

Humanity 831

Chapter 831 On the Brink of Danger

What is this?

The cultivators of the Five Great Families stared blankly at the small pillar-like object, all bewildered.

No one had seen this object before, but in everyone's perception, it seemed to create a black hole, frantically devouring the spiritual energy of the entire secret realm. The secret realm at this moment felt like a storm of spiritual energy had swept through it with great momentum.

If left unchecked, it was feared that all the spiritual energy in the secret realm would be consumed, and then the secret realm itself might collapse.

"Such vicious methods!" Chu Ruoyu's eyes twitched violently. He couldn't understand what deep hatred the outsider had with Silver Snake Valley to leave such a malicious trick.

"Dig it out quickly!" Someone shouted in anger.

Immediately, someone stepped forward, attempting to pull the Heaven's Augury Pillar from its place.

Thinking it would be an easy task, the cultivator found that even with all his strength, he couldn't move the Heaven's Augury Pillar even a bit.

Someone nearby, unable to believe it, stepped in to help, but the outcome was the same.

"Not good, this thing has already connected with the Earth Vein and cannot be moved!"

Finally, an elder cultivator, knowledgeable and experienced, saw through the situation.

Such a small object should be easy for several cultivators to handle. The only explanation for this was that the object had already tightly connected with the Earth Vein. Moving it would be like trying to move the Earth Vein of Silver Snake Valley itself.

This was something beyond human capability!

"It's over!" A horrifying thought surfaced in everyone's mind. The cultivators present stared blankly, their faces pale.

"What grudge, what enmity!" Bloodshot eyes filled Chu Ruoyu's eyes as he couldn't understand when and how Silver Snake Valley had offended the young stranger to such an extent.

It wasn't just the cultivators of Silver Snake Valley who were horrified and desperate.

The same feeling pervaded Mount Sumeru.

Liu Zhenguan had only just died, and the families of Mount Sumeru had been busy fighting for the position of the mountain lord. Before this matter was settled, a new crisis arose.

When the cultivators of the Five Great Families of Silver Snake Valley realized the uncommonness of the Heaven's Augury Pillar and the potential consequences, the cultivators of Mount Sumeru noticed the same.

As for the Ziwei Dao Palace... there was hardly any reaction.

For the current war, Ziwei Dao Palace had nearly exhausted its strength, sending all cultivators who had any cultivation to the battlefield. Those left behind were either the old, weak, sick, or ordinary people who had not practiced cultivation. Even though there was a great commotion at the spirit mountaintop where Lu Ye and others had previously resided, no one dared to investigate easily.

In the Four Great Secret Realms, as the Heaven's Augury Pillars devoured the spiritual energy of the Earth Veins, the seals broke, and the tiny Heaven's Augury Pillars grew with the wind as if they were

bamboo shoots breaking through the ground, rapidly increasing in size and then standing tall between heaven and earth.

These were undoubtedly the tallest Heaven's Augury Pillars that Lu Ye and others had ever seen.

The Heaven's Augury Pillars of the Nine Provinces were almost uniformly one person tall, but at this moment, the pillars breaking through the ground in the Four Great Secret Realms were not only taller than a person but continued to grow wildly as they devoured a vast amount of nature's spiritual energy.

On the surface of the Heaven's Augury Pillar, complex, intricate patterns appeared and disappeared, glowing like streams of light flowing upon it.

The depletion of the Earth Vein led to a series of uncontrollable consequences.

The most fearsome worries of Silver Snake Valley and Mount Sumeru came true. The secret realms that had always drifted in the Void and had no fixed location were suddenly exposed between heaven and earth, their portals wide open!

When this news reached the ears of the powerful families of Silver Snake Valley and Mount Sumeru, it felt like the sky was falling.

For many years, they had been able to avoid trouble from the undead plague of Unparalleled Continent and maintain their neutral stance thanks to the unique nature of the secret realms.

As long as they hid within the secret realms, the Corpse Race couldn't touch them.

Even when they had to open the portals, they did so carefully to avoid being noticed by the Corpse Race.

The uniqueness of the secret realms was their greatest protection.

But now, with the depletion of the spiritual energy of the Earth Vein, this layer of protection that had sustained them for a thousand years had suddenly vanished. They, along with the entire secret realms, were now fully exposed to the Unparalleled Continent, a catastrophic blow for them.

In the Four Great Secret Realms, the four Heaven's Augury Pillars grew to nearly ten zhang in height before stopping.

In a short period, the Earth Veins within the Four Great Secret Realms were almost completely devoured, and the spiritual energy within the realms had become so thin it was nearly undetectable.

On the spirit mountaintop of Huntian Holy Temple Secret Realm, where the Heaven's Augury Pillar was placed, the Eight-member Nine Provinces squad fought a bloody battle.

The situation was extremely precarious.

The mission of this trip had been achieved, and with the Heaven's Augury Pillar placed, it would be impossible to move it again. Even if the Golden Corpse King Corpse Fiend made a full effort, he wouldn't have the ability.

Now, Lu Ye and the others needed to break through and leave as soon as possible!

The eight members had been striving diligently.

Yet, as easy as it was to come, leaving was nowhere near as simple. The enormous army of zombies surrounded them from all sides, leaving no gap in the sky or ground. In such a situation, it was almost impossible to move an inch.

Under the greatest pressure, Yang Yuan and Giant Armor were flushed red, like cooked crabs, a sign of their blood Qi boiling.

Everyone had various injuries, some severe, some minor.

The current situation was a dead-end for the eight members.

"Help me!"

Suddenly, a cry for help came. Ying Wuji was the first to face a life-threatening crisis.

In the current situation, his ghost cultivation abilities were hard to utilize, and his close combat ability was weaker compared to the others. Although Giant Armor's cultivation was lower, his physique cultivation made him naturally gifted, tough and durable, with a self-preservation ability stronger than even Lu Ye.

The Corpse Race naturally targeted him, seeing him as a breakthrough point.

Especially the Silver Corpse Commander and Iron Corpse Commander hiding in the zombie crowd, ready to strike. They had already attacked Ying Wuji several times.

Previously, other members had resolved these attacks jointly, but this time they couldn't spare any help.

Ying Wuji instinctively called for help. In a flash, a massive horror enveloped him as the Silver Corpse Commander, eyes glowing silver, took his attack directly and aimed his sharp claws at Ying Wuji's chest, making the skin there feel like it was pricked by needles.

He tried to retreat, but there was no way to withdraw. At this life-and-death moment, he instinctively shouted, "Righteous Blood Flows Forever!"

As the words fell, a large hand rested firmly on his shoulder, pulling him fiercely. Ying Wuji then flew through the air, narrowly avoiding the fatal strike of the Silver Corpse Commander.

In the corner of his eyes, a flash of red light streaked past, followed by a faint voice.

"Loyal Heart Illuminates Ten Thousand Years!"

Ying Wuji was stunned. Was there a second line to that? He had never known.

Lui Qing and the others were equally speechless. In such a tense, dangerous moment, what nonsense were these two up to, still having the mood to chant verses?

"Roar!" A furious roar echoed.

Having had one arm slashed by the Boulder Mountain Saber, the Silver Corpse Commander retreated into the zombie crowd, disappearing from sight. Only his constant low growls of rage and dread indicated his presence.

But before Lu Ye could catch his breath, a tremendous sense of danger enveloped him.

In that instant, his awareness sharpened to the extreme. He turned suddenly to see an unassuming zombie in the horde throwing a punch at him.

The punch, seemingly ordinary, felt like the world was collapsing in front of him.

In the zombie's eyes, a golden light flashed.

Lu Ye raised his saber, striking toward the opponent. His right arm holding the saber bulged momentarily, and in that split second, he delivered three slashes.

Single Flash!

Repeated Slashing!

In response to such sudden danger, this simple combat skill could be most effective. Although Tyrannical Saber 1st Movement was powerful, he didn't have time to gather spirit force to use it.

The Boulder Mountain Saber, enhanced with Sharpness Spirit Runes, struck the opponent but did not cut through like usual, only leaving a shallow wound on the surface. Through the wound, golden bones were visible.

The opponent's punch landed on Lu Ye's chest in return.

Lu Ye felt his heart stop, his body thrown like a ragdoll, crashing heavily into the panicked Ying Wuji, who staggered with a cry.

The zombie, having succeeded in its move, immediately aimed to finish Lu Ye off.

"Don't think so!" At that moment, Lan Ziyi finally had a chance to act. She whirled her twin sabers, turning into a spinning top, unleashing a barrage of saber light like a storm.

Muk Qingyun's flying sword also joined, the sword light sharp and cold.

Clanging sounds rang out as Lan Ziyi's beautiful eyes changed color. She felt like she wasn't striking a zombie, but an extremely tough treasure. The feedback from her strikes made her realize this opponent's body was unbelievably rigid.

A withered hand pierced through the violent saber and fierce sword light. The ancient fists struck out directly, causing Lan Ziyi to stagger back, while Muk Qingyun's united sword technique was disrupted, his aura trembling.

"Golden Corpse King!"

At this point, Lui Qing recognized the seemingly unremarkable zombie's identity.

It was rumored that the Corpse Fiend was once an ordinary disciple of Huntian Holy Temple, but after the upheaval in the Unparalleled Continent, had some unknown experience that turned him into a member of the Corpse Race.

He was the first Corpse Race member in the entire Unparalleled Continent, and all the current Corpse Race members originated from him.

For a thousand years, Ziwei Dao Palace considered slaying the Golden Corpse King its top priority, launching countless missions against him.

However, they never succeeded, with the dispatched Dao Palace cultivators often dying without even seeing the Golden Corpse King's face.

It was undeniably tragic.

Earlier, sensing the Golden Corpse King's aura awakening, his presence spreading, everyone knew he was a supreme existence.

Now, in direct confrontation, they realized the Golden Corpse King was top-tier even among supreme beings!

Being the first Corpse Race member on the Unparalleled Continent and with a thousand years of cultivation, his power had grown to unimaginable heights.

Lu Ye was forced back and wounded unexpectedly while aiding Lan Ziyi and Muk Qingyun, who also failed to make any remarkable impact. The seemingly ordinary Golden Corpse King now tore through the Nine Provinces squad's formation like a tidal wave, carrying the terrifying power to annihilate everything in its path.

Chapter 832 On the Brink of Death

"You all must die!"

The Golden Corpse King's voice screeched like metal grinding, unbearably grating. One hand reached out for Muk Qingyun, who had been driven back with his aura shaken, his five razor-sharp, gleaming claws spreading a bone-chilling light. No one would doubt that these claws alone could rival the top-tier Magic Artifacts in the Nine Provinces cultivation world!

He didn't know what these humans had done, nor the mysteries of the Heaven's Augury Pillar, but he clearly felt the changes in the Earth Vein within the Huntian Holy Temple Secret Realm.

As one of the Four Great Temples, Huntian Holy Temple had been the largest breeding ground for corpses of the Corpse Race for millennia, nurturing countless powerful members. The vast corpse army under the Corpse Fiend's command owed much to the Huntian Holy Temple Secret Realm.

Yet now, this sacred site for the Corpse Race had its Spirit Veins depleted, and nature's spiritual energy was shockingly thin.

How could the Corpse Fiend tolerate this?

He had observed the strength of the Nine Provinces squad, knowing their formidable power. Hence, he concealed himself among the corpses, waiting for the right moment to strike. Though he hadn't gained much, he did break the Nine Provinces squad's formation, which was an achievement of sorts.

If he could kill one or two of them, he was confident he could take down the rest. The massive corpse army was not something to be trifled with. No matter how powerful these humans were, they couldn't stir up any waves!

Muk Qingyun had no way to retreat in the face of this attack. Summoning his flying sword, beams of sword light shattered the Void, sweeping towards the Corpse Fiend. His body trembled under the barrage, and more sword wounds appeared on him, but the Corpse Fiend's body was extraordinarily tough, those fine injuries unable to cause serious harm.

Sword cultivators were famous for their lethality, especially someone like Muk Qingyun. However, even his techniques couldn't inflict genuinely effective damage on the Corpse Fiend, showing the latter's immense resilience.

The scent of death enveloped him. At this critical moment, a towering figure shot out horizontally, standing between Muk Qingyun and the Corpse Fiend.

Yang Yuan!

His burly figure seemed like an indestructible barrier, bringing immense comfort in this dire moment. Blood Qi and spirit force surged around him as he held a big magic-artifact class shield in front of him.

He boldly blocked the Corpse Fiend's deadly strike!

Only then did Muk Qingyun take a deep breath. For a moment, he had thought he was already dead!

But just as he relaxed, a strange noise sounded, and both Muk Qingyun and Yang Yuan's expressions changed.

The big magic-artifact shield in Yang Yuan's hands emitted a harsh sound, and the Corpse Fiend's sharp claws, imbued with cold light, punctured five holes in it, piercing through the shield and entering their sight.

"Impossible!" Yang Yuan's pupils dilated, his eyes filled with disbelief.

There was no time for shock. The shield's glow quickly dimmed and lost its spirituality, while the Corpse Fiend's hand punctured it, his sharp claws stabbing deeply into Yang Yuan's chest.

As a physique cultivator, Yang Yuan's body, honed through countless trials, was strong enough to resist spells of the same level, yet his prideful physique felt as fragile as paper under this attack.

He felt a piercing pain in his chest, dread filling him as he feared the next moment would see the claws puncturing his heart, leading to instant death.

A figure, enveloped in flames, suddenly sprang forth beside him. The figure spun in mid-air, and a knife, shining like a star, gleamed brightly towards the Corpse Fiend's neck!

The threat of the blade was apparent before its full force was unleashed, causing the Corpse Fiend's golden eyes to narrow. He could sense the danger from this strike.

Although this knife might not claim his life, it would certainly bring him harm.

So, with almost no hesitation, the Corpse Fiend hastily retreated, vanishing amid the large corpse army, concealing his presence completely.

The figure, who had parried the attack, landed in front of Yang Yuan—it was Lu Ye. With a swift motion, he cleaved through a swarm of Corpse Race members.

Yang Yuan staggered slightly, his body cold. A moment later, he realized that had Lu Ye reacted a second slower, he would have already been dead.

From the moment Ying Wuji was in danger to the retreat of the Corpse Fiend, it had been no more than five breaths.

Yet within these five breaths, several individuals faced life and death crises.

Blood trickled down the corner of Lu Ye's mouth, evidence of the punch he'd received from the Corpse Fiend, a punch that was no minor blow.

Yang Yuan's aura became unstable. Though the Corpse Fiend hadn't taken his life, he was injured, with Primordial Corpse Poison injected into his body.

Fortunately, before setting off, everyone had received specially crafted elixir pills from Hua Ci.

Hua Ci herself could cure the Primordial Corpse Poison, but the elixir pills she made weren't as potent, only capable of suppressing the poison, giving the poisoned cultivators more time to seek treatment.

Feeling his condition, Yang Yuan quickly took out the elixir pill and swallowed it.

The squad reformed their lines, supporting each other, but it was less fluid than before. While the squad formation was breached, everyone had sustained injuries, and the prolonged intense combat was taking a toll on everyone's abilities.

"Lu Yiye!" As the only magic cultivator in the team, Lui Qing stood amidst the group, the safest position. Yet, he had killed more Corpse Race members than anyone else, even Lu Ye.

The massive and powerful spells he cast wreaked havoc in this setting, causing phenomenal damage.

"We might die here. Any thoughts on that?"

There was no blame towards Lu Ye, as everyone knew the risks before setting off, though no one expected it to get this dire.

Choosing to follow Lu Ye was their decision, and no one intended to hold him responsible for the consequences.

These Nine Provinces cultivators of their generation were all exceptional, and they understood the stakes and responsibilities.

Faced with death, Lui Qing couldn't help but speak.

"I dare not think of anything!"

Lu Ye swung his blade relentlessly, the fiery blade light flickering, and with each strike, scores of Corpse Race members fell. The pile of corpses before him grew, yet more continued to surge forward.

"What bad luck, dying alongside you!" Lui Qing sighed deeply.

"Hahaha, exhilarating!" Fong Rulie laughed maniacally. If not for Giant Armor restraining him, he might have charged forward recklessly.

"Lu Yiye, I've been putting up with you for a long time!" Ying Wuji twirled his twin curved knives, slaying Corpse Race members as he yelled, venting his frustrations. "You think you're all that, throwing orders around just because you're strong. If I could beat you, I'd have knocked you to the ground long ago!"

"Hahaha!" Lui Qing laughed. "Among cultivators, strength is respected. Ying Wuji, you're overthinking it!"

"You clearly haven't spent any time alone with him. If you had, you'd know how awful he is, always ordering others to do the dirty work while he enjoys the easy life. I, Ying Wuji, am no less than a dragon among men, yet he treats me like dirt, truly despicable!"

"You better watch out or he might cut you down right now," Lui Qing remarked.

Ying Wuji stiffened his neck. "So what? It's just a matter of dying sooner or later anyway!"

"Bold!" Lui Qing praised.

Ying Wuji then sighed, "Lu Yiye, despite your arrogance, you saved my life several times. I probably won't be able to repay you in this life. Maybe in the next one."

"As a horse or an ox?" Lui Qing joked.

"He wishes! Maybe I'll be the one saving him next time!" Ying Wuji seemed to have a few thoughts about his next life.

"If you've got the energy to chat, kill more of these corpses!" Lan Ziyi couldn't help but be irritated. Despite fighting bravely and resisting fiercely, the strange atmosphere was unnerving.

Just then, something unexpected happened.

Previously, when the Corpse Race members were killed, they just died.

But now, after they were struck down, tiny glowing lights like fireflies floated from their bodies, then dashed towards the backs of the squad members' hands.

The phenomenon was most apparent around Lui Qing, who used large-scale spells. Numerous tiny light points flew into the mark on the back of his hand, disappearing.

All eight members were taken aback.

"Is this..."

Then, everyone quickly focused, checking their battlefield markings.

The next moment, the eight showed expressions of joy.

The battlefield markings, dormant since arriving on the Unparalleled Continent, were now active.

The cause of their previous inactivity was clear—the Unparalleled Continent was beyond the Nine Provinces's influence, a separate domain entirely, making the markings useless.

But now, the markings were responsive, unequivocally indicating one thing.

The Nine Provinces Heaven's Augury had connected to the Unparalleled Continent!

This realization struck the squad simultaneously.

Lu Ye's earlier conjectures were right. The four sealed Heaven's Augury Pillars, once placed in the Four Great Secret Realms, would draw power from the Earth Vein and nature's spiritual energy. This would allow the Nine Provinces to accurately pinpoint the Unparalleled Continent and establish contact.

Thus, the battlefield markings reactivated, and their kills registered by the marking.

"Battle merit! It's battle merit!" Ying Wuji exclaimed, realizing the illumination wasn't valor points but the more valuable battle merit!

In mere moments, he had accumulated hundreds of battle merit points.

For cultivators of their tier, earning battle merit was no easy feat. The Cloud River Realm was relatively low, with limited opportunities to gain battle merit. So, discovering that slaying Corpse Race members granted battle merit was exhilarating for Ying Wuji, to say the least.

Regret soon followed. Before the marking reactivation, he had killed many Corpse Race members, all for naught in terms of battle merit.

Chapter 833 Nine Provinces?

Nine Provinces, Cloud River Battlefield, West Thirty-fifth Heaven's Augury City.

As the only Heaven's Augury City within a radius of thirty thousand miles, the Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union here was naturally bustling with activity.

Every day, cultivators from Nine Provinces came and went incessantly. The spacious streets were crowded with people, shoulder to shoulder.

Business within the Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union was even more booming, making a fortune every day.

It had been more than a month since the Yunhe Battle ended. Those who were supposed to advance to the True Lake Realm had already done so. Now was the time for a new batch of Cloud River Realm cultivators to compete for remarkable achievements. Those with some cultivation were diligently consolidating their foundations, preparing for the next Yunhe Battle, while the newcomers to the Cloud River Battlefield were striving to improve their cultivation, following in the footsteps of their predecessors.

In the big cultivation environment of Nine Provinces, there were two treasured lands to cultivate cultivators: the Spirit Stream battlefield and the Cloud River battlefield. Generations of young talents emerged like waves in the river, with new waves pushing the old, endlessly flowing.

In front of the Heaven's Augury Pillar at the mercantile union, four long lines extended in four directions. The cultivators, while waiting, whispered to each other if they were familiar.

Although it had been more than a month since the end of the Yunhe Battle, it was still a hot topic among the cultivators.

Especially the top-ranked Lu Ye, whose deeds as a Cloud River Level 8 cultivator created an unprecedented miracle since ancient times, destined to be remembered by those who came after.

Many were already familiar with him, and many were not. Naturally, those interested unearthed his story.

Looking at his path of cultivation, it was simply a history drenched in blood and tears, constantly struggling against the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge faction. Wherever he went, conflicts arose, making it remarkably lively.

The name of Lu Yiye, the Sect Destroyer, the Three Calamities of Spirit Stream, also spread far and wide.

"Speaking of which, there hasn't been any news about Lu Yiye recently," someone suddenly spoke.

"What, you miss him?"

"No, no, it's just that such a person is bound to soar upwards and be remembered in history, so paying more attention to him is natural."

"That fellow took the top spot in the Yunhe Battle, got twenty gold-hued spirit fortune sticks. He's probably in seclusion for cultivation, or perhaps he's already advanced to the True Lake Realm."

"That would be unfortunate. Without Lu Yiye, the Cloud River battlefield will be much less lively in the future."

"Such a disaster star, wouldn't it be better for him to leave early? Once he leaves the Cloud River battlefield, stronger cultivators will deal with him."

"By the way, his cultivation speed is truly fast, making others envious."

"It's just that he has many opportunities. If we had as many opportunities, our cultivation speed would not be slower than his."

"It's easy to say, but opportunities don't just appear out of nowhere. It's because they are rare that they are... what's happening?"

The lively conversations came to an abrupt halt, and all the cultivators waiting in line for trades looked at the Heaven's Augury Pillar in front of them in astonishment.

Those closer couldn't help but take a few steps back.

This was because the Heaven's Augury Pillar, which had never shown any abnormalities, suddenly radiated light. Under the bewildered gazes of the cultivators, intricate patterns suddenly lit up on the pillar, flowing with light that then spilled out, gathering in the void in front of the pillar.

In a moment, an oval-shaped gate of light, three zhang high, large enough for four people to walk through side by side, appeared in everyone's view.

The whole place fell silent. In the grand hall of the Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union, everyone's eyes were focused on it.

The event even alerted the strong cultivator stationed there. A thin, indifferent-looking middle-aged man flashed to the front of the gate of light, observing it intently.

The mercantile union manager who witnessed the formation of the gate reported the situation immediately.

The middle-aged man's thoughts raced as he listened, observing the gate with many questions in his heart.

Why would a gate appear in front of the Heaven's Augury Pillar?

Where did this gate lead to?

Such a bizarre event had never happened before.

"I'll check it out." Confident in his strength, the middle-aged man instructed the manager beside him before stepping towards the gate.

However, the next moment, he seemed to collide with an invisible wall.

He involuntarily stepped back, realizing that only Cloud River Realm cultivators could pass through. Although he outwardly displayed the cultivation of a Cloud River Realm, he was actually a True Lake Realm cultivator, and naturally could not pass.

"Senior, what's the situation with this gate?" someone with higher cultivation asked.

The middle-aged man, visibly receiving some information, was checking his battlefield marking. Soon, his brow furrowed.

Many pieces of information showed that it wasn't just this mercantile union that had a gate appear, but many other mercantile unions as well. Whether this was happening across the entire Cloud River battlefield was still uncertain, as time had been too short.

But the gate opening in such a place was clearly not a bad thing.

After a brief consideration, the middle-aged man said, "It may be an opportunity bestowed by Heaven's Augury..."

Before he finished speaking, numerous cultivators became visibly excited. Truthfully, some had already thought of this the moment the gate appeared but dared not act recklessly.

Now that even the mercantile union's people said so, it must indeed be the case.

Gates like these often led to some secret realm, places cultivators loved to explore because there was a high chance of obtaining battle merits there!

Just a moment ago, someone had mentioned how rare opportunities were. Who would have thought that a secret realm gate would appear before their eyes in the blink of an eye? This was truly saying something and having it happen immediately.

Impatient and bold, someone immediately stepped out from the crowd, striding towards the gate.

Opportunities were rare, and encountering one meant it had to be seized.

The middle-aged man naturally did not stop them, nor was there any need to. Though the destination and dangers beyond the gate were unknown, cultivation was always filled with obstacles and thorns, never smooth sailing.

He merely reminded, "If you encounter danger beyond the gate, the mercantile union will not be responsible for it. Take care, everyone!"

Who would still care about him?

As the first cultivator stepped into the gate and disappeared, a massive crowd of cultivators swarmed towards the gate from all directions, as if afraid they would miss out on the benefits by being late.

Similar scenes were occurring in mercantile unions across the Cloud River battlefield almost simultaneously. Those cultivators who had come to buy or sell goods flocked to the gates appearing in front of Heaven's Augury Pillars.

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Unparalleled Continent, Huntian Holy Temple Secret Realm.

"Battle merits, these are battle merits!" Ying Wuji's excited voice rang out because he discovered that after killing those Corpse Race entities, he could actually obtain precious battle merits!

Others discovered it too, and their hearts were elated.

But Lui Qing poured a bucket of cold water over them: "You need to be alive to spend those battle merits!"

Their enthusiasm was doused instantly.

In their current predicament, they were nearly in a hopeless situation, each with varying degrees of injuries. Of the eight of them, four had already been infected with Primordial Corpse Poison.

Only Lu Ye, Lan Ziyi, Muk Qingyun, and Giant Armor were not yet afflicted by the Primordial Corpse Poison.

Unless the four infected could quickly escape and find Hua Ci for treatment, they would inevitably be turned into members of the Corpse Race. The more they activated their spirit force, the less effective the elixirs they took, hastening the poison's outbreak.

Once the four were turned into the Corpse Race, the remaining four would also face dire outcomes.

It was truly a dead-end!

The Golden Corpse King Corpse Fiend clearly saw this, for it hadn't appeared since being repelled by Lu Ye. Even the Silver Corpse Commander and Iron Corpse Commander no longer bothered them, and only waves of Corpse Race entities overwhelmed them repeatedly.

Just as the eight from Nine Provinces squad were at their wit's end and resigning themselves to fate, unusual spirit force fluctuations suddenly surged not far away.

Everyone was shocked and quickly looked over.

On the ten-zhang-high Heaven's Augury Pillar beside them, lights were flowing non-stop. The pillar itself even trembled violently.

What was going on?

Everyone was uncertain and bewildered.

With a crashing sound...

It was as if stars shattered, with lights radiating from the Heaven's Augury Pillar, scattering across the Huntian Holy Temple Secret Realm. When the lights landed, they did not dissipate but instead twisted and stretched, quickly transforming into oval-shaped gates.

Each light became a gate.

Thousands of lights turned into thousands of gates!

Above, below, and even through the Huntian Holy Temple Secret Realm, lights fell near the battlefield where Ziwei Dao Palace and its point cultivators were located.

Within the Huntian Holy Temple Secret Realm, the nearest gate to Lu Ye and the others was less than a hundred zhang away!

A familiar aura emanated from the gate.

"Is this..."

Amidst the chaos, Lui Qing glanced at the gate, sensing the familiar aura. Suddenly realizing something, he turned to the always calm Lu Ye, who remained unfazed even in this desperate situation: "Nine Provinces?"

Ignoring the question, Lu Ye continued to battle fiercely.

Unyielding, Lui Qing pressed further: "Lu Yiye, is that the Nine Provinces? Did you anticipate this all along?"

Only then did Lu Ye coolly reply, "Since Heaven's Augury can establish contact with us and the Heaven's Augury Pillar is placed here, naturally Nine Provinces cultivators can transmit here too."

Lui Qing was briefly stunned before bursting into laughter: "So that's how it is. Lu Yiye, you sure hide things deeply, ha! This was our backup plan and reliance. No wonder you're so unflustered in this desperate situation; I thought you were unafraid of death!"

"It's not that I hide things deeply, it's that you're too dense!"

"Fine, I'm dense!" Lui Qing wasn't annoyed, feeling relieved. No result was more joyous than finding hope in despair, and Lu Yiye's verbal jabs didn't matter much.

"We're getting reinforcements?" Fong Rulie asked excitedly.

He wasn't as smart as Lui Qing, but hearing their conversation, he pieced things together.

With the Heaven's Augury Pillar there and so many gates to Nine Provinces, it was clear that reinforcements would soon arrive from Nine Provinces.

Chapter 834 Reinforcements!

By that time, they would no longer be fighting alone but would have the entire Nine Provinces as their backing and support!

Now that the portal had appeared, how far away could the reinforcements be?

The appearance of the portals also alerted the Corpse Race. Around each portal, many scattered undead tried to rush in to investigate. However, even though they passed through the portals, it was as if they had just passed through an invisible wall, with no reaction.

Just as the numerous undead were uncertain, the space shrouded by the portals suddenly distorted, and the next moment, a figure abruptly appeared.

One figure was followed by a second, then a third...

In the blink of an eye, an endless stream of cultivators appeared one after another.

Every portal was the same!

Yuen Lie hailed from a 5th grade sect in Wuzhou, with decent talent, and he now possessed the cultivation of Cloud River Level 6.

However, at this point in time, such cultivation was not very competitive. He hadn't gained much from the recently concluded Cloud River Struggle, so he could only set his sights on the next one.

The next Cloud River Struggle was five years away, which was enough for him to elevate his cultivation to the peak of Cloud River and accumulate strong foundations.

But to achieve this, he needed sufficient cultivation resources. The monthly stipend from the sect was not enough, which was a common strategy used by all major sects in the Nine Provinces. Even a 1st grade sect never provided enough resources for its disciples.

Only by lacking cultivation resources could disciples temper themselves.

If resources were supplied abundantly, it would only produce a group of people with empty cultivation but no combat skills.

The various opportunities and battles on the Cloud River battlefield, as well as fights with cultivators from opposing factions, were ways for cultivators to temper themselves.

Especially the former, which were rare and hard to come by. So when a portal suspected to lead to some secret realm appeared in the Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union, Yuen Lie followed the crowd and stepped in.

The teleportation process seemed longer than usual, with a disorienting feeling of spinning, and during the teleportation, a piece of information suddenly exploded in his heart!

He had entered secret realms before and knew that sometimes the Heaven's Augury would assign special identities to cultivators entering a secret realm based on a domain's background. This was to facilitate their actions and give them a general understanding of the realm's basic situation.

So when this information exploded in his heart, Yuen Lie was not flustered at all and quickly inspected it.

The result surprised him, as he was not given any special identity or basic information about the secret realm.

The message was simple and clear.

Exterminate the Corpse Race!

What in the world is the Corpse Race?

He had never heard of it before.

Before Yuen Lie could figure it out, his view changed, and the unusually long teleportation ended.

Experienced cultivators knew to activate their Spirit Artifact and spirit force to protect themselves at such a time, as no one knew what dangers awaited in the unknown land.

Yuen Lie was no exception. He quickly activated his spirit force and summoned his Spirit Artifact.

The sounds of roars and battle cries came to his ears. As he looked around, he saw many Nine Provinces cultivators who had arrived before him engaging in fierce combat with an unknown enemy. The air was filled with the stench of decay.

Yuen Lie was no stranger to this smell. It was the stench of a corpse that had been rotting for a long time.

Looking at the enemies before him, many looked like rotting corpses, their bodies covered with decaying flesh. Others looked like dried corpses, their bodies emaciated.

This must be the Corpse Race? The name was indeed fitting.

"Ugh..." Not far away, a delicate-looking female cultivator bent over, struggling with a pale face. She had clearly never faced such a battle scene or seen such disgusting enemies before.

"Roar!" A emaciated Corpse Race member leapt toward the female cultivator, clawing at her. Yuen Lie's eyes were quick. He leaped forward, thrusting his sword towards the Corpse Race member.

The opponent didn't dodge, allowing the sword to pierce his chest, while his claw grabbed the female cultivator's head.

There was a cracking sound, like a watermelon bursting, and Yuen Lie's eyelids twitched.

...

The Nine Provinces cultivators suffered significant losses in their initial encounters with the Corpse Race, as the usual vital spots were meaningless. Being undead beings, killing the Corpse Race required decapitation or smashing them to pieces.

Many Nine Provinces cultivators who arrived earlier suffered casualties, but more cultivators continued to arrive. Faced with the common enemy of the Corpse Race, no one cared about the factional conflict between the Haotian Alliance and Ten Thousand Demons Ridge. They used their skills and abilities, with experienced cultivators leading the newcomers to consolidate the defenses near the portals, establishing a solid foothold.

After the initial chaos, Nine Provinces cultivators built barriers at each portal, which grew stronger with reinforcements, gaining the ability to counterattack.

Few secret realms erupted into large-scale warfare upon entry. Typically, Nine Provinces secret realms were snapshots of periods from long-destroyed domains, allowing cultivators to adapt gradually. But the Unparalleled Continent was an exception.

Thus, the Nine Provinces cultivators were caught off guard and suffered some losses.

However, no one retreated because everyone quickly noticed one thing.

Killing these Corpse Race members earned battle merits!

The Nine Provinces cultivators' desire for battle merits was unimaginable. Despite the numerous fatalities and the intense battle, their fervor only grew.

Like sparks igniting the wilderness, the Nine Provinces cultivators unleashed their spirit force, spreading the flames of battle in all directions.

Outside the Huntian Holy Temple Secret Realm, on the battlefield of Dao Palace cultivators and stronghold cultivators, the three Soaring Dragon Arks were nearly wrecked.

The defensive line formed by the Soaring Dragon Arks was almost broken by the Corpse Race's assault. If it weren't for the unwillingness to abandon those who had ventured deep into the Huntian Holy Temple Secret Realm, Pang Huanyin would have ordered a retreat long ago.

Since Lu Ye and the others entered the Huntian Holy Temple Secret Realm, they had not been seen again. How could Pang Huanyin abandon them?

While Lu Ye and the others were in peril inside the Huntian Holy Temple, the situation outside was also dire.

Until the sudden arrival of the Nine Provinces cultivators.

High up, Pang Huanyin, Veteran Siao, and others stared in shock at the unfamiliar figures emerging from the portals, their hearts filled with amazement.

Originally, they were at an absolute disadvantage. Many Dao Palace and stronghold cultivators had fallen, but now, with the assistance of the sudden reinforcements, the situation seemed to be reversing.

"Fellow Daoist Hua, who are they..." Pang Huanyin suddenly realized, turning to the heavily guarded Hua Ci.

As the only healing cultivator capable of curing the Primordial Corpse Poison, Hua Ci was under strict protection. Since the start of the battle, a group from Dao Palace had been guarding her.

At this moment, Hua Ci was detoxifying a cultivator poisoned by the Primordial Corpse Poison. With her delicate hand on his chest, the poison was purged in a moment.

Unnoticed by anyone, during detoxification, Hua Ci's cultivation subtly increased.

Her unique heritage allowed her to cultivate using toxins, which was more effective than using Spiritual Energy.

Corpse Poison was also a type of poison!

For Hua Ci, the Unparalleled Continent was even better than the Five Poisons Pond for her cultivation.

Moreover, she could earn battle merits while detoxifying! This was an unexpected delight.

However, unlike most cultivators, she did not crave battle merits much.

Upon hearing Pang Huanyin's question, Hua Ci smiled, "They're all from the Nine Provinces. Lu Ye must have succeeded, wait for his good news."

Even though she suspected, Pang Huanyin was stunned when Hua Ci confirmed it.

Veteran Siao, standing beside her, murmured, "So the Nine Provinces really exist!"

Pang Huanyin had told him about the Nine Provinces and that Lu Ye and others came from there.

Since Pang Huanyin said it, Veteran Siao believed it, and Lu Ye and others did seem unlike anyone the Unparalleled Continent could produce.

But there was no visual evidence until now!

From the portals, unfamiliar cultivators continuously emerged. Though their strength varied, their numbers were unimaginable.

They wore bright clothes, wielding fine Spirit Artifacts, having cultivated different streams. Despite their diverse backgrounds, they quickly coordinated in the chaotic battlefield, forming tight battle arrays.

These Nine Provinces cultivators seemed born for war.

Clearing her mind of distractions, Pang Huanyin's expression turned resolute. Her heroic voice echoed, "Fellow Daoists from Dao Palace and various strongholds, the Corpse Race plague on the Unparalleled Continent has lasted long enough. Today, we eradicate them with the Nine Provinces' help. As Unparalleled cultivators born here, will you fall behind?"

"Kill!"

"Kill!"

"Kill!"

Raising her longsword, Pang Huanyin pointed to the battlefield ahead, "This is our home, the Unparalleled Continent, and we are Unparalleled cultivators. While others risk their lives to defend our land, will we just watch?"

"Kill!"

"Kill!"

"Kill!"

The corners of Pang Huanyin's mouth lifted, her passionate voice now calm yet decisive, "Then... kill!"

With those words, she was the first to charge.

From a passive defensive state, it was finally time to counterattack.

Behind her, Dao Palace and stronghold cultivators transformed into colorful lights, diving into the vast battlefield like a sea of stars!

At each portal, Nine Provinces cultivators noticed Pang Huanyin's side, puzzled about the apparent strong force.

But quickly understood, as regardless of origins, they were human!

And the Nine Provinces cultivators' mission was singular: exterminate the Corpse Race!

Chapter 835 This Guy Must Be Crazy

The Huntian Holy Temple Secret Realm, where the Eight-Member Squad of the Nine Provinces was located, had long since transformed into an Asura Purgatory. The broken bodies and rotting flesh of the Corpse Race piled up into mountains, and the flowing blood formed rivers.

The greatest crisis had already passed. With the continuous arrival of reinforcements from the Nine Provinces, the pressure on this side quickly lessened.

At this moment, on top of the corpse mountain, eight figures stood tall, and no Corpse Race dared to come and disturb them.

Looking around, they saw numerous portals appear everywhere, and many cultivators from the Nine Provinces emerged from the portals, forming battle arrays to fight against the Corpse Race.

The situation here was also noticed by many Nine Provinces cultivators. After recognizing Lu Ye and the others, and seeing their terrifying battle achievements, they all marveled and admired them.

"I can't take it anymore..." Fong Rulie, having lost his excitement, felt his whole body aching. On top of being poisoned by the Primordial Corpse Poison, his face was covered by an abnormal yellow hue. "I need to find that Fellow Daoist Hua quickly, or else I'll turn into a Corpse Race member."

Saying this, he hoisted his spear and leaped off the corpse mountain, rushing towards the portal to the Huntian Holy Temple Secret Realm.

"I'll go too!" Lui Qing said, following quickly behind Fong Rulie.

Ying Wuji and Yang Yuan also hurried away.

Even Muk Qingyun nodded slightly to Lu Ye before shooting to the sky.

During the earlier battle, four members of the squad were poisoned by the Primordial Corpse Poison. Later, even Muk Qingyun could not avoid it. Although Hua Ci's elixir pills temporarily suppressed the poison, it was only a suppression. With the intense battle causing spirit force to pulse, the pill's effects gradually wore off. By now, everyone felt something was wrong. They knew if they didn't purge the Primordial Corpse Poison quickly, the consequences could be dire.

If they really turned into Corpse Race members, it would be a huge problem.

Only Lu Ye, Lan Ziyi, and Giant Armor remained on the corpse mountain.

Lan Ziyi's expression was full of confusion as she looked at Lu Ye and then at Giant Armor, with a whole belly of doubts unanswered.

These two were just too strange. One was covered in wounds but showed no signs of poisoning.

In theory, any injury in a battle against the Corpse Race could not be taken lightly, as there might be Primordial Corpse Poison in any wound.

As for the other one... after such a long and fierce battle, there was not a single wound on his bare upper body.

How strong did one's physique have to be to remain unharmed in such an intense melee? Was this guy's body magic-artifact class?

Even Yang Yuan, another physique cultivator, had many wounds, aside from being injured by the Golden Corpse King Corpse Fiend, and also got wounded in subsequent battles.

She herself remained unscathed because she wore a protective soft armor close to her body. Otherwise, she would have been poisoned by the Primordial Corpse Poison by now.

These two were such freaks!

She then saw an even stranger scene.

Lu Ye casually took out a handful of elixir pills and directly stuffed them into his mouth. His cheeks bulged high, and he mumbled vaguely to Giant Armor beside him, "Recover!"

"Oh." Giant Armor responded and closed his eyes.

Crunch, crunch, Lu Ye chewed the pills while glancing at Lan Ziyi, whose eyes twitched violently.

She had never imagined that someone would take so many elixir pills at once. Those were elixir pills, not candies!

Wasn't he worried about the accumulation of pill poison and impure spirit force in such a short time?

Any cultivator, regardless of their cultivation level, would never swallow elixir pills in this manner.

This guy must be crazy!

Gulp...

The elixir pills were swallowed into his stomach, and soon Lan Ziyi heard a humming sound from Lu Ye's belly, as if Thunderbolts were roaming inside, or as if a millstone was grinding.

He even dared to activate the Bestial Gluttony Feast... Lan Ziyi was left speechless.

She knew about the useless Cultivation Technique like Bestial Gluttony Feast. So as soon as she heard the sound from Lu Ye's belly, she knew what he was doing.

He was truly fearless! Swallowing so many elixir pills at once and even activating the Bestial Gluttony Feast to refine the pill's efficacy.

However, she had to admit that it worked well because Lan Ziyi could clearly feel that Lu Ye's aura, which had dimmed due to the prolonged battle, was rapidly recovering. This undoubtedly indicated that his spirit force was being restored quickly.

But... was it necessary? Such a recovery method was practically gambling with his future.

Suddenly, the surrounding spirit force surged again. When Lan Ziyi looked at Giant Armor, she saw that he had already opened his eyes, and his spirit force was so abundant that it was almost overflowing.

"Done!" Giant Armor said in a hoarse voice.

Done with what?

Lan Ziyi suddenly felt a bit surreal. She clearly saw how Lu Yiye quickly recovered his spirit force using some special means. But what about Giant Armor?

From the moment he closed his eyes to reopening them, it was only ten breaths of time. The many losses from the previous battle had already been fully replenished?

She didn't see any trace of him taking elixir pills or absorbing Spirit Stone powers.

"Let's go!" Lu Ye called out and stepped in one direction. He didn't choose to fly, but each step covered more than ten feet.

Giant Armor followed silently, without even asking Lu Ye what he was going to do.

"Wait!" Lan Ziyi came to her senses and quickly followed, walking side by side with Lu Ye. She turned her head and said, "Together!"

She had already guessed what Lu Ye aimed to do. Although this journey would undoubtedly be risky, if it succeeded, they would gain a great deal of battle merit.

She did not want to miss this opportunity.

Lu Ye did not refuse her. Lan Ziyi had strength, and though teaming up with Giant Armor might be enough, having one more person meant more strength.

Along the way, the Corpse Race continued to attack, but having already passed through the previous ordeal; they didn't care about these small obstacles.

The three advanced in an arrowhead formation, dealing with every obstructing Corpse Race member, their handbacks absorbing the floating sparkles from the slain Corpse Race bodies.

Soon, Lan Ziyi noticed something and turned to ask, "Lu Yiye, do you know where he is?"

She had noticed that Lu Ye's actions lacked clear direction, seemingly hunting while searching.

Lu Ye beheaded a Corpse Race member's head and responded casually, "You know?"

He didn't know the target's precise location because it was too inconspicuous among the numerous Corpse Race members. They couldn't find it unless it exposed itself.

But in the current situation, the target wouldn't expose itself easily.

So Lu Ye could only kill and search concurrently. He didn't need to see it with his eyes. When the target ambushed him earlier and then injured Yang Yuan, Lu Ye had memorized its aura.

As long as the target entered his perception range, it couldn't escape.

"I don't know either." Lan Ziyi's voice softened.

"Then stop talking."

The three continued hunting, even helping some Nine Provinces cultivators out of predicaments. Upon recognizing Lu Ye and Lan Ziyi, the Nine Provinces cultivators were all excited.

So the top two from the Cloud River Contention were here, cooperating! Eliminating the Corpse Race didn't seem hard at all.

Along the way, the ground was littered with both Corpse Race remains and many fallen Nine Provinces cultivators' bodies, showing the intensity of previous battles.

Suddenly, a heartrending scream came, prompting Lu Ye to dash towards the sound's source, reaching the battlefield in moments.

By this time, the bustle around the portals had vanished. The Corpse Race had realized how formidable their Nine Provinces visitors were and had scattered.

Many Nine Provinces cultivators left the portal areas to team up with friends and relatives for hunting.

At this moment, a team of about a dozen was in dire straits, surrounded by a group of Corpse Race members. Worse, there was an extremely powerful presence among them.

Iron Corpse Commander!

In reality, not only were Golden Corpse King Corpse Fiends Overlord-level, but its three Commanders under it were strong enough to be considered Overlord-level as well, not something ordinary Cloud River Realm cultivators could handle. However, the Corpse Fiend was even stronger than the three Commanders.

The Copper Corpse Commander died unjustly before because he underestimated the strength of the Nine Provinces Squad, who killed him in just ten breaths due to their excellent cooperation. Meanwhile, his large subordinate Corpse horde couldn't display their advantage against Lu Ye's sharp perception.

Although the Iron Corpse Commander couldn't accomplish anything against the Nine Provinces Squad, he was formidable against an ordinary squad.

The strongest member of the squad fell to one strike, and the rest were in peril.

In this critical moment, the surrounding Corpse Race suddenly became chaotic. The next moment, a fiery figure cut through like a sharp blade, heading straight for the Iron Corpse Commander with a fierce blade strike.

Suddenly attacked, the Iron Corpse Commander didn't care, raising one arm to block the blade, while his iron-colored skin tensed, seemingly turning to refined iron.

In the next instant, however, his stiff face changed color upon recognizing the figure in his vision as one of the initial few invading the Huntian Holy Temple!

Among the rest, the Iron Corpse Commander didn't worry much. But this blade wielder was the one it feared.

For this was the one who injured the Golden Corpse King!

Suddenly, Corpse Qi surged around him, concentrating on his arm.

Clang...

The blade struck with a clear sound, piercing the Iron Corpse Commander's defense three inches deep but not cutting off his arm.

The Iron Corpse Commander took advantage of the shockwave to retreat swiftly, trying to flee.

Yet in the next moment, a tall figure appeared in his escape path, as if predicting his retreat route, wielding two exaggerated long blades that danced like a storm of dazzling light, enveloping the Iron Corpse Commander.

Chapter 836 The Dignity of a King

Clang clang clang clang...

A series of dense, rapid sounds emerged, like raindrops hitting a plantain leaf, causing the Iron Corpse Commander's body to tremble violently. Gashes deepened on his body, flesh turning upward.

The Iron Corpse Commander had just moved ten zhang sideways in midair, but still couldn't escape the fierce, stormy slashes.

"Roar!"

He roared, corpse Qi surging around him. He punched out, piercing through the curtain of blades, heading straight for Lan Ziyi.

Clang...

Another sound resounded. Lan Ziyi crossed her twin blades in front of her, precisely blocking the strike. However, she was still forced back by the violent power.

At this moment, the Iron Corpse Commander's heart was filled with alarm. A strong sense of danger surged like boiling water in his mind. He turned his head to see Lu Ye, who had previously ambushed him, standing not far away, gripping his saber with one hand. Lu Ye's sharp gaze pierced him like a sword, his entire power crazily pouring into the long saber, causing flames to roll on the Boulder Mountain Saber, making it appear aflame.

The Iron Corpse Commander could tell at a glance that Lu Ye was preparing to unleash a great power.

The next slash would certainly be earth-shattering.

The Iron Corpse Commander didn't panic. No matter how powerful the slash, it needed to hit him. Lu Ye was still gathering force, Lan Ziyi had been forced back, and the remaining humans were insignificant. So, he leaped into the sky, about to leave the troubled area.

He had just ascended three zhang high when a massive iron-like hand appeared out of nowhere, grabbing his ankle. In the Iron Corpse Commander's stunned eyes, the hand applied force, pulling him from mid-air.

In the next instant, the Iron Corpse Commander's vision flipped. He was smashed heavily to the ground.

The owner of the huge hand was treating him like a ragdoll.

Boom...

The ground immediately formed a pit, the strong vibrations spreading in all directions, making the Nine Provinces cultivators who had just escaped disaster shudder.

Boom boom boom...

Giant Armor's massive arms swung, slamming the ground with booming sounds.

The Iron Corpse Commander was furious. With his strong body, the attacks weren't causing serious injuries, but he had never been treated like this before.

While being swung, his body suddenly arched, his thin frame like a boneless poisonous snake, climbing up Giant Armor's arm and twisting onto Giant Armor's neck.

"Die!"

He roared, gripping Giant Armor's neck with one hand, while the other hand turned into five sharp fingers, stabbing towards Giant Armor's crown.

Everyone watching turned pale.

"Ding!" A crisp sound rang out, and the Iron Corpse Commander's pupils shrank slightly, eyes filled with disbelief.

Because his seemingly certain strike hadn't caused any damage.

He could see clearly. As his attack fell, spirit force gathered above his opponent's head, suddenly forming dense objects like miniature turtle shells...

They were so solid that they blocked his strike.

No time for surprise, an unprecedented sense of crisis suddenly enveloped him.

He quickly looked up to see Lu Ye charging. The brief gathering of force had elevated his momentum to an extent even the Iron Corpse Commander feared. The imminent slash filled the Iron Corpse Commander with long-lost terror.

With a snap, Giant Armor extended another hand, grabbing the Iron Corpse Commander's hand that was on his neck.

Gripped by one hand and one foot, the Iron Corpse Commander finally panicked.

Lu Ye's body lifted slightly, the flame-infused long saber slashing out, passing by Giant Armor and the Iron Corpse Commander on his back, sliding more than ten zhang before stabilizing.

The flames subsided, and the Boulder Mountain Saber returned to its original plain form, with no luster on its pitch-black blade.

Behind him, the Iron Corpse Commander's eyes were wide, staring forward as his mouth opened and closed, seemingly wanting to say something, but no sound came out.

Giant Armor's body shook, causing the Iron Corpse Commander to fall off. Before he hit the ground, his body had already separated, dark corpse blood spraying out.

Lan Ziyi slowly approached, looking at Lu Ye's back and then at the Iron Corpse Commander on the ground, her expression complex.

She had known that Lu Ye's prepared strike would be extremely strong, but she hadn't anticipated it being this powerful. Such terrifying killing power was beyond her reach.

Of course, she also saw that the long saber in Lu Ye's hand was of magic-artifact class. And when he unleashed that strike, he seemed to have used spirit runes to enhance the saber. All these forces combined to create such a powerful blow.

The battlefield marking on the back of her hand suddenly warmed slightly. Lan Ziyi checked it and smiled with delight.

Seeing that she had gained substantial battle merit!

Clearly, the benefits came from killing the Iron Corpse Commander. It wasn't just the merit for killing an enemy. While the Iron Corpse Commander was a strong opponent comparable to the Cloud River Realm, killing him brought merits similar to killing a Cloud River Level 9 enemy.

Moreover, merits were not only obtained by killing enemies. Contributing to battles and playing a role also earned merits.

This was likely Heaven's Augury bestowing rewards, recognizing contributions.

Regardless, the Iron Corpse Commander was one of the few top experts of the Corpse Race. Killing him significantly helped clear the corpse disaster.

Just like in the Ten Thousand Beasts Domain secret realm, when she and Lu Ye joined forces to kill Niu Meng, they had earned considerable merit afterward.

That was why she had knowingly followed Lu Ye, understanding that there were benefits to be had.

She had gained a lot of merit, but Lu Ye should've gained even more. Although three people contributed, Lu Ye landed the final blow on the Iron Corpse Commander, making the most effort.

Such a powerful Iron Corpse Commander being taken down by three people in less than ten breaths left the nearby Nine Provinces cultivators in awe.

They realized the enormous gap between themselves and the others.

A dozen of them had been powerless against the Iron Corpse Commander's assault, awaiting death. Yet, Lu Ye and the others had eradicated him like sweeping fallen leaves.

The top two in the Cloud River competition were indeed well-deserved!

With the Iron Corpse Commander dead, the surrounding Corpse Race couldn't stir up much trouble. Everyone teamed up and quickly dealt with the remaining corpses.

Lu Ye thought about finding the Golden Corpse King and didn't stay. After solving the problems here, he quickly left.

The three of them roamed around, reaping many rewards, but the Golden Corpse King seemed to have vanished without a trace.

Lu Ye speculated whether the Golden Corpse King had already fled the Huntian Holy Temple.

Given the circumstances, the remaining Corpse Race couldn't cause much trouble and would soon be eradicated by the enthusiastic Nine Provinces cultivators. Even the scattered Corpse Race across the Unparalleled Continent would become targets for cultivators.

After all, such direct and simple opportunities for earning merits weren't common.

To the Nine Provinces cultivators, these terrifying and foul-smelling Corpse Race members were prime targets.

The Golden Corpse King wasn't foolish. With the situation lost, he probably wouldn't stay.

He appeared like an ordinary Corpse Race. If he wanted to hide in the corpse crowd, it would be hard to find him.

They did see the Silver Corpse Commander's body...

The battlefield where the body lay was extremely brutal. Though Lu Ye hadn't seen it personally, he could imagine the scene.

Numerous Nine Provinces cultivators besieged the Silver Corpse Commander, who fought fiercely, ultimately falling. Judging by the battle scars, the Nine Provinces cultivators had paid a heavy price to kill him.

"Follow me; I have an idea of where the Golden Corpse King is."

Just when Lu Ye was about to give up searching, Lan Ziyi spoke up.

Lu Ye turned to look at her.

Lan Ziyi said, "We overthought it. We assumed the Golden Corpse King would hide among the corpses to ambush Nine Provinces cultivators or had already fled. In fact, he hadn't left or attacked the cultivators."

"Where is he?" Lu Ye asked.

Lan Ziyi's gaze shifted to the tallest spirit mountaintop in the distance.

Lu Ye frowned.

"He is the first Corpse Race in the Unparalleled Continent and the Golden Corpse King, with kingly pride and dignity. Knowing the situation is lost, he wouldn't live as a fugitive. There's a great hall on that mountaintop. He's inside."

Lan Ziyi shook her fair hand, saying, "I got the information through various channels. Some Nine Provinces cultivators broke in and were killed. Currently, no one dares to go there. Couldn't you ask around or are you friendless?"

With a teasing smile, she added, seeming to imply he was a lone star destined for loneliness.

Lu Ye raised his Boulder Mountain Saber.

"Let's move!" Lan Ziyi immediately led the way seriously.

No one knew the mountaintop's name, occupied for millennia by the Corpse Race, erasing all traces of the old Huntian Holy Temple.

But it was the highest and most important mountaintop.

On it stood a great hall.

In the entire Huntian Secret Realm, Nine Provinces cultivators and Corpse Race figures were seen fighting everywhere, except this mountaintop, which was eerily empty.

Lu Ye started believing Lan Ziyi's words even more.

This abnormality itself revealed much.

Moments later, the three landed lightly before the great hall atop the mountaintop. As soon as they landed, Lu Ye's expression turned sharp, sensing a familiar aura inside the hall.

The Golden Corpse King, Corpse Fiend's aura!

Inside the hall, there was also the faint smell of blood, likely from Nine Provinces cultivators killed after wandering in unawares.

The overwhelming, undisguised aura inside was like an entrenched dragon, fearing none. With his final grand battle, he would declare his end.

This was the pride of a king!

Chapter 837 How do we fight this?

Feeling the powerful aura in the hall, Lan Ziyi's expression turned grave.

During the previous battle of the eight cultivators of the Nine Provinces, although the Golden Corpse King made a brief appearance, injuring Yang Yuan, no one knew exactly how strong he was because the situation was too chaotic at that time.

Only at this moment, when she clearly felt his aura, did Lan Ziyi realize that this guy was much stronger than the three Corpse Commanders.

Is this still within the scope of the Cloud River Realm?

Even for an Overlord, this is somewhat exaggerated.

Moreover, if the Golden Corpse King was truly as powerful as perceived, then during the previous encirclement by the Corpse Race, he should have had the ability to annihilate them completely. Why didn't he? Instead, after being repelled by Lu Ye, he no longer appeared.

Is there perhaps some unknown reason behind this?

Just as Lan Ziyi was speculating, Lu Ye beside her had already stepped forward and moved on ahead.

Giant Armor followed closely without a word, evidently ready to follow Lu Ye without hesitation, even if it meant facing a mountain of blades or a sea of fire.

Lan Ziyi could only follow with a determined heart.

The grand hall's doors were wide open, resembling the maw of a ferocious beast, swallowing the three figures.

The light dimmed as they entered, and Lu Ye squinted slightly, scanning the hall.

In their view were at least dozens of mutilated corpses scattered around, clearly the Nine Provinces cultivators who had ventured in, wrongly believing there was something valuable. They had been slain by the Golden Corpse King.

Many of the corpses had eyes wide open in shock, indicating they felt immense terror before they died.

At the topmost part of the hall, an unremarkable Corpse Race member sat in a chair, propping his chin with one hand, looking down with a leisurely gaze.

His stance suggested he was not waiting for Dragon Slayers but rather old friends he hadn't seen in a long time.

Lu Ye looked up, locking eyes with the Corpse Fiend.

His golden eyes gleamed with an apparent tinge of disappointment, and a voice that sounded like metal scraping together came from the Golden Corpse King's mouth: "Only the three of you? Where are the others?"

Although many cultivators from the Nine Provinces came, the Golden Corpse King only truly cared about the initial squad of eight from the Nine Provinces. He was waiting for Lu Ye and his team.

Unexpectedly, only three came; the other five were nowhere to be seen.

This naturally disappointed him.

An unnamed fury surged within his chest. Just three of them dare to cause a disturbance!

"To kill you, three people... will be enough!"

The moment Lu Ye finished speaking, Giant Armor took large steps forward, his towering physique carrying an indescribable sense of oppression as he charged at the Corpse Fiend. His movements weren't fast and even seemed clumsy due to his bulky frame, but within two or three steps, he was already in front of the Corpse Fiend.

Lan Ziyi was taken aback, not expecting the battle to start so decisively. After just one exchange of words, they were already fighting.

But her response wasn't slow. As soon as Giant Armor made his move, she attacked from the flank, her tall and slender figure turning into a streak of imperceptible light, giving an unpredictable impression.

"Impudent!"

The Golden Corpse King roared in anger, springing to his feet.

Even he couldn't keep sitting when facing the immense pressure brought by Giant Armor.

The two figures, close at hand, almost simultaneously threw a punch at each other.

In comparison, Giant Armor's punch was powerful, while the Golden Corpse King's punch seemed almost lackluster. Anyone would think the Golden Corpse King would end up with broken bones and possibly be utterly smashed.

But to everyone's shock, when their fists collided, it was the much larger Giant Armor who was sent flying.

In a pure contest of strength, the physique cultivator Giant Armor lost completely!

A visible shockwave rippled out, impacting all directions.

By this time, Lan Ziyi had already attacked from the flank. Her usual fierce blade storm descended on the Golden Corpse King, the sound of clashes ringing out as it was unclear how many strikes she had delivered in that instant.

To her dismay, her series of slashes only left shallow white marks on the Golden Corpse King's skin without causing any real damage!

Though she was mentally prepared, guessing the Golden Corpse King's body was stronger than the Iron Corpse Commander's, this level of toughness was too much.

When she previously fought the Iron Corpse Commander, she at least managed to injure him.

The Golden Corpse King and the Iron Corpse Commander were entirely on different levels!

Facing the relentless slashes, the Golden Corpse King reached out and grabbed, halting Lan Ziyi's spinning form, as he had caught her long blade in his hand.

Lan Ziyi's face changed; in this situation, she either abandoned her blade and retreated or would be pulled close to the Golden Corpse King in the next moment, which would be disastrous even for the Cloud River's second.

Normally, the best choice would be to drop the blade and retreat, the only option, but at that moment, she didn't do so but instead spun in mid-air because she saw Lu Ye's figure.

Giant Armor had just been sent flying by the Golden Corpse King's punch, but using the cover of his massive form, Lu Ye had closed in, his blade aiming straight for the Golden Corpse King's eye socket.

He realized how strong the Golden Corpse King's body was and targeted its weak spots.

No matter how tough the body, the eyes remained vulnerable.

Faced with this attack, the Golden Corpse King leaned back, causing Lu Ye's strike to miss. He then slashed down, the blade striking heavily on the Golden Corpse King's face, causing sparks to fly.

At the same time, the Golden Corpse King, who had leaned back, kicked out. Lu Ye formed a palm with his hand, spirit force swirling in his palm, forming Defense Spirit Runes to shield his chest.

Though the blow was barely blocked, he was still sent flying by the violent force.

On the other side, using the brief gap created by Lu Ye, Lan Ziyi's spinning form erupted with spirit force, causing the Golden Corpse King to involuntarily release his grip on her blade.

Just as Lan Ziyi was about to withdraw, the Golden Corpse King took this opportunity to punch her blade.

The ferocious strength almost made Lan Ziyi lose her grip on the long blade. Her face changed as she hastily retreated to disperse the force.

Looking back at the Golden Corpse King, her eyes were filled with solemn and intense focus!

Incredibly strong, stronger than she had imagined. Her earlier intuition was correct!

Joined by Lu Ye and Giant Armor, their fierce assault couldn't touch the Golden Corpse King. Instead, he dismantled their attacks in the blink of an eye.

Unbelievable, yet undeniable.

How could they fight this?

After their brief clash, Lan Ziyi considered retreat, realizing such a powerful foe couldn't be dealt with by three or five people. An overwhelming force was needed to wear him down!

She glanced at Lu Ye, expecting him to understand. To her surprise, Lu Ye, after being repelled, charged again, unwavering in determination.

Giant Armor followed closely, his steps causing the palace to tremble.

Seeing this, Lan Ziyi gritted her teeth and rushed forward with her two blades.

Despite their past conflicts with Lu Ye, she had no thought of abandoning her comrades in such a moment.

In the grand hall, spirit force clashed instantly, with three figures interweaving in ferocious combat, getting repelled but continuing to attack, substituting each other non-stop.

The violent clashes tore the ancient hall apart, reducing it to ruins.

The Golden Corpse King Corpse Fiend showcased extreme strength, dominating against their combined assault, barely moving from the area around his chair. No matter how wild the attacks, he easily deflected them.

Without using any treasures, his body alone was his greatest asset, with terrifying power in every punch and kick.

If not for the trio's formidable strength, they would have perished already.

Even so, their situation looked dire. Only thirty breaths into the battle, all three were injured, with even Giant Armor's tough body cracking like porcelain, blood streaming from the gaps.

Lan Ziyi's aura also began to falter.

She intended to call for a retreat. Given the circumstances, they had no choice but to regroup and assess the Golden Corpse King's strength. Recruiting more allies would be necessary for another attempt.

But before she could speak, she noticed a strange change in Lu Ye.

Lu Ye's aura seemed stronger than before, his speed and force in wielding his blade visibly increased, and this enhancement continued.

"Hmm?" The Golden Corpse King was puzzled.

Lan Ziyi could sense Lu Ye's change, and the Corpse King felt it too, realizing the human hadn't shown his full strength initially!

But that wasn't the case.

Facing such a powerful foe, Lu Ye dared not hold back. The initial power he exhibited was his normal capability.

The current enhancement came from the Bloodstain Spirit Runes.

During the previous encounter with the massive zombie horde, Lu Ye was covered in wounds, deliberately avoiding using healing pills or forces to recover, preserving these injuries.

Before engaging the Golden Corpse King, he had already structured the Bloodstain Spirit Runes on himself.

As the runes continued to function, their aid became increasingly substantial.

The Bloodstain Spirit Runes were one of his trump cards, difficult to utilize, and had been rarely used.

Most adversaries were quickly dealt with, not giving the runes time to take effect.

But against the Golden Corpse King, they proved invaluable.

So at that moment, with Lan Ziyi watching in amazement, Lu Ye received a strike from the Golden Corpse King but wasn't flung back as before, instead, only being forced back a few yards before stabilizing.

"We have a chance!" Lan Ziyi's eyes lit up. If Lu Ye's strength kept growing, they might just be able to kill the Golden Corpse King with their combined effort!

Chapter 838 Giant Armor is Very Angry

At that thought, Lan Ziyi no longer hesitated. She brought her twin sabers together, and the two long blades merged into one.

Lu Ye had his trump cards, and so did she.

Her twin sabers were exceptionally long, even longer than Lu Ye's Boulder Mountain Saber by a good thirty to forty percent. Such spiritual artifacts were difficult for ordinary cultivators to wield, and only someone as tall and agile as Lan Ziyi could handle them with ease.

Now with the two blades merged, the length remained unchanged, but the blade had significantly thickened and become heavier.

Seeing the strength of the Golden Corpse King's physique, she realized that ordinary slashes would be ineffective. She was preparing to enhance her spiritual artifact's lethality, even if it meant sacrificing some speed.

She took a gentle breath, her chest rising with the motion. The blade gleamed brilliantly, and she seemed to merge with the blade's light. With a powerful strike, she slashed at the Golden Corpse King.

The timing of this strike was perfect, right when Giant Armor was entangled with the Golden Corpse King, leaving the latter no time to react.

With a loud clang, the Golden Corpse King staggered under the blow. Lan Ziyi's eyes lit up as her strike finally wounded this formidable enemy!

Though the wound was not large, it had indeed inflicted damage on the Golden Corpse King.

That was enough. As long as she could injure him, there was a chance to kill him, unlike before when she saw no hope at all.

Giant Armor was sent flying again. A strong sense of danger enveloped Lan Ziyi as the injured Golden Corpse King, now furious, turned his gaze on her. He extended a claw straight at her chest.

Faced with such a fierce attack, Lan Ziyi did not retreat but advanced instead. Fearless, she took a step forward, raised her long saber, and slashed down again.

It wasn't that she wasn't afraid of death; she had already caught a glimpse of Lu Ye's actions from the corner of her eye. She believed Lu Ye would not disappoint her.

Just as the Golden Corpse King's sharp claw was only three inches away from her heart, a fiery red blade light slashed in from the side. The powerful force forcibly altered the trajectory of the Golden Corpse

King's claw, making it skim past Lan Ziyi's clothes, tearing off a large piece of fabric, and revealing the dark golden soft armor she wore underneath.

The heavy long saber slashed down, directly landing on the shoulder armor of the Golden Corpse King, which enraged him. He raised his hand and struck at Lan Ziyi with a palm strike.

She didn't dare to be reckless and quickly retreated, but was still hit in the abdomen by the force of the palm, causing her to groan.

Before the Golden Corpse King could press the attack, Lu Ye's blade struck down again.

The Bloodstain Spirit Runes continued to enhance his momentum and strength step by step. Initially, he couldn't even withstand a single blow from the Golden Corpse King, but now he could barely manage it. Though still forced back, he no longer looked as pathetic as before.

In the midst of the fierce battle, Lu Ye cleared his mind, extending his senses to probe the surroundings.

The Golden Corpse King's strength was unnaturally powerful. When the Eight-member Squad of the Nine Provinces was surrounded by the corpse horde, he had briefly fought the Golden Corpse King. Back then, he felt the Golden Corpse King was strong but not to this extent.

If that were the case, he wouldn't have led only Giant Armor to kill the Golden Corpse King.

Had the Golden Corpse King shown such overwhelming strength at the time, apart from himself, the rest of the squad would have perished. Even he wouldn't have been confident of escaping, considering they faced an endless horde of corpses alongside the Golden Corpse King.

Through the intense battle, Lu Ye gradually sensed the root of the problem.

There had to be something here that significantly boosted the Golden Corpse King's strength.

Lan Ziyi had said the Golden Corpse King was waiting here for a king's finale, but that wasn't the case. Only here could the Golden Corpse King exert strength beyond his original level. If he left, he would still be powerful, but not to this extent.

What was it?

Even with his senses pushed to the limit, he couldn't figure it out. He only sensed a formless power continuously flowing into the Golden Corpse King's body.

A moment later, the light of hope in Lan Ziyi's eyes dimmed again.

Despite their best efforts, she, Lu Ye, and Giant Armor only managed to inflict minor wounds on the Golden Corpse King. Expecting to kill him with such injuries was wishful thinking.

Though she was unwilling to admit it, she had to acknowledge that she had underestimated the situation.

Initially, Lu Ye's increasing strength had made her believe in their inevitable victory. But now, she realized that Lu Ye's improvement had its limits.

Compared to the beginning, Lu Ye's strength had greatly improved; his speed and power were incomparable to before. However, even so, he could only barely contend with the Golden Corpse King, unable to secure victory.

Among the three, Lu Ye was the main force in killing the enemy. She couldn't do much, only manage to distract the Golden Corpse King occasionally. As for Giant Armor, he took the most beatings but always returned promptly to continue the assault.

If even Lu Ye's capabilities were limited, how could they possibly kill the Golden Corpse King?

"Lu Yiye, we can't win!"

In the midst of the clash, Lan Ziyi gritted her teeth and whispered. Since it was impossible to kill the Golden Corpse King, they should retreat early before the situation worsened.

Lu Ye, however, seemed not to hear her, continuing his agile maneuvers and clashes with the Golden Corpse King.

The benefits of the Bloodstain Spirit Runes had reached their peak. Lan Ziyi's perception was correct; this rune could no longer provide further enhancement to Lu Ye.

But he had another, even more powerful trump card that he could use at any time. This prolonged battle had given him enough time to gather strength, and Amber, silently perched on his shoulder and fused with his blood Qi spirit force, was also ready.

However, without knowing the source of the Golden Corpse King's immense strength, he dared not use it lightly. The Bloodstain Spirit Runes' benefits came at a cost, consuming his stamina and spirit force rapidly. Even with the spirit energy-storing ring to replenish his spirit force, his stamina could not be restored.

At that point, they would need to kill the Golden Corpse King in the shortest time possible to end the battle; otherwise, there would be significant risks.

So he had been searching for the reason behind the Golden Corpse King's strength, hoping to unleash his full power once he found it, deciding the battle's outcome in one move.

But now it seemed he had been overly optimistic!

Just as Lu Ye was about to heed Lan Ziyi's advice and prepare to retreat, the Golden Corpse King suddenly spoke.

"Mere ants! How dare you be so presumptuous!"

Fighting against Lu Ye and the others for so long without killing a single one had left the Golden Corpse King furious.

He knew well the strength of the cultivators from the Unparalleled Continent. Before encountering the Eight-member Squad of the Nine Provinces, he never imagined there could be so many powerful cultivators in the world.

For a moment, he was somewhat dazed. Perhaps he had slept too long, and the world outside had changed?

Whatever the reason, the battle he thought would be an easy victory had turned into torment, fueling his boundless rage.

With that, he roared.

"Roar!"

"Roar!"

A more resonant roar immediately followed, as the Giant Armor, who had been sent flying earlier, crazily charged back. At this moment, his entire being was enveloped in dense blood Qi, and his spirit force surged violently. His already burly frame swelled, becoming even larger and more robust.

Amid his wild hair, invisible thunderbolts seemed to dance, each strand standing upright. Even his normally honest and steady eyes were now filled with bloodlust.

Like an ancient ferocious beast breaking free, venting its inner rage.

Lu Ye, who had been preparing to strike again after blocking a blow from the Golden Corpse King, was momentarily stunned. He had never seen Giant Armor like this and didn't know what had caused it, frowning as he glanced over.

This guy... was he angry?

Giant Armor was furious!

Not from pain but from the rage of being a physique cultivator, repeatedly sent flying by the enemy.

As a physique cultivator, the head may fall and blood may flow, but the body must not retreat!

This was the greatest pride of Nine Provinces' physique cultivators and their most fundamental tenet.

Physique cultivators faced the most dangerous enemies head-on. If they retreated, what would happen to their companions behind them?

Though Giant Armor didn't have many interactions with others, when he used to follow Sima Yang, Sima had taught him this principle more than once.

Giant Armor had always adhered to this, being the most reliable shield for his companions in battle.

Though Sima Yang's character wasn't good, always leeching off Giant Armor for cultivation resources, he had instilled this important lesson in him.

Now, facing the immensely strong Golden Corpse King, he was repeatedly sent flying!

He didn't possess Lu Ye's sharp offensive skills or Lan Ziyi's agility. If he couldn't even utilize his greatest strength, what was the point of all his years of persistence and cultivation?

He asked himself this question, burning with fury.

As he strode forward, the ruined palace began to quake.

Each step he took caused the ground to tremor and the ruins to shake.

At that moment, he seemed not a man but a mountain, bearing immense weight.

Lu Ye's eyes gleamed with a strange light; he didn't know what had happened to Giant Armor but sensed that he had comprehended some extraordinary skill in his anger.

He could clearly feel Giant Armor's spirit force merging rapidly with the surrounding nature's spiritual energy, making him appear exceedingly heavy.

It wasn't that Giant Armor had genuinely become as heavy as a mountain; it was an effect achieved by harmonizing with the Spiritual Energy around.

This was an extremely mystical secret technique!

It was similar to the Heaven's Augury Pillar he had placed in the Silver Snake Valley's Five Prime City. Once it merged with the Earth Vein, the cultivators of the Five Great Families couldn't pull it out. Not because the Heaven's Augury Pillar was unmovable, but because removing it required shifting the entire Earth Vein connected to it.

Chapter 839 Still Have an Ace Up Your Sleeve?

With the skills of the cultivators from the Five Great Families, how could they accomplish such a thing?

Obviously, the Golden Corpse King was also surprised by Giant Armor's transformation, his eyebrows furrowing involuntarily. At this moment, the Giant Armor actually brought him a feeling of powerful oppression.

This made him feel incredibly unbelievable.

With a few strides, Giant Armor had already killed his way to the front of the Golden Corpse King, his sand-pot-sized fist fiercely punching towards the Golden Corpse King.

The Golden Corpse King also raised his fist to meet the attack.

At the moment their fists touched, Giant Armor suddenly turned his fist into a palm.

Bang...

The fist and palm touched, the force of the impact exploding outward, a ring of visible shock waves spreading in all directions.

The Golden Corpse King's eyes, shining with golden light, slightly narrowed, flashing a look of disbelief. The burly man who had been repeatedly beaten back and forth by him was not blasted away like before this time. Instead, he only slightly leaned back his upper body and remained unscathed.

Giant Armor's feet seemed nailed to the ground, motionless. The violent force from the Golden Corpse King passed through his arms to his entire body, making his bones emit a cracking sound. The already densely packed tiny cracks on his body's surface suddenly became even more concentrated, and a large amount of blood spurted out of those cracks.

It looked as if his whole body might shatter at any moment.

However, Giant Armor's eyes were clearer than ever before, and deep within them exploded with an unprecedented ferocity and determination. White, fierce fangs emerged, and he smiled menacingly at the Golden Corpse King who was just inches away.

"Caught you!"

Smack...

His fan-like large hand instantly gripped tight, firmly clenching the Golden Corpse King's fist in his palm.

"This is bad!"

From their first strike up until now, it was the first time the Golden Corpse King showed a look of panic. He hadn't anticipated that the burly man who could only endure his beating would undergo such an

extraordinary change at this critical moment. When he realized it and tried to withdraw his hand, it was already too late.

In a pure power contest, none of the three present were his match, not even Lu Ye who had maximized the effectiveness of Bloodstain Spirit Runes, let alone Giant Armor.

If it had been before, the Golden Corpse King could easily have escaped from such a grasp from Giant Armor.

But now, after a strange transformation and mastery of a mysterious secret skill, Giant Armor's hold had become tight and unbreakable. Even with the Golden Corpse King struggling forcefully, he was unable to free himself from Giant Armor's grip.

Enraged, he swiftly clenched his other hand into a fist, pounding towards Giant Armor's chest like a raging storm.

Giant Armor tried to fend off the blows, but their speeds were on completely different levels. Facing such attacks, he was utterly powerless.

Moreover, restraining the Golden Corpse King left him no room to dodge.

Despite understanding the mysterious secret skill, it didn't mean he wouldn't be hit, in fact, the attacks he took now felt even more vicious...

Luckily, Lan Ziyi charged in from the flank, her long saber slashing repeatedly, easing some of the pressure on Giant Armor.

Meanwhile, Lu Ye's voice rang out.

"Good job!"

Previously, he had intended to follow Lan Ziyi's suggestion to retreat temporarily, mainly because he couldn't identify the source of the Golden Corpse King's increased power. He didn't dare to use his final trump card hastily, as the Golden Corpse King wasn't a stationary target and couldn't be easily hit.

In truth, the Golden Corpse King's reaction speed was extremely fast. Under the previous circumstances, even if he used his final means, he might not have succeeded in dealing with the Golden Corpse King and might have even put his party of three in danger.

But now, the Golden Corpse King had truly become a stationary target!

What reason did Lu Ye have to hesitate? At this point, the source of the Golden Corpse King's increased power was no longer important. As long as they could deal with him before Giant Armor fell, they would win this battle.

"Roar!"

With a thought, Amber, who had been crouching on his shoulder, instantly sensed it and gave a tiger's roar, followed by a burst of blood-red light.

Lan Ziyi, who was attacking to distract the Golden Corpse King, was shocked, uncertain of what was happening on Lu Ye's side. Busy as she was, she turned her head to look.

She saw Lu Ye's location already shrouded in a blood-red aura, thick as substance, like swirling blood water. Within the blood water, a vague silhouette of Lu Ye could be seen.

At that moment, his silhouette appeared slightly distorted and strange...

A terrifying aura suddenly exploded from that blood-red glow!

Lan Ziyi's eyes trembled. She had felt the Golden Corpse King's powerful aura before, thinking that it exceeded the level of the Cloud River Realm. But now, the aura emanating from Lu Ye's side rivaled that of the Golden Corpse King.

This guy... still has a trump card?

Just as this thought crossed her mind, a sleek figure had already darted out of the blood-red light. So fast that even Lan Ziyi's trained eyes could only capture a vague outline.

She was momentarily stunned, as Lu Ye's current state appeared very strange.

The small white beast that had been crouching on his shoulder was nowhere to be seen, and Lu Ye's body was enveloped in a visible orange glow, which was the integrated essence of blood Qi and spirit force. The aura was highly condensed, forming shapes resembling tiger ears on his forehead and a lifelike blood-colored tiger tail behind him.

In that instant, Lan Ziyi felt she was not looking at a person but a primordial ferocious beast charging from the depths of the ancient abyss, radiating with endless fierce might.

Lu Ye's combat style had always been extremely aggressive, imposing tremendous pressure. This feeling had now intensified.

Intensified to the point that even though it was not directed at her, Lan Ziyi felt her breath hitch.

Beast Transformation!

Lan Ziyi realized instantly.

She had experienced the Ten Thousand Beasts Domain secret realm, fighting alongside Lu Ye, and witnessing Black Tortoise Sect's Niu Meng's formidable prowess vividly.

The strongest secret technique exclusive to the beast-taming faction from the Ten Thousand Beasts Domain. How could she be unfamiliar?

So she immediately recognized Lu Ye's current state—a manifestation of the Beast Transformation Secret Technique!

However, unlike Niu Meng's beast transformation, Lu Ye's form did not exhibit demon beast traits. The little demon beast traits only appeared as a mixture of blood Qi and spirit force.

This guy... hides deep!

"Master, master, I'm coming!"

The milk voice that sounded like a two or three-year-old child suddenly resonated in Lu Ye's mind, almost disrupting his killing intent.

He then remembered that after activating the Beast Transformation Secret Technique, Amber could communicate with him telepathically. Last time Amber did this, it gave him quite a scare.

However, since he had only activated the Beast Transformation Secret Technique twice so far, he had momentarily forgotten about this.

"Save Giant Armor quickly. The big guy's being beaten badly," Amber spoke, sounding indignant. Apart from Lu Ye and Yiyi, Giant Armor was the person it was closest to. Seeing Giant Armor getting beaten took a toll on Amber.

No need for it to remind him, Lu Ye had already rushed to Giant Armor's side. His figure had barely steadied when he thrust his saber.

In the beast transformation state, everything around him seemed to slow down. Lu Ye recognized this feeling, knowing it wasn't the external world slowing, but his own thoughts and consciousness speeding up—a result triggered by the sudden surge in strength.

Spirit force and blood Qi erupted fiercely, enveloping him with an unstoppable aura, and this thrust aimed directly at the Golden Corpse King's eye socket.

From the start of the combat until now, even with Giant Armor's grip, the Golden Corpse King had felt only mild panic, without a true sense of danger.

But now, he finally felt immense danger rising within him.

Being restrained by Giant Armor, unable to move, against the methods of these three humans, they could only hurt him, but not kill him. So he hadn't sensed real danger, until this moment.

He clearly felt that this thrust could threaten him.

Unable to move his body, the Golden Corpse King frantically tilted his head, trying to avoid the direct hit of the saber.

However, Lu Ye's reaction speed at this instant exceeded his normal state, as soon as the Golden Corpse King tilted his head, the saber's trajectory shifted accordingly. The dark blade gleamed with spirit light, the Double-Sharpness Spirit Runes adding lethal precision.

The Golden Corpse King was shocked!

Before, although Lu Ye had performed well, he couldn't keep up with his reaction speed, which had kept him always in control.

But now, that advantage was gone.

It was too late to dodge; the Golden Corpse King could only instantly close the targeted eye.

In the next moment, the saber struck his eyelid.

Sounding like metal scraping, emitting a piercing noise.

The Golden Corpse King leaned his head back to dissipate the thrust's force.

Rotten blood splattered, the Golden Corpse King roared angrily.

Although the thrust didn't pierce directly into his skull, it nearly blinded his eye. If not for his timely reaction, he would have been in grave danger.

Yet, his left eye now felt as if it had been sharply gouged, the eye socket throbbing with pain. Though not severely damaged, he temporarily couldn't see out of it.

Especially the corpse blood flowing from his split eyelid obscured his vision.

"He's not dead yet?" Lan Ziyi exclaimed in surprise.

Initially seeing Lu Ye's terrifying boost in strength, combined with the Golden Corpse King being restrained by Giant Armor, she thought the battle was secured. But now it seemed more fighting was required.

Without hesitating, she wielded her saber to join the attack. Although her contribution was limited, in such a situation, even slightly distracting the Golden Corpse King played a role.

"Cut him, cut him master! Use your Tyrannical Saber!" Amber's continuous voice rang in Lu Ye's mind, making him exasperated. It rarely had such direct conversations with him, so the few times Lu Ye activated the Beast Transformation Secret Technique, Amber would chat nonstop like a chatterbox.

It's especially peculiar hearing it speaking bloodthirsty thoughts in its milk-voice.

Under Amber's "supervision" and guidance, Lu Ye's figure darted around the Golden Corpse King like a striking blaze, blade light gleaming harshly from every angle, either slashing or stabbing.

With Lan Ziyi supporting from the side.

Giant Armor was completely freed.

Previously he had stood still, a punching bag, but now the Golden Corpse King had no time to deal with him.

Almost all his effort was focused on countering Lu Ye's attack.

Chapter 840 This is because you forced me

His body moved like a rainbow, constantly shifting, with Liu Guang flashing continuously on the Boulder Mountain Saber, the Sharpness spirit runes almost constantly maintained, where the blade reached, nothing could stand in its way, not even the powerful physique of the Golden Corpse King could withstand Lu Ye's strikes at this moment.

Pieces of flesh were being shaved off, in just the brief ten breaths that Lu Ye activated the Beast Transformation Secret Technique, large chunks of flesh had already been lost from the Golden Corpse King's body, revealing golden bones in many places.

Lan Ziyi's heart surged with excitement, at this rate, it wouldn't be long before the Golden Corpse King would be dead for sure.

But just as she was thinking this, the Golden Corpse King suddenly turned his head, looking at the Giant Armor just a short distance away. Then, he opened his ferocious mouth, and as he roared, a dense golden mist spewed out. The moment the golden mist left his mouth, it exploded, spreading in all directions.

Everyone's figures were instantly engulfed.

"Primordial Corpse Poison!" Lan Ziyi's face changed suddenly.

Some slightly stronger members of the Corpse Race could also unleash Primordial Corpse Poison, how could the strongest among them, the Golden Corpse King, not be able to?

Yang Yuan had suffered greatly from it before.

In fact, from the beginning of her confrontation with the Golden Corpse King, Lan Ziyi had been wary of this and tried not to let herself suffer direct blows from the Golden Corpse King.

Because according to previous experiences, the Primordial Corpse Poison needed the Corpse Race to inflict direct wounds on the human race to inject the corpse poison through the wounds.

But looking at the Golden Corpse King's posture at this moment, his Primordial Corpse Poison seemed to have some mystery, even without the most direct damage, as long as it's sprayed, once engulfed by the poisonous mist, they would also be eroded.

The three present, whether it was Lan Ziyi, the Giant Armor, or Lu Ye, all had some degree of injuries, and as the golden poisonous mist filled the surroundings, Lan Ziyi could clearly feel an eerie force invading her body through her wounds, even her spirit force couldn't block it.

In just an instant, she felt some unusual changes in her body.

And it was clear that the Golden Corpse King only now unleashed the Primordial Corpse Poison, also perceiving the dire situation, such actions must have cost him greatly.

Indeed, after spraying out that mouthful of Primordial Corpse Poison, the Golden Corpse King's aura considerably weakened.

No time to rejoice, Lan Ziyi quickly took out an elixir pill refined by Hua Ci and swallowed it, hoping to suppress the eruption of the corpse poison.

But she soon discovered that the effect of the elixir pill was minimal!

It wasn't that the elixir pill refined by Hua Ci was ineffective, but the Golden Corpse King's Primordial Corpse Poison was too potent.

That elixir pill might suppress the Primordial Corpse Poison released by ordinary members of the Corpse Race, but it could not suppress the corpse poison of the Golden Corpse King.

"Quick, kill it!" Lan Ziyi shouted, her attacks becoming even fiercer.

In such a situation, they could only aim for a quick victory. If they couldn't deal with the Golden Corpse King before the corpse poison erupted, the three of them would all be transformed into members of the Corpse Race.

The Golden Corpse King's appearance became even more miserable. Under Lu Ye's relentless assault, there was hardly a place on his body that was intact. The saber light flickered, as if carving chunks of meat from a piece of pork on a chopping board.

He had thought that unleashing the Primordial Corpse Poison would make these three humans retreat, giving him a chance to catch his breath. Unexpectedly, it not only failed but made the situation even more critical for him.

At this moment, his biggest problem was being immobilized by Giant Armor, unable to move at all. Facing Lu Ye's frenzied attacks, he couldn't dodge or evade. If not for this, how could he be in such a pitiful state?

At this rate, he didn't know when these three humans would be transformed into the Corpse Race, but he feared he might actually die here.

How could he accept that?

"Roar!"

With a roar, the Golden Corpse King's eyes flashed with determination. Ignoring Lan Ziyi's entanglement and Lu Ye's killing moves, he raised a palm like a knife and slashed fiercely toward the Giant Armor.

Splurt...

Corpse blood splashed, but the Giant Armor remained unharmed because the Golden Corpse King's strike wasn't aimed at him, but at his own pinned arm!

At the cost of severing an arm, the Golden Corpse King finally freed himself from his restraints, gaining freedom again!

Damn!

Seeing this, Lan Ziyi felt a sinking in her heart and quickly slashed, only for the Golden Corpse King to easily evade.

Freed from his restraints, the Golden Corpse King finally displayed his amazing speed, surpassing what was expected of someone at the Cloud River Realm. Even a sword cultivator like Muk Qingyun would be hard-pressed to deal with him here.

Just when Lan Ziyi thought she was about to fall victim, the Golden Corpse King ignored her and leapt away. Behind him, the orange-yellow glowing figure of Lu Ye followed closely like a shadow.

The Golden Corpse King's speed was such that only Lu Ye could keep up now!

The scene turned bizarre.

The freed Golden Corpse King fled frantically, with Lu Ye chasing relentlessly, slashing with his saber, leaving deep and shallow wounds on his back, unable to kill him outright for the moment.

Lan Ziyi wanted to help but couldn't keep up with Lu Ye and the Golden Corpse King's pace. Her abilities went unutilized, and given the poison, she dared not forcefully exert spirit force.

As for the Giant Armor, he was best at taking hits, not chasing. Holding a severed arm of the Golden Corpse King, he looked on in bewilderment.

Lan Ziyi quickly noticed something odd: though the Golden Corpse King was fleeing, he never strayed more than five hundred yards from the central hall, as if something important there kept him bound.

At this rate, it was unclear who would live or die.

Although the Golden Corpse King looked wretched, unwilling to confront Lu Ye directly and just fled, it was clear he was buying time, waiting for the corpse poison in the three to flare up, at which point he could not only escape the crisis but also gain three commanders under him.

Lu Ye's goal was clearly to kill the Golden Corpse King before that happened!

Lan Ziyi's figure wobbled suddenly, her internal changes causing distress. No longer daring to randomly activate her spirit force, she called out, "Lu Yiye, I can't hold on!"

As she said this, she quickly retreated into the distance.

She had to retreat; staying here meant she had to push her spirit force, risking transformation into a member of the Corpse Race.

She retreated far to a nearby spirit mountaintop, stopping only then, looking over at the intense chase.

Two figures intertwined, saber light flashing, accompanied by the howls of the Golden Corpse King.

The clumsy figure of the Giant Armor moved between, unable to contribute or even hinder the Golden Corpse King.

Lan Ziyi was puzzled, under the influence of Primordial Corpse Poison, why could Lu Yiye last longer, having solid foundations, but why could Giant Armor outlast her?

There was no time to ponder. She quickly took out an audio transmission stone, infusing spirit force, putting it to her mouth, and weakly shouted, "Hua Ci, help!"

The audio transmission stone was given to her by Lu Ye; everyone in the Nine Provinces squad had one, and even many were distributed to Dao Palace.

It was meant for communication, though it had never been used. Lan Ziyi had never thought her first use would be for a distress call.

"How can you be unharmed, how can you be unharmed?"

The Golden Corpse King, being chased by Lu Ye, was finally becoming unbearable. In his beast transformation state, Lu Ye's speed slightly exceeded his, unable to shake off Lu Ye's pursuit. His strong physique, now, brought not safety but humiliation, like a dull knife slicing meat.

The Golden Corpse King expected Lu Ye to transform into the Corpse Race, but there were no signs of that happening.

Confused, the Golden Corpse King knew well the potency of his Primordial Corpse Poison; the tall figure of the woman had already succumbed, retreating, and the burly figure of the other man seemed unable to hold on much longer, but Lu Ye showed no signs of being affected.

How could this be?

From the current scenario, he wouldn't last for Lu Ye's transformation. Every cut Lu Ye made inflicted limited damage but wore him down over time.

His back had no flesh left, and he appeared half-skeletal.

The Corpse Race, though undead, could die. Losing so much flesh gravely weakened him, making movement difficult, rendering Lu Ye's attacks more effective. The Golden Corpse King was trapped in a vicious cycle.

"You forced me to this!" The Golden Corpse King roared. His expression turned ferocious. After severing an arm, he had been fleeing, but now he stopped, his remaining hand reaching into the Void.

At that moment, Lu Ye felt a warning in his heart.

He didn't know what the Golden Corpse King was planning, but he could tell from his words it must be some desperate measure.

As he swiftly moved toward the Golden Corpse King, Lu Ye inhaled, his long saber laid horizontally beside his brow, ready.

In that moment, his already fierce aura became more domineering, violent, carrying an indescribable sense of oppression and aggression.

A flash of light glided over the black saber blade. For an instant, it seemed a starry sky appeared behind Lu Ye.

With a crash...

From the ruins of the hall, the ground churned, and a huge object flew into the sky, leaving a gaping pit below. The item was caught by the Golden Corpse King.

As he grasped it, the Golden Corpse King seemed struck by lightning, his body stiffened. Fine white hair sprouted on his withered body, covering him in a layer of frost, making him appear chillingly strange.

Lu Ye's eyes narrowed. He saw that what the Golden Corpse King held was a severed palm.

The dried palm seemed cleanly cut and smooth.

Despite being a severed palm, it exuded an ancient, desolate aura, as if from a distant past.

This was the source of the Golden Corpse King's sudden surge in power!

Lu Ye understood instantly.

He had been searching for this source but found nothing until the Golden Corpse King took out this severed palm.