

## Immortal 1641

### Chapter 1641: Matchmaker

"Little sister Ling'er, can you help me copy these two letters using the same handwriting?" Zu An asked, standing up and pulling out a chair for her.

Xie Daoyun was a runemaster, and what they were best at was none other than writing. Copying handwriting could be difficult for most people, but it was extremely easy for them.

"Sure~" Xie Daoyun replied as she sat down and picked up the letter. However, the smile on her face gradually froze.

When he saw her strange reaction, Zu An quickly asked, "What is it? Is this handwriting hard to imitate?"

"That's not it," Xie Daoyun said hesitantly. After a moment of hesitation, she finally said, "Which lady is big brother Zu planning to have a lovers' rendezvous with?"

Zu An couldn't help but chuckle, saying, "You've misunderstood. It's not for me, but... for a mission requirement. Do you think I'd need to forge someone else's handwriting if it were for me?" He was too embarrassed to explain who the Jedefall Palace couple was; otherwise, she could end up being frightened and refuse to do it.

"Right!" Xie Daoyun replied, her face lighting up. She grinned from ear to ear. She rolled up her sleeves a bit, revealing her snow-white wrist as she began to make copies of the letters.

"Is it too hard?" Zu An asked worriedly. Whether it was Wan Tongtian or Elder Huo Ling, they clearly had distinct styles of handwriting. That was what had troubled him previously.

"It might be hard for other people, but big brother Zu shouldn't forget what my specialty is," Xie Daoyun said, her face shining with confidence. She quickly finished the two letters.

While checking them, Zu An discovered that there was no difference at all from Wan Tongtian and Elder Huo Ling's style. He sighed in amazement, remarking, "I really never expected that such graceful hands could write such strong and powerful words!"

Xie Daoyun blushed and said, "I'm glad that I was able to help big brother Zu."

"You should get some rest. I'm going out for a bit," Zu An said as he put the letters away and walked toward the exit.

"Big brother Zu~" Xie Daoyun called after him. "Are you coming back tonight?"

Zu An was stunned, saying, "It might be very late by the time I return." He was going to help Big Manman with her treatment, and that would take most of the night. However, he couldn't spend the night there; it would be bad if Jedefall Palace's people found out.

Xie Daoyun sighed in relief when she heard that he was coming back. She said, "Then I hope big brother Zu's mission is a success!"

Zu An had a strange expression, but after waving to her, he disappeared into the night sky.

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Meanwhile, in Jedefall Palace's courtyard, Elder Huo Ling and Pei Mianman were discussing their plans for the next few days of the competition.

Pei Mianman responded to her master somewhat absent-mindedly. She was busy trying to figure out what Ah Zu had meant before he left.

Suddenly, Elder Huo Ling's expression turned cold. With a brush of her sleeves, she caught something that had flown in through the window and crumpled it up. She immediately rushed outside and looked around with sharp eyes. Unfortunately, there was no one in sight, and only a few crickets were chirping in the vicinity.

"Master, what's wrong?" Pei Mianman asked, following her out.

"There was a formidable individual here just now," Elder Huo Ling said, her expression serious. There weren't many on Violet Mountain who could deliver a letter without being discovered. However, none of them would need to act so sneakily. Could it be that there were other strong cultivators who had snuck in?

While thinking, she picked up the letter. She scanned it with her divine sense but didn't pick up any hidden traps, so she opened it up. Her heart immediately skipped a beat when she read the words in front of her. As she read through the contents, her expression changed several times. She was filled with countless shifting emotions.

"Master, what does it say?" Pei Mianman asked. She had never seen such an expression from her master's face before. She couldn't help but get up on her tiptoes to look at the letter.

"Nothing. Just something someone senseless wrote. There's no need to pay it any heed," Elder Huo Ling said as she quickly put it away. "Let's continue with what we were talking about earlier."

Pei Mianman replied with an 'oh'. She couldn't really continue asking about it now.

Previously, Pei Mianman was the one who had been absent-minded. Now, it was Elder Huo Ling's thoughts that were wandering. She looked calm on the surface, but a mix of emotions stirred inside her.

Why would that rascal write this kind of letter to me?

But who else could it be but him? How could I not recognize his handwriting?

And who else in this entire place could deliver a message like this but him?

Don't tell me that because we fought together earlier, he remembered how we were when we were younger?

But he already has a wife and a child! What meaning is there left in writing these things to me?

Hmph, who does he think he is? Does he think that I'll meet him just because he wrote this?

And he even arranged a meeting at the farthest and most secluded Heavenly Lake Peak. Just what is he trying to do?

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After a while, Pei Mianman noticed that there was something strange about her master. She said cautiously, "Master, you must be really tired from helping me recover over the past few days. Maybe it would be best if you got some rest."

"Your master isn't tired," Elder Huo Ling reflexively replied. But after a moment of hesitation, she still got up and said, "I suppose that's not a bad idea. You should take some time to adjust your condition."

After saying that, she returned to her room. Her hand trembled a bit as she took out that letter, reading the contents word for word. At times her expression was filled with sorrow, and at other times laughter. A moment later, she suddenly got up and said to herself, "Hmph, I want to see just what you have to say to me!"

She got up and prepared to leave, but she quickly returned to her room again. She had a conflicted expression. However, she still took out a mirror and some makeup from her storage pouch. When she looked at the set of familiar yet unfamiliar makeup products, a hint of grief appeared on her face. It was something that Wan Tongtian had given her back then. Just how many years had passed since she last used it? Thirty years? Or had it already been fifty...?

Fortunately, things kept in a storage pouch didn't go bad. She sat down in front of the dressing table. As she applied the cosmetics to her face, she seemed to recall those past days of glory. The strict and stern look at the corners of her eyes gradually softened, even being replaced with a hint of a young lady's bashfulness.

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Meanwhile, Pei Mianman felt very restless in her room. Suddenly, the window creaked quietly. She immediately turned around and saw a familiar figure.

"Ah Zu!" she cried out, surprised and happy. She quickly ran over to receive him, asking, "Why are you here? Master is still next door."

Zu An jumped in and gave her a big hug. When he felt that familiar pressure against his chest, he said with a chuckle, "Don't worry. She won't be back for quite some time."

At first, his plan had just been to pretend to be Wan Tongtian and write the letter to Elder Huo Ling, but he eventually thought that would be way too cruel. If Elder Huo Ling waited an entire night in the cold winds, the resentment she built up would be enough to rip Wan Tongtian apart... As such, he had changed his plan to writing letters to both of them. He had already created a chance for them, so whether or not they'd take it would be up to their fate.

Pei Mianman wasn't stupid. She quickly asked, "So you were the one who wrote that letter?"

"Who else? Do you think some third wheel drew her away?" Zu An replied, feeling rather proud of his own wit.

"Just what did you write that could actually draw my master away?" Pei Mianman asked, her eyes full of curiosity.

"Ahem, either way, it's something good," Zu An said. He was too embarrassed to explain it in detail to her. If she found out that he had messed with her master like that, she could get upset. When he saw that she was about to press the issue, however, he quickly changed the topic. "You left your window open just for me. Manman, you and I are really always of the same mind."

There were always defensive formations in places where cultivators lived. If the owner didn't approve of it, it would be quite difficult for others to enter silently.

Pei Mianman's face turned red and she said, "Hmph, I just forgot to close the window. As if I'd leave it open just for you."

"Hurry and let big brother take a look at your body. Let me see how your recovery is going," Zu An said, smiling as he reached toward her.

"You're so annoying~" Pei Mianman replied, but judging from her tone, she didn't seem to be annoyed at all.

The two naturally nestled against each other as they talked about what had happened while they were apart. They were full of happiness from reuniting after having been apart for so long.

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A while later, Zu An said, "Your recovery is way too slow. The following competition will be really dangerous for you. I'll help you with my primordial ki."

"No~" Pei Mianman replied, looking away with a red face. After being together for so long, how could she not know what his treatment method really was?

Zu An couldn't help but laugh, replying, "Then why are you moving over to the bed while saying that?"

Pei Mianman was really embarrassed. She grabbed a nearby pillow and chased him all around while hitting him with it. However, as they fought, both of them couldn't help but move under the covers.

"Didn't... you say you were going to treat me? Why have you just been... kissing me..." Pei Mianman trailed off, her voice starting to tremble a bit.

Zu An looked up from her embrace and said with a smile, "This is the preparation work before the treatment."

"You really are an annoying rascal, but I can't help but like that~" Pei Mianman replied, her eyes misty. Her beautiful arms gently embraced him, naturally coordinating with him.

The two of them had been apart for a long time. Now, they were like dry wood that caught fire and turned into a raging inferno, or clouds that had gathered water vapor for so long that just the slightest stir would cause them to burst.

"Mmm~" A sweet and tender moan emerged. Pei Mianman's entire body was covered in an enchanting pink hue.

Zu An didn't forget to use his primordial ki to treat her. However, such an injury always made the patient's body several times more sensitive than normal. Thus, Pei Mianman was soon utterly defeated.

She continued to beg her big brother for mercy. However, she didn't know that the more she pleaded like that, the more encouraging it was to a man.

The two of them were completely intoxicated by the treatment for some time, but Zu An's expression suddenly changed.

What the hell? Why does this keep happening?

Are the heavens messing with me right now?

When she felt his hesitation, Pei Mianman asked lazily, "What's wrong?"

Soon after, however, she found out the answer. She heard light footsteps outside. Then, a cold and clear voice called out, "Manman, it's me, Chuyan."

### **Chapter 1642: Freeloader**

When she heard Chu Chuyan's voice, Pei Mianman's entire body instantly tensed up. She couldn't help but tremble all over.

Zu An cried out inwardly. He hadn't expected this kind of situation to happen all over again! Previously, he had been discovered by Yan Xuehen, and intended to learn from that lesson. But how could he have known that Big Manman would do... that?

The two of them embraced each other tightly, as if they wanted to fully merge with each other. It was the moment when they shared the most intimate feelings. If there had been no one else present, they would definitely have had endless sweet words to share with each other. However, there was someone outside, and it was quite the special person too.

"Manman?" Chuyan called out in confusion. She was curious about the lack of response, even after such a long time.

"Huh? Chuyan?" Pei Mianman replied, sounding a bit flustered. She pushed Zu An off her and to the side, and quickly put on her clothes.

"I only found out that you had also come to Violet Mountain from my master. You were injured during the competition, so I came with an Ice Heart Pill to help you recover sooner," Chu Chuyan said, although she found it a bit strange. From how Pei Mianman sounded, could it be that she had been sleeping?

Zu An was shocked, remembering that Yan Xuehen had used the Ice Heart Pill before. It was White Jade Sect's greatest medicine! It was even better than Ji Dengtu's Soul Return Pill. It was extremely precious, and even Sect Master Yan Xuehen only had a few of them on her! Chu Chuyan had actually brought over such a pill for Pei Mianman?

Pei Mianman was also from the daoist sects now, so she had naturally heard of the Ice Heart Pill's value. She was shocked and moved. She hadn't expected Chuyan to give her something this precious. Meanwhile, behind Chuyan's back, she had stolen...

She felt really vexed and blamed herself. She even found Zu An a bit less pleasing to look at.

"Please wait for a moment!" Pei Mianman called out, quickly putting on her clothes. However, when she stood up, she felt something was off. She gave Zu An an annoyed look. It's all this guy's fault!

Zu An felt helpless too, thinking, Why does this scene feel a bit familiar?

Suddenly, Pei Mianman pushed him toward the window and gestured for him to get lost, leaving him dejected. Why did he feel like the third wheel here?

Still, he didn't have the courage to face Chu Chuyan's eyes that were as pure as a frozen mountain. He could only leave with a guilty conscience.

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Meanwhile, Pei Mianman quickly sorted out the messy bedding, then ran over to the door and said, "Chuyan, sorry about that. I've been really tired because of the treatment recently. I was asleep just now."

Now, Chu Chuyan actually felt a bit embarrassed. She replied, "It's all my fault for disturbing your rest."

"Not at all! I finally get to meet my good friend again, so I'm extremely happy!" Pei Mianman said while inviting her in. After all, Chuyan had come with such a precious gift, so if she didn't even let her in, it really would seem a bit inappropriate. It could even give Chuyan some doubts.

Chu Chuyan didn't refuse her invitation. After all, back in Brightmoon City, because of her naturally cold personality and the need to maintain a dignified appearance for her clan's business, she had basically never had friends. Pei Mianman had practically been the only one she could call a close friend.

"The reason I came here so late is that I don't want others to know about our relationship. There have been a lot of rumors going around about me recently, so I was worried that I'd end up bringing you unnecessary attention," Chu Chuyan explained when she saw Pei Mianman's messy hair and sleepy appearance.

"What kinds of rumors?" Pei Mianman asked while pouring some tea for her. She was stunned to hear Chuyan's explanation.

"You didn't know about it?" Chu Chuyan asked; it was her turn to be surprised.

Pei Mianman explained in embarrassment, "My master locked me up in my room and has been watching over me for the sake of this tournament. I haven't had much contact with the outside world at all."

"So that was what happened," Chu Chuyan said, her face turning a bit red. When the topic was related to Zu An, she couldn't help but be a bit embarrassed. She continued, "It's actually not that big of a deal."

She handed over an embroidered case while saying, "This Ice Heart Pill is something the sect gave me to use for myself, but I won't be using it anytime soon. Meanwhile, you're injured, so I hope it can be of use."

"How can I take something like this that could save your life? Hurry and store it away. I'm already pretty much all healed up from the sect's care," Pei Mianman hurriedly said, trying to refuse.

Jadefall Palace's treatment alone had only allowed her to recover by sixty to seventy percent, but with Ah Zu's help, she was already mostly healed. Of course, she couldn't tell Chuyan about that.

"Don't worry. I can just ask my sect for another one," Chu Chuyan said as she pushed the case over. "Don't be like this. We're good friends, aren't we?"

When she heard Chuyan call her a good friend, Pei Mianman's heart skipped a bit. A hint of guilt appeared on her face.

Afterward, Chu Chuyan talked to her about what had happened in the time since they had last seen each other. However, both of them tacitly chose to avoid anything related to Zu An. In that instant, it was almost as if they had returned to their carefree time back in Brightmoon City.

Suddenly, a strange sound came from Pei Mianman's body. Chu Chuyan was stunned and looked at her in confusion.

"My stomach has been a bit uncomfortable recently..." Pei Mianman explained while cursing Zu An to death inwardly. He had actually left so much inside her!

Chu Chuyan's expression turned strange. Back in Brightmoon City, she would really have believed it. Now that she had some experience, though, she found the sound a bit familiar. She sniffed the air and gave the messy bedding a look. When she thought about Pei Mianman's strange reaction, she already started forming guesses.

"Then I won't be disturbing your rest anymore," she said, getting up to leave.

When she saw Chuyan's expression change from gentle to completely cold, Pei Mianman felt her insides tremble. She couldn't help but call out, "Chuyan!"

Chu Chuyan stopped, but she didn't turn back around. She asked in an icy cold tone, "What is it?"

Pei Mianman felt distraught. She said weakly, "Whether you believe it or not, I will always see you as my best friend."

Chu Chuyan didn't reply. She stood in silence for a long time before nodding slightly. Then, she left.

When she left, Pei Mianman looked at the Ice Heart Pill that had been left on the table. Her face heated up in embarrassment. She grabbed her hair and screamed, "Aaah! I was almost ruined by that idiot!"

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Achoo!

Just as Zu An returned to his room, he couldn't help but sneeze.

The sound woke up Xie Daoyun, who had been lying down in the other room. She held her covers as she sat up, calling out, "Big brother Zu, you're already back?"

Zu An gestured to indicate that she didn't need to get up, replying, "Yeah. Go back to sleep and don't worry about me."

After he returned to his room and lay down, he was so embarrassed that he couldn't fall asleep. Previously, Yan Xuehen had found out that he was with Chuyan, but this time, Big Manman had been found out by Chuyan.

Just what kind of freaking bad luck is this? Should I find Chuyan and apologize?

But I ran away so fast, maybe she didn't find out... If I go and apologize now, there's no way Yan Xuehen won't find out.

Just the thought of that hell made his entire body tremble.

Meanwhile, outside, Xie Daoyun found it hard to sleep as well. I wonder if big brother Zu saw my new sleepwear or not...

Zu An thought, Seeing as I can't sleep, I might as well stay awake. He remembered that he hadn't pulled the Keyboard System for a long time. He was usually busy and didn't have time to do it, so tonight was the perfect time.

He counted up his points and saw that he had amassed a total of 718,836 Rage points. Most of those points had been gathered right here on Violet Mountain, thanks to his scandal with Chuyan drawing so much hatred.

In that instant, he even wondered whether to announce his relationship with Big Manman and Yan Xuehen. His Rage points would probably multiply, but he wouldn't necessarily be able to leave Violet Mountain alive...

When he thought about the consequences that could ensue, he shuddered. Then, he began his pulls. After doing this for so long, he didn't feel anything special anymore. Before, he would have burned some incense, taken a bath, prayed to Buddha, or whatever else. Now, he was extremely calm and just went straight to the pulls.

Thank you for playing!

Thank you for playing!

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When he saw the familiar words, Zu An wasn't shaken at all. He even wanted to laugh.

Midway, however, the keyboard stopped on the number 9.

Congratulations on obtaining a Fortune Pill!

Zu An was stunned. This name is familiar! He had managed to get a Fortune Pill when he first arrived in this world. That was precisely what he had relied on to go crazy in the casinos. However, for his current self, it wasn't that special. What, was he going to go to a casino and go through all that again? At this point, he could just rob them outright.

Hm? Maybe I should give it a try next time.

He continued the pulls, but began to frown as he watched the 'Thank you for playing' and Ki Fruits alternating. Why wasn't there even a single Tiger Talisman from the pulls?



He only had the two goddesses Daji and Mo Xi right now, so he wanted to try for another one with the Tiger Talismans. Even though they weren't all that useful in terms of combat, they could at least serve as extra hands to take care of some things.

Suddenly, the indicator stopped on the F key.

Congratulations on obtaining Freeloader!

Zu An was dumbfounded.

### **Chapter 1643: I Gave You an Opportunity But You Didn't Cherish it**

Freeloader skill description: They can be found everywhere in reality, games, and novels. Their best skill, freeloading, allows them to purchase or exchange for items even without money or other valuable goods. For the sake of freeloading, freeloaders do not fear any trouble. This kind of bravery is something worth learning from for all of us. However, their poor traits of being cheap and stingy has harmed the interests of the creators of value, thus drawing the disdain and contempt of others.

A certain well-known freeloader was once quoted: If I don't pay once I'm done, it's not prostitution, right?

Another freeloader often asserted: Freeloading brings happiness. If you freeload once, you feel great once. If you always freeload, you always feel great.

Skill effect: Once Freeloader is used, the negative cost of using any skill can be ignored. Uses left: 3.

Special reminder! There is a limit to freeloading. If the cost exceeds a certain amount, the freeloader will be bitterly punished.

Zu An was completely baffled when he finished reading the skill's effects. There had been so many freeloaders online in his previous world, and the novels he followed had often begged their readers to not freeload anymore. He hadn't expected to find the same concept even in this world.

Still, even though the skill's effects were rather simple, the shorter the wording was, the greater the consequences would be.

This skill was actually a bit ridiculous. After all, many skills in this world followed the principle of equivalent exchange. The greater its strength was, the greater the cost would be. But Freeloader could completely ignore that cost. The only thing that was worth noting was that the skill didn't seem to be omnipotent. It seemed that not even Freeloader could handle the cost if it was too great. For example, if he wanted to destroy the entire world, even if he used the Freeloader skill, he would be instantly reduced to ashes from the rebound.

He wondered where the limit of the skill was. However, it had a limit on its uses, so he couldn't just recklessly test it. Meanwhile, he could just die if he used it in a real battle...

He quickly finished his pulls. Apart from the Fortune Pill and Freeloader skill, he also obtained 720 Ki Fruits, leaving him quite satisfied with the result.

Next, he summoned Mo Xi. Her tanned skin shone with an enchanting glow, and she herself was like a beautiful leopardess. Her well proportioned thighs were full of explosive youthfulness. Even though this

wasn't the first time Zu An had seen them, he still sighed in amazement. Mo Xi was the complete opposite of Daji. Daji was delicate and soft, a beauty that could bring down an entire country. Meanwhile, Mo Xi was more like a heroic general.

Yup, her tanned skin coupled with her outfit makes her look more like those hot babes at the beach.

Compared to Daji, Mo Xi was more proud. Previously, she had never fully obeyed Zu An's orders, and only barely accepted when he brought out Ki Fruits. As such, Zu An used the Ki Fruits to make her do what he needed her to do, unlike in Daji's case, where he just gave them to her without any conditions.

However, Zu An had already thought things through by now. Even though the goddesses lacked souls, they still had things such as impression and favor. If he treated her exploitatively, she would probably treat him the same way. When she reached higher and higher levels, she would be even harder to control. Instead of that, it would be better for him to try to create a good relationship now, treating it like a dating sim.

"Open your mouth~" Zu An said as he took out the Ki Fruits. Together with what had been left over from before, he had 1,634 in total. As Daji had already made her seventh rank breakthrough, her Ki Fruit requirements had grown higher; so, rather than feeding her, he planned to raise Mo Xi's rank first.

When she saw the Ki Fruits, Mo Xi's previously cold eyes clearly lit up. After a moment of hesitation, she moved closer, then obediently raised her head and opened her mouth.

Zu An almost had a nosebleed when he saw this. These goddesses had all been exceptional beauties in life. Even though they were lacking souls, even their instinctive actions were just too beautiful.

Then, Zu An tossed the Ki Fruits into Mo Xi's mouth one after another. Valkyries normally wouldn't allow him to touch their bodies. However, in the process, he accidentally touched her soft lips, and at times he even touched her tongue. However, she didn't show any signs of a negative reaction.

Zu An finally understood why so many people online felt that feeding carried a kind of joy. At first, he had planned to just dump the fruits all at once to save time and energy. But now, he changed his plans and fed them to Mo Xi one by one. He found it quite amusing in its own way.

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Zu AN fed Mo Xi a total of 1,210 Ki Fruits, raising her up to the peak of the fifth rank. He didn't feed her the remaining 424, because they weren't enough to bring her to the peak of the sixth rank. It was better to just save them for emergencies.

Mo Xi seemed as if she still hadn't fully expressed herself. The Ki Fruits were just too delicious for valkyries. She couldn't hold herself back and even licked his finger.

In that instant, every single hair on Zu An's body stood on end. He thought to himself, She licks my fingers if I hold the fruits, but what if the fruits were placed elsewhere... He immediately got rid of those thoughts as soon as they appeared. Scum, brute, shameless!

When Mo Xi confirmed that there were no more Ki Fruits, she got up and waited for her mission. After all, that was what they always did. She got paid for what he needed her to do.

As if sensing her intentions, Zu An shook his head and said, "There's nothing I need you to do. You can just rest."

Mo Xi was stunned, clearly surprised that he didn't need her to do anything. Her expression seemed to become a bit gentler. Then, she returned to her special space.

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The next morning, Xie Daoyun saw that Zu An seemed to be constantly massaging his hands. She couldn't help but ask out of concern, "Big brother Zu, is your hand injured?"

"It's fine. It's just a small thing," Zu An replied. Inwardly, he thought, I fed Mo Xi a total of 1,210 Ki Fruits one by one! How could my hand not be sore?

Xie Daoyun took out a talisman and stuck it to his hand, saying, "This is a Pain Relief Talisman. It can alleviate fatigue and pain."

Zu An felt a refreshing sensation coming from his hand. He immediately showered her in praise. Even though Xie Daoyun's fighting strength wasn't that high, she really was a top-notch support unit! Her talismans were extremely practical! She seemed to be able to do anything.

When she heard his praise, Xie Daoyun felt really sweet inside. Her eyes looked like crescent moons as she smiled.

"Little sister Ling'er, why don't we watch the representative disciples' matches together? I'm sure it'll be quite interesting," Zu An said.

Xie Daoyun was a bit moved, but she still shook her head in the end and replied, "I have to check Violet Mountain for formations. People are all focused on Golden Peak because of the competition, so the security is a bit more lax elsewhere. It won't be as easy to find another chance as good as this."

Previously, they had only checked the main peaks. However, Violet Mountain was extremely vast. She had always had a feeling of unease, so she decided that it was better to continue investigating.

"I understand. Your mission is important," Zu An replied. He knew that she had a mission and didn't force her. However, he handed her an alert arrow from the Embroidery House and said, "Activate this if you encounter any danger. I'll come immediately."

"Okay. Thank you, big brother Zu," Xie Daoyun replied, feeling really warm inside as she held the alert arrow. Inwardly, she thought, Big brother Zu really treats me well.

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When Zu An arrived at Golden Peak, he reflexively looked for Chu Chuyan. After all, he felt really guilty after what had happened the previous night. Unfortunately, he didn't see her. Normally, though, she would come to observe a competition between the representative disciples. Could it be that she was really angry this time?

He turned around to look at Pei Mianman. Pei Mianman clearly saw him, but she pretended not to. Furthermore, her usual charming smile was nowhere to be seen.

"What did they say to each other yesterday?" Zu An muttered to himself, feeling uncomfortable. He wanted to ask her, but he couldn't do so in front of everyone else right now.

Hm? What is going on with Elder Huo Ling and Wan Tongtian? Why do both of them look as if they're spitting with rage?

I gave you two a chance, but you didn't make use of it! Zu An thought mockingly.

Just then, Wang Wuxie finished the conventional opening remarks and speech. He formally announced the beginning of the day's competition.

Because today was the day of the battle between the representative disciples to see who was the best, there weren't too many competitors. There was no need to have several fights at the same time, unlike the matches a few days prior. Instead, the battles would be held one by one for the disciples of the nine sects to view. After all, it would be a rare opportunity for them.

The first match was between the Righteous Sun Sect's Wu Xiaofan and Mount Luofu's Luo Dongjiang. When both of them got on the stage, the entire peak fell silent as the spectators watched the two.

Wu Xiaofan looked completely ordinary. No one would give him a second look if they saw him on the streets. In contrast, Luo Dongjiang was much more handsome and impressive in appearance. He had a lofty presence, worthy of his reputation as a representative disciple.

However, no one on Golden Peak dared to look down on Wu Xiaofan. After all, they had heard just too many legends surrounding him. Many of them began to quietly discuss who would win. The overwhelming majority thought that Wu Xiaofan was going to take the win, but some people supported Luo Dongjiang. After all, Luo Dongjiang had been completely unstoppable in the group stage. Furthermore, everyone liked a good underdog story.

"Luo Dongjiang isn't weak. This is a good chance to see what Wu Xiaofan's trump card is," Jadedfall Palace's Wan Guiyi remarked expectantly. At the same time, he couldn't help but give his father a look. Normally, his father would be discussing strategies with him, as well as giving him some pointers."

What is going on today? Why isn't he saying anything?

He's even avoided my gaze several times. It makes him look as if he did something to let me down...

#### **Chapter 1644: Wailing of the Cold Cicadas**

Wan Guiyi couldn't help but laugh. What could his father even do to him to let him down? His attention quickly returned to the stage.

Mount Luofu's Luo Dongjiang looked toward the honest and simple-looking man across from him, saying, "Brother Wu, everyone believes that you are number one among the younger generation. This humble one will have to experience it for myself."

Wu Xiaofan shook his head and said, "How can I dare to claim to be number one among the younger generation? Sir Zu showed that he was already stronger than me a few days ago."

Luo Dongjiang choked. Aren't you stating the obvious? He even defeated our Elder Xu, so we can only compare him to the older generation. Why would he fight juniors like us?

He just assumed Wu Xiaofan was messing with him, making him angry. He didn't say anything else and drew his sword. A powerful wave of earth energy spread out from beneath his feet, and a dragon made of earth quickly swam around him, faint dragon cries following in its wake.

Mount Luofu excelled with the earth element. This was none other than Mount Luofu's extreme art, Earth Dragon's Cry.

The dragon created a chaotic whirlwind of earth as it moved. It released a ferocious pressure so strong that even the surrounding disciples seemed to be able to feel the weight of the earth bearing down upon them. Many of the disciples sighed in amazement; they had been looking down on this Mount Luofu disciple a bit because of how helpless he was against Zu An, but now things were different.

Wan Guiyi, Lou Wucheng, and the other candidates stared at Wu Xiaofan to see how he would deal with the situation. However, even though Luo Dongjiang's aura grew stronger and stronger, Wu Xiaofan remained completely calm, as if he didn't have any intention of interrupting his opponent.

Many of the disciples felt that Wu Xiaofan was underestimating his opponent too much. After all, Luo Dongjiang was also a representative disciple. Even if there was a difference between them, how great could it be? If he just kept letting his opponent gather strength, he would definitely pay the price for it when they fought later.

"Earth Dragon's Cry!" Luo Dongjiang cried as he finished charging his power. His entire body spun rapidly, becoming one with the earth dragon around him, and he charged at Wu Xiaofan surrounded by an overwhelming aura of destruction. The barrier around the stage began flickering continuously; the technique's berserk power was clearly activating the defenses around the arena perimeter.

"The earth element usually excels at defense rather than offense. I didn't expect its offensive power to actually be so powerful!"

"As expected of Mount Luofu's extreme art!"

The disciples cried out in alarm. However, Wan Guiyi and the other representative disciples were more concerned about something else. They wondered how they would deal with this attack if they were in Wu Xiaofan's place.

"These representative disciples do seem to have some skills..." Zhang Zijiang couldn't help but say with a sigh. However, when he saw that Zu An's expression was completely calm, he quickly changed the topic, adding, "But of course, they are still far too lacking when compared to Sir Zu." Not letting go of any chance to deliver flattery was a crucial skill for any court official.

On the stage, Wu Xiaofan still didn't move an inch. Even as the berserk earth energy arrived right in front of him, he only raised his hand, causing a faint layer of purple energy to appear around it. Then, with a seemingly nonchalant push, a powerful burst of ki suddenly erupted outward from his hand with an ear-splitting noise.

The frighteningly powerful earth dragon suddenly stopped, a visible force rapidly coursing through its body. It quickly began to break apart inch by inch until it completely turned to dust.

Luo Dongjiang had been preparing to unleash his sword skills from within the earthen whirlwind, but he suddenly stopped. The earth dragon had been intended to conceal his real attack, but now that it had

collapsed, he felt the ki and blood within him stir. The hardest thing for him to accept was that Wu Xiaofan's counterattack felt as if it had stripped him of his clothes, practically leaving him completely naked in front of the crowd.

How is this possible?!

Luo Dongjiang was shocked. He had known that there was a difference between him and Wu Xiaofan, but he hadn't expected it to be so great! Earth Dragon's Cry was already his most powerful attack; he had initially thought that his opponent would either dodge or use a lot of energy to stop the earth tornado. Subsequently, he would deliver a decisive blow, catching Wu Xiaofan off guard while his energy was spent. And yet, he had never expected that he would be the one caught off guard!

However, he had already gathered his strength and had to use it. Even though he didn't have the earth dragon to conceal his move, he still used his most powerful sword skill. Dazzling sword radiance erupted from the stage, engulfing Wu Xiaofan within.

A moment later, though, that radiance dimmed. Wu Xiaofan struck the sword with his palm, directly neutralizing the attack before going on the offensive.

Luo Dongjiang was alarmed. He wanted to back up and evade, but his internal ki was a complete mess after his opponent's strike. In that moment of stagnation, Wu Xiaofan's palm instantly struck his chest.

Pfft!

Blood gushed out of Luo Dongjiang's mouth as his body was flung backward like a sandbag. Wu Xiaofan didn't continue to chase after him; instead, he cupped his hands modestly and said, "You went easy on me!"

Luo Dongjiang slowly got back on his feet and wiped blood from the corner of his mouth. He was completely dejected as he replied, "Thank you for being lenient, senior brother."

Even though he had vomited blood and been left in a sorry state, he could sense that Wu Xiaofan hadn't gone all out. Otherwise, he wouldn't even be able to stand up right now. He normally thought so highly of himself, and yet it turned out that he hadn't even been able to bring out his opponent's full power. When he thought of how sorry a state he'd be left in if he went against Zu An, he felt extremely discouraged.

All the disciples from Mount Luofu were left downcast. Earlier, their elder had lost to a youngster, and now, their representative disciple had also lost bitterly to another representative disciple. It seemed Mount Luofu wouldn't be able to raise their heads proudly for at least ten years.

Wan Guiyi cursed inwardly, That trash, Luo Dongjiang! He had wanted to see whether some of Wu Xiaofan's trump cards could be forced out, and yet Luo Dongjiang had been defeated by just two smacks.

The other representative disciples' expressions weren't that much better. They had all been hoping for Luo Dongjiang to exhaust most of Wu Xiaofan's strength, as he was their greatest opponent, but who would have thought that he would win that easily?

...

“Master, this Wu Xiaofan is pretty strong,” Qiu Honglei secretly said to Yun Jianyue.

“You’re not weak either. You’ll have a higher chance of winning against him than that Chu girl,” Yun Jianyue replied.

Qiu Honglei rolled her eyes and replied, “That’s only because of the charm skill’s advantage on men. But judging from how inflexible and square he looks, it’s probably not going to be that effective.”

“You can know someone for a long time without understanding their true nature. The more inflexible and square one looks, the more desires they may be bottling up,” Yun Jianyue said in a carefree manner. She believed that, no matter how formidable these youngsters were, she could still crush them with a single hand. Except for that brat, of course.

She reflexively glanced at Zu An in the distance. She saw him look toward Jedefall Palace from time to time, and couldn't help but sneer. He really is a womanizer after all.

...

Wu Xiaofan cupped his hands and said, “Brother Luo, don’t feel discouraged. It’s mainly because you lost your drive because of Sir Zu a few days ago, which is why you weren’t able to reveal all of your strength today. I was able to win thanks to that unfair advantage.”

The audience immediately looked toward Zu An, but he just waved toward them with a smile as if he were in a parade. The crowd was completely thrown off. There was no trace of this guy’s previous domineering and tyrannical air!

Luo Dongjiang knew that Wu Xiaofan was giving him face. A hint of gratitude flashed through his eyes. He cupped his hands and backed off.

Wang Wuxie nodded, admiring his disciple’s humility. The height of one’s achievements could be completely determined from their temperament. That was sometimes even more important than talent.

However, he quickly remembered the exception that was Zu An and his expression stiffened. He quickly said, “The first fight’s victory goes to the Righteous Sun Sect’s Wu Xiaofan. Next, Jedefall Palace’s Wan Guiyi will fight against Purity Temple’s Qiu Chanzi.”

Wan Guiyi got up and walked toward the elevated stage. Pei Mianman smiled toward him and said, “Good luck, senior brother!” They were from the same sect, after all, so she naturally hoped for him to win.

To her surprise, however, Wan Guiyi simply gave her an unhappy look and started to mutter to himself, “No woman in one’s heart, sword will strike like the divine...”

Pei Mianman was speechless.

Elder Huo Ling immediately erupted with fury. She glared hatefully at Wan Tongtian and spat, “As expected, like son, like father!”

Jedefall Palace’s disciples were already used to seeing the two of them fight. However, weren’t those words backward?

Only Wan Tongtian knew what she was really saying. His expression changed several times. In the end, he swung his sleeves and harrumphed, grumbling, "A real man doesn't fight with women!"

The exchange didn't escape Zu An's ears. He couldn't help but give Wan Tongtian a look. This kid really is something! If this continues, they really might end their lineage.

...

Meanwhile, the two contestants got onto the stage. Wan Guiyi maintained his usual over-the-top behavior. His opponent was a delicate-looking boy, Qiu Chanzi.

"Oh my, how cute!"

Many female cultivators cried out in alarm. Previously, when the nine groups were fighting against each other, the disciples had all been more concerned with their own opponents. They had only watched some of their fellow sect members' fights at most, as they hadn't had much time to pay attention to other things.

For many of them, this was their first opportunity to find out that Purity Temple's Qiu Chanzi was such an adorable young man.

Tranquility Temple's little monk Jie Se harrumphed and said, "That kid's cuteness level is actually close to rivaling mine."

Master Jian Huang struggled to stop himself from hitting Jie Se with the wooden fish.

"Senior brother, please go easy on me," Qiu Chanzi said with the manners of a good student. Anyone who saw him would want to give him a big hug.

Wan Guiyi waved his hand impatiently and replied, "Don't give me that nonsense. Just start the fight." Wu Xiaofan had won so straightforwardly that he was feeling quite a lot of pressure. He also wanted a clean victory.

Qiu Chanzi lowered his head as if he felt wronged

All the female disciples were filled with righteous indignation. They all denounced Wan Guiyi's attitude as evil.

"Hmph, women," Wan Guiyi said, simply ignoring them. With his pride, he naturally felt it beneath him to attack first. At the same time, however, he was a bit impatient and snapped, "Are you going to make your move or not?" The fangirls were starting to make him feel more and more irritated.

Qiu Chanzi suddenly looked up. A strange smile appeared on his face as he replied, "Senior brother, I have already made my move!"

Now the spectators were shocked. After all, this Qiu Chanzi had clearly appeared to be a cute and kind little boy. Everyone who saw him would want to pinch his cheeks and hug him. However, his face was now warped in an eerie way, and his temperament now seemed strange and scary. Furthermore, his entire body emanated an aura of inexplicable madness.

## **Chapter 1645: Fists for Giggling Freaks**



The spectators were incredibly shocked. Qiu Chanzi had always been very polite in the group stage and treated everyone well. Even those who had been defeated by him accepted it wholeheartedly. Why had he suddenly become like this, as if he were possessed by a demon?

Seeing people's skeptical looks, Purity Temple's Vice Temple Master wiped off some cold sweat while explaining, "Qiu Chanzi is not possessed by a demon; rather, his nature is a bit strange. He seems to have two personalities. Furthermore, because his cultivation method is special, he always enters this kind of state whenever he encounters a difficult situation."

The other sect leaders felt more at ease when they heard that. It turned out Qiu Chanzi had been holding back so far! Now that he was facing a powerful enemy like Wan Guiyi, he couldn't hold back any of his skills. Still, his current state really was a bit frightening.

...

Meanwhile, Yun Jianyue was smacking her thigh and laughing. She remarked, "This kid isn't bad! Let's try to get him into our Devil Sect if there's a chance. He has the potential to become a great devil!"

Qiu Honglei rolled her eyes and replied, "Master, didn't you tell me not to call us the Devil Sect?"

Yun Jianyue's smile froze. She hastily replied, "It's different when I say it, compared to when you say it."

"Isn't that a double standard?"

"Whatever! You should be watching the competition seriously right now."

...

Meanwhile, on the stage, Wan Guiyi was also shocked. He finally realized that something was off. It was the middle of winter, so why did he hear cicadas? Furthermore, even though he had always been rather prideful, it was strange for him to completely lose his cool. The mysterious sense of restlessness he felt seemed to come from the cicada noises all around him.

With a flick of his finger, his longsword instantly left its scabbard. He didn't grab the sword, instead launching it at Qiu Chanzi.

Even though the sword was flying hilt-first at Qiu Chanzi, a burst of sword ki flooded the entire stage. Wherever the blade passed, its sharp sword ki left long gashes all across the stage.

The disciples watching were all incredibly shocked. This Wan Guiyi's sword ki seemed to be a bit too strong! How did even this casual attack have such power?

Even Wu Xiaofan's eyes widened a bit. He carefully watched the battle.

Just then, Wang Wuxie turned to Zu An and asked, "Sir Zu, what do you think about Wan Guiyi's sword skill?"

The other sect masters and elders also looked toward him. Before, they wouldn't have cared about his opinion at all. There had been no way they would ask him about what he thought. However, after that shocking battle, they no longer viewed him as a junior. Between that and the fact that he already held

such an important post in the court at such a young age, his future prospects were clearly limitless. They all naturally wanted to improve their relationship with him.

"He's like a sword himself. He seems like a rough diamond that was born to wield the sword," Zu An commented. He couldn't help but laugh at himself. In the past, he had always been the ones fighting to the death while other judges and elders commented on his performance. He hadn't expected to be the one evaluating someone else now.

Wang Wuxie couldn't help but say to Wan Tongtian, "Brother Wan, you've given birth to an excellent son." He secretly glanced at the nearby Yan Xuehen as he spoke. He was filled with regret.

"Not at all, not at all," Wan Tongtian replied. He merely sounded polite on the surface, but he was so happy that it was almost as if his tail were wagging.

Elder Huo Ling harrumphed. She clearly became more annoyed the more formidable Wan Guiyi showed himself to be. She remarked, "They both use swords, but in my opinion, he is still far too lacking compared to Sir Zu."

The others' expressions changed. Elder, how can you just kill the conversation like that?

...

Meanwhile, several changes had taken place on the battlefield. Qiu Chanzi crouched slightly before leaping high into the air, avoiding Wan Guiyi's vicious attack.

Many of the experienced spectators frowned when they saw the move, thinking that it didn't seem like a particularly wise choice. Those who hadn't reached the master rank could only float in the air for a short time. Additionally, their mobility decreased substantially in the air. Wouldn't Qiu Chanzi just become a living target then?

Wan Guiyi's sword hilt missed and smashed into the barrier around the stage. The barrier flickered, and the sword was launched backward along its original trajectory. He seemed to have already anticipated that, though, and easily grabbed it; his move made him look incredibly handsome. Many of the younger female disciples screamed in amazement. Unfortunately, Wan Guiyi was an unromantic man, and only felt that their cheers were a bit noisy.

He looked up at Qiu Chanzi, clearly recognizing an opening, and said, "You're completely courting death!"

He transformed into a streak of light, rushing into the air toward Qiu Chanzi. He was confident that with the speed of his sword, there was no way Qiu Chanzi, who had just expended his strength, could avoid it. Earlier, Wu Xiaofan had dealt with Luo Dongjiang with just two palm strikes; winning here with two moves would be just as good.

However, his expression quickly froze, because the attack that he had believed would definitely land missed!

He had already broken through into the master rank and could move through the air at will. He quickly turned to look behind him, and saw Qiu Chanzi reappear a hundred or so meters away. Rings of blue patterns suddenly surged around Qiu Chanzi.

Wan Guiyi felt a headache coming on. What is going on here? Don't tell me this kid is going to release ridiculous sword ki just like that Zu An?

Zu An's ridiculous and overwhelming display that day had clearly left an unforgettable impression on his still rather immature mind.

The ripples quickly grew larger and larger until a giant cicada projection manifested behind Qiu Chanzi. It gently flapped its wings and released screams that made everyone present tremble in fear. The disciples who were watching felt their ki and blood stir chaotically. Their mood also became strangely irritable.

On the judge's seat, Wang Wuxie noticed that something wasn't right. With a swing of his sleeves, a wave of faint purple energy surrounded and covered the stage. Only then did the surrounding disciples gradually calm down.

Meanwhile, Wan Guiyi, who was at the center of the stage, wasn't so lucky. His entire body trembled and the ki inside him was stirred up. His eyes began to turn red, and he appeared to be on the verge of collapse.

"Heheheh... I avoided it~" Qiu Chanzi said as he grabbed his hair and revealed an extremely pleased smile. His eyes were full of madness.

Many people present felt that something wasn't quite right with this kid. Only Zu An felt that the sight was somewhat familiar. In his previous world, this kind of character appeared quite often in anime. Should I call him a crazy freak or a sicko?

Guan Chouhai couldn't help but voice his surprise. "Brother He, what is going on with him? Why does this feel a bit similar to a grandmaster's domain?"

Purity Temple's He Yuan stroked his beard and said with a smile, "This is the result of a fortuitous meeting Qiu Chanzi experienced when he was young. He obtained a strange cicada. After refining it into his own soul pet, he became this way. He thus decided to change his name to Qiu Chanzi. As his cultivation climbed, the power of the winter cicada also grew stronger and stronger." [1]

"I wonder what kind of ancient monster this winter cicada is."

The sect masters began to discuss the winter cicada's origins. Unfortunately, none of them could come to a conclusion despite their extraordinary experiences.

Only Wan Tongtian had a displeased expression. After all, the one in the current predicament wasn't one of their sons.

...

Yun Jianyue couldn't help but say with a sigh, "These daoist sects really have a great number of talented people. I didn't expect the previously harmless-looking Qiu Chanzi to be so formidable. Honglei, you can't lower your guard in the following battles."

Qiu Honglei nodded. Qiu Changzi had been publicly acknowledged as the weakest among the representative disciples, and yet he had ended up hiding his real skills so well. She didn't dare to show any more carelessness toward anyone.

“Heh, it’s time for me to attack now, right?” Qiu Chanzi said as he tilted his head to the side. The cicada projection behind him flapped its wings, and he seemed to merge with it. He flew straight at Wan Guiyi. Even the air around him seemed to be torn apart as he charged forward.

Jadefall Palace’s disciples all cried out in alarm, worried for their senior brother. The winter cicada’s unfolded wings were like two-hundred-meter-long blades! Anyone struck by them would likely be instantly bisected at the waist.

Wan Guiyi clearly intended to retaliate, but the cicada noises were giving him a huge headache. His reaction speed was significantly slower than normal. He could only barely raise his sword, gathering a blast of sharp sword ki to face his opponent.

Jadefall Palace’s people all felt very nervous. Wan Guiyi’s sword seemed significantly weaker than usual.

Boom!

The winter cicada projection smashed directly into Wan Guiyi’s sword ki and released blinding light. In that instant, it was as if space itself distorted. No one could see what was happening inside.

Suddenly, a longsword quickly spun through the air. Then, it stabbed directly into the stage floor, revealing just how sharp it was.

The disciples’ expressions all changed. That was Wan Guiyi’s sword! If a swordsman lost his own sword, it was easy to imagine what his current situation was.

Could it be that Wan Guiyi was going to lose? That would be an upset no less surprising than Zhi Yin’s loss!

Suddenly, the rays of light on the stage gradually disappeared, revealing two figures within.

Wan Guiyi’s entire body was covered in blood; even standing still seemed difficult for him. However, Qiu Chanzi was standing in front of him without moving, as if he were completely frozen.

Qiu Chanzi looked down at the finger his opponent had thrust through his chest. His expression was full of disbelief as he muttered, “How is this possible?”

Wan Guiyi’s entire body was covered in wounds, but his gaze was still extremely sharp. He was just like the sword that was embedded in the ground beneath him. He said, “A true swordsman can use every single part of their body as a sword.”

“So that was it. Hehe,” Qiu Chanzi said with a giggle, seeming to have suddenly understood.

What he got in response was a fist. Blood and snot flew through the air, drawing out two long arcs. Qiu Chanzi’s body fell outside the arena like a broken sack.

Purity Temple’s He Yuan exclaimed furiously, “Wan Guiyi, you already won! Why did you have to be so vicious?!”

Wan Guiyi replied with a sneer, “Isn’t it gross for a grown man to be giggling all day? The only things this one has to give to giggling freaks are these fists!”

1. ‘Qiu’ is a surname \*, but it can also mean ‘autumn’. ‘Chan zi’ means ‘cicada’. cicada

## Chapter 1646: Driven Insane

He Yuan was about to say something else when Wan Tongtian suddenly stood up and said, "Brother He, these kinds of things can happen in a competition. It isn't too appropriate to trouble the juniors, is it?"

He still remembered how all of them had been praising Qiu Chanzi's cocky behavior earlier, so now that the tides had turned, there was naturally no need to give them any face.

He Yuan's expression changed several times. He didn't actually fear Wan Tongtian, but this was Wang Wuxie's territory. There was no way he could just let something happen without doing anything, but...

He gave the nearby Zu An a look, and didn't say anything in the end. Instead, he left with a grave expression to check Qiu Chanzi's injuries. Zu An had helped Jedefall Palace last time. Mount Luofu's Elder Xu had been unconvinced, and that had led to their sect absolutely humiliating themselves. He didn't want to repeat that disaster.

Soon after, Wang Wuxie declared Wan Guiyi's victory. The next round was going to be between the White Jade Sect's Lou Wucheng and Supreme Mystery Cave's Shi Dingtian.

When Wan Guiyi returned to Jedefall Palace's camp, the disciples all enthusiastically congratulated him on his victory.

"Is there even anything to be happy about?" Wan Guiyi muttered, his expression unpleasant.

The others were stunned. Why do you look as if you lost or something? In that instant, they didn't even know what to say.

Wan Guiyi was extremely unhappy, because Wu Xiaofan had won so easily and defeated his opponent in just two moves. Meanwhile, his body was in tatters and he had been left in such a sorry state. Compared to Wu Xiaofan, the difference was too clear.

His junior brother Yu Cai was the one who understood his temperament the best, remarking, "Senior brother shouldn't feel too discouraged. That Purity Temple's Qiu Chanzi was clearly much stronger than Mount Luofu's Luo Dongjiang. He was naturally a bit trickier to deal with."

Wan Guiyi harrumphed. "The truly strong don't need any excuses. Even if he is stronger, I should have been able to easily take him down."

Yu Cai was speechless. Sigh, senior brother's overflowing confidence... What can we even say?

...

Meanwhile, Lou Wucheng and Shi Dingtian were already standing on the stage.

Lou Wucheng was the inheritor of the Immortal Sword. Apart from his exceptional talent, his appearance was also top-tier. Even though the White Jade Sect didn't really have it explicitly written anywhere that that was a requirement, their disciples were practically all handsome and beautiful. Even just standing there casually with his white clothes fluttering in the wind made him look impressive and courageous.

Quite a few female disciples cried out.

“Ah, senior brother Lou, my idol!”

“Wasn’t your idol senior brother Zhi Yin?”

“Hey, stop getting all hung up on the details. Today, my idol is senior brother Lou!”

...

Unlike Wan Guiyi, Lou Wucheng nodded toward the disciples around him in a good-natured manner. His bearing was outstanding and handsome, with no flaws to be picked out. He even gave his martial aunt, Yan Xuehen, a look. He felt a bit of regret that junior sister Chuyan wasn’t here; otherwise, he would have made sure to show her a good performance.

Unlike the confident and heroic-looking Lou Wucheng, Shi Dingtian looked around with a rather uneasy expression. He looked just like a country bumpkin who had entered a city for the first time. However, after what had just happened with Qiu Chanzi earlier, no one dared to look down on him just in case he was another tiger disguised as a pig.

Lou Wucheng cupped his hands and greeted Shi Dingtian. “Greetings, brother Shi!”

“Hello, hello.” Shi Dingtian hurriedly returned the greeting.

Lou Wucheng wasn’t in a rush to attack. He planned to test out his opponent first.

After Qiu Chanzi’s fight, the spectators all knew that these representative disciples really hadn’t brought out everything they had during the group competition. Almost all of them had been hiding their real strength... apart from that trash Zhi Yin, of course.

He even took out everything and still lost. I wonder just where he got the confidence to chase after my junior sister Chu.

Lou Wucheng slowly raised his sword and said, “This sword is three feet seven inches in length, eight pounds in weight. He is my best friend, and I am always extremely happy whenever I am with him.”

He took the initiative to introduce his weapon. In truth, however, it didn’t really matter whether he introduced his weapon or not, seeing as everyone knew that his ultimate skill was the Immortal Sword. That meant his weapon was naturally a sword too.

He actually wanted to take the chance to test out his opponent. After all, Shi Dingtian didn’t have a great reputation, and Lou Wucheng had only learned that he was Supreme Mystery Cave’s representative disciple after arriving at Violet Mountain. Shi Dingtian hadn’t used any weapons in the group stage.

Shi Dingtian was stunned. He clearly didn’t know that there could be such exchanges on the stage, so he instinctively replied, “My best friend is Blacky the Second.”

Now, it was Lou Wucheng’s turn to be stunned. He had been waiting for his opponent to continue, but Shi Dingtian had just stopped there! Helpless to do anything else, he could only take the initiative to ask, “What kind of weapon is Blacky the Second?”

Is Blacky the Second the second sword he uses? Is he a dual wielder? I’ll have to be careful of his other hand later.

“Blacky the Second isn’t a weapon; he’s a dog,” Shi Dingtian replied in a deadly earnest manner.

Lou Wucheng was speechless.

As if he were worried that Lou Wucheng wouldn’t understand, Shi Dingtian continued to explain, “Didn’t you introduce your best friend? Blacky the Second is my best friend. I’m always happy when I’m with him. But Cave Master didn’t let me bring him with me this time.

“Still, I met many people this time at Violet Mountain, like the ones in the group competition and now you. I don’t feel lonely anymore with all of you here with me. Besides that, there is one way in which you’re better than Blacky the Second; it can only bark while you guys can talk.”

Pfft!

The disciples watching couldn’t hold it in anymore. All of them roared with laughter. Meanwhile, the disciples who had fought with Shi Dingtian during the group stage all had unhappy expressions. They hadn’t expected to be compared to a dog. Even Wang Wuxie gave Supreme Mystery Cave’s Cave Master Mu a strange look.

Cave Master Mu’s face was completely red. The reason why he hadn’t let Shi Dingtian bring the dog was because he was scared of being embarrassed. In the end, however, it had still happened.

This damn Lou Wucheng, just fight if you’re going to fight! What are you talking about these things for?!

...

Yun Jianyue remarked in amusement, “I wonder if this kid really is stupid, or if he’s just pretending. You’ll definitely have to be careful if you end up facing him after.”

Qiu Honglei rolled her eyes and replied, “I haven’t even fought in this round, and yet you’re already telling me to think about the next round?”

“With your current ability, winning this round shouldn’t be an issue, no?”

“Weren’t you just saying that I couldn’t underestimate any of my opponents?”

“Hm? Did I say that?”

...

Lou Wucheng’s face twitched. He took a deep breath, seemingly trying to calm himself down before saying, “I was asking about your weapon.”

“Weapon?” Shi Dingtian replied, stunned. “Oh, I used to use a blade, but the two Cave Masters said that this was just a tournament and that we had to be careful. I was scared that I would accidentally kill someone, so I didn’t bring it.”

With that, Wu Xiaofan, Wan Guiyi, and Kunlun Void’s Liang Ling all suddenly opened their eyes. This kid spoke quite the bold words! Even the other sect masters looked toward Cave Master Mu with displeased expressions.

Cave Master Mu wiped away some cold sweat while explaining in embarrassment, “Kids do not really know what they are saying. Please do not take it to heart, everyone.”

Zu An looked at Shi Dingtian with an amused expression. This kid probably has a bit of a reputation... I hope you give that Lou bastard a good beating. He actually has those intentions toward my Chuyan? If I weren't a judge right now, I would consider just doing it myself.

Lou Wucheng's eyes twitched. He now felt that trying to start a conversation before the match was a mistake. He said, “You can use a blade, it's fine.”

Seeing as Shi Dingtian clearly had a weapon, and yet had chosen to use his fists, wouldn't Lou Wucheng be bullying his opponent by using a sword? He'd become a laughingstock if news of that got out.

“No no no no,” Shi Dingtian said, quickly waving his hands. “I'm not good at holding myself back and I don't know when to stop. This is pretty good. I don't have to worry about beating you to death if I only use my hands.”

Now, even Yan Xuehen couldn't help but give him a second look. This kid really was a bit strange.

Next to her, Li Changsheng frowned slightly. He carefully examined Shi Dingtian to determine whether what he said was serious, or if he was just trying to anger his opponent.

“Amitabha buddha,” Master Jian Huang said with a worried sigh. “This benefactor also has a pure and innocent heart. If he joined my Tranquility Temple, he would be able to reach great heights.”

The little monk Jie Se muttered in dissatisfaction, “Master, are you saying I don't have a pure and innocent heart?”

Master Jian Huang gave him a glance and replied, “Why don't you take a look at your own name first?”

Jie Se was speechless.

...

Lou Wucheng was finally angered. He said coldly, “In that case, I'll have to experience your respected self's almighty skills for myself.”

His longsword left its sheath as soon as he spoke. Sword shadows appeared all around him. However, in the next instant, all of his sword shadows vanished and moved unpredictably. Only a few geniuses could vaguely keep up with his sword's profound trajectory.

Zu An was quite surprised. Is this the glorious Immortal Sword?

To a certain extent, it carried some resemblance to the Snowflake Sword. However, the Snowflake Sword carried more of the poignant and ice-cold characteristics of snow, while the Immortal Sword had the profound feeling of a majestic peak, as if there really were an immortal from the heavens above who was bestowing immortality.

Shi Dingtian brandished his fists in alarm, and just happened to strike the tip of the sword. Both of their bodies trembled, and a wind blew around them. However, compared to Wan Guiyi and Qiu Changzi's ferocity, this battle clearly seemed smaller in scale.



Lou Wucheng wasn't surprised that his opponent could receive his attack at all. After all, Shi Dingtian was also a representative disciple himself. He said indifferently, "Even though I only used forty percent of my ki, the fact that you could stop it already makes you quite good among our peers. No wonder you had that level of arrogance. But if you don't use your weapon, don't blame me for being too harsh."

He paused for a moment after saying that. For some reason, he felt a strange urge to ask, "How much of your ki did you use just now?"

Shi Dingtian was stunned. After hesitating for a moment, he replied, "I think thirty percent."

Lou Wucheng roared furiously, "I'll kill you!"

Chapter 1647: Let People Off Whenever Possible

The spectators nearby roared with laughter. The scene that was playing out on the stage was just way too hilarious! They hadn't expected Supreme Mystery Cave's representative disciple to be such an interesting person.

Some people even began to secretly gamble on whether he really was that ignorant, or if he was pretending to infuriate Lou Wucheng; still, more people were leaning toward the latter. After all, it was a bit hard to believe that a representative disciple was stupid to that extent.

Zu An wanted to laugh when he saw that. If this guy had a Keyboard System, his speed of earning Rage points wouldn't necessarily be any slower than Zu An's own.

When there were some people who felt happy, there were naturally others who felt unhappy. Lou Wucheng belonged to the latter category. He believed that he had acted rather courteously, yet this Supreme Mystery Cave brat was going too far. In his anger, he could no longer hold himself back. He thrust his sword out, and the entire weapon seemed to vanish, save for the cold glint at its tip. It struck toward the major acupoint on Shi Dingtian's shoulder like a viper's tongue.

Wan Guiyi, Wu Xiaofan, and the others nodded. This Lou Wucheng hadn't let down his reputation; he did have skill with the sword.

Only Li Changsheng frowned. He felt that his disciple's mental state was too restless right now. Lou Wucheng's sword skill had gone against the original intent of immortality.

Shi Dingtian was startled and quickly dodged in alarm. His movements weren't all that refined, but he was very quick. His dodge was so fast that it seemed to break through human limits. Still, no matter how fast he was, he still wasn't as fast as Lou Wucheng's sword. At that moment, he felt as if an immortal were looking down on him, one that constantly targeted his vitals.

It seemed as if he wouldn't be able to dodge, so he unleashed a punch directly at his opponent's longsword head on. His fist seemed as tough as metal; in an instant, he exchanged several dozen moves with the sword tip. The combatants' powerful ki clashed against each other, producing waves of shockwaves through the air.

Boom!

Fortunately, the stage had been specially prepared for such a fight. Otherwise, the spectating disciples could have been injured by the sounds alone.

“This Shi Dingtian really is tough. He’s actually able to take on Lou Wucheng’s Immortal Sword with his bare fists!”

Many of the spectators cried out in alarm.

Because the results of this battle would affect the White Jade Sect, Yan Xuehen also paid some attention. She also wondered just how Shi Dingtian’s body was so tough with his level of cultivation, and just what kind of cultivation he had gone through.

But if we were to compare hardness, he’d still be far from that guy...

Yan Xuehens’ cold cheeks turned a bit red.

...

Wang Wuxie noticed that as he glanced at her from time to time. He couldn't help but become a bit absentminded.

Her complexion is so fine today. After so many years have passed, she seems to have grown prettier and prettier, while I’ve only grown old...

He felt several complex emotions, and started looking rather dejected.

...

Suddenly, there were cries of alarm as several new developments took place on the stage.

The two opponents had already separated. Lou Wucheng’s clothes were still as pure as snow; he had one arm behind his back, his other hand holding a longsword at an angle. There was a droplet of blood on the sword’s tip.

Meanwhile, Shi Dingtian was in a much worse state. His fists were already bloody. The clothing around his shoulders, chest, and legs was all tattered, with faint sword scars visible on his skin.

“I fear that you might die if you still don’t bring out your weapon,” Lou Wucheng said. After that aggressive barrage of attacks, his anger had already been largely vented. However, not only did he want to win, he wanted to win in a handsome manner. If he defeated Shi Dingtian while the latter was completely unarmed, it wouldn’t be all that glorious even if he won.

Shi Dingtian scratched his head and said, “You are a bit more formidable than the others. I really might not be able to win against you completely unarmed.”

His opponents from the group stage all had grim expressions. Why does this guy have to put it like that?

...

Just then, Cave Master Mu shouted from the judges’ side, “Dingtian, as brother Lou over here is so generous, you should just use a weapon to exchange pointers with him.” This was a once in a decade competition, so it was an important matter for every sect. He didn’t want to lose and leave just like that.

Shi Dingtian was a bit troubled, replying, “But I didn’t bring any weapons...”

Cave Master Mu was also troubled. He didn't use a blade himself, and if he provided his weapon, that would seem as if he were interfering with the fight. The White Jade Sect's side would definitely be against it.

Suddenly, a charitable disciple near the arena shouted, "I have a blade. Here, you can borrow it!"

Anyone who could participate in this competition was an elite from their clan. None of them were scared of things getting out of hand. They really wanted to see these two on the stage beat the crap out of each other.

However, someone nearby roared with laughter. "Your weapon isn't even earth-grade! And yet you have the nerve to suggest using it to fight against the Immortal Sword?"

The first person's neck turned red. He retorted, "Haven't you heard what the proverbs say? Even a match bought with a copper coin can light the most expensive incense. Why can't my weapon be used in a competition?"

While the two were arguing, Shi Dingtian laughed in a silly manner and said, "It's enough, it's enough. It's fine as long as I have a blade."

Lou Wucheng scowled. What do you mean, it's fine as long as you have a blade? Are you looking down on me that much?

When that person below saw that Shi Dingtian supported him, he felt so excited he started turning red in the face. He raised his blade and called out, "Here, take it!"

Shi Dingtian was about to take it when he turned around and said to Lou Wucheng, "I'm getting my weapon now, so don't attack me from behind, okay?"

Lou Wucheng's eyes twitched. He clenched his teeth and hissed, "Who do you think I am? Why would I do something so despicable?"

The White Jade Sect's disciples all voiced their support as well. They all felt that this brat had really gone too far.

In contrast, Supreme Mystery Cave's disciples were all holding back their laughter. This was clearly not the first time such a thing had happened.

Soon after, Shi Dingtian picked up the blade. Lou Wucheng asked coldly, "Can we continue the fight now?" He had been made to look like a joke by this brat again and again. He really was starting to have murderous thoughts.

"Yup," Shi Dingtian replied, but by the time he finished speaking, Lou Wucheng had already moved.

Kicking off the arena with the tips of his toes, Lou Wucheng rose several hundred meters into the air. He spread out his arms in midair like a cross, and the outline of an immortal palace vaguely appeared behind him.

All of the disciples near the arena suddenly felt waves of cold bleakness and a sort of sorrow, as if they stood detached from the world. At the same time, they could vaguely sense a mysterious power, as if they were being watched by some deity.

“Heavens! Is that really the legendary Immortal Palace?”

Many people were moved. Even though this was a world of cultivation, they had never seen true immortals before. Even though this immortal palace was just a projection, they felt that this was what an immortal palace was supposed to look like.

...

Both Yan Xuehen and Yun Jianyue frowned slightly. This Immortal Palace looked impressive, but had no substance. They had sensed the true aura of the Heavenly Court’s immortals in the Fiend races’ Great Xia Dungeon. This Immortal Palace was just too lacking compared to that feeling from back then.

The two couldn't help but look toward Zu An. They thought to themselves, This kid’s luck really is ridiculous! The fact that they were able to reach their current position, apart from aptitude, was partly because of luck. But compared to Zu An, they were really nothing.

When had they ever had such an incredible encounter in all those years before they met Zu An? And yet, after they met him, they had discovered that incredible things appeared one after another. They hadn’t even gotten a moment to catch their breath.

Both of them were grandmasters, so their senses were extremely sharp. They immediately noticed that they were both looking at Zu An.

Yun Jianyue thought, Isn’t the way that stone cold woman is looking at this brat a bit strange? It isn’t like her normal nature at all! Could it be that she’s just like me... worried for our disciple’s feelings?

Yan Xuehen thought to herself, This Emptiness Isle’s Elder Peng doesn’t have a great reputation, but she seems to be quite a bit stronger than I imagined.

Although, why is she looking at Zu An like that? Could it be that she’s going to do something bad to him? Maybe it’s because Zu An helped Emptiness Isle’s disciple before and she’s grateful, right?

But that look in her eyes is really strange...

Just then, Lou Wucheng slowly raised his sword at Shi Dingtian. The massive Immortal Palace seemed to have received an order and crashed down directly toward his opponent. Many disciples could feel the pressure and instinctively shuddered.

“Is this the Immortal Sword?” Wan Guiyi muttered to himself. They were both sword users, so his expression was full of excitement.

Even the sect masters couldn't help but give Li Changsheng a look. The Immortal Sword really did have a well-deserved reputation. In their eyes, Lou Wucheng’s sword was still a bit immature. For example, many details of the immortal palace were still indistinct. It seemed a bit faint and didn’t give off enough pressure. But if Li Changsheng were the one to use the skill, would they be able to stop his attack?

Supreme Mystery Cave’s youngster is finished!

That was what all the spectators were thinking. After all, that silly brat had no chance of blocking such a powerful sword!

Only Zu An looked at Shi Dingtian with excitement. He didn't believe the latter would lose so easily.

...

Right at that moment, Shi Dingtian suddenly gripped his blade in both hands. He shouted, then raised the blade. He made a simple cleaving motion. However, with that alone, a massive line of blade ki extended more than a hundred meters away!

The blade ki smashed into the immortal palace. All of the natural ki on Golden Peak rippled intensely. Then, the entire palace was sliced in half down the middle. The blade radiance's power also crumbled, becoming much smaller in size. It looked as if it were about to disappear, but it continued to slice toward Lou Wucheng.

Lou Wucheng's ki and blood were a mess from having his immortal palace destroyed. In that instant, he even found it a bit hard to move. When he saw the blade of light shooting at him, his eyes contracted rapidly.

Suddenly, there was a brittle crack. Shi Dingtian's blade was only normal steel, so it could no longer endure such power. It shattered into countless fragments that flew away in the wind. The blade radiance also disappeared at the same time.

Lou Wucheng used the chance to recover, then rushed at his opponent. He had a large chance of winning in such a situation.

When he was partway there, however, he suddenly jumped backward and made some distance beneath them. His pride as a swordsman wouldn't allow him to take advantage of his opponent's difficult situation. He said, "Brother Shi's sword skill is outstanding; it leaves me in awe. As it is difficult for us to decide a true victor, how about we just end things here and become friends?"

In his opinion, victory would already have been easily obtained. Taking the initiative to offer a tie was already showing Shi Dingtian quite a bit of respect.

For some reason, he suddenly felt the urge to ask, "By the way, what great name was given to that attack of yours?"

Shi Dingtian scratched his head and replied, "That move? Master Long taught it to me. He said that if people can't beat you, you have to let them off whenever possible. He also said that anyone can make mistakes, so you should forgive them. Sigh, what's wrong, brother Lou?"

Lou Wucheng was so angry that his eyes turned black. He vomited blood and fainted.

Chapter 1648: Are You All From the Devil Sect?

All the disciples around the stage were stunned. Lou Wucheng had clearly been at an advantage, so why had he vomited blood and fainted?

Then again, weren't the words of the kid across from him just a bit too much...?

"This fight..."

The grandmasters looked at each other in dismay as well. Normal disciples wouldn't necessarily be able to tell exactly what had happened, but naturally, they could.

If Shi Dingtian had been holding a normal blade, victory would have been decided long beforehand. However, his blade had shattered, placing victory within Lou Wucheng's grasp. Then, Lou Wucheng had wanted to show his opponent mercy, but ended up fainting out of anger.

The judges really didn't know how to evaluate the match. If they said that Shi Dingtian had won, the White Jade Sect's Li Changsheng likely wouldn't allow himself to lose that much face. However, if they said Lou Wucheng had won... Well, he was lying on the ground unconscious.

While the other judges were conflicted, Li Changsheng said indifferently, "Wucheng's temperament is still lacking, and he was both restless and impatient against his opponent. His loss this time is not undeserved."

As he had taken the initiative to say that, the others sighed in relief. They naturally declared Shi Dingtian's victory.

A commotion broke out. The spectators hadn't expected another huge upset to happen! Lou Wucheng, one of the candidates favored to take the crown, had ended up losing to an unknown, foolish kid.

Li Changsheng floated over to the stage. He reached out and sent over some ki, and Lou Wucheng gradually woke up. When he saw his master's ice-cold expression and heard the disdain directed at him, he couldn't help but feel ashamed. He really wanted to run away and crawl into a hole.

Just then, Zu An suddenly said, "I feel that his temperament isn't that bad. From the very start, he wasn't willing to take advantage of an unarmed opponent; later, he had a chance to turn the tide and grasp victory, but he didn't take advantage of his opponent. That attitude matches the lofty and unyielding character of a swordsman. I believe that if he continues to train with single-minded devotion, his achievements in the sword will be limitless."

The once completely disheartened Lou Wucheng was stunned. Even the junior disciples who normally looked up to him carried disdain in their eyes, and yet this rival in love, whom he had loathed the most, had actually spoken up for him. He couldn't help but feel all sorts of emotions well up, and even wanted to burst into tears. He quickly looked away for fear that others would see him crying.

With Zu An taking the lead, Wang Wuxie and the others naturally spoke some praises for Lou Wucheng too. After all, the White Jade Sect still had their pride, and doing them this favor wasn't too difficult.

Yan Xuehen gave Zu An a look of surprise. Didn't these two have a bad relationship? Yet he actually spoke up for him! Could it be because Lou Wucheng is from the White Jade Sect, so Zu An is showing favor to everyone related?

Her fair cheeks became a bit hot when she thought of that.

...

Meanwhile, Pei Mianman's eyes were glistening. She thought, Ah Zu is becoming more and more like a model for everyone else! Ah, but this almost makes him seem like my elder...

Qiu Honglei's eyes were also sparkling. She remarked, "Ah Zu is such a kind person."

Yun Jianyue harrumphed. "Hmph, being too kind has never been a good thing in our Holy Sect."

"Ah Zu isn't even from the Holy Sect," Qiu Honglei said indifferently. She rested her chin on her hand as she gazed at her lover in the distance.

"Stop acting like a love-struck dummy; it's almost your turn. Don't mess things up now," Yun Jianyue snapped. For some reason, she suddenly felt strangely irritated when she saw her disciple acting like this.

...

Meanwhile, Wang Wuxie had already declared the conclusion of the third fight. The fourth fight was between Kunlun Void Sect's Liang Ling and Emptiness Isle's Peng Wuyan.

When they saw the two step forward, the busybodies in the audience quickly began speculating as to who would win the fight.

Most of them favored Liang Ling, as Kunlun Void Sect had once been a great sect comparable to Jadenfall Palace and Heavenly Sorrow; they had once been considered the three great sects. Even though they had fallen quite a bit, Emptiness Isle was even worse off.

Meanwhile, this Peng Wuyan's appearance really was hard to explain... The way she had fought during the group stage was so fierce too. As such, they were instinctively biased toward the rather handsome Liang Ling.

However, Zu An secretly sized up the ugly woman on the stage. He just felt that she was a bit familiar somehow. Could it be because he had helped her out before?

...

Yan Xuehen, who had been secretly observing him, frowned. Just how much of a skirt chaser is this guy? You won't even let this woman go?

"Kunlun Void Sect's Liang Ling!" the young man on the stage cupped his hands and called out.

Qiu Honglei said with a big smile, "Let's not waste any more time with words and just fight. We don't want things to end up like the last round, do we?"

Liang Ling choked. When he recalled Lou Wucheng's bitter end, he realized that sometimes, speaking too much really wasn't a good thing. Still, he was suddenly a bit confused. This woman was clearly so ugly, but why was her smile somewhat pretty?

Ah, what the hell. Something must be wrong with me.

He began to doubt his own tastes. With a darkened expression, he took out his spear. He wanted to say 'ladies first', but when he recalled his opponent's viciousness during the group stage, she really didn't seem like the type who needed him to give her a handicap. As such, he shouted, "Then please be careful, miss!"

His entire body suddenly erupted into raging flames as he spoke. Then, his spear rapidly spun, forming a screw-shaped dragon of flames. It destroyed everything in its path as it surged toward Qiu Honglei. Even

with the protection of the arena's formations between them, the surrounding disciples still felt its horrifying temperature.

This Liang Ling's reputation might not be comparable to Wu Xiaofan and Lou Wucheng, but his control over the flame element has already reached such a degree!

There were many, many fire element cultivators in the world, but they could be divided into ranks. Those ranks could partly be determined through the color of the flames, with purer flames being more translucent and burning hotter; additionally, one's degree of control was also extremely important. There were many fire element cultivators present, and they were naturally able to see that Liang Ling was the very best of all of the fire element cultivators who had fought thus far.

Of course, Pei Minaman's black flames seemed to be an exception. Most people had never seen flames that could be black and have such ridiculous power. It was clearly some kind of strange variant flame.

...

As she watched the giant flame dragon rush at her, Qiu Honglei's expression remained calm. She crossed her arms in front of her, and a pair of short blades instantly appeared in her hands. At the same time, a wall of light suddenly took form in front of her.

The roaring dragon smashed into the wall of light, forming a miniature mushroom cloud. Then, a deafening explosion followed. The flickering flames even seemed to distort space itself.

After some time, the flame dragon disappeared, revealing Liang Ling's spear pressed up against the wall of light. However, it couldn't move even an inch forward.

"Wall of Sighs!"

There were many powerful cultivators present, and they immediately recognized the name of the move.

"She was actually a light element cultivator!"

Even the grandmasters in the judges' seats were shocked.

The light element was one of the rarest elements among cultivators. Meanwhile, the Wall of Sighs was the most famous defensive move of those cultivators. It was practically impossible to penetrate by cultivators of the same level, making opponents sigh in despair. That was where the name came from.

The grandmasters couldn't help but look at Emptiness Isle's Elder Peng with envy. They hadn't expect the weakest sect, Emptiness Isle, to have picked up such a talented individual.

Yun Jianyue's brows were slightly raised. She was in such high spirits she almost jumped up and told them the truth. The expressions of those self-righteous idiots would definitely be a sight to see then!

Zu An was in a daze. He couldn't help but remember Qiu Honglei, who was also of the light element. He thought, I wonder how she has been doing recently.

...



The sect masters and elders began discussing Peng Wuyan, but they quickly came to a conclusion. Even though the light element was rare, it didn't excel in offense. Against the fire element, which was famous for its offensive power, it wasn't really at an advantage.

Even though the power of the Wall of Sighs was extremely great, there was no way it could be maintained forever. In this kind of competition where the competitors were similar in cultivation, just relaxing even a little bit would often result in the opponent clinching a victory.

Yun Jianyue sneered, "What do you all understand?"

Only Master Jian Huang felt rather excited. He muttered to himself, "This person is extremely suited to our Tranquility Temple's legacy! If she cultivated Buddha's Light, wouldn't we be able to bring endless believers?"

The little fatty Jie Se couldn't help but grumble, "Master, our Buddhist sect is a place of tranquility; how could we allow a woman to enter?"

"Why not? So many married women who are infertile have come to pray at our temple. Don't they all have their desires fulfilled in the end?" Master Jian Huang harrumphed. "Furthermore, the Buddhist sect has nuns too."

Jie Se curled his lips. Hmph, master keeps trying to recruit people as soon as he sees someone he likes. That Sect Master Peng should watch out.

...

By then, Liang Ling had already reacted to the situation. He retracted his spear and tried to strike from different directions. His opponent had to exhaust a considerable amount of ki to maintain the Wall of Sighs, so continuing his offense would be beneficial to him.

Sure enough, the Wall of Sighs quickly disappeared. However, Qiu Honglei fired a bullet of light. It was extremely fast and instantly arrived in front of her opponent.

Liang Ling was horrified, and quickly brandished his spear to block it, making his entire body tremble. Several more light bullets flew toward him, and he dodged in alarm. However, he suddenly realized that even though these light bullets were fast, they were a bit lacking in power. As such, he gathered flames around his spear and brandished it like a dragon, dispersing all the incoming bullets.

However, out of the corner of his eye, he suddenly noticed a light bullet that was several times larger than the previous ones. The terrifying pressure made all his fine hairs stand on end. Still, he reacted quickly. Even though the light sphere's power was great, it was too slow. There was no way it would hit him.

As such, while the sphere of light was approaching, he pretended to strike it with his spear; in reality, however, he dodged it at the last moment and thrust his spear at his opponent. As long as he could get within close range, this woman would be finished. She wouldn't have the chance to use the Wall of Sighs again at all.

Meanwhile, Yun Jianyue laughed in disdain. "What a fool!"

At the same time, Liang Ling was shocked to discover his opponent's blades instantly appearing in front of him. They moved in completely unpredictable patterns and repeatedly struck at his vitals.

Liang Ling finally woke up from his daze. He had used a feint earlier, so why couldn't that giant ball of light be one too? His opponent had anticipated that he would dodge that way, and had seized the opportunity to attack him. They were a mere three inches apart, a distance spear-wielders were completely helpless in; let alone in his current state, as his strength was spent. His opponent's grasp over timing was just too vicious.

As they tore at his body, the short blades in Qiu Honglei's hands turned into two streaks of flowing light. Streaks of bloody mist quickly flew through the air.

In just a few breaths of time, a hundred and eight wounds appeared on Liang Ling's body. He fell to the ground like a doll that had been torn to shreds.

The entire Golden Peak immediately fell absolutely silent. This had initially been an evenly matched competition, but victory had been decided so quickly! Wasn't this woman a bit too vicious in the way she fought?

Kunlun Void Sect's elder roared furiously, "You are so young, yet already so merciless. Are you all from the Devil Sect?!"

Chapter 1649: Proud Yun Jianyue

"What are you crying about? It's not as if he's dead!" Yun Jianyue cried out as she slammed the table and stood up too.

At the same time, she sneered inwardly. You still haven't seen a truly merciless scene. If this weren't a daoist competition, that guy would already have been chopped up into eight pieces. There's no way he would have gotten away with just some injuries.

Zu An was alarmed. Why does this Elder Peng's personality seem a bit similar to big sis Yun's? However, he laughed inwardly. He really did have quite the imagination. Big sis Yun was way prettier than this woman, after all.

The main reason no one took that possibility seriously was because this was clearly a gathering of the orthodox faction. If those two from the Devil Sect arrived, wouldn't they just be throwing their lives away?

Wang Wuxie had a huge headache. What was going on today? The judges were fighting even more aggressively than the competitors. Were they going to start another conflict?

He was about to say something when a low and deep voice called out from below, "Elder, I haven't lost yet."

The spectators turned around and saw that Liang Ling, who had been lying flat on the stage, slowly stood back up. There was a layer of flames surrounding his entire body.

When the Kunlun Void Sect Elder saw that, his expression immediately changed. He cried out, "You absolutely must not!"

At the same time, however, there was a huge explosion as Liang Ling's entire body erupted into flames. His aura, which had become extremely weak, surged once more; additionally, all his wounds quickly healed at a visible rate.

The sect masters watching sighed. With their knowledge and experience, they naturally recognized that this was Kunlun Void Sect's ultimate skill, Inferno Rebirth. Through igniting their blood essence, they could quickly recover in a short amount of time.

Even though the effects were powerful, however, the cost was just as severe. After using the skill, one would be lucky to get away with only serious injuries. Some users even died or became crippled. Furthermore, even if one recovered, there was a chance of it affecting one's upper limit. As such, the skill was normally never used, except by those who knew they were going to die. And yet, Liang Ling had used it in the current situation. Even if he won, there was no way he could fight in the next round.

Kunlun Void Sect's Elder Xuan Dou struck his thigh and continued, "Sigh, why did you have to go that far? Did you lose your mind?"

Liang Ling had a resolute expression as he said, "I can lose, but I won't lose that easily." As he looked at Qiu Honglei, his eyes were filled with high-spirited fighting intent.

...

Even Zu An couldn't help but feel some admiration when he saw that.

Though there were all sorts of mediocre individuals in this competition, there were also quite a few excellent youngsters. For example, this Liang Ling was a bit hot-headed, but his unyielding nature proved that he was a real man through and through. The nine daoist sects were part of the righteous faction, and the disciples they had raised had some skill, as expected.

"As you wish!" Qiu Honglei replied, putting away her carefree smile. With her short blades in hand, her figure turned into afterimages as she rushed at Liang Ling.

Liang Ling didn't retaliate with his spear; instead, he turned his entire body into a blazing tornado of fire. Scarlet flames appeared all around him, and burned the entire stage until its surface became a dark red. Streaks of red veins ran across the ground like lava.

Qiu Honglei seemed to have been burned. She quickly kicked off the ground to cancel her charge and jumped back. However, the giant flame tornado at the center scattered into several smaller pillars of flame, attacking the surrounding area.

Even though the place was protected by formations, the arena's stage still turned into a sea of fire. No matter how outstanding Qiu Honglei's movement skill was, she still had nowhere to go. Helpless to do anything else, she could only fly into the air.

Liang Ling seized the opportunity and rushed into the air, surrounded by flames. His opponent hadn't reached the master rank yet, so her mobility was greatly reduced in the air.

Just then, the flames flooded the entire arena. The formation flickered rapidly, clearly under tremendous pressure. It was doing everything it could to prevent the battle from affecting the spectators around the stage.

The whole stage was like a volcano on the verge of erupting. There was crimson lava everywhere, and the air inside was quickly burning up. There was nowhere to run inside the arena.

Amid the flames, Qiu Honglei's figure just looked insignificant, as if she would be swallowed up at any time.

Heavenly Sorrow Sect's Cai Yu said with a sigh, "As expected of Kunlun Void Sect's representative disciple, this level of skill is on a different level. Emptiness Isle's ugly woman might be defeated."

Zhi Yin's expression became grim. Even though this Liang Ling was formidable, the current result had only been achieved because of Inferno Rebirth activating his potential. If he were the one on the stage, all he would have to do was hold out until Liang Ling used up all of his strength. Winning wouldn't be too difficult. He would even have been able to use both the Push of the Iron Mountain and the Shadowless Ball to attack from the very start. That way, Liang Ling wouldn't have had a chance to use his ultimate move. However, there was no such opportunity left for him after his loss in the group stage.

When he remembered the cause of all that, he stared hatefully at the distant Jedefall Palace's Pei Mianman.

It's all this woman's fault!

However, when he saw her expansive chest and her eyes that looked as if they could smile, he discovered that he couldn't bring himself to be mad at her at all.

Sigh, I didn't expect the daoist sects to have another being on the same level as Fairy Chu in both looks and cultivation. It would have been great if I just hadn't underestimated my opponent from the beginning.

After thinking things over, he felt that there was no way he would lose if they fought again. But the more he thought about that, the more depressed he felt.

...

Suddenly, a powerful wave of light flashed into existence. Many people couldn't help but close their eyes. They screamed, "What the heck? I can't see anything!"

In the air, Qiu Honglei's entire body erupted with blinding light, making her look like a sun.

The sect masters all sat up. This seemed to be a blinding skill from the light element. Because the light element was so rare, many of them had only read about it in certain texts. Now that they were able to see it for themselves, there was no way they would give up such an opportunity. Even though the blinding light made all of their disciples cover their tear-filled eyes, with their cultivation, it naturally didn't have too much of an effect on the sect masters.

However, that didn't apply to Liang Ling. Even though he was surrounded by tornadoes of fire, he had been watching Qiu Honglei the whole time. In that instant, the damage the powerful light inflicted against him was greater than what the spectating disciples suffered. He felt a wave of stinging pain, and a vast expanse of white temporarily robbed him of his sight.

That was no small matter. He could only send his flames in the direction he remembered his opponent had been in. However, why would Qiu Honglei be foolish enough to remain in the same place? She

quickly appeared behind Liang Ling, and the blades in her hands crossed. A ✕ shaped blade of light shot out.

“Holy Cross Slash?” someone exclaimed, recognizing the origins of the move. That light condensed from sword ki could slice through metal and jade alike. It was incredibly sharp.

Liang Ling finally noticed that something was strange. He quickly summoned flames behind him, but he was still a bit too late.

Boom!

The light crashed down on the spiraling pillar of fire. The terrifying flames were actually torn apart directly. The raging flames seemed to be suppressed by something, and clearly became much smaller. Liang Ling’s true self also appeared from within the flames as he quickly tried to defend himself with his spear.

Blinding radiance flickered, and he was knocked out of the sky. There were clear marks left on the spear, and his hands were drenched with blood as well. The clothes in front of his chest were torn apart, revealing a deep wound beneath them.

“Do you still want to continue?” Qiu Honglei asked with a smile.

The expressions of those present turned strange. This woman was clearly ugly, but her movements almost seemed like those of an exceptional beauty. At first, they found it a bit revolting. But as they continued to watch her, they found her more and more charming.

Is this the so-called power of the strong?

Liang Ling remained silent on the ground for a while. In the end, he said in an extremely bitter tone, “There’s no need. Thank you for being lenient; I’ve lost.”

He previously thought that he had lost because he was careless and let himself be ambushed. He clearly still had many stronger moves that he hadn’t used yet; losing during a once in a decade competition, just like that, had been too hard to accept. That was why he had recklessly used Inferno Rebirth.

However, as the fight continued, he had discovered that this woman was actually profound and incomprehensible. Anyone who could become a representative disciple definitely wasn’t stupid. He knew that the cost of Inferno Rebirth would grow greater and greater if he continued to fight, and his chances of victory were low. What reason was there left in continuing?

Wu Xiaofan, Wan Guiyi, and the other representative disciples carefully sized up Qiu Honglei. This woman was stronger than they had imagined.

As Liang Ling had admitted defeat, Elder Xuan Dou couldn't really say anything. He quickly rushed out to feed Liang Ling some of the Kunlun Void Sect’s medicines.

Meanwhile, Wang Wuxie and the other sect masters looked at Yun Jianyue with conflicted expressions, remarking, “Emptiness Isle usually remains secluded, but when they do make an appearance, they really dazzle the world.”

After all, in the past, Emptiness Isle's sole purpose seemed to have been to make the other sects look better. And yet, this disciple seemed to be ridiculously strong! Liang Ling didn't even seem to have pushed her to the limit yet.

"I agree, I agree~" When she saw these orthodox sect representatives who normally cursed her to death now praising her, Yun Jianyue felt like someone who had found a watermelon ice in the middle of the desert. She wondered just what kind of expression they would show her if they took the crown and revealed who they really were! She almost laughed out loud when she thought about how her scheme would turn these daoist sects into a laughingstock.

"As we have already decided the top four, we will rest for a day and carry out the semifinals the day after tomorrow," Wang Wuxie remarked.

Just like that, the day's competition came to an end. The disciples excitedly discussed the previous matches. Many of them ran over to Emptiness Isle to curry favor with them. Now that they had such a formidable disciple, Emptiness Isle would no longer be the weakest in the future. It was a place worthy of their shows of goodwill.

Yun Jianyue normally hated this kind of social interaction the most, but at the moment, she was actually delighted. After all, the more enthusiastic these people were, the more interesting their reactions would become once the truth was revealed.

Her tail was practically about to point to the sky when Yan Xuehen suddenly appeared in front of her, saying, "You are very similar to an acquaintance of mine."

Chapter 1650: Selection

Yun Jianyue thought in alarm, Did the stone cold woman find out? She was about to say something, but she was also worried that defending herself would only make her look more suspicious.

Fortunately, after giving her a look, Yan Xuehen shook her head in the end and said, "Sorry, I must have mistaken you for the wrong person." She left immediately afterward. Many people tried to strike up a conversation with her along the way, but she only nodded slightly in their direction.

Yun Jianyue gritted her teeth as she watched Yan Xuehen leave. Damn that woman and her looks; no wonder men are always trying to flatter her.

...

Next, they were about to draw the lots for the next round. Four winners had been decided so far, so together with Pei Mianman, there were five competitors in total. There would be another bye.

In the past, some people had raised doubts about the system being too random. What if one person continuously pulled byes? Wouldn't they be at a huge advantage?

Eventually, however, the most powerful sect at the time had stated that luck was a part of strength. The higher-ups of the different sects hadn't had many objections to that. After all, the higher one's cultivation became, the more they understood that statement. Half of one's accomplishments relied on one's own talent and efforts, while the other half was up to fate. The greater a cultivator's luck was, the

more miraculous encounters they would experience, and they would have greater room for growth compared to others.

However, after so many years, no one had actually gotten the bye again and again. In fact, there were some who had gotten a bye, but because they hadn't experienced the previous round, they hadn't been able to keep up with their fight's intensity...

For various reasons, the rule had thus been kept.

Soon after, the Righteous Sun Sect's Wu Xiaofan, Jadedfall Palace's Wan Guiyi, Supreme Mystery Cave's Shi Dingtian, Emptiness Isle's Peng Wuyan, and Pei Mianman all arrived in front of a box. The box was specially made by the daoist sects, and it completely blocked off ki perception. Between that and the fact that so many sect masters were in the judges' area watching over the process together, there was no possibility of cheating.

The competitors were starting to feel a bit nervous. After all, the luck of their draw here could very well affect their path to victory.

For Wu Xiaofan, if his opponent was too strong and he had to exhaust too much strength, someone else could potentially steal victory from him. For the others, if they encountered the strongest contestant Wu Xiaofan, their paths could just end at the semifinals.

Zu An waved toward Pei Mianman and called out, "Lady Pei!"

He didn't want to walk over to her, because Elder Huo Ling was always right beside her. It wouldn't be convenient at all for them to talk in front of her. However, if he called out to her, Elder Huo Ling couldn't stop her from coming to him.

When she saw Zu An wave, Elder Huo Ling sneered. Our Manman might treat everyone with a smiling face, but deep down, she's more guarded than anyone else. She has always kept her distance from everyone, even after all this time staying at Jadedfall Palace. I've never even heard of her getting close to anyone.

This brat only helped Manman once, and yet he thinks that he can call her over as he pleases... Huh?

Her eyes widened, because Pei Mianman actually went over to Zu An in high spirits, without a shred of reluctance.

The onlookers all exchanged looks with each other; some more daring individuals even had suggestive smiles on their faces. A graceful lady and a noble man made a perfect match. No matter how powerful Sir Zu was, he was still a young man deep down. After all, what man could resist such a great smile?

Only Qiu Honglei felt extremely depressed. Her lover was flirting with another woman, and yet she couldn't even reveal her real identity...

"Sir Zu, is there something you need?" Pei Mianman asked as she looked at Zu An. She was quite the actress herself, and knowing that there were still people watching, she didn't greet him intimately.

Zu An took out a pill and said, "You were injured during the previous competition. I have a spiritual pill here that will be helpful to you." After some hesitation, he broke the pill in half and handed it over.

Many people had strange expressions. Isn't this guy too stingy? You're giving out a pill, and yet you're only giving her half? You're trying to pursue a girl, and yet you're not willing to spend on her. Looks like this kid is doomed to be alone.

Pei Mianman stared blankly for a moment, thinking, My wounds are already pretty much healed, and you were the one who personally took care of that at night. Still, seeing as Zu An had told her to eat it, she didn't suspect anything and just took it. She swallowed it without any hesitation.

Elder Huo Ling couldn't stop her in time, and was completely stunned. What is going on? Why is this girl randomly eating something another man gave her? Let alone an incredible beauty like Manman? She asked Zu An with a scowl, "What did you feed her?"

"Treatment medicine. Didn't I already say it earlier?" Zu An replied with a shrug.

"What is the name of this medicine?" Elder Huo Ling snapped. However, she realized that asking him so directly was a bit too harsh, as he had helped Manman before, so she added, "I have given her a large amount of medicines. I am worried that the medicines might have negative interactions."

"It doesn't have a name. I made it myself," Zu An said with a chuckle. "Don't worry, it won't cause any problems."

What he had given Pei Mianman was the Fortune Pill. He wanted to help her draw a good matchup. The reason he had split it in half was because he could end up needing to use it again later. Either way, the drawing of lots wouldn't take too long, so half a Fortune Pill would be enough, right?

"Manman, do you feel uncomfortable at all?" Elder Huo Ling asked as she nervously held Pei Mianman's hand. Meanwhile, she internally decided to properly lecture her disciple once they went back. This foolish girl really doesn't have any vigilance toward outsiders! How can you just eat something another man gives you without even asking about it? What if he gave you poison?

"Not at all. Sir Zu's medicine seems to work really well," Pei Mianman replied with a big smile.

Elder Huo Ling grabbed Pei Mianman's arm and checked her condition. When she discovered that her disciple's injuries were pretty much already healed, she was stunned. Were this medicine's effects really that good?

The sect elders all stared at Zu An. They had been worried that he was going to tamper with the drawing of lots, but when they saw that he had only fed Pei Mianman a pill, they weren't so concerned anymore.

However, Wan Guiyi continued to stare at Zu An. He was also from Jedefall Palace, and judging from Elder Huo Ling and Pei Mianman's reactions, he could tell that the pill was indeed astonishing. He thought to himself, If this guy divided that pill in half, could it be that the other half is for me? Both Pei Mianman and I are from Jedefall Palace, after all. I'm wounded as well, and it's a bit more serious than hers.

At any other time, he definitely wouldn't make any unreasonable requests. However, this was related to the competition results, so he didn't want to give up on any opportunities.



When he saw Wan Guiyi looking at him impatiently, even having an uncharacteristic 'currying favor' sort of smile, Zu An was stunned for a moment. He said, "Girls can just leave their usernames and get attention, but guys have to work for it."

What kind of a joke is this? The other half is also for Manman; there's no way I'd give it to you.

Wan Guiyi didn't understand Zu An's words, but he more or less understood the meaning, leaving him quite depressed.

...

Then, they began to draw lots. Zu An wanted Pei Mianman to go first so others wouldn't end up grabbing the bye before her. However, after thinking about it, that would be letting down the Fortune Pill's reputation. Furthermore, it could draw suspicion from the others.

One after another, the competitors took jade tokens from the chest.

Pei Mianman looked at the jade token in her hand, and was stunned. Elder Huo Ling gave it a look, and quickly became ecstatic.

"She drew another bye? Is there a mistake?"

Many of the disciples looked at the judges with doubt. They wondered whether, because Pei Mianman was pretty, these old perverts had gone against the rules and messed with the results.

Wang Wuxie and the others were also stunned. However, it wasn't as if there had never been an instance of someone pulling two byes. As such, their expressions quickly returned to normal. Either way, there was no way she'd pull it three times in a row, right?

Some parties were happy, while others weren't so happy. Wan Tongtian was one of the latter, because this meant Wan Guiyi had to fight the strongest competitor, Wu Xiaofan.

In contrast, Wan Guiyi didn't feel dispirited at all. Instead, his eyes were filled with fighting spirit. In his eyes, the only one worthy of being his opponent was Wu Xiaofan. This was the perfect opportunity to settle things.

Meanwhile, Emptiness Isle's Peng Wuyan had to face Supreme Mystery Cave's Shi Dingtian.

Qiu Honglei looked at her opponent and said with a big smile. "Senior Shi, please go easy on me in the next round."

Shi Dingtian scratched his head and said, "You're really strong. I might not even be able to beat you."

"Then, if you can't beat me, you can just surrender too," Qiu Honglei said with a smile.

Shi Dingtian was stunned. He didn't know how to continue. In the end, he said, "The two cave masters want me to return with a good ranking, so I can't just surrender..."

"I'm just joking," Qiu Honglei replied casually. She glanced at Zu An out of the corner of her eye. Unfortunately, because of her current identity, she couldn't talk to him.

Ahhhh! I want this mission to end already!

...

Over the next two days, Zu An kept his attention on Yi Commandery's situation. However, neither Xiao Jianren nor Zhang Zitong contacted him, so he figured that they hadn't finished their investigation yet.

Meanwhile, Xie Daoyun had been very busy. She had traveled all across Violet Mountain to investigate every potential source of trouble. However, Zu An noticed her expression becoming more and more relaxed. After all, she had examined the place the way her master had asked her to, but still hadn't noticed the existence of any killing formations; that implied both the State Teacher, as well as the Righteous Sun Sect, were still trustworthy.

Zu An had Zhang Zijiang and Wang Bolin carry out the repairs of Violet Mountain's various palaces, while assigning his own people to different places to make sure nothing was wrong. Sometimes, however, he wondered whether the preparations were too excessive. There were so many daoist sect experts present. Who would be so reckless as to go against the emperor?

Whenever he had some downtime, he sought out Pei Mianman, but Elder Huo Ling was always around her, as if she were worried that her own daughter would be misguided by the wrong crowd.

Zu An didn't dare to impersonate Elder Huo Ling and Wan Tongtian's handwriting to send each other letters again. That 'date' the two had had clearly wasn't a joyous one. If he did it again, the two weren't stupid and would definitely notice that something was strange.

If they found out that I was the one causing trouble, maybe they would really go crazy out of embarrassment.

Most importantly, after what Big Manman had gone through that night, she didn't seem all that willing to play along anymore. She didn't tell him what had happened between her and Chu Chuyan when he asked either.

Seeing as Zu An couldn't go to Manman, he could only brace himself and try to meet with Chu Chuyan. Unfortunately, Yan Xuehen stopped him. He tried to take the chance to get closer to Yan Xuehen, but she wasn't affected in the slightest.

After a while, Yan Xuehen finally couldn't take it anymore. She looked at him with a cold expression and asked, "What are you trying to do? Don't tell me you're trying to court both the master and disciple?!"