

Unparalleled 141

Chapter 141: The Sword Soul's New Owner, There Came Three of the Seven Heroes of the Swordsmanship World

The Sword-based Daoist Rhyme billowed all around as Chu Kuangren cast his three great Daoist Physique Transformations.

Resonating with his Exquisite Nine Orifices Sword Heart, the Sword Soul soared towards him like a swallow in full flight.

Upon the sight of that, the other sword cultivators immediately reacted to stop the Sword Soul in its flight. They could not bear letting an outsider like Chu Kuangren take hold of this Sword Soul.

"You're not getting this Sword Soul. Not on my watch!"

"That's right, this Sword Soul belongs to me!"

"Even if it's Chu Kuangren, I'll still give it a good fight!"

All of the sword cultivators leaped out and attempted to halt the Sword Soul, but before they could even get close to it, a force bore down on them from all directions. As a result, all of their bodies, including those of the Honorable Swordsmen, were held in mid-air.

"If you want it, you'll first have to go through me!"

Chu Kuangren said coldly. He was able to subdue any cultivator, especially sword cultivators in his Nine Heaven Sword Prison

With his current cultivation base, even Honorables could not escape it.

All the Honorable Swordsmen were dumbfounded. They never expected that Chu Kuangren could pull off such a feat, to have every Honorable Swordsman tightly in his grasp!

It should be noted that there were dozens or more Honorable Swordsmen at the scene, without considering the other hundred or more Battle Monarch sword cultivators.

"Ah, the famed Exquisite Nine Orifices Sword Heart. It's truly remarkable!" After watching what had happened, Feng Xuanzi expressed a grim look on his face.

Unlike the others, he did not try to stop the Sword Soul because he had felt a surge of petrifying vital force locked down on him earlier on. It was the Seventh Forefather staring down at him.

Although Black Heaven Sect was on good terms with Sword Prayer City, Chu Kuangren was too important to the sect. Hence, he had to be protected at all costs, even if it meant straining the sect's relationship with Sword Prayer City.

Swish...

The Crystal Sword Soul arrived before Chu Kuangren and spun around him twice before it seeped into his Descendant Self Sword.

In the blink of an eye, the sacred sword in Chu Kuangren's hand emitted rays of glittering brilliance that was flowing with mysterious Daoist Rhymes.

Chu Kuangren could clearly feel that the Descendant Self Sword was transforming!

It was transformed by leaps and bounds!

As if the Descendant Self Sword had come to life, it let out a sword-based chant that reached beyond the skies. It was so deafening that even the other weapons around them started to quiver.

It seemed like it was not resigned to its new ownership, but there were also some hints of subordination at the same time.

This unusual transformation persisted for quite a while before the bright rays that the Descendant Self Sword radiated began to fade and the sword's jade-white-like surface started to crystalize.

As opposed to a normal sword, the Descendant Self Sword now looked more like an exquisite piece of artwork. Every part of the sword was surrounded by mysterious Daoist Rhymes.

"A Sage Ruler Weapon!"

Chu Kuangren's eyes lit up. Due to the Sword Soul's attachment, the Descendant Self Sword had improved by two grades, which turned it into a Sage Ruler Weapon!

Moreover, he could sense that the Sword Soul's power had yet been fully unleashed, so the Descendant Self Sword still had a lot of space for potential growth.

Besides, the mysterious Sword-based Daoist Rhyme that came with the Sword Soul would be of great help for him to gain insights into the sword's Dao.

The fact that the Sword Soul could help a sword cultivator comprehend a Sword-based Daoist Rhyme, as well as improving their sword's grade, made it the perfect treasure that any swordsman could ever ask for!

"Chu Kuangren has taken the Sword Soul!"

"Darn it! Come to think of it, it actually makes sense for the Sword Soul to pick Chu Kuangren since he has the Exquisite Nine Orifices Sword Heart, one of the Supreme Daoist Physiques in the swordsmanship world. Now that he is complemented by the Sword Soul, the things that he could accomplish next would be unimaginable!"

"I'm afraid it won't take long before he becomes the top swordsman of the swordsmanship world!"

Discontentment was written all over the sword cultivator's faces as they were all unreconciled to that reality.

If the Sword Soul had yet befallen into Chu Kuangren's hands, they would still stand a chance at obtaining it. However, now that the Sword Soul was already in Chu Kuangren's possession, going for it now would be like going against the Black Heaven Sect.

The Sword Soul may be precious, but their own lives were even more so!

“Perhaps letting him obtain the Sword Soul was a fitting outcome after all.” Feng Xuanzi sighed after witnessing what had happened.

Soon after, a murderous intent burst out from his gaze, “The Sword Soul has been in the Sky Fire Valley all along. Its appearance here in the outside world must mean that something has happened inside the valley.”

“Who in the world dares to wreak havoc at my Sword Prayer City!”

Just as Feng Xuanzi was about to send someone down to have a closer look, numerous masked black-clad figures emerged from a distance.

There were quite a number of them so they had the whole Great Sword Tournament venue surrounded in no time.

“Whoever has the Sword Soul, please kindly turn it over!” One of the leading masked figures of the mysterious group yelled in a hoarse voice.

“You guys are the ones who trespassed into Sky Fire Valley!” Feng Xuanzi stood away from the crowd and stared maliciously at the leading masked figure.

Chu Kuangren kindled his spiritual thought, attempting to find out who these masked people really were. However, it seemed like they had already prepared for this as a spiritual thought blockade was formed on the leading masked man and so did his crew. It was to prevent anyone from reading them.

“Having forged swords for so many years, it surprises me that the Sword Prayer City actually managed to create a Sword Soul here. I can’t imagine the difficulty that you guys went through to keep such a huge secret under the radar for so many years. Nevertheless, it’s time that this Sword Soul finds itself a new owner today.” The masked figure let out a cold smirk.

“Yes, you are right.”

Chu Kuangren’s voice was heard from amongst the crowd. Holding the Descendant Self Sword in one hand, he strode calmly to the very front of the crowd. “Obviously, the Sword Soul has already found its new owner in me. Now that that’s settled, isn’t it time for you guys to leave?”

All the masked figures fixed their gaze on Chu Kuangren, or more accurately, on the Descendant Self Sword in his hand.

“That’s the Sword Soul’s energy. It’s inside that sword!”

“Take that sword from him!”

“It’s him, Chu Kuangren. Things are going to get complicated.”

The Sword Soul had only just merged into the Descendant Self Sword, so its energy had yet subsided completely. That was the reason why these masked figures could immediately sense something amiss with the Descendant Self Sword.

However, some of their expressions turned grim once they recognized Chu Kuangren.

“Chu Kuangren, we just need you to surrender the Sword Soul and then we’ll leave,” the masked figure said. Clearly, he too was not keen to make an enemy of Chu Kuangren.

“And what happens if I don’t?”

“Then don’t blame us for not being polite.”

All the masked figures at the scene braced themselves as their sword qi began to flow. Each one of them was a sword cultivator. Even the weakest one had a Nascent Soul cultivation base.

“Northern Sea Sword Pavilion and Steel Sword Sect, do you guys really think you’re all that great?”

Chu Kuangren said nonchalantly.

All of the masked figures at the scene were startled upon hearing that.

Meanwhile, the rest of the crowd turned to look at each other in blank dismay.

“The Steel Sword Sect and the Northern Sea Sword Pavilion, it’s them!”

They were the renowned sword orthodoxies of the Azure Dragon Domain, second only to the sage orthodoxies. Everyone found it hard to believe that they came all the way here to snatch the Sword Soul.

“How on earth did Chu Kuangren figure that out?”

“Both Sect Masters of Northern Sea Sword Pavilion and Steel Sword Sect are amongst the Seven Heroes of the Swordsmanship World. Do you know that they are both Honorables?”

Feng Xuanzi’s eyes lit up when he heard that. “Ah, I remember now. Northern Sea Honorable Swordsman, you’ve visited Sword Prayer City before not long ago. You’ve even traveled to the Sky Fire Valley. I reckon you started vying for the Sword Soul since then, am I right?”

“Northern Sea Honorable Swordsman, what’s the matter? You dare to do it, but dare not reveal yourself?!”

The masked figure thought for a moment, then let out a burst of laughter. He took off his clothed face mask and revealed the face of an average-looking, middle-aged man.

“It really is the Northern Sea Honorable Swordsman!”

The expression on every sword cultivator’s face shifted slightly.

The person who was standing beside Northern Sea Honorable Swordsman took off his own mask too. He was indeed the Sect Master of another sword orthodoxy, the Steel Sword Sect. He was Honorable Swordsman of Steel!

Chu Kuangren turned to look at another masked figure who had yet to remove his mask. “Your friends have already revealed their faces, but what about you, my defeated opponent... Sword Hoarder, are you not going to reveal yourself?” Chu Kuangren said coldly.

“Chu Kuangren!!” Seeing how his identity was exposed so easily, Sword Hoarder stared at Chu Kuangren with hate-filled eyes. He then took off his mask too.

The crowd gasped in horror.

Either one of the Seven Heroes of the Swordsmanship World's names would have been enough to send shivers down one's spine. The shocking thing was that now, three of them were gathered here in one place.

"A big occasion indeed."

"Wow, Seven Heroes of the Swordsmanship World... Normally it would be hard to even meet one of them, but now we have three of them here together. Things are about to get interesting."

Chapter 142: Battling Two Honorable Supremes, Sword Hoarder's Generosity

"Even an Honorable Supreme could not figure out my real identity, I can't believe that you, Chu Kuangren did it. It seems that you have some sort of special perceiving powers," Northern Sea Honorable Swordsman said to Chu Kuangren.

"You guys still aren't retreating? Even after your identities have been exposed?"

"No, we're here for the Sword Soul, and we're not leaving till we get it!"

Northern Sea Honorable Swordsman declared in a deep voice.

Then, sword qi started circulating on his body, and a gush of chilling Sword-based Daoist Rhyme emanated. It was like a towering tsunami, shuddering the air all around them.

"You guys plan to make enemies with the Black Heaven Sect?" Chu Kuangren raised an eyebrow, looking a little surprised. He did not expect this Northern Sea Honorable Swordsman to have such guts.

"This is the Era of Great Battles!"

"It's not just sky-prides like you but just about everyone else is battling it out in everything. Everyone is competing for fortunes, resources, and a name for themselves!"

"If we don't step out of our comfort zone, we'll never make it to the very top! This Sword Soul will be mine!" A bright glint flashed from Northern Sea Honorable Swordsman's eyes.

The Sword-based Daoist Rhyme on him became increasingly cold.

He had already attained the level of an Honorable Supreme!

The Seventh Forefather stepped out of the void and looked at Northern Sea Honorable Swordsman. "I can't believe that you've already broken through to the Honorable Supreme Realm. Not bad at all."

"The Seventh Forefather of the Black Heaven Sect, the legendary sword cultivator who has traversed galaxies and warped through time and space from several millennia ago. Today, I am here to learn from you!" Northern Sea Honorable Swordsman made a fist salute and bowed. With his sword held horizontally to his chest, an unsettling fighting spirit flashed across in his eyes.

He then gave orders to Honorable Swordsman of Steel and Sword Hoarder, "I'll hold the Seventh Forefather back. I'm leaving Chu Kuangren to you both."

"Alright!"

Swish...

Northern Sea Honorable Swordsman dashed towards the Seventh Forefather.

With that, the two Honorable Supremes clashed, and a metallic clang rang out as their swords clashed in mid-air. The battle scene was truly a sight to behold as the magnificence of its sword qi soon swept across the rest of the venue.

The battle of the Honorable Supremes created waves of energy so terrifying that even the void began to quiver, the ground was torn apart, and the houses and buildings surrounding the place crumbled and collapsed over one another!

“Chu Kuangren, give me the Sword Soul!”

Sword Hoarder lunged towards Chu Kuangren. The pitch-black sword that was held in his palm exuded gushes of ferocious energy that looked extremely appalling.

Honorable Swordsman of Steel had also joined in the attack. His sword might have looked like any other ordinary steel sword, but when it was swung, it looked extremely terrifying. Every move he made with the sword had an overwhelming ferocity that left the void shuddering.

“Don’t you dare hurt the Bachelor Sage of our Sect!”

The two Daoist Protectors, Honorable Qing Lan and Old Lady Meng were just about to stop the incoming attack. However, at that moment, Chu Kuangren had already leaped one step ahead of them.

“My two respected elders, allow me to deal with this myself.” Chu Kuangren stepped forward with his great three Daoist Physique Transformations circling around him. The Battle Monarch’s Domain was about to be unleashed!

With a swing of his sword, a petrifying purple-colored sword ray which contained an unstoppable Daoist Rhyme was released, crashing onto the two Honorables’ bodies.

Both Honorables were forced back in just one move!

Old Lady Meng and Honorable Qing Lan exchanged a glance. They were a little helpless. Since Chu Kuangren was already so formidable, how else could they be of any help to him?

Their jobs as Daoist Protectors could not possibly be any easier.

“What a strong sword qi!”

“So this the Chu Kuangren whose fame was spread all across the world three years back? Such power is truly astounding.”

Sword Hoarder, on the other hand, could not concur with that statement since he had already experienced Chu Kuangren’s abilities first-hand prior to this.

Meanwhile, Honorable Swordsman of Steel, who was only battling Chu Kuangren for the very first time, seemed taken aback with the shock in his eyes. He could not help but tighten his grip on his sword.

“My two Honorables, do feel free to showcase any sort of ability you may have. Don’t disappoint me.” Chu Kuangren smirked as he levitated into the air, his raven hair floating and dancing with the wind. He looked absolutely majestic in that white robe of his as he angled his sword towards the two Honorable Swordsmen.

Battling against two Honorable Supremes alone was indeed a rare sight to behold. Several sword cultivators gulped as they found this scene absolutely ridiculous.

They were in awe not because they had never witnessed a sky-pride in action. As a matter of fact, the birth of numerous sky-prides had been witnessed in this Era of Great Battles, each one stronger than the other.

Nevertheless, no matter how powerful those sky-prides were, they could only withstand a few hits at most against Honorables. None were like Chu Kuangren, who could fight back not one but two Honorables at the same time with just one swing of his sword. The sheer magnitude of his powers was beyond imagination.

“Attack!” The energy on Sword Hoarder’s body erupted. Coupled with the Troop-Breaker Ominous Sword in his hand, he charged towards his opponent like a wicked ancient beast as his ferocious sword qi instantly locked Chu Kuangren into place!

“You sure look more powerful after changing to a new sword.” Chu Kuangren remarked. The Descendant Self Sword in his grip vibrated lightly, releasing an incredibly mystifying Sword-based Daoist Rhyme as he cast the Heaven-Slaying Sword Drawing Technique.

A purplish sword ray, which contained a mysterious Sword-based Daoist Rhyme that was miles superior to that of the Honorable Swordsman’s, beamed out. In an instant, the sword qi on the outermost layer of Sword Hoarder’s sword shattered before Chu Kuangren’s sword beam smashed onto Sword Hoarder’s Troop-Breaker Ominous Sword effortlessly.

With a loud metallic clang, the enormous force almost broke Sword Hoarder’s arm, and he was no longer able to hold onto his sword any longer. The Troop-Breaker was released from his grip.

Chu Kuangren’s figure turned into a beam of light. Nobody could see how he moved, but by the time he reappeared, he was already holding the Troop-Breaker in one hand, scrutinizing it silently.

“Hmm, this is not a bad sword, it’s even an Ominous Sword!” Chu Kuangren sounded a little surprised. This Troop-Breaker Ominous Sword may not be a sacred weapon, but its ferocious energy was stronger than one. So strong that any normal sacred weapon would not be able to match it.

“My Troop-Breaker! Give me back my sword!” Sword Hoarder looked devastated. He then activated his spiritual thoughts, attempting to summon his sword back into possession.

The Troop-Breaker could be seen vibrating in Chu Kuangren’s grip.

“Oh? This sword has been cultivated.” Chu Kuangren chuckled as he circulated his own spiritual thought to oppress the Troop-Breaker Ominous Sword!

As if it was able to sense the Exquisite Nine Orifices Sword Heart's energy through Chu Kuangren's spiritual thought, the Troop-Breaker Ominous Sword which was vibrating earlier became still all of a sudden. The sword even withdrew its own ferocious energy, becoming extremely docile.

Chu Kuangren was slightly shocked by that. The Troop-Breaker Ominous Sword was incredibly powerful. He thought he would have required more strength to oppress and bend it under his control.

However, to his surprise, it was only that easy.

Not far away, Sword Hoarder kept trying to summon his Troop-Breaker Ominous Sword, but his efforts came to no avail as Troop-Breaker Ominous Sword did not show even the slightest response.

"What on earth is going on?!"

Sword Hoarder was so desperate that he almost lost his sanity.

He felt like he had been abandoned by the Troop-Breaker.

"Even this useless sword submits itself to Chu Kuangren's Exquisite Nine Orifices Sword Heart?!" Sword Hoarder's whole body shook as he glared at Chu Kuangren with bloodshot eyes. He was so envious to the point that he was going berserk.

He harbored high hopes in the Troop-Breaker Ominous Sword. He had hoarded numerous swords, yet he only chose the Troop-Breaker to refine. He had spent countless days and nights fostering the Ominous Sword, caring for it like it was his lover.

Yet now, having just only met Chu Kuangren, the Troop-Breaker was already attracted to him. It was as if it had forsaken the precious moments that they had shared together.

Swords might not have a heart, but humans like him do!

At the sight of that, how could Sword Hoarder not be heartbroken and mad?!

The rest of the sword cultivators who stood by could not help but threw sympathetic glances at Sword Hoarder when they saw how he was going nuts. At the same time, they were in awe at Chu Kuangren's Physique.

"It is true what they say about the Exquisite Nine Orifices Sword Heart!"

"This Physique is really too overpowering for a sword cultivator, but to the rest of the sword cultivators facing it, it would be a huge threat."

"That's right."

All the sword cultivators at the scene silently swore to themselves that if they were to encounter Chu Kuangren again, the first thing they must do is to hide their own swords from his line of sight.

Otherwise, it would be too late to even cry for mercy once they lose their sword

Chu Kuangren looked at Sword Hoarder and smirked. "You're being too generous, dear fellow. You've just gifted me a sword case and a dozen or more famed swords a few days ago, and now you're presenting me yet another sword with ominous capabilities."

At this, Sword Hoarder could not hold himself back any longer. Sword qi was coursing furiously through his entire body and holding up a fist in place of a sword, he was about to throw himself at Chu Kuangren to finish him off.

Right at that moment, a terrifying energy burst came from behind Sword Hoarder.

“Sword Hoarder, step aside!”

Honorable Swordsman of Steel let out a battle cry.

He swung his steel sword high up in the air, erupting a majestic Daoist Rhyme and spiritual power which formed into a giant silhouette of sword shadow.

With a swing of his sword, the hills and valleys shuddered. The void felt like it was almost torn apart with sheer force. Its terrifying vital force locked down on Chu Kuangren, leaving him no room for escape!

Chapter 143: Killing Chu Kuangren With Brute Force? Don't Embarrass Yourself! He Just Cut Down An Honorable!

The sword shadow towered over Chu Kuangren before it cut straight down on him!

It was a terrifying sword technique!

Even if it was inferior to an Honorable, its strength was close enough. Chu Kuangren gripped the Descendant Self Sword tightly with a slight curl of his lips.

“Now that's more like it.”

“Heaven-Slaying Sword Drawing Technique!”

Chu Kuangren gripped his sword and swung it all in one go.

With the Sword Soul's boost, the Descendant Self Sword had reached a level that was almost on par with a Sage Ruler Weapon. In addition to the Five Supreme Foundation Levels that Chu Kuangren had, his spiritual power was no worse than an Honorable.

Not to mention that his comprehension of Dao Techniques was very profound.

Sage Ruler Techniques danced on his fingertips. So despite being the King of War, a single strike from his sword was as powerful as an Honorable Supreme!

The blinding light from the sword rays had all the sword cultivators squinting unconsciously while the Sword-based Daoist Rhyme gave them goosebumps.

Boom!

A huge explosion occurred as sword qi clashed with sword qi. The violent shockwave shook the ground and split open the surface, prompting the buildings around them to crumble and shatter like glass.

Many sword cultivators were sent flying like a kite in the wind as they flailed in the air and exclaimed endless and pitiful screams.

There were risks when watching a good show.

Many cultivators perished as the result of an intense battle.

“F*ck! Run!”

“I won’t make it! Ah! I’m flying!”

“Dear Gods, the sword qi almost killed me!”

The crowd was in mortified disarray. Even certain Honorable Swordsmen felt their skin crawl and their hearts falter when they witnessed the scene.

Crash!

Suddenly, a figure was thrown out of the violent storm before it landed on the street, raising a cloud of dust.

The crowd glanced over at the body and swallowed hard.

The body on the ground belonged to the Honorable Swordsman of Steel, one of the Seven Heroes of the Swordsmanship World who always shone brightly no matter the situation.

His body now lay on the ground with his hair unkempt and a body covered in bloody cuts. His elegant robes were also torn to shreds by the sword qi.

One word to describe all this was ‘brutal’.

How brutal? Extremely so!

“Chu Kuangren!”

Honorable Swordsman of Steel gritted his teeth as he glared into the sky.

The man himself stood there, looking down at him with unflinching and calm eyes. Compared to the beaten and bruised Honorable Swordsman of Steel, Chu Kuangren’s white robes remained pure and undirtied. He was like an untouchable God looking down from above.

“Weak.”

“This is one of the Seven Heroes of the Swordsmanship World? Disappointing.” Chu Kuangren shook his head, his tone filled with dissatisfaction.

He then turned his attention to the other sword cultivators and simply said, “Ah, I almost forgot about you lot. Come on, why aren’t you moving?”

There were numerous sword cultivators from the Northern Sea Sword Pavilion and Steel Sword Sect, who were at least in the Nascent Soul Realm, but they were now as silent as the grave. Seeing Chu Kuangren direct his gaze towards them had scared them so much that their whole body shook.

“Come on! Get him, all of you!”

“He’s only a King of War. Even brute force would be enough to kill him!” Honorable Swordsman of Steel roared.

The crowd of sword cultivators looked at each other, afraid to charge forth.

It was simply too terrifying!

Are you saying that a King of War was able to defeat one of the Seven Heroes with one hand behind his back?!

Was the world going insane, or were they losing their minds?!

“Honorable Swordsman of Steel! Get your people up there! He’s just a King of War. Brute force will kill him!”

Frustrated, Sword Hoarder yelled at the battered Honorable Swordsman of Steel when he noticed that the crowd had frozen.

Suddenly, among the crowd, a sword cultivator said in a trembling voice, “He killed a hundred thousand demonic cultivators in Weeping Demon Mountain three years ago! How can someone like us kill him with brute force?!”

Those words made everyone tremble as one by one, rumors of Chu Kuangren began to resurface in their minds.

Three years ago, he had killed a hundred thousand demonic cultivators in the Weeping Demon Mountain as a cultivator in the Paradise Realm.

Three years later, as a King of War, his cultivation base only grew stronger. Whereas for people like them, forget hundreds of thousands, they would not even manage a tenth of that number!

Now, they were expected to brute force Chu Kuangren to death?!

Spare them the embarrassment!

It was impossible to believe those words!

“I— is he really impossible to defeat?” Sword Hoarder glared at Chu Kuangren in disbelief. His voice was trembling and hushed.

He refused to believe this.

How could such a young cultivator have such a terrifying cultivation base? Not to mention he was already so three years ago.

Had he not gone through a three-year-long closed-door meditation, he would have turned the world upside down!

“Retreat!” Sword Hoarder swallowed hard as all thoughts of the Sword Soul were pushed into the back of his mind.

A streak of light then flashed across the sky and in the blink of an eye, it had caught up with Sword Hoarder, blocking his path to escape.

That was Chu Kuangren.

He looked ethereal, and there was no denying that his speed surpassed even an Honorable. There was no escape for Sword Hoarder.

“Get out of my way!!” With that, Sword Hoarder pushed his spiritual power to his limits, and enormous amounts of sword qi burst from his palms.

Unfortunately, he was no match for Chu Kuangren even when he had his swords. So now, without his swords, he had less of a chance to hurt him.

Chu Kuangren merely raised his palm and unleashed his Human Mountain Stamp, shattering Sword Hoarder’s sword qi and throwing him onto the ground.

He cast the Troop-Breaker to the side and pinned Sword Hoarder to the ground in a deadlock with his violent sword qi.

“Let me go, Chu Kuangren. On behalf of all the swords that remain in the case, please let me go.” Sword Hoarder was now afraid as his voice filled with fear.

“This is the second time you’ve attacked me.”

Chu Kuangren faced Sword Hoarder and spoke indifferently.

“I made a mistake! I’ll never do this again!”

“You’ll never have the chance to.”

Placing his hand on the hilt of the Troop-Breaker, Chu Kuangren channeled his sword qi into Sword Hoarder via the sword. Immediately after, enormous bursts of sword qi and blood mists exploded, riddling Sword Hoarder’s body with holes.

With that, one of the Seven Heroes of the Swordsmanship World had fallen!

A little ways away, a figure took the chance to slip into the shadows while Chu Kuangren was killing Sword Hoarder. Honorable Swordsman of Steel had fled!

The sword cultivators’ faces fell when they noticed, especially the elders and disciples of the Steel Sword Sect. They were in disbelief.

“Sect Leader!”

“F*ck! How could our Sect Leader run off like that?”

“Disgusting! That shameless rascal!”

Chu Kuangren pulled back the Troop-Breaker and barked with cold laughter upon realizing that Honorable Swordsman of Steel had fled. “The fool!”

The escaping Honorable Swordsman of Steel suddenly realized that there were two figures in front of him — a gorgeous lady and an elderly woman.

Both individuals harbored the terrifying aura of an Honorable.

“F*ck! Chu Kuangren’s protectors!”

Honorable Swordsman of Steel’s face instantly paled.

The two ladies were Honorable Qing Lan and Old Lady Meng.

“Did you think that you could leave without our Bachelor Sage’s permission? Think again!”

Honorable Qing Lan laughed coldly as she raised her palms and unleashed a beam of white light, blasting the already wounded Honorable Swordsman of Steel.

Soon after, another beam of light flew across the void and landed in front of Honorable Swordsman of Steel. Before he could react, a chill raced down his spine and he could feel his life force fading rapidly.

On the brink of death, he saw Chu Kuangren raise his hand. In his palm was a black whirlpool that resembled the mouth of a giant beast.

Chu Kuangren sucked Honorable Swordsman of Steel into the Avarice dimension with little resistance. After all, he was still an Honorable, so his flesh and blood proved to be very nourishing.

Chapter 144: Leave the Yin and Yang Ring And Scram, I See No God Other Than Me

On the Great Sword Tournament’s grounds, every single sword cultivator stared, wide-eyed and slack-jawed.

Just what did they witness?

A King of War had killed two Honorables!

Moreover, he was left unscathed. Who the f*ck would believe that a King of War was this powerful? Bullsh*t!

“How the hell is Chu Kuangren this terrifying?”

“With such power, I would have believed you if you said he was an Honorable Supreme! But King of War? Bullsh*t! Who’s King of War is this powerful?!”

“Exactly! This is beyond terrifying!”

“Good God, this generation’s Young Emperors are like the Ten Unparalleled Warriors. Rarely would you find such an outstanding one even amongst the best sky-prides.”

Bai Qianjun was also in the crowd.

He could feel his eyes tremble as he watched Chu Kuangren in the sky. With such power, he would most definitely die in one hit!

To think that he was provoking the devil himself earlier!

A shiver of fear crept into Bai Qianjun’s heart.

“This is the guy who suppressed all the sky-prides so hard that they couldn’t lift their heads? Scary!” Bai Qianjun’s voice trembled slightly.

He initially believed that no matter how strong Chu Kuangren was, he could not have been much stronger than sky-prides like Yuanhong or Gu Changge.

Oh, how wrong he was.

They were on different playing fields entirely!

He could never hope to compare with him.

“Ha! Brother Chu is still the same powerhouse after all! After his three-year closed-door meditation, when people had forgotten him, he can still shake the heavens as he pleases!”

Li Xingchen could not help but sigh.

The Sage Ruler Remnant Spirit within him secretly shivered.

“This lad’s power is far too horrifying. Killing two Honorables as a King of War? Nothing like that would have happened in my time.”

“So scary! I fear that this lad will become my greatest enemy in the future!”

Li Xingchen did not know what to think of the Sage Ruler Remnant Spirit’s thoughts.

He was still in awe at Chu Kuangren’s power.

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“Sword Hoarder and Honorable Swordsman of Steel are both dead?!!”

“To think Chu Kuangren has such power!”

In the distance, Northern Sea Honorable Swordsman, who had been fighting the Seventh Forefather, could not help but feel his heart lurch. However, a moment of distraction was all it took for the Seventh Forefather to slice his arm off with a sword.

A cry of agony ripped out of Northern Sea Honorable Swordsman as he staggered backward.

“To ascend to the Honorable Supreme Realm isn’t easy. You could have become a force to be reckoned with, but instead, you walk the path to your demise. Such a pity.” Gripping onto his Azure Vine Sword, the Seventh Forefather glanced at Northern Sea Honorable Swordsman with ice-cold eyes.

His opponent may be an Honorable Supreme like him, but the Seventh Forefather had been one for a long time, while his opponent had just ascended to the realm. There was no doubt that he would win.

“Honorable Supreme...”

Northern Sea Honorable Swordsman muttered before he let out a bitter laugh that became increasingly louder. “HAHA! Honorable Supreme?! Such a lofty title that people worship, all for what? We’re still reduced to nothing but insignificant ants before a Sage!”

“In the Era of Great Battles, the greatest stars shine the brightest. But everything under the sky still lies in the hands of the Sages. We’re nothing more than pawns for them.”

“Yet Emperors exist above Sages! The only way to rid ourselves of these shackles is to rise above everyone as an Emperor!! Especially since we’re in the Era of Great Battles, I will fight for that sliver of a chance to become an Emperor!”

“Even if I die trying, I regret nothing!”

Northern Sea Honorable Swordsman said with crazed passion, it was almost touching.

A beam of light flashed across Northern Sea Honorable Swordsman.

Chu Kuangren looked at him impassively. "Of course, fighting for what you want is the very essence of the Era of Great Battles, but only winners hold power. You have lost!"

"Indeed, I've lost! But do you really believe that you can remain undefeated forever?!" Northern Sea Honorable Swordsman spat through gritted teeth.

"I... will defeat all my enemies in this world!"

As soon as the words left Chu Kuangren's mouth, he channeled his spiritual power by lifting his hands. A terrifying Daoist Rhyme rang out and the Earth Qi surged on his palm before a mystical Ancient Godly Mountain formed and crashed towards Northern Sea Honorable Swordsman.

The Ancient Godly Mountain was majestic.

It was almost as if it could crush space and time itself.

Even the crowd of cultivators from far away could feel the immense pressure weighing down on them. Their knees buckled and faces turned as pale as snow.

As for Northern Sea Honorable Swordsman, he was already heavily injured thanks to the Seventh Forefather. In a single attack, he was crushed by the Ancient Godly Mountain and his whole body exploded into a bloody mist that stained the ground red; the man had fallen!

Chu Kuangren had slain yet another Honorable Supreme Swordsman!

Sword Hoarder, Honorable Swordsman of Steel, and Northern Sea Honorable Swordsman all fell one after another. As for the sword cultivators that they brought along, they had all lost the will to fight.

What fight?

What else was there for them to fight?!

They could not even run if they wanted to!

However, those twelve pillars of sword qi were practically stretched from heaven to hell, hence trapping them in a box. Even a blind man could see it and they knew that their cultivation bases would never be enough to escape Chu Kuangren's Nine Heaven Sword Prison vision.

"Now, the rest of you."

After killing three Honorables, Chu Kuangren turned to the remaining group of sword cultivators with a playful smile.

The group shivered with their hearts pounding in fear. They would soon know their fates.

"Leave your Yin and Yang Rings and scram," Chu Kuangren stated.

All the crowd felt was a rush of relief, as if they had just been pardoned from hell and ascended to heaven. They could not contain their joy.

They lived. They survived Chu Kuangren!

“Yes! Of course!”

“We’re deeply grateful for Brother Chu’s mercy!”

With that, they dropped their Yin and Yang Rings and scramble to escape.

Whoosh!

A streak of sword qi flashed past and sliced one of the sword cultivators in half. Blood gushed out in gallons, and some sword cultivators crumpled to the ground in fear.

“Chu Kuangren! You lied to us!”

Some sword cultivators said angrily.

Chu Kuangren replied calmly, “I am a man of my word, but if someone decides to take advantage of the situation, I will show no mercy.”

The crowd looked to the deceased and realized that he had tried to leave with the crowd before dropping his Yin and Yang Ring.

Only then did they understand what Chu Kuangren meant. Anyone else who tried to do the same instantly scrapped their plans, obediently leaving their rings before they left.

All the sword cultivators had left after a while and all that remained was a pile of at least a thousand rings.

Chu Kuangren grinned as he kept all the rings.

First, he got the Sword Soul, and now he had a bountiful harvest from the small fry. Coming to Sword Prayer City was indeed a great move!

“Master, you’re going to let them go?” Lan Yu looked at the cultivators in the distance.

Chu Kuangren chuckled. “It’s fine. Their Daoist’s core would have crumbled after that battle. I’ll be the only God they worship!”

“Junior Chu, congratulations on getting the Sword Soul.” Feng Xuanzi walked up to Chu Kuangren with a mix of emotions.

He knew it was unlikely that Chu Kuangren would return the Sword Soul to them if he asked.

Moreover, since the Sword Soul has bonded to its owner, it belonged to him as long as he was alive. No other sword cultivator could take it away.

“Since the Sword Soul suddenly showed up, I assume that Sword Prayer City is in some trouble. Does my senior require any help?” Chu Kuangren asked.

After all, he did take their Sword Soul. Since the Black Heaven Sect and Sword Prayer City were also on good terms, helping them out was the least he could do.

"I received a report that said Northern Sea Honorable Swordsman and people from the Steel Sword Sect worked together to break into Sky Fire Valley to steal the Sword Soul. Thankfully, the casualties were not high. I thank you for your contributions," Feng Xuanzi replied.

"Sword Prayer City is home to generations of swordsmiths, and many of them have forged famous swords. Most of those swords originated from this city, so you could call this the place where all the swords' energies are concentrated, and thousands of years ago, it gave birth to the Sword Soul.

"We initially wanted to find a smithing material that would create a godly vessel that was worthy of the Sword Soul, but to think this happened instead! We're truly at the mercy of fate.

"But since you have the Sword Soul and the Descendant Self Sword that our ancestors forged, I'd say it's not a bad outcome. I hope that Junior Chu will continue to shine with them both." Feng Xuanzi slowly explained the history of the Sword Soul to him but also expressed his high hopes for Chu Kuangren's future.

Chapter 145: To Make The Scabbard, Drastic Measures Must Be Taken. Go, Melt The Demonic Spear!

The Sword Soul appeared only to have Chu Kuangren obtain it. The Great Sword Tournament seemed trivial in comparison to what he had gotten.

In the end, it was clear that Chu Kuangren would be the one to take the Century Sword. After all, who else would dare to fight him?

He had Heaven Starlight, Troop-Breaker, Descendant Self, and when you include a dozen others that were inside Sword Hoarder's case, Chu Kuangren had seventeen treasured swords that most cultivators could only dream of having.

Chu Kuangren kept them all since he had the Sacred Emerald Sword Case anyway. All he needed now was to nurture it, and all the swords within it would get the same effects.

"Esteemed sword cultivators! You know I have called upon you to take part in the Great Sword Tournament, but I also have another announcement!"

On the tournament grounds, Feng Xuanzi addressed all the sword cultivators loudly.

The crowd looked at him curiously.

"Countless famous swords exist throughout the land, but their owners hail from both good and evil origins. I've been working hard in Sword Prayer City, and now I declare that a Hundred Swords Spectrum is in progress!

"The Hundred Swords Spectrum will contain a list of famous swords and their owners. Only swords and owners that have been thoroughly investigated by Sword Prayer City will make it into the records."

The crowd went wild at the announcement.

After all, most of the world's famous swords originated from this city. Hence, it was no doubt that they were the most qualified to compile the Hundred Swords Spectrum.

“The Hundred Swords Spectrum will be accessible to the public in three days and it will be updated every decade. I hope everyone will look forward to it!” Feng Xuanzi stated.

Many sword cultivators who originally planned to leave after the Great Sword Tournament immediately changed their minds and decided to wait for the exciting new developments.

With that, the Great Sword Tournament came to a close, and the Hundred Swords Spectrum would come to life.

...

When Chu Kuangren returned to the Feng residence, he began to organize his spoils from the battle since a pile of Yin and Yang Rings still lay inside his own Yin and Yang Ring.

It was impossible to go through it all alone, so Lan Yu came to help.

The two spent a whole day going through the pile. In total, there were two thousand and a hundred rings, a thousand two hundred and ten high-grade soulstones, four thousand mid-grade soulstones, and an uncountable number of other soulstones.

As for Supreme Elixirs and medicinal pills, the number was even higher.

Except for a small portion of soulstones for daily expenditure, the rest were given to the Godly Phoenix Egg.

It was Chu Kuangren’s first time witnessing how the Phoenix absorbed the soulstones.

The egg bounced into the pile of soulstones before a powerful absorption force erupted.

The soulstones’ spiritual qi broke out and rushed into the Godly Phoenix Egg. However, it was not just the soulstones but some Supreme Elixirs, medicinal pills, and materials too had their spiritual qi and Daoist Rhymes sucked dry.

Such gluttony matched its owner’s Avarice Technique.

Unfortunately, even after absorbing all the soulstones and Supreme Elixirs, the Godly Phoenix Egg still showed no signs of hatching.

“This thing is like a bottomless pit. It looks like it could hatch at any time, but it seems like there’s still a long way to go,” Chu Kuangren spoke exasperatedly.

Suddenly, the Descendant Self Sword hopped closer to Chu Kuangren, rubbing its hilt against his face as if Kuangren had neglected it.

“Heh, even the sword knows how to act cute.” Chu Kuangren placed the sword across his knees and gently stroked the blade.

The sword trembled slightly, letting out a faint hum.

Since he had acquired the Sword Soul, the Descendant Self Sword was no longer just a sword. It was different from other sacred weapons that had a spiritual awareness as it now had its own complete spiritual ego.

Spiritual awareness and spiritual ego were two completely different things.

Due to that, the Descendant Self Sword was essentially a person with a mind of its own. It had its own thoughts and personality.

Whenever Chu Kuangren placed it back in its spiritual mound, it would feel bored, like being trapped in a small and dark house.

Then again, anyone who had a spiritual ego would feel bored if they were left in an empty room.

Left with no choice, Chu Kuangren could only keep it beside him all the time.

“Still, I need to find a scabbard for you,” Chu Kuangren muttered. Its sword ray was too sharp that it might hurt someone.

The next day, Chu Kuangren sought out Feng Xuanzi and told him about wanting to forge a scabbard.

“Giving the Descendant Self Sword a scabbard isn’t hard, but because it’s a Sage Ruler Weapon and has the Sword Soul, it will continue to get stronger. I worry the scabbard won’t be worthy of the sword.”

“Also, since the scabbard exists to hide the sharpness of the blade, an ordinary scabbard won’t conceal the Descendant Self Sword’s power. You need a top-grade forging material for it, and I don’t have any now,” Feng Xuanzi said helplessly.

Even though he was a Swordsmith Master, forging a scabbard out of thin air was impossible.

“I see.” Chu Kuangren groaned slightly.

His Descendant Self Sword was so unique that its scabbard would have to be something of equal standing or if not better. Even materials used to forge the Century Sword may not be good enough.

“I got it.” Chu Kuangren’s eyes lit up.

He retrieved a dark red spear from his Yin and Yang Ring. It was a Sage Ruler Weapon that he had gotten from Northern Lingdao State some time back. It was known as the Demonic Spear of Apocalypse!

As soon as it appeared, a creepy Daoist Rhyme seeped out of the spear. Even Feng Xuanzi felt his heart stop for a moment.

“Such a terrifying spear. It’s a Sage Ruler Weapon!”

“Indeed. What does Senior Feng think of melting this and turning it into Descendant Self Sword’s scabbard?” Chu Kuangren stated.

Feng Xuanzi was mortified by Chu Kuangren’s suggestion.

Melting down a Sage Ruler Weapon for a scabbard?

What the f*ck?

Need he take such drastic measures?

Even as a Swordsmith Master, this was a first for him!

“Junior Chu, are you sure you wish to do this? This is a Sage Ruler Weapon,” Feng Xuanzi questioned.

Chu Kuangren smiled. “Why wouldn’t I want to do this? Isn’t it fitting to have a Sage Ruler Weapon become the Descendant Self Sword’s scabbard? Besides, I have no use for the spear, so letting it just sit there is a waste. I’m better off using it like this.”

‘Except that the way you’re using it is extremely bold,’ Feng Xuanzi thought to himself.

“In that case, I’ll do it. Since we’re only forging a scabbard, we don’t need the whole spear,” Feng Xuanzi said.

“That’s alright. Senior Feng can take whatever is left as payment for the scabbard’s work. I can’t let my senior work for free, can I?”

“Ha! I’ll take it then.”

Feng Xuanzi openly accepted it.

He looked at the Demonic Spear of Apocalypse enthusiastically. “Hah, despite having many years of swordsmithing experience, this is the first time I’ll be melting down a Sage Ruler Weapon to forge a scabbard. This will surely be a novel experience.”

As if it could sense its fate, the Demonic Spear of Apocalypse started to shake violently as it tried to escape Chu Kuangren’s grasp.

“Hmph.” Chu Kuangren huffed coldly before he channeled his spiritual power to suppress the demonic spear.

Melting down the Demonic Spear of Apocalypse was no easy task. Even for a master like Feng Xuanzi, it would take a few days and nights.

During that time, the unveiling of the Hundred Swords Spectrum still went on as planned, but Feng Xuanzi’s brother, Feng Huzi took over the task instead.

On this day, the grounds where Sword Prayer City’s Great Sword Tournament took place was filled with people. The sea of people stretched so far that one could not see the end of it.

The scene was no different than during the day of the tournament itself. After all, today was the day they would unveil the Hundred Swords Spectrum.

Numerous sword cultivators were looking forward to it. They wanted to see which swords would be included and which sword cultivators wielded them.

Chapter 146: The Hundred Swords Spectrum Is Unveiled, A Sage Will Preach For Us!

“Who do you think will be in the Hundred Swords Spectrum?”

“The Swords Spectrum may be from Sword Prayer City, but we don’t know if they’ve added their biases into it. If the public doesn’t approve of it, then it’s as worthless as a blank piece of paper.”

“Indeed. It all boils down to how much its words are worth its weight in gold.”

Discussions happened across the grounds of Sword Prayer City.

Soon, in the crowd's watchful eyes, the Feng family's disciples appeared and hung a book onto the wall.

A giant scripture suddenly appeared in front of the crowd. The names of various swords and their owners were listed upon it one by one.

The first thing everyone did was turn their attention to the top of the list.

First place.

"First place in the Hundred Swords Spectrum is... the Descendant Self Sword?!"

The crowd looked at each other skeptically.

"Have you heard of this Descendant Self Sword?"

"I'm not sure. It sounds familiar, but who's the owner?"

"Bullsh*t, how are you not sure? We just saw it. It's the sword that Chu Kuangren holds."

"The one that fused with the Sword Soul?"

"Yes!"

"The Descendant Self Sword's owner is really Chu Kuangren?!"

Several sword cultivators groaned.

It made sense that a Sword-Soul-infused Descendant Self Sword would be in first place, but the Hundred Swords Spectrum was not purely based on the sword itself as the owner's power had to match as well.

Chu Kuangren was the world's best swordsman?

The crowd doubted it.

That was until they remembered how they shuddered when he killed three of the Seven Heroes of the Swordsmanship World that day. Then, they began to believe it.

"F*ck. You can't see him as a regular young man. I'm speechless at the fact that he's in first place."

"Quickly, look at who's second."

"Second place is the Sword of Contending Sun. Its owner is Murong Feng, hailing from Black Warrior Domain as the Admirable Honorable Swordsman. He's an Honorable Supreme that has defeated numerous sword cultivators over the years."

"Third place is Honorable Xuan Qi's Purple Star. Our Azure Dragon Domain's number one Honorable Swordsman. I can't believe he's placed after Chu Kuangren..."

The crowd continued to go down the list on the Hundred Swords Spectrum, where the names of various famous swords and their owners came into view one by one.

Besides the dispute on Chu Kuangren being placed first, the other names were recognized by many people.

The Hundred Swords Spectrum was indeed well established.

One could imagine the chaos this would bring if word of its contents got out, especially in the world of swordsmanship. It would shake the whole world.

In the crowd, Chu Kuangren could also see the Hundred Swords Spectrum. As he looked through the list, a sliver of surprise flashed past his eyes.

He noticed that all the Azure Dragon Domain's famous Seven Heroes of the Swordsmanship World were listed outside of the top fifty. The only exception was Honorable Swordsman of a Thousand Cries, who had barely squeezed himself into the top thirty.

"The Hundred Swords Spectrum certainly holds high standards, but seeing Chu Kuangren in first place just isn't right."

Some sword cultivators could not help but voice their suspicions. "I admit that Chu Kuangren is very powerful, but with so many other powerful sword cultivators in the world, how is he first?! Even his senior is placed third!"

One of the Feng family's disciples spoke out, "Our family head said that Chu Kuangren's Descendant Self Sword is the only famous sword in the world that has the Sword Soul. That alone gave it the power to be placed first."

Swords with a Sword Soul were simply too rare.

Descendant Self Sword would have been in first place regardless since the swordsmiths of Sword Prayer City had not come across a second sword that was like Chu Kuangren's.

The explanation came as no surprise to the crowd, and it dispelled their doubts.

Gossip slowly began to spread after the Hundred Swords Spectrum went public.

Chu Kuangren placing first had caused quite a commotion, and many people eventually found out about what had happened to the Seven Heroes in the city after some digging.

The news did shake the world, but most people were more concerned with Kuangren placing first as they still refused to believe it.

Chu Kuangren was well aware of that fact, but he could not care less.

Not happy?

They could come and fight him then! He was not afraid.

Unless his opponent was a Sage, he was confident that he could strike down even an Honorable Supreme as long as he had his Descendant Self Sword.

...

"Here, this is Descendant Self Sword's scabbard."

On this day, Chu Kuangren received the scabbard that Feng Xuanzi had forged.

The scabbard was pure white, engraved with beautiful patterns.

"The job is done. I forged the scabbard after melting down half of the demonic spear. Care to try it out?" Feng Xuanzi said.

"Alright." Chu Kuangren nodded and took out the Descendant Self Sword.

Once he pulled out his sword, a sharp, piercing aura seeped out from it and it made the air feel like it was filled with millions of tiny blades. Even Feng Xuanzi felt like something was cutting at his skin.

"Goodness, the sword really would garner a lot of attention without a scabbard." Impressed, Feng Xuanzi whistled. He also noticed that it had gotten even sharper since he saw it a few days ago.

The sword was still evolving.

It may be slow, but it was still happening.

However, the moment Chu Kuangren sheathed the Descendant Self Sword into the scabbard, the sharp aura dissipated. It fit perfectly!

The Descendant Self Sword shook gently as it was satisfied with the scabbard. It was like a young lady who, loved beauty, had received a gorgeous gown.

"It's perfect. My deepest thanks, Senior Feng."

"Haha! Don't sweat it. Getting the leftovers materials is a great bonus for me." Feng Xuanzi grinned.

"Hehe."

Chu Kuangren chuckled. The two then went on to have a casual chat.

Suddenly, the duo sensed something. They directed their gazes to the horizon only to see a burst of light erupt and it was followed by the echoes of a Daoist Rhyme in the sky.

"Lord Whitelock will preach for the people in seven days."

A monotone voice boomed through the entirety of the Azure Dragon Domain.

The whole domain shook.

Even Chu Kuangren was shocked.

A Sage was descending!

"Ah, Whitelock Sage is coming to preach again." Feng Xuanzi lamented.

Chu Kuangren's thoughts shifted. "Again?"

"Yeah. Whitelock Sage is different from the other more elusive and cunning Sages. He appears every once in a while to preach and bless the people. The last time he appeared was over a hundred years ago."

"I see." That piqued Chu Kuangren's interest. "Are there any conditions to listening to a Sage's preachings?"

“Naturally, one doesn’t simply receive Daoist teachings. Without the right level of cultivation base and Dao insight, you won’t be able to hear the Sage’s preachings. If you try to listen with brute force, your Daoist core will be affected,” Feng Xuanzi explained.

Chu Kuangren nodded faintly and said, “A Sage’s preaching is a rare event. I also have things that I wish to learn from a Sage. I guess I shall take my leave then, Senior Feng.”

“Alright. I won’t keep you.”

Getting to listen to a Sage’s preaching was a golden opportunity. So of course, Feng Xuanzi would not stop Chu Kuangren and ruin his chances.

News of the Sage’s preachings spread like wildfire in just the span of one day. Suddenly, almost all cultivators were flocking to the Sage’s Dojo.

“Let’s go! Whitelock Sage is preaching again!”

“I couldn’t hear him last time because my cultivation base was lacking. This time, I won’t miss it!”

“Ha! Master Whitelock, here I come!”

Chapter 147: A Rocksteady Daoist Core, Whitelock Mountain, And The Tyrant Lei Mingtian

“Congratulations! The Host has obtained the legendary Rocksteady Daoist Core!”

On this day, Chu Kuangren did his daily rolls on the Fairy boat.

He was slightly shocked to see his prize. Even with the Lucky Halo, it was unlikely one would get something legendary. He was already insanely lucky to get the Immortal Phoenix last time!

After accepting the Rocksteady Daoist Core, Chu Kuangren did not feel any different. All that came was information about the item.

The Rocksteady Daoist Core, as the name implied, was an immovable, solid Daoist core.

It was quite a useful item. In the spiritual world, it was commonly said that its method was easy to learn, but cultivating it into a Daoist core was difficult.

The Daoist core was crucial to a cultivator. A cultivator with a strong core may not reach great heights, but every cultivator that stood at the very top would possess a strong core.

“Seventh Forefather, do you know anything about Whitelock Sage?” Chu Kuangren asked while they were on the Fairy boat.

The Seventh Forefather appeared, nodding slightly. “Whitelock Sage is well-known, so I know quite a bit about him.”

“He doesn’t belong to any sage orthodoxy, but he appears to preach to the people once in a while and he has accumulated a lot of merit with this.”

“Many powerful cultivators have heard his preachings. Due to that, he has students from all walks of life. It’s quite impressive.”

Chu Kuangren noticed a particular phrase while listening to the Seventh Forefather. "You can accumulate merit just by preaching to the people?"

The Seventh Forefather nodded slightly. "Yes, but only the first preaching has a significant effect. It's why many newly ascended Sages will preach to increase their merit, but towards the end, it stops."

"Those like Whitelock Sage are rare. He's the only one who still preaches from time to time."

Chu Kuangren nodded. "It certainly is intriguing. Could he be accumulating merits because of a personal failure?"

"Merits work in mysterious ways. But for Sages, it serves little purpose unless it's some groundbreaking mystical merit. I assume he just likes collecting them."

"Perhaps."

Chu Kuangren did not give it any more thought.

...

Whitelock's preaching grounds lay in a mountain range that was named after Whitelock himself due to his presence there.

Now, Whitelock Mountain was bustling with a crowd of people several times bigger than the Great Sword Tournament.

It made sense. The Great Sword Tournament only appealed to the sword cultivators, but a Sage's preaching appealed to every cultivator in the world.

That included many Honorables and elite individuals.

"Look, it's Ao Chang from the Sacred Lands of Serene Wisdom."

A Fairy boat's arrival attracted many people's attention.

The crowd glanced over as a few cultivators from the Sacred Lands of Serene Wisdom got off the boat. Leading the way was Ao Chang.

As a Young Emperor, Ao Chang was more famous than several Honorables. His appearance attracted the attention of many people.

"It's not just Ao Chang, but Gu Changge and Yuanhong are here too!"

"Even Lin Batian from Zhiyang Valley came."

Several Young Emperors from various sage orthodoxies showed up one after another, sparking discussions amongst the crowd.

"I didn't expect the Young Emperors to come and listen to a Sage's preaching."

"Aren't they from the sage orthodoxies? They should already have a Sage backing them, so why do they still come to listen to Whitelock Sage's preaching?"

“Are you stupid? He who doesn’t accept external criticism will never improve. Who says you can’t listen to other Sages’ preaching just because you have your own?”

“That is fair.”

Hum...

Suddenly, a flash of lightning appeared nearby and took the form of a white-robed young man with green hair.

A powerful aura settled around him as sparks of electricity pulsed in the air, shocking many cultivators.

“Who is that? Such a rude entrance.”

“Shh! Quiet. He’s the Thunder Falcon Tribe’s ancient sky pride and Young Emperor, Lei Mingtian. He was the first to get an Emperor’s Essence and he’s stronger than people like Ao Chang!”

“Right, just don’t anger him, no matter what. He’s a tyrant with a Sage’s bloodline.”

Once more, a burst of light as red as blood exploded from the crowd. Under the crowd’s gazes, a young man in blood-red robes slowly walked towards Lei Mingtian.

Their eyes met, and in the next moment, so did their blades.

The man’s appearance left many in shock.

“It’s the Yasha Tribe’s Young Emperor, Spirit Blood Child!”

“Hoho! Of all the Young Emperors in the Azure Dragon Domain, Spirit Blood Child might be the only one who can spar with Lei Mingtian.”

“There was a rumor that the two fought last year, and no one knew who won. But from the looks of this, they don’t seem to get along.”

The cultivators nearby watched the fight excitedly. Meanwhile, some Honorables were curious to see how much these Young Emperors would improve in the future.

“Itching for a fight, Spirit Blood Child?”

Lei Mingtian said coldly.

A crack of a smile appeared on Spirit Blood Child’s devilish face. “It’s been a while, Lei Mingtian. Good to see you’re still as arrogant as ever.”

“If it’s a fight you want, I’ll gladly oblige you to your death!”

Spirit Blood Child’s momentum increased with no signs of backing off.

“Brothers, this is Whitelock Mountain, a sacred place where Sages reside. Please put down your weapons,” Wuchen Zi’s monotone voice suddenly rang out.

Spirit Blood Child’s eyes flickered at the words. Although he showed no signs of stopping, he also did not move forward.

Instead, Lei Mingtian glanced at Wuchen Zi coldly. "Who are you to tell me what to do?"

"I'm simply reminding my fellow brothers. Do you not think it's a tad too much to be talking to each other like this?" Wuchen Zi was now miffed.

"Oh? Is that so?" Lei Mingtian suddenly lifted his arm to direct an explosive Lightning-based Daoist Rhyme directly at him without another word.

The expression on Wuchen Zi's face shifted as he channeled his spiritual power to block the attack.

Unfortunately, when their energies collided, Wuchen Zi was forcibly knocked back by several dozen feet and faint electric pulses danced on his body. He was actually injured by the attack!

Lei Mingtian's power sent the crowd into shock.

Even Wuchen Zi was dumbfounded. They were both Young Emperors, but Lei Mingtian's power was at least a grade above his!

Gu Changge, Yuanhong, Ao Chang, and the other Young Emperors' eyes darkened and their faces turned solemn.

"Lei Mingtian's power is not to be underestimated. He could stand on the same playing field as an Honorable if he wanted to. If I fought him, chances of me winning is low."

"As expected of the Young Emperor that got the very first Emperor's Essence. Very few Young Emperors are on par with him in terms of the insights on Dao techniques."

Ao Chang and some others thought to themselves.

Lei Mingtian's face had turned even more tyrannical after he had injured Wuchen Zi. "To think that someone like you is a Young Emperor as well. The Primordial Emperor's Essence is wasted on the likes of you."

His words were not just aimed at Wuchen Zi as he made a point of also including Ao Chang, Yuanhong, and the others in his insult.

Instantly, the Young Emperors' faces turned dark. Their eyes brimmed with anger as they glared at Lei Mingtian.

All of their protectors were equally fuming, but this was not their fight. It would paint them in a bad light to interfere in the younger generation's affairs. Not to mention Lei Mingtian's protector also had a watchful eye on them.

"That b*stard! I really want someone to come and teach this Lei Mingtian a lesson! It is so infuriating!" One of the protectors cursed into the void.

As for the other protectors, they settled on a bitter smile. They all hated Lei Mingtian but had to admit that the man was powerful. Of all the sky-prides, only Spirit Blood Child could fight with him on equal grounds.

Still, that was the best they could do since they could not give Lei Mingtian a taste of his own medicine.

Chapter 148: Who Gave You Such Courage To Speak Like That, Suppressing Lei Mingtian

Just as Young Emperor Lei Mingtian was behaving in an arrogant and domineering manner.

In the sky, a Fairy boat had arrived at the Whitelock Mountain, and descending it was a man and woman, both possessing an elegant and dignified appearance.

At the sight of those two, the expressions of Gu Change and the other Young Emperors changed slightly. All of them gazed at the two approaching figures with a look of horror in their eyes.

Many cultivators had noticed the scene which was unfolding before them.

Everyone was also in shock as well.

Gu Change, Ao Chang, and the others were fearful towards Lei Mingtian's tyrannical behavior, but with this incoming figure, they were frightened.

'My God, who the hell is this person anyway?'

Everyone in the crowd was surprised by what they saw.

However, some among the crowd had already identified the figure.

"It's him, the Black Heaven Sect's Elder Senior Brother, Chu Kuangren!"

The crowd went into an uproar at those words.

Despite having been in three-years of closed-doors meditation, news of Chu Kuangren defeating multiple Young Emperors at once the moment he came out had long spread.

Coupled with the news that Chu Kuangren had obtained a Sword Soul from the Sword Prayer City which allowed him to be ranked first in the Hundred Swords Spectrum, he now stood in the limelight among the other Azure Dragon Domain news.

"After three years, this guy finally appears."

"I've never believed it when people commented on how he had a fairy-like appearance. But now that I've seen him in real life, the rumors are indeed true. His looks are just too extraordinary."

"Since Chu Kuangren is here, things are going to get much more interesting now."

Even the other sky-prides' protectors could not help but feel shocked when they saw Chu Kuangren. They could vaguely feel a sense of danger and threat lingering around that person.

"He is even more terrifying now compared to three years ago."

"With three years of closed-door meditation, I wonder how strong is he now?"

Numerous protectors thought to themselves.

Chu Kuangren and Lan Yu arrived before everyone in the crowd and greeted them with a smile.

"Greetings fellow Daoists."

It was a day and night difference compared to Lei Mingtian's domineering entrance. Chu Kuangren came across as a very polite person and in addition to his already good-looking appearance, it built a good impression among many people. A few female cultivators were even mesmerized because of this.

"Why's the difference between those two so drastic? Aren't they both sky-prides as well? Look at how well-behaved Chu Kuangren is, unlike a certain someone's rude behavior."

"I agree, it's quite a rare sight indeed."

"Holy hell, not only is Chu Kuangren good looking, but he has a polite air to him as well. Damn, this guy has won me over already."

"Greetings Brother Chu."

"I've been a long-time fan of yours, and seeing you today, I must say that your presence lives up to your reputation. It is very admirable."

One by one, everyone in the crowd greeted Chu Kuangren in an extremely friendly manner.

Meanwhile, someone else was not a big fan of such comparisons.

Lei Mingtian's entrance was so domineering and rude that it made everyone displeased with him; whereas Chu Kuangren was like a soothing spring breeze that everyone liked.

"So you're Chu Kuangren?" Lei Mingtian frowned and glared at Chu Kuangren as he asked with a slight chill in his tone.

Slightly puzzled, Chu Kuangren replied, "Yup, that's me."

"So you're the one who killed the Thunder Falcon Tribe's Young Emperor back then. Although that Young Emperor wasn't some big shot, he's still a rare and talented genius of the Thunder Falcon Tribe. And for that, you'll have to pay!"

Lei Mingtian replied harshly.

After awakening from his slumber, he had gained a general understanding of the situation in the Thunder Falcon Tribe so he knew the things that Chu Kuangren had done to them.

Chu Kuangren suddenly had a realization upon hearing Lei Mingtian's words. He chuckled and said, "So you're from the Thunder Falcon Tribe? That explains the stench I'm picking up in the air. It's coming from an ugly-haired beast."

Everyone was stunned when they heard that.

No one had expected that Chu Kuangren would offend Lei Mingtian the moment he spoke. Not only that but he even insulted the whole Thunder Falcon Tribe as well.

What happened to the handsome and unmatched beauty?

Ao Chang, Lin Batian, and the other sky-prides were not surprised in the slightest. They already expected something like that to happen.

“Soft? Talented and polite gentleman? Hmph, it’s all an illusion. The moment that guy gets crazy, no one can ever hope to match him.”

Lin Batian mumbled softly.

“Since Lei Mingtian really wants to provoke that crazy man, he’ll have trouble on his hands now.” Yuanhong sighed as he shook his head and gazed at Lei Mingtian with pity in his eyes.

All of them were sky-prides who had fought Chu Kuangren before, so more than anyone, they understood how strong that person truly was.

Undoubtedly, Lei Mingtian was quite strong himself as well but in their eyes, he could never hope to compare with Chu Kuangren. He might not even be on the same level as Chu Kuangren.

“You shall die!” Lei Mingtian’s face darkened before his figure turned into a flash of lightning and appeared before Chu Kuangren in a blink of an eye.

His speed was so fast that only a few in the crowd could react in time.

All they saw was Lei Mingtian’s punch. Jolts of lightning pulsed between his fingers as launched his attack towards Chu Kuangren’s chest.

The moment his punch went through Chu Kuangren’s body, Lei Mingtian’s face lit up in delight. “You’re nothing but a... Wait, what?”

Before he could even bring up a smile, Lei Mingtian realized that the Chu Kuangren that he had hit did not feel real at all.

Chu Kuangren then disappeared.

“An afterimage?”

“He has such incredible speed!”

Lei Mingtian was secretly shocked. He then activated his spiritual thoughts to search for Chu Kuangren, not noticing that his opponent was already behind his back.

Surges of lightning sparked around Lei Mingtian’s body before he turned into a flash of lightning once again.

“Your speed is not bad.” Chu Kuangren said as he activated the Phantom Light Strike Technique.

The onlooking crowd could only make out two streams of light that constantly collided in the air, and terrifying bursts of shockwaves would break out every time they clashed.

Both of their speeds were just too fast.

Even an Honorable could barely make out their blurred figures in the air.

Boom!

At that point, a stream of light was smashed down from the air, forming an enormous crater as it landed on the ground and the surrounding cultivators quickly evaded it.

After taking a closer look, everyone realized that Lei Mingtian was the one lying in the crater. His hair was in a mess and blood was flowing from the corner of his mouth. Enraged, his reddened eyes glared at Chu Kuangren who was levitating in mid-air.

Meanwhile, his opponent was in mid-air fiddling with his fingers. Some hints of Human Mountain Daoist Rhyme were still emanating between his fingertips.

It was obvious that Lei Mingtian had lost the battle.

“What did you say just now? Something about making me pay? I really am curious. Who gave you the courage to spew those words before me?” Chu Kuangren lowered his arms as he gazed down at Lei Mingtian who was lying on the ground covered in dirt and dust.

Everyone noticed a gorgeous and extremely pure white sword hanging from Chu Kuangren’s waist.

They knew that Chu Kuangren was an expert in the sword Dao. The Descendant Self Sword he had was a divine blade that was recently assimilated by a Sword Soul.

However, he had already managed to suppress Lei Mingtian without even unsheathing his sword. One could only imagine how strong Chu Kuangren would be when he drew that blade.

“Chu Kuangren!” Lei Mingtian gritted his teeth and the power of thunder that sparked on his body started to grow increasingly violent. His whole figure seemed like it was enveloped in a giant ball of lightning.

Boom!

A horrifying burst of Lightning-based Daoist Rhyme erupted in an instant, forming into a thick thunder pillar that blasted out as lines of mysterious runes swirled around.

“Easy peasy.” Chu Kuangren lifted his hand and in one slap, he unleashed a terrifying Human Mountain power towards the incoming thunder pillar, shattering it the moment it made contact.

Following that, Chu Kuangren pressed his palm down. Overbearing amounts of Earth Qi erupted and formed into an Ancient Godly Mountain that came down crashing upon Lei Mingtian.

The mighty Human Mountain power locked onto Lei Mingtian, allowing him no chance to escape at all.

Faced against that terrifying attack, Lei Mingtian tried his best to defend himself by continuously shooting violent surges of lightning towards the incoming Ancient Godly Mountain.

Even so, the Ancient Godly Mountain was unyielding as it fell and crushed Lei Mingtian flat onto the ground, cracking all the bones in his body while he bled profusely.

Chapter 149: Little Daoist Boy, Thousand Mountain Formation, Even Kids Can’t Resist Him

As the power of the Human Mountain gradually dissipated, Lei Mingtian was seen lying on the ground with his bones broken as blood bled profusely. One attack and he was already heavily injured!

He wanted Chu Kuangren to pay for what he did, but never once did he think that he would be beaten to death for not being able to withstand a few moves from his opponent.

Lei Mingtian's protector had a terrible look on his face when he immediately appeared before him. Standing guard in front of Lei Mingtian, that protector glared at Chu Kuangren with caution.

Deep down, he was very shocked too.

He figured that Chu Kuangren was a formidable one, but he did not expect him to be so terrifyingly strong that a few moves of his would beat Lei Mingtian into a pulp. Moreover, Chu Kuangren did not even have to resort to using his specialized sword techniques at all.

'This person is too horrifying!'

'Even some of the elder Honorables might not possess a combat power like his.'

The other cultivators were also horrified, especially the sky-prides' respective protectors. Although they were glad to witness Lei Mingtian's disgraceful loss, they were even more terrified at Chu Kuangren's current strength.

How could their sky-prides possibly hope to match with an existence like his?

It was impossible to compete!

At that moment, clusters of clouds started to gather and a little Daoist boy in Daoist robes, whose hair was tied up in a bun, was slowly approaching them.

The cultivation level of that Daoist boy did not seem high. He was only at Paradise Realm, yet his body was radiating brilliantly from the valuable items that he wore, and even the whisk he held was an extremely rare Sage Weapon.

Everyone's eyes could not help but light up when they saw that kid, wishing that they could just relieve that boy of all those valuable treasures for their taking. However, the words that little Daoist boy spoke next made everyone give up on that notion.

"My teacher is already waiting inside. Everyone, please follow after me."

The little Daoist boy said to the crowd.

It was not hard to guess who the teacher of that little Daoist boy was the Sage of the Whitelock Mountain unless they were a fool.

That little Daoist boy was one of the Sage's followers.

Everyone then followed the little Daoist boy into the depths of the Whitelock Mountain, and Chu Kuangren did the same as well. He did not even take another look at Lei Mingtian who was on brink of death. To him, that person was just like any other stone by the roadside.

If one got in his way, all Chu Kuangren would need to do was kick it away.

No one would take a fight with a stone that seriously.

Not far away, Ao Chang, Lin Batian, and the others could not help but feel sympathetic at that sight, seeing that they used to be on the same boat as well.

The only reason they were able to live was not that Chu Kuangren could not kill them, nor was it because Chu Kuangren feared that he would spark a war between the orthodoxies.

Instead, it was because they were of no importance to Chu Kuangren. Whether Chu Kuangren would kill them or not was totally dependent on his mood at the time.

Thinking of that, the few of them looked at each other with sorrow-filled hearts.

The most gruesome blow one could ever experience in this world would be to treat another person as a lifelong opponent yet the opponent never saw them as a threat at all.

Compared to death, something like that was more unbearable especially to sky-prides like Ao Chang and Yuanhong.

...

The group of people eventually followed the little Daoist boy into the depths of the mountain range.

However, they soon noticed that something was wrong. The deeper they went, the heavier their feet felt. It was as if a mountain was weighing upon their backs, making it incredibly hard for them to continue further.

Some of the Honorables who had come here before were not surprised by that occurrence though.

"We're in the vicinity of the Thousand Mountain Formation, so that's expected."

One of the Honorables whispered.

"What is the Thousand Mountain Formation?" One of the confused cultivators asked.

"The Thousand Mountain Formation is a spell cast by the Sage. Those who wished to hear the Sage's Daoist teachings must first be able to walk through this spell!"

"You're right, the vicinity of the Thousand Mountain Formation is only a thousand feet. However, with every foot we pass, an extra mountain force will weigh down on us, thus the name Thousand Mountain Formation. Even an Honorable will find it hard to walk through this spell easily."

Another Honorable who came here before explained.

Some of the cultivators looked curiously at the little Daoist boy who was casually hopping about and said, "Then why is nothing happening to him then? He's only in the Paradise Realm after all."

"Nonsense, that kid is one of the Sage's people, so of course, the Thousand Mountain Formation will not have any effect on him."

Some of the cultivators soon noticed that surges of Daoist Rhyme were emanating from the whisk that the little Daoist boy held, which helped him to repel the effects of the Thousand Mountain Formation.

The Thousand Mountain Formation was only but a thousand feet long. For most of the cultivators, a thousand feet would not be a trouble for them to traverse as most could walk that distance in a short while. However, most of them now found it difficult to even move an inch.

Some of the cultivators who had insufficient strength immediately laid flat on the ground the moment they stepped into the Thousand Mountain Formation. Even moving a finger was hard under that immense weight.

Most of the cultivators who could move under that weight were mostly in Paradise Realm and above. However, even they found it extremely difficult to walk through as they were exhausting their spiritual power.

The most annoying thing was the little Daoist boy who was leading everyone on the path. It did not matter that he was not affected by the Thousand Mountain Formation, but it was the way he fooled around. He was either constantly chasing butterflies or squatting down to look at insects and flowers along the way.

After an hour, the group had only walked two hundred feet. One thing to note was that they expanded their spiritual power every second they were under the effects of the Thousand Mountain Formation.

“Hey Daoist kid, can you go a bit faster?”

One of the cultivators could not help but said out loud.

Without even turning his head around, the little Daoist boy replied, “Why the hurry? The path ahead is more difficult. Just stop if you can’t take it.”

The additional mountain weight would be added with every foot traversed under the Thousand Mountain Formation. They were not even halfway there yet, so if they could not hold on now, the path ahead would even be more difficult for them further on.

Everyone felt helpless upon hearing that.

The words spoken were true. If they were to exhaust their spiritual power, the path ahead would be even harder for them to walk through.

“Eh, it’s a phoenix-tailed butterfly.”

At that time, the little Daoist boy suddenly exclaimed when he saw a golden butterfly and he immediately chased after it. Even though the butterfly soon flew away, the little Daoist boy did not stop with his chase.

That phoenix-tailed butterfly flew around before it eventually landed on a slender white finger.

When the little Daoist boy looked over, he was amazed to see that the phoenix-tailed butterfly had landed on Chu Kuangren’s finger without him doing anything.

Chu Kuangren smiled gently as he moved the butterfly that was on the tip of his finger towards the little Daoist boy. However, the little boy did nothing but stared at him in a daze.

“Better be quick, kid. The butterfly will fly away if you don’t get it in time.”

Chu Kuangren said.

Only then did the little Daoist boy return to his senses and he immediately cupped the butterfly with both his hands. He released it after he had taken a closer look.

Then, he looked at Chu Kuangren and said, "Big brother, you look very handsome. Even my teacher is not as good-looking as you."

"Little boy, the Sage is going to teach us about Daoism soon, so we can't let him wait any longer right? Can we please move on a bit faster?" Chu Kuangren chuckled.

"Alright, big brother. You need to watch yourself alright? The path ahead is very hard to go through. If you feel like you cannot continue, just hold on to my hand. With this whisk that my teacher gave me, this spell won't have any effect on you anymore."

The little Daoist boy said happily. He even went as far as to provide a backup plan for Chu Kuangren in front of everyone.

That made many cultivators' mouths twitch as they felt a sense of jealousy build up within them.

'Godd*mn it, the good looking one always gets the best treatment I see.'

"D*mn it, Chu Kuangren's looks are just too bewitching, even kids can't resist him it seems," one of the cultivators lamented.

In fact, not only did the little Daoist boy think that Chu Kuangren was good-looking, but he was more mesmerized by his Banished Immortal Aura instead. The little Daoist boy was pure and innocent by nature, so he would instinctively be attracted to energies that made him feel comfortable.

Just like how the butterfly had approached Chu Kuangren.

The little Daoist boy soon hastened his pace as the others followed behind him and soon, they had made it through most of the Thousand Mountain Formation. However, as the power of the spell became stronger the more they traversed, more and more people found themselves no longer able to move on.

In the end, only a little less than five thousand people managed to go through the Thousand Mountain Formation and arrived at the Sage's palace.

However, one must not mistake the five thousand people for a large crowd. After all, the Sage's Daoist teaching had originally attracted hundreds of thousands of cultivators to Whitelock Mountain, yet only less than five thousand people had managed to go through the Thousand Mountain Formation. That was less than one percent of the original crowd that came.

Chapter 150: The Mental Staircase, Rigid And Unmoving Daoist Heart Of Stone

"My gosh, that was too tiring. I'm totally exhausted."

"It's really exhausting. This Thousand Mountain Formation is just too hard to go through."

"Wanting to listen to a Sage's Daoist teaching really is no easy task."

In front of the Sage's palace, almost half of the five thousand people who made it lied on the ground. They were extremely tired after what they went through.

Even Young Emperor sky-prides like Gu Changge and Ao Chang were slightly panting. They had obviously consumed a large amount of their physical energy and spiritual power.

"You doing alright, Lan Yu?" Chu Kuangren looked at Lan Yu beside him. She had used up a lot of her energy too and there was a thin layer of sweat on her forehead.

"I'm alright."

"You're awesome, big brother."

At that time, the little Daoist boy came up to Chu Kuangren and said, "Although your cultivation level is more or less the same as the other people here, you do not look exhausted at all."

He pointed at the sky-prides like Lin Batian and Ao Chang not far away and said.

The faces of those people instantly darkened.

'This meddlesome kid, just keep it to yourself if you know. Why do you have to say it out loud?'

"Maybe they're weaker I guess."

Chu Kuangren chuckled. Although they were in the same cultivation level, the difference in their cultivation foundations was huge. Ao Chang and the others could not even hope to compare themselves to Chu Kuangren.

Upon hearing this, their expression became even grimmer. Everyone cursed silently. 'You're the one who's weak, your whole godd*mn family is weak!'

Once everyone had rested, they then looked at the palace before them. The palace was magnificent and below it was a flight of white jade stairs. Everyone gradually became excited.

"So this is the place for the Sage's Daoist teachings?"

"I guess the Sage must be inside. Let's go and find a good place to sit."

"That's right, let's go then."

Some of the cultivators could not hold back their excitement anymore as they quickly went up the stairs. However, all they did was go up a few steps before they stopped and a look appeared on their faces. No one could tell if they were panicking and ecstatic.

"What's going on with them?"

Some of the cultivators who were eager to go up the stairs quickly took a step back and looked cautiously at the few who were behaving weirdly on the stairs.

The little Daoist boy then said, "If you want to hear the Sage's Daoist teachings, you'll not only have to go through the Thousand Mountain Formation but also this... the Mental Staircase!"

"This Mental Staircase has a total of seventy-two steps. Each of them can create all kinds of illusions to confuse and mesmerize you. If your Daoist core is not strong, you'll probably be trapped inside the illusion and escaping won't be so easy."

"There can only be two results in that situation. The first is that one can be awakened with help from an external force. If not, the second result will happen — your spiritual power will deplete until you die."

Although the little Daoist boy had explained with a friendly smile, everyone in the crowd could feel a chill in their hearts. 'My life will be in danger if I go on the Mental Staircase?'

"The Sage won't watch us die, will he?" one of the cultivators asked as he gulped in fear.

"Here, take a look over there." The little Daoist boy pointed to an area beside the palace.

When everyone looked in that direction, all they saw was a pile of bones.

Their suspicions were soon confirmed.

"Those are the ones who didn't pass the Mental Staircase's trial and died because they were trapped in the illusions and couldn't escape," the little Daoist boy said.

'D*mn it, people have really died from this!'

Everyone looked at the flight of stairs with fear growing in their hearts.

Although the Sage's Daoist teaching was a good opportunity, it was still not worth it if that meant losing one's life.

In a moment, many had already decided to give up and return.

Chu Kuangren shook his head and chuckled. "Mental Staircase, Mental Staircase, stairs that test a Daoist's core huh? What a coincidence."

"Master, let me give it a try first."

Lan Yu said before her figure disappeared in a flash and appeared before the flight of stairs. She then started to ascend it.

She took thirty-six steps in one go and only seemed to slow down at the forty-first step before the illusions started to affect her.

"That sister's Daoist core is very strong. Even an Honorable cannot walk as fast as her." Lan Yu had shocked the little Daoist boy.

"This female among my peers has such a strong Daoist heart, yet a big hulking guy like me is hesitant and fearful to start. This is embarrassing!"

One of the cultivators gritted their teeth and rushed up the stairs.

"That's right, cultivation is a matter of changing one's fate after all. If one is constantly overcautious, they might as well go home to plant their crops instead."

"It's just a Mental Staircase. I don't believe that I can't go up these stairs."

"My Daoist core will not allow me to give up that easily!"

Some of the cultivators pumped themselves up with motivation before they took the first step on the Mental Staircase and began the trial.

Ao Chang, Gu Changge, Lin Batian, and the others had also gone up.

Some of the Honorables looked like it was a breeze for them. This could either be due to their incredibly strong Daoist core; or that they had been here before to listen to the Sage's Daoist teachings, hence they had already undergone the Mental Staircase's trial and were already familiar with it.

A large group of cultivators experienced various illusions on the Mental Staircase as could be seen in their different expressions. Some faced the thing they feared most in their hearts and hence looked very terrified, while some others were living a fantasy of enjoying pleasures of the world so they looked ecstatic...

All vicissitudes of life could be experienced on that Mental Staircase.

Chu Kuangren even saw a male cultivator pouting, trying to give a kiss to another male cultivator whom he was holding on to next to him. He almost stripped him naked. One look and Chu Kuangren knew the illusion that person was trapped in.

"Big brother, aren't you going to have a try?"

The little Daoist boy asked.

"I'll wait for a little while more."

"Don't you worry, big brother. I'll look out for you from here. If you can't escape from an illusion, I will wake you up."

The little Daoist boy once again provided Chu Kuangren a backup solution.

"It's alright, I don't need it. I just want to wait until that sister is done before I give it a go," Chu Kuangren said as he looked and kept watch over Lan Yu's back.

He needed to look out and make sure that nothing bad would happen to Lan Yu.

"Oh, by the way, Seventh Forefather, why don't you go in and listen too? The Sage's Daoist teaching is quite a rare occurrence after all," Chu Kuangren said towards the void.

He had seen many of the sky-prides' protectors giving the Mental Staircase a go just now.

The Seventh Forefather and the two other protectors appeared. They then looked at the palace hesitatingly and nodded. "Alright, we will go in and listen as well then."

Three of them were not worried about Chu Kuangren. After all, they were on the Sage's Daoist grounds, so no one would dare to cause trouble here.

After more than an hour had passed, the Honorables had gone up the Mental Staircase, leaving a few behind who were still battling their illusions.

Among them, the sky-prides were the ones who had garnered the most attention since they were the future of their respective great orthodoxies. If they lacked a strong Daoist core, how could they be the pillars who would support their orthodoxies in the future then?

"Phew... I've finally made it up." Lan Yu took the final step and arrived at the entrance to the Sage's palace.

She turned around and nodded to Chu Kuangren below.

“Oh, she has already gone up the stairs. My turn to go now.” Chu Kuangren chuckled and soon, he took the first step on the Mental Staircase.

As soon as he went up the stairs, he immediately attracted the attention of all the cultivators who had completed the Mental Staircase.

Everyone wished to know how strong that sky-pride’s Daoist core was. After all, that person was an extremely talented sky-pride whose combat power surpassed everyone in the same generation.

After taking the first step, Chu Kuangren felt the view before him change and a large field of scorching flames engulfed him.

“That’s it?”

Chu Kuangren shook his head, steadied his Daoist core, and walked into the scorching flames. He paid no heed to the burning pain he felt on his body.

After that, Chu Kuangren witnessed a large assortment of illusions as he went up the stairs. The various illusions ranged from tsunami ridden storms, trembling mountains, horrifying monsters, to all the pleasures and desires of the world that were interwoven together into various forms before him.

Within a mere seventy-two steps, Chu Kuangren felt as if he had experienced seventy-two different lifetimes. He had seen delicious and extravagant food, met women of wonderful beauty, was deemed the superior and dignified Emperor, and he was also a beggar who lived the lowly insignificant life like an ant...

However, no matter what kind of illusions appeared before him, he did not linger. His unshakable Daoist core was as solid as rock!

His pace was brisk, and soon, he had passed the crowd of people that were stuck on the Mental Staircase. As if he was going up a normal flight of stairs, he soon arrived by Lan Yu’s side.

Everyone was stunned upon witnessing what Chu Kuangren just did.