

War God 291

Chapter 291: Find Someone to Save a Life!

"Young Master Qiao, have you heard about what happened last night?" In a private club, a group of young men and women were sitting together drinking. These youngsters all belonged to the small circle of top-tier wealthy families in River City; behind each of them was a local power. Qiao Zishan, the only son of River City's richest man Qiao Tianhao, was slumped on the sofa with drunken, blurry eyes, holding a glass of red wine in one hand and embracing a beautiful girl with the other. Upon hearing this, Qiao Zishan, who was about to drink, was taken aback, "What happened last night?" Qiao Zishan's life had always been upside down, roaming various entertainment venues at night and finding a hotel to sleep in with different women as the day broke. Debauchery was the truest portrayal of his life. Especially in recent times. He had been staying at this newly established private club, eating and sleeping here, completely cutting off contact with the outside world. As some of the top figures in River City, these young masters could access things ordinary people couldn't. For instance, martial artists! A while back, a battle between two Grandmasters had caused a huge stir in the Martial Arts World. The young masters present had heard some rumors, but knew little. But Qiao Zishan had seen it with his own eyes. Not only that, but he had also gotten the number of that invincible Master Lin, Lin Wudi, afterwards. Although he never dared to call, every time he met with friends or attended various banquets, Qiao Zishan would occasionally brag about this. Of course, no one believed him. Qiao Zishan was also frustrated about this for several days, wishing he could call that Lin Wudi on the spot to testify. But Qiao Zishan was no fool. As a true second-generation rich, frequenting various high-end venues and meeting elites from all walks of life, Qiao Zishan was naturally no fool. Although he was often ridiculed for this, Qiao Zishan really didn't care at all. And now, when people around him asked about what happened last night, Qiao Zishan truly didn't know a thing. "Tell me," Qiao Zishan said, clinking his glass with that person's. That person chuckled, "Young Master Qiao, you claim to know Lin Wudi, don't you? And you don't know about this?" The others also burst into laughter. Qiao Zishan kicked that person, "Hurry up and tell me." Looking around, the person whispered, "I've only heard about it. It's said that a couple of days ago, someone crippled Fang Ming, leaving him disabled." "Not only that, but they also demanded the Fang Family come to apologize, or they would make them regret it. Who is the Fang Family? Of course, they didn't agree. So, that person actually blew up the Wanta Group and even wiped out the Fang Family." "What?" Qiao Zishan suddenly stood up, his complexion drastically changing, and quite a few drinks were knocked over on the table, startling the others with his agitated reaction. "Fang Ming was beaten into a cripple? The Fang Family was wiped out?" Qiao Zishan was incredibly shocked. Because, Fang Ming was his cousin after all. The Head of the Fang Family, Fang Cheng, was his uncle. The person seemed not to have realized the gravity, nodding blankly, "I also just heard about it. Just yesterday, that person first blew up the Wanta Building, and then afterwards wiped out the Fang Family entirely." "Young Master Qiao, don't you watch TV? This is a big deal, it was all over the news, but the news said it was an accident," the person said, sneering disdainfully as he spoke; they were all too familiar with such tactics. Qiao Zishan's body shook, his hands clenched tightly. The others thought he was just drunk and didn't pay much attention. Only to hear that person cautiously say, "Guess who did it?" "How would we know? Hurry up and tell us, who was it?" someone urged impatiently. That person grinned at Qiao Zishan and chuckled, "It's said that it was none other than Lin Wudi, Master Lin, who Young Master Qiao often talks to us about." "Boom!" As soon as these words came out, Qiao Zishan suddenly collapsed onto the floor, spilling all the drinks on the table. "Young Master Qiao, what's wrong?" The crowd called out in alarm, quickly

helping Qiao Zishan to his feet, only to find him shaking violently, his complexion frightfully pale. "Young Master Qiao, are you alright?" the crowd was startled, nearly calling for an ambulance in their anxiety. "Impossible, it can't be..." Qiao Zishan muttered to himself, as if he'd thought of something, and hurriedly pulled out his phone. Usually, when Qiao Zishan went out to have fun, he preferred to switch off his phone. But now. The phone had long since run out of battery. At this, Qiao Zishan's complexion turned grim. "Who has a charged phone? Lend it to me to make a call," Qiao Zishan asked his companions. "Mine's dead." "So is mine." His companions were all a picture of helplessness. "Damn it!" Qiao Zishan cursed, pushed through the crowd, and walked outside. No matter if the news was true or false, he had to go back once. "Hey, Young Master Qiao, where are you going?" His friends were somewhat puzzled. Why did Young Master Qiao seem like a completely different person after just one glance at his phone? "Don't you guys get it? He probably remembered he had a date with that chick," someone said, lounging on a sofa, without taking it seriously. "No, that's not it!" A girl, as if she remembered something, said, "Jian Hui, the Fang Ming you just mentioned, isn't he the one who often used to hang out with Young Master Qiao?" That person paused, then said, "Not sure, as I haven't been in River City for long, and I've seldom met up with all of you. But I do know that Fang Ming is the son of Fang Cheng, the chairman of Wanta Group..." Jian Hui's words were cut off as he saw his companion's faces turn to horror. Their eyes widened, mouths agape, emitting a chorus of gasps. "What's... what's happened to you all?" Jian Hui suddenly felt a tinge of fear. "Jian Hui, something terrible has happened..." Jian Hui was confused, "What exactly happened?" "Fang Ming is Young Master Qiao's cousin!" "...""Vroom!" Qiao Zishan floored the gas of his sports car, speeding all the way. He must have run countless red lights, but Qiao Zishan was beyond caring. He was just rushing home, needing to verify if the news was true. Qiao Zishan gripped the steering wheel tightly, his palms drenched with sweat. "It can't be true, it just can't be!" Although he kept hypnotizing himself with that thought, Qiao Zishan knew that Jian Hui wasn't a liar. He knew more about the affairs of martial artists than he did. Moreover, since the news had already broken, Jian Hui had no reason to deceive him. It took over half an hour before Qiao Zishan finally reached the gates of his villa. As soon as he got out of the car, Qiao Zishan felt something was amiss. Because the number of bodyguards patrolling the entrance seemed to be much higher than usual. Even the villa, in the late night, was brightly lit, as if something major had happened. "Young Master, you've finally come back!" The moment the butler saw Qiao Zishan, he rushed over, his face marked with despair. "Where are my parents?" Qiao Zishan asked anxiously. The butler said, "Young Master, where on earth have you been these past few days? The master sent many people to find you, but none could manage it; your father and mother were nearly driven mad." Listening to the butler's rambling, Qiao Zishan shouted impatiently, "I'm asking where my parents are!" It was then that a voice, suppressed with anger, came from behind. "I went to find someone to save your life!"

Chapter 292: Master Chixiao, Daoist Buji!

"Zishan, where have you been these past few days?" Fang Ting hurried over, embracing Qiao Zishan firmly as tears streamed down her face.

The last two days had been the most agonizing Fang Ting had ever endured. The destruction of the Fang Family, the battle between Grandmasters... The gruesome and bloody scenes haunted her, jolting her awake from nightmares. It was terrifying. As the wife of the city's wealthiest man, she had never experienced anything like it. The fact that she hadn't died of fright on the spot was a testament to her

mental fortitude. What frightened her most, however, were Lin Mu's words: he had declared he would come to their door in three days and that Qiao Zishan should be prepared.

In these past two days, the Qiao Family had nearly turned River City upside down searching for Qiao Zishan. They needed to ask when he had offended such a powerful figure, but in the end, they couldn't find him. Thus, Qiao Tianhao decided to use his connections to hire several experts to protect not only Qiao Zishan but the entire Qiao Family. As River City's wealthiest man, Qiao Tianhao certainly had his own influence. To help the Qiao Family navigate this crisis, he even put up a reward of one billion yuan. For the average person, one billion was an astronomical sum, but to the city's wealthiest man, it was nothing.

Indeed, just two days after the news was released, numerous experts arrived at their door. In the end, however, Qiao Tianhao only kept two of them: a monk and a Taoist priest. With a single move each, the pair had defeated all the other candidates.

With these two men by his side, Qiao Tianhao felt greatly relieved. Even if they couldn't kill this Lin Mu, their presence would serve as a deterrent, making it much easier to resolve the situation. Moreover, both had assured him that with them present, they could hold their ground even if the opponent was a true Martial Arts Grandmaster.

"Mom, what on earth happened?" Qiao Zishan asked, still completely baffled.

At his words, Fang Ting's face filled with grief. "Your uncle and his family... they're all dead," she said, bursting into tears again.

"What?" Although he had already heard rumors, hearing it confirmed by his own mother made it difficult for Qiao Zishan to accept. "Who was it?! I'll slaughter him with my own hands!" he raged. Although the Fang and Qiao families didn't interact much, Qiao Zishan had been on quite good terms with his cousin. Hearing that he had been murdered, his first instinct was revenge.

"Slaughter him with what?" Qiao Tianhao snorted coldly. "With your title as Young Master Qiao of River City? You'd better explain to me right now when you provoked such a person!"

"Dad, what are you talking about? I don't even know him!" Qiao Zishan hurriedly explained.

"What?" Qiao Tianhao exclaimed in shock. "You don't know him? Then why did he specifically ask for you?" Could it be that Lin Wudi and Lin Mu aren't the same person? Qiao Tianhao realized the situation was becoming increasingly complicated.

"Master Qiao, there is no need to panic. We'll find out whether they are the same person or not when he arrives," said a monk standing behind Qiao Tianhao. The monk, who appeared to be over forty, had a kind, benevolent face and a constant smile.

"Indeed. Mr. Qiao, you can rest easy," the other Taoist priest said, not to be outdone. "With me here, even if Lin Wudi himself were to show up, I could slay him with a single sword strike."

"Thank you, Master Chixiao and Daoist Buji!" Qiao Tianhao was overjoyed. He quickly added, "Right, it's almost time. Please, go and rest to gather your strength."

"Very well." Both the monk and the Taoist priest left with smiles, exchanging meaningful glances.

"Dad, are you sure these two aren't charlatans?" Qiao Zishan asked, skeptical of their abilities.

"Watch your tongue!" Qiao Tianhao's face paled as he tried to stop him, but it was too late.

"Hahaha, it seems Young Master Qiao doubts our abilities." Having only just started to leave, the monk and the Taoist priest paused, glanced at each other, and chuckled softly.

"Please," the monk said, reciting a Buddhist mantra before closing his eyes.

The Taoist, meanwhile, just smiled faintly and brushed his fingers across the longsword on his back.

CLANG!

The sword shot from its sheath, soaring straight into the sky. At the same time, golden characters flew from the monk's mouth, dancing in midair. In an instant, the brilliant golden light overshadowed every lamp in the Qiao Mansion. Everyone stared, dumbfounded at the scene, too astonished to speak.

The Taoist then made a few light gestures with his fingers. The longsword transformed into a writhing dragon, flying through the air. In the blink of an eye, it carved several large characters into the sky.

The Buddhist chant stopped. The longsword returned to its sheath. All the extraordinary phenomena vanished without a trace.

The Taoist laughed heartily. "Haha, pardon the humble display."

Qiao Zishan finally snapped back to reality, exclaiming in awe. As for Qiao Tianhao and his wife, they apologized profusely. The Taoist just laughed again, then turned and walked away. The monk bowed and followed him.

Once the two had left, Qiao Tianhao's expression darkened. He turned to Qiao Zishan and said, "I don't care what your relationship is with this Lin Wudi, but for the next few days, you are not to step one foot outside this house!"

"Dad..." Qiao Zishan started to protest, but Qiao Tianhao cut him off. "If you want to live, you'll do as I say!"

Fang Ting also chimed in, "Zishan, listen to your father. Don't go anywhere for the next few days. With Master Chixiao and Daoist Buji here, the house is the safest place you can be!"

"Alright, alright. I get it." Qiao Zishan relented, feeling helpless. His mind, however, was racing, trying to figure out if the person trying to cause trouble for him was the same person as Lin Mu.

Master Lin's real name is Lin Mu, but there must be plenty of people with the same name in the world. It can't be such a coincidence, he mused. Besides, Master Lin gave me his phone number. If he really wanted trouble, he could have just called me. Why go through all this hassle?

Qiao Zishan chuckled to himself and started to head back to his room to sleep.

"Lin Mu? Lin Mu?" Suddenly, he stopped in his tracks, muttering to himself, "Why does that name sound so familiar?"

「Qin Zhu Courtyard.」

"Master!" Li Xiaotian stood respectfully at the door, the Heavenly Punishment Blade strapped to his back.

"Have the affairs in the Miao Territory been settled?" Lin Mu asked with a slight nod, seeing Li Xiaotian had returned. He hadn't brought Li Xiaotian with him when he came back, instead leaving him to handle matters there first.

"Yes, everything is mostly taken care of. With Junior Sister overseeing things, there won't be any trouble," Li Xiaotian said with a smile. The more time he spent with his master, the more he understood how formidable the man was. His junior sister, Li Lai, had been an ordinary person just a short while ago. Yet, after his master's guidance, her cultivation level had skyrocketed in just a few days, nearly catching up to his own. During their occasional sparring sessions, Li Xiaotian found it difficult to keep her suppressed.

"That's good," Lin Mu said, then added, "Right, since you're here, there are a few things I need you to do for me."

"I would not dare to refuse, Master!"

After Li Xiaotian left, Lin Mu gazed toward the horizon and murmured to himself, "After I deal with the Qiao Family, it will be time to enter seclusion." His cultivation had already broken through to the Qi Training Tenth Level. It wouldn't be long before he could achieve Foundation Establishment. He had to succeed before his scheduled duel with Zhang Daoyun.

They say that above a Grandmaster, one can achieve a state of Reaching the Divine? Zhang Daoyun, I hope we can have a battle where we both give it our all!

Chapter 293: If You Don't Want Her Dead, You'd Better Not Touch Her!

「Jiangling!」

"Family Head, the news is confirmed. The one who killed Fang Cheng is named Lin Mu, but we're not yet sure if he's Lin Wudi," the Fang Family's butler reported to Fang Tang, holding a letter.

"Who sent the message?" Fang Tang asked without looking up from his coffee.

"Fang Bin," the butler answered honestly.

"Fang Bin? The one whose brother was killed, who rushed back from abroad?" Fang Tang asked, dabbing his mouth with a napkin.

"Yes. Fang Bin found Fang Ting and confirmed that Lin Mu was responsible. It has nothing to do with Lin Wudi."

Fang Tang took a bite of bread. "Can we guarantee Fang Ting is telling the truth?"

The butler was taken aback. "Fang Cheng is dead and the Fang Family of River City is no more. Fang Ting has no reason to lie."

Fang Tang gave a short laugh. He glanced at the bread in his hand and suddenly lost his appetite.

"Elder Qi from the Fire Cloud Sect is at the Martial Alliance, isn't he? Leak the news of Fan Shuai's death to him." With that, Fang Tang stood up and left the dining room.

"Yes, sir." The butler's expression shifted subtly.

It seems the Family Head doesn't believe Fang Ting. Then again, when I recall how the River City branch of the Fang Family was cast out of Jiangling because of their ancestors' mistakes, it's understandable that descendants like Fang Ting would bear a grudge and pass along false information. At the thought, a cold sweat instantly beaded on his forehead. Is Fang Ting trying to...

「Jiangling Martial Alliance.」

Elder Qi held the letter, looking down at the Fang Family's butler. "I understand," he said flatly. "Butler Fang, go back and tell Patriarch Fang that I will pass this news on to the sect."

"Understood. In that case, I will take my leave." The Fang Family butler bowed and departed from the Martial Alliance.

Holding the letter, a grim killing intent glinted in Elder Qi's eyes. "Lin Mu? Hmph. I don't care if you're the famous Lin Wudi or not. Anyone who kills our Young Sect Master must die!"

He clenched his fist, and a searing flame erupted from his palm, incinerating the letter to ash.

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"Elder Brother Mu, did you really wipe out the Fang Family?" Liu Zijian asked from his hospital bed, his face pale after hearing the news.

Although his injuries weren't severe, Lin Mu had insisted he stay in the hospital for a few days of observation.

"Don't worry, I'll handle it." Lin Mu knew Liu Zijian was worried this would cause trouble for him.

However, with figures like Cheng Bugui and the Song Family fanning the flames behind the scenes, the matter of the Fang Family would eventually be suppressed.

Liu Zijian sighed, his eyes turning a little red. "Elder Brother Mu, I'm not blaming you, it's just... for you to do this..." He knew this was all because of him. To stand up for him, Elder Brother Mu had not only crippled Fang Ming but had also annihilated the Fang Family.

Lin Mu clapped him on the shoulder. "Don't overthink it. The Fang Family targeted my company. They brought this on themselves."

Just as Liu Zijian was about to say more, Lin Mu smiled. "What's this? You were never so fussy before."

The door creaked open, and a girl walked in carrying a lunch box.

"Elder Brother Liu, I brought your favorite roast goose with rice."

The moment she finished speaking, she noticed Lin Mu and her face immediately flushed red.

Lin Mu looked at the vaguely familiar girl, and realization dawned on him. He teased, "Well, now I see. Zijian, that's not very fair, is it? You started dating and didn't even tell your own brother."

His words made both the girl and Liu Zijian blush.

"Elder Brother Mu, Xiao Jie and I..."

"Hold it!" Lin Mu held up a hand. "You rascal. You're already calling her by such an intimate name, so why are you still pretending with me?"

"Elder Brother Liu, I just remembered I have something to do, so I'll be going now." The girl was Yang Jie, the real estate agent who had helped Liu Zijian find his apartment.

"Alright, you two are too thin-skinned." Lin Mu stood up. "Take good care of my brother. I'm going to go visit a friend."

He shot Liu Zijian a look. "You better treat her right, or you'll have me to answer to!"

Putting on a stern, big-brotherly air, Lin Mu then smiled at Yang Jie. "My brother here is a bit of a blockhead when it comes to romance, so you'll have to be patient with him. But if he dares bully you, just let me know, and I'll beat him up for you!"

"That won't happen. Elder Brother Liu is very good to me." As soon as Yang Jie spoke, her face flushed as red as an apple.

"Okay, I won't disturb you two lovebirds any longer. I'm off." Lin Mu smiled and left the room.

His brother had finally found love. Lin Mu was truly happy for him. For years, all of Liu Zijian's energy had been focused on his mother and Liu Xiaolin; he never even considered finding someone new. Seeing him with Yang Jie, Lin Mu offered his sincerest blessings. He'd met Yang Jie before. She was a kind-hearted and rather innocent girl—a good match for Zijian.

Peeking through the window in the door, Lin Mu watched as Yang Jie fed Liu Zijian one spoonful at a time, and the smile on his face grew even gentler.

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"Su Ke'er, how many times do I have to tell you? What does it matter how successful your career is? In the end, you still have to get married!" Inside the hospital room, a middle-aged woman sat by the bed, pointing to the young man beside her. "Just look at Xue Lang here. Not only is he handsome, but he's also a senior executive at his company."

"The Qin Corporation, have you heard of it? It's leagues better than that shabby little company of yours." The one speaking was Su Ke'er's mother.

"Auntie, you flatter me," the young man named Xue Lang said with a smile. "I've only been entrusted with such responsibility because the company leadership values my contributions."

Xue Lang glanced at Su Ke'er on the bed, a hint of smugness in his eyes. "Besides, Miss Su is very outstanding herself. Anyone who can become a general manager must be quite capable."

Mother Su immediately chimed in, "Oh, Xiao Xue, you're just being too modest! How could Ke'er's little company possibly compare to the Qin Corporation? The Qin Corporation is one of the biggest conglomerates in River City. People would kill to get a job there!"

Su Ke'er lay in bed with her back to them, her hands covering her ears as she pretended not to hear.

The smile on Xue Lang's face never faltered, maintaining his perfectly gentlemanly demeanor.

Her mother was not pleased. "Su Ke'er, where are your manners? Xue Lang has been here for a while now. Can't you at least say hello?"

"It's alright, Auntie. Ke'er is a patient right now, so it should be me looking out for her."

With that, Xue Lang sat down on the edge of the bed. "Ke'er," he said in a gentle voice, "if you're feeling unwell anywhere, please tell me. I'm on good terms with several of the attending physicians at this hospital. I can have them take a look at you."

Mother Su's eyes lit up. "See? Xiao Xue even knows the doctors here! Tsk tsk, so young and promising. This is one of River City's famous Grade A Tertiary hospitals. To know doctors here... Xiao Xue, your connections are truly impressive."

Xue Lang chuckled. "It's nothing, really. A few of them were my classmates, and we get together often."

"Incredible, truly incredible." Mother Su gazed at Xue Lang with the classic look of a mother-in-law sizing up a potential son-in-law, growing more satisfied by the second.

But Su Ke'er remained silent, which began to irritate her mother.

"Su Ke'er, say something! Have you gone mute?" Her mother glared, reaching out to push her.

"If you don't want her to die, you'd best not touch her!"

Chapter 294: You're Unfit to Be a Mother!

"What nonsense are you talking about?"

Upon hearing this, Mother Su flew into a rage. Turning her head, she saw a tall, handsome young man walk in from outside.

Composed and intense! That was the impression the young man left on her.

"You are..."

She felt the newcomer seemed familiar, but she couldn't quite place him.

"All of you, get out. I need to examine her," the man said.

The newcomer was none other than Lin Mu. He had just reached the door of the ward when he sensed the icy energy inside Su Ke'er beginning to flare up again. If a stranger were to touch her now, it would cause her immense trouble.

"By what right?" Mother Su immediately realized Lin Mu was not a doctor and raised her voice. "You're not a doctor, what right do you have?"

Lin Mu slowly shook his head. It was no wonder Su Ke'er disliked her mother; a personality like that was truly unlikable.

"If we delay any longer, not even I will be able to do anything." Lin Mu walked to the bedside and gazed at Su Ke'er.

Seeming to sense Lin Mu's presence, Su Ke'er struggled to open her eyes. Looking at him, she managed, "Lin..."

"Don't speak. I'm here. You'll be alright."

Su Ke'er lay in bed, wrapped in a blanket, yet she felt a bone-deep cold. Her face was deathly pale, and she was gritting her teeth, clearly in great pain. The icy energy flared up again, seemingly even more violently than the last time. But seeing Lin Mu, she managed to muster a faint, pained smile. "Mhm!"

"Are you a doctor from this hospital?" Xue Lang asked with a frown. Seeing how familiar Lin Mu and Su Ke'er were with each other, he felt a pang of displeasure.

"No," Lin Mu shook his head, "but what of it?"

"Then you can't touch her."

Mother Su also realized something was wrong and said to Xue Lang, "Xue Lang, please watch Ke'er. Don't let this man touch her. I'm going to get a doctor."

Xue Lang replied, "Of course, Auntie. I won't let anyone get near Ke'er!" As he spoke, his eyes were fixed on Lin Mu.

Mother Su quickly left the ward to find a doctor.

Xue Lang glared at Lin Mu. "I don't care who you are. Get out now, or don't blame me for what happens next!"

Lin Mu couldn't be bothered with Xue Lang. He pulled over a chair and sat by the bed. Cold sweat was already beading on Su Ke'er's forehead, and her body had begun to tremble.

Without further hesitation, Lin Mu reached his hand under the blanket and grasped Su Ke'er's.

Xue Lang's eyes widened in shock.

He knew Su Ke'er wasn't wearing anything because she needed to have an ointment applied to a waist injury. And Lin Mu, right in front of him, was putting his hand under the blanket...

"Brat, what do you think you're doing?" Xue Lang charged forward to stop him.

"Get lost!" Lin Mu was in the middle of using his Mana to suppress the icy energy in Su Ke'er's body and hadn't expected Xue Lang's interruption.

BANG!

As he spoke, a powerful force erupted from Lin Mu, sending Xue Lang flying.

"ARGH!" Xue Lang landed heavily by the doorway, letting out a pained cry.

If it weren't for Lin Mu's masterful control over his Mana, any ordinary person disturbed while channeling their energy would have seriously injured both the interrupter and themselves.

Lin Mu shot a cold glance at Xue Lang and said indifferently, "If you don't want to die, stand there and don't move!"

"You..." Xue Lang's expression turned hideous, but this time he didn't dare to step forward.

The moment his hand had touched Lin Mu, he'd felt a power surge from the man's body like an electric shock, and the force had sent him flying. In his eyes, Lin Mu now seemed profound and inscrutable.

Lin Mu paid Xue Lang no more mind. He closed his eyes, focusing on manipulating his Mana to help Su Ke'er suppress the surging icy energy.

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"Doctor, hurry!" Mother Su returned, rushing in with several doctors, her face etched with anxiety.

Of course, her concern wasn't for Su Ke'er, but for Xue Lang. Lin Mu looked very young and vaguely familiar, though she couldn't place him. But she had lived a long life; she'd seen it all. It was clear at a glance that her daughter trusted Lin Mu a great deal.

This won't do! I finally managed to connect with Xue Lang, and he has a good impression of Ke'er. With a little push from me, they'll definitely get together. When that happens...

However, when Mother Su and the doctors arrived at the ward, she saw her prospective son-in-law standing to one side rubbing his rear, his face an awful sight. As for Lin Mu, he was sitting by the bed.

And one of his hands was still under the blanket...

"You little bastard, what are you doing? Let go of her!" Mother Su's expression changed, and she charged forward to stop Lin Mu.

"Wait!"

However, a hand caught her arm, holding her back.

"Dr. Qin, what are you doing? This guy is impersonating a doctor and taking advantage of my daughter! I'm going to tear him apart!" Mother Su raged, her voice booming.

"Shut up!" At that moment, Lin Mu's eyes snapped open, and he shot an impatient look at Mother Su. "Keep blabbering, and I'll smack you."

When Lin Mu spoke, not only Xue Lang but even the doctors were taken aback.

"Young man, do you have any manners? No matter what, Auntie is your elder!" Xue Lang finally found an opportunity to chastise him.

"The little bastard wants to hit me?" Mother Su was also enraged. She rolled up her sleeves, ready to lunge at Lin Mu. "You little beast with a mother but no father to raise you, how dare you disrespect your elders? Today, I'll teach you the lesson your parents never did: how to be a decent person!"

In her fury, Mother Su lunged and grabbed at Lin Mu.

"Get lost!" Lin Mu swung his hand back, slapping her across the face.

SMACK!

The sharp crack of the slap stunned not only Xue Lang and the others but also left Mother Su herself frozen in shock.

"You don't even care about your own daughter's life. What right do you have to lecture me?" Lin Mu stared coldly at her.

"Lin Mu, how could you hit someone?" At that moment, a female doctor stepped forward, her pretty face frosty as she gazed at Lin Mu.

It was Qin Yan.

Lin Mu pointed at Su Ke'er. "You're a doctor, so you should know her condition. She can't eat anything that is inherently cold, and she must avoid cold and iced foods, right?"

Qin Yan nodded. "That's correct. Ke'er's condition is quite special. She avoids all such things."

"Then what do you call this?" Lin Mu gestured to the bedside table.

There sat a cup of milk tea and a half-eaten ice cream.

Qin Yan's expression changed. She turned to Mother Su. "What is this? Didn't I tell you Ke'er can't have anything iced? It could kill her!"

"This..." Mother Su's face grew panicked, and right beside her, the color drained from Xue Lang's face in an instant.

He had bought those for Su Ke'er. All girls liked treats like these. Su Ke'er hadn't wanted to eat them at first, but Mother Su had forced her to. After just a couple of bites, Su Ke'er had put them down, pulled the blanket over herself, and hadn't said another word to them. So that was why. Realizing he had almost harmed Su Ke'er, Xue Lang grew tense.

"What's the big deal? It was just a couple of bites of ice cream," Mother Su finally said. "When I was pregnant with Ke'er, I did laundry and cooked every day, and I turned out fine, didn't I?"

"And that," Lin Mu said, looking at her with cold contempt, "is why you don't deserve to be a mother."

Mother Su: "..."

Chapter 295 I want to go to the restroom...

"You're not fit to be a mother!"

At his words, the room fell silent. Xue Lang stood with his mouth agape, staring at Lin Mu in astonishment. He thought Lin Mu was being incredibly arrogant to speak that way about Su Ke'er's mother.

Qin Yan's face was frozen in disbelief. She knew Lin Mu had changed a lot. He had become domineering and overbearing, even somewhat aloof. But she never imagined he would scold Su Ke'er's mother so mercilessly. Although she also disliked the woman, she was still an elder, after all.

"You..." Mother Su pointed at Lin Mu, her face pale with rage and her chest heaving violently. "Fine! Just fine!" she seethed, fixing her gaze on him. Her eyes blazed with a fury that looked ready to erupt.

"Enough!" a cold voice cut in.

Everyone turned to see that Su Ke'er was awake.

"Ke'er, you're awake?" Qin Yan hurried over to her side. After a quick check, she let out a huge sigh of relief. "Thank goodness you're alright. You scared me to death! Didn't I tell you not to have anything cold?"

Su Ke'er looked at her mother with a complicated expression and silently shook her head.

"Ke'er! You're finally awake!" Mother Su burst into tears and rushed over to hug her daughter. "Oh, my child, if anything had happened to you, I, your mother, would be a sinner."

Seeing Mother Su's theatrical display, even Qin Yan couldn't help but frown.

With a placid expression, Su Ke'er pushed her mother away. "Mom, you should go."

Mother Su was stunned. She rubbed her eyes until they were red and cried, "Ke'er, what do you mean? Are you kicking me out? I'm your mother! How can you trust outsiders over me?"

"That's enough!" Su Ke'er clutched her head and roared, "You gave birth to me, yes, but did you ever raise me? When you ran off with that man and abandoned me, did you ever stop to think that I was your daughter?"

As she spoke, tears streamed down her face.

"Ever since I was little, all you've ever cared about is gambling! When you had money, you bought expensive things for yourself. When you were broke, you sold off everything in the house. You even took the money for my school registration and my medicine to go gamble. Have you ever fulfilled a single duty as a mother?"

Hearing Su Ke'er's words, everyone fell silent. The other doctors quietly excused themselves. Xue Lang wanted to leave too, but he was reluctant to give up.

With red-rimmed eyes, Su Ke'er said, "For all these years, I've gritted my teeth and overcome every hardship by myself. Now, I'm begging you, can you please just leave me alone?"

Mother Su's mouth hung open as she stared at Su Ke'er, looking utterly devastated as tears welled up in her own eyes.

"Ah, yes... you're all grown up," Mother Su said painfully. "I was wrong back then, Mom wronged you. I know my mistake now, and I'll try my best to change."

Fearing Su Ke'er would get angrier, she quickly added, "Ke'er, you get some rest. I'll head back first. Later, I'll make some soup and bring it over. How long has it been since you've had my cooking? When you were little, you loved the food I made."

"Anyway, I'm leaving now," Mother Su said, wiping away her tears. She left the ward with an expression of guilt and regret.

Xue Lang hurried to follow her out, but not before shooting a hateful glare at Lin Mu.

"Brat, just you wait!"

「Outside the hospital.」

Mother Su wiped her eyes. "Xiao Xue, sorry you had to see that."

Xue Lang shook his head nonchalantly. "Auntie, what are you talking about? It's not your fault."

Mother Su sighed. "I'm the one who failed Ke'er, so it's only right that she hates me."

"Auntie, you must have had your own difficulties," Xue Lang consoled. "I'm sure Ke'er will understand one day."

"Yes, yes, she'll definitely understand," Mother Su nodded eagerly, then asked hesitantly, "So, Xiao Xue, about you and Ke'er..."

Xue Lang spoke with sincerity, "Auntie, I genuinely like Ke'er, it's just that she..."

"Xiao Xue, don't you worry," Mother Su immediately interrupted. "As far as I'm concerned, you're my only son-in-law! As for that stinking brat from before, he can forget about having any ideas about my daughter!"

At the mention of Lin Mu, Mother Su looked as if she were grinding her teeth in anger. That little bastard actually dared to slap me! I'll make him pay for this!

"Auntie, don't worry," Xue Lang sneered. "I won't let him get away with treating you like that!"

"Xiao Xue, you mustn't do anything rash," Mother Su cautioned deliberately.

Xue Lang chuckled. "Rest assured, Auntie. I'm not crude and disrespectful like some people."

"Right, right!" Mother Su nodded profusely before adding with some feigned reluctance, "You know, Xiao Xue, with Ke'er sick in the hospital, I've been so busy taking care of her that I haven't been able to work..."

"I understand, Auntie," Xue Lang nodded with a smile. He took out his wallet, pulled out all the cash inside, and pressed it into Mother Su's hand. "Auntie, this is all the cash I have on me. Give me your bank account number in a bit, and I'll transfer some more money to you."

Mother Su took the money without hesitation, though she said, "Oh, how can I accept this? It's too much." Despite her words, the smile on her face was impossible to hide.

Xue Lang laughed. "Auntie, we'll be family soon. There's no need for such pleasantries between us."

"Yes, yes, we're all family."

「The hospital ward.」

"Ke'er, are you okay?" Qin Yan asked, sighing inwardly as she looked at Su Ke'er's red-rimmed eyes and pained expression.

"Sister Yan Yan, thank you." Su Ke'er managed a small smile. "I'm fine."

"Alright. I really can't stay; I have two surgeries to get to." Qin Yan glanced at Lin Mu, hesitated, then said, "Lin Mu, please keep Ke'er company for a while. I'll come back after I'm done."

With that, she rushed out of the room.

"Ah, Sister Yan Yan..." Su Ke'er didn't even have time to stop her. She must have been in a real hurry.

After Qin Yan left, only Lin Mu and Su Ke'er remained in the ward. Lin Mu stood by the window, watching the people outside. Su Ke'er, wrapped in a blanket, leaned against the bed and occasionally studied him.

"President Lin... I'm sorry about earlier," Su Ke'er said, breaking the silence, though her expression was a little awkward.

"It's nothing," Lin Mu replied. "You're my employee. Of course I don't want anything to happen to you."

"Just an employee?" Su Ke'er muttered to herself, a strange look on her face.

"What's wrong?" Lin Mu asked, puzzled.

Su Ke'er's face flushed, and she fell silent.

"If you need something, just say it. You don't have to be so formal with me." Su Ke'er was hurt because of company business, so he felt that as the Chairman, he should bear some responsibility.

"I... I need to use the restroom..." Su Ke'er's voice was as faint as a mosquito's buzz, her face so crimson it looked like it might bleed.

"The restroom?" Lin Mu understood at once. He stood up. "I'll step out for a moment then."

"But I can't stand up," Su Ke'er said, panicking at the thought of him leaving.

Lin Mu froze. "Then how did you go before?"

Su Ke'er bit her lip, her eyes glistening with unshed tears. "It was... my mom who helped me."

Lin Mu was speechless.

Chapter 296: Even the Buddha Cannot Save Me!

When Lin Mu returned to the Qin Zhu Courtyard, it was already evening.

To his surprise, Qin Luoli had prepared several dishes and was eagerly watching the doorway. As Lin Mu entered the living room, her eyes lit up and she walked over.

"You're back?"

Qin Luoli fetched Lin Mu a pair of slippers and even helped him hang up his coat, resembling a doting little wife.

"Thank you." Lin Mu stroked Qin Luoli's head, feeling a surge of warmth in his heart.

Despite having lived two lives, Lin Mu had rarely experienced human warmth. In his previous life, he had joined the army for training as a young man. He eventually became the world's number one assassin, walking the blade's edge and struggling on the line between life and death. With an iron-blooded arrogance, he never considered matters of love.

Afterward, he crossed into the Immortal Realm of the Nine Heavens and Ten Earths. There, he spent his life in relentless battles, leaving trails of blood and piles of corpses wherever he went, which forged his cold demeanor and swift, decisive style. Even though countless outstanding women fell for him, Lin Mu either pretended not to see or chose to avoid them.

Reborn again in this life, Lin Mu felt love and familial affection from Qin Luoli and Mother Lin, which softened his heart considerably. Subconsciously, he thoroughly enjoyed this feeling. He was just never a man skilled in expressing himself, so he often appeared nonchalant, yet his heart was filled with countless deep emotions.

Lin Mu cherished this hard-earned life. Every time he felt moved, it helped perfect his Dao Heart and quicken his cultivation speed.

Gazing at the ravishing face before him, Lin Mu's eyes suddenly shone brighter. The shackles imprisoned deep within his soul shattered with a faint POP! His entire demeanor changed once again.

He looked even more otherworldly, yet also more ordinary. If the Lin Mu from before resembled an unsheathed sword with its edge on full display, then the him of this moment was like a sword returned to its sheath, his divine brilliance restrained. But that invisible, transcendent quality was impossible to hide.

Qin Luoli also sensed the change in Lin Mu. Her heart skipped a beat, but she didn't dwell on it. On the contrary, she felt that the current Lin Mu emanated a mysterious, irresistibly captivating aura.

He was warmer, more... down-to-earth. The Lin Mu of the past was too straightforward and aloof, making him unapproachable. But now, the man before her had become much gentler.

"Come on, let's eat." Lin Mu took Qin Luoli's hand and led her to the dining table.

Although they often lay in the same bed, nothing substantial had ever happened between them. Now, the look Lin Mu gave her was filled with a rare warmth that nearly melted her heart completely.

"The food's gotten cold, I'll go warm it up." Qin Luoli had Lin Mu sit down, then patted his head. "You sit for a while, it'll be ready soon."

Watching Qin Luoli bustling about in the kitchen, Lin Mu could distinctly feel her happiness at this moment, and a smile couldn't help but emerge on his face.

It looks like once I've dealt with the matters at hand, it'll be time to spend some quality time with Qin Luoli.

「The next day.」

Qin Luoli went to her company, while Lin Mu continued his grand plan of cultivation. Having two women by his side did not affect his pursuit of the Dao in the slightest. On the contrary, his Dao Heart became more resolute, and his foundation grew ever more stable. Moreover, Lin Mu believed that as long as he found a suitable cultivation Holy Land, his progress would be even faster.

Time flew by during cultivation. When Lin Mu awoke, it was already evening again.

"Hmm, it's about time."

After glancing at the sky, Lin Mu changed his clothes and left the house.

Tonight was destined to be a nightmare for countless people.

「On the highway to River City.」

Several black Mercedes were speeding along.

"How much longer until we reach River City?" the elder in the back seat of the middle sedan asked in a deep voice.

"Replying to Elder Qi, it will take about two more hours," the driver hurriedly answered.

"Too slow." Elder Qi frowned. "Speed up!"

"Yes, sir!"

The car accelerated, roaring toward River City like a whirlwind.

「River City, Qiao Family Estate.」

The atmosphere in the Qiao Family estate was heavy. Most of the servants had been sent away, leaving only a few of the Qiao Family's guards. Numerous Hidden Guards were even stationed in concealed positions, protecting the estate like an iron fortress. Forget a person—not even a fly could dream of getting inside.

In the main hall, Qiao Zishan paced back and forth, looking deeply uneasy.

For some reason, I have a bad feeling that something significant is going to happen tonight.

He hadn't slept at all last night, trying to recall when he might have provoked such a ruthless figure. But by dawn, Qiao Zishan had to face a grim fact: over the years, he had provoked far too many people. As the son of River City's richest man and its most notorious playboy, it was safe to say Qiao Zishan had made countless enemies. But most of them feared his status and dared not seek revenge. As for the small handful who might try, they would need the strength to back it up.

However, the person who wiped out the Fang Family was clearly different. It was said his cultivation level was extremely high; perhaps it was even the renowned Master Lin.

Thinking of Master Lin, Qiao Zishan's brow furrowed even more deeply. He had personally witnessed Master Lin's power during the battle on the Bolan River. Those were the methods of an immortal, utterly unstoppable by mortals.

When exactly did I provoke this peerless madman?

After pondering all night, Qiao Zishan couldn't find an answer.

"But he promised he would visit the Qiao Family if he had the chance," he muttered to himself, then something suddenly occurred to him. "Could it be... No, impossible! Absolutely impossible!"

The more he thought, the more something felt wrong. He grew neurotic, as if he'd been struck by lightning.

"Sit down!" Seeing his son so flustered, Qiao Tianhao couldn't help but snap at him.

"Dad, I..." Qiao Zishan started to speak, but upon seeing Qiao Tianhao's gloomy gaze, he immediately shrank back.

Qiao Zishan knew that whenever his father had that look in his eyes, he was at a breaking point. It was best for everyone to stay out of his way.

Daoist Buji chuckled. "Young Master Qiao, don't be nervous. With myself and Master Chixiao here, we can handle it even if a Grandmaster himself arrives."

Master Chixiao put his palms together. "Daoist Buji is right. Young Master Qiao, please calm yourself. If that person doesn't come, then all is well. But if he does, he won't be leaving."

A look of great pity appeared on Master Chixiao's face. "Although a monk's heart is one of compassion, this man has annihilated the entire Fang Family. His sins are monstrous. Even if Buddha himself were to encounter him, he would be enlightened."

"Oh, really?"

Just then, a soft chuckle came from outside.

"Not even Buddha himself would have dared to speak of enlightening me. What makes you think you can?!"

Chapter 297: Heavenly Emperor Nine Steps—Five Steps to Make the Buddha Kneel!

As the voice faded, a figure stepped into the grand hall of the Qiao Mansion.

He was tall and slender, dressed in simple casual clothes, with a faint smile on his face.

Upon seeing Lin Mu, Qiao Zishan's expression changed drastically. "It's you!"

Qiao Zishan's lips trembled, his heart pounding with alarm. "Master Lin, you..."

It really is Lin Wudi! It's truly him!

Qiao Zishan felt a pang of pain, finding it difficult to accept this reality. "Why?"

In his subconscious, he couldn't recall ever having any contact with Lin Mu. After personally witnessing the battle on the Bolan River, he had come to revere Lin Mu as a Heavenly God. How could he possibly dare to offend him?

"What's wrong? Surprised?" Lin Mu chuckled. "Didn't you invite me to visit your home? Well, now I'm here."

His words were calm, but Qiao Zishan could feel a bone-chilling murderous intent.

Lin Wudi wants to kill me!

After confirming that this man was indeed Lin Wudi, Qiao Tianhao surprisingly grew less tense. "You must be... Master Lin, correct?"

The unknown was the most terrifying. Now that the visitor's identity was confirmed, Qiao Tianhao managed to calm down. He had seen his fair share of storms. Even when facing a Grandmaster, he could quickly regain his composure.

"Master Lin, I wonder how my unworthy son might have offended you. I hope you will enlighten me."

Qiao Tianhao's demeanor was impeccable as he gestured toward the dining table in the hall. The table was laden with exquisite delicacies, emitting an enticing aroma.

He chuckled. "Master Lin, regardless of whether my son is at fault, I had some food prepared as soon as I heard you were visiting today. Please, allow me to offer my apologies."

Seeing Zishan still standing there dazed, Qiao Tianhao rebuked him in dissatisfaction. "Zishan, what are you waiting for? Hurry up and invite Master Lin to take a seat! Pour him a drink and apologize!"

"Oh! Oh!" Qiao Zishan snapped back to his senses and hastily said, "Master Lin, please, take a seat! Please!"

Qiao Tianhao smiled. "We didn't know your preferences, Master Lin, so we just prepared a simple meal. I hope you don't mind."

Qiao Tianhao was meticulous with his words and actions. He had made countless preparations in secret, but on the surface, he had simply prepared a meal, hoping to resolve the enmity between them. Although, even now, he was still confused about how his son had offended Lin Mu.

But as the saying goes, one does not slap a smiling face. He felt he had done all he could. Surely Lin Mu wouldn't cause a scene, right?

Lin Mu chuckled and glanced at the dining table, then shook his head. "I came today for only one thing." He pointed a finger at Qiao Zishan. "To take his life!"

Qiao Tianhao's expression changed. He hadn't expected Lin Mu to refuse his courtesy. His voice became grave. "Master Lin, you... my son holds no grudge or grievance against you. Why do you insist on taking his life? Even a Grandmaster can't just kill people at will, can they?"

Qiao Zishan's voice was tinged with tears. "Yes, Master Lin! The first time I ever saw you was during your fight with Yun Xu. I admit I was disrespectful then, but I already apologized, and you accepted it! Why do you want to kill me now?"

Lin Mu shook his head. "It seems you've forgotten what you did."

When he was reborn, he witnessed the original owner of this body having his limbs broken by Qiao Zishan's men before being left for dead in the wilderness. If not for the overwhelming resentment emanating from the original owner, he never would have found such a suitable vessel. He swore an oath back then to avenge the original Lin Mu. That is why he came today. His Foundation Establishment is imminent, and Lin Mu will not allow any flaws in his Dao foundation.

"What did I do?" Qiao Zishan cried out, feigning innocence. In truth, he had done so many evil deeds he couldn't recall them all at once.

"Master Lin, even if you want to kill my son, shouldn't you at least let him know why?" Qiao Tianhao snorted. "I may only be a businessman, and my son may have his flaws, but I will not tolerate someone slandering him! Even if that person is a Grandmaster!"

His words were firm and authoritative, clearly intended to pressure Lin Mu with an appeal to propriety.

Master Chixiao snorted, his gaze fixed on Lin Mu with ill intent. "Hmph, Master Qiao, why waste your breath on him? Since he came here to kill your son, then allow me to eliminate him first!"

Lin Mu's earlier words had been disrespectful to the Buddha, making Master Chixiao eager to teach him a lesson. "I don't care if you're some 'Master Lin.' You disrespected my Buddha, and for that, you must be punished!"

As soon as Master Chixiao finished speaking, a golden Buddha light erupted from his body. The light spread out, coalescing behind Master Chixiao into the form of a Buddha statue. The statue seemed to be cast from molten gold, its hands joined in prayer, exuding the awe-inspiring majesty of the Buddhist Door.

Qiao Tianhao and his son scrambled back, their faces ashen with fright.

"Kneel!" Master Chixiao thrust a palm toward Lin Mu.

The Buddha statue behind him mirrored the motion, its own massive hand striking down toward Lin Mu.

"Heh. In my life, I have knelt to neither heaven nor earth. You think a sham Buddha like you, one who only deceives the world, can make me kneel?"

With his hands clasped behind his back, Lin Mu took a single step forward.

"Heavenly Emperor Nine Steps—Five Steps to Make the Buddha Kneel!"

A majestic, boundless aura surged from Lin Mu, like that of the Heavenly Emperor on an imperial tour. Heaven and earth trembled, and the four seas were stunned into silence.

CRACK!

With a sharp, crisp sound, the Buddha statue's outstretched hand began to shatter inch by inch. It wasn't just the hand; the entire statue began to fracture.

BOOM!

With a muffled explosion, the Buddha statue shattered, dissolving into flecks of golden light before vanishing completely.

As the statue shattered, Master Chixiao suffered a backlash. His face turned deathly pale, and he spat out a mouthful of blood.

Master Chixiao staggered back several steps before catching his balance, his eyes wide with horror as he stared at Lin Mu. "You... How is this possible?!"

"Even the Buddha himself must kneel before me, to say nothing of a mere incarnation like this!" Lin Mu's expression was one of absolute pride, and he exuded an aura of being the sole supreme existence in all the Nine Heavens and Ten Earths.

In the past, during his campaign across the Nine Heavens and Ten Earths, he had battled the Buddha of the Buddhist Door. Lin Mu had taken only five steps, and the Buddha, whose understanding of the Buddha Dharma was said to be supreme, had nearly lost his Golden Body, ultimately forced to kneel in submission. Even though his current cultivation level was less than one ten-thousandth of what it once was, he didn't need to lift a finger to deal with a mere disciple of the Buddhist Door.

The force of Lin Mu's words seemed to strike him physically, and Master Chixiao spat out another mouthful of blood.

"Fine, Lin Wudi! Today, I have truly experienced your power!"

Master Chixiao's expression grew solemn. He instantly sat down cross-legged, brought his hands together, and began silently chanting the Buddha Dharma.

OM... OM... OM...

The sound of Buddhist chants resonated as swastika-shaped Dharma Seals flew from Master Chixiao's mouth, gathering in the air around him.

"Lin Wudi, no matter how profound your cultivation level, how could you possibly comprehend the vastness of the Buddha Dharma!" A strange smile played on Master Chixiao's lips, one that was neither a grin nor a grimace, but his eyes blazed with intense killing intent. "Do you dare face this next technique of mine?!"

The Buddhist light converged as the swastika-shaped Dharma Seals danced wildly throughout the hall, yet they did not harm a single physical object.

Lin Mu laughed heartily and took a step forward. "And why would I not dare?!"

Chapter 298: Heavenly Punishment Blade, Li Xiaotian!

"BUZZING!"

The Dharma Seal danced, suddenly expanding to fill the entire hall.

"Buddha's Light Illumination!"

Master Chixiao let out a roar like the lion's roar of the Buddhist Door, deafeningly loud.

"CRACK! CRACK!"

The walls of the entire villa began to crack under the force of the Buddhist sound.

"Quick, go!"

Daoist Buji's expression changed drastically. He grabbed Qiao Tianhao and his son and instantly dashed outside.

A grand Buddhist chant sounded, and the entire villa was bathed in golden light.

Qiao Tianhao and his son stared at the scene before them, their faces stricken with terror as they stood frozen to the spot.

What kind of power is this? It's terrifying!

"What a magnificent Buddha's Light Illumination!"

Daoist Buji squinted, his expression grave as he scrutinized the scene.

Daoist Buji couldn't help but marvel, "To think Master Chixiao has combined two Dao Methods of the Buddhist Door. He's a truly heaven-sent genius!"

"Daoist, do you think the Master can win?"

This was Qiao Tianhao's most pressing concern. No matter what, as long as Lin Mu died, his son could live. The Qiao Family would also be preserved.

"Don't worry." Daoist Buji chuckled. "With this move from Master Chixiao, forget Lin Wudi. Even I would need to exert some effort to face it."

In his words, Daoist Buji seemed even more confident in his own strength.

And in his eyes, Lin Mu was already a dead man.

Whether it was Buddha's Light Illumination or the Nine Syllables of Buddha's Teachings, either one alone was enough to drive an ordinary Grandmaster to despair. What's more, Master Chixiao had perfectly combined the two.

Killing a Grandmaster was well within his reach!

"That's good, that's good."

Qiao Tianhao felt greatly relieved and was glad he had found these two experts to aid him.

This one billion was well spent!

A look of ecstatic joy appeared on Qiao Zishan's face as well.

He has to die. He has to die.

Otherwise, with a Grandmaster vowing to kill him, he truly had no way to survive.

"Heh, Buddha's Light Illumination? Nine Syllables?"

In the hall, Lin Mu looked at the overwhelming golden light and scoffed with disdain. "All these flashy tricks? I can shatter them with a single punch!"

As soon as he spoke, Lin Mu suddenly raised his hand and threw a punch.

"Slaying Gods and Demons and Punishing Immortals Twelve Forms—Deicide Fist!"

A fierce, murderous intent erupted from Lin Mu, as if it could tear the heavens and the earth apart. The spiritual energy in his body roared out, gathering in his fist.

He threw the punch!

"BOOM!"

With a deafening roar, it seemed as if the punch tore a great hole in the surrounding air.

A fist's shadow howled forth, smashing into the depths of the golden light.

"CRACK! CRACK!"

Everywhere it passed, the golden Dharma Seals were shattered to pieces, leaving only an empty void in its wake.

At the end of the void sat Master Chixiao, cross-legged on the ground.

But now, the expression on his face had vanished, leaving only bafflement.

"Why?" Master Chixiao suddenly asked.

"You're simply too weak," Lin Mu stated indifferently.

Master Chixiao had expected Lin Mu to criticize his low proficiency in Buddha Dharma, but he never thought Lin Mu would just say he was too weak.

With a wry smile, Master Chixiao placed his palms together, a compassionate look on his face. "Benefactor, all enmity stems from karma. Why not let go of your obsessions and ascend to ultimate bliss?"

Lin Mu retorted, "If that's the case, Master, why don't you let go of your own obsessions?"

Master Chixiao was suddenly shaken, then he smiled miserably. "So be it. If I do not enter Hell, who will? I only hope the Benefactor will commit fewer killings and find liberation soon."

Master Chixiao placed his palms together, chanting a Buddhist phrase, "Amitabha..."

His head drooped, and he breathed his last.

With Master Chixiao's death, the golden light that filled the hall dissipated.

A large hole was visible on Master Chixiao's chest, as if punched clean through. Eerily, not a single drop of blood flowed out.

A renowned Buddhist monk of his generation was killed by Lin Mu with a single punch.

Perhaps it was Master Chixiao's destiny.

Is he dead?

Qiao Tianhao watched the villa's main hall nervously, his hands unconsciously tightening into fists.

"Master Qiao, do not panic. Master Chixiao hails from the Golden Light Temple. With his profound Buddha Dharma, he was certainly capable of slaying that man..."

Daoist Buji hadn't finished speaking when a figure slowly emerged from the villa.

Dressed in casual clothes with his hands clasped behind his back, he strolled out leisurely.

"Apologies. The Master you spoke of has been 'liberated' by me," Lin Mu said indifferently, his gaze falling upon Qiao Zishan.

"THUD!"

Qiao Zishan's legs gave out, and he collapsed to the ground.

"Master Chixiao... is dead?"

Qiao Zishan's face turned ashen, his eyes filled with terror. With Master Chixiao dead, who could possibly stop Lin Mu from killing him?

A look of shock also flashed across Qiao Tianhao's eyes.

"Impossible!" Daoist Buji exclaimed in disbelief. "How could you have killed Master Chixiao? He may not have been a Grandmaster, but his Buddha Dharma was profound—more than enough to kill you!"

"A non-Grandmaster trying to kill a Grandmaster?" Lin Mu shook his head. "Even Yunxu Ouyang Ming didn't dare claim he could kill me. What chance did that monk have?"

"What?"

Daoist Buji's pupils constricted. "Western Poison Xiao Ouyang... was slain by you?"

Western Poison Xiao Ouyang was a Grandmaster famed for ages. How could he have been no match for Lin Mu?

"What if he was?" Lin Mu smiled faintly. "Now it's your turn. Are you going to make a move, or are you going to leave?"

Daoist Buji's expression grew hesitant.

His strength was on par with Master Chixiao's. Since Lin Mu had killed Chixiao, he knew he stood no chance either.

"Daoist, you can't leave!" Seeing Daoist Buji's hesitation, Qiao Tianhao grew desperate. "I'll add another five hundred million! Kill this man, and I'll personally hand you one point five billion!"

Daoist Buji was sorely tempted. Pursuers of the Martial Way like himself rarely had the spare energy to earn money. But he was at a critical juncture, just one step away from becoming a Grandmaster. With one point five billion, he could add a little of his own and obtain a treasured item he had set his sights on. That treasure could definitely help him advance to the rank of Grandmaster!

But...

But thinking of Lin Mu's methods, Daoist Buji was still filled with trepidation.

"Two billion!" Qiao Tianhao gritted his teeth and declared, "Daoist, kill this man and I'll give you two billion! On top of that, my Qiao Family will present you with generous gifts every year!"

Two billion was no small sum. But money lost could be earned again. His son was irreplaceable; once dead, he was gone forever.

"Fine!" Daoist Buji gritted his teeth, finally agreeing.

With two billion, he could definitely secure that treasure!

Thinking of this, Daoist Buji took a deep breath and stepped forward. "Lin Wudi, I know you are strong, but I am not one to be taken lightly."

As his words fell, a sky-shattering sword intent erupted from him.

"SHIING!"

With a piercing cry, the longsword on Daoist Buji's back flew from its sheath, pointing straight at Lin Mu.

Lin Mu stood his ground, completely motionless.

"Daoist Buji, if you wish to kill my Master, you'll have to get past me first!"

At that moment, a powerful roar rang out.

Simultaneously, a chilling blade intent descended from the heavens!

Heavenly Punishment Blade!

Li Xiaotian

Chapter 299 I Just Want to Kill You!

CLANG!

A crisp, metallic ring echoed like a white rainbow piercing the sun. A blade descended from the sky, striking Daoist Buji's longsword with pinpoint accuracy.

CLANK!

The flash of a blade split the longsword in two, and a figure immediately followed, landing on the ground with a boom.

"Qing Yu?!" Seeing the newcomer, Daoist Buji's expression changed. "You're still alive?"

The man was one-armed, holding a red Miao Knife. It was none other than Li Xiaotian.

"No thanks to you, I managed to survive!" Li Xiaotian stared at Daoist Buji with a frosty expression. "Buji, I've been searching for you all these years. I never expected you to show up here. It seems the heavens do have eyes!"

"Master, leave Buji to me!" Li Xiaotian said, his eyes filled with undisguised hatred as he glared at the Daoist.

"Master?" Hearing Li Xiaotian's words, Buji was momentarily stunned before sneering, "If our old master were still alive, I wonder if he'd admit he was blind. He betrothed our junior sister to you, and just a few short years later, you've already taken someone else as your master."

"Traitor?" Li Xiaotian held his Heavenly Punishment Blade horizontally, his killing intent flaring. "Buji, how dare you say that? Back then, Dao Zheng's kindness toward you was immeasurable, and our master treated you like his own son. But you repaid that kindness with treachery, murdering our master and causing the entire Xiaozhuang Monastery to be annihilated!"

Li Xiaotian's voice was filled with deep-seated hatred. "Before our master died, he ordered me to personally kill you and avenge all our fellow disciples from Xiaozhuang Monastery!"

Pointing his blade at Buji, Li Xiaotian's eyes turned blood-red as he roared, "You are the real traitor of Xiaozhuang Monastery!"

This was the first time Lin Mu had ever seen Li Xiaotian so enraged. Even when facing the High Priest who had betrayed his own people, Li Xiaotian's hatred had not been this palpable. From their exchange, Lin Mu gathered that Li Xiaotian was originally from Xiaozhuang Monastery and was a fellow disciple of this Daoist Buji.

"Hahaha!" Buji suddenly burst into laughter, then ground out through gritted teeth, "I'm the traitor? I was clearly the eldest senior brother of Xiaozhuang Monastery! Why would Master pass his position to you? Was it just because he married our junior sister to you?"

"Let's not call the kettle black, Qing Yu. If you want to kill me, you'll have to show me some real skill!" Buji flicked his wrist, flourishing his sword. "I was able to wound you gravely back then, and I'm even stronger now. Killing you will be as easy as slaughtering a chicken!"

As soon as he finished speaking, a dazzling light erupted from his longsword, whistling toward Li Xiaotian.

"Buji, if you hadn't used such despicable tricks, how could you have possibly injured me?" Li Xiaotian advanced fearlessly, blade in hand. "I haven't been idle all these years either!"

WHOOSH!

He slashed out with the Heavenly Punishment Blade. A ferocious torrent of energy carrying an unstoppable momentum shot forward, shattering Buji's sword light.

"Hmm?" Buji's expression shifted slightly as he sneered, "No wonder you're so bold. It seems you have gotten much stronger."

Murderous intent gleamed in Li Xiaotian's eyes as he charged forward. "Buji, today we settle the score! For Dao Zheng, for the hundreds of people from Xiaozhuang Monastery, and for our junior sister!"

Li Xiaotian bellowed as the Heavenly Punishment Blade erupted with a blinding light. Fierce waves of blade energy howled in every direction, gouging deep ravines into the ground. Unwilling to yield, Buji met him head-on. The two exchanged blows, their sword and blade clashing, occasionally unleashing terrifying waves of sword intent and blade energy.

Watching them fight, Lin Mu realized it wouldn't be over any time soon. He slowly shook his head. The grudge between Li Xiaotian and Daoist Buji was for them to resolve. He had his own business to attend to.

"Heh, you think you can just leave?" Lin Mu had just turned when he spotted Qiao Tianhao and his son trying to slip away. He offered them an indifferent smile.

Blocked from escaping, Qiao Tianhao immediately began to beg. "Master Lin, what will it take for you to spare my son? Money? Treasures? I'll give you half of my entire fortune!"

Half his fortune was an astronomical figure, an amount that countless people could never dream of earning in several lifetimes. If Lin Mu agreed, he would instantly possess immense wealth and numerous properties, becoming one of River City's top figures overnight.

"Master Lin, I'm not boasting, but you can't even begin to imagine how much half my fortune is," Qiao Tianhao pressed, certain Lin Mu would agree. "As long as you agree to spare my son, I'll give you anything you want!"

Even though Lin Mu was a Martial Arts Grandmaster, that didn't mean he was good at business. Martial artists dedicated their lives to the Martial Way, leaving no time or energy for investments. Otherwise, so many of them wouldn't be willing to work as bodyguards for the wealthy.

However, faced with Qiao Tianhao's temptation, Lin Mu slowly shook his head.

"Sorry, I only have one demand: his life." Lin Mu pointed at Qiao Zishan. "As soon as he is dead, I will leave immediately without touching anything else that belongs to the Qiao Family. But if you continue to obstruct me, don't blame me for being merciless!"

Perhaps anyone else would have accepted Qiao Tianhao's terms without hesitation. The offer was incredibly tempting and practical. Compared to taking a life just to vent anger, most people would choose the tangible reward.

Unfortunately for them, Lin Mu was the sole exception. He wasn't short on money. Or rather, he could have as much as he wanted, whenever he wanted. He had no need to make a deal with Qiao Tianhao. Killing Qiao Zishan was a promise he'd made to his body's original owner and to himself. The Heavenly Emperor's vow is eternal!

"Lin Wudi, must you be at irreconcilable odds with my Qiao Family?" Qiao Tianhao said through clenched teeth. "Do you honestly believe I can't use my name, Qiao Tianhao, to summon countless experts to hunt you down?"

"Even a Martial Arts Grandmaster can be overwhelmed by sheer numbers. You can't fight forever; you'll eventually tire." As the richest man in River City for many years, Qiao Tianhao wielded immense influence. If he was willing to pay the price, he could hire not just men like Chi Xiao or Daoist Buji, but true Martial Arts Grandmasters. The cost, however, was so high that even he would find it difficult to bear.

"If you keep pushing me, then I'll have no choice but to take you down with me!" Qiao Tianhao shielded Qiao Zishan behind him, staring fearlessly at Lin Mu. "Zishan, don't be afraid. With me here, no one will dare to touch a single hair on your head!"

Qiao Zishan was deeply moved, vowing that if he survived this, he would change his ways and be a better son to his parents.

"Right, Dad, don't worry. I'm not scared!" Qiao Zishan seemed to regain his confidence, looking at Lin Mu with a hint of pride. "Master Lin, Lin Wudi, is the price to your satisfaction? If it is, let's call it a deal."

Seeing Lin Mu remain silent, Qiao Zishan assumed he was tempted and continued, "Do you have any idea how much money my family has? Honestly, even I don't know the full amount. Just give the nod, and half of the Qiao Family's fortune is yours."

A faint, smug smile played on Qiao Zishan's face. He didn't believe there was anyone in this world who didn't love money. Everyone has a price.

"I'm sorry, but compared to the Qiao Family's fortune, I'd still rather take your life."

Chapter 300: Heavenly Emperor Nine Steps, One Step Life and Death!

"Master Lin, do you really wish for a fight to the bitter end with my Qiao Family?" Qiao Tianhao glared angrily at Lin Mu, a hint of madness flickering in his eyes.

Lin Mu glanced indifferently at the surroundings of the Qiao Mansion and chuckled. "If you think those snipers hiding around here are enough to deal with me, I suggest you abandon that hope."

The Qiao Mansion was encircled by artificial hills. The trees were lush, perfect for concealment. At this moment, within those rockeries and the forest, at least dozens of snipers were hidden. Their dark muzzles were firmly trained on Lin Mu, fingers resting quietly on the triggers.

At a single command from Qiao Tianhao, these snipers, hired at great expense, would immediately open fire to assassinate Lin Mu.

So what if he's a Grandmaster? Can he be faster than a bullet? With so many snipers equipped with the finest gear, can he, Lin Wudi, truly be impervious to blades and bullets?

Qiao Tianhao gritted his teeth, hoping Lin Mu would back down.

Unfortunately, since Lin Mu was determined to take Qiao Zishan's life, he would certainly follow through. There was no possibility of him making a deal with Qiao Tianhao.

"He alone might not be enough, but what if you add us?"

Just as Qiao Tianhao was about to order the snipers to fire, an emotionless voice suddenly cut in.

Following the voice, several figures slowly walked in from the main gate. At the forefront was an elder in traditional Tang-style clothing, exuding an air of dignity and an impressive aura. Most striking were the two large men standing behind him, both towering over two meters tall. Their hair was a fiery red, like blazing flames, and their bodies radiated an intense heat, as if they were two large furnaces.

The two men stood like iron towers behind the elder, staring at Lin Mu with murderous intent.

The elder's own strength was average, only at the Late Stage of Inner Strength. However, these two men were even stronger than him; compared to Daoist Buji and Master Chixiao, they were by no means inferior.

These are two powerful existences, both Half-step Grandmasters!

This elder was, naturally, the Martial Alliance Elder and a disciple of the Fire Cloud Sect, Elder Qi.

As soon as he appeared, Qiao Tianhao let out a huge sigh of relief.

"Elder Qi, you've finally arrived," Qiao Tianhao said, drenched in sweat, a wave of post-traumatic fear washing over him. If Elder Qi had been any later, Lin Mu might have already made his move. Facing a Grandmaster, he felt his heart pound in his chest, no matter how well-prepared he was.

"Are you Lin Mu?" Elder Qi looked at Lin Mu with indifference, as if gazing upon a corpse.

"I am," Lin Mu nodded, his eyes sizing up Elder Qi and his entourage.

The lineup was indeed formidable. Aside from the two Half-step Grandmasters, the rest were all Inner Strength experts. And this Elder Qi, who led them, seemed significantly stronger than the average Inner Strength Martial Artist. He appeared to be at the Internal Energy Peak.

"Was Fan Shuai killed by you?" The Fan Shuai Elder Qi mentioned was the Young Sect Master of the Fire Cloud Sect. Now, they had come seeking trouble with Lin Mu.

"That was also me," Lin Mu admitted calmly.

Elder Qi nodded, seemingly satisfied with Lin Mu's answer. "Since you've admitted it, come with us."

"Fan Shuai was the esteemed Young Sect Master of my Fire Cloud Sect. His status was noble. To think he would die at your hands just after arriving in River City!" Elder Qi's tone was icy. "The Sect Leader has given an order: since Lin Wudi killed his beloved son, you must be brought back to the sect to face your punishment!"

"And what if I refuse?" Lin Mu countered.

"If you refuse, we naturally have ways to make you comply." Elder Qi glanced at the two large men beside him. "You two, this man is yours."

The two men nodded and took a simultaneous step forward.

BOOM!

As their feet landed, a terrifying, searing power erupted from their bodies.

Qiao Tianhao and his son stumbled back several steps, their faces aghast with astonishment.

These two are terrifyingly powerful!

The two burly men continued forward. With each step, the ground turned scorched black, as if seared by high temperatures.

"Lin Wudi, these two are the Left and Right Protectors of our sect. Individually, they may not be a match for you, but together, they can even fight a Grandmaster." Elder Qi spoke sternly, his hands clasped behind his back. "Moreover, do you really think that even if you defeat them, the matter will end here? You should know, behind us stands an ancient martial arts sect!"

The threat in his words was palpable.

"Is that so?" Lin Mu's expression remained unchanged as he replied nonchalantly, "I wasn't afraid to accept the challenge from Zhang Daoyun of the Celestial Master Mansion. Why would I fear your insignificant Fire Cloud Sect?"

As his voice fell, Lin Mu suddenly strode forward.

Heavenly Emperor Nine Steps!

With one step, the earth shook and the mountains trembled. Everyone swayed, nearly losing their footing.

One Step, Rivers Shatter.

He took another step.

A sinister wind howled as if the gates of the underworld had been thrown open. A ghastly gale raged ceaselessly, and piercing shrieks filled the air.

Terrify Ghosts and Gods with the Second Step.

What kind of technique is this? Elder Qi's expression shifted slightly.

However, Lin Mu's steps did not cease; he took two more in quick succession.

Third Step, Heaven and Earth Change.

Fourth Step, Stars Tremble.

Heaven and earth seemed to flip, and the stars began to shift. An invisible, overwhelming pressure instantly bore down on them.

The two large men shuddered violently, their advance halting involuntarily as shock washed over their faces.

This young man's power is terrifying!

Exchanging a look, they both saw the grave expression in each other's eyes. The two men let out a low growl, and a red True Qi suddenly erupted from their bodies. The True Qi solidified into a tangible form—the mark of a warrior on the cusp of becoming a Martial Arts Grandmaster!

"Lin Wudi, stop this futile struggle! Surrender now, and you might save your life!" Elder Qi shouted, though a sense of unease crept into his heart.

"Hahaha, surrender?" Lin Mu stood with his hands behind his back, his expression proud and his eyes filled with rebellious defiance. "In all my life, when have I ever begged anyone for mercy?"

THUD! THUD!

He took two more steps, and the very color of the world seemed to change, heralding an apocalypse.

Five Steps to Make the Buddha Kneel.

Sixth Step, Evil Demons Weep.

The Heavenly Emperor Nine Steps: one step to decide life or death.

The two large men's faces turned deathly pale. Their bodies trembled violently, as if unseen hands were forcing them to their knees. But their cultivation level was high; with a shout, they gritted their teeth and resisted.

They could withstand it, but the others were not so fortunate.

PFFT!

On the other side, Daoist Buji, who was clashing with Li Xiaotian, had just leaped into the air, preparing to deliver a fatal blow. He never expected Lin Mu to unleash the Heavenly Emperor Nine Steps at that very moment. Each step felt like it stomped directly on his heart, causing him excruciating pain.

As the final step landed, Daoist Buji could no longer hold on. He plummeted from the air, giving Li Xiaotian the opening to strike him down.

"Daoist Buji, accept your death!"

A roar erupted from the Heavenly Punishment Blade as a phantom image materialized and cleaved downward.

"No—" Daoist Buji bellowed, his eyes filled with terror.

SPLURT!

A head soared into the sky, trailing a spray of blood.

With a THUD, Daoist Buji's head landed heavily on the ground, his eyes wide open in death.

Li Xiaotian also dropped to one knee on the ground, his face pale with a trickle of blood at the corner of his mouth, clearly having suffered a serious injury.

"My Senior and Junior Brothers, Dao Zheng, and Junior Sister..." Li Xiaotian grabbed Daoist Buji's head and roared to the heavens, "Daoist Buji is dead! You can all rest in peace now!"