

Primordial 391

Chapter 391 Failed Ambush, Suffering Attacks Instead

The burly-browed man wanted to challenge Lin Chen precisely because he had heard of the many treasures on Lin Chen's person.

"Desiring the treasures on my person?"

"Another fool blinded by greed, rest assured, I will soon open your eyes to reality."

Lin Chen gazed indifferently at the burly-browed man, his heart already decided on the man's fate.

As he finished speaking, a large saber had already appeared in Lin Chen's hand. During his battles, Lin Chen had rarely used a sword, instead opting for a saber, which conveniently allowed him to practice the Gale Wind Blade Technique.

Seeing the large saber in Lin Chen's hand, the burly-browed man's eyes lit up, for the saber Lin Chen held was an Earth-grade low-quality magic treasure.

Such a treasure was not easy to come by, and in response, he promptly charged at Lin Chen.

"Ah, you pitiful fellow, seeing the large saber in Lin Chen's hand, you probably think it was prepared just for you."

"You see that look in the burly-browed man's eyes? His gaze now determines how Lin Chen will treat him later. By the looks of it, that chap might not even be left with his underwear."

"In the end, he has only himself to blame for daring to covet what belongs to someone like Lin Chen."

"Speaking of which, Lin Chen does seem somewhat excessive. With so many challengers, why do I feel like he's becoming stronger with each battle? It's like everyone is unintentionally honing his martial skills, aiding in the growth of his cultivation. Each time, he strips them clean, his actions are simply too ruthless."

"Brother, if you talk like that, have you also challenged Lin Chen and been stripped bare by him?"

"What Brother Lin Chen does is absolutely right. These fools willingly challenge him, coveting the treasures on Brother Lin Chen's person. When they lose and get robbed in return, they still think they have the right to complain."

As the crowd discussed, the battle up ahead had already concluded.

The burly-browed man who had boldly declared he would defeat Lin Chen within ten moves had only lasted five moves before losing.

And the outcome was exactly as everyone had anticipated.

When the burly-browed man left Baiming Garden, all he had left was a single pair of underwear.

After the burly-browed man's defeat, Lin Chen, holding the spoils he had taken from him, made his way to a corner of Baiming Garden.

"Take these. This guy had quite a haul on him, I'm giving you three Third Grade Elixirs."

Arriving at the corner, Lin Chen immediately took out three Third Grade Elixirs and tossed them into the corner.

"Thank you, Young Master Lin Chen. I will surely redouble my efforts."

The moment the elixirs flew out, a disheveled man leapt out from the corner, caught them, and after a round of thanks to Lin Chen, left.

It turned out that the disheveled man had been spreading rumors within the Formation Sect that Lin Chen was an easy target with low cultivation but many treasures on his person. This was done with the

intent of inciting the sect's newcomers to challenge Lin Chen, who would then defeat them and strip them of all their treasures.

Every time a challenger appeared and Lin Chen obtained treasures, he would share a portion with the disheveled man.

This man too had been taught a lesson by Lin Chen before, but then had an epiphany and came up with this scheme. After some consideration, Lin Chen agreed to it.

The disheveled man, holding the elixirs rewarded by Lin Chen, returned to his abode and swiftly consumed all three elixirs to enhance his cultivation.

In the Array Formation Sect, reputation and all else are illusions; the only truth is the treasures gained and used for oneself.

Even if you are in the limelight, you might still encounter someone like Lin Chen, only to be completely plundered in the end.

Hence, after his defeat by Lin Chen, the disheveled man had come to understand this principle.

If Lin Chen were really that easy to deal with, he would have been taken down by others long ago, and it wouldn't be the turn of those who believed the rumors about him to take action.

Such is human nature; everyone wishes to take advantage of their cultivation to gain some cheap benefits, only to find themselves losing more instead.

During this time, thanks to his cooperation with Lin Chen, the disheveled man even nearly reclaimed all the treasures he had lost to Lin Chen.

His cultivation had broken through from the Third Layer of the Heaven-reaching Realm to the Fourth Layer.

Prior to this, even if he had used all of his resources, he might not have been able to achieve this feat.

Thus, his misfortune was intertwined with luck; although he lost to Lin Chen, he also made Lin Chen's acquaintance and gained some benefits as a result.

However, the disheveled man was very clear that his relationship with Lin Chen was merely one of cooperation, far from being friends.

But as long as he did not antagonize Lin Chen, all was well; with Lin Chen's ability and means, he was bound to stand out in the recruitment competition of the Array Formation Sect.

Yet, Lin Chen's behavior during his stay in Baiming Garden had offended many; therefore, the disheveled man secretly decided not to get too close to Lin Chen, to avoid bringing disaster upon himself.

If Lin Chen continued to make enemies, he would inevitably face a joint attack from other martial artists. Though Lin Chen was mysterious and resourceful, becoming everyone's target would lead to serious trouble eventually.

During this time, Lin Chen was also aware that his actions had attracted too much attention, so not every challenge was met with confrontation.

Zhao Zhongtian of the Great Flame Imperial Family had challenged Lin Chen several times, but Lin Chen, being no fool, naturally did not take the bait.

Joking aside, Zhao Zhongtian possessed the cultivation of the Sixth Layer of the Reverting Void Realm.

If this were in Divine Sun City, Lin Chen could still rely on the Power of the Dragon Vein and activate the Great Formation to contend with him.

But in Baiming Garden, facing Zhao Zhongtian head-on, Lin Chen certainly could not be his match.

Moreover, should they clash, Zhao Zhongtian would surely aim to kill, and it would no longer be a simple sparring match.

However, as Lin Chen continued to evade, Zhao Zhongtian was not one to give up easily.

Thus, one night, Zhao Zhongtian snuck into Baiming Garden and attempted a surprise attack on Lin Chen.

Fortunately, Lin Chen had sensed it in advance and had already set up the Divine Fire Troop Killing Array in the courtyard of his residence, along with ten improved Stone Sculpture Puppets, which foiled Zhao Zhongtian's assault.

That night, not only did Zhao Zhongtian fail to injure Lin Chen, but he was also repelled by the Divine Fire Army Descent Formation and nearly got hurt himself.

Zhao Zhongtian then realized that even though Lin Chen was no match for him, with formations and other tactics at his disposal, Lin Chen was not afraid of him at all and even had means that could potentially kill Zhao Zhongtian.

Chapter 392: I Have Someone Backing Me Up

Having learned his lesson, Zhao Zhongtian naturally did not dare to sneak into Lin Chen's yard again to ask for trouble.

He had considered making his presence known when Lin Chen was swindling money and treasures from people in Baiming Garden, not only to sabotage Lin Chen's plans but also to teach Lin Chen a harsh lesson, yet this plan proved ineffective.

Because when he was lurking outside Baiming Garden to spy on Lin Chen, Lin Chen simply would not show up, which greatly puzzled Zhao Zhongtian. He couldn't understand how Lin Chen knew of his whereabouts.

Could it be that the Chu Family was behind this, has the Chu Family been tipping Lin Chen off all along?

The Chu Family was Chu Zisa's clan, whose status within the Formation Sect was in no way inferior to that of the Zhao Family of the Great Flame Imperial Family.

And for a long time, the Chu Family had been at odds with the Zhao Family, so Chu Zisa was more than willing to help Lin Chen against Zhao Zhongtian.

Of course, a big part of this was because Wu Qingxia had asked Chu Zisa to take care of Lin Chen.

No kidding, Wu Qingxia had taken a liking to Lin Chen, who was bound to be no small figure in the Formation Sect in the future, so Chu Zisa was picking sides now, for those who might want to befriend Lin Chen in the future would probably have to line up to do so.

The reason the Chu Family could help Lin Chen was that although the Formation Sect would not intervene in minor squabbles, they would certainly step in to control the situation should things escalate.

Therefore, the Chu Family did not actually need to act to assist Lin Chen; they just had to gather some evidence whenever the Zhao Family intended to make a move against Lin Chen, then embellish and report it to the authorities through the Chu Family's influence. That would be enough trouble for the Zhao Family to deal with.

Thus, the Zhao Family did not dare to confront Lin Chen too overtly.

This was also why Lin Chen could remain unharmed in the Formation Sect up to now.

However, the reason Lin Chen was able to detect Zhao Zhongtian was not because the Chu Family had been tipping him off, but rather that Lin Chen's Divine Sense had become so powerful that it could cover the entire Baiming Garden. Lin Chen had memorized Zhao Zhongtian's aura, so no matter how well the latter hid, Lin Chen just had to release his Divine Sense to scan Baiming Garden and would know if Zhao Zhongtian was lurking outside, preparing to strike at him.

Therefore, Lin Chen was able to discover Zhao Zhongtian every time, whereas Zhao Zhongtian's Divine Soul was not as strong as Lin Chen's, and he could not detect Lin Chen in return.

After several failed attempts at stealth attacks on Lin Chen, Zhao Zhongtian finally had to give up.

Zhao Zhongtian could only hope to find an opportunity to deal with Lin Chen during the Formation Sect's recruitment tournament. Although he might not get the chance to face Lin Chen in the earlier stages, in the final life-or-death ranking challenge, he was bound to confront Lin Chen, and that's when he would have the opportunity to make his move.

At this moment, in a corner of Baiming Garden.

"You bastard, how dare you trick me? That guy is not someone to be trifled with at all. I challenged him only to be stripped of my clothes and have all my treasures taken. If you don't give me an explanation today, I'm going to kill you."

At that moment, a man dressed in tattered clothes seemingly robbed from someone else appeared in the alley and stopped the disheveled man, speaking out.

The disheveled man looked up and saw the bushy-browed man whom he had tricked into troubling Lin Chen.

"Explanation? Heh, what explanation do I owe you? You were foolish enough to believe what I said, insisting on finding trouble with Lin Chen. When you're no match for him, who else is to blame?"

"My words did not deceive you, Lin Chen indeed has many treasures on him."

The disheveled man coldly eyed the bushy-browed man, his tone unconcerned with the threat as he spoke. His words were true; Lin Chen did have many treasures, and not long ago, they had given him the elixir that tempted the bushy-browed man to challenge Lin Chen.

"Before you try to teach me a lesson, you should first assess your own weight."

The disheveled man spoke indifferently, as now everyone in Baiming Garden knew he was under Lin Chen's protection.

And almost all those old acquaintances had been swindled by the disheveled man at some point, but they couldn't do anything to him because Lin Chen had his back. If they caused trouble for the disheveled man, Lin Chen would take the initiative to challenge them and teach them a lesson once again.

"Significance? Haha, today I will let you know my significance."

The man with thick eyebrows became furious upon hearing the disheveled man's words.

He immediately wrapped Spiritual Light around his fists and rushed towards the disheveled man at high speed.

The two began to fight, but the disheveled man still held his ground, countering with his palms.

Eventually, the disheveled man was pushed back, but the man with thick eyebrows didn't have an easy time either.

With the help of the elixir provided by Lin Chen, the disheveled man had made a breakthrough in his cultivation, so although he was at a disadvantage now, he wouldn't be defeated in a short time.

"It's good that my cultivation broke through. I really owe it to Young Master Lin Chen's elixir."

The disheveled man silently felt fortunate, and then, taking advantage of a moment when the man with thick eyebrows was not paying attention, he immediately fled the alley.

The man with thick eyebrows chased out only to see the disheveled man's figure disappearing from his sight.

The opponent didn't want to fight at all, but the man with thick eyebrows had no way to handle him.

Inside Baiming Garden, if both parties intended to fight, it wouldn't cause much of a stir, but if a chase ensued, it would lead to the Formation Sect stepping in to stop it.

Thus, an unwritten rule had been established in Baiming Garden, which was that if someone fled, it meant the fight had to be quick and decisive.

After watching the disheveled man leave, the man with thick eyebrows cursed inwardly but could do nothing about it.

However, it wasn't long before the disheveled man unexpectedly returned, and he had brought someone along with him.

It was Lin Chen who appeared, following the disheveled man into the alley.

"It seems you're quite dissatisfied that I took the Treasures from you last time."

As soon as Lin Chen finished speaking, he took action without showing any mercy.

Lin Chen did this to let people know that the disheveled man was under his protection.

Watching the man with thick eyebrows getting beaten, the disheveled man felt an indescribable sense of contentment. This feeling of being protected by someone was truly exhilarating.

After this incident, the next day brought stirrings in Baiming Garden again—it was the arrival of a newcomer, and the disheveled man immediately became interested.

New business had come!

Chapter 393 Another Fat Sheep Delivered to the Door

On this day, the man with thick eyebrows once again encountered the man in disheveled clothes, yet he dared not target him with aggression.

Having learned his lesson from the day before, he knew that if he sought trouble with the disheveled man again, he would continue to be beaten.

At this moment, watching the disheveled man rush toward the distant crowd, the thick-browed man felt extremely annoyed.

He was well aware that the disheveled man was currently looking for someone to trouble, again resorting to cheating and deception, luring others to challenge Lin Chen.

This immediately reminded him of the scene where he was deceived by the other and foolishly went to challenge Lin Chen, only to be beaten afterwards.

However, the thought of someone shortly suffering the same pain he had, made him feel somewhat better.

At this moment, the disheveled man arrived at the entrance of Baiming Garden, and sure enough, saw four people entering, looking around with curiosity, clearly first-time visitors.

The disheveled man immediately approached them, while the other old residents looked at him with peculiar eyes, clearly understanding what he intended to do, but none spoke up.

They also did not wish to offend Lin Chen.

The disheveled man approached the four newcomers and began to persuade them, starting his deceitful ploy.

The four were two men and two women, with one of the men being middle-aged and the other a youth, both having reached the Seventh Layer of the Heaven-reaching Realm. Among the women, one had a youthful appearance and was quite petite, exuding a soft and frail charm that made men want to protect her after a few glances.

The other woman, wrapped in a fiery red dress, had a striking figure that no man could resist stealing a few more glances at, and her cultivation also ranked highest among the four, having reached the Eighth Layer of the Heaven-reaching Realm.

However, the cultivation level of these four, in Baiming Garden, would only be considered moderate, not among the top powerhouses. But compared to the martial artists whom Lin Chen had previously challenged, the cultivation of these four was formidable, especially as a group of four.

"Is everything you said true? Does that guy really carry a lot of treasures?"

The fiery beauty, interested after hearing the disheveled man's words, asked sharply.

Her nature was somewhat rough and unrefined, not typical for a woman. After learning the rules of Baiming Garden, she immediately took an interest in Lin Chen mentioned by the disheveled man.

To be precise, she was interested in the treasures on Lin Chen.

She was already imagining the scene of defeating Lin Chen and forcing him to hand over his treasures.

"Certainly it's true,"

the disheveled man said with conviction, a smile emerging on his face as he thought to himself that his victim had finally taken the bait and his elixir would soon find a new owner.

"If that's the case, lead the way for us. If we obtain the treasures from that guy, you'll be rewarded handsomely,"

the fiery woman declared loudly, with no trace of suspicion towards the shabbily dressed man before her.

However, the two men began to frown slightly, sensing that something was amiss.

"Hong Lan, let's just forget it. We've just arrived, and it's better to avoid trouble,"

the middle-aged man cautioned.

"Yes, sister, is it really right for us to try and take someone else's treasures?"

The delicate girl nodded in agreement after hearing the middle-aged man's words, her response tinged with reliance.

"What are you afraid of? He said it himself, that guy is only at the Melding Earth Realm Cultivation. What's there to be afraid of?"

"Since that guy dares to come here with such Cultivation, he should be prepared for the trouble that others will bring his way. Consider this a lesson for him. Without the corresponding strength, it's better not to wander around."

"At worst, after I defeat him, I'll leave him some usable items so he can leave in good shape. I won't make things too difficult for him, as long as he hands over some valuables."

The sultry beauty revealed a wicked smile as she spoke, making herself seem like the good Samaritan.

Then the sultry beauty followed directly behind the disheveled man, rushing towards Lin Chen's living quarters.

The middle-aged man shook his head helplessly, and the three of them followed suit.

Thump, thump, thump—

The door to Lin Chen's room was knocked on by the sultry beauty.

The series of knocks instantly woke Lin Chen from his meditation, and as he sent out his Spiritual Sense from within the room to the outside, he knew that prey had once again delivered itself to his doorstep.

However, after sensing the four individuals outside, Lin Chen frowned slightly because the cultivation of the four surpassed the medium grade of the Martial Artists in Baiming Garden.

It seemed that the disheveled man had grown increasingly greedy, now bringing such prey to him.

This wasn't some sheep, ready to be easily handled.

Yet the knocking outside didn't make Lin Chen retreat; he went straight to the door to meet the challenge.

"Beauty, are you looking for me?"

Lin Chen eyed the woman in front of him, her figure in no way inferior to Wang Yilin, and asked, his gaze continually scanning up and down her body.

"I've heard you possess many treasures. It'd be best if you just handed them over. You must be aware of the rules here in Baiming Garden. If I don't rob you, someone else will, and they won't be as reasonable as I am."

The words of the sultry beauty left Lin Chen both amused and exasperated. Since when had robbery become such a noble act? Her tone suggested that Lin Chen would be foolish not to give in to her, revealing that she, too, had a talent for twisting words, sufficient to rival even the disheveled man's job.

"Little brother, please hand it over. We can exchange it for Spirit Stones and elixirs," the frail girl interjected hastily after hearing the sultry beauty's threats towards Lin Chen.

At her words, Lin Chen's gaze shifted to the delicate girl, silently musing that this pair was indeed odd.

One demanded outright, while the other spoke of exchange, yet both were equally amusing. The treasures were his to begin with, so why would he just hand them over?

"Alright, I naturally know the rules of Baiming Garden. If you want the treasures on me, that's fine—defeat me, and I'll hand over all the treasures on me."

"But a contest is reciprocal. If you lose to me, you must also hand over the treasures you possess."

Lin Chen addressed the two women before him with a calm tone.

Chapter 394 Do You Know the Consequences of Being Shameless?

"Defeat me? Haha, you really think too highly of yourself."

"With just your Seventh Layer of Melding Earth Realm cultivation, this old lady could beat you with one hand tied behind her back within three rounds."

The sultry beauty looked at Lin Chen with a tone of disdain.

In her eyes, Lin Chen's cultivation was laughably weak. She believed that with such cultivation, him participating in the Formation Sect's recruitment competition was simply seeking his own humiliation.

"Is that so? Then let's give it a try."

Seeing that his opponent, like those who had challenged him before, did not take him seriously at all, Lin Chen immediately spoke up.

The onlookers around them immediately shook their heads, thinking to themselves that these folks were about to suffer once again.

"It seems she hasn't realized what kind of terrifying person she's provoked."

"Do you think these people will also be defeated by Lin Chen in one move just like the others before?"

"Not necessarily. Their cultivation is stronger than those who challenged Lin Chen before. They might last a bit longer, but the chances of defeating Lin Chen are slim to none."

The surrounding onlookers whispered among themselves, and their words fell into the ears of a middle-aged man.

He immediately couldn't help but cast a glance at Lin Chen, his instincts telling him that Lin Chen was not someone to be trifled with.

However, he also knew the temperament of the fiery beauty and understood that it was impossible for her to back down now.

"Kid, I'll just stand here. If you manage to hurt me, then you win."

The sultry beauty stood with her hands on her hips, still looking at Lin Chen with utter disdain.

In her opinion, with Lin Chen's level of cultivation, even if he used all his strength, he probably wouldn't be able to break through her Spiritual Power Defensive Shield.

Whoosh whoosh—

As soon as she finished speaking, a fiery red shield appeared around the hot-bodied beauty.

Seeing this, Lin Chen didn't say any more. With a flicker of light in his hand, the Flowing Light Sword appeared.

"That guy was right, you really do have some decent treasures on you. This one must have reached the Earth-Level Mid-Grade."

Hong Lan looked at the Flowing Light Sword that appeared in Lin Chen's hand and immediately her eyes brightened, showing a fervent expression. As a swordsman herself, she recognized just how extraordinary the sword in Lin Chen's hand was.

She was already imagining the scene where Lin Chen would hand over the Flowing Light Sword to her after a while.

"In that case, be careful."

Lin Chen kindly warned her, not because he wanted to be ruthless, but because this voluptuous woman in front of him was practically seeking her own death. Since that was the case, she couldn't blame Lin Chen for what was to come.

Zing—

No sooner had his voice faded than the sword in Lin Chen's hand was already in motion.

A streak of Sword Light was released by Lin Chen, flickering before everyone's eyes. They all saw the moment Lin Chen made his move, but were unable to make out the swordsmanship behind the Flowing Light Sword's movement.

Boom—

A sound of breaking Spiritual Light echoed in front of Hong Lan. The Spiritual Light Shield in front of her shattered instantly, releasing a powerful burst of energy.

"What!?"

The powerful shockwave caused Hong Lan to stagger back several steps. A series of cold cuts appeared on her body, and her fiery red dress was suddenly marked with numerous fine sword slashes, exposing the flesh underneath along with fresh blood.

"Sister Lan, are you alright!?"

"This guy's swordsmanship is so fast, I didn't even see it clearly."

The delicate woman and the other two men hurried over to Hong Lan's side, asking with concern, while looking at Lin Chen with disbelief.

They had not seen Lin Chen's sword strike clearly.

"You've lost."

Lin Chen's gaze fell on Hong Lan, and out came his calm voice.

It was Hong Lan who earlier had stated that if Lin Chen inflicted any injury on her, she would concede defeat.

"You, you're talking nonsense, I haven't lost."

Hong Lan retorted through gritted teeth, utterly refusing to acknowledge her defeat to Lin Chen.

Not just the always haughty and proud her, but probably any Heaven-reaching Realm expert would find it hard to accept being wounded by a single sword strike from Lin Chen, whose cultivation was clearly much lesser than their own.

"You want to renege on the deal?"

Lin Chen's brows furrowed slightly. It wasn't the first time he had encountered someone who clearly lost according to the terms of the wager yet refused to admit defeat.

And their end outcomes were never good, just like the thick-browed burly man before, who eventually was left in nothing but his underwear.

"So what if I renege? I want to see just how formidable your swordsmanship is."

As Hong Lan spoke, a sword appeared in her hand and she thrust it toward Lin Chen.

Seeing this, Lin Chen's expression immediately soured, and he swung his sword again, countering the Sword Light from Hong Lan's blade.

Countless Sword Qi scattered in all directions as the two exchanged blows, with the sound of their clashing swords echoing nonstop, their hands moving faster and faster.

Before long, the woman was gasping for breath. Despite her unfathomable swordsmanship, she couldn't get the upper hand against Lin Chen, and he consistently suppressed her.

And from beginning to end, Lin Chen remained as nonchalant as a breeze.

Zing—

Another sword strike, the sound of the blade ringing out. The woman's sword was sent flying by Lin Chen, skittering across the ground and trembling with the reverberation.

"Your sword is no longer in your hands. How do you expect to continue fighting with me?"

With a slash of his sword, there came a ripping sound, and the woman's gown was instantly severed by the Sword Qi, turning it into a short skirt.

The woman halted in her steps, her face showing disbelief as she looked at Lin Chen.

Her fist couldn't help but clench. She had always been highly confident in her swordsmanship, believing that no one within the same realm could best her with the sword.

Yet now, not only had Lin Chen defeated her, but he had also flung her sword from her grasp, amounting to a humiliation of the highest order for Hong Lan.

"I lost?"

The woman's eyes began to well up, unable to accept the outcome internally.

"No, I haven't lost. If you think I'll concede defeat, that's impossible. Just kill me if you dare."

The woman clenched her fists tightly, her mouth stubborn and unwilling to admit defeat even though the reality of her downfall was laid out before her.

"Do you know the fate of those who cheated and refused to admit defeat at my hands?"

Lin Chen looked at the woman with an icy gaze, his voice cold as he spoke.

"If you don't know, you can ask them."

Lin Chen glanced at the surrounding spectators.

At that moment, upon hearing Lin Chen's words, the spectators' eyes lit up, and all the men's gazes heatedly fell upon the woman.

"Young Master Lin Chen, strip her bare, just like you did with that thick-browed burly man that day."

"No, don't even leave her underwear this time."

"..."

The surrounding crowd shouted loudly, their eyes roving over the woman's body.

"You..."

Hong Lan, upon hearing the words of the crowd, understood the fate that awaited those who disregarded the rules of the contest and cheated.

Chapter 395: Accept the Loss After Gambling

Hong Lan, once she understood what Lin Chen intended to do next, suddenly retreated a few steps, her face blushing crimson.

The handsome man before her was, unexpectedly, a despicable fellow.

Meanwhile, the spectators around them began to fuel the atmosphere, shouting for Lin Chen to quickly strip the woman of her clothes, all of them eagerly waiting to feast their eyes on the spectacle.

Lin Chen was rendered speechless by the words of the onlookers.

When had he ever become the person they described, always asking those defeated by him to hand over their treasures, never demanding they remove their clothes.

Although there were a few accidents prior to this, where the clothing itself was among the treasures and Lin Chen asked them to give up their treasures, they feared he would kill them, so they left nothing behind, handing over even their clothes to Lin Chen.

"You, keep away from me, pervert."

Having learned from the crowd what kind of person Lin Chen was, Hong Lan instantly grew fearful, constantly retreating, her complexion turning sallow with dread of Lin Chen's approach.

After the preceding battle, she was well aware that she could not possibly be Lin Chen's match.

If Lin Chen really wanted to strip her of her clothes, it would be an easy thing to do, so in that moment, Hong Lan became frightened.

She was always extroverted, and although she dressed seductively, she found it amusing when men passing by focused their attention on her, but she was still untouched, never having been approached by a man, and naturally couldn't accept Lin Chen's reckless behavior.

Hearing Hong Lan's words, Lin Chen grew even more exasperated.

It was just a spar, how had he become a pervert.

"Don't try to wriggle out of it, hurry up and hand over all the treasures you have as agreed."

Lin Chen said indifferently, and then took two steps towards Hong Lan. This action immediately made Hong Lan think that Lin Chen was plotting some indecent act, and she grew pale with fear, her Spiritual Light flashing as a sword suddenly appeared in her hand, ready to fight to the death with Lin Chen.

Even in death, she couldn't let Lin Chen dishonor her, especially not in front of so many people.

In the esteemed Formation Sect, could someone really act in such a manner without anyone intervening?

Hong Lan thought to herself, and at this moment, a middle-aged man who was with Hong Lan, stepped forward, positioning himself in front of Hong Lan, watching Lin Chen warily.

"Brother, my junior sister is new here and unknowing of the rules. Her impulsive temperament has offended the young master. I hope the young master has a broad enough heart to pardon my junior sister."

The middle-aged man's gaze fell on Lin Chen, and he spoke with a smile on his face.

Upon hearing this, Lin Chen silently sneered, thinking he had never seen such a shameless person.

Lost a bet and then claimed it was due to temperament, asking him to let her off, is that possible?

If everyone acted like this after a fight, what was the point of making a bet at all?

"I don't know what your junior sister is like in your own sect, but this is the Formation Sect. Since she challenged me, she naturally should be able to accept losing. According to the bet, she should hand over all the treasures on her person. Otherwise, don't blame me for not being polite."

"You ask any of the spectators around, which one doesn't honor a bet they've lost? When it comes to you guys, why do you play such dirty tricks?"

"Do you really think I wouldn't dare to harm you? I don't mind searching for treasures on your corpses."

Lin Chen said to the four Hong Lan before him, his tone ice-cold.

"Yes, since you've come to Baiming Garden, you should be prepared to accept defeat."

"Your sister there was quite arrogant just now, boasting that she would easily defeat Young Master Lin Chen. And now, why is she acting so cowardly and trying to shirk responsibility by claiming it's her nature? What? Are we supposed to indulge her temperament?"

"If you ask me, Young Master Lin Chen, don't waste your breath on them. Just go ahead and strip off their clothes."

The crowd around them chimed in with their teasing calls again.

Many among the onlookers had also lost to Lin Chen, with some even incited by that shabbily dressed person to challenge Lin Chen, only to be utterly defeated by him in one move.

However, those around them in the past had not behaved as unscrupulously as Hong Lan and her group; they had readily handed over their treasures.

"Sister, consider this a costly lesson and hand over the treasures you have to him," the middle-aged man said, coming up to Hong Lan with a look of resignation.

Although his cultivation was slightly lower than Hong Lan's, his combat ability was on par. His sister had always looked down on others, relying on her superior talent in cultivation. Now she had finally met her match in Lin Chen.

Lin Chen's previous display of swordsmanship in defeating Hong Lan was unfathomably proficient; he didn't even see it clearly.

The middle-aged man was sure that even if the four siblings joined forces, they might not be able to be a match for Lin Chen. It would be better to admit defeat, hand over the treasures to Lin Chen, and perhaps be able to turn hostility into friendship.

After all, so many around here had been defeated by Lin Chen, and from the looks of it, they didn't seem to hold much deep hatred towards him.

Having their treasures taken and still being so amiable, it was clear they were wary of Lin Chen's strength. Thus, the middle-aged man secretly decided, they must not become Lin Chen's enemies.

Hearing the middle-aged man's words, Hong Lan felt extremely helpless and eventually had no choice but to comply and hand over all the treasures she had on her to Lin Chen.

She had really thought Lin Chen was some kind of rogue, intent on stripping her naked; thankfully, he was only truly after the treasures.

Even though it was just the treasures, Hong Lan still felt a great reluctance in her heart.

But there was nothing she could do about it. Who asked her not to listen to the advice of the middle-aged man earlier and lose to Lin Chen?

Lin Chen received the treasures handed over by the woman, nodded in satisfaction, and then headed back to his own room.

Among the four people including Hong Lan, a frail youth showed unwillingness on his face, eager to attack Lin Chen, but he was stopped by the middle-aged man.

Their purpose for this trip was to participate in the recruitment contest and be selected as disciples by the Formation Sect. It was not prudent to reveal their full strength just yet. Moreover, the middle-aged man always had the feeling that even if the four of them joined forces, they still might not be able to defeat Lin Chen.

If that were the case, they could forget about participating in the upcoming recruitment contest.

Returning to his accommodations, Lin Chen took out the collected elixirs and Spirit Stones and immediately began to cultivate.

As the recruitment contest drew nearer, more and more people were arriving at the Formation Sect. Lin Chen had to enhance his strength as quickly as possible; challenging him were becoming increasingly difficult.

Chapter 396 Enhancing Strength

Lin Chen, although he defeated Hong Lan using his exquisite swordmanship, compared to other martial artists who had arrived at the Formation Sect, Hong Lan's cultivation was only medium at best.

Even Lin Chen had a feeling that if Hong Lan and his fellow disciples had joined forces just now, it would have been very tricky for Lin Chen to defeat them.

Despite the fact that Lin Chen had defeated many martial artists by now, though they seemed to have accepted the reality of their defeat on the surface, deep down they were certainly not reconciled to it.

Lin Chen didn't dwell on it, knowing that overthinking was useless. It was of utmost importance to seize the time to improve his cultivation; then, even if everyone was dissatisfied with him and joined forces to deal with him, Lin Chen would not fear.

Returning to his room and looking at the large pile of treasures he had just collected, a smile appeared on Lin Chen's lips.

Then Lin Chen began to operate the Primordial Transformation Art to refine the elixirs and spirit stones.

At this moment, Lin Chen's body desperately needed a massive amount of energy, because after the previous battles, Lin Chen had once again broken through a bottleneck, his cultivation was about to break through to the Eighth Layer of the Melding Earth Realm.

Previously, outside his room, Lin Chen had been suppressing that cyclone, not allowing himself to break through.

Because Lin Chen knew that once the breakthrough started, there would inevitably be flaws exposed, and if there were people around who harbored ill intentions towards him, it would be dangerous.

Especially the people from the Zhao Family; although Lin Chen's divine sense had not detected the presence of the Zhao Family, who knew among the martial artists around if there were any who were colluding with them.

After returning to his room, Lin Chen immediately began to enter a state of seated meditation for sudden enlightenment. With ten stone sculpture puppets each at the Ninth Layer of the Heaven-reaching Realm around him, and the support of a formation, Lin Chen could safely proceed with the breakthrough.

With these ten stone sculpture puppets, plus the presence of the formation in the courtyard, even a fighter at the Reverting Void Realm would have to think twice before entering Lin Chen's yard.

After continuously absorbing spirit stones, Lin Chen's cultivation finally broke through to the peak of the Eighth Layer of the Melding Earth Realm, but that final step was always just out of reach.

In fact, if Lin Chen wanted to, advancing to the Ninth Layer of the Melding Earth Realm would not be difficult, but he was not eager to do so because he knew that rushing to advance in cultivation was not a good thing.

What Lin Chen was pursuing now had long surpassed invincibility at the same level; he wanted to fight against those stronger than him and not be at a disadvantage.

Even fighting beyond several levels of cultivation was what Lin Chen pursued, so he had to make sure that at every stage, he established an invincible foundation.

And the gap between the Eighth and Ninth Layer of the Melding Earth Realm was a significant hurdle. Lin Chen just happened to use the Formation Sect's recruitment competition to refine himself.

After the breakthrough in cultivation, Lin Chen gained a new understanding of the High Mountain Flowing Water Swordsmanship.

Though he had theoretically mastered the thirteen sword moves, with his cultivation at the Eighth Layer of the Melding Earth Realm, Lin Chen simply could not fully execute all the moves; for example, the final move could only be executed by his Second Soul Division.

Aside from his main body's cultivation, Lin Chen's Second Soul Division in Divine Sun City was also not idle.

On ordinary days, apart from seclusion and cultivation, Lin Chen's Second Soul Division would spar with Wang Dachui and others to practice martial arts skills.

Lin Chen arranged his tasks orderly; his main body and Second Soul Division would cultivate different techniques. Due to the shared divine soul, this was indeed a case of killing two birds with one stone.

At this moment, Lin Chen's Second Soul Division was practicing a fist technique, the Scorching Sun Divine Fist, and at the same time, sparring with Xu Ma'an in the sky above.

Xu Lianyu watched from afar as her grandfather sparred with Lin Chen in the sky, her heart surging with an indomitable passion, and she was incredibly diligent in her cultivation.

In addition, the Peak Masters of the Jade Cauldron Sect were deeply shocked in their hearts as they watched the spar between Xu Ma'an and Lin Chen's Second Soul Division.

Those in the know understood that the two were merely practicing martial arts skills, but to the uninformed, it would seem as if the two were engaged in a life-and-death battle.

Because the battle between Lin Chen and Xu Ma'an was indeed too intense, causing numerous Spiritual Light to surge across the sky.

Ever since Xu Ma'an started cultivating the Blazing Fire Divine Decree passed on by Lin Chen, he has had more motivation to cultivate.

In the past, due to the limitations of his cultivation technique, Xu Ma'an had thought about giving up as no matter how much he cultivated, it was very difficult to make any substantial progress.

But now things have changed. Since cultivating the Blazing Fire Divine Decree, Xu Ma'an could clearly feel the progress in his cultivation.

This reignited his confidence and spurred him into frenzied cultivation.

He was the Sect Leader of the Jade Cauldron Sect, and now his combat power was barely on par with Lin Chen, which naturally was too much of a blow to his pride.

Not only Lin Chen, but now Yang Yuemin's combat power was not beneath Xu Ma'an's, so he cultivated extremely diligently.

And the other Peak Masters of the Jade Cauldron Sect, seeing their Sect Leader Senior Brother working so hard, naturally did not fall behind in their cultivation progress.

Especially after they had all started cultivating the Blazing Fire Divine Decree, they too discovered the advancement it brought to their body cultivation.

At this moment, Lin Chen's main body was cultivating the Purple Cloud Wings.

He had already cultivated this martial arts skill to the Second Realm, but he still had not mastered it. Even though he could create afterimages, they were merely fleeting shadows, which could only appear for an instant, and were not truly capable of forming a solid split presence, let alone be driven by Lin Chen's mind.

The time for the Formation Sect's recruitment event was drawing closer, and more and more martial artists were arriving at the Formation Sect. Lin Chen sensed several strong auras.

If it came to a head-on fight, Lin Chen was not confident that he could contend with those adversaries; therefore, he would need the help of his movement technique.

Lin Chen vividly remembered his purpose for this visit to the Formation Sect, which was to excel in the recruitment event and successfully join the sect. If he could become a True Disciple, that would be even better.

Chapter 397: A Good Sparring Partner

Lin Chen had a Consciousness Puppet enter the Moon Shadow Pavilion, so he understood more or less the reasons behind Red Soul Hall's attack on Divine Sun City.

The ambitions of these large powers in the Eastern Domain were not limited to the present; they planned to advance toward the Southern and Northern Regions, and they naturally wouldn't overlook the strategically important position of Divine Sun City.

The Jade Cauldron Sect had already been dragged into the quagmire of the Eastern Domain powers' struggle for Divine Sun City, and now, even if they wanted to disentangle themselves, it probably wouldn't be an easy matter.

Therefore, rather than retreating, Lin Chen might as well take advantage of the situation to lead the Jade Cauldron Sect toward a broader world.

The first step the Jade Cauldron Sect needed to take was for Lin Chen to have a strong identity within the Formation Sect, which could then serve as a springboard to aid the Jade Cauldron Sect.

Red Soul Hall had already attacked Divine Sun City once before, and after being repelled this time, they certainly wouldn't just let the matter rest.

Therefore, Lin Chen had to improve his strength. If he wanted to protect the Jade Cauldron Sect and the people he cared about, he had to possess enough power.

At this moment, Hong Lan and the others had also found a place to settle down in Baiming Garden.

After the battle with Lin Chen, Hong Lan's Cultivation Resources and treasures had all been plundered by Lin Chen. Despite feeling extremely frustrated, there was nothing she could do but accept the reality.

Having witnessed Lin Chen's strength, the four of them, no matter how reluctant, had no choice but to swallow their pride. At least Hong Lan no longer entertained the idea of seeking Lin Chen's protection.

The middle-aged man, in order to consider the bigger picture, also had to accept the fact that Hong Lan's treasures were taken by Lin Chen. Since Hong Lan had disregarded the advice and insisted on snatching Lin Chen's treasures, this fate was what she deserved.

As for Hong Lan's junior sister, that frail girl, she was even more afraid to provoke Lin Chen. To her, Lin Chen was nothing short of a demon.

However, Du Feiyu, the junior brother of Hong Lan and the middle-aged man, couldn't stand this insult. They were accustomed to bullying others and taking their treasures as they roamed the martial world; it was unheard of for others to rob them instead.

Moreover, Lin Chen's Cultivation was clearly lower than theirs, something Du Feiyu found utterly unacceptable.

After settling into their lodgings, Du Feiyu tossed and turned, unable to sleep, growing more and more enraged as he thought about it, eventually deciding to seek justice for his senior sister Hong Lan.

Originally, Du Feiyu wanted to take action against Lin Chen during the day. If the four siblings joined forces, taking down Lin Chen would be easy, but he couldn't understand why their eldest brother had become so cautious all of a sudden, even stopping him from acting.

The next day, when Hong Lan and the others woke up, they found no trace of Du Feiyu in their room.

"Where did Feiyu go? Why can't I see him anywhere?"

The middle-aged man called Hong Lan and the frail girl together to ask.

Upon hearing the middle-aged man's words, a shiver ran down the spines of Hong Lan and the frail girl, as a bad premonition surfaced in their minds.

"Could Senior Brother Du have gone to find that Young Master Lin Chen from yesterday, to avenge our senior sister?"

The frail girl's face showed concern as she spoke.

"It's very possible. He wanted to make a move during the day but was stopped by our eldest brother. Could it be that he went to trouble Lin Chen alone during the night while we were in our Meditative Trance?"

Hong Lan frowned slightly as she expressed her thoughts.

The middle-aged man furrowed his brows tightly upon hearing this.

Although Du Feiyu's strength was not weak, and he was even a few notches above Hong Lan, he was definitely no match for Lin Chen.

If Lin Chen were to be provoked and decided to strike with lethal intent, then Du Feiyu would be in danger.

"Not good!"

"Given Feiyu's temperament, it's easy for him to infuriate the other party. If the other party strikes with lethal force, it could spell disaster."

The middle-aged man murmured to himself, then hurried out of the room and ran toward Lin Chen's residence.

Although Du Feiyu's cultivation was only at the Seventh Layer of the Heaven-reaching Realm, he had his own unique martial arts skill. Coupled with Feiyu's astonishing talent, he was the strongest combatant among the four of them.

Therefore, when they came to participate in the Formation Sect's recruitment event, the four of them had discussed in secret that if they encountered minor troubles, it would be handled by the middle-aged man, Hong Lan, and the frail woman, while Du Feiyu's true strength would be kept as a trump card to be revealed at the very end. This would create an awe-inspiring effect, allowing him to stand out at the event and become a disciple of the Formation Sect in one fell swoop.

However, they had planned for everything except for Lin Chen's arrival, which directly thwarted the plan of the four of them.

If Du Feiyu was indeed seeking out Lin Chen to cause trouble, then even if Feiyu emerged victorious, he would have been forced to reveal all his trump cards in the eyes of everyone. If he advanced to the final stages of the Formation Sect's recruitment event, the element of surprise would be lost, impacting the chances of victory.

What's most important is that Du Feiyu was seeking to avenge Hong Lan and his opponent was Lin Chen.

Lin Chen's strength made the middle-aged man feel ashamed; someone like Lin Chen should not be made an enemy if becoming friends was not an option.

However, Du Feiyu's current actions were likely to offend Lin Chen, which was an exceedingly unwise move.

"Ah, Junior Sister, your impulsiveness this time has brought us four to a damning plight," the middle-aged man lamented internally. If only Hong Lan had listened to advice and not insisted on troubling Lin Chen, they wouldn't be in such a predicament now.

Hearing the middle-aged man's words, Hong Lan also felt a heavy burden of guilt, realizing that she had indeed provoked someone she should not have.

But there is no medicine for regret in this world, so the main concern now is how to solve the current issues.

Arriving outside Lin Chen's residence, they saw Lin Chen with the Gentle Breeze Sword in hand, battling Du Feiyu.

"This guy, his cultivation has actually broken through," remarked Hong Lan as she sized up Lin Chen and discovered that compared to yesterday, his cultivation had risen by one realm.

For an Earth Melding Realm martial artist, a gap of one realm may not offer as dramatic an increase in combat power as those in the Heaven-reaching Realm, but Lin Chen was no ordinary martial artist.

A rise of one level in cultivation for someone of such heavenly talent does not simply double their combat power.

"You're quite good, indeed a decent sparring partner," said Lin Chen after exchanging dozens of moves with Du Feiyu, yet Du Feiyu had not fallen into a disadvantageous position.

Chapter 398 Draw

Lin Chen had to admit that the young man before him was strong, yet not to an outrageous degree, which meant Lin Chen could still manage to cope with him.

Lin Chen continually shifted his position, starting to use his movement technique to dodge Du Feiyu's attacks.

The speed at which Lin Chen used his movement technique increasingly accelerated, so quick that numerous afterimages were left around Du Feiyu; this was precisely the Second Realm of the Purple Cloud Wings Martial Arts Skill.

"I underestimated you, it seems," said the man.

Du Feiyu slightly furrowed his brow, clenched his fist, and the sword in his hand radiated light—a sword of Earth Grade quality no less.

Having observed Lin Chen fight with Hong Lan the previous day, Du Feiyu knew that Lin Chen's swordsmanship was even exquisite, but he arrogantly believed that should he cross swords with Lin Chen, he would certainly not be defeated.

However, after exchanging blows today, he realized just how terrifying Lin Chen's combat strength was. His Cultivation might not have been strong, having only just broken through to the Eighth Layer of the Melding Earth Realm the previous day, but his overall strength was comparable to that of a Warrior of the Heaven-reaching Realm, lagging only slightly behind Du Feiyu himself.

Therefore, for the time being, Du Feiyu was utterly unable to suppress Lin Chen, let alone defeat him.

This realization caused Du Feiyu, prideful as he was, to feel his face burning with the sting of humiliation.

Originally, he had wanted to vent his senior sister's frustration and teach Lin Chen a lesson; to now find himself in such a situation where he hadn't been able to gain the upper hand against Lin Chen for such a long time.

Moreover, what was most crucial was that despite the prolonged battle, Du Feiyu noticed that Lin Chen's spirit did not wane in the slightest.

According to Du Feiyu's calculations, even if he couldn't defeat Lin Chen shortly, as long as the battle was prolonged, Lin Chen's Spiritual Power would surely not keep up with his own, and once Lin Chen's Spiritual Power ebbed, Du Feiyu would certainly be able to defeat him.

However, who could have anticipated that Lin Chen's Spiritual Power seemed inexhaustible?

And what was even more dreadful was that Du Feiyu discovered, during their battle, Lin Chen's combat skills and Martial Arts Skill were improving rapidly.

Especially Lin Chen's unpredictable movement technique, which was now faster than ever, leaving countless afterimages around them.

"Even Junior Brother Du can't handle him? What kind of monster is this guy, to be so strong?"

Hong Lan and the others watched the fight between Lin Chen and Du Feiyu; Hong Lan was naturally delighted that Du Feiyu would stand up for her and give Lin Chen a piece of his mind.

None of them had expected that Du Feiyu would end up merely drawing even with Lin Chen, shocking them to their core.

The middle-aged man, however, sighed. He had guessed early on that Lin Chen would not be an easy adversary, which is why he repeatedly stopped Du Feiyu from trying to teach Lin Chen a lesson the previous day—he simply did not want to further offend Lin Chen over a matter that was already settled.

Although Hong Lan had lost yesterday, it was just a bet, and in defeat, she actually did not suffer a blow to her reputation, nor did she harbor any deep-seated grudge.

But if Du Feiyu were to trouble Lin Chen now, it would likely incur resentment, which would mean Hong Lan and her companions couldn't afford to lose even more.

"You're also very impressive, having quickly improved your strength during the battle," said Lin Chen.

Lin Chen looked at Du Feiyu, with a bit of surprise in his heart. He had faced many foes stronger than Du Feiyu, but Du Feiyu was the first he'd encountered with such exceptional Talent.

Now, during his battle with Du Feiyu, while Lin Chen's strength had indeed broken through, Du Feiyu had also improved. The strength of both men had continued to grow amidst the battle, making each other good sparring partners.

Nonetheless, both of them bore many sword wounds. They had been fighting for a whole night, neither falling behind, neither able to gain dominance, essentially reaching a deadlock.

However, the wounds on Lin Chen's body were visibly healing at a rate that could be seen with the naked eye, which left Du Feiyu and the middle-aged man and their companions profoundly shocked.

Du Feiyu, lacking Lin Chen's monstrous physique, had to fight while consuming Healing Pills.

Putting aside whether the Healing Pills would run out, just the recovery speed alone was no match for Lin Chen's natural healing. If the battle continued like this, the one to ultimately fall would be Du Feiyu.

To possess such self-healing ability, one must surely have the physique of a Supreme God Body, the first and extremely rare physique recognized across the Mysterious Heaven Continent for cultivation.

Having understood Lin Chen's physique, everyone finally knew why Lin Chen's strength was so monstrous, able to challenge those at higher levels in the Heaven-reaching Realm, despite being at the Melding Earth Realm Cultivation, and across several grades at that.

Yet, what they didn't know was that Lin Chen's physique was that of an Ancient Divine Body, far more powerful than the Supreme God Body by countless times.

The method of shaping the Ancient Divine Body had been lost to time, only the Primordial Transformation Art could achieve it.

Swipe, swipe—

At this moment, another clash ensued, with Sword Light flying everywhere and the sound of their collision constantly reverberating in the air, and once more countless wounds were added on both of them.

However, it was Du Feiyu who acquired more injuries.

Clearly, although neither could gain the upper hand in the battle, the extent of their injuries and their rates of recovery were different.

Lin Chen actually held a great deal of respect for Du Feiyu, feeling a sense of empathy for his worthy opponent.

Du Feiyu was a rare adversary, and although Lin Chen was aware of his intentions to side with Hong Lan, Lin Chen held no malice towards him and did not intend to use his advantageous physique to secure the win.

"Enough, if this battle continues, neither of us will be able to determine a victor. Let's call it quits for now and choose another day to fight," proposed Lin Chen.

Lin Chen, seeing Du Feiyu panting and constantly consuming Healing Pills, made his suggestion.

Hearing this, Du Feiyu's brows furrowed tightly; he was well aware that his physique was inferior to Lin Chen's, and continuing the fight would only lead to his own defeat.

Lin Chen's words were simply a way to allow him to step down gracefully.

After some thought, Du Feiyu nodded, sheathed his sword, and walked away.

The middle-aged man and Hong Lan, seeing that the two of them weren't hell-bent on fighting to the death, quietly breathed a sigh of relief. Thankfully, they had not completely offended Lin Chen.

Chapter 399 Convergence of All Parties

Watching Du Feiyu leave, Lin Chen glanced at Hong Lan and the other two, then also returned to his room.

Back in his room, Lin Chen carefully pondered the fight with Du Feiyu that had taken place earlier in the day.

Although Du Feiyu was young, his strength was not to be underestimated. He possessed a remarkable talent which, given time, would inevitably make him a formidable power.

However, all of this was predicated on his ability to grow smoothly. Du Feiyu, possessing a Supreme God Body, would no doubt stand out at the recruitment event of the Formation Sect.

Despite this, Du Feiyu's current strength was still somewhat immature. Zhao Zhongtian could easily suppress him, and even Zhao Zhongchuan was slightly more powerful.

Zhao Zhongchuan joined the Formation Sect along with Zhao Zhongtian, and according to Lin Chen's experience when sparring with him last time, Zhao Zhongchuan also seemed to possess a Supreme God Body.

At this recruitment event, both of them would undoubtedly be dark horses.

A powerful sect values potential rather than current strength.

A disciple with potential will receive a considerable amount of resources from the sect for cultivation.

However, martial artists of a certain age, despite their decent strength, are not likely to be highly valued by the sect; at best, they are offered a respectable position to win them over.

For such martial artists, it is difficult to grow further, and they affiliate themselves with sects primarily for resources. Yet even with an abundance of resources, it is unlikely their strength will improve much.

Thus, no sect would spend a lot of resources on training these older martial artists.

Furthermore, Lin Chen knew that the Formation Sect valued a martial artist's true strength, not external strength boosted by talisman inscriptions and formations.

Although he was not yet sure whether the Formation Sect would impose a ban on these aspects during the contest, Lin Chen was well aware that while they were his strengths, they were also his weaknesses.

If formations and talisman inscriptions were to be banned, Lin Chen's strength would be significantly reduced.

Lin Chen's physique, an Ancient Divine Body, was even stronger than the Supreme God Bodies of Du Feiyu and Zhao Zhongchuan, but Lin Chen's cultivation was far too low, being only at the Melding Earth Realm, and this was Lin Chen's critical flaw. In combat with ordinary martial artists, he could still rely on powerful cultivation techniques and martial arts skills to overwhelm his opponents.

However, when fighting prodigies like Du Feiyu and Zhao Zhongchuan, Lin Chen's shortcoming was evident.

He couldn't win quickly, and if Du Feiyu and Zhao Zhongchuan were a bit more powerful, Lin Chen might not be able to contend with them at all.

Therefore, if Lin Chen wanted to distinguish himself and rank at the top in the Formation Sect's competition, he had to improve his strength as quickly as possible.

With a grand gesture, Lin Chen took out the countless resources he had plundered recently and began to cultivate.

Lin Chen constantly cultivated, compressing his Spiritual Power and refining his Divine Body to the limit, washing his meridians and sea of qi over and over with Spiritual Power.

In truth, Lin Chen could have ascended to the Ninth Layer of the Melding Earth Realm any time, but he had not done so. His foundation in the Eighth Layer was not yet solid because it had just been a recent breakthrough. If he were to advance further, his foundation would be unstable, hindering future cultivation.

If Lin Chen rushed to increase his cultivation level for the sake of the current situation, it would be a case of loss outweighing the gain.

After all, an unstable foundation is irreversible and would severely affect future cultivation.

Therefore, Lin Chen did not resist fighting with Du Feiyu as a way to solidify his foundation and enhance his strength.

While Lin Chen's main body was diligently working to improve his strength, his Second Soul Division in Divine Sun City was also not slacking off, sparring with Xu Ma'an and other Peak Masters daily to accumulate combat experience and refine his techniques.

The High Mountain Flowing Water Swordsmanship practiced by the Second Soul Division had already reached the Great Perfection Realm, and even the hidden Thirteenth Sword Form had been successfully mastered.

Now, the way Lin Chen wielded his swordsmanship was more like an extension of self-realization; he'd even begun creating his own sword moves.

In addition to his swordsmanship, Lin Chen had also practiced the Scorching Sun Divine Fist. This set of techniques belonged to the body technique category and could enhance his physique as well as being a powerful fist technique.

Even though the Scorching Sun Divine Fist, being a body technique, could not be transmitted by the Divine Soul to Lin Chen's Divine Body, the Second Soul Division's experience provided valuable insights for Lin Chen. Therefore, the cultivation of Lin Chen's main body and the Second Soul Division was mutually beneficial.

The Scorching Sun Divine Fist had nine levels, and Lin Chen's Second Soul Division had cultivated it up to the Sixth Level, whereas his main body had reached the Fifth Level. Even though the main body was one level below the Second Soul Division, Lin Chen's main body had a stronger physique, so even at the Fifth Level, it could exert power comparable to the Sixth Level of the Second Soul Division.

The Scorching Sun Divine Fist was one of Lin Chen's key trump cards, and combined with his Ancient Divine Body, the two could unleash a formidable power beyond ordinary imagination. Hence, Lin Chen did not plan to reveal this trump card lightly.

At the moment, Xu Ma'an had improved a lot from the battles with Lin Chen these past days, advancing by two whole realms to reach the Eighth Layer of the Reverting Void Realm. He was finally surpassing his junior brothers and sisters, which put him in high spirits, and all thanks to being a sparring partner for Lin Chen's Second Soul Division.

Who could have imagined that Lin Chen, with only the strength of the Sixth Layer of the Heaven-reaching Realm, could fight on par with a Reverting Void Realm powerhouse like him.

As time passed, the recruitment event of the Formation Sect was fast approaching, with only the last ten days left.

During this period, a large number of foreign martial artists arrived at the Formation Sect every day.

For many martial artists, it was not their first time coming to the Formation Sect. Many of them participated in the Sect's recruitment competition every year.

The martial artists who arrived also surprised Lin Chen.

Among them, there were both young and old, with vastly differing strengths, and even those with great talent.

Chapter 400: Notoriety

In the past few days, Lin Chen had been paying close attention to the martial artists arriving at the Formation Sect, and to his surprise, he discovered three other martial artists with Supreme God Body physiques aside from Du Feiyu and Zhao Zhongchuan.

Moreover, these martial artists were quite young, with Du Feiyu and another girl with mushroom-cut hair even younger than Lin Chen.

It was evident that the Formation Sect had attracted a number of heavenly prides to join this conference.

The Formation Sect's recruitment conference does not discriminate by age, but the ultimate interpretation right belongs to the Formation Sect itself. Generally, those who are accepted as True Disciples and Inner Sect Disciples tend to be martial artists with decent cultivation and talent.

As for those who are older, although they are also accepted into the sect, they are more often taken in as Outer Sect Elders.

For those older martial artists, as long as their cultivation is deemed sufficient by the Formation Sect, the sect is naturally willing to support them; however, they can only stay in the Outer Sect. Even so, as long as one can join the Formation Sect, almost all martial artists coming to attend the conference are willing.

With the increase in visiting martial artists, the rooms in the Formation Sect's Baiming Garden also began to run short.

Many martial artists even fought fiercely over securing a room.

Generally, martial artists would crowd into a single room. As long as they had a place to stay, how many people squeezed together really didn't matter; it was far better than sleeping out in the open on the Sect's mountaintops.

After all, the people coming to the Formation Sect to compete were all notable figures, with the majority being distinguished Young Masters from powerful sects in the Eastern Domain. Therefore, sleeping on the mountaintop did not suit their temperament and status.

If such a disgraceful scene were to be spread back to their own sects, it would become a joke within the region.

And speaking of status, many martial artists were not content with just having a room to stay in within Baiming Garden; they wanted to go a step further and occupy a single room.

And Lin Chen's room happened to be a single room.

Therefore, in the current crowded situation, naturally, some martial artists set their sights on Lin Chen.

The Formation Sect's Baiming Garden covers just over ten thousand square meters, but including the mountaintops and the base, it can accommodate as many as five hundred thousand people and horses.

In the crowd, there are always some who like to cause trouble for Lin Chen.

Previously, Lin Chen needed a slovenly man to help spread the news to attract others to cause him trouble. However, now, when these people heard that Lin Chen's cultivation was only at the Melding Earth Realm, and that he lived alone in a single room, they flocked to challenge him without a second thought.

These challengers were not as polite as Du Feiyu; they came right up and demanded that Lin Chen give up his room. Lin Chen was not at all courteous to these people, never refusing a challenge and engaging in battle right away. As usual, he only needed a single sword strike to defeat his opponents, before forcing them to hand over their treasures.

Lin Chen had now entered a cycle: martial artists kept challenging him, he defeated them, took their treasures, and then used these resources to strengthen himself, rapidly increasing the spiritual power within his Sea of Qi.

Due to the rapid growth of his spiritual power, and to build a firm foundation, Lin Chen needed to continuously fight with others, which tempered his bones and muscles and strengthened himself. Conveniently, there were always martial artists unwittingly walking into his trap.

Therefore, Lin Chen wished for challenges every day.

By now, he no longer needed to cooperate with that slovenly man, for every person he defeated became his "shill," spreading word of their battles with him far and wide, and specifically emphasizing the abundance of treasures on Lin Chen.

Their intention was clear: they hoped that others would also fall into the trap and challenge Lin Chen in order to snatch his treasures.

However, only after truly facing Lin Chen would they realize his strength and terror, and their own treasures would all be plundered by Lin Chen, following in their footsteps. Seeing that they were not the only ones deceived and harshly taught a lesson by Lin Chen, everyone else felt somewhat more balanced in their hearts.

Within the Formation Sect, there was not only Baiming Garden but also three other gardens: Green Bird Garden, Inscription Garden, and Wanzhen Garden.

By now, Lin Chen's reputation had spread through word of mouth to the other three gardens.

However, Lin Chen's reputation was not a good one, but rather an infamous one. Now he was regarded as one of the untouchable beings in the four gardens.

In the four gardens, besides Lin Chen, there were three other individuals whose renown rivaled his, also considered as untouchable existences.

One of them was a girl named Huang Linger, a princess from Yanwu Country, which was under the jurisdiction of the Formation Sect.

The strength of the Formation Sect in the Eastern Domain was formidable, or else it would not be the top sect under the Divine Flame Alliance.

It could be said that nearly one-third of the Divine Flame Alliance's power consisted of martial artists from the Formation Sect.

Beneath the Formation Sect, there were five major countries, dozens of medium-grade countries, and even more small countries numbering in the hundreds.

Yanwu Country was one of the five major countries, with a strength that far surpassed the Great Flame Dynasty. If one were to talk about the power of the War Department, the strength of Yanwu Country might be several dozen times that of the Great Flame Dynasty.

This didn't even include the power of the martial artists within Yanwu Country. So, it was clear that Yanwu Country was an extremely powerful nation.

The princess of Yanwu Country was even more formidable, breaking through to the Seventh Layer of the Heaven-reaching Realm at just eighteen years old.

The guards protecting her were no less impressive, twelve martial artists at the Ninth Layer of the Heaven-reaching Realm, clad in Gold Armor and wielding golden spears, clearly very exceptional magic treasures.

These twelve were well-trained and coordinated with each other with incredible understanding. If they joined forces, even ordinary martial artists of the Reverting Void Realm might not gain any advantage against them.

Beyond those twelve guards, the princess from Xuanwu Kingdom also had a maid with blue hair by her side, whose strength was at the Ninth Layer of the Heaven-reaching Realm as well.

With such a lineup, since her arrival at the Formation Sect, naturally, no martial artist was foolhardy enough to provoke her, and even martial artists from the Formation Sect treated her with respectful attitudes.

Therefore, this princess of Yanwu Country was the most untouchable and renowned being within the four gardens.

The second individual was an elegantly-dressed man holding a white fan in his hand.