

# **A Man Like None Other Novel Chapter 5871**

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## **Chapter 5871**

“It seems the Evil Path Hall’s influence in the Eleventh Heaven is indeed formidable.”

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord frowned as he flipped through the secret manual. “This manual alone records five strongholds near the Flame Domain, the largest being in Crimson Flame City, reportedly overseen by an elder of the Eighth Rank Celestial Immortal Realm.”

David nodded. “Crimson Flame City is the largest city in the Flame Domain, and the Earth Fire Pavilion is also there. The Evil Path Hall has considerable power there; we must be even more cautious once we arrive.”

“There are still over two months until the Earth Fire Trial; that’s enough time,”

the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord calculated. “While clearing out strongholds along the way has delayed us somewhat, it has weakened the Evil Path Hall’s power, making it difficult for them to organize an effective encirclement in the short term.”

“Not bad.”

A cold glint flashed in David’s eyes. “Moreover, I suspect the higher-ups of the Evil Path Hall already know about the failure of Black Wind Valley. They are likely to have laid a trap for us in Crimson Flame City. The commotion we’ve caused along the way might disrupt their plans.”

The two continued south, clearing out two smaller Evil Path Hall outposts along the way.

As they approached the Flame Domain, the environment changed significantly.

The temperature gradually rose, and the fire-attribute spiritual energy in the air became increasingly concentrated.

The landscape below transformed from a barren desert into crimson hills and canyons, with occasional steaming hot springs and sporadic volcanic eruptions.

The vegetation also became sparse, consisting mostly of peculiar drought- and heat-resistant plants.

“We’re almost at the Flame Domain.”

David felt the scorching heat in the air. "The environment here is favorable for fire-type cultivators, but oppressive for others. The Evil Path Hall mainly cultivates sinister techniques, so their strength will likely be affected here."

"It's not all good for us either,"

the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord frowned. "I'm a demon cultivator, and the fire spiritual energy here is too intense; staying here for a long time will make me uncomfortable. Your Chaos Immortal Power is more inclusive, so it shouldn't be a big problem. The Little Fire Qilin, on the other hand, is thriving."

Indeed, since entering the edge of the Flame Domain, the Little Fire Qilin had been unusually excited, frequently emerging from its storage ring to greedily absorb the fire spiritual energy in the air, its golden flames brightening.

After flying for several more days, a magnificent crimson city appeared on the horizon ahead.

The city walls were hundreds of feet high, entirely constructed of crimson flame stone, reflecting a scorching luster under the sunlight.

Above the city walls, a faint red light shield enveloped the city—its protective array.

The buildings within the city were densely packed, the tallest pavilions reaching hundreds of feet high, piercing the clouds.

From afar, one could sense countless powerful auras emanating from the city, several of which were subtle and profound, clearly belonging to True Immortal Realm experts.

Crimson Flame City, the number one city in the Flame Domain, had arrived.

David and the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord landed several miles outside the city, concealing their auras, and followed the flow of people towards the city gate.

Crimson Flame City was more than a hundred times larger than Sandstone City. The city gate was teeming with people, and those entering and leaving were generally of higher cultivation levels. Sixth and seventh-grade Heavenly Immortal Realm cultivators were commonplace, and occasionally, even ninth-grade Heavenly Immortal Realm experts could be seen flying directly into the city—clearly, Crimson Flame City's no-fly zone

rule was ineffective against ninth-grade Heavenly Immortal Realm cultivators. The entrance fee to the city

was astonishingly high: 10,000 high-grade spirit stones per person.

David paid 20,000 spirit stones and entered this giant city of the Flame Domain with the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord.

The city streets were wide, paved with polished crimson flame stone slabs, and lined with shops on both sides.

Most of the shops sold fire-type materials, pills, and magic weapons. The air was filled with the smell of sulfur and magma, and the temperature was several degrees higher than outside the city. Ordinary True Immortal Realm cultivators would probably need to circulate their immortal power to resist the high temperature.

“Let’s find a place to stay first, and then go to the Earth Fire Pavilion,” David said.

The two found a medium-sized inn in the city to stay in.

The inn was called Flame Heart Residence. The location was not central, but the environment was acceptable. Most importantly, the owner seemed honest and upright, unlike the informants of the Evil Path Hall.

After settling in, David asked the innkeeper for directions to the Earth Fire Pavilion.

“The Earthfire Pavilion?”

The shopkeeper, a clever young man, was only at the fifth rank of the Celestial Immortal Realm, but he was very familiar with Crimson Flame City. “You two seniors are here to participate in the Earthfire Trial, right? The Earthfire Pavilion is in the city center; it’s the largest crimson tower. However, not just anyone can enter the Earthfire Pavilion. You either need an introducer or be an invited participant.”

“An introducer?”

David frowned. “We’ve come from afar and don’t have an introducer. How can we obtain the qualification to participate in the trial?”

“This...”

The shopkeeper scratched his head. “The qualification selection for the Earthfire Trial ended three months ago. If you want to participate now, you either need special permission from an elder within the Earthfire Pavilion, or... before the trial begins, complete certain special tasks issued by the Earthfire Pavilion to obtain contribution points to exchange for qualification.”

Special tasks?

David’s heart skipped a beat: “Where does the Earthfire Pavilion post missions?”

“In the Mission Hall in the south of the city. All the major forces post missions there, and the Earthfire Pavilion is no exception. However...”

the shopkeeper lowered his voice, “The missions posted by the Earthfire Pavilion are usually very dangerous. They’re either about collecting rare materials in the treacherous depths of the Flame Domain, or hunting powerful fire-type beasts. Many cultivators who want to take shortcuts have accepted these missions, but none of them have returned.”

“Understood, thank you.” David handed the shopkeeper a few spirit stones as a reward.

The shopkeeper happily accepted them and added, “If you two seniors wish to go to the Mission Hall, I can lead the way.”

“Also, a word of caution: Crimson Flame City is currently in turmoil. I heard that a cultivator named David has offended the Evil Path Hall, and they are currently searching the entire city for him, offering a bounty of a million high-grade spirit stones.”

“If you two seniors encounter anyone suspicious, it’s best to stay far away.”

David and Crimson Cloud Demon Lord exchanged a glance, both seeing the gravity in each other’s eyes.

The Evil Path Hall was indeed swift; the bounty had already reached Crimson Flame City.

Moreover, judging from the waiter’s tone, the bounty had caused quite a stir in the city, and many people were probably already secretly searching for David’s whereabouts.

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“We understand, thank you for the reminder.” David remained calm.

After the waiter left, the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord set up a soundproof barrier and said in a deep voice, “David, the Evil Path Hall’s influence in Crimson Flame City is probably not small. We need to be careful.”

“Hmm.”

David nodded, “Let’s go to the Mission Hall first and see if there’s a way to quickly obtain the Earth Fire Trial qualification.”

“Also, we need to go to the Earth Fire Pavilion. Even if we can’t get in, at least we can find out its location and the guards.”

After a short rest, the two left the inn and headed to the Mission Hall in the south of the city.

The Mission Hall was a very large circular building, bustling with activity inside. Hundreds of huge jade walls floated in mid-air, displaying various mission information.

The area was bustling with cultivators accepting, submitting, and issuing tasks.

David quickly found the area where the Earth Fire Pavilion issued tasks. The jade tablets there were crimson red, and while the number of tasks was limited, the rewards for each one were extremely generous.

Each task was marked “Extremely Dangerous.”

“These tasks simply cannot be completed in a short time,”

the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord shook his head after reading them. “And the risks are too great.”

David also frowned.

The qualification for the Earth Fire Trial required 10,000 contribution points, and based on the difficulty and rewards of these tasks, at least two or three extremely dangerous tasks would need to be completed.

There simply wasn’t enough time.

“It seems that the conventional approach won’t work,”

David muttered. “I need to think of another way.”

Just then, the whispers of several cultivators nearby reached his ears:

“Have you heard? Elder Yan Xin of the Earth Fire Pavilion is leading a team to the Crimson Flame Canyon to collect Flame Spirit Grass and is recruiting temporary guards.” “

Flame Spirit Grass? That’s the main ingredient for refining Flame Heart Pills. It only grows deep within the Crimson Flame Canyon, guarded by Flame Dragons. Elder Yan Xin is personally leading the expedition this time, so the demand must be considerable.”

“What’s the reward like?”

“It’s said to be quite good. Guards who complete the mission will not only receive a generous amount of spirit stones, but will also get a discount on future purchases of Earth Fire Pavilion’s pills and magical artifacts. If they perform exceptionally well, they might even catch Elder Yan Xin’s eye and be recruited into the Earth Fire Pavilion.”

“Then what are we waiting for? Let’s hurry and sign up! Elder Yan Xin is one of the three great alchemists of the Earth Fire Pavilion. Following him is a rare opportunity!”

Several cultivators hurried towards the recruitment area on the other side of the main hall.

David’s eyes lit up.

Elder Yan Xin?

The alchemist of the Earth Fire Pavilion?

Leading a team to collect Flame Spirit Grass?

This might be an opportunity.

If they could infiltrate this team and perform exceptionally well in the mission, they might directly gain Elder Yanxin’s favor, thus qualifying for the Earth Fire Trial, or even directly obtaining clues about the Earth Core Jade Marrow Milk!

“Let’s go take a look,”

David said to the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord.

The two arrived at the recruitment area, where dozens of cultivators had already gathered, all at least the fifth rank of the Heavenly Immortal Realm.

On a makeshift wooden platform ahead stood a steward from the Earth Fire Pavilion, explaining the recruitment requirements.

“...This escort mission will last seven days, with the destination being the Crimson Flame Canyon. The main responsibilities are guarding and assisting with resource gathering. A cultivation level of at least the fifth rank of the Heavenly Immortal Realm is required.”

“The reward is five thousand high-grade spirit stones per person, with additional rewards for successful mission completion. Applicants must pass a simple test; places are limited, only the first ten will be accepted.”

The conditions weren’t harsh, and the reward was reasonable.

More importantly, this was an excellent opportunity to get close to the higher-ups of the Earthfire Pavilion.

David and the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord exchanged a glance and both decided to sign up.

The test was simple, nothing more than demonstrating cultivation and attack/defense capabilities.

However, when he walked to the testing area to sign up, a young steward of the Earthfire Pavilion in charge of registration glanced at him and immediately frowned.

“Fellow Daoist, are you sure you want to sign up?”

The young steward’s tone was clearly suspicious. “The guard mission requires a minimum cultivation level of the fifth rank of the Heavenly Immortal Realm, and you... seem to be less than qualified.”

David was only at the first rank of the Heavenly Immortal Realm, which did not meet the requirements at all.

His words immediately attracted the attention of the other applicants around him.

Dozens of gazes focused on David. When they sensed his aura as a first-grade Heavenly Immortal, many wore undisguised contempt and mockery.

“A first-grade Heavenly Immortal trying to join the fun? Isn’t that just courting death?”

“What kind of place is Crimson Flame Canyon? The dwelling place of the Flame Dragon! Even a sixth-grade Heavenly Immortal wouldn’t dare claim they could escape unscathed. What’s a first-grade cultivator doing there? Becoming the Flame Dragon’s snack?”

“Probably some greenhorn from some small-town place, thinking the Earth Fire Pavilion’s guard duties are an easy job.”

“Tch, ignorant of his own limitations.”

Whispers rose and fell, their tone filled with sarcasm. In the eyes of these cultivators, at least fifth-grade Heavenly Immortals, a first-grade Heavenly Immortal was no different from an ant.

Crimson Cloud Demon Lord stood behind David, his expression slightly grim, but David gestured for him to remain calm.

David remained calm and said to the young deacon, "Although my cultivation level is not high, I believe I have some protective techniques that might come in handy. Since you're here, may I try them out?"

The young deacon hesitated for a moment, about to speak, when a gruff voice interrupted: "

Try them out? Kid, what do you think this place is? Playing house?"

The speaker was a burly man, nine feet tall with a face full of scars, carrying two axes the size of cartwheels on his back, his aura at the peak of the sixth rank of the Celestial Immortal Realm.

He walked up to David, looking down at him with a sneer, "The guard mission is for risking your life, not for newbies like you to learn something. If you know what's good for you, get lost and don't delay our legitimate cultivators' registration." A

burst of laughter erupted around them.

David looked up at the burly man, his tone still calm: "Fellow Daoist, the test hasn't even started yet, how can you be so sure I'm not good enough?"

"Ha! You need to be sure?"

The burly man seemed to have heard a joke. "With your cultivation level, I could crush ten of you with a single finger! Kid, stop embarrassing yourself here, hurry up..."

His words trailed off.

Because David suddenly moved.

Not an attack, not a defense.

He simply took a step forward.

But in that instant, a trace of David's aura leaked out.

Not a fifth-grade Celestial Immortal, nor a sixth-grade.

But an indescribable, seemingly all-encompassing yet transcendent aura!

Although it was only a fleeting moment, the burly man closest to David felt as if he had instantly been plunged into endless chaos, with all the laws around him trembling and submitting!



The raging spiritual power within him suddenly became stagnant and dormant, as if he had encountered a natural enemy!

The burly man's expression changed drastically, and he staggered back three steps, cold sweat instantly beading on his forehead. His eyes were filled with astonishment and uncertainty as he looked at David

. The laughter around him also abruptly ceased.

Those cultivators who had been mocking David now felt a strange sense of unease.

Although they didn't know exactly what had happened, the burly man's reaction and that fleeting, strange aura were enough to explain things.

This young cultivator who seemed to be only at the first level of the Heavenly Immortal Realm... was probably not simple!

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The young deacon also noticed the abnormality. He re-examined David, his attitude becoming much more cautious: "Fellow Daoist, since you insist, then participate in the test. The test consists of three parts: cultivation level test, attack test, and defense test. Please follow me."

David nodded and followed the deacon to the testing area.

The first part was the cultivation level test.

On the testing platform was a spirit-testing crystal. The cultivator placed their hand on it and injected immortal power. The crystal would display the approximate cultivation level based on the quality and quantity of the immortal power.

Some cultivators would deliberately hide their realm or use drugs to enhance their realm aura.

If one relied solely on aura to discern the other's realm, there would be errors.

This would be considered cheating, but there was no way to cheat in front of this spirit-testing crystal.

The spirit-testing crystals of the cultivators tested earlier mostly glowed with red, orange, and yellow light, corresponding to the fifth, sixth, and seventh ranks of the Celestial Immortal Realm, respectively.

When it was David's turn, he placed his hand on the crystal and slowly channeled his Chaotic Immortal Power into it.

The crystal first lit up with a faint white light, representing the weakest level of the Celestial Immortal Realm, the first rank.

Seeing this light, the young deacon's eyes filled with disdain.

The others also began to point and whisper.

The burly man who had been frightened by David also revealed a fierce glint in his eyes upon seeing this.

This spirit-testing crystal couldn't be faked; it seemed David's realm was indeed the first rank of the Celestial Immortal Realm.

In that case, he wouldn't need to be afraid of him anymore.

That terrifying aura just now was probably created using some kind of magical artifact.

Thinking of this, the burly man wanted to step forward and teach David a lesson to vent his anger.

But just as the burly man was about to step forward, the spirit-testing crystal suddenly changed.

The white light began to shift, turning gray. Then, within the gray, halos of seven colors—red, orange, yellow, green, cyan, blue, and purple—emerged. These seven colors swirled and eventually intertwined into a chaotic, indistinct gray hue!

"What...what's going on?"

The young deacon

was stunned.

He had presided over tests for many years and had never seen the spirit-testing crystal react this way.

The surrounding crowd whispered amongst themselves, bewildered.

The burly man's eyes widened in shock, and he stopped in his tracks.

David understood.

The chaotic immortal power encompassed all things, not to mention the baleful aura, the power of the divine dragon, the power of the three races, and the power of various supreme fires within David's body. This mixture of powers prevented the spirit-testing crystal from accurately determining his cultivation level, hence the abnormal reaction.

"Perhaps there's something wrong with the crystal,"

David said calmly. "Why not proceed to the next test?"

The young deacon hesitated, glancing at an elderly man not far away who had closed his eyes to meditate. This was an elder sent by the Earth Fire Pavilion to supervise the recruitment.

The old man opened his eyes, gave David a deep look, and slowly nodded: "Continue."

The second test: attack test.

Three specially made trial pillars stood in the testing area, corresponding to the defensive strength of the fifth, sixth, and seventh ranks of the Heavenly Immortal Realm.

Cultivators must launch their attacks from ten zhang away, judging their attack power by the extent of damage to the testing pillar.

Most cultivators who passed previously could only leave deep marks on the fifth-grade testing pillar, while a few sixth-grade cultivators could leave shallow marks.

As for the seventh-grade testing pillar, no one has been able to budge it.

David walked to the testing position, not taking out his Dragon-Slaying Sword, but instead forming a sword shape with his fingers, and pointed at the sixth-grade testing pillar in the middle from a distance.

A hazy gray sword aura shot out from his fingertip, silent and not particularly fast.

"That's it?"

someone muttered softly, "Weak and powerless, not even a hint of power..."

Before the words were even finished, the gray sword energy had already lightly landed on the sixth-grade trial pillar.

There was no earth-shattering explosion, no ear-piercing metallic clang.

There was only a soft “swoosh,” like a red-hot iron rod being inserted into snow.

Under everyone’s dumbfounded gaze, the trial pillar, which was strong enough to withstand a full-force attack from a sixth-grade Celestial Immortal, was easily pierced by the gray sword energy!

Leaving a hole the size of a thumb, with smooth, mirror-like edges, completely transparent!

Even more bizarrely, the material around the hole was not violently destroyed, but rather seemed to have been... directly erased from the world by some force!

The entire place was deathly silent.

You could hear a pin drop.

A few breaths later, gasps of astonishment rose and fell.

“This...how is this possible?!”

“The sixth-grade trial pillar...was pierced through?!”

“What kind of supernatural power did he use? I didn’t even see it!”

“That sword energy is strange! It’s definitely not ordinary sword energy!”

The burly man who had mocked David the most earlier was now deathly pale, filled with lingering fear.

He secretly rejoiced that he hadn’t actually attacked earlier, otherwise he would probably be the one with a hole in his body now.

The young deacon opened his mouth, but couldn’t utter a word for a long time.

In all his years of presiding over tests, he had seen the strongest Celestial Immortal cultivators, who had only left a half-inch deep slash mark on the sixth-grade trial pillar. To

pierce through it like this...was unheard of!

The supervising elder opened his eyes again, his eyes flashing with a sharp light, staring intently at David, as if trying to see through him.

David, however, acted as if he had done something insignificant, turning to the third test. The third item on the test site

is the defense test.

In the testing area, there are three puppets, each capable of launching attacks equivalent to a fifth, sixth, or seventh-grade Celestial Immortal.

Cultivators must stand in designated positions, neither dodging nor evading, and withstand three attacks from the puppets. Their defensive strength is judged based on the degree of injury.

David walked to the testing position.

“Please select the puppet level,”

the young steward’s voice already carried respect.

“Seventh grade,” David said calmly.

“Seventh grade?” Another gasp rippled through the crowd.

The attack of a seventh-grade puppet was the real power of a seventh-grade Celestial Immortal!

Even a seventh-grade Celestial Immortal cultivator wouldn’t dare claim they could withstand three hits unscathed!

This young man with only a first-grade aura was actually challenging a seventh-grade puppet?

“Fellow Daoist, the power of a seventh-grade puppet is immense, perhaps...” the young steward kindly reminded him.

“It’s alright, let’s begin,” David interrupted him.

The young steward looked at the supervising elder, who nodded slightly.

“Activate the seventh-grade puppet, first strike!” the young deacon announced loudly.

A three-zhang-tall, crimson metal puppet’s eyes glowed red, its right arm rose, and a blinding crimson light condensed on its fist, emanating a scorching and violent aura.

“Boom!”

The puppet unleashed a punch, the crimson fist shadow tearing through the air, carrying a scorching shockwave, heading straight for David’s face!

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David neither dodged nor evaded, nor even condensed any protective immortal light; he simply stood there calmly.

“Is he crazy?!” someone exclaimed in shock.

Just as the fist shadow was about to strike David—

David raised his right hand, his five fingers spread, and gently clenched it against the astonishingly powerful crimson fist shadow.

“Pfft.” It

was like crushing a bubble.

The fist shadow, powerful enough to severely injure a sixth-grade Heavenly Immortal cultivator, suddenly dissipated and vanished three feet from David’s palm, transforming into the most primordial fire-type spiritual energy and dissipating into the air.

David’s hand didn’t even tremble slightly.

“This...” The young deacon’s eyes nearly popped out of their sockets.

The onlookers were completely petrified.

He withstood a blow from a seventh-grade puppet, not only unscathed but also crushing it so effortlessly?

What kind of monster is this?!

“The second strike!”

The young deacon’s voice trembled slightly.

The puppet’s eyes glowed even brighter red, its arms rising simultaneously, its fists clashing together, condensing into a violently spinning crimson fireball about a foot in diameter!

Arcs crackled across the fireball’s surface, radiating destructive energy, at least 30% stronger than the first strike!

“Go!”

The puppet thrust its arms forward, the fireball roaring out, scorching the air and creating distorted trails in its wake!

David still didn’t dodge.

This time, he didn’t even raise a hand.

With a thought, golden light instantly enveloped his entire body, activating his Indestructible Golden Body.

“Boom!”

The crimson fireball slammed into the golden light membrane, erupting with blinding light and a deafening roar!

The dust settled.

David stood motionless,

the golden light membrane around his body rippled slightly, completely undamaged.

Even the ground beneath his feet showed no cracks—all the impact had been completely absorbed and neutralized by that thin membrane!

“Impossible...” someone

murmured, as if their faith had crumbled.

“The third strike!”

the young deacon practically roared, utterly stunned by the scene before him, losing all ability to think.

The puppet’s eyes blazed with intense red light, its entire body trembling violently. A complex array pattern lit up on its chest, frantically drawing in the surrounding fire-elemental spiritual energy!

“Buzz—!”

A giant sword, entirely formed from crimson flames, slowly materialized above the puppet’s head!

Three zhang long, its blade wreathed in crimson dragon shadows, radiating terrifying heat and sharp sword energy that sent shivers down one’s spine!

This was the seventh-grade puppet's ultimate killing move—the Flaming Dragon Slash!

Its power was comparable to the full-force strike of a peak seventh-grade Celestial Immortal!

“Slash!”

The puppet cleaved downwards with both arms, the flaming giant sword carrying the power to cut through everything, slashing down at David!

This strike made many cultivators at the fifth or sixth rank of the Celestial Immortal Realm around feel breathless, instinctively retreating.

David finally moved.

He raised his left hand, his index and middle fingers together, and gently pinched the descending flaming giant sword.

Yes, just a pinch.

Using two fingers to pinch the three-zhang-long flaming giant sword.

To everyone, this was practically suicidal.

However—

“Clang!”

A crisp metallic clang rang out.

David's two fingers firmly gripped the tip of the flaming giant sword! The  
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giant sword's downward momentum came to an abrupt halt, the crimson dragon shadow wrapped around its blade letting out an unwilling roar, yet unable to advance even an inch further!

David slightly tightened his fingers.

“Crack...”

Fine cracks appeared on the flaming giant sword, starting from its tip.

The cracks spread rapidly, covering the entire giant sword in the blink of an eye!

“Shatter.”



David uttered a single word.

“Bang—!”

The three-zhang-long flaming giant sword shattered with a deafening roar, turning into a rain of fire that fell in a flurry, but as it approached David’s body, it was all repelled and annihilated by the golden light membrane covering his body.

Within the testing area, only a puppet, its energy depleted and dimming, remained, along with the azure figure standing with hands behind his back, robes fluttering.

Deathly silence.

A silence that lasted for more than ten breaths.

Then, a deafening roar of exclamations and discussions erupted!

“My god! What did I just see?!” “

He caught a seventh-grade puppet’s Flaming Dragon Slash with his bare hands?! And crushed it?!”

“He...he’s really a first-grade Celestial Immortal? You’re kidding me!”

“This strength...at least an eighth-grade Celestial Immortal...no, a ninth-grade! He might even have touched the threshold of an Upper Immortal!”

“The Earth Fire Pavilion has struck gold this time!”

The cultivators who had previously mocked David were now flushed with embarrassment, wishing they could disappear into the ground.

Especially the burly man, who had quietly retreated to the back of the crowd, afraid of being noticed by David.

The young deacon took several deep breaths to barely calm his agitated emotions.

He walked to the supervising elder and bowed, saying, “Elder, you see...” The supervising elder

slowly rose, walked to David, and carefully examined him, his eyes full of admiration and inquiry: “Young friend, you are skilled. May I ask your master? What is your honorable name?”

David clasped his hands: “This junior is David, a rogue cultivator with no fixed master.”

“Rogue cultivator?”

A hint of surprise flashed in the elder’s eyes, but he did not delve into it. “Young friend Chen’s strength is outstanding, fully meeting the requirements for a guard. No, far exceeding the requirements. With you joining this mission, the safety will be greatly increased.”

“I am an outer elder of the Earth Fire Pavilion, surnamed Zhao. If you are interested, after the mission, I can recommend you to join the Earth Fire Pavilion and become an inner disciple directly.”

Become an inner disciple directly!

A chorus of envious gasps arose from the surrounding area.

As one of the overlords of the Flame Domain, the Earth Fire Pavilion’s inner disciples enjoy extremely high treatment and status; ordinary cultivators would fight tooth and nail to get in.

David simply said calmly, “Thank you for your kindness, Elder Zhao. I am here only for the mission rewards and training. We can discuss joining the sect later.”

Elder Zhao didn’t press the matter, smiling, “Very well, everyone has their own ambitions. Since you have passed the test, you will be a guard for our Earth Fire Pavilion on this mission. And this is...”

He looked at the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord.

“This is my companion, Fellow Daoist Crimson Cloud,” David introduced.

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord stepped forward, releasing the aura of a sixth-grade Celestial Immortal.

Although far less impressive than David’s, it was still respectable.

“Fellow Daoist Crimson Cloud has also passed

,” Elder Zhao nodded. “Please register here and receive your guard tokens. Meet outside the South Gate tomorrow at Chenshi (7-9 AM). Don’t be late.”

“Yes.”

David and the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord registered, received two crimson guard tokens, and then left the mission hall.

Behind them, countless gazes followed them for a long time, and discussions continued unabated.

“David... that name is about to spread throughout Crimson Flame City.”

“Such strength, yet such a low profile; this person is definitely not simple.”

“The Evil Path Hall is currently searching for someone named David... could it be him?”

“Shh! Be careful what you say! You can’t just say things like that!”

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Stepping out of the mission hall, the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord whispered, “David, the strength you just displayed will likely attract more attention. The Evil Path Hall...”

“It’s alright,”

David replied calmly. “They’ll come knocking sooner or later anyway. Showing some of my strength will actually deter some troublemakers and save us a lot of trouble.”

“Besides, the Earth Fire Pavilion is now interested in me; this relationship might provide us with some protection.”

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord thought it made sense and said no more.

The two returned to the inn to prepare for tomorrow’s mission.

Unbeknownst to them, shortly after they left, everything that had happened in the mission hall had quickly spread to the ears of all the major powers in Crimson Flame City through various channels.

A mysterious, powerful, and seemingly concealing young cultivator, David, had become the focus of many people’s attention.

Of course, this also included the Evil Path Hall, entrenched deep within the Ghost Market.

“The Flame Dragon Slash, capable of crushing a seventh-grade puppet with bare hands?”

Elder Blood Soul listened to his subordinate's report, a dangerous glint in his crimson eyes. "It seems the Black Wind Valley's defeat was no accident. This boy does indeed possess some skill."

"Elder, should we act now?" a subordinate asked.

"No rush."

Elder Blood Soul shook his head. "He's currently a guard for the Earth Fire Pavilion's mission; openly attacking would offend them."

"Wait until they leave the city and reach Crimson Flame Canyon... the environment there is complex, a perfect place to strike. Notify Bone Demon to lead his men ahead and set up the 'Ten Thousand Ghosts Devouring Soul Array' around the perimeter of Crimson Flame Canyon."

"This time, I, the elder, will personally take action; we absolutely cannot let him escape again!"

"Yes!"

A murderous intent quietly gathered in the shadows.

Meanwhile, David was in his inn room, meditating and preparing for the upcoming trip to Crimson Flame Canyon.

The next day at dawn, outside the south gate of Crimson Flame City.

David and Crimson Cloud Demon Lord arrived at the meeting point on time.

More than twenty people had already gathered here, including ten recruited guards and more than ten disciples and stewards from the Earthfire Pavilion.

In front of them were three magnificent carriages pulled by four Crimson Flame Beasts.

Crimson Flame Beasts were third-tier spirit beasts resembling fine horses but entirely crimson with flames burning on their hooves. They possessed exceptional endurance, making them suitable for long journeys in the Flame Domain.

At 7:15 AM, an elderly man with white hair and a youthful face, dressed in a crimson robe, emerged from the city gate surrounded by disciples.

The old man had a kind face, but a sharp glint flashed in his eyes, and his aura was as deep as the sea—clearly, he possessed the cultivation of a peak eighth-grade Celestial Immortal!

He held a crimson jade cane, the tip of which was inlaid with a fist-sized fiery red gem, radiating a heat-like yet gentle aura.

“Greetings, Elder Yanxin!” The members of the Earthfire Pavilion bowed in unison. The recruited guards also quickly bowed.

This was Elder Yanxin, one of the three great alchemists of the Earthfire Pavilion.

“No need for formalities, everyone,”

Elder Yanxin said gently. “We are going to the Crimson Flame Canyon to collect Flame Spirit Grass. We will rely on your protection.”

“Before we set off, I have a few words to say: Deep within the Crimson Flame Canyon dwells a Flame Dragon, which is violent and has a strength comparable to a ninth-grade Celestial Immortal.”

“Our goal is to quickly collect enough Flame Spirit Grass and retreat before the Flame Dragon notices us. Therefore, speed and safety are our priorities, and we will try to avoid direct confrontation with the Flame Dragon. Do you all understand?”

“Understood!” everyone responded.

“Alright, let’s go.”

Elder Yanxin boarded the middle carriage.

The convoy traveled smoothly on the wide official road outside Crimson Flame City. The Crimson Flame Beasts, with their hooves treading on fire, pulled the carriages at a considerable speed.

Guards followed on horseback or flew alongside the caravan, vigilantly observing their surroundings.

David and the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord chose to fly, as this offered a wider field of vision and allowed them to respond to any unexpected situations.

As David flew, he silently sensed the unique fire-attribute spiritual energy of the Flame Domain, his chaotic immortal power quietly circulating within him, adapting to and absorbing this intense yet pure energy.

After traveling for about half an hour, the caravan entered a reddish-brown hilly area.

The temperature here was noticeably higher, and a faint smell of sulfur permeated the air.

Just then, the carved wooden window on one side of the lead carriage, which had been closed, creaked open gently.

A stunningly beautiful face emerged from behind the window.

It was a girl who looked to be about seventeen or eighteen years old, with skin as white as snow, exquisite features, and a pair of bright, fiery eyes like burning flames.

She wore an exquisitely styled updo adorned with a crimson jade hairpin, and a fiery red flowing dress embroidered with lifelike golden crow patterns on the hem.

Though young, her beauty was already captivating, especially the innate nobility and liveliness in her eyes, unforgettable at first glance.

The girl's gaze curiously swept through the caravan, finally settling on David, who was flying through the air.

Their eyes met.

David also saw her.

Her fiery eyes were filled with undisguised curiosity and inquiry, as if she had discovered some interesting new toy.

David paused slightly, then politely nodded before looking away.

However, this single glance attracted the attention of many around them.