

Struggling to Survive with Regression Power in the Primordial Saint Sect

Chapter 61: This Child Must Not Be Allowed to Live!

[1,533 words]

Upon receiving the tragic news, Yun Zhiqiu dared not delay and hurried to a secluded chamber deep within the ancestral residence.

Inside the chamber, smoke curled in the air, and a single candle burned slowly.

At a glance, its light shone brightly, but the oil within the lamp was nearly depleted.

The next moment, a light cough came from within the mist.

“Zhiqiu, come forward.”

As the voice fell, the smoke dissipated, revealing an elderly man seated upright in a chair, dressed in splendid robes, his face aged but his back still straight.

Yun Zhiqiu immediately knelt down and bowed. “Greetings, Ancestor.”

“Rise,” said the Yun Clan Ancestor with a faint smile. “There is no need to worry. This is my second reincarnation, and I have the experience. There should be no problem.”

“It’s just unfortunate that after I reincarnate, it will take at least twenty years before I can return. During that time, no one will hold the fort for our clan.”

“Zhiqiu deserves a thousand deaths!”

Yun Zhiqiu appeared even more dejected, fully understanding the hidden meaning in the Ancestor's words.

Yun Miaozen, the clan’s most outstanding descendant in nearly a hundred years and a true Foundation Establishment seed, had died.

Such a heaven-blessed girl had fallen at the hands of a demonic fiend due to his momentary negligence.

Because of this incident, his prestige in the clan had plummeted, and the Yun Clan also lost much of its influence due to the absence of a Foundation Establishment seed.

Over the years, Yun Zhiqiu had made countless trips to the righteous-demonic battlefield in hopes of avenging Yun Miaozen's death at the hands of Lü Yang, but all his efforts had come to naught.

Upon thorough inquiry, he found out that the old turtle had actually stayed in the Saint Sect for sixty years!

This infuriated Yun Zhiqiu to the point of cursing aloud.

"You need not blame yourself too much."

The Yun Clan Ancestor remained calm. "Sixty years ago, Skeleton Mountain was part of the demon's scheme, obscuring the heavenly will. Ultimately, it was my failure to foresee it."

"If not for that, I would never have allowed you and Miaozen to go to Skeleton Mountain."

"In any case, Miaozen is dead. Our Yun Clan must now find another path. So not long ago, I agreed to a task entrusted by the Sect Master."

"What!?"

Yun Zhiqiu was startled. "The Sect Master's task—is it to use your reincarnated body to assassinate the Foundation Establishment seed of the Demon Sect?"

Such events were not uncommon on the righteous-demonic battlefield.

The Yun Clan Ancestor nodded. "If I can slay the Demon Sect's Foundation Establishment seed, I will gain great merit. It can also serve as nourishment for my future cultivation."

"But Ancestor, you've already reincarnated once before."

For Foundation Establishment cultivators, the first reincarnation was the rare fate of a chosen one, with unmatched merit and destiny, offering the best chance of returning to Foundation Establishment.

But a second reincarnation was a different matter.

Especially in the past three hundred years, the Ancestor's cultivation had seen little progress and remained at early Foundation Establishment, adding many uncertainties to reincarnation.

"In this life, one must dare to gamble."

The Yun Clan Ancestor smiled faintly. “Recently, the Sect Master divined cause and effect, discovering anomalies in the Demon Sect’s ‘Secret Realm of Law Refinement.’ There may be an opportunity.”

“The Demon Sect’s ‘Secret Realm of Law Refinement’ traps billions of souls outside the cycle of reincarnation. The Sect Master has long disapproved of it.”

“This time, he will not only help me reincarnate within it, but also personally shield me from heavenly detection, ensuring that no one will discover me and allowing me to awaken my past memories at birth without the mystery of the womb.”

“In this way, I can look for a chance to shatter the secret realm and return those souls to reincarnation.”

At this point, the Yun Clan Ancestor revealed a look of anticipation. “If this mission succeeds, it will be a great merit and can assist me in returning to Foundation Establishment.”

“To think such a thing is possible? This is indeed a great fortune for our Yun Clan!”

Upon hearing this, Yun Zhiqiu finally showed a look of excitement.

The most dangerous period for reincarnated Foundation Establishment cultivators was the early years while still trapped in the mystery of the womb.

But with the Sect Master’s help, the Ancestor could break through the mystery immediately after reincarnation!

This invisibly increased the chances of the Ancestor’s successful return to Foundation Establishment by a large margin.

Once the Ancestor succeeded, the Yun Clan would be able to continue its brilliance for another three hundred years!

Afterward, the Yun Clan Ancestor gave detailed instructions on how to forge the illusion that he was still alive after reincarnation to buy time for his return, among other matters.

Not until the oil in the lamp grew dim and was about to extinguish completely did the Yun Clan Ancestor wave his hand with lingering intent.

“Everything is ready. You may go.”

Yun Zhiqiu immediately bowed once again and respectfully said, “I wish Ancestor a successful return through reincarnation!”

Yun Zhiqiu waited for a moment, but did not hear any response from the Yun Clan Ancestor.

When he looked up again, the lamp had gone out, and the Yun Clan Ancestor had already fallen silent.

....

It was the dead of winter, and the world was covered in white.

Decades ago, great chaos erupted in the world due to the emergence of the Heavenly Book.

One scroll of it fell into the hands of the Hao Ran Academy, which revered imperial power, allowing the chaos to be suppressed.

Afterward, the foolish emperor of Great Zhou suddenly died, and a new monarch ascended the throne.

Ironically, the great chaos had caused massive death and wiped out the population pressure.

After the war ended, peace returned, ushering in an era of stability.

Thus, the new emperor was hailed as the restorer of Great Zhou.

This was evident in the capital, Tianjing City, where no one picked up lost items on the road and doors were left unlocked at night.

Even at night, the city remained full of singing and dancing.

And in the northeastern corner of Tianjing City, deep within a mansion—

In front of the birthing room, a dignified man paced anxiously back and forth until a loud cry came from within.

“Master! The child is born! The child is born!”

The next moment, the birthing room door opened and a maid hurried out.

“Congratulations, Master! Congratulations! Madam has given birth to a boy!”

Upon hearing this, the man looked up and laughed heartily. “Heaven has not forsaken my Wei Clan! At last, we have a male heir! Excellent! Everyone shall be rewarded today!”

The man's name was Wei Tieyi.

He had risen from humble origins twenty years ago and shone brilliantly in the pacification war of Great Zhou, earning immense merit and the title of "Marquis of North Pacification."

He held some renown in Tianjing City and was considered one of the martial heroes.

Now that the Wei Clan had a new male heir, it was naturally a cause for grand celebration.

Yet at the same time, inside the birthing room—

Though the newborn was still crying loudly, no one could detect the massive soul now residing within the frail body.

"Success."

The Yun Clan Ancestor had successfully reincarnated.

His true memories instantly awakened, but he did not control the body's instincts.

Instead, he sat within his sea of consciousness and began divining in silence.

"Great Zhou, Heavenly Book... Hah, so that's how it is. A Saint's theft indeed."

In an instant, the Yun Clan Ancestor discerned part of the truth.

As a Foundation Establishment cultivator of the Sword Pavilion, he was extremely familiar with all of the Saint Sect's techniques.

"Saint's Theft" was one of the most dazzling among them—of course he would recognize it.

This was the advantage of Foundation Establishment reincarnation.

Even without cultivation after reincarnation, a powerful soul allowed him to divine causality and manipulate fate easily, a dimensional blow to Qi Refining cultivators.

Yet soon, the Yun Clan Ancestor frowned.

Because when he tried to deduce who was cultivating "Saint's Theft," he encountered complete emptiness—as if causality had been severed around the person.

"How interesting... a treasure that conceals heavenly secrets?"

The next second, the Yun Clan Ancestor's brow smoothed.

He had long anticipated the importance of divination in this reincarnation and had thus come prepared.

He had brought with him a secret treasure of destiny.

“With the ‘Heaven Inquiry Instrument’ bestowed by the Sect Master, no heavenly concealment will avail them!”

At his mental command, a spherical magical treasure appeared in his hand.

Using it to divine, he instantly broke through the concealed web of cause and effect.

The next moment, the Yun Clan Ancestor was stunned.

But soon, he couldn't help but laugh wildly at the sky. “Every cause must have an effect. Every cause must have an effect. So that's it! Causality truly does not let one off easily!”

“Lü Yang...!”

Muttering the name of the one who had killed Yun Miaozen—whom he had once placed such hopes on—yet had remained free for sixty years, the Yun Clan Ancestor's killing intent surged.

Especially after using the “Heaven Inquiry Instrument” to uncover a trove of intelligence on Lü Yang.

“‘Taiyin Body-Shedding Corpse Liberation True Method,’ ‘Saint's Theft,’ third-grade True Qi, and the ‘Stealing Heaven's Secrets’ technique... if all are completed, this child has a forty percent chance of breaking through to Foundation Establishment!”

At this thought, a cold glint flashed in the Yun Clan Ancestor's eyes.

This child... must not be allowed to live!

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Chapter 62: Foundation Establishment Initiates a Killing Calamity, Winds and Clouds Arise in a Thought

[1,634 words]

"With my current strength, wanting to kill that little demon is probably not easy."

The ancestor of the Yun family had a contemplative expression on his face.

After all, he had just reincarnated into an infant's body, possessing only a powerful soul and divination abilities, without any combat strength.

".But it doesn't matter."

The ancestor of the Yun family was not in a hurry. After all, Lü Yang could not possibly discover him. He could completely develop slowly and recover to the peak of Qi Refining within ten years.

"However, that kid is slippery and currently controls this secret realm of refining methods. Once he realizes he's in danger, he can exit the secret realm at any time. Even if I recover to the peak of Qi Refining, to kill him, I must plan carefully and find a way to lure him into the trap, making it impossible for him to escape."

The ancestor of the Yun family pondered while continuing his divination.

"The three steps of martial arts are to master the five elements within the body, open the nine orifices of the heavens, and break through the mysterious gate of creation. A consummate martial artist can rival the late stage of Qi Refining. What a wonderful method."

The ancestor of the Yun family showed an expression of amazement.

He had established his foundation twice and lived for more than six hundred years, having seen countless demons, including those who had cultivated into Saint's Theft, but few were like Lü Yang.

"Without entering Foundation Establishment, one cannot know destiny. Divination and deduction abilities are far from meeting the standards of creating a method. Even if one barely creates something, it's like a mud hut, shattering upon touch. Those who achieve great success can rival the mid-stage of Qi Refining, which is already considered impressive. Reaching the late stage of Qi Refining is already deemed perfect."

"That demon actually has such talent?"

The ancestor of the Yun family was amazed, and his apprehension deepened. He had already made up his mind not to let Lü Yang break through to Foundation Establishment, to avoid adding strength to the demonic path.

But how to do it?

"Saint's Theft steal the fate of the world, depleting virtue. Those who achieve great success will inevitably encounter calamities. In this way, my reincarnation this time may be his calamity."

The ancestor of the Yun family comprehended the heavenly secrets and gained insight in his heart:

"However, I have the 'Heavenly Instrument' to protect me. He cannot divine my existence, but I can easily grasp his whereabouts. This should be my great advantage."

"In that case, I can try to create a 'calamity' for him. This 'calamity' should not be too easy to resolve, nor too difficult. It should let him see hope of resolution, so he will personally take action. Use this 'calamity' to lure him into the trap and fall into my snare."

As the saying goes, even a lion uses all its strength to hunt a rabbit.

The ancestor of the Yun family had already reincarnated once, so he did not hold the airs of Foundation Establishment and would not underestimate Lü Yang. His planning was extremely meticulous.

"Then, what should the 'calamity' be?"

The ancestor of the Yun family pondered for a moment, then smiled slightly, having made a plan: "For this child, the most worrisome thing is the error in the cultivation of Saint's Theft."

"In that case, I will help him!"

"He created the three steps of martial arts, so I will create the fourth step for him. However, this step will no longer be limited to the framework of the system he created."

Thinking of this, the ancestor of the Yun family immediately began to manipulate cause and effect.

In the blink of an eye, another ten years passed.

In ten years, heroes rose across the world, and the development of martial arts reached an extreme.

The three steps of martial arts became widely known and were learned by people all over the world.

And in this era of martial valor, one night in the capital city, thunder suddenly roared, dragons and snakes rose from the land, heavy rain poured down, and then the entire city's people saw a pillar of vast energy shooting straight into the sky, breaking through the rain clouds, reversing the celestial phenomena. In less than an hour, the clouds cleared, and the sun shone brightly!

The next day, a piece of news spread across the world.

The master of the Haoran Academy, who held a volume of the heavenly book, 'Saintly Scholar' Wang Boyuan, comprehended the Dao overnight, saw through the mysteries, and actually walked out the fourth step of martial arts!

The first step of martial arts is to master the five elements within the body.

Heart, lungs, spleen, liver, kidneys—the five organs are complete, and one is a martial artist.

The second step of martial arts is to open the nine orifices of the heavens.

Eyes, ears, nose, tongue, tendons, bones, flesh, blood, and mind—when all nine orifices are open, one can be called a martial master.

The third step of martial arts is to break through the mysterious gate of creation.

Three feet above the head is the divine. Using the five organs to transform the body's essence, and the nine orifices to draw the power of heaven and earth, combining internal and external, breaking through the mysterious gate above the head, one can see the 'divine'.

People all thought that martial arts ended here, and one would be a grandmaster with no path forward.

However, with the breakthrough of 'Saintly Scholar' Wang Boyuan, martial artists across the world were inspired.

Wang Boyuan, with a heart of righteousness, did not keep his insights to himself.

"The fourth step of martial arts is called 'Investigating the Changes Between Heaven and Man!'"

"To achieve this method, one must break free from the shackles of martial arts, no longer confined to martial arts itself, but walk out their own path, thereby achieving the transformation between heaven and man!"

Saintly Scholar comprehended this point, no longer confined to martial arts, but created the "Fortune Observation Technique", which can know destiny, observe fortune, and even change the heavenly mechanism, all because of his dedication to the country, wanting to use the fortune observation technique to extend the national fortune of the Great Zhou, establish an unbreakable kingdom, and open an era of peace for all generations.

With the breakthrough of Saintly Scholar, cause and effect changed, and the world underwent drastic changes.

The second to break through was the current practitioner of the Celestial Master Mansion on Mount Longhu, 'Barefoot Daoist' Chang Qingjing, who had an epiphany and broke through during a medical consultation.

The third was 'God Monk of Deliverance' Xuan Ku of the Hanging Temple, who had an epiphany and broke through during a morning lesson.

The fourth... fifth... sixth...

In just ten years, seven martial arts celestial beings emerged in the world, proving the feasibility of this path and completely breaking the framework of martial arts initially set by Lü Yang!

"Mm?"

In the extreme west of the secret realm of refining methods, amidst dense forests, within the Blood-Washing Tianhe Sword Formation Diagram surrounded by countless talismans, Lü Yang suddenly opened his eyes.

All he saw was dark clouds covering the sky, with no sight of the blue sky and bright sun.

The next second, a halo of light shone behind Lü Yang's head, the Taiwei Talisman operated, and the many changes over the past ten years immediately entered his mind, all grasped by him.

"The fourth step of martial arts, Investigating the Changes Between Heaven and Man—so fast!"

At this moment, Lü Yang was both delighted and suspicious. He was pleased that martial arts had changed so much in such a short time, but also doubtful.

How could it be so fast?

However, the divined causes and effects were seamless, with no flaws to be found.

"The martial arts I created, reaching the third step, can rival the late stage of Qi Refining. Now, people in the secret realm have walked out the fourth step. Roughly estimated, these so-called martial arts celestial beings probably have considerable strength, perhaps even rivaling the peak of Qi Refining. But in this way, it's no longer martial arts!"

Thinking of this, Lü Yang's expression gradually became serious.

The divined events had no problems.

The changes in cause and effect also had no issues.

Everything was reasonable, with only one problem: martial arts were out of control, and the Saint's Theft were about to fail. Only if he personally took action could it be corrected.

"This is not right!"

Lü Yang's heart instantly sounded an alarm. He naturally could not see the ancestor of the Yun family's layout and planning, nor could he sense the ancestor's manipulation of cause and effect.

He only knew one thing:

"No one should think of making me leave this place!"

Here, he had countless talismans to use, and formations to protect him. Even if ten peak Qi Refining experts came, he would not fear, firmly sitting in the fisherman's seat.

But once he left this place, it would be another matter.

Moreover, he was now the one controlling the game, detached from worldly affairs. If he chose to enter the world and become widely known, it would be equivalent to stepping into the chessboard as a piece.

One careless move could lead to total defeat.

Thinking of this, Lü Yang immediately calmed down. Although the emergence of martial arts celestial beings could disrupt his Saint's Theft, it would also take some time.

"Let me first send a clone to explore the path."

With a thought, Lü Yang summoned the Myriad Spirits Banner into his hand. Then, a strand of white qi appeared at his fingertip, surprisingly a pure 'Innate One Qi'.

This was something he had refined from himself in his second life.

Once, this 'Innate True Qi' had extraordinary effects, even helping him break through to the mid-stage of Qi Refining in his third life. Unfortunately, in the subsequent lives, it gradually became useless.

"Now is the perfect time to make use of this waste."

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[1,279 words]

Another month passed swiftly.

Inside the cave dwelling, Lü Yang sat cross-legged on a meditation cushion, a mass of white qi surging and tumbling in his palm.

After a long while, Lü Yang gently tossed it outward.

Boom!

With a loud explosion, the white qi rapidly expanded, reconstituting into a human form identical in appearance to Lü Yang, though its aura was entirely different.

Lü Yang's true body's aura was ethereal like an immortal, possessing the Dao essence found only in superior true qi of genuine cultivators.

In contrast, the white qi incarnation of Lü Yang exuded overwhelming blood energy, each movement seemingly bearing the weight of a thousand catties, and his upright, handsome face carried an innate majesty.

"Not bad, not bad!"

Gazing at the 'Innate True Qi Incarnation' he had painstakingly refined over a month, Lü Yang nodded in satisfaction.

"Unexpectedly, martial arts have such applications."

Typically, the Innate True Qi Incarnation couldn't break through.

Its essence was a mass of white qi, impermanent and untrainable, akin to Lü Yang's previous cultivation of the Heavenly Demon Blood-Transforming Divine Light, where his body ultimately transformed into a blood shadow.

However, martial arts changed everything.

By eschewing the path of immortal cultivation, martial arts focused solely on nurturing and refining blood energy, which perfectly suited the Innate True Qi Incarnation, allowing it to overcome the barrier of being untrainable.

"Unfortunately, I still don't understand how to proceed to the fourth step."

At present, the 'Innate True Qi Incarnation' possessed only the strength of the third step in martial arts.

Though Lü Yang had deduced the fourth step, he had yet to find the correct path.

Therefore, this time, Lü Yang planned to visit Tianjing City.

He intended to meet 'Saintly Scholar' Wang Boyuan, who had pioneered the fourth step in martial arts, hoping to glean some inspiration from him.

"Let you venture out on my behalf."

With a thought, Lü Yang's Innate True Qi Incarnation immediately disintegrated on the spot, transforming into a stream of white qi that vanished into the sky, heading towards Tianjing City.

"It finally moved!"

Almost simultaneously, within the Wei family residence in Tianjing City, the ten-year-old 'Wei Yun' suddenly looked up at the sky, a flash of bright light passing through his black eyes.

However, the next moment, he frowned.

"Something's off, it's a clone."

Observing the divination results, the Yun family patriarch gritted his teeth in anger.

After waiting ten years and expending significant effort to manipulate karma, he had only managed to lure out a clone.

Was that little demon truly so unhurried?

The Demon Sect always emphasized bold advancement, yet suddenly, such a cautious old turtle had emerged.

For the first time, the Yun family patriarch felt troubled.

However, he quickly adjusted his plan.

Since you sent out a clone, I'll find a way to destroy it and see if your true body can remain still!

Of course, he wouldn't act personally, as that would only alert the enemy.

The best approach was to have martial artists within the secret realm eliminate Lü Yang's clone, allowing them to discover the truth of the secret realm and rise in rebellion.

Naturally, the rebellion was doomed to fail.

The Yun family patriarch didn't care about their success; the crucial part was the process of rebellion.

Once these martial artists left the secret realm, even if they died, their souls would enter the cycle of reincarnation, making it impossible for the Dao Lord to retrieve them.

Although they would lose their lives, they would gain freedom.

Upon reincarnation, these billions of souls would fill the vast karmic web of heaven and earth, granting him immense merit.

"Perfect timing, I can have that person take action."

With this thought, the Yun family patriarch immediately performed a hand seal to manipulate karma.

"What secrets does this Heavenly Book conceal?"

In the imperial palace of Tianjing City, Ji Xiongying, one of the seven martial arts Celestials of the current era, furrowed his brows as he examined a golden book before him.

The Heavenly Book comprised four volumes, divided equally among Daoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism.

According to legend, the final volume was lost among the populace and vanished without a trace.

However, unbeknownst to others, the Great Zhou royal family had secretly acquired it.

It was through this Heavenly Book that Ji Xiongying had completed the three steps of martial arts by the age of thirty.

After 'Saintly Scholar' Wang Boyuan revealed the method for the fourth step, Ji Xiongying created 'World Authority,' harnessing the nation's power to bolster himself, ultimately breaking through to become a Celestial Grandmaster.

Yet, the more he delved into the Heavenly Book, the more anxious he became.

"Where did the Heavenly Book originate?"

"Everything has a source. If the Heavenly Book is so profound, perhaps only the legendary immortals could have created it."

This thought sparked boundless ambition in Ji Xiongying's heart.

Even after achieving the status of a martial arts Celestial, he found his lifespan remained unchanged, akin to that of an ordinary person.

How could he accept this?

"I desire immortality! I want to live forever!"

"I wish to become an immortal...!"

A trace of blood-red light flickered in Ji Xiongying's eyes.

His already strong desire was now deliberately stirred.

At this critical juncture—

"Who's there!"

Suddenly, Ji Xiongying looked up.

His 'World Authority' allowed him to sense the fluctuations in the Great Zhou's national fortune.

Tianjing City, being the capital, was virtually his domain.

At this moment, he detected a distinct 'foreign entity' intruding into his territory.

With a thought, Ji Xiongying instantly infused himself with the nation's power.

In that moment, it was as if billions of Great Zhou citizens were supporting his body, enabling him to break the martial artist's limitation of flight and soar into the depths of the clouds.

Then, he saw a figure.

The newcomer wore flowing robes, traversing the sky with clouds beneath his feet, appearing as a celestial being.

Only his gaze towards Ji Xiongying held a hint of surprise.

"You can actually fly?"

Observing the martial artist before him, Lü Yang calculated with his fingers and immediately discerned Ji Xiongying's identity.

"So that's it. A Celestial has indeed broken through the martial arts barrier."

Ji Xiongying also scrutinized Lü Yang, frowning.

"Your qi isn't condensed, your blood isn't refined, only your spirit is somewhat decent. Seems like you're a rogue cultivator taking an unconventional path. Yet, you can fly. Did you obtain some secret technique? Never mind, once I capture you, I'll naturally uncover the truth!"

With that, Ji Xiongying directly attacked!

Previously, though domineering, he wouldn't act without cause.

However, now, his unfulfilled desires made him restless.

Moreover, he believed Lü Yang wasn't a martial arts Celestial.

Without that status, Lü Yang wasn't qualified to converse with him as an equal.

Thus, capturing him would also serve as an outlet for his frustration.

"Come here!"

In the next moment, Ji Xiongying moved, instantly appearing before Lü Yang, his five fingers reaching for Lü Yang's neck, the airflow at his fingertips emitting a piercing screech.

Lü Yang and Ji Xiongying were now in close proximity.

He could even faintly hear the sound of rushing rivers from Ji Xiongying's body—that was his blood surging.

The beating of his heart resembled a celestial drum, indicating an incredibly powerful physique.

"Definitely comparable to the peak of Qi Refining."

Lü Yang was astonished.

In terms of physical strength alone, Ji Xiongying even surpassed Lü Yang, who had partially mastered the Saint Thief technique.

Truly inhuman.

"But it seems that's all he has."

Splat!

In the next second, blood splattered.

Ji Xiongying staggered backward, shock in his eyes as he stared at Lü Yang.

Between them, a 'white line' was gradually fading.

It was this 'white line' that had just sliced open his palm.

"What kind of martial art is this?"

"Sword Qi Talisman."

Under Ji Xiongying's stunned gaze, Lü Yang smiled calmly, then took out a yellow paper filled with scribbles and set it ablaze.

Boom!

In an instant, Ji Xiongying felt a sharp pain between his eyebrows.

The sword qi that had just torn through his palm now erupted from the burning talisman!

Under the brilliant sword qi, a bewildered face was illuminated.

What... what is this!?

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Chapter 64: Auspicious Day of Shock, Seven Martial Slaughters of Immortals!

[1,368 words]

"This... this..."

Having lived for several decades and earned the illustrious title of 'Martial King of Suppression,' this was the first time Ji Xiongying felt an emotion bordering on absurdity.

He saw Lü Yang raise his hand, and a piece of yellow paper with ghostly scribbles would appear beside him, then ignite, followed by various phenomena completely unrelated to martial arts—sword qi slicing through the air, thunderbolts crashing down, golden light suddenly flashing—each piece of yellow paper brought him deadly danger!

Swish, swish—!

Sword qi slashed Ji Xiongying's cheeks, lightning struck his body, making him feel numb all over, while his full-force punch was intercepted by a sudden golden light.

"Impossible!"

Ji Xiongying retreated again, but dared not engage with Lü Yang any further. He could only grit his teeth, looking at Lü Yang with fear, yet also a hidden desire.

In the next moment, a title surfaced in his mind.

Immortal!?

At this moment, Lü Yang's methods were just like those of immortals in storybooks, instantly igniting his desire for eternal life.

Thinking of this, Ji Xiongying widened the distance between them again, speaking excitedly, "Wait, there's actually no deep enmity between us, right? How about this: as long as you join our royal family's Offering Hall and share that yellow paper technique with me, I'll grant you Myriad taels of gold and lands—you can choose whatever you like!"

"Whatever I like?"

Lü Yang shook his head and chuckled. Do I need to choose?

The entire Great Zhou is a secret realm of the Primordial Saint Sect; it originally belongs to me! And you dare to promise me what's already mine?

"Alright then, I'm quite interested in the martial arts methods of Heaven and Man..."

"This is my 'Dominion of the World!'"

Without another word, Ji Xiongying directly took out a book and threw it to Lü Yang: "It contains only half a volume. If you give me the technique, the remaining half will also be yours!"

Lü Yang: "..."

Ji Xiongying's ambition was almost written on his face, and Lü Yang naturally saw through it. However, he didn't mind, and certainly wouldn't pass on cultivation methods to him.

After all, it was of no benefit to his cultivation of the Saintly Thief, and it also violated sect rules.

"What a pity."

Lü Yang shook his head, put away the 'Dominion of the World,' glanced indifferently at Ji Xiongying, and then his figure suddenly dissipated, intending to turn and leave directly.

"Trying to leave!?"

Seeing Lü Yang's flesh and blood body disintegrate into a wisp of ethereal white gas, Ji Xiongying roared in anger, while the desire on his face deepened.

Immortal technique! It must be an immortal technique!

I must obtain it!

"Dominion over the world!"

Ji Xiongying exhaled and spoke, raising his hand and clenching his five fingers. A surge of blood and qi poured into it, instantly turning his entire palm blood-red.

In an instant, Lü Yang seemed to see a vast landscape slowly unfolding before him—scholars rising at the crow of a rooster, farmers resting at sunset, warriors roaming the rivers and lakes, merchants trading in the bustling world—all vividly depicting the national destiny of Great Zhou, as well as the world's grand momentum.

Dominion over the world, and also a fist dominating the world!

Ji Xiongying's fist momentum had no physical form, purely a mental oppression, the spiritual accumulation of this martial arts master, already transcending martial arts.

However—

"You want to compare willpower with me? I practice cultivation and possess spiritual consciousness!"

Ji Xiongying's fist momentum might be invincible against crude martial artists who only knew fists and kicks, but using it against him was futile.

Boom!

With a thought, Lü Yang shattered Ji Xiongying's fist momentum instantly.

The so-called national destiny, the vast landscape, were all swept away by his spiritual consciousness.

"You can actually withstand my punch?" Ji Xiongying gritted his teeth: "Again!"

However, what responded to him was a cold laugh.

"Stubborn and ignorant."

As the words fell, dozens of talismans suddenly appeared out of thin air.

With the Myriad Spirits Banner in hand, he had brought plenty of talismans on this trip and didn't care about consumption at all.

The talismans shattered in a single breath, transforming into a torrent of sword qi that fell upon Ji Xiongying, causing him to let out a miserable scream on the spot.

In an instant, blood dyed the sky, though his physique, comparable to the peak of Qi Refining, was indeed ferocious—the sword qi talismans could slice his flesh, but could not sever his bones.

When the sword qi dissipated, Ji Xiongying had already turned into a blood-soaked figure.

His entire body had no intact flesh, as if he had just been subjected to dismemberment by a thousand cuts.

He dared not remain at the scene and vanished in the blink of an eye.

"You fled quite decisively."

Lü Yang frowned slightly.

This incarnation of his cultivated purely in martial arts and relied entirely on talismans to defeat enemies.

Although he could fly, his speed was actually still slower than Ji Xiongying's.

Lü Yang looked slightly grim.

The vitality of a Martial Arts Master exceeded his expectations.

Though Ji Xiongying had appeared pitiful and miserable, as long as he escaped with his life and rested for a few days, he could recover more than half.

A physique comparable to peak Qi Refining, yet lacking matching divine bodily abilities.

"He really is a superb material for corpse refinement."

Thinking of this, Lü Yang felt a bit remorseful.

Truly, one is influenced by those they are close to.

Even someone as kind-hearted as him had grown ruthless after spending time in the Saint Sect.

"...I'm not that kind of person." Lü Yang shook his head.

Besides, refining corpses was inefficient.

Using the Myriad Spirits Banner to refine them instantly was undoubtedly much more effective.

That being said, Lü Yang had no intention of devoting himself to this path.

After all, once this lifetime ended, he would definitely choose cultivation, and the Myriad Spirits Banner couldn't be taken with him.

"I'll think about it next life!"

With that thought, Lü Yang directly dispersed his body, then silently reformed in an alley of the capital city, merging seamlessly into the crowd.

"As expected, he lost. That's only natural."

Tianjing City, Wei Family residence.

The Yun Family Patriarch withdrew his gaze calmly.

Ji Xiongying's defeat was within his expectations.

If anything, Ji Xiongying winning would have been the surprise.

After all, this time, in stirring the threads of karma, the purpose of Ji Xiongying's fight with Lü Yang wasn't to win, but to make Ji Xiongying discover Lü Yang's existence.

Then to gradually spread the news, ultimately influencing other Martial Masters, and eventually uniting all of them to deal with Lü Yang!

As long as they destroyed his incarnation, there would be no fear of his true body not appearing!

For this, he had already arranged an "opportunity"—or rather, a bait.

All that remained was for the fish to bite the hook.

Now was the perfect chance.

With this in mind, he immediately began stirring karma again.

Almost simultaneously—

Having just escaped with his life, Ji Xiongying dared not return to the royal palace, fleeing instead to the outskirts of the capital, hiding within a mountain forest.

He originally just wanted to avoid Lü Yang.

Yet while hiding, he "accidentally" discovered a sealed stone chamber within a hidden cave.

Inside, a skeleton sat upright.

"This is..."

Ji Xiongying stepped before the skeleton and saw it holding a dust-covered book in its hands.

He immediately reached out, took it, and casually flipped it open.

"...Hm!?"

At a glance, Ji Xiongying's eyes widened.

His face was soon filled with disbelief and ecstasy.

"Truly heaven helps me!"

The author of the book was unnamed, and its contents were merely a short record:

"There are immortals in this world, who do not age or die. Kill them and eat their flesh to gain eternal life... But immortal techniques are supreme, hard to overcome. I have studied bitterly for decades, and before dying, finally comprehended a method to slay immortals. On the Auspicious Day of Shock, seven great masters must wield seven divine weapons and form a formation together—only then is there hope of victory."

Auspicious Day of Shock, Seven Martial Slaughters of Immortals!

Besides the background and details, the book also recorded the forging methods for the "Seven Divine Weapons."

Ji Xiongying read in rapture, his ambition reignited.

"Hahahaha! I truly possess great fortune and great destiny!"

"If I kill that immortal, I shall surely live forever!"

As he laughed heartily, Ji Xiongying's consciousness grew increasingly obsessed.

Karma clouded his true heart.

All thoughts other than "slay the immortal and gain eternal life" were erased.

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[- Chapter 65: Investigating the Changes Between Heaven and Man, a Startling Realization!](#)

Chapter 65: Investigating the Changes Between Heaven and Man, a Startling Realization!

[1,547 words]

At the same time as Ji Xiongying's "fortunate encounter," Lü Yang had already arrived at the most prosperous area of Tianjing City, where the number of martial artists was the highest.

Haoran Academy.

This institution, which held a volume of the Heavenly Book and pioneered the fourth step of martial arts, had now vaguely surpassed Daoism and Buddhism, becoming the holy land of martial arts.

However, strangely, ever since the fourth step of martial arts was achieved and the method widely disseminated, the dean of Haoran Academy, "Saintly Scholar" Wang Boyuan, had gradually disappeared from public view, becoming increasingly reclusive.

Nowadays, even the high-level members of the academy found it difficult to see him.

"What a feng shui treasure land."

To avoid attracting attention, Lü Yang had dispersed his form, transforming into a mass of invisible qi, and was observing Haoran Academy with great interest.

In his view, this academy was truly a place where outstanding people and spiritual energy converged.

In the entire Tianjing City, only this place was overflowing with spiritual energy. Even an ordinary person, if they studied here for several years, could develop some spiritual insight and cleverness.

What was even more remarkable was that this was not a natural creation but a man-made design.

The overall layout of the academy, the position of each classroom, the placement of flowers, birds, fish, insects, and various landscapes, had sublimated the mundane "feng shui methods," faintly forming the embryonic shape of a spirit-gathering formation!

Based on this alone, Lü Yang knew that this "Saintly Scholar" was definitely someone extraordinary.

Thinking of this, Lü Yang immediately took a step forward, directly arriving at a study deep within the academy, intending to meet this renowned native.

Then he was surprised by the scene inside the study.

Because the person inside was not the elegant scholar with a feather fan he had imagined, but a disheveled man constantly drinking wine.

Was this the "Saintly Scholar"?

At this moment, the disheveled man suddenly raised his head, his drunken eyes hazily looking toward Lü Yang's position: "I didn't expect an honored guest to visit."

With a thought, Lü Yang reassembled his form, transforming from invisible qi into a tangible body, cupping his hands in salute to the disheveled man: "Lü Yang greets Daoist Wang."

"Boyuan greets the honored guest."

The disheveled man also returned the salute, then patted his sleeves and stood up, exclaiming: "The honored guest's abilities are extraordinary. The previous battle with Martial King of Suppression amazed me, making me think several times that an immortal had descended. I wonder what the honored guest seeks from me?"

"I wish to discuss the Dao of Heaven and Man with you."

Lü Yang got straight to the point, saying: "The fourth step of martial arts, investigating the changes between Heaven and Man, I have some insights but have not grasped the essentials. I hope you can teach me."

Upon hearing this, Wang Boyuan blinked: "With the honored guest's abilities, you're also interested in martial arts?"

"Other mountains' stones can polish jade."

Lü Yang said calmly: "Are you willing to teach me?"

Upon hearing this, Wang Boyuan immediately laughed: "A guest is a guest, especially an honored one. If the honored guest wants to learn, I will naturally share everything I know without reservation!"

"However, the Dao of Heaven and Man is diverse, created by martial artists based on their understanding of Heaven and Earth and themselves. Therefore, I cannot describe it to the honored guest in detail, only briefly explain my personal method. If the honored guest has doubts, you can consult other Heaven and Man practitioners."

With that, the two sat facing each other.

"The fourth step of martial arts, I call it 'investigating the changes between Heaven and Man,' meaning to use one's own power to leverage Heaven and Earth, to glimpse the heavenly mechanisms with human strength!"

"My 'Fate Observation Technique' is like this, involving the changes of the Three Talents."

"The Three Talents are Heaven, Earth, and Man. First observe Man, to know appearances; then observe Earth, to know feng shui; finally observe Heaven, to know destiny! These three are interlinked!"

"Observe Earth through Man, observe Heaven through Earth, and observe fate through Heaven. At this stage, I can know the changes in the world without leaving home, observe the changes in national destiny, where disasters occur, where civil unrest arises, where officials are inactive, and where those who receive salaries compete with the people for profit. I can see most of these."

"Although there are still errors, I can achieve a seventy to eighty percent accuracy."

What surprised Lü Yang was that Wang Boyuan truly did not hold back, fully disclosing the "Fate Observation Technique," whose variations even involved causality!

Of course, this was not truly calculating causality.

Strictly speaking, what Wang Boyuan did was merely "guessing," so he could not calculate details, only understand the general idea and know some specific events.

Even so, it was still astonishing!

How did he do it?

Facing Lü Yang's doubts, Wang Boyuan shook his head: "To be honest, I just had a moment of inspiration one day, without any trick."

"I see."

Lü Yang nodded upon hearing this. Then the two exchanged ideas for several more hours before he got up to leave, intending to visit other Heaven and Man practitioners.

Meanwhile, in the Wei family residence.

The Yun family patriarch opened his Dharma eyes, silently witnessing the entire exchange between Lü Yang and Wang Boyuan, then withdrew his gaze without any fluctuation.

"That demon is truly ignorant."

He had no interest in Wang Boyuan's insights because no one knew better than him that Wang Boyuan's insights were due to his manipulation of causality!

After all, it was not something that could truly comprehend causality, just a mortal's "guessing method." The Yun family patriarch did not care at all, sneering inwardly:

"Discussing the Dao with various Heaven and Man practitioners, trying to take a fifth step beyond my foundation, to bring martial arts back on track?"

Simply delusional!

After all, he manipulated causality, allowing Wang Boyuan to create the fourth step of martial arts, raising the limit of martial arts to the peak of Qi Refining.

This was already the limit.

Because beyond that was Foundation Establishment!

And how could Lü Yang create the method of Foundation Establishment? So in the Yun family patriarch's view, Lü Yang's actions were meaningless and futile.

According to the Yun family patriarch's calculations, the current Heaven and Man methods had already disrupted Lü Yang's Saint Thief cultivation. To break the situation, the only way was to first kill all the Heaven and Man practitioners, then prohibit the Heaven and Man methods. What he needed to do was to kill Lü Yang's avatars, forcing his true body to act personally.

In this way, Lü Yang would be trapped.

From this perspective, Wang Boyuan was just a pawn of the Yun family patriarch.

As for pawns, the Yun family patriarch naturally had no interest. As for what amazed Lü Yang, it was not worth mentioning in the Yun family patriarch's eyes.

Including Lü Yang, although the Yun family patriarch treated him seriously, he always harbored disdain in his heart.

Because in the end, they were just a group of mortals.

"With the 'Heaven-Man Instrument' bestowed by the Sect Master, even Foundation Establishment True Persons cannot detect my existence. How much trouble can mere mortals cause?"

Leaving Haoran Academy, Lü Yang once again transformed into invisible qi, walking through the streets of Tianjing City, carefully reflecting on the recent exchange with Wang Boyuan.

"Three Talents Fate Observation Technique"

Thousands of miles away, Lü Yang's true body opened his eyes, a halo radiating behind his head.

The Taiwei Talisman operated, silently calculating the many changes in Tianjing City.

The feedback causality showed: everything was normal.

"The next thirty years in Tianjing City will be very stable, with no changes in causality. This is normal, after all, there are two martial arts Heaven and Man practitioners stationed here."

Then, Lü Yang suddenly changed his approach, no longer calculating the causality of the entire Tianjing City from a "macro" perspective, but learning from Wang Boyuan's "Fate Observation Technique," starting from the citizens of Tianjing City, calculating individual causality, and then using the changes of the Three Talents to deduce the causality of Heaven and Earth.

The reason for this was merely to verify the "Fate Observation Technique."

However, the next second, Lü Yang was stunned.

"East Street breakfast stall, Wang Erniu's family of three, using the Taiwei Talisman to calculate, supplemented by the Fate Observation Technique, should have many descendants, yet there is a great calamity of sudden death."

"Six Doors patrol constable, Chen Qing... has a great calamity of sudden death."

"Li Chengrong, great calamity of sudden death."

"Liu Xinshang, great calamity of sudden death."

Calamity! Calamity! Calamity!

Everyone, almost everyone Lü Yang saw in Tianjing City had a great calamity of sudden death in their fate, but when expanded to the whole city, there was no change!

How was this possible?

If the entire city's citizens truly had a great calamity of sudden death, the whole Tianjing City would have been shrouded in dark clouds. With his personality, he would never have approached...

"...No, something's wrong!"

In an instant, Lü Yang's pupils contracted sharply!

From the small, one can see the large; if one can calculate Heaven through Man, one person might make a mistake, but if ten people, a thousand people, ten thousand people are all like this, then it's Heaven that's wrong!

"The heavenly mechanisms and causality have been obscured... damn it, is there a Foundation Establishment True Person in the secret realm trying to harm me!?"

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[1,432 words]

At the Haoran Academy, just after Lü Yang had left, Ji Xiongying arrived quietly.

"Bookworm, have you met that immortal?"

As soon as he entered the door, Ji Xiongying was slightly startled in his heart—he had not expected Wang Boyuan, who had been high-spirited just a few months ago, to now look so disheveled.

"What happened to you?"

"Nothing." Wang Boyuan took another swig of wine and said with a smile, "If you're talking about the one who fought you, then yes, I've seen him."

"He seemed quite interested in my 'Fate Observation Technique,' what an honor."

"Cut the nonsense!" Ji Xiongying sneered coldly and threw the ancient text he had obtained through a 'fortunate encounter' in front of Wang Boyuan. "He can help us fulfill our grand ambition!"

"There are immortals in this world—ageless and undying. Kill them and eat their flesh, and one can attain immortality!"

Ji Xiongying shouted, "Weren't you determined to bring everlasting peace to the world? As long as we kill that immortal and share his flesh, we can live eternally and create an eternal world of peace!"

"An eternal world of peace..."

Wang Boyuan murmured softly, but did not show the excitement Ji Xiongying had imagined. He simply shook his head, then said calmly, "Then let's give it a try."

"Good! It's a deal!"

Ji Xiongying noticed something off about Wang Boyuan's attitude, as if he was hiding something, but he couldn't be bothered to dwell on it—so long as Wang Boyuan was willing to act.

Meanwhile, in the capital city of Tianjing.

At this moment, Lü Yang had already regained his composure, because he had suddenly realized something: if it truly was a Foundation Establishment True Person, there would be no need for such trouble.

Because this was different from the incident at Skeleton Mountain.

At Skeleton Mountain, the hidden True Person Yinshin hadn't intended to kill him, only using him as bait, but this time was different.

This time, it was clear someone truly wanted him dead!

The reason they hadn't acted yet was probably because his true body was still hidden within layers of formation arrays, and they had only sent an external incarnation to scout.

This indicated that the mastermind's cultivation was definitely not at the Foundation Establishment Realm, because if they were, they wouldn't need to be cautious—just one palm strike would be enough to kill him.

From this angle, though the opponent could manipulate karma, their strength was probably only at the peak of Qi Refining.

'A bit strange...'

Able to manipulate karma, but not at Foundation Establishment?

It's important to note that calculating karma and manipulating karma may only differ by one word, but they are worlds apart—it's the dividing line between Qi Refining and Foundation Establishment.

Calculating karma merely allows some foreknowledge.

But manipulating karma can truly cause events to unfold according to one's will—normally, only Foundation Establishment True Persons can do this.

Therefore, 'able to manipulate karma but not at Foundation Establishment' should be impossible.

Unless...

"Foundation Establishment... reincarnated?"

Lü Yang frowned. After eliminating all other impossible speculations, the only answer surfaced: “There’s a reincarnated Foundation Establishment expert in the secret realm!?”

That’s it—the tribulation of the Saint Thief!

Thinking of this, Lü Yang felt it was ridiculous.

What was this? The tribulation of his perfected Saint Thief technique turned out to be a reincarnated Foundation Establishment cultivator causing trouble?

No way!

By the heavens, he had always been kind and amiable—how could he have provoked a Foundation Establishment cultivator?

‘...Ah.’

The next second, Lü Yang’s eyes suddenly widened.

‘Yun Miaozen, Jade Pivot Sword Pavilion?’

In this life, there were only two Foundation Establishment cultivators who might bear a grudge against him.

One was the master of Mending Heaven Peak, but he was in the prime of life and nowhere near needing reincarnation.

The other was the Jade Pivot Sword Pavilion.

Given the scale of the Jade Pivot Sword Pavilion, it would be perfectly normal for a reincarnated Foundation Establishment to exist there—and since there was already enmity, could this be what drew in the tribulation of the Saint Thief?

Surely it couldn’t be that ridiculous?

At this thought, Lü Yang broke into a cold sweat, nearly so startled he was about to exit the secret realm on the spot and report to True Person Yinshin that there was a villain inside...

But in the end, he resisted the urge to leave the secret realm—because he suddenly remembered the final step of the 『Taiyin Body-Shedding Corpse Liberation True Method』 he had previously deduced and prepared to cultivate required a reincarnated Foundation Establishment soul for completion.

On the other hand, he hadn’t perfected the Saint Thief technique yet either.

If he reported now and True Person Yinshin cleared the field, he'd end up with nothing—never mind the Foundation Establishment soul, the Saint Thief would surely be a failure.

'Though it is a tribulation, it's also an opportunity!'

As the saying goes, misfortune and fortune often go hand in hand!

Every cause has its effect, and every debt has its payback—if he could survive this tribulation on his own strength, then the tribulation would transform into a monumental opportunity!

Besides, he did have a chance at victory.

Before, the enemy was in the dark and he was in the light, knowing nothing about them—of course, that was a sure-death scenario... But now that he knew the truth, it was a different story!

He could use the situation to his advantage!

'Since that reincarnated Foundation Establishment expert is scheming against me in secret, this so-called Martial Path of Heaven and Man must've also been his creation. I knew there was something off...'

'...He wants to lure me out!'

'And since I've only sent out an incarnation, he's clearly unsatisfied—so that's why Ji Xiongying suddenly showed up to fight me.'

'If nothing goes wrong, he must have a backup plan—he likely wants to destroy this incarnation to lure me out of seclusion, out of the formation's protection. But Ji Xiongying is no match for my incarnation, so to kill me... they'll have to join forces with other Heaven and Man!'

It all made sense now! Completely clear!

Lü Yang's face remained calm, but in his heart he had already pieced together most of the Yun Clan ancestor's plot, and his understanding of karma had also deepened.

'This is Foundation Establishment.'

Foundation Establishment cultivators rarely fight to the death, so they usually strike through karma—whoever can read the opponent's karma first gains overwhelming advantage!

'He wants to kill me? Then I'll let him try!'

After pondering for a long time, Lü Yang quickly came up with a countermeasure—because in fact, he was also planning to battle the Martial Path Heaven and Man, to steer Martial Path back onto the right track.

But not by creating a fifth step.

Here, the Yun Clan ancestor was quite accurate—given Lü Yang’s current cultivation and insight, even with the guidance of the Bright Dao Jade Slip, it was impossible for him to forge a new realm.

However, to break the deadlock, he didn’t actually need to create a new realm.

As long as people ‘believed’ he had created one, that was enough.

After all, the essence of 『Saint Thief』 was theft.

And to deceive the world and steal one’s reputation—no true substance was required.

‘First, I need a new identity.’

Since he wanted everyone to believe he had created a new realm, he had to make it convincing—and for that, a high-prestige origin was essential.

‘My true name... mm, I’ll go with Shakra (Emperor Shitian).’

‘I’ve lived for over a thousand years and am the only immortal in this world, having long reached the ultimate limit of this world, now seeking a way to break through.’

‘And the reason I communicate and battle with the Martial Path Heaven and Man is because I believe that when one’s cultivation reaches the peak of the world, the only way to advance further is to fight and kill one another—pushing each other to extremes in life and death, thereby breaking the shackles of heaven and earth!’

‘I call this realm—Shattering the Void!’

‘After shattering the void, one can ascend and drift away—thus, no one knows what really happens, nor can anyone describe the mysteries of this realm.’

‘Because everyone who reaches this realm never comes back—no firsthand accounts.’

The unknown breeds fear—and also hope.

‘I don’t even need to describe this realm in detail, I just need to stage a grand battle and demonstrate it in public. The rest, they’ll fill in themselves.’

This was a massive pitfall!

The Martial Path's fourth step had already reached a dead end—Foundation Establishment was impossible—but human ambition is boundless, and the Martial Path of Heaven and Man needed something to chase.

And this goal—Lü Yang would give it to them!

As long as he, in front of everyone, performed a sufficiently spectacular act—making the so-called 'Shattering the Void' feel ethereal yet plausible...

If no one believed it, no matter how real, it would be false.

If someone believed it, no matter how fake, it would be true!

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Chapter 67: The Martial World Unites to Execute One Man

[1,144 words]

On the second day of the second month, the dragon raises its head.

It had been three years since Lü Yang visited Wang Boyuan.

Over the past three years, he had met with other martial arts Martial Path of Heaven and Mans, some friendly, some fierce, and even sparred with a few combative ones.

However, Lü Yang had gained considerable insights, especially into the so-called fourth step of martial arts, 'Investigating the Transformation of Heaven and Man,' which he now understood more profoundly. His once dormant spirit had become extraordinarily active, and his entire body's vital energy seemed ready to burst forth—an extraordinary sensation.

That night, the moon was dark, the wind was high, and the stars were densely scattered.

The usually brightly lit streets were, for some reason, shuttered tight by many households, making the vast capital city appear somewhat desolate.

In the pitch-black streets, only Lü Yang walked alone.

"This path of the Martial Path of Heaven and Man is quite intriguing."

Lü Yang appeared calm, silently comprehending the circulation of his vital energy, feeling it to be exceptionally agile, almost as if it had come alive!

"Investigating the Transformation of Heaven and Man involves two changes. The first is the 'Human Transformation,' which unifies a martial artist's vital energy and spirit perfectly. The second is the 'Heavenly Transformation,' harmonizing the internal vital energy and spirit with the external universe."

The more Lü Yang pondered, the stronger his state became.

Swish—

At that moment, a blade's gleam suddenly lit up the darkness, its brilliance illuminating the street, dazzling beyond compare!

Clang! Clang!

In the next second, golden light erupted around Lü Yang, enveloping his entire body as if a golden bell shielded him.

The blade struck the golden bell, producing bursts of heat and dazzling sparks, breaking through three layers of golden light before being barely stopped by the final layer. Seeing his attack fail, the assailant retreated without hesitation, disappearing back into the darkness.

Boom!

As the attacker retreated, a brilliant sword energy struck his previous position, carving a deep chasm into the ground.

"So it's you, Fellow Daoist Ding."

Lü Yang looked up and smiled slightly, "It's been a year, and your demonic blade seems to have advanced further, breaking through four of my protective talismans."

He then glanced at the weapon that had just attacked him—a crescent-shaped, rainbow-like, yet deeply demonic curved blade that could captivate anyone who looked at it. The blade was responsible for seventy percent of the damage to his protective talismans.

"Exiled Immortal Emperor Shitian."

Ding Feiying's gaze was calm, but his tone carried fervor, "Ji Xiongying claims you are a true immortal of this era. If I can slay you, my blade technique will surely reach perfection!"

Lü Yang shook his head and chuckled, "Just you alone? That's overestimating yourself."

"Alone, perhaps not. But what about seven?"

As he spoke, more figures emerged from the darkness, led by none other than 'King of Martial Suppression' Ji Xiongying.

This martial arts Martial Path of Heaven and Man's gaze towards Lü Yang was filled with extreme greed, as if he wanted to devour him alive, sending chills down one's spine.

Behind him stood the disheveled 'Saint Heart Scholar' Wang Boyuan.

Additionally, the street where Lü Yang stood was blocked at both ends by a sorrowful-looking monk and a Taoist holding a horsetail whisk.

From Hanging Temple, 'God Monk of Deliverance' Xuan Ku.

From the Martial Path of Heaven and Man Master's Mansion, 'Barefoot Daoist' Chang Qingjing.

On the rooftop, under the bright stars, a tall woman in a white long dress, as graceful as jade, looked down.

From Hundred Flowers Palace, 'Fairy Mingyu' Hua Xiangrong.

The last was a burly man wearing dragon-shaped arm guards, exuding a rugged aura despite his luxurious attire.

A rogue cultivator, 'Alliance Leader of the World' Guan Qiankun.

The seven martial arts Martial Path of Heaven and Mans of the current era had gathered, surrounding Lü Yang in this street, with the sounds of armored troops faintly heard beyond.

It seemed even the imperial palace's guards had been mobilized!

The martial world unites to execute one man!

"What a grand formation."

Lü Yang praised, his face still calm, even laughing, "But you've come at the right time. Today, this immortal shall use your strength to shatter the void!"

As he spoke, without waiting for a response, he punched forward!

The first to confront him was 'God Monk of Deliverance' Xuan Ku from Hanging Temple, who stepped forward to block Lü Yang, raising his hand to meet the punch.

Then he saw Lü Yang open his fist, revealing a sword energy talisman in his palm.

Clang! Clang!

Brilliant sword energy burst forth, striking Xuan Ku's forehead. However, when the sword energy dissipated, a surprising scene unfolded.

"Amitabha."

Xuan Ku stood firm, hands clasped, his skin glowing with a golden hue beyond the ordinary, his internal vital energy roaring louder than great rivers. Lü Yang's sword energy talisman had only managed to pierce his forehead slightly, drawing a drop of blood.

"Master Xuan Ku's physique is indeed unparalleled in this era!"

Ji Xiongying was overjoyed and immediately called for everyone to attack together. Then he saw Lü Yang calmly take out a thick stack of talismans.

Ji Xiongying: "..."

Boom!

In the next second, dozens to hundreds of talismans were unleashed, radiating multicolored lights and grand phenomena, instantly reducing the surrounding buildings to dust.

Meanwhile, Lü Yang's aura continued to rise.

"Hahaha! It's happening! This immortal is about to succeed!"

He laughed maniacally, "Shattering the void... After living for over a thousand years, this immortal is finally about to shatter the void!"

Hearing this, the Martial Path of Heaven and Mans were stirred.

Shattering the void!?

Since becoming Martial Path of Heaven and Mans, they believed the path ahead was completely cut off. But now, hearing Lü Yang's words, could there be a new path beyond?

Even the observing ancestor of the Yun Clan showed a surprised expression.

"A new path? Impossible!"

The Yun Clan ancestor quickly dismissed the thought.

The fourth step of martial arts was his own derivation, spread through Wang Boyuan. He was certain it was a dead end, with no further path.

How could there be a new path?

"Just a deception, trying to fabricate a new path? Unfortunately, with me here, no matter how you fake it, I can find the flaws."

"As long as there's a flaw, you can't become a sage thief!"

"In the end, you'll have to reveal your true form and fall into my trap."

Despite his words, the Yun Clan ancestor felt something amiss, as if this cause and effect was heading in an unfavorable direction.

"Never mind, better to eliminate this incarnation early to avoid future troubles."

With that, the Yun Clan ancestor immediately performed a spell, influencing fate, and sent his thoughts into the void, "Don't delay, act now."

Almost simultaneously, Ji Xiongying, who had been considering Lü Yang's claim of 'shattering the void,' suddenly had a realization and decisively said:

"Don't be deceived by him!"

"This talk of shattering the void is just to confuse us. Now that all seven of us are here, each wielding divine weapons, let's form a grand formation, slay him, and share eternal life!"

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[1,681 words]

As Ji Xiongying's voice fell, all the Martial Path of Heaven and Mans present struck at once.

With the ancestor of the Yun Clan secretly manipulating karma, no one noticed anything unusual.

In the next second, the seven of them surrounded to kill, and seven divine weapons lit up the night sky.

"Good timing!"

Before Lü Yang finished speaking, his entire body burst into a mass of Innate Qi, then swept in like a violent wind, appearing before Ji Xiongying in the blink of an eye.

Seeing this, Ji Xiongying's eyes flashed blood-red.

His divine weapon was the 'Heavenly Prince Sword'.

At this moment, the divine sword was unsheathed, causing the skies above Tianjing City to churn with clouds and wind in an instant.

All the civilians within Tianjing City suddenly felt a heavy weight on their hearts, inexplicably losing all strength and collapsing to the ground.

In their place, Ji Xiongying's divine power surged violently.

"Die!"

In the next second, Ji Xiongying slashed with his sword.

Its power even surpassed that of a sword qi talisman, landing on Lü Yang and nearly scattering his qi-transformed body.

But that was all.

The Innate Qi avatar could gather and disperse at will, completely unafraid of physical attacks like fists, blades, and swords.

That was why he sent this avatar in the first place.

After all, martial cultivation was a crude system Lü Yang had created.

Even though the Yun Clan Ancestor had supplemented it up to the fourth step, allowing accomplished practitioners to have physiques comparable to late-stage Qi Refining cultivators, it still had enormous flaws.

As long as a cultivator mastered one countering divine ability, they could easily defeat it.

"Everyone, attack together!"

Seeing his sword had failed, Ji Xiongying immediately retreated: "Restrain him! Don't let him use those talismans again! Force him into melee combat with us!"

He didn't need to say it — the other Martial Path of Heaven and Mans had already charged in.

Leading the charge were 'Barefoot Daoist' Chang Qingjing and 'Calamity-Delivering Monk' Xuan Ku, one Daoist and one Buddhist, now flanking from left and right.

At the same time, 'Fairy Mingyu' Hua Xiangrong descended from the heavens, and 'World Alliance Lord' Guan Qiankun replaced Ji Xiongying to confront Lü Yang head-on.

Only the 'Demonic Blade' Ding Feiyong remained hidden in the shadows like a venomous snake, ready to strike with a lethal slash at any moment.

Boom!

Lü Yang fought freely, sometimes reshaping his body and casting talismans, other times dispersing his form to dodge attacks.

Facing seven at once, he handled it all with ease!

In the distance, the Yun Clan Ancestor who was secretly observing the battle shook his head.

"Too weak."

Although in terms of level, the Martial Martial Path of Heaven and Mans were supposedly superior to Lü Yang's Innate Qi avatar, the reality was quite different.

If Lü Yang's Innate Qi avatar was like a fully-gear'd top-level character, then the Martial Martial Path of Heaven and Mans were at most blank-slate max-levels.

They appeared equal, but the difference was like heaven and earth.

This flaw belonged to martial cultivation — a system less than a hundred years old, inherently no match for immortal cultivation.

"Fine, I shall make a move."

The Yun Clan Ancestor moved a thought, immediately stirring karma.

He slowly shifted the originally Lü Yang-favored situation toward the Martial Martial Path of Heaven and Mans' victory.

The effect was immediately visible in the Martial Martial Path of Heaven and Mans' states.

Instead of tiring in battle, the seven Martial Martial Path of Heaven and Mans grew more excited the longer they fought.

Countless flashes of inspiration erupted like a fountain.

The divine weapons in their hands also grew increasingly powerful.

These divine weapons had been designed by the Yun Clan Ancestor as 'opportunities' for Ji Xiongying and perfectly matched each Martial Path of Heaven and Man's martial skills.

Their combination could already produce power near that of divine abilities.

But with the Yun Clan Ancestor forcibly pushing karma, this 'near' divine power instantly reached the level of a true divine ability!

Boom!

Another encirclement and attack!

But this time, Lü Yang clearly sensed something was wrong.

When his Innate Qi avatar reformed, a piece of clothing was missing.

'Their attacks are working?'

Lü Yang's heart tightened.

His avatar was flawless and seamless.

This could only mean part of the Innate Qi had been worn down by the Martial Path of Heaven and Mans.

'So the Foundation Establishment cultivator finally made a move!'

Lü Yang's thoughts raced.

Although he sensed no abnormalities and his divination revealed nothing, he still instantly identified the culprit.

Fine.

The performance had come far enough.

After all, he needed this avatar to play out a grand drama.

If he got careless and it was destroyed, that would be a real joke.

"Hu—"

The next second, all Martial Path of Heaven and Mans present heard a deep breath.

Even the surrounding air currents churned violently, like winds and clouds being overturned.

The sound was melodious and clear, like a true dragon inhaling and exhaling the world.

Immediately after, the sky filled with white qi which reformed into a figure.

Lü Yang's silhouette reappeared, no longer dodging, but wearing a confident smile.

"Get lost!"

In an instant, a fierce aura burst from Lü Yang's body.

A circular light halo appeared behind his head, like a round mirror reflecting thunder and wind.

Taiwei Mirror!

Also a weapon, but this spiritual treasure far outclassed the so-called divine weapons in the hands of the Martial Path of Heaven and Mans.

Once unleashed, it instantly established dominance.

Boom!

The mirror surface rippled.

Thunder and wind exploded around Lü Yang, directly blasting all the Martial Path of Heaven and Mans away and severely injuring them on the spot.

Even so, the Martial Path of Heaven and Mans were not disheartened.

On the contrary, they grew even more excited.

All distracting thoughts vanished, leaving only one idea:

'Kill! Kill him!'

With this intense killing intent, the Martial Path of Heaven and Mans fought as if divinely inspired.

Their long-standing bottlenecks suddenly shattered.

Only 'Saintheart Scholar' Wang Boyuan, though equally fierce, moved with a hint of struggle.

As if he had realized something but couldn't escape it, only drifting with the tide.

Only his eyes, capable of seeing fate and qi, revealed a trace of fear.

'Don't worry, Brother Wang. You're a real talent. I'll save you in the next life.'

Lü Yang sighed inwardly, but his attacks showed no mercy.

Another burst of wind and thunder drove the Martial Path of Heaven and Mans back again.

Then, blinding light burst from every part of his body.

In an instant, the void trembled!

Vital energy surged like a dragon, piercing the clouds.

It was like a sky-piercing pillar landing, calming the stormy moonlit night, tearing through the dark clouds and revealing a bright full moon.

A moment ago, it was a moonless, windy night.

In the blink of an eye, it became a clear moon and sparse stars.

Between heaven and earth, only Lü Yang's long howl remained:

"This immortal has achieved the Great Dao!"

Crack!

The next second, the void shattered.

A massive rift opened above Tianjing City.

Lü Yang leapt forward, his figure flashing and vanishing into it.

Shattering the Void!

Shattering the Void!

The visual impact shocked all the Martial Path of Heaven and Mans into clarity.

Their eyes were filled with horror, as if witnessing an unimaginable martial myth.

Was this the realm beyond Martial Path of Heaven and Mans?

Shattering the void and ascending, thus transcending the mundane?

Just like the immortals in fictional tales!

What hidden truths lay within?

"I saw it..."

Among the seven Martial Path of Heaven and Mans, only Ji Xiongying murmured softly.

He was the Yun Clan Ancestor's most valued piece and thus received the most karma blessings, consuming almost all of his life's fortune.

Because of that, his insight reached its peak at this moment.

He seemed to see how Lü Yang opened that void rift.

It was simply breaking the surface by piercing a point — finding the connection point in the void, breaking through it, and entering before it closed.

"Hahaha! I can do it too!"

In the next second, Ji Xiongying suddenly laughed toward the sky.

Then, holding the 'Heavenly Prince Sword', he slashed at the void — and another rift appeared!

Ji Xiongying stepped in without hesitation.

A moment later, all the rifts closed with a bang.

The remaining Martial Path of Heaven and Mans stood in place, staring blankly at where Lü Yang and Ji Xiongying had been.

"They... ascended?"

"How can this be!"

"Shattering the void — so there really is a realm beyond Martial Path of Heaven and Mans?"

Shattering the void and ascending, to live freely beyond the mortal world?"

Meanwhile, outside the Spell Refining Secret Realm.

After Ji Xiongying followed into the shattered void, he saw Lü Yang — who had entered first — standing in a grand hall, watching him with a strange expression.

"Not sure whether to call you lucky or unlucky."

"This place is...?"

Ji Xiongying turned around and saw only a crystal orb.

But what he saw inside made his heart turn cold.

It showed the bewildered Martial Path of Heaven and Mans.

Inside the crystal orb were countless miniature buildings — cities of Great Zhou, the land under his rule.

"This is... Great Zhou!? How is this possible!?"

Ji Xiongying was no fool.

On the contrary, to stand out among martial artists and be favored by the Yun Clan Ancestor, he was certainly intelligent.

He quickly came to his senses and stared at Lü Yang in shock.

A scam!

All of it was a scam!

Shattering the void was a lie!

The next second, Ji Xiongying abruptly turned, trying to break through the void again and send a warning to the Martial Path of Heaven and Mans inside the secret realm:

"Don't shatter the void..."

Boom!

Before he finished, a beam of divine light descended and froze him in place.

Then, the second senior brother of the Three River Society, Luo Wuya, strode into the hall.

"What an excellent corpse-refining specimen!"

Luo Wuya beamed.

"Junior Brother, did you raise this in the secret realm? It's at the peak of Qi Refining! How did you raise it?"

Lü Yang cupped his hands and smiled.

"If Senior Brother likes it, it's yours."

"Good! Then many thanks, Junior Brother!"

The next second, Luo Wuya swiftly cast a hand seal.

Ji Xiongying instantly felt a chilling aura invade his body, and his Martial Path of Heaven and Man-level physique couldn't resist it!

In his final moments, he thought many things.

But in the end, this consummate martial artist, a Martial Path of Heaven and Man of his generation, a martial myth who had shattered the void — could only roar in fury at Lü Yang, who had orchestrated this entire scheme:

"Beast... You beast!!!"

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

[1,367 words]

Within the Secret Realm of Law Refinement.

Lü Yang's true body remained unharmed, sitting calmly in his cave dwelling.

As for Ji Xiongying's dying curses, he paid them no mind; at this moment, his heart was filled with joy.

"Saint Thief has succeeded!"

Lü Yang stood up, looking up at the sky.

What he saw was a river of purple qi, the fate energy gathered from 140 million living beings within the entire secret realm!

The fate energy of the martial path!

At this moment, Lü Yang bathed in this fate energy.

The radiant purple qi poured down, making him feel as if he had become the center of heaven and earth.

Simultaneously, within the Secret Realm of Law Refinement, all 140 million beings, from mortals to celestial beings, felt something in their hearts.

Each looked up at the sky, vaguely seeing a grand golden figure rising from the ground, solemn and majestic, lifted slowly upward by the rolling red dust.

"Law endowment upon the body, Sacred Body achieved!"

Lü Yang opened his eyes, once again feeling the Dao charm akin to 'ascension' that he had only sensed before in great divine abilities and Foundation Establishment True Persons.

His 'height' was rising!

The boundless fate energy was entirely absorbed by Lü Yang, leaving not a trace.

This fate energy slowly constructed an extremely complex ritual within his body.

"Hmm?"

At this moment, Lü Yang suddenly looked up at the sky.

Meanwhile, in Tianjing City, as Lü Yang shattered the void and Ji Xiongying followed closely, the face of the Yun Clan Ancestor suddenly showed shock and anger.

"Not good!"

Only now did he understand Lü Yang's scheme.

He had fabricated a realm above the celestial being level called 'shattering the void,' with himself as proof.

Now, with Ji Xiongying as additional evidence, the world would firmly believe this path was viable, and many would follow suit!

The entire system was seamless!

Even the fourth step of the martial path he pioneered was perfectly encompassed, not hindering Lü Yang's cultivation but instead enhancing its power!

Because relying solely on Lü Yang, the martial path would at most reach the late stage of Qi Refining.

But with the Yun Clan Ancestor's help, the martial path's limit astonishingly reached the perfection of Qi Refining.

Therefore, the fate energy feedback from the Saint Thief would be immense!

Yet now, even he couldn't break the martial path system.

Because theoretically, a martial celestial being comparable to the perfection of Qi Refining was a dead end.

This applied not only to Lü Yang but also to himself!

And the 'shattering the void' realm had no flaws he could find.

After all, once someone shattered the void, they vanished.

With no evidence, it's always a matter of one side's word against another's.

How could he find a flaw?

To break this predicament, unless he could create a method different from 'shattering the void' that allowed the martial path to truly break through Foundation Establishment.

But before his reincarnation, he was only at the early stage of Foundation Establishment, with limited ability.

How could he create a method enabling the martial path to break through Foundation Establishment?

Perhaps a Golden Core True Lord could!

Otherwise, he would have to kill all who witnessed Lü Yang shatter the void.

But what would that achieve?

It would only expose his existence unnecessarily.

In other words, Lü Yang's momentum in cultivating the 'Saint Thief' was now unstoppable!

"Damned! Damned!"

Thinking of this, the Yun Clan Ancestor was so angry he could grind his teeth to dust.

He never imagined his plans would fail, even aiding the enemy!

After painstakingly manipulating cause and effect, he ended up making a wedding dress for someone else?

He couldn't accept it!

Thinking of this, the Yun Clan Ancestor gnashed his teeth, full of unwillingness.

Then, he once again manipulated cause and effect, attempting a final effort.

The Yun Clan Ancestor activated the 'Heaven Inquiry Instrument' to enhance his influence over cause and effect.

"The Saint Thief is destined to face a calamity, which was originally mine. But if I strip it away and use a substitution method, replacing human tribulation with heavenly tribulation, I can invoke the power of heaven and earth to kill him!"

"Stealing the fate energy of all under heaven, an act against the heavens, must be punished by heaven!"

With a roar from the Yun Clan Ancestor, suddenly, above Lü Yang's secluded place, the previously clear sky turned dark with clouds, lightning snakes darting through.

Boom!

Thunder erupted from the mountains, turning heaven and earth white!

A massive bolt of lightning struck directly from the dark clouds, so fast that there was no time to react.

In the blink of an eye, it hit Lü Yang.

When the lightning dissipated, Lü Yang's figure slowly emerged.

However, to the Yun Clan Ancestor's disbelief, facing this heavenly lightning that could potentially kill a Qi Refining perfection cultivator, Lü Yang was unscathed!

"This is... the law of the Saint Thief?"

In the Yun Clan Ancestor's heart, information about the 'Saint Thief' flashed.

The minor and major achievements of this body refinement method were entirely different.

The minor achievement of the Saint Thief merely enhanced physical strength.

The major achievement, however, could condense 'law.'

In immortal cultivation, 'height,' or 'status,' often symbolized absolute disparity.

As long as the status was high enough, those below were like ants.

Just like Foundation Establishment True Persons to Qi Refining cultivators.

And the 'law' of the Saint Thief was, in a sense, status.

Therefore, Lü Yang now was no longer on the same level as ordinary cultivators.

All attacks from those with a 'status' lower than his couldn't even harm him!

For example, the rolling heavenly thunder summoned by the Yun Clan Ancestor through cause and effect, though powerful, lacked corresponding status.

As a result, it was like a two-dimensional attack on a three-dimensional being.

No matter how powerful, it was meaningless.

Not only couldn't it harm Lü Yang, it couldn't even touch the hem of his clothes.

Of course, laws also had strengths and weaknesses; not everyone was the same.

The Primordial Saint Sect had countless talents.

Lü Yang wasn't the only disciple who cultivated the Saint Thief, but the law he condensed was the strongest so far!

Because the strength of 'law' was determined by the system established through cultivating the Saint Thief.

If the system stopped at the mid-stage of Qi Refining, then the 'law' could only ignore attacks up to that stage.

Facing late-stage Qi Refining, it would still be broken.

However, with the 'help' of the Yun Clan Ancestor, Lü Yang's martial path encompassed the perfection of Qi Refining!

Therefore, his 'law' meant that unless a cultivator below Foundation Establishment mastered a great divine ability that could also elevate status, no one could break it!

Boom!

Bolts of lightning struck one after another.

However, Lü Yang remained indifferent, unmoved.

Even the surrounding grand formation was shattered, yet he remained unscathed.

Seeing this, the Yun Clan Ancestor's eyes nearly burst with rage, yet he was helpless.

"At this point, we can only let him go."

The Yun Clan Ancestor sighed.

"So be it, let him leave; the Sect Master's task is more important..."

"Senior, are you watching me?"

A calm voice came, and the Yun Clan Ancestor was suddenly stunned.

In the perspective of cause and effect, he saw Lü Yang suddenly turn his head, looking at him calmly.

He can see me... No, he knows of my existence!?

The Yun Clan Ancestor instinctively took a step back, heart filled with horror.

He immediately severed the cause and effect connection, then concealed his breath, hiding all traces of himself.

However, Lü Yang now was entirely different!

"Trying to escape..."

Lü Yang lowered his eyelids, ripples appearing in his eyes.

At this moment, his Sacred Body had achieved great completion.

Although he hadn't yet reached Foundation Establishment, the Yun Clan Ancestor was also no longer at Foundation Establishment.

At this moment, their statuses weren't vastly different!

In the next second, Lü Yang's soul left his body, soaring into the sky, overlooking the entire Secret Realm of Law Refinement.

The vast land was fully visible.

The Yun Clan Ancestor had the 'Heaven Inquiry Instrument' to protect himself, concealing his presence flawlessly.

Therefore, Lü Yang couldn't calculate his position.

However, having cultivated the Saint Thief here, this place was his domain.

He didn't need to calculate; he only needed to see which aura hadn't been stolen by him!

Whoosh!

With a thought, Lü Yang's mind reflected countless auras, rapidly filtering them.

In the end, only one seemingly weak aura remained, located within Tianjing City.

Immediately, the void opened.

The Yun Clan Ancestor, thinking he had concealed his presence, looked up in astonishment.

He saw a ripple above his head, and then a figure in black robes stepped out.

"...Found you."

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Chapter 70: Duel of Spells!

[1,523 words]

In the very instant that Lü Yang appeared and spoke, the entire Tianjing City transformed into black and white, with an indescribable ripple expanding in all directions.

Wherever the ripple passed, all was annihilated.

Buildings vanished, pedestrians disappeared—everything seemed as if it had never existed, treating both street beggars and martial artists equally!

"How could this be!?"

A martial artist of the Heaven and Man Realm shouted in terror, unable to accept the reality.

Yet, regardless of their reactions—be it fleeing, confusion, or hysteria—they all quietly dissipated within that ripple.

The sole exception was the 'Saintly Scholar' Wang Boyuan, a peerless genius who pioneered the fourth step of martial arts, who remained unexpectedly calm at this moment, merely gazing at the sky with a trace of relief: "Observing fate and watching the heavens... Heh, how can a frog at the bottom of a well speak of observing fate or watching the heavens?"

As early as his breakthrough to the Heaven and Man Realm, Wang Boyuan had sensed something amiss.

He had created the "Three Talents Fate Observation Technique," calculating the heavens through humanity, but when he exhausted his life's knowledge to peer into the cosmos, a tremendous anomaly emerged.

Because he saw that the heavens and earth were flawed!

Though exquisite, they were inconsistent, like a meticulously crafted counterfeit!

He once thought he had miscalculated, that the Fate Observation Technique was imperfect, but no matter how many times he recalculated, the result remained unchanged.

Could it truly be that the heavens and earth are flawed, and the human world a mere illusion?

Since then, the once elegant and dashing 'Saintly Scholar' had become a slovenly man who drank all day, wasting his life.

Now, he saw the truth.

Only at this moment did Wang Boyuan finally regain some of his former heroic demeanor, looking at the sky with a mix of relief and regret.

"What a pity... If I could witness the true heavens and earth, it would surely be a delight."

The next second, his figure vanished.

Thus, the entire Tianjing City disappeared from the earth, with no trace of its people, leaving only the Yun Clan Ancestor's residence and Lü Yang suspended in mid-air.

In just the blink of an eye, Lü Yang used his secret realm authority to erase the entire Tianjing City, collecting all living beings into the deepest part of the Law Refinement Secret Realm, awaiting the next disciple to reopen them, while the secret realm space where Tianjing City once stood was compressed around the Yun Clan Ancestor.

In this way, the space became highly condensed, preventing the Yun Clan Ancestor from escaping through the void.

"Lü Yang."

The Yun Clan Ancestor's voice carried apprehension and frustration.

The apprehension stemmed from Lü Yang's current strength, which he could no longer underestimate, and the frustration from the fact that this situation was entirely his own doing!

Without him, even if Lü Yang had mastered the Saint Thief technique, it wouldn't have been so perfect!

How could he not feel frustrated?

However, the Yun Clan Ancestor quickly suppressed all negative emotions and said in a deep voice: "Erasing Tianjing City—aren't you afraid the Saint Thief will lose the support of fate?"

"Senior overthinks it." Lü Yang responded with a faint smile: "Since the Saint Thief has already been perfected, the fate of the world is no longer important to me. After all, since it's 'thievery,' how could it possibly be returned? Compared to that, senior should be more concerned about your current situation."

"...Are you threatening me?"

The Yun Clan Ancestor's expression grew increasingly grim, his previously restrained aura gradually emanating, filled with killing intent: "You dare to speak so boldly to me alone?"

"A mere reincarnated Foundation Establishment—what's so remarkable?"

Lü Yang retorted sharply, showing no concession: "I'm in need of a reincarnated Foundation Establishment soul to study secret techniques. Senior, your timing is perfect to assist in my cultivation."

"You little brat, courting death!"

In his fury, the Yun Clan Ancestor also clarified the current situation, even feeling somewhat relieved that Lü Yang hadn't left the secret realm but chose to confront him.

If he had left the secret realm to report him, he would be doomed.

But now that he came alone, perhaps there was still hope for redemption!

The Yun Clan Ancestor frantically channeled his mana, and a brilliant golden light immediately rose above his head, radiating three colors—gold, silver, and jade—illuminating the sky in an instant!

Taiyi Golden Radiance!

Unlike Yun Miaozen's incomplete version, the Yun Clan Ancestor's Taiyi Golden Radiance was a fully refined, complete version—a true great divine ability!

In an instant, the golden light surged mightily, sweeping through the heavens and earth, stirring up immense waves of spiritual energy, directly sweeping towards Lü Yang.

Immediately, Lü Yang felt a golden brilliance before his eyes, as if isolated into another world. Then came the loss of essence, his body becoming withered, true qi exhausted, mana gradually weakening, divine consciousness dissipating, spiritual awareness no longer sharp—all his essence, energy, and spirit were brushed away by the golden light!

However, in the next second, Lü Yang stomped his foot.

Boom!

In an instant, the entire secret realm seemed to tremble violently, like a person jumping from a high place, inevitably causing a shock upon landing.

Almost simultaneously, the Yun Clan Ancestor's spiritual consciousness was greatly shaken.

The previously condensed Taiyi Golden Radiance exploded in all directions the moment Lü Yang stomped his foot, and the previously brushed-away essence, energy, and spirit rapidly returned to Lü Yang's body.

The next second, Lü Yang moved.

He gave a cold smile, then spread his sleeves, countless fireworks rising around him, swirling and coiling, finally erupting with a loud bang, causing the Yun Clan Ancestor's ears and eyes to ache.

Looking up, he saw a majestic golden figure rising from the ground, shaped like a mountain, surrounded by swirling fireworks.

"Stealing the world's fate to forge the Saint's golden body!"

Only at this moment did Lü Yang reveal the true power of the perfected Saint Thief technique—'Law' borrowing fate to take form, transforming into a 'Saint's Aspect'!

The Yun Clan Ancestor, seeing this, urgently activated the Taiyi Golden Radiance.

In an instant, the golden radiance filled the sky, splitting into three lights of essence, energy, and spirit, forming a sun, moon, and stars formation, heavier than mountains, crashing down towards Lü Yang.

But before the Taiyi Golden Radiance could fall, the towering 'Saint's Aspect' extended a massive hand, its palm full and smooth, as translucent as jade, covering the sky and descending.

With a grasp of its five fingers, it caught the magnificent Taiyi Golden Radiance along with the Yun Clan Ancestor in its palm!

"How bold!"

The Yun Clan Ancestor grunted, the Taiyi Golden Radiance continuously expanding, becoming increasingly blazing, almost transforming into a golden sun, trying to force open the 'Saint's Aspect's' palm.

However, on the other side, Lü Yang also formed a seal.

His physical body gradually became illusory, while the 'Saint's Aspect' behind him became increasingly real, solemn, and unmoved by external forces.

The Yun Clan Ancestor's erupting Taiyi Golden Radiance fell upon it, at most peeling off a layer of skin and flesh, but as soon as it did, Lü Yang regenerated it.

The result was a prolonged battle where one side consumed mana, and the other consumed blood and energy, with no advantage gained.

"Delay brings change... I must quickly subdue this person!"

The Yun Clan Ancestor's thoughts raced, knowing that Lü Yang had gained great fortune through him, the Saint Thief technique nearly perfected, already comparable to a great divine ability.

To subdue him, he had to use even more powerful methods.

With this in mind, the Yun Clan Ancestor immediately took out a spherical magical treasure, which was the 'Heavenly Instrument' bestowed upon him by the Sword Pavilion Master before his reincarnation.

He offered this spiritual treasure into the air, then bowed respectfully:

"Please, Heavenly Lord, take action."

As his words fell, the Heavenly Instrument immediately began to rotate, causing the surrounding space to be inverted in all directions!

Within the range of the 'Heavenly Instrument,' all positional changes became chaotic—forward became backward, left became up, up became forward—all determined by the wielder's intent.

At this moment, upon its activation, the 'Saint's Aspect' immediately lost its strength, and the Yun Clan Ancestor seized the opportunity to escape.

Immediately after, he held the 'Heavenly Instrument' and aimed it at Lü Yang.

In an instant, Lü Yang felt his entire body tremble, the 'Saint's Aspect' seemingly immobilized by a vast force, unable to move, remaining in place.

It was evident that the Yun Clan Ancestor had altered all of Lü Yang's movements to 'remain stationary.'

After immobilizing the 'Saint's Aspect,' the Yun Clan Ancestor didn't stop, continuously unleashing the Taiyi Golden Radiance, clearly intending to use this method to gradually break it apart.

"So strong, truly formidable..."

Lü Yang admired with a smile, acknowledging the Yun Clan Ancestor's undeniable strength, being a reincarnated Foundation Establishment cultivator with a treasure like the Heavenly Instrument.

In terms of pure strength, if they dueled a hundred times, he would likely lose all hundred.

However, dueling isn't solely about strength. Just as a chess player can defeat an opponent on the board, there are also ways to win outside the board.

Meanwhile, outside the Law Refinement Secret Realm, Lü Yang's Innate Qi avatar rushed nonstop, arriving directly at the cave dwelling where True Person Yinshan was in seclusion.

"True Person! I have a report!"

"There's a bad person inside the secret realm!"

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