

Old Gods 321

Chapter 321: Ran Sect Blade Technique the third form!

"Hiss!"

"Roar..." A throng of puppet shadows saw their master under attack and immediately rushed forward to kill.

But unexpectedly, a black flag suddenly rose, and the rapidly spreading black canopy enveloped several puppet shadows within.

"Hmm!" The Ghost General stood proudly, holding the Green Dragon Yanyue Blade, gesturing at a few puppet shadows.

Although he didn't speak, his meaning was quite clear:

Did I let you go?

Such a scene deeply touched Lu Ran.

In the face of turbulent times, true heroism shines!

Before, Lu Ran felt a bit sorry for the Ghost General, squatting by the lake, looking as aggrieved as a big fat man of two or three hundred pounds.

Now, look again!

Night Charm had the intention to kill enemies and also to assassinate its master, and was in a state of chaos, totally unreliable.

Only the Ghost General, faithful and resolute, stood with his blade... uh, temporarily without a horse.

No matter, I'll match you with a horse in the future!

"Bang!"

"Bang! Bang..." Under their master's command, three puppet shadows ignored the Ghost General and crazily bombarded the black canopy.

However, the black canopy was exceptionally sturdy, offering no way out.

It's worth mentioning that the puppet shadows replicated from the mirror could only have a strength level identical to their original form at most.

And puppet shadows couldn't use skills!

They only had their original's physical capabilities and inherited their fighting habits to a certain extent.

Under such circumstances, the Ghost General could indeed fight against many!

However...

Today's Ghost General must have encountered some bad luck.

Before, Night Charm didn't give the Ghost General any chance to show off, and now, the Evil Mirror Demon wouldn't let the Ghost General unleash his power either.

"Ahh!!"

The Evil Mirror Demon swiftly floated backward, brushed her delicate hand in front of her, and summoned four copper mirrors.

With that, the copper mirrors and puppet shadows inside the black canopy all disappeared.

Ghost General: ???

The Ghost General was charging forward, ready to go through fire and water for his master.

And then, the enemies were gone?

Fresh copper mirrors appeared in the midst of the Evil Mirror Demon's battle group, and out of the mirrors darted multiple Lu Rans.

"Running?"

Ran's face darkened, his figure flashed again.

He leaped over the "mirror wall" formed by the four mirrors and appeared behind the Evil Mirror Demon on his own.

He wielded the Dawn Blade and chopped down harshly.

"Ding!"

The Evil Mirror Demon raised her left hand, a mirror in her palm, barely blocking the fatal blow.

Lu Ran was fluid in his movements; his left hand wielding the Silent Night Blade slashed horizontally.

The Evil Mirror Demon burst out with an astonishing will to survive!

Poor in close combat, she was flustered, almost subconsciously raising her hand to block, another mirror appearing in her hand.

"Ding!"

The Silent Night Blade collided heavily with the Returning Dust Mirror, ringing out sharply.

Lu Ran was stunned!

No way!

Wasn't the lady not good at close combat?

How could she block so clearly...

The River Realm, indeed formidable, huh?!

The humans of the River Realm are called "mighty ones," and the Evil Demons of the River Realm are seen as "Demon Lords;" indeed, there is reason for such terms.

Setting aside all aspects of the Evil Mirror Demon, going back to basics, she possessed a true River Realm physique.

She had strong physical abilities and terrifying reactive capabilities!

Moreover, such subconscious defensive actions didn't need any close combat skills, purely relying on instinct was enough.

"Ahh!"

"Ah!!" From behind came a battle roar, the voice identical to Lu Ran's.

The puppet shadows were attacking!

Lu Ran furrowed his brow; each of his hands held a blade, pressing against the mirrors in the hands of the Evil Mirror Demon.

Thus, the Evil Mirror Demon was left wide open.

"Screw it!" Lu Ran thought bitterly, a mist surged under his feet, and suddenly, a pair of ram horns appeared on his head.

Divine Technique·Immortal Hoof!

Divine Technique·Immortal Horn!

Demoness, take this headbutt!

"Thud!"

The swiftly advancing Lu Ran not only dodged the puppet shadows attacking him from behind but also rammed a horn into the Evil Mirror Demon's face.

"Uh..."

The Evil Mirror Demon's nose soured, tears welling up in her eyes like little pearls spilling out.

She was knocked backward, her dark hair floating forward, her pitiable look enough to trigger anyone's protective instincts.

The puppet shadows from behind went crazy with their attacks on Lu Ran.

"Hiss—"

Mist surged under Lu Ran's feet, and he accelerated again!

Crying?

You still get headbutted~

Demoness, take my second headbutt!

"Thud!!"

Lu Ran felt dizzy in the head.

In front of the Evil Mirror Demon, another Returning Dust Mirror appeared rapidly.

The Immortal Horn struck the copper mirror heavily, and Lu Ran's forward momentum came to an abrupt halt, and he even stepped backwards a few times.

Jiang Grade Evil Technique-Returning Dust Mirror!

As the Evil Mirror Demon summoned the third Returning Dust Mirror, the puppet shadows pursuing Lu Ran were left with only one.

The River Realm Evil Mirror Demon could only summon four copper mirrors at the same time.

Since three spots were occupied by the Returning Dust Mirrors, naturally, there remained only a lone mirror for copying puppet shadows.

Coincidentally, the last mirror that copied and controlled the puppet shadows was the one charging at the forefront!

The puppet shadow's hands each held a fake Silent Night Blade and Dawn Blade.

"Whoosh~"

Hearing the sound of the air being torn behind him, Lu Ran's figure disappeared instantly.

In a flash, at his just-vanished location, the puppet shadow slashed out an "X" shape with its twin blades.

"Yah!"

The Evil Mirror Demon, with one hand on a tree, stamped her foot in anger.

She was furious, covering her nose with one hand, and pointing behind the puppet shadow with the other, as if reminding a servant.

Without a second thought, the puppet shadow turned and swung its blade.

"Crack!"

Counterfeit, after all, is counterfeit.

Lu Ran with his pair of Divine Weapons swept past, chopping off the puppet shadow's blade, and toppling the puppet shadow itself.

"Uh..." The Evil Mirror Demon mumbled, her words unclear.

At last, she realized the danger.

Or rather, it should be said, the influence of that sheep bleat uttered by Lu Ran earlier finally faded.

After the consecutive strikes, the Evil Mirror Demon was no longer blinded, wanting to escape rapidly.

In her left hand, the Returning Dust Mirror swiftly grew larger, becoming a beautifully crafted floor-length mirror.

Evil Technique-Mirror Flower Moon!

Inside the floor mirror emerged a lush forest scene.

If she left now, perhaps no one would find her again.

Just as she was lifting her skirt hem and striding out...

"Baa."

The sudden bleat made the Evil Mirror Demon tremble.

She turned her head sharply and glared at Lu Ran.

The poor little demoness, having just regained some of her wits, was once again tightly controlled by Lu Ran.

"Whoosh~ Whoosh!"

Before the Evil Mirror Demon could act, Night Charm began her onslaught!

With one bleat from Lu Ran, the confused Night Charm in the distance didn't hesitate any longer.

Unable to restrain the killing desire in her heart, she wanted to dismember her own master into a thousand pieces!

"Whoosh~"

Lu Ran was startled and flashed again.

A streak of Night Charm Blades flew past where Lu Ran had just been.

What a ruthless Night Charm!

"Uh?!" The Ghost General's face showed anger, and he wasn't putting up with it anymore!

He held the Green Dragon Yanyue Blade and chopped straight at Night Charm's head.

Night Charm's body shuddered, splitting into three.

The Ghost General placed the Yanyue Blade at his waist, turned around, switched hands, and swung a full moon.

Two Night Charms crouched, and one leaped; the great blade swept over their heads and soles of their feet.

As the two clashed, Lu Ran had already flashed in front of the floor mirror!

He stood in the path of the Evil Mirror Demon's escape, chopping fiercely with his blade.

"Ding!"

"Ding~" Yet again, the Returning Dust Mirror touched the Divine Weapon, and a crisp sound rang out.

Another Returning Dust Mirror appeared swiftly and floated in front of the Evil Mirror Demon, as if anticipating that Lu Ran would headbutt.

But this time, Lu Ran did not move.

His brow furrowed, realizing a problem.

The Evil Mirror Demon in front of him was a great Demon Lord with the reactive capability of the River Realm.

From the beginning of the fight until now, he had slashed at her closely several times.

The extremely sharp attacks could always be intercepted by the Evil Mirror Demon, either actively or passively.

The Evil Technique·Returning Dust Mirror not only had an exceptional defensiveness but even took on attackers...

This self-initiating technique really infuriated Lu Ran.

Thinking back to the fifteenth night, when Lu Ran first fought against the Prison Sky Demon, he utterly despised those tentacle-like arms.

"Whoosh~"

Lu Ran's figure suddenly appeared behind the Evil Mirror Demon, casually tossing out.

A series of Night Charm Blades flew out.

Following the faint sound of the wind, the Evil Mirror Demon turned around, and the floating Returning Dust Mirrors had already autonomously shielded her.

"Whoosh! Whoosh..."

A total of eight Night Charm Blades pierced into the Returning Dust Mirror, never to return.

"Die!" Lu Ran's foot crumbled, his hand pulling the Dawn Blade across with a long trail.

Evil Technique·Night Shadow Charm Trace!

The most powerful single-target assassination skill below the River Realm?!

"Ding!!"

The Returning Dust Mirror autonomously met the attack, its surface staunchly stopping the sharp blade trail.

How could a River Grade defensive technique be shattered by a River Grade offensive skill?

"Phew~"

A total of three Returning Dust Mirrors encircled the master, impregnable as a citadel.

Killing intent filled the Evil Mirror Demon's beautiful eyes, staring at Lu Ran, her hand reaching forward, again summoning a mirror.

And soon, a puppet shadow holding two blades darted out of the copper mirror.

"Hmm..." Lu Ran stepped back step by step, casually releasing the Silent Night Blade, allowing it to counter on its own.

Lu Ran's heart grew heavy as he recalled the series of battle scenes just now.

How to break the stalemate?

Seize speed!

How can the River Realm Demon Monarch be caught off guard?

How can the Jiang Grade·Returning Dust Mirror be outpaced?

As Lu Ran retreated step by step, a light suddenly dawned:

"I think... I've got it!"

My every attack so far has been flash first, then draw the blade to chop.

That of course gave the Evil Mirror Demon and the Returning Dust Mirror a chance to react.

If that's the case, why not chop first, then flash?

"Gulp."

Lu Ran's Adam's apple moved rhythmically.

He realized that this small change in concept would inevitably cause a dramatic shift!

"Hoo!!"

Divine Power surged through Lu Ran, he gripped the Dawn Blade tightly, twirling a flourish with his blade.

Facing the empty space in front of him, he chopped down fiercely.

The moment the blade fell, Lu Ran's figure vanished sharply!

When he reappeared, behind him was a Returning Dust Mirror, and ahead was the Evil Mirror Demon!

Evil Mirror Demon: !!!

Her face drained of color, instinctively retreating backward, but...

"Zing!"

The already low-cut luxurious long dress was instantly ripped open.

The Dawn Blade slashed diagonally down from her left shoulder to her right waist!

Blood spilled, her body exposed!

Lu Ran's heart throbbed violently, succeeded?!

He suddenly switched tactics, thrusting his blade forward fiercely.

The Evil Mirror Demon waved her hands wildly, summoning another Returning Dust Mirror, placing it in front of her chest.

Lu Ran flashed again, appearing behind the Evil Mirror Demon, facing her snow-white back.

"Zing!"

The blade that should have pierced the Evil Mirror Demon's chest instead penetrated her heart from behind.

The Evil Mirror Demon's head threw back, breath halting!

The Returning Dust Mirrors that surrounded her froze for a moment.

Lu Ran licked his lips excitedly.

The River Realm?

Demon Lord?

Hmph.

He reached forward, wrapping around her slender waist, lips approaching her delicate earlobe:

"Thank you.

I'll come up with a nice name for this move."

Chapter 322: Luoxian Mountain, 6 Immortals

Lu Ran had spent a full month and a half within the Demon Cave.

When he emerged, his Evil Mirror Demon Sculpture had reached the Jiang Realm·Second Rank!

For this period of training, Lu Ran had only summoned one general and one charm on the first day; after that, he traveled alone.

The inevitable result was a decrease in the efficiency of combating enemies.

However, Lu Ran, who liked to handle everything personally, became increasingly proficient in the use of various Evil Techniques.

Including the blade technique he had newly comprehended, he had trained it to perfection!

Lu Ran named the third style of the Ran Sect Blade Technique "Shuo Star."

"Shuo" was taken from the word "shimmer."

"Star" represented the geographical environment, inspired by the unique scenery within Galaxy Bay.

During his days in the Demon Cave, whenever Lu Ran looked up, he could see the dazzling Milky Way crossing the night sky.

Thus, the name "Shuo Star" was set.

By the time Lu Ran left Galaxy Bay, it was already the twenty-third of July by the lunar calendar.

He had spent both mid-months in the Demon Cave.

The difference was indeed astonishing.

On the fifteenth of June, Galaxy Bay was relatively peaceful, and the number of Evil Mirror Demons Lu Ran found was fewer.

But as the fifteenth of July approached, the Evil Mirror Demons became unusually active, even appearing in groups, forcing Lu Ran to temporarily avoid their sharp edges.

The military stationed in Stone City was naturally prepared.

Lu Ran also joined the city's defenders, clearing out the Evil Demons wreaking havoc in the city.

His Evil Mirror Demon Sculpture had reached the Jiang Realm-Second Rank, largely thanks to the "Evil Demon Uprising" around the fifteenth of July.

Fortunately, the Stone City where Lu Ran was located did not suffer a large-scale, organized assault from the Evil Mirror Demon race.

As for the situation in other parts of Stone City and at the frontline walls, Lu Ran had no way of knowing...

After returning to Luoxian Mountain, Lu Ran reported to the Immortal Sheep faction and then went back to the Luo Xian Residence, entering a mode of closed-door cultivation.

A full month and a half of bloodshed had given him much insight and accumulation.

Lu Ran had a vague premonition that he was about to reach the bottleneck of a minor rank!

Previously, such a thought wouldn't have even crossed his mind!

Bear in mind, he had advanced to the River Realm·Fourth Rank just on the sixth of June.

And now, on the twenty-third of July, he felt he was about to touch a new threshold?

Lord Immortal Goat's blessing and the so-called "Body Tempering and Marrow Cleansing" really were extraordinary!

With that, Lu Ran entered seclusion within Luo Xian Residence.

Time flew, and it was the third of August by the lunar calendar.

This day was special.

Because it was September 1st by the solar calendar, the day universities reopened.

Also, it was the day Lu Ran finally achieved a breakthrough after ten days of seclusion!

It was in the evening, inside the Luoxian Pavilion...

"Ah..."

Lu Ran, wearing a long white robe, sat cross-legged in the center of the Pavilion, his sigh carrying a slight tremble.

Immortal Fog continuously gathered toward the pavilion from between heaven and earth.

Within the man in the pavilion, Divine Power flowed like rivers along the meridians, circulating endlessly.

Lu Ran frantically absorbed the surrounding Immortal Fog, condensing it into rivulets within his body and merging it into his vast internal rivers.

He constantly expanded his meridians, repeatedly striking at his shackles, trying to break through the physical constraints.

As the sun set, it slowly dipped behind the mountain peaks.

The afterglow of the setting sun, set against the evening clouds, turned Yeyu City into a picturesque scene.

"Whoosh!"

Suddenly, a Gale blew up, Lu Ran's white robe fluttering.

The flowers and grass outside the Luoxian Pavilion bent with the wind, countless petals scattering in all directions.

River Realm·Fifth Rank!

Lu Ran did not stand up immediately; he continued absorbing the surrounding Immortal Fog, consolidating his new realm.

Only after the sun had completely sunk behind the mountains did Lu Ran slowly open his eyes.

His eyes still shimmered with brilliance, radiant as the stars.

At this moment, Lu Ran, surrounded by lingering Immortal Fog, exuded an ethereal and celestial presence.

It's unclear whether it was the influence of Luoxian Mountain environment or his previous experience with Body Tempering and Marrow Cleansing.

In any case, there was a certain change in Lu Ran's demeanor.

He wore the white robe of the Immortal Sheep faction, his features sharp and heroic as ever, but now appeared even more commanding.

It was a moment worthy of celebration, yet he remained calm and composed, with a hint of transcendence.

Such an attitude and demeanor made him especially well-suited to the ancient charm of the Luoxian Pavilion.

"Whoosh..."

Lu Ran slowly exhaled and stood up.

Looking westward, where the sun had set, leaving only the evening clouds.

"River Realm Fifth Stage now." Lu Ran gazed toward the horizon, his eyes slightly misty.

This advancement was certainly joyful, but more than that, it was a culmination of steady, step-by-step progress.

The setting sun, the sunset clouds, and Luoxian Mountain.

All this serenity and beauty had indeed, without him realizing, calmed Lu Ran's mind.

Lu Ran watched for a long time until the sky darkened, then finally started walking towards Luo Xian Residence.

Just as he stepped into the residence courtyard, he saw a bamboo basket on the small wooden table.

Lu Ran smiled, reminded of the treasure mother with her hair tied in buns.

Coming daily to deliver meals had indeed been hard on her.

He stepped forward and lifted the cloth, seeing his favorite stir-fried mushrooms.

Ever since he expressed his liking for this dish, the old ladies and men had been picking mushrooms from the mountains every day.

"Ah..." Lu Ran sighed softly.

Ever since arriving at Luoxian Mountain, he had been meticulously cared for.

This allowed him to focus on cultivation and ascend smoothly.

Indeed, they were a group of kind-hearted and warm people.

"What's left is insight." Suddenly, a deep voice echoed in his mind.

"Lord Immortal Goat?" Lu Ran paused in his eating.

"Your body is ready, advancing to the Jiang Realm, it's not about physical training but about inner insights."

Hearing this, Lu Ran nodded slightly.

Lord Immortal Goat blandly stated, "The insight for advancing to the Jiang Realm cannot be provided by Luoxian Mountain at this time."

Lu Ran frowned slightly, picking up on a particular phrase.

"Luoxian Mountain at this time?"

So, was it possible that in the future, this Luoxian Mountain could offer him a different kind of enlightenment?

After pondering for a while, Lu Ran ventured, "Lord Immortal Goat, should I return to Rain Alley City?"

Immortal Goat: "Stay or leave at will, follow your heart."

When the day comes for you to reach the Jiang Realm, go in front of the inner hall and offer a stick of incense."

Lu Ran's heart stirred!

It seemed that Lord Immortal Goat intended to send him to another world to explore challenges at that time.

He put down his chopsticks and nodded: "Disciple understands!"

"Hm." The voice transmission dropped a word and then fell silent.

Lu Ran waited for a moment, then picked up the chopsticks again, silently eating.

Not until the dishes were wiped clean did Lu Ran tidy up the plates and put them back in the bamboo basket, setting it back on the courtyard table.

Eating and drinking every day was embarrassing enough for Lu Ran.

It really wasn't proper to also have someone else wash his dishes.

After setting the basket down, Lu Ran returned to the master bedroom and picked up his phone.

No one had disturbed him, including the small group chat with five people, where nobody had spoken for a very long time.

Lu Ran suspected that Deng Yutang and others had probably created a new group...

Perhaps worried about disturbing his meditation by chatting in the group?

Lu Ran thought for a moment, then sent a message to Jiang Ruyi:

"Is today the start of school?"

After waiting for a while with no response, he sent another message: "I've advanced."

He quietly watched his phone for a long time, but still, no response came.

Lu Ran couldn't help but remember Jiang Ruyi's elegant and aloof demeanor.

She was always like that in the phone.

Only when standing in front of her did Lu Ran see her gentle side.

And even...

Even when accompanying her, when she was silent and lost in thought, there was an intangible distance.

Sometimes, Lu Ran wondered if the current Jiang Ruyi went to worship Lord Jian Yi, whether he would accept her.

The growth of the mind and body, tempered by the flames of war.

Indeed, she was no longer that naive young girl.

Lu Ran placed his phone on the nightstand, turned, and went to the bathroom.

Twenty minutes later, after bathing, Lu Ran returned to the bedroom and checked his phone again.

There was still no response.

"Ruyi, what a hard heart..." Lu Ran murmured softly, as he climbed into the square bed, pulling the bed curtains around him.

Days of strenuous cultivation had exhausted him both physically and mentally.

Despite his dissatisfaction, he fell asleep quickly and soundly.

The night passed without event, and the next morning arrived.

Lu Ran, groggy, opened his eyes and picked up his phone to check the time, but he saw a message instead.

It was from Jiang Ruyi, sent in the early hours of the morning.

He immediately opened it, finding just two simple words lying there quietly:

"Congratulations."

Lu Ran: "..."

Yesterday, even at the moment of his advancement, he had maintained a serene demeanor.

Because his heart was at peace.

But now, seeing Jiang Ruyi's brief message, his heart was in turmoil!

Yes, I'm in seclusion, and you really shouldn't disturb me too much.

But on the day of my advancement, is that all you have to say, those bland and formal two words?

Goddess Jiang,

Are you belittling me?

Lu Ran directly opened the booking app and purchased a flight ticket to Wu Lie River City.

As he made the payment, he faintly heard the courtyard gate being pushed open.

Lu Ran quickly got out of bed, draped the long white robe over his shoulders, and walked out.

On the small courtyard table was a bamboo basket.

In the forest path outside the courtyard, the figure of Senior Sister Cheng quietly leaving was visible.

"Senior Sister Cheng!" called out Lu Ran.

"Hm?" Cheng Rou stopped and turned her head.

Seeing Lu Ran's sleepy appearance, a gentle smile appeared on Cheng Rou's face:

"Are you awake?"

As she spoke, Cheng Rou turned back and pushed open the courtyard gate.

Lu Ran: "..."

Cheng Rou was only twenty-seven, but Lu Ran always felt like her words and demeanor were as if she was dealing with her own son...

"What's wrong, Junior Brother?" Cheng Rou looked concerned.

"Ah, Sister, I'm leaving, the flight's at noon today."

"Eh?" Cheng Rou looked a bit surprised. "You're leaving so soon?"

Lu Ran smiled and nodded: "I'll return soon, after I reach the Jiang Realm."

Cheng Rou was momentarily stunned, then her face lit up with a joyful smile: "You've already advanced to the River Realm·Fifth Stage?"

Lu Ran nodded again.

"Wow!" Cheng Rou's eyes sparkled, filled with pride and admiration: "That's amazing!"

Lu Ran was rather speechless.

This tone, this demeanor!

Lu Ran seriously suspected that Cheng Rou was applying her childcare techniques on him.

Lu Ran said helplessly: "Sister, is there any special product here? I'll take some back."

Cheng Rou replied: "Are you buying a gift for your girlfriend?"

She was a faithful viewer of "Heavenly Pride" and naturally knew that a beautiful figure always accompanied her junior brother.

Without waiting for Lu Ran's response, Cheng Rou was already pondering, murmuring:

"For such a beautiful girl, we have to pick a delicate gift, don't we?"

Chapter 323: Don't understand human language?

At dusk, Wu Lie River City.

At the university gate, a taxi started up and drove away, leaving behind a tall figure.

"Wu Lie River University."

Lu Ran muttered to himself, gazing up at the rather imposing university gate.

Above the gate, there were a few characters in gilded letters, dancing like dragons and phoenixes, and full of strength.

During the dusk hour, university students came out to forage, and the entrance was bustling with people coming and going.

People occasionally cast curious glances, sizing up Lu Ran, who paused to admire the view.

He was dressed in a black outfit, donning a cap and a mask.

That's why most people's attention was drawn to his eyes.

Those eyes were like the starry night, deep and bright, peaceful and beautiful.

Many also focused on the twin blades he carried on his back.

The two blades were sheathed and not drawn, in a parallel position, slanting toward his right shoulder.

Such a way of carrying blades was not uncommon.

The problem was, with the youth covering his face like this, coupled with the fact that everyone knew this year's top scholar from the Da Xia national exam was from Wu Lie River...

Inevitably, many people linked this figure to that seen in "Heavenly Pride."

"Is that Lu... Lu Ran?"

"Gossip says Lu Tianjiao went on a pilgrimage, and he might not even come to school this year."

"It seems to be him, the blades are carried like this."

"No way, this junior's eyes are so gentle. Lu Tianjiao's eyes are eerily cold; it even makes my heart lurch."

"Can daily life be the same as the battlefield?"

"He's entered, he's really entered! He's really a student at our school, let's go and ask him."

Quite a few people shared the idea and followed the youth with twin blades into the school gate.

Some of the bolder ones stepped forward to ask.

However, the youth just lowered his cap and waved his hand, indicating, "I'm not signing up for a mobile phone."

This visit, Lu Ran had only told Deng Yutang and asked him to keep it a secret.

According to Deng Yutang, since the school's opening ceremony yesterday, a welcoming ceremony had commenced.

This welcoming ceremony was essentially a large martial arts competition.

All students from the River Realm could participate and if they performed well, they could obtain rewards like believers' points and Divine Power Pearls.

The school aimed to use this event to let the students quickly understand each other and accelerate team formation.

Early this morning, when Lu Ran had called Deng Yutang, he was still laughing and said:

"This time you come back, you better firmly grasp Miss Jiang.

Just one day into the new term, Jiang Ruyi has already received many letters, gifts, a lot of invitations."

Lu Ran had laughed out loud:

"I've gone as far as fighting 'Evil Dogs' on 'Heavenly Pride', and someone still dares to encroach?

Deng Yutang then said, "Probably not many love letters; it's more about wanting to team up with you."

Not too many?

That means there are!

Lu Ran was numb.

In this world of "today but no tomorrow," there are far too many daring people.

Next month, the 15th might be the end for me; you're telling me to keep my emotions bottled up?

What a joke!

So, even seeing Lu Ran and Jiang Ruyi together on "Heavenly Pride," there still was a small fraction of people bold enough to express their love.

Jiang Ruyi truly was outstanding.

Whether it was her looks and demeanor or her formidable combat abilities, or even her "Heavenly Pride" reputation.

Each point alone was enough to draw ample attention.

Following the broadcast of two seasons of "Heavenly Pride," she indeed became a dream too distant for many.

And when she looked at Lu Ran, that gentle gaze, to the people in front of the screen, seemed as if it was directed at them...

Now, with the Goddess Jiang making her appearance at Wu Lie River University, it was like a dream entering reality.

For the youthful university students, acting bravely was only natural.

"Careful!"

"Awesome!"

"Wow, haha, the young man can't do it, huh?"

Voices ring out, accompanied by faint sounds of fighting.

Guided by his cellphone map, Lu Ran entered the northern forest of the campus.

There, laid out were several concrete grounds, each Martial Arts Arena about the size of two basketball courts.

The forest was bustling with people, all spectators.

Lu Ran had excellent vision; while climbing, he peered through the dense branches and leaves toward the Martial Arts Arena on his left.

"Roar!"

He just happened to see a golden tiger pouncing, pinning a student to the ground.

Was this a believer of the Second-class God·Mountain Lord?

The university campus surely was different, ah, one could encounter a variety of believers.

At Yuxiang Middle School, among nearly 400 believer students, there was only one Second-class God believer.

"Buzz~"

Lu Ran looked down at his phone, a message from Deng Yutang:

"Team Leader Jiang should be at Arena No. 46, climb towards the middle of the hill, I'm about to enter the arena, will head there after the match."

Lu Ran casually replied with an "Oh."

"Yikes! Go easy, go easy, I give up, ah!"

"Run, run, your butt's on fire!"

"Hahahaha!"

Ripples of laughter spread, lively and full of youthful spirit.

Listening to this made Lu Ran's heart flutter.

Over the past two months, he had been wandering alone inside Galaxy Bay and had been rigorously meditating alone at Luo Xian Residence.

His eyes,

Tinted deep and bright by the starry sky of Galaxy Bay,

Were also tinged with tranquility and peace by the flowers and the evening sky of Luoxian Mountain.

Now arriving at the university campus, enveloped by a fervent atmosphere, it inevitably stirred some waves in his heart.

"Arena No. 46." Lu Ran looked at the distant sign and walked toward the forest on his left front.

Here, the crowd of spectators was especially large.

These people... hmm, could they be here for Jiang Ruyi?

Lu Ran's face wore a strange expression as he stepped into the forest and circled half of the arena—where could he find a spot?

Luckily, at six feet tall, he found a spot where he could see and stood outside the crowd, looking toward the arena.

"Ooh~~~"

"Watch out, don't let the feathers fly everywhere!"

"I'm going!" The spectators hurriedly ducked as countless white feathers fluttered around.

Was this an eighth-rank Sky Star believer?

Finally encountered these proud "Blacksmiths."

The weapons they fashioned, mostly made of Tianchen Steel, were crafted by Sky Star believers.

Among them, of course, was Deng Yutang's million-dollar Heavenly Star Spear.

Lu Ran looked interestedly at the Sky Star believers showing off in the arena, his gaze following his figure but then abruptly stopping.

He saw a tall and graceful figure—Jiang Ruyi.

The area around the arena was packed like sardines.

Only under the tree where she stood was there a bit of space.

Jiang Ruyi's face was expressionless, her eyes cold as she crossed her arms in front of her, silently watching the battle in the arena.

The aura of a strong person, though intangible, could be truly felt.

The kind of cold emanating from within her, mixed with an air of keeping others at a distance, made the people around her dare not approach.

Lu Ran stared at her, his heart tightening.

He had never seen Jiang Ruyi this cold.

In his memory, she was extremely gentle, serene, and enchanting when she smiled.

She had a great personality; during the three years of high school, she was always polite and amiable to her classmates.

The Jiang Ruyi at this moment seemed like a completely different person.

Cold and aloof.

So... was she tired of being harassed?

Lu Ran frowned deeply, just about to move, when suddenly he heard a whistle:

"Whew—"

"Student No. 23 wins, contestants leave the arena!" the judge by the arena shouted loudly, "Next battle, No. 25 and No. 26!"

"Go Jiang Ruyi!"

"Why not let the Divine Weapon fight directly instead of the person?"

"Here comes Heavenly Pride, who's No. 26? Just surrender!"

"Jiang Ruyi! Jiang Ruyi! Jiang Ruyi!"

The crowd grew restless, their words becoming noisy.

But soon, the crowd unified around three words, resembling a tsunami!

People knew Jiang Ruyi from "Heavenly Pride," and most harbored a worshipful sentiment in their hearts.

Even if the Jiang Ruyi on screen and the real her were somewhat different, people were still willing to cheer for her.

Jiang Ruyi, without a word, stepped onto the arena, and the crowd in front automatically split to the sides.

"Uh." A young man was pushed out from the crowd, his face flushed.

It was unclear whether it was due to shyness or excitement.

This sight immediately elicited a round of laughter.

"What's with that expression?"

"Did he chase stars all the way here?"

"Hahaha, now that he's seen her, he might as well get her autograph and be done with it..."

"Whew—"

The piercing whistle cut through the air.

Jiang Ruyi, expressionless, had eight golden jade talismans floating beside her.

The young man on the opposite side, amid a mix of laughter and curses, finally gripped a twig.

It looked like he was a Biwu believer.

Jiang Ruyi remained silent, just coldly watching him.

"Uh." The young man felt Jiang Ruyi's gaze, and with a bit of bravado, whipped out a Biwu branch.

"Snap!"

A golden jade talisman autonomously confronted the attack, blocking the whiplike branch.

Jiang Ruyi reached out one hand, and the Jade Talisman Formation quietly emerged.

Beneath her slender hand was a Bursting Flame Talisman that sparked.

"Stop!" the young man immediately spoke, "I, I surrender!"

"Tsk~~~"

"Why did you come up then?"

"Making an impression is good, right? What if we can do missions together in the future?"

"Surrendering is the right choice, what could a River Realm First Rank Biwu believer use against a River Realm Fourth Rank Jade Talisman believer?"

Amid the buzzing discussions, the referee blew the whistle, unsurprised by the outcome.

Jiang Ruyi didn't glance at her opponent and turned to leave.

The crowd parted automatically, and cheers came from all around.

Jiang Ruyi slightly bowed her head, not intending to linger.

However, unexpectedly, a figure approached: "Congratulations, junior!"

Heh, winning without a fight."

Jiang Ruyi's brows knit lightly as she looked up at the tall young man.

The girl's impatient gaze clearly displeased the young man, though he didn't show it.

He wore a sunny smile, deliberately stepping forward and lowering his voice, "Must be quite bothered by many people, right?"

I'll escort you back, keep those people away, and let you have some peace."

Jiang Ruyi took a step back and shook her head lightly: "There's no need."

The young man's smile froze slightly, then reappeared as he continued whispering something.

This scene naturally attracted the students' attention.

"Isn't that Senior Zhao? The third-year one?"

"Yes, Zhao Zhenrn - our school's celebrity! I heard he advanced to River Realm last summer."

"Impressive, a talent of the Human Clan! Is he making a move on the junior?"

"He wouldn't dare! Wouldn't Lu Tianjiao annihilate him?"

"Senior Zhao is a First-class God·Monk believer though, and he's in the River Realm. Even if Lu Ran is fierce, he's still only in the River Realm..."

"Nonsense, have you forgotten how Lu Tianjiao slew the River Realm Evil Dog?"

"Whew! Whew! Whew—"

The urgent whistle drowned out the clamorous discussions.

The teacher acting as referee looked displeased at the edge of the arena: "Irrelevant personnel, leave immediately!"

Contestants No. 27 and 28, up to the arena!"

"Sorry, teacher, we're leaving." Zhao Zhenrn smiled apologetically at the teacher.

He stepped aside, apparently letting Jiang Ruyi walk ahead.

Jiang Ruyi's brows knit lightly, eyeing the grinning tall young man before her.

In the suddenly quiet arena, a voice suddenly rang out:

"She said, no need for your escort, can't you understand human speech?"

Jiang Ruyi's expression froze, and she quickly turned around, looking in the direction of the voice.

Many people followed her gaze.

And many looked astonished.

Because they saw in Jiang Ruyi's impatient eyes a hint of surprise.

Her always cold expression softened, and a faint smile appeared on her face.

Chapter 324: It's your own fault!

"Who is this fierce? Daring to confront Zhao Zhenren in front of so many people?"

"Probably isn't well-informed and still thinks Senior Zhao is just at River Realm-Fifth Rank, trying to show off in front of Goddess Jiang?"

"Haha, there's going to be a good show now! A Jiang Realm Great Power won't tolerate such insult."

"That's literally courting death... wait! Hold on! The person speaking seems... seems like..."

"Holy shit? Isn't that Lu Ran?"

"Lu Ran!! Wow! It really is him, finally seeing him in person!"

"I said, who would dare to confront a Jiang Realm Great Power like that, turns out it's Lu Tianjiao..."

Following Jiang Ruyi's gaze, many people turned to look in Lu Ran's direction.

Students around Lu Ran, not wanting to draw fire to themselves, also didn't want to endure the wrath of a Jiang Realm Great Power.

At the same time, the students really wanted to know who was so brave as to risk his life for the favor of a beauty.

Thus, as Jiang Ruyi looked over, people in the crowd began to step aside.

By then, the figure of a young man in black clothes, wearing a hat and a mask, was revealed.

Upon seeing him, there was a great commotion!

Who did they see?

The unparalleled national top scholar, Da Xia's genius—Lu Ran!

Instantly, the whole place erupted!

Lu Ran's popularity was far higher than Jiang Ruyi's.

"It really is Lu Ran, Lu Ran!!"

"Ran...no, General Ran is here!"

"Lu Ran! Lu Ran! Lu Ran!"

In a moment, cheers rose wave after wave.

Lu Ran, oblivious to all this, was quietly looking at Jiang Ruyi.

His heart was in turmoil.

Because the radiant smile Jiang Ruyi showed upon their reunion gradually turned sour.

Her lips pursed as she still smiled, but her eyes held an indescribable grievance.

Grievance?

Lu Ran was about to explode!

Having just returned from Luoxian Mountain, his heart had been so peaceful and calm.

Now, that look in Jiang Ruyi's eyes nearly drove Lu Ran to become a Fierce Heavenly believer!

Since entering high school, the two of them had been almost inseparable.

Lu Ran wasn't exactly a warm man.

He had made Jiang Ruyi feel embarrassed, annoyed, and even unhappy with his reproach.

But he had never made her feel aggrieved!

"Come." Lu Ran stepped forward and waved to Jiang Ruyi.

It was unclear if it was longing or grievance that spurred her.

The usually shy Jiang Ruyi, under everyone's eyes, took steps toward Lu Ran.

And those steps gradually turned into a forward glide.

As the Jade Talisman Formation appeared and vanished, Jiang Ruyi, dressed in a white long dress, like a swift swallow returning to its nest, threw herself into Lu Ran's arms.

Her long hair fluttered, her dress danced.

Gusts of wind swept by, carrying her fluttering dress, wrapping around his body.

"Wow!!"

"This is so damn youthful, isn't it?"

"Oh~~~"

"The referee teacher was just scowling, telling unrelated people to leave, and now he's smiling too, really has no bottom line."

"It's not in vain changing my preference to Wu Lie River University! To witness this scene with my own eyes, it's worth it haha!"

"I'm always like this, standing in the crowd, repeatedly witnessing the happiness of others..."

"Don't be so humble, bro, why don't we date each other?"

On the other side of the field, Zhao Zhenren's smile completely stiffened.

Vast River,

Not only represents the level of power.

It also represents one's status and identity!

As a Great Power of the Human Clan, he certainly has his dignity.

Whether it was Lu Ran's earlier disrespectful words, or the mocking looks from the people around...

All made Zhao Zhenren lose face!

When he blocked Jiang Ruyi just now, he stepped forward and Jiang Ruyi stepped back.

That indifferent look in her eyes truly stabbed at the heart.

Now, as soon as Lu Ran appeared over there, her gaze softened, and her face showed a bright smile.

Lu Ran merely waved, and she hurried forward, throwing herself into his arms.

Without a moment's hesitation, without any concern, it was as if she was declaring her allegiance.

Jiang Ruyi was undoubtedly faithful.

Despite the various thoughts of the onlookers, whether envy, sourness, or sadness,

Anyway, this quality of Jiang Ruyi made people insanely favor her!

"Were you aggrieved?" Lu Ran, holding the warm and fragrant Jiang Ruyi, whispered softly.

Jiang Ruyi pursed her lips, buried her face in Lu Ran's neck, and said nothing.

She thought that what awaited her was a beautiful college life.

But everything was beyond her expectation.

Two editions of "Heavenly Pride" made her the most radiant person in campus, entering with an aura.

Just on the very first day of school, so many people came up to her.

Jiang Ruyi was undoubtedly gentle and kind, politely refusing each time.

However, this politeness did not dispel those people but instead landed her in deeper trouble.

The confessions of young students were bold and direct.

Those coveting gazes made Jiang Ruyi extremely disgusted.

Jiang Ruyi indeed possessed the reality of a Heavenly Pride, but she was also a girl from a small town.

When she stepped out of that small world, everything seemed changed.

This world full of hardship bred many mad people.

It's as if they could not see she had someone in her heart, had not seen her various affections for Lu Ran on "Heavenly Pride."

Whether they were those with ulterior motives or fervent fans, they all troubled and worried Jiang Ruyi.

If not for her strong abilities and the constant support from Deng Tian, after the opening ceremony, she might have even been stuck in place.

Being watched and followed in the daytime, even rudely stopped directly.

Her dormitory knocked on again and again at night, piled with flowers and gifts.

Reluctantly, she put away her gentle nature and donned a cold face.

She worked hard to regain the state of cultivation within the Jade Sect, learning from her senior brothers and sisters, becoming a stern Jade Talisman Believer.

Cold and strict, unattainable.

All these changes took place in less than a day.

Back in high school, it wasn't like this.

Perhaps... it's because there were too few students in small places, and their overall strength was not good enough to approach her.

And Wu Lie River University, though not the top school in Da Xia, is undeniably a first-class institution.

The students who managed to get in were, of course, not lacking in strength or confidence.

The environment had changed.

The people by her side had also gone.

Why did she reply to Lu Ran's message only in the early hours of the morning?

Because Jiang Ruyi took a long time editing it, having a lot to say to Lu Ran.

Eventually, all her feelings were summed up in the word "Congratulations," which she sent out.

She didn't want the harassment she suffered to distract Lu Ran or prevent him from focusing on his practices.

"Ruyi?" Lu Ran gently patted her back, whispering.

"Mmm." Jiang Ruyi softly replied, like a little cat, gently rubbing her face against Lu Ran's shoulder, smelling his scent.

Despite still many eyes on her,

In this moment, in Lu Ran's arms, Jiang Ruyi felt immensely secure.

"Got my dose of sweetness, finally seeing the real deal!"

"This is way better than watching 'Heavenly Pride,' right?"

"Nonsense! In 'Heavenly Pride' they barely held hands and had to carry out city defense duties, where could they find the leisure for this?"

"Tsk ts, Senior Zhao's face is all dark, why doesn't he just leave?"

"He probably isn't finding it easy to leave, with so many people watching, a Jiang Realm Great Power being publicly embarrassed..."

At this moment, Zhao Zhenren indeed seemed to be in a difficult position.

As a follower of the First-class Divine Sect, Zhao Zhenren was undoubtedly a gifted martial artist, extremely proud.

During his sophomore summer vacation, he had reinvented himself and returned to campus as "Vast River."

Lu Ran's statement to him, "Can't you comprehend human speech?", was quite impolite!

More crucially, there were too many spectators.

Students' private discussions were like fanning the flames.

"Lu Tianjiao." Zhao Zhenren's face regained its smile, showing the demeanor of a master, "I was just trying to escort my junior sister back, to help her out.

Isn't it a bit much for you to be so blatantly rude?"

Jiang Ruyi whispered: "Let's just go, ignore him."

She could use her own strength, relying on her enchanting immortal-like appearance, to deter some people.

But there were others she indeed couldn't handle; she was ready to ask the school for help.

"Blatantly rude?" Lu Ran raised his eyelids, looking at Zhao Zhenren.

Zhao Zhenren continued smiling: "Junior sister is too popular, always getting stopped.

I meant well, hoping to help her, so she can have some peace on her way back, any problem?"

Lu Ran snorted: "All I see is, while everyone else stepped aside, only you stopped her.

I told you several times already, no need for you to escort.

Relying on some strength, persistently bothering her, right?"

Zhao Zhenren's gaze shifted slightly, but he maintained his smile: "You are not at school, unaware of the situation she's facing."

"Ha?" Lu Ran laughed outright, "At least as a Jiang Realm, regarded as a Great Power in people's mouths, is this your standard?"

Are you blaming me for not being by her side?"

Jiang Ruyi gently tugged at Lu Ran's sleeve, whispering: "Let's just leave, Lu Ran."

Zhao Zhenren's smile gradually faded, originally thinking a few words exchanged between them would calm things down, this matter would pass.

However, this Lu Ran, really didn't give any face, did he?

Honestly speaking, if it were any other River Realm student daring to rant against a Jiang Realm Great Power...

Zhao Zhenren might have lost his patience long ago!

He looked at the unyielding Lu Ran and said sternly:

"Lu Tianjiao represents Da Xia's face, should still discern right from wrong, treating people with some politeness."

Lu Ran drew a knife from behind, pointing it distantly at Zhao Zhenren, those deep and tranquil eyes turning increasingly cold:

"Don't freaking label me!

You're persistently bothering my girlfriend, and you expect me to treat you courteously?"

Lu Ran drawing his knife and pointing from afar undoubtedly escalated the situation.

River Realm, challenging Jiang Realm.

Whether it be from the historical context of Jiang Realm's status within the Human Clan or from Zhao Zhenren's personal dignity, this matter would not end well.

Zhao Zhenren's expression grew darker: "Lu Tianjiao, better not act rashly.

Here, there are no two Jiang Realm Great Powers to back you up."

Lu Ran's most dazzling feat was undoubtedly slaying the Jiang Realm·Evil Dog.

However, it's undeniable that when he killed the Demon Lord, he had the support of Captain Ge and Senior Liu, it wasn't solely Lu Ran's achievement.

"Heh." Lu Ran smirked, suddenly turning his head to look toward the front left.

The watching students there all looked puzzled, not understanding why.

Lu Ran looked at one of the male students: "You're right, this is too youthful!"

Lu Ran, who had been facing Evil Demons with weapons all day, indeed felt different upon arriving at the university campus.

Male student: "..."

Indeed, when Jiang Ruyi had thrown herself into Lu Ran's arms just now, this student had indeed blurted out this remark.

The problem was, with such a distance and so many people talking, you could still hear what I said?

"Lu... Hmm." Jiang Ruyi's words were suddenly choked back.

Lu Ran pulled down his mask slightly and gently pressed his lips against her tender ones.

Jiang Ruyi's face flushed instantly, overwhelmed with shyness, unable to utter a word.

Until she was guided behind by Lu Ran, Jiang Ruyi remained dazed, a delicate hand tightly clutching the side of her dress.

"Is this something I can watch for free?"

"Hahaha! No problem, this is so damn youthful!"

"Ran Shen, I want a kiss too..."

Amidst the rising jeers, Lu Ran pulled his mask up, his gaze firmly fixed on the grim-faced Zhao Zhenren:

"Come on, senior, I'll give it a try! See if you really have the ability to safely escort my girlfriend back to the dorm."

Zhao Zhenren's eyes darkened, stepping forward: "Then I shall exchange a few moves with Lu Tianjiao!"

Remember,

This is what you asked for!

Chapter 325: Poisoned the little mouth

"Yo? Miss He also has such refined tastes, reveling in battle here?"

Halfway up the mountain, a teasing male voice rang out.

The man had medium-length hair and a handsome appearance, with a smile on his face as he looked up at the treetop.

Perched at the treetop was a young woman.

Her figure was graceful, dressed in an elegant green long dress, quite ancient in style.

Her beautiful face and temperate grace were like a lotus blooming in a clear lake, pleasing to the eye.

"Xu Xing, please address me as senior sister."

The woman looked down, her soft voice responding to the cheerful youth.

The youth named Xu Xing laughed heartily: "We are the same age."

With a leap, he swiftly climbed the large tree.

The tree swayed from side to side, yet the woman in green remained as still.

Clearly, she wasn't really standing there, but hovering in place.

Xu Xing climbed to a position seven or eight meters high, standing on a branch and looking towards Martial Arts Arena No. 46:

"My dorm buddy just texted me, saying Da Xia's genius arrived and clashed with Zhao Zhenren.

Miss He, who do you favor more?"

He Yingcai didn't respond to the youth's teasingly formal address and softly said, "Zhao Zhenren, I guess."

Xu Xing: "Oh?"

He Yingcai sighed softly, "Lu Tianjiao is indeed astonishing, but his ability to slay the River Realm Demon Monarch was also due to the help of Human Clan elders.

Moreover, the Evil Dog Clan lacks defensive techniques."

Xu Xing nodded, "True, the Evil Dog Clan has no means of defense, affording our Human Clan the opportunity to prevail against the mightier.

Zhao Zhenren is much stronger than a mere dog.

Lu Tianjiao, I fear, can't even break through his defense."

"Um," He Yingcai nodded gently; she was more than just a spectator.

She had adopted Lu Ran's perspective, retreating her own power level to that of the River Realm's fourth or fifth tier.

Under such circumstances, how could she defeat her adversary?

It was too difficult.

The chasm between their levels was like a vast abyss laid before both parties, insurmountable.

To exaggerate a bit, defense alone had blocked all paths of victory from below.

More troubling for her was that Zhao Zhenren possessed not only Jiang Realm's Universal Skill: Water Flow Armor but also the Martial Monk's Dharma Protector Golden Body!

Even if He Yingcai herself were to fight, with her power level far surpassing Zhao Zhenren, she couldn't break his Golden Body through brute force.

First-class God-Monk was not elevated to that divine throne for no reason!

Martial Monk believers weren't just tough; they were tough with spikes.

Their Golden Body Protection made them incredibly explosive in output.

The Martial Monk faction focused on cultivating martial skills; their devotees each possessed unparalleled combat abilities!

Facing such believers in battle, direct assault was unlikely to yield miraculous results.

She could only outsmart them.

"Only through outsmarting..."

He Yingcai murmured internally, contemplating techniques available to the Immortal Sheep faction.

After careful consideration, she truly didn't know what Lu Ran could use to win...

Unless, should he resort to using Divine Technique-Immortal Pupil?

Even putting aside whether Zhao Zhenren would be afraid, even if Zhao indeed feared, he still had the Purification Skill.

The Martial Monk faction was tremendously formidable!

Not only were they impenetrable physically, they were equally resistant to spiritual attacks!

What could she possibly do?

"Alas..." He Yingcai couldn't help but sigh.

Thinking it over, only one thought remained in her mind: "Lu Tianjiao is a bit too arrogant for his youth."

"The battle is about to start!" Xu Xing anticipated eagerly as he saw Zhao Zhenren stride into the arena.

As Zhao Zhenren entered, the audience around Arena No. 46 frantically retreated.

Once Jiang Realm Great Power made a move, it was no joke.

A casual display of power could pulverize many into dust!

Jiang Ruyi soared high, her eyes filled with worry as she observed Lu Ran in the arena.

Lu Ran's arrival had delighted and surprised her.

However, as the situation developed to this extent, Jiang Ruyi felt guilty.

A River Realm Martial Monk believer, how could he fight this...

If it were any other River Realm believer... No, he couldn't fight that either.

Ultimately, it all came down to four words—Water Flow Armor.

"Whoo~"

Zhao Zhenren casually grabbed a dark golden copper stick.

Martial Monk Divine Skill·Ancient Copper Stick!

Zhao Zhenren stood in the arena, his face somber: "Lu Tianjiao, I know you're entering the battlefield on the fifteenth of August.

As your senior, I will show mercy."

While speaking, Zhao Zhenren's eyes swept across the entire arena, and as his gaze reached the participants, they continued retiring backward.

The terror of Jiang Realm was such.

After his sweeping gaze, Zhao Zhenren added, "If Lu Tianjiao can't hold on, he may also choose to surrender.

As your senior, I have that much magnanimity, not to hold past grudges against you."

From outside the arena in the woods, a series of low voices discussed:

"The art of rhetoric."

"One 'Heavenly Pride' after another, constantly confirming Lu Ran's identity, then having Heavenly Pride surrender?

"Isn't that quite insinuating?"

"Seriously, Ran Shen is a bit reckless, just a few words would have sufficed, why insist on a tough approach, now he's cornered himself, hasn't he?"

"Spare us your bullshit, if your girlfriend was harassed nonstop, could you swallow your pride?"

"And if not, being beaten up, wouldn't that be even more embarrassing?"

Many on-site understood Zhao Zhenren's words.

However, under Jiang Realm's intimidation, only hushed discussions were possible outside.

"Baa."

Quite abruptly, Lu Ran emitted a faint sheep's bleat.

Zhao Zhenren's maintained posture of a master instantly vanished.

His normally calm face revealed a trace of ferocity!

Enough hints?

A friendly competition?

Joke!

The sheep's bleat pushed by Lu Ran directly provoked Zhao Zhenren's true nature.

"Ts..."

In the next moment, Zhao Zhenren's feet spread forth layers of golden aura.

Martial Monk Divine Skill·Golden Wind!

This was a Purification Technique.

Within the area engulfed by the golden aura, all wicked and demonic sly methods would be purged!

Zhao Zhenren's demeanor returned to normal, but a strange smile appeared on his face:

"Lu Tianjiao, so aggressive, not leaving any path for yourself?"

If I were clouded by your cry and struck heavily, what would you do?"

Lu Ran's bleating was quiet, mostly unheard by the audience.

Zhao Zhenren's voice, however, was loud, as if making a statement, preemptively absolving himself of responsibility.

"Heh." Lu Ran scoffed, "Fight with honor, what's the point in holding back?"

Zhao Zhenren was genuinely baffled.

Has this kid gone mad?

Did slaying a River Realm Demon Lord inflate his ego this much?

Well, think about it.

Anyone at a young age, receiving national attention, heralded with flowers and applause wherever they go, would probably get carried away.

"Ha ha ha ha...." With that in mind, Zhao Zhenren laughed.

He laughed at Lu Ran's youthful arrogance,

Laughed at Lu Ran being unknowingly glorified to death by cheers.

Undeniably, whether within his level range or age group, Lu Ran could be described as "surpassing Da Xia."

But the opponents you've defeated were Evil Demons!

Creatures with low intelligence and little tactical breeding.

Now, you face me, a believer of the Human Clan, and a believer of First-class God·Monk no less!

And you still expect to provoke me as you did the Evil Demons...

Do you really wish to die?

"Clang clang clang!" Rosy clouds unsheathed.

Lu Ran extended his left hand, grasping the Divine Weapon: "I said we fight for real!

I, the proud son of Da Xia, let you toy with me?"

Zhao Zhenren's laughter receded, but when he looked at Lu Ran again, his eyes were laced with scorn.

"Whoo~"

Lu Ran swept his blade before him, stirring strands of golden wind: "I'll say it again!

I, Lu Ran, Da Xia's genius!

Win by winning, lose by losing, do I need your pity?

I just realized, you blew all this golden wind just to pat your own face, right?

Stop flaunting, Flower Monk, it's embarrassing."

High in the sky, Jiang Ruyi looked perplexed.

Lu Ran was indeed a slick talker, but that venom-coated mouth rarely showed itself.

Today, was Lu Ran that enraged?

Provoking the opponent like this was clearly unwise. Why do this...

"Good!"

"That's spoken with vigor!"

"Yes! That's the spirit we need, facing adversaries with a drawn sword! That's our Da Xia's genius!"

"Stop cheering, are you roasting him on a fire?"

"One by one, watching a funeral but not minding the scale of the burial..."

"Whoo~"

Zhao Zhenren stared at Lu Ran, fury surging in his heart!

A simple term "Flower Monk," seemingly light, actually pierced his male ego.

Escort his junior sister back to the dorm?

Everyone knew what you were up to, it just wasn't exposed by anyone during Zhao Zhenren's righteous ardor.

But this particular phrase also involved the word "monk."

As a Martial Monk believer, Zhao Zhenren completely exploded!

This kid's mouth, was indeed venomous!

To throw out these three words, tailor-made almost...

"Whoo~"

The golden wind at Zhao Zhenren's feet gradually dissipated.

So beautifully said, and everyone heard it, fine, let me indulge you!

Then this golden honor, I won't stick to my face anymore.

Now, dare you still call out?

"Baa~"

Lu Ran, also eyeing Zhao Zhenren, let out a sheep's bleat through his mask.

The sound wasn't loud, but it was clear.

Zhao Zhenren laughed in frustration, "Good on you, Da Xia's genius, you've got the guts!"

"Sss—"

Lu Ran's feet stirred the mist, his figure suddenly darting forth:

"Too much talk!"

Zhao Zhenren: !!!

From a distant treetop, He Yingcai's eyes brightened, murmuring to herself:

"Such a clever junior."

"Oh?" Xu Xing looked up at the woman in green.

"Hehe~" He Yingcai admired with a lifted corner of her mouth.

Is the battle just starting?

No!

As Lu Ran and Zhao Zhenren conversed, the battle had already begun!

And it was quite spectacular!

He Yingcai, putting herself in their shoes, had considered countless methods but ultimately found none that would allow her, at River Realm, to defeat a Jiang Realm·Martial Monk believer.

Zhao Zhenren almost completely dominated Lu Ran.

Surrendering, to cut losses in time, seemed like Lu Ran's only path.

What He Yingcai hadn't anticipated was that the method to victory was clearly displayed before her eyes by the junior!

And it had been shown quite some time before she even realized.

Indeed, Lu Ran lacked the ability to break Zhao Zhenren's defense.

Even a fellow at the same level had great difficulty breaking Zhao Zhenren's defense.

But...

Zhao Zhenren could break his own defense!

Martial Monk believers' output was extremely explosive.

For Lu Ran to win, it was essential for Zhao Zhenren to go all out...

No wonder, Lu Tianjiao was so aggressively pressing, his mouth sharpened with poison.

Beneath that arrogant demeanor was a heart full of schemes!

Chapter 326: Lu's, Heavenly Pride!

For Pharcyde's big fans, another update.

...

Crowds swarmed the forests surrounding Martial Arts Arena No. 46.

Hearing the news, those who couldn't find a foothold manifested their magic and soared high into the sky.

For a moment, the airspace was filled with various Believers of different styles.

The battle between Da Xia's genius and the Martial Monk Believers from River Realm truly captivated people, filling them with anticipation.

Among the crowd, a woman in white stood on her sword, leaving the space around her empty, and no one dared to watch from in front or below her, so as not to obstruct her view.

"Teacher Jiang."

A middle-aged man with quite some gall, wearing a Big Red Robe, flew up to her.

Jiang Li's eyes were icy as she glanced at the man and nodded slightly in greeting.

The man was unfazed and, looking down at the battlefield, he joked,

"Teacher Jiang, it's rare to see you in person. Were you sent by the leadership to escort these two individuals?"

"I have an old connection with Lu Tianjiao's mother," Jiang Li said indifferently.

"I see," the man said with a nod before looking toward the battlefield. "Finally, we see the third on the Heavenly Pride list.

The guy's kept himself well hidden, not even removing his hat or mask during the fight."

Jiang Li: "..."

Do I look like someone who's good at small talk?

The man sighed, "These two, neither can afford to lose."

Jiang Li's lips parted slightly, "The Martial Monk Believer has already lost."

"Oh?"

"The only way he could lose, he's found it," Jiang Li scoffed coldly, her words as chilling as her visage, "Useless."

The man: "..."

He pondered for a moment before saying, "Teacher Jiang's insight is superior to mine. When the time comes, please remind me."

Jiang Li was clearly not one for many words, uttering just three, "The scapegoat."

"Mm," the man nodded.

For this battle to successfully ignite interest, one reason was the martial spirit of Wu Lie River University.

The second was Lu Ran's life-saving Divine Technique—Body of Substitute!

Considering the Divine-Immortal Goat's affection for Lu Ran, it would not be stingy to manifest and save its Believer.

With so many teachers watching, it was impossible for Lu Tianjiao to perish here.

Yet, Jiang Li's certainty that the Martial Monk Believer had already lost surprised the man.

Meanwhile, on the battlefield.

Lu Ran advanced rapidly through the Immortal Fog, his Dawn Blade slashing straight at the enemy's head.

Zhao Zhenren's face was grim as he held the two-meter-long Ancient Copper Stick, and with a fierce downward smash,

the head of the stick suddenly wrapped in a golden energy with white, twisted lines, like cracks.

Martial Monk Divine Skill-Golden Wind Shattering!

"Zi—"

Lu Ran's forward momentum halted abruptly; the ground under his feet crumbled as he suddenly shifted sideways.

"Pang!"

The stick's head slammed into the ground, and the golden energy exploded.

Waves of golden wind, like a raging sea, surged wildly around.

Lu Ran drew a lightning bolt symbol underfoot, continuing his assault with twin blades toward Zhao Zhenren.

Zhao Zhenren, unfazed, turned to block, positioning the Ancient Copper Stick at his side.

"Ding!"

A crisp clang resounded as the Dawn Blade grazed the Ancient Copper Stick, sparks scattering where they touched.

"Dong! Dong! Dong!"

Zhao Zhenren's face changed slightly as he was forced three steps back.

All of a sudden, there was a wave of commotion from above and below.

Although Zhao Zhenren hadn't suffered any injuries, it seemed as if he was being heavily suppressed.

Vast River's warrior should easily take down a Believer of River Realm, but instead...

Zhao Zhenren's face grew unsightly!

He realized that he had an audience above and below; the incident had escalated.

Thus, he should firmly and swiftly defeat Lu Ran.

Yet, that previous strike had unleashed a tremendous force surprising Zhao Zhenren!

Was this the strength a Believer of River Realm should possess?

Lu Ran's innate Divine Power?

Or was it that the momentum of his charge was so ferocious it added more force?

If Lu Ran possessed such a level of strength, then his own water armor might not be able to withstand it!

Zhao Zhenren looked at his Ancient Copper Stick, noting the deep gash left by the blade which reflected the sharpness of the Divine Weapon and indicated Lu Ran's terrifying power.

"Is this all? River Realm?" called out Lu Ran from a distance.

Zhao Zhenren's eyes widened as he turned to look at Lu Ran.

Under the gaze of countless spectators, such humiliation was not something just anyone could bear.

"Whoosh~"

Lu Ran's retreating figure gradually came to a stop, twirling his blades, and a muffled voice emerged from behind the mask:

"I'm challenging you directly. What now?"

Zhao Zhenren nearly ground his teeth to bits!

Lu Ran wasn't just taunting with words but also infused the Divine Technique·Desolate Sound into his speech.

Unlike his encounter with Si Xianxian.

Lu Ran wasn't hiding his words; he was blatantly notifying:

"I, Lu Ran, am challenging you!

Now! What's! Next?"

"Lu Tianjiao, you've got guts!" Zhao Zhenren spat out through gritted teeth, his face turning ashen.

Once again, Lu Ran spoke, "Why don't you just release your Golden Wind?

If you can't beat me, you could at least save face by claiming you held back on purpose.

How about that?"

"Dong! Dong! Dong!"

Zhao Zhenren rushed forward with the Ancient Copper Stick in hand.

The sound of the Immortal Sheep filled his ears, fueling the violence in his heart!

"This is your own doing!" Zhao Zhenren bellowed, leaping into the air, the Ancient Copper Stick swinging ferociously toward Lu Ran.

"Zi—"

Lu Ran's figure swirled through the fog, abruptly shifting to the side.

In the midst of the thunderous explosions, a sound of Immortal Fog spurting out could be heard.

Zhao Zhenren reacted swiftly, spinning around with the stick to block.

This time, he put all his strength into it.

Yet, Lu Ran suddenly swung his arm, flinging the Dawn Blade with full force!

The Dawn Blade spun rapidly, tracing an arc through the air, heading straight for Zhao Zhenren's back.

Chapter 327: Lu's, Heavenly Pride!_2

Lu Ran tread on the Immortal Fog, wielding the Silent Night Blade, as he charged toward Zhao Zhenren.

A man and his blade tracing a "V" shaped path!

No!

More precisely, it was the number "0".

Lu Ran even paused, deliberately waiting for the Dawn Blade, ready to meet it at the end.

The audience high above had a clearer view, chattering among themselves:

"What a sight to behold from Da Xia's genius, delightful and pleasing!"

"Beautiful~"

"One man with two Divine Weapons, I'm so envious!"

"If the Immortal Sheep Believer gets chopped, that's going to be hilarious ahahaha!"

On the battlefield, things changed in the blink of an eye. As the crowd whispered, the fighters had already crossed swords.

"Dream on!"

Zhao Zhenren roared angrily, his energy surging around him.

Thinking I'd be attacked from both front and back?

Did you damn forget, I'm a Martial Monk Believer!

"Huh!!"

Suddenly, two golden bodies, two golden heads, and two golden arms materialized behind Zhao Zhenren.

Three heads and six arms?

Close enough, this is the Martial Monk Divine Technique·Furious Three Bodies!

True to its name!

Including Zhao Zhenren's original body, all three faces bore the fierce expression of a Vajra, exuding majesty.

Not only that, the newly emerged golden bodies each grasped an Ancient Copper Stick.

"Sst—"

Lu Ran's feet shuffled, failing to meet up with the Dawn Blade.

Zhao Zhenren, wielding the Ancient Copper Stick, swung fiercely but hit nothing.

"Boom boom boom!"

One of the golden bodies behind him, wielding a long stick, sent the Dawn Blade flying.

Golden energy waves tumbled forward.

"Oh my god!"

"Back! Quick, back up!"

"Get down!" Chaos erupted in the woods as everyone feared being hit by the golden blast.

After this, the onlooking crowd retreated even further.

"Flower Monk," Lu Ran slid backwards to the center of the arena, called out from a distance, "Hit me, don't take your anger out on the audience."

Suddenly, there was a moment of silence in the woodland.

Then, a "pfft," followed by laughter such as "hahaha", emerged.

"You're courting death!"

Zhao Zhenren bellowed furiously, stamping his foot abruptly. Though dozens of meters away from Lu Ran, he thrust his long stick straight out.

"Roar!!"

Energy surged wildly, a huge dragon made of golden energy burst forth, roaring as it charged.

Martial Monk Divine Technique·Cloud-Riding Dragon!

"Ah!!"

"Is he really going for the kill?"

"Be careful!" Amid the startled cries, Lu Ran retreated diagonally backwards on swirling mist at his feet.

An even more jaw-dropping scene unfolded!

Faced with the fearsome golden dragon, Lu Ran didn't dodge far away.

Astoundingly, he drew back alongside the golden dragon?

Lu Ran slowed down, allowing the dragon to fly past his side.

With his right hand holding the Silent Night Blade, he even reached towards the dragon's body, the blade tip grazing across its exquisitely sculpted scales...

Such a scene dumbfounded the crowd!

"Damn?! This control of distance?"

"Do you have to be so dashing? Do you have to be so elegant?"

"Dragon Scale Blade?"

"Really not afraid of getting hit? Can't help showing off, can you?"

"Joke! I, Ran Shen, dared to challenge the Tether Silk Robe, what fear could I have of a big dragon touching me?"

High above, Jiang Li, who always wore an expressionless face, suddenly raised her eyebrows slightly.

The male teacher beside her burst into hearty laughter:

"Hahaha! This kid, what a presence!"

In their sight, Lu Ran, using the "Dragon Scale Blade", caught too close to the golden dragon, and was finally affected.

Hmm... his hat was blown away.

He revealed a head of short, choppy hair, fluttering in the wind.

"Sst—"

Lu Ran suddenly retreated to the other side.

Zhao Zhenren followed, his stick pounding the ground, stirring up waves of golden energy.

He fled, he pursued.

They zigzagged across the arena.

"What to do?" As if Lu Ran had eyes behind his head, fog whirled under his feet as he continued to retreat quickly, "Seems like you can't do anything to me?"

With the continuous bleating in his ears, Zhao Zhenren's already irritable heart was provoked crazily time and time again.

Zhao Zhenren, overwhelmed by fury, made another forward thrust with his stick.

"Roar!!"

Another golden dragon burst forth.

Baring its fangs and claws, it emanated a murderous aura!

This time, Lu Ran was even bolder!

He actually dashed close to the ground, right under the dragon's belly.

The fact proved that Lu Ran wasn't just provoking with words; even his actions were taunting!

No sooner had Lu Ran escaped than he continued to disturb his opponent's mind: "Think of something, Jiang Realm Great Power!"

Why can't you take me down? Don't feel like it?"

Each word stabbed furiously into Zhao Zhenren's heart!

Just from the perspective of speed, the Immortal Sheep Believer indeed had the upper hand.

To the spectators, this seemed to be Lu Ran's only advantage.

But this couldn't continue.

Apart from verbal output and disgusting his opponent, what else could Lu Ran do?

The best outcome would be a draw. Zhao Zhenren might not be able to catch Lu Ran, but he certainly wouldn't lose!

Of course, if it ended in a draw...

To a certain extent, shouldn't that be considered a victory for Lu Ran?

After all, there was an insurmountable chasm between the River Realm and the Jiang Realm.

"Monk, your strength is just so-so." Lu Ran huffed coldly, "Next time, don't shamelessly cling to someone else's girlfriend."

You hear me?"

"You really think I can't catch you?!" Zhao Zhenren's eyes were split with rage, he shouted furiously!

Lu Ran's sliding figure stopped, his brows slightly furrowed.

Zhao Zhenren's neck veins bulged, furious to the extreme, and he forcefully raised his hand: "I concede, I lose!"

"Huh!!"

Directly above the arena in the high sky, a golden palm suddenly appeared.

Martial Monk Divine Technique·Great Golden Sky Monk Palm!

This was a Martial Monk's technique, adapted for use in the Jiang Realm.

Its explosive output could crush an apartment building.

Lu Ran's expression changed. Although he was still wearing a mask, the panic in his eyes betrayed his inner turmoil.

Chapter 328: Lu Family, Heavenly Pride!_3

"You can't handle this, can you?"

In Da Xia, there indeed existed an unwritten rule: during a duel, if one party left the arena, whether actively or passively, they were considered defeated.

"Get lost!" Zhao Zhenren half-knelt on the ground, slamming his hand down fiercely.

From high above, a golden giant palm thunderously smashed down!

It was so large that it not only covered the entire Martial Arts Arena but also enveloped many of the surrounding mountains and forests.

Chaos ensued all around, cries of alarm emanating from every direction:

"Zhao Zhenren! Have you lost your mind?"

"You don't care about your own life?"

"Stop it now!"

"Silence!" Jiang Li shouted loudly, her voice piercing through the tumult.

Everyone looked in astonishment at this powerful disciple of Sword One.

Zhao Zhenren had indeed gone mad.

Or rather, his desire to kill Lu Ran had reached its peak.

Since the battle began, Lu Ran's "bleat" hadn't ceased.

One should not consider Zhao Zhenren at this moment as a calm, cool-headed individual.

A common man's rage, yet blood splashes five steps away.

Extreme emotions naturally bring about extreme consequences.

The last shred of rationality made Zhao Zhenren utter, "Leaving the arena counts as a loss."

Yet in his heart, Zhao Zhenren roared, "Go to hell!"

Lu Ran's Divine Technique·Desolate Sound kept igniting an endless desire to harm in his opponent's heart.

It penetrated repeatedly, deepening with each moment.

Poisoned to such a degree was no longer something so-called rationality could restrain.

"You're crazy!" Lu Ran also shouted, a hint of panic in his voice.

"Just watch me!" Zhao Zhenren roared, his body bursting with brilliant golden light.

Martial Monk Divine Skill·Protector Dharma Golden Body!

"Whoosh!!"

The golden giant palm descended from the sky, crashing down thunderously.

"Hiss—"

Below, Lu Ran's feet stirred the Immortal Fog, not to flee but to charge at Zhao Zhenren!

His eyes, initially filled with fear, suddenly turned incredibly cold, his sinister words echoing through the arena:

"Just you watch!!"

Disciple Lu Ran humbly invites the Immortal Sheep Ancestor!

"Whoosh!!"

The Immortal Fog around Lu Ran surged, and a massive ethereal figure unfolded from him.

A robe of white jade, shimmering with a strange luster.

A face of a snow-white sheep, bearing a faint smile.

Immortal Sheep Divine Technique·Body of Substitute!

"No!!"

"Be careful, don't..."

"This... scapegoat?"

"Boom boom boom!" The golden giant palm crashed down; the earth tore apart, the woodlands collapsed.

The power of River Realm was indeed terrifying.

"Crack!!"

The golden-colored Martial Monk Believer, kneeling on the ground, saw his Golden Body shatter explosively!

Behind Zhao Zhenren, the two additional bodies were crushed beyond recognition, yet still desperately protecting their master.

Three furious bodies made of pure energy, yet each a tangible body of blood and flesh, equating to having two additional bodies grown on one's self.

Fingers still connected to the heart.

Such extreme pain from two whole bodies being smashed like this, how intense could it be?

"Spurt!!"

Zhao Zhenren knelt in the crater, dizzy, vomiting fresh blood, his original body also severely damaged.

"Hiss!"

Blade entering flesh!

"Hiss!"

Blade entering flesh!

Dawn Silent Night, one to the left, the other to the right, both blades mercilessly stabbed into the two heads behind Zhao Zhenren.

The intense pain transmitted into Zhao Zhenren's mind, as if his own skulls were pierced twice!

"Hiss!"

The twin blades swept sideways, ruthlessly cleaving both heads apart.

"Ahhhhhh!!" Zhao Zhenren screamed in agony, both hands clutching his head.

The so-called twin golden bodies, beneath the golden skin, possessed real, tangible flesh.

Blood splattered, flesh scattered.

Such a brutal scene sent chills down everyone's spine!

Yet the cruel scene continued, the twin blades fiercely chopped down all four arms.

Two heads, two arms, dissected while everyone watched...

"Bang!" Lu Ran kicked Zhao Zhenren in the face, knocking him to the ground.

One kick, another, and yet another...

Already dizzy, Zhao Zhenren's face became a blur of blood and flesh, his screams weakening.

From afar, voices of sympathy arose:

"Don't, don't hit him anymore!"

"Heavenly Pride Lu, please have mercy..."

"Smack!"

Lu Ran grabbed Zhao Zhenren by the neck, lifting him up, word by word:

"She said, she doesn't need your ride! Did you hear me clear this time?"

Honestly, if Lu Ran had said, "I, the great Heavenly Pride, don't need your coddling," it might have seemed more magnanimous.

But he instead declared: My girlfriend doesn't need your company.

Such words...

Lu Ran didn't care about others' opinions of him.

His actions were abnormal, his attacks brutal, even resorting to the Divine Technique·Body of Sin.

All just to make Jiang Ruyi's life more peaceful.

Four words: To kill a chicken to scare the monkeys.

In the future, Lu Ran would still need to travel to another realm, to leave Jiang Ruyi for a while.

Lu Ran hoped to resolve this issue once and for all!

He didn't want his girlfriend, his future wife, to live in a harassed environment forever.

As for others saying his methods were brutal, sinister, and violent...

As mentioned before, Lu Ran didn't care.

"She said, she doesn't need your ride! Do you understand?" Lu Ran bellowed, his voice carrying far.

"Hmm... Hmm." Zhao Zhenren lay in utter misery, his face a blur of blood and flesh, his breath faint, even the action of nodding his head was laborious.

"Lu Ran." A cold voice called out.

A woman in white, as pure as snow, floated in on a sword: "It's enough. Everyone understands your stance now."

Lu Ran turned to see a middle-aged woman, seemingly in her early thirties, likely a teacher.

This woman was indeed sharp-witted. From her words, it was not hard to discern she understood Lu Ran's intentions.

"It's enough." The woman spoke again, softly advising.

Lu Ran silently nodded and casually threw Zhao Zhenren onto the ground.

"Go take a walk, clear your head." The woman waved her hand, gesturing for Lu Ran to leave.

Under the woman's command, no one stopped Lu Ran from leaving.

Chapter 329: Sunset Silhouette

The sun was setting in the west, and the mountain forest was tranquil.

A pair of figures, one after the other, were making their way up the mountainside.

Jiang Ruyi, with her head bowed, silently followed Lu Ran, without a word along the way.

Several times she thought about speaking up, but she didn't know whether she should disturb the young man by her side.

He must have been calming his emotions.

Just like this morning, after editing the message for a long time, she merely sent "Congratulations."

She didn't want to disturb him, but he still came.

Appearing by her side, providing her with the security she needed most.

The battle they just had was earth-shattering.

Lu Ran, in an uncharacteristic display, showed a thunderous approach, striking a most powerful pose!

It was as if the Martial Monk Believer was not of the Human Clan, but an Evil Dog from the River Realm.

Such a terrifying battle also made everyone re-evaluate Da Xia's genius.

"Are you okay?" After a long time, Jiang Ruyi finally spoke up, her voice very soft.

Lu Ran continued to gaze at the dense forest, his pace unbreaking,

"What, you think I'm irritable and dangerous now?"

"No, how could that be?" Panic flashed in Jiang Ruyi's eyes, and she immediately reached out and grasped two of Lu Ran's fingers.

His methods in the previous battle, indeed, had been ferocious.

To most people, there would no longer be the impulse to ask for autographs or photos; instead, they would only want to stay away from Lu Ran.

In "Heavenly Pride," he was the vanguard slaying demons on the frontlines.

Seeing him in real life, he was equally fierce and aggressive.

However, this did not include Jiang Ruyi.

She knew Lu Ran's character well, as clever as she was, she had figured out why his style had suddenly changed.

Moreover, even if Lu Ran were to become violent, his saber would never turn towards her.

This confidence originated from every second they spent together.

It came from the unique look in his eyes whenever he gazed at her.

"I'm sorry," Jiang Ruyi said softly, hanging her head low.

"Why apologize?" Lu Ran stopped walking, turning his head to look at the girl.

"Because of me, you had to..."

"Ruyi." Lu Ran interrupted her, "Is it your fault for being beautiful?"

Jiang Ruyi opened her mouth, but couldn't get the words out.

Lu Ran reached out, smoothing her long hair, "Is it your fault for being so excellent and admired?"

Jiang Ruyi fell silent, bowing her head, her eyes complex.

A smile appeared on Lu Ran's face but was unfortunately obscured by the black mask,

"I don't want you to suffer. Is that your fault?"

Jiang Ruyi kept her head lowered, listening to Lu Ran's gentle murmur, her eyes gradually reddening.

This girl from the peaceful small town had barged into the bustling big city, and had always been strong.

She'd become aloof and unapproachable, adapting to everything outside and protecting herself.

Yet standing in front of Lu Ran, her strength vanished, and somehow all her grievances seemed to surge from the depths of her heart.

"But you are indeed at fault." Lu Ran changed the subject.

Jiang Ruyi immediately looked up, her reddened eyes and wounded cheeks brimming with a sense of fragility.

Lu Ran pretended not to notice, looking downward, "Wearing high heels, that's where you went wrong."

Jiang Ruyi stared at Lu Ran, at a loss for words, but at last, a smile crept onto her face.

She hadn't cried, but she certainly felt like she was on the verge of doing so, whispering softly,

"Being a bit taller might fend off some people."

Lu Ran: "..."

Is that so detailed?

Oh no!

Does that include me too?

"If you don't like them, I'll throw them away when I get back." Jiang Ruyi, holding Lu Ran's hand, gently shook it.

Her subtle movement and the soft tones of her voice contrasted sharply with her previously cold demeanor.

Lu Ran grinned, "Well, it's not necessary."

No sooner had he spoken than he felt a buzzing from his pocket.

Lu Ran took out his cell phone to see a call from Principal Zheng.

Principal Zheng, in fact, was a vice-principal who was also in charge of admissions.

Naturally, Lu Ran's phone would not receive calls from strangers.

They could contact each other because Lu Ran had previously taken the initiative to ask for the Heavenly Star Saber from the school.

"Principal Zheng," Lu Ran said.

"Lu, I'm at a meeting out of town. I heard you're back at school?" A hearty middle-aged man's voice came through.

"Yes."

"Is the pilgrimage over?"

"Not yet, I have to go."

Hearing this, Zheng Wenhan sighed inwardly, his thoughts drifting.

In a gentle tone, he said, "Lu, I heard about the incident at the Martial Arts Arena.

Control was imposed by the school right after yesterday's opening ceremony, but Miss Jiang's popularity far exceeded our expectations."

Lu Ran was silent for a moment, then responded, "Yes, our living environment is too special, never lacking in madness."

Zheng Wenhan: "I'll give you an explanation for this.

You chose Wu Lie River University, and we will do everything we can to provide you with a stable learning environment."

"Thank you, Principal Zheng," Lu Ran said quietly, and spoke a bit more, "I'm currently preparing to advance to the next level of the River Realm and can't stay at school.

As for when I'll be back, I'm not sure, but I wanted to ask for your leave in advance."

"Advancing to the River Realm?" Zheng Wenhan sounded quite surprised, and immediately responded, "Alright, go ahead with your enlightenment."

Don't worry about Miss Jiang, we'll first transfer her to the faculty dormitory..."

"I'm also taking a leave," Jiang Ruyi suddenly said.

"Uh?" Lu Ran looked at the girl beside him.

Of course, Jiang Ruyi knew where Lu Ran was going to advance to the River Realm.

Rain Alley City, by the Wu Lie River!

Jiang Ruyi took a step forward, wrapping her arms around Lu Ran's arm, a pleading look on her face.

"Agreed." The voice on the phone, having clearly heard Jiang Ruyi's words, assured, "When you come back, the school will definitely provide you with a normal learning environment."

After a couple more exchanges, they hung up.

It seemed some people were in for it.

At least some faculty members would be held accountable.

The timing of Lu Ran's return was indeed very coincidental.

In order to let Lu Ran cultivate in peace, Jiang Ruyi, not only did she keep herself from telling Lu Ran anything, but she also ordered their companions not to mention it.

Thus, Lu Ran's motive was pure, simply to visit Jiang Ruyi after advancing to the Fifth Rank of the River Realm.

But on the second day of school, such an incident had erupted.

It was hard not to speculate that Lu Ran had come back for Jiang Ruyi.

"Do you want to come back with me?" Lu Ran smiled at the young girl.

Jiang Ruyi gently nodded, "I'll accompany you to advance to the River Realm."

Lu Ran considered for a moment, "Actually, you should be able to live normally if you stayed at school."

Sometimes, bandits are more useful than soldiers.

Soldiers have to follow rules, go through procedures, with their hands tied and punishment fitting the crime.

Bandits are different.

They can put a knife directly to your throat and ask if you're afraid to die.

In this incident, Lu Ran was that bandit.

At the Martial Arts Arena, he directly beheaded and dismembered the Martial Monk Believer, leaving him bloodied and disfigured.

Such an example undoubtedly had a powerful deterrent effect.

After all, the opponent Lu Ran faced was quite suitable.

Not only was he a disciple of a First-class God-Monk, but also a great power of the Jiang Realm!

From then on, anyone thinking to disturb Jiang Ruyi's peace would have to think twice.

"No, I'll accompany you back," Jiang Ruyi stated resolutely.

She could imagine Lu Ran on the abandoned terrace by Wu Lie River, painstakingly striving for enlightenment.

With her there, she could at least bring him food every day, caring for his daily needs.

"Okay then." Lu Ran fished something out of his pocket, "Close your eyes."

Jiang Ruyi was slightly moved and did not refuse, slowly closing her eyes.

Instead of the anticipated kiss, which left her secretly hopeful, she seemed to hear a pleasant sound.

A cool sensation touched her wrist.

Was it a bracelet?

"All set!" Lu Ran held up her arm, inspecting the wrist.

Eagerly, Jiang Ruyi opened her eyes to examine the gift Lu Ran had given her.

It was a delicate gold bracelet, exquisitely made, shimmering in the sunset's glow.

On the gold bracelet was a pendant, a small piece of deep red jade.

Like a red bean.

"This is Ning Hong Jade from beneath a Demon Cave, blessed by the Great Cai Nan before it was crafted."

As Lu Ran explained, he held her arm, examining closely, "It's said to have a calming effect."

Jiang Ruyi was enthralled by the small piece of jade, unconcerned with which Demon Cave it came from or its effects.

She only noticed that it was a red bean.

And she understood the longing it represented.

"Do you like it?" Lu Ran asked casually.

The jade bracelet was incredibly beautiful, matching her slender wrist and fair skin perfectly.

As for which was more beautiful, the bracelet or her delicate hand...

Lu Ran was inclined to choose the latter.

"Ruyi?" Lu Ran turned his gaze back to the girl, not receiving any response.

"I like it," Jiang Ruyi finally came back to her senses.

Suddenly leaning forward, she wrapped her arms around his neck, whispering, "I really like it."

"Are you that easy to deceive, to fall into my arms over a bracelet?" Lu Ran teased.

Jiang Ruyi slightly tilted her head, discontentedly bumping the side of Lu Ran's head.

"Alright, now's not the time for arguments," Lu Ran gently pushed Jiang Ruyi away.

Confused, Jiang Ruyi queried, "What?"

Lu Ran looked into her eyes, laughing, "We agreed to have a chat after my advancement.

You just sent me 'Congratulations'?

You're so aloof, do you really want to freeze me to death in Cai Nan?"

"What if we don't argue?" Jiang Ruyi, just pushed away, once again embraced Lu Ran's neck, a bit tighter this time.

Her voice was soft and light, tinged with a piteous tone.

Lu Ran: "..."

He had intended to jokingly make her change her ways, to pay more attention to him in the future.

But it had turned into this.

Undeniably, he had felt pained upon reading her message, feeling abandoned.

However, seeing Jiang Ruyi herself, all that had dissipated.

What truly angered Lu Ran was that she had endured these grievances and hadn't told him.

But Lu Ran's silence made Jiang Ruyi misunderstand.

The noble and pure moonlight, in front of a certain person, also seemed a bit lowly, "Don't be mad.

I'm afraid... If I talked to you too much, I wouldn't be able to help myself, and would end up saying too much."

Lu Ran had several words come to mind: I really deserve to die!

"Let's go home," Lu Ran said, smelling her light fragrance, patting her back.

"Yes, okay," Jiang Ruyi buried her head in Lu Ran's neck, nodding slightly but not loosening her embrace.

The waning sun,

stubbornly bathing the forest.

Stretching out their shadows, very long.

Chapter 330: Travelers Returning on a Stormy Night

Night had fallen, and a light rain drizzled down.

The train pulled into the station, entering the old city's rain-drenched alleyways.

Lu Ran silently gazed out of the window, observing the sparsely lit hometown.

Ruyi, the young girl, nestled beside him, her face resting on his shoulder.

In her sleep, she was serene and beautiful, her delicate hand intertwined with Lu Ran's as if she feared he would leave.

A fine gold bracelet adorned her wrist, its small red beans shimmering with a lustrous glow.

She was sleeping deeply, perhaps not having slept well the past few days.

Now with Lu Ran by her side, even on the train, she slept sweetly.

"Ruyi, Ruyi?" Lu Ran whispered softly.

"Mm?" Jiang Ruyi opened her sleepy eyes slightly and lifted her head, greeted by a pair of gentle eyes.

After the battle, Lu Ran's eyes had reverted to their original look.

They had absorbed the stars of the night sky from the Galaxy Bay, blending with the fallen petals and rosy clouds of Luoxian Mountain.

Mysterious and profound, tranquil and peaceful.

The pilgrimage had wrought subtle changes in Lu Ran, and the title "Lu Immortal" wasn't just for show.

Whether it was body tempering and marrow cleansing or purifying the heart and cultivating the mind.

In that colorful cloud expanse to the south, everything about the Immortal Sheep held an indescribable magic, deeply affecting Lu Ran.

Jiang Ruyi, having just awoken to such beautiful eyes, couldn't help but gaze deeply into them.

"Ruyi?" Lu Ran blinked.

"Mm." Jiang Ruyi's cheeks flushed as she averted her gaze.

Her voice was soft and mellow upon waking, exuding a unique charm.

A "flame" sprang up in Lu Ran's heart.

All tranquility vanished from his eyes!

At eighteen, it was an age full of vigor.

Having not seen his girlfriend for over two months, now returning home together, how could things end smoothly?

Well... who knows.

"Are you going back to your aunt and uncle's place, or coming with me?" Lu Ran asked.

"I'll go back to my parents' house first to update them on the situation," Jiang Ruyi whispered, "I'll come see you tomorrow morning."

Lu Ran: "..."

It seemed the matter would indeed end well today.

"Oh, then I'll escort you back." Lu Ran's tone could hardly conceal his disappointment.

Jiang Ruyi was a very understanding girl.

Always had been, so this choice wasn't out of the ordinary.

Jiang Ruyi, with her delicate thoughts, clearly noticed something and gently squeezed Lu Ran's hand as if to comfort him.

The train gradually came to a halt, and the two quickly disembarked.

At the small rain alley station, few passengers alighted, and the world returned to the familiar peace Jiang Ruyi knew.

Cold and silent.

In the chilly autumn rain, they sprinted together, catching a taxi.

When Lu Ran got home, it was almost eight o'clock.

The house and the streets outside were as deserted as ever, the tabby cat having been fostered at the Jiang family's since Lu Ran left.

Lu Ran, too lazy to even turn on the lights, hurried to the bathroom, stripped off his wet clothes, and turned on the shower.

But just as he began to bathe, a voice echoed in his head.

"Hmm?" Lu Ran paused, testing, "Dawn?"

"I am Silent Night."

Lu Ran felt a bit embarrassed, explaining, "Your voice sounds just like Dawn's..."

Silent Night Blade said nothing, ignoring Lu Ran.

"What's wrong, Silent Night?" Lu Ran pressed.

"Click~"

Unexpectedly, the bathroom door opened, and Silent Night Blade flew in.

The naked Lu Ran was startled!

He glanced at the sharp divine weapon and quickly covered his essentials:

"Come on, I just mistook one blade for another, is that worth getting so worked up over?"

Silent Night: "My place was taken."

"Ah?" Lu Ran was somewhat confused.

Since Jiang Ruyi moved in, both the Dawn and Silent Night blades had been moved to hang on the wall of a small bedroom.

The wall had wooden racks specially for the blades, the two divine weapons arranged one above the other, parallel to the floor.

Silent Night Blade hung silently in the bathroom, motionless.

"Just a moment." Lu Ran reached forward with one hand, energy swirling in his palm.

Then, a finely crafted copper mirror floated before him.

With a thought from Lu Ran, the scene in the mirror shifted, revealing the image of the Dawn Blade.

Lu Ran's thoughts shifted again, and the camera pulled back slightly to reveal a Tang horizontal blade lying on the rack below the Dawn Blade.

"Heavenly Star Saber." Realization dawned on Lu Ran, and he looked at Silent Night Blade, "You're also a divine weapon; can you really let a mere mortal blade bully you?"

Silent Night: "It must have been put there by the mistress."

Lu Ran: "..."

Good!

Hierarchy matters, truly my good divine weapon!

Since it was put there by the mistress, it isn't right for you to kick it out.

Lu Ran immediately stepped out, and though there was no one at home, he still donned a Big Red Robe when he stepped out of the bathroom.

What was clearly meant to be a wedding dress, he used as a bathrobe.

Hm... the main theme is a lack of prohibitions.

Lu Ran went to the small bedroom and walked over to the computer desk, where he took down the Heavenly Star Saber.

"It's so heavy?"

Lu Ran muttered quietly, weighing it in his hands.

Tianchen Steel, by appearances, looked no different from ordinary steel.

But this material, produced in the Demon Cave, was also Da Xia's top-grade weapon material!

Its rarity and exorbitant price were staggering.

"Whew~"

Lu Ran twirled the blade, holding it horizontally before him to inspect closely.

The blade followed the style of a Tang horizontal saber, with a long, narrow blade about two fingers wide and approximately 80cm long, with a handle about 30cm long.

On both sides of the blade was a narrow fuller, situated below the spine and parallel to it.

"Hmm." Lu Ran licked his lips, extended his finger, and slowly traced the blade's edge.

The blade was not only heavy but also of excellent quality.

Worthy of being the coveted Tianchen blade, indeed impressive.

"Buzz!"

Following the vibrating noise, Lu Ran looked up.

The Silent Night Blade beneath the rack had reclaimed its spot, silently.

And the Dawn Blade above gently vibrated.

"What's the matter?" Lu Ran was puzzled.

However, both divine weapons ignored Lu Ran.

Lu Ran pondered for a moment before realizing something, looking quite embarrassed.

What had he been doing?

Just standing in front of two divine weapons, closely observing and gently touching another blade...

It was quite improper!

Lu Ran hastily tossed the Heavenly Star Saber onto the small bed, grabbed a t-shirt and shorts, and went to take a shower.

Several minutes later, Lu Ran returned to the small bedroom, feeling refreshed.

Looking at the "other woman" on the bed, he hesitated.

He glanced at Dawn and Silent Night, carefully picked up the Heavenly Star Saber, and placed it beside the computer desk.

Lu Ran couldn't take it away.

Desensitization needed to start now.

After all, Lu Ran harbored great ambitions to cultivate the Heavenly Star Saber into a divine weapon.

He even fantasized about activating the Prison Sky Demon Evil Sculpture, unfolding eight Prison Sky Hands, each holding a divine weapon...

Therefore, the Heavenly Star Saber ultimately needed to interact with Dawn and Silent Night.

Lu Ran surreptitiously observed the two divine weapons, and after noticing no reaction, he finally breathed a sigh of relief.

Being their master was indeed very humble~

Lu Ran quickly went before the small shrine, pressed his palms together, and respectfully bowed:

"Lord Immortal Goat, your disciple has returned. Thank you for saving me this afternoon!"

A deep voice resonated in his mind:

"A mere River Realm strike isn't even an itch."

Lu Ran: ? ? ?

He had been prepared to be scolded.

Before, Lord Immortal Goat had emphasized not to use the Divine Technique·Body of Sin lightly.

Summoning Lord Immortal Goat entailed using Origin Energy.

Lu Ran, with a clear purpose for Jiang Ruyi, was willing to accept punishment.

But now, having acted as he did, not only was Lord Immortal Goat not blaming him, but there also seemed to be a reassurance?

This?

Was Lord Immortal Goat worried that his disciple would bear too heavy a psychological burden, thus speaking this way?

I'm going to cry...

Lu Ran steadied his emotions: "To you, it was nothing.

For your disciple, it would have been a disastrous end. Thank you, Lord Immortal Goat, for your rescue!"

Immortal Sheep Jade Carving: "You made your decision, and I made mine.

If we both deemed it worthwhile, then it was worth it."

Lu Ran's emotions surged as he spoke solemnly: "Disciple will strive to master the Evil Technique·Paper Mache and its combination with the Body of Sin.

In the future..."

Immortal Sheep Jade Carving interrupted, "Since you toiled fruitlessly in the Demon Cave, there's no hurry at this moment.

Wait until both skills advance to River Rank; integration may be more straightforward."

Previously, while practicing in Galaxy Bay, Lu Ran had indeed labored, unfortunately without finding a fusion point for the two techniques.

Perhaps, once the techniques advanced to River Rank and he became more proficient, all would fall into place.

Immortal Sheep Jade Carving: "The priority now is to perceive growth, to advance to River Realm."

"Yes!" Lu Ran nodded vigorously.

He had returned to the rain alley with the goal of advancing to River Realm.

He wondered how long he would need to meditate by the Wu Lie River before he could find the method of advancement.

Hopefully not a year and a half.

Hm... probably not?

As Lord Immortal Goat no longer transmitted any sound, Lu Ran bowed again and then left the room.

He had planned to clean up the house, having been away for over two months, but when he turned on the light and looked around, he found the house spotless.

Could it be that Jiang Ruyi had cleaned here before school started yesterday?

Lu Ran quietly observed for a moment before shaking his head with a smile.

He returned to the small bedroom and sat cross-legged before the shrine.

Now in the River Realm·Fifth Rank, his physical body was indeed ready; there was really no need to cultivate Divine Power.

But it was a good habit.

Besides, his prayers could transform into the Power of Faith for Lord Immortal Goat to absorb.

Speaking of which, Lu Ran's way of providing for the deity wasn't just through prayers.

When he slaughtered Evil Demons and cultivated Evil Sculptures with taken souls, Lord Immortal Goat always snuck a bite.

Each Dead Soul naturally contained Origin Energy, and Lord Immortal Goat had never short-changed itself...

After meditating for a long time, Lu Ran suddenly tilted his head.

Faintly, he heard the sound of a key inserted into the lock.

"Hmm?" Lu Ran immediately stood and walked out of the small bedroom.

From a distance, the front door opened, and a tall figure clad in a raincoat entered his sight.

"Ruyi?" Lu Ran quickly approached, "Weren't you supposed to come tomorrow?"

After returning home, Jiang Ruyi had evidently adjusted her mood.

She lifted the insulated lunch box in her hand with a bright smile: "Haven't had dinner yet?"

Mom taught me how to make braised pork ribs, want some?"

Lu Ran, looking at her enchanting smile, felt as though the living room lights grew much brighter.

Whether she rushed over or the storm outside was severe, some raindrops fell on her face, leaving wet marks.

"Don't want to eat? Then I'll leave," Jiang Ruyi said, pretending to be upset when Lu Ran didn't respond for a long while.

Lu Ran immediately stepped forward, grabbed slippers from the rack, and knelt to help her out of her boots:

"I do."