

Prodigies 741

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Chapter 741: Although He Left, His Reputation Remains

Omm!

At the center of the 7th army camp, an ancient teleportation array that had been inactive for a long time released a cryptic undulation.

Luggage in tow, Lin Xun waited in front of the array with a group of empire cultivators.

It was almost time to leave.

As he recalled his experiences in Blood Kill Battlefield, Lin Xun could not help but feel a little emotional.

He was definitely returning in the future!

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“Young Master Lin, take care!”

In the distance, numerous empire cultivators were reluctantly sending them off.

“Founder Lin, you must come back and visit when you can.”

With Grandmaster Ying at the head, the rune masters of the military workshop were also present to bid their farewells.

“Hahaha, don’t worry about the road ahead, and go and do what you want! Brother, when I grow tired of life on the battlefield, I’ll come to find you for a drink!”

Lu Wenting laughed loudly and took a swig from a bottle of wine before passing it to Lin Xun.

“There will definitely be a spot for Brother Lin in the great dao battle. I only hope that we will have the chance to meet again.”

Even the usually silent Yan Feng spoke up at this moment as he earnestly looked at Lin Xun.

A warm feeling swelled in Lin Xun’s heart as he looked at their faces one by one. These were comrades he had gone through thick and thin with and fought shoulder to shoulder on the battlefield!

However, when Lin Xun’s gaze reached Zhangsun Lie, the general displayed an annoyed expression and impatiently waved as he was chasing away a fly. “Hurry up and scram. Don’t come back to cause trouble for me. Ever since you appeared, I think my head has swollen a size bigger from the constant headaches.”

Everyone immediately burst out into laughter.

Lin Xun could not help but feel somewhat embarrassed although he soon began to laugh as well.

The teleportation array activated, so they couldn’t tarry any longer. After all, all of the supplies and new recruits from the Ziyao Empire had to go through this array too.

“Everyone, farewell!”

Lin Xun cupped his fists together before he stepped into the teleportation array with the other returning empire cultivators.

“Farewell!”

In the distance, the crowd also cupped their hands together.

Goodbyes were always inevitable. No one knew when they would meet again or if they would even have a chance to.

This made many cultivators feel somewhat anxious.

Because those who have seen death numerous times on the Blood Kill Battlefield understood better than anyone the meaning of goodbye!

The corners of Zhangsun Lie’s lips twitched as if he wanted to call out to stop them, but in the end, he kept silent and vigorously waved goodbye.

Where’s A’bi?

As the teleportation array began to stir, Lin Xun could not help but feel somewhat dazed because he had yet to see A’bi.

“That’s right, given her character, she won’t come to send anyone off.”

Meanwhile, in a certain room in the camp, A’bi was alone. Her fingers were interlocked together in front of her chest which heaved in an uncertain manner. She appeared to be rather restless.

Outside the window, the sound of people bidding their farewells rang out in the distance, making her grow increasingly anxious and conflicted.

Should she go and see him one last time?

A’bi bit her lip. In the end, she abruptly jumped to her feet and rushed out of the room like a gust of wind.

When she rushed out the door, however, the teleportation array was already empty. There was no sight of his figure.

Has he left already?

A’bi shook as disappointment surged within her.

“Little gigolo...don’t be so nice to women in the future. They are easily touched and will keep thinking about how good you are. Then, it will become too difficult for them to forget you...”

After a long time, A’bi mumbled to herself as tears silently rolled down her cheeks.

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On this day, the passageway from the Blood Kill Battlefield to the empire was opened, causing many scenes of farewell to play out in the eight empire camps.

Meanwhile, new faces and recruits were also endlessly dispatched to the Blood Kill Battlefield.

A new batch would replace the old one. On the empire's frontlines, the battles would never stop as long as the enemies were alive!

"Newbies, look here. This is the Military Merit Ranking! The names on it belong to the most famous people in our camp."

"This list represents supreme glory, but you guys should also understand that every piece of glory is always accompanied by endless blood and tears."

An old soldier had brought a group of newly arrived cultivators to see the camp's Military Merit Ranking.

"Who is Lin Twelve? He only has Heaven Ascension cultivation, but he's rank three? That can't be correct, right?"

A gasp drew the newcomers' attention and soon left them in disbelief.

Nearly all of the top hundred rankers were top Cyclic Derivation experts.

As for the top ten, nine of them were older-generation Half-Step King powerhouses, making the last person, 'Lin Twelve,' stick out even more.

Because he was the only person with Heaven Ascension cultivation among the top ten. What was more stunning was that he was ranked third!

The sight of the newbies' stunned expressions made the older soldier chuckle.

These newbies have a long way to go.

Soon after, he faked a cough and leisurely explained, "Remember, do not judge Lord Lin Twelve by appearance. He is different from all of the Heaven Ascension experts you know. In fact, it would take more than an entire day for me to recount his legendary feats. I can only tell you guys that..."

The old soldier's deep voice was filled with sincere respect and a strong sense of pride.

The initially somewhat skeptical recruits soon found themselves enthralled. Their hearts beat in excitement as the dazzling figure of a young heaven pride was gradually painted in their heads.

A long period of time passed before the old soldier finally finished off and said, "Alright, let's leave it at that. You guys will have time to learn more about Lord Lin Twelve's past in the future. Come on, I'll show you guys the military workshop. Oh, right. I forgot to mention that Lord Lin Twelve is also a rune founder. Isn't it unbelievable? Hahaha, you guys should see stupefied looks on your faces..."

The old soldier laughed as he led the recruits to the workshop. Of course, there wasn't any maliciousness on his part because his reaction had been far worse when he first heard about it.

"There will always be many talents from every generation. Lin Twelve, I will break all of your records and take your spot on the Military Merit Ranking!"

Among the group of recruits, a thin youth looked back at the Military Merit Ranking with never-seen-before determination.

The youth was called Ye Fan. It was...a pretty good name.

In fact, many storytellers in the empire would often name the heroes of their stories Ye Fan...

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On that same day, the Brute camps were also receiving many recruits like the empire camps.

"Milord, who is Lin Twelve and how can he be ranked third on the Blood Wanted List? After all, he's only a Heaven Ascension youngster. Isn't that ranking far too high for someone like him?"

"Ridiculous! Who the hell is this Lin Twelve? There's no way he should be regarded as such a high-threat individual!"

Upon seeing a certain name on the Blood Wanted List, the new recruits exploded in indignation and disdain.

The expression of the Brute expert leading them immediately turned ugly and conflicted. After a long time, he gnashed his teeth in anger and roared, "All of you shut up!"

The recruits immediately fell silent.

The Brute expert jabbed at Lin Twelve's name and said with a noticeable pause between each word, "All of you had better carve this name into your heads! He's the one who brought us endless shame, so he is an enemy we must eliminate at all costs!"

The recruits immediately realized that the human youngster called Lin Twelve was no ordinary individual!

The Brute expert ultimately did not elaborate on Lin Twelve's accomplishments because it was far too shameful, unbelievable, and would probably deal a heavy blow to the recruits' morale.

"You guys will learn what this name represents in the future." In the end, the Brute expert sighed and left.

Lin Twelve was a demon god-like youngster who was rumored to be leaving the battlefield today. Despite this, it would still take some time for the dark shadow he had cast over the Brute camps to be erased...

Although Lin Xun had only spent half a year in the Blood Kill Battlefield, he had swiftly risen to fame out of nowhere like a comet and became a dazzling superstar of the Blood Kill Battlefield!

Everything that happened to him was nothing short of miraculous, and it wasn't going to be easy to erase the influence he left behind.

However, all of this was no longer of any concern to Lin Xun.

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The empire, Giant Watchtower City

It was one of the outer cities that protected the Forbidden City. Hence, it was managed by the military and the empire's most elite armies were stationed here all year round.

In the southwest sector of Giant Watchtower City lay a camp that encompassed an area of at least two hundred acres.

On this day, the teleportation array that connected to the Blood Kill Battlefield began to operate with a loud rumble.

A group of empire generals solemnly stood nearby. Their stern and serious expressions caused the originally peaceful atmosphere to become somewhat heavy and stifling.

Omm!

The teleportation array opened, and empire cultivators began to walk out amidst a cryptic buzzing noise, which immediately caused a commotion in the vicinity.

The generals secretly breathed sighs of relief. The safe opening of the passageway and the sight of empire cultivators safely returning from the battlefield was clear proof that the situation in the Blood Kill Battlefield was pretty good.

Lin Xun walked out from the teleportation array and looked up at the blue sky and white clouds. He breathed in, tasting the faint traces of aeth qi in the air, which made him feel as if he was in a completely new world.

Blood Kill Battlefield had been a barren land void of aeth qi and instead filled with the smell of darkness, killing, and danger.

It was impossible to not feel emotional upon returning to the familiar land of the empire.

I'm back!

Lin Xun spat out a breath of murky air as he felt a strong impulse to return home to Mind Cleansing Peak.

Although he had only been away for half a year, it had felt far longer than that. He wondered how his friends and family had been over the past year.

In the distance, a familiar figure approached with large steps. His bold and loud laughter arrived far before him, "Welcome back!"

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Chapter 742: People from the Omega Sword Sect

It was Zhao Tailai.

He approached with a wide smile and gave Lin Xun a warm hug before he said, "I've already heard all about it. You've performed spectacularly in the Blood Kill Battlefield. Lone Man of Rotating Stars Hibernating Moon House has said that your debt has been cleared."

Lin Xun rolled his eyes. "I thought you were here to welcome me back. I can't believe that you were only thinking about the debt."

Zhao Tailai heartily chuckled as he placed an arm around Lin Xun and began leading him away. "Come, let's leave this crappy place first. Otherwise, you won't be able to leave soon."

Lin Xun puzzledly asked, "Why?"

Zhao Tailai casually replied, "It's your fault for shaking up the Blood Kill Battlefield so much. Now all of those old guys from the military have their eyes on you and want to recruit you into the military."

Lin Xun immediately quickened his pace. He had just returned from the battlefield and hadn't even returned home yet, why the heck would he have any interest in joining the military?

Not long after Lin Xun and Zhao Tailai left, a roar rumbled across the camp, "Damnit, why can't I find Lin Twelve? Where's Lin Twelve?"

"Old Ding, why the hell are you yelling? Even if you find Lin Twelve, there's no way he'll just go along with you. A good sapling like him will only thrive in a place like my Black Dragon Army."

"Your granny's arse! Your Black Dragon Army is dogshit while my Blood Wolf Army is the true elite among the elites of the empire. If Lin Twelve has to go somewhere, he'll have to go to my Blood Wolf Army!"

"Alright alright, stop bickering. Isn't it pointless to argue before my Rose Corps has its say?"

Heated arguments began to flood the entire camp as the originally stern and dignified generals quarreled until their necks and faces turned red.

The soldiers were shocked. Weren't they supposed to welcome the soldiers back from the Blood Kill Battlefield and even host a celebration banquet later? Why had the generals begun to squabble over someone called Lin Twelve instead?

Was there something special they didn't know about him?

Lin Xun's amazing accomplishments in the Blood Kill Battlefield were soon revealed, astonishing everyone as a huge commotion ensued.

It was no wonder that the generals were bickering without regard. It turned out that he was a heaven-defying talent!

If Lin Xun were to witness this, he would inwardly rejoice that he had left with Zhao Tailai earlier. Otherwise, he would probably be unable to take a single step out of the camp without first agreeing to join one of these generals.

Suddenly, an old general with white hair and a white beard asked, "Oh, that's right. Who is Lin Twelve? Why have I never heard of him before he went to the Blood Kill Battlefield?"

The generals stopped arguing and looked at each other.

A long while passed before a fearsome-looking middle-aged general finally said, "Half a year ago, Zhao Tailai was the one who sent him into the Blood Kill Battlefield. If I'm not wrong, he...should be Lin Xun!"

"Lin Xun? Could he be..."

"Right, he's the Mind Cleansing Peak Lin Clan Leader, Lin Xun."

"So it's him!"

Everyone was stunned by the revelation. The soldiers' hearts began to tremble as they recalled how Lin Xun was already a famous figure in the Forbidden City half a year ago.

It was alarming to think that he had also achieved so many brilliant feats in the Blood Kill Battlefield.

"What a peerless young master. Heh, I used to disagree with the saying that the younger generation will eventually surpass the older generation, but I have no choice but to acknowledge it now!"

The old white-haired general sighed as the others voiced their agreement.

Previously, Lin Xun had only been famous in the Forbidden City, and his reputation was limited to the empire's territories.

However, after his stint in the Blood Kill Battlefield, even the Brute Tribes would tremble at his name!

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On their way back to the Forbidden City, there was a rare trace of gloominess between Zhao Tailai's brows as he softly sighed and said, "I originally wanted to accompany you for a drinking session, but there's an urgent matter I have to inform you about."

Lin Xun asked, "What is it?"

The two of them were in a ship that was flying across the sky.

"Several days ago, an elder of the Omega Sword Sect arrived in the empire with a group of disciples!"

These words immediately caused Lin Xun's eyes to narrow.

Omega Sword Sect!

It was a name that was far too familiar to Lin Xun because his arch-enemy, Yun Qingbai, who had killed all of the main Lin Clan members years ago was from the Omega Sword Sect.

In fact, one of Lin Xun's biggest motivations for heading to the Ancient Wasteland Domain was to avenge his parents and kin!

The target of his revenge was Yun Qingbai!

After a brief silence, Lin Xun asked, "Why are they here?"

"On the surface, their goal is quite simple. They've come for the banished Ninth Prince and seek to bring him to the Ancient Wasteland Domain."

Zhao Tailai patiently explained, "You should know that the Ninth Prince's grandfather is an influential elder in the Omega Sword Sect. After hearing of the Ninth Prince's unfortunate situation, he naturally won't sit by and do nothing."

Lin Xun nodded in understanding.

More than a dozen years ago, it was the Ninth Prince, Zhao Jingzhen, and his mother, Meng Rong, who had divulged to the Omega Sword Sect Successor, Yun Qingbai, that the newly born Lin Xun possessed the 'Grand Abyss Heaven Devourer' talent.

Subsequently, in order to pursue the 'perfect dao', Yun Qingbai had arrived in the empire alone and attacked the Lin Clan. In a single night, he killed all the main clan members and dug out the Origin Aeth Artery from Lin Xun's tiny body.

Later on, the emperor was furious when he found out and stripped Meng Rong of her concubine position. However, that was all the emperor could do due to fear of retaliation from the Omega Sword Sect if he took things too far.

In the end, Meng Rong was taken away from the empire by her father, who was an elder of the Omega Sword Sect.

As for the Ninth Prince, he was given the cold shoulder treatment by the emperor until some time ago when he was banished and imprisoned in the palace after clashing with Lin Xun, forbidden from leaving until the end of his life.

Lin Xun had not expected that the Omega Sword Sect would send someone to release the imprisoned Ninth Prince and take him away.

This was evidently the handiwork of the Ninth Prince's grandfather!

After some thought, Lin Xun asked, "Since that's their aim on the surface, what else are they secretly trying to do?"

Zhao Tailai glanced at him and said, "It should be related to you."

"Does Yun Qingbai know that I'm alive?" Lin Xun immediately shivered.

Zhao Tailai nodded. "However, even Yun Qingbai does not dare to act recklessly in the empire. Moreover, he didn't come this time, so there's no need for you to worry."

Lin Xun fell silent.

Yun Qingbai was known to be the number one sword cultivator in the Ancient Wasteland Domain and was said to be invincible under the King stage.

According to the rumors, he was highly intelligent, amazingly talented, decisive, and fearless. He was a person who had never once lost ever since he started his cultivation journey.

Many people crowned him with various titles, even calling him the prized son of the heavens. He was an existence that was feared and worshiped by countless cultivators in the Ancient Wasteland Domain.

No matter how deeply Lin Xun wished he could just rush over and face this arch-enemy of his, the cruel reality was that there was only an infinitesimally tiny chance for him to kill Yun Qingbai even with the No-Nonsense Bow and the Biluo Arrow.

What did it mean to be invincible under the King stage?

It meant that even Half-Step King experts were nothing to Yun Qingbai!

This alone showed just how powerful he was.

Moreover, Lin Xun was worried that the current information he had was outdated and Yun Qingbai had probably become far stronger!

"Yun Qingbai didn't come? Makes sense. He already stole my Origin Aeth Artery all those years ago and has already attained the perfect dao he sought. He naturally wouldn't care about what small splashes that baby from back then could possibly cause."

Lin Xun's expression was impassive and his tone was calm. "Or perhaps he doesn't even care that I'm still alive."

However, Zhao Tailai could sense that something was off about Lin Xun and could not help but say, "The dao doesn't care when you start. There is no need to undervalue yourself given your current capabilities."

Lin Xun shook his head. "Don't worry, I'm merely stating the truth. In fact, this is better for me. I hope he ignores me so that I can make his death even more miserable when I eventually take my revenge!"

Zhao Tailai solemnly instructed, "After we return to the Forbidden City, you should stay in Mind Cleansing Peak until I find out what exactly those Omega Sword Sect people are up to. It won't be too late to plan your next move after we uncover their motives."

"Alright." Lin Xun agreed.

That night, Lin Xun arrived in front of Mind Cleansing Peak. As he gazed upon its familiar entrance, his heart became more determined than ever before.

As long as he lived, he would never allow that bloody incident from back then to repeat itself!

Mind Cleansing Peak, inside Mind Cleansing Hall.

Spirit Vulture had gathered the Lin Clan higher-ups, and they were engaging in their routine discussion of the clan affairs.

Lin Zhong, Xiaoke, Lin Huaiyuan, and Third Old Zhu were all present.

Outside the hall, the Scarlet Eagle King was proudly perched on the roof. Its fiery-red feathers seemed to burn with divine flames, making it a majestic sight to behold.

"Cheep cheep~"

A fat round ball suddenly poked out from Xiaoke's arms. It had round eyes, a round nose, round ears, and a soft round body and was absolutely adorable.

It was Jiujiu.

"What is it, Jiujiu? Are you hungry?" Xiaoke was taken aback, thinking it was hungry.

"Cheep cheep~"

The little creature seemed to sense something and its round ball-like body struggled out from Xiaoke's embrace.

It seemed to be extremely excited and urgently chirped as it rushed out of the hall.

The group in the discussion hall was stunned. Jiujiu had always been very obedient and would never display such strange behavior.

Everyone could not help but look outside the hall.

It was at this moment that the Scarlet Eagle King's surprised voice rang out outside the hall, "It's Master, Master is back!"

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Chapter 743: News of a Friend

Clan Leader is back!

Mind Cleansing Peak was abuzz with excitement. Summons were swiftly sent out to all of the clan higher-ups to gather in Mind Cleansing Hall.

In fact, even senior members like Lin Xixi, Lin Yunheng, and Lin Beiguang made their way to the hall.

Outside the hall, the branch clan disciples were spread out like a sea. They solemnly stood on the spot as they silently waited.

Numerous servants and attendants were stationed further down, also patiently waiting.

Upon knowing Lin Xun had returned, everyone on Mind Cleansing Peak had dropped what they were doing and set off to see him!

This undoubtedly proved that Lin Xun's status in the Mind Cleansing Peak Lin Clan was different from before.

In fact, he was now properly respected as the Clan Leader!

The atmosphere was equally solemn inside Mind Cleansing Hall. Spirit Vulture, Xiaohe, Lin Zhong, Lin Huaiyuan, Third Old Zhu, and the other core members were all present.

The key branch clan members were also seated in the hall. None of them dared to be negligent even in the slightest.

Lin Xun was seated above everyone in the center. He looked at the familiar faces in the hall, the disciples outside, the well-trained servants and attendants, and suddenly felt an unprecedented feeling of calmness and fulfillment.

Wasn't this why he had struggled so hard ever since he entered the Forbidden City?

The Lin Clan had finally reestablished itself in the Forbidden City and was still growing with unstoppable momentum!

Various emotions churned within Lin Xun while everyone in the hall observed him.

"There's a certain ruthlessness and bloodiness mixed in his aura, and his demeanor is more composed than before. It's like he's become a completely different person..."

Spirit Vulture sighed emotionally. He had practically watched each step of Lin Xun's rise in the Forbidden City.

“He’s become increasingly unfathomable.”

A trace of surprise flitted across Xiaoke’s clear eyes. Back when they were in Blood Kill Camp, Lin Xun had been a mere thin, young teenager.

Now, he was a famous and outstanding individual. Even some of the powerful and influential figures in the Forbidden City were unable to match his demeanor!

“I can’t gauge him at all...”

Despite Third Old Zhu’s stoic appearance, he was rather shaken inside. Back then, Lin Xun had been someone that needed his protection.

Now, however, he could not even measure Lin Xun’s strength. It was very likely that Lin Xun’s current power had already surpassed his own!

Lin Huaiyuan was feeling very nervous and tense.

The feeling of facing Lin Xun had not been so intense half a year ago, but now, him merely sitting there made Lin Huaiyuan feel an indescribable pressure akin to a subject facing a superior being that ruled over the world!

It wasn’t just Lin Huaiyuan, even the older generation Cyclic Derivation experts like Li Xixi, Lin Yunheng, and Lin Beiguang were very quiet at this moment.

They could sense an extremely terrifying and bloody aura from Lin Xun that made their hearts jump in alarm.

It both shocked and stunned them.

In only half a year, his strength had become even more fearsome!

He was only at the Heaven Ascension stage, but he was making elders like them feel uncomfortable and fearful. It was completely irrational.

Lin Xun wasn’t intentionally displaying his pressure. It was instead a presence that had been honed as a result of all the killing and fighting he had experienced in the Blood Kill Battlefield.

He was dressed in moon-white clothes with his long black hair hanging over his shoulders, and his eyes appeared as deep as the abyss. He wore a calm expression. Although he was merely sitting there, he gave off the sensation of a transcendental being.

At closer inspection, it wasn’t difficult to discover that his aura had reached a certain level of completeness and perfection. There was also an aura of bloody ruthlessness within it that made him give off an intimidating and oppressive pressure.

Amidst the solemn atmosphere, Lin Xun said, “Although I’ve returned, I plan to head to the Ancient Wasteland Domain soon to avenge our murdered kinsmen and seek my own dao path.”

His clear and calm voice echoed across the hall.

Everyone’s hearts shook at the unexpected decision.

“Before I leave, I hope to select someone with strong values, integrity, and talent to take charge of the Lin Clan in my absence. This matter shall be handled by Mister Spirit Vulture and Uncle Zhong. If anyone here has any objections, go ahead and voice them.”

Lin Xun’s gaze swept across everyone in the hall.

The hall remained silent. No one displayed even the slightest indication of objecting.

Upon seeing this Lin Xun said, “Then it is decided.”

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“The Lin Clan’s influence is already able to match mid-tier noble clans?”

After the clan meeting, Lin Xun could not help but feel somewhat surprised when he inquired about the Lin Clan’s situation over the past half a year.

According to Lin Zhong, the Lin Clan’s rise had been smooth and steady over the past half a year.

Not only had their businesses expanded, but Stone Cauldron Alms, the Ning Clan, the Gong Clan, and the Ye Clan had also begun to cooperate with them more closely.

In addition, the Rune Master Association, Qinlu Academy Rune Department, and the Imperial Divine Workshop had also forged closer ties with the Lin Clan and started collaborations on several fronts.

Most importantly, almost everyone in the Forbidden City was aware that the Mind Cleansing Peak Lin Clan was favored by the emperor, and he had even personally written a blessing scroll and gifted it to Lin Xun.

It was an incredibly rare honor!

Under these circumstances, not prospering would be almost impossible for the Lin Clan.

“Heh heh, although our foundations are a little weaker than the mid-tier noble clans, no mid-tier noble clan in the Forbidden City can match our influence!”

Lin Zhong’s face was filled with pride.

Lin Xun relaxed upon seeing this, inwardly impressed by the old fox Zhao Tailai’s ability. He had fulfilled all the promises he made to Lin Xun, making him feel that his trip to the Blood Kill Battlefield was extremely worth it.

Amidst their conversation, Lin Zhong suddenly mentioned a certain matter, “Right, a few days ago, a young man called Gu Liang came to visit and claimed he was the Young Master’s good friend.”

Gu Liang?

Lin Xun immediately recalled the only friend he had made in Donglin City.

Gu Liang’s father was called Gu Yanping and was the owner of Golden Jade Hall. He was a capable and intelligent individual who had taken care of Lin Xun back then.

Gu Liang was a pretty good person as well and was his father's successor. He was sharp-witted and didn't panic easily. He was truly a friend who was able to converse about anything with Lin Xun.

Lin Zhong continued to report, "Young Master, from my inquiries, I've found out that Gu Liang is the successor of Golden Jade Hall. Golden Jade Hall is a merchant group originating from the southwest province that has recently expanded to the Forbidden City..."

Lin Xun asked, "Uncle Zhong, where is Gu Liang now?"

"Golden Jade Hall has recently opened a shop in the city's eastern district. I believe Young Master Gu Liang should be there."

Lin Zhong could instantly tell that Gu Liang had not lied when he said he was the Young Master's friend.

"From what I know of him, he would first ascertain whether I'm around before coming to Mind Cleansing Peak and yet he paid you guys a visit a few days ago. If my guess is correct, he must have encountered some kind of problem..."

Lin Xun rose to his feet and said, "Uncle Zhong, make the arrangements. I wish to see Gu Liang."

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The Forbidden City eastern district.

It was an extremely prosperous district with many merchant groups and attracted cultivators from all over the empire every day.

A dozen days ago, a new shop called Golden Jade Hall had opened here.

However, trouble occurred the moment Golden Jade Hall was opened. A group of cultivators would block the entrance every day and forbid any customers from entering.

Anyone could tell that they were trying to ruin Golden Jade Hall's business!

Today was naturally no exception.

It was noon, the busiest time of the day. Swathes of people streamed through the district, creating heavy traffic as sweat fell like rain due to the heat.

Golden Jade Hall was blocked by a 'human wall.' A group of capable cultivators had sealed off the entrance, preventing anyone from approaching.

Inside the shop, a gong-like voice loudly squawked, "Little shit, how many days has it been already? How come I don't see anyone from the Mind Cleansing Peak Lin Clan appearing to help you? You were obviously trying to use them to scare us off!"

The voice originated from a middle-aged man with a Fu-Manchu-style mustache in embroidered robes. Spittle flew from his mouth as he jabbed his finger right in Gu Liang's face, appearing extremely arrogant.

"Tch, you're just like your father, refusing to learn any useful skills and saying nothing but lies. How dare you open this dogshit Golden Jade Hall in the Forbidden City, you delusional idiot?!"

The middle-aged man's face was filled with disgust and disdain. "Even if you do know the Lin Clan Leader, it won't change your current circumstances! Remember this, you and your father are the shame of the Gu Clan who were banished from the Forbidden City. As long as the Gu Clan is in the Forbidden City, don't even think about returning!"

Opposite him, Gu Liang had an ugly expression as his fingers dug into his palm. He felt as if his chest was nearly about to explode from anger and hatred.

The middle-aged man opposite him was called Gu Yong and was Gu Liang's third-uncle. However, Gu Liang knew that his 'third-uncle' did not view them as family and even intended to destroy him when he returned to the Forbidden City!

Gu Liang held back his anger and asked, "What exactly do you want?"

"What do I want? What a childish question."

Gu Yong laughed. "However, since you wish to know, I'll tell you right now."

With a wave of his hand, he grandly declared, "Men, smash this crappy Golden Jade Hall! Kill anyone who dares to obstruct you!"

The nearby waiting Gu clansmen immediately began to move.

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Chapter 744: Accept Punishment

Bang! Bang! Bang!

The sound of things breaking rang out in the Golden Jade Hall shop. The Gu Clan members were fearlessly smashing all of the most valuable items in the shop.

"How dare you?!"

Gu Liang was enraged. His eyes bulged from their sockets in anger as he tried to stop them.

"If you dare to do anything, this place will become a river of blood!"

Gu Yong's eyes gleamed sinisterly as they turned towards a certain direction where a group of Golden Jade Hall servants and attendants were shivering in fear.

"You guys...you guys are too much!"

Red-eyed, Gu Liang trembled in anger. These servants and attendants were innocent. He would not be able to live with himself if they were implicated because of him.

However, this only made Gu Yong grow increasingly pleased with himself as he laughed loudly, "Is there anything we won't dare to do to deal with a little shit like you?"

The other Gu Clan members roared with laughter as they smashed everything of value in the shop.

Ashen-faced, Gu Liang said, "I've said before that Golden Jade Hall doesn't only belong to my father and me. Aren't you guys worried that the Lin Clan Leader will punish you? Even the entire Gu Clan won't be enough to stop him when that happens!"

Gu Yong's expression immediately darkened as he frostily said, "You still dare to use the Lin Clan to threaten us at this juncture? If the Lin Clan Leader does have ties to Golden Jade Hall, why has he done nothing for the past few days?"

Gu Liang found himself unable to reply as his expression grew increasingly ugly. Watching the shop he had so painstakingly built up being destroyed made him feel as if his heart was bleeding.

"You should just give up already!"

Gu Yong disdainfully said, "If the Lin Clan Leader personally comes today, I'll happily kneel and kowtow. However, that's clearly impossible. There's no one in the Forbidden City who doesn't know that the Lin Clan Leader is a supreme heaven pride that even the high clans do not dare to provoke. How can such a famous and brilliant individual possibly have any relation to your crappy Golden Jade Hall?"

A few days ago, Gu Yong had also led the clansmen to cause trouble, but had ultimately been frightened off by Gu Liang's supposed ties to the Lin Clan Leader.

However, Gu Yong quickly noticed that there was no reaction from the Lin Clan despite the Golden Jade Hall's difficulties.

Thinking he had been tricked, he flew into a rage. He immediately gathered up men and set off to take revenge for this humiliation.

In the beginning, he had held back against Golden Jade Hall out of caution and made sure not to go overboard with their actions.

However, since the Mind Cleansing Peak Lin Clan had done nothing despite their past few days of probing, Gu Yong was finally certain that he had been tricked by Gu Liang.

That little shit had obviously lied to scare him off!

Embarrassed and angered, Gu Yong decided to no longer hold back and resolved to destroy Golden Jade Hall today and chase Gu Liang out of the Forbidden City!

It was due to these reasons that Gu Yong had dared to make such absurdly bold claims.

In fact, he was feeling very pleased with himself for seeing through Gu Liang's 'lies' and 'evil plan' to trick them.

"You'll regret this." Gu Liang's expression was stoic. The originally beautiful Golden Jade Hall was now a complete mess. The extensive damage made his heart twist in his chest.

"Regret?"

Gu Yong laughed loudly. "I, Gu Yong, have never regretted anything I've done!"

Thud! Thud!

It was at this moment that the 'human wall' blocking the shop entrance was suddenly sent painfully flying and tumbling about like human bowling pins as if a bull had rammed into them.

Screams and wails of pain soon followed.

Gu Yong's smile froze before he exasperatedly roared, "Who dares to interfere in my Gu Clan's affairs?"

"Didn't you say that you would kneel and kowtow if I come? Not only are you not kneeling, but you even dare to be so rude to me. How brave."

The voice was accompanied by a youngster and an elder stepping into the shop.

"Who are you?"

Gu Yong's pupils shrank as his expression turned uncertain.

The other Gu Clan cultivators were also alerted by the disturbance. They immediately stopped what they were doing and looked over.

"Kneel, then you can continue speaking."

The youngster was naturally Lin Xun. He glanced at Gu Yong before turning his gaze to Gu Liang.

"I'm late." Lin Xun was somewhat apologetic.

Gu Liang shook his head and revealed a genuine smile from the bottom of his heart. "You're not late. I'm just glad we're finally able to meet again in the Forbidden City."

"You...you...you're..."

Gu Yong's eyes suddenly widened as if he had guessed something, looking as if he had seen a ghost.

Thud!

Lin Zhong walked forward and gently patted Gu Yong, causing him to fall to his knees with a loud thud. His kneecaps were instantly shattered, causing his face to twist in agony as he involuntarily gasped.

He did not dare to make any noise out of fear and was already beginning to sweat like crazy. He looked traumatized.

If his guess was correct, the youngster was Lin Xun!

However, Gu Yong could not comprehend how such a famous and peerless individual could possibly have any relation to the no-name Golden Jade Hall.

It was like finding out that a divine dragon had ties to a mere ant, which was inconceivable, to say the least.

"Didn't you hear what my Young Master said? Kneel then speak!" Lin Zhong warned before he crossed his arms and took a position slightly behind Lin Xun.

The Gu Clan cultivators were in shock.

An old man and a young man had suddenly arrived, easily knocked aside the 'human wall' in front of the shop, and confidently strolled inside. This series of events paralyzed the Gu Clan cultivators.

The sight of a Heaven Ascension expert like Gu Yong being forced to his knees with a light tap made their hearts tremble in terror and caused their expressions to change drastically. They seemed to have bullied the wrong target this time!

Many busybodies were gathered outside the shop, and there were even a number of formidable cultivators among the crowd.

These onlookers were naturally shocked when they witnessed the arrogant and fearless Gu Clan cultivators suddenly turning into cowering chickens.

Who had dared to interfere in the Gu Clan's affairs?

Although the Gu Clan wasn't as prominent as the seven high clans, they were still a mid-tier noble faction in the empire.

No one had ever treated them this way before!

One of the sharper cultivators soon identified Lin Xun and instinctively blurted out, "Oh my god, that's Lin Xun! He's appeared again after half a year!"

His words struck them like a rock creating a huge splash, causing the crowd to burst into an uproar as realization dawned upon them. No wonder the youngster dared to treat the Gu Clan members in such a manner. The famous and brazen heaven pride had returned!

The Gu Clan was in hot soup now!

Many cultivators could not help but gloat.

Several cultivators who admired Lin Xun also began to offer their services.

"Young Master Lin, do you need our help?"

"These Gu Clan members have gone too far. How dare they commit such heinous acts in public? Young Master Lin, please permit us to help you eliminate these evildoers!"

Gu Yong nearly fainted when he heard the din outside.

How could he have anticipated this? He had tried to be cautious, but still ended up being tricked by that 'lie.'

In fact, it wasn't a lie at all!

Gu Yong wanted to slap himself. How could he have offended the Lin Clan Leader?!

Gu Yong began to wish he was dead when he recalled the ruthless acts Lin Xun had committed in the Forbidden City. There were no words to describe what he was feeling at this moment.

Panic?

Terror?

Regret?

It was probably all of this and more.

Gu Yong's expression was very gloomy as if he was at a funeral.

"I remember that you were in a similar situation when we met in Haze City. What happened this time?"

Lin Xun ignored him and continued to look at Gu Liang.

“It’s a long story.”

Gu Liang sighed. “It’s actually related to the grudge between my father and me and the Gu Clan that happened long ago. I originally believed that we had given in enough and never expected that the Gu Clan would still refuse to let us off even until now.”

The two began to converse while ignoring everyone else.

However, this only made Gu Yong and the other Gu Clan members grow increasingly uneasy. The feeling of being at the mercy of someone else was torturous.

The crowd outside the shop grew as more and more people rushed over after hearing that Lin Xun had appeared.

It was inevitable since Lin Xun had not been seen for half a year. Moreover, people were always interested in the movements of a peerless heaven pride like him. It was easy to imagine the huge commotion that would follow when people found out he had appeared in some unknown shop.

Not long after, an elderly voice sounded outside Golden Jade Hall, “This old man Gu Tianzhang has led our clansmen here to accept our punishment!”

The crowd outside parted, revealing an elderly man rushing over with a group of people. They ultimately stopped outside Golden Jade Hall and bowed.

The scene shocked numerous cultivators. They knew this person! He was Gu Tianzhang, the current leader of the Gu Clan!

He was the ruler of a mid-tier noble faction and was a powerful and influential figure to any ordinary cultivator.

Likewise, the group he led wasn’t composed of nobodies either. They were all influential figures of the Gu Clan, including the likes of elders, stewards, and other high-profile individuals.

But now, all of them were obediently lined up outside Golden Jade Hall, ready to accept their punishment. The scene was shocking, to say the least!

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Chapter 745: Challenge Letter from the Omega Sword Sect Disciple

It was completely silent outside Golden Jade Hall.

The many onlookers could not help but be shocked by the sight of a highly influential figure like Gu Tianzhang leading the Gu Clan higher-ups here and humbly asking for punishment.

In the past, there had been countless rumors and tales about Lin Xun and his miraculous feats in the Forbidden City.

However, they were only rumors after all, and could never compare to personally witnessing him in the flesh.

A ruler of a mid-tier noble faction had personally come all the way to apologize. This reflected just how astonishing Lin Xun's current influence was in the city.

Inside the Golden Jade Hall shop, Gu Yong, who was still kneeling on the ground, felt as if his world had crumbled when he saw that even the Clan Leader had personally come to apologize. He realized that it was all over for him now.

Even if he somehow lived past today, he would no longer have any place in the Gu Clan!

The thought nearly made Gu Yong burst into tears. How could he have imagined that bullying an expelled clan member would end up offending the master of Mind Cleansing Peak?

The Gu Clan members who had followed Gu Yong here looked very nervous and upset as if they were at a funeral.

Just moments ago, they had been boldly and fearlessly smashing everything in the shop as if they were above the law, but now, they were in low spirits like deflated balloons.

"The leader is here. How do you want to handle this?"

Lin Xun casually glanced outside the shop before looking at Gu Liang.

Gu Liang was somewhat taken aback and likewise shocked by the sudden turn of events. Although Lin Xun hadn't said or done much, Gu Tianzhang had personally arrived with the clan higher-ups to apologize!

Gu Liang didn't know what to do. After a long time, he finally realized that Lin Xun was completely different from the Lin Xun he had known in the past!

"I..."

Gu Liang opened his mouth to say something and immediately saw Gu Tianzhang and the other higher-ups outside look at him with pleading gazes.

This made Gu Liang feel somewhat dazed for a time.

Although he had been expelled years ago, he was ultimately still a member of the clan.

No matter how much he hated Gu Tianzhang and the others, he had no choice but to acknowledge that they were too powerful.

Now, however, these 'powerful people' were looking at him with eyes begging for mercy. The drastic change in their attitudes felt almost comical and left Gu Liang in disbelief for a time.

Lin Xun could see Gu Liang's hesitation and said, "If it is a grudge that cannot be resolved, allow me to help you settle this matter..."

The words caused Gu Tianzhang's and the others' hearts to tighten as their expressions changed slightly. If the cruel and savage young demon god, Lin Xun, were to handle the affair, they knew that they would be screwed.

Fortunately for them, Gu Liang interjected before Lin Xun could finish, "Please let me handle it."

Gu Tianzhang and the others immediately felt relieved as if a heavy burden had been lifted from their shoulders.

Lin Xun suddenly looked at them. Although his expression was calm, Gu Tianzhang's and the others' hearts shivered uncontrollably as they lowered their heads, not daring to meet his gaze.

Lin Xun casually said, "I am one of the stakeholders of Golden Jade Hall. Since your people have made a mess of the shop today, I hope that you will give me satisfactory compensation."

Sweating profusely, Gu Tianzhang hurriedly answered, "Don't worry Young Master Lin, the Gu Clan will compensate you a hundred-fold for this incident and will severely punish the culprits!"

Rage bubbled within him and he wished could slap Gu Yong and the others to death right there and then. Why the hell did they have to offend the little demon Lin Xun!

Weren't they aware that even the two high clans, the Zuo Clan and the Qin Clan, ended up being humiliated by the little demon and were forced to admit defeat?

Even if they were to disregard that, there was no one in the city who didn't know that the current emperor greatly favored the little demon. Why the hell would anyone offend him unless they were tired of living?

And yet they still...

These bastards were blind idiots!

Gu Tianzhang was so triggered that he began to feel the urge to murder them.

Upon seeing this, Lin Xun knew that Gu Liang would soon be busy and would not have time to chit chat any longer. Thus, he bid his goodbyes, "When you're done settling things, come find me at Mind Cleansing Peak. We'll have a feast and drink till the next morning."

"It's a promise!"

Gu Liang happily agreed.

Lin Xun wasted no time and left with Lin Zhong. From start to end, he did not give another glance to Gu Tianzhang and the others.

Outside Golden Jade Hall, the onlookers hurriedly swarmed Lin Xun when he exited the shop.

"Young Master Lin, we're your long-time admirers. Won't you join us for some drinks?"

"Founder Lin, I am a rune master from the southwest province, may I ask if you're accepting any disciples?"

The cultivators' gazes were ablaze with excitement and friendliness while their expressions were filled with respect. They crowded around Lin Xun, creating a rather grand procession.

"Young Master Lin, I heard...I heard you're still single?"

Several young ladies plucked their courage and stepped forward, blushing as they tried to give Lin Xun their personal jade pendants.

Lin Xun felt somewhat overwhelmed. Fortunately, Lin Zhong was there to escort him out of the overly friendly crowd.

Gu Tianzhang and the others could not help but feel relieved as they watched. The Young Master was indeed an outstanding individual. It was clear that his reputation and titles were anything but made up!

When Gu Tianzhang's gaze swiveled back to Gu Liang, a sudden idea struck him. "We might be able to make use of today's incident to turn disaster into fortune and create ties with the Lin Clan..."

With this thought in mind, Gu Tianzhang took a deep breath, displayed a kindly smile, and walked into Golden Jade Hall with a sigh. "Gu Liang, the Gu Clan has mistreated you and your father for the past few years. Ah, I am deeply ashamed as an elder..."

.....

Lin Xun was no longer going to interfere in the grudge between Gu Liang and the Gu Clan. He believed the Gu Clan would not dare to try anything funny since they now knew of his relation to Gu Liang.

However, while Lin Xun was preparing to board his carriage and return to Mind Cleansing Peak, he found a handsome young man standing in the carriage's path.

"Are you Lin Xun?"

The young man was dressed in plain robes, and his long hair was tied up in a bun. He looked very young, was probably in his teens, and gave off a refined aura.

However, there was a trace of pride in his eyes, and he had even directly called Lin Xun by name.

The young man was unfazed and continued to stand there with a smile, ignoring them.

"That's right."

Lin Xun nodded. He could sense an extraordinary and unique aura from the young man.

"I am Chen Feng from the Omega Sword Sect. My master is the inner true disciple, Qing Zhe."

The young man introduced himself. He was obviously just an attendant, but his expression was calm. He gave off an air of arrogance and looked to be filled with confidence.

The Omega Sword Sect!

Lin Xun's heart shivered, but he said, "Oh, why have you come to find me?"

Meanwhile, the nearby cultivators were bewildered. Some of the older cultivators' expressions changed slightly, realizing that something was wrong.

They knew that the Omega Sword Sect was an ancient and powerful dao sect from the Ancient Wasteland Domain that could look down on the entire empire!

"My master wishes to send you a challenge letter."

Chen Feng retrieved a golden letter and tossed it to Lin Xun with a flick of his finger. There was no trace of politeness in his actions.

Anyone with half a brain could see that Chen Feng was arrogant. Although he was merely an attendant, he clearly showed zero respect toward Lin Xun!

Numerous cultivators began to feel uncomfortable as they frowned. Lin Xun was a famous supreme heaven pride with illustrious battle achievements. Despite this, he was being treated lightly by a mere attendant.

However, Lin Xun displayed a disapproving smile and said, "Go back and tell your master that I'm very busy and have no time for such pointless games."

The letter was also flicked back and gently landed at Chen Feng's feet.

Meanwhile, Lin Xun stepped into the carriage.

Chen Feng wasn't angered. He merely looked at the carriage and disdainfully said, "Lin Xun, aren't you supposed to be a peerless heaven pride? Why are you afraid of my master's challenge?"

"Go."

Lin Xun could not be bothered with him and instructed Lin Zhong to depart.

"Kid, if you dare to block us, I don't mind killing you!"

Lin Zhong's frosty gaze swept toward Chen Feng before he activated the carriage, causing it to move forward.

Chen Feng originally wanted to stop them, but Lin Zhong's firm and frosty gaze caused his pupils to shrink. In the end, he did not take action.

Chen Feng loudly said, "Lin Xun, I forgot to tell you that you have no choice but to accept the challenge. Just wait and see. No one can object to things my master has decided!"

The nearby cultivators naturally heard this and realized that there was indeed something off about the situation.

It was usually fine to turn down challenges but Chen Feng's words hinted that his master was determined to fight Lin Xun!

Such stubborn insistence from an inner true disciple from the Omega Sword Sect could only mean that he had hostile intentions!

On that same day, the Forbidden City was shaken up by the news that Lin Xun had appeared at Golden Jade Hall after being missing for half a year.

Meanwhile, news of the Omega Sword Sect disciple, Qin Zhe, issuing a challenge letter to Lin Xun also spread like wildfire, causing a humongous uproar.

Many factions were alerted and immediately began to pay attention to this matter. No one had imagined that Lin Xun would cause such a huge disturbance the moment he appeared again.

A disciple of the Omega Sword Sect challenging Lin Xun was most definitely a big deal!

Numerous factions began to look into Qin Zhe and were soon shocked by the information they uncovered.

Qin Zhi's origins and strength surpassed everyone's expectations!

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Chapter 746: Qin Zhi's Three Swords

Qin Zhi was a true inner disciple of the Omega Sword Sect. His cultivation had reached the initial Cyclic Derivation stage, and he was a descendant of the Ancient Wasteland Domain Azure Crane Clan.

He possessed the first-grade talent, 'Peerless Azure Battle Qi', and was one of the Omega Sword Sect's most outstanding rising stars, boasting incredible talent and astonishing combat power.

A few days ago, Qin Zhe had followed Omega Sword Sect Elder Gu Dongting to the Ziyao Empire and received a grand reception from the imperial family.

During the banquet, a shocking event occurred.

A bigwig of the imperial family called Zhao Guangxiu had wanted to toast Qin Zhe only to end up being rejected by him. "I don't mind toasts, but you aren't qualified."

The sentence changed the atmosphere in an instant.

Zhao Guangxiu suddenly found himself in a difficult situation and felt humiliated and angered.

He, a marquis from the imperial family, had tried to give a toast only to be rudely shut down by the other party because he supposedly wasn't qualified. He lost all face in front of everyone, and the other party was clearly trying to humiliate him.

"What about me?"

Someone else immediately stood up in disapproval. He was a respected and reputable prince.

However, no one could have anticipated that Qin Zhe would reject again without even batting an eyelid. "You aren't qualified either."

The atmosphere immediately became silent and stifling. Everyone present was a powerful and influential figure in the empire, and there was no lack of top-class individuals here.

All of them were beginning to grow annoyed by Qin Zhe's proud and arrogant attitude.

One of the bigwigs icily asked, "Then who among those present has the qualifications to toast you?"

Qin Zhe was unflustered from start to end. He continued to eat and drink as he nonchalantly said, "Anyone who can receive three sword attacks from me will have the qualifications to toast me."

Only then did everyone realize that Qin Zhe's arrogance and rudeness were attributed to his confidence in himself. He believed that the marquis and prince were unable to block the power of his three sword attacks!

What a crazy person.

The bigwigs present did not merely possess high status, but were also powerhouses who possessed cultivation no weaker than the Cyclic Derivation stage.

As such, Qin Zhe's wildly arrogant claim was naturally quite upsetting.

If he weren't from the Omega Sword Sect, they would have already expelled the arrogant bastard.

In the end, the South Fire Army Major-General, Yu Wenzhong, stepped up, seeking to prove his qualification through strength and teach Qin Zhe a lesson.

Yu Wenzhong was a peak Cyclic Derivation expert who had spent years on the battlefield and possessed ample battle experience.

Even with all that, he was defeated by a single sword attack from Qin Zhe under the shocked gazes of the crowd!

To be more precise, Yu Wenzhong failed to properly block the attack, causing him to stagger more than a dozen steps backward before coughing blood.

Moreover, Qin Zhe did not even get up from his seat or put down his cup. In fact, not a single drop of his drink had been spilled when he swung his sword.

His confident demeanor shocked everyone.

"My first sword is called 'Daybreak' because it is like the rising sun that covers the land in its light and chases away all of the darkness. You can't even withstand my first sword, so what right do you have to toast me?"

Qing Zhi sighed softly, seemingly losing interest.

He spoke like an elder lecturing a junior, causing the expressions of the bigwigs present to grow increasingly ugly.

Yu Wenzhong wanted to die from embarrassment and immediately left in a huff.

"Haha, what an arrogant kid!"

Another bigwig soon stepped forward. He was a marquis with perfect Cyclic Derivation cultivation who had slayed a real scaled dragon when he was young. He was most definitely a ruthless individual with amazing combat ability.

However, although he succeeded in blocking Qin Zhe's first sword attack, it inflicted heavy injuries on him. Hence, he withdrew before Qin Zhe could unleash his second sword attack, not daring to face it.

This shocked everyone even more.

An older-generation perfect Cyclic Derivation expert was only able to block Qin Zhi's first sword attack?

It was shocking even to imagine something like that.

Everyone could see that Qin Zhi's cultivation was only at the initial Cyclic Derivation stage, and he was at most in his twenties.

Was this the capability of an Omega Sword Sect inner true disciple?

Qin Zhi nonchalantly remarked, "My second sword is called 'Remnant Frost'. When used, everything returns to zero and all life is extinguished. You should be proud that you almost made me use it."

A mighty marquis of the empire had not only lost but was also given such an evaluation. It sounded no different than ridicule to everyone present.

In the end, the marquis' face turned green with rage, and he angrily stomped away.

Next, bigwigs stepped forward one after another to take on the three swords. Although they were all notable figures among the older generation, each was crushed by Qing Zhe without exception!

In the end, not a single person was able to stop Qing Zhe's second sword!

By this juncture, the atmosphere had fallen to its lowest point. The empire bigwigs had ashen expressions and had all been silenced.

It was a devastating blow to them.

A young man from the Omega Sword Sect had successively defeated the top experts among them, making them feel shocked, frustrated, and sullen.

At the same time, it also showed Qing Zhe's horrifying strength. From start to end, he had not stood up from his seat and continued to eat and drink as he swung his sword, appearing extremely relaxed.

However, this only made it harder to gauge his strength. No one could estimate how terrifying his power would be if he were to go all out.

In the end, the banquet ended on a very low note.

News of Qing Zhe's feats during the banquet rapidly spread, causing the many factions of the Forbidden City to be shocked like never before.

He was way too strong!

It was hard to believe that a true inner disciple from the Omega Sword Sect could easily overwhelm so many bigwigs of the empire one after another all the while continuing to enjoy his meal.

This was why such a huge commotion occurred when the news spread that Qing Zhe of the Omega Sword Sect had issued a challenge letter to the master of Mind Cleansing Peak.

It seemed very inconceivable since Qing Zhe had firmly rejected all of the bigwigs who had tried to toast him during the banquet without giving them any face.

But now, that same Qing Zhe was trying to challenge Lin Xun to a duel?

There was no one who didn't know that Lin Xun was a supreme heaven pride among the empire's younger generation.

At the end of the day, however, he still only had Heaven Ascension cultivation.

Instead of challenging an opponent with higher cultivation, the initial Cyclic Derivation stage Qing Zhe wanted to challenge Lin Xun, who was an entire greater cultivation stage lower than him. Of course there was something wrong with this!

“Something big is going to happen!”

Numerous cultivators were worried. They viewed Lin Xun as one of their own since they were all cultivators from the empire while Qing Zhe was an ‘outsider’ from the Ancient Wasteland Domain.

Under these circumstances, they would definitely stand on Lin Xun’s side.

However, when they recalled Qing Zhe’s terrifying strength, the empire cultivators began to doubt whether Lin Xun had any chance of victory if he were to accept.

Some cultivators were furious.

“Qing Zhe is too much. Lin Xun is our best younger-generation expert. If he is defeated, wouldn’t it imply that Qing Zhe stands above all of the younger-generation empire cultivators?”

“This matter is not so simple. Don’t forget that the bloody incident that occurred to the Mind Cleansing Peak Lin Clan more than a dozen years ago was the handiwork of an Omega Sword Sect disciple! Now, another Omega Sword Sect disciple has pointed his sword at Lin Xun. Could they be...trying to tie up loose ends?”

One of the older-generation cultivators believed that Qing Zhe’s goal was to destroy Lin Xun!

“Ugh, who could have imagined that Lin Xun would be targeted by Qing Zhe the moment he appeared? No one can predict how this will end.”

“Thankfully, I’ve heard that Lin Xun has rejected the duel and declared that he has no time to play around with Qing Zhe.”

“But the challenge has already drawn the entire city’s attention. If Lin Xun refuses to fight, it won’t merely be a matter of dishonoring himself!”

Various discussions rose like a storm from every corner of the Forbidden City, causing the challenge to become the hottest topic in a single night.

Would Lin Xun agree?

Everyone was paying close attention to potential developments.

.....

On the summit of Mind Cleansing Peak.

A mountain rose amidst the mist and beautiful scenery.

Lin Xun was seated before a large rectangular black jade. Beautiful colors flowed along it as it pulsed with mysterious and cryptic undulations.

A little girl was lying inside the jade.

She wore a black robe and black cloak and had a beautiful face that could take anyone's breath away. Such beauty could only be a true masterpiece of the heavens and would make the entire world look dull in comparison.

She silently lay there inside the jade with her hands forming a strange seal atop her abdomen. Her eyes were closed, and she wore a serene expression on her face as she breathed to the unique rhythm of someone in an eternal deep sleep.

Wisps of eternal night-black divine light danced around her body like the rain.

The little girl was naturally Xia Zhi, who was undergoing her second 'obliteration' cycle.

"I wonder when she'll wake up..."

After a long time, Lin Xun withdrew his gaze and sighed inwardly.

Xia Zhi practiced the mysterious heaven-defying secret art, the Nine Cycle Obliteration Art. Every awakening of her power was accompanied by obliteration, producing a transformation that was similar to reincarnation.

It was Xia Zhi's second 'obliteration,' which had begun while Lin Xun was in the Spirit Burial Sea.

Unfortunately, the 'obliteration' process still wasn't over yet. It honestly felt far too long...

In the end, Lin Xun carefully put the black jade stone that contained the sleeping Xia Zhi into the first floor of the Nameless Pagoda. He had already decided that he would bring her along when he headed to the Ancient Wasteland Domain.

It was because all of her past memories would be erased when she awakened from the 'obliteration' process. The only thing she would remember was him.

"Young Master, this doesn't look good. The Omega Sword Sect disciple, Qing Zhe, has personally come and is waiting outside Mind Cleansing Peak at this very moment!"

Lin Zhong was suddenly seen rushing over from far away.

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Chapter 747

"He's at our doorstep?"

Lin Xun was taken aback. It was just yesterday that he rejected Qing Zhi's challenge letter. Hence, he was surprised that Qing Zhi had voluntarily come after a single day.

"That's right. He looks completely at ease and has brought along a mat, table, and utensils for the consumption of alcohol and tea. From the looks of it, he will keep waiting there until you appear."

Lin Zhong frowned. His expression was rather grave.

He had seen Qing Zhe earlier. The young man was handsome, had the refined elegance of a dragon and phoenix, and a pair of azure pupils. Although he was casually sitting there, his dignified posture and calm confidence made him stand out. He was definitely an extremely terrifying expert.

Lin Zhong grew increasingly worried when he recalled that Qing Zhe had defeated many bigwigs of the empire during the banquet a few days ago.

With initial Cyclic Derivation cultivation, he had steamrolled over the empire's older-generation Cyclic Derivation experts. From start to finish, not a single person could block his three swords. It was frightening to think about.

It definitely wasn't good news to Lin Zhong that a young man with such terrifying origins, foundations, cultivation, and combat ability was so insistent on challenging Lin Xun.

"I heard that not a single person could block his three swords ever since he arrived in the Forbidden City."

Lin Xun fell into thought.

"Indeed." Lin Zhong nodded and worriedly said, "Young Master, I doubt he's here to make friends. I'm afraid that he must have some other motive."

"Naturally. Even a blind man can see that something is wrong when a Cyclic Derivation stage cultivator like him tries to challenge me to a duel."

Lin Xun off-handedly said, "In fact, I suspect that Qing Zhe had received orders from Yun Qingbai."

Yun Qingbai!

The mention of his name caused hatred to flow out in Lin Zhong's eyes. That was the fiend who had slaughtered all of the main clan members more than a dozen years ago!

"Young Master, how do you intend to deal with this?"

"As long as he doesn't cause trouble, let him sit there and drink as much tea as he wants. I have no time to fight someone with dubious intentions."

Lin Xun's reply was rather nonchalant.

He took out the Nameless Pagoda as he spoke. Toady had gone into secluded cultivation to attempt a cultivation breakthrough when they left the Spirit Burial Sea. However, there was no sign of any breakthrough even until now.

Lin Xun sent his senses inside and discovered that Toady's aura was flowing smoothly and gave off a sensation of fullness. This proved that he had not encountered any danger during his secluded cultivation, which immediately eased Lin Xun's worries.

"According to Toady, it will take him one to three years to complete his cultivation breakthrough. By that time, I would have already left for the Ancient Wasteland Domain..."

Lin Xun contemplated.

By his side, Lin Zhong was finally certain that the Young Master wasn't joking and genuinely had zero intention to fight Qing Zhe.

"That's good. At least I don't have to worry about danger befalling the Young Master..."

Lin Zhong left to fulfill his duties.

.....

On the flat and spacious path outside the entrance to Mind Cleansing Peak.

A figure with excellent posture was seated on a mat.

He had long silver hair that shone brilliantly and a pair of azure eyes that seemed to flow with intimidating light.

There was a pot of tea and a jar of alcohol on the table in front of him. He was comfortably enjoying the beverages as if he was in his own courtyard, appearing very content and relaxed.

It was Qing Zhe, an inner true disciple of the Omega Sword Sect!

He was very young, looked to be about twenty years old, had a large forehead, and his skin seemed to give off a gem-like sparkle. It made him look like a superior being who had transcended the mortal realm.

Next to Qing Zhe stood his servant Chen Feng. Although he was a servant, he was handsome and had an extraordinary presence that far surpassed any ordinary cultivator.

Master and servant waited there, appearing fearless and confident.

Qing Zhe's arrival outside Mind Cleansing Peak immediately became the focal point of the entire Forbidden City.

The areas around the entrance of Mind Cleansing Peak were packed with figures who were closely watching for any developments.

"Qing Zhe is so forceful. He went right to camping at the Lin Clan's doorstep and is obviously trying to force Lin Xun out!"

Some cultivators were inwardly alarmed.

"Qing Zhe definitely won't give up until Lin Xun agrees to the duel!"

"He doesn't really have any good options. If Lin Xun refuses to fight, everyone will think that he's afraid. This will be a heavy blow to his reputation!"

Numerous cultivators analyzed the situation and ultimately arrived at the same conclusion. If Qing Zhe continued to camp at Mind Cleansing Peak's entrance, Lin Xun's reputation would take a bigger and bigger hit as time passed.

Currently, Lin Xun was known as the supreme heaven pride of the empire's younger generation and was essentially a leading expert of his generation.

If even he was afraid of accepting Qing Zhe's challenge, wouldn't it mean that the empire's younger generation would forever be below Qing Zhe's feet?

That was a serious consequence.

“Qing Zhe is too much. He has initial Cyclic Derivation cultivation, but he wants to fight Lin Xun, who only has Heaven Ascension cultivation. That’s clear bullying!”

Some cultivators felt indignant for Lin Xun.

“Ugh, that’s not all. Didn’t many bigwigs with perfect Cyclic Derivation cultivation take on Qing Zhe’s challenge during the banquet a few days ago? All of you know how that ended. If Lin Xun accepts the duel, his chances of victory will be abysmal!”

Someone sighed.

The duel had already caused a huge commotion in the Forbidden City before it began.

Many cultivators sorely wished that Lin Xun would teach Qing Zhe a lesson to take him down a peg and earn back some of the empire’s dignity.

However, there were also numerous cultivators who were not optimistic and believed that Lin Xun had almost no hope of victory. Qing Zhe’s combat power was too heaven-defying, and even mighty perfect Cyclic Derivation experts could not block his three swords, let alone Lin Xun, who only possessed Heaven Ascension cultivation.

“I guess it was inevitable...”

Surprisingly, even Zhao Tailai had personally arrived some distance away. However, his expression was somewhat different from the pessimistic looks of the other cultivators.

“If Qing Zhe knew of how Lin Xun had terrorized the Blood Kill Battlefield, I wonder if he would still dare to camp here...”

Zhao Tailai was in a very peculiar state of mind and was even gloating a little.

A few bigwigs from the imperial army also had strange expressions as they silently waited for the show to start.

Others might still be unaware, but they knew full well of the huge commotion Lin Xun had caused in the Blood Kill Battlefield for the past half a year.

His Half-Step King expert kill count alone was already four or five!

Would Qing Zhe still think that Lin Xun was an easy target if he knew?

Of course, there was no way that they would warn him. In fact, they were already itching to see Qing Zhe make a fool of himself.

To everyone’s surprise, however, an attendant soon walked out from Mind Cleansing Peak and said, “The clan leader is busy and has no time for such matters. If Young Master Qing Zhe wishes to, you can feel free to continue enjoying your drinks here.”

The attendant left after announcing this.

Everyone was stunned.

Lin Xun had directly rejected the challenge and left Qing Zhe hanging, clearly not intending to pay him any heed.

“Why is this happening...could...could he be afraid and wants to avoid the duel? Lin Xun has never been scared of such things in the past.”

Many cultivators were disappointed, believing that Lin Xun’s actions were only hurting his reputation and growing Qing Zhe’s momentum.

“Hmph, who does Qing Zhe think he is? Does everyone have to accept just because he challenges? What a joke! I feel that Young Master Lin’s response is brilliant!”

There were also many cultivators that approved of Lin Xun’s actions.

“How dare he be so rude?! He should make it clear if he’s afraid instead of giving so many excuses. Pathetic.”

In the distance, Chen Feng frowned in disdain at Lin Xun’s decision, believing he was a coward who did not dare to fight.

Qing Zhe was unruffled. He sipped from his teacup and nonchalantly said, “It’s fine, we shall continue waiting. I have the patience and know that he’ll have to come out and fight sooner or later.”

“Master, do you have to do this given your status and cultivation?”

Chen Feng did not understand. He believed that the likes of Lin Xun didn’t have the qualifications to duel Qing Zhe. However, he was adamant about going through with the duel.

“From what I understand, he has stepped onto the legendary strongest supreme path. I’m very curious how he managed to achieve this in a lower plane where the dao is incomplete. Don’t you think it’s interesting?”

Qing Zhe leisurely explained as he toyed with his cup.

However, there was one tidbit he had left out. From what he knew, the youngster called Lin Xun should have died more than a dozen years ago but had miraculously survived. There were honestly far too many interesting points about this matter!

“The strongest supreme path...”

Chen Feng’s pupils abruptly shrank as his heart violently shuddered. He was genuinely shocked. It must be known that geniuses who could ascend this path were rare even in the Ancient Wasteland Domain!

It was indeed unimaginable that a youngster could achieve this in such a barren lower plane!

.....

Despite being left hanging by Lin Xun, Qing Zhe chose to wait. He appeared completely unfazed and seemed ready to keep waiting until Lin Xun had no choice but to come out.

This shocked the watching cultivators, and they began to realize that Qing Zhe’s intentions might not be as simple as they had initially thought.

Meanwhile, Lin Xun could not help but raise his brows upon learning Qing Zhe's stance. "Does he intend to be stubborn until the end..."

"Kid, what are you thinking? Don't you feel humiliated that he's camping right at your doorstep? This matter has already drawn the attention of the entire city. If you let Qing Zhe stay there, how will the Lin Clan dare to show its face in the Forbidden City?"

It was not long before Zhao Tailai came to seek an audience and directly asked Lin Xun how he would resolve the matter.

Surprised, Lin Xun said, "Elder, why does it sound like you can't wait for me to fight Qing Zhe?"

Zhao Tailai merely chuckled and said, "If you're confident, then fight. If you're not then it's okay to hide. However, aren't you curious to discover Qing Zhe's intentions?"

Lin Xun answered, "After beating around the bush, it sounds like you do want me to duke it out with him."

Zhao Tailai put on a serious look. "I'm anxious for you. The entire city is hoping for you to step forward and take him down a notch so he can no longer act so arrogantly as if there are no capable people in the empire!"

Lin Xun grinned and asked, "Is there anything in it for me?"

Zhao Tailai glared at him. "I'm here to try and help you solve your troubles, but you're trying to take advantage of me? Allow me to say this, I won't force you to accept the duel, but if my niece, Jingxuan, finds out that the man she fancies is hiding like a tortoise when he is supposed to do his part for the empire, how disappointed and sad do you think she'll be?"

Lin Xun had a headache. The old fox was too shameless. To think that he would play the Zhao Jingxuan card to force him to fight!

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Chapter 748: Accepting the Duel

In the end, Lin Xun agreed.

He had no choice since Zhao Tailai had brought up Zhao Jingxuan. If Lin Xun disagreed, it would make him look too weak and cowardly.

Moreover, Zhao Tailai wasn't wrong either. If he continued ignoring the Omega Sword Sect disciple camping at his doorstep to challenge him, everyone would look down on him.

.....

At the Mind Cleansing Peak entrance.

Qing Zhe savored his tea with a confident and relaxed expression. The seemingly perfect composure he gave off only made him appear more extraordinary.

In the distance, Gu Dongting watched in admiration as he stroked his beard and smiled.

He was the Omega Sword Sect Elder who came to the Ziyao Empire and was also a Life Death Stage King with immeasurable strength and high status.

He had a neat and tidy appearance, a snow-white beard and hair, and his skin gave off the healthy glow of a newborn baby. Although he was merely standing there holding a horsetail whisk, he gave off a majestic presence that made others feel as if they were looking up at a mountain.

“As expected of an inner true disciple of the Omega Sword Clan. His composure, demeanor, and presence are superb.”

Beside the elder, a bigwig sighed in admiration.

“Agreed, a young-generation talent like Qing Zhe is akin to a mighty peng. Only an ancient sect like the Omega Sword Sect can nurture such an outstanding genius.”

Praises sounded one after another. Gu Dongting was accompanied by a group of bigwigs from the Zuo Clan and the Qin Clan.

“When there’s no tiger around, even a monkey can call itself king. Lin Xun might think he’s unmatched among the empire’s younger generation, but he doesn’t know that he’s just a frog in the well in the Ancient Wasteland Domain’s eyes!”

Another bigwig icily snorted, displaying his disdain toward Lin Xun.

The two high clans, the Zuo Clan and the Qin Clan, were undoubtedly the happiest in this situation.

Previously, Lin Xun had singlehandedly humiliated the Zuo Clan and the Qin Clan while they had no choice but to swallow their grievances against him.

However, things were different now. Qing Zhe was an inner true disciple of the Omega Sword Sect who possessed superb cultivation and had subdued many bigwigs during the imperial banquet a few days ago.

Under these circumstances, the Zuo Clan and the Qin Clan could not wait to see Qing Zhe take Lin Xun down a peg, or even better, cripple him!

Gu Dongting merely smiled without saying a word, appearing rather reserved.

“Quickly look, Lin Xun is coming out!”

Gasps suddenly sounded in the distance, drawing everyone’s attention. The crowd looked over and saw a young man walking out from Mind Cleansing Peak.

It was Lin Xun.

Everyone was stunned. Many had believed that Lin Xun would not easily show himself.

After all, the duel was far too risky. If he lost, it would be a terrible blow to his reputation.

Hence why there was such a commotion when he appeared.

“Does he actually intend to accept the duel?”

Several cultivators grew anxious. News of Qing Zhe's terrifying strength had long spread to the entire city. Even the perfect Cyclic Derivation stage bigwigs had been unable to block his three swords, so how could Lin Xun possibly be his match?

"This is good as well. Rather than feel crappy letting him camp at your doorstep, why not happily duke it out and give Qing Zhe a taste of our empire cultivators' might!"

Some were excited due to their blind faith in Lin Xun. After all, his past battle accomplishments were far too glorious. Since he dared to appear, he must be confident.

On the other hand, the Zuo Clan and Qin Clan members' eyes were wide in disbelief, but they soon grew excited.

They could not wait to see Lin Xun lose everything!

A storm began to gather, and there was no going back now.

When Qing Zhe issued his challenge letter, it stirred up the entire Forbidden City and drew the attention of countless factions.

On one side, there was an inner true disciple of the Omega Sword Sect who had subdued the empire's Cyclic Derivation stage bigwigs with his three swords. He boasted overwhelming combat power and appeared unrivaled.

On the other side, was the empire's strongest youngster who was also an amazing expert with numerous dazzling achievements.

It was easy to imagine how astonishing the battle between them would be!

.....

When Lin Xun appeared, Qing Zhe was slightly taken aback, seemingly surprised that he would appear so soon.

Qing Zhe quickly regained his composure, placed his cup on the table, and rose to his feet.

The simple movement caused the entire place to fall silent as everyone's gaze focused on them.

Qing Zhe's tall and slim figure stood there with excellent posture, his silver hair sparkling under the light. He was a very handsome specimen with fair skin and sapphire eyes. When he stood up, he seemed to become a spear that gave off an intimidating aura.

Even the cultivators who didn't like Qing Zhe had to admit that he was remarkable. Anyone could tell at a glance that he was a heaven pride who was destined to shine.

Several of the older-generation experts had grave expressions. Compared to his previous relaxed demeanor, Qing Zhe now gave off a palpitating aura that resembled a sheathed sword.

"Careful, his sword dao mastery is insanely frightening. Moreover, he's a descendent of the ancient era Azure Crane Clan who has awakened his innate secret ability."

Zhao Tailai cautioned from behind.

Lin Xun acknowledged the warning and walked out from the entrance. His long black hair reached all the way to his waist, and his skin sparkled like gems, gleaming brightly under the sun.

His steps were unhurried, and his graceful figure gave off a transcendental aura.

“He’s no ordinary person.”

In the distance, Gu Dongting was somewhat surprised.

“No matter how extraordinary he is, he is too arrogant and has no morals.”

The Zuo Clan and Qin Clan bigwigs felt a little uncomfortable. They felt nothing but hatred toward Lin Xun and wished he would hurry up and die.

Gu Dongting smiled slightly and said, “I see. This could be a chance for Qing Zhe to temper his arrogance.”

“That will be best.”

The Zuo Clan and Qin Clan bigwigs were overjoyed.

In the distance, Qing Zhe’s bright eyes focused on Lin Xun and said, “Did you run out of patience?”

His expression was exceptionally calm as an intimidating icy light flowed in his eyes as if he were looking down on Lin Xun.

“You’re not the only person here, so I can’t let everyone wait for too long as it would be wasting their time. As for you, you’re not enough to affect my mental state.”

Lin Xun was also sizing up Qing Zhe and could not help but admit that what he saw was indeed very extraordinary.

Even the Spirit Treasure Holy Land’s Xiao Ran, Su Xingfeng, and the top saints from the various clans of the Spirit Burial Sea were inferior to him.

However, it was only logical since he had Cyclic Derivation cultivation and had long surpassed the Heaven Ascension stage. Moreover, such an aura was expected from an inner true disciple of the Omega Sword Sect.

“I heard that you’ve attained the strongest supreme path and hope to see it for myself today. For the sake of fairness, I will suppress a portion of my strength to prevent others from saying I’m bullying you.”

Lightning seemed to flash in Qing Zhe’s eyes as he spoke, and an almost indiscernible smile hung from the corners of his mouth. Hidden under that calm exterior were absolute confidence and pride.

Numerous cultivators’ expressions fluctuated as they were uncertain about this.

Suppress his strength to have a fair fight with Lin Xun?

Qing Zhe was undoubtedly not lacking in confidence.

Lin Xun asked, “Is that so? Before the duel, I’m curious to know whether you’re worried your blood might be spilled and you might die?”

“Arrogant!”

“What a death-seeking fool!”

In the distance, the Zuo Clan and the Qin Clan bigwigs nearly laughed out of anger.

“You guys were right. He is indeed very arrogant.”

Even Gu Dongting frowned slightly as his expression turned somewhat icy.

“It seems that you’re rather conceited. However, overconfidence is no different from foolishness, especially when you’re facing me. The likes of you aren’t qualified to say such words.”

Qing Zhe was cool as a cucumber. An intimidating aura spread as he closely examined Lin Xun.

His silver hair glowed as blood and qi began to roar within his body, causing the surrounding world to tremble in terror.

He sounded very condescending and triggered the empire cultivators. However, they were also worried for Lin Xun because Qing Zhe was too powerful.

“Since that’s the case, how about we have a bet? If you lose, truthfully answer two questions of mine. What do you think?” Lin Xun displayed a nonchalant smile.

Qing Zhe frowned although his expression remained composed. However, his eyes grew increasingly frosty as he disdainfully looked at Lin Xun and said, “What if you lose?”

Lin Xun answered without hesitation, “Do whatever you want.”

These words shook the empire cultivators. That was no different from signing away his life. Wasn’t Lin Xun the least bit worried?

Qing Zhe displayed a rare smile. It was, however, a very cold smile. “I originally had no intentions of killing you, but since you’re so insistent on wanting to die, I’ll grant your wish!”

His words were extremely domineering and displayed his unshakable confidence. No opponent would feel comforted hearing such words.

These words, however, made perfect sense to Gu Dongting because Qing Zhe was most definitely more than qualified to make such claims!

Lin Xun laughed. “Then let’s fight.”

Qing Zhe began to glow. Those with keener senses could feel his aura grow weaker.

Just as he had said, he didn’t wish to bully Lin Xun with his cultivation and was thus suppressing his power.

Rumble!

The battle erupted in an instant.

Qing Zhe advanced with a big step. His clothes and long silver hair fluttered as he turned into a streak of light and disappeared from the spot.

When he appeared again, he was already in front of Lin Xun. Sharp azure light swirled around Qing Zhe's hand as it formed a seal and swung at Lin Xun.

The air exploded as the hand seal forcefully tore open space with power that could probably destroy a mountain.

Any other Heaven Ascension expert would not be able to block this strike. The attack would blow them apart, leaving not even a corpse behind!

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Chapter 749: Injured

Qing Zhe's ferocity, decisiveness, and swiftness shocked everyone and alarmed many empire cultivators.

He clearly intended to quickly overwhelm Lin Xun and crush him below his feet!

Lin Xun made no attempt to evade. He swung his right fist as he executed the Bi'an Stamp, causing the attack to soar into the air like a Bi'an and explode the air with equally earth-shaking power.

Boom!

It felt as if a landslide was occurring as a deafening boom thundered across the skies, causing the onlookers' blood to churn wildly.

The empire cultivators were deeply anxious and worried for Lin Xun, afraid that he had failed to stop Qing Zhe's deadly attack. After all, his strength was downright terrifying.

On the other hand, the Zuo Clan and the Qin Clan members were grinning from ear to ear, appearing very relaxed and excited. They did not believe Lin Xun was Qing Zhe's match because there was too huge of a disparity between them.

Only Gu Dongting silently observed without speaking. He knew that the youngster would not be so easily subdued if he had indeed attained the supreme path.

On the battlefield, lights rapidly flared and the ground shook as if two volcanoes were colliding. Dreadful light undulations were released and unfurled in all directions like crashing waves.

The nearby rocks, path, and flora were instantly destroyed, filling the air with dust.

Two individuals clashed with their bare fists. One of them had a dignified posture and a fierce gaze akin to a sword being unsheathed while the other possessed an ethereal figure surrounded by a brilliant light. The terrifying undulations from their exchanges were so blinding that it made it nearly impossible for the onlookers to keep their eyes open.

More than a dozen blows were exchanged in an instant. Their frightening speed and power caused the world around them to fall into turmoil, affecting even the clouds and wind, and destroying almost everything in the vicinity.

This...

The Zuo Clan and Qin Clan members were astounded. Despite Qing Zhe's overwhelming strength and terrifyingly deadly attacks, Lin Xun was able to match him blow for blow!

Moreover, it was a direct clash of power against power!

Their hearts trembled in disbelief as their eyes widened in shock. There was no longer any trace of their earlier relaxed expressions, and their smiles had turned rigid.

“He only has breathing room because Qing Zhe suppressed his strength. Don’t worry, his defeat is already set in stone and is only a matter of time.”

One of the Zuo Clan higher-ups tried to console himself.

Rumble!

The earth split open inch by inch as soil and stones swept forth like a wave. The air was filled with the piercing sounds of explosions as blasts of light devastated the surroundings.

The terrifying scene was caused by the intense clash of power between the two individuals.

It was indeed an intense battle.

Cultivators from innumerable factions were gathered at Mind Cleansing Peak’s entrance, and the entire Forbidden City had their attention on the match.

Many empire cultivators were originally worried for Lin Xun, but they soon forgot their worry due to astonishment and were drawn into the duel between the two peerless experts.

There was absolutely no doubt that it was a clash of the peak.

Bang!

It was not long before the two individuals backed away and separated.

However, they soon unleashed even more terrifying attacks.

Blinding radiance rained down like a torrential downpour, engulfing their figures. They moved so fast that it felt as if they were blinking from spot to spot, making it dizzying to watch. It was also so exhilarating that the onlookers nearly forgot to breathe.

Even the older-generation bigwigs could feel their hearts stir a little, unable to comprehend how two such young individuals could possess such frightening power.

What monsters.

Several of the ordinary cultivators were stupefied and rooted to the ground in shock. Such power had already surpassed their imagination. Every clash was akin to a mountain being destroyed or a sea being split and felt as if the sun and moon were vying for supremacy.

“Hmph!”

Qing Zhe icily snorted. He was somewhat unhappy that his attacks were being blocked, and he was unable to swiftly defeat his opponent.

Rumble!

His aura grew increasingly powerful as light began to violently burn around him like a raging furnace. His long silver hair danced around him, making him resemble a shining god.

“Strong!”

Some Cyclic Derivation experts’ expressions changed when they felt the Qing Zhe’s terrifying power.

“Bixi Collision!” Lin Xun suddenly moved as a giant dragon seemed to emerge from his back, creating a Bixi phantasm.

It was the Tribulation Dragon Nine Transformations. When Lin Xun executed it, its power was clearly different from before. A massive force was released from his back, seemingly intent on smashing the entire world into the ground as it pulsed with a frightening aura of destruction.

Bang!

In that moment, everyone saw Qing Zhe stagger due to the collision and was nearly sent flying.

An uproar immediately followed!

Even the calm Gu Dongting could not help but narrow his eyes a little.

The attack caused Qing Zhe’s eyes to turn ice-cold. His silver hair wildly danced around him as brilliant azure light erupted from his body like a raging inferno.

Rumble~

His aura rapidly intensified as the space around him crumbled inch by inch. The clouds and wind nearby seemed to jump in alarm as they were dyed in dense azure light.

In the end, each breath he took made the land tremble, creating a horrifying scene.

The Zuo Clan members’, the Qin Clan members’, and the empire cultivators’ hearts jumped in alarm when they sensed Qing Zhe’s dreadful power. He was definitely an exceptionally terrifying younger-generation expert.

Qing Zhe was giving off an extremely dangerous aura as his azure eyes shone intimidatingly.

In a flash, he disappeared from the spot and appeared near Lin Xun.

Boom!

His hands formed a mighty ancient seal. Azure sparks arced around it as if lightning was contained within. The terrifying aura made even Cyclic Derivation experts’ scalps turn numb.

Lin Xun was unafraid. His aura grew increasingly ethereal, giving off a sensation of perfection as clear, clean, and illusory light shimmered around him.

Even his hair began to glow as a fierce light surged in his black eyes.

He might have needed to be cautious if Qing Zhe had not suppressed his strength. However, what was there for Lin Xun to be afraid of since he had?

“Subdue!”

Qing Zhe seemed to transform into an azure sun. A powerful and fierce aura pulsed from him as he rushed forth.

Lin Xun also activated the Tribulation Dragon Nine Transformations. Legendary divine dragons seemed to emerge one after another as the Hornless Ice Dragon Step, Bixi Collision, Baxia Imprisonment, and Bi'an Stamp were executed.

The two clashed again like a blade and sword vying for supremacy and ancient divine mountains colliding. The dreadful undulations from their clash caused the many empire cultivators' expressions to change as they hurriedly retreated.

Rumble!

Space warped and distorted, a giant abyss-like pit appeared, and cracks spread across the ground like a spiderweb.

It was a horrifying scene to witness.

More and more empire cultivators arrived nearby to watch the battle.

At the Mind Cleansing Peak entrance, Spirit Vulture, Xiaoke, Lin Zhong, Third Old Zhu, Lin Huaiyuan, and the other Lin Clan higher-ups were watching as well.

An unknown number of bigwigs were also secretly watching, closely observing every detail of the battle.

By now, everyone could tell that Qing Zhe with his suppressed cultivation was not able to swiftly defeat Lin Xun.

Lin Xun's stellar performance renewed many cultivators' understanding of him, causing them to feel pleasantly surprised.

Many people had not expected that Lin Xun's strength would grow so unfathomable after half a year.

Gu Dongting mumbled to himself, "Is this the power of the supreme path..."

The Zuo Clan and Qin Clan bigwigs' expressions fluctuated indeterminately. There was no longer any trace of their earlier relaxed demeanors.

Plop!

Moments later, blood suddenly splattered on the battlefield. At the same time, a figure staggered more than a hundred feet back in the air as blood flowed from the corner of his mouth.

"This..."

Everyone was shocked because it wasn't Lin Xun but Qing Zhe who had been forced back!

The outcome caused many people to be dumbstruck, unable to believe what had happened. The unexpectedness of it was far too astounding.

The Zuo Clan and Qin Clan bigwigs' eyes nearly popped out.

How could this be?

They never expected to see such a scene.

In the beginning, many people had been worried for Lin Xun, and almost no one believed he had any chance of victory. After all, Qing Zhe was too strong and even perfect Cyclic Derivation experts had failed to block his three swords.

However, he was the first to be injured in the duel and had been forced back by Lin Xun, who only had Heaven Ascension cultivation. The reversal was too sudden for the crowd to process.

“Continuing to suppress his cultivation won’t do him any good...” Gu Dongting frowned.

On the battlefield, Lin Xun’s black hair fluttered around him as an illusory radiance swirled around his body, making him resemble a transcendent immortal. He was completely uninjured.

He glanced at Qing Zhe and said, “Use your full power. Otherwise, your loss will only become uglier.”

The place was deathly silent.

In the distance, Qing Zhe wiped the blood from the corner of his mouth. His face was a little pale, and there was a bleeding fist imprint on his left shoulder.

The sight shocked everyone.

Qing Zhe had been so proud and confident earlier, causing many cultivators to believe that Lin Xun was at a disadvantage in the duel and would likely lose.

However, after the battle began, Lin Xun’s remarkable display continuously shocked everyone until the present moment when Qing Zhe was injured. It made the crowd feel an unrealistic sensation as if they were in a dream.

“Qing Zhe is an inner true disciple of the Omega Sword Sect and a true heaven pride. How could he be the first to be injured?”

The Zuo Clan and Qin Clan bigwigs felt terrible, refusing to believe that this was true.

“He suppressed his cultivation and didn’t use his full power. Moreover, don’t forget that Qing Zhe’s strongest weapon is his sword dao which he has yet to use until now! Keep watching, the one who ultimately loses will not be Qing Zhe.”

Gu Dongting’s words revitalized the Zuo Clan and Qin Clan bigwigs, allowing them to regain their confidence.

This wasn’t a lie. After all, Gu Dongting had a good understanding of Qing Zhe. He possessed strength that matched his arrogance and was considered an outstanding genius even in the Omega Sword Sect due to his superb abilities.

He had only been injured because he had been careless.

Gu Dongting firmly believed the situation would soon turn when Qing Zhe became serious!

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Chapter 750: Spirit Control Clash

“So strong! He even injured a true inner disciple of the Omega Sword Sect. Young Master Lin is unrivaled!”

“Haha, who bragged that Qing Zhe’s battle power was heaven-defying earlier? He’s nothing compared to Young Master Lin!”

The empire cultivators were filled with excitement and exhilaration.

For the past few days, news of Qing Zhe’s feats had spread a gloomy mood among the empire cultivators. After all, who would be happy hearing that the bigwigs of their empire had been subdued by a young foreign disciple?

As such, the empire cultivators were naturally thrilled to see Lin Xun display overwhelming might and be the first to injure Qing Zhe in a direct clash.

However, their cheers and excitement were soon cut short, and the atmosphere turned tense and stifling again.

It was because of the change in Qing Zhe’s aura. A terrifying aura unfurled as if a primordial beast was awakening from its deep slumber, causing the empire cultivators to shiver as they felt an unexplainable sense of dread.

Azure flames began to burn around Qing Zhe’s body, causing his long silver hair to sparkle like a silver waterfall as a horrifying light shone from his eyes.

If Qing Zhe was a peerless blade earlier, he was now a raging volcano packed full of destruction that was about to erupt!

The wound on his shoulder healed in an instant, leaving no trace of the previous injury.

The world around him seemed to tremble at his power, which was clearly much greater than before!

Oh no!

The empire’s top experts’ faces changed. It was clear that Qing Zhe had been angered and was no longer suppressing his power.

“So that’s the supreme path’s power. To think that it managed to injure me, what extraordinary power.”

Although Qing Zhe spoke calmly, his pressure grew increasingly powerful as light seemed to shoot out from his eyes. “However, do you think that’s enough to defeat me?”

He stepped forward as space wailed and crumbled around him. The destructive power made the top Cyclic Derivation experts’ hearts tremble.

Too powerful!

So this was Qing Zhe’s true power. He had only been injured because he had suppressed his cultivation and had been careless.

However, the situation was very different now!

“Excellent!”

A Zuo Clan bigwig could not help but blurt out in excitement, causing the empire cultivators to glare at him.

The Zuo Clan bigwig knew that he had overstepped and immediately shut his mouth. However, he inwardly sneered and was looking forward to seeing what would happen next.

In the face of Qing Zhe, who had unleashed his full power, Lin Xun did not retreat but instead walked forward. His posture was excellent, and his ethereal aura gave off a sensation of perfection.

“I don’t understand. You said earlier that you would suppress your cultivation to have a fair battle with me, but you immediately went back on your words the moment things went south. Is such hypocrisy what they teach you at the Omega Sword Sect?”

Although Lin Xun seemed to speak in a casual manner, there was a faint hint of ridicule in his words that caused the empire cultivators great misery as they struggled internally to hold back their laughter.

However, it was true. Qing Zhe had very confidently declared that he would suppress his cultivation to have a fair fight with Lin Xun earlier.

It was indeed very shameful for him to go back on his word now.

“Impudence!”

In the distance, Gu Dongting’s eyes turned cold. He had not expected Lin Xun to use this opportunity to slander the Omega Sword Sect.

Qing Zhe’s expression darkened as his gaze turned increasingly terrifying. He stared at Lin Xun and said, “I was showing courtesy to you earlier. Not only did you fail to appreciate it but you have even ridiculed me instead. It looks like you’re determined to die.”

Killing intent swirled in his heart. After having already lost face from being injured earlier, being ridiculed so openly made Qing Zhe fully enraged.

Rumble!

Mysterious sword-shaped runes shot out from Qing Zhe’s eyes and joined together in the air, releasing a sharp and peerless sword dao aura.

The empire cultivators gasped as fear rose within them, realizing that Qing Zhe was finally bringing out his strongest sword dao techniques.

It was the three swords that no one, not even the perfect Cyclic Derivation experts, had been able to stop during the imperial banquet!

“He’s not that far off from Yun Qingbai of the past...” In the distance, Zhao Tailai’s pupils abruptly shrank.

Gu Dongting, the Zuo Clan, and the Qin Clan members regained their calm. Since Qing Zhe was using his full power, there was no longer anything to worry about.

Lin Xun also appeared very composed. Although Qing Zhe’s aura made him feel some pressure, it wasn’t enough to make him feel afraid.

“After all that talk, you’re just saying that you’re right. Heh heh, I’ve finally experienced today how capable the Omega Sword Sect disciples are.” Lin Xun chuckled.

These words triggered Qing Zhe, causing his expression to become scarily calm and cold as his aura grew increasingly terrifying. Since when has an Omega Sword Sect true inner disciple ever faced such contempt?

To add insult to injury, it was ridicule from a Heaven Ascension youngster from a backwater lower plane. This made Qing Zhe’s anger hit its peak.

“Cut!”

He softly spat out a single word as a murderous aura soared into the clouds. In the next instant, a dazzling azure, sword-shaped symbol abruptly shot out from his pupils.

Swoosh!

The sword-shaped symbol emerged like a flash of azure lightning, immediately displaying its unrivaled sharpness that caused many empire cultivators to feel as if their eyes were being cut by blades.

“Daybreak!”

Several empire bigwigs involuntarily cried out, recognizing the move.

Qing Zhe had used this move before during the banquet. It struck like the rising sun, sending out rays of light that destroyed the darkness!

However, this Daybreak was clearly more frightening than the one used during the banquet. It was condensed from sword will and controlled by the primordial spirit, making it unpredictable and deadly!

Primordial spirit!

It was the spirit power that only Cyclic Derivation experts could wield.

There was no doubt that Qing Zhe’s sword dao had already been infused with the power of the primordial spirit. Such sword dao was peerless and almost impossible to find in the empire!

The attack showed all the more just how terrifying Qing Zhe was.

However, no one noticed the strange look that flashed in Lin Xun’s eyes when he saw the attack.

Swoosh!

In the next instant, a dazzling starlight blade shot out from between Lin Xun’s brows. It was snow-white, almost transparent, and resembled the dreamy northern lights streaking through the sky.

The nameless inheritance of the dao rune array!

It was the first part of the Broken Blade inheritance and was a proper Spirit Control Art. Moreover, Lin Xun was using a true ‘spirit weapon’ unlike Qing Zhe!

What was a spirit weapon?

It was a weapon controlled by 'spirit' which could cut ghosts and gods, sever heaven and earth, and throw yin and yang into disorder!

Such a precious treasure was rarely seen and was something that even old monsters like the Life Death Stage Kings might not possess.

Pff!

Under the crowd's gaze, the Broken Blade easily cut through Qing Zhe's Daybreak as if it were paper, causing it to scatter into specks of light.

The mighty Daybreak was broken in an instant before it could display any of its power, causing everyone to be dumbstruck. They were nearly unable to believe what they had just witnessed.

Urgh!

Qing Zhe had originally been filled with murderous intent and was hellbent on destroying Lin Xun with absolute power to release his hatred. However, he was suddenly flung away like a kite with a broken string, and his complexion turned deathly pale as he coughed blood.

With a loud thump, his body smashed into the ground, cracking it and sending dust into the air.

"This..."

Everyone was stupefied.

After Qing Zhe released his full power, his terrifying aura intimidated all of them, making them secretly anxious for Lin Xun.

After all, even the top Cyclic Derivation experts had been unable to stop Qing Zhe's three swords. What could Lin Xun, who only possessed Heaven Ascension cultivation, possibly do?

However, the outcome stunned everyone. Despite using his strongest sword move, he was instead defeated even quicker than earlier!

It was simply inconceivable.

"My goodness, we were blindly worrying about Young Master Lin for no reason!"

Even the cultivators who had blind faith in Lin Xun were dumbstruck. It had been too overwhelming, sudden, and almost effortless as if he had been fighting some stray dog or chicken!

"Impossible!"

The Zuo Clan and Qin Clan bigwigs nearly jumped in alarm. They had originally been filled with confidence and were anticipating the beatdown that would soon occur. Who could have imagined that it would be Qing Zhe instead who was defeated?!

Fortunately, they had learned from earlier and did not make any comments. Otherwise, they would be spurned even more by the empire cultivators.

"A spirit weapon, I can't believe it's really a spirit weapon..."

Gu Dongting's eyes flickered, clearly rather shocked. His expression rapidly changed as he stared at the white blade orbiting Lin Xun.

Only he knew that Qing Zhe's loss was only logical because that was a real spirit weapon! Such an invaluable treasure was outrageously rare even in the Omega Sword Sect!

However...it was still a frustrating result!

"Haha, hahahaha..." Zhao Tailai laughed like an old fox that had stolen a chick.

At the Mind Cleansing Peak entrance, the Lin Clan higher-ups proudly cheered.

"I'll kill you!"

Qing Zhe crawled up from the ground and released an icy roar. He was furious and refused to accept this outcome.

It was humiliating to be heavily injured before he could use his full power!

"Cut!"

There was no longer any trace of Qing Zhe's previous relaxed and confident attitude. His silver hair was in a mess, his expression was white with rage, and his figure seemed to burn like a volcano as he stepped forward and summoned an azure sword to attack.

He resembled a wildly blazing azure sun and sorely wished he could take Lin Xun's life with a single strike.

However, Lin Xun no longer had anything to fear!

If Qing Zhe had not used his sword dao technique, Lin Xun might have taken quite some effort to beat him, but now...

The outcome was already decided!