

Powerful 1171

Chapter 1171: Ambushed

"Master Ancestor, look..."

Lin Zimu looked at the devastation all around with no one in sight, and couldn't help but start to worry.

The disciples tasked with descending the mountain were all formidable Inner Sect Disciples of the Ancient Abyss Sect, some even reaching the early stages of Foundation Establishment.

Now they were either dead, or missing without a trace, their lives uncertain.

Lin Zimu was usually a gentle-natured person, never provoking others or bullying the weak. But this time, it crossed his line.

Yang Yan glanced at Lin Zimu and the other disciples nearby, his eyes flickering with a cold light.

This attack was undoubtedly aimed at the Ancient Abyss Sect.

The lives of others might not matter much to Yang Yan, but his own people were also missing from this trial, so he must avenge them.

The only thing that comforted him was the faint presence of the four women, indicating they were still alive.

However, their presence was clearly intentionally sealed, preventing him from locating them.

"Yizheng Sect again! They really seem tired of living and want me to send them off."

Hearing Yang Yan's voice, practically gnashing his teeth, the disciples' hearts filled with determination.

Each of them secretly vowed to avenge their tragically fallen fellow disciples!

The scene shifts to Zhuge Wushuang and others, who were gravely injured while fighting in the enemy's Celestial Net, but they persisted through sheer willpower.

They knew very well that once they stopped resisting and refused to cooperate, death would be their only outcome.

Surrendering was impossible, absolutely impossible.

Better to fight with all they had than resign to fate.

The people of Yizheng Sect, Biluo Sect, and Valley of Ten Thousand Flowers were still in a tug-of-war with Ancient Abyss Sect, with flashes of Spiritual Treasures and dazzling techniques adding to the chaos.

"Hahaha! Hasn't your Ancient Abyss Sect always looked down on us Yizheng Sect? Now that you're in our hands, why not just surrender obediently?"

This ambush was led by the very powerful Elder Lu Wen of Yizheng Sect.

At this moment, the disciples of Ancient Abyss Sect and Xiaocao, their eyes bloodshot, wished to flay them alive to vent their resentment.

"Heaven and Earth Staff! One weapon can shatter ten thousand techniques. Kill them for me!"

With a loud shout, amidst the swirling dust and sand, a terrifyingly glowing staff flew into the air.

The surrounding trees and leaves rustled loudly.

Already gravely injured, the faces of the Ancient Abyss Sect disciples were filled with despair.

Would they really lose their lives here today?

They certainly weren't willing to let their lives be taken by such lowly individuals.

"You dare, impudent scoundrel, prepare to die swiftly."

With an angry shout, Yang Yan rushed in with the Star Night Sword.

Seeing Xiaocao and the other four in such dire straits, his eyes blazed with fiery anger.

If this anger could take form, Liu Xi, Lu Wen, and others would have been reduced to ashes already.

With a flick of the wrist, Star Night sword clashed fiercely with the Heaven and Earth Staff, sending out blinding sparks and a tidal wave of energy.

The storm from the energy wave obliterated everything in its path, and the nearest Yizheng Sect disciples, unable to dodge in time, were all knocked to the ground.

Lu Wen, holding the Heaven and Earth Staff, found his hand trembling uncontrollably, eyes wide with shock.

Was this still human strength?!

Although the power of Star Night Sword was suppressed by the Heavenly Dao here, it was still formidable when fully unleashed.

Amongst the wails of pain around, Lu Wen and Liu Xi's expressions shifted repeatedly, thrilling to behold.

"Hmph!"

Yang Yan let out a cold snort, the Star Night Sword in his hand shone brightly, occasionally bursting with countless sword qi that seemed tangible.

In an instant, Yang Yan seemed like a Sword God descending to the world, flying into the remnants of the Yizheng Sect formation left in the storm!

Lu Wen's eyes turned sinister.

With a flicker, he suddenly appeared in front of Yang Yan, swinging the staff mercilessly at his head!

Yang Yan chuckled lightly, vanished into thin air, dodging the attack, and reappeared in his original spot.

As Lu Wen's move failed, Yang Yan took advantage, slashing at his legs with his sword.

Realizing the danger, Lu Wen hastily altered his staff's trajectory, barely managing to block just in time.

Boom!

Weapons clashed again with a thunderous boom, sending Lu Wen flying like a broken kite.

Yang Yan made no move to pursue, but instead flashed to Gongsun Ruyan and the others.

His appearance caused those Yizheng Sect experts planning a sneak attack, hoping to catch Yang Yan distracted, to abruptly halt.

They were keenly aware each of them was locked by Yang Yan's terrifying aura, fear they would become sword fodder in a single move.

"This young man is no simple character, killing so many of us just like that."

Finally recovering from shock, Liu Xi used Secret Transmission to speak to Lu Wen, who had been knocked to the ground.

"Elder Liu, what if we could recruit him to our side?"

Wiping blood from his mouth with his sleeve, Lu Wen's eyes glinted with a strange light.

"You think that's possible?" Liu Xi shook his head, doubting Lu Wen's suggestion.

Undeterred, Lu Wen continued: "With his talent, if we provide better cultivation conditions? People always aspire for greater heights. It's a matter of what we're willing to pay."

Liu Xi, swayed a bit, pondered before nodding: "Then perhaps we can proceed this way..."

Hearing the plan, Lu Wen exclaimed joyfully: "Truly, the older, the wiser! I am in awe."

Liu Xi smiled wryly: "We are all in the same boat, after all."

While the two plotted secretly, Zhuge Wushuang and others couldn't help but tear up looking at Yang Yan.

"My king, you've come."

Gongsun Ruyan, the least injured, spoke first, joy in her voice.

"Are you all okay?" Yang Yan asked as he looked at Gongsun Ruyan and the others, forcing a smile.

He knew that if he had been just a bit later, the consequences would have been unimaginable.

Though the four women were strong, they were outmatched against the well-selected elders of these sects.

"We're fine, my king."

Gongsun Ruyan smiled faintly, speaking softly.

At the onset, they might have escaped Lu Wen and company if they had fought with all their might.

But, with other Ancient Abyss Sect disciples around, they missed the best chance to escape, falling into an impossible situation.

"Do you take me for blind? Such heavy injuries, do you think I can't see?"

Yang Yan couldn't help but feel angry at their words.

He understood their stubborn nature best, unyielding to the point of death.

Clearly on the brink of death, yet they claimed nothing was wrong?!

Chapter 1172: Kill

"Your Majesty, we're fine." Gongsun Ruyan forced a smile and spoke softly.

If from the beginning, they had tried their hardest, they might have been able to escape from Lu Wen and the others.

However, with other disciples of the Ancient Abyss Sect by their side, they gave up the best chance to escape and eventually fell into a desperate situation.

"Do you think I'm blind? You've suffered such serious injuries, do you think I can't see that?" Yang Yan's voice was slightly angered upon hearing this.

He knew their personalities too well, each of them was stubborn to the death.

Clearly about to die, yet they still said they were fine?!

Killing intent surged from Yang Yan, while on the other side, Lin Zimu looked at the miserable state of his fellow sect members and felt as though his heart was bleeding.

If they had arrived a step later, their comrades could have all been slaughtered where they stood, filled with hatred.

He blamed himself deeply, instinctively gripping his sword handle, ready to strike at any moment.

"Old friend, it seems we have no choice but to engage in a fierce battle today."

Yang Yan raised the Star Night Sword, speaking as if to himself.

His gaze fixed on the two elders, his presence erupted, becoming the storm's center.

"Yang Yan, I wonder if there's been some misunderstanding between us?" Lu Wen spoke with a smile, although it seemed fake and hypocritical.

"Misunderstanding?" Yang Yan snorted coldly, "You've injured my people and call it a misunderstanding! Even if it was a misunderstanding, you must pay for your mistakes!"

Seeing Yang Yan not taking immediate action, Lu Wen felt secretly pleased and hurriedly explained again: "It really is a misunderstanding! We didn't know they were your comrades."

"Moreover, with such respect for you, how could we act rashly? It's undoubtedly a misunderstanding!"

On the side, Liu Xi couldn't help but furrow his brows, feeling like his skin was crawling.

In the face of such shamelessness, he had to concede before someone like Lu Wen.

"So?" Yang Yan squinted his eyes slightly, asking calmly.

Lu Wen rejoiced inwardly, still putting on that appearance of sincerity: "We will take full responsibility for treating your comrades' injuries and the aftermath, and sincerely invite you to visit the Yizheng Sect and Biluo Sect as an apology."

Yang Yan smiled faintly without immediately answering, as if pondering something.

Not only Lu Wen but even Liu Xi beside him breathed a hidden sigh of relief.

He genuinely hoped to win over Yang Yan.

However, neither of them knew that at this moment, Yang Yan was also weighing his options secretly.

With Yang Yan's ability, he was confident he could defeat both of them.

But the rest were not to be underestimated either.

Especially since these guys were eyeing him like tigers, just during that brief moment, they were already thinking of ambushing the four girls.

Yang Yan worried that once the fight started, those people would all attack at once, leaving him unable to protect everyone.

Even if he could barely ensure the safety of the four girls, the safety of other Ancient Abyss Sect disciples might not be guaranteed.

Suddenly, Yang Yan burst into hearty laughter, then his gaze turned cold as he said sternly:

"I'm afraid if I go, there'll be no return! Are you planning to threaten or entice next?"

With such a retort, both Lu Wen and Liu Xi were momentarily stunned.

Before Lu Wen could speak again, Yang Yan snorted coldly: "Less talking, let's fight!"

As he spoke, the Star Night in his hand was instantly activated, bursting with dazzling light blue and white light, buzzing loudly.

Lu Wen and Liu Xi exchanged a quick glance.

Since Yang Yan said this, it meant there was virtually no chance of winning him over.

If they couldn't have him, no one else should!

Therefore, they had no choice but to let this Celestial Flood Dragon Sacred Body fall at their hands.

After all, throughout history, countless prodigies have died young, and Yang Yan would not be the only one.

At this time, the light blue and white beam from Star Night had become dazzlingly brilliant, like sharp swords capable of slicing through anything.

Swoosh!

Yang Yan gripped the sword's hilt with both hands, striking fiercely toward the members of Yizheng Sect and Biluo Sect.

Boom!

With a thunderous explosion, the blue-white light gathered into a bolt of lightning and shot straight out.

Meanwhile, the people from Valley of Ten Thousand Flowers had already discreetly slipped away.

They had long since realized Yang Yan's extraordinary prowess and took advantage of the standoff to use a spatial treasure to tactically retreat.

Lu Wen and Liu Xi had detected this, but did not stop them.

Or rather, they couldn't stop them.

They just felt disdain for the people of Valley of Ten Thousand Flowers in their hearts.

As long as the target remained, it was enough for them.

In fact, they wished the Valley of Ten Thousand Flowers would withdraw so that only their two factions would share the subsequent benefits.

"Star-Burning Sword First Move—Starlight Chaos."

White light mixed with specks of blue and purple starlight, like the dusty nebulae in the universe or surging waves, forged ahead relentlessly.

The white light flew towards the disciples of Yizheng Sect and Biluo Sect, and in the blink of an eye, like slicing vegetables, there was no time to react, and many lives ended just like that.

The disciples of the Ancient Abyss Sect saw this and cheered.

They had been ambushed earlier, and some of their fellow disciples had died, and then they were hunted all the way here, almost being slaughtered. It was extremely frustrating.

Seeing Yang Yan take action, killing so many enemies with just one move, they couldn't help but cheer.

Lin Zimu, seeing Yang Yan take action, joined the battle along with some others who were not yet injured, wielding their swords.

"Star-Burning Sword Second Move—Nine Heavens Star Fall."

The starlight mixed with sharp Sword Qi, divided into two, then four, growing exponentially.

However, the power of each one did not diminish at all, flying overwhelmingly toward Liu Xi and Lu Wen.

Liu Xi, knowing its ferocity, reflexively summoned a magical treasure, transforming into a golden light to guard his entire body.

After a series of terrifying explosions, he barely withstood this move, Nine Heavens Star Fall.

Wow!

A second later, he clutched his chest, spitting out a large mouthful of blood.

Staggering on his feet, he fell directly to the ground.

But Lu Wen wasn't so lucky.

Although he also summoned a magical treasure, it wasn't the kind of absolute defensive spiritual artifact.

Foolishly trying to match Yang Yan's sword technique blow for blow, he only managed to block momentarily before being injured by the starlight, his clothes in tatters in an instant.

"Star-Burning Sword Third Move—Star Falling into the Yellow Springs."

Regrettably, Yang Yan seemed to have no intention of stopping, using his newly created Star-Burning Sword third form.

The sword light tore through the void with such might that the entire small Secret Realm seemed on the brink of collapse.

With a step forward and another slash, Yang Yan's aura surged violently, the Sword Qi covering the sky and earth.

Liu Xi and Lu Wen immediately rose, combining their forces to barely fend off the attack, both spitting blood in shock.

Although they knew from the start that Yang Yan was strong, they believed they had enough confidence to join forces and kill him.

But now, it was clear they had severely underestimated Yang Yan's strength.

Not only that, Yang Yan might turn around and kill them both instead.

In an instant, both had thoughts of retreating in their minds!

Chapter 1173: Clash of the Strong

Yang Yan looked at the two's disheveled state, a contemptuous smile tugging at the corner of his mouth.

Since they bullied his people, they can't blame him for being ruthless!

This time, he's going to take it seriously.

On the other side, Lin Zimu, without reservation, seemed equally matched.

Rabbit rise, gyrfalcon fall, wielding his sword gracefully and leisurely, like a distinguished gentleman in a troubled world.

As the senior disciple of the Ancient Abyss Sect, his prowess is unquestionable.

During the six months Yang Yan was in seclusion, he also trained hard, with evident progress in his strength.

Although his talent isn't the most outstanding, his mindset is the best.

The way of cultivation emphasizes refining the heart.

Lin Zimu's Sword Dao of Defense embraces yin and yang, focusing on the doctrine of moderation.

Especially after the fierce battle with Ban Deming, Lin Zimu had an epiphany and managed to incorporate the Path of Water into his sword techniques!

Water, when strong, can break all things, and even the giant stones in the mountains are washed away without a trace.

When weak, it hides its edge, becomes invisible, yet remains endless!

The sword techniques resemble surging waves, when touching a person, turning from surface to point, transforming into countless Sword Qi edges!

But his strength was always limited, and under the siege of many people, he gradually began to struggle!

The sword's light continued to ravage, but its power was evidently insufficient!

Yang Yan also noticed this scene, but he had no time for sentiment at the moment.

He must win quickly!

Otherwise, the situation would be detrimental to them.

Even though handling these two elders is no problem for him, the others are not opponents of Yizheng Sect and Biluo Sect.

Before this, they were already severely injured and had consumed a lot of energy, now they are merely strong in appearance but weak in strength.

With a determination for a swift victory, Yang Yan said no more and rushed at the two with speed, wielding the Star Night Sword.

Lu Wen and Liu Xi both felt their vision blur, and each took a palm strike to the chest.

Both let out a muffled grunt, feeling as if their lungs were about to shatter.

Yang Yan's lightning-fast palms were indeed powerful.

If Lu Wen didn't have a Magical Treasure for protection, he would probably have become a corpse by now.

However, Liu Xi wasn't as fortunate; after taking a palm strike, he couldn't evade and was directly killed by Yang Yan with a sword.

In just an instant, the companion beside him was headless, and Lu Wen was panic-stricken.

If this child is not eliminated, he will become a major threat in the future.

However, as this thought flashed in his mind, Yang Yan advanced on him again.

Knowing that escape was useless, Lu Wen did not retreat but advanced, preparing to confront Yang Yan directly.

But, hearing Yang Yan's disdainful cold laugh, his vision blurred, and his neck suddenly felt cold.

How is this possible?!

Lu Wen knew Yang Yan's sword was swung from behind him.

That means he appeared directly at his back!

Spatial Secret Technique!

Lu Wen's head, eyes wide open, was kicked fiercely by Yang Yan, rolling off into the distance.

This time, Yang Yan was truly enraged, intending to leave none alive.

Right as Yang Yan was about to store the Star Night Sword into the Void, he suddenly furrowed his brow as a sword light shot towards him.

He shifted slightly, narrowly avoiding the strike by a tiny margin.

A Biluo Sect disciple was holding a sword, glaring at him with murderous intent.

Yang Yan calmly observed this person, suddenly smiling:

"You were watching the whole time, yet didn't help Liu Xi and Lu Wen? Just standing there watching them die by my hand?"

The person smiled indifferently, casually responding, "I don't like those two, so if they're dead, they're dead."

"Besides, I didn't target Ancient Abyss Sect people earlier, I was just putting on an act."

Hearing this, the disciples of Ancient Abyss Sect were puzzled.

If not pointed out, it seemed no one realized.

But recalling, during the beginning, he indeed held back everywhere, never spilling anyone's blood.

Gleaning insight from the eyes of Ancient Abyss Sect disciples, Yang Yan slightly nodded, indicating for him to continue.

"Heard of the Celestial Flood Dragon Saint Body's exceptional talent, its strength is extraordinary. I'm Zhao Yuheng, an Inner Sect Disciple of Biluo Sect, wishing to take this opportunity to learn some moves."

Introducing himself as Zhao Yuheng, the Yizheng Sect disciple extended a respectful fist towards Yang Yan.

"Alright, let's fight."

Yang Yan eagerly agreed.

He too wanted to test how far his efforts over the past six months had gone.

This person was undoubtedly an excellent opponent.

Thus, Yang Yan instructed surrounding disciples to move as far away as possible, giving them enough space.

Yang Yan and Zhao Yuheng simultaneously launched, charging at each other with swords.

The blades clashed instantly, like two bolts of lightning colliding directly.

The swords met, separating almost immediately, neither seeming to gain an advantage.

Without a word, they stared at each other from afar for a full ten seconds.

"Again!"

Seeing a peer with almost identical strength, Yang Yan's heart blazed with intense fighting spirit.

With a shout from Yang Yan, Star Night's blue light shone, enveloping him entirely, becoming one with the sword, slashing towards Zhao Yuheng.

Zhao Yuheng furrowed his brow, hastily sidestepped, skillfully evading Yang Yan's sword technique.

A blue lights streaked like lightning, carving out a straight trench over a meter deep where he just stood.

"Beidou Swordsmanship! Shifting Form and Shadow."

Zhao Yuheng's eyes sank, and with a decisive shout, he suddenly split into seven.

Each person holding the Seven Star Sword, standing in the formation of the Beidou Seven Stars, trapping Yang Yan.

Swish, swish, swish!

Sword light surged, layers upon layers of seemingly tangible Sword Intent attacked Yang Yan.

However, within it, Yang Yan remained composed, his clothes fluttering, sometimes wielding his sword to dissolve crises, or forming spells to obstruct the Sword Intent.

But, the minds of the seven figures were connected, and the Seven-Star Sword Array was flawless; while Yang Yan struck fast, the energy expenditure began taking a toll.

Over time, he would inevitably fall behind.

Yang Yan naturally knew that six of the figures were illusions, only the real Zhao Yuheng was located at the core of the Seven-Star Sword Array.

He closed his eyes, cleared his mind of distractions, sensing the murderous intent from the seven Zhao Yuheng figures, trying to discern their differences.

"All things are illusion, life returns to dust. How distant the path ahead is, illusions fail against truth!"

With the sword technique Yang Yan was chanting, Star Night's blue light flared again.

This is it!

Suddenly opening his eyes, with a flick of his wrist, Star Night, carrying a violent Sword Momentum, pierced into the Jade Balance Position.

Ah!

With a muffled grunt, Zhao Yuheng was instantly wounded, utilizing some Body Technique, retreated to a place more than fifty meters away from Yang Yan.

The other six illusions vanished accordingly.

Cough, cough!

With two heavy coughs, Zhao Yuheng pressed on his injured chest, speaking with some difficulty: "Indeed, the Celestial Flood Dragon Saint Body, you are truly the strongest of our generation."

Chapter 1174: Forcing Growth

Yang Yan seemingly had no intention to continue his attack, and he smiled softly: "Indeed, it's a pity. In my hometown, there's a saying, 'If you have Yu, why have Liang?' Encountering me, it's best to retreat three times!"

Zhao Yuheng was visibly startled for a moment, then laughed heartily, and with a hint of loneliness said:

"Retreat three times! That's right, encountering a monster like you, I should retreat three times!"

"In a situation like just now, you can still maintain such clarity of mind, what do I have to compete with you?! Haha! Hahaha!"

Yang Yan's brows raised slightly, and he said calmly: "Courtesy calls for reciprocity! This time, it's my turn to strike. Zhao, be careful."

Before Zhao Yuheng could react, countless rays of white light attacked him.

Yang Yan seemed to casually perform a sword trick, and suddenly the sword light separated, layer upon layer, sweeping over Zhao Yuheng overwhelmingly from all sides.

Wow!

Zhao Yuheng merely swung a sword, then groaned, stood firm, and spat out a mouthful of blood.

The white light piercing through Zhao Yuheng did not dissipate but instead burst into countless star lights within his body.

Zhao Yuheng's body was instantly riddled with holes and fell weakly into the pool of blood.

However, the members of the Yizheng Sect and Biluo Sect, under Yang Yan's starlight, were completely exposed, pierced through, and died a hopeless death.

On the Ancient Abyss Sect's side, however, not many were left.

Counting them, they were only a dozen or so.

Though all the disciples were filled with anguish, there was more joy.

A win is a win.

In this situation, the Ancient Abyss Sect was able to turn defeat into victory almost entirely due to Yang Yan's efforts.

Everyone looked at him with eyes full of admiration.

"Yang, this time we face heavy losses!" Lin Zimu looked at the corpses of the disciples, saying sadly.

Yang Yan smiled bitterly and reminded: "Zimu, don't be overly saddened. Fate is in the hands of heaven. The immediate priority is to tend to the wounded and to leave here as soon as possible."

Lin Zimu nodded: "Hopefully, this battle will teach our brothers and sisters a valuable lesson."

Lin Zimu quickly went to tend to the injured brothers, while Yang Yan glanced back at Gongsun Ruyan and the other four who were healing on the ground.

At this moment, any reproach in his heart vanished.

"Sire, we were wrong, too complacent."

All four were overwhelmed with self-blame, and as soon as they slightly recovered, they hurriedly spoke.

Yang Yan had no intention of pursuing the matter, waving his hand: "No harm, this I also didn't anticipate."

While speaking, Yang Yan casually took out a delicate white jade bottle from his bosom and dispensed four pills to Gongsun Ruyan and the others.

After taking it, they once again exercised and adjusted their breath. Although their injuries did not change much, their energy improved significantly.

The person who cast the spell had already perished, and the Secret Realm instantly merged with the outside world.

Yang Yan looked up to the now clear heavens, unable to conceal the turmoil in his eyes.

Deep within the Ancient Abyss Sect, on a mist-covered stone-carved array, several silhouettes sat cross-legged.

These people were those rescued by Yang Yan: Gongsun Ruyan, Zhuge Wushuang, Mu Qingcheng, Xiaocao, and Lin Zimu among others.

Behind each was an elder of the Healing Element from within the sect, gradually exercising to heal them.

After several exchanges of Spiritual Power, a radiant beam was injected into each person's back.

Within a few breaths, their faces flushed, and then they all spat out a mouthful of foul blood.

After adjusting their breath on their own for a while, their complexion gradually improved.

Yet, the four girls remained with their eyes closed.

Nearby, a grand elder noticed Yang Yan's persistent frown and cautiously said:

"Reporting to the grand master, the disciples are actually fine now, they only need regular medication to fully recover. As for these girls..."

At this point, the grand elder seemed a bit hesitant.

Yang Yan tried to restrain the Evil Qi around him and nodded: "Leave them to me, grand elder may return now!"

The grand elder nodded, immediately led the disciples, and departed.

Once everyone left, Yang Yan put a hand on a nearby pillar.

It turned out, to heal everyone quickly, the grand elder led the group in setting up an array with healing effects here.

The array's core was carved personally by Elder Dugu on a superior medicinal stone, at the expense of his True Essence.

Combined with the rising Spiritual Qi around, the healing effect was excellent.

Otherwise, not to mention three days, even ten times more time might not suffice for the injured to heal themselves thoroughly.

As for Xiaocao and the four girls, they remained in meditation because Yang Yan shared his insights from his breakthrough without reservation.

As they say, breaking leads to rebuilding, though they suffered a great loss, it wasn't without benefit to them.

Yang Yan was precisely using this opportunity to "help the growth along," aiding them to achieve breakthroughs.

Normally, breakthroughs should be gradual and natural, but this time Yang Yan went against the norm, having them complete their breakthroughs first, then finding ways to consolidate.

Of course, Yang Yan didn't keep it all to himself; these benefits were also extended to Lin Zimu.

With the array's power further stimulated, the most powerful Lin Zimu was the first to open his eyes.

"Yang..."

Lin Zimu was about to joyfully say something, but he suddenly noticed Yang Yan's somber gaze and hesitated.

Yang Yan simply sighed softly: "My ten swords are now down to four."

His tone was nearly indifferent, devoid of any visible joy or sorrow.

"The other six swords have probably been taken by other sects. Considering their talent, they might be cherished and cared for there. We might not see them again..."

At this moment, Lin Zimu was still in the dark, completely unaware of the Ancient Abyss Sect's higher-ups' plans.

He gritted his teeth, somewhat angrily said: "These damned people are accustomed to using these despicable tricks!"

Yang Yan gently shook his head and turned to say: "Zimu, if there's nothing else, go to Elder Dugu for the medicine!"

"This time, you forcibly broke through, you must consolidate quickly, or else an unstable foundation will not benefit future development."

Lin Zimu glanced at the still unconscious four girls, silently bowed to Yang Yan, and then flew away on his sword.

After waiting a while, Yang Yan happily discovered the aura on the four girls began to tremble slightly.

Without any doubt, this was a sign of breakthrough.

Since the preparations were thorough, especially with Yang Yan guarding, the entire process was smooth and safe, the four girls succeeded one after another and awoke consecutively.

According to the plan, the four girls went to the Internal Affairs Hall to collect custom-made pills by Elder Dugu.

After taking them, Elder Dugu even exhaustingly used True Essence to enhance the pill's effects, assisting in their absorption.

All four girls benefited immensely, and they simply stayed at Elder Dugu's place, racing to consolidate their cultivation.

Chapter 1175: Keep Them in Suspense

Just when the four women were working tirelessly to consolidate their current levels, Yang Yan was not idle either.

In this cultivation world, Yang Yan felt that many of his original skills seemed somewhat outdated.

For example, the Ghost Gate Thirteen Needles.

Although it still has healing effects, its utility is negligible for cultivators.

It is even less effective than using the simplest Blood Pushing Technique for direct treatment.

Apart from Xiaocao, the other three women had not reached a medium Dao Body, so they could only choose ordinary Foundation Establishment.

Though even an ordinary Foundation Establishment, with diligent cultivation, can make up for lack of talent, with little differences in their levels.

However, when it comes to the hard criterion of recovery after injury, the difference between ordinary Foundation Establishment and Perfect Foundation Establishment is striking.

Among the four women, Xiaocao was the first to awaken.

And after consuming the pill refined by Elder Dugu, Xiaocao was also the first to stabilize her realm.

However, the method employed by Yang Yan was unconventional, completely diverging from the main path, so the consolidation process must be gradual.

Otherwise, a careless mistake could lead one into the Demon Dao, with no hope of redemption.

This resulted in Xiaocao consuming the third Solid Spirit Pill while the other three women were just beginning to fully absorb the effects of their first Solid Spirit Pill.

Towards the ten swords under his charge, Yang Yan has always treated them equally, never favoring one over the other.

These days, he has been pondering hard over how to help the other three women catch up to Xiaocao.

Otherwise, this gap will only widen.

Yang Yan is well aware that Fu Changjian and others he has dispatched are surely given preferential treatment among the major sects; coupled with their talents, their future is boundless.

In contrast, though Mu Qingcheng and the other three women are valued by the Ancient Abyss Sect, with substantial resource allocation, the resources available for division are limited when there are many people.

Over time, the three women might become the lowest-ranked among the ten swords.

When the ten swords reunite, they are bound to face pressure, even mentally.

Cultivation is about cultivating the mind.

The broader the mind, the wider the path of cultivation will be.

Once the mind is influenced, it absolutely hinders their growth.

The Demon Race army is watching eagerly, certainly won't easily give up the idea of occupying Earth and enslaving humanity.

Yang Yan still expects to lead the ten swords in a strong comeback, relying on his connection with Ao Tian to strike deep into the Demon Race's lair, resolving the considerable threat once and for all.

Unfortunately, after spending half a month in the Scripture Pavilion, Yang Yan has found nothing.

And, he had also inadvertently discussed privately with Elder Dugu and Sect Leader Lin An, but even there, Yang Yan did not find any clues.

Apparently, the Ancient Abyss Sect doesn't possess such a Secret Technique.

Yang Yan assumes perhaps only those higher-level sects might have some special method.

Time flies quickly, silently slipping away.

In the blink of an eye, another half a year has passed.

Each major sect has gained something in the recent talent competitions, hence the recent calm.

Of course, it's also possible everyone is holding back a force, preparing to show their skills at the Immortal Cultivation Conference, unwilling to waste energy and time on other matters.

Every day, Yang Yan is elusive as a Divine Dragon, frustrating the Little Witch, Guo Guoguo.

Especially every time she goes to the Butcher Palace to find Yang Yan, she learns from Gu Sheng that he either went into solitary seclusion or headed to the four swords, adding to her ire.

Unfortunately, when she tries to reason with Yang Yan, she always misses him.

Over time, she vaguely feels Yang Yan is deliberately avoiding her.

Though she is angry, she eventually buries this matter in her heart for the time being.

After all, with the Immortal Cultivation Conference approaching, considering the interests of the entire Ancient Abyss Sect, whether it's Yang Yan or Xiaocao and others, she cannot let personal reasons affect their cultivation.

After the realm of the four swords rapidly stabilized, Elder Dugu and Sect Leader Lin An became exceptionally excited.

Not only because the strength of Xiaocao and others has greatly improved, but also because Yang Yan's method has opened a new pathway for them.

After discussions, Elder Dugu and Sect Leader Lin An have decided to promote this unconventional method at the right time, helping those disciples who have been stagnant for long to achieve breakthroughs and further progression.

It's a known fact that hitting a bottleneck is a common occurrence on the cultivation path.

Many often fail to overcome certain bottlenecks throughout their lives, ending in regret, which is truly lamentable and sorrowful.

"This Yizheng Sect disregards our Ancient Abyss Sect, harming our disciples, hence irreconcilable!" Sect Leader Lin An stated sternly, casting his words.

Elder Dugu immediately added: "Moreover, various other sects also harbor ill intentions toward our Ancient Abyss Sect, scheming secretly."

"As they have already participated in assaults on our Ancient Abyss Sect disciples, they are evidently becoming enemies of our Ancient Abyss Sect! Letting them roam free for over half a year, it is time for a proper settlement."

Seeing Sect Leader and Elder Dugu reach a consensus, Yang Yan felt amused within.

He realized the duo's intentions.

They simply hoped he would clarify things, allowing them to comfortably utilize his method to hasten the growth of Ancient Abyss Sect disciples' strength.

Yang Yan wanted to playfully tease the duo, nodded, and casually said:

"Now that the six swords have been away for about a year, without accident, they should have made significant progress. Maybe soon we will hear of their fame."

Elder Dugu raised an eyebrow and sneered: "Based on those guys' nature, they'll definitely make it well-known, to demonstrate their sect's strength and to disturb our minds."

Yang Yan chuckled indifferently: "Currently, four swords remain in the sect; their strength should be known to both of you. Meanwhile, certainly many spies are watching their progress, with targeted strategies being formed to deal with them at the Immortal Cultivation Conference."

"When the time comes, coordinating with them will produce a show that will shock those damned folks thoroughly!"

Elder Dugu, knowing Yang Yan's character well, was aware he was deliberately changing the subject, and couldn't help but smile wryly.

He quickly signaled Sect Leader Lin An with a glance, then turned to Yang Yan saying:

"You're right! Seeking revenge should not be rushed; we need to proceed step by step. The more patient we are now, the more disastrous they'll face at the Immortal Cultivation Conference."

Sect Leader Lin An also chuckled, echoing: "Elder Dugu is right, this time will surely astonish those guys!"

Yang Yan smiled agreeably but didn't continue speaking.

This made Sect Leader Lin An a bit impatient.

Chapter 1176: Guidance

He hesitated for a moment and couldn't help saying to Yang Yan, "Right! With the Immortal Cultivation Conference almost upon us, Elder Dugu and I have been discussing whether we should find a few disciples who already have half a foot stepped into the Foundation Establishment Stage, and use your method to help them break through successfully."

"After all, this time every sect is determined to win at the Immortal Cultivation Conference. The more people we have, the greater our chance of dominating the rankings."

When he said this, Lin An actually stared anxiously at Yang Yan, as if afraid he might say no.

After all, this was Yang Yan's method. Out of respect, even though he was very eager to implement it, he still had to ask for Yang Yan's opinion.

"Sure. If you need any help, please be sure to let me know. I will definitely do my utmost."

They hadn't expected Yang Yan to agree so readily, much less to even offer his assistance; both of them were pleasantly surprised.

Yang Yan didn't want to listen to too many of their flattering words, so he hurriedly took his leave.

As soon as he returned to Butcher Palace, Yang Yan ran into Senior Brother Lin Zimu.

After forcibly breaking through with Yang Yan's help, Lin Zimu had also begun a lengthy closed-door cultivation.

His talent couldn't compare to Xiaocao's, but it was still far stronger than that of most others.

Moreover, because he had been cultivating for much longer, his current strength was still above Xiaocao's.

However, after a period of exchanging pointers, Lin Zimu actually developed a sense of powerlessness.

Xiaocao's strength was advancing by leaps and bounds, racing ahead at lightning speed!

At this rate, surpassing him was only a matter of time.

He even had reason to believe that by the time of the Immortal Cultivation Conference, he wouldn't even be sure he could last a hundred moves under Xiaocao's hands.

So whenever he had even a little spare time, Lin Zimu would wait here for Yang Yan, hoping to receive his guidance and speed up his own progress.

As the Inner Sect's senior brother of the Ancient Abyss Sect, he really couldn't afford to lose too badly at the Immortal Cultivation Conference.

"Yang, I tried the method you taught me yesterday. But whenever I use this Drive Away the Wolf and Devour the Tiger move, I always feel my True Qi is insufficient and my strength falls short."

"I've pondered over it for who knows how long and still can't find the reason, so I came to ask for your guidance, hoping to achieve a breakthrough."

Lin Zimu spoke sincerely.

He didn't even want to sit opposite Yang Yan; instead, he remained standing there with a slight bow, properly and respectfully.

He looked just like a student about to listen to a teacher's instruction.

In truth, though he addressed him as Brother Yang in words, in his heart he still regarded him as a founder-master.

Not only because of the difference in seniority, but because Yang Yan's unique insight had already thoroughly convinced him, making him willing to pay the respects of a disciple.

In fact, Yang Yan had long foreseen such a result, and he wasn't pretentious enough to insist the other sit and talk with him as an equal.

He took the clear tea Gu Sheng had brought over, took a light sip, and then smiled as he explained:

"Do you feel that every time your breath reaches the Laogong Acupoint, it suddenly pauses for a moment, then returns to normal?"

Lin Zimu nodded quickly. "Exactly, exactly! Besides this Laogong Acupoint, it's the same at the Jueque Acupoint."

As he spoke, he deliberately pointed at his chest.

That was exactly where the Jueque Acupoint was.

Yang Yan didn't say anything more. He suddenly flicked his finger; before Lin Zimu could even react, he felt a numbness on his chest.

But the next moment, he froze.

After a full three breaths, he suddenly raised his right hand, opened his palm, brought it before his eyes and examined it carefully, his face full of disbelief.

"Zimu, now you can try to run that breath in reverse, driving it straight into Jueque."

Yang Yan reminded him with a smile.

At the same time, he lightly tapped the table, signaling to the slightly dazed Gu Sheng beside him to refill his tea.

Gu Sheng snapped back to himself and hurriedly complied.

Although Lin Zimu trusted Yang Yan completely, when he heard this he still couldn't help but cast him a doubtful glance.

Yang Yan blinked slightly, nodded with a smile, then picked up the teacup in front of him and took a gentle sip.

Gritting his teeth, Lin Zimu calmed his mind and attempted to reverse his breath, starting from the Laogong Acupoint in his palm and running it along the Lesser Yang Heart Scripture upward.

At first he was still somewhat apprehensive.

After all, running the meridians in reverse was an extremely dangerous affair.

Even with his current strength, every step was full of peril.

A slight mistake could cause his meridians to fall into chaos.

In the mild case, he would be severely injured and see his cultivation regress.

In the worst case, he would die on the spot, doomed for eternity.

Yet once he tried it, Lin Zimu was utterly stunned.

He only felt that this process, which should have been extremely dangerous and difficult, was actually incomparably smooth and comfortable!

As his meridians were run in reverse, he felt as if his whole body was filled with inexhaustible power!

After he channeled his True Qi into the Jueque Acupoint, Lin Zimu followed Yang Yan's instructions step by step, reversing this True Qi through a full Circulation within his body, combing through all his limbs and bones.

When he opened his eyes again, he suddenly realized that the bottleneck he had never managed to break through actually showed faint signs of loosening.

He was just about to say something to Yang Yan when he saw Yang Yan lightly wave a hand and speak first: "If you don't mind, Zimu, you'd best stay here and continue to consolidate. If nothing unexpected happens, I believe you'll be able to take another step forward in just three days!"

Lin Zimu cupped his fists to Yang Yan solemnly. "As the saying goes, great kindness cannot be repaid with mere thanks. Zimu will never forget the grace of your instruction, Yang."

Yang Yan said with a smile, "If you keep thanking me like this, then don't bother coming again in the future."

"Hurry up and drink that tea and get to cultivating! Otherwise, as Inner Sect senior brother, you really will be outshone by Xiaocao."

Lin Zimu said nothing more, drained his cup in one gulp, and then headed straight for the cultivation room that had originally belonged to Yang Yan...

The moon was bright and the stars sparse as Yang Yan carried Star Night, carving countless marks into the mountainside!

These marks looked chaotic and disordered, but as their number increased, they faintly formed a momentum.

They seemed to be connected to each other, with countless currents of energy flowing over them, already taking on the air of a Spirit Array.

In truth, this was merely something Yang Yan had created on a whim after seeing that Recovery Array!

Yang Yan's talent was unique, and he possessed a formidable capacity for learning.

Photographic memory was an everyday occurrence for him.

More importantly, he excelled at summarizing and distilling, able to pinpoint the most crucial parts.

For example, the Array before him was something he'd created himself after drawing on the essence of the meridian-nurturing Array Elder Dugu and the others had jointly arranged earlier, combined with his own understanding of Arrays.

This matter was soon brought to Elder Dugu's attention. Already harboring a fondness for Yang Yan's talent, he immediately seized the opportunity and went to speak with Yang Yan, hoping to pass his legacy on to him.

As for nominal things such as master and disciple, he didn't care in the least; he only wished for Yang Yan to inherit his entire Array Technique legacy and carry it forward—that would be enough to fulfill his remaining hopes.

Chapter 1177: Learning

Originally focused solely on how to enhance his strength, Yang Yan was quite tempted after hearing Elder Dugu boast about the wondrous uses of Spirit Arrays in battle.

Moreover, he already knew that Spirit Array Masters were rare in this world, and the harsh training conditions made them highly sought after, naturally piquing his interest.

Strictly speaking, Yang Yan wasn't particularly focused on Arrays.

Initially, he was just intrigued by how Spirit Arrays in the cultivation world were more unique and spiritually charged compared to those in the Hidden World.

However, given his innate talent, anything that fell into his hands always shone with an extraordinary light.

Evidently, the Dao of Arrays was no exception.

It just so happened that Elder Dugu was persistent about wanting to pass on his legacy, so the two hit it off well.

The Dao of Arrays is vast and boundless.

When practiced to Great Success, it can shift the stars, possessing the might to destroy the heavens and the earth.

This was precisely what Yang Yan valued.

According to Elder Dugu, he had long desired to impart his knowledge of Spirit Arrays to a suitable "fated person," but he hadn't been able to find anyone for hundreds of years.

Now that he finally got his wish, he even invited Lin Zimu and Sect Leader Lin An for good food and wine, celebrating heartily.

Sect Leader Lin An was also delighted with such an outcome.

Having another Array expert in the Ancient Abyss Sect is nothing but beneficial.

Especially Yang Yan, who bears the future of the Ancient Abyss Sect. As the Sect Leader, he hoped Yang Yan would gather the strengths of various families and promote the unique skills of the Ancient Abyss Sect.

Even at the banquet, Sect Leader Lin An couldn't help but suggest that his expertise in Talisman techniques could be shared with Yang Yan.

Yang Yan, understanding the unspoken meaning, readily agreed.

Of course, he also understood the principle of not overwhelming himself. For the time being, Yang Yan only wanted to focus on the Array Technique path.

Originally worried that Yang Yan might be tempted by Sect Leader Lin An and divert his energy into learning Talisman techniques, Elder Dugu finally breathed a huge sigh of relief.

It should be said that even in the path of Array Techniques, Elder Dugu isn't absolutely proficient.

He's merely unique within the entire Ancient Abyss Sect.

He himself is only a third-level Spirit Array Master but had much potential for advancement.

Unfortunately, in his earlier years, he focused more on the cultivation of Martial Dao, neglecting the study and practice of Arrays.

When he later wanted to apply himself, he found he had missed the best period, hence for a long time, Elder Dugu couldn't break through his bottleneck.

Yang Yan even speculated that this was precisely why the elder placed his hopes on him.

In this world, there is no shortage of people with excellent accomplishments in Spirit Arrays who, despite not having strong cultivation, possess formidable strength.

Even though everyone is at a similar level, the aid of Spirit Arrays often places them in an invincible position.

In the following month, Yang Yan suddenly realized that when it came to Array cultivation, Elder Dugu, as the teacher, was even more diligent than he was as a student.

Thus, Yang Yan had to dedicate nearly all of his time to studying Arrays.

As a result, not only Guoguo, but even Xiaocao and others rarely saw Yang Yan.

Once he recognizes something worthy and aligns with his talent, Yang Yan becomes extremely engrossed, even to the point of forgetting to eat and sleep.

Elementary Spirit Arrays consist of two parts—Arrays and Magic Points.

Arrays include the Array Map, the order in which lines on the Array Map are constructed, and so on.

Magic Points, on the other hand, serve as the primary Spiritual Power Source for constructing the Spirit Array.

A successful Spirit Array requires both Magic Points and Arrays to simultaneously exert force.

Magic Points must continuously provide Spiritual Power, which then circulates through specific circuits on the Array, following certain flow directions and speeds, to achieve the desired effect of the Spirit Array.

This places a high demand on the Array Master's talent and control.

Without enough talent, one cannot comprehend the construction principles of Arrays.

With insufficient control, either the Magic Points won't provide enough Spiritual Power to support the Spirit Array, or excessive or unevenly distributed Spiritual Power will cause the Spirit Array to self-destruct.

Some more advanced Spirit Arrays, besides having extremely complicated Arrays, require precise allocation of the strength of each Magic Point's Spiritual Power.

On the entire Wandering Dragon Star, the highest level Spirit Array Master is level four, yet there exists a level six Spirit Array.

Legend has it that the Spirit Array was set by a Great Power who traveled to Wandering Dragon Star.

In Elder Dugu's account, the top Spirit Array Masters often dedicate their lifetime's efforts to continual exploration, taking pleasure in creating new Arrays through slight adjustments based on their understanding of the Arrays.

However, these matters are still too distant for Yang Yan.

Thus, Elder Dugu currently only has him study the most fundamental basics of constructing Spirit Arrays, primarily, how to build Magic Points.

Moreover, he insists that Yang Yan practice repeatedly, turning it into instinct, ultimately mastering the saying 'practice makes perfect' to its extremity.

This practice, though said to be the most foundational project in the Array path, still poses a high threshold for beginners.

Elder Dugu still recalls how difficult it was when he constructed Magic Points for the first time, struggling just to build one. Wishing to construct several, he found himself stretched too thin.

Even with his talent, he had to practice for a full two months to achieve mastery.

Therefore, he wasn't expecting Yang Yan to master it quickly, so he handed him a beginner's Spirit Array manual and let Yang Yan study on his own.

Yang Yan, rather enjoying it, absorbed the knowledge of Arrays like a sponge every day.

In the following period, apart from Xiaocao's rapid progression, the other three women also made swift progress.

Especially under Elder Dugu's personal guidance, each individual's talents were hugely tapped, and combined with their own abilities, each discovered their unique combat style.

With such results, Yang Yan was extremely satisfied.

Of course, Elder Dugu, as a guiding teacher, was even more gratified.

Yang Yan, as the Saint Son of the Ancient Abyss Sect, received resources like pills exceeding those allocated to Lin Zimu, the chief disciple of the Inner Sect.

But to prepare for the increasingly approaching Immortal Cultivation Conference, and to boost his strength as much as possible, Yang Yan used all the pills he was allocated, with almost no excess in reserve.

However, ever since reaching Foundation Establishment, the efficacy of these pills has become increasingly trivial.

Yang Yan has now progressed to nearly the mid-stage of Foundation Establishment; not too fast, but not too slow either.

He could naturally feel that as he advances, the effect of pills in enhancing his strength will become ever more marginal.

Unless there are more advanced pills, consuming them further would just be wasteful.

Within the sect, the highest-grade pill to enhance cultivation level is the fourth-grade low-tier Bone Marrow Cleansing Pill.

The highest-grade alchemist within the sect is also only fourth-grade.

Even if Ancestor Zongming were to exit seclusion and personally refine them, there's no guarantee of obtaining pills beyond the fifth grade.

These alchemists aren't as open-handed as Elder Dugu, the Spirit Array Master, who is willing to share his skills.

Several times when Yang Yan tried to observe their alchemy process, he was politely turned away.

Chapter 1178: Open Conspiracy

Perhaps considering the identity of Saint Son Yang Yan, the elder who is skilled in Alchemy told him the reasons behind this.

It turns out that alchemists consider their pill formulas and alchemy techniques as their most valuable treasures, almost as important as life itself.

Therefore, unless a disciple is particularly valued, these are never disclosed easily.

Originally having a slight interest in Alchemy, Yang Yan decided to give up after hearing this.

He continued to devote himself wholeheartedly to the study of Array, hoping to break through and increase his odds in the Immortal Cultivation Conference.

The four ladies knew Yang Yan was absorbed in his studies; although they missed him very much, they tacitly decided not to disturb him.

Not only that, they even teamed up to restrain Guoguo, preventing her from looking for Yang Yan.

Although Yang Yan had been keeping a low profile during these days, his reputation had once again spread widely among the disciples of the sect, and there were signs of him being deified.

After the disciples who survived the joint attack by several major sects returned to the sect, they kept talking about how Yang Yan turned the tide and saved them from peril, telling this tale enthusiastically.

With their deliberate embellishment and exaggeration, Yang Yan's image was further deified, skyrocketing in popularity.

Hence, under the halo of Saint Son Yang Yan, Zhuge Wushuang, Xiaocao and the other four, along with your Senior Brother Lin Zimu, became less conspicuous.

Moreover, Yang Yan knew very well that this result was also intentionally orchestrated by the senior leaders of the sect.

They precisely wanted to shift the focus to Yang Yan, the Saint Son, so as to give others sufficient space to rapidly enhance their strength, aiming for a ranking at the Immortal Cultivation Conference, while at the same time relieving some pressure off Yang Yan.

It was an overcast morning when Yang Yan suddenly received a message from the Sect Leader, asking him to quickly go to the meeting hall for discussions.

This time, only Sect Leader Lin An, Elder Dugu, and Yang Yan were involved.

In fact, ever since Ancestor Zongming went into seclusion, Yang Yan and the other two had evidently formed the iron triangle of the entire Ancient Abyss Sect, an existence transcending the Elder Council.

In this regard, as the core of the Ancient Abyss Sect, the Elder Council had no major objections.

Because they understood the principle of "many mouths cause confusion."

Even though they had all made various contributions to the Ancient Abyss Sect, dedicating their youth for most of their lives, no one dared to claim absolute trustworthiness.

Because for a long time, everyone could feel that every move of the Ancient Abyss Sect seemed to be under the control of their enemies.

There can only be one reason for this, which is that the enemies have planted spies around or even inside the Ancient Abyss Sect.

For safety's sake, the entire Elder Council has reached a tacit understanding, and many decisions are straightforwardly made by the three; only when they need cooperation will they involve others.

This time is no exception.

"The Ancient Battlefield at the northernmost part of Wandering Dragon Star, I believe you all have heard of it!"

Sect Leader Lin An did not mince words. Once Yang Yan and Elder Dugu sat down, he directly got to the point.

"Are you referring to the Land of the North Cold? I've heard it's been idle for tens of thousands of years. Because there are monsters guarding it, none of the ten major sects has been willing to touch that place."

Yang Yan asked.

Having long been familiar with the Wandering Dragon Star Mirror, such a legendary place was naturally not unfamiliar to him.

"That's right. Because it has been undisturbed for tens of thousands of years, the monsters there have extremely high cultivation levels." Elder Dugu nodded and continued:

"It's fine if they just stay put, but recently these monsters suddenly came out and started slaughtering the local civilians."

Yang Yan frowned slightly.

It's clear that this matter seemed fishy.

Why now did they come out, not earlier or later, precisely at this moment?

Thinking of the Snake Demon, Yang Yan almost believed this was yet another conspiracy.

Moreover, he also understood, given the wisdom of Elder Dugu and Sect Leader Lin An, they couldn't possibly have overlooked this possibility.

Thus, he remained calm, waiting to hear what they had to say.

Sect Leader Lin An shook his head lightly and said with a sigh: "This concerns the entire Wandering Dragon Star, so the ten major sects intend to join forces externally."

"Based on the discussion results, each sect must send top experts to collaborate with other sects to eliminate the monsters."

Yang Yan was even more puzzled.

If it's about eliminating monsters, sending high-cultivation but less critical elders in the sect would suffice; what's the point of involving him...

Are they sending a sheep into the tiger's mouth?

Or do the two before him have other plans?

Elder Dugu smiled and explained: "You must have sensed that this matter is quite peculiar. Though it's called a conspiracy, one could say it's a strategy out in the open."

"With such a situation, Ancient Abyss Sect must rightly take the lead. Even knowing it might be targeting us, we have no choice but to forge ahead bravely."

"Earlier, I discussed with Sect Leader Lin An and we believe we can entirely adapt to the circumstances and use this monster-eliminating event to deal with those restless folks."

As he spoke, Elder Dugu glanced over at Sect Leader Lin An.

The latter nodded, immediately taking over the conversation: "Thus, eliminating monsters is just one aspect, just a name. You must know, there are quite a few treasures inside that Ancient Battlefield, albeit with various dangers."

"People die for wealth, birds die for food. If someone dies over treasures, it's only logical and understandable."

"Besides eliminating deserving targets, inside are precious herbs beneficial for Foundation Establishment Stage cultivators, not to mention the possibility of finding treasures passed down from Ancient Times if luck permits. Such opportunities are truly hard to come by!"

Listening to Elder Dugu's tempting words, Yang Yan understood in a flash.

"So, Sect Leader intends to send us for training and treasure hunting, while casually eliminating some who may appear in the Immortal Cultivation Conference in the future?" Yang Yan said with a smile.

Sect Leader Lin An immediately smiled: "Indeed. To invite you out, this time they've gone through great lengths, indicating they will send their most outstanding disciples. This is a once-in-a-lifetime chance."

Elder Dugu smiled coldly: "At that time, I will accompany you and others to ensure your safety."

Hearing this, Yang Yan couldn't help but smile wryly.

Speaking of being cunning, it seems these two before him are no less competent.

Though they say they're going to protect him, the real aim presumably only they know.

There's half a month left until the agreed-upon day; within this half a month, Yang Yan has ample time to prepare.

A glow of excitement appeared in Yang Yan's eyes.

After such a long period of arduous cultivation, it's finally time to wield his sword and showcase his skills.

The so-called Ancient Battlefield happens to provide him enough space to exert his strengths, igniting fierce battle intent within his heart.

Inside the Sword Sect.

"Deming, we shall go to the Land of the North Cold in a month, get ready." Sect Leader Xu of the Sword Sect instructed with his back to the disciple.

"Yes! But Sect Leader, why are we going to the Land of the North Cold?" Ban Deming, the leading disciple of the Sword Sect's sect, cupped his hands with some doubt and asked.

Chapter 1179: It's Not What I Think, It's the Truth

"Monster elimination." Sect Leader Xu gently uttered these words.

"Monster elimination? I heard that the Land of the North Cold was an ancient battlefield tens of thousands of years ago, filled with many high-level monsters. Are we..." His disciple beside him asked, somewhat suspiciously.

"Not only will our sect go this time, but the other nine major sects will also join. Besides monster elimination, we will also hunt for treasure!"

Sect Leader Xu smiled mysteriously and waved his hand casually: "Alright, go and prepare. Select thirty disciples with complete Qi Cultivation or higher to go."

After speaking, his gaze turned towards the east, a shadow briefly flickering in his eyes.

"Yes, Sect Leader." The disciple bowed to take his leave.

Then, as if he remembered something, Sect Leader Xu added: "Remember to bring him along."

Valley of Ten Thousand Flowers, in the main hall.

"Are you clear about this trip to the Land of the North Cold?" asked the Valley Master of the Valley of Ten Thousand Flowers from Baihua Fairy seated across.

"Valley Master, I will immediately arrange for the disciples!" Baihua Fairy smiled slightly, though a surge of hidden resentment brewed within her, secretly vowing revenge.

The memories were vivid from that day.

On that occasion, Yang Yan audaciously refused her request to be dual cultivation partners at the disciple acceptance ceremony, willing only to treat her as a maid!

Even though over a year had passed, with her good temperament, she couldn't help but feel a rush of unexplained anger whenever she thought of it.

She certainly knew that Yang Yan would appear this time, and it was a good opportunity to clear her previous disgrace.

Within the Pill Sect.

"Sect Leader! As the premier sect in pill-making and Alchemy, precious herbs are vital for us to refine middle-tier and even high-tier fourth-grade elixirs."

"We must go this time, and we must gather as many good high-grade herbs as possible for Alchemy."

The second disciple, Song Qiao, eager at the mention of the trip to the Land of the North Cold, couldn't wait.

This Song Qiao was indeed a treasure of the Pill Sect.

Though not quite skilled at cultivation matters, he was a unique talent in Alchemy!

Unmatched by even his senior brother Ye Changqing.

In some respects, he outshone him.

Besides his extraordinary talent, he was incredibly diligent.

He could be said to be obsessed with Alchemy to the point of madness.

The Sect Leader of the Pill Sect also cherished him greatly.

However, for these reasons, Song Qiao's mentality had always been somewhat inadequate.

"Even so, we also need to consider the strength of the monsters and the other sects!" The Pill Sect Leader chuckled bitterly, patiently advising.

"Sect Leader, no problem, our sect has many who excel in Cultivation Techniques. Besides, isn't senior brother coming back soon?" Song Qiao worried that the Sect Leader might change his mind and spoke quickly.

The Pill Sect Leader clearly understood his thoughts, shaking his head in resignation.

His disciple might achieve little in anything but Alchemy!

Song Qiao had no idea of his sect leader's resignation, feeling reassured, he said: "Rest assured, since they invited us to the Land of the North Cold, we must go. We have to seize a share of the spoils!"

At this point, the Pill Sect Leader had little to say further; he could only remind him: "Right, notify your senior brother to return soon, we depart in a month. Also, ask him to select twenty disciples with complete Qi Cultivation or higher to join."

"Yes, Sect Leader!" Song Qiao responded promptly, inwardly delighted.

He was eager to seize the rare opportunity of the Ancient Battlefield.

Wishing to find precious materials there for his research.

Left alone in the vast main hall, the Pill Sect Leader.

However accidental this trip to the Land of the North Cold seemed, he had every reason to believe it was actually a conspiracy.

He'd been watching the rise of the Ancient Abyss Sect.

Probably, in his position, he'd choose such actions to stifle the emerging talents of the Ancient Abyss Sect.

After all, if the Ancient Abyss Sect continued to develop at such a rate, perhaps no other sects would remain on Wandering Dragon Star in the future!

Within the Ancient Abyss Sect, since last privately discussing with Yang Yan and Elder Dugu, Sect Leader Lin An began making arrangements for the trip to the Land of the North Cold.

"Zimu, are the arrangements for the twenty Inner Sect Disciples and the ten Outer Sect Disciples all in order? As per the method, what is their current strength? Have they all achieved breakthroughs?" Sect Leader Lin An invited Lin Zimu beside him, expectantly asking.

"Yes, Sect Leader. All have achieved breakthroughs, lifting their overall strength to a higher level." Lin Zimu nodded.

"Even so, be extremely cautious. This trip to the Land of the North Cold is fraught with danger, treacherous beyond measure..."

Outside the hall doors, Guo Guoguo stealthily eavesdropped on their conversation.

Huh?

Where are they going?

Why so many people?

Could it be, Yang Yan is going too?

No wonder he's been a rare sight lately like a Divine Dragon recognizes its origin!

No way, I'm going too, you can't leave me behind!

The way those women around Yang Yan look at him isn't right, I have to watch over Yang Yan, hmph.

Guo Guoguo thought.

Thinking this, Guo Guoguo immediately pushed open the door and entered.

Everyone instantly stopped talking and looked at Guo Guoguo.

The elders' expressions became quite colorful upon seeing this Little Witch.

They were long accustomed to Guo Guoguo's antics, resigned to fate.

Especially hearing the stories of the Little Witch with Yang Yan, they couldn't help but sweat on behalf of the Sect Leader.

And for Yang Yan, they mostly felt sympathy!

Blame it on Yang Yan's exceptional talent!

Sect Leader Lin An saw that it was his daughter and helplessly shook his head.

"Dad! Where are you going? I want to go!"

Guo Guoguo yelled, approaching Lin An.

"No, you can't come this time."

Sect Leader Lin An, hearing this was about accompanying to the Land of the North Cold, firmly replied.

"Why not? Dad, don't you want me anymore?"

Guo Guoguo began to look at Lin An with aggrieved eyes.

"Guo'Er! Alas! It's too dangerous this time, wait at home for our return."

Seeing Guo Guoguo bringing up her mother, Lin An immediately softened his tone.

"No no no! I want to go! Dad, I trust you will protect me! Besides, I'm not weak now either, I'm Qi Cultivation Level Nine now."

Guo Guoguo nearly pounded her chest.

Yang Yan heard this, pursed his lips, and slightly shook his head.

Despite the subtlety, Guo Guoguo noticed.

"Hey, Yang Yan, did I say something wrong? What are you laughing at?"

Guo Guoguo seemed to interpret Yang Yan's expression as mocking.

"I say Young Sect Leader, this time isn't like returning to the Hidden World just for fun—the trip to the Land of the North Cold, not only are there many hidden monsters, but its cold air is enough for you to endure. The Sect Leader isn't letting you go to avoid danger."

Yang Yan said indifferently, causing Guo Guoguo to persist even more.

"You you you, Yang Yan! I'm not as weak as you say! Do you think bringing me along would be a burden?"

"Not that I think so, but it's indeed the case." Yang Yan replied calmly.

"Hmph, you..."

Chapter 1180: Guoguo Causes Trouble

Guo Guoguo glared at Yang Yan, then turned to look at the Sect Leader.

"Dad! Let me go! I..."

Guo Guoguo was full of anticipation, chattering incessantly.

"Sigh!"

Lin An sighed and said unyieldingly, "The Grandmaster has already spoken, and everyone agrees. There's no need to say more, this matter is settled!"

"Dad, you also... you really don't want me!"

Upon hearing Lin An suddenly reach a conclusion, Guo Guoguo was stunned for a moment, then her eyes turned red.

"Hmph! What's so great about it! They won't let me go, I'll find a way myself!" She said, turning her head and running out.

Seeing this, Lin An opened his mouth slightly, feeling a bit disappointed. The good mood he had just felt evaporated instantly, leaving him with a headache. Why is this kid so stubborn?

"Sect Leader! The Young Sect Leader is just a bit too playful, it will be fine in a while. Later, I'll instruct someone to send her some favorite food."

Lin Zimu stepped forward and spoke to Lin An.

"Hmm, thank you, Zimu." Sect Leader Lin An said somewhat bitterly.

"No need to be polite, Sect Leader."

"Uh? Where were we?"

Yang Yan interjected.

...

Guo Guoguo, who had run out, gradually slowed down. How she wished that a voice would call out to her at this moment.

But the more she hoped, the more disappointed she felt. She paused, looked back, and then ran angrily into the distance.

"Hmph! Dad actually scolded me! Dad really doesn't want me anymore!! Waa!!!"

She couldn't hold back the tears in her eyes any longer, bursting into tears like a flood.

For the first time being treated so harshly by her own father, Guo Guoguo was genuinely heartbroken and felt very wronged.

However, this instead fueled her rebellious spirit.

Hmph! It's just the Land of the North Cold! Why can't I go there, if those women can, why can't I?!

I have to go! If they won't let me, I'll sneak along! Hmph!

And that Yang Yan, looking down on me, even said I'd be a burden. We'll see who's who.

...

Yang Yan, Zimu, and the remaining folks like Gongsun Ruyan were making the final preparations.

...

A month later, this day finally arrived.

Sect Leader Lin An, Yang Yan, and others gathered at the martial arts field.

"This time, our destination is the Land of the North Cold. The journey is very dangerous, do not advance rashly upon encountering danger, and absolutely do not act alone."

"You are all valuable talents within the sect, and we cannot afford to lose even one more. Do you understand?" The Sect Leader looked around below.

"Understood!" The crowd responded in unison.

"Set out!"

As soon as the Sect Leader's voice fell, only a shadow of him remained.

The crowd hurried to follow, one by one boarding the Wandering Dragon Boat with sword shadows.

After flying in the high sky for a long time, the Wandering Dragon Boat finally reached its destination—the southernmost end of the Land of the North Cold, Zhu Zixia.

"We will rendezvous with the others from the ten sects here, do not wander around at will."

The Sect Leader scanned the surroundings.

"Look, so many people here!"

One of the disciples suddenly exclaimed.

The others followed the direction of his voice and looked.

"It seems that the other sects have arrived long ago, and I can feel other strong forces too."

Elder Dugu finished speaking and looked at the Sect Leader.

The Sect Leader nodded and gazed into the distance, having already devised a plan in his mind.

This trip wouldn't allow them to have it too easy.

Yang Yan and others looked around upon hearing the voice too.

The severe cold of winter and snow covered everything, and the air seemed to freeze.

The wind blew, sweeping up the snowflakes in the sky.

A chilling intent quietly spread.

The narrow entrance of the mountain pass was densely packed with tents, with the flags of various sects erected at the entrance.

The Sword Sect, Valley of Ten Thousand Flowers were at the forefront, of course, also at the best spots.

The ten sects stationed nearby, neither too close nor too far.

"It seems they have all arrived, no need to cause conflict with them. Just set up camp in the back."

The Sect Leader said thoughtfully.

"Understood, Sect Leader, I'll instruct the disciples to do so."

Elder Dugu, having been given orders, withdrew.

The Ancient Abyss Sect group set up at the furthest back.

Just as they were preparing to rest, they heard noises from the front.

The Sect Leader and Elders, immersed in training, assumed it was just a conflict among the front sects, paid it no mind, and continued meditating.

On the contrary, Yang Yan and the disciples went out to observe the situation.

"You all move aside, don't block my way."

An unreasonable female voice came through.

"Young lady, you intruded into our camp, destroyed our things, and you're still being unreasonable, do you think we're pushovers?"

A person who seemed reputable stepped forward.

"I got lost, it's not on purpose, just move out of the way and don't ruin my mood."

The woman appeared unwilling to be entangled there.

"This voice sounds quite familiar."

Zimu, who was watching the show, whispered.

Yang Yan nodded in agreement.

"I'll go check it out first then."

With that, Lin Zimu turned into a sword shadow and flew towards the source of the voice.

"Then don't blame me for being ruthless, you brought this upon yourself."

The man said somewhat arrogantly.

"Being reckless at the entrance of our sect, you can't afford those consequences."

"Hmph, who's afraid of you, bring it on."

The woman seemed unimpressed.

Both sides drew their longswords, immediately at daggers drawn.

The rest of the disciples quickly surrounded the duo, the intention was obvious!

The woman had no choice but to grip her sword tight.

Just as the two prepared to attack, a flying sword shot down.

"Who is it?"

The man roared in anger.

"There's no need to be aggressive, brother, we're all men, why make things difficult for a young lady?"

Lin Zimu descended with the flying sword.

The woman turned around, and upon seeing Lin Zimu, a gleam flashed in her eyes.

"Young Sect Leader Guo, what brings you here?"

"Ah, it's Zimu, with you here, I'm not afraid anymore."

Seeing Lin Zimu arriving, Guo Guoguo's tense heart relaxed.

"Weren't you told not to come, why are you here?"

"You don't need to worry about that. Where is Yang Yan, take me to see him!"

Guo Guoguo seemed to be ignoring Lin Zimu.

"Sigh, you're incorrigible."

"Hey, don't overlook me, just because one more person came, I won't just let you leave!"

The man's face twisted somewhat.

"Brother, we did not intend to cause trouble here, could you give us some face? We'll offer our apologies."

Lin Zimu remained humble and courteous, not wanting to provoke an incident, especially with the Young Sect Leader Guo present.

"Face? Who are you all? Why should I give you face? Don't think of leaving without paying a price!"

The surrounding disciples drew their swords, ready for battle.

"Since you're so aggressive, don't blame us for being ruthless!"

Lin Zimu declared, drawing his longsword to prepare for combat.

The man's right fist swung, as Lin Zimu met it, palm pushing out, stirring waves that kicked up stones.

The man raised his blade overhead, the edge of the knife fierce.

The confrontation was just about to explode.