

King Hall 831

Chapter 831: Ji Li!

"Huh? It actually ran away?!"

Mu Jinyu was stunned when he saw the giant python fleeing.

After fighting with it for half a day, Mu Jinyu had actually become emotionally attached to the giant python. A while ago, he had several opportunities to kill it with one move.

But because he grew fond of it and felt it was a rare punching bag, he never went for the kill.

Originally, Mu Jinyu thought the giant python would understand his good intentions and develop feelings for him too. But in the end, it ditched him like a scumbag and ran away.

"Sigh..."

Mu Jinyu sighed with resentment but didn't pursue the giant python in anger to kill it.

Then, Mu Jinyu looked around to see where he had ended up.

Having fought and run with the python for some time, he had no idea where he was now. However, it should still be within the giant python's territory, he thought.

After all, he hadn't seen any other ferocious beasts during the fight.

Then, Mu Jinyu spotted a crystal-clear little tree not far away, bearing a few emerald-green fruits.

They were etched with a few snake patterns, adding a touch of eeriness and mystery.

"Huh? Isn't this the 'Dragon Saliva Celestial Origin Fruit'?"

Mu Jinyu was taken aback again when he saw the fruit.

He hadn't expected to find what he had been searching for over the past two days, all thanks to the fight with the giant python.

"That's right, snakes can sometimes represent dragons. This 'Dragon Saliva Celestial Origin Fruit' should actually be the 'Serpent Saliva Heavenly Origin Fruit'. They just changed 'serpent' to 'dragon' to sound better..."

Realizing this, Mu Jinyu was delighted.

It was true; sometimes what you seek comes effortlessly.

If the giant python were still here, Mu Jinyu thought, he would probably thank it by gently punching it a few more times.

Too bad it ran away.

"Thank you!"

Mu Jinyu shouted in the direction the giant python had fled and then walked towards the emerald-shining little tree.

With no other ferocious beasts guarding it, Mu Jinyu easily picked all the fruits from the tree.

"With the task completed and my movement technique improved, it's time to head back."

Mu Jinyu remembered that the Four Sects Martial Meeting of Yan Kingdom was about to start, and the Heavenly Sword Faction seemed to be conducting an Inner Gate assessment to select elite disciples for the event.

So even if he hadn't found the Dragon Saliva Celestial Origin Fruit, he would still need to return to the Heavenly Sword Faction in a few days.

After putting away the Dragon Saliva Celestial Origin Fruit, Mu Jinyu began heading out of the Yuntian Mountain Range.

After walking for a while.

"Hmm?!"

Suddenly, a corpse appeared in front of Mu Jinyu.

It was a woman's corpse.

Moreover, Mu Jinyu found it familiar.

After a few glances, he remembered—she was one of the two female disciples from Mingyue Valley he had saved from the Blood Sword Sect's pursuit on his previous visit to the Yuntian Mountain Range.

It seemed to be that Senior Sister Wu, right?

"Why did she die here?"

Mu Jinyu's expression changed slightly as he went over to examine her situation, discovering she had been dead for about five minutes.

The fatal wound was not caused by a ferocious beast but by a sword strike from behind.

"Did she come into the Yuntian Mountain Range alone, or with her junior sister surnamed Ji?"

Mu Jinyu frowned and muttered softly, then started using his Divine Sense to search for any signs of people while also activating his Ten Steps Move, running continuously within a few hundred miles.

Although he wasn't very familiar with them, they had met once. Now that he coincidentally encountered their accident and Senior Sister Wu had only been dead for five minutes, if there were any Mingyue Valley disciples nearby, he might still have time to save them.

Since that was the case, Mu Jinyu couldn't ignore it and just leave.

Soon, Mu Jinyu found the trembling junior sister surnamed Ji in a hidden dark cave.

"Swoosh!"

Mu Jinyu walked quickly to the front of the cave, reaching out to uncover the covering plants.

"Whoosh!"

At that moment, a sharp sword came trembling from the cave, aiming to stab him with a gleam of determined resolve.

Mu Jinyu caught the sword's blade between two fingers effortlessly.

"Don't worry, it's me!"

Mu Jinyu knew this woman wasn't trying to kill him but was too nervous, mistaking him for her pursuer. So he softly reassured her.

"Senior Brother, it's you?"

Upon hearing Mu Jinyu's words, Ji Li recognized him and responded with a joyful yet aggrieved voice.

Ji Li immediately let go of the sword's handle and hurried out of the cave, her face covered in teary streaks, looking extremely aggrieved and distressed as she threw herself into Mu Jinyu's arms!

"Senior Brother, Senior Sister is dead, Master is dead, they're all dead..."

She fearfully and tearfully confided in Mu Jinyu.

"Huh?"

Mu Jinyu released Ji Li's sword, gently holding her to keep her from falling, then his expression shifted slightly upon hearing her words.

"What did you say? Who's dead?"

He could hardly believe his guess, holding her shoulders and staring into her eyes, he urgently asked.

"They're all dead, Mingyue Valley has been wiped out..."

Ji Li briefly met Mu Jinyu's gaze before her tears fell like streams, her face full of panic and fear as she recalled the tragic disaster of Mingyue Valley!

"Mingyue Valley wiped out?!"

Mu Jinyu, hearing Ji Li's fearful words, finally had to believe his guess was true.

"How could this happen? What exactly happened? Who wiped out Mingyue Valley?"

Mu Jinyu urgently questioned again.

As one of the Four Sects of Yan Kingdom, the sudden annihilation of Mingyue Valley was a major incident. He had to find out the details and report back to the Heavenly Sword Faction.

If Mingyue Valley was destroyed by the Blood Sword Sect or Beixue Mountain Villa, the problem wouldn't be too severe.

But if Mingyue Valley was wiped out by an external force, it was a significant issue, possibly pointing to an enemy targeting the Four Sects of Yan Kingdom.

If he could discover the problem early and report it to the Heavenly Sword Faction, the remaining three sects could unite against the external threat, potentially averting the disaster!

Ji Li, hearing Mu Jinyu's inquiry, trembled as she replied, "It... it was the Liuyun Sect!"

"Liuyun Sect?" Mu Jinyu frowned, feeling the name sounded familiar, as if he had heard it before.

After thinking for a while, Mu Jinyu suddenly realized.

Liuyun Sect was a small sect that Jian Ruyan had mentioned when he first arrived at the Kunlun Ruins.

Because Di Yin originated from that sect, Jian Ruyan made a special mention of it; otherwise, she wouldn't have bothered to introduce such a small sect.

But how could such a small sect wipe out one of the Four Great Sects like Mingyue Valley?

"So, you were hiding here. You really made me search for you..."

As Mu Jinyu frowned and pondered over the situation with Liuyun Sect, a chilling voice suddenly sounded behind him.

Chapter 832 Who is she?

As soon as that eerie cold voice rang out.

Ji Li immediately let out a scream of terror and despair, then once again threw herself into Mu Jinyu's arms, trembling as she said, "Senior Brother, save me, I don't want to die..."

Mu Jinyu frowned slightly, seeing Ji Li's mental state on the verge of collapse, unable to speak clearly, and likely to interfere with his actions. He sent a hand chop towards her.

"Ugh..."

Ji Li let out a muffled groan, her eyes rolled back, and she instantly fell unconscious.

Mu Jinyu circulated True Essence Power, gently moving Ji Li to lie quietly dozens of meters away, then turned to look at the newcomer.

The newcomer wasn't young.

He was a middle-aged man, about forty or fifty years old, with a dark, thin face, a stern expression, holding a black-painted sword, and looking at Mu Jinyu cautiously.

"An Inner Gate disciple of the Heavenly Sword Faction? And with the power of the Eighth Layer of the Divine Transformation Realm? I'll deal with you right now. Then, my Imperial Master's Nephew will have one less opponent in the upcoming Four Sects Martial Meeting!"

The dark thin man stared at Mu Jinyu and then sneered coldly.

"Are you an elder of the Liuyun Sect?"

Mu Jinyu asked.

"Die!"

The dark thin man didn't answer Mu Jinyu at all and attacked him directly with the sword!

"Sssss!!"

The sword wind was fierce, the Sword Qi howled, carrying a putrid smell that made one feel slightly uncomfortable and dizzy.

Mu Jinyu speculated about the sword in the dark thin man's hand, thinking it was probably coated with a poison, not just black paint.

"Clang!"

Mu Jinyu performed Ten Steps Move and swiftly appeared behind the dark thin man, striking his back with a palm.

"Bam!"

Although the dark thin man had the same Eighth Layer of the Divine Transformation Realm power, his foundation and martial techniques were inferior to Mu Jinyu's. Being struck by Mu Jinyu, he couldn't even hold his sword steadily, stumbled, and nearly fell flat on his face!

Mu Jinyu then instantly appeared behind him again, stepping on his back, pressing him down so he couldn't stand up.

"Tell me, why did you exterminate Mingyue Valley?"

At this moment, Mu Jinyu didn't feel that sense of urgency. After all, the Liuyun Sect was still a sect of the Yan Kingdom. Although he was surprised at their power to exterminate Mingyue Valley, he thought they couldn't continue to exterminate other sects in a short time.

"Humph."

The dark thin man was shocked by Mu Jinyu's strength, finding himself powerless to resist after just one move, but he found Mu Jinyu's question naive and laughable, snorted coldly, and didn't answer.

Seeing he wouldn't cooperate, Mu Jinyu squatted down and started pressing acupuncture points on his body.

It wasn't long before the dark thin man let out a howl of despair and pain.

He felt pain all over his body, his five viscera and six bowels felt like they were being gnawed by rats, making him wish he were dead.

"I'll talk... I'll tell you everything... spare me..."

Under Mu Jinyu's acupuncture point pressing, the dark thin man confessed everything, making Mu Jinyu understand why the Liuyun Sect had the power to exterminate Mingyue Valley and why they chose to do so.

"So that's how it is..."

After listening, Mu Jinyu felt a surge of mixed emotions. There was no real enmity between the two sides; it was purely a struggle for profit.

The law of the jungle in the Kunlun Ruins was vividly demonstrated at this moment.

"I've told you everything, Big Brother, please spare my life!"

After revealing everything Mu Jinyu wanted to know, the dark thin man spoke with a trembling voice.

Mu Jinyu came to himself and smiled, "Alright, I'll send you off."

With that, he unleashed a powerful Force Energy from his foot, directly shattering the dark thin man's heart!

With a "bang," his heart shattered!

"Ugh!"

The dark thin man let out a muffled groan, blood oozing from his seven orifices, dying with open eyes.

Mu Jinyu felt no guilt about this. The man wanted to kill him without hesitation upon seeing him. Now that he wasn't as strong as Mu Jinyu and died at his hands, why should he feel guilty? Moreover, he never promised to spare his life after he confessed.

Bending down, Mu Jinyu picked up the dark thin man's sword, put it into his storage bag, and took his storage bag to check its contents.

There wasn't much of value, estimated to be worth ten high-grade spirit stones.

Better than nothing, Mu Jinyu still took it.

Mu Jinyu didn't wake Ji Li up but carried her on his back, heading back to the path where he found Senior Sister Wu's body.

With a wave of his hand, the dust surged, and soon the ground was swept into a two-meter-deep pit by a strong wind.

He lifted Senior Sister Wu's body and threw it into the pit and buried it without setting up a tombstone, then turned and left.

An hour later.

At the full speed of Mu Jinyu's Ten Steps Move, he quickly returned to the Heavenly Sword Faction and immediately went to see the Sect Leader.

Outside the Sect Leader Hall on the main peak of Heavenly Sword Mountain, two disciples were guarding.

Mu Jinyu, carrying Ji Li, rushed over and said to them, "I have an urgent matter to see the Sect Leader, please notify him."

"Alright."

The two disciples stared at Ji Li on Mu Jinyu's back with a look of shock and confusion, then one nodded and rushed in to report to the Sect Leader.

Although Mu Jinyu's reputation in the Heavenly Sword Faction wasn't as high as Yun Ge's, he was still a well-known figure. Everyone recognized him.

So they were cooperative.

Soon, the disciple who went in to report came out and said to Mu Jinyu, "Senior Brother Mu, please go in, the Sect Leader is waiting for you."

"Thank you."

Mu Jinyu thanked him and then stepped into the hall.

Before long, Mu Jinyu saw the Sect Leader practicing calligraphy.

The Sect Leader heard the commotion, stopped his practice, and told Mu Jinyu to wait while he put down his brush and looked up, smiling kindly, "What's the matter? Have you reconsidered?"

He thought Mu Jinyu had reconsidered and was ready to become his disciple.

Mu Jinyu froze for a moment, then shook his head and said, "No, the matter is like this..."

Mu Jinyu briefly explained to the Sect Leader about the extermination of Mingyue Valley by the Liuyun Sect and asked, "Now that Mingyue Valley has been exterminated, will the Liuyun Sect continue to take action?"

After hearing Mu Jinyu, the Sect Leader's face grew serious, then he shook his head, "No, their goal is to weaken the Four Sects of the Yan Kingdom and seize their cultivation resources. Having exterminated Mingyue Valley, they've achieved their goal and have no need to make extra trouble."

Then, he looked up at Mu Jinyu and said, "However, this information is important. I need to quickly gather the elders for a discussion. By the way, the day after tomorrow is the Inner Sect disciple selection assessment, so go back and prepare well!"

After saying this, the Sect Leader left the Sect Leader Hall in a hurry like the wind.

Recalling the previous Blood Sword Sect incident happening once again, he needed to discuss countermeasures with the Supreme Elders and notify the other two sects.

Seeing the Sect Leader leave in a rush, Mu Jinyu shrugged, thinking the matter was no longer his concern, and carried Ji Li back to his residence at Tianlan Peak.

He opened the courtyard door and went inside.

Jian Ruyan and Wen Rou were practicing divine skills. When they saw the woman with tattered clothes on Mu Jinyu's back, they were stunned.

Wen Rou instinctively asked, "Little Mu, who is she? Why did you get her like this?"

Chapter 833 Slowly Drawing the Plan!

Mu Jinyu was speechless upon hearing Wen Rou's question and said, "What do you mean I made her like this? Her condition has nothing to do with me. I just saved her life in passing."

Then, he recounted the events encountered in the Yuntian Mountain Range to Wen Rou and Jian Ruyan, and subsequently shared the news about Mingyue Valley's annihilation.

Wen Rou listened and lightly stuck out her tongue, her expression showing a bit of shyness and embarrassment.

Originally, upon seeing Mu Jinyu bringing back a woman, she had genuinely misunderstood, thinking that Mu Jinyu was tired of only being able to look at her every day but not touch her, so he went to find someone else.

Unexpectedly, her assumption was mistaken.

Jian Ruyan did not think as much as Wen Rou. After listening to Mu Jinyu, her delicate brows furrowed slightly, puzzled, "Strange, how could the Liuyun Sect have the capability to annihilate Mingyue Valley?"

"Who knows, it doesn't really concern us anyway." Mu Jinyu's attitude was rather indifferent.

Mingyue Valley was destroyed by the Liuyun Sect. He could casually save Ji Li, whom he had a brief encounter with, but he could not go help her seek revenge for this.

So, knowing that the Liuyun Sect's purpose in destroying Mingyue Valley was likely to join the new Four Great Sects, he did not care much about it.

At this moment, Ji Li softly uttered a sound, gradually waking up from unconsciousness.

Upon awakening, perhaps still not recovered from the previous terror of being chased, she shouted, "Senior Brother, run quickly..."

"It's okay, it's safe now." Seeing Ji Li awake, Mu Jinyu placed her on the ground and gently comforted her.

"Huh?!"

Upon hearing Mu Jinyu's words, Ji Li's originally panicked and helpless emotions inexplicably calmed down. She looked around, discovering the surroundings were different.

No longer in the desolate wilderness of the Yuntian Mountain Range, but in a luxurious living room.

"Where is this?"

Ji Li's eyes were confused, not knowing how she got here, feeling a sense of discomfort.

However, her previously tense emotions relaxed due to not seeing any Liuyun Sect elders.

Mu Jinyu answered, "This is the Heavenly Sword Faction. The people who were chasing you are dead now, you are safe."

"I'm safe?"

Ji Li heard this, her eyes blank, soon followed by a surge of sorrow.

"Wuu wuu wuu... they are all dead..."

She collapsed on the ground, crying sorrowfully.

Upon seeing this, Wen Rou quickly went over to comfort Ji Li.

Even Jian Ruyan couldn't help but feel sympathy, recalling her own past, she also consoled Ji Li.

Mu Jinyu didn't join in comforting Ji Li. Firstly, he didn't really know how to comfort people, and secondly, he wasn't familiar with Ji Li, even if he wanted to comfort her, he wouldn't know how to start.

After a while, under Wen Rou's comfort, Ji Li's emotions gradually calmed down, though she still sobbed occasionally. She looked up at Mu Jinyu, saying, "Thank you, Senior Brother, for saving me..."

She struggled to stand up, feeling down, and said softly, "Senior Brother, I need to go to the Yuntian Mountain Range again, to retrieve Senior Sister's body..."

Senior Sister Wu was her best friend in Mingyue Valley, and she had risked her life to save Ji Li in the Yuntian Mountain Range.

Ji Li was now rescued and didn't want Senior Sister Wu to be exposed in the wilderness.

With so many corpses of her fellow disciples from Mingyue Valley, she really didn't have the courage to go and bury them all, as she didn't know if the Liuyun Sect's people were still there.

But she dared to venture into the Yuntian Mountain Range where ferocious beasts roamed.

Mu Jinyu said, "You mean that Senior Sister Wu we encountered last time? I've already buried her properly."

Ji Li was stunned upon hearing this, her actions paused, then she gratefully said, "Thank you, Senior Brother, you are really a good person."

Mu Jinyu waved his hand, saying, "What are you planning now? Will you stay in the Heavenly Sword Faction, or go home to find your family?"

Ji Li's expression was desolate, she shook her head blankly, saying, "I have no family, I am an orphan, adopted and raised by my masters, Mingyue Valley was my home..."

Upon hearing this, Mu Jinyu understood why Ji Li would be so heartbroken about Mingyue Valley's destruction.

It was not just the fear of her fellow disciples being brutally killed, but also because some people in Mingyue Valley were as close to her as family.

With a light sigh, Mu Jinyu said, "Then stay in the Heavenly Sword Faction. I will notify people to come and help you with the entrance procedures."

"Thank you, Senior Brother..." Ji Li heard this, but she did not seem overly happy, her mood still low.

"Knock knock knock!"

At this moment, there was a knock on the door.

Mu Jinyu vaguely guessed who it was, and went to open the door.

The visitor was an Inner Sect Disciple, he appeared somewhat nervous seeing Mu Jinyu coming out, saying, "Senior Brother Mu, Sect Leader and Supreme Elder, they want you to bring the rescued Mingyue Valley disciple over..."

"Okay, I understand." Mu Jinyu nodded, not feeling surprised.

Just right, he didn't need to find other people later and could directly let the Sect Leader arrange Ji Li's situation.

Then, Mu Jinyu brought Ji Li and left Tianlan Peak to find the Sect Leader and Supreme Elders.

Upon arriving at the Elder's Grand Hall, the Sect Leader and Supreme Elders of the Heavenly Sword Faction all had solemn expressions, clearly worried about Mingyue Valley's incident.

Seeing Mu Jinyu bringing Ji Li in, their serious expressions slightly eased. They nodded kindly to Mu Jinyu.

Although Mu Jinyu was now just a disciple of the Heavenly Sword Faction, his potential was too astonishing, with the faction's future depending greatly on him. Hence, no one dared to treat him as an ordinary disciple.

The Sect Leader and Supreme Elders called Ji Li over, seeing her panicked expression like a little rabbit, they did not question her harshly but instead gently inquired about the matters of Mingyue Valley.

They discreetly hinted, if the situation was clear, and there were peculiarities in this matter, perhaps the Heavenly Sword Faction would join forces with Blood Sword Sect and Beixue Mountain Villa to destroy the Liuyun Sect.

This hint gave Ji Li much hope. Although she didn't want to recall the horrifying scenes of Mingyue Valley's annihilation, thinking that she could avenge her sect, she endured the pain and recounted how the Liuyun Sect destroyed Mingyue Valley.

"In other words, the overall strength of Liuyun Sect is inferior to Mingyue Valley, lacking elders in the Fanxu Realm, but they seemingly possessed a secret treasure that could match it, and a peculiar array plate preventing them from leaving? That's how they eradicated Mingyue Valley in one move?"

The Elders and Sect Leader exchanged glances after hearing Ji Li's account, their breaths somewhat hastened.

"It appears they are similar to the Blood Sword Sect of old, but their gains were lesser, unable to cultivate anyone into the Fanxu Realm."

"Perhaps, maybe their aptitude was too poor, squandering too many resources?"

"Whatever the reason, their secret treasure is likely a 'spiritual treasure', which we can plan around."

"Directly attack the Liuyun Sect?"

"No, based on what the girl just said, they possess not only the spiritual treasure but also high-level array plates. Rushing in might only serve ourselves on a platter. We need a meticulous plan..."

"Let's feign goodwill initially, welcoming them into the new Four Great Sects, and during the Four Sects Martial Meeting, assess the situation to potentially take action against them then?"

The Sect Leader and Supreme Elders exchanged secret communication, ultimately deciding not to alert the enemy prematurely.

This matter required gradual and careful plotting.

Chapter 834: The Inner Gate Assessment Begins!

The Sect Leader and the Supreme Elders' voice transmission only lasted for a moment before stopping.

However, in Ji Li's opinion, they had fallen into deep thought after hearing her words.

Seeing this, Ji Li felt a bit uneasy, unsure of what decision the upper echelons of the Heavenly Sword Faction would make. Would they help her seek revenge?

Soon, the Sect Leader raised his head to look at Ji Li and said, "This matter is rather tricky. Just relying on our Heavenly Sword Faction alone may not be enough to deal with the Liuyun Sect. I need to contact the other two sects. If we really want to take action against them, it should be during the Four Sects Martial Meeting..."

"Alright, I understand. Thank you, Martial Uncle Sect Leader..."

Upon hearing the Sect Leader's words, although Ji Li felt a bit disappointed that she couldn't immediately annihilate the Liuyun Sect, she still harbored hope in her heart. After all, there was still some hope for revenge.

Then, Mu Jinyu spoke up, "Sect Leader, esteemed Supreme Elders, this Junior Sister Ji Li is now homeless. I'd like to have her join the Heavenly Sword Faction, is that possible?"

"This..."

Upon hearing Mu Jinyu's request, the Sect Leader did not immediately agree, hesitating visibly.

In fact, he could see that Ji Li had good aptitude. However, she had grown up in the Mingyue Valley and all her cultivation techniques and divine skills were from there. Now joining the Heavenly Sword Faction might not be appropriate.

Therefore, he didn't consider arranging for Ji Li to join the Heavenly Sword Faction.

But now that Mu Jinyu brought it up, it was hard to refuse.

Seeing the Sect Leader's hesitation, Mu Jinyu asked curiously, "Is it difficult?"

Hearing this, the Sect Leader explained his concerns to Mu Jinyu.

Upon hearing this, Mu Jinyu understood the Sect Leader's true concern. He was actually afraid that Ji Li might harbor ulterior motives. If the sect cultivated her and she grew strong, she might eventually wish to rebuild Mingyue Valley.

And if she left the Heavenly Sword Faction with the various secret techniques she learned, it would be a huge loss.

They would have nurtured a competitor for nothing!

This kind of situation was not common in the Kunlun Ruins, but it was not unheard of, with quite a few such cases in the past.

Upon hearing this, Mu Jinyu also fell silent. If the Sect Leader had such concerns, it indeed wasn't an easy matter.

Ji Li was smart enough to see that after Mu Jinyu made the request, the Sect Leader and the others did not immediately agree, indicating that they actually didn't want her to join the Heavenly Sword Faction.

However, she truly had nowhere to go. After some internal struggle, she said, "Senior Brother Mu, it's alright. I also don't want to join the Heavenly Sword Faction... I... could I be your maid?"

"Hmm?!"

Upon hearing this, Mu Jinyu froze for a moment, then turned to Ji Li and frowned, "Why would you think that?"

Tears welled up in Ji Li's eyes as she whispered, "Senior Brother, you saved my life, and I have nowhere to go. I want to stay by your side and take care of you..."

The Sect Leader and the Supreme Elders, seeing this, also happily persuaded Mu Jinyu.

In the end, Mu Jinyu had no choice but to let Ji Li stay by his side for now.

After all, even if Ji Li joined the Heavenly Sword Faction, she probably wouldn't receive much attention and would lead an ordinary life.

But as his maid, he could teach her many cultivation techniques, and as for martial techniques and divine skills, they could seek out other places in the future, so it wasn't a big issue.

When he returned to Huaxia, he could openly take Ji Li with him, and she would become a significant asset to the Dragon King Hall.

Of course, if Ji Li ultimately didn't want to leave the Kunlun Ruins, he wouldn't force her. After all, the resources needed to nurture her were nothing substantial to him.

Mu Jinyu took Ji Li back to Tianlan Peak. Seeing Ji Li a bit downcast on the way, he said, "Don't worry, I won't truly treat you as a maid. Just consider yourself like those two sisters."

"No, that's not it." Ji Li snapped out of her daze and quickly shook her head, "Being able to be your maid makes me very happy, Young Master. It's just that the sudden changes in my sect made it hard for me to control my emotions. Don't worry, I'll adjust my state quickly and be a qualified maid."

"You really don't need to do this," Mu Jinyu sighed.

Unfortunately, no matter how much he tried to persuade her, Ji Li was determined to be his maid. Eventually, Mu Jinyu got tired of persuading and stopped saying anything more.

After all, it was just a nominal title, and he wouldn't truly treat Ji Li as a maid. If she wanted to consider herself one, so be it.

Back home, Ji Li had already adjusted her mindset, considering herself a maid and starting to do various chores.

This left Wen Rou and Jian Ruyan a bit stunned.

Mu Jinyu casually explained a few words to them and then went back to his room to cultivate.

There were only two days left before the Inner Gate examination. After completing the punishment task of destroying the Heavenly Sword Pool, he needed to calm down and prepare well for the Inner Gate examination.

Time passed slowly.

In the blink of an eye, two days had passed.

Today was the day of the Inner Sect disciple examination, selecting elite disciples to participate in the Four Sects Martial Meeting.

Mu Jinyu and Wen Rou had also gotten used to Ji Li's presence over the past two days, and they got along very well.

When Ji Li learned that today was the Inner Gate examination, she timidly asked if she could go and watch. Mu Jinyu immediately agreed.

Then, they changed their clothes and headed towards the Inner Sect Square halfway up Tianlan Peak.

After all, the summit of Tianlan Peak was the residence of the List of Outstanding Talents disciples, and the Heavenly Sword Faction had too many Inner Sect disciples to allow them all to go up there casually.

So, the List of Outstanding Talents disciples had to come down.

The moment the four arrived at the Inner Sect Square, it caused a sensation.

"Senior Brother Mu is here too! He's currently third on the List of Outstanding Talents. It is said that he only used one sword to defeat the previous third place, Brother Wei."

"Yes, it was terrifying. The brothers who saw that battle said Brother Yun's face changed drastically, feeling he was no match."

"Sigh, I wonder who is stronger, Senior Brother Mu or Brother Yun?"

"I think it's still Brother Yun. After all, he has been invincible for so many years. Although Senior Brother Mu is also very strong, he only joined our Heavenly Sword Faction a little over a month ago. His foundation is still a bit lacking."

"No matter who is stronger now, I believe that Senior Brother Mu will definitely be the first on the Four Sects' Genius Ranking in the future. Do you believe that?"

"..."

The numerous Inner Sect disciples in the square discussed fervently, looking at Mu Jinyu with eyes full of admiration and reverence.

Mu Jinyu was quite pleased upon hearing this. Now that he had climbed up step by step with his strength, there were finally fewer people referring to him as a Spirit Root genius.

Previously, every time he heard those four words, he felt it was a form of mockery, as if he only managed to defeat others because of his Spirit Root.

And Mu Jinyu wasn't even sure if he had a Spirit Root, so how could he feel comfortable hearing such words?

At this moment, another commotion arose from the crowd.

"Brother Yun is here too."

"And Brother Wei. Now the top three of the List of Outstanding Talents are all here."

Having just found a spot to stand, Mu Jinyu looked towards the entrance upon hearing the commotion. He saw Yun Ge smiling kindly as he walked in.

Behind him followed a young man with a cold and arrogant expression.

It was none other than the second place on the List of Outstanding Talents, Wei Ziping!

Chapter 835: Is Chen Qiuqiao There?

Wei Ziping's temperament was different from the reserved demeanor of Yun Ge and Wei Qingfeng. Instead, it exuded an aggressive sharpness.

He was like a sharp sword unsheathed, slaughtering gods and buddhas alike!

This made everyone present not dare to look him in the eye. When Wei Ziping passed by, they hurriedly stepped aside.

Wei Ziping's cultivation was the same as Yun Ge's, both at the Ninth Layer of the Divine Transformation Realm.

He had been in the second position on the List of Outstanding Talents for over a year, and no one could shake his position.

Because Mu Jinyu was seeing Wei Ziping for the first time, he glanced at him a few more times and was immediately sensed by him.

Wei Ziping looked up at Mu Jinyu, his eyes flashing, and then he walked towards Mu Jinyu.

Yun Ge noticed Wei Ziping's movement and also looked over, finding Mu Jinyu. He smiled and followed suit.

"Brother Wei is coming over. Does he want to challenge Senior Brother Mu?"

"Shh, don't talk!"

The crowd quickly fell silent.

Wei Ziping was different from Yun Ge. If he disliked someone, he might punish them at any time.

Therefore, apart from the newly promoted inner sect disciples who didn't understand, almost everyone was very afraid of him.

The crowd automatically parted to make way, and Wei Ziping easily approached Mu Jinyu.

He looked at Mu Jinyu with a defiant expression and said, "Are you the new third on the List of Outstanding Talents?"

"Yes." Mu Jinyu nodded slightly, neither humble nor arrogant. "What advice do you have, Senior Brother?"

Wei Ziping, talking to himself, said, "I heard you almost split Wei Qingfeng in half with just one sword strike?"

Mu Jinyu did not respond, as directly admitting it would seem too arrogant and conceited.

Although it was true, it was better to be a bit humble.

Wei Ziping didn't care about Mu Jinyu's silence and lightly shook his head, saying, "It seems Wei Qingfeng has truly fallen."

The people in the square were agitated and excited upon hearing Wei Ziping's words.

What Wei Ziping said was dismissive of Mu Jinyu, not taking him seriously at all.

They were all looking forward to seeing the two fight, to know who was stronger between the second and third on the List of Outstanding Talents.

By this time, Yun Ge had also arrived behind Wei Ziping. Hearing Wei's words, his face turned a bit ugly, and he was about to say something.

But Wei Ziping ignored Mu Jinyu and suddenly turned to face Yun Ge, saying coldly, "Yun Ge, you've held the first position on the List of Outstanding Talents for years. As of today, you can step down."

Yun Ge was stunned by his words, not expecting Wei Ziping to challenge him again.

This guy's arrogance was becoming more blatant!

After recovering, Yun Ge smiled and said, "If you have the skill, I am willing to step down."

Wei Ziping said nothing more, snorted coldly, and brushed past Yun Ge, walking to an empty spot and waiting for the inner sect assessment to begin.

As soon as Wei Ziping left, Yun Ge smiled wryly at Mu Jinyu and said, "That's just the way he is. He's actually not a bad person. Don't take it to heart."

Mu Jinyu nodded slightly, saying, "Yeah, he's indeed very strong and has the right to be arrogant, just a bit over the top."

While Mu Jinyu and Yun Ge were talking.

In a few inconspicuous spots in the crowd.

Li Xiaoxiao, Wu Lei, and Chen Qiuqiao looked at Mu Jinyu confronting Wei Ziping, then talking and laughing with Yun Ge, full of complex emotions.

Not long ago, Mu Jinyu was just like them, an outer gate disciple who had less prestige than them.

If not for the title of Spirit Root Genius, he would have no reputation in the outer gate.

But who would have expected?

He rose to prominence in the outer gate's great assessment, decisively winning first place, and began his ascent to the top.

In less than a month, he had reached the third rank on the List of Outstanding Talents, and his cultivation soared from the Fourth Layer to the Eighth Layer of the Divine Transformation Realm!

He still chatted and laughed easily with the strongest inner sect members, just like in the outer gate.

And what about them?

They had enjoyed some prominence in the outer gate, but upon entering the inner gate, they immediately became ordinary, striving to reach the Fifth Layer of the Divine Transformation Realm, hoping to one day rank seventy-second on the List of Outstanding Talents!

How vast was the gap between them?

It was hard for them not to feel disheartened.

Time flew by.

In the blink of an eye, half an hour had passed.

The disciples on the List of Outstanding Talents had also gradually gathered at the Inner Gate Square.

The elder presiding over the inner gate's great assessment then announced, "Alright, since almost everyone is here, those who aren't will be considered to have forfeited. Let's officially start the inner gate assessment."

Subsequently, perhaps out of consideration for Mu Jinyu, the elder began to introduce the content and rules of the inner gate examination.

The examination consisted of testing strength, speed, reflexes, and finally, a duel!

The first test of strength was called: Cauldrons and Bells Ringing Together!

In the test of 'Cauldrons and Bells Ringing Together,' a cauldron and a bell were placed ten meters in front of the tester... A total of nine cauldrons and nine bells, each one meter apart.

The tester was not allowed to use martial techniques, spells, or divine skills but could only use True Essence Power to strike the first cauldron from a distance. When the cauldron resonated from the strike, it would trigger the bell one meter away to ring. The final goal was to see how many cauldrons and bells rang together!

So, the nine cauldrons and nine bells were a total distance of twenty-eight meters from the tester.

Covering a distance of nearly thirty meters with pure True Essence Power and causing even a portion of the bells and cauldrons to ring would be manageable. But making all the bells and cauldrons ring together was quite challenging.

Because these cauldrons and bells were not ordinary but magic treasures made of special materials.

Generally speaking, disciples at the Fourth to Sixth Layer of the Divine Transformation Realm could ring three to four bells and cauldrons.

Disciples at the Seventh to Ninth Layer could ring five to six bells and cauldrons.

A genius like Yun Ge could ring seven bells and cauldrons!

That was his result in the last assessment!

"Alright, the rules are laid out. Let's begin the assessment."

After explaining the rules, the elder took out a list and called out, "First up, Chen Qiuqiao!"

"Ah?"

Chen Qiuqiao, who had been trying to stay inconspicuous in the crowd, was stunned when he heard the elder call his name to go first.

He had been so fixated on Mu Jinyu's activities on the List of Outstanding Talents that he had lost any thought of competing with him and had become somewhat self-deprecating, not daring to face Mu Jinyu for fear of comparison!

Unexpectedly, the inner gate assessment would kick off with him, putting him in the small but nonetheless spotlight, ensuring Mu Jinyu would see him.

His self-deprecation made his heart ache at the thought of Mu Jinyu now at the Eighth Layer of the Divine Transformation Realm, ranked third, while he remained at the Fourth Layer, achieving nothing, making him hesitant to step forward!

The elder, seeing no response after a while, frowned and said, "Is Chen Qiuqiao here or not?"

"If not, then the next one..."

"Here, here, here..."

Chen Qiuqiao ultimately didn't want to give up the inner gate assessment. Though his heart felt heavy, he raised his hand and called out.

Chapter 836: Yun Ge's Results! The Ninth Cauldron Rings!

The crowd saw Chen Qiuqiao raising his hand and stepping out, his expression calm, without saying anything.

No one actively mocked him either.

After all, an inner sect disciple at the fourth layer of the Divine Transformation Realm was the most common in the Inner Gate of the Heavenly Sword Faction. Most of them had similar strength, and since they had no impression of Chen Qiuqiao, they naturally wouldn't mock him without reason.

Mu Jinyu saw Chen Qiuqiao step forward but didn't greet him, as there was no need. They were not friends to begin with.

However, he still watched very seriously to see how Chen Qiuqiao would test his strength.

"Begin."

The elder saw Chen Qiuqiao step forward and furrowed his brow slightly before speaking.

"Hmm."

Chen Qiuqiao stood behind a red line, looking resolutely at the first cauldron ten meters ahead, then began to absorb his True Yuan.

Soon, Chen Qiuqiao gathered his True Yuan to its limit, his face flushed red, then he shouted and punched through the air!

"Boom!!"

The powerful True Essence Power exploded out, as straight as smoke, hitting the first giant cauldron ten meters away.

Without any enhancement from martial techniques, spells, or divine skills, the power of Chen Qiuqiao's punch was significantly reduced. However, hitting the giant cauldron still produced a few faint vibrating sounds.

"Boom, boom!!"

Chen Qiuqiao's True Essence Power struck the giant cauldron, causing it to resonate with a few faint vibration sounds. The True Essence then penetrated through the cauldron and continued to strike the first ancient bell, making it ring.

"Dang, dang!"

The cauldron and bell rang together, but it was only the first one, and a significant amount of Chen Qiuqiao's energy had already been expended.

"Boom, dang!"

Soon, the second cauldron and bell also rang in unison, finally causing the third cauldron to emit a sound...

But unfortunately, the third bell made no noise at all.

The True Essence Power from Chen Qiuqiao's punch had dissipated after making the third cauldron sound.

The elder announced as usual, "Three cauldrons, two bells, barely passing."

Yes, barely passing. Generally speaking, inner sect disciples at the fourth layer of the Divine Transformation Realm should be strong enough to ring three cauldrons and three bells.

However, Chen Qiuqiao only rang three cauldrons and two bells, which was strictly speaking not passing. But considering it was his first time taking the inner sect assessment and he didn't yet understand some techniques, the elder counted it as barely passing.

If in the next assessment Chen Qiuqiao still had this score, he would not pass.

Chen Qiuqiao knew that the passing mark was three cauldrons and three bells. Hearing the elder's announcement, his face paled and he shouted inwardly, 'So close, I was so close, damn it...'

He then returned to his original position in low spirits. The friends he had made in the inner sect comforted him, saying:

"You don't need to feel this way. Your score is actually quite good. When I first entered the inner sect and took the assessment, my score was worse than yours, only two cauldrons and two bells..."

"Yes, and nobody laughed at you, right? It's because most people scored like this in their first assessment."

"Indeed. Don't look at Senior Brother Mu being at the eighth layer of the Divine Transformation Realm, third on the list of outstanding talents. His assessment score might not even be better than the fifth or even the tenth on the list."

"..."

Listening to their consolation, Chen Qiuqiao felt much better.

Indeed, it was normal not to perform well in his first assessment.

Mu Jinyu might be third on the list, but who knows, his score might not even surpass the tenth rank.

Chen Qiuqiao comforted himself.

The assessment continued methodically.

Most people only scored three cauldrons and three bells.

Then it was the turn of the disciples at the fifth and sixth layer of the Divine Transformation Realm, who began showing scores of four cauldrons and three bells, or four cauldrons and four bells!

After that, an outstanding disciple at the forefront of the seventh layer of the Divine Transformation Realm came out for the assessment. His punch rang five cauldrons and five bells!

People were stunned.

"Next, Wei Qingfeng!"

The elder announced after the disciple retreated, showing a rare hint of anticipation in his voice.

"Senior Brother Wei is going to take the test, he is tenth on the list of outstanding talents!"

"If the top ten are taking the test, can we expect six cauldrons and six bells?"

The crowd was excited to see Wei Qingfeng, the tenth on the list, up next.

Wei Qingfeng stepped up calmly, without extra preparation, absorbing True Yuan, then punching through the air!

"Boom! Dong, boom..."

As expected, Wei Qingfeng's performance was within the crowd's prediction, six cauldrons and six bells.

After finishing, he stepped down without saying anything.

"Wei Qingfeng, six cauldrons and six bells, excellent performance!"

The elder smiled, unconcerned with Wei Qingfeng holding back.

That's because, no matter how hard Wei Qingfeng tried, he could not surpass Yun Ge, Wei Ziping, or Mu Jinyu.

If that's the case, it was better to conserve his strength, not revealing too much, ensuring better performance in the duels later.

Quickly, the scores of those ranked ninth to fourth on the list of outstanding talents were revealed.

They all scored six cauldrons and six bells. If they exerted their full strength, it was unknown if they could ring the seventh cauldron.

"Next, Yun Ge!"

This time, the elder didn't follow the order from Mu Jinyu to Yun Ge but started with Yun Ge.

Everyone was surprised but didn't think much of it and began discussing:

"It's Brother Yun's turn. Last time he scored eight cauldrons and eight bells, way ahead of everyone. Let's see if he can achieve the true cauldrons and bells ringing together this time."

"Nine cauldrons and nine bells? That's too difficult. The further back the cauldrons and bells go, the more they are made of special materials and the harder they are to ring. Brother Yun will probably score eight cauldrons and eight bells again."

"Yes, that's what I think. The scores of the top ten on the list rarely change unless there's significant improvement in strength. Brother Yun's result should be similar."

"..."

Amidst the discussions, Yun Ge stepped beside the elder and stopped at the red line.

The elder encouraged Yun Ge a bit, telling him not to feel pressured, and let him begin his preparation.

"Hmm."

Yun Ge nodded gently, calming down, and then punched out!

"Boom, boom!!"

"Dang!"

"Boom! Dang..."

In an instant, the front six cauldrons and bells rang simultaneously.

Then, the True Essence Power passed through, making the seventh cauldron ring, followed by the seventh bell!

By then, Yun Ge's True Essence Power had been significantly depleted, and the eighth cauldron's sound was much weaker than the previous ones.

When the eighth bell rang, its sound was fainter still.

Just when everyone thought Yun Ge's score would end there, the ninth cauldron suddenly made a very faint sound, almost drowned out by the other cauldrons and bells.

Chapter 837 Wei Ziping's Transcendence!

"Oh my god, the Ninth Cauldron, the Ninth Cauldron rang?"

"It's true, although it's very faint, it really rang, Brother Yun is indeed Brother Yun!"

"I wonder if the Ninth Bell can be struck?"

"..."

As the faint vibration of the Ninth Cauldron sounded, the crowd immediately became excited. Some easily moved people even had tears in their eyes, feeling they had witnessed history.

The atmosphere at the scene was instantly ignited to the extreme.

Everyone was eagerly anticipating if Yun Ge could strike the Ninth Bell.

If he could, then Yun Ge would indeed break the record.

In the history of the Heavenly Sword Faction, no one had ever managed to make the nine bells and cauldrons ring together in the Divine Transformation Realm.

It was something that could only be achieved after reaching the Fanxu Realm.

But now, Yun Ge was about to break the record.

Unfortunately, after waiting for several minutes, the Ninth Ancient Bell still showed no signs of movement.

Gradually, the resonance from the previous bells and cauldrons also began to die down.

"Failed..."

"What a pity, it's really such a pity, it was just one last bell short..."

"It's okay, maybe Yun Ge will succeed in the next assessment!"

"Not necessarily, Yun Ge has been in the Ninth Layer of the Divine Transformation Realm for a long time. By the next assessment, he might have already broken through to the Fanxu Realm."

"Sigh, it's really such a pity!"

Everyone felt deeply regretful; what a pity.

It was not just the failure to witness history, but also for Yun Ge.

He was clearly on the verge of breaking through to the Fanxu Realm. If he could make the bells and cauldrons ring together now, there would be no regrets after breaking through to the Fanxu Realm.

But now, he couldn't do it. By the next assessment, if Yun Ge had broken through to the Fanxu Realm, it would really become a lifelong regret.

The Examiner Elder also felt it was a pity, sighed, and patted Yun Ge on the shoulder, offering some words of comfort.

Yun Ge's expression remained unchanged. Although it was unclear what he was feeling inside, his face did not show any disappointment. He was calm and natural in the face of the Elder's consolation.

Then he walked down.

The Elder adjusted his emotions and said, "Next, Wei Ziping!"

Wei Ziping had already guessed it would be his turn next, not Mu Jinyu's, so he had already walked up. When he brushed past Yun Ge, he let out a cold laugh and suddenly said,

"You really haven't made any progress at all!"

Wei Ziping's voice was unhidden and almost everyone in the square heard it.

The tone carried slight ridicule and disdain.

Hearing this, many felt their anger surge, and Yun Ge's numerous followers wanted to rush up and beat Wei Ziping.

Even Yun Ge's body halted slightly upon hearing Wei Ziping's words.

It was evident his mindset was also affected by Wei Ziping's words.

However, Yun Ge's heart was quite broad, and he did not say much. He only said, "Good luck," and continued to walk towards Mu Jinyu.

Wei Ziping snorted coldly and said nothing more, stepping forward.

The crowd glared at Wei Ziping, everyone extremely enraged by the words he said to Yun Ge, but no one dared to speak out.

Although Wei Ziping's strength was comparable to Yun Ge's or even slightly lower, he was not well-liked in the Heavenly Sword Faction, not even more popular than Wei Qingfeng, who ranked tenth on the List of Outstanding Talents.

The reason was due to Wei Ziping's arrogant and self-centered personality, which they found extremely annoying.

Combined with his frequent habit of teaching others a lesson, under the guise of instruction, people were hesitant to criticize or mock him as they did with Yun Ge.

Wei Ziping approached the Examiner Elder, without waiting for any cue, he immediately threw a punch!

"You!"

The Examiner Elder was already displeased with Wei Ziping's previous attitude and became even more furious with his brazen disrespect.

Yet just then...

"Boom boom boom!! Clang clang clang..."

In an instant, the first seven bells and cauldrons all rang simultaneously.

This speed, this number of resonating cauldrons and bells surpassed Yun Ge by two!

Not only did the Examiner Elder's face change instantly, but even those inner sect disciples dissatisfied with Wei Ziping sensed something was amiss.

Soon, the eighth cauldron rang, followed by the eighth bell, and predictably, the ninth cauldron also rang.

The crowd's eyes were dazed, their expressions stunned. They never imagined Wei Ziping could also strike the Ninth Cauldron!

Moreover, his speed was faster than Yun Ge's. Did that mean he had a better chance of striking the Ninth Bell, achieving true ringing of all bells and cauldrons?

Did this mean...

He was the current number one in the Inner Gate?!

Had Wei Ziping already surpassed Yun Ge?

As the crowd remained dazed, a clear "clang" sounded. As expected, the Ninth Ancient Bell faintly rang.

The cauldrons and bells rang together!

Wei Ziping had achieved the true ringing of bells and cauldrons!

"Boom!"

Everyone's expressions changed dramatically, no one expected Wei Ziping to actually succeed.

He really made all nine cauldrons and bells ring.

Sadly, there wasn't much excitement or cheering; instead, the crowd remained strangely silent.

Everyone had wanted Yun Ge to break the record, not Wei Ziping.

Wei Ziping breaking the record and surpassing Yun Ge was something they could not accept.

The triumphant smile on Wei Ziping's face froze as he noticed the eerie silence at the scene.

Though self-centered and indifferent to others' views, he felt uneasy at the lack of cheers.

No matter how uncomfortable he felt inside, he couldn't suppress the entire crowd to demand their cheers.

Such insincere adulation, for someone as proud as him, was unnecessary.

The initially irritated Examiner Elder hesitated before speaking again, avoiding scolding Wei Ziping for his disrespect.

He swallowed hard and said, "Wei Ziping, Nine Cauldrons and Nine Bells, outstanding performance!"

Then quickly shouted, "Next, Mu Jinyu!"

Wei Ziping, in a foul mood, noticing even the Elder eager to dismiss him, felt fury rising.

Unable to hold back, he sneered, "Why bring him up? He's just in the Eighth Layer of the Divine Transformation Realm. Give him a Six Cauldrons Six Bells score and be done with it."

"Let's start the speed test next, don't waste time!"

"You! This..."

The Elder, enraged by Wei Ziping's insolence, didn't dare openly confront him due to his formidable potential, unsure of what to say.

Ji Li, unaware of Wei Ziping's notorious nature, angered by his comment on Mu Jinyu, retorted,

"How can you say that? My young master hasn't even started the test, how can you say he can't achieve the ringing of all cauldrons and bells?"

"Hmm?!"

Wei Ziping turned, noting Ji Li beside Mu Jinyu, sneered,

"You have a point, without testing, one can't know if he can achieve Six Cauldrons Six Bells."

"Maybe, in his first test, he can't even achieve that! Hahaha..."

Chapter 838: A Punch Shatters Everything! Shocking the Entire Arena!

"Hahaha..."

Wei Ziping laughed heartily, as if he had just told the funniest joke.

Although no one joined in his laughter, he did not mind, as he believed he was speaking the truth.

Ji Li and Wen Rou, upon hearing Wei Ziping's evaluation of Mu Jinyu, were so angry that their eyes turned red and they clenched their teeth tightly.

The crowd's expressions changed subtly, feeling that Wei Ziping's words were a bit too much and arrogant.

However, deep down, few thought that Wei Ziping was wrong, thinking he was deliberately belittling Mu Jinyu.

Because they also believed that Mu Jinyu's results, while unlikely to be as bad as Wei Ziping said, probably wouldn't reach seven cauldrons seven bells or eight cauldrons eight bells.

Mu Jinyu's feat of defeating Wei Qingfeng with one sword stroke was already widely known within the Inner Gate.

Everyone present knew that Mu Jinyu's biggest reliance in defeating Wei Qingfeng so easily was Elder Lin Feng's Sacred Wood Branch.

Otherwise, he wouldn't have nearly killed Wei Qingfeng with one sword strike.

But in a strength test, external objects, martial techniques, spells, and divine skills were not allowed. Given these restrictions, and it being Mu Jinyu's first test, the chances of him achieving Yun Ge's level were really low.

"Junior Brother Mu, that's just how he is, don't take it to heart," Yun Ge said, worried that Mu Jinyu would be too provoked to go through with the test and instead confront Wei Ziping.

Mu Jinyu glanced at him and shook his head, "Brother Yun need not worry, I won't stoop to the level of such a fool. That would be too undignified."

Then, Mu Jinyu went to comfort Wen Rou and Ji Li, "You don't need to be so angry. Don't take clowns like him seriously. The more you react, the happier they get. If you ignore him, he himself will find it meaningless."

"Hmm," Wen Rou and Ji Li responded, turning their heads away, ignoring Wei Ziping.

Although Mu Jinyu did not speak loudly, he did not lower his voice either, so Wei Ziping still heard his words.

Instantly, the smile on Wei Ziping's face disappeared, his eyes bulged, and his expression became fierce.

He glared at Mu Jinyu, "You call me a clown, not convinced? Well, then come on up. I'd like to see if you can make all the cauldrons and bells ring like me. If you can't, hmph, you'll see what happens in our match later..."

Mu Jinyu didn't even acknowledge Wei Ziping, just told Yun Ge and Wen Rou he was going ahead, and leisurely walked towards the bell and cauldron area!

Wei Ziping's face turned extremely dark.

He felt that Mu Jinyu, merely third on the List of Outstanding Talents and at the eighth layer of the Divine Transformation Realm, actually dared to ignore him!

'He doesn't know his place. Let's see how he handles this!' he thought.

Chen Qiuqiao, whose mindset had been falling apart, suddenly felt a strange excitement when he saw Wei Ziping confront Mu Jinyu.

He really wanted to see Mu Jinyu make a fool of himself, mocked by the crowd.

If that happened, not only would Mu Jinyu be utterly disgraced, but he would also be beaten up by Wei Ziping in the real combat test later! What a satisfying scene that would be!

Chen Qiuqiao's twisted thoughts hoped that Mu Jinyu, like himself, would perform poorly due to this being his first Bell Cauldron Test.

Mu Jinyu didn't know Chen Qiuqiao's thoughts, and even if he did, he wouldn't care.

He quickly walked to the Examiner Elder, standing on the red line.

The Examiner Elder came back to his senses, looking at Mu Jinyu with a slightly complex expression.

Originally, even if Mu Jinyu's test results were not great, it wouldn't be a big deal, since it was his first Bell Cauldron Test, and performing poorly would be normal.

But after Wei Ziping's words, if Mu Jinyu failed to achieve eight cauldrons eight bells, it would damage his reputation in the Heavenly Sword Faction.

'Alas, I hope he's not affected by this.'

"When you're ready, you can start," the Examiner Elder said to Mu Jinyu.

Mu Jinyu nodded slightly, not speaking. He then took a deep breath, True Yuan continuously accumulating, and punched towards the first cauldron ten meters ahead!

This full-force display made Wei Ziping secretly shake his head, looking disdainful.

He and Yun Ge had just tested with a casual punch. Who needed this much effort?

It seemed as if putting in full effort would make his results better.

"Boom boom boom!!"

"Ding ding ding!!"

However, in the next second, as the bell and cauldron sounds echoed, Wei Ziping's disdainful expression instantly froze.

The nine massive cauldrons and ancient bells, arranged a meter apart, all shook violently with Mu Jinyu's punch, producing a continuous, loud sound!

Mu Jinyu's punch didn't just sequentially ring some bells and cauldrons, with the Qi Force extending afterward to ring the others weakly.

He made all nine cauldrons and nine bells produce the loudest, most intense crashing sound at once!

The nine massive cauldrons trembled constantly in place, occasionally bouncing, shattering many ground tiles.

The nine hanging ancient bells swung violently, as if someone was tirelessly hammering them. They looked like they might soon fall from their stands.

"Hiss!"

"Now that's really the cauldrons and bells ringing together!!"

"What a magnificent scene, what an intense sound. This is truly bell and cauldron ringing, deafening!"

"Yes, it turns out these Bell and Cauldron treasures can also purify the heart. When rung together, I feel a lot of the malice in my heart dissipating..."

Originally hesitant due to Wei Ziping's intimidation, the crowd, as the intense bell and cauldron sounds rang out, did not find it harsh or unbearable but felt their minds being cleansed repeatedly by the sounds!

They began to exclaim, ignoring Wei Ziping's now-black-as-a-pot-bottom face.

"How could this be?!"

Wei Ziping, seeing the scene before him, far more shocking than what he had caused, looked as if he had eaten something foul.

Even he couldn't help but feel that Mu Jinyu's display was the true bell and cauldron ringing, and what he had done earlier was nothing.

This left Wei Ziping feeling deeply frustrated and defeated!

"Crack crack crack..."

The crowd vaguely heard a cracking sound amidst the bell and cauldron vibrations.

"What is that sound?!"

The crowd was puzzled.

"Oh my god, look, the cauldrons... are cracking!"

Someone sharp-eyed saw that the nine cauldrons seemed unable to withstand Mu Jinyu's punch, as the intense vibrations caused fine cracks to appear on the instruments.

This meant the nine treasured cauldrons and bells were about to explode?!

"Boom!!!"

Just as that disciple exclaimed, the nine bells and cauldrons exploded!

Chapter 839: Unrivaled!

With a thunderous explosion, the sound of the bell and cauldron's detonation echoed through the heavens, causing Tianlan Peak to tremble and alerting everyone within the Heavenly Sword Faction.

"Watch out!!!"

The Examiner Elder was momentarily stunned but quickly snapped back to his senses, his face full of anxiety. He immediately channeled his true essence, weaving a massive hand that covered the center of the explosion, isolating the surrounding disciples.

In an instant, innumerable fragments from the shattered bell and cauldron flew wildly, continuously slicing through the True Essence Net woven by the Examiner Elder.

"Pfft!!!"

The Examiner Elder could barely withstand such a terrifying explosion. Soon after intercepting the fragments with the True Essence Net, his complexion changed rapidly from red to white and back again, before he finally spat out a large mouthful of clotted blood.

"Rip!"

Unable to bear it any longer, the Examiner Elder's True Essence Net shattered into pieces.

However, thanks to his swift actions, he managed to intercept the fragments in time, giving everyone a chance to react. At this moment, despite the failure, Mu Jinyu and Yun Ge immediately intervened, each displaying their divine skills to intercept all the fragments from the bell and cauldron.

"Whew!"

Thus, a disaster that could have caused numerous casualties was averted by Mu Jinyu and the others.

Those Inner Sect Disciples at the fourth and fifth layers of the Divine Transformation Realm, remembering the terrifying scene just now, were still trembling with fear, cold sweat soaking their bodies.

"Elder, are you alright?"

As soon as Mu Jinyu resolved the fragments, he immediately ran to the Examiner Elder, who was lying in a pool of blood.

In a quick motion, Mu Jinyu reached the Elder's side, helping him up and swiftly taking out an elixir to feed him, then proceeding to channel his life source energy to treat the severe internal injury caused by the backlash.

"Huff... Huff..."

After a few breaths, the Examiner Elder slowly opened his eyes. Though his gaze was not as bright as before, he wasn't weak to the point of his pupils scattering.

"Is everything alright? What about the casualties?!"

As soon as the Examiner Elder spoke, he inquired about the injuries.

Mu Jinyu quickly replied, "Everything is fine, no one is hurt except you, Elder..."

"That's good..."

Hearing Mu Jinyu's response, the Examiner Elder's face showed relief, no longer holding the previous tension.

Then, he realized that his severe internal injuries from the backlash had completely healed.

"Hmm? How did my injuries heal?"

The Elder, puzzled, sat up from Mu Jinyu's arms.

Mu Jinyu explained, "I gave you a good healing pill, so you're healed..."

The Examiner Elder knew that Mu Jinyu was Elder Cheng's student. Upon hearing Mu Jinyu's words, he thought Mu Jinyu had given him the life-saving pill that Elder Cheng had provided, and his face showed a complex expression, sighing, "You shouldn't have..."

He felt that Mu Jinyu's life was far more precious than his old bones. His internal injuries would heal in a few months without posing a life threat, but if Mu Jinyu used the life-saving pill on him and later faced danger without it, leading to his death, wouldn't he become the sinner?

"Don't worry, Elder, I have plenty of such healing medicine; it's not a rare treasure."

Seeing the guilt and complex emotions on the Examiner Elder's face, Mu Jinyu knew he had misunderstood and quickly explained.

The Examiner Elder, somewhat skeptical, was about to ask further when he heard the sound of something slicing through the air.

The numerous Elders and the Sect Leader of the Heavenly Sword Faction had all rushed over due to the explosion.

"What happened?!"

"What was that explosion just now?!"

The elders hovered in mid-air, scanning the scene with eyes full of suspicion. Noticing that no one was injured, their gazes shifted to the center of the explosion.

They vaguely recalled that there should have been nine bells and cauldrons placed there?

These were the magical tools used for the Inner Gate strength assessment, but now they were gone?

Seeing the high-level members of the Heavenly Sword Faction being alarmed, Mu Jinyu smiled bitterly and stopped conversing with the Examiner Elder, walking over to explain the origin of the explosion to the Sect Leader and the others.

After hearing Mu Jinyu's explanation, their expressions changed slightly, and one couldn't help but exclaim:

"What? You blew up all nine bells and cauldrons with one punch?!"

"You're only at the eighth layer of the Divine Transformation Realm, right? And you couldn't have used external objects, so how did..."

Some of the Elders found it hard to believe Mu Jinyu's words.

After all, Yun Ge and Wei Ziping, both at the ninth layer of the Divine Transformation Realm, couldn't make the bells and cauldrons ring without using external aids or magical techniques, let alone blow them up with a punch!

But at this moment, the nine bells and cauldrons had indeed disappeared, leaving them no choice but to believe it.

Mu Jinyu smiled bitterly and said, "I didn't know I could blow them up with one punch. If I'd known, I wouldn't have gone all out and would have tested like Brother Yun, with a casual punch."

Mu Jinyu's tone carried a hint of regret.

He had been provoked by Wei Ziping's words and believed that his first test might not yield good results, so he didn't strike as casually as Yun Ge but instead used his full strength!

As a result, he indeed made the bells and cauldrons ring together, more intensely than Wei Ziping, but the outcome was that the bells and cauldrons couldn't withstand the immense power and exploded.

It nearly caused casualties, making him feel ashamed and regretful.

"He's not lying; it really happened that way!"

At this moment, the Examiner Elder stepped forward to explain the prior situation to the other Elders.

Yun Ge and the others also affirmed the truth of Mu Jinyu's words.

Upon confirming that the explosion was indeed caused by Mu Jinyu, the expressions of the Sect Leader and elders became quite peculiar!

Good heavens, with just the eighth layer of the Divine Transformation Realm power, participating in the strength assessment for the first time, the damage caused was even more frightening than Yun Ge and the others!

To achieve what even the ninth layer of the Divine Transformation Realm couldn't with the true essence power of the eighth layer, how formidable and terrifying was his true essence power?

"Sect Leader, this was my fault. I will bear any punishment."

Mu Jinyu, not wanting to evade responsibility, raised his head and said to the Sect Leader.

The Sect Leader snapped out of his shock and shook his head, "There's no punishment; it was just an accident. Those bells and cauldrons were just regular magical tools. If they're broken, so be it..."

Seeing that Mu Jinyu still wanted to say something, the Sect Leader continued, "No more talking. If you feel uneasy, then display the same destructive power at the Four Sects Martial Meeting to uphold the Heavenly Sword Faction's reputation."

After saying this, the Sect Leader left.

The remaining Elders encouragingly nodded at Mu Jinyu before leaving as well.

Seeing the Sect Leader and the others leave, while many disciples were still shaken, the Examiner Elder said, "There was an accident during the strength assessment. Take a break, and we will proceed with the speed test shortly."

Although the Examiner Elder didn't announce Mu Jinyu's result in the strength assessment.

Everyone present knew that blowing up the assessment tool, the bell and cauldron, made Mu Jinyu's result unrivaled in this strength assessment.

Chapter 840: The Test Begins!

Everyone took a short break.

From time to time, someone would turn to look at Wei Ziping, whose face was extremely ashen. Although many wanted to mock him, no one dared to add salt to his wound.

As a result, the scene maintained an eerie silence, even those who were excitedly discussing Mu Jinyu's performance spoke rarely.

Even though no one voiced their ridicule, how could Wei Ziping not see the mocking glances of those around him?

Wei Ziping's face was green with anger, his fists clenched, wishing the ground would open up and swallow him whole.

He never thought that the result of the strength assessment would be such a slap in his face.

Thinking about his earlier mocking words to Mu Jinyu, saying it was doubtful Mu Jinyu could achieve the Six Cauldrons Six Bells on his first try.

Looking again at the cleared space where the damaged red lines had been, Wei Ziping felt his face burning with shame!

Chen Qiuqiao shared the same feeling as Wei Ziping.

Chen Qiuqiao also thought Mu Jinyu might embarrass himself in the strength assessment, but the consecutive sounds of the Cauldrons and Bells Ringing Together, followed by the bells and cauldrons exploding, felt like Mu Jinyu had given him a hard slap.

It clearly told him that from beginning to end, they were not even on the same level.

Chen Qiuqiao felt extremely stifled.

Mu Jinyu was unaware of the frustration and despair these two were feeling; he was talking to Yun Ge.

"Junior Brother Mu, your performance just now was really impressive."

Yun Ge sat beside Mu Jinyu, looking at him with admiration.

Mu Jinyu smiled wryly, "What's so impressive? I felt so embarrassed, had I known it would turn out like this, I would have just casually thrown a punch like you guys did."

"Hmm? Junior Brother Mu, do you really think we were just casually throwing punches?" Yun Ge's eyes widened slightly with surprise at Mu Jinyu's words.

"Could it be..." Mu Jinyu's heart skipped a beat and he looked at Yun Ge.

Yun Ge sighed and shook his head, "Of course, we also gave it our all, it's just we've gone through these assessments many times and understand the techniques so even when we give it our all, it appears effortless."

Saying this, he smiled wryly and added, "Otherwise, do you think I would have almost achieved the Cauldrons and Bells Ringing Together and purposely hide my strength?"

"I really couldn't do it, it's a pity those Bell and Cauldron Treasures were destroyed by you, now this will be a lifelong regret for me."

Yun Ge sighed again, with a sense of loss.

Mu Jinyu's lips moved a few times and he said, "I'm sorry..."

"Haha, did you take it seriously? Don't apologize, I was just teasing you, there's no such regret." Yun Ge's expression instantly shifted from disappointment to a cheerful smile.

Seeing this, Mu Jinyu couldn't tell if his expression was genuine but he was relieved.

Then, he had a thought and turned to look at Wei Ziping, who still had an ashen face, and said, "Brother Yun, you said you gave it your all, so Wei Ziping must have done the same, right? But he..."

"His result was even better than mine, right?" Yun Ge said calmly.

Shaking his head slightly, Yun Ge added, "I'm not sure if his strength surpasses mine, but it doesn't matter, the better he performs, the more advantageous it is for our Heavenly Sword Faction in the upcoming Four Sects Martial Meeting."

Mu Jinyu observed Yun Ge's expression and saw that he was sincere without much disappointment, clearly he meant what he said.

At once, Mu Jinyu had mixed feelings.

"Alright, everyone, we've rested enough and shouldn't waste time. Next, we'll proceed with the speed test, follow me."

At this moment, the Examiner Elder stood up and loudly addressed everyone.

After speaking, he glanced at Mu Jinyu, then soared into the air, heading for a nearby peak of Tianlan Peak!

"Junior Brother Mu, and the rest, let's go."

Seeing this, Yun Ge stopped talking, got up, and smiled at Mu Jinyu and the others.

"Alright."

Everyone responded and followed Yun Ge, trailing behind the Examiner Elder.

Soon, they arrived at a desolate mountainside.

As soon as Mu Jinyu landed, he felt a pressing weight that almost knocked him off his feet.

Ahead, dozens of the Inner Sect Disciples stumbled and fell to the ground.

No one laughed at them, as those who remained standing were also struggling against the strange gravity!

Mu Jinyu then recalled that this peak was known as Zhongfeng, where the gravity was much greater than elsewhere.

So, some disciples frequently came here to cultivate their movement techniques and temper their True Yuan.

'It seems this test is held right here.'

Mu Jinyu thought to himself.

He now understood why the Examiner Elder allowed them to rest before coming here.

Considering they just completed the strength assessment, and with the mishap at the end, many had depleted their True Yuan. Coming here so soon would have exhausted a lot of people on the spot.

The Examiner Elder stood on a large rock, seemingly unaffected by the heavy gravity, and said, "The speed assessment is the same as previous years; you must reach the peak from the mountainside. The passing mark is within the time of three joss sticks. Let's begin!"

After saying this, he soared towards the peak of Zhongfeng!

"Charge!!"

As soon as the Examiner Elder disappeared from their sight, the participating Inner Sect Disciples shouted and each began displaying their movement techniques, sprinting towards the peak!

"Junior Brother Mu, let's hurry up!"

Yun Ge reminded Mu Jinyu.

Mu Jinyu planned to wait for the others to go up first, but hearing Yun Ge's reminder, he suddenly understood the faster one reaches the peak, the better the assessment score and rewards.

So, he decided not to hold back and nodded, "Alright."

With that, he hesitated and looked at Wen Rou and Jian Ruyan.

Jian Ruyan said, "Don't worry about us, we won't be able to get a good ranking anyway, you go ahead."

"Alright."

Mu Jinyu gave them a deep look and decided not to bring them along, then immediately used the 'Ten Steps Move', leaving behind hundreds of afterimages, and in an instant, he caught up with Wei Ziping, who was currently in the lead!

Wei Ziping was feeling proud, thinking he would get first place in the speed assessment this time, when suddenly a white flash passed before his eyes.

"Hmm? What was that?!"

Wei Ziping was stunned, doubting his own eyes.

At this moment, Mu Jinyu's afterimages caught up, and several indistinct figures flashed before Wei Ziping's eyes.

"Damn! It's you again!!"

Wei Ziping instantly recognized the afterimages left by Mu Jinyu and was filled with rage!

"Whoosh!"

At this moment, another white flash passed before Wei Ziping's eyes.

This time, Wei Ziping didn't feel he was seeing things and immediately recognized the person.

He saw at a glance that it was Yun Ge who had just surpassed him!