

Prodigies 411

Chapter 411 Give Me Seven Days

Lin Xun's remarks were full of provocation!

The fact that he used Chu Haidong, who had become a laughingstock, as an example was no different from slapping Chu Shanhe in the face.

After all, Chu Shanhe was part of the Chu Family and based on seniority, he was Chu Haidong's elder and uncle.

The audience couldn't help but gasp. Lin Xun has guts!

They were unaware that many people had also thought that Lin Xun was very daring and brave when had beaten up the descendants of the Song and Hua Families and had attempted to kill Hua Wuyou.

Lin Xun was also seen as arrogant and bold when he humiliated Chu Haidong and Chu Yunkong at the Rune Master Association Headquarters.

Despite all that, he was still alive and kicking.

In other words, anyone aware of Lin Xun's past doings would know that it was very normal for him to provoke Chu Shanhe.

"You—"

Regardless of how shrewd Chu Shanhe was, he couldn't maintain his composure in the face of such blatant provocation. His face tensed up, and his eyes flashed a terrifyingly chilling look.

The atmosphere became tense!

Many people were worried about Lin Xun.

However, after just a moment, Chu Shanhe burst out laughing and patted Lin Xun on the shoulder. "The younger generation will surpass us. Since Little Instructor Lin is so confident, I will use this opportunity to learn from you!"

His laughter was cheerful, and he spoke enthusiastically like nothing had happened. Lin Xun couldn't help but admire the old man's hypocritical behavior. His skin is so thick!

However, everyone's heart sank, knowing that Chu Shanhe was determined to make Lin Xun take on the problem.

If Lin Xun failed, he would face unimaginable consequences.

"Deputy Head Chu, why are you forcing someone to do something?"

"Exactly."

"You don't want to see Little Instructor Lin's ability. You clearly want to make things difficult for him," the students from Class 9C said indignantly. They were young and impetuous and couldn't stand Chu Shanhe.

Chu Shanhe's face darkened, but before he said something, Lin Xun scolded his students, "Shut up! What do you guys know? Deputy Head Chu wants to allow me to prove myself!"

His words were harsh.

Although confused, the students suppressed their anger and dared not say anything more.

The corners of Chu Shanhe's lips twitched. He felt that Lin Xun was being sarcastic. He fumed to himself. Wait until you embarrass yourself later.

Chu Shanhe had been planning to deal with Lin Xun from the first day he joined the Rune Department after the youth had brought so much trouble to the Chu Family.

Now that Chu Shanhe had the chance, he wouldn't let go of it so easily.

On the contrary, he had planned out everything. He would instantly take further action when Lin Xun failed. He wanted to destroy Lin Xun's reputation and make him hit rock bottom!

The Sword of Apocalypse was a treasure of the empress. Lin Xun would displease and anger the imperial family if he failed to repair it!

Chu Shanhe quivered with excitement at the thought of Lin Xun facing serious consequences.

"Little Instructor Lin, can we start now?" the older man asked with a smile.

Lin Xun nodded, turned around, and made his way to the center of the hall.

Shen Tuo and his students couldn't bear to see him accept the task of repairing the sword.

In their opinion, Lin Xun had walked into Chu Shanhe's trap, and it wouldn't end well for him!

Why didn't he refuse?

Everyone was puzzled, worried, and filled with some regret. They regretted not disagreeing with Chu Shanhe's proposal to have a taste of Lin Xun's ability, forcing the youth into such a hopeless situation.

However, regardless of how much they regretted it, it was too late to say anything.

The Sword of Apocalypse was mysterious and marvelous as it was an incredibly powerful rune armament. Even experienced rune grandmasters had failed to repair it. How could Lin Xun who had just passed the rune grandmaster verification assessment...do it?

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"Young man, it's still not too late to give up now," an elder couldn't help but remind Lin Xun as he neared the Sword of Apocalypse.

The other elders also felt bad for him.

As experienced rune grandmasters, they were well aware of the serious damage on the Sword of Apocalypse, and they knew there was only little possibility of repairing it.

If Lin Xun forcibly attempted to fix the sword, he could destroy it!

It was precisely because they had feared that the sword would be destroyed in their hands that they didn't dare to attempt repairing it.

After all, they would anger the imperial family and infuriate the empress!

Who could bear the consequences?

Previously, they were irritated that Lin Xun had meddled in the matter, but after seeing everything, they realized that the teenager was just a duck driven onto a perch, right into Chu Shanhe's trap. Their irritation was replaced by pity.

"Let's take a look at it first." Lin Xun said with a smile, but his eyes were already fixed on the sword.

The sword was peculiar. It was three feet long and one palm wide. The body was shrouded in violet qi and adorned with nine sacred and beautiful violet glory flowers.

It exuded a majestic and ancient aura like it had survived since the start of time!

Its aura alone showed that it was a legendary divine weapon!

However, in Lin Xun's view, regardless of how splendid the sword's aura was, the sword was ultimately a rune armament and had been made by a rune master.

Since it could be made, it could be repaired. It only depended on the method used.

Lin Xun stood motionless, staring intently at the sword, his mind unwavering, and his sharp and handsome face focused and serious.

Although he didn't utter a word, he exuded a calm confidence that made everyone fall silent.

The hall was deathly quiet and still as all eyes were locked on Lin Xun. Even the air seemed to have frozen.

No one disturbed Lin Xun.

But everyone's face was full of worry.

Of course, only Chu Shanhe had a smile playing on the corner of his lips. He seemed to be gloating and waiting for the good show to start.

Time passed, but Lin Xun remained as motionless as a statue.

Many instructors and students couldn't help but feel anxious. If possible, they wanted to persuade Lin Xun to retreat and not accept Chu Shanhe's request out of anger.

However, he was deep in thought, and no one dared to disturb him.

After an hour, while everyone looked glum, Lin Xun suddenly moved. He lifted his right hand into the air and reached to grab the hilt of the Sword of Apocalypse.

"No!" the elder beside him cried out in panic.

Other people's expressions morphed indefinitely. What is Lin Xun doing? Does he really plan to repair the Sword of Apocalypse?

If he fails, the consequences are very serious!

“Since he’s repairing the sword, there’s no reason why he can’t touch the Sword of Apocalypse. Move out of the way and don’t interrupt Little Instructor Lin!” Chu Shanhe yelled.

Everyone cursed inwardly. That old man wants to push Lin Xun into the pit!

Lin Xun ignored Chu Shanhe and didn’t notice the worried gazes behind him.

He seemed to be shutting his eyes to everything. His eyes were intently fixed on the Sword of Apocalypse, and his right hand was clasped around the golden-scaled sword hilt.

He closed his eyes, and his tremendous spirit sense power spread out like threads of silk, completely enveloping the sword.

For three full hours, Lin Xun didn’t utter a word.

He stood motionless with his right hand around the sword hilt. Violet qi rose from the sword body and shrouded his spear-straight body.

Just as everyone was anxiously waiting, Lin Xun finally moved. Without turning his head around, he said indifferently, “Give me seven days.”

His comment stunned the entire audience. They had never thought that Lin Xun would agree to repair the sword and not give up!

“Can...can you really do it?” asked the elder beside him.

“Not sure yet, but I can give it a try.” As Lin Xun was speaking, he sat down cross-legged on the ground. With his brows screwed tightly together, he fell into deep contemplation.

Everyone couldn’t help but feel restless. No one had the confidence to repair the sword but Little Instructor Lin readily agreed. Is he not afraid of the consequences of failing?

Chu Shanhe was overjoyed. As long as Lin Xun agrees to repair the sword, he will no doubt fail!

As a rune grandmaster, Chu Shanhe knew how serious the damage on the Sword of Apocalypse was and that it was almost impossible to repair it. He thought Lin Xun was seeking death to rashly agree to repair the sword!noVelnext.com

“Okay, everyone, let’s wait seven days. Little Instructor Lin is going to start the repairing process and mustn’t be disturbed. Let’s leave now and come back in seven days.” Chu Shanhe chuckled.

He appeared to be thinking for Lin Xun, but in truth, he was driving people away for fear that their persuasion would make the youth change his mind.

“Then...”

Everyone looked at each other in dismay, hesitant to leave.

In the end, Shen Tuo sighed, glanced at Lin Xun, and left with everyone.

Chu Shanhe walked at the back of the crowd. He also glanced at Lin Xun as he left, but his eyes glinted with malice and coldness.

Only Lin Xun and the four rune grandmasters remained on the fifth-floor hall of the Refinement Tower.

“Young man, why?”

“The Sword of Apocalypse has no hope of being repaired. You will destroy it if you try. If that happens, you will face monstrous calamity!” the rune grandmasters sighed.

However, Lin Xun’s expression remained calm and indifferent, and he quickly said, “Elders, I will have to trouble you for the next seven days. Can you please help me prepare some rune materials, ink, and brushes? Also, can you prepare some aeth medicines that restore physical strength?”

The four rune grandmasters stared at him blankly. This little guy...really intends to take such a tremendous risk to repair the sword?

Chapter 412 The influence of Little Instructor Lin

On the same day, the news of Lin Xun repairing the Sword of Apocalypse spread like wildfire.

“Isn’t that...too fierce?”

“How is that fierce? Little Instructor Lin has been pushed into the pit!”

“Deputy Head Chu is too ruthless. He clearly wants to get revenge for Chu Haidong.”

“Shhh, lower your voice!”

The incident was being discussed everywhere in the Rune Department—the school, the dormitory and every corner.

Everyone felt indignant for Lin Xun, but there was nothing they could do. Chu Shanhe’s move was an open scheme. No one could say that Chu Shanhe was wrong even if they knew he was deliberately targeting Lin Xun.

Very quickly, the news spread from the Rune Department to the Dao Martial Department, True Martial Department, Hidden Dragon Department, and the Godly Stratagems Department.

The incident received much attention because Lin Xun was well known in the Forbidden City.

Additionally, the Sword of Apocalypse had an earthshaking background as it was a treasure belonging to the empress.

Thirdly, the incident concerned the feud between Lin Xun and the Chu Family. Everyone knew that Chu Haidong had become a laughingstock after Lin Xun suppressed him, and the Chu Family’s reputation had been impacted as a result. How would the fact that Chu Shanhe, the deputy head of the Rune Department, planned to use the repairing of the Sword of Apocalypse to attack Lin Xun not attract attention?

“The Sword of Apocalypse is a legendary rune armament. Lin Xun is...screwed.”

“To be honest, I doubt Lin Xun can escape the calamity. From what I know, even experienced rune grandmasters from the Rune Master Association and Divine Workshop have failed to repair the Sword of Apocalypse. Lin Xun has just become a rune grandmaster. Even if he is amazing, how can he do what the other rune grandmasters can’t?”

“Yes, if Lin Xun fails, he would destroy the sword, ruin his reputation, and face terrifying calamity from the imperial family!”

“Strange, anyone can see that this is a pit. Why did Lin Xun insist on jumping in? Is he not afraid of death?”

“Let’s just wait. We will know in seven days.” *noVelnex.com*

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The incident became the most discussed topic in Qinglu Academy, and most people weren’t optimistic about Lin Xun’s situation.

Everyone couldn’t help but lament at Chu Shanhe’s scheme. The older you are, the spicier you are. He pushed Lin Xun into a hopeless pit in one move. His means are too terrifying.

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Shi Yu choked on his drink when he learned about the incident. He violently coughed, and his face was flushed red.

“What is that guy thinking?” murmured Shi Yu after a while.

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“Why didn’t I realize that Lin Xun is so arrogant? But I like him more this way!” Ning Meng exclaimed.

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“The Sword of Apocalypse...He has just become a rune grandmaster yet he dares to repair a rune armament? Th...” Chi Cangmei felt a headache coming on. Lin Xun always does something unexpected. Does he not have any fear?

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On Mind Cleansing Peak, Lin Xuefeng was filled with worry. “What do you guys think?”

“Let’s just wait for news,” Xiaoke said indifferently.

“Yes, keep working.” Spirit Vulture’s response was even calmer, and he just instructed Lin Xuefeng to continue to deal with the matters on Mind Cleansing Peak.

Lin Xuefeng smiled wryly. Do they not care about him?

Only Lin Zhong reassured Lin Xuefeng with a smile, “Don’t worry, we all know that Young Master won’t do anything stupid.”

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In the Forbidden City, the news about Lin Xun agreeing to repair the Sword of Apocalypse was broadcasted through the rune transmission screen.

The countless cultivators around the light screen were dumbfounded by the news, unable to believe what they heard.

Lin Xun had only joined Qinglu Academy one month ago, but he caused such a huge disturbance again! However, it likely won't bode well for him this time!

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West Creek Lin Clan.

When Lin Tianlong, Lin Nianshan and Lin Pingdu heard the news, they were dumbstruck for a moment. They had thought that Lin Xun would suffer retaliation from the Zuo and Qin Clans after he entered Qinglu Academy, but who would have thought that the Chu Family would jump out first before the two high clans took action?

"He has reaped what he has sown! Look at how many people that little bastard has offended after entering the Forbidden City—the Chi Family, the Song Family, the Hua Family and the Chu Family...they are all top forces!" Lin Tianlong smiled coldly.

"What goes around comes around. Lin Xun is doomed. How can he repair the Sword of Apocalypse?"

Lin Nianshan and Lin Pingdu nodded in agreement, looking overjoyed.

Their three clans had been badly suppressed in recent days, and they had to seek help from the Zuo and Qin Families.

Their spirits lifted, and they felt their anger vented after hearing such good news.

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In short, since Lin Xun entered the Forbidden City, he had violently beaten up the descendants of the Song and Hua Families, defeated Hua Wuyou, and invoked the phenomenon cries of the nine dragons during the rune grandmaster verification assessment. News about him erupted in the Forbidden City every now and then. It caused a sensation every time, and as a result, he had become the most discussed figure in the city.

Many people again marveled at Lin Xun's fearlessness when they learned that he wanted to repair the Sword of Apocalypse. Is there anything that Lin Xun doesn't have the guts to do?

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While the outside world was spiritedly discussing the news, the fifth floor of the Refinement Tower was unaffected, like it was isolated from the world.

"Pass me the seventh golden blossoming rune ink."

"Little Instructor Lin, what's the reason for using that type of rune ink here?"

“To coordinate with the seventh golden array and for it to resonate with the other seventy-two rune arrays. This method can guarantee that the third crack remains undamaged during repair. Be careful, watch the other side. Don’t touch the buds of the demonic eye flower.”

“Little Instructor Lin, does the demonic eye flower also need to be smelted?”

“No, the demonic eye flower plays a simple role, but it’s very important. Its buds are filled with mysterious underworld yin qi, which can be absorbed into the sword body and produce a short-term freezing effect. It can stop the seventh crack from being corroded.”

“I understand. By the way, Little Instructor Lin, what brush technique are you using? It seems that you are inscribing some kind of secret rune pattern?”

“Oh, don’t you know? This brush technique is called the Cloudy Sky Line. It is most suitable for inscribing rune arrays with attributes such as water, clouds and fog. It is to target the ninth crack.”

The conversation between Lin Xun and the four rune grandmasters echoed throughout the hall.

However, the scene seemed a little weird.

Lin Xun was sitting cross-legged with the Sword of Apocalypse, and dozens of rune inks in special cups and saucers were on the desk in front of him.

He held a slender, pale golden rune brush in his right hand and made strokes along the sword.

The four rune grandmasters were sitting upright beside Lin Xun, carefully watching his movements and asking questions.

When Lin Xun answered them, their faces lit up with enlightenment, joy, and surprise.

They resembled a group of students attending a lecture. It was an indescribably strange scene.

They were four senior rune grandmasters who had been watching over the fifth floor of the Refinement Tower for years. They had a high status and were widely respected.

However, they seemed like students of Lin Xun. If other instructors and students in the Rune Department saw them now, their jaws would drop.

Who could imagine a teenager who had just been certified as a rune grandmaster could lecture four senior rune grandmasters

In truth, Lin Xun didn’t do that on purpose.

When he was preparing to repair the Sword of Apocalypse, the senior rune grandmasters opposed and questioned his actions. They even looked at him with pity and sympathy.

However, the situation gradually changed when Lin Xun started the repairing process.

As the saying went, a real expert can identify a real expert. They were all experienced rune grandmasters. From one glance, they could tell that Lin Xun’s rune skills were unfathomable and unbelievable!

His ability shook them as they knew very little about some of his techniques.

But they were even more shocked when Lin Xun cleared their puzzlement. They subconsciously felt defeated.

How would Chu Shanhe feel if he saw the scene?

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Time flew, and seven days passed in the blink of an eye.

That day, Chu Shanhe woke up early in the morning, intentionally dressed neatly, combed his hair meticulously, and then left the residence.

When he arrived in front of the Refinement Tower, it was already crowded with figures.

Most of them were instructors and students from the Rune Department, but there were also people from other departments of Qinglu Academy. It was a grand scene.

This was because everyone knew that today was the day that Lin Xun had promised the Sword of Apocalypse would be repaired!

The crowd grew restless as Chu Shanhe arrived. The main character had arrived.

Chu Shanhe ignored them, summoned a servant to lead the way, and strode up the fifth floor of the Refinement Tower.

The rest of the people hurriedly followed him.

What did Lin Xun do in the past seven days? Can he repair the Sword of Apocalypse? Everyone was full of anticipation.

Chapter 413 The Complacency of Chu Shanhe

"How is the situation?" Chu Shanhe quickly asked as he walked up to the fifth floor.

"Deputy Head, the kid can't escape the calamity!" whispered the attendant beside him, looking excited.

"Oh? Do you have specific details?" Chu Shanhe's face was alight with joy.

"The kid had been repairing the Sword of Apocalypse for the first three days, but he seemed to have encountered a setback on the fourth. He was sitting dispirited and dull on the ground, but he suddenly snapped awake today!"

The attendant reported, "Unfortunately, I couldn't enter the fifth floor of the Refinement Tower and could only observe from the outside."

Chu Shanhe began to hyperventilate, and his heart quivered with excitement. He inhaled deeply, trying to calm himself and asked, "Where is the Sword of Apocalypse now?"

"It broke!" The attendant smiled smugly.

"It broke?" Even though Chu Shanhe had exclaimed in shock, he had already guessed the outcome.

"Are you sure?" Chu Shanhe asked cautiously, confirming whether it was true.

"I can guarantee with my life that the sword has broken into nine pieces. They have been lying there for two days and haven't been repaired."

"Good! Good! Very good!" Chu Shanhe could no longer contain his excitement and joy.

It finally happened. When I see Lin Xun, I can't wait to see his depressed and terrified face!

"Deputy Head, do you want to inform the imperial family?" asked the attendant.

Chu Shanhe resisted the impulse to do so and said, "Let's wait and see first, and then make a decision."

As they were speaking, Chu Shanhe led the group of instructors and students to the fifth floor of the Refinement Tower in a mighty manner.

The tremendous hall was utterly silent.

Chu Shanhe's eyes lit up. As the attendant said, Lin Xun is sitting motionless like he's meditating.

Has that kid really given up?

He swept his eyes around the hall and noticed the sword broken into nine parts on the desk beside him. Each piece was enveloped in violet qi.

It's really broken.

His eyes grew even brighter.

The four experienced rune grandmasters seemed to be investigating something near the desk. Their brows were scrunched up as they stared at the broken sword, unaware that Chu Shanhe had come with a group of instructors and students. **NOVELNEXT.COM**

"The..."

"The Sword of Apocalypse is broken?"

"Doesn't this mean that Little Instructor Lin has failed?"

"Heavens! How could that be? The Sword of Apocalypse has been destroyed. The imperial family won't forgive Little Instructor Lin! How would the empress forgive the person who broke her precious treasure?"

"It's over. Little Instructor Lin has gotten himself into serious trouble!"

The instructors and students cried out in panic, their expressions dramatically changing.

Shen Tuo also turned ashen-faced. He thought that Lin Xun might be able to create a miracle since he had confidently accepted the proposal.

However, the reality...was too cruel!

The students of Class 9C looked even more glum, and their hearts felt extremely heavy. They admired and respected Lin Xun. How could they accept the fact that he walked into a hopeless situation because of a trap?

Chu Shanhe cleared his throat with a cough and said aloud, "Everyone, you win some and you lose some. There's no need to be so surprised. It's just a pity we didn't see the remarkable ability of Little Instructor Lin."

Many people reddened with anger. Even some instructors and students who were uninvolved in the incident felt that Chu Shanhe had gone too far.

Chu Shanhe had carefully planned the scheme, yet he was making sarcastic remarks. He was clearly satisfied that he got revenge.

"Deputy Head Chu, the Sword of Apocalypse is already badly damaged and has no hope of being repaired. It's only a matter of time before it is destroyed," Shen Tuo explained. "This...this matter can't be blamed on Lin Xun."

"Yes, many rune grandmasters in the Forbidden City also couldn't do anything. It's understandable that Little Instructor Lin failed."

Other instructors and students echoed his words.

Chu Shanhe had never imagined that someone would oppose him at such a time.

His face darkened. "If Little Instructor Lin knew he couldn't do it, then why didn't he refuse earlier? Since he made a promise, he has to take responsibility for his failure."

After a pause, he sighed, "I actually don't want to see Little Instructor Lin fail, but the Sword of Apocalypse is very important. The consequences of it being destroyed are serious."

Many people couldn't help but curse inwardly when they saw Chu Shanhe cry crocodile tears.

That old man wants to kill Lin Xun and not leave him any chance of surviving!

"Deputy Head Chu..."

Shen Tuo was about to say something when Chu Shanhe dismissed him with a wave of his hand. "Okay, the sword is already broken, there's no point making excuses anymore. Now, we have to report the matter to the imperial family as soon as possible and hopefully, they understand."

So ruthless!

If the imperial family learns about the incident, there will be no wiggle room.

"Attendants."

Chu Shanhe issued an order before everyone could respond, "Inform the imperial family that Little Instructor Lin has failed to repair the Sword of Apocalypse and destroyed it in the process. Just report the truth."

"Yes," an attendant rushed over and received the order.

Everyone felt chilled to the bone.

However, Chu Shanhe smiled faintly, suppressing his excitement. "Everyone, don't worry. I believe the imperial family will deal with the incident appropriately."

Although Chu Shanhe acted indifferently, everyone knew he was in high spirits and complacent with the situation!

“Who said I failed?”

Lin Xun suddenly rose to his feet and swept a glance over them.

It had only been seven days, but Lin Xun had lost a lot of weight on his face. His face was unshaven and overcast with weariness.

Repairing the Sword of Apocalypse had taken a toll on him.

Everyone couldn't bear to look at Lin Xun, thinking that he only spoke out because he couldn't accept his failure.

“Little Instructor Lin, no one wants to see the Sword of Apocalypse destroyed. Don't be too upset.” Chu Shanhe pretended to be sympathetic.

Lin Xun smiled. “Deputy Head Chu, thank you for your concern, but...did you actually see me fail?”

His words sounded very rude like he was venting his frustration.

“Little Instructor Lin, I know you're in a bad mood but I hope you watch what you say and don't talk nonsense!”

“Watch what I say? Fine.”

Lin Xun chuckled. “Deputy Head Chu, do you know Chu Haidong? You two are indeed from the same family.”

What does that mean?

Many people were taken aback by Lin Xun's remarks at first, but then it dawned on them. After all the youth in front of them had proven that Chu Haidong was a stupid idiot.

Lin Xun was implying that Chu Shanhe was also a stupid idiot.

So vicious!

However, upon careful thought, it was understandable that Lin Xun was furious. After all, Chu Shanhe had pushed him into such a deep pit.

Chu Shanhe's face turned dark and unpleasant and his eyes flashed coldly. He glowered at Lin Xun and said through gritted teeth, “Little Instructor Lin, what do you mean by that?”

The atmosphere suddenly turned tense.

Lin Xun said with a smile, “What do I mean? Deputy Head Chu, you should know very well. But you have made a mistake, I have successfully repaired the Sword of Apocalypse three days ago. Why did you say I failed?”

The audience was stunned. The instructors and students looked perplexed at the Sword of Apocalypse that had been broken into nine parts on the table.

Chu Shanhe burst into laughter and shook his head. "Little Instructor Lin, I think you are talking gibberish because you're upset. The sword has been broken to such a state. How can you claim that it's been repaired?"

He burst out laughing again, feeling indescribably complacent and pleased that he had beaten Lin Xun.

"Deputy Head Chu...you shouldn't laugh," the four experienced rune grandmasters came over to him and reminded him in a whisper. Their expressions were filled with pity.

Correct, it was pity!

They were not pitying Lin Xun but instead Chu Shanhe!

Everyone felt that some unexpected change had happened.

Chu Shanhe frowned and asked coldly, "What do you all mean? Did I do something wrong just now..."

His voice suddenly stopped, and his eyes bulged wide open. He froze to the spot like lightning had struck him.

Lin Xun made a grabbing motion in the air, and clouds of sacred violet light rushed up from the table afar. They were from the nine parts of the Sword of Apocalypse.

The nine sword fragments seemed to possess spiritual nature. Amidst a unique and rhythmic clang and rumble, beautiful violet glory flowers bloomed from them one after another.

The nine violet glory flowers swayed in the air, producing a dazzling divine light and transforming into a three-foot-long sword. The sword exuded an ancient, majestic, and sacred aura!

It floated in the air while violet qi spiraled around its body, causing the surrounding air to collapse inch by inch and forming a current of turbulent air. A wailing-like whistle filled the hall.

Many instructors and students exclaimed. They felt a stinging pain in their eyes, their hearts throbbed, and they dared not to look directly at the brilliance of the sword!

Some students trembled, their hair standing on end and their faces turning deathly pale.

The...

The Sword of Apocalypse has been restored to its original state!

Moreover, its aura alone is completely different from seven days ago. It has become more sacred, majestic, and terrifying!

It's as if it has gained a new soul and life!

Everyone gasped in astonishment while Lin Xun grinned at Chu Shanhe. "Deputy Head Chu, your expression is exactly the same as Chu Haidong's when he was at the Rune Master Association headquarters. You two are like a carbon copy of each other. No wonder are both from the same clan!"

Chapter 414 Slap in the Face

Lin Xun didn't speak particularly loudly, but his voice rang clearly in everyone's ears. Besides feeling shocked, everyone felt a rush of strange emotions.

Lin Xun's counterattack was too sudden. Moments ago, he had been regarded as the loser, had been pushed into a hopeless situation, and had suffered humiliation from Chu Shanhe.

However, all of a sudden, the Sword of Apocalypse, which should have shattered into nine parts, appeared in perfect condition. Its appearance was like an invisible slap to Chu Shanhe's face!

A direct slap!

Adding to that, Lin Xun treated Chu Shanhe as a stupid idiot like Chu Haidong.

Chu Shanhe's expression visibly changed. His eyes filled with rage and shocked disbelief. "How...how is that possible?"

He couldn't believe that the Sword of Apocalypse would suddenly be restored to its original condition!

It was too unbelievable!

Shen Tuo couldn't help but ask aloud, "Lin Xun, has the Sword of Apocalypse really been repaired?"

The Sword of Apocalypse had been severely damaged, and none of the rune grandmasters in the Forbidden City was able to do anything, yet Lin Xun managed to solve the problem in just a few days. How could Shen Tuo not be shocked?

The other instructors and students were just as flummoxed.

An elder beside Lin Xun exclaimed, "It has indeed been repaired. We saw it with our own eyes!"

"Yes, not only has the damage inside the sword body been treated, but the forty-nine rune arrays within the sword have also been rearranged and refined. The Sword of Apocalypse is even more powerful than before!"

"The most incredible thing is that Little Instructor Lin...only took four days to complete the repair. We are all ashamed when we compare ourselves to him."

The other three elders sighed.

Everyone glanced at each other, astonishment flooding their hearts.

It's true!

It only took Lin Xun four days to repair a rune armament of the empress!

He is only sixteen years old, and it has only been one month since he became a rune grandmaster!

This is unbelievable!

The audience fell deathly silent. The more they thought about it, the more frightened they were.

On the other hand, Chu Shanhe's expression morphed indefinitely. Veins popped on his forehead as he stood rooted to the spot. He looked so bewildered and shocked and almost coughed up blood.

He couldn't accept the truth.

He had planned out every single step and had even begun to think about how to attack Lin Xun when he failed to repair the sword. He never thought that the youth could repair the sword in just a few days!

How is that possible?

Chu Shanhe remembered the serious damage on the sword and how every rune grandmaster found it incredibly tricky to repair the damage. This was the reason why he had confidently believed that Lin Xun, a new rune grandmaster, wouldn't succeed.

However, reality was cruel. It tore apart his plan like a blade and pierced into his heart, making him so painful that he couldn't breathe.

Many people noticed Chu Shanhe's face darkening, and that he was about to go berserk.

They felt satisfied. After all, Chu Shanhe had repeatedly humiliated and ridiculed Lin Xun. Although he attacked Lin Xun openly, his means were still too cruel, and it made many people uncomfortable.

They were satisfied to see Chu Shanhe dig a hole for himself.

Especially the students of Class 9C. They all looked at Chu Shanhe with undisguised disdain, pity, and joy.

That old guy wanted to harm Little Instructor Lin, but he shot himself in the foot instead!

The people with sharp eyes could tell that Lin Xun's prestige would soar once again after the incident!

After all, the Sword of Apocalypse was a treasure and legendary rune armament belonging to the empress. Lin Xun had repaired it to its original state in just a few days with just his own abilities. How would his remarkable abilities not shock the world?

Imaginably, the incident would cause a huge sensation once spread, and his prestige would soar to a whole new level.

On the other hand, Chu Shanhe had dug himself a hole with his well-planned, ruthless scheme.

Although Chu Shanhe was physically unscathed, his reputation and prestige would no doubt suffer after the incident. He would become a controversial presence in the Forbidden City.

His fate would be similar to his nephew Chu Haidong *NOVELnext.coM*

No wonder Lin Xun had mocked Chu Shanhe by saying Chu Haidong and him were carbon copies of each other.

Chu Shanhe repeatedly took several deep breaths to control his emotions and forced a smile. "Little Instructor Lin is indeed brilliant. This is an eye-opening experience. I believe everyone feels the same. I have another affair to attend to, so I can't stay too long."

As he was speaking, he was about to leave.

He had been embarrassed enough. Lin Xun had slapped him in the face in the most unbelievable way in front of everyone.

“Deputy Head Chu, wait a minute, you seem to have forgotten something,” Lin Xun said aloud.

Chu Shanhe’s heart sank. He forcibly suppressed his irritation and asked indifferently, “What’s the matter?”

“Since the empress left the Sword of Apocalypse to the Rune Department for repair, there has to be a generous reward. I successfully repaired it, so shouldn’t I receive the reward?” asked Lin Xun with a smile.

The audience fell silent. Lin Xun is right. If there wasn’t a reward, who would dare to repair the Sword of Apocalypse?

The corners of Chu Shanhe’s lips twitched, and he said with a stiff smile, “When...when the Sword of Apocalypse is handed back to the imperial family, there will be a generous reward passed down.”

“That’s good.” Lin Xun grinned.

However, just as Chu Shanhe was about to leave again, Lin Xun interrupted him again, “Deputy Head Chu, there is another matter.”

Kid, are you done yet?!

Chu Shanhe was so enraged that he almost lost control of his anger. He felt Lin Xun had gone too far in humiliating and tormenting him.

“What?” Chu Shanhe spat out one word from between his teeth.

“I remember you mentioned that you have sent someone to inform the imperial family that I destroyed the Sword of Apocalypse. If the imperial family finds out that the situation is the exact opposite...”

Before Lin Xun could finish his sentence, Chu Shanhe shuddered all over and his face blanched with terror. He realized the seriousness of the problem.

He would be committing the crime of deceiving the emperor!

If the emperor and empress learn what I have done, the consequences...are unthinkable!

The other instructors and students inhaled sharply as they felt that Lin Xun had done that on purpose. If the youth had told him earlier that he had repaired the sword, how would it have turned into this?

His revenge was cruel!

However, if Chu Shanhe hadn’t deliberately attacked Lin Xun with such a vicious scheme, the latter wouldn’t have been able to take advantage of the situation.

Suddenly, Chu Shanhe’s face turned livid and he erupted with anger, “Lin Xun, why didn’t you remind me earlier? Do you want to watch me embarrass myself?”

Lin Xun rolled his eyes. “Deputy Head Chu, the Sword of Apocalypse is very difficult to repair, but did you remind me?”

“You—”

Chu Shanhe's eyes almost popped out, and he almost coughed up blood.

"Me? What did I do?"

Lin Xun looked perplexed. "I helped our academy repair the Sword of Apocalypse, which is a great achievement. Deputy Head, you should be happy for me, why...why are you so furious? Did I call you a stupid idiot like I did to Chu Haidong?"

"Kid, don't go too far!" Chu Shanhe roared in anger again when he heard the words 'stupid idiot!'

He scowled, his expression sinister and terrifying. Everyone's expressions changed.

"I went too far? Deputy Head Chu, it's obvious which one of us went too far."

Lin Xun smiled indifferently. "Don't try to use your identity to suppress me. You should know that the Qinglu Academy invited me here. If you anger me, I can just simply leave."

Shen Tuo and the other instructors trembled inwardly. They had never expected Lin Xun's counterattack to be so aggressive.

They would suffer a tremendous loss if the youth left!

After all, Lin Xun was not only a genius rune grandmaster of the younger generation, but he could also repair rune armaments!

In fact, he was able to repair the legendary Sword of Apocalypse, which had troubled many rune grandmasters, in just a few days. Where could they find another talent like him?

The instructors couldn't maintain calm when they heard Lin Xun's words. They all blamed Chu Shanhe. If Lin Xun left, the Rune Department would become a laughingstock in the Forbidden City.

"Kid...you are so ruthless!"

Chu Shanhe felt like his lungs were about to rupture from anger when he sensed the change in the atmosphere. He shot a glare at Lin Xun before flicking his sleeve and leaving.

He chose to retreat in the face of the youth's threat.

This was undoubtedly equivalent to bowing his head!

Everyone felt emotional as they watched Chu Shanhe, a deputy department head, walk away in shame.

Who would have imagined that an operation to target Lin Xun would undergo such an earthshaking transformation in the end?

Chapter 415 Invitation from the Empress

As Chu Shanhe left, the storm targeting Lin Xun also subsided.novelnext.com

Under complicated gazes, he left the Refinement Tower with the students of Class 9C.

When he returned to his dormitory, he immediately passed out on the bed.

Everyone only saw him break apart Chu Shanhe's scheme in an extremely beautiful way, but no one was aware of the effort and time he had put in in the past seven days.

It was the first time that he had tried to repair a rune armament. The slightest mistake could have destroyed the treasure.

Imaginably, the repair of the sword was extremely taxing.

He hadn't rested at all in the four days and had been racking his brain for a solution to repair the sword.

In the end, he succeeded!

However, he paid a high price. He was so exhausted that he didn't want to move an inch. He just wanted to collapse on his bed and sleep to his heart's content.

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While he was in deep slumber, the news about the restoration of the Sword of Apocalypse quickly spread through Qinglu Academy and caused a sensation.

By night, the news had spread throughout the Forbidden City like wildfire and sparked an uproar.

"Lin Xun is so abnormal!"

Many people couldn't believe that Lin Xun again had caused such a stir just after one month of being verified as a rune grandmaster.

The sword was a treasure of the empress and had brought a headache to many top experienced rune grandmasters, but Lin Xun, a teenage rune grandmaster, managed to restore it to its original condition.

This was incredibly unbelievable.

That night, Lin Xun's name spread to every corner of the Forbidden City like the plague and caused a commotion.

Unquestionably, he had once again proved his strength, and his prestige had soared to a new height.

He was the master of Mind Cleansing Peak, the martial arts genius who had defeated Hua Wuyou, the teenage rune grandmaster who had invoked the cry of the nine dragons, and the top instructor of Qinglu Academy who had repaired the Sword of Apocalypse.

Lin Xun was shrouded in one dazzling halo after another, and behind each one was a sensational story.

He had achieved all those titles within one year!

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To some influential figures, the repair of the Sword of Apocalypse was too special and unusual.

It was a rune armament!

It was a treasure belonging to the empress!

His amazing feat not only brought him glory, but also showed his dazzling potential.

If Lin Xun could repair rune armaments, he wasn't far from being able to craft a rune armament!

How unbelievable would it be if a teenager was able to craft a rune armament?

Who would dare offend a genius like him?

It wouldn't be good to offend a rune grandmaster capable of crafting rune armaments!

Most importantly, Lin Xun had repaired a treasure belonging to the empress. How would the empress not take notice of a young talent such as Lin Xun?

His newly formed relationship with the empress was equivalent to gaining a terrifying protector!

"Lin Xun not only has astonishing potential, but also unbelievably good luck. He reversed the situation and obtained an unexpected tremendous harvest."

Many people couldn't help but sigh emotionally.

"Hey, Chu Shanhe has been completely humiliated. After this incident, not only will he lose face, but people will also say that he is jealous of real talents!"

"Indeed, the Deputy Head of the Rune Department was defeated by a teenager. How embarrassing!"

"As long as Lin Xun remains in the Rune Department, Chu Shanhe won't be able to lift his head again. It will be very awkward for him."

Many people shared the same thought. Chu Shanhe not only failed to do anything to Lin Xun, but he also dug a hole for himself. He likely can't raise his head again in the future.

Lin Tianlong, Lin Nianshan and Lin Pingdu all turned ashen-faced when they heard the news.

The blow was too heavy for them.

Lin Xun's sudden strong rise had already plunged the three collateral branches of the Lin Clan into turmoil.

They had no choice but to ask for help from the Zuo and Qin families to deal with Lin Xun.

Who would have thought that before they acted, Lin Xun would end up humiliating an influential figure such as Chu Shanhe, and the incident would spread throughout the entire Forbidden City?

On the other hand, the youth's prestige and reputation had soared to a whole new level after he repaired the Sword of Apocalypse.

Additionally, it was very likely that he would receive a reward from the imperial family and had also created a good impression on the emperor!

The more dazzling and amazing Lin Xun was, the heavier the blow felt to the three collateral branches!

Under these circumstances, the teenager could expose his fangs and attack them at any time!

"Just you wait, the Zuo and Qin Clans haven't acted yet. We will let you jump around for a little longer!"

Lin Tianlong, Lin Nianshan and Lin Pingdu pinned all their hopes on the Zuo and Qin Clans.

.....

“Dao Seeker, to challenge the fourth level of the Omega Secret Realm one has to be at least the Spirit Sea Stage.”

As Lin Xun woke up from his deep sleep, a familiar cold and emotionless voice rang in his ears.

His eyes snapped open, and he drew a deep breath. His jet-black eyes glazed over in contemplation. In the end, he suppressed the impulse to challenge the next level of the Omega Secret Realm.

He had broken through to the perfect intermediate Spirit Sea Stage and was only one step away from the advanced Spirit Sea Stage. Basically, he was qualified to challenge the fourth level of the Omega Secret Realm, but he lacked the energy and time to do so.

He had to teach, hone his martial arts, study runes, keep a close eye on the affairs in Mind Cleansing Peak, and be vigilant against attacks from the Zuo and Qin Clans.

How would Lin Xun have the mood and time to challenge the level?

Moreover, he knew the fourth level of the Omega Secret Realm wasn't simple.

If possible, he would rather challenge the fourth level when he reached the advanced Spirit Sea Stage as that would give him a greater chance of passing.

After a long stretch, Lin Xun walked out of his room.

Soon, he learned from Shen Tuo that he had slept for two full days, and during those two days, the news that he had repaired the Sword of Apocalypse stirred up a storm in the Forbidden City.

Deputy Head Chu Shanhe chose to retreat for now and had gone into closed-door cultivation in the Chu Clan's residence.

Chu Shanhe's decision was very wise. He would have heard humiliating remarks if he stayed around in the Rune Department.

Once the storm subsided, he might have a chance to fight back in the future.

As a result, Lin Xun felt much more relaxed.

Shen Tuo told him that the Department Head had reassured him that he could stay comfortably at the Rune Department and that he would receive special treatment.

Shen Tuo then mentioned the Sword of Apocalypse again. Lin Xun had won recognition from the imperial family after the repaired treasure was returned.

Lin Xun asked bluntly, “Is there going to be a reward?”

Shen Tuo didn't know whether to laugh or cry. He brought out a jade-like letter marked with the violet glory flower symbol and said, “This is an invitation for the empress' 300th birthday banquet. They made an exception to invite you.”

Lin Xun exclaimed, “That's the reward?”

In his opinion, it was just a birthday feast and couldn't be considered a reward.

Shen Tuo almost rolled his eyes, but he patiently explained, "Lin Xun, do you know how many influential figures would fight over the invitation? It is a great honor to be able to attend the birthday banquet. Every single person there will be an authority figure!"

Lin Xun stared at him blankly and still saw it as nothing special. Even if the guests there are remarkable influential figures, what does that have to do with me?

"You—I don't know what to say about you. If you attend the birthday banquet, there is a high chance you will win the favor of the emperor given that you have successfully repaired the Sword of Apocalypse."

Shen Tuo bluntly told Lin Xun about the real benefit of attending the birthday banquet.

Sure enough, Lin Xun gave a satisfied smile. "That's good. Otherwise, it would be a waste of time for me."

Shen Tuo couldn't help but smile wryly. This kid is peculiar. Other people would do anything for the opportunity to attend the empress's birthday banquet, but he doesn't care. He is only moved by tangible benefits and rewards.

There was only half a month until the empress' 300th birthday banquet, but Lin Xun didn't care much and continued to train and cultivate every day as before.

The only change was that he had become even more popular and his lecture hall, which was specially approved by the Department Head, was always full.

In addition to students from other classes, instructors, and rune grandmasters from the Rune Department also attended his lectures!

The scene could be described as a sea of people.

This was because Lin Xun had successfully restored the Sword of Apocalypse. His current mastery in the art of runes had amazed many rune grandmasters!

As the date of the birthday banquet neared, it started to attract the attention of the entire Forbidden City.

This was because the banquet was much grander than in previous years!

Chapter 416 Marquis of Rising Sky

It was the day of the birthday banquet of the empress.

Lin Xun arrived in the inner palace city area on a jeweled carriage. Then, he advised Third Old Zhu to leave while he entered the inner palace city alone with the invitation card.

The inner palace city belonged to the imperial family, and the entry and exit were strictly controlled. Even powerful and influential figures weren't allowed without an invitation.

It was like another world. Grand, ancient buildings stood tall as far as the eye could see, and they were bathed in the glorious glow of the morning sun.

Anyone would feel small and insignificant standing among the majestic buildings.

The palace was easy to find as it was located in the utmost center of the inner palace city. A white jade path that was dozens of feet wide led straight up to the entrance of the palace.

Palace guards stood on both sides of the white jade path with stern, murderous expressions.

Many guests had already arrived before Lin Xun; most of whom were noblemen and some were great renowned cultivators.

He quivered inwardly.

There is no doubt that the banquet is going to be very lively.

Lin Xun trod forward alone, glancing around. It was his first time in the inner palace city. A layer of violet qi blanketed the sky, and the surrounding ancient buildings and structures exuded indescribable authority.

The Ziyao Empire was tremendous, and the Forbidden City was incredibly prosperous. Therefore, how could the inner palace city located in the heart of the Forbidden City not be extraordinary?

Along the way, many people recognized him as they all looked at him strangely and whispered to one another.

Unquestionably, Lin Xun had made a name for himself in the Forbidden City. After all, he had defeated Hua Wuyou, became a rune grandmaster, and repaired the Sword of Apocalypse belonging to the empress. He had stirred up several storms in the Forbidden City and caught the attention of many people.

It was normal that many people recognized him. *novel*Ext.com

Soon, Lin Xun noticed a familiar figure—Bai Lingxi!

She was also alone. She looked particularly ethereal and stunning in a light blue dress that accentuated her graceful and slender figure with her silky black hair draping her shoulders.

She was breathtakingly beautiful even from behind.

She also came.

Lin Xun thought for a moment, contemplating whether he should go up to greet her. After all, Bai Lingxi had repeatedly stood up for him in Precious Laughter House. Although she clearly didn't think much of it, he was full of gratitude.

To his surprise, Bai Lingxi suddenly halted and turned her head around like she had noticed something. Instantly, her clear and bright eyes landed on Lin Xun.

Lin Xun's appearance in the palace surprised her as she walked over and asked, "You came too?"

Lin Xun nodded with a smile. "What a coincidence."

"Let's go in together." She walked next to Lin Xun as she was speaking.

Her face was delicately stunning, and her brows were perfect. She had a graceful figure and her skin was fair and soft like jade. She walked leisurely like a fairy from a painting.

Even though Lin Xun was acquainted with her, her beauty still took his breath away. The maiden with the innate talent Eternal Shining Stars had become more beautiful than ever.

"When we were at Blood Kill Camp two years ago, I thought I had formed a better aeth power reservoir than you, but I now have realized that your aeth power reservoir isn't just a first-grade aeth power reservoir," said Bai Lingxi suddenly.

Lin Xun narrowed his eyes, smiled, and said, "There's no difference."

Bai Lingxi's bright eyes swept over Lin Xun and she responded, "There is a difference. At least, the foundation of a first-grade aeth power reservoir can't possibly help you reach the intermediate Spirit Sea Stage in less than two years."

After a pause, her brows furrowed as if she had thought of something odd. "Besides, a few months ago, you defeated Hua Wuyou, who is at the intermediate Spirit Sea Stage, even though you were only at the initial Spirit Sea Stage. Not anyone can do that."

"I know how strong Hua Wuyou is. She is regarded as one of the strongest in the Dao Martial Department of Qinglu Academy, and she is strong enough to be ranked on the Spirit Sea Gold Rankings. Since you could defeat her, it's no longer about the foundation."

She suddenly lifted her eyes and stared at Lin Xun's face. Her soft lips suddenly parted and she said aloud, "If my guess is right, your innate talent might not have vanished when your Origin Aeth Artery was taken away."

Lin Xun trembled inwardly with shock. Bai Lingxi discovering his greatest secret was outside of his wildest expectations.

"You don't have to answer me. That's just my speculation."

Bai Lingxi shifted her gaze to the towering palace building afar. "A while ago, I learned something. Can you believe it? Beyond the Ziyao Empire is a vast, mysterious place with ancient Dao traditions. It is a paradise-like, blessed land with unimaginable cultivation resources."

Lin Xun was inwardly shaken. Inexplicably, he thought of the bloody tragedy more than ten years ago and thought of how Yun Qingbai had killed his parents and clansmen!

According to the old man of the Black Glory Sacred Hall, Yun Qingbai had come from a mysterious sect with Dao traditions called Omega Sword Sect!

"The elders in my clan said that only there can a cultivator seek the true Dao there, transcend worldliness, enter sainthood, and live with heaven and earth. But not everyone is qualified to go there."

Bai Lingxi seemed to be murmuring half to herself, and there was a hint of longing on her beautiful, flawless face.

Lin Xun's mood changed because he had a feeling that the mysterious domain that Bai Lingxi spoke of was where Yun Qingbai had come from!

Bai Lingxi drew a deep breath and said aloud, "Soon, I'm going to set out on a journey to seek the path there." Although her voice was indifferent, it was filled with unquestionable determination.

As Lin Xun looked at the maiden radiating a dreamy and sacred aura bathed in the morning sunlight, he couldn't help but feel admiration for her. He said with a smile, "I wish you a smooth trip and hope you achieve what you set out for."

He could tell that Bai Lingxi had an extraordinary determination toward cultivation and seeking the Dao. This was the reason why she stood out so much in the mundane world.

Bai Lingxi smiled sweetly. The hint of a smile she inadvertently revealed seemed to make the world dim when compared to her indescribable beauty.

"Let's not talk about this. Many geniuses and talents are going to attend the birthday banquet. Do you know why they came?" Bai Lingxi suddenly asked.

"Did they not come here to celebrate the empress's birthday?"

She shook her head. "This birthday banquet is different from those in the past. I heard...that several masters from the mysterious domain beyond the Ziyao Empire will attend. If you can win their favor, perhaps you can soar to the sky in one leap and be allowed to cultivate in the mysterious domain."

It was only then that Lin Xun realized why Bai Lingxi had mentioned the mysterious domain to him. It turned out that was also the reason she came.

Lin Xun speculated that Bai Lingxi was under the mistaken assumption that he had come to the birthday banquet to compete for that opportunity.

He was about to explain when loud rumbles rang behind him and drew the attention of everyone.

They were in the inner palace city where the white jade path led directly into the palace. Who would dare to arrogantly cause such a disturbance?

He turned around and saw a gorgeous jeweled carriage pulled by four ink-hooved dragon beasts clattering towards them with incredible speed.

The jeweled carriage was overflowing with colors and adorned with purple cloud patterns, and the four ink-hooved dragon beasts were all fierce and terrifying.

The owner of the jeweled carriage had to be impressive given that he dared to move freely on the white jade path. Furthermore, no one dared to stop the carriage.

"Ink-hooved dragon carriage! The Marquis of Rising Sky has returned!"

"Five years ago, the Marquis of Rising Sky left the Forbidden City when he was at the Spirit Dipper Stage and went to train alone in the desolate wasteland. He has killed an unknown number of trash from the Darkness Race and made a name for himself. I never thought he would return to the Forbidden City after five years!"

“After five years, I wonder how strong he has become. He should at least be at the Spirit Sea Stage, right?”

Many figures on the white jade path exclaimed. They recognized it was the Marquis of Rising Sky, Zhao Jingyin, a young marquis in the imperial family!

He was a domineering, arrogant, and bad-tempered cultivation genius.

Five years ago, the Marquis of Rising Sky, Zhao Jingyin, was only fourteen years old, but he had slaughtered dozens of cultivators for a brothel woman. Not only did he forcibly take the woman away, but he also set fire to the brothel. The incident shook the Forbidden City.

In the end, the incident spread to the emperor, and he issued a decree to expel the Marquis of Rising Sky from the Forbidden City. He was sent to the frontier to pay off his sins with meritorious service.

No one would have thought that after only five years, the Marquis of Rising Sky, Zhao Jingyin, would return to the Forbidden City!

Just from overhearing the discussion around him, Lin Xun realized the carriage was moving recklessly on the white jade path because the owner of the carriage was arrogant and fearless.

“That guy came back...”

Bai Lingxi frowned, her bright eyes flashed a look of disgust. She had also heard about the Marquis of Rising Sky’s past misdeeds.

Unexpectedly, the ink-hooved dragon carriage abruptly halted as it passed him. Because the stop was too sudden, the sinister dragon beast in front reared up on its back legs, and its iron-pillar-like front legs almost slammed into Lin Xun!

Uproar broke out.

This scene happened so suddenly that many ordinary cultivators couldn’t evade it in time.

In truth, Lin Xun was also a little caught off guard, but his years of battle experience made him subconsciously dart to the other side with miraculous speed.

Chapter 417 Daring

With both of its front legs in the air, the ink-hooved dragon beast looked ferocious and terrifying.

Such fierce beasts could suppress Spirit Sea cultivators. If the hooves struck Lin Xun, he would be severely wounded if not dead.

Whoosh!

A hornless ice dragon shadow charged out from behind Lin Xun. Then, as though he had been carried away on a cloud, he vanished from the spot.

The first transformation of the Tribulation Dragon Nine Transformations—Hornless Ice Dragon Step!

The ink-hooved dragon beast slammed its hooves into the ground, producing a loud rumble and quaking the ground. The blow was imaginably terrifying.

Lin Xun breathed a sigh of relief, but he was irritated. Beasts have to be tamed to pull carriages, which means the dragon beasts wouldn't have gone on a rampage without an order.

Roar—

However, before Lin Xun snapped back, the ink-hooved dragon beast turned more irritable and ferocious. It let out a furious roar and charged toward Lin Xun. Its foul breath assaulted his face as it pounced toward him.

“Get lost!”

Lin Xun's black eyes were terrifyingly cold. With icy mist spiraling from his body, he stepped forward and a hornless ice dragon shadow lifted its head and unleashed a resounding dragon roar.

An indescribably terrifying power erupted from Lin Xun's body.

Instantly, the ink-hooved dragon beast whimpered and collapsed on the ground with a thud as though a mountain had crushed it.

At the same time, the other three ink-hooved dragon beasts groaned and slumped over.

Hiss—

Gasps of shock filled the area.

Lin Xun's figure was still enveloped in icy mist. The hornless ice dragon shadow raised its head, exuding an indescribable deterrent power and looking at everyone with haughtiness.

His released power had suppressed four ink-hooved dragon beasts that would terrify normal Sea Spirit cultivators.

“What kind of secret cultivation art is that? How can it have such a strong deterrent power?”

Bai Lingxi's bright eyes lit up with a strange light. Lin Xun had too many secrets. She couldn't help but feel curious about what sort of unknown power he had grasped.

“Haha, you're Lin Xun?” A burst of feminine laughter sounded from the carriage, followed by a young man in a blood-colored robe stepping out of the carriage.

His skin was as fair as a woman's and his face was very pretty. He had a bewitching charm, and his eyes flashed blood-red as they opened and closed.

It was the Marquis of Rising Sky, Zhao Jingyin!

Based on appearance alone, he didn't seem like a fierce warrior who had made a name for himself on the frontier battlefield. Instead, he more resembled a handsome noble young master.

However, his appearance made many people narrow their eyes and their faces blanched with fear. They knew very well that although the Marquis of Rising Sky had a beautiful exterior, he was a demon inside!

“Correct!” Lin Xun nodded.

He understood that the clash between him and ink-hooved dragon beasts was no coincidence!

"You are indeed as young as the rumors said, but I don't think you are as bold and daring as they claim."

His gentle and feminine voice along with his bewitchingly charming face gave him a unique bearing.

"What do you think is daring and bold?" asked Lin Xun.

"If I were you, I would have killed the vicious beast that tried to ram into you and then kill the owner of the beasts," the Marquis of Rising Sky explained indifferently, but his words were filled with murderous intent. "That's what I call daring."

Some people inhaled sharply. His perverse behavior hadn't changed after five years but instead worsened!

Lin Xun nodded and thrust his palm forward. With a boom, an ink-hooved dragon beast exploded, and blood jetted everywhere.

Everyone trembled and cried out inwardly in panic. Who would have thought that Lin Xun would suddenly attack and kill one of the ink-hooved dragon beasts?

"I'm not that daring and bold, but I still have the guts to kill a vicious animal. Are you satisfied now?" Lin Xun asked indifferently.

"But in my opinion, it's still too cowardly."

The Marquis of Rising Sky didn't seem angry and just stared expressionlessly at Lin Xun. *novel*Ext.com

Bang!

Before his voice died away, another ink-hooved dragon beast exploded. The remaining two roared in alarm.

A look of sheer terror washed over nearby people's faces.

They still hadn't figured out the reason why the Marquis of Rising Sky would suddenly stop his carriage and bring trouble to Lin Xun.

Unexpectedly, the Marquis of Rising Sky was domineering, but Lin Xun was not inferior in any respect!

They were on the white jade path that led to the inner palace city. It was a sacred place, but both showed no hesitation in resorting to violence!

How frightening!

Today was the empress's 300th birthday banquet. Were they not afraid of being punished for causing such a disturbance?

"What about now?" Lin Xun asked again, his jet-black eyes devoid of emotions.

"Still not good enough," the Marquis of Rising Sky remarked indifferently. There was also not a ripple of emotion on his bewitchingly pretty face.

However, everyone sensed that the atmosphere had turned tense, and a battle was on the verge of breaking out.

The air seemed to have frozen, and the atmosphere was so oppressive that many people could hardly breathe.

Everyone knew that Lin Xun seemed to be demonstrating his courage by killing the ink-hooved dragon beasts in front of the Marquis of Rising Sky, but in truth, it was a counterattack.

The counterattack was simple, direct, and violent!

“Then continue.”

Lin Xun smiled and raised his right hand again.

How would the remaining two ink-hooved black dragon beasts continue to do nothing? When they sensed Lin Xun’s murderous intent, one pounced forward to kill.

The other roared mournfully and hid behind the Marquis of Rising Sky.

Bang! Bang!

With two loud noises, the two beasts were slaughtered.

Lin Xun crushed the head of one, but the other died under Marquis of Rising Sky’s palm. They had both died a tragic death.

Everyone couldn’t help but shudder. So strong!

Both the Marquis of Rising Sky and Lin Xun were provoking each other in the most direct way. Neither of them was willing to take a step back!

Even Bai Lingxi’s expression turned serious.

An accidental conflict had developed into a feud!

However, she was suspicious as to why Lin Xun, who had only been in the Forbidden City for less than one year, would attract provocation from the Marquis of Rising Sky who had just returned.

“Those evil creatures are embarrassing and deserve to die.”

Marquis of Rising Sky’s voice was soft and gentle, but his eyes were grim. “Now, what other way do you have to prove that you are daring?”

Lin Xun smiled. “There is a way.”

Suddenly, the Marquis of Rising Sky’s eyes gleamed with killing intent, and his robe whipped around him. “What way?”

The atmosphere was extremely tense, and the nearby air was visibly unable to bear as it started to distort and wail.

“Kill you directly.”

The smile on Lin Xun’s lips faded. His voice was calm, but it stunned everyone. Many people almost cried out loud.

“Hahaha.”

Marquis of Rising Sky threw his head back and laughed, his voice chilling everyone to the bone like a damp and cold current.

“You have disappointed me. I thought that there was another ruthless man in the Forbidden City who could impress me, but turns out you’re not that amazing.”

The Marquis of Rising Sky scrunched his nose in disdain. “You know, if you’re truly bold and daring, you would have killed me right away instead of waiting until now.”

The Marquis of Rising Sky turned around and strode away under stupefied gazes and didn’t glance at Lin Xun again.

“I won’t kill you this time. Although I can spare your life, you’re not exempt from punishment. I heard that you have repaired the Sword of Apocalypse. Since that’s the case, from today onwards, you will work in my residence and serve me for ten years. Otherwise, when the birthday banquet is over, death will come for you. Think about this carefully!”

The feminine voice drifted away and the Marquis of Rising Sky’s figure vanished.

It was only then that everyone realized the reason that the Marquis of Rising Sky, who was always surly, did not take action in the face of Lin Xun’s provocation.

His true purpose was to make Lin Xun work for him!

No wonder he would suddenly provoke Lin Xun. It turns out that he thinks highly of the other person’s ability after he repaired the Sword of Apocalypse...

The Rune Master Association headquarters, the Divine Workshop, and Qinglu Academy have offered very generous rewards and were very sincere in recruiting Lin Xun.

However, the Marquis of Rising Sky used power and strength to force Lin Xun into submission. He is too domineering!

Understanding dawned on Lin Xun. After a while, he shook his head and said to Bai Lingxi, “Let’s go in too.”

He walked towards the palace and didn’t glance at the blood-stained dragon beast’s corpse on the ground.

Bai Lingxi couldn’t help but ask, “Are you not worried?”

“I’m not worried, just very angry.”

Lin Xun shrugged and said, “I was bullied like that for no reason. If I have the chance, I don’t mind having a life-and-death duel with the Marquis of Rising Sky to see who is more daring.”

Bai Lingxi nodded and didn’t say anything else.

Soon after the two left, a clamor of discussion broke out.

“The Marquis of Rising Sky clashed with Lin Xun the moment he came back. This is too unexpected.”

“Haha, Lin Xun often stirs up a storm in the Forbidden City and is always in the limelight, but he is unlucky to encounter a fierce character like the Marquis of Rising Sky.”

“He is indeed unlucky, but given his current status and identity, the Marquis of Rising Sky can’t possibly make him submit.”

“Interesting, a bloody conflict has happened before the empress’ birthday banquet even started. It will be extremely lively.”

“Yes, even the Marquis of Rising Sky has come back. How would the banquet be an ordinary birthday banquet?”

“Let’s go. It will be clear when we enter the palace.”

Chapter 418 Active provocation

In front of the gate of the palace was a little lake.

An azure ox with violet horns was lying in the lake with its eyes closed while snoring loudly.

Every person slowed down as they passed the lake with a look of fear. They cautiously stepped into the palace, worried of disturbing the beast’s slumber.

Lin Xun’s pupils shrank as he neared the beast. Although the beast didn’t look particularly frightening, it exuded an unparalleled terrifying aura.

It was as though it would become a monster that could stir up a storm when it awakened!

Violet-horned azure rhino!

Lin Xun thought of the rumor that a legendary heaven-grade rune beast watched over the imperial palace. It was called the violet-horned azure rhino and possessed monstrous power. It belonged to the founding emperor and could suppress even Heaven Ascension cultivators!

However, Lin Xun never expected such a powerful rune beast would appear before him.

After a moment of astonishment, Lin Xun looked away and followed Bai Lingxi through the palace gate.

It was another different world.

The ancient buildings were laid out in an orderly fashion, and each one was magnificent and grand. The ground was paved with smooth white jade, and in the center of the area stood a sacrificial cauldron. There was one road specially for the emperor, and another that had been constructed for the court officials. Everywhere was oozing with the majesty of the imperial family.

The deeper they went in, the more splendid and sacred the surroundings and scenery. Many people were awed into silence.

As they passed a clear lake, a chorus of exclamations sounded.

Dazzling golden clouds rushed up from the lake, glowing a dreamy and golden hue under the morning sunlight.

It was a school of fish with golden scales. Each one was several feet long with whiskers hanging from the sides of their lips. Their crystal clear eyes sparkled and their bodies were haloed with golden light and mist, making them look particularly mysterious.

Golden wave dragon fish! *novel*Ext.com

Many people's eyes widened with astonishment. That's an extremely rare species in the world, but they appeared in groups in the imperial palace!

"Look at the lakeside, there is a seven-colored sacred lotus flower in full bloom. The leaves are divided into yin and yang! That's a rare aeth medicine!"

Soon, a colorful lotus flower by the lake caused another commotion. A refreshing, medicinal aroma pervaded the air.

"The palace is breathtakingly beautiful. The outside world can't be compared to this place!" many people marveled.

The seven-colored sacred lotus flower, an extraordinary aeth medicine, drew envious looks from many great cultivators.

"What do you know? This is just the tip of the iceberg. If you have the chance to take a look at the imperial garden, you will understand what a real treasure house is," an influential figure in a beautiful and luxurious robe said indifferently. He often traveled in and out of the palace, so he was very familiar with the area.

Even Lin Xun couldn't help but smack his lips. Every corner of the imperial palace is magnificent. Not only are there all sorts of rare treasures and rune creatures here, but the towering trees are also not ordinary.

"Everyone, it's fine to take a look, but don't touch them. Otherwise, you might bring trouble upon yourself," someone reminded the group.

Immediately, many people snapped out of their astonishment, feeling a chill run down their spine.

The rare treasures were everywhere, but they belonged to the imperial family and not anyone could touch them.

Lin Xun and Bai Lingxi continued forward and soon arrived at a huge square. The central imperial palace was just in front.

The birthday banquet was held in the central imperial palace.

Before the birthday banquet began, guests were already gathered in the square.

The square was already arranged with tables and cushions for the guests to sit and rest.

Many of the gathered figures were high-ranking ministers, powerful nobles, and great cultivators with impressive foundations.

Of course, many descendants of noble families also came with the elders of their clan.

“Please excuse me, I’m going to say hello to a few friends first.”

Bai Lingxi and Lin Xun separated and headed in different directions. She walked towards a group of young men and women who were waving enthusiastically at her.

Lin Xun wandered around by himself. He didn’t know the majority of the guests, and he was too lazy to make small talk and make friends.

However, the exquisite bridges and beautiful statues and ornaments quickly attracted Lin Xun’s attention.

To his surprise, they were all inscribed with ancient rune patterns.

Lin Xun studied them for a long while, falling into contemplation. He could tell that the rune patterns on all the objects, including the bridges, stone statues, sculptures, and ornaments were not independent but connected.

Lin Xun speculated that a large-scale ancient rune array protected the square and even the central palace area!

Suddenly, he overheard a conversation that made him furrow his brows.

“Hey, hey, Lin Xun is in trouble now. He will no doubt suffer a calamity after angering the Marquis of Rising Sky!”

“That kid has been so arrogant. It’s time that someone teaches him a lesson. Otherwise, how can the Forbidden City tolerate him?”

“That kid has angered so many people. He will suffer one day.”

The rude criticisms and verbal attacks surprised Lin Xun a little. He lifted his eyes and noticed some men and women pointing at him.

Among them were Hua Wuyou and Hua Wuhen.

It turns out that I ran into some old friends.

The corners of his lips curled upwards in a sneer as he strode towards them. “Miss Hua and Young Master Hua, it’s been a while, but I see you two are still living a leisurely life.”

Hua Wuyou’s face suddenly darkened. She had almost died at Lin Xun’s hands in the Sky Martial Arena a few months ago. How would she not be enraged to hear Lin Xun’s sarcastic remark?

“What do you want?” Hua Wuyou asked coldly.

The nearby people looked displeased. Lin Xun is so arrogant. He deliberately went over there to humiliate people!

“What do I want?”

Lin Xun smiled. “I just want to ask when will we have another life-and-death showdown?”

“How dare you?!” Hua Wuhen fumed.

"The Marquis of Rising Sky just said I am not daring enough, but you said I'm too daring. Why don't you come and see if I have guts or not?"

Lin Xun cast a contemptuous look over Hua Wuhen.

"Let's go."

Hua Wuyou grabbed Hua Wuhen and stormed away. She was afraid that she would lose her temper. The consequences would be serious if she lost control of her anger in the palace.

The others glared at Lin Xun and turned away.

"When did those guys become so cowardly?" Lin Xun stood in the same spot, looking disappointed.

In truth, he was disappointed. First, the Marquis of Rising Sky had provoked him and then Hua Wuyou and the others had criticized and mocked him. How could he remain calm?

Suddenly, he caught a glimpse of many people looking gloatingly at him. Among them, he noticed two acquaintances, Song Chonghe and Song Zhe from the Song Clan.

Is it a coincidence?

Not exactly. After all, Hua Wuyou and Song Chonghe were both descendants of aristocratic clans and had come to the palace with the elders of their clans.

Lin Xun stepped forward and said to Song Zhe with a smile, "Brother, do you remember what Shi Yu told you when you were in the Precious Laughter House? Your fiancée had an affair with your cousin. How can you still travel around with him?"

Those words felt like a direct slap to Song Zhe's face. Not only did Song Zhe's face darken but Song Chonghe's face also turned livid.

"You...don't go too far!" Song Zhe gritted his teeth.

"I'm just reminding you out of kindness, but you don't appreciate it. Ah, what a pitiful man! Someone stole your wife, and you didn't realize." Lin Xun was smiling but his words were vicious.

Seeing that Song Zhe and Song Chonghe were about to go berserk, he turned around and left.

After the venting, his anger had subsided tremendously. But he still wasn't satisfied. He glanced around, trying to spot some acquaintances.

His behavior made him seem very arrogant like he was looking to get revenge.

He was in the imperial palace, a forbidden area where even the powerful influential figures dared not create trouble, but he didn't seem to care that it was a solemn place. Hua Wuyou, Song Zhe, and the others also didn't dare to use violence even though they were itching to skin Lin Xun alive to curb his arrogance.

In truth, Lin Xun only acted arrogantly because he felt injustice that so many people were targeting him without even being provoked.

He believed the emperor and empress would take into account the fact that he had repaired the Sword of Apocalypse and not punish him for his behavior in the palace.

Of course, that wasn't important.

The most important thing was that when he arrived at the central imperial palace, he realized a problem. He wondered whether the influential figure who said he could turn the Forbidden City upside down would also attend the banquet.

Lin Xun still remembered the Ancient Twisted Plum Blossom Sword that had suddenly emerged and stopped the battle between Third Old Zhu and Hua Qinglin in the Sky Martial Arena.

The Ancient Twisted Plum Blossom Sword was a powerful weapon of the imperial family and not even ordinary members of the imperial family could mobilize it.

After repeated considerations, Lin Xun wanted to cause a scene to see if he could force the influential figure to come out!

After scanning around, he noticed another acquaintance.

However, the acquaintance's appearance on the square surprised Lin Xun. Why would she be here too?

Many people crowded around a graceful and slender figure in the distance.

Chapter 419: Ancient Wasteland Domain

The woman's figure was graceful, and her face was bright and beautiful. She was like the moon surrounded by stars.

Although her appearance wasn't breathtaking, her beauty was pure, warm, and not too flashy like a young lotus flower. It wasn't only comfortable but also made no one dare to violate her.

Her elegance was unmatched.

Of course, she was Liu Qingyan, the famous art cultivator whom many people admired in the world!

Liu Qingyan was viewed as an ethereal being in the empire. Not only did the geniuses of the younger generation adore her, but powerful and influential figures also admired her talent.

In many people's eyes, Liu Qingyan was incredibly dazzling!

However, Lin Xun still didn't expect to see her at the empress' 300th birthday banquet.

He counted the days and came to realize that they hadn't seen each other for a whole year. He couldn't help but feel emotional as he reminisced about the days with Liu Qingyan in Haze City.

She had left a very good impression on him. She was gentle, warm and kind, which made her very likable.

Moreover, when demons had almost possessed Lin Xun's mind in the third level of the Omega Secret Realm, Hundred Battles Secret Realm, Liu Qingyan had helped him out of the crisis with her flute. In the end, he had successfully passed the Hundred Battles Secret Realm.

Therefore, Lin Xun regarded Liu Qingyan as his savior.

“Miss Qingyan also came.”

“Haha, what a nice surprise to be able to meet the legendary Miss Liu Qingyan at the empress’ birthday banquet.”

“I heard that Miss Qingyan specially composed a new song to celebrate the empress’ birthday. We are so lucky to listen to it today.”

Liu Qingyan’s arrival immediately caused a stir. The young masters didn’t try to disguise their admiration for her.

Even some powerful, influential figures lit up with joy.

Liu Qingyan had a huge influence. Despite being only an art cultivator, she received such an enthusiastic welcome. Only a handful of people in the entire empire would receive similar treatment.

Lin Xun originally wanted to go over to greet her, but he gave up when he saw countless people crowding around her.

“Lin Xun! You’re also here!”

Who would have thought that Liu Qingyan would spot Lin Xun from the crowd? Her beautiful face lit up with joy, and she waved warmly at him.

Everyone was stunned, and their eyes sprang wide open. They couldn’t believe that Liu Qingyan would take the initiative to greet Lin Xun. This is so unfair!

Do they know each other?

The atmosphere turned strange.

Liu Qingyan took the opportunity to walk away from the crowd and said to Lin Xun, “I finally get to see you again.”

Her silky jet-black hair was rolled up and secured behind her head with a wooden hairpin, and her forehead was bright and smooth. When she smiled, her eyes seemed to glisten, and dimples appeared on her cheeks. She was stunning from every angle.

“I also didn’t expect to run into you here,” Lin Xun said with a smile.

The maiden before him was the same as before. Her bright eyes and kind smile felt like a refreshing spring breeze.

Liu Qingyan grinned. “There are too many people here. Let’s go over there. I have a lot to ask you.”

As she was speaking, she pulled Lin Xun by the sleeve towards the distance.

Many youngsters reddened, struggling to suppress their feelings of jealousy. They had never seen Liu Qingyan so close to anyone in the past!

Why does Lin Xun get to enjoy such a treatment?

The heavens are too unfair!

Even some powerful and influential figures couldn't help but frown. When did Lin Xun win the favor of Liu Qingyan?

Everyone's strong reaction was understandable because she was too famous. Her every move and action was watched by countless people. Many people couldn't help but speculate about their relationship when they saw them so close.

"Damn it! If Lin Xun dares to violate Miss Qingyan, I won't forgive him!"

"Yes, who is Miss Qingyan? How can a poor young master of the Lin Family get close to her?"

"Where's Granny Feng? Why isn't she around? If she was here, this would have never happened!"

The youngsters were indignant and sour. Their voices were filled with envy and jealousy.

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Lin Xun felt helpless as he overheard those conversations and discussions. "I finally understand why they say a beautiful woman can cause a catastrophe. If Granny Feng is here, she indeed might kill me."

Liu Qingyan giggled out loud. "Just ignore them."

Lin Xun rubbed his nose and shrugged. "It can't be helped."

The two chatted freely. There wasn't any awkwardness after being separated for one year. They were like very close friends talking happily.

Liu Qingyan asked about Lin Xun's situation after leaving Haze City, and Lin Xun didn't try to hide anything from her. He told her everything that had happened.

Liu Qingyan listened with interest. "I never thought you would encounter so many things in one year, but you have finally made a name for yourself. Rumors about you can be heard everywhere in the Forbidden City."

Lin Xun said indifferently, "People fear getting famous like pigs fear fattening up. I have displeased and angered quite a lot of people."

While they were speaking, a sudden exclamation rang out in the distance.

"Song Yi! The person who took first place in this year's national examination is here too!"

"Didn't they say that all the freshmen of Qinglu Academy have gone to the Ghost Killing Land for three months of training?"

"Song Yi didn't go. I think he didn't go because he wanted to attend the birthday banquet. Given his identity, he might receive recognition from the great cultivators of the mysterious domain."

Amidst the exclamations, a handsome, flamboyant young man in a blue robe strode into the square under astonished gazes.

He was Song Yi who had achieved first place in the national examination! He was a genius youngster, superior to Chi Cangfeng and Bai Lingxi!

Lin Xun couldn't help raising his eyebrows. It wasn't because of Song Yi's arrival. Instead, he thought of Shi Yu, Ning Meng and the others who had gone to the Ghost Killing Land. He wondered how they were doing.

Just as Lin Xun ceased his thoughts and was about to continue to chat with Liu Qingyan, another exclamation rang out. **noVelNext.cOm**

"Chi Cangfeng!"

"The sword genius of the Chi Family has also come!"

Lin Xun narrowed his eyes and saw a young man with a tall, golden feather hat crowning his head. The young man was shrouded in violet qi as he appeared on the square. He oozed arrogance and superiority.

He resembled an unsheathed sword revealing its sharp edge!

All of a sudden, Lin Xun cast his mind back to when the young man blocked his path and attempted to kill him when he first arrived in the Forbidden City.

Chi Cangfeng was already at the Spirit Sea Stage at that time while Lin Xun was at the Heaven Dipper Stage. If the elder from the Black Glory Sacred Hall hadn't interfered, Lin Xun would have had to mobilize the Sky Suppressing Bead to kill him.

As Lin Xun thought of the incident, murderous rage rushed up his heart, but he forcibly suppressed it.

He was in the core area of the Forbidden Palace. If he dared to resort to violence, many people would interfere. He couldn't possibly do whatever he wanted.

Following the arrival of Song Yi and Chi Cangfeng, the atmosphere became more lively in the hall. But it didn't end there. Before long, many famous genius talents started to appear one after another and sparked many discussions.

Some genius figures were even more dazzling than Song Yi, Chi Cangfeng and Bai Lingxi, but Lin Xun was very unfamiliar with most of their names. He had only heard of many of them for the first time.

For example, Yun Fushen. He had achieved first place in the national examination three years ago. He was an outstanding elite of the Dao Martial Department in Qinglu Academy and was ranked ninth on the Spirit Sea Gold Rankings.

For example, Yuchi Ze was a dazzling rising star in the imperial army. He had been fighting on the battlefield since a young age. He was only seventeen years old, but he had already reached the perfect Spirit Sea Stage and possessed abnormal combat strength.

Simply speaking, they were all impressive figures. It was rare to see such famous figures gather together.

Even Lin Xun was a little surprised. He had already learned from Bai Lingxi that many famous geniuses would attend the birthday banquet.

However, he didn't expect there to be so many!

Liu Qingyan didn't seem surprised by the appearance of so many geniuses and tried to explain the situation to Lin Xun. "They must have all come for the opportunity to enter the Ancient Wasteland Domain. After all, it's such a rare opportunity. If they miss it, they might not come across another opportunity again in their life."

"Ancient Wasteland Domain?"

"Yes, according to the rumors, there are many blessed places for cultivation there due to its strong Daoist traditions. The domain has unimaginable cultivation resources, and only there can a cultivator find the true perfect Dao path," Liu Qingyan softly explained.

Lin Xun was immediately tempted. If his guess was right, the Ancient Wasteland Domain that Liu Qingyan mentioned was the same place as the mysterious place that Bai Lingxi mentioned.

In other words, the mysterious Daoist Omega Sword Sect, where Yun Qingbai was from, was likely in the Ancient Wasteland Domain!

Based on that, the culprit of the bloody massacre of the Lin Family over ten years ago was likely from the Ancient Wasteland Domain.

After a brief moment of shock, Lin Xun looked strangely at Liu Qingyan. Even Bai Lingxi didn't know the name of the mysterious domain, but Liu Qingyan did.

This fact alone proved that Liu Qingyan wasn't simply an art cultivator!

Lin Xun drew a deep breath and asked, "Do...do you know a lot about the Ancient Wasteland Domain?"

If he could find out more about the place or even find out more about the Omega Sword Sect, it would provide him with more clues to avenge his parents and clansmen!

Chapter 420 The Empress Arrives

Liu Qingyan shook her head. "I only coincidentally heard about it."

Lin Xun felt a little disappointed.

Liu Qingyan cleverly sensed that Lin Xun's mood changed. She asked warmly, "Young Master Lin, masters and experts from the Ancient Wasteland Domain will attend the banquet. Given your current reputation and strength, if you perform well, you might be able to seize the opportunity to get what you want to know."

"I understand," Lin Xun said with a smile.

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As time passed, more and more guests accumulated on the square; almost all were nobles, powerful figures, or geniuses and elites of the younger generation.

Lin Xun received a lot of attention. Many conversations and discussions were related to him.

For example, some talked about Mind Cleansing Peak, some brought up Lin Xun's great-grandfather Lin Daochen, and some lamented that a rising star had emerged in the deteriorating Lin Family.

The cultivators obsessed with martial arts enthusiastically discussed the duel between Lin Xun and Hua Wuyou and analyzed his achievements in martial arts.

Those proficient in runes were very curious about his ability after they heard that he had repaired the Sword of Apocalypse.

Some hated and were disgusted by Lin Xun and were discussing his situation.

For example, he would soon suffer retaliation after angering so many forces ever since he had come to the Forbidden City.

In short, although some praised him and some belittled him, they all demonstrated that Lin Xun had made a name for himself in the Forbidden City, and many people couldn't help but take notice of him.

Of course, Lin Xun was only one of the most popular topics on the square, but he wasn't the focus of attention.

This was normal. The guests of the birthday banquet were either high-ranking figures, nobles, or outstanding talents.

Although Lin Xun had rapidly risen to fame, he still lacked a solid foundation and was unlikely to attract too much attention.

Talents blessed by the heavens such as Song Yi, Chi Cangfeng, Yun Fushen, and Yuchi Ze received more attention than Lin Xun.

Even Liu Qingyan received more attention than he did.

This was due to a difference in foundation and background.

He might be extremely talented and possessed many earthshaking abilities, but he was from the deteriorated Lin Family. He was far inferior to many other noble family descendants in terms of status and identity.

If it were five hundred years ago, when the Lin Family was still one of the high clans in the Forbidden City, Lin Xun would have received a completely different amount of attention.

However, he didn't care. His path was different from that of the others, and so he wouldn't care about superficial fame and titles.

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Soon, a melodious, ancient bell resounded through the square, halting the endless discussions and clamor, making everyone stop what they were doing.

The atmosphere in the square suddenly became solemn, calm, and still.

All gazes shifted to the central imperial palace.

"It's time. Please come into the palace hall!"

A sound that resembled morning bells and evening drums echoed throughout this part of the world, shaking the ninth heaven and stirring everyone's hearts with an indescribable power.

Immediately, the closed door of the central imperial palace slowly creaked open. Beautiful palace maids walked out in two straight lines and stood respectfully on both sides of the steps leading into the central imperial palace.

The empress' 300th birthday banquet had begun!

All the guests in the square were led into the central imperial palace.

"I'll head in first to prepare. You have to listen carefully to the new song I composed at the birthday banquet later. It's all because of you that I was able to smoothly complete this song."

Liu Qingyan blinked and said goodbye to Lin Xun with a smile. She had to prepare for her performance for the empress later.

"Me?" Lin Xun watched Liu Qingyan disappear in puzzlement.

He couldn't help but wonder how her new song was related to him.

As he contemplated, a palace maid guided him up the ninety-nine steps and into the most sacred palace hall in the empire—the central imperial palace.

Magnificent!

Glorious!

Majestic!

Those were Lin Xun's first impressions of the central imperial palace. The inside of the palace was like a separate world. The sun, moon, and stars seemed to hang above their heads, and mountains, rivers, and valleys seemed to be at their feet. Everyone felt small and insignificant when inside the palace.

One hundred and eight violet glory stone pillars stood tall in the palace. Each one was engraved with dragons and phoenixes and stamped with cloud patterns, auspicious animals, and violet glory flowers.

From afar, the stone pillars appeared to tower into the sky, supporting the dome of heaven!

Lin Xun was shocked to find that an indescribably majestic and sacred aura filled the hall, deterring everyone from causing trouble.

In addition to himself, the other guests also assumed solemn expressions. Regardless of their terrifying identity and status, no one dared to raise their voices.

This was the central imperial palace!

Lin Xun was seated at one of the tables under the palace maids' arrangement.

On the table was a jug of wine, a cup of tea, and a plate of aeth fruits. It looked very ordinary and didn't seem luxurious, but everyone with good eyesight gasped out in shock and disbelief.

The jar of wine was the nine dragons ancient brew specially prepared for the imperial palace! Legend had it that it was prepared from hundreds of rare and precious materials in the world by dozens of top-level brewing masters. It had to be fermented for over hundreds of years before it was ready, so each jar was priceless!

It was no exaggeration to say that it would never be seen in the outside world!

The cup of tea was pale purple and glowed with divine light. The tea leaves were in the shape of dragons and phoenixes. The tea produced a cold and rich aroma that entered straight into one's soul as it circulated the cup.

The tea was called Dragon and Phoenix and was unique to the imperial palace.

The plate of aeth fruits consisted of a golden flame jujube, a violet jade peach, and three lotus seeds glistening like black gems.

All three were harvested from the imperial garden, and each one was considered a rare wondrous treasure.

The food alone showed that it was a blessing to be able to attend the empress's birthday banquet.

Even Lin Xun couldn't help but marvel at the imperial family's wealth and power. Only the imperial family would have the money to be so generous!

When all the guests were seated, a white-haired elder in a dark purple palace robe said aloud at the end of the hall, "Your Majesty, please grace us with your presence!"

His voice was like a morning bell and showed his terrifying cultivation level.

"Chief Steward Peng's cultivation becomes more and more strong with every passing day. He likely has already reached the Cyclic Derivation Stage."

The gray-haired old man was a tyrannical figure within the imperial palace.

However, Lin Xun's attention was drawn to the end of the hall, where an illusory scene seemed to be emerging. Stunning golden light was filling the hall, and violet qi rushed forth.

Faintly, a female figure sat down on the throne. Mist and divine light spiraled around her body, blurring her face.

However, Lin Xun was awed into silence. It was as though he wasn't facing a figure, but a high and mighty king that could shake the nine heavens!

Compared to her, the powerful Chief Steward Peng suddenly dimmed like a pearl drowning in the light of the moon.

"What level of terrifying cultivation does one have to have to possess such terrifying imposing bearing?" Lin Xun couldn't maintain his composure.

Unquestionably, the empress was the one sitting on the throne!

Legend has it that she was a true Life Death Stage King who had assisted the emperor to ascend to the throne hundreds of years ago.

Within the imperial family, the empress had the most authority after the emperor!

The atmosphere in the hall turned unusually solemn, and all the guests stood up and bowed respectfully.

“Paying our respects to the empress!”

The voices echoed in the grand imperial palace hall.

“Everyone, please take a seat.”

The voice of the empress rang out from the mist and light around the throne. Her voice was gentle, calm, and not particularly powerful, but it made people dare not to treat her with disrespect.

Once all the guests were seated again, Chief Steward Peng eloquently read out a prepared birthday speech.

After that, he took out a document and read out the list of birthday gifts presented to the empress.

This was part of the birthday celebration. All the guests had already presented a birthday gift and once the list was read out, the banquet would officially begin.

Lin Xun had also prepared a birthday gift when he decided to attend, and he had entrusted Shen Tuo to send it to the imperial family.

Chief Steward Peng read out the long list of birthday gifts in a resounding voice.

“From the Marquis Jinghai’s residence, a pair of seven-colored exquisite lions, a three-thousand-year-old jade pearl flower, and a sea spirit jade phoenix ornament!”

“From the Marquis Wenyuan’s residence, a pine tree and crown crane painting, a bottle of purple-blue dew pill, and a set of mysterious sun and moon bracelets!”

“From the Marquis Bowang’s residence...”

The birthday gifts became more and more remarkable as the list went on, and each one caused a low commotion in the hall.

Treasures such as the thousand-year-old snow fungus, nine-leafed heart pill, and true eight treasures powder were considered rare treasures in the outside world, but they seemed ordinary when compared to the treasures on the birthday gift list.

The powerful and influential figures had clearly put a lot of thought into the empress’s birthday.

Lin Xun also couldn’t help but marvel at the gifts. The powerful and influential forces are indeed wealthy with a solid background. The treasures they presented are all so rare and unique that I have never heard of them before.

While Lin Xun was sighing, Chief Steward Peng paused for a moment before he continued. “From the Mind Cleaning Peak Lin Clan, a jade hairpin.”

The audience was stunned. Just a hairpin?

Lin Xun is a rune grandmaster but he presented a jade hairpin to the empress as a birthday gift!

Isn’t...isn’t that too shabby?

Suddenly, many gazes darted over to Lin Xun.

