

Prodigies 2831

Chapter 2831 To the Nirvana Spirit Stage; Battle at the Heaven-Derived Dao Arena

After returning to his dwelling, Lin Xun secluded himself to cultivate. As early as a few years ago, he had already obtained the foundations and chance to break through to the next level. At present, he could reach that threshold any time he wished.

After returning yesterday, his plan had been to secure the deacon position today, enter a long period of seclusion to cultivate, and finally seek the elder position after leaving his seclusion. However, Lin Xun had now changed his plans.

Phew~

With a deep breath, his qi began to circulate. Immediately, dao light rose from him like steam as divine radiance flowed around him, revealing various inconceivable visions. Dao sounds also spread from him in waves like monks chanting the sutras.

For a time, he resembled a godly being seated amidst his divinity as he interpreted and derived the sublime mysteries of the grand dao. The Nirvana Spirit Stage was the metamorphosis of one's spirit and Will Dharma Form, thereby leading to the transformation of one's cultivation.

At the Heavenly Longevity Stage, one would try to comprehend law power in order to create their own immortal law. At the Nirvana Spirit Stage, one could directly refine law power into a part of their own immortal law!

For example, a Heavenly Longevity cultivator could comprehend the essence of a Heaven Rank law power to create their own immortal law from their cultivation. On the other hand, a Nirvana Spirit cultivator could refine and incorporate that same Heaven Rank law power into their immortal law!

That was the scary part about the Nirvana Spirit Stage. It was also why Heavenly Longevity experts would find it almost impossible to suppress a Nirvana Spirit expert even while borrowing law power. After all, a Nirvana Spirit expert's immortal law contained law power, making them unafraid of the suppression from other law power.

Additionally, the higher the rank of law power refined by the Nirvana Spirit expert, the more terrifying the power they could unleash in battle. This was one of the qualitative differences between the immortal laws of a Heavenly Longevity expert and a Nirvana Spirit expert.

Rumble~ Rumble~

Soon, Lin Xun seemed to become an impossibly colossal dao furnace with dao sounds continuously rumbling from him. The dao light around him boiled vigorously, as if about to erupt at any moment.

If not for the Origin Sect's law power and numerous restrictions obscuring the cave dwelling, the disturbance would likely have triggered a grand phenomenon.

A few days later, while meditating, Lin Xun sent out a thought and a dazzling, mini-sun-like pill appeared and flew into his mouth.

It was the Nirvana Spirit Myriad Transformation Pill!

Made from the rare ninth grade Heaven Rank medicine spirit law, only a single pill could be refined once every ten thousand years. When consumed, it would increase the chances of advancing to the Nirvana Spirit Stage by fifty percent. Additionally, it was unbelievably effective in tempering Nirvana Spirit Stage cultivation.

However, the consensus of all three pavilion masters was usually required to obtain the pill, which made it near impossible to obtain no matter how many contributions one accumulated.

This Nirvana Spirit Myriad Transformation Pill was one of Lin Xun's rewards from the Nine Peaks Dao Contest. Its effect of improving one's odds to reach the Nirvana Spirit Stage naturally didn't hold any appeal to him. Instead, his focus was its ability to temper Nirvana Spirit Stage cultivation.

Rumble!

As soon as the pill was swallowed, Lin Xun felt his spirit, heart state, and body begin to burn as if they were amidst a raging fire, making him feel like he was being tempered in a furnace. He held his breath and focused, allowing the tempering to achieve its maximum effect.

For a time, light rose like steam in the cave as he was swallowed by a rumbling radiance.

Seven days later...Rumble!

A sudden loud noise exploded from Lin Xun's cave dwelling as if the primal chaos of the beginning had emerged. Dao power wildly rampaged, violently shaking the restrictive power of the cave. The disturbance continued for a whole fifteen minutes.

After which, a deep abyss vortex appeared where he was seated. As it slowly rotated, the turbulent divine brilliance and dao light were swallowed up like rain falling into the ocean, leaving nothing behind.

Meanwhile, Lin Xun's figure was revealed.

A full and perfect Immortal Halo surfaced behind him. An imposing Will Dharma Form was seated at the center of the halo, breathing in and exhaling the clouds and fog, wind and thunder, the sun, the moon, and the stars, the mountains and rivers, and everything else in between. It was as if all heavens and worlds were swirling around the Will Dharma Form, faintly flickering in and out of reality.

If the Immortal Halo was the infinitely expanding cosmos, then the Will Dharma Form within was the supreme ruler of all existence!

Meanwhile, grand dao power surged from Lin Xun, accompanied by a mysterious and mystical rhythm. His skin glowed with crystalline light as if it were forged from celestial metal, while terrifying vitality pulsed from his flesh, bones, and blood. Even his hair gleamed with a divine luster.

In his body, a primal-chaos-like world seemed to unfold as a grand river of the dao roared within it, rushing through his meridians to reach his five viscera and six bowels. That profound circulation resembled a law power's ever-changing orbit around the world.

Compared to these changes in his body and cultivation, the transformation of his mind-sea and Will Dharma Form were far more astonishing.

His extremely vast mind-sea was populated by billions of flowing divine lights while his Will Dharma Form sat within it like a furnace, emanating a faint aura of eternal permanence. Spirit power surged around the Will Dharma Form, transforming into myriad grand dao laws that interweaved like divine chains. It was a very spectacular sight.

This was the Nirvana Spirit Stage. The Immortal Halo manifesting a Will Dharma Form and the mind-sea that united one's will with the heavens!

The Immortal Halo of the Heavenly Longevity Stage didn't have a Will Dharma Form. Moreover, the Spirit Dharma Form in the mind-sea could never manifest such law-like grand dao power.

"Nirvana Spirit..."

Lin Xun was neither happy nor sad but extremely calm as he felt these earth-shattering transformations. There were no twists or turns, nor were there any surprises. Everything had flowed naturally like water into the sea. Hence, there wasn't really anything to feel emotional about.

Originally, all of this could have happened years ago. However, it also wasn't too late for it to happen now. Soon after, he cast aside any unnecessary thoughts and returned to a state of meditative focus. He began to familiarize himself and consolidate this new realm of power.

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Half a month later, early in the morning, Zhongli Zhe, who was meditating in his cave dwelling, suddenly opened his eyes.

When the cave's restriction was opened, a voice immediately echoed inside, "Reporting, Deputy Deacon Lin Xun has issued a challenge to you from the Origin Clarity Pavilion. If you wish to accept, Deputy Pavilion Master Fang Daoping invites you to come to the Origin Clarity Pavilion now."

Zhongli Zhe was taken aback. Has the one with the surname Lin still not given up?

After some thought, Zhongli Zhe responded, "Come back in an hour."

"Understood." The disciple from outside the cave accepted the order.

Zhongli Zhe rose to his feet and left the cave. It didn't take long for him to report the matter to Deputy Pavilion Master Fu Wenli in his cave dwelling.

Fu Wenli was also taken aback. "Is he really so bold?"

Zhongli Zhe said, "The previous setback has clearly made made him unhappy."

Fu Wenli thought about it and laughed. "I'm not worried that you'll lose. Instead, I'm worried that this will be bad for your reputation. After all, you're the rank one deacon of the Origin Sky Pavilion who has perfect Nirvana Spirit cultivation. If you accept, you'll probably be suspected of intentionally bullying Lin Xun."

Zhongli Zhe also laughed and said, "Since he wants to be oppressed, I don't mind granting his wish."

Fu Wenli muttered, "He's not a rash individual. Since he dares to issue the challenge, he must have a certain degree of confidence. If you do accept, you have to be careful of his talent ability, the Blade of Time. If hit by it, your cultivation will likely be severed."

Zhongli Zhe's pupils abruptly shrank. Soon after, he smiled and said, "Deputy Pavilion Master, you can rest assured that I've already thought of a method to avoid the Blade of Time."

Fu Wenli said, "Good, go then. This old man will personally watch and cheer you on!"

"Understood!"

Zhongli Zhe turned and left.

“Deputy Deacon Lin has issued another challenge in hopes of being promoted to the rank of deacon!”

“Origin Sky Pavilion Deacon Zhongli Zhe has accepted!”

The news quickly spread amongst the three pavilions and nine peaks, causing an uproar.

“Is Lin Xun crazy? He’s only at the Heavenly Longevity Stage, how can he challenge Zhongli Zhe, who is at the perfect Nirvana Spirit Stage?”

The disciples weren’t the only ones alarmed, even the bigwigs of the three pavilions and nine peaks were surprised and in disbelief.

“Isn't this playing right in the enemy's hands? Zhongli Zhe was probably itching for this day to come!”

Several bigwigs with favorable impressions of Lin Xun couldn't help but lament.

“Quick, let’s go to Origin Clarity Pavilion.”

“A fight with such a huge difference in cultivation has probably never occurred in the long history of the sect. I wonder where Deputy Deacon Lin found the courage to do this.”

“Cut the nonsense and hurry up!”

In the Origin Sect, almost every big shot and disciple stopped what they were doing and rushed to Origin Clarity Pavilion as quickly as they could.

It was indeed a rare confrontation. A perfect Heavenly Longevity expert challenging a perfect Nirvana Spirit expert was simply unheard of, especially because it didn’t make any sense.

"It's only been a month. Is he already unable to endure?"

Upon learning the news, even Yuan Changtian couldn't help but be stunned, finding it unbelievable.

"The more this is the case, the more it proves how subpar he is. He isn't worthy of being treated as a formidable foe by you, Young Master." Yuan Xiliu displayed a hint of disdain.

"No, I don't think Lin Xun should be this reckless." Yuan Changtian muttered, "Old Ancestor, accompany me to take a look. Although I've met him once, I've yet to witness his strength. I can use this opportunity to observe it."

"Sure!" Yuan Xiliu nodded in agreement.

Meanwhile, at the Origin Clarity Pavilion, Fang Daoping said, "Zhongli Zhe has accepted your challenge. I plan to arrange the duel at Heaven-Derived Dao Arena."

Lin Xun nonchalantly said, "I'll leave it to Elder."

Fang Daoping looked at Lin Xun and couldn't help but ask, "Things have already reached this state, aren't you going to tell me anything?"

A month ago, Lin Xun, who had been repeatedly rejected, said that he would resume the challenges in a month. Now, Zhongli Zhe had already agreed to the challenge, yet Fang Daoping still knew nothing about the source behind Lin Xun's confidence.

"Elder, please let me have this a little longer. Once the duel starts, you'll know the moment you see it." Lin Xun grinned.

"You..." Fang Daoping helplessly shook his head. "Fine, let's head to the arena."

Chapter 2832 Battle Between the Nirvana Spirit Stage

Heaven-Derived Dao Arena.

Numerous heads bobbed in the crowd. There were big shots from the three pavilions and nine peaks present, but there were even more disciples and successors around. It was a bustling scene with whispers and private conversations spreading incessantly.

From time to time, many gazes would glance toward the middle of the arena where an imposing figure stood.

Dressed in a wide robe popularly worn by officials, his skin shined with a pale gold luster as he stood with his hands behind his back, appearing unfathomable like a bottomless pool while also as towering as a mighty mountain.

Zhongli Zhe!

He was the strongest among the twelve deacons of the Origin Sky Pavilion, and a perfect Nirvana Spirit Stage expert. In the outside world, a person like him could easily support an entire Immortal Imperial Clan!

Even in the Origin World, his status was comparable to the Nine Peak Masters, making him a big shot in the sect.

Presently, Zhongli Zhe displayed a calm expression. His eyes were closed in meditation, ignoring the gazes around him. He knew that many people would despise him, believing his acceptance of Lin Xun's challenge was no different from bullying.

However, he didn't mind. After all, it was Lin Xun who issued the challenge, and he had merely accepted, so it wouldn't affect his reputation much. Instead, Zhongli Zhe hoped to use this opportunity to give Lin Xun a vicious beating.

Over the years, Lin Xun had made quite a name for himself, and his every move stirred the hearts and minds of the entire Origin Sect. If such an exceptional talent could be trampled under his feet...

It would surely be an exquisite feeling, right? A faint glimmer of excitement rose in Zhongli Zhe's heart.

A commotion emerged in the crowd far away, followed by a burst of noise.

"Lin Xun is here!"

"Alas, I don't know what he's thinking. How can he risk challenging Deacon Zhongli Zhe? If he's defeated, all of his built up momentum will be crushed."

"How do you know Deputy Deacon Lin is going to lose?"

"How can a perfect Heavenly Longevity Stage expert defeat a perfect Nirvana Spirit Stage expert? Since time immemorial, such a thing has never happened in the Eternal True Realm!"

Amidst the heated conversations, Lin Xun and Fang Daoping arrived at the Heaven-Derived Dao Arena, and Lin Xun immediately became the focal point.

Numerous people revealed complicated expressions, not understanding why he was being so rash. Some people were filled with anticipation, believing that there must be some basis behind his actions.

Lin Xun scanned the area, seeing Fu Wenli, Qi Xiaoyun, Chi Wen and the other deputy pavilion masters, as well as Xuan Feiling, Dugu Yong and the others.

When his gaze reached a certain corner, he couldn't help but be taken aback and asked, "Isn't Deacon Mu Qin supposed to be in seclusion, why is he so free to come here?"

Many people followed his gaze, and found Deacon Mu Qin of the Origin Sky Pavilion as traces of disdain emerged in their eyes.

A month prior, the first opponent Lin Xun challenged was Mu Qin. However, the Nirvana Spirit Stage expert had avoided the fight, claiming to be in secluded cultivation. How could anyone not feel contempt to see him here?

"Hmph!"

Mu Qin's expression darkened. "Must I report to Deputy Deacon Lin when I leave my seclusion?"

"Of course not." Lin Xun shook his head. "If Deacon Mu Qin doesn't mind, I'd love to take this opportunity to have a spar with you. Will Deacon Mu Qin be avoiding me again?"

A commotion shook the area. No one had expected Lin Xun to create more problems at this juncture. Mu Qin was initially taken aback before uncontrollable rage surged in his heart. After being provoked in such a public setting, what dignity would he have left if he refused?

However, before he could say anything, Zhongli Zhe, who was waiting in the Heaven-Derived Dao Arena, indifferently said, "Deputy Deacon Lin, I'm your opponent in this assessment, not anyone else."

His voice spread across the arena.

"Don't worry, you'll definitely be first." Lin Xun grinned and said, "A month ago, many deacons were too busy to accept my challenge, leaving me with some lingering regrets. So I thought I'd take this opportunity to see if I can spar with them, and finally put these regrets to rest."

The crowd's expressions turned strange. Did he really believe he was a match for Zhongli Zhe?

"Cut the crap and come here already!" In the middle of the arena, Zhongli Zhe had clearly grown impatient. "Do you have to keep wasting time?"

"Lin Xun, today is your evaluation for the promotion to deacon. It's an important affair, so let's not delay any further." Fu Wenli frostily said in the distance. He couldn't help but feel fed up with Lin Xun's actions.

"Deputy Pavilion Master Fu is right, we shouldn't delay too much." Lin Xun happily complied and landed in the arena.

Silence eclipsed the previously noisy atmosphere as all eyes turned to Lin Xun and Zhongli Zhe.

Zhongli Zhe coldly said, "Deputy Deacon Lin, this is an assessment. Although there's a big gap between our cultivation levels, I will not show any mercy the moment we fight. When you lose, you'd best not blame me for bullying you."

"Naturally." Lin Xun nodded.

Rumble!

Zhongli Zhe didn't speak any further. His aura abruptly changed as a golden Immortal Halo sprung forth. A Will Dharma Form was seated within it, shining brilliantly like a sun. The aura that could only belong to a perfect Nirvana Spirit expert also spread.

Numerous people's expressions changed as a heavy feeling swallowed their hearts. What did Lin Xun have to fight against such power?

Zhongli Zhe's eyes gleamed sharply as he softly spat out a single word, "Rise!"

Clang!

A black spear appeared. He grabbed by it as he lunged forward and thrust the spear like a thunderbolt. He struck with overwhelming swiftness and ferocity, clearly showing no mercy at all!

Many Nirvana Spirit experts outside the arena couldn't help but inwardly shiver at this scene, feeling tremendously threatened and pressured by the attack. In the face of such an attack, even Nirvana Spirit experts like them would be forced to bring out their full power, let alone Heavenly Longevity experts.

How would Lin Xun defend against it? Every gaze shifted to him. To everyone's surprise, Lin Xun didn't try to avoid or retreat. Instead, he charged forward!

"This..."

The same thought immediately surfaced in everyone's heads: trying to crack a rock with an egg! With such a disparity in cultivation level, wasn't facing the attack head-on no different from a mantis trying to stop a cart?

Clang!!!

The black spear collided with Lin Xun's fist, causing the entire arena to shudder violently. A berserk torrent of destruction unfurled, so dazzling and blinding that everyone was forced to squint their eyes.

However, the expected scene of Lin Xun being crushed by the attack didn't appear. In fact, his figure didn't even shake in the slightest. Instead, it was the black spear in Zhongli Zhe's hands that trembled violently. His expression changed slightly as if realizing something.

Before he could react, Lin Xun instantly threw a thousand punches. Every punch pulsed with the force of a chaotic raging furnace, seeking to burn everything under the heavens. The sight of a thousand of these punches forming a dense storm momentarily stunned Zhongli Zhe.

Was this the power a perfect Heavenly Longevity expert should possess?! However, he was still a perfect Nirvana Spirit expert, after all, and he immediately responded with a powerful sweep of his black spear.

The seemingly simple attack raised a giant wave of endless black thunderbolts that raged like a hurricane or a stormy ocean. Thick law power rapidly interweaved within it, making the attack exceptionally tyrannical.

Boom!

The thousand punches were swept away. Gasps sounded outside the arena as the black spear rapidly closed in on Lin Xun. However, before it could reach him, a sword cauldron rushed out to meet it, accompanied by millions of dao light rays.

Heaven and earth descended into chaos. With the naked eye, one could see the sword cauldron smash into the black spear, causing it to bend alarmingly as if about to snap. The impact also brutally knocked Zhongli Zhe away, his face turning into a blend of green and white as disbelief rapidly filled his eyes.

"The power of the Nirvana Spirit Stage!!"

He loudly roared, appearing furious as if he had been cheated. He had always thought Lin Xun was at the perfect Heavenly Longevity Stage. Who could have anticipated that he would achieve a breakthrough and reach the Nirvana Spirit Stage in a single month!

The watching crowd was also deeply shaken by the revelation. The power of Lin Xun's strike was indeed not something that belonged to the Heavenly Longevity Stage, which undoubtedly proved that he had already become a Nirvana Spirit existence.

Moreover, he was a Nirvana Spirit expert with the potential of the Eternal Supreme!

"No wonder Deputy Deacon Lin was so fearless. Turns out that he has reached the Nirvana Spirit Stage. Looks like we're in for a good show!"

Numerous people grew excited.

"That vile thing!"

The experts hostile toward Lin Xun couldn't help but inwardly curse. They too hadn't expected him to ascend to the next realm in a single month.

"Heh heh, I knew it."

Fang Daoping chuckled as he twirled his moustache. He had previously suspected that Lin Xun had achieved a cultivation breakthrough but couldn't confirm it because the latter's aura was impossible to read. Now, he was finally certain.

"I said he wasn't a reckless fool. It turns out that he had achieved a breakthrough..."

In the distance, Yuan Changtian stood with his hands behind his back as a relieved expression emerged on his face. He remarked in an interested manner, "There will be quite a few variables now."

There was still a large gap between a new Nirvana Spirit expert and a perfect Nirvana Spirit expert. Hence, Yuan Changtian felt that Lin Xun was still at a disadvantage due to his cultivation.

While an uproar was spreading outside the arena, Lin Xun and Zhongli Zhe violently clashed again.

Rumble!

Lin Xun still fought with his bare fists but his aura was now completely different from before. Each punch struck with overwhelming strength and deep disdain, like a god hurling down divine mountains from the heavens.

After the initial astonishment, Zhongli Zhe had composed himself. He calmly assessed the battle as infinite variations spread from his black spear. He was, after all, the number one deacon in the Origin Sky Pavilion and possessed extremely powerful secret arts. In battle, his immense might was nigh unstoppable.

As time passed, however, Zhongli Zhe's expression gradually grew more focused and occasional glimmers of doubt flashed in his eyes. He was already using his full power, yet he was still unable to suppress Lin Xun even until now. Instead, he was beginning to feel pressured!

However, Zhongli Zhe remained cool and calm, displaying strong tenacity. After all, a cultivator like him would never allow such a small unforeseen development to affect his fighting spirit!

Chapter 2833 Congratulations Deacon Lin

Rumble!

In the arena, Zhongli Zhe finally found an opening to execute his innate talent.

"Endless Fire of Disaster!"

A wisp of grayish-white fire suddenly spread on his black spear. When it reached the tip, the flame suddenly exploded and turned into hundreds of millions of sparks. Cries of alarm sounded outside the arena.

Although the strike was beautiful, it was also dangerous to the extreme. Even the watching Nirvana Spirit experts couldn't help but shiver at its deadliness. The Limitless Abyss Sword Cauldron spun in front of Lin Xun to block the attack. Countless sparks accelerated towards him only to be erased from existence by the sword cauldron.

Clang!

Even the black spear's powerful thrust was stopped by the Limitless Abyss Sword Cauldron, unable to advance a single inch more. Zhongli Zhe's eyes narrowed slightly. Without skipping a beat, he displayed another of his trump cards.

"Everlasting Flames of Light!"

He suddenly shone brightly like a burning sun, bathing the black spear in his hand with boundless blinding light. The surrounding space distorted and twisted as it collapsed, seemingly burned away by the horrific heat.

The thrust flooded the entire Heaven-Derived Dao Arena with light.

Boom!

However, the endless flames of light were soon torn apart with a loud boom, brutally crushed and scattered by the sword cauldron. A dao sword shot out from the sword cauldron and slashed.

Clang!!

Zhongli Zhe pulled back his black spear and clutched it with both hands in front of him to block. However, intense pain soon shot up his arms as he was flipped around and sent shooting backwards.

"This..."

Everyone was in shock. By this point, the two had fought over a thousand rounds. Despite that, the perfect Nirvana Spirit Stage Zhongli Zhe had failed to gain any advantage.

Moreover, all of his offensives were repeatedly thwarted! In the distance, Fu Wenli's, Qi Xiaoyun's, and the other bigwigs' eyes flickered as a cloudy expression spread from between their brows.

It wasn't that Zhongli Zhe's performance had disappointed them. Although the power he used was remarkable for his cultivation level, it was unfortunately slightly inferior when compared to Lin Xun.

The truth was that Lin Xun was simply too dazzling despite recently reaching the Nirvana Spirit Stage. Even in Fu Wenli's and the others' eyes, his combat power could only be described as heaven-defying, making them somewhat unable to believe what they were seeing.

So much so that even though Zhongli Zhe was trying his best, he could never cover up Lin Xun's brilliance, and was naturally unable to suppress the latter. In the arena, the battle grew increasingly intense.

"Thousand Fires Flow Like Wine!"

"Ten Thousand Burns of the Heart!"

"Calamity Fire of the End!"

Zhongli Zhe exuded a terrifying presence as he executed special move after special move. He displayed the maximum potential of his cultivation, causing the onlookers to tremble in awe.

Everyone could see that he had grown desperate and was no longer holding anything back! However, what was even more shocking was that his killing moves were blocked and neutralized by Lin Xun one by one, failing to inflict even the tiniest of wounds.

By this juncture, Zhongli Zhe's expression had become extremely grave and furious. Despite the huge disparity in cultivation level, he couldn't do a single thing to the opponent. While being defeated might not be a big matter, losing the position of deacon was something that he could never accept!

"You aren't good enough." At this moment, Lin Xun nonchalantly said, "At best, you're just a whetstone for my Nirvana Spirit path."

Swish!

His aura abruptly changed as he rushed forward with the sword cauldron.

Boom!

The sword cauldron struck with such force that Zhongli Zhe couldn't help but cough blood from the impact as his figure wavered unsteadily. He had tried his best to defend, but was still injured by the head-on clash! However, the fact that he was being regarded as a whetstone by Lin Xun was even more intolerable!

"Go!"

Zhongli Zhe's eyes flashed coldly as he opened his mouth and spat.

Rustle!

A three-inch-long blue flying knife shot forth. It arrived above Lin Xun's head like a phantom and abruptly plunged downwards. It was so fast that most people outside the arena hadn't even reacted!

However, Lin Xun's response was also extremely quick. A dao sword whizzed out from the sword cauldron and blocked the blue flying knife by a hair's breadth.

Clang!

The blue flying knife shuddered and was sent flying. Zhongli Zhe coughed another mouthful of blood. That was the life-bound flying knife he nurtured in his body and also his most powerful killing move. Despite that, it had also been easily blocked.

Outside the arena, the expressions of Fu Wenli and other big shots had turned incomparably gloomy. How could they not tell that it was almost impossible for Zhongli Zhe to turn things around?

More people, however, were instead shocked by Lin Xun's combat power. He was simply too strong! There was zero similarity between him and someone who had just ascended to the Nirvana Spirit Stage. Otherwise, how could he continuously wound the perfect Nirvana Spirit Stage Zhongli Zhe?

Zhongli Zhe shouted, "Kill!"

With disheveled hair and bloodshot eyes, he had become the very picture of desperation. Only a single fate awaited him if he was defeated by Lin Xun today: he would lose his deacon position and all of his dignity, making it impossible to ever lift his face in the sect again!

It must be remembered that when he first learned of Lin Xun's challenge, he had been quite excited and planned to use this opportunity to brutally stomp Lin Xun...

Rumble!

In the arena, Zhongli Zhe's presence grew increasingly dreadful. His spear seemed to sweep across the sky and land, causing the earth to shudder and space to distort in its wake.

However, Lin Xun had already figured out the extent of his opponent's abilities and didn't plan to continue fighting. He suddenly spread his limbs outwards and the sword cauldron ruthlessly smashed down from above.

Crash!

With an earth-shaking explosion, Zhongli Zhe's spear was torn from his grip as he was flattened into the ground, nearly smashed into a meatloaf. However, that wasn't the end. While he was being flattened, Lin Xun leaped over and grabbed his broken body.

Fu Wenli's shout sounded from the distance, "No killing!"

Qi Xiaoyun, Chi Wen and the other big shots also revealed furious expressions. Zhongli Zhe's defeat was swift and miserable, and even his body had nearly been destroyed. They just couldn't accept such an outcome.

In the arena, Lin Xun casually tossed Zhongli Zhe aside and nonchalantly said, "I naturally know that killing is forbidden in the Heaven-Derived Dao Arena."

Thud!

Zhongli Zhe fell unconscious as he tumbled on the ground. The atmosphere outside the arena was already boiling.

"Great going Deputy Deacon Lin!"

"You should be calling him Deacon Lin!"

"That was exhilarating!"

"At the initial Nirvana Spirit Stage, he bridged the gap of the intermediate, advanced, and perfect stages to subdue his opponent in a single move. Such heaven-defying strength will shock all of the past and present!"

Excited shouts sounded one after another as numerous people from the three pavilions and nine peaks feverishly gazed at Lin Xun.

In the beginning, many people had been worried that Lin Xun would lose. Now, they realized that a heaven-defying person like him had issued the challenge because he had been confident of victory.

"Not bad, not bad at all."

Fang Daoping, Xuan Feiling, Dugu Yong, and the other big shots laughed, feeling especially pleased at the sights of Fu Wenli's and the others' ugly expressions.

In recent years, gleefully seeing Fu Wenli's and the others' suffering expressions had become a source of entertainment for Xuan Feiling and the others. It was a habit cultivated through Lin Xun's battles since entering the sect...

"Congratulations, Lin Xun. From today, you are a deacon of the Origin Sky Pavilion!"

Fang Daoping's hearty laughter sounded in the distance.

Someone cupped his hands together and said, "Congratulations Deacon Lin!"

Immediately afterwards, many disciples also cupped their hands together and bowed.

"Congratulations Deacon Lin!"

Their orderly voices echoed across the sky. Everyone's expressions were colored with awe and excitement. For them, Lin Xun was practically a legend. Since joining the sect, his various feats had left a deep mark in the hearts of the people!

Those who hated Lin Xun wore ugly expressions, feeling as if they had swallowed a fly. A deacon! It was an existence that stood equal footing with the Masters of the Nine Peaks!

Who could have anticipated that Lin Xun, who had only entered the sect ten years ago, would already climb to such a high position?

Yuan Changtian rubbed his hands as he exclaimed in admiration, "Not bad at all, I underestimated him previously."

Yuan Xiliu whispered, "Young Master, isn't praising others a detriment to yourself?"

Yuan Changtian laughed and said, "Old Ancestor, jealousy is the weapon of the incompetent, while admiration is showing true respect to one's enemy."

Happy with the response, Yuan Xiliu said, "Young Master, your composure is growing ever more refined."

Meanwhile, Lin Xun looked around, feeling gratified by the respect and excitement on the crowd's faces. True prestige lay where the people's hearts pointed. Earning the acknowledgement and support of the Origin Sect was naturally something to be celebrated.

On the other hand, Fu Wenli felt disgusted by this scene and sternly shouted, "Why are you people still standing around, hurry up and bring Zhongli Zhe out!"

Silence enveloped his surroundings as everyone realized that Zhongli Zhe was still lying unconscious in the Heaven-Derived Dao Arena.

Someone hurriedly entered. However, just as he was about to help Zhongli Zhe up, he suddenly opened his eyes and shouted, "Lin Xun, to think you actually crippled my cultivation, you and I will forever be enemies!"

His voice overflowed with unmatched anger and resentment. He suddenly coughed up a large mouthful of blood before fainting again. At a rate that could be seen by the naked eye, he grew younger and younger as his aura rapidly declined!

The entire place fell deathly silent. Everyone was utterly shocked and in disbelief. Even Fang Daoping's, Xuan Feiling's and the others' pupils shrank, feeling completely caught by surprise.

Who could have anticipated that Lin Xun would sever Zhongli Zhe's cultivation without anyone noticing!?

The thought alone was terrifying, to say the least.

Eyes full of murder, the already furious Fu Wenli jabbed his finger at Lin Xun and roared, "You evil thing! How dare you be so cruel to your fellow disciple in a sect assessment?! You must be punished!"

As his words rang out, he raised his hand and viciously swung it at Lin Xun from a distance.

Rumble!

Resplendent law power gathered into a terrifying giant hand. However, it was swiftly blocked by Xuan Feiling midway.

Xuan Feiling coldly said, "Brother Fu, how can a deputy pavilion master like you willfully suppress a disciple of the sect?"

"You saw with your own eyes how despicable he is; even going so far as to sever Zhongli Zhe's cultivation. That is a heinous sin!"

Fu Wenli's face was steely-green with rage. Qi Xiaoyun, Chi Wen, Tang Qiu, and the other big shots were also enraged and displayed hostile expressions.

The atmosphere around the Heaven-Derived Dao Arena immediately became stifling and tense.

Chapter 2834 Punishment

A perfect Nirvana Spirit Stage expert's cultivation had been severed. This was naturally a serious matter!

Furthermore, Zhongli Zhe was no ordinary person. He was ranked first among the twelve deacons of the Origin Sky Pavilion, and his status was at minimum on the same level of the Nine Peak Masters. In fact, he could be considered a heavyweight bigwig in the Origin Sect.

Moreover, his surname was Zhongli, meaning behind him stood the Eighth Heaven Domain Immortal Giant Zhongli Clan. However, even with such status, cultivation, and background, his cultivation had been severed.

To someone like him, that was a fate more cruel than death! This was why Fu Wenli, Qi Xiaoyun, Chi Wen, Tang Qiu and the rest were so furious.

"It's unavoidable for injuries to happen in a spar." Amidst the tense and stifling atmosphere, Dugu Yong calmly said, "For this examination, everyone present can testify that Lin Xun did not show any inclination to commit murder from start to end. According to the sect rules, no crime has been committed as long as no one died."

"Ridiculous!" Fu Wenli angrily said, "How is this different from killing? I know that you and the others are bent on defending Lin Xun. However, I refuse to let this go until he is punished!"

Qi Xiaoyun also spoke up in a cold voice, "That's right, his actions are far too vile. If everyone follows his example and cripples their opponent's cultivation in spars, wouldn't things become a mess?"

"Yes, he must be punished severely!" Chi Wen, Tang Qiu and a host of other big shots also voiced their stance: they would not relent until Lin Xun was punished.

This made everyone present inwardly tremble. None of them had anticipated this development, nor had they imagined that Lin Xun would be so vicious.

Despite facing criticism from all sides, Lin Xun appeared as calm as ever. He blandly said, "Dare I ask Deputy Pavilion Master Xuan, in accordance with the sect's rules, did I do something wrong?"

"No." Xuan Feiling flatly said, "If you had broken the rules, I would have been the first to arrest you. All of you present should also be well versed in the sect's laws, so everyone should naturally understand that in such an examination, there's no crime to speak of as long as no one dies."

The crowd nodded at his words. Such promotion examinations were often rather cruel affairs. Since neither side would willingly back down or be replaced, victory would at times leave either one or both parties on the brink of death.

There were plenty of examples where participants would end up with their dao bodies destroyed, and even sustain serious damage to their primordial spirits. In worse cases, some would be blasted until only a single drop of origin blood was left of them.

"Is suffering a serious injury the same as losing your cultivation?!" Fu Wenli's expression was a storm of chilling rage. "I have already said that I won't stop until Lin Xun is punished today!"

Qi Xiaoyun, Chi Wen and the others also showed their stance by expressing their staunch support for Fu Wenli.

The surroundings grew so oppressive that many people found it hard to breathe. That hostile atmosphere tightly gripped everyone's hearts, making them afraid that relations between the bigwigs would finally break down completely.

If that happened, there would no longer be any peace in the Origin Sect!

Yuan Changtian sighed softly and transmitted, "Old Ancestor, do you think Lin Xun has gone too far today?"

Next to him, Yuan Xiliu's expression didn't change in the slightest as he transmitted in reply, "Young Master, this old slave only knows that by doing this, Fu Wenli and the others are also helping you eliminate a potential threat."

"Eliminate? Impossible, he'll at most be punished a little. Don't you see that quite a number of people support and protect him? If this matter gets any bigger, it will only cause more internal division in the Origin Sect, resulting in unrest and strife."

Yuan Changtian casually said, "Therefore, the biggest possibility is that Lin Xun will be punished to smooth over this matter."

Just as he said this, a golden streak of light suddenly appeared in the sky above. It transformed into a golden scroll, instantly drawing everyone's gazes.

"It's Lord Yan Ji's decree!"

The crowd was shaken, realizing that today's matter had already disturbed the Origin Sky Pavilion Master who hadn't shown himself for a long time!

The golden scroll unfurled in the sky and a deep voice emerged, "For today's incident, Lin Xun will be confined to his cave dwelling for nine years and receive a ten-year salary deduction. If anything like this happens again, the offender will not be let off lightly regardless who it is."

Each word boomed like thunder across the area, permeated with supreme majesty. The crowd was initially shocked before their expressions soon turned strange. This punishment...was basically a 'slap on the wrist.'

Xuan Feiling, Dugu Yong, and the others couldn't help but smile. Since Lin Xun had only severed his opponent's cultivation and hadn't actually broken any rules, this punishment was sufficient.

On the other hand, Fu Wenli, Qi Xiaoyun, Chi Wen and the other bigwigs were so angry that they almost vomited blood, feeling horrible inside.

You call that punishment?!

"Heh, looks like Pavilion Master Yan Ji is also very protective of Lin Xun." Yuan Changtian laughed.

This result was within his prediction, although he hadn't expected Lin Xun to be let off this lightly.

Yuan Xiliu frostily transmitted, "This seems a little unjust, and it will only make Fu Wenli and the others hold an even bigger grudge. From what this old slave understands, a problem occurred with Yan Ji's heart state while trying to attain eternity, leaving him with a wisp of primordial spirit that has survived until now. How can someone like him...still have the qualification to serve as the Origin Sky pavilion master?"

"Only a wisp of primordial spirit is it..." Yuan Changtian's eyes flickered in thought. "I hope that is true."

Chi Wen exclaimed indignantly, "That's unfair!"

Fu Wenli, Qi Xiaoyun, and the others also had extremely ugly expressions. The fact that they had lost one of their heavyweights in exchange for such a light punishment made them so angry that they nearly cursed out loud.

"Is Deputy Pavilion Master Chi Wen questioning the decision of Lord Pavilion Master?"

Xuan Feiling chillingly looked over.

"I....." Chi Wen's expressions changed indeterminately. "I just think that such a punishment isn't enough to convince the public. It's not that I am questioning the Origin Sky Pavilion Master again."

Xuan Feiling didn't pay any further attention to him. Instead, he turned to the gathered crowd and asked, "Does everyone present think this punishment is reasonable?"

"Naturally."

"That's how it should have been from the start. It's not like Deacon Lin has ever violated the rules. Honestly, some of us feel aggrieved that he even received a punishment."

"We support Lord Pavilion Master Yan Ji's decision!"

Many people spoke up, clearly stating their support for Yan Ji's decision. Chi Wen gnashed his teeth in anger. Just when he was about to say something, he was stopped by Fu Wenli.

Fu Wenli had calmed down by now. He indifferently looked at Lin Xun and said, "Since the pavilion master has made a decision, we naturally have no objections. I only hope that Deacon Lin will not harm his fellow disciples in this way again in the future. Otherwise, this honored one will have to go out on a limb to severely punish him!"

With these final words, he turned around and left.

Lin Xun smiled and cupped his hands together. "Many thanks to Deputy Pavilion Master Fu for his teachings."

Soon, Qi Xiaoyun, Chi Wen, Tang Qiu and the others also departed one after another.

"Congratulations Deacon Lin!"

"Congratulations Deacon Lin!"

Meanwhile, numerous people began to offer their congratulations. This time, however, they were clearly congratulating Lin Xun for getting off with a light punishment. This showed just how deeply beloved he was in the Origin Sect. Otherwise, it would have been impossible to receive so much support.

"Thanks everyone for speaking up for justice!" Lin Xun smiled and cupped his hands together.

"You brat, you'd better not do such things next time." Fang Daoping couldn't help but glare at Lin Xun as he walked out of the arena. "I doubt you'll be as lucky next time."

"Listen to Pavilion Master Yan Ji and obediently reflect in your cave dwelling. Don't cause any more trouble." Xuan Feiling also couldn't help but scold Lin Xun, "You saw how things went today, you would have been in for some hardships if it weren't for Pavilion Master Yan Ji."

Lin Xun smiled and nodded.

Soon, Xuan Feiling, Dugu Yong and the others also left one after another. Although today's matter had been put to rest, these big shots knew full-well that Fu Wenli and the others would not leave things at this.

Or rather, after today, the relationship between them had become irreparable. This would most likely cause a divide in the Origin Sect, which would inevitably lead to many disagreements and further turmoil.

However, this was exactly what Xuan Feiling and the others wanted. From the moment Lin Xun joined, they had already decided to borrow his hand to completely clean out the stubborn tumors within the sect. Now, the curtains on this operation were finally being pulled apart.

"Lin Xun, Peak Master asked me to tell you that no matter what will happen in the future, the Ninth Peak will always stand by your side." Ninth Peak Elder Mo Lanshan smilingly revealed Qin Wuyu's stance.

Lin Xun's heart shook as he immediately bowed and said, "Thank you!"

Soon, the bigwigs of the three pavilions and nine peaks also arrived to congratulate him. There were the Origin Clarity Pavilion Elders, Xiao Wenyuan and Li Zhen, Eighth Peak Master Cang Chongxue, Seventh Peak Master Tian Wucuo, Sixth Peak Master Wen Dongmian, and Fifth Peak Master Yu Xiangting...

Lin Xun was now a deacon. Moreover, he had replaced the head of the Origin Sky Pavilion's twelve deacons. As such, his status was now equal to the masters of the Nine Peaks, while his authority had already begun to surpass theirs!

It could be said that the changes to his cultivation and status over the years had led to him gaining the acknowledgement and approval of many big shots from the Origin Sect. Naturally, this would make things far easier for him in the sect.

At the very least, even while knowing he had so many enemies, the fact that he was still able to receive support from so many people today was in itself the greatest acknowledgement to him!

"Congratulations on your promotion, Brother Lin, and also congratulations to Brother Lin for resolving that disaster."

Just as Lin Xun was planning to leave, a clear peal of laughter rang out. Some distance away, he saw Yuan Changtian approaching while accompanied by Yuan Xiliu. Dressed in a snow-white robe, he was

handsome and elegant as always. Hence, he immediately drew the attention of numerous gazes when he walked over.

Chapter 2835 The Wonders of the Ten Directions Demon Realm

In recent years, Yuan Changtian, who served as an elder of Origin Sky Pavilion, had undoubtedly become the most prominent figure within the Origin Sect.

He hailed from the Ninth Heaven Domain and was a divine son of the Divine Yuan Clan. He possessed the cultivation at the intermediate Nirvana Spirit Stage, and his talent, attainments, and status were so formidable that they made all others seem laughable.

Despite that, Yuan Changtian was not a domineering or arrogant individual. On the contrary, he came off as a humble and gentle man. His attitude when interacting with others was impeccable, and he had become quite well-liked within the sect.

It was hard not to notice him stepping out to congratulate Lin Xun right at this moment.

"So it's Elder Yuan." Lin Xun smiled. "To what do I owe this pleasure?"

Yuan Changtian smiled warmly and said, "I had witnessed Brother Lin's brilliance earlier and couldn't contain my admiration, so I couldn't help but come and offer my congratulations."

"Thank you." Lin Xun said, "If there's nothing else, then I'll take my leave."

Yuan Changtian was speechless for a moment before he said, "Brother Lin, why are you in such a hurry to leave?"

"So there is something?" Lin Xun asked mildly.

Yuan Changtian pondered before asking, "Brother Lin, do you know why Pavilion Master Yan Ji confined you for nine years?"

"Elder Yuan, do you know the reason for this?" Lin Xun asked.

Yuan Changtian smiled and said, "This is just a hunch, so don't take it seriously. But if you want to hear it, I'd be happy to share some of my speculations."

"Please enlighten me."

"Ten years from now, the Immortal Dao Battle hosted by the Shaman Sect Ancestral Court will begin in the Ten Directions Demon Realm. At that time, each of the four courts will send five Immortals to participate and compete with each other." Yuan Changtian continued, "Based on this, the reason why you were confined for nine years is probably to give you an opportunity to participate in such an event ten years from now."

Lin Xun asked in surprise, "Is there really such a thing?"

Yuan Changtian smiled and said, "The Immortal Dao Battle is an inevitable event. As for whether Pavilion Master Yan Ji had such intentions, I am just making a guess."

After listening, Lin Xun thought for a moment and said with a smile, "Then we'll talk when I emerge from confinement in nine years."

Yuan Changtian clasped his fists and said, "Then I will not bother Brother Lin any more. Farewell."

He turned and left with Yuan Xiliu following closely behind. Such a prominent figure, who held a position of a guest elder, was acting like a servant in front of him. This only highlighted Yuan Changtian's extraordinary status.

"Immortal Dao Battle..."

Lin Xun watched Yuan Changtian leave. Then, without a second thought, he also turned and left, returning to his cave haven.

...

That evening, Tao Leng brought a new sect nameplate and handed it to Lin Xun.

"Brother, from now on, you are a deacon like me." Tao Leng smiled and congratulated him.

"As a deacon, you receive fifty thousand catties of immortal divine essence each month, can freely enter and exit the Scripture Mountain to consult our texts, and can also recruit your own disciple! According to regulations, deacons can choose a successor from among the nine peaks or seek out outstanding talents from outside, but they can only accept one.

"The successor will receive the same treatment as the disciples of the three pavilions, with the sect distributing cultivation resources monthly."

"Senior..." Lin Xun began to speak when Tao Leng interrupted him, "You and I are both deacons now, so naturally we're at the same level now. Please don't address me as 'senior' anymore."

Lin Xun smiled and, without refusing, bowed, saying, "Brother Tao."

Tao Leng also smiled. "That's right. You're now in a position of power and influence, on par with the nine peak masters. You've replaced Zhongli Zhe, who, as deacon, was responsible for disciplining and rewarding the elders of the nine peaks. Now, that responsibility falls to you."

At this point, he casually added, "By the way, I remember you were once challenged by Elder Zheng Qian when you were at the Ninth Peak, right?"

Lin Xun immediately understood and smiled. "So, Brother Tao, what should I do about that?"

Tao Leng answered without hesitation, "Do a coordinated approach with both inside and outside forces."

"Inside and outside forces? What do you mean?"

"In the Ninth Peak, everyone, from the peak master to the disciples, is on your side. They're the inside forces. Simply ask Peak Master Qin Wuyu to gather information that could harm Zheng Qian. Then, you can step in and inflict a heavy blow on him."

Tao Leng's eyes narrowed as a cold glint flashed in them. "However, if you want to completely defeat this man, that alone won't be enough. You'll also need to create opportunities for Zheng Qian to make obvious mistakes. If he does, combined with the incriminating evidence you've gathered, these two combined forces will be enough to remove him from his position of an elder, rendering him completely powerless."

Lin Xun was astonished. No wonder so many people within the nine peaks feared Tao Leng, their very faces turning pale at the mention of his name. His tactics were truly ruthless and sophisticated.

"Brother, why are you looking at me like that?" Tao Leng asked, puzzled.

Lin Xun smiled. "The advice of a wise man has really expanded my horizons."

Tao Leng shook his head and snorted. "Mere flattery."

Lin Xun said, "I'm actually not that concerned about how to deal with Zheng Qian. I'd like to take this opportunity to ask you, Brother Tao, about the Immortal Dao Battle."

Tao Leng snorted. "It's not a secret. I'll tell you everything I know."

A quarter of an hour later, Tao Leng left. Lin Xun fell into deep thought after hearing all that the other man knew about the Immortal Dao Battle.

Apparently, since ancient times, every three thousand years, the Shamen Sect Ancestral Court would launch a dao battle that was located in the Ten Directions Demon Realm. During this, each of the four courts would send five Immortals to participate.

A Heavenly Longevity Immortal would be extremely vulnerable if they entered the Ten Directions Demon Realm. Meanwhile, Transcendence Immortals were the backbone of the four courts and were

generally not easily dispatched. Therefore, in previous iterations, the four courts often dispatched Nirvana Spirit Immortals.

The rules of the Immortal Dao Battle were simple: hunt Desolate Law Power Beasts within the Ten Directions Demon Realm. The more an expert killed, the higher their ranking.

After the end of the Immortal Dao Battle, the four courts would be ranked based on the number of Desolate Law Power Beasts that were hunted by their respective successors.

To Lin Xun, this was simply a grand competition among the Immortals of the Four Great Ancestral Courts, and there was nothing special about it.

However, according to Tao Leng, the Immortal Dao Battle was much more complex than what it seemed on the surface! Every three thousand years, an incredible upheaval would occur within the Ten Directions Demon Realm, giving rise to countless incredible opportunities.

For example, in the past, some had subdued rare ninth grade Heaven Rank law powers and law spirits. Some had obtained broken fragments of Divine Rank law powers. Some had obtained an Eternal Divine Elixir. Finally, some had received a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to achieve a breakthrough in their cultivation, entering the Transcendence Realm in one fell swoop!

This was precisely why the Immortal Dao Battle was orchestrated by the Four Great Ancestral Courts. Because such a fortuitous event only occurred once every three thousand years, the Immortal Dao Battle also only took place once every three thousand years.

Learning this sparked a keen interest in Lin Xun. For a powerful being at the Immortal level, achieving a breakthrough was incredibly difficult. This could not be achieved through mere years of cultivation, nor could it be achieved simply by accumulating cultivation resources.

Even a powerful expert with great perseverance and enlightenment could not achieve a transformation of their dao if they simply practiced in isolation. Ultimately, the opportunities that could support a breakthrough at this level were exceedingly rare.

Take the Nirvana Spirit Realm, for example. Ordinary cultivation resources were of no use at all. The most helpful element for cultivation at this level was the refinement of law powers.

However, law powers were an extremely rare kind of treasure, and the higher their rank, the harder it was to find. In domains like those below the Seventh Heaven Domain of the Eternal True Realm, possessing a single Earth Rank law power was enough to support an entire Immortal Imperial clan.

Who would have the heart to refine such a law power? This was the fundamental reason why Nirvana Spirit Immortals were so rarely seen in the domains below the Seventh Heaven Domain.

After all, in those places, because law powers were so scarce, getting enough resources to produce a Nirvana Spirit Immortal was extremely difficult.

Even within the Origin Sect, Nirvana Spirit Immortals cultivated at an extremely slow pace. Some veterans had been immersed in this realm for thousands of years, and some had even cultivated for tens of thousands of years.

Besides their own personal reasons, the most crucial factor was the lack of law powers! Furthermore, this was just the Nirvana Spirit Realm.

As far as Lin Xun knew, the path to advancement for the Transcendence Realm was ten or even a hundred times more difficult than that at the Nirvana Spirit Realm! Thus, for Immortals, any opportunity to achieve a breakthrough in their cultivation was naturally something they wouldn't miss.

However, such opportunities were extremely rare, requiring a long wait and the blessing of fate. Participating in the Immortal Dao Battle was undoubtedly such a perfect opportunity for them.

It all came down to the fact that Desolate Law Power Beasts were scattered throughout the Ten Directions Demon Realm! The residual law power within these beasts was immensely beneficial for cultivation in the Nirvana Spirit Realm!

According to Tao Leng, the Ten Directions Demon Realm was an extremely strange and dangerous place, and buried within it were the law powers left behind after the collapse of countless epochs. This was somewhat similar to the Great Thousand Battlefield.

However, the difference was that, for countless years, no one knew exactly how many epochs had been buried within the Ten Directions Demon Realm. Every three thousand years, a beast tide erupted within it, and it was these Desolate Law Power Beasts that brought about this tide!

Rumors said that these ferocious beasts had fed on shattered law powers from birth, resulting in their immense power. Naturally, Lin Xun was extremely intrigued by this

Although he had gathered considerable amounts of law power over the years, most of it had been refined by Wushuang. Now, having reached the Nirvana Spirit Realm, he too needed to refine law power to advance his cultivation. Consequently, it was time to consider how to gather more.

Nine years from now, I must seize this opportunity!

Lin Xun came to a conclusion. Time waited for no one. Only about ninety years remained until Pavilion Master You Beihai attempted to certify his Eternal dao. Currently, Lin Xun was only at the early stages of the Nirvana Spirit Realm.

If he had any hope to compete for the position of the pavilion master, he needed to be at least at the Transcendence Stage. This was the most basic requirement. To ultimately secure the position of pavilion master amidst competition from the other deputy pavilion masters, even being a Transcendence Immortal might not be enough...

Furthermore, all of this would have to be achieved within the next ninety years. This put a lot of pressure on Lin Xun. Breaking through the realms was never a simple matter.

This was especially true if one wished to achieve a drastic breakthrough on the path to immortality. Thousands of years might not be enough time to reach the Transcendence Realm by following the normal path of cultivation.

Thus, a different path needed to be found!

Chapter 2836 The Secrets of Little Nether and Little Immortal

Buzz!

As he thought of this, he summoned the Limitless Abyss Sword Cauldron. Within the cauldron, the Nirvana law was diffused throughout it. Inside the world transformed by it, Wushuang, the Netherworld law, and the Immortal law all lay dormant. They were being nurtured day and night by the Nirvana law power.

When he was in the Heavenly Longevity Realm, Lin Xun had begun to comprehend the profound meaning of the Nirvana law, thereby creating his own immortal law. This, combined with the power of the laws he had grasped from the Nirvana law power, had given him an absolute advantage in battles against other Immortals.

This time, after reaching the Nirvana Spirit Realm, Lin Xun had attempted to refine the Nirvana law directly into an immortal law. Unfortunately, that proved to be exceedingly difficult. In the past seven days, he had only been able to refine a tiny fraction! If the Nirvana law was a vast ocean, then what he had refined in the past week would be a drop of water...

Truly too difficult!

Furthermore, it would be hard for him to see any results in such a short period of time. However, this was easily solved by refining other law powers first.

The immortal law Lin Xun currently possessed was condensed from the profound principles of the Nirvana law power. This meant that any law power he subsequently refined, regardless of rank or attribute, would transform into its purest form, becoming part of his own immortal law, without altering its properties.

In short, for those in the Nirvana Spirit Realm, refining law power, like refining immortal divine essence, would only benefit their own cultivation and the immortal law they wielded.

"Master, you...are you planning to refine Shuang'er?"

In the Nirvana law power, Wushuang, dressed in white like a pure young girl, looked anxious and pitiful, her large, watery eyes filled with worry.

Lin Xun finally emerged from his reverie and, stroking his chin, asked, "How much strength have you recovered now?"

"I'm equivalent to a sixth grade Heaven Rank law..." Wushuang then added quickly, "However, I will soon reach seventh grade Heaven Rank!"

"Hmm." Lin Xun sank into deep thought.

Wushuang looked very nervous, her face pale and her eyes tearful. She looked pitiful, like a prisoner awaiting her sentencing.

Lin Xun couldn't help but laugh. "You're a law spirit, without emotions or wisdom. There's no need to pretend in front of me."

Wushuang whispered, "Master, law spirits can also develop wisdom and emotions. We are far beyond the inanimate plants and trees of this world. I beg for your mercy. When I regain my former strength, I will definitely be of great assistance to you."

She seemed to understand that eating and drinking for free all these years without demonstrating her value would likely cause Lin Xun to feel dissatisfied.

"Don't worry, no one in this world would be willing to refine a law spirit," Lin Xun said casually.

Wushuang breathed a sigh of relief and stuck out her tongue. If Lin Xun didn't know of her background, he would have wondered if Wushuang was truly a law spirit or not.

"What do you think we should do with Little Nether and Little Immortal?" Lin Xun asked.

Little Nether and Little Immortal had both been obtained by him during his time in the Great Thousand Battle Domain. They were the Netherworld law power and the Immortal law power, respectively, and had belonged to the Immortal Martial Epoch.

Over the years, although these two law powers had been nurtured by the Nirvana law power, there was almost no remarkable transformation that had occurred to them. Currently, they were, at most, comparable to a law power at the ninth grade Earth Rank.

Wushuang said, "Master, I can sense that both Little Nether's and Little Immortal's origin source powers are gradually recovering. One can evolve into the Netherworld, and the other into an Immortal Realm. This may...be of immeasurable help to you in the future."

"Such as?" Lin Xun asked with interest.

Wushuang explained, "For example, suppressing your enemies in the Netherworld could condemn them to eternal damnation. On the other hand, placing one's friends and family in the Immortal Realm would allow them to avoid disasters. They could cultivate there and even avoid the calamity that will destroy this epoch."

Lin Xun was shocked. "Avoid the calamity that will destroy this epoch?"

"Indeed, both the Netherworld law power and the Immortal law power belong to the Immortal Martial Era, so they have already experienced the Five Dao Decays. Naturally, they won't be affected by this epoch's destruction."

Wushuang added quickly, "These are just my speculations. Master, if you wish to understand the true secrets of Little Nether and Little Immortal perhaps you can wait until they fully recover. Then you'll know."

Lin Xun nodded. Wushuang's suggestion reminded him of what Chen Linkong had told him when they had left the Fortune Dominion. In a thousand years at most, the calamity targeting this epoch will erupt!

If Little Nether and Little Immortal truly possessed the miraculous powers Wushuang claimed they did, then they would surely prove invaluable in the future. However, for the time being, he could not refine them.

After pondering for a moment, Lin Xun asked with interest, "Wushuang, how do you think I should refine the Nirvana law?"

A law spirit undoubtedly understood law power the best.

"This..." Wushuang hesitated before saying, "Master, the Nirvana law is too mysterious, beyond my comprehension."

Lin Xun sighed softly, "As expected, this is what it means to possess a treasure but not be able to truly obtain it."

Wushuang said crisply, "But it seems to me that you, Master, have already comprehended the secrets of the Nirvana law and have refined an immortal law. Like Shuang'er, you can refine other law powers in the future. I believe this will also enhance your own cultivation."

Lin Xun smiled. "I think so too."

His response seemed to greatly encourage Wushuang. His clear eyes gleamed with joy as he said, "Master, for others, refining a law power might require a great deal of time and effort, but for you, this is simply not a problem."

"Oh?" Lin Xun raised an eyebrow. "Go on."

Wushuang explained, "Master's control of the Nirvana law power is sufficient to suppress and refine all other law powers. Thus, you can obtain the purest law power through the Nirvana law power without having to refine it yourself."

Lin Xun hadn't completely forgotten this, but after hearing Wushuang confirm it, he finally felt certain that this approach was entirely feasible!

"Right now, all we need is more law power," Lin Xun pondered.

"Master, if I return to my former peak, I can help you find more law powers and subdue them," Wushuang interjected with a clear voice.

Lin Xun smiled and said, "Don't worry, I'll definitely not go without you when I gather law powers."

How could he not tell that Wushuang was concerned about this?

"Then Shuang'er thanks you, Master!" Wushuang's smile was sweet, exceptionally pure, and bright.

...

Next, Lin Xun began to meditate and cultivate. He had no choice but to follow the sect's punishment for him. From now on, for nine years, he would not be able to leave his cave dwelling. However, this was actually a good thing for him.

He had originally planned to retreat for a period of time, not only to cultivate but also to take this opportunity to temper and enhance the Limitless Abyss Sword Cauldron.

Those who lived in the mountains alone had no concept of the passing of time. Before long, three years had already passed in a flash.

In a cave dwelling, Yuan Changtian awoke from his meditation, and the roaring aura within him gradually subsided. Yuan Xiliu, who had been guarding him on the side, smiled and congratulated him, "Congratulations, Young Master, on reaching the advanced Nirvana Spirit Realm!"

His voice was filled with amazement and relief.

"This is nothing! It's still a far cry from my eldest brother's and third older sister's accomplishments." Yuan Changtian's expression was impassive.

Yuan Xiliu said gently, "Young Master, you are the ninth son of the clan leader. You've only been cultivating for six hundred years, yet you've already achieved your present level of accomplishment. This is far superior to what your eldest brother and third older sister achieved back then."

After a pause, he continued, "Although your eldest brother and third older sister have already reached the Transcendence Stage, with your foundation and talent, you'll undoubtedly catch up to them one day."

Yuan Changtian smiled, but remained silent.

"Young Master, are you planning to participate in the Immortal Dao Battle?" asked Yuan Xiliu.

Yuan Changtian replied without hesitating, "Of course. Before I came to the Origin Sect, my father told me a secret: an unprecedented event will occur in the Ten Directions Demon Realm. It's very likely a complete Divine Rank law will appear!"

Yuan Xiliu exclaimed fiercely, "If that's the case, we'll use all our means to seize it!"

A Divine Rank law! One hadn't appeared in the Ninth Heaven Domain for ages. If such a treasure truly emerged in the Ten Directions Demon Realm, it would cause a raging fight even among Eternals!

Yuan Xiliu said, "Fortunately, the competition isn't that great. Only the forces of the Four Great Ancestral Courts are participating. With your skills, seizing such an opportunity should be no problem."

"It's hard to say." Yuan Changtian shook his head. "Back when I came to the Origin Sect, there were also other divine sons and maidens from the Ninth Heaven Domain who had entered the Shaman Sect, the Zen Sect, and the Spirit Sect respectively. It's just that we don't know which divine clans these individuals belong to yet."

A gleam of brilliance flashed in Yuan Xiliu's eyes. "Young Master, rest assured. I'll find out everything."

Yuan Changtian nodded, then suddenly asked, "Has Lin Xun been active at all in these past three years?"

Yuan Xiliu shook his head. "He's been very quiet, staying secluded."

Yuan Changtian pondered this and then ordered, "Keep a close eye on him. He's a successor of Fangchun Mountain, and the one who the Lord of Fangchun Mountain had waited an eternity for. He has also inherited Luo Tongtian's innate talent of Grand Abyss Heaven Devourer. He must not be underestimated."

"Young Master, rest assured. According to the countermeasures Fu Wenli and the others have discussed, when the Immortal Dao Battle begins, Lin Xun will also be sent to the Ten Directions Demon Realm." A cold look crossed Yuan Xiliu's eyes as he continued, "By then, it'll be hard to say whether this boy can return alive from there."

"Both the Shaman Sect and the Zen Sect view him as a thorn in their side. If he were to participate, he would indeed face immeasurable disaster." Yuan Changtian then pondered, "However, we cannot pin all our hopes on others. When the time comes, we may have to trouble you, Old Ancestor, to make the journey in person."

"Young Master, have you agreed to let me take action?" Yuan Xiliu's eyes lit up.

Yuan Changtian shook his head. "No, you simply need to spread the news about Lin Xun to as many of his enemies as possible. Ideally, you should be able to alert an Eternal-level expert to take action. That way, perhaps you can resolve the issue once and for all."

"An Eternal!" Yuan Xiliu asked in disbelief, "Wouldn't that be a bit of overkill?"

"Old Ancestor, you don't understand. Just do as I say," Yuan Changtian responded calmly, but did not give an actual explanation.

Yuan Xiliu wasn't annoyed. Although Yuan Changtian addressed him as 'Old Ancestor,' in his presence, he had to refer to himself as 'old slave' and obey the younger man's orders.

After all, Yuan Changtian was a divine son! This was a rule that could not be violated within the Divine Yuan Clan.

"Old Ancestor, please step aside. I need to continue my cultivation, refining law power, and strive to reach a state of great perfection before participating in the Immortal Dao Battle," said Yuan Changtian casually.

"Yes." Yuan Xiliu bowed and turned to leave.

Chapter 2837 Realm of Exile

In the third year of Lin Xun's confinement...

Within his secluded abode, a spacetime portal no larger than a foot hovered silently before him. It was the Gate of Exile, condensed and refined to its utmost limit. Years ago, through endless trials, Lin Xun found that the smaller the gate's size, the longer it could endure.

Thus, for the past few years, he had devoted himself to unravelling its mysteries, studying, deducing and perfecting this innate divine power. After countless trials and refinements, he had finally compressed the Gate of Exile, inch by inch, until it was no larger than a foot across.

As a result, the Gate of Exile could now remain open for seven and a half minutes! Moreover, he could now control its size at will and even shift its position, making it appear wherever he wished.

It was also done as naturally as moving his own arm! This was progress beyond imagination. Originally, he had pursued this refinement in order to enter the world within the Gate of Exile to uncover its hidden truths.

However, through this process, his mastery over the art had undergone an astonishing transformation. His control over this forbidden power had advanced by leaps and bounds, beyond anything he had imagined. This was an unexpected harvest.

Now, gazing at the one-foot-wide Gate of Exile, a bold and dangerous idea surfaced in Lin Xun's mind.

If one day this gate could be compressed to the size of a speck of light and unleashed like a sword, would it not exile anything it touched instantly, even through an enemy's defense? Conversely, if the Gate of Exile were to expand without limit...could it swallow mountains and rivers, engulf whole cities, or even devour a region of heaven and earth and an entire world?

Unfortunately, he remained confined. Were he free, he would have long since tested how vast an expanse the Gate of Exile could truly envelop.

Seven and a half minutes passed. The Gate of Exile slowly unraveled, dissolving into a soft rain of light.

Lin Xun exhaled deeply and sat cross-legged in meditation. Sustaining the gate demanded an enormous toll on his cultivation. Fortunately, he had Sun Moon Immortal Pills to replenish what was spent.

Otherwise, with his monthly allowance suspended for ten years, it would have been impossible to practice the Gate of Exile so often, let alone maintain his daily cultivation.

A day later, with his strength returned to its peak, Lin Xun opened his eyes and drew another deep breath. Buzz!

With a single thought, the one foot Gate of Exile quietly appeared. Without hesitation, Lin Xun dissolved into a streak of light and dived straight into the gate. In the blink of an eye, he vanished. Within the dwelling, only the Gate of Exile floated quietly in the air.

As though the heavens had turned and the stars had shifted, he had crossed into another world. In an instant, a dark and murky world unfolded before his eyes. The earth below was crisscrossed with ravines and bottomless chasms that stretched beyond sight.

The heavens were smothered beneath a heavy, ink-black gloom that pressed down upon the heart. The horizon faded into a gray, endless blur, the vast earth stretching on without boundary or end. Standing amid it, Lin Xun felt as insignificant as a grain of sand in an endless desert. Apart from that faint sense of insignificance, he felt no discomfort at all.

“So this is the world inside the Gate of Exile?” He swept his gaze around.

The forbidden divine power Gate of Exile was shrouded in mystery, utterly unlike the Omega Lord’s divine power Blade of Time. For years, Lin Xun had wondered what lay beyond this door, and whether the enemies he had exiled here were still alive or long dead.

Now, he would finally see the answer with his own eyes. Without hesitation, he strode forward. The Gate of Exile could only stand for seven and a half minutes. He had to return before then. Once that time passed, even he himself had no way to leave.

Shua!

Like a streak of light, he swept through the vast, gray expanse, his spirit sense spreading out to probe every corner of this world. Before long, a thunderous rumble echoed from the distant dark heavens.

He shot toward the sound and saw two millstones suspended above a colossal ravine, one black, one white. Each was a thousand feet across, revolving in opposite directions, grinding against one another with deafening force. The void around them buckled and shattered beneath the crushing power.

Lin Xun's pupils contracted sharply. The moment he saw the pair of black and white millstones, information flooded his mind: Corpse Severing Millstones! They were manifestations of the Principle of Annihilation.

All who were exiled to this world would have their bodies and souls ground to dust beneath the Corpse Severing Millstones!

"So all those enemies I've cast into exile over the years were ground to dust by this?" A chill crawled up Lin Xun's spine. At the same moment, his spirit sense quivered with a strange resonance, as though the Corpse Severing Millstones were now an extension of his own being.

A thought stirred. Boom!

The black and white millstones surged into the air, whirling madly between heaven and earth. The crushing force they unleashed twisted the very fabric of space until the surrounding void buckled and collapsed. From the point where the millstones met erupted an even more terrifying devouring force, as if to drag all existence into their grinding annihilation!

Unbelievable...

“Stop!” At Lin Xun’s command, the Corpse Severing Millstones halted midair, then slowly drifted back to hang above the vast ravine once more. However, when he attempted to stow them away, he found he could not. In other words, the Corpse Severing Millstones could only function within this realm and could not be taken beyond it.

“Interesting.” Lin Xun murmured.

After a brief thought, he pressed onward. Before long, a radiant mountain emerged in the distance, haloed by auspicious clouds. On its cliff face, a dazzling host of divine weapons danced in the air: dao swords, battle blades, divine seals, scrolls, horsetail whisks, gourds, vases, halberds... There were hundreds in number, each brimming with divine light.

When Lin Xun extended his spirit sense, understanding dawned. Treasure Drop Cliff! All those who were exiled to this realm would have their bodies obliterated by the Corpse Severing Millstones, and every treasure they carried would be sealed within this cliff. Thus it came to be known as Treasure Drop Cliff.

As Lin Xun’s thoughts stirred again, a strange and terrifying power burst forth from Treasure Drop Cliff. Brilliant and multicoloured flames flared skyward, flooding the gray heavens with light. The Treasure Drop Principle! It was an unfathomable power that suppressed and restrained the spirit of every treasure beneath the heavens!

Feeling the surge of strange energy, Lin Xun couldn’t help but be shaken. A sudden thought surfaced. Toady’s lifebound treasure, the Treasure Drop Coin...its essence is akin to the Treasure Drop Law!

Huh?

Then, his eyes lit up as he caught sight of a familiar treasure. It was a short blade, its edge as thin and clear as a cicada’s wing, radiating a faint, illusory aura of time. It flickered in and out of sight among the other treasures, subtle to the point of vanishing.

However, Lin Xun’s heart stirred with excitement. Blade of Light and Shadow! This was a treasure left by his great grandfather, the Omega Lord!

Back in the Sixth Heaven Domain, he had taken it into the Gate of Exile and sealed it away. Lin Xun acted at once, flicking his hand lightly.

Swoosh!

All the treasures suppressed beneath Treasure Drop Cliff surged like a tide, streaming into his grasp. Among them shone the Blade of Light and Shadow.

“Where’s the Divine Magnetic Mountain...” Lin Xun frowned slightly.

He still remembered that day in the Magnetic Wind Belt, one of the forbidden zones in the Rowdy Demon Sea, when he used the Gate of Exile to seize the thousand foot tall Divine Magnetic Mountain. By logic, it too should be found somewhere near Treasure Drop Cliff.

Pondering to himself, Lin Xun pressed on to investigate further. Time slipped quietly away. Even after traversing nearly thirty thousand miles, he still found nothing.

Lin Xun made a swift decision and turned back. Seven and a half minutes had nearly passed; he dared not stay a moment more.

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Back in his dwelling...Shua!

The moment he stepped out, the one-foot Gate of Exile expanded slightly, then dissolved into a rain of light. Lin Xun sat quietly, recollecting everything he had seen and felt within. Only now did he confirm it...beyond the gate lay a true secret world!

This was a world that could only be called the Realm of Exile. Within it, he had already discovered two mysterious domains: the Corpse Severing Millstones, imbued with the terrifying Principle of Annihilation, and the Treasure Drop Cliff, suffused with the rare Principle of Treasure Drop.

He now understood that dao principles were a power far higher than dao laws themselves. By now, he had comprehended that laws were born from the power of order, and that the power of order itself arose from the principles of heaven and earth.

In short, dao principles stood above both laws and order.

The Transcendence Realm was the state of breaking free from the restraints of the heaven-and-earth principles that governed an epochal world. Whereas at the Eternal Realm, one could command and wield the very principles of heaven and earth themselves!

This meant that both the Principle of Annihilation and the Principle of Treasure Drop were powers far beyond Lin Xun's current comprehension. Despite that, within the Realm of Exile, he wielded them as though he were their sovereign!

He had a strong premonition that the Realm of Exile held far more secrets than these. Beyond the Corpse Severing Millstones and the Treasure Drop Cliff, countless hidden wonders were surely waiting to be uncovered. He resolved that in the days to come, he would delve deep into the Realm of Exile and uncover every secret it concealed.

With that thought, he sat cross-legged on the ground, closed his eyes and sank into meditation. At the same time, he took out the Blade of Light and Shadow and examined it closely. Years ago, Mister Lu had explained that the blade could channel the power of time because it was forged with a hundred thousand pounds of Divine Magnetic Iron! Without it, no treasure could possibly withstand the corrosion and destruction of temporal power.

Lin Xun clearly remembered what Mister Lu had told him back then: The Grand Abyss Heaven Devourer bloodline was deeply tied to the power of time. Only by awakening the fourth stage of that innate divine talent could one condense the power of time into laws and engrave them upon one's life-bound weapon.

Then, with every motion in battle, he could wield the very power of time itself! Mister Lu had also left behind nine forbidden dao diagrams, designed to refine Divine Magnetic Iron and condense the laws of time!

Lin Xun currently had no shortage of Divine Magnetic Iron. When he explored the Rowdy Demon Sea, he took the Divine Magnetic Mountain and harvested one hundred thousand pounds of Divine Magnetic Iron.

Unfortunately, he had still not awakened the fourth stage of his innate talent, and thus could not transform the power of time into laws...

Even after three years of tempering the Limitless Abyss Sword Cauldron, he had been unable to imbue it with the power of time. Now, gazing at the Blade of Light and Shadow, he could only sigh helplessly.

What exactly is the fourth stage power?

For the past three years, he had pondered this question, yet the answer continued to elude him. Even now, having refined his mastery of the Gate of Exile to its utmost perfection, there was still no sign of change in his innate divine power.

Casting aside all stray thoughts, Lin Xun put away the Blade of Light and Shadow and sank wholly into meditation. Once his strength recovered, he would once again enter the Realm of Exile.

Chapter 2838 Fourth Stage of Innate Talent

Time flowed quietly. In the blink of an eye, a month had passed. One day, Lin Xun stepped out from the Gate of Exile, his brow furrowed.

For the past month, he had entered the Realm of Exile almost every day, yet he had gained next to nothing. Standing still in contemplation, he let out a soft sigh.

Ultimately, the Gate of Exile could only be opened for far too short a time...only seven and a half minutes. That limit shackled his every move. Up to now, he had managed to explore no more than a hundred thousand miles within that mysterious realm. If he went any further, there simply wouldn't be time to return.

"This won't do," he murmured.

Drawing in a deep breath, he made up his mind. From his day onward, he would once again deduce the profound mysteries of the Gate of Exile. No matter what, he had to extend its duration! He sat down cross-legged and began to meditate.

Years drifted by like mist. By the sixth year of Lin Xun's confinement...

Within his quiet dwelling, he sat in deep mediation. Suddenly, his eyes snapped open, brilliant light flashing within them. After years of unceasing deduction, he had finally unraveled every secret of the Gate of Exile. There was nothing left he did not understand.

"Let's begin." Drawing a steady breath, he circulated his cultivation.

Buzz!

The void trembled. Ripples of power spread outward as a space-time rift bloomed into existence, and a one foot Gate of Exile materialized before him. As Lin Xun extended a hand, the Gate of Exile began to contract, rippling like a lake struck by a stone. Within seconds, it shrank to the size of a palm fan, a clenched fist, a copper coin...

Until at last, it shrank into a single, almost illusory speck of light! It gleamed like the edge of a sword, dazzling beyond comparison. The aura of time that flowed from it carried a sharpness that seemed to pierce straight into the soul.

Lin Xun watched in silence. Time trickled by. The speck of light showed no sign of fading.

Fifteen minutes passed. Thirty minutes. An hour...

Only then did the speck of light finally dim, before bursting apart with a soft boom into a brilliant rain of radiance that drifted through the air.

An entire hour! That was eight times longer than before! A surge of irrepressible joy welled up in Lin Xun's heart.

After a quick calculation, he realized that sustaining the Gate of Exile at this level roughly consumed thirty percent of his cultivation. It was a heavy toll, but well worth it, as the gate could now be opened for an entire hour.

Suppressing his excitement, he crossed his legs once more, meditating until every trace of energy was restored. Only then did he activate the Gate of Exile again. With a flash, his figure turned into a streak of light and vanished into the gate.

The familiar vast gray world unfolded before his eyes. Without wasting a breath, he soared forward at full speed. A few minutes later, a hundred thousand miles had passed beneath him.

Once, this was his limit. Now, it was only the beginning. He pressed onward, his spirit sense sweeping across heaven and earth, probing everything within reach. Then, a quarter of an hour after entering the Realm of Exile.

He suddenly halted mid-flight. A look of utter astonishment flickered across his face. In the far distance, a white waterfall cascaded from the hazy heavens, plunging into a vast ravine like a snow-white dragon of ice. It was none other than a waterfall of time!

That blinding cascade was nothing but the power of time itself, dazzling, ethereal, and boundless. To one side of the waterfall hung a vast black mountain, suspended beneath the heavens, wreathed in obscure power as it endured the endless baptism of the waterfall of time.

Divine Magnetic Mountain! The moment Lin Xun recognized it, emotion welled up in his chest. He drew a steady breath and advanced toward it. With every step he took, he could keenly sense the distortion of time deepening. The nearer he drew to the waterfall hanging between heaven and earth, the slower the current of time became.

By the time he reached the mountain, the flow of time had nearly come to a complete halt. It was as if the very thread of time had been stretched to its limit. Here, a single day might pass, while in the outside world, barely a quarter of an hour slipped away!

Without question, the Principle of Time had warped before this waterfall.

Lin Xun released his spirit sense. The instant it brushed against the white torrent, a violent shock tore through his mind. In the next breath, endless waves of dao mysteries flooded his mind-sea like a roaring tide.

Taken by surprise, he gathered his will, steadying his turbulent thoughts. Then, a burning pulse flared within his chest. His Origin Aeth Artery trembled, like a volcano stirring after countless years of silence.

Could it be...another innate power awakening?

The thought barely formed before Lin Xun instinctively sat down cross-legged and entered meditation.

Boom!

An instant later, his Origin Aeth Artery erupted like a volcano. Obscure yet terrifying temporal power burst forth, condensing into a pillar of white light that speared into the heavens.

In that moment, the distant waterfall of time hanging between heaven and earth shuddered as if in response. Endless filaments of time burst from its depths, drawn by an unseen force, cascading over Lin Xun and bathing him in shimmering light.

Then came a scene beyond belief—Lin Xun's form began to flicker and shift... a youth, an aged elder, a child, and a man in his prime...

The transformations repeated endlessly until even his outline blurred and became distorted. The torrent of temporal power flooded into his Origin Aeth Artery, which had become a bottomless abyss, devouring everything with ravenous greed.

It was impossible to tell how much time had passed. At last, a sharp, tearing pain ripped through his chest, forcing a groan from his lips

Soon, the agony faded, and the Origin Aeth Artery that had erupted like a volcano sank once more into silence. Lin Xun opened his eyes. Far away, the waterfall of time poured endlessly from the heavens, a boundless veil of white.

Everything had returned to how it was before. However, within Lin Xun's mind, countless new insights were quietly taking shape. Almost without thinking, he extended both hands, weaving intricate seals in the air. His slender fingers moved and intertwined, drawing streams of temporal power that coiled around the forming seals.

In one swift motion, Lin Xun flung his hands apart, cleaving through the void before him.

Buzz!

A mysterious force surged into being, like a barrier spanning heaven and earth, woven from countless filaments of temporal power. It was a mysterious and unfathomable restriction barrier!

A surge of indescribable joy and excitement welled up within Lin Xun.

Seal of Temporal Restriction! This was the fourth stage of his innate talent! Its might lay in the word 'restriction.' When this divine power was unleashed, the temporal principals of heaven and earth were drawn forth, forming a restriction barrier!

This realization stirred a memory in Lin Xun. Outside the Flowing Light Forbidden Realm in the Fortune Dominion lay a temporal restriction. Long ago, the Eternal Night Divine Emperor, gravely wounded in a great calamity, had relied on a temporal restriction barrier to halt the pursuit of a group of powerful foes, sealing herself within the Eternity Coffin. Countless ages passed, yet no one had ever broken that barrier of time.

Now, Lin Xun finally understood. What the Eternal Night Divine Emperor had once displayed was this very fourth stage of innate divine power: the ability to forcibly draw upon the Principles of Time, weaving them into a barrier of restriction that not even countless ages could break!

Realizing this, Lin Xun trembled inwardly. A barrier woven from time itself. Among all the eternal beings in this world, how many could truly shatter such a power?

However, he also understood that his newly awakened power was still far from the level of the Eternal Night Divine Emperor. The Seal of Temporal Restriction he had forged was destined, for now, to be

limited in strength. However, in time, as he unraveled its mysteries one by one, its power would surely grow stronger!

Lin Xun exhaled a long breath and slowly rose to his feet.

He now understood that this waterfall of time cascading from the heavens was known as the Flow of Time, which was the embodiment of the Principle of Time themselves. When he cast the Seal of Temporal Restriction here, he could draw upon the power of the Flow of Time, unleashing a power beyond imagination!

Huh? Suddenly, a thought struck him. How long have I been inside the Gate of Exile?

He swiftly calculated, then exhaled in relief. The Principle of Time near the Flow of Time had slowed to an extreme. Here, a single day was equivalent to less than a quarter of an hour in the outside world.

However, Lin Xun also noticed that this temporal power was not constant, but would shift ever so subtly from time to time.

This realization stirred a faint unease in him. If the Principle of Time here were to suddenly accelerate, the consequences could be disastrous.

Without hesitation, he drew a deep breath, swept his sleeve, enveloping the towering Divine Magnetic Divine Mountain in a surge of power, then sealed it into the Limitless Abyss Sword Cauldron before retracing his path back.

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In his dwelling, his figure appeared out of thin air. Relief washed through him, followed by a surge of unrestrained joy.

He had been confined for six years. His cultivation realm had advanced little, but the insights he had gained far surpassed his progress in cultivation! He had pushed the Gate of Exile to its absolute limit.

Now, he was able to compress it to the size of a speck of light, or expand it to an unimaginable scale. If unleashed in battle, its power would be beyond imagination.

Within the Gate of Exile lay endless mysteries, such as the Corpse Severing Millstones, the Treasure Drop Cliff, and the Flow of Time. Each embodied a distinct principle: The Principle of Annihilation, the Principle of Treasure Drop, and the Principle of Time!

When he one day stepped into the Eternal Stage, how could he possibly fear being unable to comprehend and command the mysteries of such principles?

His greatest gain, however, was undoubtedly the awakening of the fourth stage of his innate divine power! If he could wield the Seal of Temporal Restriction to perfection, then even in the face of utter catastrophe, he could rely on its power to resist and neutralize disaster.

“Six years have passed. Only three years of confinement remain. During this time, I must completely refine the Limitless Abyss Sword Cauldron,” he murmured.

He now possessed the Seal of Temporal Restriction, the Divine Magnetic Mountain, and access to the Realm of Exile, from which he could draw forth the endless temporal power from the Flow of Time.

With these, he could refine Divine Magnetic Iron and brand them with the power of time, thus transforming the Limitless Abyss Sword Cauldron into a forbidden weapon imbued with the power of time!

Let's begin!

Lin Xun busied himself within his dwelling. Though six years had passed under confinement, he never once felt boredom. On the contrary, he was completely absorbed in his cultivation. Even if his punishment was lifted now and he was free to leave, he would likely be reluctant to do so...

In the years that followed, he shut himself off from the world, immersing wholly in cultivation. Before he knew it, the ninth year of his confinement had quietly arrived.

Chapter 2839 Emerging from Seclusion

That day, within Lin Xun's dwelling, the Limitless Abyss Cauldron floated quietly before him. This ancient vessel radiated solemnity and might, yet compared to the past, its form now shimmered with an ethereal, crystal-like brilliance, as though strands of temporal light flowed upon its surface.

Within the cauldron, clouds and mists churned, light and shadow intertwined, countless dao laws drifted, and ripples of temporal power spread outward into the air. Its divine aura had undergone a significant transformation. It was no longer what it once was, but something far deeper and more unfathomable.

Lin Xun's eyes shone with astonishment.

For the past three years, he had entered the Realm of Exile almost every day, tempering the Limitless Abyss Sword Cauldron beside the Flow of Time. Each session, he would cultivate there for long hours, allowing the cauldron to absorb more of the power of time, day by day.

At the same time, the consumption of Divine Magnetic Iron had been astonishing. The hundred thousand pounds of Divine Magnetic Iron he had originally collected were exhausted in less than a month. Fortunately, by refining the Divine Magnetic Mountain, Lin Xun obtained more than three million pounds of Divine Magnetic Iron, and that allowed him to forge the Limitless Abyss Sword Cauldron into its current, transcendent state.

Divine Magnetic Iron, imbued with Primordial Magnetic Force, was uniquely suited to bear the weight of time. After refining such huge quantities of this power, the Limitless Abyss Sword Cauldron, both inside and out, brimmed with the aura of time itself.

Even without unleashing its full might, the sword cauldron already exuded a crushing pressure. Ordinary cultivators would be utterly incapable of moving it, let alone resisting its weight. It was simply too heavy, tempered from millions of pounds of Divine Magnetic Iron and suffused in the power of time itself. Even cultivators of the same realm would find it almost impossible to command.

"Before, I could only use the Time Stopping power to freeze my foes and strike them down afterward. But now...with the sword cauldron, I can unleash that same power directly, sealing time itself while delivering the killing blow!" Lin Xun's eyes gleamed.

Not only could the cauldron unleash Time Stopping, but it could also channel the two forbidden divine powers, the Blade of Time and the Gate of Exile. Once wielded in battle, its destructive potential would be beyond imagination.

After quietly attuning himself to the Limitless Abyss Sword Cauldron for a long while, Lin Xun opened his mouth, and the sword cauldron instantly turned into a ray of light, vanishing into his body.

“It’s been nine years...I wonder what’s become of the sect in all this time.” He murmured, rising to his feet and stretching slightly.

These nine years had been peaceful and fulfilling for him. Besides cultivation, whenever he found a spare moment, he would chat with Xia Zhi within the Limitless Abyss Sword Cauldron.

He had promised Xia Zhi that once his confinement ended, he would ask the sect to let her remain by his side under the pretext of taking her as his disciple, so that she would no longer have to hide in the sword cauldron. Moreover, with the title of disciple of the Origin Sect, even if he were to leave on his own, she would remain safe.

After a brief rest, Lin Xun once again crossed his legs and sank into meditation. Nine years had passed, yet his cultivation remained at the initial Nirvana Spirit Stage. His progress had been painfully slow.

The reason was simple: he lacked law power! At this stage, refining law power was the key to advancement; the more one mastered, the faster one’s dao foundation grew.

Despite that, Lin Xun felt no urgency. With his current foundation, once his confinement was lifted, he would have countless chances to seek out and subdue law powers.

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Three months later, Tao Leng arrived at Lin Xun’s dwelling to inform him the period of confinement had ended.

“How do you feel?” he asked with a smile.

“Not bad.” Lin Xun replied, his lips curving faintly. He invited Tao Leng inside, brought out some fine wine and they drank together as conversation flowed. Gradually, he began to learn about what had transpired over the past nine years.

During this time, no one in the sect shone brighter than Divine Son Yuan Changtian. In just nine short years, his cultivation had soared to the pinnacle of the Nirvana Spirit Stage, and it was a pace so terrifying that many found it hard to believe.

In addition, Elder Zheng Qian of the Ninth Peak had been stripped of his position and thrown into the Prison of Repentance for a thousand years.

Lin Xun was taken aback by the news, but Tao Leng chuckled and explained that the entire affair had been orchestrated by Peak Master Qin Wuyu. He himself had merely gone along with the tide. In short, Lin Xun hadn’t needed to lift a finger and Zheng Qian had already been brought down.

After all, with Lin Xun’s current standing, powerful figures like Qin Wuyu and Tao Leng were more than willing to act on his behalf.

However, when Tao Leng mentioned Xuan Feiling, his smile faded, replaced by a trace of concern.

“A few years ago, word came from the Ninth Heaven Domain. A powerful figure there expressed the wish for Deputy Pavilion Master Xuan to go cultivate there.” Tao Leng said in a low voice. “Although Deputy Pavilion Master Xuan refused, rumors have been spreading in the sect. I fear he may soon be forced to accept the decree.”

Lin Xun’s eyes narrowed. “Who is this so-called powerful figure from the Ninth Heaven Domain? What right do they have to meddle in the affairs of our Origin Sect?”

“It’s said to be connected to the Divine Yuan Clan. Apparently one of the Yuan Clan’s ancestral elders was a close friend of our sect’s founding patriarch. Whether that’s true or not, I can’t say.” Tao Leng lowered his voice. “But one thing is certain...The Yuan Clan’s true aim is to pave the way for Yuan Changtian.

"This boy has already reached the pinnacle of the Nirvana Spirit Stage, and is only one step away from Transcendence. Once he breaks through, he'll undoubtedly set his sights on the position of deputy pavilion master!

"If Deputy Pavilion Master Xuan leaves, the timing couldn't be more perfect for him." Lin Xun frowned. "Each of the three pavilions has nine elders, most of whom are at the Transcendence Stage, and some have even reached their pinnacle. Even if Deputy Pavilion Master Xuan leaves, it shouldn't fall to a 'newcomer' like him."

"For Yuan Changtian, there's hardly any real competition." Tao Leng said coldly. "Take our Origin Sky Pavilion, for instance. Once Deputy Pavilion Master Xuan Feiling leaves, the remaining two deputy pavilion masters are both firmly on Yuan Changtian's side. With their full support, the moment Yuan Changtian attains Transcendence, he'll surely take Deputy Pavilion Master Xuan's place."

Lin Xun nodded slightly. "If that's the case, then it truly is troublesome."

Tao Leng hesitated for a moment before saying, "Brother, I do have a suggestion. If you ever get the chance to contend for an elder's seat, you could challenge Yuan Changtian. If you manage to take his position, he'll have no path left to the deputy pavilion master post."

Lin Xun replied calmly, "I wouldn't mind doing that. But if he refuses to accept the challenge...things could get complicated."

Tao Leng couldn't help but sigh, "You're right about that."

Lin Xun remained composed. "I'll speak to Deputy Pavilion Master Xuan about this personally. No matter what, I can't let Yuan Changtian have his way."

The two continued talking for a while longer before Tao Leng finally took his leave. Afterward, Lin Xun stepped out of his dwelling and made his way straight to Xuan Feiling's residence.

Wild Cloud Abode.

As though he had long anticipated Lin Xun's visit, Xuan Feiling was already waiting inside when Lin Xun arrived.

Before Lin Xun could speak, Xuan Feiling said evenly, "You cannot meddle in the affairs of the Ninth Heaven Domain. So even if you ask, I won't tell you a thing."

Lin Xun was stunned for a moment then asked, "Elder...do you really have to leave?"

A faint smile touched Xuan Feiling's lips. "I don't have to, but I've long intended to make a trip to the Ninth Heaven Domain. If, along the way, I can take that final step and break through...all the better."

He had already reached the pinnacle of the Transcendence Stage and was just one step away from the Eternal Realm. If he could break through, it would naturally mark the beginning of his journey on the Eternity Path.

This answer caught Lin Xun by surprise. "Elder, aren't you worried about being bullied?"

"Hahaha!" Xuan Feiling laughed heartily. "The Ninth Heaven Domain may be home to Eternal Divine Clans, but it's still an unimaginably vast world. With my cultivation, the only beings capable of bullying me are those old monsters of the Eternal Stage. Besides, if I dare to go, it means I'm well prepared. I'm not foolish enough to go courting disaster. Boy, save your worrying for yourself."

He spoke as though nothing in the world could trouble him. Lin Xun fell silent. He knew too little of the Ninth Heaven Domain to argue. After a pause, he asked, "Then...when do you plan to leave, Elder?"

Xuan Feiling seemed to see straight through him. "You intend to stop Yuan Changtian from seizing the position of deputy pavilion master before I depart, don't you?"

Lin Xun nodded. "Of course."

"That will be no easy task. Even if you succeed in becoming a deputy pavilion master, your enemies will be old foxes like Fu Wenli and Qi Xiaoyun. In addition there's old monsters like Yuan Xiliu, Chi Wen, and Tang Qiu... Once you stir that nest, the trouble will be endless."

“Elder, do you think I’m afraid of a little trouble?” Lin Xun asked in response.

Xuan Feiling paused, taken aback, then sighed, “You’re still only at the initial Nirvana Spirit Stage. The road to Transcendence is a long one. And I...will remain in the Origin Sect for no more than thirty years.”

Thirty years!

Lin Xun’s heart sank. Even with his talent, even if he amassed vast amounts of law power, thirty years was still far too short to guarantee a breakthrough to the Transcendence Stage.

After a moment’s thought, Lin Xun said, “Elder, before you leave, I still want to give it a try.”

Xuan Feiling’s gaze grew solemn. “Haste makes waste. Too much is as bad as too little. The dao cannot be forced. If you allow impatience or obsession to take root in your heart, it will only hinder your path.

“Besides, it’s merely a deputy pavilion master’s seat. It can’t change much. My advice is not to rush into competing with Yuan Changtian, but rather to set your sights on the future...on the position of pavilion master of the Origin Clarity Pavilion.”

After hearing this, Lin Xun smiled faintly, “It’s only a try. If I fail, I can always compete again later.” He appeared calm and unruffled. However, beneath that composure burned an unshakable will.

Xuan Feiling studied him for a long moment before letting out a deep sigh. “If that unfilial grandson of mine possessed even half your ambition and courage, I’d gladly trade ten thousand years of my life for it.”

He was, of course, speaking of Xuan Jiuyin.

Lin Xun replied softly, “The great dao holds countless paths. He doesn’t need to walk the same road as I do. As long as he follows his heart, that’s enough.”

Xuan Feiling waved a hand dismissively. "This's what we call being disappointed that iron won't turn to steel. When you have children and grandchildren of your own, you'll understand this feeling."

After a brief pause, he continued, his tone softening, "Since you've already made your decision, I won't try to dissuade you further. In the years to come, I'll do everything within my power to support you."

Then, as if suddenly remembering something, he smiled. "Not long ago, the higher-ups of the sect reached a unanimous decision. You, together with four other Immortals, will represent the Origin Sect in the upcoming Immortal Dao Battle to be held at the Shaman Sect Ancestral Court."

Chapter 2840 Take in a Disciple

"Unanimous decision?" Lin Xun asked in surprise.

Xuan Feiling nodded with a smile. "Yes. Even Fu Wenli, Qi Xiaoyun, and the other deputy pavilion masters agreed. You'll be representing the Origin Sect in the Immortal Dao Battle."

Lin Xun's eyes flickered. "It seems this journey to the Shaman Sect Ancestral Court will be anything but peaceful."

Xuan Feiling laughed heartily. "Aside from the danger within the Ten Directions Demon Realm, what other dangers do you think await?"

Lin Xun's reply was calm and measured, "The forces of the Shaman Sect and Zen Sect will surely seize this opportunity to cause trouble. And as for Fu Wenli and Qi Xiaoyun...they're not the kind to remain idle either."

"You've missed one person." Xuan Feiling reminded him.

"Yuan Changtian?"

"That's right. This divine son from the Yuan Clan will be accompanying you this time." Xuan Feiling's tone grew serious. "Outwardly, he won't dare act against you. But the human heart is treacherous, so you must remain vigilant."

Lin Xun nodded. "Besides Yuan Changtian and myself, who else will be participating?"

"Elder Cao Beidou of the Origin Emptiness Pavilion, Elder Li Zhen of the Origin Clarity Pavilion, and Second Peak Master Yun Tianming," Xuan Feiling replied.

Lin Xun's eyes narrowed.

Cao Beidou, one of Fu Wenli's men, was a perfect Nirvana Spirit Immortal who had long shown open hostility toward him. Whereas, Yun Tianming, the Second Peak Master and clan elder of Yun Muzhe, wielded enormous influence within the sect.

It was clear to Lin Xun that these two would stand firmly behind Yuan Changtian once they set off for the Shaman Sect.

"I'm sure you've noticed. Among everyone chosen, only you are still at the initial Nirvana Spirit Stage. The rest have reached its pinnacle." Xuan Feiling continued, "And if nothing goes awry, the participants sent by the other three ancestral courts, the Shaman Sect, Zen Sect, and Spirit Sect, will be of the same caliber."

He glanced at Lin Xun. "So, how is it? Feeling any pressure?"

Lin Xun laughed lightly. "Pressure makes things interesting. Without it, this trip would be far too dull."

Xuan Feiling grinned and raised his thumb in approval, "In courage and resolve, none in the Origin Sect can compare to you, Lin Daoyuan."

Lin Xun gave a wry smile. "Elder, there's no need for such politeness between us."

"That's not politeness," Xuan Feiling said with mock irritation. "If it were anyone else, they'd be pacing restlessly, wracked with worry."

Then his expression turned solemn. "This time, you may act with Elder Li Zhen in the Ten Directions Demon Realm. Fang Daoping and Yuan Xiliu will accompany you all there as escorts. With them overseeing the journey, there should be no danger along the way."

Lin Xun nodded.

Xuan Feiling went on to remind him of many things. From their conversation, Lin Xun learned that in three months, the Origin Sect's chosen participants would set off for the Shaman Sect Ancestral Court.

Before taking his leave, Lin Xun clasped his hands respectfully. ""Elder, There is one favor I wish to ask."

Xuan Feiling raised a brow, curiosity glinting in his eyes. "Oh? And what might that be?"

Lin Xun straightforwardly explained that he intended to take Xia Zhi as his disciple.

"That's a small matter," Xuan Feiling said. "You're now a deacon of the Origin Sky Pavilion and fully qualified to take on a disciple. Go to the Origin Clarity Pavilion and find Fang Daoping. He'll handle all the arrangements for you."

A sense of relief washed over Lin Xun. With this matter settled, Xia Zhi would no longer have to remain hidden in the Limitless Abyss Sword Cauldron.

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On this day, news of Lin Xun's release from confinement swept through the Origin Sect like wildfire. Almost at the same time, word spread that he had been chosen to represent the sect in the Immortal Dao Battle, and the entire sect erupted into discussion.

"Among the five participants, only Deacon Lin is still at the initial Nirvana Spirit Stage. With that cultivation, won't he be at a disadvantage in the Ten Directions Demon Realm?"

"Nonsense! A heaven-defying monster like Deacon Lin can't be judged by common sense."

“Don’t forget, even Zhongli Zhe, a perfect Nirvana Spirit cultivator, had his entire cultivation crippled by Deacon Lin!”

“Still, this Immortal Dao Battle concerns our sect’s standing among the four ancestral courts. In my opinion, sending Deacon Lin may be risky...but perhaps he’ll become our hidden blade. Who knows? He might even deliver a miracle.”

While the disciples were abuzz with speculation, another shocking piece of news rippled through the sect.

“Deacon Lin has taken a disciple!”

“Who?”

“A woman named Xia Zhi. The Origin Clarity Pavilion has already approved it and issued her disciple token!”

“Xia Zhi? What’s her background?”

“That...no one seems to know.”

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That day, Lin Xun’s dwelling was livelier than it had been in years.

“Deacon Lin, I heard you’ve taken in a disciple. My peak master has specially prepared a gift for you. Please accept it!”

Messengers arrived one after another, bearing congratulatory gifts on behalf of various elders and peak masters. Most of the offerings were related to cultivation, such as divine materials, rare elixirs and spirit herbs. All of which were of extraordinary worth.

Even Lin Xun couldn't help but feel a little surprised. At the same time, the crowd finally caught sight of his newly accepted disciple.

She was a young maiden dressed in a flowing black gown. Her skin was pale as crystal and snow, her eyes bright and clear, and her beauty pure and ethereal. She was like a young girl untouched by the dust of the world.

Of course, this was not her true face. Lin Xun had deliberately altered Xia Zhi's features. If the world were to see her real appearance, it would surely stir a storm throughout the sect. After all, in this world, beauty too perfect often becomes its own curse.

It was late at night when Lin Xun's abode finally grew quiet.

"From now on, you can walk openly in the Origin Sect." He spoke with a smile as he prepared food for Xia Zhi.

"I have no interest in that." Xia Zhi sat quietly, savoring the food Lin Xun had made. The gentle sounds of her eating were as clear as spring water trickling through stone, soft and pure as a song of the heavens. Though her features have changed, her eyes remained large and luminous as ever, her beauty still serene and breathtaking.

"I know." Lin Xun handed her a golden, perfectly roasted beast leg, its fragrance wafting through the room. "But I don't want you staying cooped up in the Limitless Abyss Sword Cauldron all day."

Xia Zhi hummed softly in reply, then she asked out of the blue, "Lin Xun, how old is Sister Jingxuan's child now?"

The question caught him off guard. His gaze grew distant. "It's been decades since I last left the lower world...Fan'er must have grown up long ago..."

An inexplicable guilt welled up in his heart. He remembered meeting his father, Lin Wenjing, in the Flowing Light Forbidden Zone, and how the old man had carried guilt for not being there during his childhood. Now, Lin Xun finally understood that feeling.

“Lin Xun,” Xia Zhi said seriously, lifting her head. “I want to give you a child too.”

Lin Xun nearly choked on his breath. Her clear eyes were fixed on him, leaving him completely flustered. He coughed awkwardly. “Xia Zhi, there’s...no need to rush. When the time comes, I’ll marry you properly, bring you into the family, and then...well, we can do it.”

Xia Zhi’s delicate brows furrowed, “Bring me into the family? What does that mean?”

“It means marriage.”

“What’s that?”

“Uh...” Lin Xun felt a headache coming on. “Marriage means...we’ll stay together for the rest of our lives, never parting, sharing life and death.”

Before he could finish, Xia Zhi interrupted with a blank look, “Aren’t we already together now?”

Lin Xun’s lips twitched. “That’s different. Once we’re married, we’ll be husband and wife, and we’ll have an official bond. That way, our family and friends will know we belong together.”

“Can’t we just do that now?” Xia Zhi asked, genuinely puzzled.

Lin Xun said helplessly, “At the very least, we should let my parents and Jingxuan know first and get their blessing.”

Xia Zhi pondered for a moment, then sighed softly, “How troublesome. Forget having a child then. That way, I won’t have to deal with all this.” With that, she lowered her head and calmly resumed eating.

Lin Xun was speechless. What else could he even say? He could only think to himself, I’ll have to find someone else to explain these things to her someday.

In the days that followed, he spent nearly all his time with Xia Zhi, wandering through the mountains of the Origin World, cooking her delicious meals and enjoying a peaceful, fulfilling life.

Time slipped away quietly. Two months passed in the blink of an eye. Now, there was only one day left before his departure for the Immortal Dao Battle. That night, Lin Xun sat with Xia Zhi for a long time, trying once more to persuade her to stay in the sect. Unfortunately, no matter what he said, she refused.

Finally, Xia Zhi snapped, "Lin Xun, are you trying to get rid of me?"

Her words silenced him instantly.

"Or, do you think I'm a burden now?"

Xia Zhi was clearly angry, yet her lovely face remained calm. Her clear, unblinking eyes locked onto him made him feel a rare sense of unease.

Lin Xun gave a helpless smile. "I just don't want you living in fear and worry all the time."

"If something happened to you, do you think I'd still want to live?" Xia Zhi asked.

Lin Xun rubbed his forehead and sighed, "Then...we'll go together."

Xia Zhi's lips curved into a radiant smile. "Alright."

Seeing that bright, infectious smile, Lin Xun couldn't help but laugh as well.

The next morning, in the vast square before the Central Dao Palace of the Origin World, the atmosphere buzzed with quiet anticipation. When Lin Xun arrived, Yuan Changtian, Cao Beidou, Yun Tianming and Li Zhen were already there.

“Brother Lin, you seem to be in good spirits lately?” Yuan Changtian greeted him with a smile.

“Not bad,” Lin Xun replied with a similar smile.

“Deacon Lin’s new disciple is said to be quite the beauty. I hear the two of you have been wandering the mountains together every day. To outsiders, it’d be easy to mistake you for a couple. Of course, in our cultivation world, such things between master and disciple aren’t unheard of. It’s hardly a breach of morality or the dao, wouldn’t you say?” Cao Beidou remarked from not far away.

Lin Xun arched his brow, casting him a calm glance. “Elder Cao seems to have some opinions about me taking a disciple?”

“Haha, how would I dare?” Cao Beidou gave a faint smile.

Yun Tianming suddenly spoke, his face expressionless, “Deacon Lin, we are traveling to the Shaman Sect to participate in the Immortal Dao Battle. We bear the reputation of our sect. I hope that, in the days ahead, Deacon Lin will show a bit more restraint and not stir up as many disturbances as before.”

After a pause, he continued, “Within the sect, no one cares what storms you cause. But beyond these walls...if your actions bring shame to our sect, you’ll be remembered as its sinner.”

Lin Xun let out a low laugh. “Peak Master Yun, my conduct is hardly yours to judge.”