

Humanity 991

Chapter 991: Venerable Lord

By the lakeside, a serene and peaceful atmosphere prevailed. Under the night sky, a gentle breeze brushed past, stirring the hair of the young woman, who closed her eyes comfortably.

Suddenly, she frowned, a hint of displeasure flashing in her eyes, and lowered her head to examine her battlefield marking.

She wondered who was being inconsiderate enough to disturb her at such a time.

Soon, her expression changed.

"What's the matter?" came the calm voice of the fishing man.

The woman glanced up at him, cautiously reporting, "Venerable Lord, that Lu Yiye has taken a squad from the Law Enforcement Hall to the Chen family on Mount Mi, and the Family Head Chen Tianchui has enlightened him!"

Crack...

The fishing rod in the Venerable Lord's hand suddenly splintered, and he turned to look at the woman, anger surging onto his face: "How dare he!"

Though his voice was not loud, his expression was extremely sharp, and the woman hurriedly knelt on one knee: "Venerable Lord, calm your anger!"

"Accomplishing nothing and spoiling everything!" The Venerable Lord was evidently furious with Chen Tianchui's actions. "Has it already been done?"

For decades, he had been planning a grand scheme, one that could overturn the current order of the Nine Provinces.

For this great plan, he needed to wait for some special individuals. Unfortunately, no suitable candidate had appeared over the years until the sudden rise of Lu Yiye from the Righteous Blood Sect!

This made him realize that Lu Yiye was likely the person he had been waiting for!

Thus, he had instructed that contact with Lu Yiye was to be made at all costs, but his order was to engage, not enlighten!

Because once enlightened, even if Lu Yiye paid heed to their every word, he would lose his inherent value.

"It should be...yes!" The woman replied tremblingly, "Still, for some reason, Lu Yiye seems to have noticed something amiss and is currently leaving the Chen family."

"He noticed something unusual?" The Venerable Lord was taken aback, "How did he notice?"

The method he left behind would be impossible to detect unless one were of the Divine Sea Realm, and according to the information he received, Lu Yiye had only recently advanced to the True Lake Level 5 realm.

Could Lu Yiye possess such abilities?

"Chen Tianchui is also puzzled, and he has transmitted a message asking for instructions on how to handle the matter."

The Venerable Lord was silent for a moment before speaking, "The Chen family is now useless."

The woman felt a slight chill, knowing that with just one word from the Venerable Lord, a 6th grade family like the Chen family could vanish from the Nine Provinces.

No one was more aware of the Venerable Lord's power than her.

"Tell them to spare Lu Yiye's life, but the others...kill!" The Venerable Lord quickly decided, and slowly stood up, "Additionally, make a trip to Mist Cliff; the plan must be advanced."

They originally needed to wait a bit longer, but the Chen family's actions would inevitably attract attention from the Haotian Alliance. At that time, many Divine Sea Realm cultivators would surely come to investigate, though they usually wouldn't easily venture deep into Mist Cliff. Even if the secrets beneath Mist Cliff were unlikely to be exposed, precaution was still necessary.

The plan could only be expedited to prepare for unforeseen circumstances.

In this world, there ultimately is no foolproof scheme. These decades of painstaking planning, hidden behind the scenes managing everything, laying down various strategies - he was confident that even if the plan was rushed forward, it wouldn't affect the overall situation.

"Yes!" The woman responded as she shot up into the sky, quickly disappearing from sight.

The Venerable Lord stood in place, pondering for a moment, then turned and dashed off in another direction. He gazed deeply into the distance, as if beyond thousands of miles he could see a long-lost face, softly murmuring: "Do not block my path!"

His eyes gleamed coldly, like a blade's edge!

In the visitors hall of the Chen family on Mount Mi, accompanied by a hum, Lu Ye felt a slight heaviness on his body.

Although the feeling of heaviness quickly vanished, he realized what had occurred.

"Great Sky Prohibition Array!" A Great Sky Prohibition Array was unexpectedly laid out here.

Moreover, with the activation of the Great Sky Prohibition Array, a transparent light screen swiftly rose, enveloping a vast area.

"Trap array!" The ones behind him all turned pale.

Lu Ye's expression grew grave as he channeled spirit force into his eyes. Through the hazy moonlight, he looked at the numerous figures suddenly appearing outside the trap array, and the one leading them was unmistakably Chen Lie, the Chen family Great Elder who had been extremely hospitable just moments ago.

Exchanging glances, Lu Ye shouted furiously: "What does the Chen family plan to do, rebel?"

This was what puzzled him most. Chen Lie had enthusiastically invited them to the Chen family as guests, then tampered with their tea, and after the incident occurred, even activated a Formation to trap them here.

He couldn't fathom why this was happening or what the Chen family intended.

His group and the Chen family had no grievances or enmity. The Chen family had no reason to act in such a manner.

Could the Chen family be part of the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge? Lu Ye pondered all possibilities, and that was the only plausible one.

The people of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge constantly regarded him as a thorn in their side, wishing to eliminate him completely. They had indeed acted in that manner but unfortunately had never succeeded.

Today, having walked into the Chen family unsuspectingly, was undoubtedly a very good opportunity.

Yet, even if the Chen family were to be eliminated here along with ourselves, there is nowhere in this vast Bingzhou for them to find refuge. Is it really worth it for a grand 6th grade family to act in such a way?

As Lu Ye was questioned, he subtly made a hand gesture behind his back.

Lin Yinxu's figure flashed, preparing to use Lu Ye's body as cover to send signals outside.

No matter why the Chen family wants to do this, the current situation is extremely disadvantageous for them, and it is naturally urgent to quickly send signals for help.

However, as Lin Yinxu started her move, Chen Lie shouted fiercely, "Kill them!"

He naturally knew that he couldn't give Lu Ye and others any chance to send signals, otherwise nearby Divine Sea Realm cultivators would soon come to aid them, and should that happen, the Chen family would be close to destruction.

As he issued the order, his eyes were tightly fixed on Lu Ye's reaction because, in his opinion, Lu Ye must have been enlightened, was one of their own. The means left by the Venerable Lord had always been infallible, Lu Yiye was certainly famous, but as long as he wasn't in the Divine Sea Realm, he couldn't resist.

With the commands given, streams of lights from weaponry and magic and spells swept overwhelmingly towards the direction of the visitors hall.

With fierce roar, Giant Armor leapt out from behind everyone, blood Qi boiling, making his form seem to swell by a whole circle. Spirited force surged around him, raising a hand to press in the void. A turtle shell-like shield abruptly formed at his palm, blocking the silhouettes of those behind.

All those streams of weaponry and magic and spells struck that shield, sounds of "tuk tuk tuk" never ceased, making the once dazzling shield rapidly dim.

Then shattered.

Giant Armor's protective means were strong indeed, yet facing the joint strong attack from the Chen family cultivators, it was still hard to persist.

Lu Ye and others all made their move simultaneously, in an instant, blades and sword shadows crisscrossed, spirit force chaotic.

At this moment, somewhere among the crowd, the Chen Family Patriarch Chen Tianchui stared intently at Lu Ye in front of the visitors hall, a chill settling in his heart.

It's useless!

Lu Yiye wasn't enlightened after all!

Chen Lie thought Lu Ye had already been enlightened, and Chen Tianchui also believed that, after all, he had watched Lu Ye drink that cup of tea with his own eyes.

Anyone who has had that tea cannot escape the fate of being enlightened.

But at this moment, he could already confirm one thing, that Lu Yiye indeed hadn't been enlightened, because he had already employed the means left by the Venerable Lord, yet couldn't detect the slightest resonance from Lu Ye.

At this instant, he glared angrily, his eyes wide open, within the eyes, a silver thread-like worm was constantly swimming in the eyeball, appearing extremely bizarre.

As long as Lu Ye had been enlightened, activating this means would make Lu Ye immediately switch sides, then the people around him would be completely unprepared. Cooperating with the Chen family's strong attack, it would be easy to kill those five people.

As long as those five were killed, the crisis could be resolved, as for how to deal with the aftermath, explaining the deaths of these five team members to the Justice Department, there's always a way.

But now that Lu Ye's side is completely unreliable, and seeing Lin Yinxiu behind Lu Ye transmit a message out, he immediately understood, regardless of what happens to Lu Ye and the others, the Chen family is completely done for this time!

"Kill! Kill them all!" Chen Tianchui shouted fiercely amidst unstable mind.

The Chen family is finished, but they must drag some down with them.

With a command, numerous Chen family cultivators gathered in front of the visitors hall rushed fiercely forward.

Slash slash slash slash...

Li Baxian's flying sword rampaged, Chen family cultivators rushing at the forefront fell like grass, which made his brows furrow deeply.

Because many of the fallen cultivators were from the Spirit Stream Realm and Cloud River Realm, allowing him to massacre them.

But now is not the time for any compassion, although unwilling in heart, he showed no hesitation, sword lights raged back and forth amidst the crowd, continuously harvesting the lives of Chen family cultivators, bringing endless wailing.

While Li Baxian's flying sword flaunted its might, Feng Yuechan's magic and spells were hardly less, with each spell cast yielding results.

However, the Chen family seemed to have gone all out this time, and there were even more cultivators continuously flying in from one direction, joining the battle.

That direction, no doubt was where the Chen family's Heaven's Augury Hall was, the cultivators stationed at Spirit Stream battlefield and Cloud River battlefield must have received the signal and were rushing back.

In less than ten breaths, before the visitors hall, Chen family cultivator bodies had piled up.

Blood flowed into rivers.

At this moment, Lu Ye and others also found themselves in a bitter struggle.

Though the Chen family was a 6th grade family, they didn't have many True Lake Realm cultivators. Excluding those outside, there were less than ten True Lake Realm cultivators within the family. The Spirit Stream Realm and Cloud River Realm cultivators were unable to withstand a single blow from Lu Ye and others, but the True Lake Realm was different, they ultimately had some strength, Lu Ye could kill one, two, but couldn't slay them all in a short time.

The squad of six fought and retreated simultaneously, and in moments were pushed back to the entrance of the visitors hall.

There was no way to retreat further, to retreat into the visitors hall would mean cramped space, preventing them from enacting combat efficiently, then the Chen family cultivators would swarm in, surely trapping them inside, worsening the situation.

In less than thirty breaths of exchange, the squad of six sustained individual injuries, though not severe, somewhat affecting their strength.

Looking at the densely packed silhouettes ahead, Lu Ye took a deep breath, raising a hand to grip in the void, a baby-sized sphere appeared in his palm.

Seeing this scene, Chen Lie's eyes wrinkled, an extremely unsettling feeling rose in his heart.

"Stop him quickly!" Chen Lie shouted as he lunged towards Lu Ye.

Chapter 992: The Dragon Throne's Ferocious Might

Chen Lie didn't know what exactly Lu Ye was holding, but he sensed an extremely dangerous aura emanating from that orb-like object.

As he spoke, he had already lunged at Lu Ye, spirit force surging around him, and threw a powerful punch.

Though he was old, as a physique cultivator, his strength was not to be underestimated. He was confident that Lu Yiye, a mere True Lake Level 5 realm, could not possibly withstand such an attack.

While launching his punch, his other hand reached for the orb, intending to seize it.

A slash of blade light came down from above, and Chen Lie drove his blood Qi and spirit force to protect himself, neither dodging nor evading.

It wasn't until the blade struck that Chen Lie realized something was wrong. A formidable force surged from the front, freezing his body and shattering the protective aura of spirit force and blood Qi. As pain hit him, he was already being thrown backward.

Out of the corner of his eye, he saw another Chen family elder who charged with him having his head fly high into the air.

That was the Seventh Elder, who had a cultivation of True Lake Level 7!

At the True Lake realm, a Level 7 was no weakling, yet he couldn't even withstand a single slash from Lu Yiye. Moreover, that slash had repelled him first before cutting down the Seventh Elder!

A chill crept into his heart, and as a sense of great crisis arose, a crackling sound reached his ears.

Once he steadied himself and looked, he was stunned.

At the entrance of the visitors hall, where Lu Ye had been, there was now a three-zhang tall scarlet figure replacing him, its lines were sleek, and its entire body was sharp and angular, giving off an impression of extreme toughness.

On that scarlet figure, complex and arcane patterns spread from its face, traversed its torso, and extended to its limbs, forming an extremely wild totem.

Two intense red lights shone from the eye sockets of this towering figure, like spectral fires that chilled the heart of anyone who gazed upon them.

A visible wave of air emanated from the feet of the scarlet figure, roaring as it spread outward.

Together with it spread an indescribable sense of oppression.

In this instant, all the cultivators of the Chen family were captivated, staring blankly.

In the back of the crowd, Chen Tianchui, who was hiding in the shadows, was also dumbfounded, unable to see clearly when Chen Lie was blown away.

Standing there, he witnessed clearly that in the fierce battle, Lu Yiye suddenly summoned a sphere the size of a baby's fist, which immediately split into countless tiny fragments that attached to him. In the blink of an eye, the small figure transformed into a three-zhang tall monstrous thing.

What is this? Even Chen Tianchui, as the Clan Leader of a 6th grade family and knowledgeable with a cultivation of True Lake Level 9, couldn't help but be shocked beyond comprehension by this scene.

Cover armor?

No one ever heard that Lu Yiye had cover armor, and such a cover armor was unheard of.

What made him even more fearful was that Lu Yiye, clad in cover armor, wielded a saber one-zhang-six in length, with a blade resembling bamboo shoots, having a node every foot.

With the saber in hand, an endless menacing aura spread, as if an ancient ferocious beast had been born.

In that instant, all Chen family cultivators couldn't help but feel a chill in their hearts.

"Hoo..." A soft exhale sounded, and a visible stream of air spurted from both sides of the angular cover armor's head, transforming into white mist.

The long saber was held horizontally at his side and lightly swung, as if swatting away mosquitoes.

A faint blade light flickered, and in an instant, the figures of many Chen family cultivators before Lu Ye stiffened, including even a True Lake realm elder!

The next instant, he crouched slightly, pointing the saber tip downward, dragging the blade as he walked through the stiffened Chen family cultivators.

With the sweeping wind, the bodies of these people became rigid. Without exception, all their upper halves slid down, revealing neatly cut lower halves, and blood spurted up to the sky.

Like a tiger among a flock of sheep.

The towering figure of the Dragon Throne, paired with the exaggeratedly shaped Dragon Spine Saber, claimed the life of a Chen family cultivator with each flicker of blade light.

Everywhere he passed, there was a storm of blood and rain.

"Kill him!" A roar came from the back of the crowd.

Only then did the many cultivators of the Chen family snap back to reality, fearlessly charging toward the towering figure. Blade arcs surged, and more people fell constantly, yet the ones who followed showed no fear, stepping over the blood and corpses on the ground to rush forward heedlessly.

From afar, the scene was both tragic and heart-wrenching.

Inside the visitors hall, Li Baxian and the four others stared slack-jawed at the sudden change.

Before this, none of them had witnessed the might of the Dragon Throne firsthand, assuming this trip would end disastrously, little knowing that Lu Ye had such a trump card.

Lu Ye, clad in the Dragon Throne, fought his way out, drawing the attention of ninety percent of the Chen family cultivators, immediately reducing the pressure on their side significantly.

Giant Armor and Xiao Xinghe stood at the entrance of the visitors hall, using their combined sabers to create a barrier, blocking the sporadic and scattered attacks from the Chen family cultivators.

Li Baxian and Feng Yuechan each employed their own tactics, executing the invading enemies one by one, while Lin Yinxiu's figure flickered in and out, but every strike she made was successful. With the strength of the five of them combined, they were temporarily safe from danger.

"Something's wrong!" Li Baxian spoke up, stealing a glance in Lu Ye's direction amid the chaos.

From the start, something felt off. The Chen family's sudden hostility was unexpected by everyone.

Now, there was an even greater sense of incongruity.

By rights, when facing Lu Ye, now wearing the Dragon Throne, even a True Lake Realm cultivator would inevitably feel a tinge of fear.

The so-called morale is like a tiger's momentum at the first blow, declining at the second, and exhausted at the third. The Chen family has already lost so many people, the remaining survivors, whoever they are, must be timid in their hearts.

But the Chen family cultivators seemed not the least bit afraid. Following an order, even an inconspicuous Spirit Stream Realm would dare to madly rush toward Lu Ye, disregarding their own lives. Some even climbed up the tall figure of the Dragon Throne, madly attacking it, making a continuous clattering sound.

Although Lu Ye was killing fast, he couldn't withstand the sheer numbers of the Chen family.

Moments later, the place where the Dragon Throne stood could no longer see that tall and slender figure, as the people of the Chen family had completely flooded over it.

Just as Li Baxian and others were worried about Lu Ye's safety, a light but deep voice suddenly emerged from within the amassed mountain of people.

"Crescent Moon!"

As the words fell, a glimmer of saber light blossomed from within the human mountain.

Followed immediately by a dense flurry of saber lights, like crescent moons slicing out.

The hissing sounds continued nonstop.

The human mountain collapsed, severed limbs and chunks of meat flew all around. The submerged figure of the Dragon Throne reemerged, the scarlet figure now covered in wet blood, appeared even more vividly colored.

Chen Lie's head flew to the front of the visitors hall, rolling right at the feet of the Giant Armor, which stepped on it and crushed it.

Freed, Lu Ye took a step forward and charged toward a certain spot in the crowd, wielding the Dragon Spine Saber, slicing through waves and cutting through, with not a single match for him. All those daring to approach within ten feet of him fell like weeds.

His speed was such that in the dim night, it was impossible to see him clearly, with only two points of crimson gleaming in his eye sockets, trailing two scarlet light trails.

In an instant, he reached in front of a middle-aged man.

The man roared, summoning a large hammer, leapt up mightily, using the momentum of descent, and smashed fiercely downward at Lu Ye's head, this strike was a full burst of the opponent's power and was extremely powerful.

Faced with such a strike, Lu Ye merely raised a hand and caught the descending hammer.

With a boom, the tall figure of the Dragon Throne crouched slightly, knees bending to absorb the impact, firmly clutching the hammer, and forcefully dragging the opponent before him. His other hand, wielding the Dragon Spine Saber, reversed smoothly, with the hilt smashing heavily into the opponent's chest.

With a crack, who knows how many ribs were broken.

The middle-aged man spat out a mouthful of blood, his energy instantly withering.

Lu Ye discarded the large hammer, raised a hand to grip his head, lifting him in front of himself, and an icy voice came from beneath the Dragon Throne, "Your Chen family... what are you up to?"

This middle-aged man was the Family Head of the Chen family, Chen Tianchui.

Earlier, he was hiding here giving orders, and Lu Ye had already perceived his location, knowing that this was the last True Lake Realm left in the entire Chen family.

The other True Lake Realm cultivators had either been killed by him or slain by Li Baxian and Xiao Xinghe.

Even the surviving Chen family cultivators were less than thirty percent of before.

Lu Ye didn't kill him because he felt today's events were too strange. The Chen family inexplicably attacking them was one thing, but after the incident, they besieged them altogether.

He thought the Chen family was a pawn placed by the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge to eliminate him taking this opportunity.

But after the battle, he felt that didn't seem right.

Because the Chen family cultivators' actions were too fearless, as if no one considered their own life and death, even with him wearing the Dragon Throne, it only shocked and stunned the Chen family cultivators at first, afterward not posing any threat at all.

Even if the Chen family had moles planted by Ten Thousand Demons, it would only be a portion of them, it couldn't be that the entire Chen family cultivators were from Ten Thousand Demons.

If that were the case, the news would have been leaked long ago.

So Lu Ye couldn't understand why the Chen family dared such audacious actions, did they not know what consequences would follow for ambushing the Law Enforcement Hall squad like this?

Not killing Chen Tianchui naturally was to take him back to Haotian City for a thorough interrogation.

In any case, today's events need to be understood; otherwise, similar attacks might happen next time.

"Not worthy of... the chosen one," Chen Tianchui suddenly spoke.

"What?" Lu Ye asked, but received no response, only hearing a light popping sound from within Chen Tianchui's head, and then Chen Tianchui's neck tilted, losing his breath.

He died just like that!

Lu Ye didn't even know how he died! Because he didn't feel Chen Tianchui activating spirit force at all.

Puff puff puff...

Similar sounds came continuously from beside him.

"Grab a live one!" Lu Ye yelled angrily, turning to grab a nearby Chen family cultivator, but just as he caught him, that person died on the spot.

Bodies fell one after another, the remaining Chen family cultivators all fell to the ground.

Lu Ye was somewhat dumbstruck.

The survivors Li Baxian and others were equally dumbstruck!

Chapter 993: Lu Ye the Sect Destroyer

Blood Qi surged to the heavens, blood flowed like rivers.

In the square outside the Chen family's visitors hall, broken corpses could be seen everywhere, especially in the place where Lu Ye was surrounded by a crowd and at the entrance of the hall, where bodies were stacked like small mountains.

The Chen family, a 6th grade family, didn't have too many cultivators, but also not too few. During the battle, numerous Spirit Stream-Cloud River cultivators continuously came over from Heaven's Augury Hall, totaling around several hundred.

Yet at this moment, these several hundred met their end here.

Among them, seventy percent died in fierce battle, the last thirty percent died inexplicably.

The clouds cleared in the sky, and moonlight slanted down.

Xiao Xinghe and others stepped out from the visitors hall and gazed upon the scene resembling hell before them, feeling a chill in their hearts.

Dead people, they had seen before, but the mysterious deaths of the last Chen family cultivators were too peculiar.

No one knew how they died.

Moreover, during the battle, the Chen family members were fearlessly aggressive, leaving everyone puzzled. The hordes rushing forward seemed not like living humans but irrational beasts.

A cracking sound echoed, and everyone looked up to see the moonlit figure three meters high disintegrate, turning into small fragments, transforming into spherical objects the size of infant heads.

Lu Ye reached out to grab them, landing lightly, his body staggering slightly.

Lin Yinxiu hurried forward to support him, seeing his pale face, asked with concern, "Captain, are you alright?"

Lu Ye shook his head.

There wasn't much wrong, just exhausted. Using the Dragon Throne as a trump card greatly depletes oneself, and he also suffered some internal injuries during the fierce battle.

Casual attacks simply cannot penetrate the Dragon Throne's defense, thus causing no harm, but the shockwaves from the attacks cannot be offset by the Dragon Throne. Once or twice is fine, but multiple times become hard to endure.

Especially when he caught Chen Tianchui's strike at the end, he felt as if his hand bones had cracked under that blow.

This is also why he didn't use the Dragon Throne when forced into a corner by Liew Yuemei the last time.

Liew Yuemei might not break through the Dragon Throne's defense, but she has ways to kill him.

"I'll rest for a bit, you all investigate the cause of those people's deaths." Lu Ye said as he sat down cross-legged, took out a handful of elixir pills from the storage sack and stuffed them into his mouth, grasping a Spirit Stone in each hand to activate the Talent Tree's power for absorption.

Spirit force could be quickly replenished, but the physical and mental power consumed by the Dragon Throne requires slow recovery.

Lin Yinxiu quietly guarded by his side, acting as his protector.

Xiao Xinghe and the other four split into pairs to investigate the causes of those people's deaths as instructed by Lu Ye.

Today's affair, too many mysteries abound, too much that remains incomprehensible.

After some investigation, nothing useful was found, only that the last batch of people who died, including Chen Tianchui, seemed to have an external force exploding in their brains, turning them into mush, and killed instantly.

While Xiao Xinghe and others were busy, Lu Ye contemplated Chen Tianchui's words before his death.

He didn't catch it clearly, perhaps Chen Tianchui didn't finish his sentence, vaguely hearing something about the chosen person.

Who chose whom?

If it was him, then who had chosen him?

What did it have to do with today's incident at the Chen family?

Lost in thought, Lu Ye suddenly looked up into the sky to see a stream of light swiftly approaching.

In a flash, it landed in front, revealing a middle-aged man's figure.

The squad immediately gathered around Lu Ye, eyeing with vigilance.

Lu Ye slowly stood up, placing a hand on the Boulder Mountain Saber at his waist.

Seeing the gruesome scene, the newcomer's eyelids twitched.

Seeing the squad so wary, he took out his guard token from his waist, "I am Xiang Dongliu from the Justice Department. Which team are you from?"

Everyone then understood; reinforcement had arrived.

Almost at the moment of action against the Chen family, Lu Ye instructed Lin Yinxiu to send for reinforcements, and Lin Yinxiu successfully conveyed the information, calculating the time, the reinforcement had arrived quickly.

Judging from the previous spirit force fluctuations exhibited by the newcomer, this Xiang Dongliu is evidently in the Divine Sea Realm, only a Divine Sea Realm could hold the position of a Department Chief in the Justice Department.

Confirming they were from the same side, the squad finally relaxed, mainly because the ordeal with the Chen family left everyone shaken, and before the newcomer's identity was confirmed, no one could guarantee whether he was friend or foe.

Even now, they remained alert.

"Law Enforcement Hall Team D-9, Lu Ye, greetings to the Department Chief!" Lu Ye showed his guard token and saluted.

Xiang Dongliu glanced him over before looking aside, "Are these people... killed by you?"

"Some were."

"What happened here?" Xiang Dongliu asked solemnly.

Though he came here upon receiving a distress signal, he didn't expect to witness such a spectacle here. Sensing the surroundings, aside from some mortals residing over ten miles away, anyone with cultivation had perished.

In a single night, the Chen family could almost be said to have been annihilated.

The Chen family of Mount Mi will also become history.

Lu Ye then briefly recounted the events that had transpired.

Xiang Dongliu listened with furrowed brows, as there were too many holes in Lu Ye's account.

Leaving aside other issues, the Chen family's tampering with the tea made no sense. How could the Chen family, a 6th grade family, be unaware of the consequences of such actions against a Law Enforcement Hall team?

Even more irrational was the family's collective assault after the events were exposed.

He had little interaction with the Chen family but knew of Chen Tianchui. A person capable of being the Chen Family Patriarch and possessing a True Lake Level 9 cultivation was certainly no ordinary person. Could such a person be this foolish?

Lu Ye spoke quickly, as the situation itself wasn't complex, but there were too many puzzling aspects.

Xiang Dongliu remained silent for a moment after hearing him, then finally spoke: "Lu Ye the Sect Destroyer, truly lives up to his name. Seeing is believing."

The moniker "Lu Ye the Sect Destroyer" originated when Lu Ye was on the Spirit Stream battlefield, but back then he merely destroyed the outposts of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge sects, never actually wiping out an entire sect. The name was somewhat exaggerated.

Until today... it was now truly confirmed.

"I hope what you're saying is true," Xiang Dongliu said, looking at Lu Ye with a meaningful glance.

Lu Ye sensed something: "Sir, do you suspect us?"

Xiang Dongliu replied, "This matter will be judged by the Lord Department Chief when you return to Haotian City. It is not for me to comment. I was merely dispatched to rescue you."

Lu Ye was silent for a moment and did not say more.

Indeed, today's event had too many suspicious points, so it's no wonder Xiang Dongliu had doubts.

"Since you are all unharmed, then I have nothing more to do here. Please clean up the area..." Xiang Dongliu was speaking when he suddenly sensed something, looked up in a direction, immediately frowned, and soared into the sky, heading in that direction.

His sudden action left Lu Ye and the others confused, for none of them knew what he had discovered.

"That direction... it's the direction of Mist Cliff?" Feng Yuechan mused.

At that moment, a violent surge of spirit force came from that direction, and Lu Ye and the others looked over. Under the night sky, they saw brilliant flashes erupting repeatedly from that direction, illuminating the heavens. Two distinct auras were clashing fiercely.

"He's encountered an enemy!" Xiao Xinghe frowned.

Of the two people fighting over there, one was obviously Xiang Dongliu, who had just rushed over, but the identity of the other person was unknown.

Judging by the auras, one was clearly stronger, and the other slightly weaker, but from such a distance, no one could determine which was which.

Only Lu Ye, who had already developed Mental Consciousness, had an intense worry etched across his brow.

Because he sensed that the slightly weaker aura was indeed Xiang Dongliu's.

In other words, the person fighting Xiang Dongliu was much more formidable.

"How dare you!" An angry shout came from the direction of Mist Cliff, immediately followed by a sudden cry brought to an abrupt halt.

The battle ended!

From the moment Xiang Dongliu arrived to engage the unknown enemy, only thirty breaths had passed!

Lu Ye's heart sank continuously, unable to comprehend the night's events. A series of bizarre happenings unfolded one after another, giving him a sense of being swept into some rapid current and a premonition of something major about to occur.

A stream of light quickly approached from Mist Cliff, carrying the imposing power unique to a strong cultivator of the Divine Sea Realm.

After finishing off Xiang Dongliu, the unknown Divine Sea Realm entity was heading towards them.

Lu Ye and the others all felt a numbness on their scalps, instantly readying for battle.

Though they knew it was unlikely to be a match for a Divine Sea Realm strong cultivator, no one among them was willing to sit and await death.

Lu Ye even took out the Dragon Throne, but before he could activate it, the figure rushing from Mist Cliff flew directly over their heads.

In that split second, Lu Ye exerted his Ocular Power and vaguely saw an alluring figure in the stream of light.

It was a woman!

When the woman flew over their heads, Lu Ye distinctly saw her glance downward but showed no intention of stopping and continued on her way.

The brief exchange of glances made Lu Ye break into a cold sweat because in that instant, he vaguely perceived a meaningful look flash across the woman's eyes.

Ten breaths later, the sound of a long exhale filled the air.

The survivors all wore grave expressions.

"Why... didn't she kill us?" Lin Yinxiu asked.

If the woman had decided to kill them, the squad would have been unable to resist. Even if Lu Ye donned the Dragon Throne, it wouldn't suffice. At that point, only activating the Golden Body Token could save his life, leaving the others to certain death!

"Perhaps she disdained it!" Xiao Xinghe looked at the blade in his hand, a feeling of helplessness welling up within.

Though having their lives spared was a relief, being dismissed like that wasn't something to be jubilant about.

"Let's go!" Lu Ye urged as he headed toward Mist Cliff.

In any case, they needed to check on Xiang Dongliu's fate, for he had come to their aid.

Chapter 994: Sudden Change

In just a few dozen miles, they arrived swiftly.

There were no signs of a major battle; after all, the two Divine Sea Realm cultivators had clashed in the air, leaving no trace.

They searched all around but found no sign of Xiang Dongliu.

Judging by the noise of the battle and the final, brief scream, it was likely that Xiang Dongliu met some misfortune. His fate was uncertain, and he was nowhere to be seen. There was only one possibility.

Lu Ye stood at the edge of Mist Cliff, looked down, and without much hesitation said, "I'll go down to take a look."

The environment of Mist Cliff was treacherous; the thick fog not only blocked mental consciousness exploration but was also mixed with numerous origin magnetic ore particles. The further down one went, the more the spirit force within a cultivator was suppressed.

Going deep into the bottom of Mist Cliff meant a cultivator's power would be hard to exert, making it troublesome to even climb back up.

However, it's not that one couldn't get back up; climbing was still possible.

"I'll go with you," Xiao Xinghe spoke up.

Lu Ye nodded and was just about to step out when his movement suddenly halted. He concentrated, frowned, and listened closely.

"What's that sound?" Lin Yinxiu also noticed the anomaly. Among those present, her cultivation was the highest, but since she hadn't developed mental consciousness, her perception wasn't as strong as Lu Ye's, so she discovered it a step later.

Soon, the others also sensed the commotion.

An eerie buzzing and a rustling sound came from below the Mist Cliff, growing closer and closer.

"Something's coming up!" Lu Ye shouted in a low voice. Judging by the noise, whatever was coming was in great numbers!

"Retreat!" Lu Ye barked, leading everyone back. They retreated for a hundred yards before stopping to look back.

The noise from below Mist Cliff grew louder, and the dense fog enveloping the abyss began to churn violently. Something as large as a human figure emerged flapping from the mist.

Under the bright moonlight, the figure's unusual shape clearly appeared before everyone's eyes.

"Insect Race!" Li Baxian exclaimed.

This creature that burst from the mist at Mist Cliff was a Mantis Insect Race.

All Nine Provinces cultivators were familiar with such things; after all, Insect Plagues frequently erupted on the Spirit Stream battlefield, and most cultivators had witnessed the devastation caused by the Insect Race.

But this Insect Race was significantly larger than the ones Li Baxian had seen on the Spirit Stream battlefield, and it exuded a much more ferocious aura.

This Insect Race was at least comparable to a Cloud River Realm insect!

Everyone felt their scalps tingle.

A single Cloud River Realm Insect Race wouldn't have alarmed them so much, but everyone knew that the Insect Race never acted alone.

They often moved in groups, forming huge Insect Race armies, and if there were Insect Races, then there had to be an insect hive.

Thinking back on the sounds they heard earlier, everyone felt a chill down their spines.

The mist continued to churn as Insect Races surged out from below Mist Cliff. In the blink of an eye, the view was filled with swarming Insect Race figures.

The Insect Races varied in form, with some flying like mantises and others posed like hyenas crouched on all fours. They were clad in what seemed like thick layers of bone armor, with sharp spikes protruding from their shoulders, glinting coldly in the moonlight. There were even centipede-like Insect Races, their hundred feet moving swiftly as they danced.

The first Mantis Insect Race that had burst from the mist had already spotted Lu Ye and the others. With a flap of its wings, it flew towards them.

A myriad of other strangely shaped Insect Races followed closely behind.

Li Baxian slashed with his flying sword, cleaving the Mantis Insect Race in half. As the sword light wreaked havoc, more Insect Races fell midway.

Feng Yuechan continuously unleashed magic and spells, coordinating with Li Baxian to kill enemies.

Even Yiyi, who had been hiding within Amber, dashed out, wielding the power of magic and spells.

Yet, despite their excellent techniques, the enormous flood of incoming Insect Races presented an overwhelming challenge.

In no time, many Insect Races charged forward fiercely.

Giant Armor stood forward, shielding everyone. Lu Ye, Xiao Xinghe, and Lin Yinxiu spread out at the sides, their blades and sword lights flickering, as Insect Races fell one after another.

Lu Ye's expression was grave.

He had experienced an Insect Plague once on the Spirit Stream battlefield, but the Insect Races he encountered then were much easier to deal with than these, given the limitations of the battlefield. Their strength couldn't be fully realized.

But these Insect Races now were each equivalent to the Cloud River Realm. If their numbers were small, they wouldn't pose much of a problem, but as their numbers increased, it became a disaster.

Lu Ye couldn't understand why there were so many Insect Races beneath Mist Cliff.

Why hadn't these Insect Races been discovered before? With their low spiritual intelligence, they couldn't have just been hiding beneath the Mist Cliff without appearing.

Lu Ye recalled his mission for this trip; it was reported by Nightingale that there might be a ferocious beast here. After arriving, they did slay a harmful green-scaled python and thought it was the ferocious beast Nightingale discovered.

But what if it wasn't? What if what Nightingale noticed wasn't the commotion caused by the green-scaled python, but the sign of the Insect Race surging within Mist Cliff?

Without time to think further, the squad of six plus one spirit engaged in battle with the invading Insect Race for a moment, and Lu Ye shouted, "Go!"

If they stayed any longer, they would likely be surrounded by the Insect Race. Although many Insect Race members were slain in that brief moment, the view was still filled with an overwhelming insect army.

Moreover, Lu Ye clearly sensed that the Insect Race emerging from below Mist Cliff were not just Cloud River Realm, but those comparable to True Lake Realm...

No Insect Race comparable to the Divine Sea Realm was noticed, but they could not let their guard down!

With his command, everyone immediately soared into the sky, carving a bloody path through the surrounding insects and fleeing in a particular direction, with numerous insects in pursuit, only to be picked off by Li Baxian's flying sword.

"Lin Yinxiu, send a message to the Justice Department, informing Lord Department Chief that an insect plague has broken out here. Also, inform him that Justice Department Manager Xiang Dongliu was attacked by a female cultivator of unknown identity, his life or death unknown!"

"Yes!" Lin Yinxiu acknowledged and quickly responded.

"Senior Sister Feng, inform the Loyal Heart Sect and ask them to send people to exterminate the Insect Race!"

Within a thousand-mile radius, the most powerful is the Loyal Heart Sect. With the sudden outbreak of an insect plague, ordinary sects and families cannot handle it at all, just like the 6th grade Chen family being no match against such a plague, it would be difficult for them to survive even if Team D-9 hadn't exterminated them today.

Only the Loyal Heart Sect could be relied upon. If they could send people quickly, there might be a chance to curb the plague's spread.

Feng Yuechan hurriedly sent the message.

While speaking, Lu Ye descended to a certain place below.

This was the front courtyard of the Chen family, where Chen Lie had guided Lu Ye and the others through when they first arrived. According to Chen Lie, this was the place where those without cultivation aptitude in the Chen family resided, numbering two to three thousand.

Those in the Chen family with any cultivation were mostly dead.

Only these ordinary people who never cultivated were left. With the sudden outbreak of the insect plague now, these people had no chance of survival if nobody cared for them.

Though Lu Ye had just fought a deadly battle with the Chen family, nearly exterminating them, it was Chen family who instigated the conflict, and even now, he did not know why they acted that way.

But when it came to these ordinary people, Lu Ye couldn't bring himself to ignore them.

Flying to the front courtyard, Lu Ye loudly shouted, "An insect plague has erupted! If you want to survive, quickly find a place to hide, the deeper the better, hurry, hurry, hurry!"

In the Chen family's front courtyard, many ordinary people who hadn't cultivated were already having a sleepless night due to the sudden outbreak of fighting from the main house earlier. Not knowing what happened, many woke up startled from their sleep, gathering to discuss sending someone to check the main house.

Before they could decide, Lu Ye's voice echoed from above.

Even though these ordinary people hadn't cultivated, being from the Chen family, they were aware of some matters of the cultivation world and had heard of insect plagues.

Lu Ye's urgent tone made the gathered Chen family members panic instantly, but fortunately, there were still a few highly respected elders to take charge. With their orders, everyone quickly dispersed, each finding a place to hide.

Lu Ye turned and looked back, seeing the moonlit sky covered by a dark cloud rising from Mist Cliff, spreading over here. Within that cloud, were countless massive silhouettes of the Insect Race, too many to count.

He did not linger there; after reminding the people of the Chen family, he immediately turned and flew away, simultaneously retrieving some Explosive Fire Spirit Stones from his storage sack, firing them as he went.

Loud booms rang out, accompanied by intense spirit force fluctuations.

A large number of insects were attracted and chased after.

The Insect Race had low intelligence but were highly sensitive to spirit force fluctuations, something Lu Ye had noticed during the Spirit Stream battlefield. Lu Ye could not let the Insect Race linger in the Chen family's front courtyard, so he employed this method to draw their attention and lead them away.

As for how effective this method would be, or how many of the Chen family's ordinary people would survive in the end, that was beyond his control.

He had done his best, let fate decide.

"Captain, Lord Department Chief instructed us to self-preserve first," Lin Yinxu suddenly said.

Lu Ye knew self-preservation was necessary, but under the current situation, he had to first draw the Insect Race's attention.

"What is Loyal Heart Sect's response?" Lu Ye asked again.

Feng Yuechan quickly replied, "The Loyal Heart Sect has already sent people out."

"Good!" Lu Ye growled lowly, constantly launching Explosive Fire Spirit Stones, each explosion accompanied by surges of intense spirit force fluctuations, pursued relentlessly by the swarm of insects behind.

Amidst the massive insect swarm, Lu Ye sensed many powerful auras, but couldn't tell if those insects were comparable to the Divine Sea Realm.

"Scatter!" Lu Ye said, grabbing Amber off his shoulder, tossing it to Giant Armor, and turning to fly in another direction, his fiery red wings unfolding, suddenly boosting his speed.

"Lu Ye!" Yiyi exclaimed.

"Go!" Xiao Xinghe shouted sternly, taking the lead in veering off in another direction.

The rumble of explosions grew fainter, and moments later, when they turned back, they saw that there weren't many insects chasing them. However, the swarm around Lu Ye seemed to stretch endlessly, causing their hearts to tighten.

Chapter 995: Mount Tai

In his flight, Lu Ye examined the ten-part map.

Such a massive Insect Plague must not be led to densely populated areas, especially places like cities, otherwise countless casualties will surely occur.

In those cities, there are quite a few ordinary people living.

Soon, Lu Ye targeted a plain, where the view was wide and open, with few people around, making it a perfect place to encircle the Insect Race.

He quickly sent a message to Feng Yuechan, asking him to inform the Loyal Heart Sect about the situation.

At this moment, the Loyal Heart Sect's Sect Protection Array opened up a gap, and numerous cultivators turned into flowing lights, sweeping out from the mountain gate. From a distance, those streaks of flowing light pursued like shooting stars across the sky, forming a spectacular scene.

The Loyal Heart Sect, a 2nd grade sect with profound foundation, and numerous disciples, acted swiftly upon receiving Feng Yuechan's report about the outbreak of an Insect Plague within their territory.

They also issued orders to the subordinate sects and families, commanding them to cooperate.

Meanwhile, the news of the sudden Insect Plague outbreak at Mount Mi spread rapidly through various channels. Initially, some people couldn't believe it, as this event was too abrupt, leaving everyone uncertain about its authenticity.

But as time passed and confirmed by multiple channels, those cultivators who were doubtful finally realized that an Insect Plague had indeed occurred.

For a while, within a radius of a thousand miles, numerous cultivators began to take action.

At the rear mountain of the Loyal Heart Sect, a figure stood silently. If there were sect disciples present, they would recognize this person as their own Vice Sect Leader, Yooi Guanjia.

The Loyal Heart Sect, a 2nd grade sect, naturally did not have a weak cultivation level for someone like Yooi Guanjia as Vice Sect Leader.

Yet, strangely, his expression seemed a bit apprehensive, and from his look, it was evident he was waiting for someone.

The person who could make a strong individual like him wait nervously would surely not be ordinary.

The mountain wind whistled as a reminiscing look appeared in Yooi Guanjia's eyes, and he suddenly sighed.

Others might not know why the Insect Plague erupted beneath Mount Mi but the moment he received the news, he understood that some matters... had begun!

The appearance of the Insect Plague was merely to attract the attention of the Loyal Heart Sect. At present, in Loyal Heart Sect, aside from Yooi Guanjia, only the always closed-off Sect Leader and three other elders remained, as all other Divine Sea Realm cultivators had departed to eliminate the Insect Plague.

It could be said that this was the moment when the Loyal Heart Sect's defenses were most vulnerable.

Sooner than he anticipated.

Therefore, after arranging some trivial matters, he immediately came here to wait quietly.

Suddenly, a ripple spread across his front. With its expansion, a silhouette appeared spectrally before Yooi Guanjia.

Even though Yooi Guanjia was prepared, he was slightly taken aback, secretly admiring how this person's strength had grown, as he hadn't noticed the presence until the person revealed themselves.

The intruder's face was unclear, covered by a mask, marked by a distinct duality of black and white, each color occupying half. Yet, where the colors intersected, it gave an odd impression of blending water and milk — an indescribable peculiarity.

"Venerable Lord!" Yooi Guanjia's heart tightened, bowing respectfully.

If others witnessed this scene, they would be profoundly shocked. Yooi Guanjia, despite being the Vice Sect Leader of a 2nd grade sect, almost managed the entire Loyal Heart Sect in the absence of the secluded Sect Leader. His status and authority were formidable, surpassed by only a few Sect Masters in Nine Provinces from 1st grade sects.

Yet at this moment, he respectfully greeted another person, with utmost reverence, even addressing them as Venerable Lord.

"Not seen for many years, your cultivation has improved again," the Venerable Lord said lightly.

"Thank you for your concern, Venerable Lord."

The Venerable Lord glanced towards a certain direction: "Is that one still in closed-off cultivation?"

He was asking about the Loyal Heart Sect's Sect Leader.

Yooi Guanjia replied: "Eight years already, still not emerged."

The Venerable Lord chuckled lightly: "To break the Divine Sea shackles by oneself, the old fellow is indeed muddled. The time has not come; breaking the Divine Sea shackles is not such an easy task."

Yooi Guanjia's expression stirred.

At their level of cultivation, the greatest concern was naturally the Divine Sea shackles. Every cultivator at the Divine Sea Realm could sense there was a path beyond yet no one had found where it leads. Many, like that one, had secluded themselves to ponder but had gained nothing.

Yooi Guanjia had attempted such pondering as well but similarly, had no results.

However, from the Venerable Lord's words, he seemed to know something?

Daring not to ask, Venerable Lord noticed his thoughts and casually said: "No need to overthink, you will understand when the time comes."

"Yes."

"Is she still here?" The Venerable Lord asked again.

"By Venerable Lord's order, she won't be involved in today's actions, which she threw a fit over. But I forcibly ordered her as the Vice Sect Leader."

The Venerable Lord chuckled softly: "Her daughter is out there facing the brunt; naturally, she is concerned."

"Feng Yuechan?" Yooi Guanjia's heart moved, realizing the Venerable Lord truly possessed vast divine skills, uncovering nothing from him.

"I will meet her; some things ought to be retrieved," as the Venerable Lord spoke, he started moving in a particular direction.

Yooi Guanjia quickly cupped his fists: "I respectfully ask Venerable Lord not to harm her!"

The Venerable Lord continued walking without pause, his voice carrying a faint chuckle, "You really are deeply in love. So many years have passed, her daughter is already at the True Lake level, and you still can't let go."

Yooi Guanjia's expression was bitter, yet he remained silent. Some things are not so easily let go of.

"Rest assured, I am only here to retrieve something and then I'll leave. I won't harm a single hair on her head."

Hearing the Venerable Lord say this, Yooi Guanjia finally let out a long breath.

The Venerable Lord walked neither too fast nor too slow. At this time, seventy percent of the Loyal Heart Sect's personnel had been dispatched, making the originally bustling sect seem desolate. Along his entire route, not a single person noticed his presence.

After walking for more than two hours, he finally reached the mountaintop of a spirit peak.

Gazing at the familiar scenery before him, a nostalgic look appeared on the Venerable Lord's face.

Years ago, he often came here, though back then he did not come alone but accompanied by another person.

At that time, he was the most trusted subordinate of the man whose name echoed throughout the Nine Provinces.

Decades passed in the blink of an eye, times have changed, yet he never expected to return here once more, and in such a manner, it made him sigh with emotion.

On the spirit peak, there was a small courtyard, serene and elegant. Outside the courtyard, an enclosure of fences surrounded the yard, and clusters of purple flowers climbed up the fences, draping a purple coat over them.

He instantly noticed the silhouette of a woman sitting in the courtyard, her face solemn, seemingly communicating with someone.

Is she perhaps messaging that girl Yuechan?

He did not hide his presence, instead walking straight forward.

The woman in the courtyard immediately looked up vigilantly.

Such an inexplicable appearance of a person within the sect naturally aroused alertness. However, soon her expression turned to one of surprise and incredulity as she scrutinized the newcomer.

Although he wore a mask that obscured his features, she instantly recognized his figure.

Amazement filled her eyes, turning into disbelief.

The Venerable Lord entered the courtyard, gazing at her silently. Though masked, hiding his facial expression, his eyes appeared to hold a trace of a smile.

"Mount Tai?" The woman's voice was somewhat trembling.

The Venerable Lord raised his hand, removed his mask, revealing an unremarkable face, and smiled at the woman, "Senior Sister Qiu, long time no see!"

In the entire Loyal Heart Sect, there were not many women with the surname Qiu, and among those who could reside here and possess Divine Sea Realm cultivation, there was only one.

Elder Qiu Min!

This generation of cultivators rarely heard her name, as she had been reclusive for decades, never leaving the Loyal Heart Sect. Even within the sect, her presence was very faint, to the point that some disciples did not realize there was such an elder in their own sect.

However, to the older generation of cultivators, her name was quite familiar.

Not because she had accomplished any world-shaking deeds, but because she married an incredible man and bore him a daughter.

The man's name was Feng Wujiang!

Qiu Min was Feng Wujiang's widow and the biological mother of Feng Yuechan.

After decades, suddenly seeing Mount Tai again, Qiu Min could hardly believe her eyes. She stared dazedly at the familiar face before her. While decades had passed, the other party seemed unchanged in appearance, only their demeanor had shifted, becoming more reserved and enveloped in an impenetrable mystery.

She recalled the many brothers around Feng Wujiang, among whom Mount Tai was the most lively and the one who admired Feng Wujiang the most.

Only after a moment did she speak, "But... weren't you already..."

"Dead, you mean?" Mount Tai smiled slightly, "Senior Sister never saw my body; how can you be sure I'm already dead?"

"Your branding mark clearly vanished." Qiu Min frowned.

Determining a person's life or death is quite simple. If the branding mark is still there, the person is alive; if it has vanished, then the person is dead.

Qiu Min naturally had Mount Tai's branding mark, given their familiarity decades ago.

But that mark had disappeared after the battle decades ago, which is why she concluded that Mount Tai was dead.

Yet at this moment, Mount Tai, who should have been dead for decades, appeared vividly before her, causing a tremendous psychological shock.

In an instant of realization, Qiu Min understood, "You erased your battlefield marking?"

When a branding mark vanishes, apart from death, the only other possibility is that the battlefield marking was erased. Such a feat is extremely difficult to achieve. Even if a cultivator committed a crime and was expelled from the sect, they would only lose their identity as a sect disciple; the battlefield marking would remain, as it is bestowed by Heaven's Augury.

Yet difficult does not mean impossible, especially given that Mount Tai followed Feng Wujiang for many years, who had displayed many extraordinary methods in front of them seldom seen by ordinary people.

"Senior Sister is still so perceptive and clever." Mount Tai smiled slightly, which was an admission, "Will Senior Sister not invite me to sit?"

Qiu Min finally came back to her senses and hastily invited him in.

"Everything is still the same here, unchanged from before." Mount Tai looked around while speaking, then meeting Qiu Min's anxious gaze, he slowly shook his head, "Big Brother Wujiang has indeed fallen in battle, I personally buried his remains."

The hope in Qiu Min's eyes was instantly extinguished...

Chapter 996: As Long As That Thing

On the spirit mountaintop, within the small courtyard, the light in Qiu Min's eyes dimmed once more. Initially, upon seeing Mount Tai "resurrected from the dead," she harbored a bit of hope, wondering if Feng Wujiang, like Mount Tai, had erased his battlefield marking and remained hidden all these years.

But hope remained just that—hope.

If he were truly alive, he wouldn't have remained unseen all these years, nor would he be absent from his daughter's life.

Feng Wujiang, ultimately, has long been dead.

"All these years, where have you been?" Qiu Min tidied her emotions and asked.

"Wandering here and there, with no fixed abode," Mount Tai replied with a smile.

"Why did you feign death? Were you hiding from someone?"

"Not at all, Senior Sister Qiu. Don't overthink it. Some matters are unclear when you're part of them. Only by stepping outside can you see them more clearly."

Qiu Min frowned slightly, finding Mount Tai's words vague and hard to understand. He seemed quite different now from what she recalled.

"Then... have you seen things clearly now?"

Mount Tai slowly shook his head: "It's all so intricate and confusing, but at least there's more clarity now than before."

"That's good," Qiu Min nodded.

The two chatted idly for a while longer.

Mount Tai said, "Senior Sister Qiu, actually, I came this time because I need something that Big Brother Wujiang left with you back then."

Qiu Min looked at Mount Tai and smiled: "Just say it. We've known each other for so many years. No need for formality."

Mount Tai stared into Qiu Min's eyes, his expression serious: "I need the item Big Brother Wujiang left with you."

Qiu Min met his gaze, a trace of confusion flashing in her eyes: "What item?"

After a moment of looking into each other's eyes, Mount Tai suddenly laughed: "It's been so long, but Senior Sister's unchanging temper remains the same."

Qiu Min was even more puzzled: "What are you talking about?"

Mount Tai slowly shook his head: "Senior Sister, since I've come, I'm naturally certain that the item is with you. Why deceive me?"

Qiu Min frowned and said: "But your Big Brother Wujiang truly left nothing with me."

"Ah," Mount Tai suddenly sighed, "I knew it, Senior Sister won't give it to me."

"But I really don't understand what you're talking about." Qiu Min's expression was of helplessness.

"Why don't you look at this, Senior Sister?" Mount Tai suddenly changed his tone and pulled out an item to hand to Qiu Min.

It was a Moon Reflection Disc. Upon seeing it, Qiu Min's face slightly sank as an awareness dawned on her, even her aura took on a slight chill.

She reached out to take the Moon Reflection Disc, channeling spirit force into it. In the next moment, a scene viewed from high above appeared on the disc.

The Moon Reflection Disc, typically paired, is used for transmitting images. One disc reflects, while the other reveals the scene on the other side.

From the reflection on the disc in her hand, it was clear that someone was holding the paired disc high up, casting the image of the scene below onto this disc.

The production of Moon Reflection Discs isn't complicated. Back when Lu Ye was returning to the Righteous Blood Sect on the Spirit Stream battlefield, he passed by Hundred Peaks Mountain and participated in the Dragon Spring Meet. Mount Qingyu, the Tailuo Sect, and the Qin family jointly crafted a huge Moon Reflection Disc to reflect the battle of Hundred Peaks.

However, that disc was quite rough, only showing the general distribution of personnel of the three forces, without specific details.

The small Moon Reflection Disc in Qiu Min's hand was naturally of much higher quality than the one at Hundred Peaks Mountain.

Within the disc, the reflection clearly depicted a scene of a vast plain, where various forms of the Insect Race raged wildly, along with cultivators interweaving and attacking the Insect Race.

The sudden outbreak of the Insect Plague on Mount Mi was known, with numerous cultivators from the Loyal Heart Sect having gone out to assist. Qiu Min was aware of it—she had just been in contact with Feng Yuechan, knowing she was currently fighting insects with companions on a plain.

So, upon seeing the reflected scene on the disc, Qiu Min immediately knew where it was.

Just then, the scene in the Moon Reflection Disc shifted, focusing on a position on the plain where six figures came into view, evidently a group of young people full of vitality.

Among the six, four men and two women, the one standing at the forefront was exceptionally tall. Even just from the reflected scene on the disc, he gave an impression of an impregnable fortress, as if with him standing there, no one could breach his defense.

Qiu Min's gaze was instantly fixed on the woman behind this tall figure, currently using magic and spells to slay her enemies.

This person was her daughter, Feng Yuechan!

Qiu Min's aura suddenly turned ice-cold and uncontrollable. Mount Tai, with hands behind his back at some unspecified time, walked to the fence outside, plucked a small purple flower, and lightly sniffed: "I remember these flowers were personally transplanted by Big Brother Wujiang, simply because he heard you liked them. Over the years, you've taken good care of them, Senior Sister." He turned back, slightly smiling: "Of course, my niece, you've cared for her even better, Senior Sister."

Qiu Min tightened her grip on the Moon Reflection Disc, calmed herself, and said, "This Insect Plague, is it connected to you?"

She wasn't a fool. Having cultivated to the level of the Divine Sea Realm and having lived all these decades, how could she possibly still be the naive and ignorant girl she once was in her youth? There were simply too many coincidences today.

The insect swarm of Mount Mi suddenly erupted, leading to many members of the Loyal Heart Sect leaving their sect headquarters to eradicate the insect wave. And during this very time, Mount Tai, who should have died decades ago, appeared at her doorstep.

She couldn't help but overthink things.

"What does Senior Sister think?" Mount Tai answered her question with another question.

"That means it has something to do with you." Qiu Min felt her heart sink. What an incredible method this was, at least from her understanding, orchestrating such an insect swarm wasn't possible by human hands.

The first question, where did such a large number of the Insect Race come from?

"Yooi Guanxia... he's your man!" This time Qiu Min wasn't asking, but she spoke with a tone of certainty.

Today, she received a message from Feng Yuechan, intending to go personally. However, she was forcibly stopped by Yooi Guanxia. Initially, she was puzzled as to why Yooi Guanxia did this; now she realized it was because Mount Tai was coming to meet her.

So she had to remain in the Loyal Heart Sect!

And during Mount Tai's journey here, there were no warning signs from the sect headquarters, nor did any restrictions get triggered, allowing him to arrive here as if he were in an unoccupied land, which clearly indicated a lot of things.

"Senior Sister Qiu, this time I've come only for that item." Mount Tai sighed again, "I ask Senior Sister to grant me this favor."

"I don't know what you're talking about!" Qiu Min pressed her red lips together.

A scene from decades ago flashed in her mind. Feng Wujiang had once entrusted her with an item, telling her if anyone ever came asking for it, under no circumstances should she hand it over, particularly to Mount Tai!

Back then, Qiu Min didn't know why Feng Wujiang would give such instructions. After all, at the time, Mount Tai could be considered Feng Wujiang's most trusted person, their brotherhood deep. Feng Wujiang had no reason to be wary of Mount Tai, yet he emphasized it so.

And it's been decades since the event occurred, and Mount Tai had supposedly died decades ago as well; she had almost forgotten about it.

It wasn't until today, upon seeing Mount Tai and hearing him request to take what Feng Wujiang left here back then, that Qiu Min suddenly became vigilant.

What exactly was that item? With Feng Wujiang's instructions back then, and after all these years, Mount Tai truly came seeking it.

She had kept it for decades; of course, she tried to understand it. But it was merely a peculiar round disc, she couldn't derive anything useful from it at all.

"Senior Sister, I don't have much time, and you won't have much time either. Within one incense stick's time, if I don't get that item, I fear that niece of mine might face dire consequences!"

"You're threatening me?" Qiu Min glared at Mount Tai, "Don't forget, she's your Big Brother Wujiang's only bloodline!"

"I know, of course." Mount Tai nodded, "So, if possible, I would absolutely not want to harm her. But... for the unfinished grand ambition of Big Brother Wujiang, any sacrifice is worthwhile!"

"Feng Wujiang is already dead; you personally told me that!"

"Yes, Big Brother Wujiang is dead, but it was this damned world that should have perished, not him!" Mount Tai's emotions suddenly became somewhat agitated.

"What exactly do you want to do?"

Mount Tai slowly shook his head, "I only want that thing; once I get it, I'll leave!"

"I don't have what you want, I don't know where you got your information, but you must have the wrong person."

Mount Tai smiled faintly, "Then think it over slowly, Senior Sister."

Qiu Min suddenly felt a headache. Mount Tai had changed so much. Previously, under Feng Wujiang's leadership, he was the most lively and least scheming. But seeing him after so many decades, Qiu Min found she didn't recognize him at all.

Perhaps... she never actually knew him; only Feng Wujiang knew his true nature, otherwise Feng Wujiang wouldn't have specifically instructed her with those words back then.

Time slowly passed, Qiu Min stared at the reflection within the Moon Reflection Disc, lost in thought.

Mount Tai did not urge her, only sat quietly by her side, waiting silently.

On the plain reflected by the Moon Reflection Disc, Lu Ye and his allies were joining forces to fight enemies.

Previously, alone, he had used the Explosive Fire Spirit Stone to create a huge commotion, luring a large number of the Insect Race to this plain, and then immediately went into hiding.

Once the Insect Race lost track of him, they behaved like headless flies, acting on their instincts, devouring everything alive. Within a short time, the once vibrant plain became utterly lifeless wherever the insects passed.

Fortunately, it wasn't long before numerous cultivators rushed over from every direction after hearing the news, especially from the Loyal Heart Sect, with several strong Divine Sea Realm cultivators among them.

Other members of the squad had long connected with Lu Ye, regrouped here, and joined the army aiming to eradicate the Insect Race.

Amidst the fierce battle, Lu Ye suddenly frowned, withdrawing to hide behind the Giant Armor, silently spreading out his Mental Consciousness to probe the surroundings.

"What's wrong?" Li Baxian, who was controlling his sword to slay insects nearby, asked.

"It's nothing." Lu Ye shook his head. He didn't know if it was just his imagination, but he kept feeling as if someone was watching him.

Chapter 997: Yaorao's Silhouette

Although the insect plague erupted suddenly and on a large scale, cultivators from all directions rushed over and quickly stabilized the situation. However, it was uncertain how many people would suffer this time.

Lu Ye had led most of the Insect Race to this plain, but many still scattered elsewhere, and these dispersed insects were bound to impact villages and cities within a thousand-mile radius.

As time passed, the number of Insect Race members diminished. The entire plain was filled with the sight of cultivators slaughtering insects, and the desolate earth was piled with the corpses of insects.

More cultivators who received news continued to rush over.

Lu Ye's team was well arranged, with representatives from various factions, which made them quite efficient at killing insects. Surprisingly, they could even earn battle merit by killing these insects, which was an unexpected delight.

Amidst the intense battle, Lu Ye suddenly sensed danger. Looking up, he saw a figure swooping down from the sky, heading straight towards them.

An oppressive aura filled the air, and immense pressure descended from the sky. It was a Divine Sea Realm arriving!

Lu Ye almost thought this person was about to attack them. Fortunately, this unfamiliar Divine Sea Realm changed course just thirty feet away and landed nearby, punching through the head of an insect wrapped in bone, shaped like a hyena.

This insect was not weak, comparable to a cultivator of the True Lake Realm. Its bony exterior granted it substantial protective power and required some effort to kill.

Lu Ye and his team had slain many such insects before and were well acquainted with their difficulty.

Seeing that the lone Divine Sea Realm plunged into the surging insect plague, Lu Ye finally sighed with slight relief.

Just a moment ago, he really thought the unfamiliar Divine Sea Realm would attack them.

He frowned slightly, cast aside distracting thoughts, and continued to cooperate with Xiao Xinghe and the others in battle.

At the instant the Divine Sea Realm swooped down from the sky, in the small courtyard on the spirit mountaintop of the Loyal Heart Sect, Qiu Min, who had been silently pondering while constantly watching the Moon Reflection Disc, noticed the scene change rapidly. Her expression changed dramatically as she looked up and shouted angrily, "Mount Tai!"

Mount Tai sat still, smiling in response, "The time has come, Senior Sister Qiu."

"I'll give you the item; don't harm Chan'er!" Qiu Min said, raising her hand to send something over. Mount Tai raised his hand to catch it.

At that moment, the scene in the Moon Reflection Disc changed again. The person holding the Moon Reflection Disc suddenly changed direction, and the figures of Feng Yuechan and the others disappeared from within it.

Qiu Min frowned slightly and said angrily, "You tricked me!"

Mount Tai had been sitting there the whole time, with no signs of communicating with anyone. Moreover, he had already erased his battlefield marking, making it impossible to contact anyone from such a distance.

Yet, the person holding the Moon Reflection Disc still changed direction at the last moment.

In other words, Mount Tai had prearranged it so that even if she hadn't handed over the item, Feng Yuechan and the others wouldn't be in danger.

"Who knows?" Mount Tai seemed quite satisfied now that he had what he wanted. "Personally, I absolutely do not wish to harm Big Brother Wujiang's descendants, but if someone stands in my way, I cannot predict what I might do. I hope you'll forgive me, Senior Sister Qiu." His tone was mild, yet the threat was apparent.

As he spoke, he pocketed the palm-sized round disc.

"What exactly are you planning, and what is that disc?"

"In a few days, Senior Sister will naturally know what I'm planning. This disc is also an important component, but that's all I can say right now. Please wait and see, Senior Sister."

Qiu Min felt a vague sense of unease, fearing that some earth-shattering event might happen in the future.

"Oh, right." Mount Tai seemed to recall something else, "I need to ask Senior Sister to swear a Heaven's Augury oath not to disclose today's events to any third party!"

Qiu Min looked at him coldly, "What if I don't?"

Today's matter was too significant, and besides, discovering that their Vice Sect Leader was somehow involved with Mount Tai was terrifying.

"Why be stubborn, Senior Sister?" Mount Tai looked at her. "Even if you call Yuechan back to stay by your side, it might not ensure her safety. Senior Sister wouldn't want to test my capabilities."

Qiu Min turned her head away and said coldly, "Rest assured, I will not reveal today's events to anyone."

"Still, I request Senior Sister to take the Heaven's Augury oath." Mount Tai's gaze was intense as he stared at her.

Qiu Min lowered her eyes and, ultimately resigned, made the Heaven's Augury oath in front of Mount Tai.

She could not gamble with Feng Yuechan's safety, so even though Feng Wujiang had advised her never to give the round disc to Mount Tai, she still handed it over.

After all, Feng Yuechan was her and Feng Wujiang's only descendant—a sole source of solace in this world.

When she opened her eyes again, Mount Tai was already gone, leaving not a trace, only a voice from an unknown direction saying, "Thank you, Senior Sister, for cooperating. When the time comes, you will understand my good intentions."

Mount Tai had left.

Qiu Min sat for a long while without moving. The series of events that occurred today were quite a shock to her mind, even as a Divine Sea Realm cultivator. There were too many things she couldn't comprehend.

It wasn't until footsteps approached that Qiu Min suddenly snapped back to reality, looking up to see Yooi Guanxia approaching.

"Get lost!" Qiu Min looked at him coldly.

Yooi Guanxia's mouth moved twice as if he wanted to say something, but in the end, he said nothing. He slightly cupped his fists, turned around, and left.

After more than a day's fierce battle, most of the insects on the plains had been killed. Many cultivators dispersed and spread out in all directions, searching for any that had escaped.

The squad led by Lu Ye was also doing this task, occasionally making a catch.

News arrived that the location of the insect hive had been found, deep within Mist Cliff...

Already many strong cultivators of the Divine Sea Realm were heading over there, preparing to penetrate Mist Cliff and destroy the insect hive. But in such a ghostly place as Mist Cliff, even those strong in the Divine Sea Realm going deep inside wouldn't have much of an advantage. So until they figure out the internal situation of Mist Cliff, they don't dare to act impulsively.

The Chen family's front courtyard, Lu Ye led his squad over here.

He came here just to check on the situation of those in the Chen family's courtyard. When the insect plague broke out, the Chen family was the first target. Many ordinary people, warned by him, hid separately, and he didn't know how many managed to escape the disaster.

Looking around, the originally orderly architectural complex was in ruins, evidently affected as the insect plague passed through. The ground was covered in large swaths of blood stains and there were many torn and bloodstained clothes, clearly showing that many people had met misfortune.

There were still some scattered insects here, not many in number, and not very strong in power. The six members of the squad split into pairs, spread out, eliminating these escapees while looking for the whereabouts of survivors.

After some investigation, the result was neither good nor bad.

Many of the Chen family had died, but some managed to survive. These were the ones who reacted quickly, hiding in places like cellars immediately after Lu Ye's warning, fortunately surviving.

Lu Ye felt somewhat heavy-hearted.

When he was killing the cultivators of the Chen family, he did so without hesitation, like chopping vegetables, without the slightest reluctance. After all, they were mutual enemies, and it was either them or him; there was no room for mercy.

But the actions of the Chen family's cultivators ultimately had nothing to do with these ordinary people.

After the disaster, there were less than five hundred surviving members of the Chen family, making it impossible to restore the family's former glory. The best outcome for them now was to live peacefully.

The battlefield marking transmitted a message, and Lu Ye lowered his head to check.

A moment later, he looked up and said, "Let's go, Lord Department Chief wants us to report in Haotian City about the detailed account of this incident."

This trip was just meant for a task, yet unexpectedly so much happened, truly catching them off guard.

The insect plague had nothing to do with them, but the extermination of the Chen family was carried out by Team D-9.

A 6th grade family had been wiped out, a matter neither big nor small. Even though the Chen family had made the first move, they still had to provide an explanation to those above.

Lu Ye also wanted to understand why the Chen family acted in such a way. With his own power, he couldn't investigate any useful clues and could only rely on the Justice Department, perhaps they knew something.

As for the Mist Cliff insect hive, it was unrelated to them, as the strong cultivators of the Divine Sea Realm would handle it.

As he was saying this, he was about to summon the spirit ark for his squad when Lu Ye suddenly turned his head to look to the side, and in the next instant, his hair stood on end.

Because from that direction, on a ruined rooftop, an enchanting figure had appeared at some unknown time!

No one knew when she had arrived. She seemed to have been standing there all this time, quietly watching everyone.

The woman's figure was extremely seductive, and her clothing was extremely revealing, making one's blood boil. She merely stood there, her entire body exuding endless temptation, making it impossible to look away. She wore a mask obscuring her face.

Yet Lu Ye immediately recognized this woman as the one who flew over their heads the previous night, and Xiang Dongliu had fallen victim to her hand!

What shocked Lu Ye even more was that the mask on this woman's face, he had seen before.

It was the same mask with pure white base and red and blue ribbons on either cheek!

He had twice interacted with people wearing this type of mask. Once at the Cloud River battlefield when he was being hunted, a woman with this mask, suspected to be in the True Lake Realm, had assisted him.

Another time was a few months ago, when he was returning to Haotian City across Cangyan Mountain Pass to be promoted in rank, he encountered a man wearing the same mask. He fought with the man and drove him off.

This was the third time...

Although he hadn't had much contact, it was certain that these people were part of the same group and belonged to a highly mysterious organization. He didn't know why they were contacting him.

Lu Ye was very reluctant to get involved with such people. He himself often wore masks in his actions, and naturally knew the conduct of these people. Hiding their heads and showing their tails was never a good thing.

At the moment their eyes met, Lu Ye's heart raced, and without thinking, he shouted loudly, "Run!"

As he said this, he drew his blade and charged towards that direction.

He didn't know why this woman suddenly appeared here, but her presence at such a time clearly did not bode well.

Chapter 998: The Captain Has Been Captured

Maybe it's to silence witnesses?

After all, the previous night, after she killed Xiang Dongliu, while passing over the Chen family, Lu Ye had a brief moment of eye contact with her.

As Lu Ye was rushing forward, intending to summon the Dragon Throne, a fragrant breeze hit his face, and that woman appeared spectrally in front of him.

She gently lifted a palm and pressed it towards him.

At that moment, Lu Ye's hair stood on end.

Without seeing what happened, that delicate jade-like palm imprinted on his chest, causing Lu Ye's body to suddenly stiffen, feeling his whole spirit force dissipate and unable to muster any strength.

The gap... is too large.

This woman is no ordinary cultivator of the Divine Sea Realm; her power is even greater than Liew Yuemei, whom Lu Ye had met before!

Thinking about it, Xiang Dongliu was also at Divine Sea Realm, yet under this woman's hand, he couldn't even withstand thirty breaths before perishing on the spot. How could her power be weak?

Amber, who was perched angrily on Lu Ye's shoulder, roared, revealing its true form with rolling Demon Origin, opening its large bloody mouth to bite at the woman.

However, the woman merely laughed softly, "Get away." Her voice was so soft and lingering that it caused ripples in one's heart.

With a casual wave, Amber flew away.

Along with it, the figures of Giant Armor and Xiao Xinghe also flew out.

Both of them reacted very quickly, responding at the same time Lu Ye shouted, but instead of fleeing, they charged in pursuit, only to meet the same fate.

The sound of clashing swords echoed as countless flying swords shot forth, a technique of Li Baxian, followed by the spells cast by Feng Yuechan.

The two had cultivated together since childhood, long developing a telepathic connection, making them a formidable pair even against cultivators who exceed their level by several stages.

However, the gap in cultivation was too vast; the woman didn't even look at the multitude of flying swords and spells, she merely blew softly.

That breath turned into a pink mist.

The flying swords and spells collided with the mist, instantly losing all their power.

The mist enveloped the area where everyone was, leaving them all dizzy and confused.

Lin Yinxiu, somehow, managed to get beside the woman, but before she could launch an assault, she was surrounded by the mist, revealing herself with a stagger; her hurried strike was completely non-threatening.

"A bunch of interesting little fellows." The woman's soft voice came again, she grabbed Lu Ye's arm, and soared into the sky.

Within moments, she was gone.

Giant Armor and Xiao Xinghe got up awkwardly, but they were also affected by the mist, feeling dizzy and giddy.

After a while, Lin Yinxiu's cry of alarm sounded, "Oh no, the captain's been taken!"

She had the highest cultivation, and she recovered the fastest. Although affected by the mist, it was clear the woman had no intention of killing them, merely preventing them from acting temporarily.

"Quick... send a message!" Xiao Xinghe gritted his teeth and whispered urgently.

Lin Yinxiu finally snapped out of her daze and hurriedly sent out a message.

A moment later, the pink mist dispersed as they each sat cross-legged to recover, recalling the previous events with shock.

"Who was that person?" Li Baxian asked, "Why did she kidnap Junior Brother?"

Xiao Xinghe shook his head, "I don't know." After a pause, he added, "For now, it doesn't seem Junior Brother's life is in danger."

If the woman truly intended to kill, none of them could have escaped given the power disparity, but she didn't kill any of the squad, only captured Lu Ye and left, clearly having another agenda.

However, with Lu Ye captured, even if his life is safe, the situation isn't optimistic. Who knows what that woman intends to do with him?

Meanwhile, in Haotian City, inside the Justice Department's hall, Qian Wudang received Lin Yinxiu's message, and his face changed.

He had just ordered Lu Ye to lead his squad back to Haotian City for debriefing, yet in a blink, Lu Ye was captured by a mysterious woman.

What on earth is happening?

Too many events have occurred in these past days.

The Chen family suddenly caused such an uproar, being wiped out by Lu Ye's squad, followed by an Insect Plague outbreak under Mist Cliff, and now a mysterious woman suddenly capturing Lu Ye, all these disruptions are overwhelming.

Looking at all the upheavals in these past days, the Chen family is undoubtedly the starting point; in fact, Mist Cliff is within the Chen family's domain.

Qian Wudang sensed that an invisible hand might be manipulating certain events from behind the scenes.

The Chen family is merely the chess piece on the surface; there are many things he cannot see hidden beneath.

After a brief contemplation, he immediately sent a message to Thang Yifeng.

No matter the circumstances, the matter of Lu Ye's capture still must be informed to the sect master.

The sect master was in a meeting with the Elder Council when he received the message. A bunch of old men and women were arguing non-stop, almost ready to roll up their sleeves and fight; the situation was chaotic.

Upon receiving the message, the sect master immediately stood up.

In no time, a figure darted out of Haotian City, heading straight toward the Chen family's location.

Meanwhile, strong winds rushed past in midair, the scenery below retreating rapidly, Lu Ye furrowed his brows, feeling the situation becoming increasingly complex and puzzling.

He couldn't comprehend why this mysterious woman wanted to capture him!

He originally thought the other party was here to kill him to silence him, but now it doesn't seem like it. If they truly wanted to kill him, they would have done it earlier.

So, she wasn't here to kill him.

Understanding this, Lu Ye felt relieved; since it wasn't an assassination, his life was temporarily not in danger.

As for the purpose of her capturing him, Lu Ye couldn't figure it out.

He had encountered people from this mysterious organization twice before. Lu Ye could feel that they seemed to want to recruit him. But why capture him if they want to recruit him?

Lu Ye really didn't want to be involved with such an organization, so during the second encounter, he had no hesitation in fighting them, implicitly showing his attitude and stance.

But now it seems some things are unavoidable.

At this moment, he was being carried by the woman, flying rapidly.

He didn't resist, mainly because he couldn't. Just now, the woman pressed her palm on his chest, causing his spirit force to become disordered and still hasn't calmed down.

"You can't escape," Lu Ye suddenly said.

Under normal circumstances, being captured like this would likely result in a bad ending, but with many strong cultivators of the Divine Sea Realm roaming within a thousand miles, the squad must have already sent out the message, and the Justice Department surely has taken action. With the Justice Department leading, the nearby strong cultivators in the Divine Sea Realm could quickly mobilize. Although the mysterious woman was powerful, it was wishful thinking to take him away under such circumstances.

So Lu Ye was not panicking at all.

"What if I escape?" the woman replied, her voice still as soft as a lover's whisper in the ear.

"Then it shows you're very capable!" Lu Ye said, mainly trying to distract her.

"How about we make a bet? If I can escape, I'll cut off your tongue. If I can't, we'll die together. How about that?"

Lu Ye quickly shut his mouth.

No matter what, there was no good end for him, so this bet was not worth taking.

This woman, extremely venomous!

The woman chuckled softly, "Why aren't you talking anymore?"

At this moment, a silhouette swiftly approached from the front, yelling aggressively before arriving, "Release him!"

Reinforcements had arrived!

Lu Ye was overjoyed. Although he didn't recognize this Divine Sea Realm expert, they must have received the message to intercept this woman. He immediately and covertly began to move his spirit force, ready to attack this venomous woman the moment they clashed. Not hoping to do anything significant to her, but to at least create some trouble for her, increasing his chances of escape.

But the mysterious woman had already anticipated this. Just as Lu Ye began to gather his spirit force, he felt a powerful force surge from the woman's palm, brutally invading his body and dispersing the spirit force he had painstakingly gathered.

He couldn't help but groan, unable to gather any more spirit force.

Faced with the intercepting Divine Sea Realm cultivator, the mysterious woman didn't dodge at all and charged straight forward.

Their respective energies and spirit forces burst forth, intertwining with ceaseless movements of mental consciousness.

Lu Ye couldn't clearly see how the two exchanged blows; he only knew that the moment their silhouettes overlapped, a muffled grunt sounded, and the Divine Sea Realm cultivator who came to intercept fell diagonally downward, while the woman's silhouette merely paused slightly before continuing forward.

That person was no match for this woman! And the difference was significant!

Given enough time, this woman could have easily killed that person.

Lu Ye felt a chill in his heart.

Along the way, many Divine Sea Realm cultivators soared into the sky to intercept the mysterious woman.

They were all effortlessly dealt with by her, making Lu Ye increasingly awed by this woman's terrifying strength.

The stronger she appeared, the heavier Lu Ye's heart became.

Finally, a majestic presence rapidly approached from the direction of Haotian City, bringing a slight smile to Lu Ye's face because he sensed it was the sect master!

"Here comes a troublesome guy, huh!" The mysterious woman clearly realized the sect master's strength, turning her head to look in that direction with a serious expression.

"Our sect master is here, release me immediately, or you'll find no place to be buried," Lu Ye said fiercely.

"Ah, it's Thang Yifeng..." The woman understood, "I can't provoke him!"

Saying this, she suddenly descended towards the ground below.

In the distance, the sect master's gaze was as sharp as lightning, shouting with majesty, "No matter who you are, if you dare harm my disciple, I will have you torn to pieces, even if I must chase you to the ends of the earth!"

His voice, amplified by spirit force, traveled about 30 miles, his overwhelming anger blazing as winds and clouds gathered behind him, akin to a deity descending from the heavens.

The woman, bringing Lu Ye, descended in front of a cave, turned around, and looked toward the approaching sect master, bowing gracefully, "Greetings to Old Master Thang. This young woman merely borrows your disciple for some time and won't harm him. Please rest assured, Old Master Thang."

As she said this, she lifted Lu Ye by the collar and turned to enter the cave.

In the distance, Thang Yifeng saw this scene and quickened his pace.

Inside the cave, Lu Ye looked around, a foreboding sense rising in his heart.

Sure enough, as the woman's spirit force surged, intricate patterns inside the cave lit up, instantly activating a big array.

The area covered by the big array twisted the Void.

"A teleportation array!" Lu Ye felt his heart sink to the bottom of the valley.

Chapter 999: Under the Roof

Before the sect master could reach the place, he saw from afar the space near the mountain cave twist and then return to normal.

In his Mental Consciousness, the mysterious woman's aura, along with Lu Ye's, vanished without a trace in that instant.

"A teleportation array!" The sect master's extensive experience allowed him to discern immediately what had happened inside the cave; a teleportation array had evidently been triggered.

Unwilling to give up, he descended swiftly into the cave, but there was no trace of Lu Ye, and even the teleportation array, set up by someone unknown at an unknown time, was already broken and destroyed.

Clearly, this was to prevent anyone from tracking their whereabouts through this Formation.

Without pausing, the sect master quickly exited the cave and stood coldly at its entrance. After a brief moment of contemplation, he messaged Qian Wudang: "Find a way to get a tracking disc ready; the old man needs to use it!"

At present, to trace Lu Ye's whereabouts, using a tracking disc was the only option.

Though these items were scarce, surely the vast Bingzhou guard would have some in storage. Given Qian Wudang's status as Justice Department Chief and the sect master's current standing as an elder in the Elder Council, obtaining a tracking disc would naturally pose no issue.

When the teleportation array inside the cave was activated, Lu Ye only felt himself constantly falling into the Bottomless Abyss, feeling extremely uncomfortable.

Especially since at this moment his spirit force was dispersed, difficult to gather and mobilize, making it even more arduous.

He thought to himself, it seemed it wasn't just his own constructed teleportation arrays that had such a flaw; it was a defect in the teleportation arrays themselves, and this one was larger in scale than those he constructed before, indicating a much greater teleportation distance, though how far it could teleport was hard to estimate.

This was an opportunity!

If he was uncomfortable, the mysterious woman must be too.

Perhaps he could try to ambush her the moment the teleportation ends!

With that thought, Lu Ye hurriedly gathered his scattered spirit force.

Time seemed to slow to a crawl at this moment, and suddenly, the sensation of free-falling into the Bottomless Abyss vanished, and his feet landed on something solid.

Lu Ye immediately turned his head to see the mysterious woman right beside him, her figure swaying slightly as though she was drunk.

Beneath the two, a big array hummed, with Dao Runes shining brilliantly.

Lu Ye desperately pushed the bit of spirit force he had gathered, and the Boulder Mountain Saber roared out of its sheath, thrusting directly towards the woman's slender neck.

This strike lacked even half the power of his usual strikes, yet it was his all-out effort at this moment.

The long blade paused, its tip a mere inch from piercing the woman's neck. Beneath the mask, the mysterious woman's lips curled slightly, as if mocking.

Two jade-like fingers clamped onto the Boulder Mountain Saber's blade, rendering Lu Ye's strength futile, unable to advance even an inch.

"Naughty little thing, deserves punishment!" The woman teased coquettishly, extending her other hand slowly, thumb and middle finger poised, lightly flicking Lu Ye's forehead right before his eyes.

Boom...

Lu Ye felt as though struck by a mountain, his entire body flung towards the rock wall, crashing into it.

Rubble cascaded down, Lu Ye maintaining his striking pose, slowly sliding down the wall, his head buzzing with a resounding noise, unable to see for a moment.

After a while, he slowly regained his senses, looking up to see the mysterious woman with a flirtatious figure standing before him, her mask removed, smiling with deep intention as she gazed at him.

Undeniably, the woman was exceedingly seductive, and with such a charming figure, she was the dream of every man.

Yet at this moment, seeing her smile, Lu Ye felt it as venomous as a viper.

Under the woman's gaze, he stood up silently, sheathing the Boulder Mountain Saber, and raised his hand: "Let's go."

As he spoke, he shook his head, the dizziness not yet fading, partly due to the teleportation array's impact and partly due to the flick he received; mainly the latter.

The woman was momentarily puzzled: "Where to?"

"Wherever you're taking me," Lu Ye retorted.

The woman stared at him blankly for a moment before smiling: "Have you resigned yourself to fate already, wasn't that strike just now quite fierce?"

Lu Ye's forehead throbbed—not an illusion, but a growing bump from the flick—his expression calm: "Under someone's roof, you have to bow your head, what good is being fierce, I can't beat you anyway."

The woman's eyes squinted, glinting dangerously: "Your ability to adapt makes me think sparing your life is unwise; surely you're thinking 'a gentleman seeks revenge, even after ten years' or some such thing now."

"What do you want?" Lu Ye frowned.

The woman spoke slowly: "Perhaps killing you here is more appropriate!"

"If you wanted to kill me, you would've acted already; why go to such lengths," Lu Ye snorted softly, "Besides... can you answer for it if you really kill me?"

With those words, the woman's smile gradually faded.

Lu Ye was inwardly alarmed; indeed, someone was behind this woman!

What he said just now was merely a test; he thought that the mysterious organization had approached him twice with the intention of recruiting him. Since it's an organization, it couldn't be just the words of a single woman.

In that previous situation where he was abducted, the woman most likely acted under someone's instructions.

But this was just his own speculation, and after casually testing the waters, he found it was pretty close to his thoughts.

But... such a mysterious organization, capable of abducting him amid so many Divine Sea Realm experts, what part of him had caught their eye?

His cultivation had indeed progressed quickly, but it was only at the True Lake Level 5 realm; what great achievements could that attain.

Or perhaps, they were indeed eyeing his potential, wanting to control him while he was still growing?

His mind filled with wild thoughts and distractions, and yet, unexpectedly, the woman flicked his forehead again.

However, this time she didn't exert any force, just gave a gentle flick.

"Don't be too smart, smart people die young!" The woman said a meaningful statement and turned to head outside: "Follow me; your sect master will surely chase after, so you'd better not make any unnecessary moves, otherwise, it won't look good if I have to tie you up."

Lu Ye covered his head, humiliation on his face, a fierce determination in his heart that one day these two flicks would be repaid tenfold, hundredfold, and he stepped to follow the woman's shadow.

With the woman's warning, Lu Ye indeed dared not make any unnecessary moves, and moreover, he could clearly sense that even though the woman had her back to him, there was a wisp of Mental Consciousness continuously lingering around him; any unusual move on his part would be immediately detected by her.

This, too, was a cave, arranged with a teleportation array, linked to the previous array.

Before leaving, the woman casually destroyed the teleportation array here.

Leaving the cave, she activated her spirit force, enveloped Lu Ye, and took to the air.

After flying for a while, she descended again, taking Lu Ye into another cave and teleporting away through the array there.

They traveled through four teleportation arrays in succession, ultimately leading Lu Ye to lose track of his location, unsure even if he was still in Bingzhou.

He had the urge to check the ten-part map, but knowing the consequences, he refrained.

From the experience of this journey, it was evident that their actions were meticulously planned, and the existence of several large-scale teleportation arrays was strong evidence of this.

Lu Ye even had the feeling that their thorough planning was specifically to capture him, ensuring that no one could catch up with them through the multiple teleportation array transfers.

After the last teleportation, the mysterious woman destroyed the array as usual and brought Lu Ye to a waterfall. They flew up and passed through the waterfall to reach a cavern behind it.

"Stay put," the woman instructed, then moved to the side and pressed her hand against the Void.

Lu Ye looked up, unsure what she intended to do, but soon his face was filled with shock.

As the woman pressed her fair hand down, ripples suddenly spread out, and as they expanded, the Void in front of her began to distort.

In less than ten breaths, the distorted Void opened up an entrance to a passage. The entrance was whirlpool-shaped, filled with nothingness and Chaos, seemingly even devouring the line of sight; nothing was visible but a dark, swirling opening.

"A secret realm?" Lu Ye's expression was aghast.

There was unexpectedly a secret realm entrance here, and it appeared to be under this mysterious woman's control!

This couldn't help but remind him of the Unparalleled Continent. In the Unparalleled Continent, there were similar secret realms, three of which were controlled by the human race, and one by the Corpse Race. The human race's three secret realms continuously roamed in the Void, and their entrances were elusive, unlike the fixed entrance of the Corpse Race's secret realm.

He simply didn't expect that in the Nine Provinces, there was also a secret realm under human control.

"Go in," the woman opened the secret realm entrance and instructed Lu Ye with a nod.

Lu Ye really didn't want to enter. Though his actions had been restricted before, he was still within the Nine Provinces, and with the right maneuvers, he might still contact the sect master or Qian Wudang to find a way to be rescued.

But if he entered the secret realm... the situation would be entirely different.

The inside of a secret realm is like a separate world, cut off from the Nine Provinces, and communication emblems cannot send messages out.

Lu Ye had experienced several secret realms, so he was naturally aware of this. In other words, once he entered this secret realm, it would be nearly impossible to contact the sect master and others.

But at this moment, he was the knife, and he was the fish; he had no choice.

Seeing the woman's impatient expression and her hand reaching to grab him, Lu Ye decisively stepped towards the secret realm entrance.

A moment of darkness engulfed his sight, followed by a burst of light.

A fragrant breeze enveloped him as the mysterious woman also entered.

Lu Ye turned back, seeing the secret realm entrance with a whirlpool imprinted in his view, and momentarily abandoned the idea of rushing back out.

The mysterious woman turned around and, like before, sealed the entrance. Only then did she stretch and complained, "I'm exhausted!"

Her figure was already remarkably enchanting, and this action made her curves even more striking.

Lu Ye glared at her fiercely!

Chapter 1000: Small Secret Realm

The mysterious woman clearly noticed Lu Ye's gaze, but she didn't mind, only the corners of her mouth slightly lifted.

Lu Ye's gaze passed over her, looking toward a not so distant place, where a black-robed man stood quietly, not particularly tall, but extremely solidly built.

This person stood perfectly still with hands hanging low, the arrival of the woman and Lu Ye didn't draw much of his attention, he only glanced once then lowered his gaze, continuing to stand there quietly.

Another one in the Divine Sea Realm, and a physique cultivator as well.

Lu Ye felt a slight apprehension in his heart.

However, something about this person felt odd to Lu Ye, his expression was wooden, and there was a dimness in his eyes, making him seem a bit dull. It wasn't clear if this was just an illusion.

Beside him, the mysterious woman finished stretching and casually called out to Lu Ye, "Let's go."

Stepping forward, Lu Ye had no choice but to follow.

Almost at the same moment Lu Ye was led into this secret realm by the mysterious woman, elsewhere in Bingzhou, high in the sky, Thang Yifeng suddenly paused in his rapid flight.

He was holding a tracking disc, the pointer had been consistently pointing in Lu Ye's direction, but just now, the needle suddenly began spinning rapidly, showing no sign of stopping.

With the needle spinning erratically, he couldn't accurately track Lu Ye's location.

The sect master frowned, studying the tracking disc for a moment, his heart cautiously guessing. He then checked his battlefield imprint and found the imprinted mark of Lu Ye in a state of uncontactable status.

Immediately he understood, Lu Ye must have entered a closed secret realm, which was why the tracking disc couldn't trace Lu Ye's movements, and why the battlefield imprint was in a state where contact wasn't possible.

Fortunately, the imprint hadn't disappeared, meaning Lu Ye's life wasn't in danger.

His heart filled with worry, yet there was nothing he could do.

Elsewhere, the members of D-9 squad continued trying to contact Lu Ye, but regardless of how many messages they sent, there was no response, until this moment when Lu Ye completely lost contact.

Yiyi burst into tears, while Feng Yuechan and Lin Yinxiu hurried to comfort her.

Xiao Xinghe and Li Baxian exchanged worried glances, feeling a deep sense of powerlessness.

They were right there when Lu Ye was captured. But faced with a powerful Divine Sea cultivator, all their resistance was futile, and they could only watch Lu Ye being taken away, naturally causing them great distress.

Now they had no idea where Lu Ye was or if he was in danger, and even if they wanted to rescue him, there was no way to do so.

"Let's return to Haotian City first and have Lord Department Chief and the sect master intervene," Xiao Xinghe quickly decided. Given the situation, there was nothing they could do, only by asking Qian Wudang and Thang Yifeng to step in could they have a chance to save Lu Ye.

...

"Who was that just now..." Lu Ye, inside the Nameless Secret Realm, trailed behind the mysterious woman, trying to gather information.

He didn't expect her to tell him anything, but to his surprise, she spoke, "You can call him Dao Thirteen."

"Dao Thirteen?" Lu Ye frowned, finding the name peculiar. If it's merely a name, it's fine, but if this thirteen is a number, it becomes intriguing.

Where there's a Dao Thirteen, could there be a Dao One, a Dao Two, and so on?

The woman wasn't planning to explain much to him; she continued walking while speaking, "From now on, you'll stay here, no one will limit your freedom, do whatever you want, understood?"

Lu Ye looked puzzled, "You brought me here just to imprison me?"

What grudge or grievance?

"Someone wants to meet you."

"The person behind you?" Lu Ye guessed.

"Just wait!" The woman impatiently said, now she had reached a wooden house by the lake and walked straight in, shutting the door behind her with a bang.

Leaving only a lingering fragrance in the air.

Lu Ye stood in place, pondering briefly, and quickly turned, rushing towards the entrance of the secret realm. As expected, the woman made no move to stop him, and soon Lu Ye reached the entrance, giving a glance at Dao Thirteen, who stood there like a door deity: "Open the exit, I want to leave!"

Opening the entrance and exit of a secret realm required special methods, naturally, Lu Ye didn't know how to do it, but since Dao Thirteen was guarding here, he surely knew.

This person seemed not very bright, and Lu Ye wanted to try if he could persuade him to let him out.

Despite the slim chances, how would he know if he didn't try?

Dao Thirteen slowly lifted his gaze, looking at him expressionlessly, a hoarse voice coming from his mouth, "Command token!"

Lu Ye didn't have any command token!

He directly grabbed the guard token at his waist, infused it with spirit force, and shook it in front of Dao Thirteen: "Open the exit!"

"The hand seal is incorrect!" Dao Thirteen's hoarse voice rang out, and then he lowered his eyes, standing there like a wooden stake.

Lu Ye's eye twitched, observing his demeanor and behavior, he even doubted if this guy was alive, or perhaps like his master's doppelganger, an automaton?

But even his master's doppelganger named Little Butterfly was much more lively than this Dao Thirteen. Dao Thirteen gave Lu Ye the impression of not only being wooden but also rigid.

Without the hand seal, there was naturally no way to have Dao Thirteen open the secret realm.

Still, it wasn't all in vain, at least it was confirmed that Dao Thirteen really could open the secret realm.

This approach was not feasible, so Lu Ye turned his head to look at the wooden house of the mysterious woman and began to explore this secret realm.

After about half an hour, Lu Ye basically understood the environment here.

This was a small secret realm, similar to the one he had visited at the Sword Weapon Sect, but about twice its size.

The sky within the secret realm had no sun or moon shining, only a murky light, making it look like an overcast day.

The boundary of the secret realm was a void, just looking at it gave an extremely ominous feeling, and Lu Ye naturally dared not venture thoughtlessly.

Who knew what the outcome would be if he ventured in.

The environment here was also extremely monotonous, with only a lake and sparse forest around it, without any beasts or birds in sight.

The mysterious woman entered the wooden house by the lake and did not appear again. She must have been tired from the run and was probably resting.

Lu Ye thought for a moment, then went to the nearby woods to cut down a few trees and personally built a wooden hut by the lake.

Unable to leave here for the time being, he could only make do with what he had.

He was also very curious about who was behind the woman and why they had captured him here.

Not knowing how long he would stay here, he had to have a place to live.

Building huts and bamboo houses was something Lu Ye was well-practiced at since he had done it many times before, and in less than an hour, a two-story wooden house took form, facing the mysterious woman's house across the lake.

Though the mysterious woman had not shown any great malice toward him from beginning to end, one could never be too cautious. His cultivation was not as high as hers, so it was better to be careful.

Lu Ye then set up some formations around his hut, mainly for alarm and isolation; for protection...there was no need.

If she really intended to harm him, with her strength, a protective formation wouldn't stop her, so he didn't bother wasting his energy on it.

In the following days, Lu Ye spent some time each day walking around the secret realm, and he could always faintly sense a Mental Consciousness quietly watching him, evidently from the mysterious woman monitoring him.

Lu Ye didn't mind. The Nameless Secret Realm was only so big, and with the woman's high cultivation, unless he stayed in his hut, everything he did was basically under her watch; hiding from her wasn't an option.

Only the hut, which he had isolated with formations, could block her Mental Consciousness detection.

Besides exploring the secret realm, Lu Ye spent the rest of his time activating the power of the Talent Tree, devouring fire spirit stones.

Being captured alive this time by a strong cultivator from the Divine Sea Realm had made him feel a sense of crisis. As his cultivation improved, encounters with Divine Sea Realm would become more frequent, and if it were someone like Liew Yuemei or the mysterious woman, he'd have no chance of resisting with his current strength.

In fact, he already felt a crisis when being chased by Liew Yuemei, but with the sect master's protection, that feeling diminished a lot, until now...

The sect master couldn't always protect him, and relying on Qian Wudang was even less reliable.

If he couldn't defeat others, at least he had to run fast, thus increasing his hope of survival.

Relying solely on the wings spirit runes wasn't enough. With his current True Lake Level 5 realm cultivation, even with the wings and Move-Like-The-Wind, he couldn't outrun a Divine Sea Realm cultivator. This was proven when Liew Yuemei chased him.

Lu Ye urgently needed a new method, one that could help him escape the pursuit of a Divine Sea Realm cultivator.

He had a hope in mind, but to achieve this, he needed to rely on the Talent Tree; as long as that particular spirit rune could be activated on the Talent Tree, he could escape from future enemies.

He had been longing for that spirit rune for a long time, devising all sorts of imaginative uses and plans for it, but unfortunately, it had not been activated.

But he was sure the Talent Tree had that spirit rune; it just hadn't been the right time.

So he began devouring fire spirit stones, hoping to try his luck.

No new spirit runes had been activated during this time, mainly because he had activated seven spirit runes at once last time, which took him a while to digest, until recently when Lu Ye understood the real use of the Single-Stalk Twin Lotus.

Following the principle of not biting off more than one can chew, Lu Ye hadn't put much effort into the Talent Tree.

Now that the real use of the Single-Stalk Twin Lotus was clear, it was naturally time to activate new spirit runes.

He already had a large number of fire spirit stones, and over the past few months, he had been refining Explosive Fire Spirit Stones for the Justice Department, gaining even more. Activating a few new spirit runes shouldn't be a problem, but whether he would get the one he wanted was entirely up to luck.

On this day, Lu Ye had just returned from patrolling the secret realm. While passing by the mysterious woman's wooden house, she opened the window and her charming face came into view, looking at him with a smile: "You spend your days not resting calmly, what are you searching for?"