

Primordial 461

Chapter 461 The Might of the Chasing Thunderbolt Arrow

"This phrase sounds all too familiar," he said. "But you simply don't have the ability to make me hand over the treasures."

"If you don't believe me, then feel free to come and try your luck."

Lin Chen, holding his sword, looked at the crowd with a burst of murderous intent emanating from him.

Lin Chen and his companions had hoped to sit on the sidelines and watch the tigers fight, swooping in at the last moment to reap the benefits. However, who could have expected that Chang Bai and others would be so shameless to speak of surrender while simultaneously launching a deadly attack on Ouyang Xuan and his group?

"Arrogant fool," one said. "Do you really think you alone can stop so many of us?"

After these words, Chang Bai and other martial artists swiftly surrounded Lin Chen, weapons in hand, ready to kill him.

"Brother Lin, be careful. These guys are tough and their strikes are ruthlessly fierce; we were defeated by them earlier," Ouyang Xuan warned immediately upon seeing Chang Bai and the others surrounding Lin Chen.

"Lin Chen, prepare to die."

With a light shout from Chang Bai, the martial artists surrounding Lin Chen surged forward to attack.

The crowd was somewhat excited, for slaying Lin Chen meant they could claim the treasures he possessed.

Thus, when they moved to strike, their eagerness was palpable.

"Be careful, Lin Chen," Xia Wanxin said, seeing so many martial artists attack Lin Chen all at once.

Xia Wanxin wanted to help Lin Chen but found it impossible.

For martial artists had also surrounded her, and they had no intention of letting such a great beauty slip through their grasp.

The purple-robed maiden stood guard by Xia Wanxin's side, resisting the encircling martial artists with her.

Boom, boom—

With each strike that landed, Lin Chen remained still, unfazed, not even bothering to dodge the onslaught.

"Just as I thought, it's too forced. There are simply too many martial artists," Ouyang Xuan said, watching Lin Chen besieged by Chang Bai and the rest, his expression darkened as he sensed trouble.

Boom—

Thunderous—

However, when the martial artists' attacks hit Lin Chen, they merely landed on him without piercing his skin in the slightest.

"I told you, you cannot harm me," Lin Chen said with a faint smile. Following that, with a shake of his body, the martial artists attacking him were shockingly sent flying away.

Lin Chen soared into the air and struck several martial artists with a punch, caving in their bodies with the sheer force of his fist.

"Puh—"

Those attacking Lin Chen spat out fresh blood as they were flung to a distance, unable to get up again.

"This guy is a Body Cultivation practitioner; his punch is too powerful, and his physical strength is simply abnormal. Keep some distance from him," Chang Bai shouted upon witnessing Lin Chen's formidable close-combat prowess, as he retreated and distanced himself from Lin Chen.

The martial artists previously hit by Lin Chen's fist were now seriously injured and had lost their fighting capacity.

It was clear just how terrifying Lin Chen's punch was.

Chang Bai had no confidence in fighting Lin Chen up close. In close combat, he would undoubtedly lose.

"Do you really think that keeping your distance from me will save you?" Lin Chen said, a cold smile appearing at the corners of his mouth.

Immediately after, a golden bow and arrow appeared in his hands.

Seeing the golden bow and arrow in Lin Chen's hands, Xia Wanxin's worries instantly faded away.

Swish, swish, swish—

Lin Chen nocked ten arrow feathers onto the bowstring in an instant.

The moment the arrow feathers aimed at the crowd, a bad premonition suddenly arose within them.

However, they had no time to ponder, for Lin Chen's arrow feathers were already in flight, swiftly bearing down on them.

The crowd attempted to dodge, but it was already too late; the arrows' speed was simply too fast.

Thunderous—

A violent explosion sounded; and indeed, as expected, all the martial artists except Chang Bai were overwhelmed by Lin Chen's arrow feathers.

As for Chang Bai, just as Lin Chen's arrow feathers were about to hit him, he wielded his sword and suddenly unleashed a Sword Qi, striking with a surprisingly strong blow, managing to counter Lin Chen's arrow feathers.

Chapter 462 Formidable Opponent

"No wonder this man was able to defeat Ouyang Xuan, it seems he does have some skills."

Lin Chen looked at Chang Bai intercepting his Thunder Chasing Arrow Feather and slightly frowned. So far, Chang Bai was the only person who had intercepted Lin Chen's arrow feathers.

You should know, within the Thunder Chasing Arrow Feather, there was the powerful Great Dao Power of both the Power of Thunder and the True Meaning of the Wind.

However, despite this, Chang Bai was still able to intercept it.

"Kid, do you think I'm the same as those common goods? In the Enlightenment Stone Forest, even if you have comprehended two 'true intents', I don't believe you can be stronger than my True Meaning of the Sword."

Chang Bai said arrogantly, his eyes full of madness, showing a manner that didn't take Lin Chen seriously at all.

Immediately after, his sword emitted a dazzling Spiritual Light and in the next instant, countless Sword Lights covered the sky and slashed towards Lin Chen. Then those Sword Qi, as if alive, weaved into a huge net in the space and fell towards Lin Chen,

The intent of the siege was clearly to leave Lin Chen no room to evade.

Feeling the power contained within those Sword Qi, Lin Chen thought to himself that he had underestimated Chang Bai, whose sword contained such formidable power.

Although Lin Chen was somewhat confident about the strength of his body, faced with the attack from these Sword Qi, he did not dare to take the risk. Immediately, a pair of purple wings appeared on Lin Chen's back.

"What impressive wings; I wonder if they are formed from a Cultivation Technique or Treasures."

"However, once I've defeated you, all these will belong to me."

Chang Bai looked at Lin Chen with a continuous sneer on his face, believing that Lin Chen's struggles were but the futile flailing of the dying.

In his eyes, Lin Chen's capture was a sure thing.

Whoosh whoosh—

However, once the pair of wings appeared on Lin Chen's back, his speed surged instantly. Leaving behind an afterimage, he immediately escaped, dodging Chang Bai's Sword Qi attack in an instant.

"You think you can escape? It's not going to be that easy."

Believing Lin Chen was trying to flee, Chang Bai gripped his sword tightly and moved with utmost speed, pursuing the figure of Lin Chen who flew away into the sky.

"So fast!"

After seeing Chang Bai's movement technique, everyone, including Lin Chen and Ouyang Xuan, couldn't help but feel immense surprise.

Especially Lin Chen, who was extremely shocked by Chang Bai's speed.

Because Chang Bai's speed was only slightly slower than Lin Chen's.

And this was with Lin Chen employing the Purple Cloud Wings and utilizing the True Meaning of the Wind. Without these methods, wouldn't Lin Chen's speed fall behind Chang Bai's?

"In the end, my own strength is still too weak."

Lin Chen said with a self-mocking smile. His First Layer of the Heaven-reaching Realm cultivation had already surpassed those Half-Step Return to Void Realm Heavenly Prides, yet it still wasn't enough, and he even felt a sense of frustration.

Now, Chang Bai wielded his sword, continuing the pursuit to kill Lin Chen.

"Run, the more you flee, the more exciting the chase for me. Being able to extinguish a Heavenly Pride like you is indeed a delightful matter."

Chang Bai's smile grew somewhat frantic as he watched Lin Chen.

But Lin Chen had no intention of dragging out the fight with Chang Bai, as Xia Wanxin and others were still surrounded by those Martial Artists below.

Although there was no deep connection between him and Xia Wanxin, their current relationship was that of allies, and they were like friends.

Lin Chen did not wish for Xia Wanxin to die at the hands of those Martial Artists, so he did not intend to continue this pursuit with Chang Bai.

Swoosh swoosh—

One after another arrow feather was placed on the bow by Lin Chen, who continued to evade the pursuit while firing arrow feathers to attack Chang Bai.

Chang Bai could only use his movement technique to dodge, but the arrow feathers shot by Lin Chen could actually track automatically, locking onto Chang Bai as if they were guided.

Chang Bai knew this must be due to Lin Chen's use of Soul Power; he could never have imagined Lin Chen's Soul Power to be so strong.

Swish swish—

Seeing that he couldn't dodge, Chang Bai's expression changed, and using his sword, he unleashed countless powerful Sword Qi to destroy the arrow feathers one by one.

Afterwards, he continued to release powerful Sword Qi, spreading across the entire space at that location, enveloping Lin Chen within it.

"Kid, I'd like to see where you can run off to now."

Chang Bai's Sword Qi, like some kind of formation, locked Lin Chen and him inside, making it impossible for Lin Chen to escape, no matter how agile his movement technique was.

"Are you so sure I can't get away?"

Lin Chen looked at Chang Bai's confident demeanor and drew his bow and arrow.

This time, Lin Chen only used one arrow feather.

And his target was not Chang Bai but the Sword Qi barrier behind him that was like a shield.

Hum—

An arrow was released, and the outcome that made Chang Bai's face change massively occurred. Lin Chen's arrow feather created a gap in his airtight Sword Qi barrier, and then Lin Chen's figure moved, instantly escaping.

"You're like an eel; let's see where you can run off to now."

"It's time to end this farce."

Chapter 463 Stalemate

Chang Bai's eyes were fixed on the retreating figure of Lin Chen with anger, and he roared loudly. Then, above his palms, the Power of Cold Ice that had defeated Ouyang Xuan before emerged once again.

"Lin Chen, I have no time to play with you anymore. The farce is over, go to hell."

In Chang Bai's eyes shone an icy murderous intent, and he gripped the sword in his hand tightly.

In an instant, with the enhancement of the Power of Cold Ice in his hands, the sword in Chang Bai's grip was gradually enveloped by the cold aura.

At that moment, wave after wave of Cold Ice Sword Qi was unleashed by Chang Bai, immediately sealing off the path of escape in front of Lin Chen.

Seeing this, Lin Chen's flying figure suddenly paused.

"Power of Cold Ice?"

Lin Chen hadn't expected that Chang Bai would possess such talent that he could wield two Great Dao Powers.

"Indeed, it should end now."

Whiz, whiz—

Arrow after arrow was shot by Lin Chen towards Chang Bai.

Whoosh, whoosh—

However, just as he was casually destroying the arrows shot by Lin Chen, suddenly, the surrounding area burst into intense heat, and the Cold Ice Sword Qi he had set up around was instantly evaporated.

The scorching temperature caused Chang Bai's complexion to change dramatically.

With the barrier of Cold Ice Sword Qi around him gone, Lin Chen could escape to safety.

However, Lin Chen didn't flee but looked at Chang Bai with a cold gaze.

Hum, hum, hum—

Suddenly, eighteen Fire Dragons, each one ablaze with flames, appeared and enclosed Chang Bai in the center.

Chang Bai's face turned utterly pale, as he could sense that the eighteen Fire Dragons surrounding him were all targeting him.

And all of this was naturally Lin Chen's doing.

"You... you're actually an Array Master too."

Chang Bai wasn't foolish. He could naturally tell that the Fire Dragons around were a part of a Formation, albeit a consumptive one with tremendous power but undoubtedly of great value.

Just now, Lin Chen's continuous arrow shots were to set up a Fire Dragon Formation.

This Formation, known as the Explosive Dragon Killing Formation, was something Lin Chen had recently learned from the Source of Ten Thousand Formations within the space of the Primordial Myriad Transformation Cauldron.

Lin Chen had always studied this before, but he had never been able to set it up.

But now, having reached the Heaven-reaching Realm, he had succeeded.

If he had known earlier, he would have let his Second Soul Division try it first to understand the problem.

"You... you're willing to expend this Formation?"

Chang Bai looked at Lin Chen, speaking somewhat stutteringly.

"Of course, it's just some materials after all."

"I believe that the Treasures I will obtain from your body after killing you should be enough to compensate for my expenditure."

Lin Chen looked at Chang Bai with a cold smile on his lips.

He and Chang Bai had developed a deep enmity. If Chang Bai were not dealt with, he would surely be a problem later on.

The issue now was that Lin Chen's Formation was set up temporarily. Despite its impressive momentum, its actual lethality wasn't as great.

If the Formation failed to kill Chang Bai in one hit, Chang Bai would surely fight desperately. If Lin Chen managed to escape, it would be one thing.

But if Chang Bai took his anger out on Xia Wanxin and the Purple-robed Maiden, it would be trouble for both women.

Lin Chen was not willing for others to suffer on his behalf, which was why he had not activated the Great Formation yet.

Otherwise, even at the expense of some Heavenly and Earthly Treasures, Lin Chen would have surely triggered the Killing Formation to bury Chang Bai right there.

However, while the two were in a standoff, suddenly two figures flew rapidly toward them from afar.

Lin Chen and Chang Bai turned their heads in confusion, looking puzzled.

Because the two approaching figures were none other than Chu Zisa and Tang Yunshan.

The identities of these two people—one belonged to the Chu Family of the War Department, and the other was an elder of the Outer Sect and also the controller of this secret realm trial.

Moreover, wasn't there a Cultivation limit within this secret realm?

For Chu Zisa, it was alright since her Cultivation was at the First Level of the Reverting Void Realm, which she could suppress to enter.

But Tang Yunshan was at the Sixth Layer of the Reverting Void Realm.

Chapter 464: Swordsman in White

"What are the two of you doing?"

Upon arriving, Tang Yunshan saw Lin Chen and Chang Bai locked in combat.

Currently, watching the deadlock between Chang Bai and Lin Chen, Tang Yunshan immediately spoke up to intervene.

Within the secret realm, the assessment was meant to test everyone's capabilities, and it was not intended for the participants to fight to the death.

However, the actions of the two in front of him clearly indicated they were gearing up for a life-or-death battle.

"Lin Chen, why don't you give Elder Tang some face and withdraw the formations around us?"

Chang Bai looked at Lin Chen and immediately spoke out.

Yet, upon hearing this, Lin Chen remained unmoved.

"Why don't you disperse the surrounding Sword Qi first? With your ruthless methods, if I were to withdraw the Fire Dragon Formation around us, you would surely take the opportunity to strike me down, wouldn't you?"

Lin Chen said coldly as he looked at Chang Bai.

He was all too aware of Chang Bai's tactics. Previously, when they were hidden, Lin Chen had witnessed with his own eyes that even though Ouyang Xuan had conceded defeat, Chang Bai still eliminated all the martial artists in Ouyang Xuan's team.

Tang Yunshan's cultivation was indeed strong, but in this secret realm, it was suppressed.

If Lin Chen withdrew the Fire Dragon Formation, and Chang Bai wanted to attack Lin Chen, Tang Yunshan's suppressed cultivation within the secret realm would be completely incapable of stopping Chang Bai.

Once the Fire Dragon Formation was gone, Lin Chen would lose the upper hand and lack the means to check Chang Bai.

"You... Are you really going to disrespect Elder Tang Yunshan that much?"

Chang Bai was annoyed when Lin Chen saw through his intentions.

He was very clear about the current situation. With Lin Chen's talent, if he wasn't killed today, Chang Bai would have to face severe consequences in the future.

Once they left the secret realm, Lin Chen would surely become an Inner Sect Disciple and even a Core Disciple. Lin Chen would then certainly have opportunities to take revenge on him.

Faced with Chang Bai's attempt to pressure him by mentioning Tang Yunshan, Lin Chen remained unmoved.

He genuinely didn't respect Tang Yunshan.

It wasn't just here, where Tang Yunshan's cultivation wasn't impressive, but even outside, within the Formation Sect, Lin Chen didn't hold Tang Yunshan's strength in high regard.

If Lin Chen were to use all of his tricks, Tang Yunshan's mere Sixth Layer of the Reverting Void Realm strength would be completely manageable by Lin Chen.

If it weren't for Lin Chen's unwillingness to reveal his true capabilities, someone like Chang Bai wouldn't even register in his concern.

However, there were too many people around at the moment, and with the final rankings battle yet to come, Lin Chen didn't want to reveal his strength prematurely.

Using the Purple Cloud Wings had been a reluctant move of necessity.

Watching the two in the sky, Tang Yunshan, although somewhat displeased that neither of them would give him face, felt somewhat helpless.

These two were likely to become candidates for the Inner Sect, destined for a limitless future.

The current situation was beyond Tang Yunshan's control, so he immediately sent a message to Tang Yuntian, reporting the situation here.

And just after Tang Yunshan sent out a message about the situation here.

Less than half an incense stick time later, a man dressed in white slowly flew over.

"Young Master Bai, you've arrived."

Seeing the man in white arrive, Tang Yunshan actually gave him a bow, showing a hint of fawning in his gesture.

Lin Chen and Chang Bai both narrowed their eyes slightly at the arrival of the man in white, sensing that the newcomer's cultivation was only at the Half-Step Return to Void Realm, likely self-imposed with restrictions to limit his cultivation and allow entry.

Upon arriving, the young man in white merely glanced indifferently at the frigid Sword Qi in the sky and at Lin Chen's eighteen Fire Dragons, his eyes devoid of any emotion, extremely calm, before a silver sword appeared in his hand.

The moment the silver sword appeared in the man's hand, Lin Chen took an extra few looks, as he sensed that it was a Heaven-grade Treasure.

Until now, this was Lin Chen's first encounter with a Heaven-grade Treasure.

With the silver sword in hand, the man didn't utter a word. Instead, he unleashed his Spiritual Power, slashing a sword each towards Lin Chen and Chang Bai.

Hum hum—

As the two streaks of Sword Light flashed by.

The Sword Qi that Chang Bai had condensed in the sky was instantly dispersed by that Sword Light.

Meanwhile, Lin Chen's eighteen Fire Dragons were instantly extinguished by the Swordsman in White's Sword Qi.

Witnessing the Swordsman in White's domineering and sharp Sword Qi, Lin Chen, Chang Bai, and all the martial artists present were inwardly astounded.

Actually, Lin Chen was relatively composed, as he recognized the extraordinary quality of the Swordsman in White's Swordsmanship.

If the man hadn't had his cultivation restricted, his strength would likely be even greater, perhaps one of the Formation Sect's Heavenly Prides.

Chang Bai, stunned by the Swordsman in White, felt an extreme shock.

He had thought his own Swordsmanship was already extremely remarkable and, bolstered by the Cold Ice Power, belonged to an invincible existence within his level.

However, at this moment, the Swordsman in White's seemingly unremarkable sword stroke had completely dissipated all of his Sword Qi.

"Who on earth is this Swordsman in White!"

Chapter 465 Trial Ends, Ranking Contest

Because of the commotion caused by the Swordsman in White's strike, the attention of all Martial Artists within the secret realm was immediately drawn. They had noticed the fight between Lin Chen and Chang Bai while it was happening, but none rushed over right away, instead thinking of reaping the benefits afterwards.

Yet when everyone began to move, heading toward the location of Lin Chen and the others, they felt the world spinning around them as if in a sudden swirl, realizing that a Teleportation Array within the secret realm had been activated.

The crowd was puzzled, as there were still twenty days left before the end of the trial in the secret realm. Why were they being teleported out now? Could it be because of that strike unleashed by the young Swordsman in White?

"You two, quiet down. If you really want to have a fight to the death, then wait for the final ranking battle."

The man in white looked at Lin Chen and Chang Bai, speaking indifferently before his figure disappeared from everyone's sight.

As everyone was still bewildered, they found themselves locked in by a teleporting force, about to be transported out of this space.

Shortly after, everyone appeared outside the square of the secret realm's Teleportation Gateway.

The number of Martial Artists teleported out this time reached more than four thousand.

Tang Yuntian immediately ordered someone to tally the results of the top one thousand participants in this secret realm trial.

Ultimately, combining the results of the previous four stages, the final scores of the participants were calculated.

Although they did not understand why they were teleported out before the trial time had concluded, deep down, everyone was silently relieved.

Tang Yuntian then explained the sudden end of the trial in the secret realm to the crowd.

It turned out that the disturbances inside had triggered spatial turbulence, necessitating an early conclusion to the trial.

However, this was merely an explanation for the masses, not the true reality of the situation.

The true reality, known only to Tang Yuntian and the others, was that the battle between Lin Chen and Chang Bai had caused such a great disturbance that without intervention, their fight could have led to even more casualties.

What was most important was that both Lin Chen and Chang Bai were considered among the top Heavenly Prides, and the Formation Sect did not wish to see either of them perish in this battle.

Following the Formation Sect's count, it was found that this trial in the secret realm had resulted in the deaths of more than four thousand Martial Artists. Never before had there been such a high number of casualties in a secret realm trial.

After an investigation, the Formation Sect found that nearly a thousand of these deceased Martial Artists had perished at the hands of Chang Bai's party.

The Formation Sect did not rage over this because they had made it clear from the beginning of the trial that the secret realm was fraught with dangers, and participants should be prepared for any eventuality.

Moreover, despite Chang Bai's methods being somewhat ruthless, his Talent and aptitude were superior. He not only possessed the True Meaning of Swordsmanship but had also self-realized the True Meaning of Ice. If the Formation Sect were to cultivate him, he was bound to become a powerhouse like Mu Qianqiu.

"Brother Lin, it's such a pity we didn't meet inside the secret realm. Otherwise, if we joined forces, we could have reigned supreme and claimed all the command tokens."

Qin Kaifeng approached Lin Chen and spoke lightly.

Lin Chen simply smiled mildly, not responding, instead turning his gaze to Xia Wanxin in the distance.

At that moment, Xia Wanxin was also looking at Lin Chen, and upon seeing him look back, she haughtily turned her head away.

Zhao Zhongchuan, Zhao Zhongtian, Deng Yu, and a few others, although not united, individually harbored strong resentment towards Lin Chen.

The final test of the Formation Sect was still some days away, giving everyone some time to rest and return to their peak condition.

According to the results so far, the scores of the participants were also determined.

Out of the initial twelve thousand people who took part in the fifth stage, only over seven thousand had survived. From them, the Formation Sect only selected the top one thousand with the highest scores.

These were mostly the Martial Artists who had the most command tokens among the four thousand teleported out of the secret realm at the end.

Of course, there were also some who had been transported out of the secret realm trial early.

Because these Martial Artists had done well in the previous four stages, they had earned high scores.

And the person who took first place in the combined scores of the stages was naturally Lin Chen, with the second place going to not Qin Kaifeng, but Chang Bai.

Qin Kaifeng ranked third, Xia Wanxin fourth, Deng Yu fifth...

These rankings, by the time of the sixth-stage ranking match, actually bore no significance.

Because the sixth-stage ranking match would not be conducted based on the scores of the previous stages.

These scores could be seen as a mere acknowledgment of the Martial Artists' Talent and achievements in the recruitment trials.

Of course, for those selected to become disciples of the Formation Sect, their scores would be converted into sect contribution points according to a certain exchange rate.

However, this exchange rate was pitifully reduced; Lin Chen's high score of over twenty thousand, upon becoming a disciple of the Formation Sect, could only be exchanged for twenty-six sect contribution points.

And the final ranking battle also offered decent rewards.

According to the rules of the Formation Sect, it would be held among the top one thousand participants based on the scores of the previous five stages.

These one thousand people were considered to have successfully entered the Formation Sect.

However, only the top five hundred in the ranking battle would have the chance to enter the Inner Sect.

The remaining five hundred would be open for selection by Outer Sect Elders.

Of course, if anyone had a preferred Elder or peak, they could also enter, but this was limited to the top one hundred winners.

This meant that the top one hundred winners, even if not selected by an Elder, would have the right to choose and enter under any Elder they preferred, provided the Elder agreed.

This rule was relatively generous, since winning just one match was enough to qualify for entry into the Inner Sect.

The Formation Sect essentially recognized these top one thousand disciples as being exceptionally talented and powerful.

The purpose of the sixth-stage ranking match was to further understand the true strength of the participants, to facilitate the Elders in selecting their desired disciples.

Chapter 466:

After emerging from the secret realm, Lin Chen returned to his dwelling to recuperate from his injuries.

The sixth level of the Array Formation Sect had initially not sparked an interest in Lin Chen to compete for rankings, since just one victory in the ranking contest would grant him the chance to enter the Inner Sect.

However, to his surprise, the rewards given by the Array Formation Sect for the ranking contest were exceedingly generous.

As long as one placed within the top one hundred in the ranking contest, they could receive substantial rewards from the Array Formation Sect, which included several Third-Grade Elixirs and ten sect contribution points.

Entering the top ten of the ranking contest would grant one Fourth-Grade Elixirs, Fourth-grade Talisman Inscriptions, one Top-tier Earth-grade Magical Treasure, and a hundred sect contribution points.

The highest quality magic treasure Lin Chen had was only Earth-Level Mid-Grade, and if he could acquire a Top-tier Earth-grade Magical Treasure, it would undoubtedly provide a significant boost to his strength.

And if one could enter the top three of the ranking contest, the rewards would be even more incredible.

The rewards for the top three spots were Fourth-Grade Elixirs, Fourth-grade Talisman Inscriptions, plus the opportunity to enter the Spirit Martial Pavilion of the Array Formation Sect to select a Lower Heaven-level Treasure, along with an additional one thousand sect contribution points.

Such rewards were simply too tempting.

Lin Chen yearned for a Heaven-grade Treasure in his heart and decided no matter what, he intended to compete for the rankings.

Lin Chen had thought that the trump cards he concealed would play some role in the final challenge, but unexpectedly, the ultimate ranking contest prohibited the use of elixirs that enhanced strength, as well as the use of talisman inscriptions, and restricted participants to magic treasures not surpassing Earth-Level Mid-Grade.

This rule severely limited martial artists' reliance on external forces, meaning that during this ranking contest, all external forces would be significantly weakened, and everyone could only rely on their own cultivation to vie for their rankings.

These rules were quite unfavorable for Lin Chen, as many of his trump cards involved using talisman inscriptions.

Even without using talisman inscriptions, Lin Chen, relying solely on his strength, still possessed the power to fight in the contest. After all, it was a one-on-one battle, and with his invincible martial prowess at his level, as long as he didn't face Heavenly Prides like Chang Bai or Qin Kaifeng right off the bat, Lin Chen could achieve a commendable rank.

Sorting through various treasures, Lin Chen began to categorize them, determining if he could refine some elixirs from the materials plundered in the secret realm to enhance his strength.

Without further ado, Lin Chen categorized the treasures, only to discover that many materials were now beneath his consideration, and he needed to figure out a way to send these treasures back to Jade Cauldron Kingdom for Xu Ma'an and others.

For the current Lin Chen, these materials were no longer of much use, but for Xu Ma'an and the others, they were still valuable treasures.

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In Divine Sun City of the Jade Cauldron Kingdom,

within a grand hall, Lin Chen's Second Soul Division was discussing foreign trade matters with Zhao Lingxi.

According to the report Zhao Lingxi gave to Lin Chen, the foreign trade ventures over the past two months were overall quite successful, turning profits in both Frost Chill Kingdom and Da Yun Kingdom.

Frost Chill Kingdom, under the influence of the Array Formation Sect, was tolerant towards the Lingxi Commerce Guild originating from Jade Cauldron Kingdom and did not encounter much trouble.

However, the Lingxi Commerce Guild in Da Yun Kingdom faced endless problems, as Da Yun Kingdom was a chaotic and complex place where the newly established guild was bound to attract trouble from many.

Zhou Lan, originally a disciple of the Floral Transfer Palace, found that since merging into the Jade Cauldron Sect, they had access to cultivation resources and their growth rate in cultivation far exceeded what was possible during their time in the Floral Transfer Palace.

The current Jade Cauldron Sect emphasized that those who contributed more would receive greater rewards, advocating a strategy for the entire sect to progress together.

Two months ago, when Zhao Lingxi was about to conduct business overseas, the Jade Cauldron Sect issued a mission which, in addition to some warriors from the War Department, required ten Inner Sect disciples to accompany her.

Their task would be to protect Zhao Lingxi's commerce activities in Da Yun Kingdom.

Though the mission was dangerous, it wasn't unbearably tough, so Zhou Lan decided to go to Da Yun Kingdom with Zhao Lingxi.

At this moment, after Lingxi Commerce Guild faced repeated robberies and looting by unknown martial artists, Zhao Lingxi eventually returned to the Jade Cauldron Sect to seek Lin Chen's help in devising a strategy.

Zhou Lan and a group of martial artists stayed behind to guard the Lingxi Commerce Guild.

Yet at this moment, a group of fierce-looking men entered the Lingxi Commerce Guild. Several men in their company fiddled with daggers, their greedy eyes sweeping over the interior of the guild.

Upon seeing these men, Zhou Lan's expression suddenly stiffened because there were over twenty of them, and each person's cultivation was above their own.

"Lass, these goods are ours now," said the skinny, cold-eyed leader of the men, his tone, which was full of threats, directed at Zhou Lan.

Zhou Lan was sure that any resistance or refusal would likely provoke these men to take by force. With Zhao Lingxi gone back to the Jade Cauldron Sect and having taken many guards with her, it wouldn't be easy for Zhao Lingxi and her sisters to fend off these aggressors alone.

Before leaving the Jade Cauldron Sect, Lin Chen had specifically instructed that their safety should be the top priority. If anyone threatened their well-being or attempted to steal their treasures, they should comply temporarily to preserve their lives.

Seeing that Zhou Lan offered no resistance, the warriors from the War Department did not intervene either.

"Good, you know what's good for you. Brothers, start moving the goods," said the sinister-looking skinny man as he leered at Zhou Lan, then ordered his minions to begin moving the goods out of the Lingxi Commerce Guild.

Chapter 467 This Chamber of Commerce Must Have a Significant Background

"Little girl, I'm known as Dragonfly the Bandit. In this city, all the merchants tremble at the mere mention of my name. Today, my men and I are raiding your establishment, consider it an honor for your guild. Interested in becoming my woman?"

The emaciated man's gaze roved continuously over Zhou Lan's body, his mind no doubt conjuring up all manner of filthy thoughts.

Zhou Lan was from the Floral Transfer Palace, and whether in terms of her appearance or figure, she was of superior beauty, naturally arousing the longing of the men before her.

Behind Zhou Lan, there were seven or eight other women, some from the Floral Transfer Palace, others from the Jade Cauldron Sect, all of them not lacking in beauty or grace.

At this moment, the predatory desire of the emaciated man and his lackeys was quite apparent.

Seeing that Zhou Lan was ignoring them, the emaciated man began to slowly approach her with his group in tow.

Step by step—

However, just as the emaciated man and his men took a couple of steps forward, the guards from the Commerce Guild drew the long swords at their waists without hesitation.

They hadn't forgotten the instructions Lin Chen had given them beforehand.

Given the situation at hand, they knew well enough they were no match for the emaciated man and his group.

If the other party intended only to seize their goods, the Jade Cauldron Sect would naturally settle accounts with them afterward. But if they dared to lay hands on the people of the Lingxi Commerce Guild, the guards were prepared, even if it meant perishing together, to fight the emaciated man and his group to the bitter end.

"Gentlemen, don't go too far!"

A burly guard among them, with sword drawn, glared at the emaciated man and coldly rebuked him.

The strength of the burly guard was merely at the Fourth Layer of the Heaven-reaching Realm, whereas the emaciated man's strength was at the Seventh Layer.

But the burly guard showed no fear against his opponent. As members of the Jade Cauldron Sect War Division, they were fearless, brave, and ready to confront any adversary.

Seeing the resolve of the burly guard to fight desperately, the emaciated man furrowed his brow slightly.

The purpose of their visit was merely to rob the goods. They had previously boasted only to intimidate—they had lied when they said that all the merchants in Da Yun Kingdom would be frightened at the sound of their name.

They only dared to target newly established companies like the Lingxi Commerce Guild and some smaller merchants. Faced with larger companies, they wouldn't dare to make even a peep.

Seeing that the burly guards were ready to fight to the death, the emaciated man decided not to pursue Zhou Lan and the others any further. He snatched the treasures and left.

Outside the Lingxi Commerce Guild, in a room at a vantage point.

A band of martial artists sat in a group, hiding in the shadows observing the Lingxi Commerce Guild.

They had just witnessed Dragonfly the Bandit and his men robbing the Lingxi Commerce Guild and seen them leave.

"Boss, we really should have made a move. This Lingxi Commerce Guild was so easy to take down," lamented one martial artist, full of regret. Their leader, out of extreme caution toward this newly arrived guild, had hesitated for too long. And now, someone else had beat them to it.

"Take it down? I'm afraid it's not that simple. I've already looked into it; this Lingxi Commerce Guild came from Jade Cauldron Kingdom."

"Jade Cauldron Kingdom? You mean the recently renamed third-grade Shu Country? I heard that even Red Soul Hall with its grand army couldn't take it down. If this Lingxi Commerce Guild truly represents the Jade Cauldron Kingdom, then Dragonfly the Bandit might have just bitten off more than he can chew this time!"

...

Time flew by, and an hour later.

Twelve dark silhouettes appeared within the Lingxi Commerce Guild. Zhou Lan stepped forward and immediately recognized that these shadowy figures were the power of the 'Dark Division' from the Jade Cauldron Sect.

Immediately after, Zhou Lan recounted to the people of the Dark Division what had previously happened at the Lingxi Commerce Guild, and then took out a compass.

"This compass can track down those guys' whereabouts. I'll leave the rest to all of you from the Dark Division," she said calmly, handing over the compass to the leader of the shadowy figures.

Within the Jade Cauldron Sect, aside from the disciples of the various peaks, there were also the War Division and the Dark Division, which were not under the control of the peak masters.

These forces were directly managed by Lin Chen and Xu Ma'an. They could disregard the orders of anyone else in the Jade Cauldron Sect but had to act with the sole purpose of guarding and maintaining the interests of the Jade Cauldron Sect.

The War Division was naturally the main military force of the Jade Cauldron Sect, but that was only on the surface.

Beyond the War Division, Lin Chen had also established the Dark Division, whose martial artists' training was no less arduous than that of the War Division's members.

The martial artists of the Dark Division were all carefully selected, each possessing sharp movement techniques and formidable strength; each was trained as an assassin.

Although the Da Yun Kingdom had complex relations, sending out too many martial artists from the War Division to protect the Lingxi Commerce Guild was clearly inappropriate.

Hence, Lin Chen sent the power of the Dark Division.

Whoosh whoosh——

At this moment, twelve dark silhouettes were following the compass's guidance, heading towards the gathering place of the gaunt men and others who had robbed the Lingxi Commerce Guild.

Having dared to snatch the treasures of the Lingxi Commerce Guild and even intending to harm their people, the twelve shadowy figures had already sentenced their opponents to death in their hearts.

As for being dispatched to the Da Yun Kingdom to guard the Lingxi Commerce Guild, the twelve members of the Dark Division were extremely happy, for though the kingdom was chaotic and filled with troubles, it was also their opportunity to make achievements and earn Contribution Values.

Sometime later, the twelve dark silhouettes arrived at a desolate area on the border of Da Yun Kingdom.

There lay a dilapidated village, with cries of crows echoing all around, and without any villagers in sight—it appeared to be an abandoned village.

"Boss, these goods are really quite something, with so many Third Grade Elixirs and so many unique Talisman Inscriptions. They're worth a lot of money. That Lingxi Commerce Guild really has some nerve, owning so many valuable items yet daring to do business in the Da Yun Kingdom with just a few weak guards. They're truly courting death."

"Yeah, I didn't expect us to get our hands on this batch of goods so easily. It's like picking up money off the ground."

"It's just a pity about those girls, with looks and figures like that, it would've been a huge pleasure to capture them and bring them back here for a good time in this bleak village."

"Enough of that. Although those guys earlier had strengths lesser than ours, they came with full momentum, ready to fight to the death. Such determination shouldn't belong to a lowly commerce guild like that. I always feel a bit uneasy."

"Big brother, I think you're worrying too much."

Thump——

While Dragonfly the Bandit and the others were talking, the rotten door was kicked to dust with a single foot.

Chapter 468: Suppressing Bandits, The Frustrated Li Hanyi

"It was you? You stole the goods from our Lingxi Commerce Guild?"

Dragonfly the Bandit and his men raised their heads, looking towards the entrance, their brows furrowing.

Because this village had long become their base of operations, there were restrictions placed all around the outside, and yet they had not sensed the black-clothed person arriving at their doorstep at all.

What was more critical was that they could not discern the true cultivation of the man before them, completely unable to probe the depth of his realm.

"Who exactly are you, and do you realize you've intruded upon the territory of Dragonfly the Bandit?"

The gaunt giant bellowed furiously, stepping forward two paces, a powerful aura erupting from him.

However, faced with the outburst of the gaunt giant's Heaven-reaching Realm Seventh Level cultivation, the black-clothed person at the door did not move an inch. The oppressive aura directed at him dissipated as soon as it approached, neutralized by an invisible force.

"I will ask one last time, did you steal our Lingxi Commerce Guild's goods?"

The black-clothed man looked at the gaunt giant and asked once again.

There were more than twenty martial artists in the room, each of them above the Fifth Layer of the Heaven-reaching Realm, with the highest cultivation belonging to the emaciated giant, who was at the Seventh Level.

Such a force, if placed within the ranks of our Jade Cauldron Sect, would be considered quite powerful.

The black-clothed man's cultivation was also at the Heaven-reaching Realm Seventh Level, but he was not the least bit afraid of the more than twenty martial artists in the house.

His long-term training in the Dark Division had cultivated a calm and collected state of mind. Moreover, he was confident that even under the attack of these twenty-plus individuals, he could at least kill three martial artists. Not to mention, they had deployed twelve B-level assassins from the Dark Division for this mission.

"Barging into our domain and you still dare to act so arrogantly? I'll teach you a lesson in minutes. Those goods were indeed seized by us, what about it? Do you have the ability to take them back?"

A beefy martial artist by the gaunt man's side, looking at the black-clothed figure at the door, shouted arrogantly.

Upon hearing this, a faint cold smile appeared on the corner of the black-clothed man's mouth.

"Since you admit it was you who took them, that's enough. We have not found the wrong people."

"Next, you will pay the price for your deeds."

"Die!"

The moment the black-clothed man's words fell, a chilling wind suddenly swept across the room. All they saw was a dark shadow appear before their eyes, and a sharp dagger sliced across the throat of the fat martial artist.

The chilling dagger touched the copious flesh, slicing it open before the blood could even spurt out, and the dagger had already flashed by.

Thump—

"How is this possible? Who are you?"

Seeing the corpulent man die before their very eyes in the blink of an eye, everyone finally came to their senses.

However, the black-clothed man at the door had not made any move, but on the support beam inside the room, another figure had appeared, exuding an aura identical to that of the man at the door.

The people, looking at the two figures, showed a look of terror in their eyes, and they all drew their weapons, warily eyeing the two individuals.

"No matter who you are, to dare kill within the territory of Dragonfly the Bandit, even if you possess exceptional strength, you are but two people. We are so many, we do not believe we can't take you down."

Despite the deep trepidation in his heart, the gaunt giant nevertheless mustered his courage to bolster their own spirits, for if they were to lose heart, they would surely stand no chance against their adversaries.

Whoosh whoosh whoosh—

However, no sooner had the gaunt giant's words finished than another ten black figures appeared on the beams inside the room, adding up to twelve alongside the previous two.

"The moment you seized the Lingxi Commerce Guild's goods, your fate was already sealed."

"Next, you may resign to your fate."

"Before you die, we can let you know our names. The twelve of us are known as Black Crow, a name in assassination that will soon make everyone in the Da Yun Kingdom tremble with fear. Alas, you won't have the chance to witness it anymore."

As the black-clothed man finished speaking, the other eleven figures, as well as he, left a lingering afterimage in their original place and charged towards the members of Dragonfly the Bandit within the room.

A short while later, equivalent to the time it takes for one incense stick to burn, the twelve dark figures, along with the goods, returned to the Lingxi Commerce Guild.

The Black Crow operated directly under the command of Lin Chen, not even following the orders of Xu Ma'an. The dozen had practiced a cultivation technique that Lin Chen had derived from the Purple Cloud

Wings, making their movement technique elusive and unpredictable. Lin Chen had sent them to the Da Yun Kingdom not only to protect the Lingxi Commerce Guild but also to establish a Dark Division force within the kingdom.

...

Beyond Dragonfly the Bandit's group, the Lingxi Commerce Guild's goods had also been intercepted by another force during transport.

This force were the real bandits, numbering close to two thousand martial artists. They usually operated on the borders of the Da Yun Kingdom, preying on merchants traveling through certain key areas.

As such, the Da Yun Kingdom didn't monitor them too closely; since they didn't act within the towns and cities of the kingdom, the authorities turned a blind eye.

Facing this den of thieves, deploying the Dark Division's forces was clearly insufficient, as the Dark Division was suitable for assassinations, not for open combat.

At this moment, Li Hanyi, accompanied by five hundred warriors from the War Department, slowly approached Daiyun Mountain.

The mountain peak in sight was where this den of thieves was located.

"It seems this is the place. Just do what you do best, and avoid rushing into the area where I'm drawing my sword to strike."

For Li Hanyi to lead an army to exterminate bandits was indeed an overkill.

But when Lin Chen assigned him this task, Li Hanyi agreed without a word of complaint.

During these two months at the Jade Cauldron Sect, Li Hanyi had had enough and felt extremely suffocated internally.

In swordplay exchanges with Lin Chen, he was constantly suppressed.

In swordplay exchanges with Xu Ma'an, he was again suppressed at every turn.

Even when exchanging swordplay with Yang Yuemin, he still found himself utterly suppressed.

Apart from these three individuals, others would lose to him, but the fights were not satisfying since they simply could not compare with Li Hanyi in swordsmanship.

Therefore, Li Hanyi needed to vent, and coming here to exterminate bandits was an excellent choice.

After all, Lin Chen had made it clear that the life and death of these warriors were for Li Hanyi to decide.

Chapter 469: Three Sword Moves

"Boss, an army has appeared up ahead, exuding an extraordinary aura, with alarmingly superior equipment. They're approaching our territory—could they be coming to exterminate us?"

"An army? Da Yun Kingdom wouldn't do such a thing. How many are there?"

"Five hundred!"

"Five hundred and you're panicking? Gather the brothers, let's ensure these fellows never return. Aren't they just here to deliver their equipment to us?"

Inside Clear Wind Stockade, a man with an eyepatch gave the command and immediately soared into the air, rushing out of the stronghold to confront the enemy.

In no time, over two thousand bandits had assembled. Facing the Jade Cauldron Sect's army, a hint of cowardice crept into their hearts.

For the five hundred soldiers before them wore sets of armor—at least of Profound Middle Grade quality—far better than the junk they had scavenged.

Many of them had been bandits in Clear Wind Stockade for over a decade, robbing countless merchant companies, yet not one of them had ever owned decent gear.

Indeed, the treatment these outlaws received was nothing compared to a regular army's.

"Gentlemen, you've mobilized for a trial, but you must have mistaken the place. This is the genuine Outlaw Camp."

The bandit with the eyepatch said coldly and tauntingly as he eyed Li Hanyi leading the five hundred soldiers.

Despite the imposing presence and orderly ranks of the army before him, their cultivation levels were quite poor. Many were only at the Melding Earth Realm.

He alone could fight a hundred such men.

And although Li Hanyi was a warrior of the Reverting Void Realm, his aura was naturally unrecognizable to the bandit.

Lin Chen had sent out this army precisely as a warning to those within Da Yun Kingdom harboring ill intentions against the Lingxi Commerce Guild.

The message was clear: Don't mess with the Lingxi Commerce Guild, or death is the only path left.

"I'm not one for idle chatter. You've plundered goods from my Lingxi Commerce Guild—do you know the consequences?"

Li Hanyi spoke calmly as his hand glinted with Spiritual Light, summoning an azure Treasured Sword, while looking over the more than two thousand bandits.

The leading bandit had the strength of a Half-Step Return to Void Realm cultivator, and there were a few at the Ninth Layer of the Heaven-reaching Realm, but the rest of the bandits were of lower cultivation, hardly worth Li Hanyi's notice.

Although annoyed at being sent by Lin Chen to suppress bandits, Li Hanyi harbored no complaints.

After all, it was he who had agreed to this task, to vent the frustrations within him.

"So it's that trash commerce guild's army. Yes, we robbed it. What are you going to do about it?"

The eyepatched bandit spoke arrogantly, not taking Li Hanyi and his forces seriously at all.

"What am I going to do? You'll find out soon enough."

Li Hanyi spoke indifferently, then slowly rose into the air, his azure treasured sword radiating dazzling Sword Qi, stretching dozens of feet out from the blade.

"A Reverting Void Realm powerhouse!?"

The man with the eyepatch finally felt fear upon seeing the Sword Qi Li Hanyi had conjured.

He couldn't understand how such a low-level army contained someone with such immense strength.

"Misunderstanding, this is all a misunderstanding, we must have robbed the wrong one," the bandit said in fear as Li Hanyi prepared to make his move, desperately trying to explain himself.

However, Li Hanyi paid no heed.

"I'll only strike three times. If you survive, consider it your good fortune."

Li Hanyi said with a faint smile, then made his move.

The five hundred soldiers watched in awe as Li Hanyi's technique dominated the battlefield, each swallowing hard.

"We didn't kill them all. Should be about five hundred left, all unable to resist anymore. Clean out the stronghold, take the goods, and tie up the living to bring back," Li Hanyi ordered the five hundred soldiers in a calm voice.

The members of the War Department were bemused, thinking to themselves how their mission seemed a bit too easy this time around...

...

When Li Hanyi returned to the Jade Cauldron Sect with the five hundred War Department soldiers, escorting over five hundred bandits, Lin Chen arranged for the robbers to be kept in the Deadly Servant Barracks. If they showed merit, they would have the chance to join the War Department.

After dealing with the troubles of the Lingxi Commerce Guild, Lin Chen entered seclusion.

There was one month left until the Descension Ruins would open once again.

This time, when Lin Chen went there with the Descension Order, it wasn't expected to cause as much commotion as the last opening of the ruins had.

But Ma Yuan of the Black Cloud Sect had also qualified for the Descension heritage. He had obtained the Blazing Fire Divine Decree, a top-quality technique, and his cultivation level had grown unknown extents since.

Lin Chen's Second Soul Division held no fear for the opponent, but increasing strength would add an extra layer of security.

After all, who knew whether Ma Yuan had obtained only the Divine Technique in the last visit to the Descension Ruins?

When Lin Chen's original body visited the Formation Sect, he had handed over the Descension Order to the Second Soul Division.

As the original body couldn't spare the time to visit the ruins, letting the Second Soul Division go in his stead was no different.

And now, the Second Soul Division, even stronger than Lin Chen's original body, was more likely to defeat Ma Yuan.

...

At this moment, in the Formation Sect.

Once Lin Chen had healed his injuries, he sought out Xia Wanxin to inquire if she possessed any more Five Elements Treasures.

However, Xia Wanxin seemed to have anticipated Lin Chen's visit, continuously playing coy, neither confirming nor denying that she had the Treasures.

Seeing this, Lin Chen knew Xia Wanxin was bargaining, and immediately produced a Qiankun Escape Talisman.

"This talisman is a treasure from a secret realm that saved your life, allowing you to teleport a hundred li. You've already witnessed its usefulness, and its value needs no further explanation from me," he said.

"I don't take things for free. I'll use it to trade with you."

Chapter 470: Jostling for Position and Fame

"A fine treasure indeed."

After hearing Lin Chen's description of the Qiankun Escape Talisman, Xia Wanxin's eyes blazed with eagerness, naturally wanting to trade with Lin Chen.

However, the Seven-Colored Ganoderma was nothing less than a treasure of a very high level, possessing the power of the Five Elements and being extremely rare; Xia Wanxin had just one such treasure.

Xia Wanxin too wanted to trade, but unfortunately, she no longer had any Five Elements Treasure on her.

After explaining her situation to Lin Chen, he was momentarily at a loss for words.

In front of Xia Wanxin, he touted the exceptional Qiankun Evasion Technique, feigned poverty, and mentioned the favor he had done by saving Xia Wanxin and the purple-robed maiden— all to get Xia Wanxin to offer a Five Elements Treasure in exchange, not knowing that she no longer possessed any.

All the effort Lin Chen spent talking his head off appeared to have been a waste of breath.

Nevertheless, Xia Wanxin recognized the importance of the Five Elements Treasure to Lin Chen and claimed that her father, the emperor, would have someone send some over.

Upon hearing this, Lin Chen nodded in agreement, since the Five Elements Treasure was not only superb for cultivating the Scorching Sun Divine Fist but also as a top-quality material for alchemy and setting up formations.

Although Xia Wanxin no longer had any Five Elements Treasures, she did have an alternative item: a segment of willow wood, containing the Wood Attribute from the power of the Five Elements.

While not as extraordinary as the Seven-Colored Ganoderma, it was still a suitable substitute.

Lin Chen wasted no time and directly traded one Qiankun Escape Talisman for it.

In fact, crafting the Qiankun Escape Talisman was very troublesome and required the consumption of many heavenly and earthly treasures. If Lin Chen hadn't been so urgently in need of Five Elements Treasures, the value of this talisman would have been comparable to that of the willow wood.

Subsequently, Lin Chen found other martial artists to trade with, exchanging treasures he had for those with the power of the Five Elements or simply purchasing them with spirit stones.

After a series of trades, Lin Chen had acquired four types. Fortunately, he already possessed a Water Attribute treasure, and with that, he had all the Five Elements Treasures he needed. He immediately began refining and cultivating the Scorching Sun Divine Fist.

After refining the Five Elements Treasures, Lin Chen's cultivation of the Scorching Sun Divine Fist advanced to the peak of the Fifth Layer.

Crack—

With a strong grip, Lin Chen crushed a piece of incredibly hard cold iron stone in his hand, purely with his physical strength and without using any spiritual power.

This cold iron stone, refined and free of impurities, is essential for crafting magic artifacts, but Lin Chen could now crush it with his bare hands without a trace of spiritual power.

"With my current strength, I could battle most martial artists. But facing heavenly prides like Chang Bai and Deng Yu would still be somewhat tricky."

Lin Chen pondered in his room, but as the ranking competition was to start the next day, he had no extra time to enhance his strength.

The following day, a thousand martial artists began drawing lots to determine their opponents.

Lin Chen was lucky in the first round, drawing a martial artist at the Eighth Layer of the Heaven-reaching Realm.

His opponent, seeing that Lin Chen's cultivation was only at the First Layer of the Heaven-reaching Realm, immediately became confident.

However, as soon as Lin Chen stated his name, his opponent lost his nerve.

Lin Chen knew he couldn't reveal his full strength too early, even though he had already fought with Chang Bai.

Other martial artists still didn't know his techniques, and if he exposed his true capabilities too soon, he wouldn't be able to surprise them in later fights.

In the battles, Lin Chen used only his golden bow and arrow as his weapon.

The Blazing Flame Divine Bow was of Earth-Level Mid-Grade, not exceeding the tournament's restrictions.

The Thunder Chasing Strike was a magic treasure refined by Lin Chen, with tremendous power. Even a martial artist at the Eighth Layer of the Heaven-reaching Realm was defeated by a single arrow.

Lin Chen thus emerged victorious and entered the top five hundred.

The following evaluation was to take place within the Inner Sect. The five hundred who had failed could only compete within the Outer Sect no matter what.

The competition was not entirely fair, as some martial artists drew heavenly prides like Chang Bai and Qin Kaifeng in the first round. Though their strength might have allowed them to break into the top five hundred, the unlucky draw led to their defeat.

Therefore, the defeated five hundred still drew lots within the Outer Sect to determine their rankings.

After entering the Inner Sect, the Formation Sect sifted out several martial artists whose cultivation was too strong, allowing them to battle in the final contest.

This alleviated some pressure for other competitors.

Lin Chen fought another two battles, still using the Blazing Flame Divine Bow, defeating his opponents with a single arrow each time.

Three fights later, he made it into the top one hundred and temporarily received the first-tier reward.

But in the fourth fight, Lin Chen encountered someone familiar.

"Kid, I finally found you. Our boss specifically asked me to give you a warm welcome. I hope you don't disappoint me and fall before I've had my fun," said his next opponent.

In the fourth fight, Lin Chen's opponent was Sun Fengyu, a henchman of Deng Yu. Although his cultivation was at the Eighth Layer of the Heaven-reaching Realm, his combat strength was exceptional.

Sun Fengyu's weapon was a golden staff, which he wielded with immense power, swinging it furiously towards Lin Chen.

In Sun Fengyu's eyes, Lin Chen was destined to fall to his staff.

Not to mention Lin Chen's mere First Layer cultivation of the Heaven-reaching Realm, even martial artists at the Ninth Layer would hesitate to confront his golden staff head-on.