

## **Y Master 1111**

Chapter 1111: Since You're Here, Don't Even Think of Leaving!

Dead?!

The three disciples of the Tianyuan Sect looked at each other in disbelief, unable to believe what was happening before their eyes!

It must be known that Gu Yun was a late-stage True Essence Realm cultivator. Even if his realm had been forcibly elevated with elixir pills, with considerable water content, he was still a late-stage True Essence Realm cultivator, after all.

And Ye Fan was merely a cultivator at the peak of the True Qi Realm. How could he possibly turn the tables on a late-stage True Essence Realm cultivator like Gu Yun?

Unless one enters the True Essence Realm, one remains an ant forever.

Yet, this ant had counter-killed a late-stage True Essence Realm cultivator like Gu Yun. How could that be possible?

At this moment, they simultaneously thought that perhaps Ye Fan was just a bait to lure Gu Yun here, and then a strong person from the Xuanwu Sect had suddenly launched a killing move to kill Gu Yun.

Shua!

Thinking of this, the trio's expressions changed drastically. If things were really as they thought, with the three of them already revealing themselves, the strong person from the Xuanwu Sect might appear any moment now.

But they realized there was actually no strong presence from the Xuanwu Sect nearby.

Even though encountering a strong person of the Holy Embryo Realm would render their cultivation useless and escaping would be a luxury, their sharp spiritual sense told them that only Ye Fan was around.

What was going on?

Could it be that Gu Yun was indeed counter-killed by this True Qi Realm Ye Fan before them?

Absurd!

This thought was simply absurd!

The three simultaneously denied this idea in their minds. Combat across realms wasn't impossible, but surpassing even a minor realm was exceedingly difficult.

Yet, Ye Fan and Gu Yun differed by a whole realm and three minor realms!

But the corpse of Gu Yun in front of them told them everything was real, and not an illusion.

A little cultivator of the True Qi Realm, surpassing levels to slay a late-stage True Essence Realm cultivator, was simply beyond belief.

The traces of battle on the scene were very evident, nearly devastating the area, leaving signs of a brutal fight everywhere.

The shattered rocks, pulverized vines, and diverted rivers all testified to how fierce this battle was.

And...within several hundred meters was only Ye Fan!

In such a scenario, even if they didn't know how Ye Fan did it, they were almost certain Gu Yun indeed died at Ye Fan's hands!

Thinking of this, they inexplicably felt fear creeping in, a chill spreading through them, looking at Ye Fan as if at a demon, or a butcher.

They were afraid!

Even with a thousand or ten thousand reasons to disbelieve, various signs told them it was true!

Whoosh!

Whoosh!

Whoosh!

Overwhelmed by fear, the three, without a word, turned and ran, caring not for appearances.

Mid True Essence Realm cultivators, when faced with a peak True Qi Realm cultivator, had no courage to even fight, choosing instead to flee directly.

Three mid True Essence Realm cultivators!

Frightened away by the peak True Qi Realm Ye Fan...no one would believe such a tale.

Yet, in reality, such a scene genuinely occurred!

This was rare in the history of the entire Southern Domain, or even the whole Tianxuan Continent, only the unparalleled Heavenly Pride of the Di Clan wielded such deterrence!

And now, Ye Fan had achieved all of this!

“Since you’re here, why rush to leave?”

Ye Fan stepped forth, appearing suddenly in front of them, blocking their path, speaking with no emotion.

“Scatter and escape!”

The trio exchanged glances, seeing deep fear in each other’s eyes. Ye Fan’s composure was too chilling, so much so that it terrified them.

“Do you think you can escape?”

Ye Fan snorted coldly, moved his feet, and with Wind Shadow Steps, pursued the gray-clothed youth like a swift wind and lightning.

Shua!

The gray-clothed youth didn't expect Ye Fan to give up on the other two and chase after him, his face changed wildly in fear, and without hesitation, he burned his True Yuan, abruptly increasing his speed by a third.

Others burn True Yuan to fight. He burned True Yuan to flee!

Unfortunately, even burning True Yuan, he was not a match for Ye Fan, who possessed Wind Shadow Steps, and the distance between them closed swiftly.

"Senior brothers, save me..."

The gray-clothed youth was horrified, fleeing wildly while seeking help from the other two youths.

The eagle-eyed youth and the other Tianyuan Sect disciple, after considering it several times, felt that if they continued to flee separately, sooner or later Ye Fan would pick them off individually. It was better for the three to gather and fight to the death; perhaps they could find life in certain death.

Whoosh!

Whoosh!

With this in mind, the two quickly converged towards the gray-clothed youth.

Ye Fan was naturally aware of this, and while pursuing the gray-clothed youth, he did not relax his surveillance of the other two.

Ye Fan also burned Gang Qi Essence, his speed surged again, rapidly closing the distance to within a hundred meters.

A hundred meters, for a Gang Qi Realm (True Qi Realm) cultivator, was a very dangerous distance!

For Ye Fan, at the peak of the True Qi Realm, it was the perfect timing to strike.

Three mid True Essence Realm cultivators, once united, weren't as simple as one plus one equals two. Whether in attack or defense, their power would multiply.

Ye Fan naturally wouldn't give them the opportunity to join forces.

Just now, if the three had not chosen to flee separately but had fought head-on, Ye Fan might not have had a ten percent guarantee of taking them all down.

But now it was different; even if they thought of joining forces to resist Ye Fan, it was already too late!

While sprinting, Ye Fan's eyes shot out two beams of strange light, aimed at the back of the fleeing gray-clothed youth's head.

Spiritual attack!

Ye Fan decided to make it a quick battle, first using a spiritual attack to eliminate one with overwhelming force.

This would exert strong psychological deterrence on the remaining two and eliminate a powerful opponent.

The gray-clothed youth never expected Ye Fan to be a dual cultivation of magic and martial arts — a cultivator of dual cultivation of magic and martial arts was extremely rare even in the Xuan Realm.

Subjected to Ye Fan's spiritual attack, the gray-clothed youth's consciousness was briefly chaotic, his vision darkened, and he stumbled, terrified, calling for help from the other two youths while fleeing.

The eagle-eyed youth and the other Tianyuan Sect disciple, weighing their options, realized that if they continued fleeing like this, they would be defeated individually by Ye Fan, and it would be better to band together to fight him and perhaps find survival in desperate straits.

Whoosh!

Whoosh!

With this thought, the two rapidly converged toward the gray-clothed youth.

Ye Fan, of course, wouldn't give them the chance to unite.

Though pursuing the gray-clothed youth, Ye Fan burned his Gang Qi Essence, speeding up again, and quickly closed in on them.

"Help me, senior brothers..."

The gray-clothed youth was terrified out of his wits. While fleeing, he stumbled and called out to the other two for help.

The eagle-eyed youth and the other disciple from the Tianyuan Sect, after much deliberation, realized that if they kept running like this, Ye Fan would inevitably pick them off one by one, so instead they should gather as one and make a last stand, which might just offer a glimmer of hope for survival.

Whoosh!

Whoosh!

With this in thought, the two quickly converged towards the gray-clothed youth.

Ye Fan increased his speed again, quickly closing in despite chasing the gray-clothed youth, never relaxing his watch over the other two for an instant.

Ye Fan also burned the Gang Qi Essence, his speed soared once again, immediately closing the distance between him and the gray-clothed youth.

For the three mid True Essence Realm cultivators, coming together in a joint attack was not as simple as it seemed. Together, their power in both attack and defense would multiply significantly.

Of course, Ye Fan wouldn't give them a chance to join forces.

No hesitation, Ye Fan directly used his killing move "Domineering Fist".

The punch of Ye Fan instantly targeted the nape of the gray-clothed youth who was running for his life.

Spiritual attack!

Ye Fan decided to make a quick decision and acted first by launching a mental attack towards the back of the gray-clothed youth's mind.

The gray-clothed youth was incapable of comprehending that Ye Fan was a dual cultivator of Skill and Martial Arts—even in the Xuan Realm, cultivators specializing in both aspects were extremely rare.

The gray-clothed youth was hit by Ye Fan's spiritual attack, his concentration wavered for a moment, everything went black in front of his eyes, and he staggered, trembling as he fled.

“Senior brothers, save me...”

The gray-clothed youth, scared to death, stumbled and pleaded for help while running from Ye Fan.

The eagle-eyed youth and the other Tianyuan Sect disciple hesitated for a moment, thinking that if they continued running, sooner or later Ye Fan would defeat them individually; they decided it was better to regroup and fight to the death together, possibly seeking survival in a desperate situation.

Whoosh!

Whoosh!

With this thought, the two hurriedly gathered towards the gray-clothed youth.

Of course, Ye Fan was also aware of this situation. Even though they were chasing the gray-clothed youth, he didn't relax his surveillance on the other two for a moment.

Ye Fan, burning his Gang Qi Essence, accelerated once more, rapidly closing the distance, reaching the perfect time to strike.

"Why leave so quickly when you're already here?"

Ye Fan stepped forward, shrinking the ground into inches, suddenly appearing in front of the three and blocking their path, speaking with a blank face.

The gray-clothed youth was utterly shocked that Ye Fan ignored the other two and chased after him, scaring him so much that he burned his True Yuan without hesitation, increasing his speed by a third.

Others burn True Yuan to fight for their lives; he was burning True Yuan just to escape with his life!

Yet, even as he burned his True Yuan, he was still no match for Ye Fan's Wind Shadow Steps, and the distance between them closed rapidly.

"Senior brothers, save me..."

Terrified to the core, the gray-clothed youth stumbled and leapt around as he fled, calling out for help to the other two youths.

The eagle-eyed youth and another Tianyuan Sect disciple, after weighing their options, realized that if they continued to flee in this manner, they would eventually be taken down one by one by Ye Fan. It was better to gather and fight to the death together. There might be hope for survival.

Whoosh!

Whoosh!

With this thought that came to all of them, the two quickly converged towards the gray-clothed youth.

Naturally, Ye Fan wouldn't give them a chance to join forces. While pursuing the gray-clothed youth, he burned the Gang Qi Essence, and his speed soared again, closing the gap rapidly.

Ye Fan's eyes shot out two beams of striking light, aiming directly at the frightened gray-clothed youth, who was fleeing for his life while calling for help from the other two youths.

Spiritual Attack!

Ye Fan decided on a quick resolution and launched his spiritual attack, causing the gray-clothed youth's mind to temporarily scramble. Everything before his eyes went dark, causing him to stagger and flee in panic.

Without any hesitation, Ye Fan unleashed his killing move "Domineering Fist".

No...

Feeling the terrifying presence approaching fast from behind, the gray-clothed youth was filled with dread, his face twisted with fear.

He spun around, delivering a fist in one fluid motion, simultaneously spitting out a stream of Innate True Essence, forming a large blade that slashed towards Ye Fan's shoulder.

The large blade collided with Ye Fan's Punch Ray, shattering instantly without a sound. Subsequently, the gray-clothed youth's fist was smashed apart by Ye Fan's punch, fragments of flesh and a mist of blood spreading in the air.

Burning his True Qi, Ye Fan punched the late-stage True Essence Realm cultivator to pieces with a single blow, flesh and blood scattering.

The eagle-eyed youth and the other disciple from the Tianyuan Sect were so utterly shocked at witnessing the whole process of the gray-clothed youth being blown apart by Ye Fan's punch that their eyes almost popped out, their shock beyond words.

They were both mid True Essence Realm cultivators, yet of comparable strength to each other. If Ye Fan could blow the gray-clothed youth with a single punch, what if they were to face him?

Thinking of that terrifying outcome, they were filled with unbounded fear, exchanged glances, then started frantically burning their True Yuan and fled in different directions deeper into the Xuan Beast Forest.

Chapter 1112: Not Letting a Single One Go!

Because they saw Ye Fan kill Gu Yun, the other three Tianyuan Sect disciples were scared out of their wits and had no courage to fight.

However—

Ye Fan didn't let them off, after killing the gray-robed youth, he pursued another Tianyuan Sect disciple onto a mountain ridge and killed him with a punch!

That person, with intense unwillingness and regret, followed their senior brother Gu Yun, leaving Ye Fan with a large number of beast cores, some spirit stones, and a treasure medicine.

Ye Fan did not expect the opponent to carry a treasure medicine, which was an unexpected surprise.

After all, treasure medicines are much stronger and rarer than those spiritual medicines with a ten-year age.

Where there is a treasure medicine, there is a rule of powerful Xuan Beasts guarding it, just like the Jade Horned Snake Ye Fan slayed, where he found the Dragon Tongue Plant at its cave entrance.

The Tianyuan Sect disciple carrying a treasure medicine must have obtained it in the Xuan Beast Forest, but ultimately Ye Fan benefited from it.

After killing that Tianyuan Sect disciple, Ye Fan put the spoils into the virtual space, then turned to chase the eagle-eyed youth.

From his appearance alone, it can be seen that the eagle-eyed youth is the type who is naturally cold and indifferent, not caring at all about others' life and death.

Earlier, he suggested separating to escape, for this reason!

In the span of thirty minutes, Ye Fan caught up with the eagle-eyed youth near the canyon where Gu Yun and the others were intercepted before.

Seeing that there was no escape, the eagle-eyed youth suddenly did something Ye Fan did not expect, he fell to his knees with a thud, tears streaming down, and said: "No... don't kill me! Please spare me! I was forced! It was Gu Yun, that bastard, who forced me here!!"

Hmm?

Ye Fan did not expect the eagle-eyed youth to act like this, and he was momentarily stunned.

“Die!!”

Immediately, Ye Fan saw the deceitful glint in the eagle-eyed youth’s eyes and was about to speak when he saw the eagle-eyed youth suddenly attack, a poison-coated dagger stabbed silently at Ye Fan’s foot like a venomous snake.

Ding!

With a light sound, the dagger shattered, leaving a grain-sized wound on Ye Fan’s instep.

“Hahaha... you’re dead!”

The eagle-eyed youth succeeded with his strike and bounced away quickly as if springs were installed under his feet, creating distance from Ye Fan, and looked at Ye Fan with a sinister laugh.

His dagger was coated with the most potent poison, one that seals the prince with blood; even if Ye Fan’s strength is immense, able to suppress the poison temporarily, he would eventually die.

Ye Fan also felt the wound on his foot, it was the first time in so long that someone could leave a mark on him.

The numb and itchy feeling from the wound told him the dagger had to be highly toxic, but he wasn't at all concerned.

Firstly, the Pure Yang Body itself has terrifying resistance to poison, the average poison can't harm him at all.

Secondly, Ye Fan still carried the antidote pill that neutralizes all poisons, making him immune to a hundred poisons.

"Pa!"

Amid the eagle-eyed youth's wild laughter, Ye Fan made his move, a slight movement underfoot and he was next to him in a blink, lifting a hand and slapping the eagle-eyed youth's face, causing him to fly backwards with half his face sunken.

If not for the True Essence Protection, Ye Fan's strike would have taken the eagle-eyed youth's life!

"You..."

The eagle-eyed youth fell, quickly got up, filled with shock and anger, and retreated swiftly.

However—

Ye Fan was faster than him!

Bam!

Ye Fan kicked out, hitting the eagle-eyed youth's dantian, fusing his physical strength with True Qi, erupting instantly, and the violent force directly destroyed the eagle-eyed youth's dantian.

“No!!!”

The eagle-eyed youth screamed, his body kicked into the air by Ye Fan and flew over a dozen meters away, like a kite with a broken string.

With his dantian broken, the eagle-eyed youth's cultivation vanished, rendering him a complete wastrel!

All of this gave him the feeling of falling from Heaven to Hell, and he fainted upon hitting the ground.

Ye Fan roused the Pure Yang Qi and the antidote pill to swiftly clear the toxins from his body, then his foot moved, and he swooped beside the eagle-eyed youth.

Pa! Pa! Pa!

Ye Fan rapidly slapped several major acupoints on the eagle-eyed youth, drilling lines of True Qi into his meridians, instantly stimulating him awake.

“Ah...!”

Upon seeing his predicament, the eagle-eyed youth nearly went insane, having endured the loneliness and pain beyond ordinary people, cultivating arduously to the mid True Essence Realm.

Only to find, all those years of hard cultivation went down the drain in an instant, how could he not despair?!

“Two questions, answer them and I’ll give you a quick death, or else I’ll make you wish you were dead, it’s your choice!” Ye Fan said coldly, with not a trace of mercy on his face.

After all, mercy to the enemy is cruelty to oneself!

He had just experienced this, and would not make the same mistake again!

The eagle-eyed youth glared at Ye Fan with fiery eyes, refusing to answer—although he didn't know exactly what Ye Fan's question was, he wasn't prepared to answer.

"Hehe..."

Seeing the resolute look in the eagle-eyed youth's eyes, Ye Fan smiled and tapped once on the Xuanji point of the eagle-eyed youth.

Instantly, the eagle-eyed youth's meridians seemed to reverse, and he was overwhelmed with itching and numbness, as if countless ants were gnawing at his meridians.

"Aow..."

This kind of pain was simply unbearable for a human; the eagle-eyed youth screamed miserably, his body twitching uncontrollably.

"I'll give you one more chance."

Ye Fan said expressionlessly, "Also, don't doubt my abilities, you may already know, I came from Earth. Before I came, I was a disciple of the Divine Doctor on Earth. A doctor can save lives and is more adept at killing and torturing people!"

Ye Fan wasn't lying; this kind of punishment was actually taught to him by Chu Xuanji.

"Hiss~"

The eagle-eyed youth gasped, shivered, and said hoarsely, "I'll tell, I'll tell, just relieve this pain for me first."

Ye Fan casually brushed his acupoint, and the sensation of reversing meridians vanished instantly.

"Huff... huff..." the eagle-eyed youth gasped for breath, "What do you want to know?"

"First, how many people did you send to capture me, and what are their strengths? Second, is there anyone guarding near the spatial passage between the Xuan Realm and Earth?" Ye Fan got straight to the point.

"There are only four of us here. Near the Xuanwu Sect's mountain gate, there is also an elder of the Holy Embryo Realm."

The eagle-eyed youth cooperated very well, in the face of such torture, he spilled everything he knew like beans being poured out.

After listening to the eagle-eyed youth, Ye Fan pondered for a moment. According to him, there weren't any Tianyuan Sect people guarding near the spatial passage, which meant he could check it out without encountering any danger.

"You've been very cooperative, I'll give you a swift end!" Having obtained the information he wanted, Ye Fan decided to act.

"I have a question. I hope you can tell me, or I won't die in peace!" the eagle-eyed youth stared fixedly at Ye Fan's instep.

"What is your question?"

"You were hit with my Five-Flower Poison, why are you fine?"

This was the most puzzling thing to the eagle-eyed youth. Although his dagger wasn't of great quality, it was imbued with Five-Flower Poison, which he spent a fortune acquiring.

And the Five-Flower Poison is one of the world's rarest poisons; if the poisoned person cannot get the antidote in time, they are sure to die!

"Because I have this!"

Ye Fan took out the antidote pill and waved it in front of the eagle-eyed youth, saying, "This is an antidote pill obtained from the body of a Jade Horned Snake."

"Sssh—"

Upon finishing his words, Ye Fan pointed a finger, and a finger-thick bloody hole appeared at the center of the eagle-eyed youth's forehead, killing him instantly.

...

After killing the eagle-eyed youth, Ye Fan moved his feet and headed toward the small valley where the spatial passage was located.

Along the way, whenever he encountered a Xuan Beast he could defeat, Ye Fan would decisively kill it and activate his recording bracelet to document the entire process of slaying the Xuan Beast.

Whenever he encountered an invincible Xuan Beast, Ye Fan would try to find a way to avoid it, avoiding direct confrontation with these Xuan Beasts.

As the number of Xuan Beasts dying at his hands gradually increased, his contribution value was also skyrocketing.

Hungry he ate, thirsty he drank, riding into the dawn and resting at dusk, Ye Fan spent over a month in the Xuan Beast Forest without reaching the small valley where the spatial passage was located.

That day, Ye Fan silently calculated the number and level of Xuan Beasts he had hunted and the contribution value they would generate, finding that he should be roughly within the top twenty ranks of elite disciples.

This ranking was already enough to qualify for the elite disciple competition, so Ye Fan stopped delaying. The time was almost up, and he feared that if he continued hunting like this, although his contribution value would accumulate, he might miss the timing for the elite disciple competition.

If he couldn't return to the sect before the elite disciple competition, it would be a futile effort!

After all, he came to the Xuan Beast Forest to hunt Xuan Beasts to gain contribution points, aiming to break into the top thirty-six and qualify for the competition.

Now he had the qualification, and missing the competition schedule would leave him with regrets, wouldn't it?

What he needed wasn't just the prestige of being a core disciple; more importantly, he needed substantial cultivation resources. Only if the Xuanwu Sect believed in his boundless potential would they devote all their efforts to nurturing him.

Relying solely on himself, acquiring vast cultivation resources and rapidly improving his strength was almost impossible.

Moreover, the Nine Heavens Profound Body had significant differences compared to others. That is, all of the acupoints in his body could store True Qi, which meant the amount of Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi he needed for a promotion was terrifyingly vast.

Under such circumstances, gaining the full support of a powerful sect was undoubtedly easier than burning cultivation resources on his own.

With this thought, Ye Fan decided to cease hunting Xuan Beasts and employ his movement technique to head fully towards the small valley where the spatial passage was located!

Chapter 1113: Traces of Mother

The Xuanshou Mountain Range is vast and holds an extremely important position in the Southern Domain of the Tianxuan mainland. It is considered the Sixth Great Forbidden area outside the Five Great Life Bans.

However, unlike the other Five Great Life Bans, this place is not devoid of life; it is the paradise of the Xuan Beasts.

According to legend, the heart of the Xuanshou Mountain Range is a secluded utopia, with picturesque scenery and Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi so dense it has turned into liquid. Any pool here is not filled with ordinary water, but concentrated Heaven and Earth Source Liquid.

Cultivation in such a place is absolutely twice the result with half the effort, yet except for a few Great Emperors in the history of the Xuan Realm, no one has reached the heart of the Xuanshou Mountain Range.

Thus, the true nature of the heart of the Xuanshou Mountain Range is unknown to anyone, and can only be speculated upon from the fragmented words left by the Great Emperors.

It's said that the Xuan Beasts deep within the Xuanshou Mountain Range have shed their beast forms, transforming into human-like shapes. Any Xuan Beast capable of shedding their original form has unfathomable power.

Among humans, only the Great Emperor can overpower these Xuan Beasts who have transformed into human forms, so only a Great Emperor can be unimpeded in the heart of the Xuanshou Mountain Range.

Even the most powerful cultivators below the realm of the Great Emperor dare not rashly venture into the heart of the Xuanshou Mountain Range.

The small valley where the space passage connecting the Xuan Realm to Earth is located lies on the edge of the heart of the Xuanshou Mountain Range, connected to the central area.

Nearby, there are also many powerful Xuan Beasts, but these formidable Xuan Beasts are not interested in this little valley, nor the space passage.

The reason is simple. Beyond the True Essence Realm, due to the influence of the laws of Heaven and Earth, they cannot enter the space passage and thus reach Earth.

Their goal is to enter the heart of the Xuanshou Mountain Range and gain the recognition of those human-shaped Xuan Beasts within. As for entering Earth through the space passage, they have no interest at all.

However, despite this, there are still quite a number of Xuan Beasts living near the space passage. The last time the Flame Eagle took away a group of relatively weaker Xuan Beasts, it created a vacuum here in a short period.

In the Xuanshou Mountain Range, the number of Xuan Beasts is extremely large. After the disappearance of the ruler here, other Xuan Beasts quickly occupy the space.

Yet today, the area near this inconspicuous little valley is silent, even devoid of the sound of insects, resembling a graveyard.

Near the space passage, within the little valley, a noble, graceful, and pure woman stood quietly. Her eyes seemingly pierced through the void, staring at the space passage.

Although the space passage has been sealed, she seemed to still be able to see its existence, her eyes projecting intense longing.

From her appearance, the woman seemed to be around thirty years old, wearing a long white robe. The mountain wind blew, making her garment flap loudly.

The woman gazed at the space passage, her expression constantly changing, revealing deep emotions like an ocean.

Sometimes she showed intense sorrow as if her heart was dead, all thoughts extinguished, even as if the surrounding air was filled with profound sadness.

Other times it revealed deep worry, with maternal light shining in her eyes, as though she could see something she loved dearly through the space passage.

“It’s been twenty years, I wonder how he’s doing...”

The woman appeared like a loving mother surrounded by saintly light, as if she transformed into a compassionate figure.

“I owe him too much... I wonder if I can make it up in this lifetime...”

Her eyes grew misty, and two tears filled with long-brewing intense emotions spilled over uncontrollably, sliding down her smooth cheeks.

“Hmm?”

Suddenly, the sorrowful woman sensed a cultivator approaching rapidly, snapping her out of her memories.

“Hu~”

She took a deep breath and, filled with intense reluctance, floated away.

The cold mountain wind blew across her face, faintly revealing two still-wet tear trails, with tear droplets glistening at the corners of her eyes. As the cold wind blew, the tears fell like pearls on a broken string, wetting her collar...

In a blink of an eye, the woman had vanished beyond the valley, like a swan flying into the distance.

...

Not far from the little valley, Ye Fan encountered trouble. Eager to hurry on his journey, he neglected to monitor his surroundings and was entangled by a Mid True Essence Realm Beast king.

This Mid True Essence Realm Beast king was a two-headed Earth Wolf, fierce and cunning, with terrifying power. Even if Ye Fan used his full strength, he couldn't defeat it quickly. However, the Earth Wolf could do nothing to Ye Fan either, and they could only stare each other down.

Ye Fan didn't have much time to waste here and directly burned his True Qi, unleashing strong combat power, simultaneously using Magic and Martial Arts to frighten the Mid True Essence Realm Beast king.

Although the Earth Wolf was fierce and sly, it was very accurate in judging strength. Once Ye Fan displayed his full combat power, it quickly realized it wasn't Ye Fan's opponent and that continuing the fight would lead to its death.

After scaring away the Earth Wolf, Ye Fan was about to move on when suddenly Elder Xuan's voice echoed in his mind: "Xiao Fan, something is off!"

Ye Fan was startled, fearing something might have happened to the space passage, and hurriedly asked, "What's wrong? What's off?"

"Just now, I sensed an extremely familiar aura very similar to your mother, Ling Yun," Elder Xuan hesitated before continuing, "However, I can't be sure it's Ling Yun. It might be someone else whose aura is very similar to your mother's."

"What?!"

Ye Fan was instantly excited, nearly fainting from shock. All these years he had never seen his mother. Besides coming to the Xuan Realm to refine the Soul Gathering Pill to save Su Liuli, he was also searching for his biological mother.

Ye Fan is a person of deep emotions, and if not for this, he wouldn't have faced stagnation in his cultivation due to a familial enigma!

Whizz!

In a burst of excitement, Ye Fan increased his speed to the limit, his entire body emitting a faint golden light, like several golden lightning bolts shooting towards the small valley.

He was almost certain that the person Elder Xuan sensed was his mother Ling Yun, because besides his mother, there weren't many in the Xuan Realm who knew about the space channel, and there absolutely wouldn't be anyone in the Tianyuan Sect with an aura similar to his mother's.

Soon, Ye Fan arrived at the small valley and found it deserted. The space channel was still sealed well and showed no signs of being discovered.

However—

Now Ye Fan didn't care about the space channel at all. He quickly searched through the small valley, able to smell a faint fragrance lingering in the air, but the person was already long gone, vanished without a trace.

"Elder Xuan, where is she? Where did my mother go?"

Ye Fan anxiously asked Elder Xuan; he truly wanted to see his mother even once. From childhood to adulthood, he had never seen his mother, not even a single photograph.

Regarding his mother, Ye Fan's mind held only a symbol, with no memories whatsoever, which had always been Ye Fan's greatest regret!

Elder Xuan sighed and said, "She left. She's already gone. If you could have been a bit quicker, you might have seen her. Unfortunately now..."

"Gone?!!"

Ye Fan was struck as if by lightning, standing there dazed, his mind blank, completely bewildered by the news.

Twenty years!

How many twenties are there in a lifetime?

Ye Fan waited a full twenty years, and just as he was about to meet his biological mother, such a change occurred!

"Does my mother not want to see me?"

Ye Fan quickly overturned this thought; what kind of mother wouldn't want to see her own son?

Although Ling Yun left him on Earth and returned to the Xuan Realm alone, she left him the powerful Emperor Weapon, the Nine Heavens Mysterious Crown!

This... is enough to prove Ling Yun's love for him!

In Ye Fan's mind, Ling Yun left because she didn't know the person approaching the valley was him.

"Mom, I'm Xiao Fan! I'm Xiao Fan! I've come to the Xuan Realm to find you!!!"

Thinking of this, Ye Fan suddenly became excited, running wildly in the small valley, shouting loudly.

He firmly believed that as long as his mother heard his call, she would surely come out to meet him.

"Roar~"

However—

Ye Fan's voice echoed through the valley and also provoked the roars of other Xuan Beasts.

In the next moment, the roars of Xuan Beasts blared through the forest, completely drowning out Ye Fan's voice, leaving him gnashing his teeth in anger.

Hmm??

Suddenly, Ye Fan stopped in his tracks, staring intensely at a spot near the space channel, where two distinct footprints showed that someone had indeed stood there for a long time.

“Mother, were you standing here earlier? Why didn’t you wait for your son?”

Ye Fan’s eyes reddened, gazing into the depths of the Xuanshou Mountain Range, and whispered softly.

Twenty years had passed, all these years, Ye Fan constantly missed his never-seen mother.

How much pain and suffering does a child without a mother endure, who knows?

Ye Fan had always been very sensible since he was young, but who can understand the bitterness and pain behind this sensibility?

Now, he was about to meet his mother, yet missed her by a hair, unable to meet, Ye Fan’s heart bled and wept.

Looking towards the depths of the Xuanshou Mountain Range, Ye Fan wanted to rush in to verify if the departed person was indeed his mother.

But he restrained this thought because he knew he couldn't; with the power he currently had, entering the depths of the Xuanshou Mountain Range was a path to certain death!

"Strength!"

"I must quickly improve my strength; only by increasing my strength can I possibly search for my mother's trail; otherwise, everything is just empty talk!"

Ye Fan clenched his hands tight, nails digging into his flesh, with drops of blood trickling down onto the grass below.

"Phew~"

After an unknown amount of time, Ye Fan took a deep breath, cast a deeply reluctant glance towards the depths of the Xuanshou Mountain Range, turned around, and left the small valley, unwilling to leave.

He must return to the sect immediately to participate in the elite disciple competition!

Chapter 1114: Sudden Crisis Appears!

Two months' time, neither long nor short, has passed by without notice.

There are only five days left until the elite disciple tournament. The Xuanwu Sect Inner Sect elite disciples are returning in droves, whether they were out gaining experience or on missions, most have returned to the sect.

The massive return of elite disciples has made the area where the Xuanwu Sect's elite disciples are located become lively. Many elite disciples are moving around every day, either discussing cultivation insights with close brothers or exchanging unused spiritual medicine and materials for artifact refining and alchemy.

But among the core disciples, Tong Qianchen is restless. There are only five days until the elite disciple tournament, yet there's no news of Ye Fan.

In recent days, she's been going to the Xuanwu Summit where the Great Elder resides almost every few days, hoping to see Ye Fan safely return.

As long as he can return safely, it doesn't matter whether he can participate in the elite disciple tournament.

On this day, Tong Qianchen appeared on the Xuanwu Summit again.

Although the Xuanwu Summit, where the Great Elder is in seclusion, isn't a place prohibiting idle people, many disciples in the sect know the temperament of Great Elder Wu Xinhai and prefer not to come here without reason.

Therefore, the Xuanwu Summit is very serene, devoid of much worldly clamor, and filled with a sense of natural tranquility and harmony.

“Uncle Wu, has Brother Ye not come back yet?” In front of the quaint little house, Tong Qianchen asked the elder Wu Xinhai, who was sitting inside.

Wu Xinhai and her father Tong Tianhao are actually like senior and junior brothers, only Wu Xinhai is much older, so calling him Uncle Wu isn’t wrong.

“Hmm.”

Wu Xinhai nodded, his face full of worry. He has never taken a disciple in his life, always solitary, a lone soul without even a wife.

He thought he would die lonely, never expecting to find a promising cultivation talent like Ye Fan in his later years.

Wu Xinhai has devoted almost all of his heart and soul to Ye Fan. On the surface, he is very strict with Ye Fan, but that’s in the hope that Ye Fan can make remarkable progress.

Because he believes Ye Fan has already missed the best time for cultivation, to catch up he must endure what others cannot in order to achieve success.

Ye Fan's performance has always pleased Wu Xinhai greatly—such an apprentice who brings honor to the master, Wu Xinhai treasures immensely!

In recent days, he too has been worried, checking the Lamp Hall almost daily to see if Ye Fan's soul lamp is still normal.

He knows Ye Fan's unyielding temperament; given the chance, Ye Fan would definitely delve deep into the Xuanshou Mountain Range, hunting stronger Xuan Beasts to gain contribution value more quickly and qualify for the elite disciple tournament.

"Uncle Wu, do you think Brother Ye might have encountered some trouble? That's why he hasn't been able to return in time?"

Sitting across from Wu Xinhai, Tong Qianchen asked with a worried face. She's not really expecting anything from Wu Xinhai, just seeking some psychological comfort.

Wu Xinhai naturally understood her thoughts, smiled lightly, and said, "Don't worry, for now, your Brother Ye is safe. I just came from the Lamp Hall, and his soul lamp is still lit, which means he's at least still alive. As long as he's alive, there's nothing to worry about."

"I hope Brother Ye returns soon. If he encounters invincible Xuan Beasts or disciples from the Tianyuan Sect, he might be in danger." Tong Qianchen silently prayed for Ye Fan's swift return.

Having heard Tong Qianchen's words, Wu Xinhai was also slightly worried—if Ye Fan encountered strong people from the Tianyuan Sect, there might indeed be danger.

“Should I go look for him? So this kid doesn't actually get taken by people from the Tianyuan Sect!”

Wu Xinhai mused silently. This is the only good disciple he's had in his life; he can't let anyone take him, not even the Tianyuan Sect.

“Girl, don't worry, go back and wait in peace. Your Brother Ye will surely have blessings in disguise. If necessary, I will personally go find him.”

Wu Xinhai started to hint at her to leave, and Tong Qianchen, not wanting to disturb Wu Xinhai's cultivation further, took her leave.

On the way back, Tong Qianchen glanced unintentionally at Xuanling Summit, where the elite disciples are. All elite disciples cultivate on Xuanling Summit.

The elite disciple tournament is also held on Xuanling Summit, where a small arena for the finals is currently being built, with several elders engraving a defensive formation.

As the main peak, Xuanling Summit covers an extremely vast area, much of which is rarely visited by people.

In a secluded and usually deserted corner, Wei Jun was diligently practicing a powerful martial art technique. With a single strike, the air was set ablaze, emitting a singed smell.

“Clap, clap...”

Applause came from behind a boulder, and Chu Feng stepped out leisurely, looking at Wei Jun, who was practicing martial arts, with a face full of smiles, and said, “Junior Brother Wei is indeed remarkably gifted and has high comprehension! To have cultivated Fiery Flame Slash to such an extent in less than two months, I’m truly happy for you as your senior brother!”

“Where, where, compared to Brother Chu, I am just a small figure in the big picture. Brother Chu’s talent and comprehension are second to none in our Xuanwu Sect; the position of Sect Leader in the future will surely belong to Brother Chu. When that time comes, don’t forget to lend your junior brother a hand!”

Although Wei Jun’s strength isn’t much to speak of, his skill in reading people’s expressions is indeed top-notch. He knows exactly what to say, and his flattering words were loud and clear, which made Chu Feng exceptionally comfortable.

After the two praised each other for a while, Wei Jun said, “Brother Chu, that brat who knows neither heaven nor earth hasn’t returned yet; he might already be dead. We just don’t know whether he died under the sharp claws of the Xuan Beasts or at the hands of the Tianyuan Sect disciples.”

“Who he died to isn’t important; what’s important is that he’s dead. Unfortunately, I don’t have the privilege to go to the Lamp Hall to verify, otherwise I would go and see for myself if his soul lamp is extinguished or not!”

Chu Feng shook his head and sighed. Although he is a Core Disciple, he does not yet have the privilege to freely visit the Lamp Hall. Even Tong Qianchen, the daughter of the Sect Leader, needs Elder Wu Xinhai to accompany her in order to enter; otherwise, she couldn't get in either.

"You've done excellently in this matter. If nothing unexpected happens, the first place in this Elite Disciple competition is definitely yours. Besides, with your current combat power, you're already fully capable of defeating He Yuntian. Then you can become a Core Disciple like me."

Chu Feng patted Wei Jun's shoulder, feeling very satisfied with the performance of this loyal hound.

However, he also felt a bit uneasy in his heart because the Elder guarding the Lamp Hall had not yet announced that any soul lamps were extinguished. No soul lamp being extinguished means no one has died.

"I owe this entirely to Brother Chu for bestowing me with martial arts. Without it, I wouldn't have attained my current combat power. Brother Chu's great kindness is something Wei Jun could never repay, even if broken bones await!"

Wei Jun is very aware that the He Yuntian mentioned by Chu Feng is indeed the weakest among the Core Disciples. Being the weakest, nonetheless, he is still a Core Disciple.

With this Fiery Flame Slash, Wei Jun could effortlessly secure first place while simultaneously defeating He Yuntian, replacing him as a Core Disciple!

Thinking about the benefits of being a Core Disciple, Wei Jun couldn't hold back the fire in his heart. It's not just about elevated status; he'll also have more Cultivation Resources and surely cultivate faster than he can now.

"That's the reward you deserve. Stick with me in the future and help me with my tasks; I won't treat you unfairly." Finishing his words, Chu Feng turned and left, leaving Wei Jun to continue his martial arts cultivation.

Watching Chu Feng's disappearing figure, a vicious smile emerged on Wei Jun's face. He's only limited by his current power; once he becomes stronger in ability, will he continue working for Chu Feng?

Everyone has their own hidden motives. Chu Feng is like this, so why wouldn't Wei Jun be?

...

Meanwhile, a group of people arrived in the Xuanshou Mountain Range.

The leader was impressively an elder from the Tianyuan Sect, dressed in a dark blue robe with a palm-sized golden leaf stitched on the left chest—a symbol of the Tianyuan Sect.

However, only strong individuals at the elder level have the privilege to wear golden leaves on their chest; other disciples merely have leaves of green, red, blue, or purple.

This elder brought dozens of disciples dressed in white, each bearing blue leaves on their chests, indicating they are Elite Disciples of the Tianyuan Sect.

“Elder, there was once a great battle here, and it carries the aura of Brother Gu Yun!” one of the Elite Disciples reported to the elder.

“Search carefully; there must be no oversight!” The elder commanded with a stern face.

The Tianyuan Sect and Xuanwu Sect have been fighting for so many years, gaining a deep understanding of each other’s artifacts; the Xuanwu Sect has a Lamp Hall, and naturally, so does the Tianyuan Sect.

Any disciple who ventures outside leaves a soul lamp in the Lamp Hall, to ensure the Sect is informed in case of accidents.

This is merely a spell; soul lamps are low-level Magic Artifacts capable of collecting and preserving a wisp of a cultivator’s soul. There is a mysterious connection between the lamp and the body; if the body perishes, the soul lamp immediately extinguishes.

Gu Yun and three others were killed by Ye Fan, and the Tianyuan Sect found out quickly. Although they didn’t know who did it, they guessed that the Xuanwu Sect surely had a hand in it.

Thus, they sent an elder accompanied by dozens of Elite Disciples to investigate.

As they searched, Ye Fan arrived nearby. Though not yet aware of anyone ahead, Elder Xuan sensed it and warned, “Kid, there are people ahead—strong individuals in the Holy Embryo Realm. Quickly hide the Nine Heavens Mysterious Crown, then immediately enter the Virtual Space to evade!”

What?!

Ye Fan was startled. He quickly concealed the Nine Heavens Mysterious Crown in a lush grove, then stepped into the virtual space within the crown.

At the same time, the elder from Tianyuan Sect led several Elite Disciples toward Ye Fan’s hiding place for a thorough search...

Chapter 1115: Delay

The elder of the Tianyuan Sect led dozens of elite disciples in a thorough search in the Xuan Beast Forest, discovering the bodies of Gu Yun and three other disciples, but they were only a pile of minced flesh, identifiable only by their clothing and belongings.

All this happened because Ye Fan killed them and left immediately, attracting nearby Xuan Beasts with the strong scent of blood—their flesh became a feast for the Xuan Beasts!

The scent of blood was like a beacon for the nearby Xuan Beasts, and after realizing there was no danger, they came to feast on the flesh.

In fact, it was by following the scent of blood that the Tianyuan Sect disciples found the bodies of the four people.

“Damn it, who did this? I will tear them into pieces!”

The elder of the Tianyuan Sect was furious; Gu Yun was the Sect Leader’s disciple and extremely important to the Tianyuan Sect, but he died here.

More importantly, among the other three dead disciples from the Tianyuan Sect, the eagle-eyed youth was his disciple.

Watching his prized disciple die tragically, the elder’s eyes almost shed blood as he roared continuously.

“Search, search thoroughly for me, don’t overlook any clues. Even if you have to dig three feet deep, find the murderer for me!” The elder of the Tianyuan Sect commanded sternly, looking as though he wanted to kill.

Although the other elite disciples knew it was impossible to find the murderer, with the elder so angry, no one dared to defy his orders. They could only put in their utmost effort and conduct a thorough search.

The repeated searches almost exposed Ye Fan’s Nine Heavens Mysterious Crown.

Fortunately, he hid the Nine Heavens Mysterious Crown extraordinarily well, not only burying it in the grass but also covering it perfectly, without a single hint visible, even blocking the golden light completely.

The elder of the Tianyuan Sect searched several times near the Nine Heavens Mysterious Crown, and Ye Fan, hiding in the virtual space, could clearly sense the outside presence.

Nonetheless, the ability of the Nine Heavens Mysterious Crown to conceal its aura was terrifying, seemingly like a dead object without a trace of aura, undetectable even by the Holy Embryo Realm elder.

Even so, Ye Fan sweated coldly.

He knew that if discovered, not only would the Nine Heavens Mysterious Crown change hands, but he himself would likely be forced out.

Who knows if the Tianyuan Sect has some evil martial arts like the Soul Searching Technique?

Due to the restrictions of the world's rules, it is almost impossible for Earth's cultivators to break through to the True Essence Realm, even if they succeed, they are definitely not opponents of the Xuan Realm's strong people, making Earth almost certain to become Tianyuan Sect's backyard.

The elder of the Tianyuan Sect led the search continuously for two days, covering almost a hundred miles, thoroughly scouring almost every area.

Ye Fan hid in the virtual space of the Nine Heavens Mysterious Crown apprehensively, not relaxing until two days later.

This was also thanks to Ye Fan's skillful hiding of the Nine Heavens Mysterious Crown, as several times during the continuous two-day search, Tianyuan Sect's elite disciples almost found the Nine Heavens Mysterious Crown but ultimately overlooked it.

Having narrowly escaped disaster, Ye Fan sadly realized he still couldn't leave. The reason was simple: not far ahead of him, guarding the only way to the Xuanwu Sect, stood several elite disciples.

Ye Fan weighed his combat power and felt he still couldn't take the risk. If he couldn't quickly kill all these elite disciples, the elder of the Tianyuan Sect would arrive, leaving him with no burial place.

"What should I do? The competition is about to start! If they keep guarding here, it will definitely delay my participation in the competition!"

As time ticked by, Ye Fan questioned himself anxiously.

To him, time in the virtual space was slipping by slowly. He knew that the Xuanwu Sect's elite disciple competition was about to begin. If he couldn't return in time, he feared he wouldn't qualify to participate.

But being anxious was useless. Right now, he absolutely couldn't rush out of the virtual space. If he acted, it would be too late for regrets.

Since Elder Xuan couldn't step forward either, relying solely on his own power, he couldn't face not only the Holy Embryo Realm elder of the Tianyuan Sect but even these elite disciples together.

"Endure! I must endure!!"

Having no choice, unable to leave, Ye Fan constantly admonished himself to endure and not act impulsively.

While waiting, he cultivated in the virtual space, trying to use cultivation to calm himself.

Another three days passed. According to the time ratio between the virtual space and the outside world, combined with the previous two days, Ye Fan spent fifty days in the virtual space.

During this period, the elder of the Tianyuan Sect never stopped searching, having expanded the search range, though the previously searched areas became blind spots.

This is human inherent thinking; on Earth, many in the police system know that many criminals who prefer to act contrary, possessing reverse thinking, like to hide near police stations.

Thus, they can always observe the new search dynamics of the police, and also the most dangerous places become the safest.

The police call this reverse thinking ‘under the lamp’s shadow’, meaning the more dangerous a place is, the more it becomes people’s blind spot, and easily overlooked.

If the elder of the Tianyuan Sect understood this principle, he should strengthen the re-searching of already searched places.

Unfortunately, he didn’t know this, which provided Ye Fan with a certain safety margin.

That day, an elite disciple who was sent to scout the Xuanwu Sect’s situation returned, heading straight to the elder, saying, “Elder, the elite disciple competition of the Xuanwu Sect has started. Important members and disciples of the Xuanwu Sect have all returned, except for that disciple named Ye Fan, who is said to have died in the Xuan Beast Forest!”

Dead?

After hearing the report, the elder of the Tianyuan Sect frowned deeply; he didn’t believe Ye Fan was dead, but had no proof to show Ye Fan was still alive.

“It’s truly unfortunate, not expecting that kid to die in the Xuan Beast Forest.”

One of the elite disciples of the Tianyuan Sect laughed; they didn’t know what Ye Fan meant to the Tianyuan Sect. With their status, they hadn’t reached such core secrets, so Ye Fan’s death wasn’t taken to heart.

“It certainly saved him trouble, how nice would it be if we caught him; it would be a major accomplishment!”

“Exactly, Elder, since Ye Fan is dead and the Xuanwu Sect people have returned, should we also go back? Staying here any longer is pointless.”

Several elite disciples opened their mouths, advising the elder of the Tianyuan Sect to lead everyone back to the Sect, as the Xuan Beast Forest was full of dangers. Encounters with powerful Xuan Beasts emerging from deep in the forest would leave even the elder unable to protect them, akin to a clay Buddha crossing a river unable to save itself!

“Wait a bit longer, let’s talk after the other searchers come back.”

The elder of the Tianyuan Sect pondered for a moment. Though the disciple had a valid point that staying longer was indeed pointless, he decided to search once more.

Ye Fan was presumed dead, and seeking information about the space passage from him was no longer possible. Moreover, Gu Yun was dead too, leaving fewer who knew about the space passage.

Yet, he was still unwilling to let go, especially because his prized disciple also died here, which made his anger rise uncontrollably at the thought.

The elder gave orders, so even if they were reluctant, they could only wait, conducting superficial searches nearby, without detailed investigation.

Firstly, the area had been searched countless times, and there couldn't be anyone hidden. Secondly, they were indeed fed up, having spent five consecutive days doing nothing but searching without making any discoveries.

“Return to the Sect!”

Half a day later, all the dispatched elite disciples returned with no results. The elder of the Tianyuan Sect sighed, knowing that further searches would likely be fruitless, and with a wave, led all Tianyuan Sect disciples away.

Once the elder of the Tianyuan Sect and the numerous elite disciples withdrew, Ye Fan patiently waited for another hour before quietly emerging from the virtual space.

“Rest assured, they really left.” Knowing Ye Fan's worries, Elder Xuan comforted him.

“Phew~~”

Taking a deep breath, Ye Fan activated his movement technique, rushing urgently towards the Xuanwu Sect.

Though he was unsure whether he would still be able to participate in the elite disciple competition, regardless of what happens, even with just a slim chance, he would seize it!

Chapter 1116: The Tournament Begins as Scheduled

Just as the Tianyuan Sect disciple reported, the elite disciple competition of the Xuanwu Sect's Inner Sect took place as scheduled, not delayed due to Ye Fan's absence.

On the day of the competition, at dawn, the main summit of the Xuanwu Sect, Xuanwu Summit, was already bustling with people. Inner sect, outer sect, elite disciples, core disciples—each formed their own group, distinctly separated.

Among the elite disciples, there were two small factions: one consisted of those who fell outside the top thirty-six and couldn't participate in the competition, and the other was the top thirty-six.

After a brief commotion, everyone sat according to the previous rules, waiting for the Sect Leader and the elders to arrive.

Among the core disciples, Tong Qianchen was restless with anxiety; last night, she learned from Great Elder Wu Xinhai that Ye Fan's soul lamp hadn't extinguished, meaning at least Ye Fan was still alive.

But until now, he still hadn't returned, feared to be in grave danger, since the Tianyuan Sect constantly sought to capture him. If he ventured beyond the influence of the Xuanwu Sect, he might fall into the hands of the Tianyuan Sect.

If that's truly the case, Ye Fan might never return. Thinking of this, Tong Qianchen felt as if her heart was being slashed.

Over these days, Ye Fan's shadow had deeply imprinted itself within her mind.

She knew what kind of emotion this was, but she had no solution. From a holistic perspective, the Xuanwu Sect slightly fell short of the Tianyuan Sect, sufficient for defense but lacking in offense.

If Ye Fan were to fall into the Tianyuan Sect's hands, it would be incredibly difficult for him to return, especially since Ye Fan had once brutally humiliated the Tianyuan Sect's sect leader Helian Chang.

With Helian Chang's vindictive nature, how could he let Ye Fan escape his control alive?

Not only her, but Great Elder Wu Xinhai was also deeply worried about Ye Fan's safety, as Ye Fan was his first and only disciple.

Just yesterday, he specifically went to search the back mountain but found nothing, feeling faintly that Ye Fan had been captured by the Tianyuan Sect's people. Otherwise, with Ye Fan's character, he would never miss the competition.

"Alas..."

Thinking of this, the Great Elder felt a subtle ache in his heart; he had poured much into Ye Fan with great expectations.

Now, Ye Fan might have already fallen into the Tianyuan Sect's clutches, making his heart ache.

Yet he understood that even if Ye Fan fell into the Tianyuan Sect's hands, he couldn't storm in demanding him back, and even going there would be futile since Helian Chang wouldn't admit anything.

Amidst everyone's expectation, the eastern sky revealed a ray of dawn, which in an instant spread across the land, cloaking the Xuanwu Summit in gold and red hues.

In the dawn, Sect Leader Tong Tianhao led the elders through the air, slowly landing in the square before the hut.

In the square stood a temporary stone platform about five feet high, with Taishi chairs lined up in a row on top.

Tong Tianhao landed on the stone platform with the elders, gently seated himself, and glanced at the crowd below, noticing Ye Fan's absence among the elite disciples, sighing slightly in his heart.

Yesterday, he learned from Great Elder Wu Xinhai that Ye Fan hadn't returned yet, suspecting that Ye Fan had fallen into the Tianyuan Sect's hands.

Today, seeing this scene, Tong Tianhao realized that Ye Fan probably wouldn't return.

Among the core disciples, Chu Feng, sitting beside Tong Qianchen, outwardly appeared unaffected, calmly pleased internally.

To him, Ye Fan's continued absence signified his likely death!

For him, it mattered not if Ye Fan died under the fierce claws of a Xuan Beast or within the hands of Tianyuan Sect's strong people; what mattered was Ye Fan was dead!

He firmly believed that without Ye Fan, Tong Qianchen would surely return to his side, allowing him to continue implementing his plan, which was also the purpose for Chu's Family Head having him join the Tianyuan Sect.

Tong Tianhao shook his head in private, adjusted his mood slightly, and then felt a bit comforted seeing the vibrant faces below.

Those people were the elites of the Xuanwu Sect, the future pillars of the sect!

In Tong Tianhao's view, once they fully grew, the Xuanwu Sect wouldn't have to fear the Tianyuan Sect anymore. Then, even if facing off openly, they'd have the confidence.

Clearing his throat, Tong Tianhao spoke with full energy, "You all are the future hope of our Xuanwu Sect, our future pillars; I am proud of you!"

"Over the years, our Xuanwu Sect has weakened, diminishing in status among the Three Great Sects. Our future rise depends on your performance, and our goal is to become the leading force of the three

major forces in Tianyuan State. I hope all disciples strive hard in cultivation to revitalize our Xuanwu Sect...”

Before the competition started, Tong Tianhao eloquently expressed a grand vision to inspire the disciples, sketching a beautiful blueprint to rouse their fighting spirit.

“Strive! Strive!!”

All Xuanwu Sect disciples were fired up, believing that sweeping across Tianyuan State was imminent, and that the future Xuanwu Sect would flourish in their hands, becoming a renowned sect in the Southern Domain of the entire Tianxuan Continent.

Seeing the atmosphere sufficiently stirred, Tong Tianhao happily announced, “Now, I officially declare that the Xuanwu Sect Inner Sect Elite Disciple Competition begins!”

“First, we will conduct the points competition. All elite disciples ranked among the top thirty-six will enter the Trial Pavilion one by one.”

The Trial Pavilion is a secret location within the Xuanwu Sect. Except for the disciples who have been inside, no one knows exactly what kind of existence the Trial Pavilion is.

Upon hearing that they would enter the Trial Pavilion, the thirty-six elite disciples eligible to participate eagerly prepared, their eyes filled with provocative intent, each unwilling to yield to the others.

Tong Tianhao was very satisfied with the reaction of the crowd below. He continued, “There will be only one winner in this competition — the elite disciple with the highest points will gain the qualification to challenge a Core Disciple!”

“It’s indeed difficult to select one winner out of thirty-six people!”

“There is a world of difference between Core Disciples and elite disciples; it’s normal for the difficulty to be higher and the conditions more stringent.”

“No matter what, I’ll give it my all and leave no regrets!”

With Tong Tianhao’s words finished, the previously quiet crowd became restless. Some felt the difficulty was high and the conditions harsh, while others were filled with fighting spirit.

Tong Tianhao pressed his hands down slightly, and the scene immediately quieted down. Pairs of eager eyes gazed at him, making him feel very proud.

After all voices had died down, Tong Tianhao continued, “Since the Trial Pavilion is full of dangers, the participating members will each receive a Life-saving Talisman from the Great Elder in a moment. If you encounter an irresistible danger, you only need to crush the Life-saving Talisman with force to be safely transported out.

Of course, crushing the Life-saving Talisman means you will be exiting the competition, and your score will still be counted, but you cannot re-enter...”

The rules that Tong Tianhao mentioned next were already known to the core disciples, but those participating in the elite disciple competition for the first time listened carefully.

However, many of the elite disciples had participated in the elimination round before and were not unfamiliar with the Trial Pavilion.

The so-called Trial Pavilion is actually a small space, a universe of its own, unaffected by the outside world. However, the space inside is not very large.

The Trial Pavilion is divided into three layers, each with a large number of Xuan Beasts. The first layer contains True Essence Realm Xuan Beasts, whose origins are unknown, but their power is terrifying.

The second layer has Holy Embryo Realm Xuan Beasts, but typically, elite disciples linger on the first layer; no one dares risk going to the second layer.

After all, for an elite disciple, challenging a Holy Embryo Realm Xuan Beast is akin to seeking death!

As for the third layer, aside from the Great Elder Wu Xinhai who has been there, no one knows what powerful Xuan Beasts dwell in the small space of the Third Layer of the Trial Pavilion. But just guessing with your toe, you can be sure they are not easy opponents.

After announcing the competition rules and precautions, Tong Tianhao returned to his seat.

The Great Elder Wu Xinhai approached the edge of the stone platform expressionlessly, coldly scanning the thirty-six elite disciples below. He said, "Come forward to receive your Life-saving Talisman!"

The elite disciples did not dare delay. They quickly stood up and came to the stone platform, raising their hands high above their heads, and bowed their heads, saying, "Disciple Wei Jun, here to receive the Life-saving Talisman!"

"Disciple Han Taiyi, here to receive the Life-saving Talisman..."

"..."

Soon, all thirty-six had received their Life-saving Talismans and stood respectfully to the side awaiting further instructions.

The Great Elder Wu Xinhai said emotionlessly, "The Life-saving Talisman is meant to be used when you encounter irresistible danger. Of course, if you want to test whether the Life-saving Talisman works, I don't mind."

"The usage of the Life-saving Talisman was just explained by the Sect Leader, so I won't repeat it, but there's one thing I must tell you, the Life-saving Talisman requires time to activate. If you encounter unavoidable danger, I hope you crush the Life-saving Talisman early. If it's not crushed in time, don't blame me for not warning you beforehand if you die inside."

"Hiss!"

Listening to the Great Elder's words, the elite disciples couldn't help but look at each other, gasping involuntarily, and silently warned themselves not to overreach, lest they lose their lives.

"Alright, now let's invite the Sect Leader to open the Trial Pavilion and send you inside."

The Great Elder Wu Xinhai was in a foul mood and could have said more, but refrained. Instead, they directly watched Sect Leader Tong Tianhao and several elders together open the Trial Pavilion and send in these young people who did not know the immensity of heaven and earth.

Whoosh!

Whoosh!

Whoosh!

Sect Leader Tong Tianhao nodded, waved his hand, and together with the seven elders, flew into the sky. They surrounded the stone pillar on Xuanwu Summit's peak, casting one enigmatic Dharma Seal after another.

Chapter 1117: High Spirits

Xuanwu Summit is the main peak of the Xuanwu Mountain Range and the foundation of the Xuanwu Sect. The Great Elder guards this place, which also indirectly shows his status and position within the Xuanwu Sect.

On the flat land at the peak of Xuanwu Summit, there stands a stone pillar about three zhang high, appearing weathered and without any distinguishing features.

However—

Today, under the joint efforts of Sect Leader Tong Tianhao and seven other elders, a series of seal techniques were directed at the stone pillar, causing it to suddenly radiate bright light.

The light was more dazzling than the rising sun, forcing everyone to close their eyes unwillingly. When they felt better and opened their eyes again, they were astonished to find that the original stone pillar had turned into a three-story Linglong Pagoda suspended in mid-air.

Without any support, it floated in the air like Mysterious Turtle Island, appearing particularly eerie.

The three-story Linglong Pagoda emitted a gentle glow, slowly rotating in the air and fully displaying itself before everyone.

Aside from core disciples who had previously entered the Trial Pavilion and some elite disciples, all other disciples were stunned, not expecting such a place to exist atop Xuanwu Summit, not knowing if it was sealed or what.

The three-story Linglong Pagoda did not seem large, but everyone knew that space must exist within it, with its outward appearance small but its internal space likely not small at all.

After completing all this, Tong Tianhao flicked his hand, causing a Bronze Mirror to fly out from his sleeve, expanding with the wind to the size of a house, suspended in the air, illuminating every detail clearly.

Within the mirror, a row of names began to slowly appear, belonging to the thirty-six elite disciples.

“All disciples whose names appear in the Bronze Mirror, pass by the mirror in order and enter the Trial Pavilion to hunt Xuan Beasts for points.”

Tong Tianhao fixed the Bronze Mirror in mid-air and spoke to the top thirty-six elite disciples.

Following his voice, a sturdy young man was the first to walk towards the Bronze Mirror. He was Lin Feng, the last-ranked on the elite disciples' list, also the very last.

As he passed by the Bronze Mirror, it emitted a golden light, instantly imprinting his image within the mirror, with a miniature version of Lin Feng appearing next to his name.

Stepping into the air as if on solid ground, Lin Feng resolutely approached the three-story Linglong Pagoda. As soon as he neared the pagoda, it seemed to exert a powerful suction force, directly pulling him into the first layer of the pagoda, disappearing from sight.

After he entered, everyone anxiously watched his points on the Bronze Mirror. The first layer housed True Essence Realm Xuan Beasts; this was known to all, but how long he could endure was uncertain.

Soon, Lin Feng's points began to change. The rules for this competition were simple: since the first layer contained True Essence Realm Xuan Beasts, killing an early-stage True Essence Realm Xuan Beast was worth one point, and a mid-stage True Essence Realm Xuan Beast was worth two points.

Killing a late-stage True Essence Realm Xuan Beast was worth three points, while defeating a True Essence Peak Realm Xuan Beast was worth ten points, though for these elite disciples with at most late-stage True Essence Realm strength, defeating a True Essence Peak Realm Xuan Beast was almost impossible.

Escaping alive from a True Essence Peak Realm Xuan Beast was already an impressive feat; they could only contend with early-stage or mid-stage True Essence Realm Xuan Beasts.

Even if they encountered a late-stage True Essence Realm Xuan Beast, the outcome was uncertain.

After all, within the same realm, Xuan Beasts are slightly stronger than human cultivators in terms of strength.

Ye Fan is an exception, with a powerful body and cultivation of the "Nine Heavens Profound Skill," his True Qi quantity and quality far surpassing those of similar cultivators.

In comparison, most of the time, human cultivators encountering Xuan Beasts of similar realms can only flee, with little chance of victory even in a desperate fight.

After killing several early-stage True Essence Realm Xuan Beasts, Lin Feng, the first to enter the Trial Pavilion, unsurprisingly encountered a powerful late-stage True Essence Realm Xuan Beast and, without fighting, hastily crushed his life-saving talisman, choosing to forfeit.

He had just reached the mid-stage True Essence Realm, facing a late-stage True Essence Realm Xuan Beast with no chance of success, forced to end the competition early, or else face death!

A gentle light enveloped Lin Feng before the late-stage True Essence Realm Xuan Beast could strike, instantly transporting him outside the Trial Pavilion.

Next was the second-to-last ranked elite disciple, who also did not last long inside before being teleported out, though he achieved a respectable ten points, drawing admiration from the outer disciples.

However, this disciple knew that with such a score, likely not even in the top ten, he sat beside Lin Feng looking dejected.

Following this, the third and fourth disciples successively entered the Trial Pavilion to hunt Xuan Beasts, hoping for better results.

Tong Tianhao and the elders watched their achievements, gradually changing from concern to joy; the disciples' performances were very impressive, overall surpassing the previous batch of elite disciples.

This indicated that the rise of the Xuanwu Sect was on the horizon; once these disciples matured, the Xuanwu Sect was destined to become the leading sect among the three major sects of Tianyuan State.

As time passed, more and more elite disciples entered the Trial Pavilion, and after hunting a few Xuan Beasts, faced with unbeatable opponents, had to crush their life-saving talismans and be transported outside the Trial Pavilion.

One day ended in this tense competition, night fell, with stars dotting the gemstone-like night sky, appearing exceptionally beautiful.

No disciple left, nor did Sect Leader Tong Tianhao and the elders; they remained in the stands, awaiting the final results.

Fighting through the night, in a single day, only fifteen elite disciples completed the competition, with the best score barely over twenty points, far below Tong Tianhao's expectations.

However, he also knew that things would only get more exciting from here, as there were sixteen elite disciples who had yet to enter the Trial Pavilion, and they were the stronger disciples.

Especially the top three ranked: Ding Yuankong, Wei Jun, and Yuan Daoling. Their strength was the highest among the elite disciples, and they were the most promising candidates to become core disciples.

As the elite disciples entered the Trial Pavilion one by one, crushed their life-saving talismans, and were transported out, in the end, only three remained—Wei Jun and the other top three elite disciples!

Ranked third, Yuan Daoling was spurred by the crowd ahead of him. Even though he knew he would definitely be in the top three this time, he still wanted to give it his all to strive for first place!

After all, only the first place has the qualification to challenge the core disciples!

After entering the Trial Pavilion, Yuan Daoling frantically hunted Xuan Beasts, his points skyrocketing, quickly surpassing the highest-ranked person.

After hunting ten mid-True Essence Realm Xuan Beasts, he encountered a late-stage True Essence Realm Xuan Beast. As someone already at the late-stage True Essence Realm, he had to fight for the first place.

However——

The principle that human cultivators cannot defeat Xuan Beasts of the same realm manifested in Yuan Daoling. Despite giving it his all and burning his True Yuan, he was still defeated and crushed his life-saving talisman.

Clearly, for Yuan Daoling, first place was certainly attractive, but he needed to preserve his life first. Otherwise, if he lost his life, what use would it be for everyone to recognize him as first?

After Yuan Daoling was helplessly transported out, Wei Jun casually approached the Bronze Mirror, left his image, and entered the Trial Pavilion.

By now, everyone understood that the first place would surely be among Wei Jun and the other two. However, it was uncertain whether this time's favorite, Ding Yuankong, could suppress Wei Jun and Yuan Daoling, and continue his glory?

"Look, Wei Jun's points are rising so fast!"

As Wei Jun entered the Trial Pavilion, everyone suddenly noticed his points soaring rapidly, almost increasing by three points at a time, a terrifying growth.

In just one hour, Wei Jun's points exceeded Yuan Daoling's, leaving him far behind.

His performance stunned everyone. These were late-stage True Essence Realm Xuan Beasts! How could they be so easily slain by him?

In reality, after entering the Trial Pavilion, Wei Jun didn't encounter any Xuan Beasts at the True Essence Realm Peak, but rather many late-stage True Essence Realm Xuan Beasts.

Using the Fiery Flame Slash taught by Chu Feng, these Xuan Beasts were no match for him. They quickly contributed beast cores one by one, becoming points under his name—this Bronze Mirror has a mysterious connection with the Trial Pavilion. As long as the person in the mirror slays a Xuan Beast in the Trial Pavilion, the corresponding points will accumulate under that person's name.

“Oh my, Wei Jun’s score has already surpassed the first place of the previous session!”

Soon, Wei Jun’s points exceeded the first place of the previous elite disciple competition, leaving everyone in shock.

No one expected Wei Jun to be so formidable, as his usual performances weren’t too outstanding, overshadowed by the first place Ding Yuankong.

No one expected today that Wei Jun would make an incredible turnaround, with his points far ahead, reaching a terrifying fifty points, while the first place in the previous session only achieved forty-eight points.

Seeing Wei Jun’s points still climbing, Ding Yuankong’s expression became serious; he knew it wouldn’t be easy for him to gain such points.

Not only him, but even the core disciple at the bottom felt waves of concern, for a simple reason: if Wei Jun challenged him after obtaining the first place, he must fight and cannot lose. If he loses, he would be downgraded from a core disciple to an elite disciple, needing to start over, which wasn’t the outcome he desired.

Ultimately, after achieving the highest score of fifty-five points, Wei Jun encountered an invincible True Essence Peak Realm Xuan Beast.

“That’s enough; I believe no one can surpass my points!”

Wei Jun was not one to take risks. Knowing he couldn't win, he wisely crushed his life-saving talisman in time, allowing a gentle light to transport him out of the Trial Pavilion.

"Fifty-five points, that's incredible!"

Wei Jun was met with a wave of screams; everyone was boiling with excitement!

Never before had anyone achieved fifty-five points in the history of the elite disciples' matches.

Wei Jun created a miracle!

In the enthusiasm of the crowd welcoming him back like a hero, Wei Jun was spirited and complacent, giving Ding Yuankong a provocative glance, as if to say, there's no need to compete; your points cannot surpass mine!

Soon after, when no one was watching, Wei Jun cast a grateful glance at Chu Feng.

Chu Feng appeared indifferent, but his heart was filled with a sense of control over the match and Ye Fan's fate!

Chapter 1118: Ye Fan Returns!

“Whew~”

Amidst the expectant gazes of the crowd, Ding Yuankong took a deep breath, walked proudly to the bronze mirror, left his image, and resolutely stepped into the Trial Pavilion suspended in mid-air.

“Brother Ding is so strong!”

With each step in the void as if walking on solid ground, Ding Yuankong displayed pure strength, drawing a round of applause.

“Heh!”

Wei Jun sneered, confidently believing that Ding Yuankong could never surpass him in points, and that the first place in the elite disciple competition belonged to him alone.

Ding Yuankong did indeed aspire to surpass Wei Jun in points to reclaim his first place, but Wei Jun’s performance put him under great pressure.

Fifty-five points were nearly impossible to achieve just by slaughtering early-stage True Essence Realm Xuan Beasts. He needed to risk challenging True Essence Realm Peak Xuan Beasts to match and eventually surpass Wei Jun quickly in points.

But how could this be easy?

Not to mention that it's very difficult to come across True Essence Realm Peak Xuan Beasts, even if encountered, whether he could win was a question. However, he had no retreat; he had to fight.

When Ding Yuankong first entered, he encountered a mid True Essence Realm Xuan Beast, which he killed with a single strike, and people outside witnessed a miracle as his points rose rapidly, matching Wei Jun's.

All the way to forty-eight points, tying the record of the previous elite disciple competition's first place holder, Ding Yuankong's points seemed to hit a bottleneck and stopped moving at forty-eight.

In fact, in the Trial Pavilion, Ding Yuankong encountered a problem. After a large number of Xuan Beasts were slain, almost all the low-level Xuan Beasts on the first level of the Trial Pavilion were wiped out, leaving only the powerful Late-stage True Essence Realm and True Essence Realm Peak Xuan Beasts.

These Xuan Beasts were terrifying in strength, nearly impossible to defeat. Moreover, these Xuan Beasts were intelligent. After so many slaughters, they gradually understood that all Xuan Beasts must unite.

This time, Ding Yuankong encountered three Late-stage True Essence Realm Xuan Beasts at once!

He was merely at the Late-stage True Essence Realm; if he encountered one Late-stage True Essence Realm Xuan Beast, he could still fight desperately, but now he had three at once!

Killing three Late-stage True Essence Realm Xuan Beasts would earn nine points!

This was incredibly tempting for Ding Yuankong!

He did not want to give up because Ding Yuankong knew very well that if he gave up this opportunity, he might never surpass Wei Jun again.

As long as he killed these three Late-stage True Essence Realm Xuan Beasts, he could surpass Wei Jun and create a new miracle!

As the first elite disciple, he absolutely couldn't allow himself to fall behind others, especially not let Wei Jun overtake him.

Ding Yuankong decided to take the risk!

With such wishful thinking, Ding Yuankong decisively took action, fighting alone against the three Late-stage True Essence Realm Xuan Beasts.

Regrettably, he overestimated his own strength. Under the siege of the three powerful Late-stage True Essence Realm Xuan Beasts, he didn't even have a chance to crush his Life-saving Talisman, being directly torn apart by the three Xuan Beasts, spilling blood everywhere.

"This..."

The people outside were dumbfounded. Although they didn't know what exactly happened inside the Trial Pavilion, seeing Ding Yuankong's image on the bronze mirror gradually fade, and even his name slowly disappear, even the slowest reactors understood that he encountered an accident in the Trial Pavilion.

This kind of incident wasn't the first. In previous elite disciple competitions, many defiant disciples with wishful thinking were unable to withstand more points and better results, gritting their teeth not to crush the Life-saving Talisman, eventually dying inside.

Some couldn't crush the Life-saving Talisman in time when danger arrived and became Blood Food for the Xuan Beasts in the Trial Pavilion.

"Brother Ding is too unfortunate!"

"Winning or losing in an instant doesn't represent anything. He placed too much importance on being first!"

Ding Yuankong, initially the most hopeful, became overly greedy and defiant, ultimately dying in the Trial Pavilion, shocking everyone greatly.

However, such things were also commonplace; the path of Cultivation itself is not a smooth avenue. There was always the possibility of premature death for various reasons.

Everyone didn't feel too much sadness, only regret that such a disciple, who originally had infinite potential, didn't die in battles with other Sects but in the Trial Pavilion, felt somewhat unworthy.

"Heh, did he really think creating a miracle was that easy? Truly ignorant of life and death, wanting to forcibly hold on without having the ability, simply courting death!" While others mourned, Wei Jun sneered coldly within.

"Alright, his death was self-inflicted—he had the chance to escape, but he abandoned it himself. You don't need to be sad, the Cultivation path is inherently fraught with thorns, and those without great perseverance won't go far!"

Tong Tianhao stood and spoke solemnly to all the disciples. Although he was also saddened by the death of a disciple with substantial potential, he knew it was not the time to grieve.

After comforting the disciples briefly, Tong Tianhao announced the content of the next competition.

The competition was simple, with the point leader Wei Jun challenging the lowest-ranked Core Disciple.

As long as Wei Jun could defeat the lowest-ranking Core Disciple, he could replace him and successfully join the ranks of the Core Disciples.

However, this was not easy; after all, Core Disciples were Core Disciples, not so easily defeated.

After announcing the competition rules, Tong Tianhao flicked his wrist and threw an ancient bronze chariot, which was merely palm-sized upon release but rapidly expanded in the wind into a massive war chariot.

Tong Tianhao and all the elders flew onto the chariot, hovering in the air, looking down at the stone platform.

On the stone platform, Great Elder Wu Xinhai did not fly into the air with the other elders but stayed in the center of the stone platform.

Upon closer inspection, intricate patterns were inscribed on the stone platform. These patterns formed a Defensive Array, sufficient to defend against attacks below the Holy Embryo Realm, so as to prevent the platform from being destroyed halfway through the competition.

Wei Jun, full of ambition, leaped onto the stone platform, bowed to the Great Elder, and then stood confidently on one side of the platform, with War Intent, looking at the lowest-ranked Core Disciple.

Swish!

Seeing that Wei Jun had already stepped onto the stage, the core disciple ranked at the bottom changed his expression, knowing that he had no choice but to face the challenge and reluctantly came to the stone platform.

After saluting the Great Elder, this core disciple took a deep look at Wei Jun and moved to the other side of the stone platform.

Before the start was even announced, the two's gazes clashed as if in battle, neither willing to concede.

To maintain his position and honor, the core disciple had to fight with all his might.

And Wei Jun, in order to advance, would inevitably stake everything on this battle. Neither would submit to the other.

Seeing the two were ready, Great Elder Wu Xinhai didn't mince words, harshly sliced his hand downward, and shouted, "Challenge match, begin!"

Swoosh!

Swoosh!

Wu Xinhai's voice was like igniting a powder keg, as both rushed at each other like leopards. At the same time, they unleashed their absolute techniques, clashing.

Both were at the late-stage True Yuan Realm, almost equal in strength, and the only deciding factor would be their martial arts techniques.

Wei Jun didn't want to expose his "Fiery Flame Slash" technique yet, so he aggressively attacked with his most proud technique, the Xuanwu Fist.

The core disciple ranked at the bottom was also using the Xuanwu Fist.

The Xuanwu Fist is the most orthodox martial art of the Xuanwu Sect, and also the most standard technique, but mastering it is not easy, as it belongs to the high-level profound martial arts.

Bam bam bam bam...

The two exchanged more than ten moves, but neither could gain the upper hand, as both could predict the other's next move, rendering any deception futile.

The scene was lively, with outer disciples cheering continuously, while core disciples sneered coldly.

To them, this martial art was almost like something superfluous; everyone knew the Xuanwu Fist, but in addition, they would choose to study some powerful martial arts.

Almost no one had truly cultivated the Xuanwu Fist to its utmost, not even Sect Leader Tong Tianhao, who deemed its power ordinary.

Unlike the core disciple at the bottom, Wei Jun incorporated other martial arts into his Xuanwu Fist, making his strikes significantly different.

The core disciple fought following the textbook, each punch possessing great power, but he was unable to do anything to Wei Jun.

The greatest feature of the Xuanwu Fist is that it consumes very little True Yuan but possesses tremendous power, making it suitable for prolonged fighting.

Wei Jun, after altering it, included a lot of deceptive moves in his Xuanwu Fist, making his attacks fast and ruthless. After more than ten moves, the core disciple struggled to keep up.

Great Elder Wu Xinhai and Sect Leader Tong Tianhao and the others naturally noticed the modifications Wei Jun made by incorporating other martial arts into the pure Xuanwu Fist, but they kept silent.

To them, Wei Jun's adjustments were also a form of innovation. Only geniuses could create their martial arts, and even altering existing techniques was not something ordinary people could accomplish. No wonder he could earn terrifying points in the elimination round.

"Surrender, I won't harm you; otherwise, don't blame me for being ruthless!"

After a hundred moves, Wei Jun had completely figured out his opponent's tactics, but he still had many cards up his sleeve, making the outcome obvious.

"Wishful thinking, unless you defeat me. Making me surrender is impossible!"

The core disciple, determined to maintain his position and benefits, burned his True Yuan, and his combat power surged.

Wei Jun waited for this moment. When a cultivator burns their True Yuan, there's a brief moment of vulnerability.

Whoosh!

As the core disciple ranked at the bottom burned his True Yuan, Wei Jun struck, landing a palm on his chest, True Yuan surging forth, with a bang, sending his opponent flying.

Puff...

The core disciple never expected Wei Jun to seize the moment so well, caught off guard and severely injured, spewing blood as he flew off the stone platform, crashing heavily into a distant stalagmite, where his vision blacked out, and he lost consciousness.

Victory?

Wei Jun won?!

Not until Wei Jun sent the core disciple flying did the crowd come to their senses, looking at him with eyes filled with envy, jealousy, and admiration...

“That boy surnamed Ye is truly my lucky star. If it weren’t for him, how could I have obtained the Fiery Flame Slash technique from Brother Chu and achieved such infinite glory today?”

Standing on the stone platform, Wei Jun gazed around triumphantly, enjoying the envious glances from the crowd below, secretly smug.

At this moment...

A tall figure appeared at the mountain gate entrance of the Xuanwu Sect.

After a tough and arduous journey, Ye Fan had returned!

Chapter 1119: Ye Fan’s Return, Part 2

At the moment when Ye Fan strode onto the Xuanwu Summit.

Time seemed to stand still.

Everyone’s gaze was focused solely on him.

Shock, disbelief, surprise...

The reactions were varied!

“Isn’t that Ye Fan? How did he return?”

“It’s really him. Wasn’t it said that he encountered a mishap deep within the Buxuan Beast Mountain Range? What is going on?”

The first to react were the Outer Disciples. Ye Fan was the first among them to enter the Inner Sect, leaving the deepest impression on them.

At this moment, seeing Ye Fan standing unharmed on the Xuanwu Summit’s plaza, they immediately began to discuss.

Some said Ye Fan was lucky, others said he was merely fortunate; whispers filled the scene.

After all, they were Outer Disciples, surrounded by Inner Sect Disciples, elite disciples, Core Disciples, even elders and the Sect Leader, so they couldn’t speak too loudly.

However, with Ye Fan's enhanced hearing, unless they spoke with ventriloquism, it couldn't escape his ears.

Ye Fan gave a faint smile and didn't say a word.

He knew he needed to give these people some time to react. Regardless, since he was absent for so long, everyone probably thought he had met an unfortunate fate?

"Ye Fan? He actually returned at this time? What happened in between?"

"Why didn't he return earlier? If he had, he might have witnessed some excitement!"

The Inner Sect Disciples were also gossiping, utterly baffled by Ye Fan's sudden return. However, they had no conflict of interest with Ye Fan.

On the contrary, Ye Fan's formidable strength and astonishing potential had won them over. Subconsciously, they considered Ye Fan as a target to chase and idolize.

Seeing Ye Fan return safely, they were naturally delighted, even if he didn't qualify for the elite disciple competition, it didn't affect his standing in their hearts.

However, those elite disciples who had a competitive relationship with Ye Fan were gloating.

Ye Fan's previous dominant performance had cast a shadow over their hearts.

When the elite disciple competition began and Ye Fan still hadn't returned, they assumed Ye Fan had either died in the Xuanshou Mountain Range or was captured by the Tianyuan Sect, secretly rejoicing.

With Ye Fan gone, they lost a strong rival, how could they not be pleased?

But now, seeing Ye Fan stand before them without losing a single hair, made their expressions somewhat unnatural.

Yet they didn't dare say anything, with the Sect Leader and many elders present. Clearly, Ye Fan was treasured by the Great Elder, and if he noticed their schadenfreude, it would mean indirectly offending the Great Elder.

The Great Elder's status was exalted, even the Sect Leader had to show him respect. If he ever lost his temper, probably no one in the entire Xuanwu Sect could challenge him!

Shua!

Tong Tianhao suddenly stood up, his eyes shining brightly as he looked at Ye Fan, seemingly wanting to see through him entirely, his delight in the gaze was undisguised.

Ye Fan was the one he protected with a risk of completely breaking ties with the Tianyuan Sect. If something had really gone wrong, all his efforts would have been in vain.

The Great Elder's lips moved, very excited. He originally thought Ye Fan had fallen into the hands of the Tianyuan Sect, but couldn't believe he returned on his own.

"You brat..."

The Great Elder directly flew over, patted him on the shoulder, and condensed countless words into one phrase: "It's good you are back, it's good you are back!"

"Brother Ye..."

Tong Qianchen also walked over, but considering the many people present, she dared not act too passionately, lest others misunderstood. So she forcibly held back the urge to rush out and stopped abruptly.

However, her radiant smile did not escape the observant. With a little attention, one could see many things in the deep affection on her face and eyes.

Unlike the crowd's joy, Chu Feng and his followers were in disbelief. They were simply not prepared for Ye Fan's return.

When Ye Fan appeared on the plaza, Chu Feng was shocked and then looked confusedly at Wei Jun, who had just been promoted to Core Disciple.

Wei Jun wore a bewildered and astonished expression, utterly unable to comprehend why? Clearly, Ye Fan had ventured deep into the Xuanshou Mountain Range, out of Xuanwu Sect's influence.

Given the Tianyuan Sect's hatred towards Ye Fan, it was absolutely impossible for them to allow him to return alive, yet Ye Fan did just that?!

Finding no answers from his subordinate, Chu Feng frowned at Wei Jun, then glanced towards Tong Qianchen nearby.

Seeing Tong Qianchen's radiant smile and deep, affectionate gaze, Chu Feng's face was cloudy.

In front of the crowd, Ye Fan calmly bowed to Great Elder Wu Xinhai and said, "Master, I returned late and made you worry."

Wu Xinhai, gratified, grasped Ye Fan's hands, helped him up, and said, "It's okay, it's okay, just coming back is good enough, just coming back is good enough! I'm not a stickler for formalities, we don't need these superficial rituals. Go, greet the Sect Leader."

Ye Fan nodded, came to Sect Leader Tong Tianhao, and respectfully bowed, "Sect Leader!"

At the same time, he similarly saluted the other elders, causing several elders to nod approvingly while secretly feeling envious: This disciple is truly exceptional. Wu Xinhai really found a treasure; he's well-mannered, and his strength is impeccable. Why isn't such a good disciple mine?

"Father!"

Seeing Ye Fan standing before her father, Tong Qianchen weighed her options and decided to take the opportunity to ask her father what exactly had happened to Ye Fan.

"Hmm, Xiao Qian, is there something you wish to ask?"

As an experienced individual, Tong Tianhao naturally saw through his daughter's little intentions, but he doted on Tong Qianchen so much that he didn't call her out, instead giving her an opening.

Tong Qianchen, no fool, immediately interjected, "I want to know why Brother Ye was delayed for so long. What exactly did he encounter?"

Tong Tianhao silently cursed himself for being careless; the date for the elite disciple tournament was announced three months ago, and Ye Fan couldn't have been unaware. Given his character, even if he couldn't qualify for the competition, he would have made sure to return before the competition started.

But he only returned now. Clearly, he must have encountered something difficult to handle that delayed his return.

Upon thinking this, Tong Tianhao smiled at Ye Fan and said, "You heard what Xiao Qian said. We're curious too. What danger did you encounter in Xuanshou Mountain Range that made you return so late?"

"It was like this..."

Ye Fan truthfully and deceptively recounted his experience in Xuanshou Mountain Range, especially emphasizing that while he was training, he encountered strong people from the Tianyuan Sect. He had to evade them to avoid being hunted, leading to delays and missing the elite disciple tournament.

"So that's what happened!"

Many people felt relieved. With Ye Fan's strength, encountering strong people from the Tianyuan Sect and escaping alive was quite a feat.

"Since the strong from the Tianyuan Sect discovered you, how did you escape their pursuit? Could it be that they captured you and then let you return to our Xuanwu Sect as an undercover agent?"

At this moment, an untimely voice rose from the crowd, drawing everyone's attention to him.

"Wei Jun, what do you mean?"

Tong Qianchen's face flushed crimson, as Wei Jun blatantly didn't trust Ye Fan and seemed bent on sowing discord.

"I mean no harm, but as everyone knows, Ye Fan once insulted the Tianyuan Sect Leader Helian Chang. If Ye Fan encountered strong people from the Tianyuan Sect, I don't believe he could have escaped from their hands alive."

Saying this, Wei Jun paused, casting a covert glance towards Chu Feng before continuing, "The only explanation is that Ye Fan was captured by them. To save his life, he chose to surrender, and Helian Chang, wanting to obtain insider information on our sect, didn't kill him but let him return!"

This accusation was ruthless. Those who were happy about Ye Fan's return fell into contemplation, thinking about the possibility.

"Absolutely impossible. I understand my disciple. If Ye Fan were really caught by the Tianyuan Sect, he would rather die than surrender!"

At this crucial moment, the Great Elder stepped forward, firmly stating that Ye Fan would never surrender to the Tianyuan Sect.

"I also believe Brother Ye's words are true. If he had indeed betrayed and surrendered, he would not appear at this moment. Either he would have returned before the competition, or waited until after it. In any case, he wouldn't appear now."

Ye Fan sighed, feeling that no matter where he went, he couldn't escape from schemers and plots!

With the strong support of Great Elder Wu Xinhai, Sect Leader Tong Tianhao and the other elders also chose to believe in Ye Fan's words, asserting that Ye Fan could not have betrayed the Xuanwu Sect.

"I reserve my opinion!"

Seeing things weren't going his way, Wei Jun, noticing he wasn't steering the situation to his intended direction, chose to remain silent.

Ye Fan gave him a deep glance, then turned to Sect Leader Tong Tianhao and Great Elder Wu Xinhai and asked, "Sect Leader, Master, may I ask, can I still participate in the elite disciple tournament?"

"What? You still want to participate in the elite disciple tournament?" Sect Leader Tong Tianhao and Great Elder Wu Xinhai were both taken aback.

"If possible, I'd like to give it a try!"

Ye Fan nodded, full of anticipation.

Chapter 1120: Doubt

"Pfft—"

Before the Sect Leader and Great Elder could say anything more, the entire square erupted in laughter.

“Has this kid lost his mind? He actually dares to ask to participate in the elite disciples competition?”

“He thinks that anyone who is an elite disciple can join the elite disciples competition!”

“That’s right, even if his ranking was enough, the time has passed!”

“Wants to participate in the elite disciples competition? Wait until next time! It’s not happening this time!”

After hearing Ye Fan’s request, almost everyone thought Ye Fan was either insane or didn’t understand the rules.

In their eyes, not even knowing that one needs to be in the top thirty-six ranks to qualify for the elite disciples competition, yet wanting to participate, is simply delusional!

Among the core disciples, Chu Feng remained silent, keeping a calm and serene expression, but at his hidden behest, his lackeys showed no mercy.

Chu Feng was always shrewd and would definitely make sure he was not linked to such matters, even if he was going to deal with Ye Fan, ensuring no one saw it was his instigation, at least seemingly unconnected to him.

A young man beside him sneered, "What right does that kid have to participate in the elite disciples competition? Not only was he late, missing the contest time, but his contribution value is zero. Does someone like that qualify to join the elite disciples competition?"

"Exactly, if someone like him can participate, is it fair to the other elite disciples?"

"Zero contribution value and delayed, does he have any right to join the elite disciples competition? Could it be just because he is the Great Elder's disciple, he gets an exception?"

Not only in the core disciples were there Chu Feng's men, but there were also loyal followers of his among the inner and elite disciples.

Among them, Wei Jun was particularly loud, targeting Ye Fan from the start.

The reason is simple, he was the one hindering Ye Fan from hunting Xuan Beasts to accrue contribution value, and due to this, he received a powerful martial art, Fiery Flame Slash, from Chu Feng.

Originally thinking Ye Fan was doomed, unexpectedly, he survived, making Wei Jun feel somewhat guilty towards Chu Feng.

In such circumstances, he naturally targeted Ye Fan, and wouldn't miss this chance to zealously slander Ye Fan, seeking favor with Chu Feng.

"Quiet, quiet, this isn't a vegetable market, what kind of decorum is this noise?"

An elder stepped forward, channeling energy into his dantian, his voice booming like thunder throughout Xuanwu Summit, instantly silencing all sounds.

Seeing the elder intervene, the murmured discussions vanished instantly, each disciple pressing their lips tighter than trapped legs, fearing a misplaced word would anger the elder, leading to serious consequences they couldn't afford.

The elder slowly walked out, approached Ye Fan, softening his voice, "Ye Fan, you might not be familiar with the competition rules, let me tell you, the elite disciples competition requires you to be in the top thirty-six in contribution value to participate, and you've also missed the time, the elimination rounds are over, you see..."

This elder did not speak definitively but left room by looking at the Great Elder, implying these rules should have been told to him, why weren't they?

"\_"

The Great Elder felt wronged, hadn't I told him? I informed him long ago! Ye Fan shouldn't be unaware! Could he be confident he can enter the top thirty-six in contribution value?

Thinking of this, Wu Xinhai also glanced at Ye Fan, hoping Ye Fan could provide a reasonable explanation.

Though he was the Great Elder, he couldn't abuse power in front of so many people to grant Ye Fan an extra spot.

Besides, he couldn't afford to lose face—since becoming Great Elder, he never begged anyone for anything!

"I understand the rules!"

Ye Fan said solemnly, "There shouldn't be any problem with my contribution value entering the top thirty-six, I hope the Sect Leader can give me this opportunity."

Wow—

His words stirred waves of shock, the scene erupted once again, almost everyone knew Ye Fan had been among the elite disciples for just three months.

During these three months, one month was spent in seclusion, meaning he only had two months to hunt Xuan Beasts and earn contribution value.

Within a mere two months, could he raise his points, that is, contribution value into the top thirty-six?

Not only the inner and outer sect disciples doubted Ye Fan's words, but the elite disciples were even more incredulous, each looking at Ye Fan skeptically.

Three months ago, Ye Fan had just joined the elite disciples, though he stood out, too many elite disciples surpassed him in realm and strength, even those reaching the True Essence Realm dared not claim they could enter the top thirty-six within two months.

One must understand, accumulation of contribution value is not done overnight, even elite disciples slowly accumulate such value over a long period.

In just two months, could Ye Fan rise from a contribution value of zero newcomer to the top thirty-six? If he indeed accomplished this, it would be unprecedented!

"Impossible, he absolutely cannot achieve that!"

At that moment, even Chu Feng was moved, he too progressed from elite disciples, thus was highly aware of the rules for the elite disciples leaderboard.

Contribution value is gained by hunting Xuan Beasts, and hunting relies not only on strength but immense luck; it's not always possible to encounter the specific Xuan Beast one desires to hunt.

Although he didn't intentionally pay attention to how many points the top thirty-six had, it seemed like it wouldn't be low. Ye Fan wanting to catch up on points within a mere two months was almost impossible.

At least Chu Feng thought that he couldn't do it back then. Could Ye Fan be more of a demon than him?

"Is he bluffing? How could that be possible?"

"Exactly, everyone can see that he hasn't even broken through to the True Essence Realm, how could he rush into the top thirty-six?"

As soon as these words were spoken, everyone suddenly realized that Ye Fan had only been an elite disciple for a mere three months.

Most Xuanwu Sect disciples would still be staying in the Outer Sect at this time, yet he advanced rapidly and had already fought his way into the elite disciples.

But no matter how strong he was, it couldn't cover up a fact, and that was Ye Fan was still at the peak of the True Qi Realm, having not broken through to the True Essence Realm.

And hunting mystical beasts to gain contribution points, the fastest way is to hunt powerful mystical beasts. The stronger the mystical beast hunted, the more sect contribution points one gains.

However, powerful mystical beasts aren't just sheep waiting to be slaughtered, are they?

Many human cultivators, when hunting mystical beasts, might even be hunted themselves by mystical beasts if they encounter strong ones.

Because, between human cultivators and mystical beasts, the roles of hunter and prey aren't unchanging. When encountering strong mystical beasts, humans can easily become prey and be killed by mystical beasts.

In everyone's eyes, Ye Fan was just at the peak of the True Qi Realm. Even if he was strong, the mystical beasts he hunted might only be at the early-stage True Essence Realm.

For most people, a True Qi Realm hunting a True Essence Realm mystical beast was already a challenge of surpassing levels, even if it was just an early-stage True Essence Realm mystical beast.

Until one breaks into the True Essence Realm, one hasn't truly stepped onto the path of cultivation!

The True Qi Realm and True Essence Realm are a dividing line. Many cultivators get stuck at this barrier for countless years without any progress.

Some cultivators can't even cross this barrier in their lifetime and end up achieving nothing, becoming the lowest level of cultivators in the world, only slightly stronger than ordinary people.

Even stepping back and saying, even if Ye Fan could kill a True Essence Realm mystical beast of a higher level, it would at most be an early-stage True Essence Realm mystical beast.

With only two months, how many early-stage True Essence Realm mystical beasts could he hunt? Perhaps more of them were True Qi Realm mystical beasts.

Moreover, according to Ye Fan, he encountered strong people from the Tianyuan Sect in the Xuanshou Mountain Range and was chased around the mountains by them.

In this process, it was impossible for him to hunt mystical beasts. Not only could he not hunt mystical beasts, but he also had to avoid them as much as possible. Otherwise, if he got entangled by mystical beasts and the strong people from Tianyuan Sect came, he wouldn't have any chance to escape.

On the way back and forth, he would also be delayed for quite a bit of time. All things considered, it was absolutely impossible for Ye Fan to reach the qualification of the top thirty-six required for the elite disciple competition.

This was the judgment in the hearts of most people!

Despite making this judgment, when they looked at Ye Fan, the calmness and composure on his face made some shrewd disciples feel puzzled.

“How can he be so calm and confident?”

“Could... could it be that he’s telling the truth?!”

For a moment, everyone was full of doubt.

“Ahem...”

Sect Leader Tong Tianhao coughed twice, breaking the strange atmosphere at the scene, and said slowly, “Ye Fan was delayed returning because he encountered a chase from the Tianyuan Sect. If his sect contribution value truly exceeds the thirty-sixth ranked elite disciple, then give him a chance!”

After pausing for a moment, Tong Tianhao continued, “Our Xuanwu Sect practices democracy. Elders, what do you think?”

“Sect Leader’s insight!”

“I have no objections. If his points meet the requirements, what’s wrong with making an exception once?”

“Everything is solely up to the Sect Leader’s decision!”

The elders all expressed no objections. As long as Ye Fan’s contribution value met the requirements, giving him a chance was acceptable.

“Heh, I just want to see how many contribution points he can earn!” Wei Jun sneered and said secretly in his heart.

“If that’s the case, Ye Fan, please hand over the beast cores and recording bracelet you’ve obtained. I’ll check them.”

As soon as Sect Leader Tong Tianhao finished speaking, everyone’s eyes focused on Ye Fan, waiting for him to hand over the beast cores and the recording bracelet documenting the process of slaying mystical beasts.