

War God 521

Chapter 521: I Am the Spirit Extinguishing Mage!

Next, it was Cai Heng's turn.

"If you don't want to die, I advise you not to go," Lin Mu said suddenly, just as Cai Heng was about to get up and leave.

"Hm?" Cai Heng's expression changed. "What do you mean by that?"

Lin Mu replied indifferently, "Nothing in particular. Just a friendly reminder."

If Cai Heng hadn't helped Xu Yao arrange her dorm and whatnot before, Lin Mu wouldn't have bothered.

Qiu Ning's contempt for Lin Mu grew. "What nonsense are you spouting? If you can't handle the game, just quit." She added, "Besides, isn't this girl perfectly fine? Who are you trying to scare?"

Qiu Ning already looked down on Lin Mu. Compared to Chu Tian, he was a world apart.

"Are you going or not?" Seeing Cai Heng frozen in place, Qiu Ning stood up. "If you won't go, I will."

With that, Qiu Ning stood and walked out.

Mo Mo watched, somewhat dazed. Why are they suddenly fighting to go? However, she noticed that Chu Tian hadn't said anything, so she let it be. After all, every one of them is going to die anyway. At this thought, a sinister smile touched her lips.

Qiu Ning walked out of the private room and, under Mo Mo's guidance, headed toward the room covered with talisman papers. Although the atmosphere was set up realistically, Qiu Ning was quite brave.

"You think this little setup can scare me?" Qiu Ning pursed her lips and walked straight into the room.

BANG!

The door slammed shut. Qiu Ning's heart tightened for a moment before she calmed down again. Such primitive tactics. I remember playing a horror game that was even scarier than this. I had to reach into a specially-made coffin with a hidden compartment to find something. The moment I reached in, something grabbed my hand. I thought it was a person at first, but it felt ice-cold. When I pulled it out, it was a heart. I was startled, sure, but that was it. So, a scene like this is nothing to me. Besides, if it weren't for Young Master Chu, who would want to play games with these Xiaobai!

With a disdainful snort, Qiu Ning walked step by step toward the mirror. A confident smile appeared on her face as she looked at her reflection.

In terms of both figure and looks, Qiu Ning was one in ten thousand. At Jiangling University, she was even voted one of the top ten campus beauties. She was completely confident she could win over Chu Tian. Once she was with him, would she ever have to worry about living a life of luxury again?

The room was dimly lit and plastered with talismans, creating a chilling atmosphere thick with Ghastly Qi. Yet to Qiu Ning, it felt as if she were standing in a field fragrant with flowers. In her mind's eye, Chu Tian approached with a rose in hand and a gentle smile, slowly pulling her into his embrace...

An involuntary smile graced Qiu Ning's lips as she slowly hugged herself, completely oblivious to the hand reaching out from the mirror, seizing her in its grasp.

"Aaaah!"

With a scream, Qiu Ning was yanked directly into the mirror, vanishing without a trace.

...

Back in the private room, Cai Heng grew puzzled. "Why is Qiu Ning taking so long?"

"Probably went to the bathroom," Chu Tian said nonchalantly.

"Bro... I need to go to the bathroom, too," Xu Yao suddenly whispered.

"I'll take you," Mo Mo said with a smile, standing by the door.

"Thank you." Xu Yao stood up and followed Mo Mo out.

Lin Mu's eyes narrowed. He stood up and said, "I need to use the restroom as well."

Mo Mo's expression stiffened. She glanced at Chu Tian before forcing a smile. "Of course. Please, follow me."

Mo Mo walked ahead, with Lin Mu and Xu Yao following side by side.

"Bro, I don't actually have to go. I just have a weird feeling about this place," Xu Yao whispered.

"Hmm? What did you find?" Lin Mu asked, surprised. Has she figured something out?

"Nothing," Xu Yao said with a frown. "It's just a feeling. You don't know this, but my intuition has been scarily accurate my whole life."

"Don't be afraid. I'm here. I'll protect you." Lin Mu smiled, inwardly sighing in relief. It's good that she senses the danger. That saves me an explanation later.

"Bro, I'll let you in on something," Xu Yao whispered. "I'm a police officer. My mission is to catch the murderer," she added with a mischievous giggle. "What about you? Don't tell me you're really the 'Homeless Man' of this game."

Lin Mu's lips curved. "Me? That's a secret!"

"Tch. Fine, don't tell me. So stingy!"

Lin Mu smiled faintly and glanced at Mo Mo walking ahead of them.

Just then, Mo Mo lowered her head to look at her phone. A text message glowed on the screen: "Find a way to get that kid into the room!"

Slipping her phone away, Mo Mo took a deep breath, turned to Lin Mu, and said, "Player 'Homeless Man', it will be your turn to get a clue card soon."

Lin Mu nodded. "Alright."

After coming out of the bathroom, Lin Mu watched Xu Yao return to the private room before following Mo Mo toward the designated room.

"By the way, where's the other woman? I haven't seen her," Lin Mu asked, deliberately making conversation.

Mo Mo smiled. "She went back while you were in the bathroom."

"Oh, I see." Lin Mu smiled, his expression unreadable.

As soon as he stepped inside, Mo Mo locked the door from the outside. A sinister smile spread across her face. "Enjoy your final moments."

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Inside the room, Lin Mu stared at the locked door, a faint smile playing on his lips.

"So impatient?" With a soft chuckle, he said, "In that case, I'm done playing your little game."

Stretching lazily, Lin Mu walked to the mirror. He put his hands on his hips and said, "Alright, let's see what's so strange about this place."

In the grim and terrifying room, his voice echoed, sounding exceptionally eerie as he spoke to himself.

Outside the door, Mo Mo heard his voice and assumed he was just psyching himself up. A sneer of contempt touched her lips. Let's see how you die.

Inside the room, Lin Mu remarked, "The setup is rather convincing."

He cracked his neck, then slowly approached the mirror, examining the cards on the table before it. The back of each card was illustrated with a different, terrifying portrait. One particular image struck Lin Mu with a sense of familiarity.

Is that the guy I scared earlier?

In the mirror, a mist rose behind Lin Mu—the smoke from the room's sandalwood, making everything blurry. Gradually, the smoke coalesced into the form of a human figure. It raised its hands and began to slowly creep toward Lin Mu.

All of this happened in complete silence.

Lin Mu, seemingly oblivious, kept his head down, studying the cards as if deciding which one to pick.

The shadow behind him drew closer, its hands reaching to clamp around his neck.

But just then, a brilliant golden light erupted from Lin Mu, illuminating the entire room as brightly as day.

"A mere evil spirit dares to try and harm me? Begone!"

In the next moment, the shadow behind Lin Mu dissolved like snow under a blazing sun, letting out a piercing scream as it rapidly dissipated.

"How could you hurt me? How is that possible!" a sharp voice shrieked, seeming to come from all directions at once, making its source impossible to pinpoint.

"Speak! Who are you? Why have you come here!"

Lin Mu smiled faintly. "I am the Spirit Extinguishing Mage."

"And I came here, of course, to eradicate evil spirits like you."

Chapter 522: You're defying the gods!

"You're full of shit!" Hearing Lin Mu's reply, the hidden voice grew furious, evidently not believing a word.

"Believe it or not." Lin Mu was unconcerned. The Spirit Extinguishing Mage was the player character he was portraying, so he didn't care whether these ghostly entities believed him or not.

"I couldn't be bothered with you trash at first, but since you dared to lay a hand on my sister, you've become unforgivable." Lin Mu stood with his hands clasped behind his back, his own back to the mirror. He looked into a corner disdainfully and said, "Are you going to come out on your own, or do I have to make you?"

"If I have to do it myself," he added, "your soul will be obliterated, and you'll never be reincarnated."

Mist rose from the corner, and the ghostly shadows within it seemed to multiply.

"Bullshit mage! You think I'd believe you?" the sharp voice shrieked with rage. The mist thickened, and the temperature in the room plummeted. "Since you want to ruin my plans, you can go to hell!"

The mist surged forward, transforming into countless tendrils of cold, malevolent Ghastly Qi.

"The glow of a firefly daring to compete with the bright moon!" Lin Mu snorted and blew out a breath of air.

WHIZ!

A blinding light shot from Lin Mu's mouth. In the blink of an eye, it transformed into a dazzling golden radiance that struck the Ghastly Qi. With a piercing scream, the Ghastly Qi dissipated, leaving behind a ghost-faced mask that was already shattered.

As the Ghastly Qi vanished, so did the voice. However, the room remained as dim as ever, and the temperature continued to drop.

RUSTLE...

A faint sound arose. From the mirror that Lin Mu had his back to, strands of black hair began to emerge. The hair slithered across the floor, slowly writhing toward him. It crept up his legs and, in a flash, completely enveloped his body.

"Die!" a voice full of excited, bloodthirsty cruelty echoed through the room. "Although this isn't the vital blood of a virgin, someone with blood as powerful as yours is an extreme rarity. This is truly exhilarating! Once I devour you, this divided spirit of mine will be able to break the Seal!"

The voice was filled with pure excitement. Thousands of hairs danced wildly in the room, like tentacles thrusting viciously toward Lin Mu.

"Hmm?!" a moment later, the voice was filled with terror. "How is this possible?"

The hairs, as sharp as blades, couldn't even penetrate Lin Mu's skin.

"All flash and no substance." An indifferent voice sounded as a divine, resplendent brilliance erupted from Lin Mu's body.

CRACK!

The hairs snapped and instantly dissolved into nothingness. Lin Mu stood in the same spot, not having moved an inch.

"No, impossible!" the deep, sharp voice cried out in disbelief. "Who are you? You're not an ordinary person!"

"Of course I'm not an ordinary person," Lin Mu grinned. "I told you. My name is the Spirit Extinguishing Mage."

"You lie!" the voice roared. "This so-called 'Night of Spirit Communication' is my masterpiece, designed to fool the world. How could you possibly be the Spirit Extinguishing Mage!"

This so-called Tongling Mansion was its creation, established with the purpose of finding suitable sacrifices for it to devour, all to free its trapped, divided spirit. By now, it had consumed numerous victims. It wouldn't be long before it could break the Seal and regain its freedom.

"So, you're the Spirit Extinguishing Mage," Lin Mu said with a smile. "I was wondering how a mere game could involve something so elaborate, like devouring lifeblood to break a Seal. It seems that over the years, you've consumed plenty of lifeblood and harmed many people, haven't you?"

A flicker of killing intent appeared in Lin Mu's eyes. If I hadn't followed her here today, my sister Xu Yao would surely have been in danger. The regret would have been endless.

"Hmph, you know too much!" The cold voice grew more murderous. "But you're already caught in the trap I've laid. What does it matter if you know? You still can't escape death!"

Suddenly, a gust of Yin Qi swept through the room, causing all the talisman papers to rustle loudly. From within the mirror, a withered hand appeared once again, reaching for Lin Mu.

"You think you can show off in front of me with that pathetic amount of power? You truly overestimate yourself." Lin Mu's eyes were filled with disdain. He had already realized that an evil spirit was sealed within this mirror. However, this evil spirit was able to use its bewitching arts to create puppets, which would continuously bring people for it to devour. Clearly, this spirit must have been quite powerful when it was alive. But no matter how powerful, it was useless before Lin Mu.

"Boy, you are far too arrogant. The power of a Spirit Communication Master is beyond your imagination," the chilling voice sneered. "You have no idea who you're dealing with!"

"And do you know who you're dealing with?" Lin Mu replied softly. "You are opposing a deity!"

"Presumptuous boy, you can die now!"

As the voice fell, the withered hand lunged toward Lin Mu's chest. Its sharp nails pulsed with a dreadful, gloomy Yin Qi. If an ordinary person were to be touched by this energy, they would fall gravely ill at the very least. If that hand pierced their body, death was certain. Moreover, Lin Mu could feel that the force behind the hand was considerable, comparable to the full-force blow of a Grandmaster.

Unfortunately for the spirit, it was useless against Lin Mu.

He stood his ground, and just as the withered hand was about to touch him, he flicked his finger.

CRACK!

A blinding bolt of lightning shot from his fingertip, striking the withered hand perfectly.

"Nine Heavens Divine Thunder?!" a shocked voice cried out as the withered hand violently exploded, vanishing into thin air.

"I told you," Lin Mu said, "you are contending with a deity."

Having destroyed the hand, he took a step forward and threw a punch at the mirror.

"Don't!" An old man's face, twisted in pain, suddenly appeared on the mirror's surface. He let out a terrified plea, "Immortal, spare my life!"

"I gave you a chance!" Lin Mu didn't hesitate, his fist continuing its downward arc.

"Stop!" Seeing Lin Mu's merciless attack, the old man grew frightened and roared with a crazed expression, "If you kill me, I'll kill this woman!"

The fist halted abruptly, just an inch from the mirror's surface.

Killing this evil spirit is one thing, but if someone dies here, it will be troublesome. If I were alone, it wouldn't matter, but today is my sister Xu Yao's first day of university. If someone actually died, the repercussions would be severe.

"I'll spare your life for now," Lin Mu said, slowly withdrawing his fist.

"Thank you, Immortal! Thank you, Immortal!" In the mirror, the old man expressed his gratitude repeatedly. "This humble servant will work tirelessly to repay you, Immortal."

The old man was already in complete awe of Lin Mu's power. To him, what else could this being be but an Immortal?

"Is that so?" A slight curve appeared on Lin Mu's lips.

"Every word I say is true! I would never dare deceive an Immortal," the old man said. He paused, then began to sigh sorrowfully. "It's just that this divided spirit of mine has been trapped here for three years now. If I don't return to my body soon, my physical form might be taken over by another of my divided spirits."

"That's no problem. I'll just let you out," Lin Mu said confidently. He slammed his palm onto the mirror and gripped it forcefully.

"Don't—" the old man screamed, but it was too late.

I'm dead. I'm really dead this time.

As the old man howled in despair, Lin Mu forcefully pulled a blurry figure straight out of the mirror. It was the old man.

The moment the old man's divided spirit left the mirror, a dense web of cracks instantly spread across its surface before it shattered with a loud bang. The old man who witnessed this was completely stunned.

The next moment, he fell to his knees and kowtowed respectfully. "This humble servant, Tongling, pays my respects to the Immortal!"

Lin Mu said lightly, "Alright. From now on, you will follow me."

"Yes, Master!"

Chapter 523: Repatriation Spell!

"Since you have accepted me as your master, you must never again use living beings as sacrifices. If I find out, I will scatter your soul to the winds!"

Given his personality, Lin Mu would normally be reluctant to take someone like the Spirit Seer as a servant. However, upon discovering the man could survive as a splinter soul, he realized the Spirit Seer had already embarked on the path of cultivation.

Although it seemed the Spirit Seer had not been cultivating for long, this was Earth, after all. Spiritual Energy was scarce here, and the methods of cultivation had long since vanished into the river of history. For the Spirit Seer to have taken the first step on this path meant that in the Immortal Realm, he would be considered a top-tier genius.

Besides, keeping the Spirit Seer around would be of great use to Lin Mu.

"Master, please rest assured," the Spirit Seer said, hesitating for a moment. "You saved this splinter soul of mine, so I will naturally obey your every command. It's just... I am only a splinter soul right now. I may not be able to do much for you."

Lin Mu sneered. "If you want my help retrieving your original body, just say so."

The Spirit Seer kowtowed repeatedly, crying out, "Master, you must help me! Otherwise, I have no idea what the other splinter soul—the one currently occupying my body—will do."

"Alright, get up. I'll help you," Lin Mu said, glancing at the Spirit Seer. "That girl from before... you captured her, didn't you?"

"Yes, but rest assured, Master, I haven't had the chance to..." The Spirit Seer couldn't finish his sentence. Sacrificing a living person was an offense against the Heavenly Dao, and he was genuinely terrified that Lin Mu would obliterate him with a single slap.

"Let her go," Lin Mu ordered with a frown. He would save who he could.

"Yes!"

The Spirit Seer agreed at once. He formed a series of hand seals, and streams of sinister energy shot from his palms.

BOOM! BOOM!

A hidden passage was suddenly revealed where the mirror had stood, leading down into a dungeon.

Lin Mu was slightly surprised. There was a dungeon beneath the room. Inside, he saw a pile of skeletal remains—at least a dozen of them.

"To think you've killed so many people," Lin Mu's gaze turned cold. He could tell they had all been young women, around twenty years of age, who had met an untimely end because of a mere game.

"Master, you misunderstand! I didn't kill them!" the Spirit Seer exclaimed in terror, rushing to explain. "I have been cultivating for fifty years and have never slain an innocent person. Although I was sealed here and had to devour lifeblood to survive, I never took a life."

"Then these people..." Lin Mu trailed off as something occurred to him. He noticed chains and other restraints in the dungeon, suggesting it was used to imprison people.

"It was Chu Tian," the Spirit Seer said with a bitter smile. "I was sealed here, with the Chu Family tasked to guard me. To survive, I made a deal with them. I would only devour a little of their victims' lifeblood—not enough to be fatal. But Chu Tian never released them. Instead, he imprisoned them here and tortured them day after day."

"Since your original body could seal you, why didn't it just kill this splinter of yours and be done with it?" Lin Mu asked.

"My original body wouldn't do that," the Spirit Seer replied. "Killing me would also harm it. And while I may be weak, I still have a few tricks to stay alive."

Lin Mu nodded. Someone who had managed to step onto the path of cultivation would certainly not be a fool.

"So, you're saying your original body is with the Chu Family?" Lin Mu asked.

"Exactly," the Spirit Seer confirmed. "That other splinter soul needs a vast amount of resources to gain complete control of my body. The Chu Family has significant power in this area and can provide everything it needs."

"On one hand, they act as that beast's lackeys, and on the other, they want to cooperate with me. The Chu Family really knows how to play both sides!" the Spirit Seer scoffed.

"Let's go," Lin Mu said, shaking his head and starting to walk out.

"Where are we going?" the Spirit Seer asked instinctively.

"To help you take back your original body, of course."

Watching Lin Mu's departing back, the Spirit Seer's mouth fell open in utter shock.

「In the private room.」

Everyone was a little surprised to see Lin Mu and Qiu Ning return together.

"Qiu Ning, where have you been? We couldn't reach your phone; we were about to call the police," Cai Heng said, walking over with a concerned look.

"I'm fine," Qiu Ning replied, rubbing her head. She seemed to be in pain, feeling as if she had forgotten something important that she couldn't recall no matter how hard she tried.

"It's good that you're fine," Cai Heng said worriedly. "Qiu Ning, you look pale. Why don't we call it a night?"

"Yeah, we're done! We're done for the night!" the couple suddenly stood up. "It's getting late. We should head back." Before anyone could reply, the two of them hurried out. For some reason, they felt the place was eerie and terrifying.

Seeing them leave, Chu Tian's expression soured slightly.

"Qiu Ning, if you're not feeling well, there's a place to rest here," Chu Tian said, standing up and walking toward her. "How about I take you there?"

For some unknown reason, the sight of Chu Tian filled Qiu Ning with a primal fear. She instinctively took a step back and shrieked, "Don't come near me! Stay away!"

"Qiu Ning, what's wrong? It's me, Chu Tian," he said, continuing to approach her with a charming smile.

"Chu Tian? Chu Tian..."

Hearing the name, Qiu Ning reacted as if she'd recalled something horrendous. Her face filled with absolute terror, she clutched her head and screamed, "No, don't kill me! Please, don't kill me..."

Suddenly, Qiu Ning spotted Lin Mu. She ran to him, grabbing his hand and refusing to let go, her face ghostly pale as she trembled uncontrollably.

Cai Heng and Xu Yao were stunned. What in the world was happening?

Seeing Qiu Ning's reaction, a cold glint flashed in Chu Tian's eyes, but he quickly covered it with a smile. "Qiu Ning, do you have some sort of misunderstanding about me? Why would I want to kill you?"

"Senior Chu, please don't agitate her anymore," Cai Heng said, sensing something was deeply wrong. "We should take her back to the university first."

Chu Tian nodded. "Alright."

However, everyone noticed that Qiu Ning was still clinging to Lin Mu, refusing to let go.

"Uh... Lin Mu," Cai Heng said helplessly. "Could I trouble you to help us get Qiu Ning back? Thank you. It seems like she only trusts you right now."

Lin Mu's brow furrowed slightly before he gently pressed a finger to the center of Qiu Ning's forehead. Her eyes rolled back, and she fainted.

"You can just carry her on your back," Lin Mu stated, not bothering to explain himself to the astonished onlookers. "Yaoyao, let's go. I'll take you back to school."

In the end, Lin Mu left with Xu Yao, while Cai Heng carried Qiu Ning on his back. The group promptly departed from Tongling Mansion.

"Young Master, it's terrible! The mirror... it's shattered!" Mo Mo came running over, her face a mask of panic.

"What?"

Chu Tian's face drained of color. He rushed into the room and saw the shattered mirror. Where it had stood was now the entrance to a dungeon. Inside, countless white bones were piled high, and the walls were covered in frantic scrawls.

It was a single name, repeated over and over.

Chu Tian!

The script was chaotic, as if etched with blood and fingernails, radiating a boundless, seething hatred.

Seeing this, Chu Tian stumbled back a step. At that moment, he saw Mo Mo follow him in. She too saw the scene in the dungeon and slapped a hand over her mouth in horror.

A vicious light flared in Chu Tian's eyes as he lunged toward her.

"Since you've seen it, you can die too!"

However, just as Chu Tian was about to seize Mo Mo, the blurred figure of an old man materialized before him.

"You..."

The old man gave a toothy grin, and his figure flickered, diving straight into Chu Tian's body. The next moment, Chu Tian's body went rigid, then began to twitch with an unnatural awkwardness.

An ancient, hoarse voice issued from Chu Tian's mouth. "It's not as good as my original body, but it will have to do for now." The voice was filled with a tone of reverence as it continued, "The Repatriation Spell my master taught me is truly remarkable."

Chapter 524: Because He is Young Master Mu!

"Is this the Chu Family?" Lin Mu looked at the brightly lit villa complex in the distance, slightly surprised. He hadn't expected the Chu Family to own such a vast estate.

"Indeed." 'Chu Tian' stood behind Lin Mu. Despite being a young man in his early twenties, his voice was as hoarse as an old man's.

Naturally, this was the Spirit Seer who had possessed Chu Tian's body. He only possessed a single divine fragment; without a host, he couldn't remain in the outside world for long. Even having possessed Chu Tian's body, the Spirit Seer could feel the power of his Divine Soul rapidly depleting. If Lin Mu hadn't stepped in to stabilize his Divine Soul, this fragment of the Spirit Seer would have likely vanished by now.

"With the help of that other fragment, the Chu Family has expanded rapidly over the past few years, making an untold fortune behind the scenes. Of course, to avoid exposure, they have always maintained a low profile," the Spirit Seer said. "Master, do you really intend to go to the Chu Family now? Don't you need a plan?"

"There's no need for such trouble," Lin Mu said flatly. "Besides, I don't have that much time."

"But that divine fragment possesses my original body and has become incredibly powerful. Even at my peak, I was no match for it. Master, you..." The Spirit Seer was genuinely concerned for Lin Mu, but he was even more worried about his own fate. If Master can't defeat my original body, will I lose my chance forever? In today's world, where else could I find someone stronger than him? Deep down, the Spirit Seer simply didn't believe that Lin Mu was a match for the fragment.

"Even at your peak, you were no match for me." Lin Mu shook his head and walked towards the Chu Family estate.

The Spirit Seer was struck dumb by the comment, unable to retort. The Master is truly the Master—terrifyingly powerful and with a tongue sharp enough to kill.

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As fate would have it, today was the day the Family Head of the Chu Family was to marry his fifth wife. The Chu estate was brightly lit and festively decorated. The vast courtyard was filled with distinguished guests, all prominent figures from Jiangling. Some among them were even bigwigs from Handong. Any single one of them held the power to make Handong Province tremble. This showed that while the Chu Family appeared to be low-key, its influence within Handong Province was formidable.

"The preparations are nearly complete, Family Head, and the guests have all arrived." The Butler approached with a faint smile on his aged face, his eyes filled with respect for the Family Head.

Although the Family Head had only been in charge for a few years, he had already increased the Chu Family's strength several times over. During this time, the Chu Family had expanded its power extensively, all from the shadows. Even for the wedding of his fifth wife, half of the most powerful figures in Handong Province had come to attend.

"Mm." Chu Zhengbo was dressed as a groom. Though middle-aged, he was remarkably well-maintained and possessed a scholarly grace, the very epitome of the saying, 'a man in his forties is a flower in bloom'—especially a man as wealthy and influential as him.

"How do I look?" Chu Zhengbo admired himself in the mirror as he asked the Butler.

"Family Head, you are just as dashing as in your younger days. Taking another five wives would be a trivial matter for you," the Butler said flatteringly, a wide smile on his face.

Chu Zhengbo laughed heartily, thoroughly enjoying the flattery. A man of his wealth and power had long since had his fill of exotic delicacies, luxury cars, and grand villas. Only the pursuit of carnal pleasure

never grew tiresome. Moreover, the woman he was to marry today was a foreign beauty, one in a million in both temperament and physique—a true treasure in his eyes.

"Let's go." Chu Zhengbo suddenly asked, "By the way, where's Chu Tian? I haven't seen him all day. Has he gone off gallivanting again?"

The Butler responded respectfully, "The Young Master has gone to the mansion."

"Hm?" Chu Zhengbo's gaze flickered, and he sneered. "Just what I'd expect from my son. When he returns, tell him he can play with women all he wants, but remind him to be careful."

"Yes!"

Chu Zhengbo nodded. "Go and bring out the bride. Since all the guests have arrived, have her come and make a toast with me."

"Right away, Master." A servant bowed and departed to carry out the order, while Chu Zhengbo went out to greet his guests.

A great number of people had come to the Chu estate today. Although Chu Zhengbo hadn't invited many guests personally, the Chu Family's power was so immense that many in their circle had heard of the event despite their low profile. When the playboy Family Head Chu Zhengbo was getting married, it was only natural for them to prepare a gift and come hoping to share in the celebration.

Thus, as soon as Chu Zhengbo appeared, all the guests stood and offered their congratulations.

"Thank you all for giving me face. If our hospitality is lacking in any way, I ask for your forgiveness," Chu Zhengbo said, raising his glass. He downed the wine in one go as soon as he finished speaking.

Chu Zhengbo truly lived up to his title as Family Head, speaking and acting with impeccable grace.

"Family Head Chu, you're too kind!"

"Family Head Chu, you hold your liquor well!"

"Congratulations, Family Head Chu!"

Everyone raised their glasses in a toast to Chu Zhengbo.

"Family Head, the Young Master has returned, but..." Just then, the Butler approached Chu Zhengbo's side, whispering hesitantly.

"Hmm? What is it?" Chu Zhengbo's brow furrowed slightly.

"Family Head, I think you should see for yourself," the Butler said with his head bowed.

"Everyone, my sincerest apologies. Please continue to eat and drink. I must excuse myself for a moment," Chu Zhengbo announced before turning to leave.

"Where is he?" As soon as he left the main hall, Chu Zhengbo's expression soured.

"The Young Master was heading for the back mountain, but I stopped him," the Butler said, his voice tinged with nervousness.

"What?" Chu Zhengbo's face changed, and he hurried toward the back mountain.

"Young Master, without the Family Head's explicit order, you really cannot go to the back mountain!" In the rear courtyard of the Chu estate, several bodyguards blocked Chu Tian and Lin Mu, their expressions troubled. The back mountain was the Chu Family's forbidden ground. No one besides the Family Head was permitted to enter.

"Get out of the way!" 'Chu Tian' snarled in a low voice. "You dare to block my path?"

"Young Master, we are simply doing our duty. Please don't make things difficult for us," the bodyguards pleaded, continuing to block the path.

"You're seeking death!"

Just as 'Chu Tian' was about to attack, Chu Zhengbo arrived.

"You little beast, what do you think you're doing?" Chu Zhengbo roared. "Get back here!"

If the real Chu Tian hadn't been possessed, he would have certainly obeyed his father and left. But the person standing there now was the Spirit Seer.

"Hmph!" With a cold snort, 'Chu Tian' lunged forward, striking two bodyguards in the chest and sending them flying. "Master, let's go!" he yelled.

As the pair were about to cross the courtyard gate, Chu Zhengbo's pupils constricted. "You are not Chu Tian! Who are you?!"

Of course, I know my own son. Since when was he this powerful? To think he could send two of the Chu Family's experts flying with a single palm strike!

Chu Zhengbo's expression changed drastically. "Kill them!" he roared.

"Yes, sir!" Instantly, dozens of bodyguards surged into the rear courtyard, at least twenty of them.

Facing more than twenty bodyguards, Lin Mu's expression remained unchanged. "Get out of my way if you don't want to die."

"Kill him!"

The moment Chu Zhengbo gave the order, the Chu Family's bodyguards lunged toward Lin Mu.

"You overestimate yourselves."

Lin Mu waved his hands, and a terrifying force erupted, sweeping toward the guards. A series of screams rang out as all the bodyguards were sent flying, crashing to the ground unconscious.

Seeing this, Chu Zhengbo drew a sharp, cold breath.

"Who in the world are you? Why have you come to trespass on Chu Family grounds?!" By this point, the commotion had drawn the guests' attention. They all rushed over just in time to see Lin Mu send dozens of bodyguards flying with a single wave of his hand.

"I'm someone you can't afford to provoke." Lin Mu smiled faintly. "Stay put if you value your life."

With that, Lin Mu turned and walked directly toward the back mountain.

Just as Chu Zhengbo was about to order his men to give chase, a big shot from Handong Province suddenly grabbed his arm.

"Elder Fan, why are you stopping me?" Chu Zhengbo was frantic. The back mountain held his family's secrets. Moreover, *he* had strictly forbidden any outsiders from entering.

"Family Head Chu, listen to my advice. No matter what that man does, do not interfere," Elder Fan urged.

"Why?" Chu Zhengbo raged. "That man is running wild on my family's territory, and you're telling me I can't do anything about it?"

"Unfortunately, you've hit the nail on the head. When it comes to what *that* man wants to do, no one dares to interfere, and no one *can* interfere," Elder Fan said, his face etched with fear. "Because... he is Young Master Mu."

Chapter 525: The Chu Family's Back Mountain, Frost Descends!

"Young Master Mu?"

Chu Zhengbo frowned. The name felt familiar, but he couldn't quite place it.

"Family Head, terrible news!"

Just then, a Chu Family servant ran over in a panic. "The Fifth Madame has disappeared!"

"What?"

Chu Zhengbo was furious. "A bunch of useless trash! You can't even keep an eye on one person!"

First, someone trespassed on his back mountain, and now the woman he was about to marry had vanished. Chu Zhengbo felt his chest burn with rage.

"Send men to find her! If you can't, don't bother coming back!"

Chu Zhengbo immediately arranged for a search party.

"Family Head, she ran toward the back mountain!" a bodyguard rushed over, his face pale.

"What?"

Chu Zhengbo roared with anger, "After her! And find those two beasts while you're at it!"

In an instant, countless bodyguards from the Chu Family sped toward the back mountain.

"I don't care if it's Young Master Mu or Young Master Shui. If they dare cause trouble on Chu Family territory, they're courting death!"

Chu Zhengbo spoke with killing intent. "Forget Jiangling, even in all of Handong Province, if I will it, my Chu Family is the sky!"

Even Chu Zhengbo went himself, not only to personally drag the woman back, but also to kill Lin Mu with his own hands!

Seeing Chu Zhengbo charging toward the back mountain, Elder Fan sighed heavily. "Alas, this time, the Chu Family is finished."

"Elder Fan, what's going on? How is the Chu Family finished?" one of the tycoons asked.

"Yes, Elder Fan, and who is this Young Master Mu you mentioned?"

Though the Chu Family was low-profile, it still held an extremely high status in Handong Province.

Could there really be someone the Chu Family wouldn't dare to offend?

"Young Master Mu? The name sounds familiar... I just can't quite place it," someone said.

"Elder Fan, could the Young Master Mu you're talking about be Director Lin of Coiling Dragon Bay, the recent talk of the town... Lin Mu?" someone suddenly blurted out.

"Correct, it is he," Elder Fan sighed, a hint of respect in his eyes. "Besides him, who else would dare claim the title of 'Young Master'? In the entire Handong Province, there is only one!"

"What? It's really him?!"

The crowd cried out in shock.

Lin Mu was a legendary figure in Handong Province now.

Legend had it that in just a few days, he transformed Coiling Dragon Bay into a Cave Heaven and Blessed Land. Even the top tycoons of Handong Province had to show him deference, and he earned billions in a single day.

Not only that, but the richest man in Jiangling, the Mayor of Jiangling, the Handong tycoon Xie Dingtian, and a host of powerful figures in the business world were all Lin Mu's people.

The Fang and Wang Families were destroyed because of him.

Half the tycoons of Handong Province called him Young Master, and the heroes of the underworld acknowledged him as their lord.

Cheng Bugui of River City;

The Five Dragons and Six Phoenixes of Jiangbei;

Zheng Mingye of Jiangling;

Xie Dingtian of Handong Province!

Which one of these individuals wasn't a major figure? And yet, they all had to grovel at Lin Mu's feet.

This man, not yet thirty years old, had already created countless miracles.

So, at this moment, everyone was stunned.

They never imagined that this legendary figure had come to the Chu Family.

And Chu Zhengbo, the head of the Chu Family, had actually declared his intent to kill Lin Mu.

Was that even possible?

"Gentlemen, there's another piece of news you might not be aware of," Elder Fan said with a bitter smile, his tone complex. "That man has already been appointed as the General Instructor of the Southeast Military Academy. He is due to assume the position in a few days."

"What?"

Someone gasped, their face a mask of disbelief.

The General Instructor of the Southeast Military Academy?

That was not a position an ordinary person could attain.

With such an honor, who in Handong Province would dare to oppose Lin Mu in the future?

"Elder Fan, is that true?"

"Indeed, that's shocking. We haven't heard a whisper about it," another added.

Facing their skepticism, Elder Fan said, "Would I lie to you? This matter is absolutely true."

The crowd suddenly recalled Elder Fan's background. Doesn't he have a family member at the Southeast Military Academy?

The Chu Family's back mountain was a dense forest, filled with a chilling and eerie atmosphere under the moonlight.

A figure in white ran swiftly through the forest, fleeing for her life. She kept glancing back, as if being pursued.

"There she is! I see her!"

An excited voice rang out as three figures rushed forward, closing in on the person ahead.

"Ah!"

Suddenly, the fleeing woman tripped and fell with a cry of alarm.

The brief delay allowed her pursuers to catch up.

"Run now, you little bitch!"

Chu Zhengbo strode over, grabbed the woman, and said viciously, "What? Do you think being my woman is some kind of mistreatment?"

"Fuck, you... let go of me..."

The woman struggled, her accented Mandarin revealing she was a foreigner.

This woman was none other than Alice!

SLAP!

Chu Zhengbo struck Alice across the face. "You ungrateful bitch!" he roared. "I was kind enough to save you and even offered to make you my woman, yet you're so unappreciative!"

Alice looked at Chu Zhengbo, her eyes wide with terror. "Please," she begged, "let me go. Please, let me go."

Fear flooded Alice's heart.

She had finally made it to Huaxia, but before she could find the person who could save her, she was hunted down and then rescued by Chu Zhengbo.

She thought she had escaped a wolf's den, only to fall into a tiger's lair.

Worse, the Gu poison in her body had begun to act up, rendering her powerless. Chu Zhengbo treated her like prey, imprisoning her in the Chu estate.

This imprisonment had lasted for over a year.

"Take her back," Chu Zhengbo ordered his men. "After we find those two little bastards, I'll deal with her!"

"There's no need to go to all that trouble."

Just then, a faint voice sounded as two figures emerged from the woods.

It was Lin Mu and the Spirit Seer.

"It's you."

Chu Zhengbo's eyes lit up, and a savage sneer spread across his face. "Boy, I didn't expect you to dare show your face. Get him!"

The Chu Family bodyguards charged at Lin Mu.

But these men were no match for him. With a burst of energy, he sent them flying.

This display startled Chu Zhengbo.

Who is this guy? How can he be so strong?

"It's you! I... I've found you! Save me!"

Alice recognized Lin Mu, and joy flashed in her eyes, which quickly filled with tears. She had endured so much suffering and hardship on her journey to Huaxia. She thought she was doomed, but now she had unexpectedly found him.

She was finally saved.

Lin Mu certainly remembered this Alice. If he hadn't sensed the Gu poison he had placed inside her, he wouldn't have bothered with her.

Lin Mu looked at Chu Zhengbo, his tone nonchalant. "Let her go, and I might spare your life."

"Let her go?"

Chu Zhengbo let out a cold laugh. "Who do you think you are? You really think you can do whatever you want just because you can fight? Too bad for you, this is the Chu Family's territory!"

"Kill him!"

His two bodyguards glared with murderous intent, ready to strike.

Lin Mu shook his head slightly. "So we can't come to an agreement? In that case, you can die."

With a flicker, Lin Mu pointed his finger. The two bodyguards beside Chu Zhengbo instantly exploded into a mist of blood.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

Following that, the other bodyguards also exploded. In the blink of an eye, more than a dozen men were dead.

"How... how is this possible?"

Chu Zhengbo staggered backward, his face a mask of terror.

"Spirit Seer, save me!" he yelled as he saw Lin Mu approaching him.

CRACK! CRACK!

Lin Mu suddenly stopped and looked behind him.

The ambient temperature plummeted. A layer of frost appeared on the ground, spreading at a visible rate.

Chapter 526: Even an Ant Dares to Consider Itself a God!

The frost spread with incredible speed, advancing from the depths of the dense forest to right in front of them in the blink of an eye. Not only that, but the frost seemed to be conscious, dividing into two semicircles before finally encasing everyone within. A piercingly cold chill suddenly descended.

Alice was stunned. She had been educated in the science of the twenty-first century. Because of her status, she had received the very best education and was taught the most advanced scientific concepts. In her view, everything could be explained by science. Even the Gu poison in her body, to her, was just an unknown toxin that current medical methods simply couldn't solve yet. But this... this scene unfolding before her eyes clearly could not be explained by science.

By the time Alice came to her senses, the ground was already covered with a thick layer of frost, rendering her completely immobile. An elderly figure calmly approached, treading slowly across the ice. The elder wore a strange set of mourning clothes that were extremely unsettling. Moreover, his eyes were an icy blue that struck fear into anyone who met his gaze.

"Hmph! You've got some nerve, causing trouble on my turf!" The moment the elder appeared, his icy blue eyes fixed on Lin Mu, a hint of murderous intent flashing within them.

"Master, quickly kill this man!" Chu Zhengbo cried out excitedly as soon as the elder appeared.

This man was the Master, a figure of immense prestige in the Southeast Five Provinces. He was a revered guest among various powerful leaders, regarded as a divine being. The Master was a being who transcended the mortal world; in Chu Zhengbo's eyes, he was a god! Chu Zhengbo had personally witnessed him freeze an entire lake with a single gesture, and on a blistering summer day at that! He had also seen the Master shatter a rockery with a single slap. What else could such power and means be, if not the work of an immortal? Who among mere mortals could possibly contend with him?

That was why Chu Zhengbo dared to claim that if they wished it, the Chu Family would reign supreme. With a divine figure like the Master backing them, the Chu Family truly could do as they pleased. If the Master hadn't instructed them to keep a low profile and avoid exposing his existence, the Chu Family would have long since become the number one family in Handong Province.

Lin Mu had realized it as well. By the standards of the Cultivation World, this old man could be considered a novice who had grasped a sliver of the Way. The only reason he hadn't fully awakened was due to the sparse Spiritual Energy on Earth. Even so, achieving this much was already impressive. At the very least, the powers of the mundane world could no longer restrain him. Even the old fisherman, Jin Bumie, would only face certain death against this man.

"Hn." Hearing Chu Zhengbo's words, the elder nodded and pointed his finger.

CRACKLE! CRACKLE! CRACKLE!

In the blink of an eye, all the bodyguards Chu Zhengbo had brought with him turned into ice sculptures.

CRACK!

The next moment, the ice sculptures shattered, leaving no trace of the people inside—not even their bones remained. In the blink of an eye, he had annihilated dozens of bodyguards. Such terrifying strength!

"Master, what are you..." Chu Zhengbo was thoroughly scared and blurted out, "Master, you should be killing them!"

Chu Zhengbo pointed at Lin Mu and his companion, his face etched with fear.

"Before killing them, I'll deal with some small fry first."

The elder's eyes flashed. When he noticed Alice, his icy-blue gaze suddenly brightened. "Not bad, not bad at all. I didn't expect the offering you brought this time to be so fine. In that case, I shall spare your life!"

The elder laughed heartily, then with a grasping motion of his hand, Alice was suddenly pulled into the air, flying toward him.

"Ah!" Alice screamed, "Save me! Please, save me!"

"Hahaha! Who could possibly save you now that I've made my move?" The elder cackled, his face flushed with excitement. "So many years... I have waited for so many years to find someone of such fine quality. For my Gu poison to have been nurtured in you for so long without killing you... it seems your constitution is truly extraordinary."

"Once I devour your vital blood, I will be able to completely control this body! I'll no longer need to hide in the shadows!"

The elder laughed loudly as he spoke, the excitement on his face impossible to conceal. A look of utter despair crossed Alice's face. It seems my death today is inevitable.

"Master, let's take this chance to escape!" the Spirit Seer suddenly said. "This beast seems to have grown even stronger! We're no match for it."

The Spirit Seer hadn't expected this. Although the old man hadn't fully taken control of his body yet, he was frighteningly close. Once he devoured that foreign woman, he would definitely gain complete control of this fleshly vessel. By then, it would be too late for them to leave.

"Trying to run away?" The elder shot a look at Lin Mu and his companion, a cold sneer on his face. "Do you really think you can escape?"

Alice, pale as a ghost, hovered in mid-air as if controlled by some mysterious force. The elder looked at Lin Mu and the Spirit Seer with utter disdain. He didn't take them seriously in the slightest; after all, the power he wielded was something these mortal ants could never comprehend.

"Who said I was going to run?" Lin Mu suddenly smiled. "On the contrary, I think the one who should be running is you. How about I give you a choice? One, hand over this physical body. Two, I'll drag you out myself!"

Lin Mu added with a grin, "Of course, if I have to do it myself, your end won't be nearly as pleasant."

"You whelp, you're blaspheming a god!" Chu Zhengbo interjected before the elder could even speak.

In his eyes, the Master's status was supreme. Over the years, he had helped the Chu Family countless times; to him, the Master was a divine being. The Chu Family's ability to last for generations depended entirely on him. For Lin Mu to dare insult the Master now... it was a death wish!

"A god?" Lin Mu laughed as if he had just heard the world's biggest joke. A god? Forget this old man, even someone like Lord Tathagata wouldn't dare call himself a god in my presence. This insignificant mortal has barely touched the threshold of Cultivation, and he dares to call himself a god?

"An insignificant ant like you dares to call itself a god in my presence? Are you tired of living?"

Lin Mu's words made the elder's expression darken completely. Beside him, the Spirit Seer's face went pale.

He knew his own split spirit better than anyone. Bloodthirsty, cruel, and quick to anger! It couldn't stand being provoked. This split spirit was already much stronger than before. If it made a move, he would face certain death, his soul truly scattering into nothingness. Thinking of this, the Spirit Seer felt a pang of regret. Why did I follow Lin Mu looking for trouble? Wouldn't it have been better to stay quietly in the Soul Communion Realm? It's really over now.

"Good. Good. Very good!"

As the Spirit Seer had feared, the elder was enraged. He licked his lips, a vicious smile spreading across his face. "I won't kill you right away. I will slice the flesh from your body, piece by piece, then extract your soul and torture it slowly.

"Not only that, but I will also find your family and your friends. I will slowly torture them to death as punishment for your disrespect!

"So, what do you think of this punishment?"

The elder's expression was ferocious, and a hint of crimson flashed in his ice-blue eyes, signaling that he was utterly enraged.

Lin Mu grinned. "A fine idea. I'll be sure to use that exact method on you."

Chapter 527: Extreme Speed, Martial Arts Grandmaster!

"You have some courage. I must admit, I've even grown to admire you," the old man said, suddenly shaking his head. "It's just a pity you're too old. Otherwise, I would have considered cultivating you myself."

"Are you finished?" Lin Mu asked. "If so, you can die now."

Hearing Lin Mu's words, the Spirit Seer's expression filled with despair. His avatar grew so unstable that it was almost ejected from Chu Tian's body. It was over. Completely over. He had just broken the Seal, only to die here. With Lin Mu acting so arrogantly, how could that other avatar possibly spare them?

As expected, the crimson in the old man's eyes grew more intense.

"You have succeeded in angering me!"

The old man suddenly waved his hand, and the row of giant trees behind him exploded violently, shattering into splinters.

This move alone terrified Chu Zhengbo. His legs went weak, and he collapsed to the ground. If that palm had landed on Lin Mu, it would have reduced him to a meat paste! So, making an enemy of the Master? That was just seeking death! The two of them weren't on the same level at all!

"This is the first time I've ever met someone so arrogant, but as I've said, no one can save you today!" The old man laughed in fury, his eyes brimming with murderous intent. He had long since transcended the mortal world and was revered as a god wherever he went. Yet now, in this insignificant city of Jiangling, he was being so belittled.

It seemed that after so many years of inaction, the world had forgotten the existence of the Spirit Seer!

"Die!"

The old man pointed a finger at Lin Mu, and a fierce, cold wind suddenly erupted from the heavens. The force of this single finger was enough to annihilate Lin Mu. The old man was very confident in this attack.

"Master, run!"

At that moment, 'Chu Tian,' who was standing to the side, suddenly rushed forward, shielding Lin Mu with his body.

BANG!

With a dull thud, 'Chu Tian' was sent flying. He sprayed a mouthful of blood before he even hit the ground.

Seeing this, a cold sneer formed on Chu Zhengbo's lips. This brat dared to impersonate my son. He almost fooled me.

But then, Chu Zhengbo's expression suddenly changed. The clothes on Chu Tian's chest had been torn, revealing a palm-sized mark.

That was Chu Tian's birthmark! So... this really is my son, not an imposter?

"Dad, save me..." Chu Tian suddenly spoke. It was his son's voice, different from the deep, hoarse one from before.

CRACKLE!

Chu Zhengbo was about to rush over to save his son, but he was too late. A layer of frost appeared on Chu Tian's body, freezing him solid in an instant.

CRACK!

The frost shattered, and Chu Tian crumbled into a pile of ice shards.

"No..." Chu Zhengbo roared, a mouthful of blood spraying from his lips.

Although he, Chu Zhengbo, had countless women, he had no other children besides Chu Tian. That was why he had always indulged him. But now, his only son was dead.

"Master, how could you kill my son? How could you?!" Chu Zhengbo yelled furiously at the old man.

"He was just a son. If he's dead, he's dead. You can always have another," the old man snorted coldly. "If you keep babbling, I'll kill you too!"

Chu Zhengbo didn't dare say another word. Chu Tian was already dead, but he still wanted to live. Besides, with the Master's methods, it wasn't impossible for him to have another heir.

However, the old man's expression suddenly shifted, and he took an abrupt step back.

SWOOSH!

A dark figure flashed past, coming to a stop in the distance. It was a blurry silhouette, identical to the old man.

"You... you actually got out?!" the old man exclaimed in shock.

The Spirit Seer sneered, "Surprised, are we? You monstrosity. Since we've met today, it must be the will of heaven. Let's settle this once and for all!"

The old man burst out laughing. "Excellent. A supreme-grade blood offering, and now you. It seems my luck is quite good today! Once I devour you, I will be able to completely control this body!"

As soon as he finished speaking, the old man stomped the ground and charged forward. He appeared before the Spirit Seer and struck out with his palm. An endless chill erupted, completely enveloping the Spirit Seer.

The Spirit Seer's expression changed. To his horror, he found he couldn't move at all.

"Spirit Seer, you never imagined I would master this body to such a degree, did you?" the old man laughed wildly. "I'll tell you the truth: I have completely refined the Soul Communion Realm. My current strength is beyond your wildest imagination!"

"What?" Horror filled the Spirit Seer's eyes, quickly followed by despair.

So be it... This must be my fate.

"Kid, I'll hold him off! You run for your life!" the Spirit Seer shouted to Lin Mu. "Run as far as you can and don't ever come back!"

With that, the Spirit Seer closed his eyes, preparing to self-destruct his avatar.

"Spirit Seer, are you insane? If you self-destruct, whether I die is still up for debate, but you will most certainly be annihilated!" the old man cried, a hint of panic on his face.

"If I'm to die, then we'll die together!" the Spirit Seer laughed boisterously. He spread his arms wide, his avatar's power surging as he prepared to detonate.

"Since you have acknowledged me as your master, you cannot die without my permission."

At that moment, a calm laugh echoed out. The Spirit Seer felt a warmth spread through him, as if it were spring, and his eyes snapped open. He saw a hand pressed against his back, a stream of cyan divine radiance pouring into his avatar. That cyan light, brimming with a rich Power of Life, was rapidly suppressing the berserk energy within him, preventing his self-destruction. This was Spirit Wood Energy, which could stabilize souls and bind spirits; it was enough to save the Spirit Seer's life!

"Ma... Master..." the Spirit Seer stammered, staring blankly at Lin Mu, his ancient eyes reddening slightly.

"What the hell are you crying for at your age?" Lin Mu said with a look of disdain. "Step back. Watch me avenge you."

With a gentle wave of his hand, he pulled the Spirit Seer aside with an air of casual nonchalance.

HISS!

The Spirit Seer sucked in a sharp breath. His gaze toward Lin Mu was now filled with immense shock and... sincere respect. He had originally thought that Lin Mu had only bested him because he had been sealed for too long, his strength a pale shadow of its former glory. But the power Lin Mu had just displayed had completely awed him. On top of that, he had saved his life!

"Such a rich Power of Life!" the old man, having witnessed Lin Mu's move, was equally shocked. If I devour him, my strength will surely climb to the next level!

Greed filled the old man's eyes. He clenched his fists and lunged at Lin Mu.

"Too slow."

Lin Mu simply shook his head. His figure flickered, and the old man's fists struck nothing but an afterimage.

"Hm?" The old man froze, blurting out, "Incredible speed, like a Ghost Charm... You have ascended to the Dao through the Martial Way! You are a Martial Arts Grandmaster!"

"Yes and no."

At that instant, Lin Mu reappeared in another spot, watching the old man with a faint smile.

The old man snorted coldly. "So what if you're a Martial Arts Grandmaster? You'll die all the same!"

Chapter 528: The True Power!

"Die!"

The old man snorted coldly and stomped his foot on the ground. An endless frost spread out, rushing toward Lin Mu, intending to freeze him solid.

"Child's play!" Lin Mu laughed heartily and stomped his foot as well.

CRACK!

All the frost vanished. The sweeping, frigid aura instantly reversed course, rushing back toward the old man at an even greater speed.

"Hmph!" The old man snorted and, with a wave of his hand, swatted the cold aura away.

BOOM! BOOM!

This time, the surrounding trees suffered the consequences, and a dozen of them snapped in an instant.

"Not bad, not bad. You truly are full of surprises. To be a Martial Arts Grandmaster at such a young age... I once thought such people were merely exaggerations, but to think this world truly has a genius like you." The old man was surprised that Lin Mu could break his attack, but he quickly calmed down.

"Given another twenty or thirty years, I might have to flee in disgrace at the sight of you," the old man said with absolute confidence. "But it's a pity that right now, you aren't qualified! So what if you're a Grandmaster? Before me, that is nothing but mortal strength. When you witness true power, you will realize you are nothing but a frog at the bottom of a well!"

The old man's body contorted as he sneered, "A Grandmaster is nothing. I've killed more than one before!"

"Oh? True power?" Lin Mu smiled.

This man has barely taken his first step and hasn't even crossed the threshold of Cultivation, yet he dares to speak of power in front of me? It's as laughable as a child with a wooden sword boasting to a deity wielding an Immortal Sword about what makes a true Sword Immortal!

But the old man didn't see it that way. In his eyes, no matter how skilled Lin Mu's martial arts were or how strong he was, he was still just an ant.

"Then let me show you what true power is!" the old man harrumphed. He moved, his arm rising slightly.

Instantly, the temperature of the world plummeted. An ethereal Long Spear, coalesced from pure ice, materialized in the air.

"Go!" The old man waved his hand fiercely. The ice spear whistled through the air, rocketing toward Lin Mu.

"Master, be careful!" From a distance, the Spirit Seer's expression changed as he cried out a warning.

This Divine Sense Clone actually managed to cultivate such a spell! It seems that after all these years, his main body's power has advanced by leaps and bounds!

"Master?" Hearing the Spirit Seer's cry, the old man sneered. "Spirit Seer, to think that you, once a powerful figure respected by all, would acknowledge a mere boy as your master. It seems you've truly regressed with age!"

"Since that's the case, I'll butcher this brat and let you see just how rotten your judgment is!"

With a flourish of his sleeves, the old man sent the ice spear flying at an incredible speed. In the blink of an eye, it was right before Lin Mu. It thrust forward!

"Die!" A murderous glint flashed in the old man's eyes. He had once used this very spear thrust to instantly kill a Martial Arts Grandmaster, a man who was supposedly a top expert on some heavenly list. But in the end, he still died.

This spear, formed from ice, was as hard as steel. Amplified by his power, it could not only pierce a person but also easily penetrate real steel. Therefore, with but a single thought, he could put a hole straight through Lin Mu.

"Kill!" the old man bellowed, the Long Spear radiating a frigid, murderous intent as it descended.

However, faced with this killing blow, Lin Mu merely raised a single finger and tapped gently.

"Break."

As the single word left his lips, the ice spear froze in midair.

CRACK!

In the next moment, a dense web of cracks spread across the spear. With a soft sound, it shattered into dust.

"How is this possible?" The old man's face was a mask of horror. His strike, capable of slaying a Martial Arts Grandmaster, had been shattered by a single finger? How can this boy's power be so bizarre?

Even the Spirit Seer was dumbfounded. He clearly hadn't expected Lin Mu to be so formidable.

"Is this what you call power?" Lin Mu shook his head. "Too weak!"

"Ignorant junior, do you really think this is the extent of my abilities?" the old man snarled. "This time, I will ensure your very soul is annihilated!"

The old man slammed both hands onto the ground. In the air, another ice spear materialized. But it didn't end there. A second, a third... all the way to a fifth ice spear appeared, all of them pointing at Lin Mu.

Simultaneously, countless ice spikes, sharp as bamboo shoots, erupted from the ground around Lin Mu, all shimmering with a cold light.

From afar, the Spirit Seer's expression changed drastically. "Ice Descends Upon the World?!"

The old man roared with laughter. "Spirit Seer, you didn't expect this, did you? I have already mastered 'Ice Descends Upon the World'! How can you possibly be my match?"

At this moment, the ground was coated in a thick layer of frost, as were the surrounding trees. From that frost, an endless stream of ice spears continued to form, arranging themselves in rows in the air, their tips aimed directly at Lin Mu.

HISS!

Chu Zhengbo scrambled backward, his face pale, yet his eyes shone with a fervent gleam. This had to be the power of a god. It was too terrifying. How could a mere mortal possibly contend with it?

"Boy, now you will witness the true power of my 'Ice Descends Upon the World'!" With a grand wave of the old man's hand, the ice spears lunged at Lin Mu again, moving faster than bullets.

Before, it was only one. Now, there are hundreds, even thousands of them. Let's see you break these!

Just as the ice spears were about to strike, Lin Mu smiled.

"True power?" he mused. "Ice Descends Upon the World?"

Lin Mu's mocking voice echoed through the air. It sounded as if it had descended from the Nine Heavens, instilling in all who heard it a profound and sun-bright majesty.

He stomped lightly on the ground. A deafening boom resounded. The entire mountain began to shake violently, as if the very earth were quaking.

In an instant, dirt and stone flew everywhere as an immensely powerful force descended, its overwhelming aura sweeping in all directions!

In the next moment, the Spirit Seer and Chu Zhengbo witnessed a sight they would never forget for the rest of their lives.

A colossal dragon's head burst forth from the ground! It was followed by a body so massive it seemed to span the heavens and the earth.

It was an Ice Dragon!

The dragon's head was ferocious and terrifying, radiating a biting chill. Its entire body was crystalline and translucent, its scales bristling like sharp blades, giving it the appearance of a small mountain. As the Ice Dragon raised its head, it revealed a torso over a hundred feet long, towering like a skyscraper.

At this very moment, most of the Chu Family's Back Mountain was already encased in ice. Not only Chu Zhengbo but also the others remaining on the Chu Family's grounds felt as though they had been transported to the North Pole.

Cold winds howled, and the world was plunged into an extreme, freezing cold.

And there, standing atop the dragon's head, was Lin Mu. He looked like a deity made manifest, seated upon a divine throne. His expression was indifferent, his eyes filled with mockery as he gazed down upon the old man from his high perch.

"True power?" he asked. "What exactly were you referring to?"

At that moment, the old man's expression changed drastically. He stared at Lin Mu in utter shock.

Chapter 529: Destroying the Avatar, Soul Communion Realm!

Within the forest, there was no need for any reservation. In the cities, if one showed too many of his abilities, he would inevitably attract unwanted attention. But here, Lin Mu didn't deliberately suppress his power. Divine Spells were his strongest weapon!

Standing atop the Ice Dragon with a mocking smile, Lin Mu looked indifferently at the old man. "You, an ant who has just touched the threshold of Cultivation, dare to speak of power?"

He lightly tapped the dragon's head with his foot, and the massive head slowly advanced toward the old man.

The old man's expression changed dramatically. As if thunderbolts were roaring in his mind, the fear in his eyes had grown to its absolute limit.

CRACK! CRACK!

The countless ice spears and frost the old man had conjured were now frozen in midair, as if time itself had stopped. The Ice Dragon opened its massive jaws and took a fierce inhale, sucking all the ice spears into its belly.

ROAR!

The Ice Dragon let out a satisfied roar, and a puff of white breath shot from its nostrils, intensifying the surrounding chill and thickening the frost on the ground. A layer of white frost even coated the old man's face.

"Die!"

An indifferent voice rang out, devoid of emotion and certainly not joking.

The old man trembled, his lips quivering.

THUD!

He suddenly knelt, prostrating himself with his forehead pressed tightly against the ground. "Spare my life, Immortal! Please spare my life!"

The old man was terrified. "As long as you don't kill me, I'm willing to work like an ox or a horse for you!" he begged.

Compared to his earlier haughty demeanor, he was now no different from a dog! He was a Master respected by thousands, worshiped as a divine being by countless influential figures in the Southeast

Five Provinces. He had not reached his current status easily and did not want to die. To save his life, he knelt at Lin Mu's feet like a pathetic dog.

It was because Lin Mu's strength had far surpassed his imagination.

He had thought Lin Mu was merely a Martial Arts Grandmaster. But only now did he realize that the man was no ordinary Grandmaster. He was a god! A real god! What I called power was nothing more than child's play in front of Lin Mu, not even worth mentioning! The achievements Lin Mu had attained were beyond my wildest dreams, beyond anything I could reach in this lifetime.

Chu Zhengbo was stunned. He was shocked that the Master would actually beg for mercy from someone in their twenties.

The Spirit Seer was also stunned, but his shock stemmed from Lin Mu's power.

That terrifying Ice Dragon... those earth-shattering abilities... How could a Mortal achieve this? This is a god, an Immortal! A being we can never hope to touch!

Lin Mu's icy eyes looked down at the old man, and the words he uttered made the temperature on the entire mountain drop even further. "Didn't you just say you wanted to scatter my soul and kill all my family and friends? Weren't you?"

The old man's face paled, and he kowtowed repeatedly until his forehead was bleeding.

"Immortal, please spare my life! I was... I was just joking before!" Fear was written all over the old man's face. He slapped himself while begging, "Immortal, please let me go this one time! I swear, I will never provoke you again. Even if you make me your dog, I won't have any complaints!"

The venerable Master, worshipped by the world, was now willing to be Lin Mu's dog. If word of this got out, it would surely shock the entire world.

A slight smile touched Lin Mu's lips. "Be my dog?"

The old man nodded fervently. "Yes, yes, yes! As long as the Immortal doesn't kill me, I will be the Immortal's most loyal dog! If you tell me to go east, I will never dare go west! If you tell me to eat feces, I will absolutely not dare to eat meat!"

The Spirit Seer's mouth gaped open in disbelief at the old man's words.

This animal! He's willing to give up all his dignity just to live?

At the same time, a sense of unease washed over him. He was worried Lin Mu would accept the old man's offer.

After all, if I were in his position, I would choose the old man too. His power is greater; he's far more useful than I am!

Chu Zhengbo instinctively covered his mouth, as if seeing his Master for the very first time.

However, just when everyone thought Lin Mu would agree, he shook his head mockingly.

"You? Worthy?"

Those three simple words sent the Spirit Seer into a state of elation while the old man's expression changed drastically.

He refused? Lin Mu actually refused!

"A mere ant like you thinks you're worthy of being my dog?" Lin Mu said with an indifferent, disdainful expression. "I could kill you with a single breath. Do you think I need a lapdog like you?"

"You..." The old man's face turned pale, and a flash of crimson appeared deep in his eyes.

A warrior can be killed, but not humiliated! I've already humbled myself to such an extent! If he had simply refused, that would be one thing, but to insult me like this!

As this thought crossed his mind, an even denser chill emanated from his body. With a hoarse voice, he snarled, "Kid, do you really think I'm afraid of you? Since you want me to die, then I'll take you with me!"

A layer of cold frost appeared on the old man's body as sharp, ice-spur-like projectiles burst out from him in a surprise attack, shooting furiously toward Lin Mu.

Lin Mu scoffed and stood motionless. Just as the numerous ice spurs were about to pierce him, the Ice Dragon suddenly opened its mouth wide and fiercely inhaled.

All the ice spurs vanished.

At the same time, the dragon exhaled a stream of even colder white breath that instantly enveloped the old man.

"No—"

With a final scream, he was frozen solid, an expression of sheer terror locked on his face.

"With your pathetic level of strength, you dare make a fool of yourself in front of me?"

The Ice Dragon automatically lowered its head, setting Lin Mu on the ground before disappearing. Lin Mu stood before the frozen old man and slowly raised one hand.

"You beast. You've borrowed someone else's body for long enough. It's time to return it."

He placed his palm on the old man's head, and under the latter's terrified gaze, Lin Mu gently grasped.

HSSS!

The next moment, a tattered and fragile soul-like shadow was in his hand. It was the Spirit Seer's other soul fragment! The soul fragment struggled frantically in Lin Mu's hand, letting out a silent roar as if begging for mercy.

"Unexpectedly, you beast were quite fortunate. You used an external object to possess someone's body, but alas, you ran into me today."

Lin Mu recalled what the Spirit Seer had told him. He had been cultivating a secret technique to split his Divine Soul into two—one primary, one secondary. However, shortly after the separation, the secondary soul had taken advantage of the primary's weakened state to seize his body, which led to all the subsequent events.

As soon as Lin Mu finished speaking, he squeezed his hand tightly, instantly crushing the secondary soul fragment. Simultaneously, Lin Mu grabbed the Spirit Seer's Divine Soul and forcibly shoved it back into his body.

"Fuck..." the Spirit Seer blurted out.

Merging a Divine Soul back into its body requires a series of complex and meticulous steps! Who does it like this?!

"Practice the Repatriation Spell I taught you," Lin Mu said. "In less than an hour, you'll be able to regain control of your body."

The frost on the Spirit Seer's body vanished, and an object fell to the ground—it was an ancient-looking mirror. Lin Mu drew the mirror into his palm. It was bone-chillingly cold, like holding a block of pure ice. On the back of the mirror, three characters were carved in an ancient seal script.

"Soul Communion Realm?"

Chapter 530: The Way Must Not Be Transmitted Lightly!

"Magical treasures?"

Lin Mu was slightly surprised. He hadn't expected magical treasures to exist in this realm, which was somewhat astonishing.

Magical treasures in the world were divided into several major categories. From lowest to highest, they were: Mortal Instruments, Magic Artifacts, Spiritual Artifacts, Immortal Artifacts, and Divine Artifacts. Within these categories, each magical treasure also had a strict hierarchy: inferior-grade, medium-grade, superior-grade, and holy-grade. This Soul Communion Realm was an inferior-grade Mortal Instrument, the absolute lowest tier of magical treasure.

No, that's not right.

Lin Mu's eyebrows twitched as he finally noticed something was off. A genuine magical treasure inherently possessed a unique Dao Charm, which was the fundamental distinction between it and an ordinary object. The stronger the Dao Charm, the higher the rank. Lin Mu's own Yulong Sword was an inferior-grade Spiritual Artifact, exuding ample Dao Charm and boasting formidable power capable of destroying anything with a single strike.

However, this Soul Communion Realm only possessed a faint trace of Dao Charm, and even that was rapidly dissipating. Before long, it would degrade into a mere mundane item.

So, it's an imitation.

Soon, this Soul Communion Realm would become an ordinary object, useful for nothing more than being a regular mirror.

Although it's just an imitation, it's still considered a rarity.

All magical treasures in the world came from the hands of Artifact Refiners, and Artifact Refiners were all powerful figures in their own right. To encounter a magical treasure on an Earth so scarce in Spiritual Energy was a surprise to Lin Mu, and it stirred some new thoughts in his mind.

Could it be that Earth once had Cultivators? Did they all disappear with the advent of the Last Dharma Age? For some reason, I feel things aren't that simple.

I'll have to wait for the spirit within it to awaken before I can ask my questions.

After stowing the Soul Communion Realm, Lin Mu glanced at Alice, who had long since passed out from the cold. He shook his head gently and slapped a palm against her body, infusing her with his Mana. Alice immediately regained consciousness.

"Thank you, thank you for saving me..." Upon seeing it was Lin Mu, Alice's eyes instantly turned red as she voiced her thanks.

"I've already cured the Gu poison in your body. You may leave now." Glancing at Alice, Lin Mu shook his head. This woman was truly fortunate. It was a miracle that she had managed to survive the Gu poison for this long.

"Can I... can I take you as my teacher? According to you Easterners, you would call that person a 'Master,' right?" Alice suddenly knelt on the ground, kowtowing repeatedly to Lin Mu. "Immortal, please, take me as your disciple! I'm homeless now."

Her purpose in coming to Huaxia had been to cure the Gu poison in her body. Now that it was resolved, Alice suddenly didn't know what to do. However, the thought of the various mystical powers this Easterner possessed filled her with a sudden desire to become his disciple.

"Take you as my disciple?" Lin Mu shook his head. "You're not suitable."

"What?" Alice looked surprised. "Is it because I'm not pretty enough? Or do you want money? I know there's a fee for becoming a disciple—I have money. As long as I can return to my country, I can give you a large sum of it."

When she left the Blood Rat Mercenary Corps, her Uncle Jack had left her a large sum of money, so the current Alice was quite a wealthy young woman. Moreover, in her country, apprenticing to a master required a hefty payment.

"Money?" Lin Mu scoffed. "Do you think I need it?"

"Then why?" Alice knew that someone like Lin Mu wouldn't be lacking in wealth. Then...

Alice bit her lip, her cheeks flushing as she said, "Then what do you think of me? As long as you teach me, I'm willing to give everything, including myself..."

In the West, it wasn't unheard of for teachers and students to have... special relationships. Although Alice was reluctant to offer her body, she was willing to pay any price to learn the Easterner's mystical abilities. Besides, he was quite handsome and definitely her type.

"My conditions for accepting a disciple are very strict. You're not suitable," Lin Mu said, fully aware of Alice's thoughts as he rejected her directly.

"You haven't even told me your conditions! How can you just say I'm not suitable?" Alice retorted, unconvinced.

She had been through far too much in the past year. Her uncle was killed, her mercenary corps was annihilated, and she had entered Huaxia alone—a mysterious country filled with endless dangers. During that time, she was hunted, deceived, and even imprisoned. She had encountered things that most people would never experience in their lifetimes. Whether in terms of experience, temperament, or willpower, she felt she was no worse than anyone else. Furthermore, back in the West, she had been called a genius. Naturally, she took great issue with Lin Mu's dismissal.

Lin Mu furrowed his brow; he hadn't expected Alice to be so stubborn. He said, "Do you really want to learn?"

Clenching her fists, Alice replied, "Yes, it's all I dream about. In fact, I came to Huaxia for you, but not just to have the poison in my body cured. I came because I want to learn that magical power you have."

Alice didn't understand cultivation, but she knew it was something wondrous.

Lin Mu's brow furrowed again. "Can you tell me why you want to learn?"

"I want to become as powerful as you so I can protect the people I want to protect!" The memory of her uncle's tragic death made Alice's eyes redden.

Uncle Jack had been the kindest person to her, yet all she could do was flee to another country, watching helplessly as he was killed. Alice didn't want such a tragedy to ever happen again.

"So, no matter how difficult it is, no matter how much I have to suffer, I'm not afraid!" Alice knelt on the ground and kowtowed to Lin Mu. "I, Alice Liddell, earnestly beg you to accept me as your disciple."

Seeing how serious Alice was, Lin Mu's expression turned grave as he stated indifferently, "My path is not one that ordinary people can withstand."

"Even if I can't, I must!"

"Alright then." Lin Mu said lightly, "Since you wish to become my disciple, you must pass my trial."

"Does that mean you've agreed?" Alice exclaimed excitedly. "Oh my god, thank you!"

Seeing Alice jump up and lunge toward him as if for a hug, Lin Mu took a slight step back. "I haven't agreed to anything yet. Only if you complete my trial will I consider accepting you as my disciple."

"What?" Alice cried out. "You'll only *consider* it after I complete it? What if you don't agree then? Won't all my effort be for nothing?"

"Then let's not speak of this again. You may leave," Lin Mu sneered.

She wants to be my disciple and still dares to negotiate terms? As if anything in this world is so easy!

"Fine, I agree!" Alice said with a look of determination. "I said it before. No matter the difficulty, I will do it!"

"Good. That's the spirit," Lin Mu said. "It's nearly six hundred kilometers from here to Suzhou. I'll give you one month. If you can walk to Suzhou, I will accept you as my disciple."

"Over five hundred kilometers? On foot?" Alice cried out in astonishment. "My God, how is that even possible?"

"Yes, on your own two feet. You cannot take any form of transportation—no planes, high-speed trains, or cars. And you cannot carry a single penny with you," Lin Mu said indifferently. "Of course, if you feel you can't do it, you can forget I ever mentioned it. I'll arrange for you to leave Huaxia and return to your own country."

Lin Mu wasn't trying to make things difficult for Alice. The Dao could not be taught lightly.

In his previous life, he had endured so much hardship and fatigue just to be accepted into an Immortal Sect. He and his two siblings, holding Qing Zhu canes and wearing worn straw sandals, walked for three full years before they were barely able to enter a small sect. But it was those years that had tempered his character, forging it into steel.

"Alright!" Alice took a deep breath. "I promise you. I will definitely do it!"

"I shall wait and see."