

## Old Gods 531

Chapter 531: Wait for me!

On a desolate mountain ridge, six figures fell in succession, all wearing expressions of relief after narrowly escaping calamity.

"We finally made it out..."

An Xian landed on the ground but stumbled and fell to her knees with a thud.

The dignified River Realm Great Power, reduced to such a sorry state—unthinkable back in the Human World.

An Xian glanced eastward, only to see an endless expanse of desert, resembling one of Da Xia's uninhabited zones in the west.

Sparse vegetation, an overwhelming grey-yellow palette.

Even the distant mountain ranges, undulating along the horizon, were bare and lifeless.

Yet, An Xian refused to turn back!

She had no desire to look at the eerie stone pillars behind them again.

"I know everyone is relieved, but now is not the time to let down our guard!" Meng Zhixuan spoke up, assuming the role of leader. "The Sand River Doll can tunnel underground.

For now, we haven't put enough distance between ourselves and the stone pillar forest; we must continue heading east."

As one of the team captains, Meng Zhixuan indeed had the authority to speak in such a manner.

However, several Jade Talisman Believers glanced toward Jiang Ruyi.

Meng Zhixuan also turned his gaze to the aloof woman. Despite their frantic escape, Jiang Ruyi showed no sign of distress.

She remained composed and poised, casually smoothing her long hair. Her every move was calm and elegant.

"Junior Sister Jiang?" Meng Zhixuan said gently, voicing a reminder.

Though displeased inside, he did not let it show.

"This is where we part," Jiang Ruyi said softly.

Her words elicited expressions of shock from the group.

"What?" Meng Zhixuan was equally stunned. "Junior Sister Jiang, what are you saying?"

Jiang Ruyi finally turned her gaze to Meng Zhixuan: "Using the title of Senior Brother, you've repeatedly dictated to me. It's truly disheartening."

Meng Zhixuan's heart sank as he sensed trouble.

Previously, during their escape from the stone pillar forest, she had taken over a squad leader's position but cooperated well in the days that followed.

But now...

Meng Zhixuan's expression turned serious. "Junior Sister, the situation was dire earlier. As your Senior Brother, I only meant to prioritize everyone's safety."

So at times, when issuing orders, my tone may have been..."

Jiang Ruyi interrupted him directly: "I have a higher Realm and a Divine Weapon at my side, and it's true that I should shoulder more responsibility. I've willingly helped the team overcome challenges.

But whether it's charging ahead, covering the rear, or rescuing Senior Sister's life—it's always been me.

Every time, you've dismissed these actions with a few words, repeatedly reminding everyone that you're the leader, you're the decision-maker, claiming all the credit for yourself."

Jiang Ruyi looked at Meng Zhixuan as his expression changed repeatedly and said faintly, "It's truly disheartening."

Meng Zhixuan feigned displeasure: "Junior Sister, how can you think like this? You're really disappointing as my Junior Sister—we were all just trying to escape danger..."

Once again, Jiang Ruyi cut him off.

Standing with her hands behind her back, she swept her gaze over Meng Zhixuan and the man and woman standing behind him: "You can thank me now."

Meng Zhixuan's face froze.

The young woman's gaze grew icy, her aura surging forth.

Beside her, An Xian's heart trembled violently. She stealthily shifted her position to stand slightly behind Jiang Ruyi to her right.

On Jiang Ruyi's left stood Song Yu, the middle-aged man who had approached her for guidance earlier.

Jiang Ruyi looked at the three people across from her: "As fellow Jade Talisman Believers, I can be your Junior Sister, but I'm not your subordinate, nor do I owe you anything."

On the contrary, I am your savior.

Now, you can thank me."

Her words, every syllable deliberate, left the two behind Meng Zhixuan blushing furiously.

Jiang Ruyi was undeniably stronger, armed with her Divine Weapon, and their shared hardship made her contributions incontestable.

It was Meng Zhixuan who had ingrained this notion into the team.

Was he wrong?

Whether right or wrong, it didn't justify complacency from those under protection.

"Junior Sister Jiang, thank you for saving my life!" Jade Talisman disciple Zhu Yuan placed her hands together and spoke immediately.

"Much appreciated," Zhang Zhenghu said, though his expression seemed slightly awkward.

"Enough, Junior Sister." Meng Zhixuan quickly interjected. "I have no intention of stealing credit from you!"

It's just that my approach was flawed earlier, overly hasty. Let's leave this place first, find a safe spot, and then discuss things properly."

Faced with the danger, Meng Zhixuan had no choice but to back down.

The peril of the Holy Spirit Mountain Realm had far exceeded his expectations.

This blade named Jiang Ruyi—he must wield it. If he couldn't control her, then at least he had to travel alongside her!

Leverage her to the fullest!

Jiang Ruyi suddenly smiled, though her exquisite face remained hidden behind a veil: "I saw how Chu Tianyun died."

Meng Zhixuan's chest tightened: "That was an accident—no one wanted something like that to happen!"

"Hah!"

Suddenly, eight Golden Jade Talismans emanated from Jiang Ruyi's body.

Meng Zhixuan instinctively took a step back.

The Golden Jade Talismans spun past An Xian and Song Yu, who stood behind Jiang Ruyi, without touching them.

Once the Divine Technique·Golden Jade Eight Talismans advanced to the River Grade, the caster could control them freely.

Meng Zhixuan immediately understood Jiang Ruyi's intent and said angrily: "The situation was urgent, and the Sand River Doll attacked suddenly!"

Junior Sister, how can you maliciously interpret my actions like this?

We're all brothers and sisters who have endured life and death together—I would never deliberately push Brother Chu forward!"

Jiang Ruyi spoke softly: "Instinctive reactions reveal true nature."

Meng Zhixuan: !!!

He had never imagined that the usually quiet Jiang Ruyi would wield words with such precision!

One sentence was enough to pin him on the pillar of guilt!

Chapter 532: Wait for me! \_2

The man and woman behind Meng Zhixuan also had eyes filled with uncertainty.

In the face of a great crisis, some grudges should be set aside.

Some matters should be buried deep in the heart!

What's more, Meng Zhixuan's explanation was reasonable. After the crisis was resolved, he indeed displayed genuine sorrow, far from being an act.

However, Jiang Ruyi... didn't seem to buy it.

Jiang Ruyi stared directly into Meng Zhixuan's eyes: "Leave!

Being teammates with someone who seeks power and is selfish..."

Meng Zhixuan quickly interrupted: "Utter nonsense! How can you slander me like this?"

Jiang Ruyi pretended not to hear, and added: "You disgust me."

Meng Zhixuan roared angrily, his hand falling to the sword hilt at his waist: "Impudence!"

Jiang Ruyi showed no trace of fear, still staring coldly at him.

In her beautiful eyes, there was a faint trace of killing intent: "I won't kill you because we are both Jade Talisman Believers, working to fulfill the task given by the Jade Talisman Lord.

Leave. This is the last time I'm warning you."

Jiang Ruyi might seem impulsive, but this was actually the result of careful consideration.

Much like everybody else, Jiang Ruyi carried a touch of arrogance.

That arrogance stemmed from the Human World!

Back in Da Xia, everyone present here was a Great Power, revered by the masses.

Their combat prowess was so exceptional that arrogance was inevitable.

However, after arriving in the Holy Spirit Mountain Realm, these so-called River Realm Great Powers were utterly humbled!

Jiang Ruyi quickly realized that remaining indifferent to worldly affairs would not suffice!

On her own, finding Lu Ran was nearly impossible.

She might not even manage to see the ocean before dying midway!

Jiang Ruyi completely transformed her approach—she needed allies!

The Jade Talisman disciples present did not know each other prior, and their partnership existed due to a singular tie—the identity of being Jade Talisman Believers.

Thus, Jiang Ruyi could not attack Meng Zhixuan.

She maintained incredible composure and clear logic, strategically showcasing her recognition of the "Jade Talisman Believer" identity!

It wasn't merely a reassurance for the disciples present; it was also a recruitment notice!

"Senior Brother Meng, Junior Sister Jiang, we..." Zhu Yuan stepped forward, intending to smooth things over.

Jiang Ruyi looked at her: "Senior Sister Zhu Yuan may go along with him; I won't stop you.

But you should be cautious. Next time there's a crisis, take a guess—will your Senior Brother Meng push you forward?"

"Crack!" With a sound, the treasured sword was drawn!

"Jiang Ruyi!" Meng Zhixuan's face darkened, his voice sharp, "You have insulted me repeatedly! I've ignored it out of consideration for your youth and immaturity.

As your Senior Brother, I've swallowed my rage and prioritized the greater good, even with our lives at stake, all for the task entrusted by the Jade Talisman Lord!

Don't be ungrateful and push me too far!"

Jiang Ruyi remained with her hands behind her back, coldly staring at Meng Zhixuan, and said calmly:

"Scram."

"Buzz!!" At Jiang Ruyi's waist, Cold Night Sword trembled violently, as if it could be drawn at any moment.

Both Jiang Ruyi's realm and the Divine Weapon she carried posed immense threats.

Yet Jiang Ruyi had one more ability that struck fear!

Over the past several days, everyone had witnessed the strength of Jiang Ruyi's martial arts!

Due to the unique attributes of the Jade Talisman Sect's Divine Technique, disciples who entered the sect followed one of two development paths.

One could become a "Mage" specializing in ranged attacks.

Or a close-combat "Martial Artist."

And Jiang Ruyi...

This seemingly delicate and slender woman was, incredibly, an unparalleled master of swordsmanship!

Her close-combat skills were absurdly powerful!

It was hard to fathom how such a young woman could possess such skill.

She was undoubtedly gifted.

But she must also have learned from a renowned teacher!

Evidently, Lu Ran had arranged for an exceptional swordsmanship teacher, Cheng Li, to train his fiancée—Mountain Master's Lady—and elevate her close-combat prowess to a staggering level!

Cheng Li, the elder, was one of the original battle Sheep!

He was among the generation that followed the Immortal Sheep Lord in creating the world; his power is no laughing matter!

"You..." Meng Zhixuan tried to say something further.

Jiang Ruyi narrowed her beautiful eyes slightly, then suddenly took a step forward, drawing her sword.

Without any warning!

Meng Zhixuan's pupils contracted wildly!

He hurled himself backward, activating the Golden Jade Eight Talismans instantly.

In a flash, his figure darted between the pair standing behind him.

Zhang Zhenghu and Zhu Yuan, of course, were no amateurs either; they evaded instinctively, but Meng Zhixuan's Golden Jade Eight Talismans inevitably brushed against them.

"Whoosh!!"

The wind roared, and Jiang Ruyi's long dress swirled lightly.

She simply took a step forward, then stopped, her gaze sweeping past the dodging pair.

Zhang Zhenghu's face was grim, while Zhu Yuan rubbed her forearm, struck by the Golden Jade Talisman, her eyes lowered.

The answer was once again proven.

In the simplest and most direct manner.

Meng Zhixuan's face turned ashen!

He stared fixedly at the white-robed woman standing motionless—even her Divine Weapon half-drawn receded back into its sheath.

Behind Jiang Ruyi, Song Yu stepped forward.

With his tall, lean physique and a face sharp as a blade, his cold, profound gaze pierced deeply.

His voice was chillingly cold: "Junior Sister Jiang is merciful. Out of respect for our shared sect, she merely wants you gone.

If you dare to continue pestering her, I will act on her behalf."

Jiang Ruyi's eyebrows subtly rose, nearly imperceptibly.

She dared execute this series of maneuvers because she had confidence.

Whether in terms of personal strength, her influence, or the twenty-plus days of care and kindness she extended to the team members.

Jiang Ruyi was certain her teammate, Song Yu, would stand by her side.

But she hadn't expected Song Yu to react so strongly!

So... was this his pledge of allegiance?

Interestingly, Song Yu was at the Jiang Realm-Third Rank—the same rank as Meng Zhixuan—also among the top combatants in the ten-person group, apart from Jiang Ruyi.

Previously, under Meng Zhixuan's deliberate cover and camaraderie, Song Yu had served as Jiang Ruyi's team leader.

However, as the days of survival passed, in this power-dominated world, Song Yu smoothly transferred his "position."

He became one of Jiang Ruyi's generals, obeying her commands unquestioningly.

"Fine, fine, fine!" Meng Zhixuan gritted his teeth, "Jiang Ruyi, you're full of yourself, Song Yu, you're all in collusion!"

I will report everything to the Jade Talisman Lord as is!"

Song Yu's face darkened, and he advanced abruptly, his blade unsheathing from his waist.

Meng Zhixuan panicked internally and flew backward.

After so many days together, Meng Zhixuan had a general understanding—this guy was genuinely ruthless!

Absolutely willing to kill!

"Ding~ Ding~ Ding!"

A flurry of crisp clashes echoed endlessly.

Golden Jade Eight Talismans versus Golden Jade Eight Talismans!

As for the Electric Shackles Talisman, Bursting Flame Talisman, Frost Talisman, Quicksand Talisman, and the like...

Completely useless.

With the same mentor, how could anyone outmatch one another?

"Ding!"

Song Yu's blade slashed straight toward Meng Zhixuan.

Meng Zhixuan blocked desperately with his sword, shouting angrily: "Are you insane? You dare...ah?!"

His rage turned to a cry of sheer terror.

Because the Cold Night Sword was stabbing toward him fiercely, slicing through the air with an intimidating sound.

That Divine Weapon's presence was simply overwhelming!

Back at the Stone Pillar Forest, countless Evil Demons fell at its edge!

Meng Zhixuan's heart wavered, while Song Yu's eyes gleamed coldly. With a sharp flick of his wrist, the blade harshly slashed against Meng Zhixuan's shoulder.

"Screech..."

The Jade Talisman Sect didn't specialize in strength-enhancing techniques, and Song Yu's blade was merely ordinary.

Thus, his attack left only a faint scratch on Meng Zhixuan's Water Flow Armor.

Nonetheless, after the strike, Song Yu followed promptly with a whipping kick from his left leg!

"Thud!"

Meng Zhixuan's waist buckled, as his Golden Jade Eight Talismans went flying in rapid succession.

Song Yu's Golden Jade Eight Talismans instantly returned to their rightful position.

"Senior Brother Song." Jiang Ruyi unexpectedly spoke.

Song Yu was about to press further but halted abruptly upon hearing her.

Under his intense glare, Meng Zhixuan dared not linger for even a moment, seizing the momentum from being struck to flee hurriedly.

Jiang Ruyi raised her hand, gripping the returning Cold Night Sword, coldly watching as Meng Zhixuan fled into the distance.

For a long time, she scanned the group around her.

Some lowered their eyes; others smiled amicably.

Jiang Ruyi knew that from this moment forth, these four were her core team.

Their ideals could be gradually aligned, and their loyalty slowly cultivated.

Nothing pressing to worry about.

"Heh..." Jiang Ruyi exhaled softly, looking up at the sky and the Cloud Sea.

She wondered how Lu Ran was faring.

One must prepare for the worst...

She truly needed to form a solid team to find him and help him survive better in this cruel world.

Lu Ran,

wait for me.

### Chapter 533: Lady's Name

"Captain Jiang, keeping this person around will only bring trouble," Song Yu returned.

Jiang Ruyi softly said, "We are all disciples under Lord Jade Talisman, gathering Holy Spirit Energy here to honor the great God.

Let him go; even if he can gather just a wisp more of Holy Spirit Energy for Lord Jade Talisman, we disciples would have fulfilled our duty."

Though those were the words from her lips, deep in her heart, she knew well that the potential threat needed to be eliminated.

Except such words, while Song Yu could say them, Jiang Ruyi, who aspired to lead, absolutely could not.

What Jiang Ruyi spared was not Meng Zhixuan's life but the unwavering allegiance and loyalty of everyone else—Song Yu, Zhang Zhenghu, Zhu Yuan, and An Xian included.

This group of people had started out as complete strangers with no prior connections, bound together solely by their shared identity as Jade Talisman believers.

That shared identity was the weapon Jiang Ruyi considered herself to hold in her grasp.

But it was a double-edged sword!

She had to wield it cautiously.

From another perspective, if Jiang Ruyi were to kill a fellow disciple for personal power struggles, the hearts of those around her would undeniably fracture.

In the fledgling stages of establishing a force, everything remained unstable.

Once upon a time, Liu Bang, the first Emperor of Han, willingly gritted his teeth and forgave his traitorous old acquaintance Yong Chi to demonstrate magnanimity as a leader and stabilize morale—surely she could let a fellow disciple go as well.

"Captain Jiang, what's our next move?" An Xian quietly asked.

"Let's leave this desolate wasteland first," Jiang Ruyi gazed toward the east. "This region is exceedingly dangerous."

Speaking as she activated the Jade Talisman Formation around her, Jiang Ruyi slowly ascended into flight.

The others promptly took to the sky as well.

Jiang Ruyi strategically commanded, "Senior Brother Song and Senior Brother Zhang will take the front left and right, while Senior Sister Zhu and Little Xian guard the rear.

I'll stay in the center to coordinate and respond as needed."

"Yes!"

"Understood." Led by Song Yu and An Xian, Zhang Zhenghu and Zhu Yuan chorused their agreement.

Song Yu was at Jiang Realm Third Rank, Zhang Zhenghu and Zhu Yuan at Second Rank, and An Xian at First Rank.

Coupled with their leader Jiang Ruyi at Fourth Rank, the team was reasonably formidable in strength.

While flying, Jiang Ruyi spoke up, "Do any of you know Lu Ran?"

"Of course!" An Xian, ever direct, replied while looking at Jiang Ruyi's back. "Who doesn't know of Lu Tianjiao's name!"

"The Pride of Da Xia, renowned far and wide."

Jiang Ruyi listened to their voices and nodded, "He's also here in this realm."

"Oh?" Zhang Zhenghu, leading at the right front, turned to look at his junior sister and asked, "Do you know where Lu Tianjiao might be?"

Everyone instantly pricked up their ears.

The news was unquestionably thrilling!

Lu Ran's strength, undeniable to all who bore witness to it!

His collection of Divine Weapons and Magic Artifacts was enough to leave anyone speechless.

Furthermore, due to his association with \*Heavenly Pride\*, Lu Ran carried a significantly positive reputation—in fact, one could say he had the endorsement of Da Xia!

For any Da Xia individual, Lu Ran could serve as their backing!

To say nothing of the fact that Jiang Ruyi was part of their squad.

Lu Ran, the Human World Sect Master of the Immortal Sheep Sect and the Lord of Luoxian Mountain!

Jiang Ruyi was his childhood companion, his fiancée, and famously recognized as Lady Luo Xian!

Whether for smoother task execution or improved survival odds, the team should seek to ally themselves with Lu Ran.

"Not sure exactly," Jiang Ruyi sighed softly.

At this, everyone couldn't help but feel disappointed.

But then Jiang Ruyi continued, "He might be somewhere near the sea."

"The sea..." Zhu Yuan's heart sank to the depths.

Glancing at their surroundings, it was nothing but desolation.

They seemed worlds away from the sea!

Jiang Ruyi pressed on, "Friends, let's complete the mission entrusted to us by Lord Jade Talisman while searching for Lu Ran.

If we can rendezvous with him and work together on the task, it would provide everyone an additional layer of security."

"Exactly, that's the way forward!"

"Agreed!" Several voices echoed in support.

While their plan was still far from concrete, merely knowing Lu Ran was in the realm was enough to soothe their spirits slightly and offer some hope.

Their group of five advanced eastward.

Seeking a safe resting spot, half an hour later, they unexpectedly stumbled upon something familiar.

"No way... please no!" An Xian's voice carried a note of terror.

In the distant east appeared the stone pillar terrain once more?

Those sky-piercing pillars had already become their nightmares.

Jiang Ruyi promptly ordered, "We'll go around it, avoid the stone pillar forest."

"Understood, Lady Luo Xian," Song Yu replied.

Lady?

The title gave everyone pause for a moment.

Even Jiang Ruyi lifted her brows slightly.

This "man of few words" Song Yu certainly had his moments.

He didn't dwell on past glories or revel in the times when he stood revered by thousands in the Human World.

Undoubtedly, Song Yu's understanding of his current circumstances was sharper!

While some people still mistakenly clung to formalities, addressing Jiang Ruyi as "Junior Sister," ...

Song Yu subtly reminded everyone of the true state of affairs.

Moreover, when Jiang Ruyi sought control of the team at the start, Song Yu was the first to pledge allegiance.

Without hesitating over what his fellow disciples might think, he wielded his blade against Meng Zhixuan!

Before returning, he made sure to audibly state one thing for Jiang Ruyi and everyone to hear: "Keeping him would only bring trouble!"

From beginning to now, with smooth leadership transitions to his calculated actions, Song Yu undoubtedly showcased his agreement and acknowledgment of Jiang Ruyi as the leader.

"Whew~"

Flying at the front left, Song Yu signaled Zhang Zhenghu on the opposite side to shift directions and then glanced back at An Xian.

An Xian, unclear of his intentions, silently flew her course.

Meanwhile, Zhu Yuan spoke up, "Junior Sister Jiang is Lu Tianjiao's wife, widely known as Lady Luo Xian. It's a fitting title."

An Xian finally caught on and quickly chimed, "Ah, yes, correct!"

To survive in a hostile realm like this, one naturally needed a pillar of reliance.

Jiang Ruyi was the team's current reliance; Lu Ran was their future reliance.

Previously, when Jiang Ruyi confronted Meng Zhixuan, she had forcefully asserted her stance.

She displayed her significant achievements and made it clear she was no subordinate.

Even brazenly declared: "Now, you may offer your thanks."

It was evident what Jiang Ruyi wanted and what kind of person she was—all eyes could see.

And the title "Lady Luo Xian" certainly carried greater respect.

"Hmm." Jiang Ruyi acknowledged with a subtle nod, her gaze lingering on Song Yu for a brief moment.

A mere shift in title brought tremendous advantage to her in establishing authority.

Jiang Ruyi accepted the sentiment behind Song Yu's gesture.

"Mas... Lady," Zhang Zhenghu hesitated but ultimately changed his words, then said, "There seems to be people over there!"

"Hmm?" Jiang Ruyi directed her gaze afar.

Upon further observation, she indeed noticed figures at the edge of the stone pillar forest.

"Looks like a group of Shanwei believers!" Zhang Zhenghu's piercing tiger-like eyes gleamed. "They appear to be battling Fang-faced beings!"

God Shanwei, ranked fourth in Da Xia's pantheon of gods.

Its form was human-like but entirely composed of mountain stone.

The deity lacked facial features, and streams of Divine Power flowed like water through the rugged stones comprising its body.

To this day, people debated whether to classify Shanwei as a humanoid god or an object-type deity.

The Shanwei Sect was largely support-focused, known for its prowess in defense and control, albeit lacking much in offensive capabilities.

Its believers were typically staunch and reliable, making excellent allies!

Hence Zhang Zhenghu's brightened demeanor.

"Lady, should we check it out?" Zhang Zhenghu turned to Jiang Ruyi and smoothly continued calling her "Lady." "This sect's offensive capabilities are somewhat lacking.

If we lend them a hand, we could also use the opportunity to form some ties."

In the realm of God Demons, you could trust stereotypes entirely!

For example, when encountering an Immortal Sheep Believer, you could immediately assume they were soft and easily bullied.

There was a 99% likelihood you'd be right!

Similarly, upon meeting Shanwei Believers, you could instantly regard them as dependable and loyal!

"Alright," Jiang Ruyi nodded lightly. "Let's take a look."

Encountering Human Clan comrades battling Evil Demons certainly warranted assistance.

And if the situation allowed, they might even gather critical intelligence about Holy Spirit Mountain, deepening their understanding further.

The Da Xia ideology embedded within Jiang Ruyi drove this decision, with full support from her team.

Evidently, as newcomers to this realm constantly fighting Evil Demons, they had yet to encounter the Human Clan faction.

None of them realized just how grotesque or merciless Holy Spirit Mountain could be...

"Boom—rumble!"

The edge of the stone pillar forest was a place shaken violently by combat.

As the saying goes, mortal enemies collide, emotions run high!

The Shanwei Sect and the Fang-faced beings were mortal adversaries.

Six Shanwei disciples were locked in fierce combat against eight Fang-faced beings.

"Trap him, trap him!" A middle-aged man commanded sharply, both hands slowly lifting.

"Buzz!!"

The earth trembled as stone and soil surged upward.

A dome constructed of rubble and sand instantly enveloped a Fang-faced being.

Shanwei Divine Technique: Stone Earth Prison!

"Argh! Arghhh!!" Within the stone prison, the Fang-faced being roared enraged.

Wielding an energy-forged Wolf Fang Club, the creature viciously struck at the inner walls of the prison, bursts of cyan energy erupting continuously.

Evil Technique: Stone Fragment Blast!

Yet the prison merely trembled loudly, showing no signs of breaking—testament to its remarkable sturdiness!

"Da Yong, await my signal!"

"I'm ready!" replied a man named Da Yong, poised in a sprinting stance toward the prison.

Armor covered his body, composed entirely of stone slabs.

Armor?

Stone slabs spaced neatly and large enough to enlarge the wearer's frame significantly—it was nearly akin to "miniature mech armor!"

Shanwei Divine Technique: Mountain Stone Armor!

The technique came with clear advantages and downsides: phenomenal defensive power at the cost of immense weight.

So heavy it hindered physical movement.

"3...2...1!" Following the countdown, Da Yong launched himself forward with explosive force.

Like a cannonball in motion!

Indeed, while wearing Mountain Stone Armor, the Shanwei disciples were incredibly cumbersome.

But in this moment, Da Yong did not need agility—he only needed to charge and penetrate!

"Whoosh~" The Stone Prison abruptly dissipated.

"Huh?" The Fang-faced being, mid-swing with its Wolf Fang Club, hit nothing but air, just as a terrifying momentum assaulted its side!

The Fang-faced being whipped its head to look—only to see the formidable "stone figure" barreling toward it!

Fang-faced being: !!!

Thump—a muffled crash erupted as the creature was brutally knocked flying.

It must be said, the Shanwei Believers' offensive techniques were genuinely sparse.

Just how sparse?

Poor Shanwei disciples found themselves forced to activate defensive techniques just to body-slam their opponents...

Chapter 534: Hosting to welcome and refresh?

Boom!

The Fanged Man didn't even have the chance to let out a wail before being smashed into pieces by Shi Yong, whose body was cloaked in Stone Armor.

Shi Yong's feet stomped heavily on the ground, unable to stop his momentum, sliding forward uncontrollably.

"Roar!"

Another Fanged Man saw his companion's gruesome death and immediately let out an angry roar.

Watching Shi Yong slide toward him, the Fanged Man began casting a spell without hesitation.

In an instant, countless fragments of stones churned in the air, swept along by a cyanial demonic wind.

Fanged Tribe's Evil Technique-Shattered Stone Chaos!

This technique could stir up shards of rocks and summon a demonic wind to disrupt the energy flow of all targets in the area.

"Da Yong!" a woman cried out, watching as chunks of Shi Yong's Mountain Stone Armor peeled away piece by piece.

Along with it, the Water Flow Armor within the Mountain Stone Armor became highly unstable.

If this continued, Shi Yong would be exposed and meet the Fanged Man's Wolf Fang Club with nothing but flesh and blood!

One must know, the god Shanwei was ranked fourth precisely due to its unrivaled defensive capabilities!

Not only superb physical defense, but the Shanwei Sect also excelled in Spirit Defense Techniques.

Even when isolated deep in enemy territory, the believers of this sect displayed no fear.

"My sect specializes in defense. What can you even do to us?"

But the Fanged Tribe... they didn't aim to break the armor!

Instead, they disrupted spellcasting, rendering Shanwei believers' defensive techniques ineffective.

It was a form of dimensional suppression.

"Huff!"

A female disciple of Shanwei, clad in "mini stone-mecha" with divine power coursing through her, suddenly erupted.

Shanwei Divine Technique·Stone Power!

Her muscular thighs tensed, and with a forceful stomp, she launched herself like a cannonball.

"Roar!" The Fanged Man roared again, his gaze fixed on Shi Yong, oblivious to the approaching death.

The female disciple of Shanwei charged into the demonic whirlwind of stones. Her own armor fragmented piece by piece, but her fists remained ironclad!

To clarify:

Techniques like Shattered Stone Chaos and Blood Sea Chaos were only designed to disrupt enemy spellcasting, causing divine energy within their bodies to go awry.

They did not outright forbid casting techniques!

Yet techniques like Stone Power and Fierce Heavenly Power required users to agitate the divine energy in their bodies during the casting process.

A bizarre phenomenon unfolded!

The more the Fanged Man tried to disrupt her spellcasting, the smoother the female disciple's usage of Shanwei's Divine Technique·Stone Power became...

"Bang!!"

As Shi Yong was still skidding to a halt, the female disciple's small fist clenched tightly and exploded the Fanged Man's head with a direct punch.

Blood and flesh splattered all over the female disciple.

"Fangling!" Shi Yong called out in alarm.

Wan Fangling shot through the air, crashing into a towering stone pillar.

Honestly, if an ordinary person crashed into such a grand stone pillar at that speed...

They'd be reduced to nothing but pulp!

Fortunately, Wan Fangling was a Great Power of the River Realm, and her body's resilience far exceeded that of ordinary folk.

"Rumble!"

Wan Fangling was... tenacious.

To avoid being passively slammed, she chose to attack actively instead!

Her small hands clenched into fists, pounding into the stone pillar like iron hammers.

"Ugh!"

Wan Fangling let out a muffled groan.

Her momentum was too fierce, and her strength too overwhelming.

By the time she had crossed through the demonic stone whirlwind, her Water Flow Armor was already on the verge of dispersing. Now, it completely shattered.

In an instant, her fists became bloodied and mangled.

"Roar!" The Fanged Man's furious howl echoed again.

Two long fangs materialized out of thin air, blocking Wan Fangling's flight path.

"Sword! Enemy attack!"

At that very moment, a startling cry rang out.

Gu Zhang, the team leader, grimaced and barked out orders: "Retreat! Get out of Ten Thousand Blade Mountain's area, don't engage with the Fanged—what?"

Gu Zhang flinched.

Indeed, a sword was streaking through the air, but it wasn't from the Flying Sword techniques of the Sword Sect. It was a Black Ice Sword?

A Divine Weapon?!

Gu Zhang's heart sank with a foreboding sense of doom!

But what surprised him was that the divine weapon didn't slaughter indiscriminately. Instead, it pierced through a Fanged Man's skull.

And that Fanged Man was the one casting Evil Technique·Fanged Strike against Wan Fangling!

"Squelch!"

The blade drove deep into the Fanged Man's skull, carrying the body as it flew into a towering stone pillar.

The two materialized fangs lost their master's control before striking.

Wan Fangling narrowly escaped, darting between the fangs.

"Kill." A cold female voice rang out.

Gu Zhang tensed, turning his head sharply.

At the edge of Ten Thousand Blade Mountain, several disciples of the Jade Talisman Sect soared into view like descending gods, flinging White Jade Stone Tokens.

"Boom!"

"Rumble..." Bursting Flame Talismans erupted one after another.

Fanged Men were consumed by the sea of flames, their bodies flung into the air by the shockwaves, leaving a trail of blood and wails.

In less than thirty seconds, the Fanged Men were completely annihilated.

Forming a defensive formation, Gu Zhang and his three companions warily observed the disciples of the Jade Talisman Sect.

Meanwhile, Shi Yong hurried to Wan Fangling's side, helping his beloved to her feet.

Ultimately, everyone's gaze locked onto a woman in white robes.

Her celestial presence and imposing aura were undeniable.

Although her face was hidden behind a white veil, her revealed features suggested stunning beauty.

As the Black Ice Sword slowly returned to the scabbard at her waist, Gu Zhang couldn't help but swallow nervously.

"Thank you, Daoist, for your timely assistance!" Shi Yong exclaimed.

Beside him, Wan Fangling nudged Shi Yong's elbow slightly.

"You're too polite." Jiang Ruyi hovered in mid-air, her keen eyes catching the subtle gesture.

However, what puzzled her was the intense hostility emanating from Wan Fangling, the bloodied middle-aged woman.

The four Shanwei believers below were equally hostile, their gazes even carrying murderous intent!

Why?

After all, the Jade Talisman team had just lent them a hand.

If it were simple vigilance, that could be understood.

But this latent killing intent...

Was this a normal reaction?

Below, Gu Zhang's eyes flickered slightly as thoughts churned in his mind.

Do they really harbor no killing intent?

Judging by the state of their tattered clothing, they likely hadn't been in this realm for long.

If that's the case, everything made sense!

Gu Zhang's gaze swept past the black-and-gold scabbard and hilt before him. He cupped his hands and bowed. "Dare I ask, Daoist, is this your first time in this realm?"

Jiang Ruyi looked down at the man. "What makes you think so?"

Gu Zhang gave a self-deprecating laugh, gesturing to his own ragged attire.

Jiang Ruyi remained silent.

Gu Zhang noted her response and continued, "This place isn't safe. We should withdraw from the territory of Ten Thousand Blade Mountain."

"Alright." Jiang Ruyi lifted her gaze, surveying the dense forest of towering stone pillars.

So, this terrain of "stone pillar forests" was called Ten Thousand Blade Mountain?

The name certainly fit.

Jiang Ruyi turned and began flying westward.

Gu Zhang motioned for his team to follow, his eyes once again lingering subtly on the Divine Weapon at Jiang Ruyi's waist.

Before long, the two groups exited Ten Thousand Blade Mountain and stopped near a massive rock several hundred meters away.

"Thank you, Daoists, for your invaluable assistance!" This time, it was Gu Zhang who spoke up.

Jiang Ruyi waved her hand lightly.

Usually reserved, she uncharacteristically spoke a long sentence, accompanied by an unprecedented gentle smile:

"We were merely passing through. Upon seeing human compatriots battling against evil demons, how could we possibly stand idly by?"

Her words caused two Shanwei believers' faces to twist into strange expressions.

Among them was Shi Yong.

He glanced toward his wife, who was silently using her Water Flow Armor to cleanse her injuries with divine energy.

Jiang Ruyi maintained her composed demeanor, yet inwardly, a chill ran down her spine!

Something was off!

Her words appeared to contradict their beliefs?

At least, they clashed with the ideals of two Shanwei disciples!

Why?

Shouldn't human compatriots help each other in times of need?

Gu Zhang hastily smiled, "Daoists are new to this realm, so I assume you're unfamiliar with the ways of Holy Spirit Mountain.

If you don't mind, why not return with us? We can act as hosts and introduce you to the general situation here, while also offering you a proper welcome."

Hearing this, Shi Yong glanced at Gu Zhang.

Play host? Offer a proper welcome?

What a joke! Holy Spirit Mountain has no such traditions!

Gu Zhang... surely has his eyes on this group.

Shi Yong hesitated silently before looking toward his wife.

Wan Fangling continued cleaning her hands using the Water Flow Armor, completely unresponsive.

"Do you know which direction the ocean lies?" Jiang Ruyi suddenly asked.

Rather than responding, she changed the subject.

Gu Zhang paused for a moment before shaking his head. "When Lord Shanwei transported us here, we landed in this area. We haven't ventured very far since."

Jiang Ruyi seemed deep in thought, her hands clasped behind her back. "Are there any nearby towns or gathering places of our human compatriots?"

Gu Zhang shook his head again. "Likely not, or at least, none that I've found."

As he spoke, he scanned around cautiously, stepping back slightly.

Gu Zhang wrapped his arms around two of his teammates, adopting a comradely posture while smiling bitterly, "We lack strength and were trapped in this area surrounded by Ten Thousand Blade Mountain without the ability to wander far."

Ever since Lord Shanwei sent us here, we've been barely scraping by together."

Observing this gesture, Jiang Ruyi sneered internally.

Her hands remained clasped behind her back, yet her right index finger twitched subtly, as if tracing some unseen pattern.

The four individuals standing behind Jiang Ruyi immediately noticed a faint spark of flame appearing at her fingertip.

An Xian couldn't help but feel perplexed.

This...? Was Lady Jiang preparing to...?

Gu Zhang continued to press his invitation, "Valiant Daoists, this place is far from safe. At any moment, demonic clans could emerge from Ten Thousand Blade Mountain. It's better to come back with us to Shanwei's domain, where you can settle down before we discuss anything further."

"Alright." Surprisingly, Jiang Ruyi consented.

Gu Zhang narrowed his eyes slightly, studying the ethereal woman before him. Through her enigmatic gaze, he felt he had gleaned some insight.

Or rather, certain reactions from Jiang Ruyi's entourage had tipped him off.

However, at this stage...

The arrow had left the string—it could no longer be stopped!

Gu Zhang had a premonition: Even if he wanted to halt proceedings, this highly intuitive and sharp-witted woman wouldn't let it happen!

Jiang Ruyi nodded slightly and smiled. "Lead the way."

Gu Zhang gestured slightly behind Jiang Ruyi's party, saying, "That direction."

"Hm?" Jiang Ruyi seemed to sidestep, suddenly hurling a Bursting Flame Talisman.

Gu Zhang's divine energy surged as he reacted almost instantly!

Shanwei Divine Technique·Stone Power!

Gu Zhang grabbed two teammates, using them as projectiles to hurl fiercely toward the front.

"Boom!!"

The Bursting Flame Talisman detonated with a deafening explosion.

A sea of terrifying flames swept forward, with an intense blast shockwave rippling outward.

Jiang Ruyi's gaze turned icy as she soared backwards, rapidly layering Golden Jade Talismans to create a stack of one-meter-wide Golden Jade Shields.

"Crack! Crack! Crack..."

The flames and explosion shockwave slowed the Shanwei disciples but ultimately couldn't block their ferocious charge!

Under the immense power of Stone Power, the two Shanwei disciples smashed through one Golden Jade Shield after another.

When facing the Fanged Men, the Shanwei believers treaded carefully.

But facing human compatriots?

The Shanwei believers turned brutally aggressive!

However, Jiang Ruyi's swift divine techniques had created a brief window for her group.

Everyone quickly flew skywards.

"You motherf\*\*\*er!" Zhang Zhenghu erupted in fury, losing his usual Jade Talisman Sect composure.  
"We helped you out, and this is your way of repaying us?"

Jiang Ruyi's long dress billowed, her flowing hair drifting forward.

For a fleeting moment, her cold stare mirrored someone else's equally chilling gaze.

Gu Zhang's face turned dark, filled with regret and anger!

If only... If only they had struck sooner...

It wasn't supposed to be like this!

At such close range, powered by Stone Power, hurling two hefty "cannonballs" should have obliterated two of their enemies at the very least.

In fact, by their planned trajectory, those two teammates should have crushed three or four opponents!

But now...

Gu Zhang's pupils constricted slightly!

High above, the woman in the white dress extended her delicate hand, sending White Jade Stone Tokens shooting downward in a rapid assault.

"Swoosh~ Swoosh~!"

...

### Chapter 535: Surrender?

"Hurry up and go!" Wan Fangling whispered, her feet propelling her forward as she dragged Shi Yong away swiftly.

But all around was an endless desert, with no cover in sight, so where could they escape to?

The answer is... Ten Thousand Blade Mountain!

"You two!!" Gu Zhang was also retreating quickly, but he was furious as he looked at the couple fleeing the battlefield, "Running to Ten Thousand Blade Mountain means death as well!"

Get back here and fight the enemy!"

The couple had been in the Holy Spirit Mountain Realm for less than two months.

They had been with the Mountain Breaking Gang for even less time, less than two weeks, and they didn't feel much allegiance.

Compared to the so-called gang, the two clearly cared more about each other.

"Puff!"

A White Jade Stone dropped to the ground, even though Gu Zhang had run dozens of meters away, but this White Jade Stone... was a Quicksand Talisman!

In an instant, the desolate land transformed into a roiling Sand River.

"Stand there." Jiang Ruyi's cold voice was penetrating, "Surrender and you won't be killed."

Wan Fangling's movements stiffened instantly.

The couple had started their escape earlier, and due to Jiang Ruyi's casting position, they happened to be on the banks of the wide Sand River.

Wan Fangling knew well that entering the Ten Thousand Blade Mountain territory was a path of near-certain death.

But what choice did she have?

Entering the mountains might mean death, but not entering... might also mean death!

Should she bet her life on this young woman's words being true?

Wan Fangling was caught in a dilemma, while on the other side, Gu Zhang....

He was caught in the flow direction of the Sand River and had long been engulfed by the swirling quicksand.

The defenses of the Shanwei Sect were indeed exceptional.

The Quicksand Talisman indeed couldn't crush the Mountain Stone Armor.

But this rushing Sand River could bury all living things alive, causing Gu Zhang to suffocate to death!

Isn't this a form of dimensional reduction attack?

I don't even challenge your defense!

I change the battle environment, depriving you of the right to breathe.

"Hoo!!"

Suddenly, a thick wall of mixed stone and earth rose high into the air.

The scene was particularly eerie!

If it were on flat ground, erecting a wall would be nothing noteworthy.

But in the midst of a turbulent Sand River, raising a stone-earth wall?

Shanwei Divine Technique · Mountain Stone Wall!

This technique was clearly defensive, but Gu Zhang was using it to escape.

Since the stone-earth wall was in the river's flow, as it rose, it was being tilted by the quicksand, on the brink of collapse.

Atop the stone-earth wall stood a tightly bound figure—Gu Zhang!

Thin lines of sand reached out from the Sand River like venomous snakes, entwining his body, dragging him down relentlessly.

The intent was to bury Gu Zhang alive!

"Ahhhh!" Gu Zhang, covered in Stone Armor, unleashed all his strength, tearing apart the binding sand lines with raw force.

Just then, another stone-earth wall sprang up.

Another Shanwei believer who had been engulfed also broke through the Sand River in the same manner.

Gu Zhang hurriedly leaped towards the second stone-earth wall, cursing angrily: "Get over here, damn it! They're Jade Talisman Believers, the coldest bunch!"

You really think they'll let you go! Damn!"

Jiang Ruyi's icy voice sounded again, with a hint of mockery: "You've lost the dignity of a River Realm Great Power, but I haven't."

I mean what I say."

Wan Fangling and Shi Yong exchanged glances, neither went to help nor continued to flee.

It was clear that the couple had made a decision.

Although it was a gamble, it was also a decision Wan Fangling made cautiously!

The Jade Talisman Sect is indeed cold-hearted, but the young woman obviously hadn't been in this realm for long.

She still held onto the life philosophies from the Human World, in Da Xia!

So... it's worth the gamble!

"Boom boom!"

"Boom boom..." From afar, explosions echoed continually from the battlefield.

Here, Jiang Ruyi was chasing down two enemies.

Meanwhile, two Shanwei believers previously used as cannon fodder by Gu Zhang were being blasted by four Jade Talisman disciples!

The ground here also had sand and mud flowing.

Song Yu seized the opportunity and blasted a Shanwei believer into the sky!

Shanwei believers... are truly tough!

One Bursting Flame Talisman after another hurled forth, unable to crack open the opponent's Mountain Stone Armor.

"Senior Brother!" An Xian hurried over, also casting Bursting Flame Talismans one after another.

"Stop, I surrender!" the man shouted desperately, "Don't, don't keep bombing upwards, please... show mercy, I surrender!!"

Song Yu's eyes were ruthless.

Now you want to surrender?

Too late!

When you tried to blast me just now, where was your mercy?

"Boom boom!" The Bursting Flame Talisman never stopped, and the sound of explosions was continuous.

Song Yu's fingers sketched symbols rapidly, keeping a tight lock on the enemy.

From afar, Wan Fangling witnessed this, her expression changing swiftly.

She suddenly placed both hands beside her mouth, forming an amplifier shape, loudly warning:  
"Danger! Don't fly high! It's dangerous!!"

Consider this a token of allegiance.

At least Wan Fangling was trying to increase her chances of survival.

The problem was, Song Yu was already very high up, the distance was too great, and the explosion noises were so loud...

"No! Please! I'm begging, I surrender! Don't go..."

Before the man could finish speaking, a surge of energy suddenly pulsated from the swirling Cloud Sea.

"Puff!!"

An almost invisible force crashed down, and the Shanwei believer exploded instantly.

Truly shattered to pieces!

Only specks of blood and fragments rained downward.

"Hmph." Song Yu snorted coldly.

He certainly knew what would happen if you continued flying skyward.

During the previous years of flight, one of his squadmates reduced in number was chased by a flock of Golden-winged Bats, fled upward frantically, trying to dive into the Cloud Sea.

However, before that person could get inside, he was blasted apart!

Along with the pursuing Golden-winged Bats, which were also decimated...

"Ah!" Although An Xian had mentally prepared herself, she still shivered in fright.

She was tens of meters below Song Yu and didn't dare chase too high without his ferocity.

Seeing the enemy was dead, she immediately turned and flew downwards.

The battle group below was not too chaotic.

Zhang Zhenghu and Zhu Yuan were tackling the "problem" together.

Unlike Song Yu and An Xian, Zhang Zhenghu here used Frost Talismans.

While the defensive power of the Mountain Stone Armor was exceptional, the Frost Talisman could infiltrate the stone armor's gaps, penetrate your Water Flow Armor...

And completely freeze your fleshy body!

The Jade Talisman Sect, wielding Four Elements Magic, was indeed strong, always finding a way to counter the enemy.

As for why no one used the Electric Shackles Talisman...

Because the Shanwei Sect is immune to lightning damage!

Their Mountain Stone Armor repels electricity.

Even without armor, as long as their feet touch the ground, they're unaffected by lightning!

The Shanwei Divine Technique · Stone Power draws energy from the earth.

Lightning-proof!

Song Yu didn't join the battle group below but instead flew in Jiang Ruyi's direction.

At this moment, the battle group around Jiang Ruyi had already revealed its outcome.

Initially, Gu Zhang still resisted and attempted to escape.

With each Frost Talisman Jiang Ruyi cast, Gu Zhang's already heavy stone-armored body grew increasingly stiff and sluggish, and the situation deteriorated rapidly!

Jiang Ruyi had completely gathered momentum, leaving Gu Zhang with only the last struggle.

Sometimes, the saying "the sooner you die, the sooner you're reborn" is quite accurate.

But Gu Zhang insisted on struggling.

In choosing between freezing to death and being buried alive, he opted for being buried alive while frozen...

"Heh..."

Gu Zhang, covered in frost, stepped on a protruding stone-earth wall, finally breaking the surface from the Sand River, taking a deep breath.

But as soon as he exhaled halfway, a Frost Talisman struck the stone helmet on his head.

The second half of his breath filled with frost.

"Cough cough, cough! Cough..."

Gu Zhang coughed violently, but a line of fine sand ensnared his ankle and dragged him back into the Sand River.

This time, it wasn't just a mouthful of frost; it was a mouthful of mud!

Jiang Ruyi stood in midair, her cold eyes overlooking the Sand River below.

Like a deity wielding the power of life and death in this domain.

Another Shanwei disciple was also struggling in the Sand Sea, once wanting to coordinate with Gu Zhang, but Jiang Ruyi forcefully tore them apart.

"Hoo~"

Jiang Ruyi lightly lifted her two fingers on her left hand.

A line of fine sand flicked out from the Sand River, throwing the frost-covered Gu Zhang out.

With a flick of her right hand, Jiang Ruyi hurled a Frost Talisman down towards Gu Zhang.

"I surr... render! I cough cough, cough... ugh!"

Gu Zhang no longer had the heart to curse.

He pleaded loudly, but his words were interrupted by coughing, and he was dragged underground once more by the fine sand lines, gagged by mud.

These fine sand lines could act autonomously or move according to Jiang Ruyi's will.

Previously, in the buffer zone of Evil Dog Village, when she accompanied Lu Ran in slaying the River Realm Demon Lord · Evil Dog, she relied on manipulating these fine sand lines to drag Lu Ran underground.

"Madam!" Song Yu arrived rapidly.

Jiang Ruyi's attitude towards enemies greatly pleased Song Yu!

Previously, Jiang Ruyi had spared Meng Zhixuan, which worried Song Yu somewhat.

Now, seeing Jiang Ruyi's combat stance, it seemed he had worried too much.

Come to think of it, Lady Luo Xian's choices must be a means to win people's hearts.

"Hmm." Jiang Ruyi flicked her finger.

From the Sand River, Gu Zhang was once again hurled out by the fine sand lines.

Song Yu, looking at the couple in the distance, asked for instructions: "What about those two people?"

"Keep them, I have questions to ask."

Jiang Ruyi spoke softly, flinging a Frost Talisman from her hand.

"No... I surr... cough cough, cough..." By now, Gu Zhang was frozen stiff, his brain muddled due to suffocation and lack of oxygen.

In such physical condition, how could he sustain the Mountain Stone Armor?

Covered in mud and frost, he was once again brutally hit in the face by a Frost Talisman.

Dense frost spread out, freezing this body of flesh and blood down to the bone.

"Buzz!" From Jiang Ruyi's waist, the Cold Night Sword shot out fiercely, piercing into the expanding frost mist.

There was no sound of the sword piercing flesh, but rather the sound of shattering.

As if an ice sculpture had been pierced and shattered...

Jiang Ruyi pressed her thin lips, silently gazing at the frost-covered region.

In the roiling Sand River, there had long been no stone-earth wall at this location, suggesting the other Shanwei disciple had been buried alive and killed.

This was Jiang Ruyi's first time killing fellow humans.

She was anticipating her inner response, only to find...

No ripples at all.

Was it that she had slain too many evil demons, and had long grown accustomed to killing?

Or was it because this was a counterattack, thus she felt no guilt at all?

Perhaps, after her ascension to the River Realm, she no longer regarded people as people?

Who knows...

She indeed cared about very few people.

Jiang Ruyi remained silent until the Cold Night Sword returned to its sheath, instructing: "Clean up the battlefield."

Song Yu, even more respectful, slightly bowed his head: "Yes."

Jiang Ruyi turned to look into the distance, her gaze fixing on the couple.

"Gulp." Shi Yong swallowed hard.

In the high sky, the woman, as cold as frost, was slowly flying over...

Chapter 536: Slaughterhouse

Jiang Ruyi's gaze enveloped the pair as she descended slowly from the sky.

"Take action, Brave," Wan Fangling whispered, lightly nudging her husband with her elbow before taking the lead in kneeling.

Shi Yong hesitated for a moment before lowering his head and obediently falling to his knees.

Jiang Ruyi frowned slightly.

Indeed, Shi Yong and Wan Fangling were captives, and it was fitting for them to lower their stature.

But kneeling?

Jiang Ruyi felt displeasure welling up inside her.

The pair were respected figures in the Vast River, revered and protectors of their own domains. Even as prisoners, shouldn't they retain their pride and integrity?

Such behavior—what a disgrace!

Being herself a person of the River Realm, Jiang Ruyi now felt ashamed to be associated with these two.

Silence blanketed the desolate land.

With the battle over, only the sound of wind stirring up sand echoed across the barren desert.

Jiang Ruyi didn't land. Instead, she hovered in midair, standing diagonally above the pair.

The disciples of the Shanwei Sect were akin to human bombs!

One must always be vigilant for such people to act out suddenly.

Jiang Ruyi remained deep in thought, saying nothing, merely lowering her head to fix her gaze upon the pair.

Wan Fangling grew increasingly anxious, her thoughts racing wildly as she spoke up proactively: "Thank you, my lady, for sparing our lives and for showing mercy."

Finally, Jiang Ruyi opened her mouth, speaking softly, "We bear no grudges and have even helped you. Why do you repay kindness with betrayal?"

Wan Fangling sighed inwardly, bowing her head respectfully as she replied, "Madam, you've only just arrived in this realm; you may not yet understand the rules of Holy Spirit Mountain."

"Explain them to me."

"Yes, Madam." Wan Fangling immediately began to speak.

Though the couple had been in Holy Spirit Mountain for only two months, they had experienced much.

Relying on the Shanwei Sect's powerful defense techniques, they had eked out a existence through constant displacement, joining small squads, affiliating with factions, and even serving as servants for two West Desolation believers.

As Wan Fangling spoke at length, the Jade Talisman disciples finished clearing the battlefield and gathered around.

The more they listened, the more astonished they became!

The more they listened, the darker Jiang Ruyi's expression grew.

To think that Holy Spirit Mountain was so brutal, so vile, and so corrupted!

No wonder when she had previously offered Shanwei disciples the notion of "human clan fellowship and mutual help," their faces had turned strange.

In this realm, all creatures followed the will of the gods, prioritizing the collection of Holy Spirit Energy above all else.

Thus, between individuals, there existed direct conflicts of interest—they were competitors in a deadly race!

Encounters turned hostile, knife to knife—enemies in a life-or-death struggle!

"So... this terrible?" An Xian couldn't help but speak out, her voice quivering with emotion.

In the Human World Da Xia, throughout her twenty-plus years of life, the human clan had always been a united community of shared interests and fate.

Faced with formidable enemies, people stood together, helping one another.

But here, Holy Spirit Mountain...

Wherever she looked, all sentient beings—be they human or demon—were enemies?

"Yes," Wan Fangling replied softly, her gaze lowered.

Jiang Ruyi pressed her lips together silently.

This series of revelations had challenged her deeply-held beliefs and ideals.

And after processing this shocking information, her mind instantly conjured up a figure—Lu Ran!

Are you... okay?

When you first arrived in this realm, were you also plotted against? Ambushed?

Are you... are you still alive?

Jiang Ruyi slowly lifted her head, gazing at the surging cloud sea above, her heart heavy with oppression.

No, you must still be alive.

If I can sense the abnormal conditions of this realm from faint clues, then you, upon arriving, must have sensed them too.

Jiang Ruyi tried to console herself, but her heart was gripped with growing worry.

Lu Ran was undoubtedly a warrior of the human clan.

A fighter who dedicated his life to the survival of his kind!

His hatred for the evil demons was matched only by his devotion to the human clan.

In that small Rain Alley City, every street and every housing district had witnessed his protection of the people.

At all costs, indifferent to life and death.

Yet, in entering a realm filled with deception and fratricide, how would someone like Lu Ran...

His steadfast Dao Heart—was it still intact?

Was he still forging ahead, unwavering?

After the collapse of the ideals he upheld, could he still continue to survive?

Despite her usual composure, Jiang Ruyi's mind grew increasingly chaotic with concern.

She closed her eyes, letting out a deep sigh.

The people around her held their breaths.

For the first time in so long, Jiang Ruyi had displayed such intense emotion.

Even during their days of fleeing, amidst one near-death crisis after another, she had been the unshaken one.

But now...

Song Yu deliberated for a moment before signaling to An Xian with his eyes.

Under Song Yu's urging gaze, An Xian calmed her inner turmoil and cautiously approached Jiang Ruyi. Tentatively, she whispered, "Madam..."

"Hmm?" Jiang Ruyi broke from her reverie, glancing at the woman beside her.

In that brief moment, she seemed to see Xiao Tian Tian.

A petite figure, short-cropped hair, almond-shaped eyes—sweet yet timidly charming.

"Are you all right?" An Xian asked in a timid, concerned tone.

"I'm fine." Jiang Ruyi lowered her eyes to look back at the couple. "In this realm, have you ever seen or heard of Lu Ran? He's an Immortal Sheep Believer..."

"Is he the Da Xia's genius, the famous Lu Ran?" Shi Yong's thoughts raced as he gazed up at the stunning woman.

Though the couple had spent their days secluded from the world in the ancient city under the god's feet, the tales of "Heavenly Pride" had spread far and wide.

Shi Yong had heard of Lu Ran's reputation and even glimpsed some highlights that immortalized him.

Wan Fangling's eyes lit up further, her gaze intensifying as she observed Jiang Ruyi's veiled face, scrutinizing her features.

From the limited glimpses of Lu Ran she had seen, had she caught sight of this girl's appearance?

Could it be that their relationship...

"Have you seen Lu Ran?" An Xian asked urgently.

The couple shook their heads, and disappointment washed over the group.

Jiang Ruyi nodded softly before continuing, "Then do you know where the ocean lies?"

The couple shook their heads again.

In two months, they'd seen nothing but deserts and stone pillars. They hadn't ventured beyond the Ten Thousand Blade Mountain area—how could they have seen an ocean?

Jiang Ruyi had anticipated such a response, inwardly sighing: "Stand up."

"Thank you, Madam." Wan Fangling seized the opportunity, promptly changing her address. "From now on, my husband and I will serve you loyally, striving tirelessly like the most devoted servants!"

Jiang Ruyi: "..."

In this realm, survival honed people into shrewd beings.

Even if lacking in talent, fate would prod and mold them into "growing" adept.

Song Yu abruptly asked, "How many members are in your Split Mountain Gang?"

Wan Fangling replied, "Including us, there are twenty-two people.

However, one week ago two squads totaling eight people disappeared and haven't returned."

Song Yu pressed further, "The remaining members—what kind of Believers are they? What are their strength and realms?"

Wan Fangling: "They are all Shanwei believers, primarily between River Realm Second Rank and Fourth Rank..."

After probing extensively, Song Yu looked to Jiang Ruyi. "Madam, how about we take over this gang?"

Jiang Ruyi deliberated silently, offering no response.

Song Yu added, "The road ahead is perilous. The more strength we have, the better our chances of survival. These two have already described the situation of this realm—it's power above all, devoid of moral laws.

People prey on one another; the strong enslave the weak."

Jiang Ruyi remained unresponsive, her brows furrowing slightly.

Song Yu hurriedly persisted, "The Shanwei Sect may lack offensive power, but their unique abilities make them prime targets. Sooner or later, surrounding factions like West Desolation will swallow them up.

They're destined for slavery!

Madam is merciful; if these Shanwei believers follow you, at least they won't suffer humiliation."

Jiang Ruyi: "..."

Am I merciful?

The battle had just ended, and the enemies' corpses had hardly grown cold... No, they were already freezing.

Completely frozen.

Still, it was undeniable the team needed to grow and amass strength.

Jiang Ruyi's lashes fluttered slightly; this path to finding Lu Ran—who knew how long it would take?

The road would undoubtedly be perilous.

The Jade Talisman Sect also had weaknesses; supplementing the team with believers from other factions would strengthen their survival capabilities.

"Madam!" Wan Fangling looked up at Jiang Ruyi, her tone respectful. "The Gu Zhang squad and the remaining two squads of the Split Mountain Gang are at odds.

Especially after the disappearance of those eight people, Gu Zhang's ambitions have swelled—he's likely vying for the gang leader position.

He brought us out this time intending to recruit the two of us newcomers."

Jiang Ruyi, being sharp and perceptive, naturally understood what the woman was implying.

Sure enough, Wan Fangling continued, "Gu Zhang's small circle of close contacts—all killed here.

The other members of the gang shouldn't bear hatred toward you over Gu Zhang's death. Madam can proceed boldly in taking over the Split Mountain Gang."

"Alright." Jiang Ruyi responded gently.

Song Yu's eyes brightened as he nodded silently in approval.

Zhang Zhenghu and Zhu Yuan exchanged a glance but said nothing.

Jiang Ruyi addressed the group. "Let's head to the Split Mountain Gang shortly.

Is the battlefield cleaned up yet?"

The group promptly presented weapons and Divine Power Pearls.

An Xian looked at the spoils, her expression complex. "This place feels like a slaughterhouse for our human clan..."

Wan Fangling's revelations about Holy Spirit Mountain still reverberated in An Xian's mind, unsettling her.

Upon hearing the Split Mountain Gang's remaining members' ranks—River Realm Second Rank through Fourth Rank—a particular thought in An Xian's head grew increasingly uncontrollable.

The ten-member squad she belonged to—a group of Jade Talisman disciples—were also River Realm cultivators!

Why couldn't they stay in Da Xia to safeguard peace, protect cities, and defend civilians?

No wonder the count of human clan Great Powers in the human world always remained stagnant.

Turns out, they were transported here under the guise of collecting Holy Spirit Energy, forced into mutually destructive slaughter?!

An Xian's thoughts churned chaotically, until she realized the suffocating silence around her.

Some thoughts could tread dangerous lines!

No matter how evident the harsh reality was, one could only privately contemplate it—never speak it aloud!

Unless...

The crowd subtly looked toward Jiang Ruyi, while Shi Yong and Wan Fangling secretly observed the young leader's reaction.

In such a cruel and pragmatic world, Jiang Ruyi's stance dictated the team's collective attitude.

Gradually, An Xian became acutely aware!

She had openly questioned the gods before a congregation of devout Believers.

She had accused the benevolent, saving gods of treating the human clan like mere livestock, throwing them into a slaughterhouse...

An Xian was utterly terrified!

Her body trembled violently in fear, cautiously turning her gaze to Jiang Ruyi.

Under the scrutiny of all, the aloof and elegant woman in white appeared indifferent to everything around her.

She scanned the battle spoils and ordered, "Song Yu, distribute them among everyone."

Song Yu dutifully replied, "Understood!"

An Xian gazed at Jiang Ruyi in stunned disbelief, unsure whether to feel relieved or grateful...

She bowed her head silently. The atmosphere grew tense and eerie once more.

Chapter 537: Saving for a dowry?

The base of the Split Mountain Gang is located within the mountains.

When Jiang Ruyi and her team arrived, the Shanwei believers guarding the entrance reacted as if facing a formidable enemy!

Especially when they saw Shi Yong and Wan Fangling following behind the Jade Talisman disciples, the expression on the Shanwei believers' faces turned even grimmer.

"We mean no harm."

Jiang Ruyi hovered in the air, looking down at the guards standing at the entrance.

However, for this Shanwei disciple, the words of the woman in the white dress were not credible at all!

At this moment, two Jade Talisman disciples were blocking the entrance aggressively.

The woman in the white dress had two other Jade Talisman disciples scattered in the air, observing the situation from above...

Is this supposed to mean no harm?

You're trying to seize the entire mountain!

The woman in the white dress, as beautiful as she was, had cold eyes and an aloof aura, almost as if "kneel and submit" was written on her face!

"Go ahead," Jiang Ruyi spoke again.

Shi Yong and Wan Fangling immediately walked in.

Just as the guard at the door was about to make a move, Song Yu timely said, "Daoist, we truly mean no harm.

You know our sect possesses the Divine Technique-Quicksand Talisman; if I make a move, the entire mountain will collapse.

We have 5 Jade Talisman Believers on our side, and even if the Split Mountain Gang has endless tunnel exits, none will escape."

The Shanwei believers guarding the entrance clenched their fists, glaring at the stern-faced Song Yu.

The Shi Wan couple brushed past the guard and entered the tunnel.

The scene fell into silence.

Jiang Ruyi stood quietly in the air, her gaze scanning the mountain tops, looking far into the distance.

After a long time, several Shanwei believers emerged.

The leader was a burly man.

He appeared to be in his early forties, bald, with a tangled beard on his face, looking very fierce.

"Lady Jiang, I've heard a lot about you!" The bald man looked up at the woman in the white dress, a bit surprised, but still cupped his hands and said, "I'm Gu Zhang from our gang, I apologize!"

Xiong Xiong represents the Split Mountain Gang, and apologizes to you!"

Everyone: "..."

The previously tense atmosphere became somewhat strange because of the name "Xiong Xiong."

You even seem kind of cute?

Jiang Ruyi looked down, scrutinizing carefully.

Looks can be deceiving; despite his rough and burly appearance, this rough man spoke quite pleasantly.

Xiong Xiong grinned and said apologetically, "Lady Jiang, our Split Mountain Gang is so poor we don't even have decent clothes, nothing valuable to atone for..."

Jiang Ruyi softly said, "Do you believe whatever Wan Fangling says?"

Xiong Xiong immediately replied, "Gu Zhang is blinded by greed and wants to snatch everything. I know him too well; he's just a bandit!"

Though he spoke like this, Xiong Xiong didn't think so in his heart.

Does the truth matter... at all?

In the domain of the Holy Spirit Mountain, there were never truths or falsehoods.

Only strength and weakness!

Jiang Ruyi looked at the apologizing bald man, sighed softly in her heart.

This world is indeed as Wan Fangling said.

If it were in the Human World Da Xia, the mysterious death of four River Realm Great Powers would definitely be thoroughly investigated.

Justice would surely be served.

Jiang Ruyi, integrating into this new world, said slowly, "I heard you are trapped here."

Although Xiong Xiong had a rough appearance, his mind was delicate, and he already understood the other party's intention.

But the circumstances were beyond his control, and he had to respond, "This area seems spacious, but is actually surrounded by the terrain of Ten Thousand Blade Mountain."

"We can't get out of Ten Thousand Blade Mountain."

Jiang Ruyi nodded slightly, "We want to get out, to a place with mountains and trees, rivers, and seas. Why not join us?"

When mentioning the word "sea," Jiang Ruyi's mind inevitably wandered.

She unconsciously lifted her head, gazing into the distance.

If she could, she wanted to find the sea herself, without getting distracted by trivial matters.

However, she was not strong enough.

She could only keep accumulating power.

Moreover, she also had to consider finding Lu Ran.

A strong team was the bargaining chip that allowed her and him to survive better.

As she thought about it, Jiang Ruyi's expression became a bit strange.

For some reason, she suddenly felt like she was "saving up for a dowry"?

So that after being with him, they could live better, accumulating non-stop...

"Lady Jiang?"

A voice interrupted Jiang Ruyi's train of thought.

Jiang Ruyi came back to her senses, withdrew her gaze from the horizon, and looked apologetically at the man, "I lost my train of thought."

Xiong Xiong grinned, not caring at all.

Your distraction, your aloofness, all don't matter.

This was Xiong Xiong's seventh year in the Holy Spirit Mountain.

If the Holy Spirit Mountain had taught him anything, it was one thing: "Dignity is not important in such a place."

In fact, as a weakling, not having dignity was important!

Without it, you could live longer.

Xiong Xiong replied loudly, "Our strength is too weak, we'll just survive here!"

Live a few more days, and also collect more Holy Spirit Energy for Lord Shanwei, as a token of gratitude to the gods.

Lady Jiang, I beg you, don't make things difficult for us."

Jiang Ruyi, however, said, "Recently, eight of your people have gone missing."

Xiong Xiong nodded, "Yes."

Jiang Ruyi sighed softly, "Maybe they are dead, or maybe they were taken as slaves by West Desolation disciples.

You know in your heart that if you stay here, that will also be your fate."

Xiong Xiong was silent.

Jiang Ruyi continued, "If you come with me, maybe you can leave this barren land.

I am different from West Desolation Sect and all other strong Divine Sect believers; I can guarantee you that you will be my team members, not servants."

Xiong Xiong looked up at Jiang Ruyi, wanting to believe in pies falling from the sky, wanting to believe the words of the woman in the white dress.

But after all that...

But this is Holy Spirit Mountain!!

Jiang Ruyi suddenly said, "The person behind you seems to know me."

"Ah?" Xiong Xiong turned his head to look behind.

Among the two men and one woman, the tall and thin curly-haired young man looked a little excited.

"Do you know each other?" Xiong Xiong was stunned.

"Yes!" Wang Xuyang nodded repeatedly.

Xiong Xiong immediately rejoiced, "Friends? Or classmates?"

Why didn't you say so earlier!

If you could get connected with such a powerful person, that would be great!

Xiong Xiong was daydreaming when Wang Xuyang shook his head again, "I know her; she doesn't know me."

Xiong Xiong: ???

He just wanted to kick Wang Xuyang into the dirt.

Seeing the expression on his boss's face, Wang Xuyang quickly said, "Brother Xiong, she is Da Xia's genius!"

Do you remember? I mentioned it to you when I just arrived!"

"Ah?" Xiong Xiong was quite surprised, "Heavenly Pride? That program?"

"Yes, yes, yes!" Wang Xuyang nodded repeatedly.

Xiong Xiong suddenly understood, and everything made sense!

Why could an eighteen or nineteen-year-old girl lead a group of senior disciples in their thirties and forties?

Why does she have such influence and power?

It turns out she is Da Xia's Heavenly Pride!

Xiong Xiong looked up at Jiang Ruyi, appreciating her powerful presence, and quietly asked, "How does Lady Jiang rank?"

As he said this, Xiong Xiong sighed in his heart.

It's no wonder that Da Xia meticulously selected Heavenly Prides from millions of believers!

Look at this quality!

Compared to Lady Jiang, the others are simply worlds apart.

Upon hearing the question, Wang Xuyang was momentarily at a loss.

He suddenly realized that he might have misspoken.

Jiang Ruyi indeed was a Heavenly Pride in essence, but she didn't hold the title!

"No, Brother Xiong." Wang Xuyang cautiously said, "Lady Jiang isn't ranked; she's not a contestant of 'Heavenly Pride.'"

"What the heck?" Xiong Xiong was stunned for a moment, then burst into laughter.

He raised his large hand, slapping Wang Xuyang on the back of the head, "You damn brat, messing with me?"

"Smack!"

With a crying face, Wang Xuyang held his head, quickly explaining, "Her boyfriend is! Her fiancé is a Heavenly Pride!"

Xiong Xiong still wore a dark face.

"The ultimate Heavenly Pride!" Wang Xuyang nodded emphatically, full of certainty, "Ranked first!"

"Oh my gosh?" Xiong Xiong was shocked!

Ranked first?

In Da Xia, among a hundred people meticulously selected from across the nation, being ranked last meant standing out!

And yet she ranks first?

Wang Xuyang nodded frantically, "Undoubtedly the first! Acknowledged as the first!

The foremost of Da Xia!"

"Smack!"

This time, Xiong Xiong slapped his own bald head.

Da Xia's Heavenly Pride top!

How powerful must he be?

Not only Xiong Xiong, but several Shanwei believers around also became secretly apprehensive.

Wang Xuyang continued speaking without pause, "The reason Lady Jiang, so young, is respectfully called a lady is due to her fiancé being a Human World Sect Master of a Divine Sect!"

Lady Jiang is a Sect Master Lady!"

"Huh??"

Xiong Xiong foolishly raised his head, gazing at the woman in the white dress standing in the air.

Oh my god!

Today, I've encountered true dragons and phoenixes.

The wife of the Human World Sect Master...

Holding his head, Wang Xuyang finally breathed a sigh of relief.

He deliberately omitted mentioning that the Divine Sect was the Immortal Sheep Sect.

Because his boss's mind was already buzzing.

Speaking now might make Wang Xuyang worry that his boss would directly faint...

"Heh."

In the sky, Jiang Ruyi chuckled and shook her head.

This was her first time smiling in a long while.

Unexpectedly, even in this remote barren land, she could still benefit from Lu Ran's reputation.

She raised her eyes, gazing into the distance.

Her beautiful eyes seemed as though they could penetrate time and space, spotting someone's figure.

"Knowing me is even better." Jiang Ruyi casually said, "You can trust me, join my team, come with me."

Wang Xuyang looked up at the woman in the white dress, the more he looked, the more bitterness he felt.

He was an avid viewer of "Heavenly Pride" and had affectionately referred to Lu Ran as a "Ran Dog" in Lu Ran's live broadcast room.

He even followed the trend and sent a barrage:

"Knife in hand, follow me, seize Ruyi, slay the Ran Dog..."

However, the beautiful days in the Human World were gone forever.

Wang Xuyang never expected that the day he was fortunate enough to meet Jiang Ruyi, would actually be in this cannibalistic Holy Spirit Mountain.

He mustered the courage to ask, "Lady Jiang, Ran... ahem, Heavenly Pride Lu?"

Jiang Ruyi: "He is also in this realm; I'm looking for him."

Wang Xuyang was both surprised and delighted!

Like many Da Xia people, Wang Xuyang's fondness for Lu Ran was maxed out!

Compared to Jiang Ruyi, he naturally trusted Lu Ran more!

"My lady!" An Xian suddenly flew over, reporting, "People are coming from the south."

"Hmm?" Jiang Ruyi looked over.

In the distant south, several figures were swiftly approaching.

One of them was holding a battle axe.

These are...

Believers of the Second-class God-West Desert?

Chapter 538: in person...

Xiong Xiong gazed into the distance, his expression changing dramatically after a few seconds: "Those two... Damn it!"

A group of six approached, four of whom were tall, burly, and exuded an overwhelming presence. The leader carried a battle axe.

One glance was enough to recognize them as disciples of the West Desolation Sect!

The other two individuals in the team—Xiong Xiong recognized them immediately. They were his lost brothers from a week ago.

Judging by the situation... those two had likely already been enslaved.

Were they now leading their master to destroy their own base?

"Those bastards!" Xiong Xiong gritted his teeth and cursed, seeing the aggressive momentum of the West Desolation believers. He knew today might spell doom!

Beside him, Shi Yong wore a troubled expression.

Xiong Xiong cursed those two former members of the Rift Mountain Gang, but wasn't he also cursing Shi Yong and Wan Fangling, the married couple?

Wan Fangling, on the other hand, appeared indifferent, unfazed by the insults.

After all, the couple hadn't been part of the gang for long and felt little allegiance.

Moreover, Lady Jiang differed from other Strong God believers! If Xiong Xiong truly decided not to follow Jiang Ruyi, the dignified Lady Luo Xian wouldn't force him to comply.

Hence, at its core, the couple hadn't truly "invited evil into their house."

"Lady Jiang, the approaching group bears ill intentions!" Xiong Xiong raised his head and looked toward the white-robed woman hovering in mid-air.

Jiang Ruyi's expression remained unchanged as she spoke coldly: "Have you decided on my proposal?"

Xiong Xiong's face contorted with conflicting emotions.

At this critical moment, Jiang Ruyi's question completely cornered the bald-headed man.

How should he choose?

Become a servant of the West Desolation Sect, barely scraping by?

Or follow this Human World Sect Master's wife and trust her promises?

Upon closer thought, the decision wasn't difficult. But the real problem was that if Xiong Xiong and his group followed Lady Jiang, they would incite the wrath of the West Desolation Sect!

The West Desolation disciples approached aggressively, clearly determined to succeed.

A battle seemed inevitable...

"Your time is running out," Jiang Ruyi said, her tone growing frostier. "If you're unwilling to follow us, then we will leave... Hmm?"

Her voice trailed off, and Jiang Ruyi raised her eyebrows slightly.

Her gaze focused on the tall young man at the end of the six-member team.

This person... looked familiar.

"Thump!"

The bald-headed man gritted his teeth, closed his eyes, and knelt heavily to the ground: "Lady Jiang, we are willing to follow you!"

If captured by the West Desolation Sect and turned into slaves, life would surely become unbearable, filled with endless torment and humiliation, forever clouded in darkness!

But following Lady Jiang offered at least a glimmer of hope.

After learning more about Jiang Ruyi, Xiong Xiong gained deeper insight into her many roles.

Following her...

Might actually lead to a better life?

With their leader prostrating in worship, the rest of the Shanwei believers naturally followed suit, kneeling one by one.

Though Lady Jiang had clearly stated she would treat them as team members, not as servants, the current circumstances made it impossible for anyone to remain standing.

Except for one!

Wang Xuyang remained standing—not because he was unfamiliar with the rules of the Holy Spirit Mountain, but because his attention was fixed on the approaching group, his gaze locked onto the young man at the end of the procession.

From above came Jiang Ruyi's cold voice: "Swear it in the name of the God."

In the realm of the Holy Spirit Mountain, people's actions were unbound by laws or restrictions.

The only slightly binding force came from the believers' oaths made in the name of their deity.

Xiong Xiong immediately raised three thick fingers, vowing: "I, Xiong Xiong, swear by the great Shanwei that I will follow Lady Jiang to the death and remain loyal!"

Jiang Ruyi: "..."

Such promptness?

Either Xiong Xiong had resolutely gambled everything and fully committed,

Or he simply didn't take such vows seriously, even if they invoked the deity he believed in, demonstrating a lack of reverence.

Which was it?

Jiang Ruyi thought it was likely the latter.

Earlier, An Xian had accidentally uttered the word "slaughterhouse," planting a seed in everyone's minds.

Perhaps the gods they devotedly worshipped weren't as majestic and radiant as they'd assumed.

Xiong Xiong had survived this realm for so long—it was likely he understood this truth deeply.

He relied on Shanwei Sect's Divine Technique to save his life, yet he might harbor suspicion or even resentment toward his god, Shanwei. Both were possible.

Jiang Ruyi's thoughts raced before an unexpected voice called out from below:

"Feng'er?"

The voice belonged to Wang Xuyang, filled with excitement.

Jiang Ruyi's beautiful eyes narrowed slightly as she instantly recalled the identity of the youth at the end of the group.

Da Xia's genius—the eighty-seventh Heavenly Pride—Xue Fengchen!

The affinity Da Xia's people held for their hundred Heavenly Prides was beyond question.

Lu Ran was referred to affectionately as "Ran Dog," respectfully as "Ran Shen," and playfully as "Emperor Ran," among other nicknames. This was, in its essence, a testament to Da Xia's admiration for him.

And such affection wasn't reserved for Lu Ran alone.

The other Heavenly Prides also had their nicknames, such as West Desolation disciple Xue Fengchen.

He was endearingly called "Feng'er"...

A tall, mighty, and valiant young man saddled with an effeminate nickname.

Netizens were truly gifted when it came to humor.

"Whoosh~"

The gust of wind surged, sending dust everywhere.

Three men and one woman—a total of four West Desolation believers—arrived astride their mounts.

The leader appeared to be in his forties or fifties, tall and muscular, his body rippling with blocky muscles. He held a Mountain Opening Axe, radiating an astonishing presence!

Jiang Ruyi had already received a warning from the Cold Night Sword: the axe in his hand was, without a doubt, a Divine Weapon.

The man sized up the scene before the cave entrance, his expression unfriendly.

At that moment, a crowd of Shanwei believers led by Xiong Xiong knelt before Jiang Ruyi.

Their posture was unquestionably one of allegiance.

The leader's eyes followed their bowing direction until they settled on the sky.

"So that's who it is." He smirked coldly, hefting the Mountain Opening Axe in his hand. "It turns out to be the Daoists from the Jade Talisman Sect.

My name is Guo Yize. Which of you is the leader?"

Though he asked the question, Guo Yize's gaze had already locked onto Jiang Ruyi, then shifted to the sword sheath at her waist.

Jiang Ruyi's eyes flicked past Xue Fengchen, a faint glimmer flashing through them as an idea took shape.

Standing with her hands behind her back in mid-air, Jiang Ruyi declared, "The Shanwei believers have already decided to follow us."

Guo Yize chuckled lightly: "Young girl, your age is small, but your appetite isn't?"

Do you think you can manage such a large group of slaves?"

His words were shockingly blunt.

He didn't even bother to feign politeness!

Jiang Ruyi frowned slightly before responding coolly, "They are my team members, my future comrades, not slaves."

This was both an explanation and an attempt to win loyalty.

"Haha! Hahaha..." Guo Yize suddenly burst into laughter, as though he'd heard the most ridiculous thing.

His arrogant demeanor and wild laughter were utterly insane!

It even evoked the image of the Barbaric Female Demon Clan.

The Shanwei disciples gathered by the cave seethed with anger but dared not act upon it.

In the presence of Second-class God believers, the Shanwei believers truly lacked the ability to resist.

Worse yet, the West Desolation Sect countered the Shanwei Sect perfectly!

The Shanwei believers' pride—the Mountain Stone Armor—was an exceptionally reliable defense against most creatures.

Unfortunately, the West Desolation Sect specialized in a Divine Technique called "Shattering the Eight Desolates."

This technique was tailor-made for destroying mountains, rocks, and even the earth itself...

"Heh." Another West Desolation believer standing beside Guo Yize let out a cold chuckle.

He gazed at the white-robed woman hovering in mid-air with a hint of sarcasm in his eyes, like he was watching a foolish little flower.

Guo Yize abruptly stopped laughing, his eyes brimming with menace: "Little girl! This old man has traveled far to reach this place; I won't leave empty-handed!"

"Whoosh!"

With overwhelming momentum, Guo Yize raised the Divine Weapon—the Mountain Opening Axe—and pointed it to the sky: "Leave the slaves and depart at once! I'll let you go!"

The believers of the Second-class God West Desolation were indeed more dominant than those of the Third-class God Jade Talisman.

But Jade Talisman believers were no pushovers either!

Guo Yize's decision-making revealed as much—if Jade Talisman Sect had been weaker, he wouldn't have let Jiang Ruyi leave.

Jiang Ruyi ignored Guo Yize entirely. Her beautiful eyes focused on the youth at the end of the procession.

With the opposition's leader holding such an attitude, peace would be out of the question...

"Xue, Feng, Chen." Jiang Ruyi's lips moved slightly, enunciating each word.

"Hmm?"

"Oh?" The expressions of three West Desolation believers shifted into surprise.

The middle-aged woman beside Xue Fengchen turned to the valiant youth: "Xiao Chen, do you know her?"

Xue Fengchen clasped his hands in greeting, his tone steady: "I have met Lady Luo Xian before."

Hearing this form of address, Jiang Ruyi's heart steadied!

Good, very good!

Always composed like frost, Jiang Ruyi's brows now carried a hint of sternness: "Xue Tianjiao, have you joined this group of villains?"

Xue Fengchen's heart trembled.

He maintained a stoic expression, but his thoughts were roiling in turmoil.

Especially upon hearing the term "Tianjiao"; it filled his heart with shame.

From the start, Xue Fengchen had recognized Jiang Ruyi but chose silence; he didn't know how to speak or how to face her.

But... what could he do?

Xue Fengchen sighed heavily in his heart.

His days in the Holy Spirit Mountain Realm hadn't been long, yet he'd spent much of it fleeing through the Ten Thousand Blade Mountain, wandering in desperation until he finally found a faction—Tianhuang Mountain.

Tianhuang Mountain was teeming with experts, forming its own set of rules.

These were rules organically crafted within the grand principles governing the Holy Spirit Mountain.

Xue Fengchen was just one man—what could he possibly change?

Jiang Ruyi spoke again, pressing him further, yet offering a compromise: "I imagine you've only been in this realm for a short time.

Da Xia's genius—Xue Fengchen!

Would you truly side with these villains, intending to fall from grace?"

Xue Fengchen tightened his grip on the Mountain Opening Axe.

"Enough of this 'genius' nonsense!" Guo Yize, sensing trouble, quickly interjected, "This is the Holy Spirit Mountain!"

Jiang Ruyi abruptly switched tactics: "Lu Ran is in this realm as well."

Xue Fengchen's sharp eyes lit up as he looked up at Jiang Ruyi: "Ran Shen is here as well?"

Noting Xue Fengchen's reaction and how he referred to Lu Ran, Jiang Ruyi reassured herself.

This was the influence of Da Xia's premier genius!

It was also the intimidating power of Lu Ran!

Faced with dire circumstances, Jiang Ruyi leveraged all available resources and forces: "On the 19th day of the first month, Luoxian Mountain opened a Divine Ruins, known across the land.

The Immortal Sheep Sect recognizes only him as capable of successfully challenging the Divine Ruins.

I know his approximate location; I'm currently on the way to find him."

Xue Fengchen silently nodded; her words weren't false.

Jiang Ruyi's tone grew firm: "Xue Tianjiao, don't bring shame to Lu Ran's glory!"

Xue Tianjiao, mustn't you retain your honor and mission, to be worthy of Da Xia's recognition of the title 'Heavenly Pride'!"

Each word struck with deafening force!

As her speech concluded, Jiang Ruyi's gaze swept across the tall, thin youth at the cave's entrance.

Feeling the commanding presence in her sharp gaze, Wang Xuyang shivered.

Realizing her intent, Wang Xuyang shouted passionately, "Yes, Feng'er!

Don't follow these villains; come with us to find Ran Shen!"

The endearing term "Feng'er" pulled Xue Fengchen out of the mire of the Holy Spirit Mountain and back to the Human World Da Xia.

Wait, what?

So someone still knew him here!

Moreover, this person was among the group the West Desolation Sect sought to enslave?

"Damn it! You damn son of a—\*&\*&... ¥%!!" Guo Yize erupted in furious profanities, visibly losing his composure.

Being ignored was something he could grudgingly endure.

But this? Dammit!

Turning traitor before a battle?

And doing it right in front of him?

"Boom!"

Crazed with fury, Guo Yize stomped heavily, causing sand to churn and surge toward the cave entrance!

"Kill!"

From above came Jiang Ruyi's icy command.

...

Chapter 539: Will you still accept?

The battle ignited in an instant!

Xue Fengchen gripped an axe in his left hand and suddenly grabbed the arm of the woman beside him with his right hand: "Yunyan!"

Gao Yunyan, in her early thirties, had a tall and slender figure, with short, attractive hair and sharp, heroic eyebrows.

Her earlobes were adorned with large, hoop-shaped silver earrings.

They shimmered brightly.

Perfectly complementing her bold and spirited demeanor.

Gao Yunyan turned her head, only to see Xue Fengchen's resolute gaze. He said solemnly, "Don't go!"

She raised an eyebrow, about to speak, when an angry shout came from afar: "Xiao Gao! Xiao Xue! Stop standing there, hurry up and join the fight!"

Xue Fengchen clenched Gao Yunyan's arm tightly, shaking his head.

Gao Yunyan stared directly into his eyes. "Chen, do you know what you're doing?"

Xue Fengchen's tiger-like gaze burned brightly: "This world... it shouldn't be like this."

"Hoo!!"

The Sand Sea surged, frost spreading in all directions.

Although the two were not at the center of the battlefield, they were still swept into the turmoil.

Energy roiled beneath Xue Fengchen's feet, causing the yellow sands to churn.

West Desolate Divine Skill·West Desolate Sand Sea!

"Whoosh!"

The two stood atop the Sand Sea, their figures rising and falling along with the waves of sand, retreating from the fight.

From beginning to end, Gao Yunyan did not resist.

She allowed him to lead her away, yet she asked, "Do you understand the consequences of what we're doing?"

Consequences?

If they failed, or if news got out, they would face the unending pursuit of Tianhuang Mountain.

Inside Tianhuang Mountain, experts were as numerous as trees in a forest.

And among them were more than ten Sea Realm Great Powers!

To those in the River Realm, compared to the vast Yangyang Sea, they were akin to ants...

"What's wrong is simply wrong." Xue Fengchen's expression grew increasingly resolute. "I refuse to become someone I despise!"

"Heh." Gao Yunyan suddenly laughed.

A fierce gale swept past, tousling her short hair and grazing her face, where a self-mocking smile emerged.

"Before, we had no choice but to join Tianhuang Mountain to survive." Xue Fengchen's grip on Gao Yunyan's arm tightened further.

Gao Yunyan: "That so-called prodigy Lu—does he really warrant such a risk from you?"

Xue Fengchen replied solemnly, "If you had joined the mountain two months later, you would know what kind of man Lu Ran truly is!"

He is the foremost prodigy of Da Xia and the Human World Sect Master of the Immortal Sheep Sect!"

Hearing this, a glimmer of intrigue flashed across Gao Yunyan's eyes.

No more questions could be asked; in this instant, this domain had become a tempestuous sea of yellow sand!

West Desolate Divine Skill·Floating Sand!

Before achieving River Grade, this technique could only send sand flying forward to obscure the enemy's vision.

However, upon ascending to the River Grade, the technique underwent a qualitative transformation!

West Desolation believers now could summon sandstorms, not only blocking enemy sight but also perceiving everything within the sand.

"Xiao Gao, Xiao Xue... you two! Are you f\*\*\*ing defecting?!"

Guo Yize's furious curses echoed as yellow sand surged beneath his feet, propelling him backward at high speed.

Rage consumed him, his insults growing even harsher: "Xue Fengchen! Gao Yunyan! You ungrateful traitors!

Have you forgotten that it was Tianhuang Mountain that gave you shelter?"

"Heh." Jiang Ruyi's icy voice cut through, carrying scorn as sharp as a blade. "For a bunch of ruthless fiends, what talk of righteousness?

Defect from Tianhuang Mountain?

It was Tianhuang Mountain that betrayed the entire Human Clan!"

"What sharp-tongued little wench!" Guo Yize bellowed amidst the dense sandstorm. "Since you want death, I will gladly oblige!"

Another male West Desolation believer, Cao Rongcheng, activated the West Desolate Divine Skill·Floating Sand as he frantically pleaded:

"You two, hurry and join the battle. Don't act recklessly!"

Xue Fengchen clasped Gao Yunyan's arm tightly: "Lu Tianjiao is just a trigger. The core issue lies with me! I no longer want to sink into this darkness, nor do I wish to become a sinner!"

Yunyan, you're not like the others in Tianhuang Mountain. Let's leave together!"

Gao Yunyan pressed her lips together, releasing Floating Sand: "Leave? Not that easily."

Xue Fengchen's heart sank!

The sandstorm was too thick; he could no longer see her face.

Yet through the Floating Sand's perception, he discerned that Gao Yunyan's right hand had already gripped a battle axe!

Divine Technique·Shattering Desolation Axe!

"Yunyan." Xue Fengchen's expression turned grim. "Ever since I joined Tianhuang Mountain, you have always been the one guiding me. I know you're different from them..."

Gao Yunyan interrupted: "We have to slay these two old bastards first if we want to leave.

And leave far away!"

Xue Fengchen's words came to an abrupt halt.

Gao Yunyan suddenly leaned closer, her lips colliding heavily with his.

Xue Fengchen: ???

In the swirling sands, he felt a warm sensation on his lips.

This...?

"I'll indulge your madness!" Gao Yunyan licked her lips, tasting the sand, then forcefully broke free from Xue Fengchen's grip.

Despite the sand on her lips, it didn't feel dirty.

After all, this fine sand originated from the Divine Technique-Floating Sand, crafted entirely from Divine Power.

"Charge!" Gao Yunyan, perceiving everything within the sandstorm, charged forward.

"Alright!" Xue Fengchen tightened his grip on the Mountain-Cleaving Axe and followed close behind.

She was right. If they were to escape the Demon Cave, they had to eliminate these two West Desolation believers.

They couldn't afford to let them relay intelligence back to Tianhuang Mountain!

"You...!" Cao Rongcheng's expression drastically changed!

The omnipresent sand revealed to him that Gao and Xue were barreling toward him!

"You little brats, I'll f\*\*\*ing kill you both!" Guo Yize exploded with rage.

Originally, it had been four West Desolation disciples at Jiang Realm·Fifth Rank against five Jade Talisman believers of mid-to-lower River Realm ranks.

Among the Jade Talisman squad, the highest rank was Jiang Realm·Fourth Rank Jiang Ruyi.

And now?

A four-on-five fight had abruptly turned into two-on-seven!

How could they possibly fight like this?

As for the Shanwei disciples...

The West Desolation believers never considered them worth noticing in the first place.

Chapter 540: Will it still be accepted?\_2

Actually, the Fourth-class God·Shanwei believers are truly not that weak.

Unfortunately, the West Desolation Sect counters the Shanwei Sect completely. With one swing of the axe, everything shatters, rendering them helpless.

However, the Shanwei Sect excels in supportive abilities. Equipped with the Divine Technique-Mountain's Intent, they can perceive all beings within a certain range that are in contact with the ground or hidden beneath it.

Xiong Xiong and Wang Xuyang kept reporting locations, thoroughly infuriating the two West Desolation believers!

Guo Yize wished he could smash these guys to pieces with a single swing of his axe.

But how could the Jade Talisman disciples let him have his way?

One Frost Talisman after another was hurled to freeze him solid!

Guo Yize retaliated using Sand Sea, attempting to bury the Shanwei believers alive, while the opposition erected Mountain Stone Walls to create towering dirt fortifications...

"Retreat! Old Guo, retreat!" Cao Rongcheng shouted loudly and turned to flee.

"You old scoundrel, you're not going anywhere!" Gao Yunyan shouted fiercely.

The Sand Sea beneath her feet churned, surging like roaring waves, propelling her forward with great force.

Over the past two years since joining Tianhuang Mountain, she had witnessed too many brutal scenes of prisoner abuse.

West Desolation believers are usually domineering and ruthless.

In certain respects, they are just slightly smarter, more mentally stable, and more disciplined than the Barbaric Female Demon Clan.

Yet within the lawless Holy Spirit Mountain, the ferocity lurking in the hearts of the West Desolation believers was entirely unleashed.

Their cruelty toward captives and slaves was utterly appalling!

Gao Yunyan had little influence and could change nothing.

Indeed... if you didn't demonstrate a bold and uninhibited demeanor, you'd be perceived as unaligned, unacceptable to Tianhuang Mountain.

But today...

Go wild!

Xue Fengchen was right, Sect Master Lu was merely a trigger, a choice; the true root was within oneself!

I don't want to live this way anymore.

"Gao Yunyan! I should've kicked you off the mountain back then!" Cao Rongcheng roared, gripping the Broken Desolation Axe in both hands and hastily blocking an attack.

"Bang!!"

Two identical Broken Desolation Axes collided heavily.

They exploded with a thunderous boom!

Both sides possessed the Divine Technique·Desolate Power, maxing out their strength attributes!

Additionally, both sides wielded the earth-shattering Mountain Splitting technique, Divine Technique·Shatter Eight Desolates!

With this swing, whose weapon could remain intact?

"Hyah!" Xue Fengchen shouted, seamlessly coordinating with Gao Yunyan, charging directly at Cao Rongcheng.

Cao Rongcheng's heart raced as he desperately deployed a technique, the Sand Sea underfoot surging violently toward Xue Fengchen.

However, Xue Fengchen advanced with his own Sand Sea!

The moment the two Sand Seas collided, Xue Fengchen swung his axe to carve through the path ahead, turning his shoulder into a potent weapon. The collision sent Cao Rongcheng staggering, and Xue Fengchen smoothly spun around in unison.

This impact disrupted Cao Rongcheng's balance entirely.

It also made Xue Fengchen's movements fluid and unhindered!

A Mountain Opening Axe came crashing down in a sweeping arc, forcefully carving out a perfect crescent moon!

Each movement was precise and breathtaking.

Not only were the motions swift, but the sheer power behind them was astounding!

What! Call that... Da Xia's genius!

Cao Rongcheng's face turned pale, his heart racing into his throat.

In a flash, he instinctively leaped backward while activating Divine Technique·Western Wilderness Body.

In an instant, Cao Rongcheng transformed from flesh and blood into a construct of yellow sand.

The technique functioned similarly to the Golden Body.

Its defensive power was shockingly high!

Yet, the West Desolation Sect... specialized in countering him!

Xue Fengchen's axe, infused with Desolate Power and fortified by Divine Technique·Shatter Eight Desolates, struck true!

"Crack!!"

The formidable axe blade cleaved across Cao Rongcheng's chest.

Even though it could not split his yellow sand body into two, it did rend his chest open.

"Aaaah!" Cao Rongcheng screamed in agony. Upon reverting to his flesh form, his torn chest poured blood like a torrent.

"Hmm?" Jiang Ruyi suddenly turned her head, her eyes narrowing.

Though she lacked perception techniques, she was equipped with the Divine Weapon·Cold Night Sword.

Cao Rongcheng was blown off his feet?

His feet had left the ground, no longer treading on the Sand Sea?

"Whoosh~"

Jiang Ruyi suddenly raised her hand. The Cold Night Sword flew at high speed, carrying an Electric Shackles Talisman affixed at the junction of its hilt and blade.

"Sizzle~ Sizzle!"

In the next instant, Jiang Ruyi mentally triggered the Electric Shackles Talisman.

A thunderball with a fifty-meter radius manifested abruptly, engulfing Cao Rongcheng.

Cao Rongcheng: !!!

His body froze, limbs numb.

Before he could react further, the Cold Night Sword pierced through his skull.

Xue Fengchen charged forward on the Sand Sea. Noticing the incoming blade, he immediately raised his Mountain Opening Axe to block.

"Ah! Aaaaah!"

Guo Yize's eyes went bloodshot as he sensed his ally's death amid the storm of sand.

By now, his entire body was encrusted with frost and snow.

Although the Jade Talisman disciples couldn't see the battlefield clearly through the sandstorm, the Frost Talisman's spreading effect covered a vast area.

Moreover, Song Yu, An Xian, Zhu Yuan, and Zhang Zhenghu carried the protection of the Jade Talisman Formation, allowing them to roam freely within the frosty realm without being frozen stiff.

"Huff!!"

Amid Guo Yize's enraged howl, a massive, terrifying battle axe appeared high in the sky.

West Desolation Sect's River Realm Technique-West Desolation Divine Axe!

"Hmph." Gao Yunyan sneered coldly, raising her hand high.

Xue Fengchen mirrored her actions, both palms surging with divine power.

Two additional colossal West Desolation Divine Axes materialized in midair!

However, these axes weren't meant for offense but interception.

"Traitor! Shameless traitor...gah!" Guo Yize cursed furiously, only to have his mouth filled with frost. "Ugh...go!!"

Frozen solid, Guo Yize could only summon the Sand Sea beneath him, pushing himself forward to swing the Divine Weapon-Mountain Opening Axe.

Strangely, because of the freezing effects, his grip on the axe handle didn't immediately release.

But eventually, the Mountain Opening Axe broke free.

"Boom!"

The two axes above intercepted the descending West Desolation Divine Axe perfectly.

Gao Yunyan, though anxious, leapt to Xue Fengchen's side, wrapping her arms around his waist: "We can't let the Divine Weapon return!"

If the axe made its way back to Tianhuang Mountain, everything would crumble!

Gao Yunyan sensed the Divine Weapon Axe's location amidst the sandstorm, channeling Desolate Power into her hands to propel Xue Fengchen forward forcefully.

"Huff!!"

Like a cannonball, Xue Fengchen rocketed forward, blasting through the sandstorm into the zone where frost and sand intertwined.

"Bang!"

Gao Yunyan's formidable strength translated into Xue Fengchen's absolute speed.

He carved a path, seizing the fleeing Mountain Opening Axe and driving it heavily into the earth.

"Gah! Gaaaaah!"

Guo Yize wanted to say something, only for his mouth to be filled with frost and snow.

Surrounded in dense frost and snow, the five Jade Talisman disciples flew in synchronized formation, targeting his muffled moans, hurling Frost Talismans relentlessly.

Soon enough, Guo Yize fell silent.

Even though Frost Talismans were merely control techniques and couldn't instantly freeze a target, the sheer number of Jade Talisman disciples was overwhelming...

"Clink!"

Jiang Ruyi gripped the Cold Night Sword tightly, thrusting it downward at an angle.

"Crack!!"

A completely frozen figure shattered instantly upon impact.

Jiang Ruyi stood where her enemy once stood, looking down at the shards of frost and snow scattered across the ground.

Despite her victory, there was little joy on her face.

Holy Spirit Mountain.

Filthy, vile, cruel, steeped in scheming.

And herself...

Jiang Ruyi slowly closed her beautiful eyes, exhaling softly.

Earlier, she had killed Gu Zhang, using near-torturous methods to freeze and bury him alive, yet she felt no emotion.

Now, all her techniques were exhausted.

Under the guise of Heavenly Pride, she had accused repeatedly, relying on Lu Ran's reputation and influence, fabricating lies like "knowing where Lu Ran is" to orchestrate desertions among West Desolation disciples.

Finally, she had reduced her enemy to shattered fragments scattered across the battlefield.

Cruelty, calculation...

Jiang Ruyi slowly raised her head, gazing at the turbulent Cloud Sea above, a trace of bitterness flickering in her eyes.

This journey to find you, how much longer must I walk?

What will this Holy Spirit Mountain turn me into?

If that day truly comes,

If I survive and you live on, and we reunite...

Will you accept the person I have become?

"Madam! Madam, please spare us!"

"We were forced into this, Lady! We had no choice..." Two Shanwei believers, realizing there was no escape, rushed forward and knelt, pleading for mercy.

Jiang Ruyi glanced at the trembling duo begging for their lives, uninterested, and turned her gaze to the distance.

She intended to summon Xiong Xiong for assistance, but the surrounding Shanwei disciples misunderstood and instantly knelt collectively.

Behind her veil, Jiang Ruyi's face broke into a bitter smile.

I'm not... not that kind of person. I don't wish to enslave my kin.

This mountain,

is too dirty...

"Boom!!!"

Suddenly, from high above, came a deafening roar that shook the heavens.