

Powerful 1131

Chapter 1131: I Only Ask Your Name

Gu Sheng followed Yang Yan during this period, and because Yang Yan didn't need those ordinary resources, they all benefited Gu Sheng.

Although Gu Sheng has a spiritless body, with Yang Yan's help and the accumulation of abundant resources, he successfully broke through to the fourth level of Qi Cultivation perfection.

Now, he is considered one of the outstanding figures in the Outer Sect.

"Where are Zimu and the others now?" Yang Yan asked.

"Young Master, at the Broken Cliff," Gu Sheng quickly replied.

Broken Stone Cliff is an unknown small peak that Yang Yan and Lin Zimu often visit.

There's nothing special about it, just that it's sparsely populated, with beautiful scenery.

"Let's go."

Yang Yan greeted them, got up, and pushed the door open to leave.

Gu Sheng bowed and stepped aside, then followed closely after Yang Yan came out.

Lin Zimu and Liu Yi are the first and second senior brothers in the Inner Sect, so their prestige among the disciples is also very high.

At this moment, these two leading figures of the Inner Sect had gathered all the Inner Sect disciples participating in the demon-slaying mission at Broken Stone Cliff.

A rough glance showed that these Inner Sect disciples numbered forty to fifty in total.

This accounted for half of the Ancient Abyss Sect's disciples above Qi Cultivation level seven.

The rest were either in seclusion or on tasks outside, unable to return for now.

These Inner Sect disciples were quite curious.

After all, the senior brother gathered them together but suddenly said to wait for one more person.

Everyone is from the same sect, and the outstanding ones above Qi Cultivation level seven in Ancient Abyss Sect are quite limited.

Now, everyone is curious about who the senior brother is waiting for?

Could it be that they are waiting for those two Foundation Establishment Stage deacons?!

They didn't have to wait too long; the answer was soon revealed.

A streak of light flashed across the sky and suddenly disappeared.

A disciple rubbed his eyes in doubt and found that there were already two more people beside the senior brother.

The newcomers were none other than Yang Yan and Gu Sheng.

"Yang Brother, haha!"

"Grandmaster Yang!"

"Grandmaster!"

"Greetings, Grandmaster!"

...

Quickly, a sharp-eyed disciple immediately knelt on one knee, cupping his fists and calling out respectfully.

As one started, the other disciples quickly followed suit, respectfully greeting Yang Yan.

Nowadays, all Ancient Abyss Sect disciples know that Yang Yan is not only the Saint Son and Grandmaster of the sect but also the future hope of the Ancient Abyss Sect's rise.

Without the sect's indoctrination, the younger generation of disciples now most worship Yang Yan.

Especially those disciples who entered the sect at the same time as Yang Yan show even more respect upon seeing him.

"You may rise; I'm not accustomed to this formality, let's keep it as usual."

Yang Yan made a joke as he arrived.

Although the joke wasn't very funny, everyone laughed together with tacit understanding.

While everyone knew Yang Yan, not many knew Gu Sheng, so quite a few people curiously looked at the Outer Sect disciple in blue robes.

"Yang Brother, we depart for demon-slaying tomorrow. These are the spiritual treasures distributed by the sect to the disciples."

Without any visible action from Lin Zimu, a small hill of spiritual treasures appeared on the ground.

The spiritual treasures emitting precious light immediately drew the attention of all the disciples.

Many disciples couldn't help but let their eyes shine with delight.

Aren't these all elite Inner Sect disciples of the Ancient Abyss Sect? Why would they get excited seeing some spiritual treasures?

That's natural!

Even some Foundation Establishment Stage deacons don't own these low-level spiritual treasures!

Many deacons devote their lives to the sect diligently and finally receive a low-level spiritual treasure as an award.

From this, the preciousness of the spiritual treasures is apparent.

Among everyone present, only Yang Yan, Lin Zimu, and Liu Yizheng seemed somewhat calm.

In Ancestor Zongming's assessment, Star Night is considered a growth-type spiritual treasure.

Accompanying Yang Yan for many years, it has gained some spirituality, becoming a spiritual treasure!

"What is this?"

Yang Yan asked in puzzlement.

Lin Zimu smiled gently: "Yang Brother, as fine as the spiritual treasures are, with too many participating Inner Sect disciples, you need to allocate them."

"Alright."

Yang Yan didn't refuse and nodded decisively.

"Does Zimu need a spiritual treasure with him?" Yang Yan asked Lin Zimu first.

It wasn't favoritism on Yang Yan's part. As the senior brother, Lin Zimu wielding a spiritual treasure is naturally more powerful than ordinary disciples.

Lin Zimu shook his head and said: "My master Mad Sword once bestowed upon me a middle-grade spiritual treasure: the sword I hold, named Chixiao."

Lin Zimu held his sword and subtly indicated to everyone.

Alright, he's a rich second generation; I was overthinking it.

Yang Yan then turned his gaze to Liu Yizheng.

Now experienced, he didn't speak first.

Liu Yizheng rubbed his head and smiled at Yang Yan's gaze:

"Grandmaster, my master also bestowed upon me a spiritual treasure—the Dao Ling Sword."

"Alright."

Yang Yan slightly frustratedly looked at the ground, counting roughly only a dozen spiritual treasures left, then addressed the group of excited Inner Sect disciples:

"Those among you who consider yourselves in the top twenty in strength, step forward."

The disciples looked around at each other upon hearing this.

Some appeared hesitant, some dejected, while others confidently stepped forward.

Among the forty or fifty disciples, over twenty people eventually stepped out, exceeding Yang Yan's desired number of twenty.

Yang Yan was satisfied and nodded.

Suddenly, someone in the crowd turned around and spoke to another:

"Junior Meng, it seems you just broke through to Qi Cultivation level seven recently. Do you qualify for the top twenty?"

The named disciple showed discontent but still retreated to the back.

Then, that person turned to two others and said: "Junior Wu, Junior Feng, you are at the bottom of the Thirty-Six Celestial Pride List; do you qualify for the top twenty?"

Again, two people reluctantly stepped back.

"Junior Fan..."

"Junior Xu..."

That person repeatedly named names, and soon the original group of over twenty was reduced to seventeen or eighteen, before stopping.

Frankly, Yang Yan was somewhat displeased inside, but he did not show it.

He looked at that person in silence for a long time, then suddenly asked:

"Name?"

The person seemed to anticipate Yang Yan's question and smiled freely:

"Grandmaster Yang, I am Zhong Shiyi, ranked third on the Inner Sect Celestial Pride List, eligible among the top twenty present."

"I just asked for your name."

Yang Yan slightly frowned, showing a hint of displeasure.

"Since your strength is remarkable, you don't need a spiritual treasure for defense; step back!"

Yang Yan had calculated that, without this person, the spiritual treasures on the ground would be enough for the remaining disciples.

Zhong Shiyi's originally confident face froze, and he stared at Yang Yan with barely hidden resentment before retreating into the crowd behind.

Although Zhong Shiyi was embarrassed, none of the disciples dared to laugh; instead, some were comforting him in the back.

He seems to be a well-connected figure!

Yang Yan observed everything but didn't pay much attention, only lightly saying:

"Divide them yourselves, pick the spiritual treasure that suits you."

Chapter 1132: Risks Arise at the Border City

Even so, there are only so many spiritual treasures, how can everyone get a perfectly satisfying one?

But the last dozen disciples still received their spiritual treasures with excitement.

Though it was only a brief possession.

"Please, Yang, say a few more words for everyone!" Lin Zimu suddenly said with a smile from the side.

Why does this feel like a pre-battle mobilization?

Yang Yan felt embarrassed and casually said, "Just work hard, everyone."

Then he took Gu Sheng back.

Leaving Lin Zimu and Liu Yizheng smiling bitterly in place.

How could they not know Yang Yan's natural tendency to be uninvolved?

Actually, they just wanted Yang Yan to use this opportunity to establish some prestige among the disciples.

After all, the future leader of the Ancient Abyss Sect is destined to be Yang Yan, not Lin Zimu, nor Liu Yizheng.

As the night bell rang three times, the wind accompanied the rain.

Early the next morning, a gentle breeze swayed, carrying a few withered leaves, drifting toward Yuanfang.

On the ancient mountain, two Foundation Establishment Stage chief deacons had already gathered all the disciples, preparing to descend the mountain.

High in the sky was a large ship with a dragon head and tail.

After the two chief deacons mentioned a few things to be aware of for this mission, they led everyone onto the dragon boat.

"Yang, I didn't expect the two deacons to only be responsible for our safety and not the mission itself. We might have some trouble this time."

The stern area was quite peaceful, with only three people sitting around the surrounding seats.

"What? You've lost confidence?"

Yang Yan found it amusing.

Lin Zimu shook his head: "Yang, the master revealed to me some information, saying that this great demon is not a native of Zhou Kingdom but a foreign great demon."

"Moreover, if the transmitted information is correct, it's only a Foundation Establishment Stage great demon, with terrifying power."

"What are you worried about?"

Yang Yan still didn't understand.

After all, there were two chief deacons accompanying them.

No matter how bad things got, their lives shouldn't be in danger, right?

Otherwise, the sect wouldn't have bothered to send two chief deacons out.

"Alas! Grandmaster, you don't know. If the chief deacons act to eliminate the demon, our trip would be in vain, and the mission rewards won't count."

Liu Yizheng was straightforward, directly expressing their concerns.

No one could compare to Yang Yan; they all lacked resources.

If it's truly a Foundation Establishment Stage great demon, then the same level of demon race is naturally stronger than humans, let alone a group of disciples with an average Qi Cultivation level at the eighth rank.

Lin Zimu and Liu Yizheng had some confidence in self-preservation, but they feared those Qi Cultivation seventh rank disciples, who were mere burdens in front of a Foundation Establishment Great Power.

"So that's what you're worried about."

Yang Yan smiled and shook his head lightly, casually saying:

"If it's truly a Foundation Establishment great demon, just have the junior disciples exert their efforts from the periphery. The reward resources will be shared with them."

"If it's just Qi Cultivation demonic creatures, then let the junior disciples participate together to drill some experience."

"No matter what, the sect's arrangement must have its reasoning."

Liu Yizheng immediately chimed in cheerfully, "Grandmaster Yang, you're absolutely right!"

Lin Zimu smiled silently on the side, thinking unknown thoughts.

"Where is the great demon now? Do we have a map?" Yang Yan suddenly asked Lin Zimu.

Lin Zimu, upon hearing, lowered his head, looking at his hands.

In the blink of an eye, a Scroll appeared in his hands.

Unrolled on the boat's deck, revealing a regional map.

Once the map was spread out, it showed a range of mountains.

Looking at the top of the map, the words "Li Mountain" were visible.

"Li Mountain? Where is it?"

Yang Yan, after all, was not a native of Zhou Kingdom, hence he asked.

Lin Zimu pressed a finger on the map, speaking solemnly:

"Li Mountain, far east of Zhou Kingdom, near the border, next to Yuwen Country."

Yang Yan paused in thought, suddenly asking: "Is Li Mountain an abandoned area by Zhou Kingdom?"

Upon hearing, Lin Zimu's face showed a hint of embarrassment.

He opened his hand, revealing another Scroll.

Spreading it open, it was a county map.

Lin Zimu pointed on it and said:

"Li Mountain belongs to Wu County, historically rich in Spirit Stone Veins, an important strategic location for Zhou Kingdom."

"Among them, a top-grade Spirit Stone Vein is considered the lifeline of Zhou Kingdom."

Yang Yan furrowed his brows, remaining silent.

Lin Zimu continued to point east of Wu County, specifically at Li Mountain:

"Because Wu County has a top-grade Spirit Vein, the more powerful Yuwen Country sought to invade Wu County."

"The two countries fought for decades, with countless casualties yet no decisive victory. Now they have reached a consensus."

"Yuwen Country will no longer covet Wu County, and in exchange, Zhou Kingdom will not station troops at their strategically critical Li Mountain fortress, rendering it a useless possession."

Yang Yan asked somewhat perplexed:

"Doesn't that mean Yuwen Country could easily advance?"

Lin Zimu suddenly laughed, somewhat proudly saying:

"Yang, how could that be! Zhou Kingdom spent a fortune to build a mighty pass behind Li Mountain, called Celestial Mist Pass, fortified with a hundred thousand troops, like an impregnable wall."

Yang Yan narrowed his eyes slightly, knowingly nodding:

"I finally understand why Zhou Kingdom doesn't act, it's because of this."

"This great demon must be aware of this, which is why it only kills at the border, retreating to Li Mountain afterward, quite a cunning plot! Indeed, a clever scheme!"

Liu Yizheng seemed confident, calmly stating:

"Grandmaster Yang is correct, but no matter how well-planned this demon's scheme is, it won't ultimately escape."

Indeed, with two Foundation Establishment Stage chief deacons on the demon-elimination team, what risks could they encounter?

Yang Yan remained silently thoughtful.

He suddenly thought of some key issues but wasn't certain, opting for silence.

"A trip to Li Mountain, at the Wandering Dragon Boat's pace, shouldn't take more than half a day. Just afraid of alerting the enemy..."

Lin Zimu's gaze deepened, rubbing his finger on the Li Mountain map.

"The two chief deacons shouldn't let it escape," Yang Yan replied.

"Indeed!" Lin Zimu nodded, affirming Yang Yan's statement.

Lin Zimu's words were right; once the disciples of Ancient Abyss Sect boarded the dragon boat, it traveled swiftly for half a day and arrived at Wu County.

Fearing to alert the enemy, Yang Yan and Lin Zimu decided not to proceed directly, but to use Wu County as a base, where disciples would travel on foot or horseback as needed.

Otherwise, if they used Sword Flight, considering the demon race's acute external perception, they'd likely be detected.

Wu County, as a frontier city of Zhou Kingdom, naturally had many troops stationed there.

Today, large contingents suddenly appeared on the streets of the county city.

These soldiers, clad in armor and wielding blades, were deployed along several main streets, seemingly preparing for the arrival of some significant figures.

The governor gathered civil and military officials, waiting respectfully inside the Governor's Mansion.

By noon, under the blazing sun, the officials waited, sweating on their cheeks, yet no one complained of fatigue.

When a servant offered an umbrella to shade the governor, it was waved away by the governor with a goatee.

Chapter 1133: Open Conspiracy

Just fifteen minutes past noon, a flash of silver light pierced through the clouds like lightning.

As it got closer, the speed gradually slowed down.

Closer still, the dragon head at the bow of the ship began to appear faintly.

The Old County Governor turned excitedly to call upon the gathered officials.

After a shout of "Welcome, Immortal Master of the Ancient Abyss Sect," the county overseer and all the officials knelt to the ground.

"Even as a county overseer, how could he perform such a grand ceremony?"

Yang Yan watched clearly from the Wandering Dragon Boat, feeling quite puzzled.

Lin Zimu had already stood up, took a step forward to look down, then turned back to Yang Yan and said:

"Yang, this Zhou Kingdom is actually considered to be a vassal of our Ancient Abyss Sect. It has the power to grant its life and can take it away as well."

"I see." Yang Yan nodded, indicating his understanding.

At this moment, dozens of Inner Sect Disciples at the back of the Dragon Boat also stood up, including some disciples with a curious look.

It seemed they were disciples who seldom carried out missions outside the sect.

"Let's go!"

No one dared to move because Yang Yan remained still.

Once the leader gracefully landed, drizzles of disciples descended from the Dragon Ship like raindrops.

The kneeling county overseer raised his head slightly, his face filled with joy.

The people of Wu County were finally saved!

"Greetings to the Immortal Masters of the Ancient Abyss Sect!"

The county overseer led the officials in unison.

"Greetings to the Immortal Masters of the Ancient Abyss Sect!!"

Yang Yan watched for a moment as he landed in front of him, with the disciples standing peacefully behind him.

"Name?" Yang Yan asked in a deep voice.

"Replying to the Immortal Master, I am the overseer of this county, Kong Kun."

County Overseer Kong Kun bowed to the ground and cautiously answered.

"Stand up." Yang Yan gestured with a slight raise of his hand, speaking gently.

"Yes!"

The old county overseer had some difficulty supporting himself to stand, and the officials behind him also slowly rose.

"There is no time to lose, arrange fast horses, we head out to eliminate the demon." Yang Yan immediately commanded.

"Yes! Rest assured, Immortal Master, the horses are ready, please follow me."

The Old County Governor noticed that Yang Yan was the leader of this group of Immortal Masters.

So every word said to Yang Yan must be right.

Lin Zimu had been standing behind Yang Yan, raised his head to look at the Wandering Dragon Boat still hanging in the air, wanting to remind Yang Yan to collect this Spiritual Treasure.

With a deep glance, Yang Yan found he had already turned away with the Old County Governor.

He couldn't help but laugh bitterly two times, flicked his sleeves, shrinking the vast Wandering Dragon Boat infinitely, turning it into a stream of light into his sleeve.

"Immortal Master, these are top-grade warhorses from the army, each capable of traveling a thousand miles a day." The Old County Governor respectfully followed behind Yang Yan, speaking with great respect.

Looking at the dozens of calm and grazing horses before him, Yang Yan nodded with satisfaction, then asked again: "Have the people around the Li Mountain area been evacuated yet?"

"No..."

The wrinkles on the Old County Governor's face squeezed together, speaking with a look of guilt:

"It is my negligence; it's my negligence indeed! Surrounding thirteen towns and villages of Li Mountain, totaling ten thousand and eight hundred people, have all fallen victim to the demon's evil hands!"

"Heh!"

Yang Yan sneered coldly: "With everyone dead, what's the point of talking about negligence now?"

The Old County Governor grew even more fearful, bowing his white head down, not daring to speak further.

"Mount up!"

"Yes!"

With Yang Yan's command, the disciples of the Ancient Abyss Sect flew up from the ground and landed steadily on their respective horses.

This small horse farm had an additional number of horses, evidently prepared for the Ancient Abyss Sect's disciples.

"Yang."

Lin Zimu sat on the horse, with his right hand holding a pure white horse alongside him.

"Thank you, Zimu." Yang Yan expressed his gratitude, immediately flew up, straddled the horse, and whipped the long reins.

"Giddy-up!"

"Giddy-up!"

A vast cloud of dust rolled in, leaving the county overseer and officials dumbfounded.

"Tell your superior that the consecrated Immortal Masters are meant to be used! Don't always come begging the sect every time there's trouble!"

Even though the horses had galloped far away, Yang Yan's voice still came through clearly.

The Old County Governor was momentarily stunned.

His superior... wasn't that the emperor?

The horse group proceeded with great fervor, given the prior instructions from the county overseer, Yang Yan and his group sped through the official road.

Wu County was large, with dozens of counties under its jurisdiction, and even more villages.

Of course, if Yang Yan and his group traveled by Sword Control, crossing Wu County would take less than half an incense stick's time.

However, driving horses required care for the mounts, making continuous acceleration impossible, so by the time Yang Yan and his group arrived at the foot of Li Mountain, it was nearing dusk.

Because they deliberately concealed their aura while riding, they appeared full of energy but showed no apparent threat.

At that moment, a grim cave on Li Mountain emitted an eerie cold laugh.

"Yet another batch of soldiers has come, unaware of their impending doom, with vitality stronger than the previous batches! Tut-tut—now I can advance my Blood Demon Technique to an even higher level."

...

"Dismount, prepare to search the mountain! Groups of three to five, keep distances between teams not too far to support each other, remember not to be alone."

Yang Yan commanded sternly from his horse.

"Yang, there's no need!"

Lin Zimu suddenly stopped Yang Yan.

The disciples behind him simultaneously shifted their gazes to Lin Zimu.

Lin Zimu pointed to Li Mountain in front, then looked at the dozens of Inner Sect Disciples behind, and said in a low voice:

"Yang, for us to search such a large Li Mountain like ordinary people would be too strenuous."

"Why don't we go up the mountain, randomly find a mountain peak, arrange formations, and simply wait for the prey?"

Upon hearing this suggestion, Yang frowned, expressing concern, saying: "I'm just afraid the demon will sense danger and refuse to come out."

After hearing this, Lin Zimu smiled and took out a small item.

It was a small jade box, looking simple and delicate, seemingly ordinary.

Lin Zimu did not keep Yang Yan in suspense, and directly said: "Yang, the jade box contains Fog Spirit Grass, borrowed from my master. To demons, it is akin to a Sacred Artifact; we just need to open the box, and it will undoubtedly come."

"Fog Spirit Grass? What does it do! If so, it turns out to be an open strategy."

Even though Yang Yan had never seen Fog Spirit Grass, witnessing Lin Zimu's confident demeanor assured him somewhat.

After all, Lin Zimu is not one to boast.

Liu Yizheng suddenly interjected from the side, his eyes gleaming as he looked at the jade box in Lin Zimu's hand, excitedly saying:

"Senior Brother, is it the main ingredient of Foundation Establishment Pill, Fog Spirit Grass?"

Seeing this, Lin Zimu reluctantly nodded:

"It is the main ingredient for Foundation Establishment Pill, though you won't be needing this Foundation Establishment Pill."

Liu Yizheng instantly showed a dejected expression, sighing helplessly.

Indeed, without medium Dao Body or higher aptitude, it's impossible for disciples needing Perfect Foundation Establishment to receive this rare Foundation Establishment Pill from the sect.

"Then let's go up the mountain."

Since Lin Zimu had prepared everything, Yang Yan was happy to oblige, leading the group onto Li Mountain.

Chapter 1134: You Let Your Tail Show

Li Mountain's vastness is not inferior to the Ancient Mountain.

However, the Spiritual Qi on Li Mountain is much thinner than that on the Ancient Mountain.

Furthermore, any cultivator at the third level of Qi Cultivation and above can detect the Demon Qi and faint Blood Qi mixed within the Spiritual Qi.

This is the aura of that demon and the lingering aura of the tens of thousands of villagers it slaughtered here.

After tying up dozens of fine horses casually in a grove at the mountain's foot, the group ascended Li Mountain led by Yang Yan.

In the middle, Liu Yizheng, with his ninth level of Qi Cultivation, was stationed, ready to provide aid to all sides at any moment.

Lin Zimu was at the rear, ensuring the path was cut off.

Having the elder brother nearby gave the disciples at the very back a lot of reassurance.

As they traversed the forest, cicadas and birds chirped in their ears from time to time.

They could also hear the rustling of small animals stepping on the sandy soil and dried leaves close by.

Although the darkness ahead did not hinder Yang Yan and the others' vision, they still lit the torches prepared in advance.

After yet another squirrel scurried past from the nearby forest, Lin Zimu's ears moved slightly, and he gave Yang Yan a glance.

The two exchanged smiles, instantly reaching a tacit understanding.

"Alright, let's set up camp here."

After walking for a little over half an hour, the group reached the halfway point of Li Mountain.

It was just right—a small peak with a flat piece of land outside.

Sitting casually on a ground covered with dried leaves, dozens of disciples began to orderly set up camp.

Logically, Inner Sect disciples like those from the Ancient Abyss Sect shouldn't need to do such camping activities.

However, most of the disciples often did missions outside, inevitably leading to times when they had to rest in the forests.

Thus, each of them possessed a tent and knew a fair amount about camping skills.

Even those who didn't know could get help from nearby fellow brothers.

The tents were medium-sized, more than sufficient to accommodate three people.

Every three disciples squeezed into one spot.

Yang Yan, Liu Yizheng, and Lin Zimu each had a tent to themselves.

The three positioned their tents in a triangular formation at the outermost edge, almost controlling all directions.

Night fell, and a gentle over-mountain breeze blew across the small peak.

Bright torch flames illuminated the surrounding area.

Other than the beast sounds, no other sounds were emitted.

Everything seemed like the calm surface of a tranquil lake, peaceful and harmonious.

A large silhouette emerged from a cave somewhere within Li Mountain, its bright eyes staring at the small peak below.

Greed flashed across its face but was forcibly suppressed for reasons unknown.

Time passed, and it was already late at night.

Even some disciples' snoring could be heard from the small peak.

Nobody knew whether it was intentional or not.

As though they had coordinated, after midnight when a gust of mountain wind blew past, a peculiar scent began to permeate through the mountain.

At the top, the creature that had originally returned to the cave suddenly opened its eyes!

"Fog Spirit Flower! How can this mountain have Fog Spirit Flower? How could I not know?!"

"Strange! This fragrance is clearly coming from those people; could it be bait?"

Upon thinking this, the creature mocked itself with a smirk: "Even if there's a trap, what of it? They're merely a bunch of cultivators hiding their Qi Cultivation; they're just coming to offer me some blood food!"

"Not to mention I've got them backing me!"

The conversation halted there.

Sibilant sounds began to echo in the cave.

When the small peak suddenly experienced a fierce gust of wind mixed with a strong fishy stench, Yang Yan, Lin Zimu, and the others simultaneously opened their eyes.

Those pretending to sleep also feigned drowsiness, with subtle signs of excitement on the corners of their lips.

The demon had arrived!

"Dragon Elephant Demon Slaying Array, activate!"

Lin Zimu's tent exploded with a thunderous roar following it.

"Boom!"

"Boom!"

"Boom!"

With the beginning, naturally, the continuation followed. All disciples ceased to hide their intentions, soaring into the sky with pieces of fabric.

"Left flank, take position!"

"Right flank, take position!"

"Central formation, take position!"

"Array core formed!"

A magnificent radiance suddenly encircled the small peak, bright and dazzling.

"Ha ha, ha ha!"

Strange laughter echoed through the mountain, revealing one's true form outside the dazzling light array.

A figure dressed in luxurious Daoist robes, indistinguishable from human form, appeared.

But the eyes on the face were slender, and the chin was very pointed.

"Fellow Daoists, setting up a grand array here late at night, could it be you're here in Li Mountain to catch demons?"

After laughing, the sharp-cheeked Daoist standing on a mound squinted his eyes, looking at those within the array.

Yang Yan timely stepped out of the tent.

These Ancient Abyss Sect disciples mostly had experience executing missions with Lin Zimu, so they meticulously followed Lin Zimu's orders, rendering Yang Yan's position as mentor unnecessary.

However, once Yang Yan stepped out, he became the group's backbone instantly.

Even Lin Zimu cast a questioning look towards Yang Yan.

The demon was indeed present.

No one else could possibly appear here.

By this time, some disciples, positioned at the back due to their weaker cultivation, showed subtle signs of concern.

Demonic creatures completely transforming into humans at least required enduring a Celestial Thunder baptism and stepping into the Foundation Establishment Stage!

This meant they were now facing a great demon at the Foundation Establishment Stage, which could easily overpower humans of the same realm!

Despite the elder brother being at the peak of Qi Cultivation, how could they fight when the strength difference was so vast?

If the two major overseers actually took action, it would mean their trip was in vain.

For a moment, many were hesitant and indecisive.

"Hmm... fellow Daoists, why are you staring at me like this? Why is everyone silent?"

The Daoist donned a friendly smile, though it seemed insincere.

Yang Yan kept an emotionless countenance, glanced faintly behind him, and said abruptly:

"Snake Spirit, your tail is showing."

Upon hearing this, the Daoist's face changed, and he immediately looked down at his feet, only to see his silhouette under the glow.

He instantly understood that he was being toyed with by the novices within the array.

"Hm hm—"

He grimly chuckled twice at Yang Yan, then continued: "I don't understand what the fellow Daoist is talking about?"

Yang Yan looked at him for a long time, then slowly replied once more: "I'm telling you, your tail is showing."

The Daoist became furious at once.

Knowing he was exposed, he simply stopped pretending and opened his right hand, revealing a snake-shaped longsword.

"A bunch of ignorant brats dare to think of slaying demons and proving the Dao; truly laughable! I'll have you serve as a feast for my temple today!"

Yang Yan stood calmly in place, merely watching the Daoist charge forward as he chuckled: "Dragon Elephant Array formed, do you dare enter?"

The Daoist sneered, pointing the snake-shaped sword at Yang Yan's face:

"You activated the grand array even before I entered; are you afraid you won't have time to set it up once I do?"

Yang Yan nodded, surprisingly responding: "Indeed."

Some disciples needed to see the Daoist's false visage to realize the demon's stage, but he and Lin Zimu had sensed it long ago, prompting the immediate formation of the array.

Chapter 1135: Are You Afraid Now?

According to the original plan, if it was just a lowly Qi Cultivation little demon, we would have simply lured it into the array and ground it to death.

But now, things were completely different.

The three of them all immediately cranked their focus up to the max, fully on guard.

That Daoist, hearing Yang Yan admit it, grew even more smug. He tilted up his chin and sneered:

"You little brats, I won't enter the array. I'll just smash it from the outside. With that bit of Spiritual Qi you've got, how long can you keep this grand array from breaking?"

"When the array breaks, the snake dies!"

Others might fear this monster, but Lin Zimu did not.

With his mid-grade Dao Body, he already had the ability to fight above his level.

Now, seeing that Daoist so arrogant, he immediately drew his sword and stepped out of the array, charging at the monster.

"Senior Brother, I'll help you!"

Who knows what he was thinking, but Liu Yizheng actually rushed out as well, face full of excitement.

"Hey, you're the array eye, don't move around."

Yang Yan called out helplessly, but still stepped forward to take Liu Yizheng's place.

The Dragon Elephant Array could trap enemies and kill them. Although it did not have a way to attack those outside the formation, protecting these disciples for now was no problem.

Normally, the more helpers the better, but Lin Zimu didn't think so.

When he charged up to the Daoist, he suddenly discovered that Liu Yizheng had followed him out as well. He was instantly shocked and angry:

"Get back!"

In his urgency, he even skipped the name.

"Senior Brother, I—"

The green streak that Liu Yizheng had turned into had just arrived beside Lin Zimu, and before he could finish speaking, a vicious palm wind was already slapping over.

"Bang!"

The green protective barrier was as fragile as paper, easily shattered by a single withered palm, which then landed on Liu Yizheng's shoulder.

"Pff!"

A spray of blood arrowed out of Liu Yizheng's mouth, and his whole body was knocked flying.

"Boom!"

The fallen leaves all over the ground were hit by the tremendous impact and instantly crushed into dust.

A figure smashed into the ground in a sorry heap, rolling a few times before finally coming to a stop.

"Hm? He actually has a life-saving item?"

The Daoist glanced at the white halo on Liu Yizheng's body at this moment, and said, somewhat in disbelief.

Liu Yizheng barely managed to lift his head, his shoulder aching fiercely.

Seeing the white glow, he instinctively reached to his neck and fished out a pure white jade token.

Holding it up to look, he saw a large crack had already appeared right across the middle.

"Foundation Establishment Stage... why is he this strong?"

Liu Yizheng's eyes went black, his neck went limp, and he actually fainted on the spot.

"Second Senior Brother!"

"Second Senior Brother! Hurry and save Second Senior Brother!"

The many disciples inside the array, seeing that even with a life-saving Magical Treasure Liu Yizheng had only barely taken one hit from the monster, all felt a chill rise in their hearts.

"Don't panic! We can't save him right now!"

Yang Yan blocked a few reckless disciples and turned his gaze toward Lin Zimu.

In truth, it wasn't only because they couldn't save him now; Yang Yan also believed Liu Yizheng wouldn't die.

On the other side, Lin Zimu had long since clashed with the Daoist.

With a Chixiao Sword in his hand, his swordplay flowed like clouds and water, leaving no gaps.

Relying on a decent Magical Treasure and a clever Body Technique, Lin Zimu actually fought the Daoist to a standstill for a time.

One disciple shouted with joy on his face, "Look, look! Senior Brother truly is Senior Brother, he can actually fight that monster!"

"Yeah! Senior Brother can actually fight across a whole major realm. It's unbelievable, simply unbelievable!"

"Senior Brother is mighty!"

...

The other disciples seemed greatly encouraged, all of them excited, staring fixedly, afraid to miss any detail.

Yang Yan, at the array eye, only shook his head slightly.

With his eye for it, he could of course see that from beginning to end Lin Zimu was only dodging on the strength of his Body Technique, occasionally throwing out a few harassing attacks.

One could only say that in terms of speed, that monster was indeed a bit lacking, which gave Lin Zimu a few openings to exploit.

After they tangled for quite a while, the monster seemed to grow impatient.

Amidst billowing smoke, its body shimmered and it revealed its true form.

Sure enough, it was a big jet-black snake!

Its massive body was as thick as a water barrel, the scales all over it gleaming with a metallic luster.

On its Snake Head were faintly two bulging bumps—it actually had the potential to transform into a Flood Dragon!

You must know, for a snake to transform into a Flood Python, it has to undergo Core Formation!

After Core Formation, a demon's strength is comparable to a Golden Core Great Power.

Thankfully, this snake only had the potential and wasn't truly a Flood Python yet.

Otherwise, even the two chief stewards who came along would likely be no match, and might well be swallowed in one gulp.

As for the disciples present, aside from Yang Yan, who might have a sliver of life thanks to his Spatial Talent, the rest probably wouldn't escape, not even one.

After revealing its true body, the Snake Demon's speed instantly rose by thirty percent.

And both its defense and attack power increased as well.

Lin Zimu, who had been barely holding his own, almost immediately fell into disadvantage.

Just then, Yang Yan suddenly called out from within the array, "Zhong Shiyi!"

The disciple who was called first froze, then a trace of forbearance flashed through his eyes.

"Disciple is here!"

One disciple stepped forward in response.

This person was none other than the one who, when Yang Yan was distributing Spiritual Treasures earlier, had claimed he was ranked third on the Inner Courtyard's Thirty-Six Celestial Pride List.

"Go quickly and bring Yi Zheng back." Yang Yan said in a low, firm voice.

Zhong Shiyi didn't move an inch. He turned his head and glanced at the unconscious Liu Yizheng outside the array.

One was ranked second on the Celestial Pride List, the other third. They usually didn't get along, and even had some grudges.

Let Zhong Shiyi save Liu Yizheng?

And with a Foundation Establishment great demon lurking outside, watching for a chance to strike?

That was asking a bit much.

Zhong Shiyi turned back and cupped his hands to Yang Yan, pondering for a moment:

"Grandmaster Yang, I..."

Yang Yan gave him a cold glance and said with some disdain, "What, you scared?"

Scared?

Zhong Shiyi bit his lower lip, and with some difficulty squeezed out a single word through his teeth: "Yes!"

As soon as he answered, Zhong Shiyi didn't wait for Yang Yan to speak. He directly used his Body Technique, flashed out of the array, and rushed toward where Liu Yizheng lay.

"Heh heh heh! Little fellow, did this seat give you permission to take him away?"

Seeing this, the Snake Demon, which had clearly been forcing Lin Zimu ever closer to the brink, suddenly abandoned its original target and shot toward Zhong Shiyi like lightning.

The Snake Demon's thinking was actually quite simple.

In its view, for Liu Yizheng to have such a life-saving Magical Treasure, his status was definitely not ordinary.

As the saying goes, if you want to catch the thieves, catch the leader first. Once it realized this, of course it wouldn't let such a big piece of prey slip from its grasp.

Hiss, hiss—

The Snake Demon flicked its massive tongue, and as it slithered across the ground it stirred up a wave of rank, fishy wind. Sand and gravel flew, dust billowed all around, and visibility plummeted.

As soon as Zhong Shiyi smelled that stench, his face changed.

He turned his head on instinct and was horrified to see the Snake Demon staring at him with two huge lantern-like, green-glowing eyes.

Ah!

Zhong Shiyi let out a shrill scream, so frightened his soul nearly flew away.

His body stumbled and he almost pitched forward onto the ground.

"Senior Brother, save me!"

Zhong Shiyi cried out at the top of his lungs, voice tearing at his throat.

Chapter 1136: Useless

No matter how full of himself Zhong Shiyi was, he absolutely did not think he could withstand even one strike from the Snake Demon.

You had to know, Liu Yizheng's cultivation was about the same as his, and on top of that he carried a Protective Spiritual Treasure bestowed by the elders of the sect.

Even so, he'd still been knocked unconscious by a single blow from this Snake Demon, let alone Zhong.

He also had a Protective Spiritual Treasure, but he really didn't want to waste it here.

Besides, as for trying to survive in the hands of this terrifyingly powerful Snake Demon in front of him, he honestly didn't have the slightest bit of confidence.

Lin Zimu had just escaped danger and barely had a chance to catch his breath; hearing Zhong Shiyi's cry for help, he immediately grabbed his flying sword and charged over.

"Brat, it would've been one thing if you kept hiding, but you actually rush over without knowing your own limits—are you looking to die?"

Feeling a gust of fierce wind surging from behind, the Snake Demon immediately turned its head back.

Swoosh!

Its thick tail lashed fiercely, howling as it swept toward Lin Zimu.

Zhong Shiyi was still shaken out of his wits and had already thrown the matter of saving anyone to the back of his mind.

Wind sprang under his feet as he bolted straight back into the Dragon Elephant Array.

"Trash!"

Seeing this, Yang Yan was furious, but he still suppressed the urge to kick the man straight back out.

"Come and take my place as the array eye!"

Yang Yan shouted angrily.

If this piece of crap weren't a fellow disciple, Yang Yan would've long since wanted to slap him to death.

"Yes."

A morbid look flashed across Zhong Shiyi's pale face; only after casually wiping the sweat from his forehead did he notice the gazes of the surrounding disciples.

Some held confusion, some cold ridicule, and others were filled with bafflement...

Was this really the very same Senior Brother Zhong ranked third on the Inner Sect's Thirty-Six Celestial Pride List?

Yang Yan shot him a cold glance; once Zhong had taken over the position of array eye from him, he drew the Long Sword Star Night, his entire person transforming into a streak of flowing light.

"Yang!"

Lin Zimu held his sword crosswise to block the Snake Demon's strike, but his whole body was swatted away by the tremendous force and crashed heavily to the ground.

"Cough, cough!"

Even with Lin Zimu's cultivation at the peak of Qi Cultivation, in front of a Foundation Establishment Stage Snake Demon he was injured the instant they made contact.

"Watch out!"

Seeing that the Snake Demon was actually about to deliver a killing blow to the badly injured Lin Zimu lying on the ground, Yang Yan's already extreme speed suddenly increased by another three points.

"Little Snake Spirit, your opponent is me!"

Yang Yan's shout of provocation clearly had an effect.

With him already closing in from behind, the Snake Demon was forced to halt its action and turn around, opening its blood-filled maw toward him.

Roar!

The Snake Demon let out an enraged bellow, ferocious light blazing in its eyes.

"Your breath stinks!"

Yang Yan cursed without the slightest courtesy.

Even as he spoke, his right hand moved on reflex, swinging Star Night hard and driving it straight into the Snake Demon's gaping mouth.

Clang!!!

However, instead of the tearing sound of a throat being pierced ringing in his ears, a clash of metal rang out!

"Roar!"

The massive tail thrashed wildly against the ground as the Snake Demon let out a howl of agony, like its heart and lungs were being ripped apart.

This was the first time since the battle with the Ancient Abyss Sect disciples that the Snake Demon had suffered a meaningful injury.

The Snake Demon's lantern-sized eyes bulged to the limit, its two sharp fangs still dripping with viscous strands of saliva.

It even kept dripping continuously from the corners of its mouth.

Yang Yan's gaze sank as he quickly withdrew Star Night.

Inside the Snake Demon's blood-red mouth, a streak of scarlet had burst open.

To prevent a counterattack from the Snake Demon, Yang Yan prudently pulled back right after landing the hit.

At this moment, Lin Zimu, who had fallen behind them, was also slowly propping himself up with his longsword.

"Cough, cough..."

He was wracked by a fit of violent coughing, a pool of black blood spilling from the corner of his mouth.

With his sword planted in the ground, he twisted his head to look at Yang Yan and forced out a hoarse reminder: "Yang, this demon can't be fought head-on, cough, cough..."

"Brat, you actually dared to injure me? I'll make you wish you were dead!"

The Snake Demon reared where it stood, its massive Snake Head shaking violently as a surge of black mist spewed from its mouth.

This black mist carried an intense corrosive effect; the instant it met the air, sizzling sounds rang out as even the air seemed to be corroded.

Yang Yan's expression shifted slightly, and he stepped backward with his right foot in the air.

Yet that black mist was like maggots gnawing at a bone, clinging stubbornly as it pursued Yang Yan relentlessly.

A wry, helpless smile tugged at Yang Yan's lips.

As the saying goes, a gentleman does not stand under a crumbling wall—there was no way he was going to test this on his own body.

With a thought, space around him suddenly stirred, and Yang Yan's body vanished from where he stood.

The Snake Demon's eyes bulged even wider, an almost human look of shock appearing on its face.

The little cultivator in front of it had actually triggered the Space Law just now?!

That was a technique only a Nascent Soul Stage Great Power might possess... Small Shifting!

Horried, the Snake Demon couldn't help but shrink its neck back slightly.

Not only that, even the black mist that had been relentlessly chasing Yang Yan suddenly froze in place.

"Who exactly are you?!" the Snake Demon asked in alarm and doubt, its voice even trembling a bit.

Yang Yan remained silent, keeping a certain distance between himself and the Snake Demon.

"How do you know Small Shifting?" The Snake Demon still didn't dare strike at Yang Yan, continuing to question him nervously.

Yang Yan still didn't speak, but the contempt in his eyes already made his attitude clear.

You want to know my name...? You're nowhere near qualified!

Man and demon faced each other from afar, locked in a standoff for quite some time.

During this period, Lin Zimu and Liu Yizheng were both carried back into the Dragon Elephant Array by the disciples inside.

Yang Yan watched coldly from the sidelines, his face showing little change, but in his heart he let out a long breath of relief.

Just now, it was precisely because Liu Yizheng was unconscious and Lin Zimu heavily injured that Yang Yan had felt so constrained.

He had only one goal: to stall the Snake Demon for a while, giving them enough time to retreat back to the grand array.

Now that the two of them had safely entered the array, Yang Yan no longer had any worries.

At this moment, Star Night suddenly slipped from Yang Yan's right hand, slowly revolving in midair before him, its tail trailing specks of blue starlight.

The space in front of Yang Yan began to turn illusory, ripples of space spreading out like a rotating starry sky, mysterious and unfathomable.

"This is... the Ancient Abyss Sect's Star Constellation Swordsmanship?"

The Snake Demon was actually rather well-informed, recognizing Yang Yan's Swordsmanship at a glance.

"Is that the Star Constellation Sword, first among the seven swords of the Ancient Abyss Sect, in your hand?" The Snake Demon stared in puzzlement at Yang Yan and Star Night for a long while, speaking with some uncertainty.

As it spoke, who knew what it suddenly thought of; it abruptly burst into loud laughter:

"The Star Constellation Sword can't possibly have only this level of power, and the Star Constellation Swordsmanship only applies to cultivators below the Golden Core realm. That means you definitely aren't a Nascent Soul elder!"

Yang Yan raised an eyebrow and sneered. "When did I ever say I was a Nascent Soul elder?"

As the last syllable fell, Star Night in Yang Yan's hand pivoted in midair, drawing a dazzling arc of sword light, its razor-sharp tip tearing through the air, thrusting straight at the Snake Demon's heart.

At the same time, he shouted:

"I don't need the might of a Nascent Soul—just I, Yang Yan, am more than enough to behead you, you damned beast!"

"Ridiculous!" A man-eating green glint flashed in the Snake Demon's eyes, its features twisting into a hideous snarl.

Having confirmed that Yang Yan was not a Nascent Soul cultivator, the Snake Demon instantly stopped holding back and actually lunged straight at him.

"Sever!"

With Words Become Law, Star Night swept up a blaze of starlight and cleaved straight down on the Snake Demon.

Chapter 1137: Kill

The snake demon faced the overwhelming strike without a trace of fear.

Just as Star Night was within three feet, the Snake Head suddenly lowered.

"Roar!"

The body, tens of meters long, unexpectedly burrowed into the ground in an instant!

Crucially, the ground didn't show any movement, as if the snake demon and the earth were one entity.

"Earth Escape Technique?"

Yang Yan was slightly startled; Star Night then turned and flew back, retreating explosively.

The Earth Escape Technique is recorded in the Ancient Abyss Sect as an ancient art.

Throughout the entire Wandering Dragon Star, less than twenty people know this Miracle Technique!

"Roar!"

As expected, a huge Snake Head suddenly burst from where Yang Yan had just stood, its gaping maw clearly aiming to swallow him whole.

Missing its strike, the snake demon wasn't startled, and after giving Yang Yan an eerie grin, it vanished into the ground again.

How could this be fought?

Yang Yan couldn't attack underground, so he had to repeatedly dodge the snake demon's attacks.

Occasionally, when dodging was impossible, he would directly fold space and forcefully use Instant Teleportation.

After several failed attempts at what it thought were sure-kill strikes, the snake demon gave up entangling with Yang Yan.

It turned its head and chose a new target, continuously attacking the Dragon Elephant Array from underground.

The snake demon's realm was higher than Yang Yan's, and it cunningly abandoned him to assault the Dragon Elephant Array instead...

This left Yang Yan at a loss.

With a thought, Yang Yan decided to provoke it.

"So, the demon race dares not to fight against human cultivators below their realm?"

Indeed, the snake demon, outraged, roared:

"Boy, the cunning of the human race is fully reflected in you! If I break the Dragon Elephant Array and kill them all, what would you do?"

Yang Yan sneered, his face full of ridicule, "A demon is a demon, ignorant as ever. This array, at your current level, cannot be broken in less than three days and nights."

The snake demon's eyes shot out cold light, diving silently underground.

It used its actions to tell Yang Yan that in the face of absolute power, everything else was laughable.

The snake demon underground was untraceable, but its massive tail would occasionally lash out like a gigantic whip, battering the Dragon Elephant Array with rumbling sounds.

The Dragon Elephant Array suffered heavy blows, trembling violently.

The brilliance on it dimmed noticeably.

Even at Yang Yan's ultimate speed, he couldn't stop such a mad and elusive assault by the snake demon.

"Damn it, isn't there a way to break this Earth Escape Technique?" The more Yang Yan thought, the angrier he became, shouting in frustration.

At that moment, within the Dragon Elephant Array, everyone including Lin Zimu wore expressions of worry and despair, unable to change the situation.

If this great demon were truly to break the Dragon Elephant Array, the inner sect disciples of Ancient Abyss Sect might have no choice but to fight to the death.

If anything went wrong, complete annihilation was possible.

This waiting didn't last long.

Though the Dragon Elephant Array was powerful, it was, after all, formed by a group of Qi Cultivation disciples.

Such an array standing before a Foundation Establishment great demon, holding out seemed like a foolish dream.

Rumble!

As the array gradually turned from intact to fragments, then collapsed with a bang, the entire process spanned less than half an hour.

During this time, the snake demon attacked several hundred times!

That the Array of All Things could last this long, Yang Yan knew was already not easy.

He even began to fear that with the next attack, it would shatter and collapse.

"Wretch!"

At the moment the array collapsed, Lin Zimu, who had regained nearly seventy to eighty percent of his strength, let out an explosive shout.

Holding the mid-grade spiritual treasure Chixiao, he was the first to rush towards the snake demon that just broke the array from the edge within.

The snake demon, unlike before, didn't retreat underground immediately after attacking.

This time, it laughed wildly, charging into the center of the former array where the crowd was densest!

This sudden raid left Lin Zimu and Yang Yan caught off guard, and in shock, they could only rush forward with all their might to try stopping it.

In the center, dozens of Ancient Abyss Sect inner sect disciples, the highest realm barely reaching the eighth or ninth level of Qi Cultivation.

The lower ones had just approached the seventh level of Qi Cultivation!

Facing the attacks of a Foundation Establishment snake demon, each of them felt a trace of despair.

"Fellow siblings, our Ancient Abyss Sect has stood for a thousand years, the inner courtyard established a millennium ago, with every departing inner sect disciple renowned across the Zhou Kingdom."

"Because they were not only highly skilled, but resolute in will! In such a life-and-death situation, can we abandon self-rescue?!"

"Even for the path in our hearts, we Ancient Abyss Sect disciples fear not death! Brothers, fight with me!"

Liu Yizheng finally awoke at this critical moment.

Upon awakening and facing such a situation, instead of feeling fear, he began to boost morale.

Also leading by example, wielding his sword, he charged head-on towards the oncoming snake demon.

As the second senior brother of the inner sect, his words carried weight.

"Yes! The spirit of Ancient Abyss Sect is indestructible, demon-exterminating and Dao-preserving!"

Then, after a blue light, dozens of beams followed.

These beams were determined and sharp, unstoppable!

"Kill!"

What is Dao?

Even those cultivating the Dao weren't fully clear about its true meaning.

But it didn't prevent them from knowing the Heavenly Dao, the Great Dao, and the righteous path in their hearts!

"Kill! Kill! Kill!"

"Star Constellation Swordsmanship!"

The night was hazy, the dissipated array allowed the high-hanging moon to faintly illuminate the area.

The only sight was the leading beam surrounded by starlight spots.

After a loud shout, the familiar Star Constellation Swordsmanship could not force the snake demon to retreat.

"Hahaha! Whelp, you dare use a Foundation Establishment stage Daoist Technique by mere comprehension at Qi Cultivation ninth level, can your spiritual power sustain it?!"

Facing Liu Yizheng's strongest sword, disregarding future damage, the snake demon neither dodged nor evaded, speaking from its large snakehead.

As the longsword wrapped in brilliant starlight flew towards it, the snake demon suddenly spewed a large cloud of black mist.

"Buzz buzz buzz..."

"Sizzle sizzle sizzle..."

The imposing longsword wrapped in radiant light plunged into the black mist.

At first, it seemed to meet powerful resistance; the sword vibrated unwillingly, buzzing.

Then the black mist completely enveloped the longsword, and after a screech of corrosion.

Within three to five seconds, the black mist suddenly opened a gap.

Buzz...

Clang!!!

Liu Yizheng's flying sword fell immediately, the remaining sword light completely dimmed, plunging to the ground.

Chapter 1138: Life and Death Slaughter

At the same time, Liu Yizheng, who was still desperately trying to sense the flying sword in mid-air, forcibly held back a mouthful of blood.

Once the flying sword landed, he couldn't hold it in any longer, and a mouthful of dirty blood sprayed into the air.

The specks of starlight on his body scattered around, and even the protective Spiritual Energy Shield suddenly disappeared.

Liu Yizheng was like an ordinary mortal without any magic, and after spitting out a large mouthful of fresh blood, he fell straight down.

The entire process, although it seems lengthy to describe, actually happened in the blink of an eye.

Liu Yizheng's sudden fall left many disciples at a loss.

Most people cried out in grief and indignation, firmly grasping the Spiritual Treasure in their hands, intending to perish together with the snake demon!

"Alas!"

Yang Yan forcefully withdrew Star Night and, with a space teleportation, steadily caught the falling Liu Yizheng.

Looking at Liu Yizheng's pale face, Yang Yan couldn't help but sigh again.

After placing Liu Yizheng in a relatively safe place, Yang Yan reappeared outside.

This time, he appeared silently behind the snake demon.

At this moment, Lin Zimu had already charged to the left side of the snake demon, and, with a loud shout, unleashed an extremely powerful sword strike with all his might.

In front, dozens of disciples preparing to die valiantly also had five or six nearly simultaneously making their moves.

Swish, swish, swish—

Five or six beams of sword light fired together, almost without reservation.

Yang Yan hesitated not, aiming at the snake demon's spine and slashed out with his sword.

No matter how much the snake demon at the Foundation Establishment Stage couldn't possibly take all these fierce and unstoppable sword techniques in an instant.

What's more, it had no method of translocation, and it was too late to flee underground.

All it could do was brace itself and endure!

"You bunch of little brats, in such a hurry to die?!"

The furious snake demon let out a threatening shout and spewed out a large cloud of black mist again.

Several disciples, who were well aware of the black mist, stood before the snake demon. Even though they had long resolved to die, they were still scared out of their wits.

To the extent that their hands holding the swords were unsteady.

Knowing they couldn't fight it head-on, even if they sacrificed their lives, they couldn't get close. They had no choice but to let go, leaving behind their Spiritual Treasures to act as a temporary barrier to block the black mist.

And then they all hurriedly retreated using Body Techniques.

The black mist, although it didn't catch them, immediately corroded and damaged the five low-grade Spiritual Treasures.

The five people, already linked with their Spiritual Treasures, felt their Qi Seas surge at the moment the treasures were damaged.

Five blood arrows shot from their throats, and five figures fell straight to the ground.

The only somewhat good news was that they seemed to be better than Liu Yizheng.

At least their protective spiritual shields didn't dissipate, and falling to the mortal realm wouldn't necessarily kill them!

"Azure Vault Technique, Life and Death Slaughter Sword! Slash!!"

Yang Yan, having finally seized an opportunity to attack, in such close proximity, unleashed the mightiest killing move.

The Life and Death Slaughter Sword, which once sliced through the demon god Chiyou, was undoubtedly formidable.

The demon god's strength was roughly equivalent to the Foundation Establishment Great Power, but Chiyou's power was impaired, yet still somewhere between perfect Qi Cultivation and Foundation Establishment.

At that time, Yang Yan was able to slay Chiyou with the Life and Death Sword, let alone now!

Yang Yan was confident in seizing the demon's vitals, seriously injuring it, or even taking its life directly.

At this moment, the snake demon had just resolved the threat from the front and opened its mouth to swallow the flying Lin Zimu whole.

However, at that instant, its heart skipped a beat, a sense of extreme danger suddenly surged up.

It knew someone was behind it but didn't realize it was Yang Yan!

In the nick of time, the snake demon instinctively tilted its head slightly.

Boom!

Clang!!!

It was as if someone's back of the head had been struck with a heavy hammer, even though the snake demon's scales effectively blocked it for a moment, merely pausing the attack for half a beat!

"Ah!!!"

The snake demon, unable to endure the pain, let out an anguished howl, its body rolling continuously, fiercely charging and crashing, wanting to crush Yang Yan to pieces.

Alas, Yang Yan had anticipated such an outcome.

As soon as he hit the target, he forcibly folded space, disappearing into thin air, escaping the snake demon's range of attack, watching the spectacle from a safe distance.

The back of the head was oozing blood, yet the figure had no time to care because two silhouettes were already closing in from the front!

"Thundercloud Sword!"

"Life and Death Slaughter Sword!"

Yang Yan and Lin Zimu flanked from left and right, while the disciples behind them seemed to suddenly see the dawn of victory.

"I swear, in this lifetime, I'll slaughter all disciples of the Ancient Abyss Sect!!"

The heavily wounded snake demon went utterly mad, its voice rumbling through the air.

After making its vow, it opened its mouth and spat.

A small, green demonic core, which expanded with the wind, instantly transformed into a massive object of dozens of feet.

This is a demon core initially refined by demons above the Foundation Establishment Stage!

It can be said that the snake demon's exquisite cultivation is all encapsulated within!

Yang Yan and Lin Zimu, faced with the sudden change, couldn't halt their movements.

Yang Yan was better off; having fought his way up to this point, he was quick to react to such situations, his sword in hand, instantly disappearing from where he stood, appearing before the snake demon!

Lin Zimu wasn't as lucky as Yang Yan.

In haste, he forcibly interrupted his long-prepared sword move, powerfully slashing at the demon core.

The demon core remained unmoved, continuing its charge.

Lin Zimu, already heavily injured, experienced further backlash from the Daoist Technique when forcibly changing techniques, aggravating his wounds further.

When the demon core heavily struck him, Lin Zimu didn't even make an extra sound, falling like a broken kite, far away from the wind.

"Senior Brother!"

"Senior Brother!"

"Senior Brother!!"

"No! Quickly, save Senior Brother! Senior Brother mustn't die!"

Behind them, dozens of figures saw Lin Zimu falling weakly from the sky as if his light was extinguished. They went mad, recklessly burning their True Essence, only to increase their speed to rescue faster by one more fraction!

"Life and Death Slaughter, I'm in command!"

What happened afterward, Yang Yan wasn't very clear.

He only knew that probably only he could confront the snake demon head-on now.

Yet he remained boundlessly heroic!

Star Night in Yang Yan's hand instantly sliced through the sky, producing a sharp sword howl.

The sharp sword edge was wrapped in a layer of thin, light blue glow.

At this moment, in the thick, black night, it appeared so dazzling and conspicuous.

"Life and Death Slaughter..."

For the first time, the snake demon experienced true fear in front of a group of Qi Cultivation disciples.

"Life and Death Slaughter... Slaughter, is it?"

The light gradually faded from the snake demon's eyes, as if instantly transformed into a lifeless statue.

Yang Yan's attack, it couldn't receive! Nor could it withstand!

Thus, a trace of fear swiftly flitted across its godless eyes.

The snake demon, transformed into human form, turned and suddenly leaped back, trying to flee the attack!

Chapter 1139: Blood-Soaked Battle

How could Yang Yan possibly let it have its way?

You have to know, this move is immensely powerful, and the consumption is just as huge!

Even Yang Yan himself couldn't possibly use it continuously.

Since that's the case, it meant that every strike Yang Yan made was absolutely critical.

"Slash!"

Before the words had even fallen, Star Night flew from his hand, its speed a few points faster than that shadowy figure.

Rumble!

Starlight flared, dazzlingly bright, carrying the might of thunder as it tore through the air and hacked heavily into the Snake Demon's back.

"Aaah!!!"

The Snake Demon in Daoist robes had the clothes on its back shredded in an instant by that endless starlight, turning into scraps that scattered through the air.

Blood splattered as Star Night carved a deep, bone-revealing wound into its back, then reversed and flew back.

"Ah!"

Struck again, the Snake Demon turned its head with endless resentment and glared at Yang Yan.

It twisted around and, seething with rage, charged the group of disciples on the ground!

There, dozens of Inner Sect Disciples had just caught Lin Zimu safely. A few held swords on guard, but the only role they could really play was just that—standing guard.

"Spread out, now!!"

Anxious to the extreme, Yang Yan stepped directly onto the returning Star Night, turning into a streak of light as he rushed toward the Snake Demon.

The Inner Sect Disciples of the Ancient Abyss Sect weren't idiots. Hearing Yang Yan's shout, they scattered at once.

Two disciples disregarded everything, one staying behind to cover the retreat, the other carrying Lin Zimu on his back and fleeing madly!

What does it mean to be the Inner Sect's senior brother?

Other sects might not be the same, but in the Ancient Abyss Sect, the senior brother was the Young Sect Leader, a future Sect Leader—level existence!

He wasn't just highly respected among the disciples, he also possessed sufficient talent and strength!

It was no exaggeration to call him the future hope of the Ancient Abyss Sect.

"Trying to run?!"

The lightning-fast Snake Demon caught that disciple who was covering the retreat. With a vicious grin, its right hand turned into a claw and crushed the disciple's shoulder in one grip!

"Ugh!"

The disciple grunted and fainted on the spot.

"Life and Death Slaughter!!"

In blazing fury, Yang Yan's head went hot. He was clearly still sending out the sword, yet his body moved at the same time, slipping through space!

Multitasking with one mind and two uses?!

Was this still a Qi Cultivation disciple of the Ancient Abyss Sect?

Could he be some Immortal Monarch reborn?!

Even though the Snake Demon sensed it, even though it was afraid, even though it let go of that disciple and tried to flee, it was still too slow.

"Bang!"

Star Night shattered the Snake Demon's Protective Elemental Shield in one stroke, hacking viciously into its body that was hard as metal or stone.

"Aah—"

The Snake Demon let out a heart-wrenching scream.

But Yang Yan had no intention of stopping.

Once that strike landed, another sword of light, fast to the extreme, whistled out with overwhelming momentum.

"Get lost!"

The Snake Demon's reaction was fairly quick. It turned and slammed a palm at Yang Yan's chest with an Overwhelming force.

The timing was critical, but Yang Yan had more than enough time to change his move mid-way and block that palm.

He didn't.

Yang Yan chose to trade injury for injury!

If he didn't, he was afraid the Snake Demon would use Earth Escape Technique and slip underground in the blink of an eye.

The chance would vanish in an instant.

If he let the Snake Demon escape, what else could he do?

Rumble!

The ferocious palm tore the air apart, the raging, howling wind of the strike slamming heavily into Yang Yan.

To the Snake Demon, Yang Yan's Protective Gang Qi was no more than paper.

It crushed through it like dead wood, almost without hindrance, shattering it with a single palm.

At the same time, Yang Yan's sword also slashed into the Snake Demon's shoulder.

It wasn't the Life and Death Slaughter Sword, but this strike that used up most of Yang Yan's Spiritual Power was nothing to scoff at either.

Star Night hacked a deep, bone-revealing gash into the Snake Demon's shoulder.

"Boom!"

"Rip!"

Taking that palm head-on, Yang Yan's meridians and Spiritual Qi went wild, and his whole body was sent flying.

Spurt!

In midair, with his qi and blood surging, Yang Yan couldn't hold back a mouthful of fresh blood that sprayed out.

In an instant, he felt his consciousness start to blur.

The Snake Demon, having been slashed by Yang Yan, immediately blasted backward.

In the blink of an eye, it vanished from the surface, actually using Earth Escape Technique again to drill into the ground.

His soles scraped violently across the ground, slipping back dozens of steps without being able to brace. Only then did Yang Yan barely manage to stabilize himself.

"Cough..."

He spat out a mouthful of clotted blood and, with no time to worry about himself, quickly turned his gaze toward those disciples who had scattered.

Liu Yizheng was unconscious, Lin Zimu was severely injured; in this vast Inner Sect, for a moment there was actually no one to take command!

All the disciples subconsciously focused their gaze on Yang Yan.

Grandmaster Yang, with only Qi Cultivation Stage strength, had forced a Foundation Establishment Snake Demon into such a miserable state—this scene was already deeply etched into their hearts.

But when Yang Yan looked over at them, they panicked a little inside.

Because Yang Yan didn't speak; he just kept twisting his neck, turning his head from side to side.

Finally, his gaze suddenly stopped on a Qi Cultivation seventh-layer disciple to his right.

The disciple being locked onto felt a chill rise in his heart and subconsciously shrank his neck.

He didn't know why. Why was it that the moment Grandmaster Yang stared at him, a cold dread surged up inside?

Roar!

Yang Yan suddenly bellowed, his whole body shooting out ahead of time.

That disciple had already been tense as a bowstring. Hearing Yang Yan's angry shout, although he didn't understand why, he still retreated at once.

However, his speed was ultimately still too slow!

In Yang Yan's perception, even though the Snake Demon had hidden its presence underground, there was still a faint trace of Demon Qi that he could catch.

It was just that when it used Earth Escape Technique its speed surged; even Yang Yan had to keep turning his head, locking onto the opposite directions.

When that trace of Demon Qi locked onto that disciple and shot straight at him, Yang Yan knew it had to be the Snake Demon!

This time, Yang Yan rushed out even faster than before, his speed swelling by another margin.

If this kept up, the Snake Demon might not even have time to kill anyone—just as it emerged from the ground, Yang Yan would already arrive to strike!

Once the Snake Demon sensed the commotion on the surface, it abruptly shifted direction, turning back and shooting toward the opposite side!

Even with Yang Yan's monstrous mind, his strength was still lacking in the end.

That one turn left him a few breaths slower than the Snake Demon!

Between experts, victory or defeat could be decided in a single exchange, let alone a few breaths' worth of time.

In the direction opposite Yang Yan, a disciple realized something was wrong and tried to pull back.

The ground began to bulge slightly like a drilling earth dragon, shooting toward that disciple at great speed.

One moved like a toddler learning to walk; the other like a soldier in full sprint—how could those speeds even be compared?

As expected, that disciple was seized by the throat. Even as he desperately maintained his True Qi Protection Shield and struggled with all his might in that grip, it was useless.

"Heh heh! Die for me!"

The Snake Demon gave a cruel laugh and clenched its right hand fiercely.

"Crack!"

The disciple's neck went limp; his breath vanished in an instant.

Someone had actually died!

"You beast!!"

"Life and Death Slaughter Sword, to me!!"

Shocked and enraged, Yang Yan roared.

Before he arrived, Star Night was already shooting toward the Snake Demon at a speed even faster than his.

The Snake Demon didn't have time to think and immediately tried to flee underground.

"Boom!"

Yet just as the Snake Demon was about to sink into the ground, Star Night struck its back.

Hit by that blow, the Snake Demon's injuries worsened. The Earth Escape Technique it was casting was also disrupted, and it tumbled out mid-way in a sorry state.

It rolled clumsily across the ground before it finally avoided Star Night's pursuit.

By the time Star Night completed its strike and shot toward it again, the Snake Demon had already vanished.

Chapter 1140: Pursuit

"Cough cough—Yang Yan, let him kill, as long as he shows himself, you stand a chance to slay him!"

Lin Zimu, supported by several disciples, clutched his chest and spoke with difficulty.

"Grandmaster Yang, please ensure you kill this beast to avenge our Ancient Abyss Sect disciples!"

Other disciples all looked at Yang Yan with excitement.

If this demon doesn't die, it will be a lifelong disgrace to them!

And later, if fortunate enough to undergo tribulation, it would become their heart demon.

"No."

Yang Yan shook his head, his gaze firmly locked on the faint demon qi.

The Snake Demon couldn't understand how Yang Yan was tracking him.

Having just suffered another blow, it was healing now, daring not to make rash moves.

Yang Yan clearly understood Lin Zimu's intentions since he possessed the power.

Thus, according to their plan, they wanted to use the disciples present as bait at all costs.

As long as the Snake Demon dared to make a move, once not, twice, twice not, three times, there would always be an opportunity to kill it.

Yang Yan stared at the motionless Snake Demon, silent for a long time, before slowly speaking:

"Using sect disciples' lives as bait, I, Yang Yan, can't do it."

"Since I don't have the ability now, it must be so."

"Fellow disciples, we can forego the reward for this mission!"

Yang Yan's words were astonishing.

The disciples looked around at each other, their faces full of doubt.

"Two Chief Stewards, please strike and slay the demon!"

Yang Yan directed his gaze upward.

In his perception, two figures had been silently watching from the air.

Every mission, disciples face death and injury; such outcomes for the Ancient Abyss Sect are standard.

However, because of the mission's uncertainty and with Yang Yan as the Saint Son involved, the sect dispatched two Chief Stewards as a special case.

Otherwise, without risk, what was the point of training?

Would it be like children playing?

Thus, when the Snake Demon crushed the throat of an Inner Sect disciple, the two Chief Stewards did not intervene.

Since if they engaged, it would signify mission failure!

Frankly speaking, only a disciple died, which was entirely within tolerable limits.

Now, Yang Yan's spoken plea was soon met with a response from the sky.

"Bold fiend, daring to cause chaos within Ancient Abyss Sect's jurisdiction! You deserve to die!"

"Saint Son, rest assured! We will immediately exterminate this vile beast!"

With these words, like sudden fireworks ascending in the sky, two bright yellow flames roared like lightning.

Before they arrived, the swords did!

Two longswords carrying flames of thunderous aura charged brashly toward the hiding place of the Snake Demon below.

"Ah! How is this possible?! How can there be two Foundation Establishment cultivators!!"

The Snake Demon's terrified cries emerged from underground before a silhouette quickly surfaced from the depths to show itself on the ground.

Even one Yang Yan already troubled him greatly, let alone two Foundation Establishment experts?!

It wasn't that he didn't want to use Earth Escape to hide.

Actually, if a cultivator of the same level were prepared, it would only take a moment using the Daoist Technique to trap him deep underground, immobilized!

At that time, truly becoming a fish on the chopping block for others to slaughter at will.

The Snake Demon could not believe Yang Yan's appearance.

These two human Foundation Establishment cultivators had just arrived but were surely following for a long time.

How was it such bad luck to encounter two Ancient Abyss Sect Foundation Establishment cultivators?!

Though panicked internally, the Snake Demon's speed of action was unrelenting.

Knowing its weakness, it transformed into its true form, turning and fleeing wildly in one direction!

"Trying to escape?"

Yang Yan was the most enraged.

Standing on a flying sword, he immediately dashed out, tightly pursuing the Snake Demon.

The two Chief Stewards recalled their flying swords and mounted them, following behind.

Unlike Yang Yan, their Sword Flight speed was the fastest.

How could the other disciples miss the chance for revenge?!

The senior and secondary brothers were severely injured, plus a young disciple dead, the mission was already failed, why not reclaim some interest?!

Every fearless man had long awakened their bloodlust, mounting their flying swords and blazing bright flames in pursuit.

"Lie Wood, pursue!"

"Yin Bing, pursue!"

Two Foundation Establishment Chief Stewards behind Yang Yan suddenly unleashed their power, with two sword lights passing by Yang Yan, their speed surprisingly outperforming the Snake Demon.

Indeed, Ancient Abyss Sect wasn't simple!

Yang Yan sighed softly in his heart.

Knowing his speed was always amongst the top tier within the same realm.

Now, with Qi Cultivation at the ninth level, he could still surpass ordinary Foundation Establishment cultivators.

However, these two Foundation Establishment early-stage Chief Stewards' speed actually surpassed Yang Yan, indicating their speed at least reached the mid-stage Foundation Establishment level.

Speed transcending one's own realm creates a nightmare-like existence for opponents of the same level!

The Snake Demon was skilled in speed yet faced continuous pursuit by the two Chief Stewards closing the gap.

Seeing the two human cultivators nearing from behind, the Snake Demon secretly resolved, burning its essence and blood, speeding up again.

One demon in the front, two humans behind, followed by another closely plotting tail.

In the far rear, it was a group of fervent Ancient Abyss Sect disciples relentlessly pursuing.

One side fleeing for life, they spared no effort, as long as they could accelerate more!

The other side hunting, feeling confident, hence no desperation justifying a costly chase.

Thus, amid the pursuit and escape, time quietly flowed.

"Senior Brother, ahead is the border; beyond, it's Yuwen Country."

Among the rear disciples, one supporting Lin Zimu glanced at the border ahead, expressing slight concern.

Major sects have had an established policy of not readily entering other countries since ancient times.

If sect disciples venture to another country for training, notices would surely be sent to inform the host country's sects.

After all, nearly every country is occupied by a sect, akin to a sect's territory.

Some may be stronger eighth-level sects with members possibly advancing to the Nascent Soul Stage.

Others might be one of the top ten seventh-level sects, with at least one Nascent Soul Great Power present!

Yuwen Country's sect is the seventh-level Yizheng Sect!

Within is a Nascent Soul patriarch and a dozen Golden Core elders, and this is only the apparent strength of Yizheng Sect.

"No problem, pursue! Even if Yizheng Sect's comrades knew, they wouldn't say anything."

Lin Zimu steadied himself and spoke.

Ancient Abyss Sect disciples chase a Foundation Establishment demon; the demon flees into Yuwen Country, aiding Yizheng Sect in demon extermination.

Yizheng Sect has no reason to complain.

Moreover, demon extermination naturally is the duty of all Righteous Sects.

"Heh heh! If you dare, follow me in!"

The Snake Demon, previously only running for life, suddenly turned back, glaring with malice at the two Chief Stewards, speaking coldly.

Then, it dove headlong into Yuwen Country.

This place had already left Li Mountain Range; ahead lay endless wilderness.