

Prodigies 2701

Chapter 2701 Li Zhongyuan

Dugu Youran passed the round smoothly. Not long after, it was Lin Xun's turn. When his imposing figure appeared in the arena, the atmosphere grew oppressive.

The forces that hated him to their core could barely conceal their murderous intent towards him. If they hadn't been on the territory of the Origin Sect Ancestral Court, they would have immediately rushed over to devour him.

Someone muttered, "I just wonder what this guy will do this time."

Just one comment made many people reveal odd looks when they recalled his behavior in the first round. Seeing Lin Xun, Ye Chunjun's eyes also flickered with surprise.

However, Lin Xun smiled warmly and said, "Brother Ye, we meet again."

Everyone was stunned. What was going on? When did Lin Xun become associated with one of the gatekeepers?

Ye Chunjun's face froze slightly. He then said, "Yes, you're here. Last time, Elder Mo said he would personally recommend you to the Origin Sect Ancestral Court."

Lin Xun smiled and said, "We weren't able to have a good enough fight last time. If I get the chance this time, I'd love to have another one with Brother Ye."

The corners of Ye Chunjun's lips twitched, and he mumbled, "Haha, I hope so too."

In the distance, an old man shouted, "Lin Xun, are you looking down on the second round of the selection? Is this the time for idle chatter? Are you trying to curry favor with someone in front of everyone? Are you planning to cheat?"

Lin Xun's smile faded. Recognizing the old man as a member of the Nan Clan, he retorted, "Do you think the seniors present at the Origin Sect Ancestral Court are just for show? Who would be so foolish as to cheat under their noses?"

He sneered, "Besides, even if someone did try to cheat, does it have anything to do with your Nan Clan? Since when do you get to meddle in the affairs of the Origin Sect Ancestral Court?"

After neatly refuting the Nan Clan elder's series of accusations, he then flipped the script, making the old man's face turn green with anger.

"You evil creature, you will surely die a horrible death!" exclaimed the Nan Clan elder angrily.

Lin Xun turned to look at Li Zhen and bowed, "Senior, I'm taking the test, but someone from outside the sect is cursing me, trying to influence and disrupt my state of mind. Honestly, it's beginning to affect me. I wonder if the Origin Sect Ancestral Court would care about such matters?"

Everyone present was stunned. Lin Xun was really too talented at stirring up trouble. The Nan Clan elder became so angry that he nearly vomited blood. This brat was simply shameless, and his intentions were also sinister! After being accused of this, he had no leg to stand on.

Some Immortals who had previously planned to follow the Nan Clan elder's lead in scolding Lin Xun could not help but secretly congratulate themselves for holding their tongue. Otherwise, they would have been bitten by this brat as well!

A hint of helplessness crossed Li Zhen's rugged, resolute face. He finally understood why Xiao Wenyan had been constantly grimacing during the first round. This Lin Xun guy was truly a troublemaker.

With a dry cough, Li Zhen declared in a deep voice, "From this moment on, no more undue clamor from the audience. If you disrupt the assessment, then don't blame me for being rude."

This was a blatant warning to the Nan Clan elder, who was so embarrassed that he wished he could find a crack in the ground to crawl into.

Lin Xun smiled and bowed, "Thank you, Senior, for your righteous words."

Li Zhen said unhappily, "Hurry, take out your nameplate and begin the duel!"

He was genuinely worried that Lin Xun would repeat his old tricks and cause another disturbance in the second round.

Lin Xun readily agreed and took out his nameplate. A strange wave of energy surged, and instantly, the jade pendant on one of the gatekeepers resonated. It was Li Zhongyuan! The atmosphere was abuzz, and many gasped, some almost screaming.

Of note, because Li Zhen had previously warned the audience against making any noise, despite this turn of events, no conversations burst out.

However, their expressions clearly showed their surprise. This was because Li Zhongyuan had already dueled with other participants three times earlier, and each time he had eliminated his opponent without fail! In the eyes of the spectators, he had become the strongest of the nine gatekeepers.

He hailed from the Second Peak, and rumors claimed that he possessed the foundation to break through and enter the Immortal Stage hundreds of years ago. Therefore, his combat power was truly terrifying.

Ye Chunjun was relieved not to be chosen by Lin Xun, but when he saw that Lin Xun's opponent was Li Zhongyuan, he couldn't help but be astonished.

As a successor of the Origin Sect, Ye Chunjun was well aware of Li Zhongyuan's background. Among the core disciples of the Nine Great Peaks, Li Zhongyuan's combat power ranked among the top ten! He was also the strongest among these gatekeepers. Even Ye Chunjun hadn't expected Lin Xun to be so unlucky this time, to face such a tough opponent.

The atmosphere was turbulent, and the faces of those hostile forces couldn't help but gloat. Lin Xun, how are you going to survive this second round?

Donghuang Qing couldn't help but shake his head and sigh, "It seems Lin Xun's progress will be over."

Li Zhen frowned slightly, as if sensing something, and scanned the nine gatekeepers—Li Zhongyuan, Ye Chunjun, Huo Qinghe, Gu Zheng, and so on—one by one.

In the end, he said nothing.

At the same time, Fang Daoping's voice echoed in Xiao Wenyuan's ears, "Who distributed the jade talismans to the nine gatekeepers?"

Xiao Wenyuan's eyes suddenly flickered, and his heart trembled. He realized that Fang Daoping's question was extremely relevant, and he was likely suspicious about something.

"It must have been arranged by Deputy Pavilion Master Tang Qiu," Xiao Wenyuan replied via voice transmission.

Fang Daoping hummed, his expression as calm as ever, and said nothing more.

Despite that, Xiao Wenyuan couldn't calm down. Could it be that Deputy Pavilion Master Fang had suspected that someone was secretly behind the showdown between Lin Xun and Li Zhongyuan?

Thinking of this, he couldn't help but glance at Donghuang Qing. If anyone was the most eager to eliminate Lin Xun, it would undoubtedly be that guy. However, as an elder, Donghuang Qing probably didn't have the ability to rig such an assessment. So who could it be? Could it really be Deputy Pavilion Master Tang Qiu?

Xiao Wenyuan recalled that Tang Qiu had come from the Tang Clan, one of the Ten Immortal Giants of the Eighth Heaven Domain, which was also extremely hostile to Fangcun Mountain. If so, then it would be easy to explain. However, Xiao Wenyuan wouldn't say anything out of line without proof. These thoughts were just his speculations.

Meanwhile, in the vast arena, only Lin Xun and Li Zhongyuan remained. The two faced each other from a distance, capturing the attention of the entire audience. The atmosphere became extremely solemn and oppressive.

Li Zhongyuan wore a white robe and had black hair. His features were sharp and angular, his tall figure as straight as a sword, and he exuded a piercing coldness. It was rumored that he possessed an astonishing bloodline gift, known as Dao Shield of Devouring, and it was capable of threatening even Immortals once unleashed!

This round would only last for half a quarter of an hour for each participant. Despite that, no one was certain that Lin Xun could hold out to the end.

No matter how impressive his performance was in the first round, Li Zhongyuan was truly extraordinary. He was a core disciple ranked among the top ten of the Nine Great Peaks. If he unleashed his full might, who could withstand him?

Without any preliminary verbal sparring, Li Zhongyuan attacked immediately. His tall figure charged forward like a razor-sharp, domineering sword, wielding the mighty laws of the Ancestral Realm as he sped towards Lin Xun.

Bang!

Amidst the earth-shattering roar, a divine black sword flashed from Li Zhongyuan's palm. As he slashed, a sword chant resounded through the nine heavens, illuminating a terrifying spectacle. Gods and demons wept blood, the world came to nothing, disasters unfolded, mountains of corpses appeared, and seas of blood surged...

In that instant, the vast arena had transformed into a doomsday purgatory! The power of a single sword was truly overwhelming.

Lin Xun's clothes fluttered. His dark eyes were deep and profound, and his expression was as serene as ever. A wave of astonishment welled up within him. Li Zhongyuan's strength had surprised him too.

A deafening clash echoed. The Limitless Abyss Sword Cauldron emerged, blocking the terrifying, apocalyptic sword strike. At this point in their collision, a terrifying torrent of energies erupted, shattering the surrounding void.

"So powerful!"

The entire arena erupted in excitement. This clash made everyone feel astonished and shaken. Lin Xun swayed slightly, and a long-dormant fighting desire within him finally stirred. Li Zhongyuan was undoubtedly powerful, even stronger than Ye Chunjun. His attainments in the Supreme Emperor Ancestor Stage had reached the absolute peak.

In the past, Lin Xun would have taken him very seriously and would not have been the slightest bit careless. However, after completely refining the Primal Chaos Tree and the Primordial Chaos Thousand Daos Tree in Cloud Guardian Workshop in Cold Moon City, he had shed the shackles of the past. Thus, his cultivation had undergone an invisible transformation.

One must give up before gaining. Just as one needed to let go before picking up.

No one knew the depths of Lin Xun's current combat prowess. In fact, not even he himself could judge. In this realm, he has yet to encounter a rival worthy of becoming a threat! When someone became so powerful that there was no rival, there was no way to compare anymore. How could he truly know just how powerful he was now?

In other words, unless a worthy threat arose among the supreme Emperor Ancestors of this world, in this realm, he, Lin Xun, represented the single most powerful cultivator of all time! Li Zhongyuan was powerful, but in his opinion, he was only capable of a single fight and posed little true threat.

Boom!

As the battle raged, the arena was turned upside down, the sun and moon dimmed, and all sorts of awe-inspiring phenomena unfolded, drawing countless exclamations of surprise from the crowd outside.

Li Zhongyuan's aura was divine, his attacks were domineering, and the power he displayed shocked many Immortals. He was like a master at the pinnacle of the Ancestral Realm, commanding the world with his demeanor!

However, people gradually realized that no matter how powerful and fierce Li Zhongyuan's attacks were, Lin Xun had neutralized them all one by one.

Compared to Li Zhongyuan's boundless aura, Lin Xun seemed quite calm. Throughout the entire time, he was like a rock on the seabed, unmoved by the surging currents. While not revealing any dazzling power, as he continuously neutralized his opponent's attacks, and his calm and detached demeanor was truly breathtaking!

Many Immortals could not help but observe Lin Xun's every move, but to their surprise, none of them could fathom the depths of his cultivation. He was like the abyss, unfathomable and dark! This shook them to their core. Just how far had this young man's attainments in the Supreme Emperor Ancestor Stage reached?

No one knew!

Even Fang Daoping, Xiao Wen yuan, Li Zhen, and the others felt a surge of emotion within them.

Chapter 2702 Shattering His Mindset

"In this realm, this disciple has truly reached an unparalleled level of history. Given his talent, he would surely rank among the top ten core disciples of the Nine Great Peaks." Xiao Wen yuan sighed.

Among the Nine Great Peaks, the top ten supreme Emperor Ancestors had all reached the pinnacle of perfection in their realm and were considered unrivaled in the world. While they were considered the top ten, the difference between them lay not in their cultivation, but in their combat ability. After all, there were so many factors that influenced combat ability.

For example, Li Zhongyuan was a supreme Emperor Ancestor who had reached the pinnacle of perfection in this realm, on par with Lin Xun. However, his mastery of the dao, state of mind, willpower, combat methods, and combat experience were clearly different from his opponent's.

For the first time, Fang Daoping commented, "Truly rare."

This caused Donghuang Qing to frown slightly, but he was unable to refute. With his keen eyesight, it was clear that, despite Li Zhongyuan's immense power, he hadn't truly struck a blow that hit Lin Xun during the current battle.

Having achieved this meant that Lin Xun's strength was undeniable. Even Donghuang Qing had to acknowledge this.

The arena was seething with excitement, with occasional exclamations of surprise echoing. Everyone was stunned by this pinnacle contest; even Immortals were captivated by it. It was not an exaggeration to say that, looking across the entire Eternal True Realm, from ancient times to the present, this battle was unprecedented and unparalleled in the world!

Many people then came to realize that, despite being at the same peak of the Ancestral Realm, the disparity in combat power was far more profound than they had imagined. Those eliminated in the first round of assessment were truly among the best of their realm. Despite that, compared to Lin Xun and Li Zhongyuan, the chasm between them was stark.

At this moment, a group of outstanding figures in the distance, including Donghuang Shaowen, Mu Zunwu, and Zhongli Feiyun, were completely absorbed by this battle. They were holding their breath and concentrating with their eyes wide open.

Their expressions remained largely unchanged, yet their hearts were restless. Lin Xun's strength weighed heavily on them. The fact that he could battle Li Zhongyuan to this degree was proof enough.

Outside the arena, old monsters like Donghuang Qiong, Qi Tingzi, Zhongli Chong, and Mu Cangjia all had a gloomy look on their faces. Lin Xun not being eliminated in the first round was already unexpected and difficult for them to accept.

Now, in this second round, facing a top figure like Li Zhongyuan, his ability to hold his own was equally surprising, even shocking. They couldn't imagine how formidable Lin Xun would become if he truly had the chance to become a successor of the Origin Sect this time, given his talent, as he embarked on the path to immortality.

Suddenly, Lin Xun, who was fighting in the arena, spoke with a hint of disappointment etched in his voice, "Time is almost up. If that's all you've got, then I don't want to play with you any longer."

It wasn't a taunt, but it was more powerful than that, leaving everyone outside the arena in disbelief, completely stunned.

Li Zhongyuan is this powerful, yet he actually disappoints you?

The old monsters frowned, somewhat bewildered and uncertain. When they looked at Li Zhongyuan again, a gloomy expression had crossed his cold face, and a faint, raging fire burned deep in his eyes, as if irritated.

He took a deep breath and said expressionlessly, "You'll regret saying that!"

Every word was cold, as intimidating as a knife's edge.

Boom!

The next moment, his clothes billowed, his long hair flew, and a stream of blood qi, like a smokescreen, burst forth from above his head. As the blood qi grew thicker and more concentrated, his entire body seemed like a furnace boiling in chaos.

An indescribable, terrifying aura emanated from Li Zhongyuan, causing the vast arena to hum and tremble under the pressure of his imposing presence.

If it were anyone else, they would have immediately attacked, trying to stop and suppress Li Zhongyuan, knowing full well that the next attack would be terrifying. However, Lin Xun chose not to. He simply observed.

He watched as the thick, boiling blood qi within Li Zhongyuan coalesced before him into a mysterious blood-red shield.

The blood-red shield was interwoven with dense Ancestral laws, and imbued within it was Li Zhongyuan's entire spirit, qi, and willpower. This gave it the vibrations of life and produced a strange humming sound.

Boom!

When the blood-red shield was fully formed, the aura it released sent shockwaves through the hearts of some Immortals outside the arena. This was Li Zhongyuan's innate power, and it possessed a forbidden, heaven-defying, murderous aura powerful enough to threaten even Immortals!

Other participants like Donghuang Shaowen, Qi Qingshi, and Mu Zunwu all wore solemn expressions, their hearts straining as they rapidly pondered how they would face this extremely dangerous attack. Meanwhile, Lin Xun stood still, motionless.

Only wisps of the obscure, chaotic laws of the ancestral realm emerged, interweaving into a deep, dark abyss that drifted around him.

No one knew that it was only at this point in the battle did he feel a hint of true threat from Li Zhongyuan. This long-lost feeling far from intimidated Lin Xun. Instead, it filled him with an indescribable excitement.

"Go!" Li Zhongyuan roared in the distance, his long hair flying, his mighty presence like a god. The blood-red shield before him immediately pushed through the void, charging towards Lin Xun.

Boom!

The naked eye could see that the void was being shredded like paper wherever the blood-red shield passed, and it was unable to stop it at all.

Just a glance at it gave those in an audience a suffocating feeling, as if their souls were being torn apart and devoured. This was Li Zhongyuan's innate power, Dao Shield of Devouring! This ability shocked the entire audience at that moment.

At the same time, Lin Xun also attacked as he stepped into the void and charged forward. With a simple punch, he smashed at the blood-red shield.

Bang!

The resulting noise was like thunder from the sky, shaking the barrier leading to heaven. Everyone's heart skipped a beat as they watched his fist colliding with the blood-red shield. His attack had unleashed a terrifying tearing and devouring force that suddenly spread outward. Lin Xun was towering like a god!

Instantly, people noticed that the blood-red shield hadn't shattered. Instead, Lin Xun swayed slightly and both of his sleeves had shattered and disintegrated into fragments.

Is this a sign of weakness?

The old monsters who hated Lin Xun couldn't help but get excited. Before, he had been like an unshakable rock, but now, facing the blood-red shield, he showed signs of being shaken. How could they not be excited? If possible, they wished Lin Xun would be slain instantly by the Dao Shield of Devouring!

The next moment, their expressions froze, and their excitement was replaced by a touch of astonishment, shock, and disbelief. Lin Xun had swung his fist again, striking fiercely.

Bang!

Bang!

Bang!

Every punch he delivered was like a giant slamming down, and its muffled thunder-like sound echoed throughout the heavens and earth. The unparalleled forces of his punches were like a landslide or tsunami, threatening to destroy heaven and earth, shatter everything, and break all restraints and shackles, unleashing a courageous charge forward!

At this moment, Lin Xun was utterly ferocious. Every punch he threw out was like a blow to the hearts of the people, causing them to change color, shudder, and tremble with fear! Even Fang Daoping, Xiao Wenyan, Li Zhen, and the others narrowed their eyes slightly, as if they had grasped something. Their expressions now held a hint of realization.

Bang!

When Lin Xun punched for the ninth time...

The Dao Shield of Devouring, considered Li Zhongyuan's strongest innate power, finally couldn't withstand the terrifying impact and exploded. Blood-red light shone throughout the sky, illuminating the vast, ancient arena with a vibrant crimson color. It was a dazzling, chilling red.

The audience was utterly dazed and stunned. Nine punches and the Dao Shield of Devouring had exploded! Furthermore, Lin Xun had remained unscathed the entire time..

This situation was truly astonishing.

Some old monsters cried out, their eyes widening, "How is this possible?"

They couldn't imagine how the blood-colored shield that was so powerful it could threaten an Immortal could be directly shattered like that. In particular, the old monsters of the Li Clan were deeply affected. They clenched their fists and their expressions shifted dramatically.

At this moment, Donghuang Shaowen, Mu Zunwu, Qi Qingshi, and the others fell silent, their hearts churning with emotion.

They had previously been making comparisons of their strengths and contemplated how they would have responded to this attack. Unanimously, they all agreed that dodging it was the wisest option. Otherwise, even if they fought it head-on, they would likely be injured or even unable to withstand the blow.

However, who would have imagined that Lin Xun would shatter this shield with nine simple, direct punches! How could they remain calm after witnessing that?

In the arena, Li Zhongyuan had suffered an even greater blow. The blood-red shield had been condensed from his energy, his lifelong cultivation, and his unwavering fighting spirit. After being shattered by Lin

Xun, he too had suffered from a backlash. He coughed up blood, and his face turned pale and translucent.

Everyone could see that Li Zhongyuan was injured! However, the mental shock he felt from this was even greater. It felt like the supreme path he had spent his entire life pursuing had broken in the most brutal and cruel way possible. Indescribable frustration and a sense of loss washed over him like a tide.

"Defeated...is my dao not strong enough..." Li Zhongyuan muttered, his eyes dim and his expression dazed.

Li Zhen, who was presiding over the assessment, had a slight change in expression. This was a sign that Li Zhongyuan's dao heart was unstable and on the verge of collapsing. Without hesitation, he uttered a dao sound, "Doh!"

Li Zhongyuan stiffened, his eyes instantly clearing, but his face remained as pale as ever. Furthermore, his clothes were soaked with cold sweat, and he looked utterly dejected!

Li Zhen frowned. He could see that while Li Zhongyuan's dao heart had been saved, the mental blow dealt to him by Lin Xun this time was too great, leaving an indelible shadow. If he didn't overcome it, then he might not ever certify his dao as an Immortal in this lifetime...

Fang Daoping, Xiao Wenyuan, and the others had also witnessed this, so they couldn't help but sigh inwardly. They had vaguely sensed that Lin Xun had done this deliberately, simply waiting for the other party to unleash his strongest attack before crushing him in one fell swoop.

When a person's most powerful attack was ruthlessly crushed, such a blow, for a cultivator, was more devastating than any verbal humiliation or torture, and more overbearing and brutal than any other method. Such a blow would inevitably cause a crack in one's dao heart!

In contrast, Lin Xun, standing alone and detached in the distance, remained unharmed and calm as ever, forming a stark contrast. The difference between the two was immediately apparent!

Chapter 2703 Trouble

Li Zhongyuan had been defeated. He was the only gatekeeper who had soundly lost so far in the second round. At the same time, he was also the strongest of the nine gatekeepers!

This also meant that this supreme Emperor Ancestor, who was worthy of being ranked in the top ten of the core disciples in the Nine Great Peaks of the Origin Sect, had been defeated. Furthermore, he had lost to Lin Xun, a supreme Emperor Ancestor who had not yet become an Origin Sect successor!

Previously, some had thought that Lin Xun could hold on through the allotted time frame and pass the assessment that way. After all, his performance in the first round was truly outstanding. Others had also thought that, no matter how powerful Lin Xun was, he might only be able to fight Li Zhongyuan to a standstill.

However, no one had imagined that Lin Xun would defeat Li Zhongyuan, the strongest gatekeeper, in this duel!

Those nine devastating punches not only defeated Li Zhongyuan's strongest ability but also shattered his mindset. If it hadn't been for Li Zhen's timely dao sound, the consequences would have been unimaginable.

At this moment, the arena and the audience was completely silent. Everyone was stunned. Even the Immortal-level figures were quiet as it took them a decent period of time to calm down again.

Ye Chunjun had watched the entire battle unfold. Aside from being shocked, a bitter feeling had welled up within him. He finally understood that his unwilling surrender in the Mystic Forbidden Realm had been justified. He even felt fortunate that Lin Xun's opponent this time wasn't him. Otherwise, it might not have been Li Zhongyuan in the shoes of the defeated.

At this moment, Lin Xun felt a slight pang of regret. After his opponent's powerful attack, he had intended to shatter his mind in one fell swoop, but it was clear that the Origin Sect Ancestral Court wouldn't allow it. Li Zhen's timely intervention had imperceptibly helped Li Zhongyuan stabilize his dao heart.

Of course, he was a core disciple of the Second Peak, a supreme Emperor Ancestor worthy of being among the top ten of the Nine Great Peaks. If he had crumbled now, Li Zhen would probably not be able to explain himself to the sect.

However, Lin Xun also understood that while Li Zhongyuan's state of mind had remained intact, it had been left with a shadow, which was enough to hinder his path to immortality!

Without further thought, he decided to leave. However, at that moment, the oppressive silence within the arena was shattered by an old, cold voice, "Grand Abyss Heaven Devourer! You are the descendant of Luo Tongtian!"

It was Donghuang Qiong who spoke. His face was sullen, and his eyes were brimming with murderous intent. A single stone stirred a thousand ripples. The arena erupted in an uproar, creating a sensation.

Luo Tongtian!

The Omega Lord!

Everyone knew that he, who had been in the Seventh Heaven Domain, had once dared to challenge the Eighth Heaven Domain's Ten Immortal Giants! His innate talent involved the forbidden laws of time. Long ago, it had brought countless of his formidable enemies to their doom!

"A disciple of Fangchun Mountain, and the descendant of Luo Tongtian... Just who...is he?"

Some people trembled in disbelief. A successor of Fangchun Mountain was considered a public enemy by the Ten Immortal Giants. In addition, Luo Tongtian had been a thorn in their side and had been hunted down by them. However, Lin Xun possessed both of these identities. Who wouldn't be shocked?

"So he possesses the innate talent of the Grand Abyss Heaven Devourer..."

Many of the older generation's eyes flickered. In the past, the Luo Clan had once stood tall in the Seventh Heaven Domain. They had boasted an incredibly glorious past and were arguably the foremost power there. This was because they had the Omega Lord at their helm!

Back then, Luo Tongtian was a master of a million, with his might so overwhelming that it made all other Immortals pale in comparison! Those of his generation were destined for a bleak period. No matter how

powerful they were, they could only serve as his foil, living in his shadow. It could be said that at that time, he had single-handedly dominated the Immortal Stage!

Unfortunately, this legendary giant of the Seventh Heaven Domain had later died while seeking the Eternity Door. From that moment on, the Luo Clan fell into decline, and their past glory was swept away by the wind and rain!

Now, the Luo Clan lingered in the Sixth Heaven Domain, almost forgotten by the Seventh Heaven Domain. Despite that, in the Origin Sect Ancestral Court, the innate talent Grand Abyss Heaven Devourer had reappeared!

Furthermore, it had come with a disciple of Fangchun Mountain, so who could not be surprised and shocked by this twist?

"Grand Abyss Heaven Devourer! This evil creature deserves to be chopped into pieces!"

"What a calamity!"

"No wonder he's so anxious to seek refuge in the Origin Sect Ancestral Court. He knows that as long as he continues to cultivate in the Eternal True Realm, his identity will inevitably be discovered, leading to a catastrophic disaster."

At this moment, Immortals like Qi Tingzi, Zhongli Chong, and Mu Cangjia also spoke out coldly. As veterans among the Eighth Heaven Domain's Ten Immortal Giants, they naturally had ample reason to hate and slander Lin Xun.

The situation was turbulent, showing signs of being completely out of control. Jun Huan was about to speak up when Lin Xun shook his head and said, "Senior Sister, let them bark. When we've conquered their clans later, we'll settle accounts with them one by one!"

His voice was cold and resolute. This made people tremble. Didn't this mean that Lin Xun, who was a disciple of Fangchun Mountain and a descendant of the Luo Clan, was declaring war on the Eighth Heaven Domain's Ten Immortal Giants?

Wasn't he worried about retaliation? Even within the Origin Sect Ancestral Court, there were many who belonged to the Ten Immortal Giants or the forces allied to them!

"Junior Brother, you're absolutely right." Jun Huan smiled. Her expression was calm, her eyes clear, and she stood there casually, with an air of fearlessness and a look of disdain.

This time, neither she nor Lin Xun intended to hide anything during the selection process. So what if their identities were revealed? After years of forbearance and dormancy, a confrontation with the Ten Immortal Giants was inevitable!

The situation grew increasingly turbulent and shifted rapidly.

"Silence!" Li Zhen shouted, like a resounding bell, silencing all voices in the room.

"Fellow Daoist, does the Origin Sect Ancestral Court truly intend on protecting this evil remnant? You all should know that if this evil creature is allowed to remain within the sect, it would cause countless disasters!" warned Qi Tingzi coldly.

Li Zhen frowned, "Do you think we in the Origin Sect would be anxious about these matters?"

His voice radiated immense authority.

Qi Tingzi's expression changed slightly as she said, "I've made it clear what I needed to say. If Fellow Daoist can truly represent the Origin Sect Ancestral Court's perspective, then I have nothing more to say."

She was clearly hinting that Li Zhen wasn't qualified enough to represent the entire Origin Sect Ancestral Court's stance. If he dared to defend Lin Xun, then he would likely be implicated with whatever happened in the future.

The atmosphere in the room grew increasingly oppressive, and a murderous aura permeated the entire place. This was a dispute between the Ten Immortal Giants of the Eighth Heaven Domain and the Origin Sect Ancestral Court, so no one else dared to intervene.

"Everyone, in my opinion, it's best to disqualify this participant, Lin Xun, from the selection. If he were to truly enter Origin Sect Ancestral Court, it would undoubtedly cause a host of unexpected disasters." At this point, Donghuang Qing also spoke up, looking at Fang Daoping, Li Zhen, Xiao Wenyuan, and the others. He continued in a deep voice, "It might even displease some important figures."

He had emphasized the phrase 'important figures.'

Donghuang Qing believed that Fang Daoping and the others would clearly understand the stakes involved. For the sake of a single remnant of Fangchun Mountain, there was a high possibility of unrest within the Origin Sect Ancestral Court.

Was it really...worth it?

Donghuang Qing's opinion stunned many. If the Origin Sect Ancestral Court chose to abandon Lin Xun now, then would he and his senior sister still be able to leave this place alive today?

Li Zhen's frown became even more prominent as he said coldly, "I just want to ask you, when has our Origin Sect Ancestral Court ever made such an exception in our rules before?"

The corners of Donghuang Qing's lips twitched. You're still talking about the rules at a time like this? Do you, Li Zhen, really not understand what's going on, or are you just pretending to be ignorant?"

He glanced at Xiao Wenyuan.

Xiao Wenyuan's usual smiling countenance had vanished. After a moment's silence, he calmly declared, "This is the examination for the successor recruitment process at our Origin Sect Ancestral Court. The entire world is watching. I'd like to ask Elder Donghuang: if we eliminate Lin Xun now, how will the world view our Origin Sect Ancestral Court?"

A gloomy look crossed Donghuang Qing's brow. Just as he was about to speak, Xiao Wenyuan challenged him again, "I'd like to ask Elder Donghuang again: when did the opinions of the Ten Immortal Giants ever override the rules of the Origin Sect Ancestral Court?"

This made Donghuang Qing stiffen, his expression changing dramatically. "Elder Xiao, I've never said that!"

This pointed statement was utterly devastating to him. Once the public got word of this, the Ten Immortal Giants themselves might not be greatly affected, but Donghuang Qing would undoubtedly be the first to become the sinner of the Origin Sect!

"So, you agree that we should act according to the rules?" asked Xiao Wen yuan.

Donghuang Qing's expression shifted wildly as he almost lashed out from fury. Xiao Wen yuan had elevated the issue of expelling Lin Xun from the selection process to a level comparable to the relationship between that of the Origin Sect Ancestral Court and the Ten Immortal Giants. This left him speechless, daring not to even utter a word of disapproval!

In the distance, the expressions of Donghuang Qiong, Zhongli Chong, Qi Tingzi, and the others darkened. Li Zhen's and Xiao Wen yuan's attitudes had also infuriated them.

"What do you think, Brother Fang?" Undeterred, Donghuang Qing glanced at Fang Daoping, who had remained aloof.

Fang Daoping glanced back at him and said, "What did I say before the selection process began?"

Donghuang Qing fell speechless again. At that time, Fang Daoping had declared that everyone needed to follow the rules! This was his attitude, the attitude of the Origin Clarity Pavilion, and even the attitude of the Origin Sect Ancestral Court!

Seeing this, the expressions of Donghuang Qiong, Qi Tingzi, and the others grew even darker. The other spectators in the audience were filled with admiration and respect. The Origin Sect Ancestral Court was truly a transcendent force. What could even the Ten Immortal Giants do? On the Origin Sect's turf, the rules still had to be followed!

Was this protecting Lin Xun? No! These were the rules of the Origin Sect, and they must not be challenged or violated. Everyone had their own standards. In this situation, the attitudes of Fang Daoping and the others undoubtedly revealed the heritage and style of the Origin Sect Ancestral Court.

Li Zhen continued in a deep voice, "The assessment continues. For the next few days, don't blame me for being rude if you dare to disregard the rules!"

This was a warning, directed at those from the Immortal Giants like Donghuang Qiong. It was at this moment that the controversy surrounding Lin Xun, sparked by his innate talent, Grand Abyss Heaven Devourer, had subsided. For him, the worst scenario had not yet occurred.

To everyone present, the Origin Sect Ancestral Court had proven its strength and transcendence. However, for the Immortal Giants, this outcome was undoubtedly deeply embarrassing!

Chapter 2704 Acting in Accordance with the Rules

The second round continued. After the tremendous shock of Lin Xun's complete victory over Li Zhongyuan, the following battles, while still intense and exciting, felt somewhat dull.

Several hours passed. The second round had concluded. Of the original twenty-seven participants, sixteen had passed, and eleven had been eliminated. The third round was going to take place a day later.

...

Absolute Sunder Sword Palace.

In the main hall on the first floor, Lin Xun and fifteen other supreme Emperor Ancestors had been housed in separate halls. The Origin Sect Ancestral Court had provided each of them with healing elixirs and cultivation resources. They were all unique treasures rarely found in the outside world.

In one of the halls, Lin Xun let out a long sigh, feeling a sense of relief. The attitude displayed by the Origin Sect Ancestral Court during the second round of the selection had completely reassured him.

At the very least, this meant that as long as he became a successor of the Origin Sect, he no longer had to worry about the external threats posed by the Ten Immortal Giants. However, Lin Xun also knew that many powerful figures from his enemies were present within the sect, and those in those hostile factions were bound to be unable to remain indifferent.

This also meant that his future in the Origin Sect Ancestral Court would undoubtedly be turbulent. However, he didn't care about that. He didn't believe that anyone within the Origin Sect would be so bold as to kill him with their own hands!

Suddenly, Xiao Wenyuan's voice rang out from outside the hall, "Young friend, can we talk privately?"

Lin Xun was startled, then stood up and welcomed Xiao Wenyuan, who was standing outside, into his hall.

"Today, I would like to thank you for your righteous defense. Please accept my greetings." Without asking Xiao Wenyuan's purpose in coming, Lin Xun bowed and expressed his sincere gratitude first.

Xiao Wenyuan was speechless for a moment, then he smiled and said, "What Deputy Pavilion Master Fang, Elder Li Zhen, and I had defended today were the rules of the Origin Sect Ancestral Court, and not you."

Lin Xun nodded, "I understand."

The two sat down and exchanged pleasantries for a moment. Xiao Wenyuan then said, "If nothing unexpected happens, then all sixteen of the participants who have passed the second round of the selection will be able to successfully pass the third round. That's the reason why Donghuang Qiong and the others had chosen to challenge your results in the second round."

It was an abrupt remark, but after a moment's reflection, Lin Xun realized it wasn't surprising. The third round was called Leaving Your Name in the Azure Clouds. At that time, anyone who could inscribe their name using their willpower in the sky three thousand feet above the ground and next to the Absolute Sunder Sword Palace would be considered someone who had passed the selection process.

Failure to reach at least three thousand feet above the ground would result in elimination. According to Lin Xun's understanding, those who had qualified for the third round, like him, would hardly have to worry about being eliminated.

This also meant that people like Donghuang Qiong, Qi Tingzi, and the others had no chance of challenging him in the third round. So, they could only do so during the second round!

Xiao Wenyuan said, "Originally, since you weren't a true disciple of the Origin Sect, I wouldn't be able to tell you these things. But now that it's about to happen, there are some things that you should be aware of."

Lin Xun's heart sank, and he said, "Senior, please enlighten me."

Xiao Wenyuan thought for a moment and said, "Three years ago, we at the Origin Sect already knew you would be participating in this selection process. Or perhaps it is more accurate to say that we even knew about it before you did."

Lin Xun was surprised. Did Third Senior Sister arrange this in advance?

"Just remember, it is precisely because we knew you were coming to attempt the selection process that this matter caused great controversy and turmoil within the sect."

Xiao Wenyuan continued, "A good portion of members wanted to reject you outright, believing you are a calamity who will bring unrest to the sect. Others believe that matters concerning the Origin Sect Ancestral Court should be determined by our own rules and customs. To them, whether you or anyone else takes the test, as long as you become a Origin Sect successor, you are a member of the Origin Sect."

Lin Xun asked, "So, these attitudes have divided the Origin Sect into two camps?"

Xiao Wenyuan laughed. "How could it be that simple? There are others who have been observing this with surface indifference, not expressing their personal opinions. Furthermore, there are some who have long been dissatisfied with some of the Origin Sect's existing problems and hidden issues, so they hope that a so-called troublemaker like you will appear to muddy the waters, thereby providing an opportunity to eliminate some of these problems and unspoken issues."

After a pause, Xiao Wenyuan carefully concluded, "In short, everyone has their own thoughts and considerations regarding your presence."

Lin Xun instantly felt a sense of unease. He had never imagined that his appearance would cause such a stir within the Origin Sect Ancestral Court. After pondering for a moment, he asked, "So, according to Senior, if I truly become a disciple of the Origin Sect what should I do?"

Xiao Wenyuan's answer was simple, "Act in accordance with the rules."

After a moment's reflection, Lin Xun immediately understood his point. No matter what the Origin Sect's influential figures thought, as long as he stayed within the rules, no one could do anything to him!

"Thank you for your guidance, Senior." Lin Xun bowed.

Xiao Wenyuan waved his hand. "This is what Deputy Pavilion Master Fang asked me to tell you. If you want to thank someone, you should thank him."

Lin Xun probed, "Senior, may I ask what Deputy Pavilion Master Fang thinks about my arrival?"

Xiao Wenyuan couldn't help but laugh. "What do you think?"

Lin Xun thought for a moment, quickly understood the hint, and said, "Senior, on your return, please tell Deputy Pavilion Master Fang that I will thoroughly remember his instructions and will act in accordance with the rules."

Xiao Wenyuan smiled and nodded. As he was leaving, he suddenly remembered something and said, "I also owe you a favor from the first round. If you trust me, then I would recommend you choose to cultivate on the Ninth Peak after the end of the selection process."

"The Ninth Peak?" The look in Lin Xun's eyes was quizzical.

Back in the Mystic Forbidden Realm, Mo Lanshan, the training elder of the Ninth Peak had given him a jade pendant, hoping that he would participate in the Origin Sect's selection and be able to cultivate on the Ninth Peak. However, Lin Xun hadn't expected that even Xiao Wen yuan would recommend the same peak to him.

"Yes, of the Nine Great Peaks, the Ninth Peak's overall strength is the lowest, far inferior to the other eight, but it has the cleanest foundation and isn't plagued by too many chaotic undercurrents." Xiao Wen yuan continued meaningfully, "More importantly, the Ninth Peak will offer you more opportunities for advancement."

As Xiao Wen yuan left, Lin Xun pondered the 'advancement opportunities' the older man had mentioned.

His goal in coming to the Origin Sect Ancestral Court was simple: to fulfill Third Senior Sister's instructions and secure the opportunity to become the pavilion master of the Origin Clarity Pavilion within a hundred years!

Becoming a pavilion master, who wielded immense power, was incredibly challenging. This was especially true within the Origin Sect Ancestral Court, where every position was already filled. Those veterans who held significant power were as old as the heavens, and with their cultivation, they could live for countless thousands of years.

Barring any unexpected events, the positions and powers they held were unlikely to change.

If Lin Xun wanted to achieve his goal, he had to start as a true disciple, gradually advancing through the ranks to become a core disciple, then a disciple of the Origin Clarity Pavilion, then deputy deacon, followed by deacon, then elder, to then becoming a deputy pavilion master, and finally qualifying to compete for the position of pavilion master.

If the current pavilion master remained alive and held onto the position, then there would be virtually no chance of advancement.

Several years ago, Origin Clarity Pavilion Master You Beihai had stated that he would step down as pavilion master before attempting to transcend immortality and attain eternity. This once-in-a-lifetime

opportunity had naturally attracted the attention of countless influential figures within the Origin Sect Ancestral Court.

If the Ninth Peak offers more opportunities for advancement, then I might consider it... Lin Xun contemplated. Xiao Wenyan's reminder was timely. Many prominent figures from hostile factions held important positions within the Nine Great Peaks.

For example, the Second Peak Master, Yun Tianming, was the great-grandfather of Yun Muzhe. Entering the Second Peak would be like walking into a tiger's mouth.

With Yun Tianming's methods, it would be absolutely impossible to guard from his tricks as a newly entered successor. On the other hand, there was no guarantee that similar incidents wouldn't occur on other peaks. If the Ninth Peak truly wasn't plagued by such chaos as Xiao Wenyan claimed, even if it ranked last among the nine peaks, Lin Xun would be willing to go!

...

The next morning, in front of the Absolute Sunder Sword Palace, in the vast arena, Lin Xun and fifteen other cultivators had been waiting patiently.

Today, the third round of the selection was going to begin! Unlike the previous rounds, this one was simpler. It wasn't a battle or a fight, but instead a test of one's cultivation and willpower.

At this point, the formation surrounding the Absolute Sunder Sword Palace had been removed, revealing its true form. This building, resembling a divine sword pointed upward, exuded a chaotic, immortal aura. Without the array restraining it, the oppressive aura it exuded made breathing difficult for many audience members. Even Immortals couldn't help but be affected by it.

Rumor had it that the Absolute Sunder Sword Palace itself had been the personal sword of the Origin Sect's patriarch. Long ago, because the sword was imbued with such a murderous aura, it was sealed here by the founder himself.

There were even rumors that the entire Absolute Sunder City was built specifically to suppress this sword! Gazing up from the arena, the Absolute Sunder Sword Palace towered ten thousand feet into the sky, emanating a dark, chaotic hue that was mysterious and unsettling.

Three thousand feet above the ground, densely packed azure clouds of the great dao floated, but the higher one went, the fewer and fewer they became. Each azure cloud of the great dao had been left behind by every newcomer to the Origin Sect over the years, and they had been imprinted here forever.

The third round was going to take place at least three thousand feet above the ground, next to the Absolute Sunder Sword Palace. With their willpower alone, participants were going to attempt to condense an azure cloud of the great dao and leave their name upon it!

Fang Daoping instructed, "Elder Donghuang Qing, you will preside over this third round."

Donghuang Qing followed his orders and stepped forward. His gaze swept over Lin Xun and the other fifteen participants, and he said with a stern expression, "You should all be familiar with the rules of the selection by now. Remember, everyone has only one chance. Do not be careless. Now, the assessment begins!"

Swish!

Every eye outside the arena turned to Zhou Zhizhi. He had been the first to pass the first round, and the first to compete in the second. Now, he would be the first to take on the third round.

Chapter 2705 Soaring All the Way to the Top

People had a deep impression of Zhou Zhizhi. His performances in the first and second rounds weren't exceptional, but they weren't terrible either. The reason why many people remembered him was because he had achieved so many 'firsts.'

He was the first to pass the first round. He was the first to participate and pass the second round. Now, he would be the first to attempt the third round.

It would be hard not to remember him. Even Lin Xun had a deep impression of him. However, Zhou Zhizhi simply didn't want to be in the spotlight for this kind of reason. He would rather be remembered for his achievements than for always being the first to appear...

The test had begun. Zhou Zhizhi calmed himself, took a deep breath, and soared into the air, charging up along the Absolute Sunder Sword Palace.

A distance of three thousand feet was a distance any supreme Emperor Ancestor could reach with a single teleport. To his surprise, when he actually began to fly, he realized that this test was far from as simple as he had originally imagined.

The aura emanating from the Absolute Sunder Sword Palace was like layers upon layers of barriers pressing down upon the void. Let alone teleporting, even flying was incredibly hard against such an oppressive force.

Every step forward was met with a terrifying onslaught of pressure. Soon, he was covered in cold sweat as he expended his entire cultivation base to the utmost. He barely managed to slowly head upward.

To the eyes of the crowd, Zhou Zhizhi was acting as if he was carrying a mountain on his back while trudging through mud. He sometimes stumbled and sometimes panted from fatigue. Sweat had long soaked through his clothes.

Everyone's eyes widened. Zhou Zhizhi was a supreme Emperor Ancestor who had passed two rounds of the selection process, yet now, simply reaching that three thousand foot mark was a struggle. He was straining, using every ounce of strength.

While the rules of this third round might sound easy, it was certainly not something anyone could pass! By the time he reached three thousand feet, Zhou Zhizhi had nearly fallen from the sky several times, leaving many people on edge for him.

Fortunately, he had finally arrived safely. Incredibly, this seemingly miserable figure appeared unsatisfied with meeting the mark and continued on. Each step looked arduous, but he continued to climb higher.

Gradually, many people were moved and filled with admiration for him. Perhaps only someone with such great perseverance and courage could achieve such success in the great dao.

Finally, at nearly three thousand five hundred feet, Zhou Zhizhi stopped. While wiping the sweat from his forehead, he condensed an azure cloud of the great dao with his willpower, and elegantly inscribed his name upon it.

Then, he flopped over and plummeted from the sky head first. Once he got closer to the ground, he flipped over steadily and came to a stop, breathing heavily. "I'm so tired!"

Everyone couldn't help but laugh.

Qi Qingshi came out next. Compared to Zhou Zhizhi, her movements seemed much more easy, but as her figure rose higher, her speed gradually slowed. Finally, she stopped at an altitude of six thousand feet!

This situation immediately caused a sensation in the audience, as her achievement was truly dazzling. However, a hint of resentment and helplessness lingered in Qi Qingshi's eyes.

At this height, the floating azure clouds of the great dao had become sparse, but many still remained. Many more azure clouds floated at even higher heights. All this meant was that in the past, many people, like her, had reached this height, and many more had surpassed it!

Unfortunately, no matter how unwilling she was, she could do nothing about it; this was her limit. After Qi Qingshi passed the test, one supreme Emperor Ancestor after another took the test, with each one reaching the three thousand foot mark without incident.

Some, like Xiang Xiaoyuan, stopped at exactly three thousand feet. Some, like Dugu Youran, stopped at higher altitudes, like three thousand nine hundred feet.

This also showed that Xiang Xiaoyuan, who had come from the Great Thousand Worlds, ultimately lacked the foundational skills of Dugu Youran, a daughter of heaven who had lived in the Seventh Heaven Domain since childhood.

Lin Xun was the seventh to appear. When he began, everyone in the audience perked up, their eyes fixed on him. His astonishing performance in the first and second rounds left no doubt that he would

pass this test. What the audience was actually interested about was how high he would ultimately reach!

"Do you see those azure clouds of the great dao that are nine thousand feet away? It's said that they are the test results of the three closed door disciples who had been accepted by the patriarch of the Origin Sect." An old antique whispered, "If Lin Xun can reach this height, then he will be highly valued by the Origin Sect Ancestral Court!"

Nine thousand feet away were three azure clouds of the great dao that were floating in different areas. Those were the results of the three personal disciples of the founder of the Origin Sect, and they had been sent to the Ninth Heaven Domain to cultivate long ago!

Over countless years, there were many newcomers who had attempted to challenge the nine thousand foot height, but without exception, they had all ended in failure.

"Heh, I know a thing or two about the masters of those clouds. They are now powerful beings among the Eternal Divine Clans, immeasurably noble." Qi Tingzi chuckled. "But I doubt that Lin Xun can achieve such a feat in this third round."

Jun Huan also smiled and said slowly, "Whether you believe it or not, it won't change the fact that my junior brother has entered the Origin Sect Ancestral Court. Also, you'd better keep your mouth shut during the assessment and don't come afoul of the rules. Otherwise, I'm afraid the fellow daoists at the Origin Sect Ancestral Court won't approve of your actions."

"You..." Qi Tingzi's eyes shone with anger. However, just as she was about to say something, she saw Lin Xun starting the test.

Everyone's attention was drawn to him. He stepped into the air, his robes fluttering. His demeanor was like a banished immortal who was walking through the air.

He wasn't fast, yet it was as if he was strolling leisurely in a garden. Within a flash, he reached a thousand feet. To everyone's astonishment, Lin Xun remained calm and composed, his speed remaining unchanged.

Soon, he reached the three thousand foot mark! At this moment, a commotion erupted in the audience, with countless people staring at each other in bewilderment. No one had expected him to reach this height so easily, as if he had encountered no obstacles along the way.

This was undoubtedly terrifying!

"Truly a pervert..." Zhou Zhizhi smacked his lips in amazement.

A surge of resentment welled up in Qi Qingshi's heart. This mere comparison had revealed a vast gap between herself and Lin Xun.

However, many others remained calm, such as Fang Daoping, Xiao Wenyuan, and Li Zhen. Given the prowess he had displayed in the first and second rounds, it was no surprise that he had reached this point.

As time passed, he quickly reached four thousand feet, five thousand feet, six thousand feet... He was soaring all the way! This situation left countless people dumbfounded. Even at this moment, his movements showed no signs of stagnation, and he remained as calm as ever. His leisurely demeanor showed how effortless it was for him!

When he reached eight thousand feet, the crowd fell silent. Everyone stared with their eyes wide open, their mouths dry, and their jaws clenched. Six thousand feet was the best result of the six supreme Emperors Ancestors who had previously participated in the test. Now, Lin Xun had already surpassed that record.

At eight thousand feet, the azure clouds of the great dao were extremely sparse, with fewer than ten clouds in total! Furthermore, it was clear that this was not his final result. After reaching this height, his upward speed slowed slightly. With each step, dao light surged from him, rumbling, and he was clearly under pressure. Despite that, he was not in a state of disarray.

He continued to advance, his figure inching closer to the nine thousand foot mark under the amazed gazes of the crowd. At this moment, even Fang Daoping, Xiao Wenyuan, and the others revealed a look of surprise. Would Lin Xun ultimately be able to leave his name beyond the nine thousand foot mark?

Donghuang Qing, who presided over this assessment, had a gloomy expression. As for Qi Tingzi, Zhongli Chong, and the others in the distance, they were filled with resentment and discontentment.

The more dazzling Lin Xun performed, the more uncomfortable they felt. Who would enjoy watching an enemy they desperately wanted to kill rise to prominence before them?

A scream of excitement resounded, piercing the ears and shocking the hearts of the audience, "Nine thousand feet! He's broken through!"

With countless people watching raptly, Lin Xun had ascended to the nine thousand foot mark!

This was an achievement that would shock the ages, one that would be recorded in the annals of the Origin Sect Ancestral Court and remembered by generations to come. Because, from ancient times until now, only three azure clouds had ever floated above nine thousand feet. From today on, a fourth azure cloud was going to appear in that high sky!

"This is like a slap in the face of those who were blind before." Jun Huan smiled, her eyes narrowing into a pair of crescent moons.

Her comment was indeed like an invisible slap to the face, striking Qi Tingzi. Her face turned pale and tensed out of fury. However, few paid attention to this. All eyes were now focused on Lin Xun because he hadn't stopped yet!

Even though his steps had become difficult and slow, even though his figure occasionally swayed, even though he looked far less calm and unrestrained than before, his pace still hadn't stopped!

People held their breath, their hearts hanging in the air, filled with anticipation. When Lin Xun went past one of the three azure clouds, the crowd erupted in exclamations of astonishment that resembled the roaring sound of a cauldron exploding.

As he gradually surpassed the second of the three azure clouds, many people could not help but clench their fists tightly, their heads becoming dizzy. Even Fang Daoping, Xiao Wenyuan, and the others felt inexplicably nervous at this moment. For only they truly understood the astonishing and unprecedented magnitude of Lin Xun's achievement!

If word of this were to reach the Origin Sect Ancestral Court, even the elders would be on edge!

As Lin Xun gradually and with immense difficulty went past the highest azure cloud, an eerie silence descended upon the crowd. Everyone was speechless, utterly flabbergasted.

Chapter 2706 Above All at Ten Thousand Feet

At nine thousand nine hundred feet above the heavens was the very first great dao cloud! That was the height set by the first disciple of the Master of the Origin Sect, and it was a record no one had ever surpassed since time immemorial.

Despite that, Lin Xun's tall figure had risen beyond that great dao cloud! He was relentless. His moon-white robe was soaked in sweat, and every ounce of his cultivation had been pushed to the absolute limit. He was like a vast abyss suspended beneath the blue sky.

The sight left everyone dumbstruck. Their minds went blank. They might not have truly grasped the significance of this height, but they knew one thing: Lin Xun had just broken the greatest achievement in history! That alone was enough to shake one to the core.

For those Immortals from the Eighth Heaven Domain, their understanding ran far deeper. They all knew that the one represented by the first great dao cloud was now a mighty figure in the Ninth Heaven Domain, an existence whose power and authority could pierce the heavens and encompass the earth.

This was a living legend who could make even the Immortal Giants of the Eighth Heaven Domain bow in awe! Now, the record set by that mighty figure ages ago had been surpassed. If it had been anyone else, they might have erupted in cheers and admiration.

Instead, it felt as though they had swallowed a dead fly, the taste bitter and revolting. Because the one who broke this record was...Lin Xun!

Fang Daoping, who had always been as serene and detached as one living beyond the mortal world, now revealed a complicated expression and sighed, "If our Origin Sect Master were here, he would likely be the first to take him in as a closed-door disciple."

As a veteran of the Origin Sect Ancestral Court, Fang Daoping had long known that anyone who could surpass the nine thousand feet mark in the third round of assessment would be qualified to become the Origin Sect Master's personal successor!

However, countless years had passed without a single person achieving this step, to the point that the matter was almost never brought up again.

"Yes, it's a pity the sect master left on his travels long ago. No one knows when he'll return..." Xiao Wen yuan murmured. He had lived for tens of thousands of years and could be called an old antique, yet before the Origin Sect Master, he was still just a junior.

Since ancient times, since the founding of the Origin Sect Ancestral Court, there had been only one sect master and it had never changed once. In other words, the Origin Sect Master had lived so long that even most of the oldest living immortals could only regard themselves as juniors before him.

"Even without the sect master here, based on today's feat, Lin Xun's future achievements on the immortal path will be no less than those of the sect master's three closed-door disciples." Li Zhen said in a deep voice.

Hearing these sighs of admiration, Donghuang Qing felt as if he had swallowed a dead fly himself. Furthermore, to make it worse, Li Zhen then turned to him. "Elder Donghuang, as chief examiner for the third round, what is your opinion of this?"

Donghuang Qing's chest tightened, but he forced a smile. "This Lin Xun...hmm...even though I can't stand him, I have to admit...he is...he is...quite an extraordinary young man..."

When he finished speaking, he felt utterly miserable. How did it feel to praise someone you despised and wished dead? Others might not know that feeling, but at this moment, Donghuang Qing knew it all too well.

"Beyond ten thousand feet!" At that moment, Fang Daoping spoke, his expression deeply moved.

At the same time, everyone saw that Lin Xun did not stop after passing the tallest great dao cloud. Instead, he continued upward, advancing step by step until he had gone beyond ten thousand feet. That was the stretch of void beyond the very pinnacle of the Absolute Sunder Sword Palace.

If the Absolute Sunder Sword Palace was a sword, then at this moment, Lin Xun was standing proudly upon its tip. In the boundless heavens and earth, none stood higher than he! All eyes were fixed on that tall, transcendent figure in utter silence.

Without a doubt, in today's Origin Sect assessment, Lin Xun had shattered every record in history and even forged a legend of his own. Just for this feat alone, his name would echo through the Eternal True Realm and be remembered for all eternity.

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At ten thousand feet high, the sky stretched into a boundless sea of white clouds. Upon arriving, Lin Xun no longer felt the oppressive force that had weighed on him all the way up. His body felt light, and he let out a long breath of relief.

Even he had not expected the ascent to ten thousand feet to harbor such immense force. By the time he reached nine thousand feet, fatigue was already setting in, and each step upward became increasingly arduous. The climb to the height of ten thousand feet grew ever more gruelling with every passing moment.

Fortunately, it was now all over. Lin Xun used the power of his will to condense a great dao cloud, and inscribed three elegant characters on it, Lin Daoyuan, before preparing to leave.

Suddenly, from the vast sea of clouds, a snow-white cat shot out. Its body was plump, its fur soft and gleaming, and its eyes as deep and serene as a green-blue lake.

A white cat?

Lin Xun froze in surprise. Over the years, he had encountered countless divine beasts and ferocious birds, such as the Celestial Phoenix, the Vermillion Bird, the Black Tortoise, the White Tiger, and even the True Dragon itself.

However, he had never expected that, during the third round of assessment, he would encounter a cat at ten thousand feet above the ground. It was a chubby, snow-white cat with a lazy posture.

Other than that, there was nothing remarkable about it. However, the next moment, Lin Xun stiffened, and an oppressive, suffocating aura pressed down on him.

The moment the white cat's emerald eyes met his, an overwhelming, deadly aura he had never felt before surged toward him. It was so terrifying that it felt as though he was staring not at a cat, but instead at some unfathomable monster!

A moment later, the cat withdrew its gaze, shook its head, and vanished into the sea of clouds. At the same time, a lazy yet threatening voice sighed in his mind, "Little one, don't tell anyone you saw me here. Otherwise, I'll make you regret it."

Lin Xun raised an eyebrow. Am I...being threatened by a cat?

However, he quickly realized that the white cat had to be remarkably extraordinary and was most likely a fierce beast kept by some terrifying figure.

The fact that it could appear above this vast sea of clouds indicates it must have a significant connection to the Origin Sect Ancestral Court.

But why does it forbid me from revealing that I've seen it?

Could there be some unspeakable secret?

"If you continue making wild guesses, don't blame me for being impolite!" The white cat's lazy voice suddenly echoed again in Lin Xun's mind, this time with a menacing edge.

Lin Xun flinched. It can actually read my thoughts?

His expression changed and he didn't dare to probe further.

Don't be fooled by its appearance. It may look like a harmless fat cat, but if it strikes with its claws, the consequences could be disastrous.

With a shake of his head, Lin Xun turned and began descending. In the vast arena, the moment he appeared, countless eyes turned toward him as if witnessing the return of a living legend.

The tense silence was immediately shattered by a roar of excitement. People began chattering eagerly, their inner shock impossible to suppress. Only the forces that hated Lin Xun looked increasingly displeased, their expressions growing darker one by one.

As for the supreme Emperor Ancestors who had yet to take the assessment, such as Donghuang Shaowen and Mu Zunwu, their hearts felt unbearably heavy...

With Lin Xun having set a new record at ten thousand feet, anyone who followed, even if they performed brilliantly, would inevitably be overshadowed if they could not reach the same height! However, reaching such a towering height of ten thousand feet was no easy feat.

This realization weighed heavily on Donghuang Shaowen and the others. They deeply understood just how unlucky they were to take the assessment alongside Lin Xun.

Sure enough, in the following assessments, no one could match Lin Xun's results. Not a single person even reached nine thousand feet! Even those as formidable as Donghuang Shaowen, Mu Zunwu, and Zhongli Feiyun could only ascend to around seven thousand feet.

The crowd's reactions were also lukewarm. After witnessing Lin Xun's astonishing feat, the remaining assessments seemed dull and unremarkable by comparison.

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The three rounds of assessment came to an end. Lin Xun and thirteen other supreme Emperor Ancestors passed successfully, while nearly a hundred others were eliminated.[1]

However, no one would remember the losers. All anyone knew was that, from this day forward, Lin Xun and the other thirteen supreme Emperor Ancestors would become successors of the Origin Sect, and their feats in the three rounds of assessments would spread across the Eternal True Realm in record time!

Among them, the brightest star was naturally Lin Xun. This young man, gifted with the innate talent of the Grand Abyss Heaven Devourer and a successor of Fangchun Mountain, had left everyone astounded across all three rounds of the assessment.

No one could forget his astonishing feats in the first round. Nor could they forget that in the second round, he became the only contestant to defeat the gatekeeper, and the one he defeated was a figure ranked among the top ten of the Nine Peaks.

In addition, they would never forget that in the third round, he shattered the eternal record, writing a new legend atop the ten-thousand-foot sky!

In the past, his might and terror shook the world, and his fame was unrivalled, but he was despised by countless immortal forces. Despite his fame, everyone knew he could face death at any moment.

Now, he was about to become a successor of the Origin Sect. Who among the forces that once despised him would dare act as they had before? Even if they did dare, they would have to carefully weigh the consequences first!

Although the assessments had ended, the crowd around the Absolute Sunder Sword Palace lingered, unwilling to leave, and it took a long time for them to gradually disperse. Lin Xun and the thirteen supreme Emperor Ancestors would be led by Fang Daoping into the Origin Sect Ancestral Court for the ceremony to accept them as disciples on the next day.

“Elder, I need to speak with my senior sister,” Lin Xun said, seeking instructions from Fang Daoping.

“Go ahead. No one in this Absolute Sunder City would dare lay a hand on you. Just make sure to return to the Absolute Sunder Sword Palace before dawn tomorrow.” Fang Daoping replied casually.

Lin Xun turned and left. Outside the arena, Jun Huan, who had been waiting, ran forward and hugged him tightly, laughing warmly. "You truly deserve to be my junior brother!"

Her eyebrows danced with joy, her smile radiated pride, and her stunningly beautiful face was filled with genuine delight. However, Lin Xun felt slightly stiff.

Jun Huan was already tall, with only half a head's difference between them. As she wrapped her arms tightly around him, even through the layers of clothing, Lin Xun could clearly feel the perfection of her figure...

Chapter 2707 Hidden Undercurrents

After a moment, Jun Huan realized something was off and pushed Lin Xun away. Her beautiful eyes flashed as she glared at him fiercely. "How does it feel?"

Lin Xun froze, stunned. "I..."

Does she want me to describe the feeling of the embrace?

Jun Huan reached out and pinched his arm sharply. "I'm asking you how it feels to become a successor of the Origin Sect!"

Her pretty face was slightly flushed, a little warm, yet on the surface, she appeared perfectly composed. Earlier, she had been overcome with emotion and gave Lin Xun a big hug, but it was clear that this little brat had taken advantage of her!

"Oh...nothing special," Lin Xun replied causally. Becoming an Origin Sect disciple was expected. What puzzled him more was the mysterious white cat he had encountered ten thousand feet above the ground.

"Let's go for a drink." Jun Huan grabbed Lin Xun by the sleeve and led the way. Naturally, he didn't refuse.

Absolute Sunder City was bustling and prosperous. Every street and alley was filled with cultivators, and teahouses, restaurants and various shops lined the roads. All of these had been established by the native residents.

Their ancestors had lived here for generations. Protected by the Origin Sect Ancestral Court, they had no fear of calamity and lived carefree lives. However, they had little hope of leaving Absolute Sunder City and venturing beyond the Thousand Star Sea.

For countless years, the Thousand Star Sea had been sealed by restriction forces, isolating it from the outside world. Only for the recruitment of successors did the Origin Sect Ancestral Court lift these restrictions, allowing free passage in and out.

However, once the assessment ended, the Thousand Star Sea would once again become isolated. Inside a restaurant, Lin Xun and Jun Huan sat drinking together. The wine was called Youthful Travels, a speciality of Absolute Sunder City

With its unusual name, the wine was strong and sweet, fiery yet invigorating, like the unrestrained spirit of youth, leaving a unique taste on the palate.

“Senior Sister, those old guys aren’t going to give up so easily. I’m worried they might take action once you leave the Thousand Star Sea.”

After three rounds of drinks, Lin Xun could no longer keep his worries to himself. He would be joining the Origin Sect Ancestral Court, where no one could threaten him. However, Jun Huan would soon be leaving, and given the nature of those Immortal Giants, they would never let such a chance to strike her slip by.

“Don’t worry, since I dared to come this far with you, I naturally have the confidence to face any danger.” Jun Huan replied with a confident smile. The wine had left a delicate flush on her fair, smooth cheeks, and her limpid eyes brimmed with an alluring charm.

There was an irresistible grace to her drunken state. However, Lin Xun had no time to appreciate it. He said, “Should I ask Deputy Pavilion Master Fang Daoping to see if he can help?”

Jun Huan scoffed, "Little Junior Brother, you're underestimating your senior sister. This is the Seventh Heaven Domain, not the Eighth. Even without the Boundless Nearness Talisman, my cultivation alone is enough to deal with anyone at my cultivation level."

Lin Xun opened his mouth to argue but Jun Huan raised her glass and said, "Stop overthinking and drink!"

She was as bold and fearless as any man. Lin Xun sighed inwardly, pushed all distractions aside, and drank with Jun Huan. Just as dawn was breaking, his senior sister let out a long breath, and the drunkenness in her beautiful eyes vanished without a trace.

"Junior Brother, if you ever run into any trouble in the future, use this jade slip to contact me." She handed Lin Xun a slip carved from the bone of some strange beast.

"Senior Sister," Lin Xun hesitated after taking it. "There's something I'd like to ask your help with."

Jun Huan teased with a smile, "Oh? We haven't even parted yet and you're already asking me for favors. Tell me, what could make my little junior brother so worried?"

Lin Xun said quietly, "Senior Sister, I'm a little worried about Mister Lu, Grandpa, and Uncle..."

Jun Huan immediately understood. Now that Lin Xun's possession of the Grand Abyss Heaven Devourer talent had been exposed, his enemies might find themselves powerless to harm him directly, but they would almost certainly not let the Luo Clan off so easily! Once the Luo Clan was shackled, it would be enough to pose a grave threat to him.

"Leave this to me," Jun Huan promised.

That very day, she left Absolute Sunder City. Lin Xun personally saw her off. As her graceful figure disappeared into the distance, he drew a deep breath and murmured, "Senior Sister, take care..."

That same day, all the cultivators from the outside world departed from Absolute Sunder City, heading towards the Thousand Star Sea. If they didn't leave now, the Thousand Star Sea would be completely sealed off within three days, and by then, no one would be able to leave even if they wished to.

Lin Xun and the thirteen others gathered in the Absolute Sunder Sword Palace, waiting for some time.

"Elder Xiao, Elder Li, and Elder Donghuang...stay behind. If anyone makes a move in the Thousand Star Sea, stop them immediately. Fang Daoping instructed, "And if you find outsiders trying to remain here, drive them away. Do not endanger their lives."

"Yes." Xiao Wenyuan, Li Zhen, and Donghuang Qing acknowledged the order.

"Are you all ready?" Fang Daoping turned to Lin Xun and the thirteen others.

Everyone nodded. Without another word, Fang Daoping flicked his sleeve, and he, Lin Xun and the others vanished into thin air.

As soon as they left, Donghuang Qing took a deep breath, then turned to Xiao Wenyuan and Li Zhen, bowing.

"Gentlemen, I'm sure you're well aware that there are many who don't want Jun Huan, a successor of Fangchun Mountain, to leave here alive. I wonder if you might grant me this favor...and turn a blind eye to the matter? My Donghuang Clan, together with friends from the Eighth Heaven Domain, would certainly ensure such goodwill does not go unrewarded!"

He bowed deeply again.

Xiao Wenyuan was taken aback and glanced toward Li Zhen. Li Zhen's voice was icy. "This isn't about favors...it's about upholding the rules."

Without so much as a glance at the bowing Donghuang Qing, Li Zhen turned and left the Absolute Sunder Sword Palace.

A shadow crossed Donghuang Qing's face, but he forcibly suppressed his anger. "Li Zhen's temper is like a stone from the bottom of a toilet pit, stinking and unyielding. No wonder that after all these years he's still just an elder, while Fang Daoping, who entered the Origin Sect Ancestral Court alongside him, has already become a deputy pavilion master."

As he spoke, he looked at Xiao Wenyan and said, "Brother Xiao, you're not going to be like Li Zhen, are you?"

Xiao Wenyan sighed, "Elder Li has already made his stance clear. Even if I side with you, Elder Donghuang, it would be meaningless. In my opinion, it's best to follow the rules."

With that, he too turned and left. Donghuang Qing's expression darkened further. He muttered, "Everyone knows that Li Zhen has a foul temper, but you, Xiao Wenyan...you're no better!"

After a long silence, he took out a jade pendant, crushed it, and said, "Tell them to act only after they've left the Thousand Star Sea."

On that day, a great battle erupted outside the Thousand Star Sea, drawing countless gazes from all directions. However, it didn't take long for the battle to end.

According to later reports, Jun Huan, a successor of Fangchun Mountain, had been besieged, yet she still managed to slay Qi Tingzi, a Nirvana Spirit Immortal, before escaping with injuries. The news shook the world.

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Origin World.

This was a secret realm vast as a world created in the depths of the Thousand Star Sea. It was less a secret realm and more a boundless great world, surpassing the twelve grotto heavens of the Seventh Heaven Domain.

Central Dao Palace.

This was the heart of the Origin Sect Ancestral Court. At this moment, the peak masters and elders from all nine peaks had gathered outside Central Dao Palace.

“I want to see what kind of person this Lin Xun is. He managed to defeat my Second Peak’s core successor, Li Zhongyuan!” Second Peak Master, Yun Tianming, said coldly. He was clad in a snow-white robe that set off his handsome features and flowing beard. With his hands behind his back, he exuded an imposing, awe-inspiring presence.

The crowd’s expressions varied. They had all heard what had happened in the three rounds of assessments, and knew that among the fourteen successors joining the Origin Sect this time, Lin Xun was the brightest star.

Unfortunately, his identity was also the most contentious. He was a disciple of Fangchun Mountain and a descendant of Luo Tongtian. His very name had long stirred controversy and unrest within the Origin Sect.

“So, you mean you don’t want Lin Xun to join the Second Peak?”

The question came from a sage-like old man with snow-white hair and beard framing a kindly face and a spring-breeze smile.

Yue Wuchou!

He was the master of the First Peak and a Nirvana Spirit Stage old antique.

“I never said that.” Yun Tianming replied expressionlessly, “On the contrary, I am determined to secure such a peerless talent. If he joins the Second Peak, he will surely shine brilliantly in the future Nine Peaks Dao Contest.”

At this, someone chuckled, “Brother Tianming, as I recall, in the first round of the assessment this boy humiliated your great-grandson Yun Muzhe and nearly shattered Li Zhongyuan’s dao heart in the second. Under such circumstances, can you really overlook the past?”

The speaker, clad in green robes and appearing like a handsome young man, was Nan Bohong, master of the Third Peak.

Yun Tianming frowned. "If he can serve the Second Peak, why should I care about such things?"

Several people revealed expressions of disapproval. After all, who could guarantee Yun Tianming had no hidden agenda in wanting Lin Xun to join the Second Peak?

"In my opinion, that boy will most likely choose the First Peak. After all, it's been the strongest for years, and its foundation is unmatched among the Nine Peaks," someone remarked.

Yue Wuchou shook his head with a sigh, "Though I welcome him in the First Peak, I have no wish for the trouble he'll bring. I'm sure all of you have already thought this through and made your plans. I'll be blunt...no matter which of the nine peaks he enters, plenty of disasters will follow, and I have no wish to be caught up in that storm."

He made his stance clear. The others exchanged glances, fully aware that even if Yue Wuchou wished to stay out of the storm, the First Peak was destined to be dragged in. After all, who didn't know that many of the First Peak's fiercest figures hailed from the Eighth Heaven Domain?

Of course, the same was true for several of the other peaks. In short, every towering figure present harboured their own schemes, and without exception, they revolved around the young man about to arrive!

Taking it all in, Mo Lanshan could not help but sigh inwardly, recalling his meeting with Lin Xun in the Mystic Forbidden Realm. Who could have imagined that the arrival of this youth would already have the Origin Sect Ancestral Court roiling with hidden undercurrents and unpredictable waves?

Just then, ripples spread across the distant void, and one figure after another emerged: Fang Daoping, Lin Xun, and the others.

Chapter 2708 Joining the Ninth Peak

Before the Central Dao Palace, when Fang Daoping and the others arrived, all eyes turned toward them and quickly settled on Lin Xun. The atmosphere shifted subtly. Lin Xun sensed the change but remained unbothered.

“Everyone,” Fang Daoping said calmly, “these fourteen individuals have passed the assessment and become successors of our Origin Sect. I’m sure you’re all aware of this already. We will now begin the disciple recruitment ceremony. From among the Nine Peaks, you may choose any successor you wish and state your terms, but the final choice rests with the successors themselves.”

This was the long-established rule for taking disciples.

“Zhou Zhizhi, if you join the First Peak, I promise that within ten years you will become a core disciple and receive the resources to pursue immortality!” Yue Wuchou, master of the First Peak, spoke up without hesitation.

“Dugu Youran, the Sixth Peak has been waiting for you.”

“Qi Qingshi, Donghuang Shaowen, Mu Zunwu...the three of you are welcome in my Fourth Peak.”

Voices rang out in quick succession as the masters of the nine peaks extended offers, each setting out their own terms. The scene grew lively. Several invitations were also extended to Lin Xun, including from Yun Tianming of the Second Peak, Nan Bohong of the Third, and Mu Yunzhen of the Fourth.

On the surface, they were eager to take in such a dazzling supreme Emperor Ancestor, but what truly lay behind their smiles was known only to themselves.

Lin Xun took it all in quietly, without saying a word. He had already learned from Xiao Wenyan that his arrival had stirred great discord within the Origin Sect. Even among these nine peaks, there were no doubt quite a few harbouring ulterior motives.

Thus, he chose not to respond to these invitations right away. Before long, after some contest, Zhou Zhizhi agreed to cultivate at the First Peak, bringing a broad smile to Yue Wuchou’s face.

Soon after, Dugu Youran accepted the Sixth Peak's invitation. The Sixth Peak's master, Wen Dongmian was the only woman among the nine peak masters. She was a gentle and dignified figure.

When she saw Dugu Youran accept, she couldn't help but smile. After all, Dugu Youran's granduncle was Dugu Yong, one of the deputy pavilion masters of the Origin Emptiness Pavilion.

The Origin Emptiness Pavilion oversaw the transmission of cultivation arts and safeguarded the sect's inheritances. Its status was akin to that of a scripture repository. Having Dugu Youran join was a stroke of good fortune for the Sixth Peak.

Xiang Xiaoyuan joined the Seventh Peak. Many revealed expressions of mild surprise at the sight. These old foxes were anything but naive. They had long investigated Xiang Xiaoyuan's background and they knew that she came from the Liuxiang Clan and possessed no other illustrious lineage.

Moreover, among the fourteen successors, her assessment results ranked in the lower-middle tier. These facts were hardly enough to raise any eyebrows. However, from the first round of assessment, it was clear to everyone that she and Lin Xun shared a close bond and were likely good friends. In addition, with such ties to Lin Xun, it naturally changed everything.

As a result, even an important figure like Yue Wuchou, the First Peak Master who had no wish to be caught up in Lin Xun's affairs, had never even considered taking Xiang Xiaoyuan in.

However, who would have thought the Seventh Peak Master extended her an invitation! It was an intriguing move, enough to make Lin Xun pause and remember the Seventh Peak Master's name: Tian Wucuo.

Soon after, the other successors made their choices one after another. For example Donghuang Shaowen and Mu Zunwu both joined the Fourth Peak. Qi Qingshi entered the Third Peak. Zhongli Feiyun entered the Second Peak.

In the end, only Lin Xun remained. All eyes turned toward him, each gaze carrying a different expression, all anticipating his decision.

"If you don't know how to choose, I'll help you." At that moment, Fang Daoping suddenly spoke out.

His words made the expressions of many important figures shift subtly. Fang Daoping was the Deputy Pavilion Master of Origin Clarity Pavilion, what stance would he take now?

“Thank you for your kindness, Elder. I have already made my decision. I plan to go to the Ninth Peak,” Lin Xun replied.

His answer stunned everyone. Even the Ninth Peak Master, Qin Wuyu, froze in surprise. He hadn’t extended an invitation to Lin Xun throughout this entire time! What was going on?

However, Fang Daoping didn’t seem the least bit surprised. He turned to Qin Wuyu with a smile. “Congratulations, Peak Master Qin. With Lin Xun joining the Ninth Peak, its future ranking will surely improve greatly.”

The expressions in the hall grew rather peculiar. The corners of Qin Wuyu’s lips twitched before he forced out a hearty laugh. “It is a great honor for me, and a blessing for the Ninth Peak, to have young friend Lin Xun join us!”

Of course, it was plain to everyone that his words were spoken with reluctance. Even Lin Xun could tell that Qin Wuyu’s smile wasn’t sincere...

“It’s settled then,” Fang Daoping declared. “Three days from now, I will deliver the sect tokens of these fourteen people to each of the nine peaks. From today onward, these disciples will share in your glory...and your losses.”

The gathered leaders all gave slight nods. Then, each departed with their new successors.

“Let’s go.” Qin Wuyu cast Lin Xun a glance, let out a light sigh, and waved his sleeve. An auspicious cloud rose beneath them, carrying both away until they vanished from sight.

After watching them leave, Fang Daoping turned and walked alone into the Central Dao Palace. Inside, two figures sat cross-legged. One was a haggard, bony man clad in coarse sackcloth. He was Tang Qiu, a Deputy Pavilion Master of the Origin Clarity Pavilion.

The other one was rotund like a perfectly round ball, sitting there like a small hill of flesh. He was Yu Xing, another Deputy Pavilion Master of the Origin Clarity Pavilion.

Tang Qiu and Yu Xing, together with Fang Daoping, were the three Deputy Pavilion Masters of the Origin Clarity Pavilion.

In the years since the Pavilion Master, You Beihai, entered closed-door cultivation, the three had overseen all matters of the Origin Clarity Pavilion.

“Has the recruitment of successors been completed?” Seeing Fang Daoping come in, Yu Xing asked with a smile. His plump face was creased with squinting eyes, radiating an air of affable kindness.

Fang Daoping gave a brief nod, then turned his gaze toward Tang Qiu. “Pavilion Master Tang, were you the one who assigned the jade talisman that Li Zhongyuan carried during the second round of assessment?”

The thin and gaunt Tang Qiu slowly opened his eyes, his face expressionless. “Is there a problem?”

“Whether there’s a problem or not, you know better than anyone.” Fang Daoping, normally aloof and calm like drifting clouds, now spoke with unmistakable force. “In fact, Deputy Pavilion Master Tang, you should count yourself lucky that Lin Xun wasn’t eliminated this time. If the Origin Sky Pavilion who enforces the sect’s laws had decided to investigate, I’m afraid the consequences would have been dire.”

Tang Qiu’s brow furrowed, his gaze turning cold. “I have always acted in accordance with the rules and never done anything disgraceful. Why should I fear the Origin Sky Pavilion’s investigation?”

“Alright, alright, that’s enough. The assessment is over, what’s the point in arguing now?” Yu Xing said with a smile, stepping in to defuse the tension.

However, Fang Daoping stated evenly, “I could choose not to pursue this matter, but that battle has left Li Zhongyuan’s state of mind fractured. He is among the top ten supreme Emperor Ancestors of the nine peaks. As far back as hundreds of years ago, he already possessed the aptitude to prove the dao and

attain immortality. Yet now, he has suffered such a calamity during the assessment. I fear...certain people will find it hard to let this pass without assigning blame.”

Tang Qiu responded coldly, “Is that so? Deputy Pavilion Master Fang, you were the one in charge of this assessment. Now that something like this has happened, I’m afraid you won’t be able to stay out of it.”

At that moment, a clear voice sounded from outside the Central Dao Palace, “Deputy Pavilion Masters, word has come from the Origin Clarity Mountain. Pavilion Master You has invited the three of you to meet him.”

Pavilion Master You!

It could only be You Beihei, the master of Origin Clarity Pavilion who had been in closed-door cultivation for years!

Fang Daoping, Tang Qiu, and Yu Xing were all visibly taken aback. Could this assessment have actually alarmed the pavilion master, forcing him to end his seclusion?

Without hesitation, the three immediately set off.

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The Ninth Peak, also known as Lotus Peak, was located in the northwest of the Origin World. Like a lotus platform rising to the heavens, it exuded an air of elegance and spiritual vitality. Auspicious clouds carried Qin Wuyu and Lin Xun all the way to the Ninth Peak.

The peak master remained silent throughout the journey. His features were plain, the wrinkles between his brows forming the shape of the character ‘川’. His skin was dark and he wore a simple cloth robe. His entire appearance was unremarkable.

However, this inconspicuous man was a Nirvana Spirit Immortal! When the Ninth Peak came into view, Qin Wuyu hesitated, then came to a stop. “Lin Xun, since you are now a successor of the Ninth Peak, there are some things you should know in advance.”

Lin Xun bowed. "Please instruct me, Peak Master."

Qin Wuyu said, "You are no ordinary disciple. I won't hide this from you... Like Yue Wuchou, the master of the First Peak, I had no wish to be dragged into trouble. In truth, I was inwardly opposed to your arrival."

Lin Xun was silent for a moment before saying, "In other words...I've put you in a difficult position, Peak Master."

Qin Wuyu gave a faint sigh. "Not exactly difficult, but rather...a bit tricky."

Immediately, he shook his head. "But there's no point dwelling on it now. Since you are here and now a successor of the Ninth Peak, I will treat you as one of my own. As long as you don't violate the sect's rules, no matter what happens, I will stand behind you. But if you break those rules, I will not be able to shield you."

His words were direct, candid and left no room for misunderstanding.

Lin Xun found himself warming to him because of this. He said in a serious voice, "I will remember your guidance, Peak Master. Please rest assured."

Qin Wuyu nodded, said no more, and led Lin Xun straight to the Ninth Peak. This mountain was a place of breathtaking beauty and divine elegance, like a treasured land of the immortals.

Rolling seas of clouds surged, suffused with myriads of divine rays, while the dense and majestic essence of primordial chaos drifted over the lotus-shaped Ninth Peak, bathing it in resplendent light.

From a distance, the sight left Lin Xun awestruck. He recalled the Emerald Bamboo Blessed Land, home of the Zhuang Clan. He had also been awestruck by its beauty, but compared with the Ninth Peak, it was nothing.

This was the Ninth Peak! Furthermore, it was just one of many wondrous sites within the Origin World! From this alone, one could see the depth and transcendent might of the Origin Sect, one of the Four Great Ancestral Courts.

No wonder even the Ten Immortal Giants of the Eighth Heaven Domain treated it with reverence! When Qin Wuyu and Lin Xun arrived at the summit, many figures were already waiting.

Everyone from the Ninth Peak had gathered, including true disciples, core disciples, and a host of elders. They had clearly been waiting for some time.

“Lin Xun?!”

“It’s him?”

The moment they saw that the successor Qin Wuyu had brought back was Lin Xun, a wave of surprise swept through the crowd.

Chapter 2709 Plan

The rankings of the nine peaks were never fixed. Take the current Ninth Peak, Lotus Peak, as an example. It held the title of ‘ninth’ simply because it ranked last among them. This ranking had clung to Lotus Peak for countless years.

Changing positions, in theory, was simple. Every thousand years, the core disciples of all nine peaks of the Origin Sect would compete in the Nine Peaks Dao Contest. When that time came, the rankings would be reshuffled according to the performance of each peak’s core disciples.

Of course, in the many Nine Peaks Dao Contest of the past, Lotus Peak’s dismal performances had left its ranking firmly fixed at the bottom to this very day... If the nine peaks were ranked by overall strength, Lotus Peak was undeniably the weakest.

Thus, when the elders and disciples of the Ninth Peak saw that the successor brought back by Peak Master Qiu Wuyu was Lin Xun, they were all visibly astonished. After all, they knew what had happened during the three rounds of the assessments. How could they not know how heaven-defyingly powerful Lin Xun was?

What they hadn't expected was that Lin Xun would actually choose to join Lotus Peak, the lowest-ranked among the nine peaks... Only the elders faintly guessed the truth, feeling a mix of joy and concern in their hearts

They were pleased because with Lin Xun joining the Ninth Peak as there was no longer any doubt that the Ninth Peak's ranking could be turned around. They were concerned, however, because he seemed trailed by endless troubles, and it would be all too easy for the Ninth Peak to be dragged into it...

Qiu Wuyu offered no explanation. After bringing Lin Xun to the summit, he simply said, "Elder Mo, you've met Lin Xun before. I'll leave him in your care."

Then, without another word, he turned and left. Everyone was stunned. It even seemed as though Peak Master Qiu Wuyu was not particularly pleased about Lin Xun's arrival.

Mo Lanshan broke the silence with a smile. "Little Friend Lin Xun, congratulations on passing the assessment, and welcome to our Ninth Peak. From today onward, you are one of Lotus Peak's successors."

"Brother Lin, we can cultivate together from now on." Ye Chunjun waved cheerfully, clearly delighted at Lin Xun's arrival.

"Brother Lin, do you still remember me? We met last time in the Mystic Forbidden Realm." The speaker was a pretty and charming young woman, her hair tied up in a neat little bun, her eyes bright and lively beneath graceful brows. She spoke with a playful smile, her voice soft and sweet, delightfully pleasant to the ear.

Lin Xun recognized her. She was Qin Ruoling, the daughter of Qin Wuyu, peak master of the Ninth Peak. Standing beside her were several men he had also met before: Meng Haochen, Zhuo Lin, and Huang Muji.

The rest were unfamiliar, but with Mo Lanshan's introductions, Lin Xun quickly gained a clear understanding of the Ninth Peak's situation. Aside from Peak Master Qin Wu Yu, the Ninth Peak had only three elders, including Mo Lanshan, whose cultivation had reached the Immortal Stage.

There were also fifteen true disciples and five core disciples. With Lin Xun's arrival, the number of true disciples finally increased to sixteen.

One reality Lin Xun had to face was that among the nine peaks of the Origin Sect, the Ninth Peak had the fewest disciples and elders. For instance, the First Peak alone boasted nine elders! In addition, its combined number of core and true disciples reached fifty, which was twice that of the Ninth Peak!

Under such circumstances, it was little wonder that in the past Nine Peaks Dao Contest, the Ninth Peak had always placed last. With so few disciples, changing their position was near impossible.

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From that day on, Lin Xun officially became a true disciple of the Ninth Peak and was given his own abode on Lotus Peak.

True disciples enjoyed considerable benefits. Each month, they received one thousand pounds of immortal divine essence and one hundred pounds of immortal divine materials, along with the privilege of entering Scripture Mountain once to consult the sect's inheritances and ancient texts, as well as various other advantages.

Among them, the immortal divine essence was by far the most precious. It was a cultivation resource similar in nature to a cosmic origin crystal, but its value far exceeded it. Born from the primal chaos origin of a universe, this treasure alone was sufficient to fully sustain an Immortal's cultivation needs. Even among the great immortal forces of the Seventh Heaven Domain, immortal divine essence was regarded as a peerless treasure that only true immortals were qualified to enjoy.

The fact that the Origin Sect provided such a resource to its true disciples at the supreme Emperor Ancestor level spoke volumes about its vast wealth and unfathomable foundation.

Immortal divine materials, though secondary, were still incomparably precious, as they were indispensable for refining treasures. To be granted a hundred pounds of them every month was an incredibly generous benefit.

Scripture Mountain was the site of the Origin Sect's scripture repository, a place that had always been guarded by the Origin Clarity Pavilion. The scriptures stored there were as vast as a sea of mist and smoke, encompassing every kind of cultivation text and inheritance under the heavens, and even many that had survived from the previous epoch!

Of course, the most precious of all had to be the rumored immortal legacy within Scripture Mountain!

In the entire Eternal True Realm, an immortal legacy was almost unheard of. This was because every cultivator's path to attaining immortality was different, and the great dao they sought was never the same. It was nearly impossible to instill the profound mysteries of the immortal realm into a form that could be taught or passed down. Despite that, within the Scripture Mountain of the Origin Sect, such an immortal legacy existed!

This fact alone explained why the Origin Sect's status was so transcendent.

"It's a pity not everyone can access it..."

At that moment, Lin Xun sat cross-legged in his own cave-dwelling, reading through a jade scroll. Mo Lanshan had given it to him. Recorded within it were all sorts of matters and regulations about the Origin Sect Ancestral Court. It had helped resolve many doubts he had long carried in his heart.

For example, if he wished to consult the immortal legacy in the Scripture Mountain, two conditions had to be met:

First, one had to be a core disciple of the Nine Peaks.

Second, one had to possess three nine-star merits.

In the Origin Sect, aside from cultivation, disciples could choose to undertake missions issued by the sect to obtain additional cultivation resources. Each mission completed would grant a corresponding amount of merit, which could then be exchanged for resources.

Depending on the mission, merits were divided into nine tiers, from one-star up to nine-star. One-star merits were the most common, while nine-star merits were the highest tier. In other words, to study the immortal legacy from Scripture Mountain, one had to complete three nine-star missions, earning three nine-star merits in total!

As Lin Xun read through the jade scroll's list of unclaimed nine-star missions, the corner of his mouth twitched.

"Refine a complete sixth grade Heaven Rank law power or higher. Reward: one nine-star merit."

"Slay an Evil Spirit Lord whose strength rivals the Heavenly Longevity level, and retrieve its heart. Reward: one nine-star merit."

"Collect a wisp of cosmic primal chaos. Reward: one nine-star merit."

Each nine-star mission was monstrously difficult, their challenge beyond imagination. After going through them, Lin Xin was left speechless. Not to mention the average supreme Emperor Ancestors, even for him, completing those nine-star missions would be no easy task!

"It won't be too late to attempt these after I've adapted and grown familiar with the Origin Sect Ancestral Court," Lin Xun murmured.

He was deeply tempted by the immortal legacy within Scripture Mountain and longed to study it. However, for now, having only just joined the Ninth Peak as a mere true disciple, he lacked the qualifications to pursue such an opportunity.

"The priority should be to become a core disciple first."

Lin Xun never forgot his true purpose in joining the Origin Sect Ancestral Court: to ultimately become the pavilion master of the Origin Clarity Pavilion.

The jade scroll also recorded the conditions for ascending to core disciple status. By the usual process, a new disciple underwent assessment after ten years. At that time, the peak master and three elders

would evaluate one's cultivation, talent, and performance over the decade. As long as the results were outstanding, there was a great chance of promotion.

However, Lin Xun had no intention of waiting ten years. If he advanced by that route, he could never hope to become the pavilion master of Origin Clarity Pavilion within a hundred years.

Fortunately, the jade scroll mentioned an alternative path: Go to Origin Clarity Pavilion to demonstrate your understanding of the dao!

The Origin Clarity Pavilion was responsible for selecting and appointing disciples. At that time, a key figure in charge of promotions would arrange and oversee the dao assessment and accept challenges from others.

Challengers were chosen from the core disciples of other peaks, and the candidate under assessment had to face them in three duels. Losing even a single match would cost them the chance to become a core disciple.

From ancient times until now, many true disciples of the Nine Peaks had attempted this path of advancement, but almost all had ended in failure. It was simply too difficult.

Competition already existed among the nine peaks, so who would willingly watch true disciples from other peaks leap to core disciple status in a single stroke? For example, if Lin Xun chose this path, he would face challenges from the core successors of the eight peaks, and he would have to win all three duels!

Of course, he was not afraid. No matter how strong the core disciples of the other peaks were, they were still only at the supreme Emperor Ancestors level, and in this realm, he had never feared anyone.

Hadn't he already defeated a figure like Li Zhongyuan, ranked among the top ten of the nine peaks? For most, this road might be grueling and seem hopeless. However, for him, it was a reliable shortcut!

"Three days from now, I'll receive my sect token. When that time comes, I'll make a trip to the Origin Clarity Pavilion." Lin Xun decided.

Only with a sect token could one be considered a true successor of the Origin Sect. In the future, whether for cultivation or for obtaining sect resources, everything would depend on it. Likewise, if he wished to go to the Origin Clarity Pavilion to undergo a dao assessment, a sect token would also be required.

“Brother Lin, are you ready?”

Outside his residence, Ye Chunjun’s clear voice rang out, instantly pulling Lin Xun from his thoughts.

“Coming.” Lin Xun stood up and walked outside.

“Let’s go! The junior brothers and sisters are already waiting for you at the banquet. Even all three elders are here, which is quite rare.” Ye Chunjun said with a smile as he watched Lin Xun step out.

Lin Xun nodded with a smile. This was his first day in the Origin Sect. He had become a true disciple of the Ninth Peak and at Elder Mo Lanshan’s suggestions, all the true and core disciples of the Ninth Peak gathered tonight to hold a welcoming banquet for him.

Lin Xun could hardly refuse to attend such a gathering. After all, no matter how renowned he was in the outside world, within the Origin Sect Ancestral Court, he was still nothing more than a newcomer.

Chapter 2710 Waves of Provocation

The banquet had a warm and friendly atmosphere. Whether they were true disciples or core disciples, all were well aware of Lin Xun’s extraordinary performance in the three rounds of assessments. They felt deep admiration and spoke with both respect and awe.

After all, even someone like Li Zhongyuan was defeated by Lin Xun. In the entire Ninth Peak, even Gu Yu, the top-ranked core disciple, was still inferior to Li Zhongyuan in the overall ranking among the nine peaks.[1]

Given this, they did not dare to treat Lin Xun, the ‘newcomer’, lightly. Perhaps the only regret was that Peak Master Qin Wuyu hadn’t come.

As the banquet neared its end, Elder Zheng Qian, who was in charge of the Ninth Peak's rules and punishments, suddenly spoke: "Lin Xun, you must know how perilous your position is. I hope from now on you can remain low-key and avoid stirring up any trouble. Otherwise, it will only drag the Ninth Peak into misfortune."

These words instantly cooled the once warm and lively atmosphere. Lin Xun cupped his fists in salute. "Rest assured, Elder Zheng. Even if I were to make a mistake, I will take full responsibility and ensure the Ninth Peak is never dragged into trouble."

Zheng Qian nodded. "Then let me be blunt: if you dare make a single misstep in the future, I will be the first to hold you accountable."

His tone was calm, but the weight behind his words was severe. The sudden words left everyone unsettled, feeling as though Elder Zheng Qian harbored no goodwill toward Lin Xun, and even revealed a faint air of resistance and rejection.

Lin Xun raised an eyebrow and was about to speak when Mo Lanshan chuckled and eased the tension. "Alright now, let's not spoil the mood."

Zheng Qian rose to his feet. "I have urgent matters to attend to. I'll take my leave. Please, continue without me."

With that, he departed. What had been a lively and harmonious banquet suddenly grew dull because of Zheng Qian, and before long, the crowd gradually dispersed.

"Brother Lin."

On the way back to his abode, Ye Chunjun caught up with Lin Xun. After some hesitation, he sent a voice transmission, "Elder Zheng Qian is vying for a deacon's post in the Origin Sky Pavilion. You must be very careful not to give him any leverage over you."

Lin Xun's eyes narrowed as he replied in voice transmission, "Brother Ye, are you saying Elder Zheng might try to use me as a stepping stone to earn merit in exchange for that position?"

Ye Chunjun sighed, "Whatever the case, you must tread carefully."

Lin Xun immediately understood and cupped his fist. "Thank you for the warning, Brother Ye. Rest assured, I'll repay your kindness when the chance arises."

Ye Chunjun let out a bitter smile. He said in a serious tone, "I ask for nothing in return. With someone like you joining our Ninth Peak, it is truly a blessing. In time, you'll surely shine brilliantly and change the fate of the Ninth Peak. I just don't want to see you plotted against or harmed."

Lin Xun smiled and patted Ye Chunjun on the shoulder. "I understand."

After the banquet, he found himself with a rather good impression of the Ninth Peak's successors. Although the Ninth Peak was ranked at the bottom among the nine peaks, as Xiao Wenyuan had said, it was free of messy conflicts and thus an ideal place for his cultivation.

Even Peak Master Qin Wuyu, who had seemed resistant to him, had already accepted him. As long as Lin Xun acted in accordance with the rules, Qin Wuyu would not give him a hard time.

However, that Zheng Qian...

Upon returning to his own abode, a sharp glint flashed in Lin Xun's eyes as he recalled Elder Zheng Qian's words said at the banquet.

If that old fox truly dares to use me as a pawn to climb his way into the Origin Sky Pavilion, then he can't blame me for being ruthless!

.....

Three days later...

Lin Xun received his sect token from Mo Lanshan. Forged from a rare immortal divine jade, the token bore four characters on the front: Origin Sect Ancestral Court, while the back was engraved with 'Lin Xun, successor of Lotus Peak.'

Upon closer inspection, Lin Xun discovered the token carried an extremely obscure trace of law power! According to Mo Lanshan, the sect token was not just an emblem of identity, but also a treasure infused with law power. If one faced a life-and-death crisis, it could help to resolve the deadly tribulation.

"With this token, you may now collect your cultivation resources from the Origin Emptiness Pavilion." Mo Lanshan said with a smile.

Lin Xun nodded. Origin Emptiness Pavilion was located upon the Origin Emptiness Mountain. Behind the mountain towered the famous Scripture Mountain of the Origin Sect. At its heart lay the Heavenly Treasure Hall, the place where cultivation resources and supplies were managed and distributed.

All successors of the nine peaks obtained their cultivation necessities from here. In addition, the Heavenly Treasure Hall also distributed the sect's missions, and disciples seeking to earn merit had to come here to receive them.

When Lin Xun arrived, the Heavenly Treasure Hall was bustling with activity. Figures crowded the hall, some eagerly claiming new missions, others weary and dust-covered, holding the spoils of completed tasks as they exchanged them for merit.

Lin Xun's appearance immediately stirred commotion among the crowd.

"Look, that's Lin Xun. He defeated Li Zhongyuan and now he's cultivating on the Ninth Peak."

"So that's him."

"Hehe, just wait, there's bound to be a show."

Whispers spread through the crowd as countless gazes fell on Lin Xun, all with different expressions. Although the assessment for selecting successors had ended three days ago, everyone knew that the one who drew the most attention was none other than this Ninth Peak's newly accepted true disciple.

Lin Xun paid the murmurs no mind. His gaze swept the hall before he headed straight toward the counter where cultivation supplies were distributed. Behind the counter sat a fair-skinned man in a black robe. He leaned lazily back in his chair, sipping tea and reading a scroll leisurely.

"Greetings, Senior Brother, I'm here to collect my monthly allowance." Lin Xun produced his sect token and handed it over.

The black-robed man was Chao Zonglin, a disciple of the Origin Emptiness Pavilion. His standing was higher than the core successors of the nine peaks.

After all, the Origin Emptiness Pavilion was in charge of imparting teachings and transmitting inheritances, guarded the Scripture Mountain, and managed the Heavenly Treasure Hall, wielding immense authority.

Years ago, Chao Zonglin was an outstanding core disciple of the Second Peak before being recruited into the Origin Emptiness Pavilion. Without even lifting his eyes from the scroll, Chao Zonglin said indifferently, "Junior Brother, you came too late. This month's allowance is already gone. Come back next month."

From start to finish, he didn't so much as glance at Lin Xun. His attitude was dismissive.

Lin Xun asked, "Is it just me, or is it the same for everyone else?"

"Does it make any difference?" Chao Zonglin replied carelessly.

"Yes," Lin Xun said.

That one word was calm, yet edged with challenge. At that, Chao Zonglin finally closed the scroll, sat upright, and fixed Lin Xun with a cold stare. His voice rang out clearly, "When I say the allowance is gone, it's gone. Understand?"

Although his tone was calm, his words carried oppressive weight. From across the hall, many turned to watch. Sensing the tension, several faces lit up with excitement, as if delighted at the prospect of seeing Lin Xun humiliated.

However, Lin Xun only smiled faintly, his eyes unreadable, and said, "If I find out you're singling me out, don't blame me for being rude."

An inexplicable chill ran through Chao Zonglin's chest. Under Lin Xun's gaze, he felt an oppressive pressure that he could not explain! Despite that, he quickly sneered, "Don't blame you for being rude? Junior Brother Lin Xun, you're new here, you probably don't understand the sect's rules yet. If you've got the guts, go ahead and try."

His laugh was arrogant, his eyes brimming with provocation and disdain. Lin Xun ignored him and turned to leave. Disappointment flickered across many faces.

Chao Zonglin frowned. Watching Lin Xun walk away, he deliberately raised his voice, "Junior Brother Lin Xun, if you happen to come at the wrong time again next month, you won't get your allowance then either."

This was blatant provocation, a clear declaration that no matter how many times Lin Xun came in the future, he would never get his allowance!

Lin Xun paused mid-step. Without turning his head, he said coldly, "If others can claim theirs, then so can I...unless you really are singling me out. If that's the case, I guarantee you'll pay a price you can't imagine!"

Then he strode out.

"You only dare to spout threats, but not act on them. And they call you fearless?" Chao Zonglin chuckled, faintly disappointed.

It seemed Lin Xun neither lost his temper nor lashed out, failing to give him the reaction he wanted.

“It seems Lin Xun isn’t as reckless or overbearing as the rumors claim,” someone in the Heavenly Treasure Hall remarked thoughtfully.

Everyone could tell that Chao Zonglin’s provocation was a deliberate attempt to make things difficult for Lin Xun. However, the person in question endured it and refused to take the bait.

Just then, a group strode into the hall. It was none other than Donghuang Shaowen, Mu Zunwu, Qi Qingshi and several others. They had come for their monthly allowance. Chao Zonglin readily handed over the storage pouches filled with cultivation resources one by one.

Once they had left, Chao Zonglin casually resumed reading his scroll, sipping tea at leisure as he mused to himself. There’s still Xiang Xiaoyuan. That girl is close to Lin Xun. When she comes, I’ll make things difficult for her too...push her until she loses control and strikes. And when she does, I’ll suppress her in one fell swoop...”

Just then, his vision suddenly darkened. Startled, he looked up, only to see Lin Xun, who had left earlier, now returned and standing before him again.

“Junior Brother Lin Xun, why have you come back again?” Chao Zonglin asked offhandedly.

“Why is it that Donghuang Shaowen and the others can receive their allowance, but I cannot?” Lin Xun’s gaze was cold and unfathomable as he fixed it on Chao Zonglin.

He had never left, but had been waiting just outside the hall, watching the entire process of Donghuang Shaowen and the others collecting their monthly allowance.

Chao Zonglin said unhurriedly, “Junior Brother, our sect’s monthly allowances are limited. Donghuang Shaowen and the others notified me in advance, so I set some aside for them. As for you, you simply came at the wrong time. Naturally, there was nothing left.”

“So what you’re saying is that when I come again in the future, I might just keep coming at the ‘wrong time’?” Lin Xun asked.

Chao Zonglin chuckled smugly. “Junior Brother, who can say for certain about such things?”

Lin Xun’s gaze swept across the Heavenly Treasure Hall as he asked, “Are you the only one distributing the monthly allowance here?”

Chao Zonglin’s smile deepened with amusement. “As it turns out, the elders are all occupied with more important matters, so that leaves me as the only one in charge here.

Lin Xun let out a soft “Oh,” then suddenly reached out and grabbed Chao Zonglin in one move.

Completely caught off guard, Chao Zonglin had no chance to resist before Lin Xun’s large hand clamped around his neck, yanking him up from behind the desk.