

War God 541

Chapter 541: He is an existence beyond your imagination!

"Test?"

The man with the glasses laughed. "You're Lin Mu, right? You want to test yourself against one of my men?"

"Don't be ridiculous. I'm afraid you wouldn't be able to take a single punch. If that happens, it won't be just one person losing face."

As the man spoke, his gaze swept over Guan Feifei, his smile brimming with sarcasm.

Guan Feifei had an apologetic look on his face, unsure of how to explain.

The man was from the Security Bureau. Given his high status, even people from high society spoke to him politely, which had naturally fostered an attitude of superiority.

"Oh?"

Lin Mu raised an eyebrow. "I'm afraid I'd kill you with one punch, and then you'd have nowhere to go cry about it."

Since the other party had been so rude, Lin Mu didn't hold back either.

"Hmph, sharp-tongued!"

The man snorted coldly. "Guan Feifei, is this how you handle things? I thought he was a master of national martial arts, but it turns out he's just some crude thug. To think you had the gall to introduce him here. It's simply disgraceful!"

In both his tone and demeanor, the man with the glasses revealed his disdain and contempt for Lin Mu.

As someone from the Security Bureau, he had seen plenty of strange and extraordinary people. But most were just frauds, and this Lin Mu seemed to be no different.

He looked plain and completely lacked any distinguished aura, which only deepened his disappointment and worsened his attitude toward Lin Mu.

"Mr. Jin, Lin..."

Before Guan Feifei could explain, Lin Mu spoke indifferently. "You may be dressed like a gentleman, but I'm surprised such ugly words are coming out of your mouth. Did you forget to brush your teeth, or is it true that a dog can't spew ivory?"

Lin Mu's nature was such that if you didn't provoke him, he wouldn't bother you. But if you tried to bully him... then sorry, Lin Mu was not a timid or fearful person.

What he liked most was to grind the faces of people like that into the dirt and stomp on them!

"What did you say?"

Just as expected, Mr. Jin's face darkened. "Kid, do you even know what you're talking about? Do you have any idea how important this is? Then again, how could a low-life thug like you ever come into contact with such secrets."

His words were barbed, revealing his profound disdain for Lin Mu.

The smile on Lin Mu's face vanished, and a cold glint flashed in his eyes.

This guy was clearly used to being self-important, thinking he could step on anyone he pleased.

Lin Mu was about to explode, but then he saw Guan Feifei desperately signaling him with his eyes.

"What? You want to fight?" Mr. Jin sneered, his face full of scorn. "A small fry like you isn't even qualified to make me lift a finger."

"In that case, get lost!" Lin Mu said coolly. "Get lost while I'm still not in the mood to kill anyone."

"Kid, watch your attitude!"

Mr. Jin remained silent, but the tall man behind him spoke up. He chided coldly, "Is that any way to speak to Mr. Jin? Apologize, now!"

Lin Mu's expression turned abruptly cold, and a sharp gleam shot from his eyes.

"Apologize, you say?"

Lin Mu raised his palm, ready to strike.

"You want to fight?" the tall man said with excitement. "You're truly looking for death!"

He didn't take Lin Mu seriously at all; in fact, he didn't give him a second thought. The man looked soft and weak, with no hint of a Martial Artist's aura. He had no presence whatsoever.

He hailed from a mysterious military unit tasked with protecting important leaders. He was so highly regarded that he had even attended a professional military academy, so he naturally looked down on an ordinary person like Lin Mu.

Just as the two were about to come to blows, Guan Feifei interjected anxiously, "Gentlemen, our purpose here is to rescue the hostage. If you start fighting, won't you just become a laughingstock for the kidnappers?"

"Hmm, that's true," Mr. Jin said. "But you've also reminded me of something. Guan Feifei, I came here to inform you that you no longer need to involve yourself in this matter. The Security Bureau will be taking full responsibility."

"What?"

Guan Feifei was stunned. Clearly, he had not expected this.

"What? Do you have a problem with that?" Mr. Jin huffed, his voice cold and displeased.

"No," Guan Feifei said grimly. "If this is an order from above, I will obey it unconditionally. But if this is just your personal decision, then forgive me, but I cannot accept it!"

"Are you daring to defy a military order?" Mr. Jin's face darkened. "Guan Feifei, I am not asking for your opinion. You just need to follow orders!"

This was indeed Mr. Jin's personal decision. Lin Mu's backtalk had irritated him, and he was taking his anger out on Guan Feifei. You want to save someone? I'll make sure you can't! I'll kick Guan Feifei right out of this operation and see what you can do about it!

"To hell with your orders!"

Guan Feifei had finally reached the end of his patience. This Mr. Jin was the type to take a mile if you gave him an inch. He deeply respected Lin Mu. After all, Lin Mu had saved his grandfather, a huge favor for the Guan Family.

Not only that, but he was a passionate man himself. Lin Mu didn't want to cause trouble, but Mr. Jin was simply too arrogant. So, Guan Feifei exploded.

"Guan Feifei, watch your tone!" Having been cursed at, a cold glint appeared in Mr. Jin's eyes. "Do you realize I can report this behavior to your commanding officer?"

Guan Feifei said coolly, "Go ahead! Do you really think I'm afraid of you?"

"Fine, just you wait!"

Mr. Jin smirked coldly and immediately made a call. After speaking a few words, he looked at Guan Feifei with a sneer.

Guan Feifei's phone rang. After listening for a moment, his complexion immediately darkened.

"You... you're despicable!"

Guan Feifei crushed his phone in his hand, then turned helplessly to Lin Mu. "Mr. Lin, I'm sorry. This matter is no longer under our control."

Just now, he had received a call from a high-ranking official in Sichuan-Shu, instructing him to follow Mr. Jin's arrangements.

"So, you no longer need me for this?" Lin Mu raised an eyebrow and asked.

Guan Feifei nodded helplessly. "This case has been completely taken over by the Security Bureau. There's nothing I can do."

"Alright."

Lin Mu answered succinctly and turned to leave.

This caught Mr. Jin off guard, preventing him from lashing out. He could only watch Lin Mu's retreating back with mockery, his eyes full of disdain.

"Mr. Lin, where are you going?"

"Just taking a look around," Lin Mu replied without looking back.

The man at Mr. Jin's side doesn't even possess Inner Strength. Lin Mu knew a bit about Qing Ni, the Sect Leader of the Emei Sect. Although she isn't a Grandmaster, she's extremely close. If even she was injured, what chance do these people from the Security Bureau have? If this situation involved a stranger, Lin Mu would have already left. But he couldn't; Li Qiran is Luo Li's good friend. Since he had promised, he had to help. Of course, if the people from the Security Bureau could actually pull off the rescue, he would be happy to not get involved.

Mr. Jin shook his head, looking at Guan Feifei with disdain. "See that? That's the man you invited. He knows he isn't strong enough, so he's just making an excuse to leave."

"Shut your mouth!" Guan Feifei roared, furious and ashamed. "You idiot! Mr. Lin's abilities are beyond your imagination. Trash like you isn't even worthy of polishing his shoes!"

Chapter 542: Please Make a Move!

"He's just running his mouth." Mr. Jin said coldly, "You should be grateful that kid ran fast. If A Long had made a move, he'd be dead!"

"Mr. Jin is right. One punch from me and that kid wouldn't just be injured; he'd be half-dead," A Long added, clenching his fists, his face full of pride. He had immense confidence in his own strength.

"Mr. Jin, look out!"

At that moment, A Long's expression changed dramatically. He lunged in front of Mr. Jin and threw a punch.

BANG!

PFFT!

A Long was sent flying backward, spitting a mouthful of blood. Once he steadied himself, he stared at a small pebble on the ground, his expression one of utter shock. That very pebble had flown toward him, knocked him back, and injured him.

Not only that, but after he punched it, the pebble remained completely intact, without a single crack.

"Consider this a small lesson. Otherwise, you'd already be dead," Lin Mu said indifferently from a short distance away, then turned and left without a backward glance.

"This..."

Watching Lin Mu's retreating figure, A Long's eyes revealed a trace of horror.

Was it that kid who just struck? But how could that be? Plucking flowers and throwing leaves to harm people—that's a Grandmaster's technique. A single flying pebble injured me... Such strength, even if not a Grandmaster's, is infinitely close. But how could that kid possibly be a Grandmaster?

"A Long, what on earth happened? Did that kid ambush us?" Mr. Jin's face was also pale; the scare had clearly shaken him.

"It's nothing. I might have been mistaken." A hint of pain crossed A Long's brow. His dangling arm trembled slightly, blood trickling from his fist.

Mr. Jin nodded and said, "Don't worry. That kid is obviously no expert. He's not worth a second thought."

A Long considered this for a moment, then nodded slightly. He too found it hard to believe that Lin Mu had been the one to injure him. After all, with his strength, ordinary people were no match for him. Moreover, Lin Mu was too young and showed no signs of energy fluctuations; he seemed like a completely normal person.

"Heh, what a pair of fools." Guan Feifei shook his head and said, "I hope you don't regret this. You've offended Mr. Lin today. Asking for his help in the future will be next to impossible."

Leaving them with those words, Guan Feifei also departed.

That moron thinks he can save Li Qiran? Dream on! Even the Sect Leader of the Emei Sect failed, let alone these two idiots!

Guan Feifei's words left Mr. Jin and A Long seething with rage.

A Long nodded and asked, "Mr. Jin, the rescue plan?"

"We move tonight!" Mr. Jin declared. "Also, find a chance to teach that kid a lesson!"

"Understood!"

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Lin Mu had considered calling Qin Luoli, but decided against it. Since he had given Qin Luoli his word, he would stick to it. He'd wait and see if the Safety Bureau could rescue her.

Honestly, Lin Mu wasn't keen on getting involved. He didn't know Li Qiran and they had no connection, so he wasn't particularly interested.

Just as Lin Mu was hesitating, his phone rang.

A number from Sichuan-Shu?

Lin Mu answered the call. A hesitant, elderly woman's voice came through the line. "Excuse me... are you Lin Mu?"

"I am. May I ask who this is?" Lin Mu frowned, wondering how the caller had gotten his number.

"Hello, hello! I'm Qiran's grandmother. It was Luo Li who told me that you could save her," the old woman said with some trepidation. "Can I meet you?"

After a moment's thought, Lin Mu agreed.

Just then, a car pulled up in front of Lin Mu. It was Guan Feifei.

"Mr. Lin, where are you headed? I can give you a ride."

Lin Mu nodded, got into the car, and gave him an address.

Soon, they arrived at a hotel room. The door opened a crack, and a stooped, elderly woman cautiously peeked out at the two men.

"Granny Li?" Guan Feifei clearly recognized the old woman and looked slightly surprised.

"You are... I remember you! You seem to be a director of some sort. Are you all here to rescue my little Qiran?" The old woman's face lit up with joy. After letting them in, she quickly shut the door as if afraid of being discovered.

"Granny Li, what are you doing here?" Guan Feifei asked, surprised. Since Li Qiran's kidnapping, the Safety Bureau had placed Granny Li under their protection. He never expected to find her here.

"Sigh, I didn't want to," Granny Li lamented, wiping a tear from her eye. She then turned to Lin Mu and asked, "Young man, are you Lin Mu?"

Being addressed as "young man" felt a little strange to Lin Mu. In terms of age, he was countless times older than her. But seeing as she was Luo Li's elder, he had no choice but to nod. "Yes, I'm Lin Mu."

"Oh, never mind then," Granny Li sighed, wiping her eyes. "Young man, thank you, but you should go back. Tell Luo Li that her granny thanks her as well, but this is Qiran's fate. We can't have you risking your lives to save her."

"Granny Li, what do you mean by that?" Lin Mu frowned, curious.

"You don't know?" Granny Li looked at him in astonishment. "Don't you know how dangerous it is to rescue Qiran? So many people have already died. I don't want anyone else to die."

"As much as I want Qiran to live, I can't bear to see you all walking into danger," she said, her voice breaking into quiet sobs.

Guan Feifei explained that there were nearly a dozen kidnappers, each an expert of the highest caliber that ordinary people couldn't handle. They had already sought countless masters and even mobilized an army unit to rescue Li Qiran, but every attempt had failed.

"They're that strong?" Lin Mu was taken aback. He hadn't expected the kidnappers to be capable of fending off an entire army.

"Correct," Guan Feifei said. "Not only are they incredibly strong, but they also possess heavy weaponry and are holed up in a mountain hollow that is easy to defend and hard to attack. Anyone who goes in is detected immediately."

"Our people were killed before they could even get inside!" Guan Feifei gritted his teeth, his face a mask of hatred.

"I see." Lin Mu nodded, offering no opinion.

"Mr. Lin, if it's possible, I still hope you'll intervene," Guan Feifei said gravely. "Li Qiran is very important to our country!"

Lin Mu's interest was piqued, but on the surface, he just nodded. "You think the people from the Safety Bureau will fail?"

"They will fail, one hundred percent!" Guan Feifei bit out. "They're a bunch of idiots! Otherwise, we wouldn't have lost so many people!"

"No, you mustn't," Granny Li pleaded. "Young man, listen to me. Leave now. Get out of here and don't get involved in this mess."

Lin Mu smiled. "Granny Li, you don't believe in me?"

"It's not that Granny doesn't believe in you," she replied, "it's just that this is truly too dangerous. If something were to happen to you, how could I ever face your parents?"

Granny Li's sincere words moved Lin Mu deeply. Her own granddaughter's life hung in the balance, yet she was worried about the safety of a stranger.

At that moment, Lin Mu made his decision. He would help.

Just then, Guan Feifei's phone rang. After he took the call, his expression drastically changed.

"Those idiots!"

Hanging up, Guan Feifei turned to Lin Mu, his expression grim. "Mr. Lin, Jin Kui's rescue attempt failed. He's been captured, too."

"The military in the Sichuan-Shu region is requesting your assistance!"

Chapter 543: Little Doyle, Not Worth Mentioning!

"Jin Kui's rescue attempt failed, and he even got himself caught in the process!"

A Jeep sped along the mountain road. Guan Feifei drove rapidly, her tone scornful. "That idiot! He was just trying to take all the credit for himself. If anything happens to Li Qiran, chopping off ten of Jin Kui's heads wouldn't be enough to pay for it!"

Lin Mu's curiosity grew. "Who on earth is this Li Qiran to warrant such a massive response from you all?"

Guan Feifei glanced at Granny Li in the back seat and hesitated.

Lin Mu smiled slightly and snapped his fingers. Granny Li immediately slumped over in her seat, fast asleep.

Guan Feifei's eyes widened, once again shocked by Lin Mu's methods.

"Mr. Lin, you must promise me first that not a single word I say will be leaked!" Guan Feifei's expression turned serious. "After all, this is a breach of discipline."

Lin Mu sat up straight. "Go on."

Guan Feifei let out a long breath. "Li Qiran is involved in an SSSS-level secret. As for what that secret is, someone of my rank isn't qualified to know."

"But what I can tell you is that SSSS-level secrets are something only people of my grandfather's rank are somewhat privy to, and even they don't know much." Gripping the steering wheel with one hand, she held up her other. "In all of Huaxia, no more than five people know about this."

No more than five people?

This time, Lin Mu was genuinely shocked. He hadn't expected an ordinary girl to be involved in such a high-level secret. According to Guan Feifei, did that mean only someone of Xiao Xuan's caliber was qualified to know?

"Mr. Lin, don't blame me for being vague. I don't know much myself, but not a single word of what I've told you can get out!" Guan Feifei reminded him gravely. "Otherwise, it won't just be me. My grandfather, and even my entire Guan Family, will be implicated."

"I understand," Lin Mu smiled. "You wouldn't be telling me this if you didn't trust me."

Guan Feifei chuckled softly.

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Legends say that Sichuan-Shu is home to many Jiaolongs and even more Sword Immortals. While that's only what the old texts claim, the abundance of mountains in the region is an undeniable fact.

Li Qiran was being held in a mountain hollow in Sichuan-Shu called Mount Zoujiao. It was the site of an old, deserted village. The residents had moved out long ago, but some of the houses remained.

A few miles from Mount Zoujiao, on a small hill, a contingent of over ten thousand soldiers was stationed. This was the temporary base for the rescue operation.

When Lin Mu's group arrived at the foot of the mountain, they were stopped.

"Sorry, you can't go up."

The two soldiers on guard duty blocked the Jeep, preventing them from entering. What's more, countless hidden rifles were aimed at the three of them, ready to fire the instant they made a move.

"Your head instructor, Zhou Dalong, asked us to come!" Guan Feifei said. "If you don't believe me, you can ask him right now. Here are my credentials."

The two soldiers glanced at each other. One of them nodded, stepped aside, and reported the situation on his walkie-talkie.

"Identity confirmed. Allow them to pass."

Just as the soldiers were about to let them through, another vehicle drove up and was also stopped. Two men got out of the car, one dressed in white, the other in black. The two were identical twins, and judging by their aura, they were powerful experts.

Grandmasters?

Lin Mu's gaze sharpened slightly. The twins were both Grandmasters.

"Master Yang, you've finally arrived!"

At that moment, a group of people descended from the mountain, led by a dark-skinned, powerfully built man with sharp, gleaming eyes.

"Instructor!"

This was the head instructor of the Shu Region Military Area, Zhou Dalong.

Zhou Dalong nodded and walked toward the twins, a smile spreading across his face. "Master Yang, you've finally come. Thank you for making the journey."

"It's no trouble," the twin in white said. "Alright, enough with the pleasantries. Let's head up the mountain and rescue the girl."

"Excellent." Zhou Dalong was delighted, but then he noticed Guan Feifei.

"Greetings, Instructor Zhou!" Guan Feifei saluted and said, "Instructor Zhou, this is Lin Mu from Jiangling."

"Oh?" Zhou Dalong sized up Lin Mu. "Since you're also here for the rescue, then you should come up with us."

"Instructor Zhou, is that really necessary?" the twin in black interjected with a frown. "With my brother and I on the job, what kind of enemy can't we handle? Besides, this man is clearly an ordinary person. Isn't he just going up to get himself killed?"

His words, though not explicitly scornful, were laced with an unmistakable, innate arrogance.

"Well..." Zhou Dalong looked troubled. "Masters, he was recommended by the team in Jiangling. It would be difficult for me to just send him away. How about we let him come along?"

The man in black was about to speak again, but the man in white cut him off. "Awu, let it be."

The black-clad twin turned to Lin Mu, his eyes holding a clear warning. "You can follow us, but no matter what you see, keep your mouth shut and don't you dare interfere. If you obstruct the rescue, I'll kill you myself!"

As he finished speaking, he struck the mountain wall beside him with his palm.

BOOM!

A distinct palm print appeared on the rock face, so clear that even the lines of his palm were visible.

The move awed everyone present. How terrifying! To leave a palm print on solid rock required immense power. But what was most frightening was that the area surrounding the print was completely unscathed. Clearly, the man's control over his power had reached a horrifying level.

The man in black retracted his hand and smiled proudly. "So, don't play games with your life. Let's go."

Without waiting for a response, he started walking up the mountain.

"Mr. Lin, can you do that?" Guan Feifei asked, glancing back at the palm print with a grave tone. If a blow like that landed on a person, wouldn't it kill them instantly? In all his years as a soldier, this was the first time he had ever seen such a thing.

"Trivial tricks, hardly worth mentioning," Lin Mu replied with a slight smile, calmly starting up the mountain path.

Watching his retreating back, Guan Feifei was momentarily stunned. Trivial tricks? Mr. Lin, isn't that boasting a little too much?

Though Lin Mu's voice was low, the twins heard him clearly. After all, they were both experts of the Grandmaster Realm.

"You arrogant brat!" the Black-clothed Grandmaster raged. "Say that again if you dare! Do you believe I won't end your life with a single palm strike?" This kid had no strength to speak of, yet his audacity was astounding. To dare be so disrespectful was to court death!

"Awu!" the White-clothed Grandmaster reprimanded him. "The rescue is our priority. Don't cause unnecessary trouble!"

"Hmph!" The Black-clothed Grandmaster seemed to obey his brother without question. He shot Lin Mu a cold glare. "Kid, after I've rescued the hostage, we'll have a proper 'spar'."

"I'll let you see for yourself whether my Iron Palm Technique is truly a 'trivial art'!"

Chapter 544: Shu Land Grandmaster, Yang Brothers!

Legend has it that Mount Zoujiao was formed during the ancient Shu era, when a Jiaolong slithered through the water, causing mountain peaks to collapse and pile up into mounds of earth. Even now, legends about the numerous Jiaolongs of Shu Land persist in Sichuan-Shu.

"Shu Land was home to many Jiaolongs that destroyed cities and wreaked havoc. Consequently, countless Sword Immortals descended from the mountains to slay them and hone their Cultivation Levels."

Gazing at Mount Zoujiao a kilometer away, the white-clothed Grandmaster let out a long sigh, as if imagining that bygone era of Sword Immortals riding their blades to slaughter Jiaolongs.

"Master Yang, those kidnappers are now hiding in a hollow on Mount Zoujiao. The terrain is easy to defend but hard to attack," Zhou Dalong said with a grave expression. "What's more, they have heavy firepower and an expert in their ranks. We've dispatched several units already, but they all failed."

"Master Qing Ni of the Emei Sect attempted a rescue but was injured by their expert. She's currently recuperating in the camp. A few hours ago, Mr. Jin led an assault as well, but he also failed and was captured."

Zhou Dalong sighed, a hint of complaint in his voice. "If Mr. Jin had just waited for the two masters to arrive and acted with them, this whole mess could have been avoided."

The white-clothed Grandmaster, Yang Wen, was ranked fifteenth on the Heaven List, while his elder brother, Yang Wu, was a fellow Martial Arts Grandmaster ranked fourteenth. Rumor had it in the Martial Arts World that these twin Grandmasters, when fighting together, could comfortably rank in the top ten. However, the Heaven List judged only individual prowess, so their combined strength was never considered in the rankings. Nevertheless, this was a testament to the terrifying power of Yang Wen and Yang Wu.

The identity of the person being rescued was extremely sensitive, and the mission could not afford any mishaps. Otherwise, the chiefs of the Sichuan-Shu Military Region would not have personally requested the presence of these two eminent Grandmasters.

"Qing Ni of Emei?" the black-clothed Grandmaster, Yang Wu, remarked with disdain. "That woman isn't even a Grandmaster. Of course she failed."

"Yang Wu, watch your words," Yang Wen cautioned with a frown.

Although Yang Wu was resentful, he said no more. Despite being the elder brother, he had always followed his younger brother's lead since they were children.

"Rest assured, Instructor Zhou," Yang Wen said with a faint smile. "With the two of us on the job, saving them will be a simple matter."

"Thank you, Grandmasters," Zhou Dalong said gratefully. "I already have my men moving into position. Once you make your move, they'll provide support to prevent any surprises."

"Instructor Zhou, this is Lin Mu. He's an expert from Jiangling who was brought in to help," Guan Feifei hurriedly interjected, not wanting Lin Mu to be ignored.

To Guan Feifei's surprise, however, Yang Wu glanced at Lin Mu, snorted, and said with contempt, "Him? An expert? What kind of skill could he possibly have!"

"Grandmasters, Mr. Lin is here to help with the rescue at the request of Handong Province's top official. You..." Guan Feifei felt embarrassed but still tried to speak up for Lin Mu. He had realized that these people were planning to ignore Lin Mu and go on their own. Furthermore, since he didn't know that Yang Wen and Yang Wu were Martial Arts Grandmasters, he still believed Lin Mu was the one most likely to save the hostages.

"Young man, you should go back. This is no place for you," Yang Wen said, glancing at Lin Mu. He sounded as if he had Lin Mu's best interests at heart, but the underlying arrogance and contempt in his voice made Guan Feifei frown.

After all, Lin Mu was a Martial Arts Grandmaster. Guan Feifei had seen him in action at the Jiangbei Martial Meet and knew that his own grandfather held him in high regard. To see him dismissed so casually was jarring. It was one thing for the men from the Security Bureau, but for these two to humiliate Lin Mu like this was infuriating to Guan Feifei. Besides, Guan Feifei was one of the mission coordinators. That meant the Yang Brothers had no authority to send Lin Mu away.

Sensing Guan Feifei's displeasure, Zhou Dalong glanced at Lin Mu and said, "Xiao Guan, you understand the gravity of this situation, don't you? This is a rescue mission, not a dinner party."

"To be honest, the problem on Mount Zoujiao isn't that simple. First, there are quite a few kidnappers, and each of them is formidable. The fact that we've sent several teams and they all failed proves this point."

"Second, they have an expert leading them, possibly even a Martial Arts Grandmaster. You saw for yourself that Master Qing Ni was injured."

"The most troublesome part is that this is a rescue, not an assassination. Otherwise, I could have wiped them out with a single artillery shell and saved us all this trouble!"

Zhou Dalong's analysis was spot-on. It had to be said that a man didn't reach the position of chief instructor by being useless. In the military, what matters is real skill, not connections. His words hit the nail on the head.

It was no longer a matter of finding a few experts of equal strength to the enemy; the primary objective was the rescue itself. Killing was easy, but saving lives was hard. The enemy was like a small, ruthless army, and with hostages in their hands, our side was severely restricted. Experts could easily kill their opponents in a fight, but rescuing someone **before** the enemy killed the hostage was a different matter entirely—substantially more difficult.

"Furthermore, Mr. Jin is in their hands now. The Security Bureau insists that he be rescued along with the others, so we need even more powerful experts," Zhou Dalong explained. "Both masters are exceptionally powerful and hold a high status in the Sichuan-Shu Martial Arts World. With them taking action, success is almost guaranteed."

"Therefore, no one else needs to get involved," Zhou Dalong stated, his resolute tone carrying the weight of a command. No matter how unwilling Guan Feifei was, he had no choice but to accept it.

"Mr. Lin, about this..." Guan Feifei looked at Lin Mu, his face full of guilt.

"It doesn't matter," Lin Mu said, gazing at the distant Mount Zoujiao. "I was too lazy to make a move anyway."

"Are you too lazy to get involved, or do you just know you're not strong enough?" Yang Wu sneered. "Still, you're a smart kid. Otherwise, if you got into trouble, we wouldn't have the energy to save you."

Lin Mu's expression remained calm, and he said nothing.

But Guan Feifei couldn't hold back and was about to speak when A Long arrived. He looked completely different than before; he was now covered in blood, his body riddled with wounds as if he had just survived a major battle.

"You people still have the nerve to show your faces!" Upon seeing Lin Mu and Guan Feifei, A Long's expression turned foul. He said angrily, "If it weren't for you, how could Mr. Jin be in this mess!"

"Guan Feifei, you owe me an explanation!"

Guan Feifei exploded in fury. "Explanation, my ass! You were the ones who were impatient to claim all the credit. Now that things have gone south, you have the gall to blame me? Do you think I'm a pushover? It's Jin Kui's own damn fault he got captured!"

A Long was about to retort, but Zhou Dalong bellowed, "What's all this shouting about? I'm in charge here, so both of you shut it!"

"And you, Liu Long, don't think I have to take your crap just because you're from the Security Bureau," Zhou Dalong said furiously. "If it weren't for your greedy, reckless advance, not only would the rescue have failed, but I wouldn't have lost so many of my men! I will definitely report this to the higher-ups for a full investigation. Just you wait!"

"Hmph!" Liu Long snorted coldly and fell silent.

"Alright, let's go save them," Yang Wen said. He exchanged a glance with Yang Wu, and the two of them suddenly launched themselves from the mountaintop, diving down like Azure Hawks. They moved with incredible speed, disappearing into the dense forest in just a few blinks of an eye.

Everyone who saw it gasped in awe.

"The two masters truly live up to their reputation!"

Chapter 545 My Brother Alone Is Enough!

The onlookers only saw two figures traversing the mountain cliff as if it were flat ground, covering a hundred meters in the blink of an eye. Judging by their speed, Yang Wen, the Martial Arts Grandmaster in white, appeared to be slightly faster, but Yang Wu was not far behind.

"Are they planning to fly over?" Guan Feifei murmured, stunned. To avoid provoking the kidnappers, Zhou Dalong had deliberately chosen this mountain peak, which was a full kilometer from Mount Zoujiao. How could people possibly fly? A kilometer is one thing, but even a few dozen meters should be impossible, right?

"Haha, young Guan, that's where you're mistaken," Zhou Dalong chuckled. "These two are renowned Martial Arts Grandmasters in the Martial Arts World. Their strength is beyond what we ordinary people can possibly imagine."

With two Grandmasters like the Yang Brothers on the case, the hostages would surely be saved.

However, Lin Mu frowned. Judging by the kidnappers' methods, they clearly came prepared. Past rescue attempts failed due to their advantageous terrain and the presence of their own experts. There must be a brilliant military strategist among them to have chosen such a location. The Yang Brothers are making such a grand entrance... they've probably already been spotted. If the enemy is prepared, even Martial Arts Grandmasters like them will run into trouble.

Guan Feifei had been watching Lin Mu's reactions closely. Seeing him frown, she couldn't help but ask, "Mr. Lin, what's wrong? Do you see a problem?"

Hearing her, Liu Long said disdainfully, "What could he possibly notice? He's probably just scared."

Zhou Dalong, however, exclaimed in awe, "Don't say he's scared—even I'm impressed. In all my years, I've never seen such skill."

After hearing them, Lin Mu shook his head with a wry smile.

"What are you smiling at, kid?" Liu Long, who had been annoyed with Lin Mu from the start, became furious. "Do you actually think these two masters are going to fail?"

"None of your business," Lin Mu retorted, rolling his eyes. He couldn't be bothered with this idiot.

"Sharp-tongued brat!" Liu Long sneered. "I bet you're just upset that you came all this way for nothing. Just wait until Mr. Jin is rescued. I'll deal with you then! Don't think you're so special just because some big shot recommended you. Remember, there's always someone better out there! You are nothing!"

For some reason, the mere sight of Lin Mu infuriated Liu Long. Perhaps it was because Lin Mu had been disrespectful when they first met. With the failed rescue and Jin Kui's capture, Liu Long was now venting all his frustration on him.

"Don't speak so definitively," Lin Mu said lightly. "I'm afraid you'll regret it in a moment."

Others couldn't see it, but Lin Mu could see everything clearly. The Yang Brothers were indeed Grandmasters, but their strength was merely average. Their supposed ranking at fourteenth or fifteenth was likely just hype. Moreover, their flashy rescue attempt had already been discovered. Hidden snipers already had them in their sights.

"Hmph, what an idiot," Liu Long scoffed. "What do you know? With two Grandmasters on the move, success is guaranteed!"

Lin Mu couldn't be bothered to engage with him.

He looked up into the distance, where the Yang Brothers had already covered several hundred meters. While humans certainly couldn't fly that far, the Yang Brothers were using the terrain, periodically landing on massive trees and boulders to propel themselves forward. In this manner, the two rapidly closed the distance to Mount Zoujiao.

However, as they neared the mountain, there were no more places to gain leverage. Just when everyone thought the Yang Brothers could go no further, Yang Wu, the one in black, suddenly grabbed Yang Wen and hurled him forward with immense force.

The next moment, everyone watched, dumbfounded, as Yang Wen shot forward like a cannonball, hurtling toward the ravine of Mount Zoujiao at incredible speed. He entered the ravine in the blink of an eye.

"Great!" Liu Long was overjoyed.

Zhou Dalong was equally ecstatic. Their previous rescue attempts had failed primarily because they couldn't even reach the kidnappers' hideout. Now that Yang Wen was inside, his strength as a Grandmaster would surely be enough to save the hostages.

While Yang Wen entered the ravine, Yang Wu returned the way he came, landing before the group. He was completely unflustered, as if he hadn't just performed such an incredible feat. Once again, everyone was shocked by the Yang Brothers' power.

"Master Yang, why did you come back?" Liu Long couldn't help but ask. "Can Yang Wen handle it alone?"

Yang Wu nodded. "They're just a few petty thieves. My brother alone is more than enough."

Seeing the worried look on Liu Long's face, Yang Wu chuckled. "Rest assured, gentlemen. The outcome is already decided."

"But their side has a Grandmaster as well," Zhou Dalong said with a frown. "Can Master Yang really handle it alone?"

This wasn't what they had discussed earlier. The plan was for two Grandmasters to act together—one to fight the kidnappers, the other to rescue the hostage. That was supposed to be a surefire plan. And yet, Yang Wu had returned? If something goes wrong, who will take responsibility?

Hearing Zhou Dalong's words, Yang Wu's expression darkened. "What? Are you questioning my brother's strength? Let me tell you, even if their side has a Grandmaster, even if it were the great Lin Wudi himself, my brother could still kill him and rescue the hostage without a scratch!"

The two brothers had already decided that Yang Wen would handle the rescue. Yang Wu's temperament was too volatile for such a delicate task. Besides, even as Grandmasters, they couldn't possibly cross a kilometer of open air to reach Mount Zoujiao without any footholds. Of course, Yang Wu wasn't about to mention that part.

As he spoke, Lin Mu, who was standing to the side, raised an eyebrow, a faint smile playing on his lips.

The others were oblivious, but Lin Mu knew exactly what was happening. Right now, in the ravine of Mount Zoujiao, Yang Wen has already engaged the enemy. And... it looks like he's on the losing end.

Yang Wu sat down in a chair. His eyes lit up when he spotted a teapot nearby. He quickly poured a cup and said, "Relax, everyone. Before this tea has a chance to cool, my brother will have the hostage out."

He continued boastfully, "They say Guan Yu slew Hua Xiong while his wine was still warm. Today, the Yang Brothers save the day before the tea grows cold. A beautiful tale for the ages!"

The fragrance of the tea filled the air as steam drifted up. However, more than ten minutes passed with no sign of movement from Mount Zoujiao.

"It's been so long. Why is there no movement?" Liu Long couldn't help but ask.

"The tea is already cold. This..."

Everyone looked. The tea on the table was now cold, and Yang Wu's expression had turned just as frigid.

"Rest assured. When my brother makes a move, he will definitely..."

Before Yang Wu could finish, a figure suddenly burst from the ravine of Mount Zoujiao. He sprinted frantically along the cliff face, looking utterly disheveled.

"He's back!" Seeing this, Yang Wu shot to his feet, a proud look on his face.

Chapter 546: No One Can Save You!

In the distance, everyone could only see a figure fleeing desperately. Zhou Dalong raised his binoculars and exclaimed in shock, "Master Yang?!"

It was Yang Wen! However, his white robes were now completely stained with blood. Not only that, but one of his arms looked as if it had been blown apart. Most importantly, Yang Wen was alone. This meant he had utterly failed to rescue anyone!

Liu Long and the others were stunned. Just a moment ago, Yang Wu had declared that his brother alone was more than enough. The sight of the two men traversing a kilometer through the air, displaying the methods of a Grandmaster, had shocked everyone. But now, Yang Wen was fleeing like a scalded dog, not only failing to rescue anyone but also getting grievously injured himself.

"How... could this happen?" Liu Long's face turned ashen. It was over. This was a complete disaster! If even Yang Wen had failed, who else could possibly rescue Mr. Jin?

Jin Kui's status was no small matter. At this moment, Liu Long wasn't even thinking about the other hostage; he was only concerned with how he would explain himself if something were to happen to Jin Kui.

At this moment, it wasn't just Liu Long; Zhou Dalong's complexion also turned ghostly pale. He had previously placed his full confidence in the Yang Brothers, believing the rescue to be foolproof. But now, even Yang Wen had failed.

Who else could rescue the hostage? he thought. It doesn't matter if Jin Kui dies, but the other hostage must not fall into enemy hands.

Yang Wu! Suddenly, Zhou Dalong's thoughts turned to Yang Wu. Even though Yang Wen had failed, there was still Yang Wu.

"Master Yang, quickly, you must save him!" Liu Long cried out, having had the same idea. He seized Yang Wu frantically, pinning his hopes on him to rescue the hostages.

Seeing this, Yang Wu's expression became incredibly grim, his face seething with murderous intent.

"Brother, save me! They have more than one Grandmaster..." Yang Wen's terrified voice drifted over. The next moment, a figure appeared in midair and savagely kicked Yang Wen, sending him plummeting from the sky.

BOOM!

A loud crash resounded through the valley, making everyone's heart leap into their throats. A fall from such a height meant certain death. Moreover, they were facing more than one Grandmaster! What are we to do now?

"How dare you harm my brother!" Yang Wu stomped his foot violently. With a BOOM, the ground cracked open, and Yang Wu shot up from where he stood, launching himself toward his brother.

Is he going to save him? Everyone was overjoyed at the thought. That's right! Yang Wu is also a Grandmaster! With him here, there's still a chance!

Yang Wu moved with incredible speed. His Internal Energy erupted from his body as he shot forward, vanishing from sight in the blink of an eye.

More than ten minutes later, Yang Wu returned with Yang Wen in his arms. However, Yang Wu's expression was terrible. Although Yang Wen was still alive, his aura was faint, his body was covered in wounds, and an unknown number of his bones were broken. To survive a fall from a hundred meters was a testament to his great Life Force. But one of Yang Wen's arms was gone.

After they finished bandaging his wounds, Yang Wen barely managed to regain consciousness. As a Martial Arts Grandmaster, his Life Force was naturally powerful. However, the current Yang Wen no longer possessed the pride and bearing of a top martial expert; he was in a pathetic state, his face filled with despair. He was grievously injured, with an arm missing. Not only that, but his martial foundation had been severely damaged. Even if his wounds healed, he would never again possess the strength of a Grandmaster.

Yang Wen's expression was one of terror, with a hint of utter despair in his eyes. A Martial Arts Grandmaster was respected by thousands. But now, he was no longer a Grandmaster. If he didn't recover properly, he might be reduced to a cripple.

"Master Yang, what's the situation in there? Did you see Mr. Jin? Was he being mistreated? What did those people do to him?" Liu Long asked from the side.

"Get lost!" Enraged, Yang Wu lashed out, sending Liu Long flying with a single slap. His brother had a severed arm and was so gravely injured he might become a cripple, yet this Liu Long was still asking if Jin Kui had been mistreated?

Guan Feifei shook her head. That Liu Long really deserved it! she thought. Can't he see the man's brother just lost an arm? How could he ask such a moronic question?

Yang Wen seemed to gradually come to his senses. He let out a long sigh and said, "It's hopeless. No one who goes in can save them."

Yang Wu held his brother and said, "Ah Wen, what exactly happened in there? Even if they had multiple Grandmasters, you might not have been their match, but you've always been known for your movement techniques. How could you have failed to escape?"

Yang Wen gave a bitter laugh. "Not only were there two Grandmasters, but there were also more than a dozen Inner Strength experts. If that were all, it would have been manageable, but they..."

Yang Wen trembled uncontrollably, his eyes filled with a lingering fear, as if he had just experienced something truly horrific. "They actually strapped bombs to the hostage. The moment I moved to save him, the bombs detonated. That's how I lost my arm."

HISS!

Hearing Yang Wen's words, everyone gasped. How ruthless! The enemy used the hostage as bait to lure Yang Wen in. After he was critically injured by the explosion, their numerous experts all attacked at once. Then, as he tried to escape, a Grandmaster who had been lying in ambush appeared and kicked him down into the valley. What vicious methods! What a sinister plot!

"Damn it!" Yang Wu roared in fury. He grabbed Liu Long by the collar and yelled, "Your intelligence report said there was only one Grandmaster! Why were there more?"

"Please, calm down, Master Yang! We had no idea either," Liu Long said, his face pale with fear. Mr. Jin is dead. How am I going to explain this to my superiors?

"Master Yang, if I may ask, what happened to the hostages?" Zhou Dalong asked with a grave expression.

"One of them is dead," Yang Wen said, a flicker of pain on his face. "The man died. As for the girl we were supposed to rescue, I never saw her. But I fear she's most likely dead as well."

"What?" Zhou Dalong's face went pale, and he staggered. The hostage is dead? What now? How am I going to explain this to my superiors?

"Xiao Ran is dead? Is my Xiao Ran really dead?" At that moment, Granny Li stumbled over, her face etched with anguish.

"You idiots! What kind of security are you running? How could you let a family member get this close?!" The moment Zhou Dalong saw Granny Li, his expression darkened. He hurried over to her and said, "Ma'am, I..."

Staring toward the distant Mount Zoujiao, tears streaming from her ancient eyes, Granny Li said, "This is fate. It's just fate. You can't be blamed."

The old woman suddenly collapsed to her knees, wailing, "Xiao Ran, Granny has failed you... I've failed you..."

Witnessing this scene, everyone fell silent.

"Granny Li..." Just then, a young woman ran over, embraced Granny Li, and also began to cry. Granny Li's mouth fell open. She let out a few hoarse gasps and fainted.

"Miss Ling Yun, please take Granny Li back for now," Zhou Dalong said, turning to the young woman. The woman was Ling Yun, a Disciple of Qing Ni, the Sect Leader of the Emei Sect!

"Alright," Ling Yun replied, helping Granny Li up to leave.

"May I ask what you intend to do?" Lin Mu suddenly spoke up. He had just seen Zhou Dalong make a phone call, as if he had received new orders.

Zhou Dalong glanced at the unconscious Granny Li, then clenched his teeth and said, "I've already reported the situation to my superiors. The order from above is to level Mount Zoujiao to the ground!" And not a single one of those kidnappers will be left alive! Kill them all, without mercy!

Hearing Zhou Dalong's words, everyone's expression changed. Level Mount Zoujiao to the ground? This is pure vengeance!

"And you agree with this?" Lin Mu asked.

"Kid, this isn't a question of my agreement! The hostage is dead!" Zhou Dalong snapped, his eyes blazing with fury. "But I will not let those animals get away with this. I want them to pay with their lives!"

"And what if I told you the girl isn't dead?" Lin Mu said coolly. "If your rash decision is what gets her killed, how will you face her family then?"

Chapter 547: Wait for me to come back, then I'll settle the score with you!

The girl isn't dead?

At these words, not only Zhou Dalong but even Yang Wen was stunned.

"Mr. Lin, are you telling the truth? The hostage isn't dead?" Guan Feifei couldn't help but ask.

"Young man, do you not believe me?" Yang Wen said weakly. "I went in there myself. Would I lie to you?"

Yang Wu was furious. "Boy, what do you mean by that? Are you calling my brother a liar?" This kid is truly preposterous, daring to question my brother and me!

Lin Mu looked at Yang Wen and asked coolly, "Did you personally see the girl die?"

"That... no." Yang Wen fell silent for a moment before explaining, "But those kidnappers are ruthless. One of the two hostages is already dead, so the other one must have met with foul play by now."

"Seeing is believing. On what grounds do you declare her dead based on mere speculation? What is your motive?" Lin Mu continued his cold mockery, "If your misjudgment leads to her death—a death not at the kidnappers' hands, but at yours—how will you answer to her family? How will you answer to the countless soldiers who sacrificed themselves?"

Lin Mu's sharp questioning left Yang Wen speechless.

"This is... Mr. Lin, correct?" Zhou Dalong asked with a grave expression. "How can you be certain the hostage isn't dead? If we delay any longer, the kidnappers might escape." This was a detail that had to be confirmed.

"Believe it or not. What does it have to do with me?" Lin Mu stared coldly at Zhou Dalong. "As the commander of this operation, you applied to bomb the mountaintop without confirming the facts. With such recklessness, I'd say the Chief Instructor of the Sichuan-Shu Military Region ought to be replaced!"

"Presumptuous!"

"Audacious! How dare you criticize Instructor Zhou?"

"Kid, you're too arrogant!"

Zhou Dalong's subordinates were instantly enraged. How dare Lin Mu mock their instructor? It was a slap in the face to all of them.

"All of you, shut up!" Zhou Dalong barked. After silencing his men, he gave Lin Mu a sincere salute. "Mr. Lin, I was in the wrong earlier, and I apologize. But please, you must tell me: are you certain the hostage is not dead?"

"That's right. You haven't been inside, so how can you be sure?" Yang Wu also demanded.

Lin Mu frowned slightly. "I have my methods. You don't need to know them."

"What a joke!" Yang Wu snorted. "Are we supposed to believe you just because you say so? That's the most absurd thing I've ever heard!"

"If Mr. Lin says the hostage is fine, then the hostage is definitely fine!" Guan Feifei declared. "Instructor Zhou, gentlemen, I, Guan Feifei, stake my honor on it. Every word Mr. Lin says is the absolute truth!"

"And how much is your honor worth?" Yang Wu mocked coldly.

"A soldier's honor is worth more than the heavens!" Guan Feifei shot back bluntly. "It's true you are a Grandmaster, but you clearly have no idea what honor means to a soldier!"

"Well said!"

Just then, a gravelly voice rang out. An old man in a military uniform was walking over. His aged face held a natural authority, suggesting he was a high-ranking official from the Military Department.

Zhou Dalong hurried to greet him, saluting sharply. "Commander, what brings you here?"

"What, am I not allowed to come and have a look?" The old man glanced at Zhou Dalong, his tone flat. "Dalong, you've been with me for many years. I've always held you in high regard. But today, you have deeply disappointed me."

"Commander, I..." Zhou Dalong lowered his head, though his expression was tinged with defiance.

"What? You don't accept it?" The old man's smile vanished. "Deciding to flatten Mount Zoujiao without ascertaining the facts... Is that what I taught you?"

"But, Commander, Master Yang personally—" Before Zhou Dalong could finish explaining, the old man shot him a fierce glare. "Personally what? Did he **tell** you, or did he **see** it with his own eyes?"

"Do I really need to be the one to teach you that hearing is not the same as seeing?"

Familiar with the old man's temper, Zhou Dalong didn't dare say another word; he knew his commander was truly angry. This was the highest-ranking officer of the Sichuan-Shu Military Region, his direct superior.

"This young man is right. If the hostage isn't dead and you blow up the mountain, causing an innocent to die horribly, how will you answer to her family?" The elder turned to Lin Mu. "Young man, tell an old fellow like me the truth. Are you absolutely certain the hostage is still alive?"

"I am certain," Lin Mu said.

The elder nodded. "Zhou Dalong."

"Sir!"

"Prepare a rescue plan!" The old man's presence radiated a commanding aura, as if he commanded nations. "I don't care how difficult it is. You will rescue that hostage. Otherwise, you can step down as Chief Instructor."

With that said, the elder ignored Zhou Dalong's reaction and walked over to Granny Li, who had woken up but remained lost in despair.

"Ma'am, don't you worry," Xiang Yunlong said, speaking in a thick, local Sichuan-Shu accent as he tightly grasped Granny Li's hand. "I, Xiang Yunlong, promise you we will rescue your granddaughter, y'hear!"

"Thank you, thank you..." Granny Li was so moved that tears welled up in her eyes.

But the crowd fell silent. Rescue her? But who would go?

"I'll go," Lin Mu said.

Everyone, including Xiang Yunlong, stared at Lin Mu in shock.

You?

Yang Wu snorted. "My brother couldn't save her. What makes you think you can?" He was very confident in his brother's abilities. If even Yang Wen had failed, what hope was there for a kid like Lin Mu?

"Young man, let me tell you the truth. You have no idea what it's like in there. Even if my brother and I went in together, we couldn't pull off a rescue," Yang Wen said, before breaking into a violent coughing fit.

"Master Yang, this..." Zhou Dalong began to panic. Time was running out, and they still didn't even know if the hostage was dead or alive. If Lin Mu rushed in recklessly and got himself killed, what would happen? As the man in charge, he, Zhou Dalong, would have to bear all the responsibility.

"Just because you can't do it doesn't mean Mr. Lin can't," Guan Feifei said coldly. "The hostage was fine. If she comes to harm because of your indecisiveness, I'd like to see who's going to take responsibility for that."

"Young lady, I'm not one to brag, but I, Yang Wen, am still a Martial Arts Grandmaster. Do you really think I would lie to all of you?" Being questioned repeatedly had clearly angered Yang Wen. "Even if the hostage isn't dead, he's just a wet-behind-the-ears kid! How could he possibly face two Grandmasters and their countless expert allies all by himself?"

"Do you think my brother lost his arm for fun?" Yang Wu sneered. "He fell into their trap because the enemy was utterly despicable and had two Grandmasters on their side! You want to play the hero without even knowing what you're walking into? Do you think this is some kind of game?"

At this, the crowd fell silent. Granny Li shook her head, wiping tears from her eyes. "Xiao Mu, let it be. It's too dangerous. Your granny can't bear to see you get hurt."

Lin Mu suddenly burst out laughing. "Dangerous? To me, there is no such thing as danger in this world!"

"Since I promised you I would rescue your granddaughter, I will keep my word."

"Keep your word?" Watching the high-spirited Lin Mu, Yang Wu sneered, "Big talk. Let's see you don't lose your life backing it up."

"What do you think you are to speak to me like that?" Lin Mu suddenly turned his indifferent gaze on Yang Wu. "You really think you're somebody important? In my eyes, you are nothing."

"You..." Yang Wu raged, "I am a Martial Arts Grandmaster! How dare you speak to me like that?"

"A Martial Arts Grandmaster?" Lin Mu scoffed. "After I rescue the hostage, I'll be back to settle the score with you."

Chapter 548: Entering Dangerous Ground Alone, Drawing a Sword to Slay Bandits!

"Let's see if you even make it back alive!" Yang Wu said arrogantly. "I'd like to see you try."

Deep down, he looked down on Lin Mu. Too conceited. Too proud. A personality like that was bound to suffer.

Moreover, as a Martial Arts Grandmaster famous for years and ranked fourteenth on the Heavenly List, Yang Wu's strength was beyond question.

In fact, he'd already made up his mind. When Lin Mu failed, he would go and save the hostages himself. If they died, he'd just slaughter a couple of the enemy to avenge his brothers. It would also be a chance to show everyone that he, the Shu Land Grandmaster, hadn't earned his reputation for nothing.

"Mr. Lin, are you confident?" Guan Feifei asked nervously from the side. Although she had a lot of faith in him, the thought of two Grandmasters stationed at Mount Zoujiao still worried her.

"What? Even you don't believe me?" Lin Mu said with a slight smile. "Don't worry. I guarantee I'll bring them back to you safe and sound."

"Anyone can boast," Liu Long mocked. "Actions speak louder than words. Otherwise, you'll just end up making a fool of yourself when you fail."

Lin Mu couldn't even be bothered with someone like Liu Long. An ant like him wasn't worth his time.

Seeing Lin Mu still hadn't moved, Yang Wu sneered, "What's the matter, not leaving yet? Are you scared? If you are, just say so and get lost. It'll be ugly if you embarrass yourself later."

"Sigh. I really don't know how someone like you ever became a Grandmaster." Lin Mu shook his head. "Your perspective is too narrow, your vision too small."

Shaking his head, Lin Mu slowly walked toward the edge of the cliff, lifting his foot and preparing to step out.

Seeing Lin Mu's movement, the onlookers were stunned. "What is he doing?"

Yang Wu was startled for a moment, then burst out laughing. "Is he planning to fly? Don't make me laugh! Even my brother and I need a foothold to cross. Him?" His tone was filled with disdain and ridicule. Lin Mu is just an ordinary person. What kind of strength could he possibly have?

"Don't tell me he's going to kill himself," Liu Long taunted. "Now that's a possibility."

At that moment, even Xiang Yunlong shook his head. He's just trying to save face, hoping someone will stop him.

Just as Xiang Yunlong was about to step forward and give Lin Mu an excuse to back down, Yang Wu began to speak. "Kid, if you want to die, I can oblige. There's no need to— Fuck!"

Before Yang Wu could finish, his pupils contracted. It wasn't just him. Everyone else stared with their mouths agape, their faces masks of disbelief.

When Lin Mu took that step, his body didn't fall. Instead, it hovered eerily in mid-air.

Yang Wu drew a sharp breath, his pupils constricting. "Void Riding Wind," he gasped. "The pinnacle of the Grandmaster realm!"

Only a Martial Arts Grandmaster at their absolute peak could achieve Void Riding Wind. Even the Yang Brothers were a long way from reaching that stage. Yang Wen also sucked in a breath of cold air, his face filled with shock.

The next moment, something even more astonishing happened. With his hands clasped behind his back, Lin Mu began walking step-by-step toward Mount Zoujiao. It was as if he were treading upon an invisible glass path high in the sky, slowly walking into the distance.

A light breeze blew, causing his clothes to flutter. He looked like a Banished Immortal, walking on the wind itself.

"A Grandmaster! That's definitely a Martial Arts Grandmaster!"

"And not just any Grandmaster! Have you ever seen one who could do this?"

"Holy shit, is he an Immortal?!"

Amid the gasps of astonishment, the Yang Brothers' faces turned crimson, their expressions ugly and grim.

As for Liu Long, he collapsed to the ground with a thud. He... He had actually offended a Martial Arts Grandmaster!

Xiang Yunlong rubbed his eyes vigorously before finally bellowing, "Damn the Immortals to hell! Now I've truly seen it all!"

As Lin Mu's strength progressively advanced, the power of the Heavenly Emperor Nine Steps gradually revealed itself. Merely walking on the wind was a minor feat.

Once, at his peak, he could use the Heavenly Emperor's steps to saunter through the gales of the Ninth Heaven as if strolling through his own garden. One must understand that the gales of the Ninth Heaven were something that not even peak experts of the Carefree Realm dared to touch lightly. At best, they could destroy one's physical body. At worst, they could obliterate the soul, denying any chance of reincarnation.

Yet Lin Mu, relying on the Heavenly Emperor Nine Steps, had roamed freely amidst those gales, seizing countless opportunities and karmic fortunes, which laid a solid foundation for him to achieve the station of Emperor Zun.

"This is bad!" Zhou Dalong suddenly exclaimed. "Even if Mr. Lin is incredibly strong, approaching so brazenly is bound to attract the attention of those bandits! If they use weapons to stop him..."

CRACK!

Before Zhou Dalong could finish, the heavy crack of a rifle shot echoed through the air.

"A Barrett!" Zhou Dalong's face fell. "And a top-of-the-line model at that!"

"It's over, it's all over!" The others turned just as pale, thinking Lin Mu was doomed.

All of this seemed to happen in slow motion, but it was over in an instant. As the bullet screamed through the air, the crowd saw Lin Mu's figure pause.

Zhou Dalong's face went ashen, and he staggered. Was he hit? It's over... We failed!

"Hmph. Trying to act tough, kid? This time you've gotten yourself killed!" A venomous glint appeared in Yang Wu's eyes. After being repeatedly humiliated, I absolutely loathe him. His death is immensely satisfying.

"That's not right!" Guan Feifei suddenly cried out. Everyone looked up again, their bodies jolting in shock.

Lin Mu was still standing there in mid-air, his head lowered as if inspecting something. A cold smile touched his lips. He was holding a bullet between two fingers.

"You think this can hurt me?" He shook his head. With my body forged by the Construction of the Twelve Floors, my physical form is immensely powerful. A sniper bullet is nothing. I wouldn't even blink if I were hit by a cannonball. The Twelve-Fold Towers at the Qi Refinement Realm grant a body comparable to that of a Golden Core Cultivator!

"Here, have it back."

With a flick of his finger, Lin Mu sent the bullet whistling through the air, faster than a bolt of lightning.

"AHHH!"

A bloodcurdling scream echoed from the distant forest. Peering through his binoculars, Zhou Dalong saw a sniper hidden in the trees, shot dead directly between the eyes.

"This..." Zhou Dalong was at a loss for words. The scene was simply too shocking.

It wasn't just him. Even the Yang Brothers, who were Grandmasters themselves, were thoroughly terrified by what they had just witnessed. Holy hell, not even a bullet can pierce him? He caught it and flicked it back to kill the sniper! His power... it's just too terrifying.

The death of the sniper had clearly attracted the full attention of the experts on Mount Zoujiao.

The next moment, a man on Mount Zoujiao stood up, hoisted a rocket launcher onto his shoulder, and fired directly at Lin Mu. The rocket screamed through the air, breaking the sound barrier as it flew toward him.

"FUCK!" Zhou Dalong yelled, his face blanching as he screamed for Lin Mu to dodge.

However, back on the cliff, the crowd saw Lin Mu simply raise his hand. A crack of thunder sounded from the heavens, and the Dragon Tamer appeared in his grasp.

"Alone I enter this den of wolves; with my sword, I shall cull the wicked!"

The next moment, a brilliant sword light that seemed to connect heaven and earth flashed through the air, cleaving the rocket in two. But it didn't stop there. The sword light roared onward, slicing the man on the mountaintop in half.

The crowd was left utterly speechless.

Chapter 549: He is Lin Wudi!

BOOM!

The moment the man on the mountaintop was slain, a second cannonball was fired. Although the projectile appeared small, its power was immense. Zhou Dalong knew that a shell like this had enough power to level a small hill.

"Look out! Intercept it, quickly!" Zhou Dalong suddenly shouted, his face a mask of horror.

The cannonball was heading straight for them.

They didn't possess Lin Mu's terrifying strength, which allowed him to slice a cannonball in half with his sword; they could only try to intercept it with modern weapons. But in that instant, they had no time to react. All they could do was watch helplessly as the cannonball hurtled toward them.

"We're finished!"

This was the only thought left in their minds. Even Xiang Yunlong felt a surge of despair.

However, just then, Lin Mu darted out in midair like a Ghost Charm. His form shot forward, and he kicked the cannonball.

The next second, everyone's jaws dropped in shock as they watched the cannonball change direction and shoot straight up into the sky! Before the stunned gazes of the crowd, Lin Mu had actually kicked the cannonball away with a single kick.

Is this guy even human?

KA-BOOM!

A thunderous explosion echoed, scattering fire in every direction. The immense sound wave stung their eardrums.

"Yes!" the survivors roared, erupting in a sudden cheer.

Slicing a cannonball with one sword strike, changing its direction with one kick. This made everyone tremble with excitement. His actions perfectly embodied the phrase: going alone into danger, drawing a sword to slay the enemy! It was so domineering, so awe-inspiring, that it made everyone's blood boil with excitement.

Most of these men were iron-blooded soldiers who had always admired the strong. Lin Mu's sword strike had already earned their deep respect. The kick that changed the cannonball's trajectory had just saved their lives, filling them with an overwhelming sense of gratitude toward him.

"Damn, that scared me to death." Zhou Dalong wiped the cold sweat from his face. A cool breeze blew past, sending a chill down his spine. He was drenched in sweat.

Xiang Yunlong wasn't faring much better. Although he had seen his share of battle before, this was the first time he had witnessed such a thrilling scene.

"I almost cashed in my chips here," Xiang Yunlong laughed loudly. "But this kid, he's not bad at all. He saved my life and the lives of these youngsters. Whether he manages to rescue the hostage or not, I'm definitely having a drink with him later."

He was laughing on the outside, but inside, Xiang Yunlong let out a long sigh of relief. That scared the hell out of me!

"But the enemy still has so many experts and... two Grandmasters," Yang Wen said with a dejected expression.

He admitted that he couldn't have blocked that sword strike, nor could he have kicked the cannonball away like Lin Mu. However, the two Martial Arts Grandmasters on the other side were the most critical threat.

Hearing Yang Wen's words, everyone tensed up.

"Master Lin, you can do it!"

Suddenly, a clear voice rang out. The crowd turned to see that Ling Yun had, at some point, moved to the edge of the cliff. She clenched her small fists, her face flushed with excitement.

"Master Lin?" Xiang Yunlong suddenly asked, "Girl, do you know Mr. Lin?"

Ling Yun didn't answer. Her gaze remained fixed on Lin Mu, her eyes shining brightly.

Ordinarily, Xiang Yunlong would have been furious to be ignored, but not now. He wasn't angry, because Lin Mu had moved.

He tread upon the void and rode the wind, wielding an ancient sword that looked ordinary but was terrifyingly lethal. In an instant, he vanished.

"Where is he?"

"How did he disappear?"

"What terrifying agility!"

Laymen enjoy the spectacle, but experts see the technique. As Martial Arts Grandmasters, the Yang Brothers could naturally tell that Lin Mu had just executed an extremely advanced agility skill. He was as fast as a Ghost Charm, too quick for the naked eye to follow.

A few seconds later, they heard piercing screams and furious roars from the direction of Mount Zoujiao. Have they started fighting?

The crowd's expression grew solemn. They knew the most dangerous moment had arrived because Lin Mu needed to rescue the hostage before the kidnappers could kill them. That was the most difficult part of the entire mission.

And the enemy had two Grandmasters waiting for him.

Could Lin Mu do it?

"Good lad! To think you've slain twelve of my protectors in a row. It seems I underestimated you!" a voice boomed, thundering in everyone's minds as a beam of golden light erupted from the peak of Mount Zoujiao.

The next moment, a short, stocky man in a kasaya shot out from the golden light. His hands formed a seal as he pressed down toward a certain direction. In mid-air, an enormous handprint plummeted toward the ground, making the very air seem to flee in terror.

BOOM! BOOM!

A roaring sound followed as the handprint smashed into Mount Zoujiao, causing half of it to collapse.

"The Secret Sect Great Palm Imprint?" Yang Wu cried out, his face filled with shock and fear.

"Secret Sect Great Palm Imprint? Is that something special?" Guan Feifei asked instinctively.

Yang Wu spoke with a grave expression, "The Secret Sect Great Palm Imprint is the signature technique of Xing Ge Da Wa, the Zangdi Grandmaster ranked thirteenth on the Heavenly List!"

For the first time, a note of terror laced Yang Wu's tone. "Although my brother and I are only one rank below him, if we faced him, we wouldn't be his match even if we fought together."

Beside him, Yang Wen's expression grew even more somber. "I was injured by him."

Seeing the fear still lingering in Yang Wen's eyes, everyone grew tense.

"Where's Mr. Lin?" Zhou Dalong asked. "He'll be alright, won't he?"

Yang Wu shook his head. "How could he be? Nobody survives once Xing Ge Da Wa makes a move. He never leaves anyone alive after a fight! I'm just curious why someone who is always in seclusion in Zangdi would come all the way to Sichuan-Shu."

Zhou Dalong's face turned pale as he instinctively glanced at Xiang Yunlong, whose expression was grim, a cold glint in his eyes.

"Master Lin will be fine!" Ling Yun suddenly said, just as everyone else was convinced Lin Mu was doomed.

"Hmph! Who do you think that kid is, that he could be unharmed?" Yang Wu scoffed. "When Xing Ge Da Wa attacks, no one can survive, unless the one at the very top of the Heavenly List steps in."

"Which one?"

Yang Wu took a deep breath and uttered a name.

"Lin Wudi!"

The Martial God myth, Lin Wudi!

"Although Xing Ge Da Wa is ranked thirteenth, Master Lin once killed Xing Zirong, who was ranked tenth! There are even rumors he fought Zhang Daoyun, the Dragon Tiger Mountain Celestial Master from the top ten, though the outcome is unknown. However, his astonishing feat of slaying three Grandmasters in a row at Dongting Lake has already cemented his place as the number one figure in the current Martial Arts World!"

In his speech, Yang Wu respectfully referred to Lin Wudi as Master Lin, a testament to Lin Wudi's current stature within the Martial Arts World.

However, after Yang Wu finished speaking, he saw Ling Yun give him a strange look before saying something that sent a chill down his spine.

"He *is* Lin Wudi, Master Lin. Didn't you recognize him?"

Chapter 550: The Elegance of the Sword Immortal!

The crisp voice echoed in the mountain breeze.

At dusk, Yang Wu's face was ashen.

The boy he had been repeatedly calling out to was actually the Lin Wudi?

This...

"During the battle at Dongting Lake, I was fortunate enough to witness Master Lin in action," Ling Yun said, clasping his hands to his chest, his eyes sparkling. "Master Lin is the person I admire most."

Yang Wu: "..."

「In the distance, above Mount Zoujiao.」

Xing Ge Da Wa landed on a mountaintop, his sinister eyes filled with smoldering rage. Just moments ago, he had unleashed the Secret Sect Great Palm Imprint and destroyed half a mountain. Although he had killed the thief, he had also killed the little girl in the process. His plan, years in the making, was now ruined in a single stroke, causing his murderous intent to flare.

He looked up toward the distant cliffs.

"Hmph!"

Xing Ge Da Wa hesitated. He decided it was best to leave now. With the hostage dead, these people would be furious and certainly wouldn't let him go easily. They might even resort to using powerful, large-scale weapons. Although he was a Grandmaster and unafraid of such conventional weapons, it would be troublesome if his opponents summoned several other Grandmasters to attack him together.

Hmph, as long as Lin Wudi stays out of it, I am invincible! he sneered to himself. If I want to leave, no one can stop me!

Full of confidence, Xing Ge Da Wa prepared to retreat.

"Want to leave? It's not that easy."

Just as Xing Ge Da Wa turned to go, an indifferent voice suddenly fell upon his ears. He whirled around to see a figure not far away. The man held an ancient sword, his expression impassive as he watched him.

"You're not dead?!" Xing Ge Da Wa exclaimed in shock. But what stunned him even more was that the man was holding a little girl—the very hostage he had worked so hard to capture.

"The hostage isn't dead either??" Xing Ge Da Wa was suddenly overjoyed. "Truly, the heavens are on my side! Once I kill you, that girl is mine!"

As his laughter died down, Xing Ge Da Wa's hands flew into a seal. A golden light erupted from his body, emitting a blinding radiance.

"Secret Sect Great Palm Imprint!" Xing Ge Da Wa roared, striking out with his palm.

His mastery of the Secret Sect Great Palm Imprint was profound, having reached a nearly supernatural level. It could not only kill but also restrain a person. As long as he could control Lin Mu, even for a few seconds, he could snatch the girl back. Then, he could kill his opponent with a single palm strike and leave at his leisure.

Xing Ge Da Wa's plan was sound, and the Secret Sect Great Palm Imprint shot forward, about to envelop Lin Mu.

Just as the palm imprint was about to land, Lin Mu casually lifted his wrist. The Yulong Sword swept out, effortlessly shattering the imprint.

"Hmm?"

Xing Ge Da Wa's expression changed. Just as he was about to make another move, he saw a mocking smirk play on Lin Mu's lips.

This is bad!

Xing Ge Da Wa cried out internally, his body recoiling.

"Only realizing it now?" Lin Mu said with a faint smile. "Don't you think it's a little late?"

ZING!

The next moment, a brilliant beam of Sword Qi shot up from below, streaking toward Xing Ge Da Wa.

"Hmph! You think a mere sliver of Sword Qi can harm me?" Xing Ge Da Wa sneered. "The secret arts of my Esoteric Sect are beyond your imagination."

The Esoteric Sect's secret arts could also be used to fortify the body. Having practiced them since childhood, Xing Ge Da Wa had long ago achieved the state of the Esoteric Sect's Golden Body. This Sword Qi, he believed, could be shattered with a wave of his hand.

"Break!" Xing Ge Da Wa bellowed, slamming his palm down.

However, the next moment, the smile froze on his face. The Sword Qi effortlessly pierced his palm, then his arm, his shoulder, and finally, his head.

Xing Ge Da Wa's body was sliced diagonally in two. Before he could even scream, the pieces tumbled from the sky.

He had killed Xing Ge Da Wa with a single strike!

「On the cliff.」

Everyone who witnessed this gasped in shock. The Yang Brothers, in particular, stared with their mouths agape in utter astonishment.

PFFT!

Suddenly, Yang Wu coughed up a mouthful of blood, and he looked utterly defeated.

"No, how can this be? It's impossible," Yang Wu muttered, shaking his head. His face was deathly pale, his eyes lifeless, as if his very spirit had been siphoned from his body in an instant.

Xiang Yunlong glanced at Yang Wu and shook his head slightly. To think that a Grandmaster like Yang Wu could be so frightened by Lin Mu's display that he'd vomit blood... It seems he's finished.

「...」

After slaying Xing Ge Da Wa, Lin Mu cast his gaze downward.

"Will you come out on your own, or must I 'invite' you out?"

His emotionless voice echoed through the area. Is someone else still hiding? the crowd wondered.

Just as they were feeling puzzled, a fierce blade light erupted from the ground, slashing straight toward Lin Mu. Simultaneously, a figure shot away into the distance at an incredible speed, vanishing in the blink of an eye.

"Haha, do you truly believe you can come and go from Huaxia as you please?" Lin Mu laughed. "You're not going anywhere!"

He shattered the blade light with one strike, then swung the Yulong Sword gracefully. A razor-sharp streak of Sword Qi shot out, cleaving the air as it howled into the distance. In an instant, it caught up to the fleeing figure.

"No, spare—"

A blood-curdling scream was cut short as a head flew into the air, spraying a fountain of blood. The headless body's momentum carried it forward for several more meters before it finally collapsed.

Two sword strikes. Two Grandmasters slain.

"Incredible!" Xiang Yunlong's face was flushed with excitement, and he couldn't help but roar, "Slaying two Grandmasters in succession! With such methods, he is no different than a Sword Immortal!"

The others watched, thrilled and exhilarated, their blood boiling with excitement. They felt that to have witnessed this battle in person made their lives complete. It was simply too astounding.

Two Grandmasters had been slain by Lin Mu. One had to remember that even Grandmaster Yang Wen had not only failed to save the hostage but had lost an arm in the attempt.

Riding the void.

Slicing artillery shells with a sword.

Executing Grandmasters.

Who else could perform such feats?

In the distance, Lin Mu walked over slowly, holding his sword in one hand with his other arm around the girl.

Countless pairs of eyes, filled with excitement, were fixed upon him.

"Salute!" Xiang Yunlong suddenly roared, his body snapping to attention as he rendered a sharp salute to Lin Mu.

SWOOSH!

Over a hundred people saluted in unison, welcoming him as a returning hero.

It was a salute of gratitude.

It was a salute of respect.

Gratitude to Lin Mu for saving their lives.

Respect for Lin Mu for venturing into danger to rescue another.

"First team, go!" Zhou Dalong commanded, lowering his hand. The dozen or so subordinates he had on standby immediately charged into Mount Zoujiao.

"Report! All enemies have been annihilated!"

The news came back quickly, shocking everyone once more.

All enemies annihilated? Over a dozen experts and two Martial Arts Grandmasters, all killed by Lin Mu single-handedly?

"Thank you! Thank you, Sword Immortal!" Granny Li cried, rushing forward. She took her granddaughter from Lin Mu's arms, then dropped to her knees and began kowtowing. "Thank you, Sword Immortal, for saving my granddaughter's life!"

Tears of joy streamed down her face as she bowed three times. Lin Mu calmly accepted her gesture.

"You murderer!" Liu Long suddenly charged forward, pointing a shaking finger at Lin Mu. "Lin! Why didn't you act sooner? If you had, Mr. Jin wouldn't have died!" he cursed. "Even if you didn't kill Mr. Jin, you're still responsible!"

At these words, everyone, including Xiang Yunlong, looked aghast.

"Am I wrong?" Liu Long roared, his eyes bloodshot. "If this guy had acted sooner, how could Mr. Jin have possibly died? It's all his fault—"

SWOOSH!

A flash of sword light whistled past. Liu Long clutched at his throat, but it was useless. His head tumbled to the ground.

"Noisy," Lin Mu said flatly.