

Starlit Path 64

Chapter 64: Can Numbers Defy an Immortal?

North Luo, Lakeheart Island

To Mo Liuqi, everything on the island was a paradox, both novel and strange.

It brimmed with life, yet only ten eerie chrysanthemums dotted the landscape.

It seemed lifeless, yet the air was crisp and pure, cleaner than the deepest mountain forests.

Mo Liuqi strolled slowly along the lakeshore, the gentle breeze ruffling his robes and invigorating his spirit.

“North Luo... Lakeheart Island,” he murmured.

He reached up, removing a cheap beaded hairpin from his hair, its beads swaying lightly.

Fingering the name etched upon it, he gripped it tightly.

“Azhu, wait for me. I’ll come back to you alive,” he vowed silently.

In the distance, Jing Yue stood lazily, a pearwood sword case slung across his back, watching Mo Liuqi.

Mo Liuqi, the second greatest assassin of the Mo Clan, was a formidable force—perhaps even stronger than Jing Yue himself.

But was Jing Yue worried?

Not in the least. Behind him stood a young prodigy, a figure rivaling the greatest masters of the hundred schools.

If Mo Liuqi knew his place, all would be well. If not...

Jing Yue smirked, recalling the young master's fiery temper, tempted to whistle in anticipation of the drama.

Mo Liuqi ignored Jing Yue's gaze, turning his attention elsewhere.

About a mile from the shore, a figure cloaked in black robes sat cross-legged, a menacing butcher's knife resting on their knees.

Two miles further, a woman in a white dress sat similarly, as if communing with the heavens.

Squinting, Mo Liuqi sensed faint, snake-like streams of energy being drawn into their bodies, coalescing into their qi cores.

He recalled Lu's demand: reach the third stage of the qi core realm within a day, or his head would be delivered to Azhu.

The thought sent a shiver of tension through him.

He couldn't let Azhu see his bloodied head. To survive, he had to achieve the third stage.

"The qi core realm... what kind of realm is that?" Mo Liuqi muttered, rubbing his temples.

He glanced back at Jing Yue, who flashed a sunny grin.

Mo Liuqi's face remained impassive as he turned away.

This guy... his aura's weaker than mine, nothing special about him. Better ask the butcher.

With a tap of his foot, Mo Liuqi darted toward Nie Changqing.

Wolong Ridge, Outside the Immortal Palace

War cries shook the heavens.

Dantai Xuan's crimson cape billowed in the wind as he waved his command banner, sending waves of soldiers charging toward the immortal palace.

Mo Ju stood behind him, his emotions a tangled mess.

Dantai Xuan had the audacity to unite with other regional lords, rallying thousands of troops to storm the palace—a bold move.

Yet Mo Ju couldn't shake a gnawing sense of dread.

Fanning himself lightly, his silk scarf fluttering, Mo Ju stared intently at the palace.

He couldn't deny Dantai Xuan's logic: even a grandmaster like Xiang Shaoyun would fall against ten thousand men.

But... could mere mortals truly challenge an immortal?

If numbers alone were enough, would an immortal still be an immortal?

Boom!

The first soldier, face flushed with greed for the hundred-thousand-tael silver reward, charged within five miles of the palace. A crushing pressure forced him to his knees, cracking the ground beneath him.

More soldiers followed, swarming like ants.

Yet each was pinned down by the palace's overwhelming aura.

Some climbed over their fallen comrades, pressing forward.

To their delight, they noticed the pressure weakening as their numbers grew.

Dantai Xuan, gripping his banner, watched with burning eyes.

As soldiers brandishing long blades broke through the five-mile barrier, a grin spread across his face.

“See? Nothing can withstand ten thousand men! If that’s not enough, we’ll send twenty thousand, thirty thousand!”

“I refuse to believe we can’t pave a path into that palace with sheer lives!”

Behind him, a squad of elite first-class warriors, handpicked and trained at great expense, surged forward.

Mo Ju’s eyes narrowed. Dantai Xuan was serious—deploying even his prized warrior unit.

This twenty-man team might not match a master in single combat, but on the battlefield, they were unstoppable killing machines.

Clad in fine armor, they sprinted across the ridge, reaching the five-mile mark.

Their spirits soared.

The terrifying pressure within five miles had indeed weakened with the influx of numbers—like a finite stream of water divided among many.

“Charge! Breach the immortal gate!” the squad leader roared, pressing forward against the pressure.

Four miles, three miles, two miles...

They caught sight of the towering, mysterious gate, shrouded in radiant, multicolored light.

Unstrapping their long staffs, the twenty men bound them together into a massive battering ram.

“Charge!”

Ten guarded, ten carried the ram, rushing within a mile of the sealed gate.

Beyond the five-mile mark, Dantai Xuan tossed his banner to Mo Ju.

With a shing, he drew his sword.

“Immortals... are nothing special!” he chuckled softly.

Leaping down, flanked by his guards, he charged toward the gate.

Other regional lords, watching eagerly, began to stir with ambition.

Suddenly, their expressions shifted.

The sky darkened.

Looking up, they saw storm clouds rolling in, blotting out the once-brilliant sun with an oppressive, city-crushing force.

The air grew heavy, suffocating.

Within five miles of the palace, the frenzied joy on the soldiers' faces vanished.

Dantai Xuan's elite squad felt a chill creep from their soles to their entire bodies.

Pale blue energy swirled around the palace, rippling outward in waves.

The squad froze, their attempt to ram the gate halted.

Pfft!

All twenty coughed up blood, collapsing under the crushing force.

Their eyes bulged, nearly popping from their sockets, as they saw, atop the palace, the pale blue energy coalescing into a hand holding a glassy chess piece.

A majestic voice echoed in their ears:

“The heavens care not, treating all as pawns.”

The piece fell.

Snap.

A crisp sound rang out, the only sound in the world.

Then...

The squad let out desperate screams.

The spiritual pressure surged exponentially, crushing their bodies into oblivion.

Boom, boom, boom!

Within five miles of the palace, every soldier, every warrior...

All vanished with a whoosh, as if erased, leaving only pools of crimson blood and a suffocating stench.

An immortal's move had wiped out the living, their fates sealed in a single thought.

Dantai Xuan, one foot poised to cross the five-mile mark, froze.

Before he could step forward, nearly twenty thousand men, including his elite squad, were erased in an instant.

Blood sprayed, drenching the ground before the palace in a sea of red, a vision of hell on earth.

Half his body soaked in blood, Dantai Xuan trembled violently, his eyes reflecting the carnage.

His legs gave way, and with a thud, he collapsed to his knees.

Immortal Palace, Antechamber

Xiang Shaoyun, swinging his axe, felled the last fiend, his body steaming with vital energy.

His qi core spun rapidly, absorbing spiritual energy, but it merely circulated through him and dissipated.

“Damn it!”

He slammed his shield into the ground.

Without an immortal cultivation technique, his ability to refine spiritual energy was pitifully low, and it grew harder the more he tried.

He'd slaughtered every fiend in the antechamber, yet not a single wisp of spiritual energy had been refined.

Suddenly, he turned, frowning toward the palace's exterior, as if sensing a great calamity outside.

Li Sansi and Mo Shugui felt it too, a chill running through them.

"Those fools outside... they didn't do something stupid, did they?" Mo Shugui muttered, narrowing his eyes.

"Even I, Xiang Shaoyun, and Li Sansi can't withstand the pressure within three miles. Ordinary warriors charging in are just begging for death," Xiang Shaoyun said, turning his gaze back.

The fate of others meant nothing to him.

His eyes locked onto the stone door of the middle chamber.

If the antechamber held no cultivation techniques, the middle chamber—where the coffin likely lay—might.

Carrying his axe and shield, his towering frame approached the sealed door.

He pressed his hand against it.

Suddenly...

The door shattered, kicking up clouds of dust.

Xiang Shaoyun stepped back, staring intently.

In the middle chamber, rows of white candles flared to life, their ghostly green flames illuminating the space.

Li Sansi, Mo Shugui, and Kong Nanfei gasped, gathering together, their eyes fixed on the chamber.

As the dust settled...

Under the eerie green glow, a gaunt figure in a Taoist robe slowly turned its head from within the central coffin.

A pair of eyes, reflecting the ghostly flames, gleamed green, staring straight at them.