

Humanity 941

Chapter 941 The Sect Headquarters Has Successors

The moment those Haotian Alliance cultivators made a move, Tong Shuyao had already flashed in front of Lu Ye, her spirit force surging, her eyes cold and fierce.

Fortunately, the cultivator who was lunging toward Lu Ye was still somewhat rational and immediately halted upon seeing Tong Shuyao.

But their conspicuous actions had already caught the attention of numerous Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators, further affecting the nerves of the entire Haotian Alliance camp.

In an instant, the cultivators from both sides were brimming with spirit force, glaring at each other like tigers eyeing their prey, the atmosphere was tense and confrontational.

Lu Ye's face was pale, primarily because it was the first time he used his mental consciousness in a fight, exerting too much force and almost completely depleting the power in his Divine Pool. Only Soul Cleansing Water could replenish such a loss; relying solely on his own recovery would likely take some days.

However, if he hadn't done this, he wouldn't have been confident in instantly killing Tan Shu. After all, Tan Shu was at True Lake Level 7, and the difference in cultivation between them was evident. If Tan Shu had sensed something amiss and shouted surrender, it would have been impossible to finish him off.

The sacrifice was ultimately worth it.

"Is the Haotian Alliance unable to afford a loss? Does one death mean such a big commotion?"

Someone shouted.

Upon hearing this, many Haotian Alliance cultivators appeared rather uncomfortable.

In these battles, it's common for someone to be defeated and die, but never had it caused such a large-scale confrontation.

Take the incident just now when Xiao Xinghe beheaded his opponent with one stroke; no one from the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge intervened, they merely watched silently.

But now, with their side losing just Tan Shu, their reaction was so excessive, which was clearly unjustifiable.

However, the current situation mainly arose from those cultivators who had always been by Tan Shu's side. The other Haotian Alliance cultivators were merely responding instinctively.

"If the Haotian Alliance can't bear to lose, then let's fight here. We, from the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, are not afraid of you." Another voice joined in.

"Indeed, the rules of these battles have been maintained for many years. The life and death of the combatants are left to fate, and no one else is allowed to interfere. If the Haotian Alliance insists on breaking them, that's your choice, but be aware of how people will judge you in the future."

"Perhaps they think their lives are precious, while our lives are worthless."

...

A flurry of chatter broke out, making the situation increasingly difficult to control.

At the critical moment, Tong Shuyao shouted loudly, "Everyone, shut up!"

Her Master Uncle is the Mountain Pass Chief of the Dark Moon Forest Pass, she herself is quite formidable, and she has many admirers at the Dark Moon Forest Pass. Furthermore, she is the only Level 7 present. With this shout, no one from the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge dared to disrespect her, and they immediately fell silent.

Tong Shuyao swept her cold gaze over the crowd in front and said, "If the Haotian Alliance wants to fight, we are here to accompany you to the end. But if so, there will no longer be any battles here, nor any place to earn extra battle merit. I don't think that's something you want, right? It's common for people to die in combat; he can only blame himself for his lack of skill. If you don't want to fight, withdraw immediately, and let today's matter end here."

As her words faded, many Haotian Alliance cultivators clasped their fists in salute from afar and turned to leave.

The cultivators of the two camps in the Nine Provinces are fearless of battle, but as Tong Shuyao said, no one wants to engage in a senseless battle that disrupts the long-standing rules.

Moreover, with the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge's morale high and Tong Shuyao, a Level 7, holding the fort, the Haotian Alliance would definitely suffer if a fight were to break out.

Anyone with a bit of sense wouldn't start a conflict with the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge at this time.

With someone leading the departure, others followed, and soon a large number of Haotian Alliance cultivators left. Even those cultivators who had been with Tan Shu, seeing that nothing could be done, could only hurriedly carry away Tan Shu's corpse and flee.

Watching the departing Haotian Alliance cultivators from afar, the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge camp erupted in cheers, and pairs of fervent eyes turned towards the direction where Lu Ye was.

The battles here have been ongoing for years; day or night, cultivators have clashed here, improving their skills while earning battle merit.

But such a long-lasting affair had come to an end today, and in some way, it also suppressed the Haotian Alliance once. Naturally, the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators looked at Lu Ye, the instigator of all this, with respect.

Moreover, Lu Ye had fought six consecutive battles today, astonishing them, especially the last one. No one knew exactly what had happened, but the result was undeniable.

A battle between True Lake Level 3 and Level 7 ended in an instant, with the Level 7 dying.

Overcoming four minor levels to kill an enemy—if such a thing hadn't happened right in front of their eyes, no one would have believed it.

It was foreseeable that this independent cultivator named Li Taibai would surely earn the favor of the two Mountain Pass Chiefs in the future and become a cornerstone of the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

When Lu Ye first came over with Tong Shuyao, no one paid attention to him, and some even secretly envied him. But now, it was clear that they had been short-sighted.

Such a person would surely become famous throughout the Nine Provinces in the future!

Among many concerned eyes, the most concerned one was Tong Shuyao: "Junior Brother Taibai, are you all right?"

Mainly because Lu Ye looked shockingly pale at the moment, apparently enduring tremendous pain, his expression somewhat twisted.

He shook his head slightly upon hearing her: "I'm fine, just used a forbidden technique, exhausted a lot. Senior Sister Tong, please take me back."

Tong Shuyao hurriedly summoned her Flying Spirit Artifact, carrying Lu Ye towards the direction of the Dark Moon Forest Pass, while not forgetting to instruct the reluctant Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators: "Disperse."

Watching the two leave, someone quietly praised, "Senior Sister Tong truly has a keen eye."

Who knows where she found such a person, how can an independent cultivator possess such a strong foundation?

The Ten Thousand Demons Ridge people still hadn't returned to the Dark Moon Forest Pass, but news from here had already spread back. The first reaction of many cultivators upon hearing this news was disbelief — impossible.

But as more and more news spread back, many Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators were dumbfounded, because what they thought was impossible had just happened, witnessed by many cultivators from both camps with their own eyes.

Until Tong Shuyao returned with Lu Ye to the Dark Moon Forest Pass, more than half of the cultivators at the pass already knew about it, and some even came out early to greet them, just to see Lu Ye's true appearance.

Upon seeing him, all silently praised, indeed, he had an extraordinary aura, a Dragon Phoenix among people!

A moment later, Lu Ye entered his room, activated the formation to guard and alert, and took out a drop of Soul Cleansing Water from his storage sack to swallow, finally feeling much better.

While he was Theft of Heaven's Augury to replenish his spirit force, he reviewed the gains and losses of today's battle.

Because since he advanced to the True Lake Realm, he hadn't had a proper fight with anyone, most of the time honing himself in the Mirage Realm.

The only experience of fighting with an enemy was accompanying the A-3 squad of the Law Enforcement Hall, against a Divine Sea Realm, which couldn't count as a formal battle.

Today's battle, though he won easily, had many points worth reflecting on, especially since his identity at the moment wasn't a combat cultivator, but a sword cultivator, making it even more worthy of introspection.

And then, the Third Senior Brother... What exactly were Tan Shu and his people trying to achieve by making things difficult for him, even to the point of resorting to murder?

He thought of asking Shui Yuan, but if he really asked, many things couldn't be explained, and he had to let it go.

In the future, when he has the opportunity, he'll visit Jinglan Lake Pass himself to take a look.

As for Tianyuan Sect... although they replaced the Righteous Blood Sect to become a 1st grade sect, no matter how you look at it, they're still a big sect. A big sect shouldn't act like this. What exactly is Tan Shu's group trying to achieve by making things difficult for Xiao Xinghe, is it the entire Tianyuan Sect's intention, or is it secretly instigated by certain individuals?

If it's the latter, it can be understood that even within the same camp, there are personal grievances among cultivators, but if it's the former, then it's a bit excessive.

And what about Green Emperor City? Do they not know the plight of their disciples? Or do they know but are powerless?

The local waters of the Nine Provinces are much murkier than those of the Spirit Stream battlefield and Cloud River battlefield; some things are not clearly black and white.

He still remembers, when he initially joined the Righteous Blood Sect, the sect master told him a sentence.

The law is without right or wrong, people are divided into good and evil; there are many wicked individuals in the Haotian Alliance, and many virtuous ones in Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

In dealing with the world, differing stances lead to differing perspectives on matters.

Take himself, for instance; on the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge side, he is the heinous Lu Ye the Sect Destroyer, the Three Calamities of Spirit Stream, but on the Haotian Alliance side, he is a rising star, the future hope of the Righteous Blood Sect.

With many things hard to fathom, Lu Ye also didn't bother pondering anymore.

Meanwhile, Tong Shuyao arrived at a sleeping palace.

The arrangement here had a somewhat feminine touch, it was Lin Yue's residence at the Dark Moon Forest Pass.

Lin Yue was waiting for her.

Upon seeing Lin Yue, Tong Shuyao exclaimed excitedly, "Master Uncle, Master Uncle, let me tell you, that Junior Brother Taibai is truly incredible."

"I've heard about it already, is it true, or is there some exaggeration?" Lin Yue asked.

She had initially planned to send a message to Tong Shuyao to ask her about the situation, only for Tong Shuyao to come directly to deliver the news.

"What did Master Uncle hear?" Tong Shuyao asked.

Lin Yue was unmarried and childless, so she always regarded Tong Shuyao as her own daughter and was very indulgent towards her, which is why Tong Shuyao felt unreserved in her presence.

Lin Yue glared at her, "Never mind what kind of news I heard, you tell me what you saw."

Tong Shuyao obliged, and vividly recounted what she saw and experienced today. Naturally, there wasn't much exaggeration, mostly honest recounting, though there was an element of preconceived bias, in her description, Lu Ye inevitably came off with a bit more charm and freedom.

"You didn't deceive me?" Even hearing Tong Shuyao say it personally, Lin Yue still found it hard to believe, not that she was ignorant, but simply because it was too incredible.

"Absolutely true!" Tong Shuyao's expression was serious, almost swearing an oath of Heaven's Augury.

"Good!" Lin Yue smiled, "My Ten Thousand Demons Ridge finally has a successor... No, the sect headquarters finally has a successor."

Lin Yue and Tong Shuyao's sect was a 2nd grade sect, though in recent years, it had been somewhat lacking in talent. Of the new generation of disciples, a few were promising, but they were all killed by Lu Ye the Sect Destroyer. Today, upon hearing of Lu Ye's performance, Lin Yue immediately entertained thoughts of inducting him into the sect.

Chapter 942 Haotian Alliance has Lu Yi, Ten Thousand Demons Ridge has Li Taibai

Originally, a True Lake Realm independent cultivator wouldn't attract much attention from a big sect, as they already have plenty of True Lake Realm cultivators.

Recruiting such independent cultivators makes it difficult to cultivate their loyalty to the sect. It's better to nurture some young ones without any background; at least, they have stronger potential to grow and more easily develop a sense of belonging to the sect.

But Lu Ye's performance today certainly intrigued Lin Yue.

The most important point is that he's not just any independent cultivator, but one from the Unparalleled Continent. He's new to the Nine Provinces and doesn't fully understand the situation here, likely confused about his own future. If they recruit him now, it'll be easy to win his allegiance.

As for loyalty, it can be gradually cultivated later.

There's no need to inspect his background.

Previously, Lin Yue had already sent a communication from Ten Thousand Demons City to have someone check Li Taibai's background, at least to ascertain whether he was from the Unparalleled Continent.

If he was a hidden agent from the Haotian Alliance or had been recruited earlier by them and placed in Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, Lin Yue would be implicated if events unfolded later.

But today, Li Taibai, in front of many cultivators from both camps, decisively struck down a Haotian Alliance True Lake Level 7 cultivator. This makes it clear that he has no relation with Haotian Alliance, otherwise, why would he blatantly kill someone in front of everyone?

Having killed someone from Haotian Alliance, no matter who he was before, he can only be a person of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge from now on.

Such a person can be used with confidence.

Tong Shuyao was delighted upon hearing Lin Yue's words, "Does Master Uncle intend to bring him into our sect?"

"What do you think?" Lin Yue glanced at Tong Shuyao.

"That's great, that's great!" Tong Shuyao nodded eagerly, like a chicken pecking at grain, wishing for it to happen, and urged, "I'll go talk to him."

If he can be recruited into the sect, their relationship would be even closer, and future interactions would be more legitimate.

"There's no rush. This person is not as straightforward as he appears. If you hastily approach and speak to him, it might not be effective." Lin Yue waved dismissively.

"Master Uncle means..." Tong Shuyao didn't quite understand.

"Silly girl." Lin Yue sighed, feeling his junior niece was rather naive, or perhaps only saw the brilliance on Li Taibai and missed everything else, so he decided to give her some pointers, "Why do you think he killed that person from Haotian Alliance today?"

Tong Shuyao blinked, "Why?"

"To assert dominance!" Lin Yue, with an understanding look, confidently shared his insight into Lu Ye's intentions.

Tong Shuyao was puzzled.

Lin Yue went on to explain, "He won six battles continuously, but only retreated the enemy in the first five battles, not even injuring them. Yet in the final battle, with a thunderous strike, he used some method to kill his opponent. It is clear; he intended to assert dominance by killing. In previous fights, he didn't kill anyone just to let them lower their guard. When his target appeared, he instantly put all his effort."

"Master Uncle means... Junior Brother Taibai's initial target was Tan Shu, the one who died?"

Lin Yue nodded, "On Ten Thousand Demons Ridge side, the strongest is you, on Haotian Alliance's side, the strongest is Tan Shu. To assert dominance, taking on the strongest is naturally most effective. In the first five battles, he only retreated opponents without killing, deliberately so, until the final fight. He's new to the Nine Provinces and brought here by me. Now having such prestige, it will be easier to make his moves later... Tsk, this guy is quite shrewd. Be a bit cautious when interacting with him; he's not as simple as he appears."

Tong Shuyao listened, feeling dizzy, hesitatingly said, "Could it be that Junior Brother Taibai knew Tan Shu was strong, and didn't dare to hold back, that's why he went for the kill?"

"It's possible, but even if he had fought Tan Shu to a draw or lost, no one would underestimate him. Yet, he chose to kill Tan Shu, clearly knowing that defeating the strongest yields the best effect."

Tong Shuyao pondered, recalling everything Lu Ye had done today, realizing it might truly be as Master Uncle said, that everything Lu Ye did today was intentional, strategically advancing step by step with Tan Shu as his original target.

Indeed, Lin Yue's analysis was thorough, with Lu Ye's actions largely interpreted correctly, though the motivation was mistaken.

But how could Lin Yue know, Lu Ye merely wanted to stand up for his Third Senior Brother, not for showing off?

If not for his concern about the treatment Third Senior Brother received and his future safety, Lu Ye wouldn't have made such a big show. For him now, keeping a low profile and conserving strength would be sensible.

At the very least, by killing Tan Shu, there would be one less person troubling Third Senior Brother in the future. Moreover, Tan Shu himself wanted to kill by proxy but failed, so Lu Ye felt no psychological burden in taking him down.

"It's understandable that he has his own thoughts, but no matter what, my Ten Thousand Demons Ridge finally has someone who can be showcased." Lin Yue smiled slightly, "Haotian Alliance has Lu Yiye, and my Ten Thousand Demons Ridge has Li Taibai. I wonder, if these two meet, who would be stronger."

Among the cultivators of this generation, both camps have produced many with excellent talent, but none as dazzling as Lu Ye.

Originally, Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had Lan Ziyi, and many strong cultivators in the Divine Sea realm pinned their hopes on Lan Ziyi, hoping she could surpass Lu Yiye.

But things didn't go as hoped...

On the Spirit Stream battlefield, her ranking on the Spirit Stream Ranking was inferior to Lu Ye's, and on the Cloud River battlefield, her standing in the Cloud River contest was also lower than Lu Ye's...

There's no hope for Lan Ziyi, but Li Taibai is promising. Based on his performance today, he's certainly not inferior to Lu Yiye.

Lin Yue could almost foresee that once these two grow up, there will inevitably be a world-shaking rivalry!

"Yao'er, follow him in the coming days. Don't let too many people get in touch with him. If the opportunity arises, see if she's willing to join our sect," Lin Yue instructed.

The news of today's events will undoubtedly spread quickly, and by then, theirs won't be the only sect eying Li Taibai.

Fortunately, they had the advantage of proximity. If others wanted to poach him, it would depend on her consent.

"I understand, Master Uncle. Rest assured, I won't let anyone snatch him!" Sometimes Tong Shuyao was a bit silly, yet other times she was very smart. This time, she understood Lin Yue's implication.

Saying this, she dashed out, clearly intending to find Lu Ye.

But just as she stepped out, she remembered that after today's battle, Junior Brother Taibai was exhausted and had already gone into seclusion to recuperate. Even if she went, she wouldn't see him.

"This girl..." Lin Yue shook her head with a smile.

Initially, Lin Yue had some reservations about Tong Shuyao fancying Li Taibai. From her perspective, apart from being handsome, Li Taibai didn't have any particularly outstanding qualities; he was just barely presentable.

Young talents like him were abundant over at the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, and even their sect had several.

Judging people by appearances, like Tong Shuyao did, wasn't very smart. It could cause her trouble in the future.

But now, upon reconsidering, her view changed. If Tong Shuyao genuinely liked the lad, it might be worth trying to match them up.

At that time, he would be the sect's ideal son-in-law, and whether they officially recruited him wouldn't matter much.

Of course, recruiting him would be best, saving him from being snatched up by other sects.

After that incident, the long-standing combat tradition at the two mountain pass entrances had ceased for several days; the previously bustling combat field was now desolate and empty.

Two days later, a figure darted into the Dark Moon Forest Pass, hurrying towards a grand hall.

This was the administration hall of the Dark Moon Forest Pass, where Lin Yue typically worked, handling various matters within the pass.

She wasn't the only one in the hall; there were other Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators present. Many matters at the mountain pass didn't require her direct attention, so she naturally had people assisting her—her trusted aides.

When that figure rushed into the hall, the many Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators quickly rose and saluted, "Greetings, Great Mountain Pass Chief."

Generally, each mountain pass has at least two Divine Sea Realm cultivators stationed, distinguished as Great Mountain Pass Chief and Little Mountain Pass Chief.

The distinction lies solely in their cultivation levels.

Although Lin Yue held the position of Mountain Pass Chief at Dark Moon Forest Pass, she was actually the Little Mountain Pass Chief. The man who came was the Great Mountain Pass Chief Zhang Kun, his cultivation level one tier higher than Lin Yue's, at Divine Sea Level 7.

Previously, he had matters to attend to and had not been present at the pass for the past few days.

Now, he rushed back urgently, looking very anxious, which made Lin Yue click her tongue in curiosity, "What has happened to you, Senior Brother?"

Zhang Kun wasted no words, urgently stating, "I heard some rumors earlier."

"What aspect are you referring to, Senior Brother?"

"There's a rumor that a cultivator named Li Taibai came to the pass and, with a True Lake Level 3 cultivation, killed a Haotian Alliance cultivator of Level 7. Is it true?"

"What do you think, Senior Brother?" Lin Yue smiled lightly without giving a direct answer, pondering whether this guy also has an eye on Li Taibai and plans to contend with her for him.

Although she held the advantage of proximity and had instructed Tong Shuyao to stay close to Li Taibai, ensuring he wouldn't interact with too many people, according to Tong Shuyao's reports, Li Taibai had been in seclusion healing these past two days, not allowing anyone an opportunity to draw him in.

"Junior Sister, I'm not joking with you, nor do I have any other intentions. Please tell me if this really happened!" Just like Lin Yue hadn't believed it when she first heard of it, he was equally skeptical. But as he gathered more and more intelligence, he realized that it might very well be true. And if it was, the situation was becoming perilous.

"It did happen, why?" Seeing Zhang Kun's not-so-good expression, Lin Yue didn't want to beat around the bush any longer.

"Was the person killed named Tan Shu?" Zhang Kun asked again.

"It seems that's the name." Lin Yue recalled and nodded; after the incident occurred two days ago, everyone at the mountain pass talked about Li Taibai's fame. Who would care about the victim? Lin Yue only knew Tan Shu's name because Tong Shuyao narrated the details to her.

"Damn it!" Zhang Kun's face changed, urgently exclaiming, "Quick, issue orders to prepare for battle!"

Chapter 943 Hand Over Li Taibai

"Senior Brother, what exactly is going on?" Lin Yue's face also changed.

Zhang Kun's expression was grave: "You only know that the person who was beheaded is named Tan Shu, but do you know the person behind him?"

Lin Yue frowned: "No matter who is behind him, the Haotian Alliance shouldn't disregard the bigger picture just because someone died in battle, right? Over the years, many people have died at the two mountain passes because of combat, and among them, there were disciples from 1st grade sects. No one ever raised a fuss because of that. Senior Brother, I know this Tan Shu is a disciple from the Tianyuan Sect, but what kind of background does he have that makes you treat it like a looming threat?"

Zhang Kun said, "Since you know he's a disciple of the Tianyuan Sect, can't you think of someone?"

Lin Yue pondered for a moment: "Are you referring to... Yu Huajin, that old immortal? Is Tan Shu related to her?"

"Sigh!" Zhang Kun sighed, "Junior Sister, you reached the Divine Sea Realm relatively late and might not know that Yu Huajin's husband was surnamed Tan. They had a son who was said to be extraordinarily talented. Several decades ago, he shone brilliantly but, due to some mistakes, was beheaded by Feng Wujiang on the battlefield to console the troops. Tan Shu is the descendant of this person, who died while Tan Shu was still in the womb."

"So... Yu Huajin is Tan Shu's grandmother?"

Zhang Kun solemnly nodded: "Now, do you understand?"

Lin Yue's face also changed.

Zhang Kun said: "Because of what happened back then, that old hag Yu Huajin has harbored deep resentment towards the Righteous Blood Sect. Even though she is part of the Haotian Alliance, she has often suppressed them both openly and secretly. It's said that the deaths of many Righteous Blood Sect disciples were related to her. Unfortunately, the Righteous Blood Sect didn't have concrete evidence, and with the sect's decline, the matter was left unsettled. Yu Huajin had only one son, who was slain by

Feng Wujiang, and that son left only one offspring, now dead at our hands, practically eradicating this line. How can Yu Huajin let this go? If it were someone else, they would consider the bigger picture and not make a big deal out of one person's death. But Yu Huajin is a madwoman; who knows what she might do?"

Lin Yue suddenly felt a headache. Earlier, Lu Ye's victory over the strong by defeating Tan Shu brought face to their side, but now she realized it was a colossal blunder.

Just as Zhang Kun said, if it were any other Divine Sea Realm cultivator, even if angry, they would consider the bigger picture. But Yu Huajin is a lunatic, capable of doing unexpected things.

Especially since Yu Huajin still holds substantial power over the Sky Gate Checkpoint, it's hard to predict what actions she might take.

It seems Tan Shu was stationed at Jinglan Lake Pass partially because the combat there wasn't intense. That crazy woman had a private intent to protect her family's last descendant, and since Jinglan Lake Pass falls under the jurisdiction of the Sky Gate Checkpoint, it was more convenient for her.

While Lin Yue was contemplating, the guard tokens on her and Zhang Kun's waists simultaneously reacted. The two shared an uneasy glance and immediately realized that their worst fears had happened.

And it came so quickly, making them deeply aware of Yu Huajin's madness.

"Prepare for battle!" A low shout, amplified by spirit force, swiftly spread throughout Dark Moon Forest Pass.

In an instant, the entire mountain pass was like a pot of oil sprinkled with salt, boiling over, and countless Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators ran to their posts, the sounds of preparation echoing everywhere.

In less than thirty breaths, all the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators within the pass mobilized, displaying incredible efficiency.

Lu Ye, who was cultivating and resting, was also alarmed.

Noticing the anomaly, he quickly opened the door and stepped out, though his face remained pale.

The consumption of his Mental Consciousness had already been replenished, but he had told Tong Shuyao that he used a Forbidden Technique, allowing him to defeat Tan Shu with a weaker force.

Being a Forbidden Technique, naturally, its consumption was immense, and it wouldn't be possible for an ordinary person to recover so quickly.

He quickly spotted Tong Shuyao standing not far away, looking up as if searching.

"Senior Sister Tong, what's going on?" Lu Ye asked.

"The Haotian Alliance is attacking the checkpoint," Tong Shuyao quickly replied, still feeling puzzled. Jinglan Lake Pass and Dark Moon Forest Pass hadn't seen any battles for a long time, so why would the Haotian Alliance suddenly come to attack?

She vaguely suspected that it might be related to the events of the previous day, but couldn't be sure.

Lu Ye listened with a deep frown.

The Haotian Alliance came to attack the checkpoint, and Li Taibai was from the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge; if he encountered people from the Haotian Alliance, should he fight or not?

If he fights, it goes against his nature; if not, it might expose his weakness.

In an instant, his face grew paler, his body staggered, and his entire aura seemed extremely feeble.

"Junior Brother Taibai!" Tong Shuyao rushed forward to support him.

Lu Ye waved his hand: "That Forbidden Technique consumed too much. I need to rest for a few more days to be fine."

Tong Shuyao feared no deceit: "In that case, Junior Brother, please return indoors; you need not participate in today's battle."

Lu Ye decisively nodded: "Senior Sister Tong, please be careful."

"Go back, I'll report to the Mountain Pass Chief, you won't be punished for avoiding battle," Tong Shuyao said, soaring into the sky.

Seeing her leave, Lu Ye quickly turned around and stepped inside his house, closing the door. No matter what, he couldn't join today's excitement.

With the battle preparations ordered, even though there had been no conflict for a long time, Dark Moon Forest Pass quickly became operational, constantly receiving messages from the front line, but soon all sources were cut off.

It was clear that the scouts probing for information had their tracks exposed; their fate was likely doomed.

On the city walls, Lin Yue and Zhang Kun, the two Mountain Pass Chiefs, stood side by side, exerting their ocular power to peer into the distance, vaguely able to see the massive formation of the Haotian Alliance.

"That old witch acts recklessly. However, given her sensitive status, she certainly won't lead the fight personally. Nevertheless, I assert there are more Divine Sea Realm attackers than just the two from Jinglan Lake Pass, there must be reinforcements dispatched. Junior Sister Yue, send a message to the neighboring passes on both sides, tell them to be ready to support us at any time!"

"Yes!" Lin Yue accepted the order, immediately sending messages to the Divine Sea Realms of the neighboring sides, urging them to prepare for support.

It was unwise to call them over now; asking for help before the battle would weaken our morale. If the Haotian Alliance is feinting an attack here, and the real target is the sides, asking for help now would fall into their lure-the-tiger-from-the-mountain scheme, burdening and endangering the sides.

Moreover, the speed of the Divine Sea Realm is rapid; if they sense something off and come from nearby, they can arrive within one hour.

With the defenses of Dark Moon Forest Pass, they could certainly hold for one hour.

The Haotian Alliance army drew nearer, causing Zhang Kun and Lin Yue to furrow their brows. For the current lineup, Jinglan Lake Pass has virtually deployed its full force, even sending its two Divine Sea Realm Chiefs.

These two, a man and a woman, had cultivations similar to Zhang Kun and Lin Yue. Though they had never crossed paths in battle, a real fight would certainly be a match between equals.

No other Divine Sea strong cultivators were seen, but if the other side intended to hide, they wouldn't be detected.

"Just received information, that Liew Yuemei is Tan Shu's biological mother!" Zhang Kun lightly spoke while looking at the palace-attired woman among the two Divine Sea Realms on the opposing side.

"They're probably mad!" Lin Yue furrowed her delicate brows.

Just because of one death, a great commotion ensued, causing two longtime peaceful passes to start a war. It would be a source of ridicule if spread.

But half of Sky Gate Checkpoint is run by Yu Huajin, and Liew Yuemei is the chief of Jinglan Lake Pass. Tan Shu's death evidently drove this mother-in-law and daughter somewhat insane, now only thinking about avenging Tan Shu, heedless of everything else.

Even if this matter reaches Haotian City's Elder Council, they wouldn't criticize them since the factions are adversarial by nature; launching an attack is a regular step—the death of an heir is merely an excuse.

"Activate the array!" As Zhang Kun shouted, the protective array of Dark Moon Forest Pass was triggered, a transparent light screen like an overturned bowl covering the pass.

On the city walls, the light of numerous arrays began to shine, waiting to strike when the enemy approaches a specific distance.

Throughout history, in the battle between offense and defense, the defender always held the advantage, so even though Jinglan Lake Pass has deployed its full force, Zhang Kun and Lin Yue aren't overly worried because given the situation, the enemy won't conquer Dark Moon Forest Pass.

Their only concern is the presence of hidden Divine Sea Realms.

The attacking Haotian Alliance army evidently saw the response from Dark Moon Forest Pass, halting outside their range.

Liew Yuemei, clad in white palace attire and with a face colder than ice, stepped out from the crowd, stopping five hundred meters away from Dark Moon Forest Pass.

Her gaze swept over every segment of the city wall, seemingly searching for someone, but found nothing, finally retracting her line of sight in disappointment and fury.

"A guest from afar is indeed delightful. Fellow Daoist Liew, why didn't you give a heads up before coming? If you informed me sooner, I would have gone out to welcome you." Zhang Kun looked at Liew Yuemei with a smile.

He showed warm hospitality but Liew Yuemei responded coldly, lightly speaking, "Where is Li Taibai? Hand over Li Taibai, and I'll immediately withdraw my troops!"

Zhang Kun raised his eyebrows. Despite knowing the reason for today's battle was yesterday's altercation, hearing the opponent's admission was another thing.

In his heart, he understood; Tan Shu's death indeed incited great anger in Liew Yuemei and Yu Huajin. The opponent showed complete transparency, without any intent to hide.

In reflection, it's not surprising; over thirty years ago, their son and husband were slain by Feng Wujiang in battle. They painstakingly raised their grandson and son, giving him some cultivation skills, and placed him in a pass with little conflict, fearing harm, yet he still died.

Moreover, he was killed by someone whose cultivation was four levels lower.

No one could accept this.

"Fellow Daoist Liew, you're jesting. Not to mention, I don't know who Li Taibai is, nor whether he belongs to my Dark Moon Forest Pass forces. Even if I knew, I wouldn't hand him over to you."

"Hand him over! Otherwise, I'll make sure Dark Moon Forest Pass is never at peace!" Liew Yuemei's expression suddenly turned ferocious.

"Fellow Daoist Liew, don't forget, you are Divine Sea Realm; standing before the armies of both sides, you shouldn't lose your composure!"

Liew Yuemei cared not for composure; her gaze turned towards the city, urging her spirit force, she shouted forcefully, "Li Taibai, come out! Today, I will rip you to shreds!"

Chapter 944 Clearing the Levels

In the Dark Moon Forest Pass, Lu Ye had just closed the door to his room, deciding not to get involved in today's chaos, when he heard the angry voice of a woman: "Li Taibai, get out here! Today, I will tear you to pieces!"

He was stunned, unable to understand why someone would target him, and from the intensity of her aura, she was clearly a Divine Sea Realm!

He had only been at the Dark Moon Forest Pass for two days; if he had offended anyone, it would only be Tan Shu, whom he had killed the day before.

Was she seeking revenge?

If so, today's events must be related to those of the previous day.

He frowned quietly, though he didn't know who the shouting Divine Sea Realm was. She was undoubtedly from the Haotian Alliance, most likely a relative of Tan Shu, launching a major attack because of Tan Shu's death—a foolish move!

Beyond the mountain pass, Liew Yuemei scanned the area, still unable to spot Li Taibai, becoming even more furious, her gaze turning hateful toward Lin Yue and Zhang Kun, gritting her teeth: "This is your own doing."

Turning away, she swiftly returned to her own camp.

"Prepare for battle!" Zhang Kun ordered solemnly.

Given the current situation, a clash today was unavoidable; Liew Yuemei had lost her mind. Unless Ten Thousand Demons Ridge handed over Li Taibai, the Haotian Alliance would not retreat.

But the positions of the two camps were opposing, and there was deep blood hatred between them. Not to mention that Li Taibai's actions the previous day benefitted Ten Thousand Demons Ridge. With his True Lake Level 3 cultivation cutting down a Level 7, his talent was extraordinary; even an average cultivator wouldn't be handed over by Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

Only war can resolve this!

Both inside and outside the mountain pass, the atmosphere suddenly stiffened, the scene was tense and hostile.

Thousands of Haotian Alliance cultivators had already set up their attack formation, like a dark cloud looming above, slowly advancing towards the Dark Moon Forest Pass.

As they reached a certain distance, the speed of the Haotian Alliance cultivators suddenly increased.

At the same time, a furious shout echoed from the walls of the Dark Moon Forest Pass.

"Kill!"

In an instant, the numerous arrays on the walls buzzed, their powers activated, transforming into bright rays of light aimed at the advancing enemies.

A few months ago, the Gushan City Pass of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge was also besieged, but at that time the attackers were the Fire Spirit Race army, imprisoned and embittered.

Faced with various countermeasures from Gushan City, the irrational Fire Spirit Race suffered heavy casualties instantly.

But the Haotian Alliance wasn't the Fire Spirit Race; having come to attack the pass, they were thoroughly prepared.

When the Dark Moon Forest Pass's attack launched, the protective arrays on the forefront ironclad warships of the Haotian Alliance army activated instantly, forming massive barriers that blocked all incoming attacks, while the numerous Haotian Alliance cultivators hid behind these ironclad warships, quickly advancing forward.

One side attacked fiercely, the other side advancing under a barrage of attacks—the battle commenced!

Lu Ye had already leaped onto the rooftop, watching from a distance. Even without being in the midst, he couldn't help the battle fervor stirring in his heart, wishing he could charge into the fray right then and there.

Since his cultivation began, he had often fought against others, even achieving the terrifying feat of single-handedly killing two thousand enemies of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge. But the scale of this battle was completely different from anything he had experienced before.

In such a large-scale environment, the cultivators of the two camps were like flowing torrents, and each cultivator within them was part of that flow. No one could remain unaffected; even the most battle-averse soldiers could easily have their fighting spirit ignited.

Yet today's events were something he truly couldn't get involved in.

Li Taibai was a sword cultivator of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

But Lu Yiye was a combat cultivator of the Haotian Alliance!

He killed Tan Shu to stand up for his third senior, carrying no psychological burden.

But he absolutely couldn't oppose the Haotian Alliance in such a scenario.

So he could only watch intently.

Between offense and defense, the Haotian Alliance army was drawing closer to the Dark Moon Forest Pass, yet historically, the defending side always had the advantage in such battles.

With Zhang Kun and Lin Yue's deployments, the Haotian Alliance's ironclad warships began suffering damage, and without the ironclad warships as protective barriers, the Haotian Alliance cultivators hiding behind them started experiencing casualties.

Therefore, attacking a pass has always been difficult. Without absolute manpower superiority, no one easily initiates battle.

But today, the Jinglan Lake Pass somehow raised troops and attacked, causing Zhang Kun and Lin Yue to increase their vigilance and preparedness.

Liew Yuemei indeed lost her mind, but she was a strong cultivator in the Divine Sea Realm; she couldn't possibly be unaware of the drawbacks of attacking a pass. Since she attacked despite knowing them, she must have certain confidence.

What is she relying on?

Zhang Kun and Lin Yue did not know; all they could do was remain vigilant.

As the Haotian Alliance's thousands of cultivators steadily advanced, the casualties continued to increase, and the ironclad warships at the forefront decreased by more than half. Numerous Haotian Alliance cultivators had no barriers to rely on, forced to constantly dodge the incoming attacks.

"Something's wrong!" Zhang Kun suddenly muttered on the wall.

Lin Yue also sensed something was amiss. According to the advancement progress of the Haotian Alliance army, they should have already started their counterattack because the distance was adequate. Only by counterattacking could they wear down the power of the Dark Moon Forest Pass's protective array; only by breaking the protective array could they have a chance to attack the pass.

But in fact, even though they had reached the distance to counterattack, the Haotian Alliance still did not make many moves. They seemed only intent on pushing closer to the Dark Moon Forest Pass.

"Watch out for Ghost Cultivators!" Lin Yue shouted, with her Mental Consciousness surging as she began to investigate in all directions. She thought the Haotian Alliance might have sent some Ghost Cultivators to secretly destroy the array, but after probing, it resulted in no findings.

The offensive from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge grew increasingly fierce, causing casualties among the Haotian Alliance cultivators to mount.

Even so, the cultivators at Jinglan Lake Pass calmly continued to advance.

After one incense stick's time, the Haotian Alliance's army had moved to within a hundred feet of the Dark Moon Forest Pass!

And the cost paid for this was extremely high, since the onset of battle, the Haotian Alliance hadn't attacked even once, focusing solely on defense and evasion.

However, Zhang Kun was not the least bit delighted, because the more decisive the situation, the more it demonstrated the Haotian Alliance's resolution to penetrate the pass.

The sense of unease in his heart was incredibly strong, yet he truly could not understand what the opposition intended to do, which made defensive preparations difficult.

"They intend to forcibly destroy the array!" Lin Yue shouted.

Advancing to such a close distance, the Haotian Alliance's intention was quite apparent; they planned to break through the protective array at the Dark Moon Forest Pass in one go.

But... can they succeed?

If they fail, the Haotian Alliance would be in a dire situation as their proximity leaves little room for retreat. Unable to break the array or flee, they might face annihilation, and even if Liew Yuemei and another Divine Sea cultivator survive, they would inevitably face military justice from the Haotian Alliance.

That would be a fate worse than dying in battle.

"Kill!" An angry shout suddenly echoed from Liew Yuemei's mouth.

With her command, the situation seemed to undergo some strange transformation.

With each advance to just before the pass at Dark Moon Forest, numerous Haotian Alliance cultivators, seeing their companions around them wounded or killed, had built up a significant rage with nowhere to vent.

Upon Liew Yuemei's command, all the Haotian Alliance cultivators unleashed their fury.

Each of them took some items from their storage sacks and hurled them towards the Dark Moon Forest Pass, resulting in a ferocious attack that was like a storm.

Strangely, these attacks had minimal spirit force fluctuations and didn't seem very dangerous.

"What is that?" Lin Yue strained her Ocular Power to observe, seeing the Haotian Alliance cultivators throwing things resembling Spirit Stones, puzzled, "Fire Spirit Stones?"

Full of questions, why were the Haotian Alliance firing so many Fire Spirit Stones?

The energy within Fire Spirit Stones is indeed unstable; if knocked or bumped, they might explode, and do possess some lethal capability. Yet Fire Spirit Stones alone wouldn't pose a significant threat to the protective array of the Dark Moon Forest Pass.

Are these the Haotian Alliance's trump card?

Just as she was puzzled, Zhang Kun suddenly exclaimed in shock: "No good, it's Explosive Fire Spirit Stones!"

Lin Yue's heart skipped a beat, recalling hearing about Explosive Fire Spirit Stones somewhere, yet there was no time for further recollection as the Explosive Fire Spirit Stones had already impacted the array's light screen at the Dark Moon Forest Pass.

Boom...

Boom boom boom...

With the initial explosion, a continuous and almost unbroken humming sound followed, with massive firelight erupting like a volcanic discharge.

Each explosion from an Explosive Fire Spirit Stone was equivalent to the full force strike of a True Lake Realm cultivator.

In that instant, at least twenty thousand Explosive Fire Spirit Stones buzzed together, their unleashed might incredibly terrifying.

Lu Ye, watching this from a rooftop, felt his eyelids twitch violently, unexpected by what he witnessed.

Explosive Fire Spirit Stones...

He knew them too well.

These were his creations.

Yet Qian Wudang had him craft them; they belonged to the Justice Department, so how did they end up here?

Although Lu Ye had no idea why the Explosive Fire Spirit Stones appeared here, he certainly knew his trouble was grave.

His own creation was being used for the first time in a major conflict between two camps, directly against him, ridiculously amusing.

Moreover, judging by the quantity of Explosive Fire Spirit Stones, all the ones he had previously crafted seemed to have been deployed.

All for a decisive achievement!

The detonation of twenty thousand Explosive Fire Spirit Stones matched the full-force assaults of twenty thousand True Lake Realm cultivators, unleashed concurrently within a brief period.

Though the protective array at the Dark Moon Forest Pass was formidable enough to withstand a Divine Sea Realm's heavy attack, it now dimmed noticeably and seemed shaky amidst the storm.

The light screen of the array had countless ripples spreading outward, creating an extraordinarily spectacular scene.

Chapter 945 Destructive Lightning Spear

The power of twenty thousand Explosive Fire Spirit Stones was simultaneously triggered, with terrifying momentum, yet even so, the protective array of Dark Moon Forest Pass remained unbroken.

Just as Lin Yue and Zhang Kun secretly breathed a sigh of relief, a shocking energy fluctuation suddenly erupted.

Only to see Liew Yuemei's spirit force surge, her clothes and black hair fluttering, as she wielded a treasure resembling a three-foot short spear, injecting spirit force at the Divine Sea Realm into it, causing lightning to dance on the short spear and transform into a bolt of lightning.

Liew Yuemei grasped the short spear, as if truly holding a bolt of thunder.

"Destructive Lightning Spear!" Zhang Kun's eyelids twitched violently, recognizing the origin of the short spear at a glance.

It wasn't that he paid much attention to Liew Yuemei, but the name of the Destructive Lightning Spear was so renowned, for it was the Tianyuan Sect's treasure, barely on the same level as the mountain and river map, famous throughout the Nine Provinces.

Generally speaking, such sect treasures are stored within the sect, not easily used unless the future of the sect is at stake.

So no one expected Liew Yuemei to bring this treasure out this time.

She clearly didn't have the authority on her own, but with Yu Huajin backing her, there was room for maneuver.

In ordinary times, the protective array of Dark Moon Forest Pass might not be unable to withstand this spear's strike, but now the protective array had just suffered heavy damage, teetering on the brink; should Liew Yuemei unleash the power of the Destructive Lightning Spear, the consequences would be unimaginable.

"Don't even think about it!" Zhang Kun shouted fiercely, flashed towards Liew Yuemei, intending to intercept.

However, just as he moved, another Divine Sea Realm from the Haotian Alliance blocked him midway, forcing Zhang Kun into battle despite his urgency.

Seeing this, Lin Yue could only charge out of the pass, heading directly towards Liew Yuemei to kill her.

But Liew Yuemei didn't even glance at her, focusing entirely on channeling her spirit force into the Thunder Spear, her eyes deep as she gazed in a certain direction within Dark Moon Forest Pass, gritting her teeth and shouting fiercely, "Little thief, today you will die without a doubt!"

She had already discovered Lu Ye's whereabouts.

She had indeed never seen Li Taibai before, but when Lu Ye had slain Tan Shu, it had been witnessed by many Haotian Alliance cultivators, so it wasn't hard for her to know what Li Taibai looked like.

Thus, she immediately spotted Lu Ye standing on a certain rooftop, looking this way, dressed in white with a gourd at his waist, such distinctive marks too obvious.

"Pass through me first!" Lin Yue shouted fiercely, her words barely landing when a figure darted out from the side, drawing attention only upon making a move, revealing his status as a strong cultivator at the Divine Sea Realm.

Lin Yue was instantly blocked.

"Trouble!" Lin Yue thought to herself that things were not looking good. She and Zhang Kun had long been on guard regarding whether any other Divine Sea Realm from the Haotian Alliance was lurking in the shadows. Now it seemed there really was, but the opponent had hidden well, never revealing a flaw, causing both her and Zhang Kun to have failed to detect it.

Now no one from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge was restraining Liew Yuemei, who held such a divine object as the Destructive Lightning Spear in her hand. Dark Moon Forest Pass... was in danger!

Fortunately, upon sensing things turning sour earlier, she had already sent messages to both sides of the pass, alerting two Divine Sea Realm cultivators from the left and right, who would arrive in less than one hour.

As long as they could hold on for one hour, the crisis could be resolved.

Meanwhile, Liew Yuemei's Thunder Spear transformed into a bolt of lightning, crashing down towards Dark Moon Forest Pass.

No loud sound, almost silent; but when that thunder struck the protective array, the already teetering array struggled even more to maintain itself.

Crack...

Not until this moment did the sound of thunder explode, deafeningly.

As the power of the Thunder Spear struck the protective array, lightning spread in all directions, making the entire protective array seem to transform into a semicircular net of lightning.

The teetering protective array could no longer hold, shattering like a broken mirror with a crashing sound!

In an instant, the many frustrated cultivators of Haotian Alliance, led by Liew Yuemei, rushed into Dark Moon Forest Pass like a tiger descending the mountain.

The two sides of cultivators clashed directly, the battle erupted.

Liew Yuemei then carved a bloody path through the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators' ranks; with no one restraining her, her Divine Sea Realm strength in such a setting was dreadfully overwhelming. If she chose, she could go on a killing spree.

Yet she didn't do so; instead, she landed atop the roof where Lu Ye had stood just moments before.

Looking around, where was Lu Ye's trace?

As soon as she had triggered the power of the Destructive Lightning Spear, wrapping the entire protective array of Dark Moon Forest Pass in a lightning net, Lu Ye had fled.

He surely wouldn't stand there foolishly waiting to die.

Liew Yuemei had come specifically to find him, the attack being merely a process.

Thus he knew, under no circumstance could he fall into Liew Yuemei's hands.

At this moment, he was hiding in a concealed spot, having activated the Breath-concealing and Concealment Spirit Runes, completely restraining his aura, moving not an inch... leaving the rest to fate.

But escaping under the nose of a strong cultivator at the Divine Sea Realm, how incredibly difficult is that?

Liew Yuemei momentarily failed to find Lu Ye's trail, and couldn't help but be furious, knowing well that in such a short time, Lu Ye couldn't have escaped, but must be hiding nearby. At once, she activated her Mental Consciousness to scour the surroundings, intent on ferreting out Lu Ye's trail.

Yet came up empty.

"Where can you escape to?" Liew Yuemei shouted angrily, surrounding herself with roiling spirit force, casting powerful magic and spells sweeping in all directions.

Numerous buildings instantly collapsed, turning into ruins centered on Liew Yuemei's location, with the power of magic and spells rapidly radiating outward. Many Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators caught up by the attack met instant tragic ends.

Lu Ye didn't dare to look, but personally experiencing the wrath of a Divine Sea Realm strong cultivator was enough to secretly shock him.

The power of the magic and spells was getting closer and closer to his hiding spot, to the point where he could no longer stay hidden.

A moment later, driven by desperation, Lu Ye had no choice but to soar into the sky, swiftly darting toward the outside of the mountain pass.

"Where do you think you're going!" Liew Yuemei turned her head and locked onto Lu Ye's silhouette, casting a spell with a wave of her hand from afar.

Sensing the crisis behind him, Lu Ye wanted to evade, but how fierce and overwhelming was the power of a Divine Sea Realm attack; he was helpless even if he wanted to.

This spell hit him hard on the back, and Lu Ye was instantly severely injured, his body staggering as he spit out a mouthful of blood, even his spirit force seemed somewhat scattered.

"Hmm?" Liew Yuemei showed a look of surprise.

Because she believed that her attack was something a True Lake Level 3 couldn't withstand, it should have incapacitated him, yet the result was not as expected.

"Treasure garment?" Liew Yuemei, with her sharp eyes, immediately noticed the extraordinary nature of Lu Ye's Crimson Dragon Battle Suit, understanding that he must have relied on it to take her attack.

But what of it? Once targeted by her, how could a True Lake Realm create any waves?

In front, Lu Ye buried his head and fled. If he weren't afraid of exposing his identity by using the wings spirit runes, he would have activated them already. For now, he could only use Move-Like-The-Wind, yet with his True Lake Level 3 cultivation, he still moved like lightning.

But then again, the gap in cultivation was too vast, even activating the wings might have been useless.

A huge doubt welled up inside him.

Because he vaguely felt that Liew Yuemei had no intention of killing him!

Otherwise, the earlier attack couldn't possibly have been so mild.

With the protection of the Crimson Dragon Battle Suit and his own strong physique, although caught off guard by that attack, it only caused him minor injuries.

He wouldn't think the other was kind enough to spare him; from the brief moment when their eyes met, he had already seen the hatred and killing intent boiling in her eyes.

Having the opportunity but not killing him, she must intend to capture him alive!

The power gap between them was immense, and Liew Yuemei indeed had the means to capture him alive.

This was likely to take him back for the sake of the deceased Tan Shu!

In a flash, Lu Ye had discerned Liew Yuemei's intentions.

For him, this was actually good news. If a Divine Sea Realm cultivator was truly intent on killing him, his chances of survival would be minimal.

If she wanted to capture him alive, at least his immediate situation wouldn't be too perilous.

As he contemplated this, Liew Yuemei's second attack came.

Lu Ye sensed it but couldn't dodge, once again being struck heavily on the back.

Spitting out another mouthful of blood, Lu Ye saw stars explode before his eyes, his body uncontrollably plummeting downward.

Even though the pain in his chest and abdomen was unbearable, it confirmed his earlier speculation, Liew Yuemei had no intention of killing him now, indeed she wanted to capture him alive.

Before he hit the ground, the third attack arrived.

At this, Lu Ye didn't even think about dodging; he hurriedly activated the Crimson Dragon Battle Suit's built-in defenses. Instantly, a light shield enveloped his body, like a protective array safeguarding him.

Such was the miraculous property of this treasure garment; it came with an internal protective array, triggered by spirit force, capable of producing wondrous effects if used properly.

Relying on the defense of the Crimson Dragon Battle Suit, he managed to block the third attack without danger.

His entire body fell into a building, crashing through its roof.

As he hit the ground, he immediately stood up, took a deep breath, forcibly calming the turbulent spirit force within, desperately pouring it into the sword gourd at his waist.

Looking up, Liew Yuemei swiftly floated down from the broken roof, evidently intending to capture him in one go.

Their gazes met, Liew Yuemei gritted her teeth, "You deserve to die!"

Speaking, she extended her hand to grab at Lu Ye from a distance, a large hand formed by pure spirit force descended, and the already dilapidated house instantly collapsed.

Lu Ye patted the sword gourd at his waist, whispering, "Go!"

Boundless sword light surged, whistling out from the sword gourd, many sword lights transformed into a sword dragon, snaking its way toward the spirit force hand.

Such a technique was clearly beyond what a True Lake Level 3 could display, even Liew Yuemei was momentarily stunned.

She grew furious, the speed at which the spirit force hand pressed down became even more aggressive.

The sword dragon collided with it, and as many sword lights extinguished instantly.

The quality of the sword gourd indeed surpassed Lu Ye's comprehension, but at this moment, he couldn't harness even a fraction of its power; he relied solely on the Sword Qi converted from the spiritual artifact the sword gourd had devoured.

He could instantly slay a True Lake Level 7 cultivator like Tan Shu, but facing a Divine Sea Realm like Liew Yuemei, such means were still inadequate.

Fortunately, he managed to slightly delay the spirit force hand's pressing speed.

Chapter 946 Can't Let You Stay

Liew Yuemei never expected that a mere True Lake Level 3 cultivator could possess such a profound foundation, it was beyond her imagination.

One must understand that her previous three attacks were all made with the intent to severely injure Lu Ye, each strike executed with increasing ferocity.

Yet, under the assault of three magic and spell attacks, this Li Taibai still hadn't lost the capability to act, and even had the strength left to resist her.

Tan Shu died exactly under such methods...

She had heard that Li Taibai, who slew Tan Shu, was a sword cultivator, who could command Sword Qi to kill enemies, a person with deep strategies, engaging Haotian Alliance soldiers in six battles. In the first five battles, he never exerted his full effort, not even harming or killing his opponents, yet suddenly in the last battle, he struck decisively.

Tan Shu's death was partly due to his complacency and carelessness, but also resulted from Li Taibai's calculated steps.

Regarding Li Taibai, Liew Yuemei was understandably infuriated! She came this time precisely to capture him and bring him back, to place him before Tan Shu's grave as a sacrifice to console his spirit.

Originally expecting an easy capture, she didn't foresee all these turbulent events arising now, getting further enraged as her tricks were resisted by a mere True Lake Realm.

Just as she prepared to overpower and seize Lu Ye, a distant shout came through: "Fellow Daoist Liew, swiftly resolve this!"

It was another Divine Sea Realm at Jinglan Lake Pass calling out.

Although they broke through Jinglan Lake Pass's protective array this time by surprise, using twenty thousand Explosive Fire Spirit Stones combined with the might of Destructive Lightning Spears, earlier

casualties were considerable, and now frontal combat wasn't giving Haotian Alliance cultivators much advantage.

Moreover, they were still in Ten Thousand Demons Ridge territory, which surely has already requested reinforcements, so for Haotian Alliance, prolonged battle is unfavorable.

He had an agreement with Liew Yuemei, that he and another invited Divine Sea Realm would hold off Lin Yue and Zhang Kun, while Liew Yuemei would swiftly kill Li Taibai and other Ten Thousand Demons Ridge soldiers at the pass, aiming to cripple the defenders of the Dark Moon Forest Pass this battle.

Then they could safely retreat.

But now, it seemed Liew Yuemei hadn't fulfilled her part of the deal, she must be planning to capture Li Taibai alive, otherwise how could it be that she hadn't succeeded yet?

The situation currently doesn't look favorable for Haotian Alliance, if Liew Yuemei continues to be delayed, these people will likely pay an enormous price when trying to leave.

Helpless, he could only shout from afar.

Liew Yuemei, though somewhat blinded by hatred, was still ultimately a Divine Sea Realm, how could she not understand the change in the battlefield situation?

She had intended to capture Li Taibai alive, but seeing his capabilities, she realized she can't continue delaying.

"I'll leave you no chance!" Liew Yuemei roared, murderous intent already surged.

Such foundation in just a mere True Lake Level 3, what if this person were allowed to grow?

In recent years, Haotian Alliance had encountered Lu Yiye of the Righteous Blood Sect, so dazzling that in both Spirit Stream and Cloud River battlefields, he stirred major sects of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge into a frenzy, top sects were helpless against him.

Because of certain special reasons, Liew Yuemei is also paying close attention to Lu Ye.

But given the current situation, this Li Taibai is no worse than Lu Yiye, perhaps even feeling stronger.

One might say, the present Li Taibai is Ten Thousand Demons Ridge's own Lu Yiye!

Ten Thousand Demons Ridge doesn't have a good way to deal with the real Lu Yiye, but she now had control of Li Taibai's worth and life, personal vendetta came first, heaven-sent opportunity, she must eradicate.

As she roared, all her spirit force surged, along with mystical energies, directly impacting Lu Ye.

Apparently unleashing a Mental Consciousness attack.

Her cultivation was much stronger than what Lu Ye previously encountered at Xianxia Mountain with Ning Hu, reaching Divine Sea Level 7.

Ning Hu was considered just entered the Divine Sea Realm, moreover, Xianxia Mountain being a 4th grade sect, its foundation wasn't strong, so his usage of Mental Consciousness attack was extremely simplistic, just merely pushing his own Mental Consciousness out.

Yet, Liew Yuemei was different, born from 1st grade Tianyuan Sect, her cultivation compared to Ning Hu was higher by five levels, undoubtedly her usage of Mental Consciousness was more sophisticated.

With the Mental Consciousness attack's emergence, Lu Ye felt as though calamity was imminently approaching.

In a blur, he faintly sensed a sharp attack cutting from the void, penetrating his mind in an instant.

He instantly recognized what was happening, after having such experiences before, first time is unknown, second familiar, third times are smooth sailing.

A mix of amusement and frustration filled him.

Other True Lake Realm rarely faces such misfortune being targeted by Divine Sea Realm, but he has encountered this thrice since leaving Cloud River battlefield.

The first time wasn't really targeting, Yu Bo's Mental Consciousness attack against Nian Yuexian swept over him, still it directly led him into a coma, although later it was a blessing in disguise, birthing his own Divine Pool.

The second was Ning Hu at Xianxia Mountain.

This was the third time!

Lu Ye was endlessly grateful for his foresight, having spent a huge price to defend his Divine Pool, and learning Twin Dragons Guarding the Sea from gold and silver flood dragons, otherwise back at Xianxia Mountain, he would've faced dire consequences.

The Golden Lock dangling on his chest flashed a ray of light and simultaneously, in his mind resonated Dragon's Wail, indicating twofold defense mechanisms triggered.

The protection from the Golden Locks was barely effective, and this time, the Twin Dragons Guarding the Sea couldn't fully protect Lu Ye. The attack slashed straight through, breaking past the Twin Dragons Guarding the Sea and cutting into his Divine Pool!

It's not that Twin Dragons Guarding the Sea is too weak; after all, it's merely a protective means left by the two flood dragons beside Lu Ye's Divine Pool. Moreover, Liew Yuemei attacked with full force driven by a killing intent, naturally making it hard for Twin Dragons Guarding the Sea to completely defend.

Liew Yuemei's Divine Thought Slash was weakened considerably, yet it still cut into the Divine Pool.

Without causing any ripple...

The Soul Suppressing Pagoda, exchanged from the Hall of Battle Merits, truly lives up to being an exceptional Soul Device. With this pagoda guarding the Divine Pool, there's no fear of the pool suffering a devastating blow.

If it were any other True Lake Realm, even if it were a Level 9 realm, it might have perished on the spot from such an attack.

Lu Ye merely felt a slight pain deep in his mind, but no other harm was done.

Yet he exaggeratedly screamed loudly, and even his spirit force became extremely scattered at that moment, feigning the appearance of having suffered a deadly blow.

The scattering of spirit force resulted in the defense barrier formed by multiple Sword Qi instantly becoming loose, losing its ability to resist.

"Die!" shouted Liew Yuemei fiercely.

A large hand of spirit force pressed down, drowning out Lu Ye's figure.

Dust swirled, and Liew Yuemei swept her sleeve to disperse the dust cover, looking down she saw Lu Ye lying flat on the ground, blood pooled beneath him, his whole body like a shattered porcelain, with cracks all over the exposed skin, blood trickling out.

Motionless, with a weakened breath, the spirit force fluctuations emanating from him were surprisingly only at the Spirit Stream Realm...

Glaring at Lu Ye with hatred, Liew Yuemei gritted her teeth: "Consider yourself lucky!"

She originally intended to capture him alive and take him back, but now was forced to kill him, feeling a nagging disappointment she struggled to vent.

She didn't bother to check on Lu Ye's life or death, confident that after suffering her various methods before, even if he didn't die on the spot, he wouldn't survive longer than one incense stick's time. Leaving him to linger in despair before death was more satisfying to her.

Turning, she headed towards the crowd of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge. As a Divine Sea Level 7 realm without restraint, she wreaked havoc, causing heavy casualties, which Lin Yue and Zhang Kun watched with furious but helpless eyes.

After a savage slaughter, releasing the pent-up resentments, Liew Yuemei gave a low shout: "Retreat!"

The Haotian Alliance cultivators engaged across the Dark Moon Forest Pass received the order and retreated while continuing to fight, demonstrating excellent military discipline.

Though Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had intentions to pursue, they were frightened by Liew Yuemei's might, not daring to advance rashly.

Moments later, as they came grandly, the Haotian Alliance withdrew in the same manner, even taking all the corpses of the fallen cultivators with them.

Though both Lin Yue and Zhang Kun were furious, they could do nothing but watch the enemy withdraw from Jinglan Lake Pass, feeling suffocated with anger.

Thunder roared and lightning flashed in the sky, suddenly a violent storm descended.

Dark Moon Forest Pass was in ruins.

Amongst the debris, large raindrops fell, Lu Ye lying on the ground slowly opened his eyes, painfully reached out and placed the Golden Body Token, hidden in his sleeve, into his storage space.

If Liew Yuemei had insisted on completely eradicating him, he would have had to use the Golden Body Token to guard against her, otherwise, he would certainly be dead.

Fortunately, Liew Yuemei believed he wouldn't live much longer, leaving him alone. Of course, time was of the essence for her as she knew her advantage would not last long. Otherwise, once reinforcements from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge's surrounding Divine Sea realms arrived, not only would her situation be perilous but Haotian Alliance's soldiers would also suffer huge losses.

The plan to capture alive turning into a kill wasn't what Liew Yuemei wanted, but at least it avenged Tan Shu's death.

"Liew..." Lu Ye's gaze was indifferent. He didn't know Liew Yuemei's name, but from the earlier call from another Divine Sea realm, it was clear her surname was Liew.

Reflecting on the recent battle, it was extremely perilous. At the critical moment, he had a flash of inspiration, enabling him to escape major distress.

At the very moment the opponent used a Divine Thought attack, Lu Ye had only two options, to follow the flow or counter it.

Following the flow led to this current outcome.

Countering it would have only brought about even fiercer attacks, and at that point, the Golden Body Token would have been unusable.

So, Lu Ye decided promptly to pretend he was being disturbed by the Divine Thought attack, even letting his spirit force turn chaotic. How a True Lake Realm would react to such means, he mimicked; after all, having truly encountered it before, he knew well how to disguise.

As for the Spirit Stream Realm's spirit force fluctuations emitted from his body, it was naturally the effect of Pseudo-Might.

Liew Yuemei, seeing his weakened spirit force fluctuations and miserable appearance after taking a hit from her Divine Thought attack, naturally assumed he wouldn't live much longer.

Unaware that it was all just a facade...

There wasn't much bitterness; he had no stance to bear hatred. Ultimately, he was from the Haotian Alliance, and having killed Tan Shu, it was natural for the other side to seek revenge for Tan Shu.

If he were truly from the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, then harboring resentment against Liew Yuemei would only be natural.

However... To stir up such a large-scale battle just to take personal vengeance, even causing the death of not a few Haotian Alliance soldiers here, is greatly unjustified!

Having someone like that in charge at Jinglan Lake Pass is truly lamentable for the soldiers there!

Chapter 947 Li Taibai is finished

Until one incense stick's time after Haotian Alliance withdrew their troops, the Divine Sea Realm reinforcements from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge arrived belatedly.

It's not that they didn't come fast enough, it's really because Haotian Alliance moved too quickly, catching Dark Moon Forest Pass completely off guard.

Initially, Lin Yue and Zhang Kun thought with the protective array at the pass, they could easily hold out for one hour. Who would have known that Haotian Alliance would use Explosive Fire Spirit Stones and Destructive Lightning Spears to catch them off guard, directly breaking the protective array, leading to subsequent events.

In this battle, Haotian Alliance suffered considerable casualties, and Ten Thousand Demons Ridge did as well, mainly because Liew Yuemei killed quite a few people. An unchecked Divine Sea Realm is truly terrifying.

Torrential rain poured down, and the entire pass was immersed in a sorrowful atmosphere, as the surviving soldiers began to clean up the battlefield and care for the wounded.

"Li Taibai is over here." An exclamation was heard, followed by several figures rushing over from all sides. At the sight of Lu Ye's tragic injuries, all were secretly horrified.

"Quick, take him away to be treated!"

Feigning unconsciousness, Lu Ye felt someone enveloping him with spirit force, quickly relocating him to a safer area.

All around, there were suppressed groans and cries of pain, indicating this was a place to care for injured cultivators. Quietly sensing, there were quite a few healing cultivators tending to the wounded.

Soon someone came to his side, and upon seeing his condition, couldn't help but gasp, "The injuries are so severe..."

"Veteran You may not know, Fellow Daoist Taibai was targeted by a Divine Sea Realm, and these injuries are all caused by Liew Yuemei. Please, Veteran You, you must save him."

Someone explained.

The day before, Lu Ye had beheaded Tan Shu, greatly boosting the morale of the Dark Moon Forest Pass soldiers and making many aware of his immense potential. Naturally, many wished to befriend him. Today, Liew Yuemei charged into Dark Moon Forest Pass, directly targeting Lu Ye, which many witnessed, thus understanding the source of his injuries.

"So he's Li Taibai, who's been quite the sensation these past two days," Veteran You spoke, having evidently heard of Li Taibai in recent days. "A true hero in his youth, to survive under a Divine Sea Realm hand is truly remarkable. I will do my best."

"Then I'll have to trouble Veteran You. I have military duties to attend to, so I'll take my leave."

"Go on."

A moment later, Lu Ye felt a gentle power enveloping him, likely Veteran You applying his healing techniques. Quietly sensing, this healing cultivator named Veteran You, though older and with decent cultivation, was only at True Lake Level 9, not Divine Sea.

Lu Ye was relieved considerably.

His injuries were indeed extremely severe; while his psyche was safe, the critical damage was to his physical body. Liew Yuemei's angry strike aimed to kill him with the palm, but thanks to his strong physique and the protection of the Crimson Dragon Battle Suit, he managed to survive. Otherwise, under that palm, he would likely have been shattered.

Even so, his body's condition was not optimistic. Fearing he'd expose a flaw, Lu Ye maintained consciousness forcibly, worried that if he slipped into unconsciousness and the Thousand Faces Spirit Runes failed, his true face would be revealed, and Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators would see Li Taibai transform into Lu Yiye, which would be a laughingstock.

Under Veteran You's methods, Lu Ye felt the pain in his body alleviating somewhat.

Time passed, and Veteran You was indeed doing his utmost to heal him, but Lu Ye's injuries were too severe. Even with his own powerful physical foundation, complete recovery wasn't a matter of just a day or two.

During this time, some people came to visit Lu Ye, but he found it strange that Tong Shuyao had not appeared.

This gave him a vague sense that in the previous battle, Tong Shuyao either died or suffered severe injuries like himself; otherwise, given her previous attention towards him, it was improbable she wouldn't come to visit.

Not that he was too concerned; in cultivation, the path is thorny, life and death are normal.

Time passed.

Until all of a sudden, Lu Ye heard a familiar voice: "How is he?"

It was Lin Yue, who came to check on him.

Veteran You, who had been diligently caring for him, immediately replied, "His physical foundation is quite good, he's barely managed to preserve his life, but..."

"But what?"

"Logically, with his physical foundation, he should have already awakened by now, but he's still unconscious. I'm afraid his psyche was injured, which is causing the coma. After all, he survived an encounter with a Divine Sea Realm, and Liew Yuemei likely employed a spiritual attack on him."

"Liew Yuemei indeed used spiritual attack methods," Lin Yue nodded. Though she was blocked by a Divine Sea Realm from Haotian Alliance, she paid some attention to Lu Ye's situation. She couldn't miss Liew Yuemei's clear signs of deploying a spiritual attack.

"That explains it. Liew Yuemei's cultivation is at Divine Sea Level 7; not to mention this child is only True Lake Level 3, even someone like me at Level 9 would likely have their psyche shattered, falling into eternal sleep if targeted by Liew Yuemei."

"Do you mean... he'll remain in this coma forever?"

"It's just a possibility. Even if he wakes, the damage to his psyche is irreparable, leaving him sluggish and dull in behavior."

"Is there a way to heal?" Lin Yue frowned.

Veteran You shook his head: "The old man is powerless, and the lord should know what kind of injury it is when the psyche is wounded. Such injuries are basically incurable except for those few rare treasures."

Lin Yue was silent for a moment before sighing: "What a pity!"

It's a pity for such a talented individual. She originally thought he was a rising star and had already determined he could compete with Lu Yiye of the Haotian Alliance. However, he suffered such a calamity, his psyche wounded—he might sleep forever without waking up, and even if he did wake, his future would be bleak.

She had planned to bring Li Taibai into her sect for cultivation, and she didn't oppose Tong Shuyao's intentions towards him. But now, it seems all those plans are unnecessary.

Throughout history on the Nine Provinces continent, countless talented geniuses appeared, but those who couldn't grow ultimately vanished like a brief bloom. Just like herself—among the cultivators of her generation, many had higher aptitude than her. They were those she once looked up to. But now?

Those people have turned to dust, yet she progressed smoothly in cultivation and now has reached Divine Sea Level 6. She's even secured the throne of the Mountain Pass Chief of the Dark Moon Forest Pass.

Having seen much, Lin Yue felt regret, but not profoundly.

Without further instructions, Lin Yue quickly left.

Noticing Lin Yue's attitude, Veteran You wasn't as diligent in healing Lu Ye at first. It's not to say he's opportunistic, but he feels with Li Taibai's talent and facing such catastrophe, perhaps it's better to die at least preserving the glory of life. If people think of him in the future, they'd recall his battle where he slayed Tan Shu.

The scars of the battle were slowly healing.

A few days later, when Veteran You came as usual to check on Lu Ye's injuries, he found him already awake and sitting on the bed, dazed.

In astonishment, he said: "You're awake?"

Lu Ye showed no reaction at first, then after a while seemed to notice Veteran You and looked up: "You are..."

Veteran You smiled slightly: "I'm the healing cultivator of the Dark Moon Forest Pass. You've suffered severe injuries before, and for these days, I've been treating you."

Lu Ye showed an enlightened expression, about to speak but suddenly grimaced in pain as if enduring great agony.

Veteran You immediately said: "Hold your thoughts, young friend. Your psyche is injured, it's not wise to overthink. You need to calm your mind and recuperate."

Indeed, just as I speculated before, even though Li Taibai woke up by chance, his thoughts are muddled. Though there are no signs of dementia so far, the aftermath of a wounded psyche is evidently hard to bear.

But he saved a life after all, which could be considered a fortune amidst misfortune.

After a brief examination of Lu Ye, Veteran You departed.

Moments later, within Lin Yue's chamber, Veteran You reported Lu Ye's current condition.

Lin Yue sat quietly by the bedside, listening. On the bed lay a person, Tong Shuyao.

Just as Lu Ye had speculated before, Tong Shuyao was seriously injured. Her injuries were far less severe than Lu Ye's and, after treatment by the healing cultivators of Dark Moon Forest Pass, she's recovered, though her body is not as robust as Lu Ye's, so her recovery is slower.

At this moment, Tong Shuyao was still in deep sleep.

After Veteran You finished speaking, Lin Yue finally asked: "In your view, does Li Taibai have any chance to advance to the Divine Sea?"

Veteran You slowly shook his head: "Unless he can encounter fortuitous circumstances that precisely address his condition, he won't say advance to the Divine Sea. In his current state, even maintaining normal cultivation is difficult."

During the brief conversation with Lu Ye earlier, he suffered headaches several times, each time looking as though the pain was unbearable. Under such conditions, how could one cultivate?

Yet how difficult it is to encounter such fortuitous circumstances?

In other words, Li Taibai's cultivation will likely remain at True Lake Level 3 for the rest of his life, unable to progress further. Moreover, he's bound to suffer and find life worse than death.

"Does he know himself?" Lin Yue asked again.

"I have explained it clearly to him," Veteran You replied.

"You may leave." Lin Yue waved her hand somewhat weakly, sighing inwardly, feeling it's difficult to handle the situation with Li Taibai.

If it were any ordinary cultivator, she could place him as she pleased, even keeping him at Dark Moon Forest Pass would be fine. But Tong Shuyao clearly has feelings for Li Taibai, and her young niece is still unaware of Li Taibai's situation. If she learns, who knows how heartbroken she might be.

There's also Zhang Kun's attitude to consider.

These days Zhang Kun clearly has some blame towards Li Taibai. He believes Dark Moon Forest Pass suffered such calamity entirely because Li Taibai killed Tan Shu, otherwise, the two passes would have remained peaceful for years. How would Jinglan Lake Pass suddenly decide to forcefully attack, causing so many Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators to die in battle?

Chapter 948 Righteous Blood Sect Lu Yiye, Returns!

At the Dark Moon Forest Pass, Lin Yue was only a junior pass chief, while Zhang Kun was the main pass chief. Although Zhang Kun's blame wasn't very reasonable, with both camps fighting for so many years, it was always about you killing me and me killing you. If one really wanted to trace this to its roots, the blame indeed lay with Li Taibai.

Thoughts swirled in her mind, and a decision was made, but the time was not yet right, so she set it aside for now.

Two days later, Veteran You examined Lu Ye and said, "Young friend, your physique is strong, and your physical injuries are no longer a concern. However, the damage to your psyche is beyond my old skills. In the future, take care and rest your mind; perhaps one day you will recover."

This was, of course, said to comfort him, as even Veteran You didn't believe that Li Taibai's injured psyche would recover.

"Thank you, Veteran You," Lu Ye thanked him, watching Veteran You leave and only after a long while did he retract his gaze.

It was time to proceed with the next step of his plan!

In the end, he was Lu Yiye of the Haotian Alliance, not Li Taibai of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge. By chance, he ended up at the Dark Moon Forest Pass, but he couldn't stay here forever.

He had previously planned to find an opportunity to leave, but the right time hadn't arrived yet.

The challenge at the Jinglan Lake Pass and Liew Yuemei's intervention had presented him with the opportunity.

A True Lake Level 3 with severe psyche injuries and no future prospects... Lin Yue wouldn't want to cling onto him, surely.

Having made up his mind, Lu Ye left his room and went to the outside of Lin Yue's sleeping quarters, where he was soon granted an audience.

After exchanging a few casual words, Lin Yue inquired about Lu Ye's current injuries, to which Lu Ye replied truthfully. However, what puzzled him slightly was that Lin Yue's attitude seemed a bit off, but it was hard to pinpoint exactly what was strange.

"My lord, I have come to resign," Lu Ye declared his intention.

"Resign?" Lin Yue was somewhat surprised.

Lu Ye nodded, "Veteran You said my psyche injury is difficult to heal, requiring great opportunity for recovery. I wish to leave here and wander around; perhaps I'll encounter some opportunities."

Lin Yue nodded slightly, understanding Lu Ye's plan.

There was no reason to stop him, as she had already intended to transfer Lu Ye away from the Dark Moon Forest Pass, to prevent distress to her junior nephew upon recovery upon seeing Lu Ye's condition.

She wouldn't let a futureless Li Taibai hinder her junior nephew's future.

Unexpectedly, before she could propose this to Lu Ye, he had already come to resign, which was perfect for her.

"Have you decided?" she asked.

Lu Ye didn't respond, instead staring blankly at a spot.

Following his gaze, Lin Yue saw nothing there and let out a slight sigh, recognizing it as a symptom of his psyche being injured, as Veteran You had mentioned.

In such a state, it's difficult to concentrate, let alone maintain cultivation.

After a while, Lu Ye seemed to come back to his senses, rubbing his forehead, "Pardon me, my lord, my mind wandered. What did you just ask?"

With a hint of helplessness, Lin Yue asked, "You've decided to leave?"

"Yes, I do request your permission for it."

"Since you've decided, I won't stop you, but there is one thing I need your help with."

"Please tell me, my lord."

"You probably understand Yao'er's feelings for you, and I can see you have no interest in her. After you leave, I will tell Yao'er that you've fallen in battle, so you won't need to contact her in the future... Have you two exchanged battlefield marking imprints?"

"We haven't," Lu Ye shook his head. He certainly wouldn't have taken the initiative to exchange imprints with Tong Shuyao. Tong Shuyao probably felt embarrassed to bring it up before, so there was no way to contact each other, and Tong Shuyao couldn't use an imprint to determine his life or death.

"That's good. I hope you can agree to this."

"I would never mislead Senior Sister Tong, you can rest assured, my lord."

"You're smart," Lin Yue looked at Lu Ye with satisfaction. "When do you plan to leave?"

"If my lord permits, I can leave now."

"Very well." Lin Yue nodded, taking out a storage sack, "Take these items; they should be useful someday. If ever your injuries heal, you can come find me again."

"Thank you, my lord!" Lu Ye took the storage sack, "Then I shall take my leave!"

Exiting Lin Yue's sleeping quarters, Lu Ye did not linger, activating his spirit force, he soared into the sky and left the Dark Moon Forest Pass.

By the window, Lin Yue watched the direction Lu Ye departed in, her expression slightly complex, yet ultimately she sighed softly.

Leaving the Dark Moon Forest Pass, Lu Ye hurriedly made his way.

He didn't expect that his resignation would be approved so easily, and recalling the storage sack Lin Yue had given him, a thought couldn't help but emerge in his mind.

Lin Yue probably wanted him to leave the Dark Moon Forest Pass too, but simply hadn't had the chance to tell him. Why else would she have already prepared the storage sack?

Opening the storage sack, he took a quick look; it was filled with cultivation supplies, not too valuable, but better than nothing.

Sure enough, Lin Yue did have the idea for him to leave the Dark Moon Forest Pass.

From her standpoint, a True Lake Level 3 with no future wasn't worth much attention, and this person also had someone from her family concerned, so it was all the more unacceptable.

But it suited Lu Ye's desires perfectly.

On his way, he occasionally put on a lost expression and sometimes seemed as if his head was splitting from pain, all symptoms of the severe psyche trauma.

Until entering Liyuan, Lu Ye only then found a hidden place to land.

Next, he needed to figure out how to return to Cangyan Mountain Pass.

Originally, after leaving the Sword Weapon Sect secret realm, he should have returned, but he was unexpectedly delayed for several days.

Nian Yuexian had already sent several messages asking about his situation, which Lu Ye managed to brush aside with various excuses.

If he didn't return to Cangyan Mountain soon, Nian Yuexian might come looking for him.

When he came, Ying Wuji was his guide, speeding along the way swiftly, but going back wasn't going to be so smooth.

Thinking a bit, Lu Ye tapped his battlefield marking and sent out a message: "Xiao Ying, still alive?"

Earlier, Nian Yuexian took Ying Wuji with her, and Lu Ye wasn't clear about the following events, but Ying Wuji's battlefield marking was still imprinted, indicating he hadn't died.

At Gushan City Pass, Ying Wuji, who was recovering in his residence, checked the message, his eye twitching continuously...

Xiao Ying...

Now even Lu Yiye started calling him this!

If someone unaware knew, they might think he had some unspeakable relationship with Lu Ye.

Immediately replied: "Seriously injured, do not disturb!"

He absolutely couldn't get entangled with Lu Yiye anymore, otherwise, he'd only get deeper and more stuck, and truly, Gushan City Pass was a place he couldn't stay at any longer, he had to quickly find a way to transfer from there.

"How did you get injured?" Lu Ye was surprised.

"Playing dumb! Ask your Water Fairy Junior Sister!" Thinking of the encounter that day, Ying Wuji was furious.

Upon exiting the Sword Weapon Sect secret realm, Nian Yuexian took him directly, inevitably coming across numerous Ten Thousand Demons Ridge Divine Sea Realm pursuits and blockades. Battles of this level, how could Ying Wuji possibly meddle? The aftermath of these battles, he silently endured them all. Him not dying was truly fortunate.

The injuries he sustained were no less severe than Lu Ye's previous ones.

Fortunately, Nian Yuexian didn't truly intend to kill him. Noticing his serious injuries, she abandoned him, allowing him to survive.

"Then you should recover, hopefully meet again next time."

"...Scram!"

Finishing the communication with Ying Wuji, Lu Ye was silent for a moment.

He initially thought about having Ying Wuji guide him again, but now Ying Wuji was seriously injured and it was impossible to rely on him.

The identity of Li Taibai couldn't openly head towards Cangyan Mountain Pass.

If that's the case, he'd have to stealthily return to Cangyan Mountain Pass himself, which wasn't difficult, just took a bit more time.

Maintaining the appearance of Li Taibai, Lu Ye activated Concealment Spirit Runes to fortify himself, heading towards Cangyan Mountain Pass. This way, even if accidentally discovered, he could bluff his way through using the identity of Li Taibai.

Traveling hidden by day and exposed by night, nothing ventured, nothing gained.

After all, not every place was as bustling as Liyuan was before. The vast frontline territory of the two major camps would make it impossible to patrol fully, even if there were teams scouting every corner of each mountain pass.

Took nearly two days before reaching the vicinity of Cangyan Mountain Pass.

Only then did Lu Ye reveal his presence, retrieving the sword gourd and sword at his waist, before changing the color of the Crimson Dragon Battle Suit to black, dispersing the Thousand Faces Spirit Runes maintained for days.

Haotian Alliance's Lu Yiye, returned!

From the spirit beast sack, he released Amber, and immediately, Yiyi popped out to breathe, pouting, "Lu Ye, where have you been, not letting us out for such a long time?"

Lu Ye then recounted his experiences from the recent period, making Amber's tiger eyes widen and Yiyi click her tongue.

Both a spirit and a tiger were secretly worried, yet wished to fight alongside Lu Ye.

But the fact that Amber was the beast pet of Righteous Blood Sect's Lu Yiye was known by many people, a distinct trademark. Thus, Amber could not appear when masquerading as Ten Thousand Demons Ridge's Li Taibai.

"That Liew Yuemei is simply rotten to the core, we must get revenge whenever we can!" Yiyi said resentfully.

Lu Ye seemed rather calm: "From her perspective, wanting to kill me is normal, just using public resources for personal vendettas is indeed a major taboo for someone of high status. I don't know if Haotian City is aware of this."

"Is Third Senior really having a hard time over there?"

"It's not great, if there's a chance, let's go check it out together."

"Sure, sure." Yiyi nodded continuously, having quite a favorable impression of the Third Senior, whom she had never met. For he had compiled all his saber skills cultivation insights and offered them to Lu Ye generously; Yiyi also knew about this.

As the conversation proceeded, Lu Ye suddenly felt something, turned his head to gaze in a direction.

There, a streak of light was rapidly approaching, and behind this light, several figures ceaselessly chasing.

Lu Ye exerted his Ocular Power, gazing at the leading streak of light, and was astonished, because he recognized the person coming, someone he had met only a short while ago.

The other person seemed to notice him too and was overjoyed, about to cry for help, but ended up with a look of horror.

Because Lu Ye unexpectedly drew the long saber at his waist, his figure electrified towards her, swinging down fiercely!

Chapter 949: Iron-hearted Lu Yiye

I don't know what the person encountered before, but they were already injured, their clothes were tattered, and they looked extremely disheveled, exposing themselves while fleeing.

At this moment, suddenly attacked by Lu Ye, they instinctively mobilized their spirit force to protect themselves.

The long saber was blocked by the spirit force on the surface of their body, but the overwhelming power was unavoidable. With a cry of surprise, their body involuntarily plummeted downward.

Lu Ye followed with his saber, closely pursuing.

From a distance, it looked as if he was pressing the person down with a single strike.

She landed in a disheveled heap, dazed and dizzy. Luckily, thanks to the physique of a True Lake Realm cultivator, she wasn't too badly hurt, though the pain was unbearable. Before she could get up, a jet-black long saber was already placed across her neck.

Following the length of the saber with her eyes, she met Lu Ye's downward gaze.

Feeling the sharpness of the blade, she froze involuntarily.

Swish swish swish...

Several figures landed not far away; they were the ones chasing the woman. These people also seemed to have gone through a fierce battle, bearing multiple injuries. The leading youth's aura was strong, possessing a cultivation of True Lake Level 6.

Seeing this situation, he couldn't help but grin: "Well done, Fellow Daoist. I really have to thank you."

Although with their cultivation, they would have captured the woman sooner or later, it was naturally less troublesome with Lu Ye's help.

Saying this, he stepped forward, reaching out to grab the woman.

The other party's rude manner left Lu Ye momentarily stunned. Although he couldn't fully understand everything that had happened in such a short time, he had guessed most of it, or he wouldn't have acted so decisively just now.

The Boulder Mountain Saber still rested on the woman's long, slender, and fair neck, making her dare not move, yet a sword light flashed, cutting through the Void.

The youth halted, looking toward Lu Ye, who had somehow acquired a longsword in his hand, and frowned: "Fellow Daoist, what are you doing?"

The people behind him all looked at Lu Ye with a menacing expression, each secretly channeling their spirit force.

"What do you want to do?" Lu Ye responded with a question.

The youth replied matter-of-factly: "Taking the person!"

Lu Ye looked at him calmly: "She is in my hands. What do you want to take?"

The youth couldn't help but frown: "This woman is from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, just fought with us, and all her companions have been slain. She's the only one who fled. Since she's fallen into your hands, I ask you to return her to us so I can take her back for interrogation. We might gain some useful information!"

"I captured her, so I'll do the interrogation. There's no need for you to worry."

The youth raised an eyebrow, obviously misunderstanding something: "Is Fellow Daoist trying to steal credit from us?"

"The credit is in my hands; you are the one trying to steal my credit!" Lu Ye looked at him calmly.

The youth stared back forcefully, the muscles under his eyes twitching slightly, his whole body exuding a dangerous air of spirit force. After a long pause, he took a deep breath: "What's your name?"

"Lu Ye of the Cangyan Mountain Pass!"

"Cangyan Mountain Pass?" The youth frowned slightly. Cangyan Mountain Pass Chief Nian Yuexian was a mighty figure who guarded a pass on her own; who in Bingzhou's provincial guard didn't know of her?

Lu Ye identifying himself as someone from Cangyan Mountain Pass made the youth somewhat apprehensive.

But leaving just like that was also a bit unwilling.

Lu Ye continued, "This place is already within the jurisdiction of Cangyan Mountain Pass. Since the person has fallen into my hands, it should be handled by me. Please retreat."

These words were irrefutable; this area was indeed within the jurisdiction of Cangyan Mountain Pass. As someone from there, Lu Ye had every right to intervene in this matter, and they really had no grounds to object.

After hesitating for a moment, the youth clenched his teeth: "In that case, the person is yours." He waved his hand, calling the others: "Let's go!"

Moments later, several figures soared into the sky, heading towards the Clear Moon Cave Pass.

Only when their figures disappeared did the woman, who had been sitting paralyzed on the ground without moving, let out a long sigh of relief. Her entire being seemed empty, with tear marks still visible at the corner of her eyes. She looked at Lu Ye pitifully: "Are you going to kill me?"

Lu Ye put away his saber and sword, speaking calmly: "If I wanted to kill you, you'd already be dead."

With his strength, that previous strike could have easily claimed her life. The reason she was still alive was entirely due to Lu Ye's mercy.

Because this woman was Shen Xiaomao!

Shen Xiaomao immediately broke into a smile through her tears: "I knew you wouldn't kill me."

Lu Ye glanced down at her, retrieving a piece of clothing from his storage sack and tossing it at her to cover what was exposed: "What happened?"

Shen Xiaomao showed a frightened expression: "You heard it too; I was patrolling outside with a few others and accidentally encountered their team. We fought, and everyone else died. I'm the only one still alive."

Lu Ye couldn't help but frown: "Because you're a woman?"

It didn't make sense that everyone else had died and only Shen Xiaomao survived; her cultivation level wasn't particularly high.

She survived simply because she was an attractive female cultivator. Thinking about Shen Xiaomao's tattered clothes, Lu Ye vaguely understood some things.

"Yes." Shen Xiaomao nodded, with a look of lingering fear.

For some female cultivators, there are times when certain things are more terrifying than death.

So just now, she had already made up her mind that if Lu Ye handed her over to those people, she would immediately take her own life, never to live in disgrace.

Fortunately, Lu Ye didn't do that.

Only when they first met, Lu Ye had slashed at her, giving her quite a scare.

At that time, however, she was in a panic, her mind in disarray, with no time to consider much. Now, upon reflection, Lu Ye's actions were the correct response.

With their opposing factions, Lu Ye was supposed to act hostile upon seeing her; he couldn't possibly greet her warmly. If he did, their secret acquaintance and slight friendship would have been exposed to those people.

It seems that, in the instant Lu Ye saw her, he had already discerned many things and thought of a strategy to handle the situation.

His mind was so meticulous, his reaction so swift.

Shen Xiaomao felt secretly relieved.

Lu Ye fell silent for a moment, once again recalling the teachings of the sect master from back then.

The law is neither righteous nor evil, it is people who are good or bad.

It's no surprise that the two major factions are adversaries, engaged in mutual battles and slaughters, but the Haotian Alliance's reputation doesn't necessarily represent the light. Under this seemingly righteous banner, many shadows lurk, with plenty of undercurrents brewing in the dark.

"Lu Yiye, thank you this time," Shen Xiaomao sincerely expressed her gratitude. If she hadn't happened to encounter Lu Ye, she would surely have perished today.

"No need, let's go." Lu Ye called out and summoned his spirit ark.

Shen Xiaomao was suddenly dumbfounded, "Go... where?"

Lu Ye looked at her as if it were obvious, "You're my prisoner, of course, you have to come back with me to the Cangyan Mountain Pass!"

Shen Xiaomao's eyes widened, "You're not going to let me go?"

How did she become a prisoner? It's like escaping the wolf's den only to enter the tiger's lair, making her feel dizzy.

"Stop the nonsense, come on up!" Lu Ye stood on his spirit ark and called her aboard.

Even if he intended to release her, it couldn't happen immediately; otherwise, once the news leaked, he'd be undeniably guilty of colluding with the enemy.

Lu Ye was always careful and prudent in his actions; how could he make such a mistake?

Bringing her back to report to Nian Yuexian, even if Shen Xiaomao fled later, Nian Yuexian would be there to cover, unrelated to Lu Yiye.

Shen Xiaomao was unaware of Lu Ye's plan, and seeing he truly intended to capture her, she was instantly annoyed, "You're truly heartless!"

Despite her previous help—though she did earn three drops of Soul Cleansing Water—there was still some rapport between them. How could he now want to make her a prisoner?

"Enough talk!" Lu Ye partially drew the Boulder Mountain Saber.

Shen Xiaomao decisively and swiftly jumped onto the spirit ark.

They flew swiftly, soon returning to the Cangyan Mountain Pass.

Upon their arrival, Nian Yuexian appeared before them, scanning him up and down to ensure no harm had come to him, then felt at ease.

"Subordinate greets my lord!" Lu Ye clasped his fists in salute, "I apologize for causing concern, my lord."

"As long as you're back," Nian Yuexian replied indifferently, her gaze suddenly sharp as it landed on Shen Xiaomao standing pitifully behind Lu Ye.

Seeing her wearing Lu Ye's clothes, with her inner garments appearing somewhat tattered, her eyes slightly narrowed, "Who is she?"

Lu Ye answered, "She is..."

Who is she?

Lu Ye only knew her as Shen Xiaomao, but that clearly wasn't her real name. Both Shen Xiaomao and Ye Liu had used aliases back then, something everyone understood.

He turned his head and signaled to Shen Xiaomao, "This is my lord, Nian Yuexian! Answer her questions truthfully."

Shen Xiaomao trembled as she stepped out from behind Lu Ye, lowering her head, not daring to look at Nian Yuexian. In her understanding, Nian Yuexian from the Cangyan Mountain Pass was an extremely formidable figure, someone even her own Mountain Pass Chief, Wan Zhanggang, feared greatly.

She respectfully bowed, her voice somewhat trembling, "Junior Shen Chudan, greetings to senior."

Lu Ye showed a look of realization, finally knowing this woman's name.

"Is your recent delay in returning because of her?" Nian Yuexian asked faintly. Lately, Lu Ye hadn't returned, and she had often sent messages inquiring about his situation. But Lu Ye hadn't expressed

much, primarily because it was difficult to explain, only saying he was preoccupied with trivial matters and would return shortly.

It had also caused Nian Yuexian to have some misunderstandings.

"It's not like that," Lu Ye hurriedly responded, "My lord, you may not know, she isn't from the Haotian Alliance; she's from the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, Gushan City Pass."

Nian Yuexian looked puzzled, "Then how did you two..."

"Currently, she's my prisoner!" Lu Ye replied emphatically, drawing a resentful look from Shen Chudan.

Nian Yuexian couldn't help but laugh, "Did you just conveniently capture someone on the way back?"

I'm not a stray cat or dog; how did I end up being conveniently captured... Shen Chudan felt utterly despondent.

Lu Ye then recounted the recent events briefly, hearing which, Nian Yuexian's expression turned grim. As a fellow female cultivator, she couldn't bear to see other female cultivators suffer such circumstances, even though Shen Chudan was rescued by Lu Ye this time, avoiding disaster. Yet, those few men had surely committed such vile acts more than once, and there were likely other Ten Thousand Demons Ridge female cultivators who had fallen victim to them.

Treating the enemy can involve fighting or killing, but to humiliate others in such a manner is naturally despised.

Chapter 950 Nian Yuexian Wants to Go into Seclusion

"What do you plan to do with her?" Nian Yuexian asked.

Lu Ye glanced at Shen Chudan beside him and cupped his fists, saying, "This matter requires your decision, my lord."

At the same time, he secretly transmitted through Mental Consciousness: "My lord, I became acquainted with her at the Cloud River battlefield; we have some ties. Last time, it was through her passing a message to Ying Wuji that led to everything that followed."

Nian Yuexian understood, nodded slightly, and said to Shen Chudan, "I need a maid for menial tasks, so you shall follow me from now on."

Shen Chudan was on the verge of tears but dared not disobey and could only reply, "Yes!"

She consoled herself, thinking that being a maid wasn't so bad; serving under such a renowned Divine Sea Realm like this wasn't humiliating, and it was certainly better than being captured alive by those people before.

Nian Yuexian looked at Lu Ye again, "Go rest, come find me tomorrow; I have something to say to you."

"Yes, I take my leave!"

As Lu Ye left, Nian Yuexian's form flickered and disappeared, leaving Shen Chudan standing there, feeling somewhat bewildered, not sure where to go or what to do.

After some thought, she followed the direction Lu Ye had left and soon arrived at Lu Ye's bamboo loft, raising her hand to knock: "Lu Yiye, what am I supposed to do now?"

No response came from inside.

She knocked for a while longer before the door opened. Lu Ye walked out, hand on his sword, passing by her as if he couldn't see her at all.

Shen Chudan was infuriated and quickly blocked Lu Ye's path: "Are you deaf? I'm talking to you."

Lu Ye stood there, pondering for a moment as if remembering something, then turned back to the bamboo loft, shutting the door with a bang.

Shen Chudan was dumbfounded, feeling that Lu Yiye was truly despicable, ignoring her after bringing her back, pretending not to see her, despite her previous help in passing the message and items for him.

Indeed, as Ying Wuji said, having connections with him leads to no good end.

The more she thought about it, the more wronged she felt, almost bringing her to tears.

Couldn't see her...

Suddenly, a light flashed in her mind...

Shen Chudan's heart skipped a beat, vaguely realizing something.

Inside the bamboo loft, Lu Ye sat cross-legged, responding to messages from Cheng Xiu.

Cheng Xiu was the one from the Justice Department designated to coordinate with Lu Ye on the Explosive Fire Spirit Stones. Every seven days, he would come to Cangyan Mountain Pass to collect the stones Lu Ye had refined, but Lu Ye found this troublesome and asked him to report to Qian Wudang to change it to once a month.

Qian Wudang had agreed.

As a result, Lu Ye had been roaming outside for the past two months, naturally unable to hand over the Explosive Fire Spirit Stones. During this time, Cheng Xiu had already sent inquiries multiple times.

Lu Ye only instructed him to continue waiting.

Now, back at Cangyan Mountain Pass, it was time to hand over the stones, as this related to obtaining battle merit.

Arrangements were made for the next day, and Cheng Xiu readily agreed.

Actually, Lu Ye also wanted to ask how his refined Explosive Fire Spirit Stones ended up at Jinglan Lake Pass, but this was an awkward question since, as Lu Yiye, he shouldn't know about the battle situation there so soon.

After settling the matter, Lu Ye briefly utilized Mental Consciousness to scout outside but found no trace of Shen Chudan within a mile radius.

"Not too stupid!" Lu Ye murmured to himself.

They had some connection, and considering she helped him last time, Lu Ye couldn't outright trouble Shen Chudan, but when he saved her from that Haotian Alliance cultivator, he couldn't release her immediately.

He could only bring her back to Cangyan Mountain Pass.

Now that she was lost here, it was no longer his concern, as he still had Nian Yuexian over him.

Having agreed with Cheng Xiu to deliver the stones the next day but with none in hand, Lu Ye had to work overtime today to refine them quickly.

This wasn't difficult for him; refining Explosive Fire Spirit Stones was just a routine process.

The two months' worth amounted to sixty thousand Explosive Fire Spirit Stones, bringing him a full three hundred thousand battle merits, not to mention the extra rewards from his initial agreement with Qian Wudang on refining losses.

A silent night passed.

The following day, when Cheng Xiu arrived at Cangyan Mountain Pass as agreed, Lu Ye had already prepared the sixty thousand Explosive Fire Spirit Stones. After a brief check, Cheng Xiu left satisfied.

Without a moment to rest, Lu Ye immediately headed to Nian Yuexian's residence.

Inside the bamboo loft, Lu Ye entered as permitted and took his seat.

"The woman you brought back yesterday has safely returned to Gushan City Pass," Nian Yuexian stated.

Lu Ye was momentarily stunned before realizing that Nian Yuexian must have secretly ensured her safe passage. He immediately cupped his fists, "Thank you, my lord."

"Additionally, I am going into closed retreat," Nian Yuexian spoke once more.

"Rest assured, my lady, I will do my utmost to oversee the mountain pass here," replied the subordinate.

Nian Yuexian slowly shook her head, "This retreat may take some time."

For a cultivator of the Divine Sea Realm to say it would take time, it surely wouldn't be brief, most likely calculated in years.

Lu Ye pondered, "Did my lady gain significant insights within the Sword Weapon Sect's secret realm?"

Nian Yuexian nodded, "In that Sword Mountain, every flying sword held an enduring thought from the Sword Weapon Sect's ancestors, filled with profound Sword Dao. My previous climb up the Sword Mountain granted me much, and I must now carefully comprehend it. Moreover..."

She retrieved the Willow Catkins Cutlass, "I must also completely refine this treasure."

The Willow Catkins Cutlass is something beyond that of a spirit treasure. Although Nian Yuexian had been refining it for a while, she hadn't fully succeeded. According to her estimate, it would take a considerable amount of time to completely refine it.

"Do you mean..." Lu Ye slowly began to understand.

If Nian Yuexian were merely to retreat for ten days to half a month, or even one or two months, it wouldn't be a major issue. However, if it took too long, she would certainly need to find a safe and reliable place, meaning she would have to leave Cangyan Mountain Pass.

Once she departed, no one would be left guarding this side.

Lu Ye alone at the True Lake Level 3 could not accomplish much. Staying here alone was dangerous. If those from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge learned of the situation, they would launch a large-scale attack against the Righteous Blood Sect Lu Yiye.

"I have already reported this to Haotian City. Soon, another cultivator of the Divine Sea Realm will come to take over and oversee this area. Concurrently, a large number of provincial guards will be mobilized here. Cangyan Mountain Pass will be like any other pass."

The peculiarity of Cangyan Mountain Pass lay with Nian Yuexian, who, single-handedly guarding a pass, held great fame across the Nine Provinces.

But without Nian Yuexian, Cangyan Mountain Pass would be no different from any other pass.

"I offer you three choices," Nian Yuexian gazed at Lu Ye, "First, stay at Cangyan Mountain Pass. You now hold the rank of Capital Commandant and aren't considered weak. Regardless of which Divine Sea Realm cultivator comes, they will not belittle you. However, due to your connection with the Righteous Blood Sect, they might be hostile towards you, making your days ahead difficult."

"Second, if there is a mountain pass you wish to visit, I can have you transferred there. This small matter I can still arrange."

"And the third?" Lu Ye inquired.

Nian Yuexian's eyes softened, "Justice Department Chief Qian Wudang has been asking for you, wishing to transfer you to the Justice Department. I have ignored him. However, if you don't wish to stay at a

mountain pass, you can go to the Justice Department. Although Qian Wudang can sometimes be unreliable, at least you needn't worry about him targeting you. You seem to have dealt with him before; joining the Justice Department would earn you attention."

"I understand," Lu Ye nodded, "My lady, do you have any recommendations?"

Nian Yuexian glanced at him, speaking slowly, "The peculiarity of the Righteous Blood Sect is something you must be aware of. In Bingzhou, the Righteous Blood Sect has many friends but also numerous enemies. No matter which mountain pass you go to, you can't guarantee you won't be targeted. Almost every pass has at least two Mountain Pass Chiefs in charge, and above the Chiefs is the checkpoint lord. Each Chief has their allies, making it hard to guard if someone intends to trouble you. The Justice Department is different. It wields significant power and is a strong institution. Qian Wudang is a decent person, known for defending his own. His appreciation of you means working under him will eventually lead to prominence."

"So, my lady suggests I go to the Justice Department?"

"It's merely my personal suggestion. Whether you go or not is up to you. There's no need to rush your decision; give me an answer in three days. Before I enter retreat, I will ensure you're settled."

"I understand. Thank you for your guidance, my lady."

Nian Yuexian's gaze was complex, "You have assisted me greatly during this time, it is only right."

Reflecting back, Lu Ye had been at Cangyan Mountain Pass for only a few months, yet more had happened in these months than during her decades of solitary guarding here.

"By the way, my lady, this is for you." Lu Ye took out a jade slip.

"And this is..." Nian Yuexian looked at him, puzzled.

"An inscription rubbing of the Sword Dao True Meaning from the Sword Weapon Sect." Lu Ye explained, "It should be useful to you."

Before the secret realm of the Sword Weapon Sect collapsed, Khong Khong had entrusted Lu Ye with the sword gourd, a token of the Sect Master, along with a jade slip. Contained within the slip were Artifact Refining essentials and the Sword Dao True Meaning.

The artifact crafting essentials were of no use to Nian Yuexian, but the Sword Dao True Meaning suited her well.

Yesterday, Lu Ye had separated the contents of the jade slip into two parts and inscribed several copies using his Mental Consciousness.

Nian Yuexian nodded, "You are thoughtful."

"Then, I shall take my leave."

Leaving Nian Yuexian's bamboo pavilion, Lu Ye returned to his residence and sat down in deep thought.

Yiyi noticed and asked, "What's the matter?"

"Our Mountain Pass Chief is entering closed retreat for a long while..." Lu Ye shared the three choices he received from Nian Yuexian.

After hearing, Yiyi asked, "Which one do you choose?"

"Actually, I wish to go to Jinglan Lake Pass." Lu Ye's words were surprising.

The situation on Third Brother's side was concerning. If he could go to Jinglan Lake Pass, he could look out for Third Brother as well.

However, should he go, there was a significant issue.

His identity as a disciple of the Righteous Blood Sect would inevitably invite considerable targeting and oppression!