

The Beauty 741

Chapter 741 The Final Showdown (2)

Ling Chen wiped the blood from the corner of his mouth, gasping for air heavily, trying to alleviate the pain in his body.

When his breath became smooth, Ling Chen stared straight at Wang Hao in front of him, with a flicker in his eye, seemingly deep in thought. In fact, there was no need for him to suffer so much. As long as he agreed to Wang Hao's terms and admitted defeat willingly, he could easily obtain the Nine Elements Pill and then rescue his father, Ling Kun, from Ji Gang's grasp.

Before the start of the martial arts competition, Wang Hao had mentioned asking Ling Chen to deliver the Nine Elements Pill to Su He as a gift for becoming his disciple. Whether Su He would agree was another matter. By then, Ling Chen could completely take the Nine Elements Pill to save his father.

However, Ling Chen couldn't bring himself to do such a thing, nor did he want to accept someone else's kindness for nothing.

Su He allowing him to attend the grand event at Yangxin Pavilion and giving him the opportunity to compete for the Nine Elements Pill was already extremely challenging, and he didn't want to trouble Su He further. Besides, there was another important reason; he did not wish to lose face for himself and Su He.

Even if he was to lose, he would do so with dignity. Furthermore, the contempt in Wang Hao's tone and demeanor irked Ling Chen. From Wang Hao's words and behavior, Ling Chen could feel that even though Wang Hao was polite, he didn't take him seriously at all.

Of course, as a high-ranking fighter on the Earthly List, Wang Hao indeed had the right to look down on him.

But as a peer, Ling Chen could not stand being underestimated. Hence, even if he didn't fight for Su He's honor today, he would fight for his own.

"Still want to continue?" Wang Hao looked at Ling Chen, who remained silent, and shook his head: "Your strength is far inferior to mine, even if I fought you with one hand tied, you still couldn't beat me. As you are now, you're not qualified to be my opponent."

Upon hearing this, Ling Chen struggled to lift the corners of his mouth into a faint smile as he struggled to stand up from the ground, then patted the dust off his clothes with his hand.

Seeing the smile bloom on Ling Chen's handsome face, everyone was stunned, their expressions filled with puzzlement.

Has the guy been knocked silly by Wang Hao? To still be able to smile at a time like this, could it be due to the verbal blows from Wang Hao that he laughed out of sheer rage?

While everyone was speculating, Wang Hao slightly furrowed his brows and directly asked: "What are you laughing at?"

"Nothing much. Can't one even smile? Regardless, it's always better to smile than to cry, right?"

"You still refuse to admit defeat?"

"It's too early to admit defeat now."

As he spoke, Ling Chen reached into his clothes and pulled out a small wine gourd.

Wine gourd?

The crowd scrutinized the wine gourd in Ling Chen's hands, slightly taken aback. Then, as if someone had sparked a thought, their gazes shifted from Ling Chen to Du Kang in the stands.

Everyone knew that Du Kang was virtually never without his wine gourd; now that Ling Chen pulled out a wine gourd, it led everyone to subconsciously associate it with Du Kang. Could it be... Ling Chen still had a trick up his sleeve?

While they pondered, they saw Ling Chen on the stage uncork the wine gourd and drink directly from it, taking huge gulps.

It didn't take long for all the wine in the gourd to be consumed.

Ling Chen tossed away the empty wine gourd, his pale face instantly flushing red, with steam rising from his head.

Uh!

Probably from drinking too much, Ling Chen let out a burp, his face flush with drunkenness, his feet seemingly losing strength, and his body swaying from side to side.

This is... Seeing the change in Ling Chen, the crowd seemed to have guessed something, their eyes filled with surprise.

Su Mei, Yang Zhe, Yang Tao, Du Kang, and the others looked at Ling Chen with his red face from drinking and their expressions changed slightly; they all stood up, a hint of concern in their brows.

"This kid...why did he drink it all at once?" Du Kang muttered to himself.

Before the competition began, Du Kang mentioned that this fight was very dangerous for Ling Chen. If he did not use some tricks, Ling Chen probably wouldn't last long. Thus, he had Yang Tao give Ling Chen a gourd filled with specially made strong liquor to keep as a contingency.

However, the amount of strong liquor in that gourd was not small; it was enough for three uses, yet Ling Chen drank it all in one go.

This strong liquor was brewed by Du Kang himself, and he was very aware of its effects. Being drunk all at once by Ling Chen, it was uncertain whether his body could withstand it.

Alas! This kid... really is too impulsive.

At this moment, as the alcoholic strength surged, Ling Chen felt a rush of heat in his body, boiling hot as if there was a raging flame burning inside him, every part of his body ached unbearably.

Damn!

It seems he drank too much.

Ling Chen gave a self-mocking smile.

He thought that the gourd Yang Tao gave him was just one serving, but only after drinking did he realize it was definitely more than that. Now, the blazing fire was causing his internal organs immense pain, and he wished he could just find some water to drink to relieve the discomfort.

But there was no water to drink at this time, and with no other choice, Ling Chen could only rely on his willpower to endure it fiercely.

Although his body suffered unbearable pain from the burning, it was not without benefits. He had been injured consecutively by Wang Hao, and his whole body was in unbearable pain. But now, under the influence of the strong liquor, despite feeling uncomfortable, he no longer felt any pain, as if all the pain had been erased from his body.

Ling Chen was clear in his heart, the pain hadn't disappeared; it was merely suppressed by the alcohol and he simply couldn't feel it.

At this moment, everyone's eyes were wide open, staring at Ling Chen on the stage with his face flushed red.

This is... This is Du Kang's secret technique!

Anyone with a bit of insight recognized it immediately.

For a time, everyone's gaze collectively turned to Du Kang. They all knew, Du Kang only had one official disciple, Yang Tao, and would never teach his skills to outsiders, let alone his secret techniques.

However, Ling Chen was not only Su He's disciple, but he also enjoyed the special care of Du Kang, a kind of treatment not just anyone could have.

With the support of two Heavenly List masters behind him, Ling Chen's fortune was indeed considerable.

Wang Hao stared at Ling Chen's crimson face, his brows unconsciously furrowed, and his expression revealed a trace of cold severity.

He couldn't understand, what virtues and abilities did this guy possess, that he could receive the favor of two Heavenly List masters. In terms of talent, aptitude, and strength, in what way was he inferior to Ling Chen. Not to mention Ling Chen, among the many disciples of Yangxin Pavilion, which one could compare to him.

But why, why couldn't such an outstanding individual like him gain the favor of others.

Thinking of this, Wang Hao felt a surge of anger rising from the bottom of his heart.

Today, he would let everyone know that he, Wang Hao, was the most outstanding, the most formidable talent, and only he deserved the favor of the Heavenly List masters.

"Not good!"

Although far away, Du Kang's eyes sharpened. From Wang Hao's expression, he could tell the other had become angry.

Chapter 742 The Final Showdown (3)

This is the final bout, without the many rules of the previous advancement matches. In order to fight for the ultimate victory, everyone will display their full strengths, applying all their skills. At that time, accidental injuries are inevitable.

Therefore, the rules for the last battle are relatively simple, as long as the opponent's life is not endangered. So when Du Kang saw the angry expression on Wang Hao's face, he knew Ling Chen was in trouble.

During the previous bouts, although Wang Hao had used all his strength, he still held back a little, not injuring Ling Chen too severely. But judging from the current situation, Ling Chen is probably not going to have an easy time.

In the midst of his thoughts, Wang Hao took a step forward on the stage and charged towards Ling Chen.

With the Shattered Leaf Step unfolding, Wang Hao's body, swept by a gust of breeze, instantly closed the distance to Ling Chen. His open palm turned into a fist and slammed hard towards Ling Chen's chest.

As the fist wind neared, Ling Chen's face turned red as he bellowed out loud, his breath hot, and he smashed his steel-like fist hard to meet Wang Hao's fist.

Bang!

The two fists collided heavily, immediately emitting a dull thud. What followed was Ling Chen retreating two or three steps backwards before he stabilized his footing.

Tsk, tsk!

Seeing this scene, everyone couldn't help but exclaim in surprise. He actually withstood it, truly unbelievable.

The situation just now was still crystal clear in everyone's mind; Ling Chen was completely no match for Wang Hao and had been driven to a desperate situation. However, after using Du Kang's unique secret technique, Ling Chen's strength surprisingly increased so much, truly shocking.

"It's still not enough."

Below the stage, Yang Tao watched Ling Chen engaging in combat and said, "Even though Ling Chen has drunk all the strong liquor from the gourd, his strength compared to Wang Hao still has a significant gap."

Yang Zhe added, "I actually admire him quite a bit. Despite drinking so much, not only is he fine, but he can also keep up. Big brother, I'm afraid even you can't compare to this."

Yang Tao nodded, "Correct, if it were me, having drunk so much strong spirits, I would have probably collapsed on the ground by now. Ling Chen's strength is weaker than mine, but he can persist for so long, it's really not an easy task. It seems his physical stamina is better than all of ours."

As the two were conversing, the situation on the stage gradually began to change.

Originally at a disadvantage, Ling Chen seized the opportunity to launch a relentless assault, giving Wang Hao no chance to counterattack.

Ling Chen was very clear in his heart that Du Kang's unique secret technique had a time limit; if he couldn't finish the fight quickly, once the effects of the liquor wore off, he would be powerless to resist.

Therefore, Ling Chen dared not waste time, his fierce punches erupted violently, one punch followed by another, slamming hard towards Wang Hao.

Combining the Nine Yang Qiankun Step, Ling Chen's movement technique was very exquisite, and each of his steps managed to restrain Wang Hao, rendering the latter's Shattered Leaf Step ineffective.

Faced with Ling Chen's ferocious onslaught, Wang Hao moved left and right, dodging everywhere. Relying on his strong strength and rich experience, Wang Hao managed to evade the attacks at the most critical moment each time.

Suddenly, just as he threw a punch, Ling Chen abruptly stopped his advance and held back his offensive.

Seeing Ling Chen's actions, Wang Hao was slightly taken aback, temporarily unable to react, not knowing what Ling Chen intended to do. That punch was clearly thrown, but then it was pulled back. What exactly did he want to do?

Just as Wang Hao was puzzled, Ling Chen stepped back several paces, opening up the distance between them.

Seeing this situation, not only Wang Hao but also everyone around was looking at Ling Chen with puzzlement, not knowing what he was up to.

Under everyone's gaze, Ling Chen turned his head, his eyes sweeping over the crowd one by one, his eyebrows tightly furrowed as if searching for something, his expression carrying a trace of strangeness and doubt.

Seeing that Ling Chen wasn't focusing on him, Wang Hao's face suddenly darkened. A proper martial contest, yet this guy unexpectedly retracted his move midway. Worse still, judging by his current demeanor, he seemed completely dismissive of Wang Hao, instead turning his attention to others.

"Ling Chen!" Wang Hao called out with a light shout, his toes lightly tapping the ground.

Since Ling Chen had given up the initiative, it was time for him to seize it back.

In a blur of motion, Wang Hao's body had already closed the distance to Ling Chen. One could see his palm and fist, high and low, launching an attack from two different angles, aiming straight for Ling Chen's face and abdomen.

With the wind of the force brushing against his face, Ling Chen quickly redirected his gaze from the crowd to Wang Hao, then step back to avoid Wang Hao's strikes, seeking to reorganize his own offensive.

However, Wang Hao seemed to have anticipated Ling Chen's reaction. Leaning his body forward, he closed in a little more, his fist and palm striking together with ferocious force, brutally hammering into Ling Chen's abdomen and his neck.

Struck hard, Ling Chen immediately flew backward and 'thumped' onto the floor.

The pain in his abdomen was excruciating, but Ling Chen could still barely tolerate it. It was the pain in his neck that was most severe, making even breathing difficult, almost suffocating him.

Seeing the areas where Wang Hao struck, the onlookers frowned and started murmuring.

"Wasn't Wang Hao too ruthless, attacking Ling Chen's vital points like that?"

"Indeed, although the rules of the contest allow for anything that doesn't endanger life, still targeting someone's vitals is... Wang Hao is so much stronger than Ling Chen, yet he resorts to such tactics, it's just... sigh!"

Hearing the discussions below, Wang Hao's face looked somewhat unsightly.

He chose to target Ling Chen's neck because he found him annoying and unbeatable in a prolonged fight, so he used this ruthless move to render Ling Chen incapable of continuing the fight. Besides, he had already shown mercy; if he hadn't pulled his punch, that last move would have been enough to kill Ling Chen.

"Big Brother, what happened to Ling Cheng just now?" Xia Yue turned to look at Qiu Yong and asked with concern.

Qiu Yong shook his head and said, "I'm not quite sure either. If Ling Chen hadn't suddenly been distracted, Wang Hao's move would never have succeeded."

"Ling Cheng had been staring at the crowd just now, seemingly searching for someone," Yuan Yun recalled Ling Chen's demeanor just before and spoke up.

"Looking for someone?" Qiu Yong asked puzzledly, "We're all here, whom else is he searching for?"

"How would I know that? You'd probably have to ask him yourself to find out."

At this moment, Ling Chen was lying on the floor, rubbing his neck and gasping heavily, his flushed face gradually improving.

When the pain in his neck had subsided somewhat, Ling Chen got up from the ground, looking straight at Wang Hao across from him, then once again cast his gaze towards the crowd below, his eyes filled with confusion.

Just now, when Ling Chen was clashing with Wang Hao, it seemed like he had seen someone. Because his thoughts and attention had been focused on Wang Hao, Ling Chen didn't get a clear look.

But with just that silhouette, Ling Chen trusted his eyes—he couldn't possibly be mistaken.

It must be him!

Chapter 743 The Final Showdown (4)

Ling Chen had always thought that he had disappeared, or encountered some unforeseen accident, his fate between life and death unknown. But to his surprise, that guy was actually still alive. Not only was he alive, but he also showed up in the Yangxin Pavilion, making a blatant appearance among the crowd.

He had grown bolder after not seeing him for a while.

Zhu Hong!

After searching for so long, you finally show yourself.

Ling Chen thought to himself. Yes, the silhouette he just saw in the crowd belonged to Zhu Hong. Having known Zhu Hong for so long, he trusted that he couldn't have been mistaken. Especially that occasional glance thrown by Zhu Hong, from which he sensed a trace of resentment and a chilling murderous intent.

It was him!

If it weren't for Zhu Hong catching his attention just now, how could he have exposed a flaw and given Wang Hao an opportunity.

Gritting his teeth, Ling Chen endured the pain in his body and took a deep breath. Unconsciously, Ling Chen cast his peripheral vision towards the crowd, hoping to spot Zhu Hong again.

However, Zhu Hong might have realized that he had been spotted, and now concealed himself, leaving no trace to be found.

It seems I can only wait until the competition ends to find a way to locate Zhu Hong.

In the midst of his contemplation, a series of footsteps approached from the distance, swiftly closing in.

That's not good!

Ling Chen turned his head, only to catch a glimpse of a figure flashing by. Immediately after, a strong momentum bore down on him, and a pair of palms had already reached in front of him.

Without time to think, Ling Chen quickly arched his back backwards, and a pair of hands charged with Hua Realm energy just passed over him. Not waiting for Wang Hao to strike again, Ling Chen propped his hands on the ground and swiftly lifted his legs, kicking Wang Hao's arms and neutralizing his attack.

Seizing this chance, Ling Chen stepped back repeatedly until he reached the edge of the platform before finally stopping.

It's no good... Realizing his own condition, Ling Chen thought to himself that this was bad. Even though he had finished all the strong liquor from his flask, the effects were gradually diminishing at this moment and he didn't know how much longer he could hold on.

Continuing like this, defeat was just a matter of time.

What to do?

Ling Chen thought to himself. Whether it was the Nine Yang Qiankun Step or other techniques he had mastered, he had nearly exhausted them all by this moment and he didn't know what else could be used to defeat his opponent.

Could it be... that he really had to take that step?

Remembering what Su He had told him before, Ling Chen's expression turned solemn, his eyes flickering with hesitation.

As Ling Chen was lost in indecision, Wang Hao from the opposite side of the platform began to walk towards him.

Seeing the opponent drawing closer, step by step, Ling Chen bit down on his teeth, his flickering gaze became resolute in an instant.

All in!

Having come this far, there was nothing he wasn't prepared to part with. Whether it was life or death, getting his hands on the Nine Elements Pill was his top priority.

His mind raced, and Ling Chen had already made a decision.

Coming face to face with Ling Chen's determined eyes, for some reason, Wang Hao felt his steps hesitate slightly, and a strange feeling arose in his heart, as if the Ling Chen before him had transformed into a completely different person.

And most importantly, the Ling Chen in front of him actually gave him a sense of danger. Even though Ling Chen had used quite a few tricks since the start of their fight, he had never felt this way before.

Danger?

Wang Hao squinted his eyes slightly and frowned, looking at Ling Chen with a face full of wonder and suspicion, trying to identify where that dangerous aura was emanating from.

However, from head to toe, Wang Hao didn't discover anything amiss.

At this moment, the distance between Ling Chen and Wang Hao was no more than four meters, and as they drew closer, Wang Hao's sense of crisis intensified.

One step... Two steps... As Wang Hao moved, Ling Chen remained motionless in his original spot, his sharp gaze locked onto Wang Hao's figure as if frozen in place.

Approaching closer, Wang Hao glanced at the Tianling Blade that lay on the ground and felt slightly relieved. Without the Tianling Blade in hand, what could Ling Chen possibly do, even if he had great skills? Could he really defeat him with bare hands?

Hmph! Daydreamers.

Let alone the absence of the Tianling Blade, even if Ling Chen were a bit stronger, Wang Hao would not fear him in the least. The disparity in their strengths was clear, and considering the severe injury Ling Chen had just suffered, what techniques could he possibly have left?

With this thought, Wang Hao completely relaxed his tense mood. He had certainly worried too much; at this point, Ling Chen had reached an impasse and couldn't possibly have any ways to counter him. If he had any formidable techniques, he would have used them by now.

As this idea surfaced in his mind, Wang Hao no longer hesitated. In an instant, he lightly tapped the tip of his foot, executing the Shattered Leaf Step as swift as a breeze, closing in on Ling Chen in the blink of an eye. At such a close distance, Wang Hao could even hear Ling Chen's breathing.

However, the very moment Wang Hao made his move, Ling Chen suddenly acted.

Under everyone's gaze, Ling Chen neither dodged nor defended against Wang Hao's attack but instead met Wang Hao's palms with his body.

Seeing this, all the onlookers were stunned.

What is this kid trying to do?

Using his body to resist Wang Hao's attack, how was this different from seeking death?

At that moment, Porridge Girl, Yang Tao, Yang Zhe, and Qiu Yong, among others, all stood up with looks of astonishment, completely clueless as to what Ling Chen intended.

On the platform, faced with Ling Chen's seemingly self-destructive action, Wang Hao was slightly taken aback; among all the possibilities he had considered in the split second he attacked, he never expected Ling Chen to choose this method.

Wang Hao didn't understand; even if Ling Chen wanted to give up, there was no need for this—he could have just admitted defeat directly.

During these thoughts, Wang Hao's palms had already struck Ling Chen's chest.

Spurt!

A mouthful of fresh blood was spat out, and Ling Chen's face instantly turned pale. Under the powerful force of Wang Hao's palms, Ling Chen's body was sent flying.

It's over!

Wang Hao withdrew his gaze from Ling Chen and exhaled lightly.

Ling Chen had taken the full force of his two palms; even if he were stronger, there was no chance for him to stand up again.

At this thought, Wang Hao turned his head to look at the crowd below the stage, standing straight and tall, ready to accept the adoring and admiring gazes of the crowd.

However, just at that moment, a burst of surprised exclamations erupted from the crowd, all turning their gazes toward something beside Wang Hao.

What's happening?

Wang Hao was puzzled, not understanding the crowd's reaction, and quickly turned his head. Suddenly, he saw something flying through the air towards his head.

The object was moving quickly, and Wang Hao realized it too late to react in time.

In an instant, the swirling object from the air landed sharply, perfectly covering Wang Hao's entire head.

Feeling his vision being obstructed, Wang Hao was taken aback and hastily removed the object from his head, throwing it far away below the platform.

At the same time, a 'bang' was heard as Ling Chen's body finally hit the ground, spitting out another mouthful of fresh blood.

Chapter 744 - The Final Victor (1)

Seeing Ling Chen fall outside the boundary of the arena, everyone's heart finally sank with him.

Ling Chen was out, and the martial arts competition was finally over. Although Ling Chen lost, the looks in people's eyes were filled with appreciation. For a mere practitioner on the Dragon List to endure for so long against Wang Hao was no easy feat.

Indeed worthy of being Su He's disciple, it was indeed remarkable. If it were someone else, they probably wouldn't have lasted half as long.

"Ling Cheng!"

"Ling Chen!"

At this moment, porridge girl and Qiu Yong and others hurried over, helping Ling Chen up from the ground. Seeing his pale face and his breath weak as threads, porridge girl's beautiful eyes brimmed with crystalline tears, hurt by the situation, her little hand gently stroking Ling Chen's cheek, she chided him with concern, "You're too stubborn, you should have conceded earlier. Why push yourself to this extent?"

Ling Chen slightly raised the corners of his mouth, managing to squeeze out a wry smile, "It's okay, I'm not going to die."

"Ling Chen, are you okay?"

At this time, Su Mei, accompanied by an elder, walked over from the side, her tone worried.

Ling Chen shook his head lightly, replying: "I'm fine."

"That's good to hear." After finishing her sentence, Su Mei looked up at Wang Hao on the stage, then continued, "I'll announce the results soon, and afterwards, I'll have the best doctor from Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion take a look at you."

With that said, Su Mei stepped onto the stage.

Watching Su Mei step up to the stage, Qiu Yong and a few others helped Ling Chen stand. However, because his injuries were too severe, Ling Chen couldn't muster any strength. He couldn't even speak loudly, let alone stand.

"Hmph! To think of defeating Wang Hao, how utterly delusional."

Suddenly, a mocking voice came from the crowd.

Porridge girl frowned, following the direction of the voice, only to see the words were from Tong Nan; how he got there, no one knew.

Xia Yue retorted discontentedly, "At least my Ling Cheng had the qualifications to challenge Wang Hao, while you didn't even have that. I don't know who was defeated by my Ling Cheng, and now you have the face to criticize him. I always thought my Ling Cheng had a thick skin, but you're even more audacious. At least my Ling Cheng has some shame, while you have none at all."

Upon hearing this, Ling Chen almost couldn't resist laughing aloud. How had he failed to notice before that Xia Yue had such a way with words, skillfully insulting someone without using a single swear word.

Tong Nan snorted coldly, "Had I not been careless, he would not have gained an advantage."

"You might as well shut up; we're not interested in squabbling with a defeated underling."

As Xia Yue's words fell, before Tong Nan could speak again, Wang Hao's voice suddenly came from the stage: "Ling Chen, what I said before still stands. As long as you deliver the Nine Elements Pill to Elder Su and explain my intentions, I can offer you some benefits. If you don't want the benefits, that's fine too. Consider it a favor you can call in whenever you need help in the future. What do you say?"

These words stirred a buzz of discussions among the crowd.

Although Wang Hao wasn't an elder of Yangxin Pavilion, everyone was well aware of his strength; receiving a favor from him could be considered quite an opportunity. There seemed to be no reason for Ling Chen to refuse such an offer.

As Wang Hao's words reached Ling Chen, he touched his nose, silent for a long while, making everyone wonder what he was thinking about.

Seeing Ling Chen's delayed response, Wang Hao calmly spoke, "Take your time to think it over, and let me know once you've decided."

"That's enough!"

At this moment, Su Mei, standing beside Wang Hao, spoke up. She glanced over the crowd below the stage and declared, "Today's competition concludes here, and there's no need for me to announce the outcome, as everyone has already witnessed it. As per tradition, the victor has the rights to dispose of the Nine Elements Pill. Now, please bear witness."

After saying that, the elder beside her passed the exquisite wooden box to Su Mei.

"Wang Hao, this is the Nine Elements Pill. You are aware of its value without me needing to elaborate, I trust you will use it wisely." Having spoken, Su Mei held up the wooden box with both hands and presented it in front of Wang Hao.

"Thank you, Pavilion Master!"

Wang Hao bowed with a fist, ready to take the wooden box.

"Hold on!"

But, just at that moment, a voice suddenly came from the crowd.

Everyone turned to look and saw Du Kang, followed by a few elders from Yangxin Pavilion, quickly approaching from the stands.

"Elder Du, do you have something to say?"

Du Kang glanced at Su Mei and said, "Pavilion Master, please wait a moment." Then, ignoring the crowd's baffled looks, he walked directly to the left side of the arena and picked something up from the ground.

Everyone noticed that Du Kang was holding the very object Ling Chen had thrown, which was later tossed off the stage by Wang Hao.

Watching Du Kang closely inspect the item in his hands, everyone's curiosity piqued; they also wanted to know what it was and why Ling Chen had thrown it at the last moment.

Amidst the confusion, Du Kang lifted his head, looked at Su Mei on the stage, and stated, "Pavilion Master, you might need to revise the outcome."

These words shocked everyone present.

Revise the result of the competition?

Could it be... that Wang Hao wasn't the winner? But everyone had clearly seen that Ling Chen was knocked out of the arena by Wang Hao and landed outside. According to the rules of the competition, those who leave the boundaries of the arena are immediately deemed to have lost.

Su Mei, puzzled, asked Elder Du, "Elder Du, everyone saw, the winner is Wang Hao, why do you...?"

"I say this because I have my reasons." With that, Du Kang lifted the item in his hand and lightly waved it in front of everyone, saying, "I think most of you are unfamiliar with this item, it's no wonder, as this hidden weapon has been lost for many years, known to very few. Today is a rare opportunity, so let me enlighten you. This weapon's name is the Blood Dripping Device, and I'm sure the name is not alien to those present, though it's rarely seen."

The Blood Dripping Device?

Upon hearing Du Kang's explanation, everyone was taken aback. They had heard of the infamous Blood Dripping Device but had never seen one.

It was said to be an extremely vicious weapon, used to take people's lives, and had been abandoned many years ago. No one expected to see it again today.

"Just now, everyone saw that Wang Hao's head was covered by the Blood Dripping Device; if it weren't for Ling Chen's mercy, Wang Hao's head would have been severed. Therefore, the winner of this competition isn't Wang Hao but Ling Chen. Does anyone disagree?"

With even Elder Du speaking up like that, no one else had any objections, although some looked at Wang Hao with pity. In such a short time, he had fallen from grace, a true loss of face.

Chapter 745 The Final Winner (2)

At this moment, Wang Hao standing on the stage appeared to have frozen, his complexion turning exceptionally unsightly. What was supposed to be a sure victory had taken an unexpected turn, and the decision that he had lost was something he found impossible to accept.

As the foremost disciple of Yangxin Pavilion, Wang Hao had always been a proud individual, possessing an ego slightly stronger than others.

Consequently, when he heard Elder Du Kang revise the outcome of the match, he felt as though he was about to lose face completely, unable to leave the stage with dignity.

Blood Dripping Device... Wang Hao clenched his teeth in secret!

No, he had not lost to Ling Chen, but rather to a hidden weapon he had never seen before.

Under Elder Du Kang's correction, Su Mei immediately amended the result of the match, taking back the Nine Elements Pill which was originally about to be passed to Wang Hao.

"I apologize for the earlier misjudgment, and here I express my regret to everyone. Now, please welcome the ultimate victor, Ling Chen, to the stage." As she spoke, a joyous smile bloomed on Su Mei's delicate and lovely face.

Her mood had been like that of Qiu Yong and the others before, feeling pity for Ling Chen. If possible, she had wished for Ling Chen to win, not Wang Hao. Now, events had taken a dramatic turn, and her wishes had surprisingly come true.

"Big brother, please help me to the stage, I can't walk anymore," Ling Chen said helplessly.

Qiu Yong nodded without a word and walked straight up to the stage, taking the Nine Elements Pill from Su Mei's hand.

Yuan Yun patted Ling Chen on the shoulder with a laugh, exclaiming excitedly, "Ling Cheng, your efforts haven't been in vain, you've finally got it."

Ling Chen grinned and wanted to say something more, but before he could speak, he felt a wave of exhaustion and his head became heavy; he directly fainted into the arms of the porridge girl.

...

Who knows how much time had passed, but Ling Chen finally woke up from his deep slumber.

Looking around the environment, Ling Chen knew he was lying in the guest room. He propped himself up with his hands on the bed, wanting to sit up, but as soon as he tried to exert pressure with his arms, he felt an all-over weakness and collapsed back onto the bed.

Pain!

Ling Chen took in a sharp breath. He had been fine during the day of the competition, but now he felt an unbearable pain in every part of his body, as if each move pricked him with thousands of needles.

Even with his tolerance for pain, he found it nearly unbearable, almost crying out in agony.

Upon careful consideration, although he'd often been injured during this period, none were as serious as this time.

Based on his own experience, he estimated that he would need at least a month to fully recover.

Just as he was thinking this, the door to the room was pushed open from the outside, followed by the sound of approaching footsteps. Ling Chen turned his head to look, only to see Qiu Yong and the others walking in one after the other.

"Big brother, second brother..." Ling Chen mustered up his spirits and greeted them one by one.

"Ling Cheng, how are you feeling?" Xia Yue asked with concern.

Ling Chen replied with a wry smile, "I'm afraid I'll have to stay in bed for a while."

"You, oh you..." Qiu Yong said, "This time you were too reckless. In pursuit of victory, you almost gave up your life. It was not worth it at all; you are not allowed to do this again."

"Big brother, you're well aware that what I'm doing is to save our father. As long as he can return safely, I'm willing to pay any price." Having said this, Ling Chen glanced at the others and asked, "By the way, big brother, where's porridge girl? Why didn't she come with you?"

"She left Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion yesterday."

Left?

Ling Chen was taken aback. Given how concerned porridge girl was with his own condition, it was impossible for her to leave without taking his health into account.

With this in mind, Ling Chen anxiously asked, "Big brother, why did she leave?"

"She said she was going to save your father," Yuan Yun chimed in from beside him. "You've been unconscious, and she was worried that it could cause too much delay, so she decided to take the Nine Elements Pill and trade it for your father's safety herself."

"What?"

Ling Chen was shocked. He hadn't expected porridge girl to undertake the task of finding Ji Gang and trading with him for the Nine Elements Pill all on her own.

"Big brother, how could you let her go alone?" Ling Chen expressed his concern. What kind of person was Ji Gang? With porridge girl going by herself, who knows what tricks Ji Gang might play? He's a top

expert on the Heavenly List. What would happen if he really played some kind of trick, what could porridge girl do?

"What could I do? Besides, her worries aren't unfounded. We've been out for so long, and there's been no word from God Organization. Who knows whether Ling Kun is still safe. So, rather than worrying here, it's better to exchange your father back with the Nine Elements Pill sooner."

Xia Yue interjected, "Ling Cheng, you don't need to worry too much. Porridge girl isn't going there alone."

"Oh?" Ling Chen asked, "Who else is with her?"

"Yang Tao and Yang Zhe went with her. Elder Du knew you needed the Nine Elements Pill to save your father, and he was worried that porridge girl might encounter trouble on her own, so he sent the Yang brothers to accompany her. This way, she has some support, so you don't need to worry too much."

Hearing this, Ling Cheng finally breathed a sigh of relief. Both Yang Tao and Yang Zhe were high-ranking experts on the Earthly List. With the two of them accompanying her, porridge girl's mission would undoubtedly be much easier.

"Big brother, how long have I been unconscious?" Ling Chen shifted the topic and asked.

"Almost two days now. Lucky for us, we managed to get a Heavenly Mechanism Pill from Master Su that day. We dissolved the Heavenly Mechanism Pill into water and fed it to you, which helped your body recover. Otherwise, you probably would have been unconscious for more than three days. These past few days, many people have come to visit you, but we turned them all away."

"Who came?" Ling Chen asked curiously.

He didn't know many people in Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, so he wondered who would visit him.

"Just some opportunistic types," Yuan Yun snorted. "You defeated Wang Hao, becoming the top among the disciples of Yangxin Pavilion, and you're Elder Su's disciple. Coupled with the favor you've received from Elder Du, just those points alone are enough reason for people to ingratiate themselves with you."

With that, Yuan Yun couldn't help but laugh and say, "Ling Cheng, you've made it now. With your status, your position isn't at all inferior to Master Su's. In the future, you'll have to take good care of your big brothers."

Ling Cheng replied with a slight smile, knowing Yuan Yun's words were said in jest, so he didn't take them to heart.

Suddenly, Ling Cheng's heart skipped a beat, remembering something. His smile vanished instantly, and he said in a grave tone, "Big brother, I saw Zhu Hong that day."

"Who?"

Everyone was momentarily stunned, looking at Ling Cheng in surprise.

"You're talking about that Zhu Hong?" Xu Ming was the first to recover, frowning slightly as he said, "Last time Zhou Qi and his people turned the entire Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion upside-down and still couldn't find any trace of Zhu Hong. Everyone thought he had an accident..."

"No." Ling Chen interrupted Xu Ming, stating, "He's fine, and he's within Yangxin Pavilion. Although I didn't see him very clearly that day, I'm certain it was him; there's no mistake. I'm wondering, Elder Zhou and his men searched thoroughly; there's no way they should have missed Zhu Hong. The reason they came up empty-handed must be that someone is secretly protecting Zhu Hong, allowing him to escape harm."

Chapter 746 Who is the Killer?

After hearing Ling Chen's guess, Xu Ming spoke gravely: "Do you think someone in Yangxin Pavilion is protecting Zhu Hong? Have you considered that since Zhu Hong is a member of the God Organization, whoever that person is, why would they do this? Isn't that openly opposing the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion? To put it seriously, this act is no different from being a traitor. Moreover, Zhu Hong appeared in Yangxin Pavilion, so the person you suspect must also be from Yangxin Pavilion. Do you realize what this means?"

After Xu Ming finished speaking, Ling Chen realized the gravity of the situation. Yangxin Pavilion has always been a strong support for the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion; without Yangxin Pavilion, the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion wouldn't be as powerful. Thus, if even Yangxin Pavilion had internal issues, this was no trivial matter.

Qiu Yong slightly furrowed his brow and said: "Second brother, Six Masters, since the problem is so serious, do you think we should tell Master Su?"

Ling Chen nodded and said: "Definitely, we have to tell her. How about this, big brother, please ask Miss Su to come here, it would be better for me to discuss this matter with her."

"Alright, wait here then, I'll go find her now."

Qiu Yong quickly left, and Su Mei arrived swiftly too. To facilitate the conversation between Ling Chen and Su Mei, Qiu Yong and others respectfully left the room after greeting Su Mei, leaving only Ling Chen and Su Mei in the room.

Once everyone had left, Su Mei, looking at Ling Chen lying on the bed, asked curiously: "What is this about?"

"Miss Su, please sit down, I have something to tell you."

Su Mei, without suspicion, sat down at the bedside, waiting for Ling Chen to speak.

Right away, Ling Chen thoroughly explained the situation regarding Zhu Hong, including what he discovered during the martial contest that day.

After listening, Su Mei's expression turned solemn. She looked at Ling Chen with a rarely serious tone and said, "Ling Chen, this is no joking matter. Are you sure you saw correctly?"

"I can be one hundred percent sure, absolutely no mistake."

"If that's the case, the situation is more troublesome than you think." Su Mei pondered for a moment and then said, "Keep this matter quiet for now; I will speak to Elder Du. He's a senior member in Yangxin Pavilion with a high status among the elders; these internal matters should only be investigated discreetly by him."

"Alright then." Ling Chen subtly nodded and continued: "Zhu Hong appearing in Yangxin Pavilion is definitely not a simple matter, I hope you can treat it seriously."

"I know." Saying this, Su Mei stood up and said, "You haven't recovered from your injuries yet. Don't go anywhere for now, just stay here peacefully and heal. Leave when you are better."

After watching Su Mei leave, Ling Chen quietly lay on the bed, staring at the ceiling, lost in thought.

For some reason, ever since he saw Zhu Hong appearing in Yangxin Pavilion, Ling Chen had felt uneasy, always fearing that something bad would happen. Knowing Zhu Hong for so long, he was well aware of Zhu Hong's character and tactics; that guy would definitely not stay quietly in Yangxin Pavilion.

Sigh!

Thinking over and over, Ling Chen sighed gently.

There were too many issues to resolve at the moment, not to mention Zhu Hong, even the matters involving the porridge girl and his own father were giving him a headache.

...

In the blink of an eye, three days had passed.

"Okay, okay, I understand, don't worry, I'll be back in a few days. Alright, you go ahead."

After hanging up the phone, Ling Chen set his mobile phone aside, calculating the time.

During the call with Nanrong Wanqing, Ling Chen realized that he had been away for too long this time. Including these days of recuperation, it had been nearly ten days since he left home, no wonder Nanrong Wanqing was worried and had specifically called to check on him.

After several days of rest, Ling Chen's injuries had somewhat healed, but it was just a slight improvement. He estimated that a full recovery would probably take a month.

However, Ling Chen wasn't worried about his own physical condition; his concern was about porridge girl and Zhu Hong's situation.

It had been three days, and there was still no news from porridge girl, and there was no movement from Yangxin Pavilion either; he did not know whether Su Mei had taken any action.

Thud thud thud!

While thinking, a series of urgent knocks suddenly came from the door. Ling Chen turned his head to see Wei Jiahao running inside hurriedly, and he spoke anxiously, "Ling Cheng, you better go outside and check."

"What happened?"

"That... I... Ah! You better see it for yourself. I don't know how to explain it."

Seeing Wei Jiahao's anxious expression, Ling Chen didn't ask any further. He quickly got out of bed and hurried towards the door.

"Hey! Ling Cheng, slow down, be careful not to trip." Wei Jiahao, worried about Ling Chen's health, quickly followed his pace.

Exiting the room, Ling Chen followed Wei Jiahao and arrived at a mountain next to the training field.

Upon reaching there, he saw the area densely packed with people, including Su Mei, Du Kang, Qiu Yong, and other elderly people he last met in Yangxin Pavilion; they were almost all present.

What's going on?

Ling Chen muttered to himself in surprise.

Immediately, Ling Chen, with Wei Jiahao's help, pushed through the crowd to get deeper inside. Reaching the center of the people, Ling Chen looked intently, and his expression suddenly changed, revealing a look of shock in his eyes.

How could this happen?

Ling Chen looked on in surprise and was momentarily at a loss for words.

In the center of the crowd, there lay two people, Tong Nan and Song Yi. At that moment, both of them were already dead, the blood flowing from their seven orifices, their death seems very tragic.

They... died!

Ling Chen couldn't imagine that Tong Nan and Song Yi had died. These were not ordinary Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion Disciples. They were disciples from Yangxin Pavilion, one a master from the Earthly List, and the other ranked among the top three in the Dragon List, both with formidable self-defense capabilities.

The appearance of the two indicated they had been murdered.

At this time, Song Yi's master, Huang Zheng, was squatting in front of the corpses, his face gloomy, examining the conditions of the two bodies.

After a while, Huang Zheng stood up from the ground, turned his head to look at Su Mei and Du Kang, and said gravely, "Both of them were attacked from behind. The attacker had average strength but was

adept and cunning, and the palm technique was extremely toxic. Both Tong Nan and Song Yi were poisoned and died after being hit by the attacker's palm technique."

"Poisoned?"

Huang Zheng nodded and said, "The assailant's palms must have contained lethal poison. Otherwise, with Tong Nan and Song Yi's capabilities, it is impossible that they couldn't even struggle before being killed outright."

After hearing Huang Zheng's analysis, Su Mei asked, "Elder Huang, when did they die?"

"Based on my experience, it should have been late last night."

"Late at night?" Du Kang slightly furrowed his brows and asked, "Why would they come here so late at night?"

Huang Zheng glanced at his disciple's corpses and said coldly, "That is something we would need to ask them to know."

Chapter 747 Tang Yan

"Pavilion Master, someone dared to commit murder within the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion and even killed a disciple of Yangxin Pavilion. We must thoroughly investigate this matter and find the murderer who killed my disciple," Huang Zheng said with an ashen face, gritting his teeth.

He had spent so much effort and time training a direct disciple, only for them to be killed, how could his heart be at ease?

Su Mei nodded, promising: "Elder Huang, rest assured, Song Yi and Tong Nan are both members of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. As the Pavilion Master, I will not ignore this. I assure you, I will investigate this matter thoroughly and find the murderer."

In the midst of speaking, an elderly man hastily rushed over, rudely pushing through the crowd to reach the corpse.

Looking at Tong Nan lying on the ground, a deep sorrow suddenly surfaced on the thin face of the old man. His lips quivering, mumbling something incomprehensible, his wrinkled hands shakily lifted and slowly reached out to touch Tong Nan's cold cheek, his cloudy old eyes filled with grief.

"My dear disciple...you...how could you just..." As he spoke, the old man began to sob like a child.

Seeing the old man's devastated appearance, Ling Chen tapped a Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion disciple standing nearby on the shoulder and quietly asked, "Who is that man?"

The Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion disciple looked at Ling Chen in surprise and said, "You don't know him? He's Tang Yan, Tong Nan's Master." The disciple glanced around and then leaned close to Ling Chen's ear, whispering, "Let me tell you a secret, although Tang Yan always claims Tong Nan as his disciple, there are many rumors within the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion saying Tong Nan is actually Tang Yan's biological son."

"What?" Ling Chen widened his eyes in disbelief at the old man.

Biological son!

This news was staggering.

"Hey! Is that information accurate? Tang Yan looks like he's in his eighties or nineties. Tong Nan should be his grandson, right? Could you be mistaken?"

The Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion disciple shook his head and said, "Impossible, I can't be wrong, everyone talks about it. I heard that Tang Yan found a young woman to live with for two years. Later, Tang Yan brought an infant, not yet a year old, back to the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. Hey! If you look closely, don't you find a resemblance between Tang Yan and Tong Nan?"

Hearing this, Ling Chen turned his gaze toward Tang Yan's aged face, examining it closely. Indeed, there were some similarities between Tong Nan and him.

Moreover, Tang Yan's utterly heartbroken expression starkly contrasted with Huang Zheng's. While both had lost disciples, Huang Zheng merely displayed anger, but Tang Yan showed the pain of a white-haired person sending off a black-haired one, which inevitably made one speculate further.

If what the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion disciple said was true, Ling Chen actually felt some sympathy for Tang Yan. To have a child late in life, only for this tragic outcome to occur, was indeed pitiable.

"Elder Tang, please don't be too heartbroken," Su Mei spoke to comfort him.

Tang Yan shook his head, his eyes brimming with tears as he firmly looked at Tong Nan's corpse and said, "Disciple, rest assured, your Master will definitely find the murderer and tear him to pieces. Just wait!"

After saying this, Tang Yan stood up and turned to leave.

Seeing this, Su Mei hurriedly called out, "Elder Tang, please calm down first, I..."

Without letting Su Mei finish speaking, Tang Yan suddenly turned back, staring into Su Mei's tearful eyes, and said fiercely, "Calm down? How can you ask me to calm down when my disciple has died? I raised him from childhood, like my own son, and now he's gone, I..."

"Tang Yan, mind your words," Du Kang interjected, "Show some respect in front of the Pavilion Master, it wasn't her who harmed Tong Nan."

Seeing Du Kang speak up, Tang Yan immediately shut his mouth. He could afford to disrespect Su Mei, but not Du Kang, who was a senior from Yangxin Pavilion and held a much higher position.

"Pavilion Master, I apologize for any offense just now, I'll take my leave now!" After saying this, Tang Yan gave a fist salute to Su Mei, then turned and walked out through the crowd.

Watching Tang Yan's departing figure, Su Mei sighed lightly and said, "Alright, everyone disperses. Elder Du, please have someone preserve the bodies of Tong Nan and Song Yi well. We'll choose a good day for their burial."

"Understood," Du Kang nodded, then signaled to several young men who immediately understood and hurriedly carried away the bodies of Tong Nan and Song Yi towards the ice storage of Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion.

As the crowd dispersed, Ling Chen also returned to the guest room with Qiu Yong and others.

Upon entering the room, Xia Yue sat in a chair, expressing, "I really didn't expect Tong Nan to be dead. Eh, who do you think could have done it?"

Hearing this, everyone instinctively turned their gaze to Ling Chen. Sensing this, Ling Chen quickly realized what everyone meant.

"You mean...the perpetrator is from the God Organization?"

Qiu Yong nodded, "The God Organization is everyone's enemy, and besides, the only ones capable of committing a murder in the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion are likely from the God Organization."

Ling Chen pondered and said, "The God Organization is indeed a suspect, but I don't think it was their people. Think about it, the defense of Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion is extremely tight, if someone infiltrated, it's impossible that no one noticed."

"If the God Organization deployed a Heavenly List expert, then it's not impossible. Tong Nan was a Heavenly List expert yet was killed with a single strike, showing that the murderer is very powerful," Yuan Yun added. "Moreover, for a Heavenly List expert to infiltrate Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion would be a straightforward task."

"No!" Ling Chen shook his head, "Third brother, your guess isn't impossible, but the God Organization doesn't have that many Heavenly List experts. Do you think Heavenly List experts are so common? Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion has been around for centuries and has only a few Heavenly List experts. It's already tough for the God Organization to get Ji Gang's help. Moreover, why would the God Organization send a Heavenly List expert to the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion? Just for nothing?"

With that, Ling Chen paused, then continued, "I think that the murderer might actually be from the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, or rather... from Yangxin Pavilion."

Upon hearing this, Qiu Yong and the others were shocked, and exclaimed in surprise, "Ling Cheng, do you think there's a traitor in Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion? But didn't you help the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion rid itself of the God Organizations' spies last time?"

"Big brother, the murderer may not necessarily be a spy from the God Organization, but might have other motivations. In any case, this matter is not simple. I'm even considering if it could be connected to Zhu Hong."

Chapter 748 Tang Yan's Revenge

Zhu Hong?

Xia Yue curiously said: "Ling Cheng, how could you suspect Zhu Hong? Zhu Hong is just an ordinary person. Do you think he has the ability to kill Tong Nan and Song Yi? Let alone those two, anyone from the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion could easily handle him."

Ling Chen touched his nose and replied, "I'm just suspicious, I haven't confirmed anything. Just take it as a casual remark; it's not to be taken seriously."

During the conversation, a sudden 'bang bang bang' knocking sound came from the door.

"I'll go and open the door."

Wei Jiahao stood up and quickly walked towards the door. However, before Wei Jiahao could open it, a 'thud' was heard, and the door was violently kicked open, sending the door and its frame flying straight toward Wei Jiahao's body.

This sudden turn of events startled everyone. Fortunately, Wei Jiahao's martial arts foundation was solid. Seeing the flying door coming at him, he clenched his fists tightly, like twin dragons soaring from the sea, and fiercely blasted the door apart, splitting it in two.

"Who is it?"

Qiu Yong quickly stood up and focused on the door, only to see a person entering. It was Tang Yan, whom they had seen before.

At this moment, Tang Yan's face was filled with rage, his eyes cold and murderous, holding a steel sword in his hand, he charged in fiercely and glared at Qiu Yong and the others, shouting, "Who is Ling Chen? Show yourself!"

Ling Chen slightly furrowed his brows and looked at Tang Yan, asking, "I am Ling Chen. Elder Tang, what is this about?"

"What is this about?" Tang Yan stared at Ling Chen's face, grinding his teeth angrily, "You dare ask me what I'm here for. Ling, you killed my disciple; now surrender your life!"

As the words fell, Tang Yan flicked his wrist and lightly tapped with his toes, instantly turning into a gust of wind and closing in on Ling Chen, thrusting his sword towards Ling Chen's forehead.

If the thrust landed, Ling Chen would stand no chance of survival.

Seeing the blade approaching, Ling Chen's eyes widened, and his back was covered in cold sweat. Because his injuries had not yet recovered, even though he wanted to dodge, his body could not keep up with his reaction.

"Stop!"

Seeing Ling Chen in danger, Qiu Yong shouted thunderously, taking three steps in two, quickly rushed to Ling Chen's side, and threw a fierce punch that hit right at the body of the steel sword.

Struck by Qiu Yong's punch, the trajectory of Tang Yan's sword immediately deviated, stabbing towards Ling Chen's cheek instead.

Seeing this, Ling Chen quickly turned his head to the side. In an instant, the sword's tip grazed his left cheek, leaving a long, bloody mark.

Had Ling Chen not reacted in time, that sword would have pierced through his cheek.

But feeling the cold of the sword's edge, Ling Chen was still shocked, breaking out in a cold sweat instantly, and he was stunned, taking a moment to recover.

Seeing Ling Chen injured, Qiu Yong and the others were immediately infuriated.

This Tang Yan, completely unreasonable, launched an attack as soon as he entered, with lethal moves aiming to kill Ling Chen on the spot. As one of the "Eight Eccentric Masters," they could not tolerate such treatment.

Failing with the first strike, Tang Yan continued stepping rapidly, bypassing Qiu Yong's block, moving to Ling Chen's side, and preparing to continue his assault.

However, before Tang Yan could strike, the other people in the room had already reacted, rushing to Ling Chen's side and joining forces to block Tang Yan's attack.

"Seventh Brother, Eighth Brother, take good care of our Ling Cheng. Leave this old guy to us to deal with," Yuan Yun waved his steel blade and stood in line with Qiu Yong and Xu Ming, protecting Ling Chen behind them.

Tang Yan assessed Qiu Yong, who was leading the group, and coldly said, "Qiu Yong, I know you. Out of consideration for your age, I won't make things difficult for you all. Just hand Ling Chen over to me, and I'll let you go immediately."

Qiu Yong sneered and replied, "Tang Yan, you really overrate yourself. Do you think you command such respect? We are the Eight Eccentric Masters, united as one. If you want to harm a hair on my Ling Cheng, then prepare to join your disciple in the underworld."

Hearing these words, Tang Yan sneered disdainfully, "Just with you? Fine, since you're seeking death, I'll grant your wish."

As soon as he finished speaking, Tang Yan flicked his wrist and with a series of crisp sword clangs, his steel sword shot out, thrusting straight towards Qiu Yong.

But before Tang Yan could close in on Qiu Yong, a fierce gust of wind suddenly shot over, aiming directly at Tang Yan's face.

Feeling the lethal gust, Tang Yan's face immediately changed color as he hurriedly backed away, lightly waving the steel sword in front of him.

Clang!

With a clear sound, Tang Yan's steel sword trembled violently.

At the same time, an arrow fell from the sky, landing right beside Tang Yan's foot.

Looking up, Zhang Zhongfeng was seen standing in the corner of the room, maintaining a relative distance, holding a longbow in hand and still clutching another arrow.

The Archer God, Zhang Zhongfeng!

Tang Yan's pupils tightened slightly, and his old face instantly turned ugly.

Among the eight eccentrics, the most famous was undoubtedly Zhang Zhongfeng.

Archer God Zhang Zhongfeng, the only one capable of killing Earthly List experts with bow and arrow. Within a certain range, Zhang Zhongfeng was almost the nightmare of Earthly List experts.

This is bad!

Tang Yan frowned, he had been too impulsive earlier, only focusing on taking Ling Chen's life and had forgotten about the presence of Zhang Zhongfeng.

While pondering, Yuan Yun and Xia Yue rushed over from both sides, with a knife and a sword, their attacks sharp and direct, aiming for Tang Yan's vital points.

"Scram!"

Tang Yan barked coldly, his steel sword swinging fiercely, slashing horizontally to force Yuan Yun and Xia Yue back. However, before his sword could fully swing, he heard a 'clang,' and Tang Yan's steel sword was struck by an arrow again. The blade had not yet swung out before being knocked back by the arrow.

With his swordsmanship disrupted, Tang Yan couldn't make a new move in time as Yuan Yun and Xia Yue closed in, attacking respectively from the middle and upper routes.

Seeing the knife and sword approaching, Tang Yan did not dare to take them lightly and quickly retreated a few steps, wielding his steel sword to parry Yuan Yun's attack.

However, although Yuan Yun's steel knife was repelled, Xia Yue's Mother-Child Sword remained sharp, thrusting straight towards Tang Yan's eyes.

Xia Yue's expression was cold, showing no intention of holding back.

Hmph!

As the sword edge approached, Tang Yan twisted his waist, raising his hand in a countermove, and flicked lightly with his fingers, hitting the blade squarely.

With a 'ting,' Xia Yue's Mother-Child Sword was immediately deflected.

But Tang Yan still overlooked one thing—Xia Yue was using a Mother-Child Sword. Although the long sword was deflected, the short sword hidden in Xia Yue's palm went unnoticed.

Before Tang Yan could react, he felt a pain in his arm. His sleeve was slashed, skin cut open, and blood flowed out gurglingly through the wound, instantly staining the sleeve red.

Pain flooding in, Tang Yan's old face changed color in an instant, his eyes filled with murderous intent, fierce and threatening.

"Seeking death!"

Chapter 749 The Unrevealed Xu Ming (1)

Tang Yan roared angrily, swung his steel sword without minding Qiu Yong and Yuan Yun beside him, and directly launched an attack towards Xia Yue.

Xia Yue's reaction was not slow either. When Tang Yan struck, she had already retreated, hoping to widen the distance between them. However, Xia Yue still underestimated Tang Yan's strength. After all, Tang Yan was no ordinary high-ranking martial artist on the Earthly List.

Among the elders of the Yangxin Pavilion, Tang Yan was slightly stronger than Huang Zheng, Liang Tian, and others. There were only a handful of martial artists on the Earthly List who could defeat Tang Yan.

At this moment, although Tang Yan was still about a meter away from Xia Yue, the momentum of his steel sword was fierce, and his energy was condensed and sharp. Within a meter, Xia Yue had no chance of dodging.

"Little Sister!"

Seeing Xia Yue in danger, Qiu Yong and Yuan Yun couldn't help but shout out and leaped towards Tang Yan to intercept his attack. However, Tang Yan was too fast, and even their reaction came too late.

In a corner of the room, Zhang Zhongfeng had long placed an arrow on the bowstring, with the sharp tip locked on Tang Yan, ready to save Xia Yue at the critical moment.

However, before Zhang Zhongfeng could shoot his arrow, he suddenly saw a figure flash before his eyes, blocking Tang Yan in his line of sight.

Who?

Zhang Zhongfeng frowned slightly. Having lost his target, he couldn't lock his arrow on Tang Yan to rescue Xia Ye. In a split second, Zhang Zhongfeng quickly shifted position with his longbow, searching for a favorable perspective.

Clang!

But at this moment, a crisp sound suddenly rang out in the room. Then, before everyone could react, they saw Tang Yan's body flying out, heavily crashing into the wall along with the steel sword falling to the ground.

This...

Seeing this scene, everyone present was stunned, looking incredulously at the person who had intervened.

It was Xu Ming!

The person who had suddenly appeared, rescued Xia Yue, and repelled Tang Yan was Xu Ming.

Tsk tsk!

Ling Chen silently marveled, his handsome face unable to conceal a look of shock.

Xu Ming ranked second among the eight eccentrics, mainly due to his age and seniority. Although Ling Chen had spent a considerable amount of time with Xu Ming, he seldom saw Xu Ming make a move and was unclear about the extent of his strength. Moreover, Ling Chen had learned from Qiu Yong and others that Xu Ming was the most mysterious among them because no one knew his origins or what he had experienced in the past.

Now, faced with a high-ranking martial artist on the Earthly List like Tang Yan, Xu Ming actually managed to repel him, which was indeed surprising to Ling Chen and the others.

For a long while, the other six eccentrics didn't react. Since Yang Chen, who was seventh, was blind and could only hear sounds without seeing what happened, he was not as visually shocked as Ling Chen and the others.

At this moment, Tang Yan picked himself up from the ground and, looking at Xu Ming in front of him, his face alternated between green and red, a mix of shame and anger with a tinge of shock within.

"You... who are you?"

Finally, Tang Yan chose to speak rather than continue the attack. Having received a blow from Xu Ming just now, he had deeply felt Xu Ming's strength.

Although he had been caught off guard by Xu Ming, the power Xu Ming displayed still made him wary. It wasn't a question of whether Xu Ming was stronger than him, but he was certainly no weaker.

"You are not worthy to know who I am," Xu Ming said coldly.

"Fine." Tang Yan nodded, glanced over at Ling Chen standing behind Xu Ming, then refocused his gaze on Xu Ming and said, "Today I'll give you face and let it slide. However, Ling Chen killed my disciple and I will never let this go. Unless you have the ability to stay by his side all the time, no matter where he flees, I will not forgive him."

"I..." Ling Chen opened his mouth, ready to retort, but before he could speak, Xu Ming cut him off, saying solemnly, "Tang Yan, don't think I wouldn't dare to touch you just because of your age. I'll tell you, stop acting entitled because of your seniority. Ling Chen didn't kill Tong Nan; he's been bed-ridden these past few days and hasn't recovered from his injuries. Forget killing Tong Nan, in his current condition, he couldn't even kill a dog, let alone a person. I don't know who told you Ling Chen killed Tong Nan, and I'm not interested in investigating. In any case, we, the Eight Eccentrics, always take responsibility for our actions. If it really was our doing, we would definitely admit it."

Hearing this, Tang Yan's gaze flickered, clearly contemplating something.

After a pause, Tang Yan spoke, "For now, I will believe what you said. When I return, I will find out the truth of this matter."

Having said this, Tang Yan turned and prepared to leave.

However, before Tang Yan could reach the door, Xu Ming suddenly stepped forward to block his path.

Facing Xu Ming who was blocking his way, Tang Yan's face turned cold, barely containing his fury, he asked, "What more do you want?"

"Tang Yan, do you really think the Eight Eccentrics are so easily bullied, that you can come and go as you please? You accused my Sixth Brother of murdering your disciple without any cause and sought revenge at our doorstep, attacking without explanation. If we didn't have some ability, my Sixth Brother would already be dead under your sword. You can leave, but first, you must apologize to my Sixth Brother. Only if he forgives you, can you go."

At these words, Tang Yan's face underwent a change, his eyes turning icily cold, and through gritted teeth he said, "Don't be too presumptuous. I am telling you, I am not afraid of you. If it really comes to blows, it's not clear yet who will be the deer brought down."

"Oh!" Xu Ming said unabashedly, "If you dare to start a fight, then we will accompany you to the end. But before we start, let me be clear: we, the Eight Eccentrics, are united in attack and retreat. Either you take on all eight of us, or all eight of us will fight you alone. The choice is yours."

"You..." Tang Yan was at a loss for words. He had seen shameless, but never this shameless.

If it were just Xu Ming alone, Tang Yan might have the courage to clash with him. But facing the Eight Eccentrics alone was beyond his courage. It wasn't just about how formidable Xu Ming was; there was also the Archer God Zhang Zhongfeng. Apart from these two, Qiu Yong, Yuan Yun, Xia Yue, and others were not to be trifled with. The eight of them together could easily take his life.

Yet, for him, a respected elder of the Yangxin Pavilion and a prominent figure of the Earthly List, to apologize to a junior was unthinkable. Where would he put his face after this?

Moreover, if word of this got out, it would likely become a laughing stock for the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion.

With these thoughts, Tang Yan found himself hesitating.

After a brief moment, seeing Tang Yan's delayed response, Xu Ming urged, "Have you made up your mind yet?"

As his voice fell, Tang Yan raised his head, swept a glance over Xu Ming and the others like Qiu Yong. The next second, without waiting for the crowd to react, he suddenly sped up and dashed towards the door.

Chapter 750 The Unrevealed Xu Ming (2)

Trying to escape?

Xu Ming snorted lightly, his toes lightly tapping as if he were stepping on a gust of wind, and in an instant, he rushed to the doorway, blocking Tang Yan's path and intercepting him at the door.

Confronted with Xu Ming, who suddenly appeared before him, Tang Yan didn't utter a word and immediately slapped out a palm strike aimed straight at Xu Ming's chest.

The fierce palm wind came hurtling through, and Xu Ming had no intention of retreating. Instead, he threw out a punch, which met Tang Yan's palm with a solid hit.

Fist meeting palm, the two were momentarily separated, and neither gained the upper hand.

Seeing his path blocked, Tang Yan did not give up but continued to launch attacks, attempting to push Xu Ming back. However, just then, a sharp arrow broke through the air and dissolved Tang Yan's offensive once again.

Time after time, with the coordination of Xu Ming and others, not only did Tang Yan fail to get closer to the doorway, but he was also forced back several steps.

"Attack together!" Qiu Yong gave a light shout, readying Yuan Yun and Xia Yue to launch an attack from behind and join Xu Ming in a pincer movement to take down Tang Yan.

However, just as they were about to make their move, a loud shout suddenly came from the doorway: "Stop!"

At the sound, Tang Yan's tense old face instantly relaxed, and he withdrew his hands, secretly sighing in relief.

At last!

Tang Yan secretly rejoiced. The reason he had refused Xu Ming's demand and fought back was to draw attention. As long as someone from the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion intervened, he could retreat unscathed and save face.

Following the shout, Qiu Yong and the others quickly turned their attention toward the doorway. Suddenly, they saw Su Mei arriving quickly, escorted by several Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion Disciples.

Seeing the disordered scene inside the room, Su Mei's brows slightly furrowed. Glancing at Tang Yan and the others on the scene, she asked indifferently, "What happened?"

Qiu Yong gave a fist salute and said, "Master Su, you should ask him about this matter." Qiu Yong pointed at Tang Yan and continued, "Without provocation, he burst into our room, didn't say a word, and started ranting about killing Ling Chen to avenge his disciple. If it hadn't been for our presence, he might have succeeded. Master Su, to speak unpleasantly, we are also considered guests of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. Is this your way of hospitality?"

Hearing this, Su Mei turned to Tang Yan and asked, "Elder Tang, I hope you can give me and everyone present an explanation."

Seeing that Master Su had spoken, Tang Yan, despite his unwillingness, had to respond: "Master, this is a misunderstanding. I heard that Tong Nan had a conflict with Ling Chen a while ago, and besides that, he hasn't made enemies with anyone else, so I thought..."

"You thought it was Ling Chen who killed your disciple?" Su Mei said discontentedly, "Elder Tang, you are too hasty. Perhaps Ling Chen had a verbal conflict with Tong Nan, but I am very clear about Ling Chen's character; he would never do such a thing. Also, Elder Tang, I would like to remind you that your disciple was not as good as you think, his popularity in the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion was not great. It wouldn't have come to this if you, as a Master, hadn't spoiled and indulged him, backing him up from behind. You should reflect on yourself instead of venting your anger on others."

After a pause, Su Mei waved her hand and said, "Alright, let's end the matter here today. I hope there won't be a next time."

"Yes, Master," Tang Yan replied, about to step outside.

But before Tang Yan could reach the doorway, Xu Ming once again stepped forward to block his path.

Tang Yan's expression darkened as he coldly demanded, "What else do you want?"

Xu Ming said dismissively, "What do you think I want? Did you really think my words earlier were just for show? It's simple, two choices lay before you: apologize and admit your wrong, or... we cripple your arms. Choose for yourself. But don't even think about stepping out the door without our permission."

"How dare you!" Tang Yan bellowed in anger, "Don't forget, this is the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, and the Pavilion Master is right here. It's not your turn to call the shots. All of you, get lost; otherwise, don't blame me for being rude."

"Is that so?" Xu Ming remained unfazed by Tang Yan's fury, and retorted, "If you think you're capable, then try to break past me. Just don't say I didn't warn you, if you make a move, it won't be as simple as just crippling your arms."

Seeing the two stand their ground, Master Su became anxious and hurriedly spoke up, "Elder Tang, gentlemen, today's matter was indeed an impulse on Elder Tang's part. Please give me face and let it go. If there are any offenses, I, on behalf of Elder Tang, apologize to everyone here."

Xu Ming glanced at Master Su and replied, "Master Su, it's not that I don't respect you, but this man is too arrogant. If he doesn't learn his lesson, he'll think that no one can control him. So, if there's any offense today, I apologize in advance to Master Su and hope you don't take it the wrong way."

"Correct!" Qiu Yong, with his head held high, said sternly, "We, the eight eccentrics, always stick together. No one can bully us. Besides, this matter doesn't concern Master Su, you don't need to meddle. I'd really like to see how powerful the Earthly List experts of Yangxin Pavilion are." With those words, Qiu Yong stepped forward, pressuring Tang Yan even more closely.

Meanwhile, Yuan Yun and Xia Yue followed suit and sealed off all of Tang Yan's escape routes, leaving him trapped.

Witnessing this, Tang Yan's face turned extremely gloomy, his murky old eyes flickering with cold light, staring intently at Xu Ming.

Seeing the impending clash and readying for a fight, Master Su quickly turned to Ling Chen with a pleading look, hoping for his help.

Tang Yan had come for Ling Chen, and from beginning to end, Ling Chen had not spoken a word. If he would let Tang Yan go, Qiu Yong and the others might not persist in fighting.

Feeling Master Su's gaze, Ling Chen glanced at her, hesitated briefly, then withdrew his gaze as if he didn't understand what Master Su meant.

It wasn't that Ling Chen didn't understand Master Su's intention; he just didn't want to act on it. He knew clearly that Qiu Yong and Xu Ming were standing up for him. If he intervened now and stopped Qiu Yong and others, it would be a disservice to his brothers.

Moreover, Tang Yan's attitude had greatly displeased him. Such a self-righteous old man definitely needed to be taught a harsh lesson.

Seeing that Ling Chen did not speak, Master Su had no choice but to instruct her subordinates to quickly fetch reinforcements.

"Big brother!"

At that moment, Ling Chen's voice rang out.

Qiu Yong asked, "Ling Cheng, what is it?"

Ling Chen looked at Tang Yan with a smirk and said, "This old man hasn't said a word for so long; it seems he doesn't intend to apologize. In that case, there's no need for us to waste time with him."