

The Beauty 1251

Chapter 1251 Heart Ailment (2)

Back at Lin Han's home, upon learning that Chen Junfeng was willing to accept treatment, Lin Han was quite surprised, not expecting Ling Chen to actually persuade Chen Junfeng.

"Miss Lin, my time is very limited, can you cure Sir Chen as quickly as possible?" Ling Chen asked. If it weren't for the incident with Tong Zhentian, Ling Chen would have probably returned by now. But now he couldn't; Tong Zhentian was seriously injured, and Dragon Tiger Hall needed a master to hold the fort. Ji Gang wouldn't do; he was just a puppet. Therefore, Chen Junfeng was undoubtedly the best candidate, which was the main reason Ling Chen stayed in Xianghe Village.

"Sir Chen's issue is psychological, not something that medication can cure. It requires a gradual process, finding a quiet environment to slowly recuperate. Even at the slowest pace, it will take about half a year."

Upon hearing Lin Han's words, Ling Chen felt a bit anxious. Half a year... he couldn't wait that long. "Miss Lin, can't it be faster? Maybe... a week?"

Lin Han stared, speaking with a hint of irritation, "Do you think I'm a deity? This kind of illness can only be cured with long-term care, unless you have a spiritual elixir."

"Spiritual elixir?" Ling Chen's eyes lit up, as if he thought of something, muttering to himself, "I understand now..."

"Hey! I was just saying it randomly, don't take it seriously." Lin Han panicked, mistakenly thinking Ling Chen had come up with some dubious idea, hurriedly stopping him, "There really aren't any spiritual elixirs in this world, those are just things from movies and novels."

Ling Chen smiled mysteriously, "Not necessarily."

Over the next two days, Chen Junfeng cooperated well with Lin Han's treatment. Over the years, due to persistent nightmares, Chen Junfeng lacked rest. Fortunately, he was a Heavenly List expert, his body much stronger than an ordinary person. Otherwise, with so many years of insomnia, he would have collapsed long ago.

To ensure Chen Junfeng could rest well, Lin Han used medication, using sedatives to induce deep sleep in him.

Two nights passed, and after a good sleep, Chen Junfeng's complexion improved significantly, looking much more spirited than before.

That day, just after finishing lunch, Ling Chen received a call from He Ziyun, "Ling Chen, the time has been set at the Martial Arts Academy, the duel will begin in three days."

"Three days?" Ling Chen exclaimed, "That's so soon? Can't you ask them to delay it?"

"I've tried my best, but their attitude is very determined, they refuse to accept our proposal." At this point, He Ziyun's tone carried a hint of worry, "Ling Chen, this is going to be a big crisis for Dragon Tiger Hall. If we don't handle it well, Dragon Tiger Hall will lose everything."

"Mr. He, I understand all of this."

"No, you may not understand completely," He Ziyun said, "Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy has notified the entire Martial Arts community about this duel, inviting many martial artists to watch, including the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. You should know their purpose in doing so."

"I know," Ling Chen replied, "They want to humiliate us in front of everyone, completely defeating Dragon Tiger Hall."

"Elder Tong is injured and still unconscious, unable to wake up anytime soon, and Dragon Tiger Hall lacks someone to hold the fort. In the past two days, everyone's mood has been very low, especially those martial artists who joined Dragon Tiger Hall, as well as our newly recruited students. They've lost confidence in Dragon Tiger Hall, and some are already preparing to leave."

"Mr. He, I am very aware of what this duel means. Rest assured, I will return as soon as possible. No matter the result, I will stand with Dragon Tiger Hall through thick and thin." Pausing for a moment, Ling Chen continued, "If anyone wants to leave, let them go. There's no need to retain them. Their leaving is

not a loss to Dragon Tiger Hall, but rather a good thing. What we need are people who can share our highs and lows, not a bunch of fair-weather friends. This is the perfect opportunity to clean up a bit."

"I understand your point. Alright, I have other matters to handle, come back soon, everyone is waiting for you."

After hanging up the phone, Ling Chen exhaled slowly. Although he talked lightly with He Ziyun, his heart felt heavy. To say there was no pressure would be a lie. There was not just pressure, but immense pressure. Fortunately, he was naturally optimistic; otherwise, such immense pressure might have been suffocating.

After a short break, Ling Chen went to the clinic. At this moment, Chen Junfeng was sitting on a hospital bed in the clinic, holding a book and reading earnestly.

Ling Chen leaned on the door frame of the ward, looking at Chen Junfeng on the bed, several times ready to speak but hesitated. At this moment, Chen Junfeng put down the book in his hand, turned to look at Ling Chen, and asked, "Did you need something from me?"

"I... nothing, just wanted to see how you're doing," Ling Chen said with a slight smile.

"Really?" Chen Junfeng looked at Ling Chen meaningfully, "I'm old enough to see if you have something on your mind. Has the time for the duel been set?"

Ling Chen nodded, "The duel will be held in three days, we don't have much time."

Chen Junfeng frowned slightly and said, "Three days... too short. Although my body is not a big issue, my skills have deteriorated considerably over the years due to neglect. I don't think I can fully recover and am worried I might not be much help, instead becoming a burden to you."

"Sir Chen, as long as you're willing to help, don't worry about anything else. However, if we want to win the duel, we probably need to leave for East Sea City today."

"Alright, no problem," Chen Junfeng readily agreed.

"Then you get some rest, I'll arrange the flight and let Miss Lin know." With that, Ling Chen turned and left the clinic.

At two o'clock in the afternoon.

At the entrance of Xianghe Village, Lin Han, with Lin Chun, stood in front of a Land Rover, waving goodbye to Ling Chen and Chen Junfeng. Lin Chun, reluctantly looking at Ling Chen, asked, "Big brother, can we meet again in the future?"

Ling Chen ruffled his little head, reassuringly, "Don't worry, it won't be long before we meet again." After speaking, Ling Chen turned to look at Lin Han, "Miss Lin, thank you for everything during this period. I will forever remember this kindness."

"You're welcome, once you return, take good care of yourself and Sir Chen. His recovery requires peace and quiet, you may want to hire some care staff."

"I will." Glancing at the time, with a flight at four-thirty, it was getting late; if they didn't leave soon, they might miss the flight, "Miss Lin, little one, we have to go now, goodbye!"

"Goodbye, big brother, Sir Chen!" Lin Chun waved his arms vigorously, watching the SUV go off into the distance, tears started rolling down his face. Except for his sister, this was the first time he felt attached to an outsider.

Chapter 1252: Tournament Rules

Three days passed quickly.

These three days, Dragon Tiger Hall became especially lively. Such a situation has only occurred when Dragon Tiger Hall first opened. After Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy set the time, Dragon Tiger Hall chose the location. Someone inside suggested to hold the competition at Dragon Tiger Hall to gain the home ground advantage.

However, Dragon Tiger Hall is not the kind of organization that likes to take advantage and certainly doesn't want any excuse for criticism. After discussions, the final location was set in a sports arena. Over the past few days, the martial arts stage and viewing stands in the arena have been prepared. After a

thorough check by both sides, confirming there were no issues, each party positioned personnel to guard the arena, preventing any unauthorized entries or actions that might compromise the fairness of the competition.

Before the competition began, Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy stirred up hype everywhere, inviting martial arts figures to watch the fight. If it was just a regular martial arts academy, few would pay attention. But, the opponent this time was Dragon Tiger Hall, sure to attract many interested spectators. Even Zhou Qian and Ren Han from the Martial Arts Association flew from Beijing to East Sea City to witness the sparring personally.

Apart from the martial arts figures congregating from across the country in East Sea City, another piece of news spread among the crowd.

"Hey! Have you heard? Old Sir Tong from Dragon Tiger Hall is sick and in a coma, now Dragon Tiger Hall is leaderless, how do you think their chances of winning are?"

"That place called... Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy might be newly established, but their strength cannot be underestimated. I heard from a friend that the academy is full of experts, and the hall master is even a Heavenly List expert."

"Is that for real? Where did so many Heavenly List experts come from? Are they worth so little nowadays that they're running martial arts academies?"

"Who knows, Huaxia is full of hidden talents; there are many experts; you just don't know about them. You think everyone is like you, learning a few moves and thinking you're invincible, wanting everyone to know how awesome you are. Hmph! Truly shallow."

"No matter what, since Old Sir Tong is indisposed, Dragon Tiger Hall has lost a Heavenly List expert to oversee things; it's likely difficult for them to beat that academy. I'd say Dragon Tiger Hall is in big trouble."

For a time, everyone was talking about the odds for Dragon Tiger Hall and Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy. Surprisingly, there were even bets placed outside the arena; many martial arts enthusiasts placed wagers. With Tong Zhentian unable to attend, there were few betting on Dragon Tiger Hall; most had their hopes on Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy.

Wednesday was the day of the battle between the two academies.

Early in the morning, a large crowd of martial arts enthusiasts had gathered outside the arena, all hoping to get in early and secure a good seat.

At eight o'clock, representatives from Dragon Tiger Hall and Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy opened the arena doors. Immediately, the martial arts spectators surged inside, filling the venue instantly. It should be known that the sports arena's usual capacity during basketball competitions is around fifteen hundred people. But the seats were instantly packed, showing the immense interest in this competition.

After the spectators arrived, they waited for about half an hour before Dragon Tiger Hall's members got to the arena. Leading the team was He Ziyun, since Tong Zhentian and Ling Chen were both absent; he had to step forward as the deputy hall master. Dragon Tiger Hall deployed a small team of only ten, half of whom were composed of the Eight Eccentrics: Qiu Yong, Xu Ming, Yuan Yun, Zhang Zhongfeng, and Xia Yue. Yang Chen and Wei Jiahao, due to their moderate skills, were not included.

For this competition, these five were considered the main force; the others served as substitutes. Unfortunately, even though Dragon Tiger Hall had experts, few were truly reliable. Therefore, it was deemed safer to rely on Qiu Yong and his crew. They were trusted members, and given Qiu Yong's strength, they might possibly secure a victory for Dragon Tiger Hall.

Once everyone was seated, Qiu Yong glanced at the spectators and asked, "Mr. He, why hasn't Ling Cheng arrived yet?"

"I don't know either." He Ziyun chuckled bitterly, "I've informed him before that the competition takes place today. He told me he would return as soon as possible. But in the last few days, I've called him more than ten times yet couldn't reach him; no idea where he's wandered off to."

"What should we do?" Yuan Yun asked anxiously, "We're short-handed."

The rules of today's competition had long been set: best of five matches. Each side sends five members, with one representing Dragon Tiger Hall and Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy's hall master. In essence, it's a battle between hall masters, which is more a showdown between Heavenly List experts.

It was precisely because of these rules that most spectators doubted Dragon Tiger Hall. Nevertheless, among the crowd, some did support Dragon Tiger Hall. After all, there were five matches; should Dragon Tiger Hall win three, they would claim victory.

Time ticked away; near nine o'clock, the people from Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy finally arrived late. Seeing the team from the academy, He Ziyun and others sensed something foreboding. They weren't unfamiliar with the leader; it turned out to be Chen Quan, a Heavenly List expert. Recently, Chen Quan had been causing trouble with Zhu Hong in East Sea City, creating nuisances for Ling Chen and his companions. Since Zhu Hong's disappearance, Chen Quan had vanished without a trace. Now, he somehow became the hall master of Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy—this change was quite drastic.

Glancing at Chen Quan, He Ziyun shifted his attention to the other members. This time, Chen Quan brought the same number of people, including middle-aged men in their thirties and youths in their twenties. These individuals seemed unfamiliar, never seen before. However, He Ziyun could sense an unusual aura from them.

Too calm!

For any skilled individual, there would be some fluctuation in emotions when competing. Yet, the opposing team maintained expressionless tranquility, like a well-trained army. Such people are undoubtedly the most terrifying.

"Elder Qiu, what do you think?" He Ziyun asked.

Qiu Yong scrutinized the opponents and responded solemnly, "These people... are not simple." Then, pondering for a moment, he said, "Second Brother, you'll take the first round. How about that?"

Xu Ming nodded, "Understood."

The first match is crucial; neither Qiu Yong nor He Ziyun dared to be careless. Given their current circumstance, securing the first victory was necessary to boost morale. Among everyone, Xu Ming undoubtedly held the highest probability of winning.

"Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion arrives!"

Just then, a voice echoed from the arena entrance, immediately drawing everyone's gaze.

Chapter 1253 Duel (Part 1)

Very soon, Su He led a group of people through the entrance. Apart from Su He, the rest were familiar faces. Wang Hao, Su He's newly accepted disciple, caused a commotion at the last opening ceremony of Dragon Tiger Hall, and was repaired by Ling Chen, leaving a deep impression on everyone.

Watching Su He sit down on the spectator seats, the expressions of He Ziyun and others turned somewhat unsightly. They had long heard that Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion would send people to watch the match, but they never expected Su He himself to come. Su He's entry instantly heated up the entire scene.

The world's number one expert personally coming to watch undoubtedly elevated the level of this martial competition by several grades.

At this moment, Chen Quan quickly led everyone from the Martial Arts Academy to the spectator seats, cupped his fists towards Su He and the others to express his welcome.

Su He nodded and chatted with Chen Quan with a smile. This scene fell into the eyes of everyone, with a special meaning. Su He completely ignored the people from Dragon Tiger Hall, but chatted enthusiastically with those from Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy. Anyone with a brain could see the problem in the differential treatment.

It seemed that compared to Dragon Tiger Hall, Su He was more biased towards Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy.

For everyone present, Su He's attitude was undoubtedly a wind vane. Suddenly, there were more people outside betting that Dragon Tiger Hall would lose.

Looking at Su He on the stand, Xu Ming frowned slightly, slowly lowered his head, his eyes flashing, not knowing what he was thinking. From his clenched fists, it could be seen that his mood was not calm at the moment.

After a while, Su He stood up from his seat, looked at everyone present, cleared his throat and said: "Ladies and gentlemen, I suppose you all have been eagerly anticipating today's martial arts competition. Given that this match involves the confrontation between Heavenly List experts, our Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, upon the invitation of Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy, will act as the referee. Before the match begins, I want to remind both sides to compete fairly and not resort to tricks. Otherwise, if discovered, you will be judged to lose directly. Master Chen, Master He, do you have any questions?"

Chen Quan laughed and said: "Elder Su is the referee, we'll follow your instructions."

He Ziyun did not reply, just nodded.

"Everyone has heard." He Ziyun glanced at Qiu Yong and others, saying: "Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion is colluding with Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy, having them as the referee is not good news for us."

Xia Yue angrily cursed: "These people are really shameless, not only do they secretly harm Elder Tong, but they also use such despicable means to bully us. Having people from Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion as the referee clearly shows they are going to help the other side. What chance do we have to win?"

"Fifth sister, don't be hasty." Qiu Yong said: "The match hasn't started yet, don't jump to conclusions so quickly. Moreover, we aren't that bad, even though we are lacking a Heavenly List expert to sit in, your second brother and third brother are all experts. As long as we can win three battles, the victory will ultimately belong to us."

After speaking, Qiu Yong turned to look at He Ziyun, saying: "Mr. He, could you call Ling Chen a few more times, ask where he is, and tell him to hurry over."

"Alright, I'll try again." Saying this, He Ziyun took out his phone and walked to the side.

After a short break, at ten in the morning, the martial competition between Dragon Tiger Hall and Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy officially began.

Dragon Tiger Hall sent Xu Ming, as this was the first match, securing victory was crucial otherwise the morale would take a heavy hit.

Therefore, sending Xu Ming was the safest choice.

As Xu Ming walked to the center of the venue, Su He on the stand squinted his eyes slightly, and looked at Xu Ming with interest. After a while, Su He turned his head and quietly instructed Wang Hao beside him. Wang Hao nodded, took out his phone and started pressing buttons. Simultaneously, Chen Quan from Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy discreetly glanced at his phone after taking it out, then stood up, pointed at a young man among his team.

The young man immediately stepped into the arena.

"Are both of you ready?" Su He asked: "If there are no issues, let's begin, don't waste everyone's time."

As soon as the voice fell, the young man took the first action, he charged forward, aiming at Xu Ming, and violently punched out. Faced with the young man's offensive, Xu Ming remained calm and didn't regard him seriously. As the opponent's punch was about to reach him, Xu Ming slightly raised his hand and lightly tapped with two fingers, hitting the opponent's wrist precisely.

Instantly, the young man's expression changed, his whole arm seemed crippled, helplessly drooping down. Without succeeding in a move, the young man did not give up, he tucked the arm into the belt, securing the arm swinging back and forth to prevent it from affecting his movements.

After preparing, the young man jumped up, twisted his waist sharply, like a spinning top, his legs swiftly rotating, straight towards Xu Ming's head.

Seeing the opponent's movements, Xu Ming took a step back, raised his hands high. With a soft shout, the watching crowd didn't catch what had happened, just heard an 'ah', with a scream, the young man's body fell directly from mid-air, crashing heavily onto the ground.

Puff!

A mouthful of blood spurted out, the young man fainted directly, lying motionless in the center of the field.

With the battle over, the result was clear. Su He smiled slightly, stood up and announced: "Congratulations to Dragon Tiger Hall for winning the first match."

Xu Ming glanced at Su He on the stand, without saying a word, turned around and went back to the Dragon Tiger Hall's seating area. "Well done." He Ziyun said.

"They came prepared." Xu Ming sat down, said in a deep voice: "My opponent was too weak, at best ranking ninth on the Dragon List."

Upon hearing this, Qiu Yong's face turned unpleasant, saying: "They wanted to replace our strongest with their weakest, but... how did they know your strength?"

Xu Ming didn't speak, he kept looking at the ground, eyes complex, not knowing what he was thinking. Seeing this, He Ziyun and Qiu Yong stopped asking. Dragon Tiger Hall was already leading the match, only needing to win two more matches to conclude the martial competition smoothly.

"Now, please let Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy send out your team members first."

Su He's voice sounded, and a middle-aged man stood up from the Martial Arts Academy direction, he walked confidently into the field.

He Ziyun watched the opponent, asked: "Does anyone recognize this person?"

Qiu Yong and others replied: "Never seen him before." After speaking, everyone looked at each other, eyes showing a hint of hesitance, "Mr. He, who do you think we should send?"

"I..." He Ziyun smiled wryly, "I don't know who to send to the field either."

Chapter 1254 Duel (Part 2)

He Ziyun felt a bit helpless. They knew nothing about the opponent's identity, nor his strength, or what he was good at, so they couldn't make a choice.

"Dragon Tiger Hall, have you still not chosen a contestant? If you can't decide in thirty seconds, I'll rule this match as a forfeit for you."

Su He's urging voice came through, and after thinking it over, He Ziyun finally set his gaze on Yuan Yun. At this moment, they could only let Yuan Yun step in.

Though Yuan Yun wasn't the strongest, he was skilled in swordsmanship and an expert in aggressive attack strategies. Using him to probe the opponent's strength was a good choice.

As Yuan Yun stepped into the arena, the second match officially began. Yuan Yun drew his steel sword and looked at the opponent, saying, "I excel in using swords. To avoid anyone saying I took advantage, you pick your weapon."

The middle-aged man said nothing, merely walked to the weapon rack beside the field, and selected a broad-backed big saber. The weight of the saber was hefty and very long, like a guillotine, intimidating in itself. Seeing his opponent also choose a big saber, Yuan Yun's eyes turned serious instead of playful.

He was an expert with swords, familiar with all kinds. He clearly understood how heavy the opponent's saber was. To wield such a big saber, you'd need immense strength. No amateur would choose such a weapon.

Their eyes met, and both sides remained silent, their gazes gradually becoming sharp, like a blade piercing the opponent's body.

In the blink of an eye, a minute passed, yet neither moved. However, their momentum had reached its peak. Now, they were both searching for the opponent's flaw.

After a while, the audience in the stands grew somewhat impatient. What the heck, all this time and neither made a move, just staring at each other. This wasn't about who had the fiercer gaze; it was a duel, get into action already, weapons clashing is what brings thrill.

Perhaps the audience's complaints were heard, as the middle-aged man's body leaned slightly forward and finally initiated an attack. At the very instant the middle-aged man moved, Yuan Yun also acted. He raised his steel sword overhead, and with a shout, his body darted forward like an arrow from a bowstring, striking directly toward the opponent's head.

Clang!

A crisp sound echoed as the blades clashed instantaneously. In just a second, both slashed over ten times, their movements a blur to the eyes. Those with less skill only saw a faint shadow, unable to clearly see the blades.

After ten seconds, both Yuan Yun and the middle-aged man mutually retreated, maintaining about a five-meter distance.

"Third brother's in trouble," said Xu Ming, who had been sitting silently, breaking the quiet.

Hearing this, Xia Yue chimed in, "Second brother, it's just started. Is that person really that formidable?"

"Pay close attention to their breathing, and you'll understand." Upon hearing this, everyone focused their attention on the breathing of the two. Indeed! After the initial clash, Yuan Yun's breathing had gradually become rapid, indicating significant exertion. In contrast, the middle-aged man showed no expression, his breathing remaining steady. The comparison made it clear who was superior.

Qiu Yong frowned, speaking gravely, "Third brother's swordplay emphasizes might, but the opponent's swordplay is no weaker. If he continues to butt heads, third brother might not be a match unless he can switch his attack style and find the opponent's weak point."

As they spoke, the middle-aged man raised his saber and launched another offensive. The big saber whistled through the air, the sound alone could make one shiver. Seeing the middle-aged man approach step by step, Yuan Yun shouted, lifting his steel sword to meet him.

Another head-on clash? Seeing Yuan Yun's action, Qiu Yong and the others couldn't help but feel concerned. However, at this moment, Yuan Yun suddenly shifted a step to the left, avoiding the middle-

aged man's frontal attack. As one strike missed, the middle-aged man's gaze immediately locked onto Yuan Yun again. His wrist turned, and the saber followed through to slash toward Yuan Yun's head.

The opponent was incredibly fast. Although the saber was heavy, in the middle-aged man's hands, it was as agile as an extension of his arm, uninhibited by the blade's weight.

Yuan Yun did not expect the opponent to react so swiftly. Caught off guard, he quickly raised his steel sword to block the saber's strike.

Another 'clang' resounded, and Yuan Yun slipped, retreating three or four meters. Feeling the pain in his hands, Yuan Yun's heart sank a little. Such formidable strength! This person didn't look particularly strong, but his power was astonishing.

In the split second of thought, the middle-aged man's attack was already upon him. Seeing this, Yuan Yun gritted his teeth, advancing instead of retreating, waving his steel sword as he charged.

One step... two steps... suddenly, Yuan Yun crouched and leapt high, jumping from the middle-aged man's front to his back. Seizing the moment, Yuan Yun swung back with a strike, yet the middle-aged man's response was swift. He already had the saber raised above his head, blocking the attack.

Even though one strike failed, Yuan Yun wasn't disheartened, launching strike after strike like a continuous tide, his Sword Force surging, momentum increasing. After over ten strikes, the middle-aged man's steps began to slowly retreat, a hint of surprise in his eyes. At this moment, he clearly felt that Yuan Yun's Sword Force was growing stronger, with each strike overpowering the last, as if his force could accumulate.

This transformation added a hint of gravity to the middle-aged man's stern face. Seeing Yuan Yun's offensive gaining strength, the middle-aged man's eyes bulged, and he let out a loud roar. Then, his Sword Force changed, completely disregarding Yuan Yun's attack, swinging directly at Yuan Yun's shoulder.

Seeing this, the onlookers couldn't help but exclaim in shock. This man was too bold, abandoning defense like that—did he intend mutual destruction?

At that moment, Qiu Yong and the others all stood up from their seats, their eyes riveted on the two in the arena.

If Yuan Yun didn't retreat, both would be executed by the opponent's steel sword. But, if Yuan Yun retreated, the Sword Force he painstakingly accumulated would dissipate instantly. Once the opponent was prepared, he would be unlikely to find such a good attack opportunity again.

At this moment, almost everyone's gaze was fixed on Yuan Yun. Everyone wanted to know, what choice would Yuan Yun make? His choice would decide the outcome of this duel.

As everyone held their breath, only Xu Ming's attention was on Su He. At this juncture, does the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, as the judge, not intend to intervene?

Chapter 1255 - 1563: Duel (3)

"Third brother!" Xia Yue, unable to hold her composure, couldn't help but shout out.

However, Yuan Yun in the center of the arena seemed not to hear Xia Yue's shout; his attention was entirely focused on his opponent. Seeing that his opponent had no intention of stopping, Yuan Yun gritted his teeth and abandoned the thought of holding back. His opponent wasn't afraid to die, and neither was he.

With a downward slash, Yuan Yun's wrist trembled slightly, and the steel blade that was originally aimed at his opponent's shoulder suddenly shifted horizontally towards the middle-aged man's neck. Striking the shoulder wouldn't necessarily be fatal, at most it would result in the loss of an arm. However, if the head were to be chopped off, not even the gods could save you.

This subtle action by Yuan Yun immediately took everyone by surprise. However, amidst their surprise, there was also a strong sense of admiration.

When others are ruthless, you must be even more ruthless!

"Stop!" At this critical moment, a voice finally came from the stands. Almost simultaneously, Yuan Yun and the middle-aged man withdrew their blades and retreated to the side.

After a brief moment of bewilderment, the audience finally came to their senses and turned their eyes towards Su He on the stands.

"Elder Su, you are the referee. Who do you think is the winner of this duel?" someone shouted loudly.

Su He smiled faintly, "It was a brilliant match, both contestants performed well. However, if we talk about victory and defeat, they are both slightly lacking, so I believe declaring a draw is the fairest decision."

Upon hearing these words, the crowd began to discuss among themselves. Some agreed with Su He's decision, while others were dissatisfied. It was obvious to the clear-eyed spectators that the middle-aged man's final move was a result of desperation, meant to force Yuan Yun back due to his inability to withstand Yuan Yun's assault; nonetheless, Yuan Yun wasn't buying it and instead intensified his attack.

If those two slashes had landed, Yuan Yun would undoubtedly have been the victor, while the middle-aged man would have faced certain death. Therefore, some people felt that Su He's judgment was unfair. A grandmaster from the Heavenly List couldn't possibly miss something so apparent to so many.

He Ziyun remarked with a displeased expression, "Elder Su, isn't this decision unfair? Our contestant from the Dragon Tiger Hall was clearly in the lead, so why declare a draw?"

Su He replied indifferently, "Martial arts duels are ever-changing. Having the upper hand at one moment doesn't mean it will last, and it is very likely that the next moment he could be killed by his opponent. Such situations aren't rare, so it's not enough to determine the result based on temporary advantage. Master He, if you think my judgment is flawed, you may ask everyone present. If everyone believes my judgment is wrong, I'll immediately correct it. What do you think?"

"You..."

"Mr. He, let it go!" Qiu Yong gripped He Ziyun's sleeve and whispered, "Su He is clearly biased, but we can't fight that. Regardless, a draw is better than a defeat, and we still have chances to win."

He Ziyun took a deep breath, slowly calming his inner anger, and nodded, "Don't worry, I won't act rashly."

While speaking, Yuan Yun had already stepped down from the arena. Seeing him panting heavily, Qiu Yong patted his shoulder and said, "Well done."

"Big brother, Mr. He, I'm sorry, I let you down." Yuan Yun felt very apologetic. They could have won this match, but it ended in a draw, and he was unwilling to let it go.

"It's okay, it's not your fault, the blame lies with the treacherous ones from the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion." After a pause, Qiu Yong asked, "Third brother, I've never seen you use that blade technique before."

"That's a technique I recently comprehended. Didn't the sixth brother ask each of us to choose a martial arts manual best suited for ourselves? That's it. Unfortunately, I was just a bit shy of defeating my opponent."

Upon hearing this, Qiu Yong and others realized the situation.

"Elder Qiu, we have the first move in the third round. Who do you think is most suitable?" He Ziyun asked.

Qiu Yong looked at their members. Xu Ming and Yuan Yun had already participated, and the remaining candidates were himself, Zhang Zhongfeng, and Xia Yue. Xia Yue's strength was too weak, unsuitable for the arena. As for Zhang Zhongfeng... Qiu Yong pondered for a while and then excluded him.

Zhang Zhongfeng was reputed as Huaxia's number one archer, indeed formidable, but his skillset was too singular and would easily be targeted. Besides, the opponents from the Martial Arts Academy came prepared, surely equipped to handle him. After much contemplation, Qiu Yong felt that he was probably the most suitable candidate.

"Mr. He, if there's no other option, I'll have to step in."

"You?" He Ziyun was slightly taken aback and immediately refused, "No way! You can't go on now; it's not yet your time to make a move."

"Mr. He, let Big Brother go." Xu Ming chimed in, "The contestants, as you can see, are very skilled, far from ordinary. If we switch to Fourth and Fifth siblings, the chances of winning are minimal. Apart from Big Brother having the capability to fight, the others' hope is very slim."

"But... if we send Elder Qiu now, who will go next time?"

Qiu Yong thought for a moment and asked, "Mr. He, is there still no contact with the sixth brother?"

"I called him, but there was no answer," He Ziyun sighed lightly, "Ling Chen might not make it back in time, we can't pin all our hopes on him now."

"Big brother, why don't you let me give it a shot?" Zhang Zhongfeng volunteered, "Currently, our record is one win and one draw. Even losing one round isn't too much of a setback."

Qiu Yong couldn't decide, so he turned to the others and asked, "Do any of you have better suggestions?"

"Everyone, you might have overlooked something very important." Xu Ming spoke slowly, "In the next two duels, we must win both to have a chance at victory. If we lose even one, we are defeated."

Upon hearing this, everyone immediately understood Xu Ming's point. The first four duels were fought by members of the Dragon Tiger Hall and the Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy, with the final match being a contest between the hall masters. Now with Tong Zhentian unconscious, the Dragon Tiger Hall couldn't find anyone to match Chen Quan. There was still Ji Gang, but he wasn't considered an option.

Ji Gang was just a puppet without his own consciousness, severely limited in strength. Whether he could defeat Chen Quan was uncertain. Furthermore, if Ji Gang were to be discovered by the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, Su He wouldn't show mercy. After all, when Ji Gang was still with the God Organization, he once launched an attack on the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, causing it significant losses. Given the vengeful nature of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, they wouldn't spare Ji Gang. Therefore, Ji Gang couldn't go on stage.

With these considerations, everyone found themselves in a dilemma.

"What's wrong, is the Dragon Tiger Hall unable to send anyone else?" A slightly mocking voice came, focusing everyone's attention on Qiu Yong and his group.

Chapter 1256 - 1564: Duel (Part 4)

"I'm going!" Qiu Yong no longer hesitated and strode into the center of the arena, looking coldly at the people from the Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy.

Seeing Qiu Yong enter the arena, a peculiar smile appeared on the faces of Chen Quan and others. "You, go ahead." Chen Quan gestured, and a middle-aged man immediately walked onto the stage without a word. This middle-aged man was very strong, standing at 1.85 meters tall, with muscles bulging all over as if bursting with explosive power.

The appearance of the middle-aged man immediately piqued the intense interest of the audience. Everyone knew that Qiu Yong, as the leader of the Eight Oddities, was best skilled in cross training. Judging by the physique of this man sent by the Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy, his path seemed similar to Qiu Yong's. Therefore, this battle was sure to be exceptionally exciting.

"Qiu Yong, please enlighten me!" Qiu Yong made a polite gesture. Although both parties were adversaries, Qiu Yong still maintained the proper demeanor and courtesy in the martial arts ring.

However, the opponent showed no intention of returning the courtesy, instead staring coldly at Qiu Yong with a slightly cruel smile.

"Old man, I advise you to get off now and spare yourself the embarrassment. I'm afraid you won't be able to withstand my punch," the middle-aged man mocked.

Qiu Yong remained unfazed and replied faintly, "That's my business, you don't need to worry. Come on, don't waste time, let me see how capable you are." As soon as the words fell, the middle-aged man burst into laughter, took big strides, and charged directly at Qiu Yong.

The speed of the middle-aged man was neither fast nor slow. With his body, if he could still move quickly, there wouldn't be many who could match him. Seeing the opponent rush over, Qiu Yong lightly

touched his toes and gently tapped his opponent's shoulders with his hands. Using the force from the middle-aged man, Qiu Yong's body flew away instantly, landing at the edge of the arena.

Qiu Yong's move was just a way to test his opponent's strength and take advantage of the middle-aged man's power to move away, so he wasn't injured.

After an unsuccessful attack, the middle-aged man did not hesitate and charged again. As before, Qiu Yong still did not confront him directly but relied on agile movement to dodge the opponent's charge.

The continuous evasions drew booing from the audience. Everyone expected an exciting duel, but Qiu Yong's persistent retreat was disappointing. Since both trained cross training, naturally, they should engage in hand-to-hand and foot-to-foot combat; that's what would be interesting.

Despite the booing around him, Qiu Yong acted as if he hadn't heard it, continuing to focus on his opponent. This battle was crucial for the Dragon Tiger Hall, so what he needed to do was not satisfy the audience but to be cautious and strive for victory.

At this moment, the middle-aged man stopped and looked at Qiu Yong, saying, "Old man, are you fighting or not? It's shameful for the leader of the Eight Oddities to be so cowardly. If you don't want to spar with me, then get off quickly and stop wasting everyone's time. Isn't that right?" He asked the audience with his last sentence.

Qiu Yong frowned slightly and said in a deep voice, "How I choose to fight is my business, and it's none of your concern."

"Jiang Qing, stop wasting words and start fighting," urged Chen Quan from the stands.

The middle-aged man named Jiang Qing nodded and walked towards Qiu Yong again. As Jiang Qing approached step by step, Qiu Yong let out a light shout, suddenly quickening his pace and swiftly charging towards his opponent. In the blink of an eye, Qiu Yong was already close to Jiang Qing. "Good move!" Jiang Qing shouted, throwing a punch.

Facing the strong steel fist, Qiu Yong did not retreat but raised his fist to collide with the opponent's.

Bam!

Instantly, the two fists collided fiercely, producing a dull sound. At the same time, Qiu Yong's expression slightly changed, his feet moving half an inch backward. Although the movement was small, it surprised the Dragon Tiger Hall members. Everyone knew Qiu Yong's strength well, having practiced cross training for years. Moreover, with support from others, his skill level had long broken into the Earthly List. Now, being pushed back by an unknown figure left them astonished.

At this moment, the Dragon Tiger Hall members were incredibly worried. They initially thought Qiu Yong would secure this match, but now, it seemed much harder than anticipated.

While everyone was worrying about Qiu Yong, he and Jiang Qing had already clashed over ten times, every time with Jiang Qing having the upper hand in power. If this continued, Qiu Yong would be suppressed sooner or later. Fortunately, Qiu Yong was not a novice; having lived for so many years, his combat experience was the most abundant.

Given the opponent's strength advantage, he couldn't continue direct confrontation; otherwise, he would lose out. As the punch came, Qiu Yong slid his feet, dodging frontally and quickly moving to the opponent's back. Without waiting for Jiang Qing's reaction, Qiu Yong seized the opportunity and punched at the opponent's back.

Bam!

Fist met flesh, and the members of Dragon Tiger Hall rejoiced. With a successful strike, Jiang Qing would surely fall behind. However, looking at the Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy people, they remained calm and unrestrained, unmoved by the situation on stage, as if everything was under their control.

At this moment, Qiu Yong's eyes brightened slightly, quickly retracting his fist and preparing for a second attack. However, this punch was blocked by Jiang Qing's hands. Only to see Jiang Qing's fingers firmly gripping Qiu Yong's fist, making it impossible to move forward or backward. After several attempts, Qiu Yong's expression changed. He was shocked to find Jiang Qing's strength had unexpectedly grown stronger, completely suppressing him.

This... how is this possible? Qiu Yong looked at Jiang Qing incredulously; had he been concealing his power all along?

As he pondered, he heard Jiang Qing's satisfied laughter. "Old man, this is all you've got? You're too weak. I told you to get off quickly, but you insisted on staying. Since that's the case, you'll pay the price." With these words, Jiang Qing's arm suddenly pulled hard, drawing Qiu Yong nearer.

Seeing this, Qiu Yong resolutely abandoned defense and went all out on the offensive. With a Mountain Collapse, his shoulder and elbow fiercely slammed into Jiang Qing's body. Instantaneously, a thud was heard, and Jiang Qing's legs flew off the ground, falling heavily.

"Good!" He Ziyun and others in the audience couldn't help but shout after witnessing this scene, finally relieved.

"This match is almost certain now." Xia Yue said with a smile.

Yuan Yun chimed in, "Luckily our big brother is in the match, otherwise it would be hard for anyone else to win."

"Don't celebrate too early." At this point, Xu Ming's voice came from the seating area.

Chapter 1257 - 1565: Duel (5)

"Second brother, that Jiang Qing is already injured, doesn't big brother stand a chance to win?" Xia Yue asked.

Xu Ming shook his head and didn't respond, but the worry in his eyes showed he didn't have high hopes for this match. At this moment, everyone's eyes were focused on Jiang Qing. After being repelled by Qiu Yong's Mountain Collapse technique, Jiang Qing lay flat on the ground in a 'big' shape, showing no sign of movement for quite some time. Some began to whisper, wondering if Jiang Qing had fainted.

While everyone was whispering, Jiang Qing suddenly sat up from the ground. Immediately after, he grinned and began laughing heartily, as if he were enjoying himself immensely.

Standing up, Jiang Qing patted his chest and laughed loudly, saying, "That was satisfying. Let's continue!" With that, Jiang Qing pushed off the ground with his toes, charging toward Qiu Yong like a raging bull. Seeing this, Qiu Yong attempted to repeat his previous strategy, shifting positions to avoid Jiang Qing's rush. However, Jiang Qing seemed to anticipate his move and suddenly redirected his charge, locking onto Qiu Yong's new position.

Qiu Yong's eyes narrowed, attempting to shift again. But before he could move, Jiang Qing accelerated, his speed doubling from before, closing the distance between them.

With no way to avoid it, Qiu Yong had no choice but to meet it head-on. He crossed his hands and pushed forward, attempting to block Jiang Qing's head. Yet, feeling the strong power emanating from Jiang Qing, Qiu Yong's expression suddenly changed. Before he could react, Jiang Qing's head broke through his hands, colliding with his abdomen.

Instantly, a surge of pain hit Qiu Yong, and his body flew backwards, landing further away. Before he landed, he caught sight of a blur — Jiang Qing had charged at him again. Still airborne, with no support from his feet, Qiu Yong was helpless against Jiang Qing's rush, barely managing to kick toward Jiang Qing's head with his right foot for leverage, propelling himself upwards once more.

Watching Qiu Yong soar into the air, Jiang Qing suddenly halted, a triumphant smile playing on his lips.

"I declare Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy the winner of this match," Su He's voice echoed throughout the gymnasium just as Qiu Yong's feet touched the ground.

Lost? Qiu Yong was slightly stunned — how was this possible? He hadn't been defeated; why was he declared the loser? Just as he was about to argue, his gaze was drawn to the white line at his feet.

This is... Qiu Yong's heart sank, immediately realizing the situation. He was out — according to the match rules, if one side steps out of bounds, they are declared the loser. The area of the arena was twenty by twenty meters, under normal circumstances one rarely steps out of bounds. However, under Jiang Qing's continuous assaults, Qiu Yong had been propelled over ten meters, landing beyond the white line.

Thinking about this, Qiu Yong couldn't help but sigh in frustration. He had aimed to win this round with all his strength, unexpected loss left him feeling aggrieved.

Back at the Dragon Tiger Hall's seating, everyone's mood was dejected. However, regardless of the outcome, Qiu Yong's failure wasn't deliberate, and he couldn't be blamed. He Ziyun voluntarily walked over to Qiu Yong, patted his shoulder, offering comfort, "Elder Qiu, you did your best, we still have a chance."

"Sorry, I was careless."

"Big brother, there's no need to apologize. Even if there hadn't been any unexpected incidents, you couldn't have matched him head-on. This battle, whatever the conditions, you had no chance of winning."

Upon hearing Xu Ming's voice, everyone was taken aback. Xia Yue exclaimed, "Second brother, big brother clearly injured Jiang Qing. If he had held on a little longer, Jiang Qing surely would have lost."

"Really?" Xu Ming replied indifferently, "That's just wishful thinking. The technique Jiang Qing practices seems unusual; if I'm not mistaken, it's a skill that harms oneself before others. Big brother's attack didn't affect him. On the contrary, the stronger the attack, the greater the pain he endures, enhancing Jiang Qing's strength. Big brother must have felt this during the confrontation."

Qiu Yong thought for a moment, nodding, "That's true, I assumed he was holding back his strength."

"So, under such circumstances, big brother's chance of winning was very slim. In a way, losing may be better to avoid sustaining serious injury."

"What do we do now?" Yuan Yun asked, "Big brother, second brother, we've already lost one match. If we don't win all upcoming matches, we're finished."

Upon hearing this, everyone fell into silence. Qiu Yong, Xu Ming, Yuan Yun, the three had already competed, yielding one win, one loss, and one draw. He Ziyun was certainly going to compete, but his opponent would be Chen Quan. It's evident that their match has no suspense, with Chen Quan sure to win. Thus, they must aim for another win to level the score with their opponents. As for what happens after, they'd rather not consider it for now.

"Next is the fourth match, please Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy send your competitor," Su He's voice announced, prompting a middle-aged man in his thirties to step forward, awaiting Dragon Tiger Hall to send their challenger.

He Ziyun studied the middle-aged man on the field, asking solemnly, "Who do you think should compete?"

Qiu Yong glanced at Zhang Zhongfeng beside him, sighing, "Let the fourth brother go. He's the only suitable choice left."

The others nodded in agreement. Zhang Zhongfeng silently picked up his bow and arrow, preparing to compete. Just then, He Ziyun received a phone call. It was brief, only lasting seconds before he hung up.

"Mr. He, what's the matter?" Yuan Yun asked.

"Nothing." With that, He Ziyun moved to the center of the arena. Seeing this, Chen Quan teased, "Master He, it's not your turn to fight me yet, are you eager to lose?"

"He knows he'll lose anyway, so it's better to finish the fight and go home quickly rather than stay and be embarrassed," quipped the Martial Arts Academy folks.

He Ziyun, unfazed by their ridicule, spoke to himself, "Master Chen, I wish to raise the stakes a bit, what do you think?"

"Raise the stakes?" The crowd, along with Chen Quan and his team, were momentarily stunned. Observers could clearly see that Dragon Tiger Hall was destined to lose with no winning potential. Yet, knowing he'd lose, He Ziyun wanted to raise the stakes — what was he planning? Could it be... he had an ace up his sleeve?

Chapter 1258 - 1566: Raising the Stakes

Facing the crowd's lively discussion, Chen Quan stared at what He Ziyun was doing in the arena, his eyes flickering as if hesitating over something. After a while, he asked, "Master He, you want to raise the stakes, what exactly is it?"

"As everyone knows, Dragon Tiger Hall possesses rich heritage accumulated over time, which is a very rare treasure. So, I would like to put up ten lost Martial Arts manuals as a stake. What do you think, Master Chen?"

Ten lost Martial Arts manuals? For a moment, everyone in the audience was shocked, eyes gleaming. If someone else had proposed these stakes, no one might believe them. However, Dragon Tiger Hall is different from other forces; it truly has this heritage. Back when Dragon Tiger Hall first opened, they presented a few lost Martial Arts manuals.

Regarding He Ziyun's proposal, Chen Quan was lost in thought. Undeniably, He Ziyun's proposal was indeed tempting. Ten lost Martial Arts manuals represent vast wealth for martial artists. While pondering, Chen Quan subtly glanced at Su He in the stands, their eyes meeting, with the latter gently shaking his head.

Understanding Su He's intentions, Chen Quan cursed inwardly. Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion also possesses such heritage, so they don't care about those Martial Arts manuals. He had no choice; Su He was in charge now, and he had to comply. After thinking it over, Chen Quan said, "Master He, though your stakes are alluring, unfortunately, I'm not very interested, so... let's continue with the duel."

"What, you think the stakes aren't enough?" He Ziyun nodded, "Alright, since you think it's insufficient, I'll raise the stakes further, wager the entire Dragon Tiger Hall; are you interested?"

Upon hearing this, Chen Quan was shocked.

"Master He, are you sure you're not joking?"

"Do I look like I'm joking?"

"This..." Chen Quan hesitated. He was tempted by the ten lost Martial Arts manuals, but since Su He was indifferent, he had to let it go. But now, it's different; He Ziyun wants to wager the entire Dragon Tiger Hall, which is incomparable to the ten Martial Arts manuals.

He glanced at Su He in the stands; the latter was also pondering. He Ziyun's proposal had already intrigued him. However, the main reason they hadn't decided was He Ziyun's hidden card. In the current

situation, Dragon Tiger Hall had almost no chance of winning. In such a case, He Ziyun's proposal seemed bizarre. It was unclear whether He Ziyun was despairing or truly held an ace up his sleeve.

Not only Su He and Chen Quan but even Qiu Yong and others were astonished by He Ziyun's proposal. Since the beginning of the duel, He Ziyun hadn't discussed this with them; it was entirely his own decision. What... is he trying to do?

"Brother, what is Mr. He trying to do?" Xia Yue said urgently, "Knowing he's bound to lose, yet he does this, does he want to hand over the entire Dragon Tiger Hall to others?"

Yuan Yun said solemnly, "Mr. He intends to betray Ling Cheng. Brother, we must stop him."

Qiu Yong shook his head, saying, "Don't act impulsively, we all know what kind of man Mr. He is, and Ling Cheng knows him the longest. I believe Mr. He wouldn't do anything against Ling Chen. He must have his reasons for doing this. Let's not rush and observe the situation first."

After a few minutes of consideration, Su He finally decided, nodding to Chen Quan.

"Alright, I accept your proposal," Chen Quan said.

"Then... if you lose, what will you wager?" He Ziyun said, "I'm wagering the entire Dragon Tiger Hall; you need to have equivalent stakes."

"I'll wager the entire Martial Arts Academy; how does Master He feel about that?"

"Master Chen, do you think that's fair? The wealth of Dragon Tiger Hall is well-known, what does your Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy have? Aside from a valuable Martial Arts Academy, is there anything else? If you want to bet, at least show some sincerity."

Chen Quan was speechless for a moment; he couldn't produce a stake that would satisfy He Ziyun. Unless Su He took charge, otherwise, he didn't know how to respond. As he was pondering, suddenly his phone rang in his pocket. Taking out his phone and reading the message on the screen, Chen Quan was secretly surprised; Su He indeed had extravagant plans.

After organizing his words, Chen Quan said, "Master He, I don't have the heritage of Dragon Tiger Hall. How about this: I exchange ten properties; what do you think?"

He Ziyun pondered for a moment, then said, "Alright. However, I need to know the value of those properties, to see if they're worth gambling the entire Dragon Tiger Hall."

"Okay." With that, Chen Quan looked at Su He. The latter immediately said, "Since both sides want to raise the stakes, let's suspend the duel until everything is confirmed." After saying that, Su He stood up with Wang Hao and others, leaving the stands and heading towards the lounge.

Meanwhile, people from Dragon Tiger Hall and Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy also returned to their respective lounges.

Upon entering the lounge, Yuan Yun couldn't hold back his curiosity and asked, "Mr. He, what's going on, why are you doing this?"

He Ziyun smiled faintly, "Everyone, please calm down. I understand your feelings, but trust me, I would never do anything that harms the interests of Dragon Tiger Hall."

Upon hearing this, Zhang Zhongfeng seemed to understand something and responded, "Mr. He, do you have an ace up your sleeve?"

"To be honest, I don't know either. Now, we can only hope for a miracle."

At the moment, in another lounge, Chen Quan and Su He were discussing in low voices.

"Don't you find it strange that He Ziyun suddenly proposed to raise the stakes? I'm wondering if he's setting a trap for us."

"Are you scared?" Su He said indifferently, "Ling Chen is dead, Tong Zhentian is injured, Dragon Tiger Hall's two main pillars have fallen; what else are you afraid of? Even if He Ziyun has other tricks, so

what? I've given you so many resources; can't you handle this duel? Chen Quan, if you can't even manage this, then you have no value at all."

Chen Quan was inwardly furious, almost wanting to explode at that moment. However, considering his situation, he had to suppress his anger and said sternly, "Rest assured, I won't mess this up." Pausing for a moment, Chen Quan shifted his tone and asked, "How long until those documents arrive?"

Su He checked the time and said, "If nothing unexpected happens, about an hour. Just wait!"

Chapter 1259 - 1567: Tie

After an hour and a half, the people from Dragon Tiger Hall, Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy, and the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion returned to the gymnasium.

"Master He, here are the documents you requested, please have a look." Chen Quan handed a folder to He Ziyun. Looking at the documents inside, He Ziyun nodded slightly and said, "Very good, it's all in order."

The value of these ten properties is extremely high, and some are unobtainable even with money. It's easy to guess that these properties must be assets of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. Even for the wealthy Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, these properties are very precious. If they didn't have absolute confidence in winning this match, they certainly wouldn't be so generous as to use these properties as stakes. "Master He, since everything's in order, shall we begin?"

"No problem." With that, He Ziyun turned and returned to his seat in the Dragon Tiger Hall section, waiting for the Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy to send someone to the stage.

Chen Quan seemed to have already made a decision as a middle-aged man in his forties stood at the edge of the arena, ready to enter. Walking to the center, the middle-aged man clasped his hands, saluting all those present.

"Master He, it's now your turn to send someone from Dragon Tiger Hall," Su He said casually.

He Ziyun smiled slightly, "Elder Su, don't worry. Dragon Tiger Hall never disappoints." As he finished speaking, a tall and slender young man, wearing a harmless smile, strode out from the aisle of the gymnasium.

"Sorry to keep you all waiting, I'll be representing in this duel."

As the other party's voice rang out, everyone focused their attention on the young man.

"That's... that's Ling Chen, the vice hall master of Dragon Tiger Hall."

"This guy finally showed up. I was just wondering why he hadn't appeared yet when such a big event happened at Dragon Tiger Hall."

"Hmph! So what if he showed up, Dragon Tiger Hall will still lose. Does he think he can change the outcome of this match?" Someone scoffed at Ling Chen's arrival, thinking it was a waste of time.

As Ling Chen appeared in the aisle, Chen Quan, Su He, and Wang Hao's pupils slightly shrank, with a hint of disbelief in their expressions.

This... how is this possible? Isn't he dead? Why is he here?

Wang Hao rubbed his eyes hard, believing it was all an illusion. It was impossible for Ling Chen to be here. But, no matter how much he refused to believe it, Ling Chen was indeed real. Su He squinted, examining Ling Chen as he walked, a cold gleam flashing in his murky old eyes.

Entering the center of the arena, Ling Chen waved to Qiu Yong and the others. From start to finish, his gaze never strayed towards the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion's position.

"Sorry for the wait," Ling Chen smiled slightly, looking at his opponent, "There's no time to lose, let's start right away."

"Mr. He, you kept this secret from us," Yuan Yun said helplessly. "If you had told us earlier that Sixth Brother was coming back, we wouldn't have worried so much."

He Ziyun smiled apologetically, "I wasn't sure if he could make it back in time. Earlier, he called and told me to try to delay things. I thought about it a lot and realized the only way was to increase the stakes to attract the interest of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, thereby buying some time."

"So you used the entire Dragon Tiger Hall as a wager?" Qiu Yong chimed in, "Since Sixth Brother is back, this match shouldn't be a problem, but the key is the final match. Who will face Chen Quan then?"

"Well..." He Ziyun glanced at Ling Chen on the stage and said, "I think Ling Chen should have a solution."

As they spoke, the battle on the ground began. The middle-aged man facing Ling Chen showed no courtesy, opting for a direct aggressive approach. As for Ling Chen... he seemed the most at ease. No matter how fierce the opponent's attack, Ling Chen maintained the fastest movement speed. With the guidance of the Nine Yang Qiankun Step, his body was like a gust of wind, rapidly changing positions, so much so that the opponent couldn't even touch his sleeve.

Seeing the situation on the field, Chen Quan and Su He, among others, didn't look pleased. They selected their representatives targeting the weaknesses of Dragon Tiger Hall, be it Zhang Zhongfeng, Yuan Yun, or Qiu Yong. Chen Quan and Su He had meticulously prepared, but Ling Chen was the exception. In their view, Ling Chen was supposed to be dead and wouldn't appear in the arena. Therefore, none of the martial artists chosen had a counter for the Nine Yang Qiankun Step.

As time ticked by, the audience gradually lost interest in the match. So much time had passed, yet the Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy's contender couldn't even touch Ling Chen's sleeve, while Ling Chen moved as though he was leisurely strolling, seemingly toying with his opponent. By this stage in the match, who was stronger and who was weaker was evident. So, the audience no longer held any expectations for the martial artist and just hoped that Ling Chen would swiftly conclude the match to allow for the final exciting showdown.

After a while, Ling Chen got tired of playing and seized an opportunity to close in on the middle-aged man, knocking him to the ground with one punch.

With Su He's voice echoing, Ling Chen secured this round. So far, Dragon Tiger Hall's record stood at two wins, one loss, and one draw. If they won just one more, they would claim the victory title.

"The next battle will be between the hall masters of both sides," Su He stood up, surveying everyone present, and declared, "Please prepare accordingly."

"Elder Su," at this moment, Ling Chen stepped forward and loudly asked, "If this match ends in a victory for Master Chen, then we would be tied. Elder Su, as the judge of this contest, I would like to ask if the result would be a draw, or would we have another match until there's a winner?"

Su He pondered for a moment and said, "In a contest of martial arts, naturally, there should be a decisive winner, especially since both sides have already placed bets. If it ends in a draw, there will be another match."

"Alright," Ling Chen nodded and smiled, "I have no further questions, Elder Su, please proceed."

"Master, it seems Ling Chen intends to forfeit this match, to avoid Chen Quan, and seek a chance to win in the additional match," Wang Hao said.

"His little schemes are obvious to me. Hmph! If that's what he's thinking, he's gravely mistaken. I won't give him that chance."

After a brief rest, the match resumed, with Chen Quan and He Ziyun representing their respective sides. As expected, before the match could begin, He Ziyun conceded in advance, allowing Chen Quan to win without a fight. As such, the score stood at two to two, temporarily tied.

"Alright, let's take a fifteen-minute break. After that, we'll proceed with the additional match," Su He said before leading everyone off the stage.

Chapter 1260 - 1568: Tiebreaker

In the sports hall's rest room, Chen Quan and Su He among others were discussing the match of the final tiebreaker. "The last match is crucial, who do you think it is most appropriate to send out?" Chen Quan asked.

Su He replied, "Right now, I'm not thinking about that. I'm thinking about who Dragon Tiger Hall will send out. At present, both Ling Chen and Qiu Yong have already taken the stage, only Zhang Zhongfeng and a few other nobodies haven't come up. I think Zhang Zhongfeng is most likely. What do you think?"

"Quite possible. However, Ling Chen is quite cunning; we should be careful," Chen Quan paused, then continued, "Even though Tong Zhentian is injured and unconscious, Dragon Tiger Hall still has Ji Gang, and to win, Ling Chen might send him out."

"That won't be necessary." Wang Hao interjected, "Ji Gang is the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion's enemy. As long as Ji Gang dares to show up, we will not let him go. Ling Chen is smart; he will surely not give us the opportunity or reason to cause trouble."

"Alright!" Su He spoke out, "I anticipated many problems in today's match, so I prepared early. Rest assured, the last match is a sure-win, there will be no issues."

A quarter of an hour passed quickly. Soon, personnel from three sides reentered the sports hall through the passageway. As the people from Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion took their seats, the last match officially started. At this moment, everyone from Dragon Tiger Hall focused their attention on the opposite side. They were eager to know who Chen Quan would send to participate in this most important match.

However, Chen Quan remained seated and silent. At this point, a person walked briskly from a passageway in the sports hall. More accurately, it was an elder. The elder walked with vigorous strides, heading straight to the center of the field, saying not a word, and maintaining silence throughout.

The elder's appearance immediately stirred discussions among the audience, speculating about his identity.

"Big brother, have you seen this person before?" Ling Chen asked.

"No." Qiu Yong looked the elder up and down, frowning slightly, "Little brother, I don't know why, but this person gives me a very bad feeling."

"I noticed too," Xu Ming interjected, "This person is very unusual, I suspect... he might very well be a Heavenly List expert."

"Heavenly List expert?" Xu Ming's words shocked everyone. "Second brother, this is no joke, is that person really a Heavenly List expert?"

Xu Ming looked at Xia Yue, who had asked the question, and nodded gently, "Quite possible. Look at Su He and Chen Quan's expressions, they are not worried about this match at all, indicating that they are confident of victory. The only thing that can give them such confidence is a Heavenly List expert."

Saying this, Xu Ming's tone showed a trace of helplessness, "The foundation of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion is too strong. Dragon Tiger Hall is not yet a match. If Dragon Tiger Hall had another ten years to develop, they might be strong enough to contend with the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. Right now... it's too early!"

Hearing this, a trace of despair showed in everyone's eyes. They hadn't expected the other side to have a Heavenly List expert; how could they compete now? Everyone had high hopes for the final battle, but now a Heavenly List expert appeared, shattering all their confidence.

"Little brother, what do we do now?" Yuan Yun asked Ling Chen, "Should we... just concede? No matter who we send up, getting injured is inevitable, there's no need for us to increase our losses."

"Third brother, don't rush; things haven't reached that point yet," Ling Chen said calmly, "I'm rather curious to see just how much hidden strength the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion has."

"Master He, it's your turn to send someone to the stage," hearing Su He's voice, everyone looked at Ling Chen. For now, only Ling Chen could make the decision. Facing everyone's gaze, Ling Chen smiled slightly and said, "We are ready."

After speaking, Ling Chen turned back and shouted to the audience: "Sir Chen, it's your turn to go on."

Immediately, a person leaped up from a back row seat, lightly tapped a few shoulders in the front rows, and landed steadily on the field.

Seeing the contestant sent by Dragon Tiger Hall, Su He's face slightly changed, and he suddenly stood up from the stands.

Noticing Su He's change in expression, Wang Hao asked, "Master, what's wrong?"

"Chen Junfeng!" Su He gritted his teeth and slowly spat out the name, his eyes blazing with intense animosity.

"Chen Junfeng?" Wang Hao was slightly puzzled and asked, "Who is Chen Junfeng?"

"Good, very good." Su He didn't respond to Wang Hao's question, nodding to himself, "Ling Chen is indeed Ling Chen, he always manages to surprise me."

Looking at Chen Junfeng appearing on the field, the audience showed curious expressions. Whether it was the person sent by Dragon and Tiger Martial Arts Academy or the contestant from Dragon Tiger Hall, none of them had seen them before. So, everyone speculated about the identities of these two individuals.

"Chen Junfeng," Chen Junfeng clasped his hands in salute to his opponent.

"Zhu Chuan," the opponent coldly and indifferently uttered his name.

"Everyone." At this moment, Su He announced from the stands, "Please step back twenty meters, do not disrupt the duel between the two Heavenly List experts."

Heavenly List experts? Two of them? Su He's words instantly brightened the eyes of everyone present. In no time, without Su He's urging, everyone got up and stepped back, making a large area for the duel between the two Heavenly List experts.

"Little brother, where did you find this Heavenly List expert?" Xia Yue asked curiously.

Ling Chen replied with a smile, "I was lucky to meet Sir Chen while recuperating." Saying this, Ling Chen turned to Qiu Yong and asked, "Big brother, you and Sir Chen are of similar age; you should have heard of his name in your younger days, right?"

"I have some impression, but I can't recall clearly."

"Since we also have a Heavenly List expert participating, the outcome of this match is now fifty-fifty, we still have a great chance." He Ziyun breathed a sigh of relief. The entire Dragon Tiger Hall was at stake; if they really lost, even if Ling Chen and the others didn't blame him, he would find it hard to forgive himself.

After a while, when the area was completely cleared, the duel between the two Heavenly List experts officially began.

Chen Junfeng stood quietly in place, not striking in advance but carefully observing his opponent. Similarly, Zhu Chuan did not move. Heavenly List experts differ from other masters; without a certain assurance, they won't recklessly make a move. At most, they tentatively test before showing their real skills.

A minute or two passed, Chen Junfeng took steps forward, walking a couple of steps. However, he didn't head directly towards Zhu Chuan but circled around him, slowly moving as he sought an opening to strike.

Suddenly, Zhu Chuan, who had been standing still, tapped his toes lightly and instantly turned into a shadow, disappearing from his original spot.