

## **Y Master 1191**

### Chapter 1191: The Stunning Xuanwu Sect

Ye Fan emerged victorious, earning three points, while Wang Yuntian, having proactively conceded, ended up with zero points, yet he was quite satisfied.

Not only did he exert his peak strength in the arena, but his battle with Ye Fan also enhanced his skills and provided insights that would be beneficial in his future combats.

Once Lei Bikuan announced the result of the match, the murmurs among the crowd gradually quieted down, with most people looking at Ye Fan with a hint of respect in their eyes.

In their view, he is an opponent truly worthy of respect!

Next was the Yu Group, with the first match featuring a genius from the Ma Family. He defeated his opponent with an indisputable absolute advantage within three moves, successfully earning three points.

Ma Yuanhang's performance was truly astonishing, surprising many people. Who would have thought his strength was so formidable? Although he faced a contestant from a small sect, who among those hailed as geniuses is a pushover?

Ma Yuanhang's ability to defeat his opponent within three moves already sufficiently demonstrated that he had the qualifications to be a seeded contestant.

Amidst the audience's exclamations, the competition continued.

Next came the Zhou Group, featuring Liu Family's genius, Liu Qingyun, who had met Ye Fan once before, against Zhang Taiyi, the Xuanwu Sect's second genius disciple.

As soon as they took the stage, they immediately engaged in an intense battle. As a direct lineage genius of the Liu Family, one of the Five Great Families, Liu Qingyun's strength was certainly not to be underestimated, especially as a seeded contestant. How could he justify the name without adequate strength?

However—

Unfortunately for him, he encountered Zhang Taiyi!

Once the foremost core disciple of the Xuanwu Sect, Zhang Taiyi's strength far exceeded everyone's expectations.

As a disciple of Wang Qingshan, the Supreme Elder of the Xuanwu Sect, Zhang Taiyi's prowess was definitely formidable and extremely mysterious. Even Ye Fan had never seen him fight, only hearing about him from Tong Qianchen.

Before being defeated by Chu Feng, he consistently held the top position among the Xuanwu Sect's core disciples, unchallenged.

It was due to Ye Fan's emergence overshadowing him, coupled with his inherently low-key demeanor, that no one knew his true strength.

In terms of real combat power, he might not be a match for Qingxuan, but he was far superior to Ma Family's Ma Yuanhang, and Liu Qingyun was even less of a challenge for him.

Moreover, Zhang Taiyi did not expend much True Yuan; he had no intention of prolonging the fight with Liu Qingyun and thus immediately displayed terrifying strength.

Liu Qingyun seemed like a small boat in a vast ocean under his assault, on the brink of capsizing at any moment.

At this moment, Liu Qingyun was in dire straits. Initially confident that, as a seeded contestant, he could easily defeat his opponent like the previous five, he had never imagined encountering Zhang Taiyi from the Xuanwu Sect right off the bat, making the fight incredibly tough.

Huff!

Huff!

Mysterious array patterns continuously lit up on the ancient arena, fist force overwhelming the sky, finger beams darting everywhere. Liu Qingyun roared incessantly, yet could not reverse the losing trend.

During the match, Zhang Taiyi's face remained as cold as stone, without a trace of expression, starkly contrasting with Liu Qingyun's furious glare, making the difference between them immediately apparent.

The Liu Family elders leading the team stood up nervously, not daring to make a sound, staring intently at the two battling on the arena.

After a while, the Liu Family elder leading the team sighed in despair and said, "It's over, Qingyun will surely lose!"

Almost as if responding to his prediction, Zhang Taiyi, who had been fighting silently and without a word, suddenly shouted, "It's over!"

As he spoke, Zhang Taiyi delivered a whip kick harshly on the unsuspecting Liu Qingyun, kicking him directly off the arena with the sound of cracking ribs echoing harshly.

Liu Qingyun's Protective True Essence was shattered by Zhang Taiyi's kick, sending him hurtling in the air over seven meters before landing below the stage, blood frothing from his mouth, blacking out instantly.

This outcome was beyond everyone's expectations; who would have thought that, as a seeded contestant, he would be eliminated in the very first match.

Clearly, with injuries like Liu Qingyun's, he couldn't possibly participate in the subsequent matches unless he could recover swiftly, which seemed difficult at the moment.

"How did this happen? Isn't Liu Qingyun a seeded contestant?"

"Is the Xuanwu Sect really rising? Producing a Ye Fan wasn't enough; they had another hidden expert that defeated seeded contestant Liu Qingyun. I fear the remaining contestants aren't his match either."

Among the onlookers below, most were ordinary people without cultivation and cultivators with low strength, who were quite shocked by this result.

The powerful contestants and leading elders in the competition, as well as the representatives of major forces watching from the platform, all noticed that Zhang Taiyi still had more strength in reserve, suggesting that he hadn't fought with his full power just now.

Nonetheless, they weren't surprised, for the Three Great Sects had slightly more overall strength than the Five Great Families, and Zhang Taiyi had previously been the top core disciple of the Xuanwu Sect, a predetermined seeded contestant, an equal talent to Chu Hong, Luo Xiaolin, and Qingxuan. It was only because Ye Fan suddenly appeared that he was replaced as a seeded contestant. Defeating Liu Qingyun was only logical.

Swoosh!

The moment Liu Qingyun was sent flying, Lei Bikuan immediately moved, catching up to help him up from the ground and fed him a healing Holy Pill before handing him over to the rushing Liu Family elder.

The result of the match couldn't have been clearer. Lei Bikuan didn't delay any further and directly announced the result; Zhang Taiyi had defeated the seeded contestant Liu Qingyun and had become a new generation of seeded contestant, advancing to the top eight was already a foregone conclusion.

This result made the seed contestants from the remaining two clans feel a deep sense of crisis. Perhaps they would follow in Liu Qingyun's footsteps, defeated by other disciples from the Three Great Sects, and possibly be replaced as seed contestants.

After the completion of the match for the "Zhou Group," up next was the battle between Yuan Family's genius and Tong Qianchen from the Xuanwu Sect.

After returning to his seat, Zhang Taiyi casually said to Tong Qianchen, "Junior Sister Tong, good luck!"

Tong Qianchen smiled sweetly and replied, "Relax, you have defeated Liu Qingyun, so naturally, I can defeat that genius from the Yuan Family. Tong Qianchen is not to be trifled with."

Ye Fan furrowed his brows and said, "Xiao Qian, do not underestimate the enemy. Since Yuan Ye has been selected as a seed contestant, he must have some extraordinary abilities. It's better to be cautious and take care."

"I understand, Brother Ye. Don't worry, wait for my good news."

Tong Qianchen nodded, then walked out of the waiting area and onto the arena. By this time, the Yuan Family's genius, Yuan Ye, was already waiting on the stage.

After exchanging names, the match officially began.

Yuan Ye was indeed powerful, and he chose a sinister path, with moves that were treacherous and fierce, striking ruthlessly, almost every move aiming for the kill.

Tong Qianchen, after all, is the only daughter of Sect Leader Tong Tianhao of the Xuanwu Sect. Whether in talent or comprehension, she's no worse than others. What she lacks is just cultivation time, which can't be helped as she is still young and hasn't cultivated for as many years as others.

Tong Qianchen kept Ye Fan's advice in mind, remaining calm and composed in battle, aiming not for merit but for safety, securing the situation first.

The Xuanwu Sect's mental method emphasizes foundation, so Tong Qianchen defended more than attacked, yet she remained undefeated, her energy channels long and True Yuan abundant.

Although Yuan Ye's offensive was fierce, he couldn't harm Tong Qianchen. Every attack was neutralized by her tight defense, and a careless move could even trigger her fierce counterattack.

"Fight!"

After fighting for a long time without progress, Yuan Ye gradually lost patience. Those on the sinister path are mostly eager for quick victory, and his True Yuan was not as profound as Tong Qianchen's. If long drawn out battles prove disadvantageous, he must change his strategy, go all out, and take down Tong Qianchen; otherwise, further delay could lead to defeat.

Whoosh!

Given Liu Qingyun's recent experience, Yuan Ye of course dared not be careless. With a shout, he flipped his hands, taking out two short daggers from his sleeves.

This kind of weapon is a favorite of assassins like Ye Hei, small and easy to hide, flexible with multiple attack angles.

Swoosh!

Tong Qianchen flipped her hands as well, taking out her weapons: two small hand shields. Only one foot in size, they were covered in ridged patterns, resembling being struck by a hammer like a turtle shell.

These two hand shields were specially crafted for her by one of the three remaining Supreme Elders from the Xuanwu Sect, who specialized in artifact refining, as protective Spiritual Artifacts, masterpieces of the peak of Holy Embryo Realm.

Moreover, the elder invented a set of martial arts for Tong Qianchen specifically to cultivate with these two small hand shields, enabling incredible power.

In the Sect's competitions, whether core disciple ranking matches or any other type, Tong Qianchen had never used this pair of shields before.

This time, seeing Yuan Ye using a pair of short daggers, she was reluctantly compelled to bring out these small shields.

Seeing Tong Qianchen take out the shields, Yuan Ye couldn't help but feel his heart sink. The reason being, whether weapons or Spiritual Artifacts, they all inherently overpower each other, and Tong Qianchen's shields happened to counter his short daggers, with both sides evenly matched in flexibility.

Clang!

Clang!

Clang!

...

Shield in hand, Tong Qianchen shouted sharply, showcasing her unique martial arts, her pair of shields flying up and down, capable of blocking and defending, chopping, and smashing, her moves fierce yet graceful.

Tong Qianchen's counterattack immediately threw Yuan Ye into disarray because her shields just happened to restrain his short daggers, leaving him with an array of Absolute Techniques unusable; every dagger thrust was inevitably blocked by Tong Qianchen's shields without a single move fully executed, not half of it effective.

This frustrating fighting style was the first of its kind he had ever encountered in his life, having skills yet unable to defeat the opponent, even forcing out the opponent's deadly techniques.

Tong Qianchen fought increasingly excitedly, shouting continuously, forcing Yuan Ye into disarray, with only defensive ability, no ability to counter-attack.

Seeing this, Ye Fan felt relieved, knowing Tong Qianchen would undoubtedly defeat the opponent, Yuan Ye was destined to lose.

Sure enough, at this moment, Tong Qianchen unleashed the trump card, her two shields struck heavily against Yuan Ye's chest, directly shattering his Protective True Essence.

Swoosh!

Yuan Ye flew backward through the air, landing in disarray on his back, conceding defeat as it became inevitable!

Chapter 1192: Forcing Out Ye Fan's Combat Power?

"It's over!"

In the instant he was knocked backward, those two words filled Yuan Ye's mind.

Whoosh!

Tong Qianchen dared not be careless, her feet moved, her figure flickered, and she swiftly pursued Yuan Ye.

Before the opponent voluntarily concedes, the match cannot be declared over, and in such circumstances, she naturally wouldn't give the opponent a chance to catch their breath.

Yuan Ye's strength was considerable; if he was allowed to recover, it wouldn't be so easy to defeat him again.

Just as Tong Qianchen's pair of Hand Shields was about to strike from the air, Yuan Ye hurriedly said, "I concede!"

Lei Bikuan was both amused and annoyed, but as the referee, since Yuan Ye had already conceded, the match was over, and he naturally couldn't allow Tong Qianchen to attack him anymore.

So, Lei Bikuan quickly pointed out, a beam of Golden Light separated Tong Qianchen and Yuan Ye.

The pair of Hand Shields of Tong Qianchen heavily struck the Golden Light with a loud bang, and the immense recoil knocked Tong Qianchen flying back, yet the beam of Golden Light didn't even tremble, showing the formidable strength of Lei Bikuan.

The audience below the stage boiled over; another seed contestant was defeated, likely making this Genius Tournament the most prone to upsets and also the highest quality one yet.

In past Genius Tournaments, though dark horses occasionally emerged, they were very few, and ultimately they could not go all the way.

In most cases, seed contestants defeated other contestants in their group, even when occasionally losing after several rounds due to excessive True Yuan depletion, but seeing a seed contestant eliminated right from the start was utterly surprising.

Moreover, as known to everyone, Tong Qianchen wasn't even ranked that high among the Core Disciples of the Xuanwu Sect, being the weakest in strength among the five contestants.

Yet, despite this, she defeated the seed contestant Yuan Ye, becoming the new seed contestant of the Hong Group.

Counting it all, Xuanwu Sect now had three people become seed contestants, which was truly astonishing!

Could the Xuanwu Sect, after years of decline, finally be about to rise?

This result left everyone astonished; that Zhang Taiyi was able to defeat his opponent and become a seed contestant of his group was understandable, for his strength was originally quite good, but for Tong Qianchen to also defeat the seed contestant in her group was indeed surprising.

However, the representatives from the major forces knew that Tong Qianchen defeating her opponent wasn't a coincidence, but rather because she indeed had this strength.

As one of the Three Great Sects, even though the Xuanwu Sect had long been weak, it was still a massive sect, and compared to the heirs of the Five Great Families, it held advantages in every way.

Yuan Ye lost rather unwillingly, thinking that if his short dagger hadn't been countered by Tong Qianchen's Hand Shields, it would still be hard to say who would have won.

But regardless, the top eight was now out of his reach, and he could only strive with all his might to break into the top ten, after all, his injuries were not severe and could fully recover with just a night's rest.

After announcing the match result, Tong Qianchen bounced off the stage and came to Ye Fan, saying, "Brother Ye, I told you, I would definitely win."

Ye Fan nodded, saying, "Well done, you can now basically be sure to enter the top eight, but don't be careless, because there are still others in your group, and you can't slack off in the next matches to enter the top eight."

“I know, Brother Ye, rest assured, I will definitely enter the top eight — I want to accompany you to the end!”

Tong Qianchen’s last sentence was a double entendre, the implication of which Ye Fan naturally understood, but for now, he could only play dumb, without responding.

Next up was the last group, the seed contestant of the Huang Group, Yun Family’s genius Yun Yi, ranked at the bottom of the Five Great Families, against Qing Xuan Sect’s number two genius Xiang Zhan Yun.

Yun Yi was quite nervous; among the Five Great Families, besides Chu Hong not counting, only the Ma Family’s seed contestant passed smoothly, the other two faltered, could he defeat Xiang Zhan Yun?

Upon taking the stage, after exchanging names, the match officially began.

After exchanging names, laughter erupted from the audience because the two names were simply too amusing.

The ordinary folks had no concept of victory or defeat and did not care who won or lost; for them, as long as the fight was exciting, the outcome meant nothing to them.

As for those who had placed massive bets, even wagering their lives, they were only concerned with the four contestants most likely to win the championship; as for the others, they had the same thoughts as the ordinary people.

As the match began, Yun Yi directly used his strongest attack, desperately hoping to defeat Xiang Zhan Yun with a single punch.

But Xiang Zhan Yun was steady, not rushed at all.

One steady, the other reckless and impulsive, the difference in advantage was already very clear, Yun Yi, despite his all-out effort, was absolutely incapable of defeating Qing Xuan Sect's Xiang Zhan Yun; his defeat was merely a matter of time.

Indeed, by the tenth move, Xiang Zhan Yun deliberately exposed a flaw, luring Yun Yi to risk an attack, then with a sidestep, an elbow strike knocked Yun Yi flying, his Protective True Essence instantly shattered, and the piercing True Yuan surged into Yun Yi's meridians, nearly crippling his cultivation.

By this point, it's not something that holding on could resolve anymore, so Yun Yi straightforwardly chose to concede; compared to his life, face didn't matter anymore.

He had already tried his best and still couldn't defeat his opponent; it was beyond his control.

Nobody commented on the result after all, the Yun Family was at the bottom of the Five Great Families, whereas Xiang Zhan Yun was the second genius of Qing Xuan Sect, ranked second among the Three Great Sects, second only to Qing Xuan; his win was thus expected.

However, the direct lineage disciple, ranked second in the Chu Family, was quite dissatisfied with the result, believing his strength was no less than Tong Qianchen and Ma Yuanhang, and could even contend with Qing Xuan Sect's second genius.

If he hadn't been grouped with Ye Fan, but rather placed in another group, he would have definitely been able to defeat them and advance to the top eight.

The second genius of the Chu Family was named Chu Yue, it was he who helped Chu Feng angrily rebuke Tong Qianchen on the street, scolding her as a "slut."

In the Chu Family, his strength was comparable to Chu Feng's before, and now with Chu Feng crippled, he was undoubtedly the Chu Family's second genius, second only to Chu Hong.

"Brother Yue, no need to lament, although you can't advance to the top eight, you can still fight for the top ten, as long as your points can reach the top ten, you will qualify to enter the Tianyuan Secret Realm with me."

After hearing Chu Yue's complaint, Chu Hong smiled and comforted him, encouraging him to defeat his opponents as best as he could, earn points, and strive to enter the top ten.

Only by entering the top ten would one be eligible to enter the Tianyuan Secret Realm, a place that all contestants yearned for.

"Brother Hong, I'm not complaining, I just think it's a bit unfair. Why do they get into such favorable groups, while I was just inadvertently grouped with that wild kid Ye?"

Although Chu Yue said he wasn't complaining, his tone made it evident that he was indeed resentful.

But he could blame no one but himself for having bad luck, being one of the eight groups, he ended up grouped with Ye Fan.

Given Ye Fan's previous performances, it was virtually impossible for him to defeat Ye Fan; the top eight was out of his grasp.

He understood that Chu Hong was right, although the top eight was inaccessible, he could still aim for the top ten, just getting into the top ten was sufficient.

After the first-round match ended, the second-round match didn't start immediately, instead, there was a short break, during which the square buzzed with discussions of the previous battle.

The crowd also anticipated the second match, believing it would bring even more excitement.

After all, the initial contestants were extremely strong seed contestants, and the match process was too straightforward, lacking spectacle for the common folks who enjoyed flashiness and excitement.

But for the strong, such battles were also worthy of attention, as they could glean insights from the subtle traces.

After a period of rest, the second round of the round-robin was about to commence, with all contestants preparing, except those who had already won or lost in the first round, as they wouldn't be appearing short-term.

“Brother Yue, since you’re grouped with that wild kid Ye, you’ll surely face each other sooner or later. Remember, I don’t expect you to defeat him, it’s impossible for you to defeat him, his strength is well concealed. I have only one request for you, and that is to do your utmost to force out his real Combat Power! As long as you can force him to reveal his true Combat Power, I’ll know how many moves it’ll take to kill him!”

Before the start of the second-round match, Chu Hong told Chu Yue this.

Chapter 1193: Chu Family’s Chu Yue

The second round of the competition quickly began. As a round-robin tournament, ten people per group would have five matches, and the recently finished match was just the first one.

After the grouping draw, everyone randomly drew a number for their opponent and order of appearance. Only one person had a single number, while the other eight had double numbers, paired against each other, with the single number challenging the seed contestant.

The first match began again, with both sides being geniuses from small sects, their strength comparable. Although their battle was full of flaws in the eyes of strong people, for ordinary spectators, this was a truly exciting battle, earning genuine applause and exclamations.

As a judge, Lei Bikuan shook his head repeatedly. After having watched the matches of seed contestants, these battle scenes were merely difficult for him to see with his Dharma Eye.

The strength of these people seemed easily defeated to him, yet for contestants of this age, their performance was already quite impressive.

After fierce combat, a winner was finally determined, and the surrounding spectators were entirely stirred, cheering excitedly.

The defeated wore a dejected face, while the victor basked in the admiration of ordinary people.

Next was the second match of the Earth group, which was equally exciting. The audience cheered nonstop, some even whistling.

It's understandable. After all, the Xuan Realm is not Earth; there aren't that many high-tech products—forget about using mobile phones or watching TV and movies. The ordinary people here still live primitive lives dictated by sunrise and sunset without any entertainment. Watching such a match is indeed rare, so they were very thrilled.

Moreover, this wasn't a movie but real, fierce combat, fist meeting flesh, where negligence could lead to fatalities—a level of excitement unattainable in film.

Ye Fan remained focused on the battles in the ring, looking for any strengths he could learn from these participants.

Continuous learning is something he persistently adheres to, believing he can learn what he lacks from anyone.

The saying goes, in a journey of three, there is always something to learn from one!

The result of the second match unfolded amid cheers and regrets—one person won, another narrowly lost.

Though defeated, they earned the respect of ordinary people. As for the strong people, they were indifferent; such exciting battles were pleasing but unnecessary.

Yet no matter how strong one is, they wouldn't despise these contestants' performances, having journeyed through this stage themselves.

Next was the third match, the Xuan Character Group, a small sect against a Xiao family battle, also exceptionally lively, met with thunderous applause from the audience. This high-quality combat was something rarely seen, so naturally, the contestants received the warmest applause.

Laypeople watch for excitement, unable to see the underlying techniques, only feeling that the battles were splendidly exciting, Gang Fist and Sword Aura intertwining, occasionally dazzling with brilliance, making these contestants appear formidable.

Of course, they also respected those strong enough to defeat opponents in a single move, only feeling the match ended too quickly, leaving them unsatisfied.

But even the most exciting match has its end—after intense fighting, the third group settled, producing a winner.

“Next is the second match of the Yellow Group. The contestants come to the stage!”

After announcing the end of the third group match, the fourth group’s second match commencement was declared, leaving Lei Bikuan extremely busy.

During the match, he also needed to watch the contestants closely to prevent injuries.

The second match of the fourth group featured Chu Family’s second genius, Chu Yue, brimming with frustration and eager to vent. His opponent was unfortunate indeed.

Chu Yue’s opponent happened to be from a small sect as well, possessing some skill but hardly on his level.

After they ascended the stage, Lei Bikuan ordered them to exchange names before preparing for the match.

Once the names were exchanged and enough distance was created between them, Lei Bikuan shouted, “Let the match begin!”

Then he positioned himself above them, monitoring their fight from on high.

“Brother Chu, I truly did not expect to be your opponent. Please go easy on me!”

The disciple from the small sect humbly bowed slightly to Chu Yue, fully aware of Chu Family's ability rivaling the Three Great Sects now.

Chu Yue, being Chu Family's second talent, defeating him seemed nearly impossible!

Despite knowing he couldn't win, he had to give his all to avoid regrets.

"If you admit defeat now, I naturally will go easy on you!"

Chu Yue was extremely arrogant, but his arrogance was warranted; whether in realm or true combat power, he far surpassed his opponent.

"Brother Chu, you jest. This concerns sect honor. How can one surrender without battling? However strong your Chu Family is, it shouldn't bully like this, right?"

Chu Yue's opponent, though from a small sect, was ambitious, his gaze fixed on Chu Yue nearly madly, declaring, "Don't you know? Armies might be deprived of their general, but an individual's will cannot be taken! You may defeat me, but you cannot humiliate me!"

"Then why ask for mercy?" Chu Yue's face fell, speaking coldly: "Don't say I didn't give you a chance, go ahead and strike first!"

“This Chu Yue is truly forceful! I wonder how strong he actually is?”

“I believe his power is surely not weak; otherwise, he wouldn’t be ranked as Chu Family’s second genius.”

“Looks like Chu Yue’s opponent is unlucky, encountering such a formidable opponent, I wonder how many moves he can last without defeat.”

People below discussed fervently, feeling Chu Yue was too arrogant, treating himself as a seed contestant. Could he really possess such strength?

Just as everyone was discussing, Chu Yue’s opponent made a move. He knew that if he didn’t take action now, Chu Yue would probably attack first.

To strike first is to gain the advantage; to strike second is to be at a disadvantage. He understood this principle well.

Whoosh!

In that moment, he shouted loudly and unleashed his strongest martial arts technique, throwing a punch towards Chu Yue’s face, trying to disrupt Chu Yue’s vision.

This martial arts technique focused on first disrupting the opponent's vision, and then continuing the relentless barrage of attacks like the Yangtze River, continuous and unending. As long as the opponent retreated even a little, they would be met with his ceaseless assault. Unless the technique was fully executed, it was impossible to stop.

If his opponent couldn't withstand this round of fierce attacks, the outcome would already be decided!

Whoosh!

However—

Facing the attack of the small sect disciple, Chu Yue didn't even bother to look, casually meeting the punch. His blazing Punch Ray was like a small sun, blinding everyone!

Bang!

In the next moment, the fists of the two collided, emitting a loud explosion.

After the explosion, there was a "crack" sound. Chu Yue's punch shattered the opponent's fist, and before the opponent could react, Chu Yue's punch, still brimming with momentum, crashed into the opponent's chest!

"Ah..."

The competitor let out a miserable cry, a part of their chest caved in, and a spray of blood erupted from his mouth. He fainted before even hitting the ground.

One punch!

With just one punch, the opponent was severely injured, their life and death uncertain.

Chu Yue stood proudly in the arena, not pursuing, but looking unsatisfied.

Because...

He was very clear about the consequences of his punch. Although he severely injured his opponent, he did not kill him!

Despite the lack of satisfaction, the pent-up energy in Chu Yue's chest was released, and his heart felt much more relieved.

"Hoo~"

Chu Yue let out a breath, standing in the arena, waiting for Lei Bikuan to announce the result.

Lei Bikuan smiled wryly. Earlier, he had checked the injuries of the small sect disciple. The injuries were very serious, almost severing the heart veins. If the heart veins had been severed, even he might not have been able to save him.

Fortunately, after taking a Healing Holy Pill, the situation had stabilized. He wouldn't die, but he would be bedridden for two months.

"Why is this Chu Yue so powerful?"

"Indeed! His performance is almost indistinguishable from the previous seed competitors, defeating the opponent in one move. If it weren't for Lord Lei's timely treatment, his opponent might have died!"

Only then did the audience react, exclaiming at Chu Yue's strength, considering him no less than the other seed competitors.

"This guy is truly extraordinary. The Chu family really is full of talents. Having a Chu Hong isn't enough; they even have a Chu Yue who's so powerful!"

"It's unfortunate. If he were in the final four groups, he could defeat any seed competitor in those groups and successfully advance to the top eight. However, being in the same group as Ye Fan from Xuanwu Sect, the situation doesn't look optimistic!"

“That might not be the case. With his strength so close to the seed competitors, and even stronger than many of them, who’s to say he won’t pull off an upset and defeat Xuanwu Sect’s number one genius?”

The audience was abuzz, many loose cultivators and contestants discussing the matter, feeling that Chu Yue was at a disadvantage in the Yellow Group. If he were in any of the universe’s primordial groups, he could have a chance to advance to the top eight.

“Do you think Chu Yue could cause an upset and defeat Xuanwu Sect’s top genius?”

The previous speaker brought this speculation again, sparking a new round of discussion.

“I think it’s possible, because from the performance of Xuanwu Sect’s top genius in the first match, it’s impossible to see his true Combat Power. Perhaps Chu Yue is stronger than him.”

Some believed that Chu Yue was stronger than Ye Fan and could really cause an upset. After all, it wasn’t unheard of—three of the seed competitors in the last four groups had already been replaced, so why couldn’t this one?

“I don’t think it’s possible. Not to mention anything else, judging by the strength of the second genius of Xuanwu Sect, he is not much weaker than Chu Yue. That Ye Fan being above them proves his strength is at least not lower than the second genius.”

“That’s right, I also think so. However, this second genius from the Chu family is also extraordinary. I believe that while he won’t defeat Xuanwu Sect’s top genius, he might force out his true Combat Power.”

This viewpoint was more common because with Zhang Taiyi's previous performance as a baseline, Ye Fan could not possibly be weaker than Zhang Taiyi. Chu Yue almost certainly couldn't defeat Ye Fan, but might force out his true strength.

Chapter 1194: Xuanwu's Decline, Chu Family's Rise? Merry Christmas

The sounds of speculation and discussion naturally reached Ye Fan's ears, but he didn't care, his expression calm as still water.

Ye Fan's reaction left those paying attention to him quite puzzled—Chu Yue was undoubtedly strong, so why was he so composed? Could it be that, at only the Mid True Essence Realm, he was really powerful enough to disregard Chu Yue?

Ye Fan paid no heed to the questioning looks of these people.

The competition continued, and it looked like the sky was getting darker. If they didn't continue the fight into the night, unless something unexpected happened, by the time all five matches of the first round ended, it would be completely dark.

Next up was Shen Tu against a disciple from a small sect, with almost no suspense. With his strength, as long as he didn't run into a genius disciple from the other two major sects or the Chu family, no one was his match.

Even if he did encounter a disciple ranked third from the Qing Xuan Sect, the Tianyuan Sect, or the Chu family, the outcome would be fifty-fifty; he still had a chance to win.

“Prepare the victory wine for me. I’ll be right back!”

Before taking the stage, Shen Tu said this to Ye Fan and the others, his confidence overwhelmingly strong.

“You little rascal, your arrogance is even bigger than your foot odor! If you lose the match, see how I deal with you!” Supreme Elder Shen Ximen jokingly scolded him.

Shen Tu chuckled, darting onto the stage like an eel.

At this time, his opponent, the disciple from the small sect, was also walking up from the other side of the stage.

That person was much steadier than Shen Tu; on the surface, he seemed more like a master, but whether he truly was or not would only be revealed in the match.

After exchanging names, Shen Tu transformed as if into a different person, the entire being turned into an unsheathed steel knife, exuding fierce killing intent.

Ye Fan nodded; with Shen Tu’s strength, defeating his opponent was just like playing.

The match began, and Shen Tu almost launched a storm-like chain of attacks at lightning speed, defeating his opponent within ten moves.

The opponent was frustrated to the point of vomiting blood, having not expected to encounter such a top-grade fighter, not only powerful but also full of unpredictable moves that were impossible to withstand.

Next was the fourth match of the Zhou Group, with a contestant from the Qing Xuan Sect against a genius from a Xiao family.

After a round of fierce combat, the contestant from the Qing Xuan Sect finally won, earning three points, while the genius from the Xiao family ended in gloom.

The fourth match of the Hong Group was the Chu family's third-ranked genius against Jin Zhanfei from the Xuanwu Sect.

"Go, we look forward to your excellent performance."

Jin Zhanfei's strength was not weak, but the opponent was equally strong; this match was destined to be a fierce battle between a dragon and a tiger.

Upon taking the stage, it was customary to exchange names before starting the match.

The Chu family's third-ranked genius was named Chu Chuan, a genius in terms of talent and comprehension, not to be underestimated in strength.

The battle entered a fever pitch as soon as it began, with neither side testing each other; both went all out from the start.

Jin Zhanfei was well aware of his opponent's strength and didn't dare to be careless, fighting steadily, while Chu Chuan also knew Jin Zhanfei's strength in the Xuanwu Sect.

"Xuanwu Mountain Collision!"

Jin Zhanfei directly used the Xuanwu Sect's absolute technique, the Xuanwu Divine Fist, launching a killing move, with both fists pounding fiercely at the opponent.

Bam!

Chu Chuan sneered, spinning around to deflect Jin Zhanfei's Punch Ray, then punching Jin Zhanfei in response.

Jin Zhanfei grunted, not retreating a single step, then kicked Chu Chuan's thigh.

Both of them were putting their all into it, launching their absolute techniques frequently, with each strike accompanied by blood. In a few short minutes, half of Jin Zhanfei's clothes were stained with blood.

Chu Chuan was not having an easy time either, with multiple injuries from Jin Zhanfei's desperate attacks and severely depleted True Yuan.

In a sudden clash and separation, they both mustered another hard blow, blasting Jin Zhanfei's right arm open, the flesh a bloody mess, hanging powerlessly, an appalling sight.

Meanwhile, half of Chu Chuan's face was swollen like a pig's head, his left eye given a dark bruise by Jin Zhanfei's Eye Sealing Hammer.

After this fierce exchange, they both stopped simultaneously, panting heavily, and their heads were steaming.

For a moment, the audience below was almost entirely silent, as if in a graveyard, captivated by the intense match, not even daring to breathe loudly.

"Come on!"

"Hit him!"

“Kill him!!”

Seeing the two finally stop momentarily, the crowd below nearly went wild, continuously cheering them on.

No one expected, just as night was falling, to witness such an exciting match; it was truly worth every moment.

Not only were the spectators below inspired by the unyielding spirit of the two, but even the representatives of various major forces on the opposite platform were captivated by their match, watching intently.

“Come again!”

Jin Zhanfei’s eyes flashed with a crazy glare. Although his right arm couldn’t move, he still had his left hand and legs, and as long as he wasn’t completely down, the match wasn’t over.

Lei Bikuan was also moved by the pair. Hovering in the air, he could best feel the dense War Intent between the two.

Especially Jin Zhanfei, who left a profound impression on him.

With his strength and vision, it wasn't hard to see that Jin Zhanfei's strength was slightly inferior to Chu Chuan, but he dared to risk his life, willing to risk it all, with an indomitable spirit of never giving up flowing in his veins, something not easily found.

"Since you want to die, I'll grant your wish!"

Chu Chuan hadn't expected Jin Zhanfei to be so tough; now, he was also seriously injured, with extremely depleted True Yuan.

In fact, this was also due to the advantage he secretly had, as Chu Feng had leaked some of the Xuanwu Sect's secrets to the family when he was in the Xuanwu Sect. Especially before coming here, he relayed the strengths and absolute techniques of the Xuanwu Sect contestants.

With this targeted approach, he still had to exert so much effort to not defeat Jin Zhanfei. Without this advantage, he really couldn't imagine if he could defeat the likes of Jin Zhanfei, who fought like a madman.

The match continued, with Jin Zhanfei ignoring his injuries, punching fiercely toward Chu Chuan with his left fist, carrying an unstoppable force.

Simultaneously, Chu Chuan also moved. Like Jin Zhanfei, he abandoned defense completely, attacking the enemy wholeheartedly, using offense as defense.

Bam!

Jin Zhanfei's fist struck Chu Chuan's left arm, but he himself had a rib broken by Chu Chuan's punch, the searing pain making him spit a mouthful of blood, and he staggered back eight steps before falling heavily to the ground.

At this moment, Lei Bikuan had already seen that Jin Zhanfei was unable to continue fighting, and the outcome was decided. He descended from the air to help Jin Zhanfei up, setting his fractured rib right, and feeding him a Healing Holy Pill.

Meanwhile, Shen Ximen had already reached the stage, looking at Chu Chuan with a complex gaze, saying nothing as he received Jin Zhanfei from Lei Bikuan's hands and carried him back to the waiting area.

"Xuanwu Sect's genius is nothing special either!"

On the stage, Chu Chuan, hailed as the third genius of the Chu family, watched Shen Ximen carrying Jin Zhanfei offstage, sneering arrogantly.

"Elder Shen, everyone, sorry, I couldn't defeat my opponent..."

In Shen Ximen's embrace, Jin Zhanfei hadn't fainted and spoke with a pale face, his eyes full of guilt.

"It's okay, you've done your best, and you've demonstrated the bravery of our Xuanwu Sect. No one will blame you."

Shen Ximen sighed silently in his heart. Every disciple was a treasure of the Xuanwu Sect, and for the glory of the sect, Jin Zhanfei was commendable to have come this far.

Unfortunately, Jin Zhanfei's opponent was too strong, and his opponent was familiar with his strength, which was why they could still defeat him despite his desperate efforts.

"The Chu family's geniuses are really extraordinary!"

"Indeed, having Chu Hong is one thing, but Chu Yue and Chu Chuan are also very strong!"

Everyone witnessed this; Chu Chuan's performance gave everyone a new understanding of the Chu family's overall strength.

At the same time, Chu Chuan's strength revealed Chu Yue's even greater strength, not to be underestimated.

In such circumstances, almost everyone was even more looking forward to the match between Chu Yue and Ye Fan.

"Who will ultimately emerge victorious?"

They were filled with anticipation!

Chapter 1195: Wait and See

The competition continued, but after the battle between Jin Zhanfei and Chu Chuan, the other battles were already losing their appeal. Though the remaining matches were lively, none could be as heart-stirring as that of Jin Zhanfei and Chu Chuan!

When all the matches were finished, the sky was already completely dark. Torches were lit early around the square, making the entire area as bright as day.

Even with that, it was impossible to continue the matches today. With numerous battles in one day, even if the participating cultivators could persist, considering the ordinary spectators, it was inappropriate to continue.

City Lord Lei Bikuan announced that today's competition was concluded, and everyone gradually dispersed in small groups.

Ye Fan and his group returned to their quarters. The inn had already prepared a sumptuous dinner, just waiting for their return.

Although Jin Zhanfei's injuries were severe, fortunately, due to timely treatment and the astonishing effect of the Healing Holy Pill given by Lei Bikuan, by the time they returned, his injuries were almost fully recovered. With a hearty meal and a good night's rest, he'd be lively again by tomorrow.

Ye Fan couldn't help but marvel that Jin Zhanfei truly was a daredevil who feared nothing, and he had a thick nerve, not making a sound despite being so seriously injured.

After dinner, everyone returned to their rooms to rest, while Elder Shen Ximen helped Jin Zhanfei to recover quickly, as there were several matches awaiting him, and he had to stay in peak condition.

Silent through the night, the next morning everyone rose early, washed up, and received a nutritious breakfast from the inn, which was perfectly balanced though not plentiful, but adequately covered all nutritional aspects.

After breakfast, led by Shen Ximen, the group of six once again arrived and sat in the competition waiting area on the square.

At that moment, other people were also arriving gradually; the match was about to begin.

The ordinary people and some loose cultivators from Tianyuan City arrived earlier than these participating contestants. When Ye Fan and others arrived, it was exactly like yesterday—crowds everywhere, looking out all one sees is a sea of round, bald heads.

Some shrewd vendors were amidst the crowd zealously hawking various snacks.

Occasionally, noisy cursing broke out, who knows who stepped on someone's foot, leading to a jumping and cursing scene—a highly lively affair.

Ye Fan felt it was very similar to the fairs he'd occasionally visit with Chu Xuanji during his childhood, fleetingly making him feel as if he was on Earth.

At this moment, a sorrow rose inside Ye Fan!

It's not that he doesn't miss home or want to return to Earth to see his family and friends, but he can't!

He had more important tasks in the Xuan Realm, like searching for his mother and closing the channel between Earth and the Xuan Realm. He must not let strong people from the Xuan Realm know of this channel or even learn of Earth's existence.

All of this makes it so he cannot return to Earth!

At least, not now!

After a while, City Lord Lei Bikuan and Zuo Fengshan also arrived at the arena.

According to tradition, before the second round starts, all competitors switch opponents to ensure fairness, allowing every competitor to comprehensively display their strength, preventing their talents from being buried if they meet a strong opponent early.

With a bell ringing through the skies, the entire square instantly quieted down, and the first match of the second round officially began.

In the first group, the first to take the stage was still Chu Hong, the unparalleled genius of the Chu family. Following five matches in the first round yesterday, with wins and losses, today his opponent was adjusted to a different contender. Coincidentally, it was still a genius from a small sect.

On the stage, the two stood facing each other, and Lei Bikuan announced the start after introducing them, then stood behind the genius from the small sect, ready to rescue at any moment.

Everyone knew, based on Chu Hong's displayed strength yesterday, this opponent still wasn't a match for him. Persisting for three moves would be miraculous.

Chu Hong's strength was too overwhelming, not deserving of the combat power for someone of that realm, so many speculated under the stage about how many moves the genius from the small sect could withstand against Chu Hong.

It wasn't a matter of guessing victory or defeat—rather, how many moves Chu Hong's opponent could endure without being defeated, proving the crowd's recognition of Chu Hong's strength.

As Chu Hong's opponent, the genius was well aware that defeating Chu Hong was impossible; he hoped only not to lose too disgracefully.

Upon learning his opponent was Chu Hong, he had prepared for defeat, knowing that no matter the result, as long as he tried his best, it was enough.

The situation with Jin Zhanfei yesterday had heavily impacted many. His indomitable spirit and bravery in the face of death deeply moved them.

For the honor of the sect and personal dignity, even knowing inevitable defeat, persistence till the match's conclusion became the proud spirit of a genius, not allowing him to retreat.

"Please, Brother Chu, teach me!"

That person didn't fear Chu Hong's overwhelming presence; knowing he was sure to lose, there was nothing to fear. Even in defeat, he aimed to lose honorably.

"You make the first move; otherwise, they'd say I didn't give you a chance to attack."

Chu Hong was, as ever, arrogant, not regarding his opponent whatsoever. If it were an opponent from one of the Three Great Sects, it might pique his interest, but competitors from small sects didn't interest him at all.

However, the competition has its rules, and no matter how unwilling he might be, he must persevere and cannot miss any match.

"In that case, please forgive me!"

The contestant from the small sect's expression turned serious, uniting his spiritual energy, advancing to a state of no self, no objects, shouted fiercely, and launched a punch at Chu Hong.

This was the most powerful punch he had thrown since embarking on the path of Cultivation in Martial Arts, capable of posing a certain threat to Cultivators at the Peak of True Essence Realm.

Ye Fan secretly nodded, this genius from a small sect truly lived up to the name, just this move alone was enough to place him among the ranks of the geniuses.

Unfortunately, his opponent was Chu Hong, whose strength was far superior. Even his strongest attack would likely be unable to do anything to Chu Hong.

As expected, Chu Hong curved a cold arc, extended his left hand, opened his five fingers, and just as the man's fist was about to reach him, he suddenly grabbed it, and with his right hand, he struck out with a palm, directly sending the genius from the small sect flying.

One move!

Chu Hong still defeated his opponent with one move!

In two consecutive matches, not a single opponent could withstand more than one move under his hand, showing the extent of his formidable strength.

However, this time, Lei Bikuan was always watching the match between the two, and with timely assistance, that contestant was not too severely injured.

Perhaps it was also because the elders of the Chu Family felt that demonstrating strong power was one thing, and as long as it wasn't a life-and-death battle with an agreement of life and death, it wasn't necessary to seriously injure the opponent, as that would negatively impact the clan's honor.

Possessing strong power is one thing, but if one goes too far, they will inevitably become the target of public criticism, which is absolutely detrimental to the development of the clan.

Today's first match was no different from yesterday's, except that people came to recognize more distinctly the fearsome nature of Chu Hong from this match; not a single opponent could withstand two moves from him.

"He is truly too strong, and it seems that the claim of him being the number one genius in Tianyuan State is not wrong at all, his power is simply unfathomable, and no one can make him truly go all out in a match."

"With combat power like his, he might even be able to contend with a strong person at the early-stage of the Holy Embryo Realm, right?"

People speculated whether Chu Hong had long since broken through to the Holy Embryo Realm and just had some Secret Treasure to conceal his original realm aura.

But after pondering again, it seemed impossible. Given Chu Hong's arrogance, if he really broke through to the Holy Embryo Realm and formed the Holy Embryo, he wouldn't hide his aura. The more people knew, the better.

Moreover, the Tianyuan Secret Realm only allows young Cultivators below the Holy Embryo Realm to enter. If Chu Hong wanted to enter the Tianyuan Secret Realm, he would have to suppress his power and could only break through after the tournament ends.

At the very least, he would have to wait until entering the Tianyuan Secret Realm before he could break through!

The first match ended with Chu Hong's strong victory, and next came the second match of the day.

The first genius of Tianyuan Sect, the number one Core Disciple Luo Xiaolin, faced off against a genius contestant from the Ma Family.

Once on stage, Luo Xiaolin, after Lei Bikuan shouted "Let the match begin," immediately and decisively struck, the genius from the Ma Family didn't even have the chance to react before being blown away with one move.

If not for Lei Bikuan's early vigilance and action in neutralizing most of Luo Xiaolin's Punch Ray, the genius from the Ma Family probably wouldn't be able to continue participating in the following matches.

The third group, Qingxuan, was also very strong, resolving the opponent almost at lightning speed, the match proceeded fast and neatly.

Next was the Yellow Group's match, which was Ye Fan's group.

"Round two, match four, Xuanwu Sect's Ye Fan versus Chu Family's Chu Yue, both please take the stage!"

When Lei Bikuan announced Ye Fan and Chu Yue to the stage, the audience below was almost boiling; yesterday they had speculated who between Chu Yue and Ye Fan was stronger and who could advance to the top eight.

Unexpectedly, today, they could witness the showdown between the two; the entire plaza seemed like a pot of boiling oil broken open by a bowl of cold water, instantly exploding with people engages in intense discussions about the match between the two.

"Finally, it's the match between Xuanwu Sect's Ye Fan and Chu Family's Chu Yue!"

"Yes, their match should be the most anticipated of all today's matches!"

"Can Ye Fan be on par with Chu Hong, among the three supreme geniuses? Will Chu Yue be able to force out Ye Fan's true combat power or cause an upset by defeating Ye Fan? Let's wait and see; the results will soon be out!"

Both the audience below and representatives of the major forces were eagerly anticipating this match.

In their view, through this match, they should be able to see clearly to what heights Ye Fan's true strength had reached!

#### Chapter 1196: Ye Fan Emerges Victorious

In the waiting area, many contestants were eagerly anticipating the battle. Yesterday, Chu Yue's performance was particularly impressive, and they believed this would definitely be a spectacular match.

"Who do you think will win between the top genius of the Xuanwu Sect and Chu Yue, the second genius of the Chu Family?"

Someone posed this question, immediately sparking a heated discussion among the crowd.

"Isn't it obvious? Ye Fan will definitely win!"

Some believed Ye Fan would win, as he was the top genius of the Xuanwu Sect, one of the Three Great Sects. His strength surely wasn't just the Mid True Essence Realm on the surface, he was likely comparable to the top genius of Qing Xuan Sect.

"The outcome is still uncertain; Chu Yue is not without hope!"

This viewpoint was quickly argued against, with opponents thinking that Ye Fan, though the top genius of the Xuanwu Sect, had a realm that was indeed too low. Even if he could fight above his level, whether he could defeat Chu Yue was unknown. Perhaps Chu Yue could upset the odds and beat Ye Fan to advance to the top eight.

Both sides held their ground, unable to convince each other. Ye Fan and Chu Yue hadn't even entered the stage yet, but the audience area below was already abuzz, as if any disagreement might lead to a fight.

"Ye, the wild brat, please!"

The Chu Family's waiting area, where Chu Yue was, was adjacent to Ye Fan's waiting area, less than ten meters away. After hearing from the City Lord and referee Lei Bikuan, Chu Yue sneered at Ye Fan.

"Since you're in such a hurry to reborn, I'll make it happen for you."

Ye Fan had no affection for the Chu Family.

Jin Zhanfei was injured just yesterday, and the arrogant remarks of Chu Chuan disrespecting the Xuanwu Sect were still fresh in memory.

Blood debts are repaid in blood. Ye Fan had a good relationship with Jin Zhanfei, who was a straightforward and passionate man, very much to Ye Fan's liking.

Originally, when Chu Hong, Chu Feng, and others publicly insulted Tong Qianchen, Ye Fan felt uncomfortable. Now, with Jin Zhanfei injured and Chu Chuan insulting the Xuanwu Sect, Ye Fan felt even more displeased with the Chu Family and decided to show them some consequences!

Chu Yue didn't realize Ye Fan was already angry; his task was to force out Ye Fan's true strength as much as possible to gather information for Chu Hong, the Chu Family's top genius.

In his opinion, as long as he learned where Ye Fan's true strength lay, Chu Hong could have a targeted strategy to kill Ye Fan and avenge Chu Feng!

Whoosh!

As if to show he wasn't afraid of Ye Fan, Chu Yue was the first to step onto the arena.

"Ye Zi, none of the Chu Family are good people, cut him down fiercely, let them know the strength of our sect!"

Shen Tu patted Ye Fan on the shoulder, giving him an encouraging glance.

Shen Tu knew Ye Fan's strength well. After Chu Feng comprehended the wonder of Thunder Power, his power soared, even Zhang Taiyi was not his opponent, yet Ye Fan had still crippled his cultivation with one punch, piercing through his Dantian. No matter how demonic Chu Yue was, he couldn't be stronger than Chu Feng at his peak.

“Let’s make it quick!”

Zhang Taiyi, who rarely spoke, also opened his mouth, showing his strong confidence in Ye Fan.

Some people are geniuses, but some are demons, geniuses among geniuses, and Ye Fan was just that kind of person.

In just one year, Ye Fan leaped from the True Qi Realm to the Mid True Essence Realm, and his actual combat power was astonishing. He also comprehended the Secret Technique of Thunder Power, his Attack Power soared.

In Zhang Taiyi’s view, Ye Fan was unmatched among those of the same realm, even if facing cultivators one or two small realms above him, the result would still be defeat for them, they were simply not his match.

“Be careful with everything, try not to show your full strength. In such matches, the less exposed strength can sometimes have the effect of catching people off guard.”

Elder Shen Ximen had previous experience leading teams and understood the tricks in the competition rules, advising Ye Fan on how to effectively use them.

Against opponents far inferior to oneself, there’s no need to use full power. The saying “a lion fighting a rabbit uses full strength” applies only in life-and-death battles, while competitions are about who has more hidden cards, who conceals strength better.

“Elder Shen, I understand!”

Actually, Ye Fan didn’t need Elder Shen Ximen to teach him; he was already an expert at utilizing rules. Otherwise, back on Earth, he wouldn’t have been able to use rules to send his family’s enemy Bai Guotao’s beloved son into prison.

Under the expectant gaze of many, Ye Fan slowly walked to the arena and climbed onto it via the steps. This was his first match today, and a highly controversial one.

Since Ye Fan’s previous performance was lukewarm, no one knew how truly strong he was.

But his opponent, Chu Yue of the Chu Family, had shown great strength, defeating enemies in one move, much like the previous performances of Chu Hong, Luo Xiaolin, and Qingxuan.

Under such circumstances, people somewhat doubted if he could defeat Chu Yue.

This was also his best opportunity to prove to everyone whether he was qualified to be a seed player. If he won, everything would be good to say. If he lost, then the title of seed player would have to change hands, and he might not even make it to the top eight.

Once Ye Fan stood on the arena, Lei Bikuan took a deep breath; he also felt this would be an extremely exciting match.

Only with more excitement in the match, he as the referee would be busier, needing to constantly pay attention to the subtle differences between the two, in order to decide whom to assist.

“Do you think Ye Fan will still suppress his strength to match the opponent’s realm like he did yesterday?”

Many cultivators also speculated below the stage. After Lei Bikuan’s insight yesterday, they already knew Ye Fan’s true strength was unfathomable. Would this time be like yesterday?

“I think not, didn’t you see? Just now, this second genius of the Chu Family was provoking Ye Fan. Even a clay figure has some dirt nature. I believe Ye Fan will definitely not be willing to play sparring partner for the opponent like yesterday.”

“Announce names, prepare for the match!”

While the crowd was discussing, Lei Bikuan pressed his hands down to stop the discussion and then dutifully performed his job. Despite the two knowing each other, many in the audience didn’t know them, or were familiar with faces but not names, so introductions were necessary.

“Chu Family, Chu Yue!”

Chu Yue’s voice was cold, devoid of any emotion, his eyes burning with intense War Intent.

“Xuanwu Sect, Ye Fan!”

Ye Fan did not show the same humility as yesterday but rather displayed a cold demeanor.

Unlike Chu Yue’s eyes filled with soaring War Intent and sharp light, Ye Fan’s eyes were like a pool of dead water, devoid of any emotion, looking at Chu Yue as if looking at something lifeless, or as if viewing a Stone.

His body was enveloped in War Intent!

Before the battle even began, the war intent of the two had already enveloped the entire ancient arena!

“Ye Fan’s aura has changed!”

Some perceptive cultivators had already noticed that in terms of aura, Ye Fan had already gained an advantage over Chu Yue. Even though the contest hadn’t started, they could roughly guess that Chu Yue was probably not Ye Fan’s match.

However, the majority still couldn’t detect these subtle differences, only feeling that the atmosphere was somewhat heavy.

Ye Fan stood on the stage as immovable as a mountain, his whole being like a pillar reaching the heavens!

“Both sides prepare, the contest begins!”

Lei Bikuan took a deep breath. At present, he didn’t know which side he should lean toward, so he slowly took to the air, hovering above the two.

The contest was about to start, and everyone held their breath, waiting to witness the most thrilling clash between the two. Even the small vendors stopped their calls, and the whole square was as silent as a graveyard, with only faint breathing sounds audible.

Seeing that Ye Fan had no intention of making the first move, Chu Yue didn’t hold back. He was currently simmering with anger. Despite Chu Hong thinking he wasn’t Ye Fan’s match, only planning to push Ye Fan to reveal his true combat power.

But he himself did not believe he was utterly without hope of defeating Ye Fei Na. After all, in terms of realm, he was slightly superior to Ye Fan.

Moreover, he could fight across realms as long as he didn’t encounter geniuses of the same level, he could defeat opponents across realms.

He didn’t believe Ye Fan could remain unaffected under his attack; even if he lost today, he wanted to leave a deep impression on Ye Fan.

Hoo!

Thinking of this, Chu Yue no longer hesitated, enhancing his aura madly and incorporating war intent into his attack, swinging a fierce hand blade at Ye Fan's face!

Sky Splitting Palm!

The Absolute Technique that the Chu Family depended on for fame; the reason the Chu Family could become the strongest among the five ancient families was not just due to the talents and strength of the family disciples, but also attributed to "Sky Splitting Palm".

This palm almost represented the full display of Chu Yue's strength. With confidence, he could reduce a giant stone to dust with one hit!

Facing the aggressive strike, Ye Fan not only didn't assume a defensive or offensive stance but slowly closed his eyes, using his awareness to substitute for vision, understanding every change around him.

Seeing Ye Fan actually close his eyes at this critical moment, Chu Yue was momentarily stunned, then overwhelmed with anger – Ye Fan's actions clearly indicated disdain!

"Courting death!!"

With burning rage, Chu Yue drove his True Yuan madly, launching a frenzied strike that moved at a dizzying speed.

At their level, True Yuan was not unleashed externally; instead, it was contained within the palm, waiting to release forcefully upon contact with the opponent's body, directly destroying the opponent's meridians with overpowering destructive force.

"It's over, Ye Fan underestimated!"

Just as Chu Yue's hand blade was about to strike Ye Fan, someone below the stage shook their head, believing that Ye Fan had no way to escape this time.

Not only did ordinary people think this way, even the leaders of various sects and families thought Ye Fan was indeed overconfident.

Facing such a powerful opponent and still daring to close his eyes, wasn't this courting death?

Meanwhile, representatives from major forces did not express opinions but kept their eyes glued to the arena.

Boom!

Just when Chu Yue secretly rejoiced and everyone thought Ye Fan was undoubtedly defeated, Ye Fan moved, meeting Chu Yue with a punch!

Domineering Fist strikes out, domineeringly controlling the world!

Ye Fan, moved later but arrived first. Although he didn't use Thunder Power, the punch was powerful, creating a blast of air, causing the Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi to boil.

Hmm?

The power of Ye Fan's punch surprised Lei Bikuan.

Hoo!

Almost simultaneously, Lei Bikuan swung a palm, the Divine Power instantly condensing into a golden light palm, completely isolating the two.

Neither Chu Yue's palm nor Ye Fan's punch managed to hit the opponent, all striking the golden light palm which dimmed immediately, successfully neutralizing both attacks.

"Contest ends, Ye Fan wins!"

After stopping the contest, Lei Bikuan directly announced the result.

As the City Lord of Tianyuan City and a strong Divine Power Realm, how keen were his perceptions?

When Ye Fan hadn't made a move, he couldn't see how strong Ye Fan's true combat power was, but the moment Ye Fan moved, he realized that Chu Yue's strength was indeed far from matching Ye Fan's.

Wow!

Everyone originally anticipated an exciting duel, unexpected that the contest ended just as quickly as it started, with Lei Bikuan halting it and announcing the result.

This series of events directly stirred the initially silent scene into a commotion!

"What's going on?"

"Yes, both parties just made a move, yet to truly engage, how did Lord Lei stop the contest? How could he declare Ye Fan the winner?"

"Did Lord Lei see that Chu Yue was no match, fearing Chu Yue would suffer severe damage?"

Below the stage, most ordinary spectators couldn't make heads or tails, each puzzled with confusion.

#### Chapter 1197: Courting Death

From the audience's perspective, the ordinary people couldn't see the intricacies involved; they simply felt the match ended too abruptly.

Originally, they thought there would be a fierce battle between dragons and tigers. Even if Ye Fan could defeat Chu Yue, he would surely pay a certain price. At the very least, he would have to showcase his most formidable combat power to possibly defeat Chu Yue.

But now, the two had just exchanged blows, and neither side had made any move; not even a thread on their clothing was torn. City Lord Lei Bikuan then announced the match was over. What was going on?

The people below the stage were all discussing animatedly, almost turning chaotic.

Some of the less powerful loose cultivators couldn't discern who was better, after all, the two hadn't even hit each other. Before Chu Yue's Sky Splitting Palm and Ye Fan's fist reached the opponent, Lei Bikuan interfered and announced the match was over, declaring Ye Fan the winner. This result left them baffled.

However, cultivators are cultivators; they know well that City Lord Lei Bikuan is a strong figure in the Divine Power Realm. Not only in the entire Tianyuan State, but even across the mainland's Southern Domain, he is very famous.

Since Lei Bikuan said Ye Fan won, there must be a reason for it.

Moreover, Lei Bikuan belongs to the Jueluo Country and has no relations with the Three Great Sects or the Five Great Families, so there is no reason for him to be biased.

Announcing it this way might very well be because he saw that Chu Yue was no match for Ye Fan. Once Ye Fan's fist landed on Chu Yue, it might be too late for rescue.

In the waiting area, the leaders of each participating sect and family were also puzzled. They could see that Ye Fan was slightly better than Chu Yue, but it didn't mean Chu Yue had no power to fight. Lei Bikuan's verdict surprised them.

Although the representatives of the various powers sensed something was off, they felt that announcing the match's end this way was hard to justify, as Ye Fan and Chu Yue were so close at the time and Ye Fan struck later. Declaring Chu Yue lost like this, he might not accept it.

As if to validate everyone's suspicion, Chu Yue, with a face full of resentment, said to Lei Bikuan, "City Lord, I refuse to accept this. I haven't lost. You are intentionally favoring him, I demand a rematch!"

Swish!

Seeing Chu Yue questioning his fairness, Lei Bikuan's face fell instantly, and he said coldly, "I'm doing this for your own good. If I hadn't stopped your match in time, you would have been either dead or heavily injured. Yet, you question my fairness?"

“If you refuse to accept it and demand a rematch, that’s possible. But by the rules, the second match will be a life-and-death battle. You must first sign a life-and-death declaration. Are you willing to sign it?”

“I’m willing. For the honor of my family and my personal dignity, I am willing to sign the life-and-death declaration, and let life and death be as decreed by fate. I’m just not sure if that Ye fellow has the guts!”

Chu Yue thought that even if he wasn’t a match for Ye Fan, burning his True Yuan could definitely allow him to fight to some extent.

At the very least, even if he wasn’t a match after burning his True Yuan, he could force Ye Fan to reveal his true combat power and achieve the pre-match objective.

When the time came, he could concede defeat timely.

One must admit, Chu Yue’s calculations were quite meticulous!

“Is it really going to be a life-and-death battle?”

Everyone’s emotions were stirred. Aside from yesterday’s battle between Jin Zhanfei and Chu Chuan, there hadn’t been any actual life-and-death battles. Today, they were in for a spectacle.

“A life-and-death match! Truly unexpected. The Chu family’s genius is so resolute, choosing a life-and-death match for the family’s honor!”

A life-and-death battle, as the name suggests, is when both parties sign a life-and-death agreement. This means that after signing, the referee will no longer stop the match until one side is defeated, concedes, or is killed. It is the most brutal form of competition, unparalleled.

“Ye kid, if you’re still a man, sign the life-and-death agreement with me. Fight squarely, and even if you die in battle, die like a man. Do you dare?” Chu Yue spoke again.

“Since you seek death, I’ll grant it!”

Ye Fan had intended to defeat or even kill Chu Chuan in one strike, but was interrupted by Lei Bikuan. Seeing Chu Chuan proactively proposing a life-and-death match now, he responded coldly.

Wow!

With Ye Fan’s words, the scene burst into an uproar again.

“A life-and-death match... Truly unexpected, the two would escalate to a life-and-death match!”

“Just now, the two hardly exchanged blows. Chu Yue didn’t accept City Lord Lei’s verdict; proving oneself could only be through a life-and-death match!”

“Hearing Ye Fan’s words earlier, it seems he intends a killing move. Is Chu Yue courting death?”

After the uproar, the scene buzzed with heated discussions, pushing the atmosphere of the genius competition to the first climax.

“Since you both agree, sign the life-and-death declaration and restart the match!”

Lei Bikuan did not stop them, rather he directly ordered a pre-written life-and-death declaration to be brought out. As long as both signed, they could engage in the life-and-death match.

Swish swish swish...

Under the watchful eyes of the crowd, Chu Yue was first to sign his name on the life-and-death declaration.

Following that, Ye Fan also signed his name on it.

With their names signed, the life-and-death match became inevitable. The match must be fought until one side is dead, and only then will the match be considered over.

Unless the losing player concedes timely, calling for help from the referee could save them from death.

Seeing this, Lei Bikuan showed no expression.

Previously, he stopped the match because he saw Ye Fan's fist was formidable. If Chu Yue was hit, he would be either dead or severely injured.

He didn't want Chu Yue to fall like that, letting Tianyuan State lose a potential young cultivator.

But Chu Yue questioned his judgment and proactively proposed a life-and-death match...

That irked him, hence he refrained from any further persuasion or interceding.

"Both sides prepare, the match begins!"

Seeing Ye Fan and Chu Yue ready for the match again, Lei Bikuan called out solemnly.

"Hoo~"

Hearing Lei Bikuan's words beside his ears, Chu Yue took a deep breath, his face twisted, eyes shooting sharp beams, letting out a long howl, directly burning his True Yuan, causing his combat power to surge dramatically.

Burning True Yuan is usually a last resort in life-and-death situations. Although it allows for a rapid increase in a cultivator's combat power in a short time, the side effects are very obvious; mishandling it could cause one to fall from their original realm.

Swish!

At this moment, seeing Chu Yue burn his True Yuan from the start, the onlooking cultivators were astounded, even the participating players were dumbfounded—what kind of grudge could push one this far in a match?

Hmm?

In the waiting area, Shen Ximen frowned slightly. Chu Yue wasn't playing by any usual rules, which caused the leading captains of various sects and clans to stand involuntarily, staring intently at the intense duo on the platform, eyes shining.

Even the representatives of the major powers were visibly focused on the stage, afraid to miss any of the exciting match moments.

"Ye squirt, meet your death!"

Burning his True Yuan, Chu Yue's offensive power, defensive power, and speed soared. It was said that none, under normal circumstances, could withstand his thunderous strike.

In the midst of his cruel laughter, Chu Yue transformed into a bolt of lightning, charging directly at Ye Fan, while raising his hand to form a blade, aiming it fiercely at Ye Fan's heart.

Whoosh!

Burning his True Yuan, Chu Yue's attack power, defense, and speed were all enhanced, and he dashed towards Ye Fan like a flash, forming his hand into a blade, stabbing fiercely towards Ye Fan's heart.

Ah!

Under the platform, some already closed their eyes, unable to bear the sight of Ye Fan's chest being pierced through by a hand blade.

Swoosh!

The next moment.

Just as Chu Yue's figure appeared in front of Ye Fan, the eerily still Ye Fan finally moved!

Once again, he launched a punch!

Move after the other yet arrives first!

Just as Chu Yue's hand blade was less than two inches from his heart, Ye Fan's fist struck his chest with full force!

The explosion sounded in everyone's ears, the violent fist force smashed through Chu Yue's protective True Yuan and crashed into his chest!

Chu Yue was blown apart by Ye Fan's strike!

Chapter 1198: Misjudged

One punch.

With just one punch, Ye Fan blew Chu Yue apart!

This result was beyond everyone's expectations.

For a moment, the vast square was silent, and everyone was dumbfounded, staring at Ye Fan.

At this moment, Ye Fan still maintained his posture after the punch, but in everyone's eyes, he was like the War God incarnate.

Ye Fan's figure was deeply imprinted in everyone's hearts at this moment, and no one expected that someone as strong as Chu Yue couldn't withstand even a single move in his hands.

"Hiss~"

The contestants in the same group as Ye Fan couldn't help but gasp, looking at Ye Fan with eyes full of awe and fear.

In their view, there was no need to continue their matches with Ye Fan—the fourth group had no one who was Ye Fan's match, and his advancement to the top eight was a sure thing!

Those who originally thought Chu Yue could pull off an upset and defeat Ye Fan suddenly shut their mouths, as the outcome before them was like a silent slap across their faces.

The slap was silent, yet it stung painfully!

"He only used one punch?!"

On the platform far opposite the Ancient Arena, the representatives of various forces stood up, showing varying degrees of shock on their faces.

As representatives of the powerful forces across the Tianxuan Continent, they deeply understood that Ye Fan's current performance could only be described as dazzling, and he was no less than Chu Hong, the Chu Family's top genius.

They misjudged!

All the major powers' representatives felt they had misjudged, and Ye Fan's true combat power was as deep as the abyss.

Because...

Instinct and rationality told them that during the recent match, Ye Fan had still not used his full strength; he was holding back.

"Just how strong is this young man really?"

"What level could his true combat power reach?"

They secretly questioned themselves.

There was no answer, but they vaguely felt that the long-weakened Xuanwu Sect was about to rise again!

It's called a resurgence because, several years ago, the Xuanwu Sect was the number one major sect in the entire Tianyuan State, with even the Tianyuan and Qing Xuan Sects no match for them. It was during that time that Tianyuan State was originally named Xuanwu State.

It wasn't until later, when the Tianyuan and Qing Xuan Sects joined forces to attack the Xuanwu Sect, nearly wiping it out, that the Xuanwu Sect fell from first to third place, and the Tianyuan Sect became the strongest sect in the entire Xuanwu State. Hence, Xuanwu State was renamed Tianyuan State.

Once the Xuanwu Sect rises again, it will likely completely disrupt the existing power structure, and the entire Tianyuan State will face an unprecedented reshuffling.

Zuo Fengshan, representing the Jueluo Kingdom, thought even deeper; regarding strength, aside from a few hidden major power members in the audience, he was the strongest present.

He could see that Ye Fan's true strength was likely not beneath Chu Hong and Luo Xiaolin, and this genius tournament's champion would indeed be decided through a fierce competition.

In his view, Ye Fan was one of the important talents worth recruiting.

Although the Jueluo Kingdom was strong, it was only so in the Southern Domain. Compared to the Holy Land or the Di Clan, the gap was too large!

Under such circumstances, the Jueluo Kingdom couldn't prosper without powerful talents, and Ye Fan was undoubtedly such a talent.

Zuo Fengshan had already made up his mind to report this matter to the Jueluo Kingdom's King after the tournament, and, under the name of the Imperial Family, recruit Ye Fan under their banner.

Yaling, the manager of the Treasure Pavilion's Tianyuan City branch, had her beautiful eyes flashing with brilliance—Ye Fan's performance greatly exceeded her expectations!

Originally, she thought that even if Ye Fan could defeat Chu Yue, it would require a fierce battle, as Chu Yue was the second genius of the Chu Family with considerable strength.

Additionally, due to his first match defeat, Chu Yue would be doubly cautious, especially as this was a life-and-death battle where only one could walk down the arena. Under such circumstances, how could Chu Yue not handle it carefully?

Yet utterly unexpectedly, after Chu Yue burned his True Yuan, Ye Fan used merely one punch to blow Chu Yue apart in the air, leaving not even an intact corpse behind.

At the moment Ye Fan blew Chu Yue apart with one punch, Yaling's heart throbbed violently.

And at this moment, the feeling of unease in her heart grew even stronger—Ye Fan’s performance told her that his heavy betting at the Treasure Pavilion was not a momentary impulse but full of confidence!

Moreover, she felt that setting Ye Fan’s betting odds too high was a very serious mistake.

Because, from Ye Fan’s previous performance, it’s clear that even if not on par with Chu Hong, it was close, and stronger than both Luo Xiaolin and Qingxuan.

Yaling was almost certain that after this match, there would be many people betting on Ye Fan, and should he win the championship in the end, the Treasure Pavilion would suffer a huge loss.

“This Ye Fan, it seems I truly underestimated him. With his current performance, he can definitely break into the top four, perhaps even reach the semifinals or even the finals.”

Yaling murmured to herself. Although she was a woman, being the manager of the Treasure Pavilion in Tianyuan City, her strength was undoubtedly formidable.

She felt it necessary to immediately alert her subordinates to adjust Ye Fan’s odds; otherwise, she might not be able to hold her position.

“How is this Ye Fan so strong?”

The disciples of the Tianyuan Sect looked very troubled.

They never expected Ye Fan to kill his opponent in one strike. On the contrary, they wanted to gauge Ye Fan's strength through his fight with Chu Yue to prepare Luo Xiaolin to easily eliminate Ye Fan in their match!

But now, even Luo Xiaolin couldn't be sure of Ye Fan's true strength.

Because, even for him, it was nearly impossible to kill Chu Yue, who was burning his True Yuan, in a head-on clash with one strike.

However—

Ye Fan achieved it. What does this mean?

The leading elder of the Tianyuan Sect said gravely to the competing disciple beside him, "Except for Xiaolin, none of you should try to be brave when facing Ye Fan. If it's clear you're no match for him, absolutely don't engage him in a life-and-death battle. This person is ruthless; I fear he will intentionally weaken our strength!"

Except for Luo Xiaolin, the other disciples from the Tianyuan Sect remained silent.

Ye Fan's performance was deeply imprinted in their hearts. They knew very well they were no match for Ye Fan and agreed with the elder's words.

"Hmph!"

Luo Xiaolin coldly stared at Ye Fan, who stood proudly on stage, clenching his fists with strong killing intent in his eyes.

"Xiaolin, if you encounter him in the upcoming matches, don't underestimate him. Go all out; you must kill him and avenge the Sect Leader!"

The elder of the Tianyuan Sect knew Luo Xiaolin was intent on killing, but he still needed to remind him because Ye Fan's previous performance genuinely shocked him.

Of course, shock aside, he had great confidence in Luo Xiaolin, believing whatever Ye Fan could do, Luo Xiaolin could do too. As long as he carefully dealt with the matches, killing Ye Fan shouldn't be difficult.

"Elder, rest assured. Although his performance surprised us, the final result won't change. The arena will be his execution ground!"

Luo Xiaolin promised the elder with a sinister smile.

Meanwhile, a similar scene was unfolding not far away at Qing Xuan Sect, where their leading elder was also advising the competing disciples of his sect. If they couldn't compete with Ye Fan, they should directly admit defeat or follow Lei Bikuan's judgment result, absolutely not stubbornly engaging in a life-and-death battle.

Qingxuan looked indifferently at Ye Fan on stage, his face showing no expression, not revealing whether he was happy or worried. However, the occasional flash of fierceness in his eyes betrayed him.

Two tigers cannot coexist on the same mountain; he absolutely would not allow Ye Fan to prevent him from winning the championship!

Once he won the championship, he would receive guidance from Zuo Fengshan. For him, this was worth risking his life to strive for, and anyone blocking his victory was his enemy.

The people of Xuanwu Sect were extremely excited, as Ye Fan, with one move, crushed the Chu Family's second genius, showcasing absolute strength, making them particularly proud.

Elder Shen Ximen's old face smiled like a blooming chrysanthemum.

"Brother Ye is amazing!"

Tong Qianchen had no reservations about her admiration and affection for Ye Fan. She had initially guessed how many moves Ye Fan would need to defeat Chu Yue, not expecting that Chu Yue would be exploded with just one.

“Ye Zi is mighty!”

Shen Tu and Jin Zhanfei were ecstatic, howling in excitement. Elder Shen Ximen was in a good mood and did not stop them.

Only Zhang Taiyi, who was usually cold as ice, maintained his cool demeanor, not saying a word, sitting in his seat while observing Ye Fan on stage, his eyes sparkling with a special light.

Ye Fan’s performance did surprise him, but it was also within reason, as Ye Fan had already comprehended the Secret Technique of Thunder Power, making his strength impossible to measure by realm alone.

Not far away, the Chu Family Master, Chu Yuankong, was livid!

Chu Feng had his cultivation ruined, and Chu Yue was exploded on the arena. How was he, as the Family Head, supposed to explain this to the family?

“You’ve ruined Brother Feng’s cultivation, and now you’ve killed my brother Chu Yue. Heaven and earth will not save you—at the elimination match, I will definitely kill you!”

When Ye Fan stepped down from the arena, Chu Hong suddenly stood up, his gaze sharp as a knife as he looked at Ye Fan, his killing intent overwhelming.

“Chu Feng won’t be the first, and Chu Yue won’t be the last!”

Ye Fan replied forcefully and directly, confronting directly with determination.

Chapter 1199: Second Seed

After Ye Fan stepped down from the stage, Chu Family Master Chu Yuankong collected Chu Yue’s severed limbs, his aged face dark and terrifying, his eyes almost capable of spitting fire.

“Alas...”

City Lord Lei Bikuan sighed, wanting to say something comforting, but after opening his mouth, he ultimately said nothing.

He knew very well that Chu Yuankong would not let this rest. In the elimination round, Ye Fan would most likely encounter Chu Hong, and by that time, Chu Hong would definitely not show mercy.

“Son... let’s go home!”

Chu Yuankong was engulfed in sadness. Chu Hong alone was not enough to support the entire Chu Family; strong people like Chu Yue were also the future pillars and hope for the Chu Family’s rise.

However, after Chu Feng, Chu Yue also died at Ye Fan's hands!

This filled him with immense sorrow, and when he looked at Ye Fan, the murderous intent in his eyes was undisguised.

"Hmph!"

Shen Ximen naturally felt Chu Yuankong's killing intent and coldly snorted, releasing a fierce killing aura.

He was warning Chu Yuankong not to try any tricks, or the Xuanwu Sect would not sit idly by.

Hmm?

Feeling Shen Ximen's intense killing intent, Chu Yuankong shuddered inside. Although the Chu Family was the strongest among the Five Great Families, and Chu Hong was also the top young genius in the entire Tianyuan State, their overall strength could not compare to the Xuanwu Sect.

Immediately, Chu Yuankong forcibly suppressed his inner anger and killing intent, collected Chu Yue's torn body, and left the arena.

Seeing this, Lei Bikuan announced that the competition would continue.

Next up were two contestants from small sects, fighting with unprecedented intensity, both giving it their all, causing the Defensive Array Patterns on the ancient arena to flicker repeatedly, dissolving their overflowing attacks to prevent harming ordinary spectators below.

The matches continued one after another, and soon it was Zhang Taiyi's turn to enter.

Zhang Taiyi's opponent was a disciple from a small sect. Although skilled, compared to a genius from the Three Great Sects like Zhang Taiyi, there was a vast gap.

Zhang Taiyi easily won the match, stopping just short of harming the opponent, not even injuring him.

The disciple from the small sect was fully convinced of his loss, and also grateful for Zhang Taiyi's mercy, as he stepped down.

"Thanks for letting me win!"

Zhang Taiyi gracefully stepped down from the arena, his points now totaling six, and it seemed that in his group, no one was his match, making it almost certain he would advance to the top eight.

After a few more matches, it was finally Tong Qianchen's turn to take the stage.

Tong Qianchen's opponent was also a genius from a small family.

After a round of combat, Tong Qianchen effortlessly defeated the opponent, securing victory once again, causing an uproar among the audience.

Because, among the five members of the Xuanwu Sect, three had already passed the second round, with Jin Zhanfei and Shen Tu yet to compete.

The competition continued, and the disciples from Tianyuan Sect and Qing Xuan Sect also performed well, defeating their opponents with ease.

Soon, it was Jin Zhanfei's turn. This time, Jin Zhanfei had good luck, facing a contestant from a weaker small family.

Jin Zhanfei had shocked everyone yesterday with his fearless fighting style that left many uneasy.

Today's opponent felt the same. He didn't think himself stronger than Chu Chuan and used all his power from the start.

Jin Zhanfei fought boldly, employing the Xuanwu Fist, and within ten moves, sent his opponent flying. Unlike Zhang Taiyi, he couldn't perfectly control his strength.

This battle made everyone aware of his prowess. It wasn't that he was not strong enough yesterday, but that his adversary was too powerful and knew his moves too well, leading to his defeat.

However, he dealt a heavy blow to his opponent, earning honor despite losing, resolving this battle within ten moves, showing his formidable side.

"Thank you for holding back, I concede!"

The contestant from the small family candidly admitted defeat, knowing he was not Jin Zhanfei's match. After being sent flying, he did not ask for a rematch but chose to concede directly.

In his view, conceding was not shameful, especially when facing someone like Jin Zhanfei, who fights recklessly, ignoring safety. Signing a life-and-death agreement might not end so fortunately for him.

Winning the match was important, but compared to his life, staying alive is more critical. He clearly understood the gap between himself and Jin Zhanfei.

"Thanks for letting me win, are you unharmed?"

Jin Zhanfei had no regard for those arrogant to the extreme, but he had no airs with the weak, understanding that they too needed dignity.

Having won the match, showing his opponent full respect was necessary, also helping the sect earn the favor and support of these small families and clans.

Although Tianyuan State was not small, the Three Great Sects and Five Great Families were all vying for this big pie, and to gain broader support, they had to win over the unnoticed small families and sects.

After a few more matches, it was finally Shen Tu's turn to take the stage.

Everyone eagerly awaited his performance. Ye Fan fought fiercely, others fought brilliantly, but none left a more profound impression than Shen Tu's quirky antics.

He was a maverick capable of turning a competition into a stage performance, and everyone eagerly anticipated a more exciting show from him.

The contestant facing Shen Tu looked distressed, knowing Shen Tu's unusual tactics and that sticking to conventional methods would only lead to being led by the nose.

"Shen, it's up to you now."

Jin Zhanfei patted Shen Tu on the shoulder and said to him with a smile.

"Don't worry, leave it to your brother."

Shen Tu swaggered onto the arena, bowed slightly to Lei Bikuan, and then stood on the stage, waving to the audience below.

The crowd below instantly erupted with excitement; whether ordinary people or Loose Cultivators, even representatives from major forces couldn't help but laugh. This kid was indeed a quirky character.

Soon, his opponent also stepped onto the stage.

Just after standing still, and before Lei Bikuan could speak, Shen Tu shouted loudly, "Hey, you there, state your name, Grandpa doesn't fight nameless fools!"

"Bastard, are you the referee or am I the referee?"

Lei Bikuan was so enraged by Shen Tu that he was fuming; having been the City Lord for so many years, and hosting several such tournaments, he'd never encountered such a bizarre contestant.

"Both sides report your names and prepare for the match!"

To prevent Shen Tu from causing more trouble, Lei Bikuan quickly had both sides exchange names before starting the match.

“Tianyuan Sect, Wu Song!”

Wu Song was the last unnamed contestant from the Tianyuan Sect, and although his strength wasn't weak, he was still quite behind Shen Tu.

Initially startled by Shen Tu's sudden shout, Wu Song wanted to retort, but with Lei Bikuan announcing the name exchange and the match preparation, he had no choice but to angrily announce his name and sect.

“Xuanwu Sect, Shen Tu!”

No matter how comically, Shen Tu didn't dare act recklessly in front of City Lord Lei Bikuan. Earlier, he had taken advantage of Lei Bikuan's inattention to give his opponent an initial scare. Seeing Lei Bikuan getting serious, he obediently reported his name and affiliation.

“Both sides, prepare. The match begins!”

Saying this, Lei Bikuan floated into the air to oversee the match between the two.

Shen Tu continued with his strategy from yesterday, stating clearly at the start where he intended to hit his opponent, leaving Wu Song's face ashen with anger.

But after fighting for a while, Wu Song realized Shen Tu was true to his word; he never adjusted his moves, even though Wu Song had prepared for them.

Gradually, Wu Song relaxed, giving it his all in the encounter with Shen Tu. Although he knew he might not be Shen Tu's match, the enmity between the two sects made him forget his fear and perform beyond his usual level.

"Poke out your dog eyes!"

On the stage, Shen Tu yelled violently, turning his hand into a knife and gesturing as if to poke Wu Song's eyes.

Swish!

Wu Song's expression changed, raising his hand to block.

"Bang!"

At that moment...

Shen Tu suddenly switched moves, delivering a Groin Kick right into Wu Song's crotch, instantly knocking him away.

“You really believed I was going to poke your eyes? Are you damn stupid?!”

After kicking the opponent off the stage, Shen Tu wasn't satisfied, maintaining an expression like he got away with something.

“Pfft—”

Seeing this scene, the whole crowd roared with laughter.

In everyone's eyes, although Shen Tu wasn't the strongest in this competition, he was undoubtedly the quirkiest.

...

The matches continued until dusk, and finally, the second round ended.

Just after City Lord Lei Bikuan announced the end of today's matches and that it would continue tomorrow, Ya Ling suddenly stood up and gently said, “Ladies and gentlemen, I now announce a decision: the odds for Ye Fan from the Xuanwu Sect will be adjusted. Ye Fan's odds will change to 1 to 3. In other words, from now on, anyone betting on Ye Fan to win the championship will be paid out at a 1 to 3 ratio if he wins!”

Wow!

With Ya Ling's announcement, the entire square was abuzz, accusing the Treasure Pavilion of being too cunning for adjusting the odds as soon as they saw Ye Fan's outstanding strength.

Moreover, the odds of 1 to 3 were second only to Tianyuan State's top genius, Chu Hong's 1 to 2, making it the second-lowest odds in this competition.

With this, the Treasure Pavilion effectively regarded Ye Fan as the second seed in this competition!

"Ye Fan from the Xuanwu Sect is stronger than Luo Xiaolin and Qingxuan, only second to Tianyuan State's top genius, Chu Hong?"

At this moment, many people were left wondering about this question.

The answer will be revealed in the knockout rounds!

Chapter 1200: Blown Away with One Punch

After two consecutive days of competition, the contestants have a general understanding of their opponents—except for a few deeply hidden contestants, most of them have exposed their true combat power, leaving little suspense for the upcoming matches.

On the third day, the third round of the competition continued, with Tianyuan City's City Lord, Lei Bikuan, who had quite the business mind, extending the competition over a long period with exciting matches each day, making it hard for the audience to resist.

Within these days, the economy of Tianyuan City has rapidly grown, earning tremendous profits.

Everyone coming to participate are geniuses from various clans or sects, naturally not caring about these small amounts of money.

Other loose cultivators coming to watch the competition are also wealthy individuals. Being a loose cultivator isn't easy; though they are free from sect rules, in terms of cultivation resources, they must strive to obtain them on their own.

Almost no loose cultivators are poor; they are extremely wealthy, nearly as rich as nations, otherwise, they couldn't have maintained a foothold in the highly competitive cultivation world.

Moreover, some businessmen who came are wealthy merchants from nearby states, whose arrival, despite taking away some wealth, also contributed considerable tax revenue.

Every day in front of the city lord's mansion, the square is crowded with people, sweating like rain, raising sleeves to block the sun, bustling with excitement.

The arena remains lively, with contestants from small sects and clans fighting splendidly for points, each giving their all, eager to enter the top ten and gain access to the Tianyuan Secret Realm.

Although each participating clan or sect receives certain rewards, compared to entering the Tianyuan Secret Realm, these rewards seem rather insubstantial.

Chosen to participate in this genius competition are elite young talents, naturally unwilling to lag behind, seeking opportunities in the Tianyuan Secret Realm, and proving themselves in front of others.

A few seed contestants appear particularly relaxed; the Chu family's peerless genius, Chu Hong, continues to defeat opponents with a single move, with no one able to force him into a second attack.

As such, no one can truly see the extent of his actual strength.

Qingxuan and Luo Xiaolin, not to be outdone, imitate Chu Hong and similarly defeat opponents in one move, smoothly finishing their matches.

For them, unless facing an opponent of the same level, it's nearly impossible to force them to exert their full power.

Their remarkable performances consistently draw cheers and gasps from the audience, with everyone believing their strengths are closely matched, though Chu Hong seems slightly superior judging by the composure displayed in the matches.

It soon came to the fourth match featuring Ye Fan and his opponent, who was a disciple of the Tianyuan Sect, but not the second strongest, just the third ranked disciple.

“Ye Fan is encountering a disciple from Tianyuan Sect again, what do you think he’ll do?”

In the audience, seeing the two appear, they began discussing. Ye Fan’s performance was the biggest highlight of this competition, each time producing new tricks, no exception this time, prompting many to speculate whether Ye Fan might use the match to strategize against this Tianyuan Sect’s contestant.

“I think Ye Fan definitely won’t hold back this time; don’t forget, Xuanwu Sect and Tianyuan Sect have unresolved grudges, and both sects’ disciples are determined to completely defeat the other and uphold their sect’s prestige, so I believe Ye Fan will use thunderous means to directly defeat his opponent!”

Upon hearing this, everyone nodded in realization, aware of the grudges between Xuanwu Sect and Tianyuan Sect; during Xuanwu Sect’s peak, Tianyuan Sect teamed up with Qingxuan Sect in a surprise attack, resulting in heavy losses for Xuanwu Sect, with hatred still deep-rooted, making it impossible to show mercy if they clash.

Moreover, Ye Fan publicly criticized Tianyuan Sect Leader Helian Chang as having a muddled mind, a matter that has spread widely throughout Tianyuan State, known by almost everyone.

Under such circumstances, many believe that even if other Xuanwu Sect disciples might tolerate Tianyuan Sect disciples, Ye Fan definitely won’t, likely leading to a decisive victory or even life-and-death confrontation similar to the previous rounds.

Of course, the one who dies will surely be the Tianyuan Sect disciple, not Ye Fan, as Ye Fan has already crushed the Chu family’s second genius, his strength unfathomable.

While making such predictions, people were puzzled: Ye Fan's cultivation realm is merely mid True Essence Realm, not the peak yet, yet effortlessly defeats late-stage True Yuan cultivators like slicing through chickens, hardly expending any effort. Why?

Not only the regular audience and loose cultivators watching the matches but also other contestants waiting for their turn believe Ye Fan will use thunderous means for a one-move victory.

Simultaneously, almost nobody favors Tianyuan Sect's disciple.

Though Tianyuan Sect's disciple is also a genius, being ranked third, compared to Ye Fan's strength, even against first-ranked Luo Xiaolin, he might not be disadvantaged, much less against him?

This is naturally understood by the leading elder of Tianyuan Sect, yet it's about the sect's reputation. Even knowing he's at a disadvantage, he must enter the match; conceding without fighting would greatly disgrace Tianyuan Sect, which they cannot afford.

The third-ranked contestant of Tianyuan Sect wore a bitter expression, aware he's not Ye Fan's match, and knowing the grudge between Tianyuan Sect and Xuanwu Sect, facing Ye Fan is asking for trouble.

Despite this, he knows he must give his all, demonstrate his strongest combat power, and even if losing, he must lose with dignity.

The elder leading Xuanwu Sect, Elder Shen Ximen, appeared unconcerned, occasionally taking his wine gourd for a sip, filling the area with the scent of alcohol.

His wine gourd, a spiritual artifact, crafted from Jun Mountain Old Vine gourds, held vast capacities, easily holding several vats of wine.

Hence, people saw him drinking without ever witnessing the wine gourd empty.

He held great confidence in Ye Fan, believing that despite Ye Fan's cultivation being only mid True Essence Realm, his true combat power exceeded the peak of True Yuan Realm, with a considerable chance of victory against Chu Hong.

"The match begins!"

On the ancient arena, Lei Bikuan, after exchanging names, announced the beginning of the match; this time, he stood behind the Tianyuan Sect disciple, ready to intervene and halt the match at any moment.

After all, yesterday's life-and-death battle where Ye Fan demolished the Chu family's second genius, Chu Yue, was vivid in memory, prompting diligence without negligence.

Moreover, he knew the grudges between Xuanwu Sect and Tianyuan Sect.

Thus, he must protect the Tianyuan Sect disciple as much as possible, preventing unexpected casualties.

“Tianyuan Sect, He Yunhua, please advise!”

As soon as the Tianyuan Sect disciple He Yunhua took the stage, he spread True Yuan throughout his body, forming a layer of True Essence Armor, bearing a striking resemblance to the Xuanwu Sect’s Xuanwu Armor Technique.

This cultivation technique was originally a well-kept secret of the Xuanwu Sect, but it is unknown how the Tianyuan Sect acquired it. Through the efforts of several generations, they finally developed another type of armor technique. Although its appearance is completely different from the Xuanwu Armor Technique, the actual defensive effect is comparable.

“I wouldn’t dare!”

Ye Fan responded in a deep voice, taking a step forward, causing the defensive array patterns on the arena to flicker incessantly, indicating they were under significant force.

Immediately, Ye Fan, like a breeze, with supersonic speed, darted directly towards He Yunhua, swinging his right fist violently.

Blood Gang!

This punch was from the “Domineering Fist,” utilizing the Blood Gang, and Ye Fan relied solely on his physical strength, not using any True Yuan.

However—

Even so, in the face of Ye Fan's fierce punch, He Yunhua was almost powerless to resist.

"Bang—"

A muffled sound erupted as He Yunhua was struck by Ye Fan's Iron Fist, the force sending him flying backwards.

One punch sent flying!

Without any suspense...

"Hiss..."

A gasp arose from below the arena. Almost everyone widened their eyes, staring fixedly at the stage, as if asking: Was he defeated just like that? So simply?!

Thud!

As if to respond to the audience, He Yunhua hit the ground, suffocating with resentment.

He never expected that Ye Fan would attack as soon as he spoke, and his speed was absurdly fast, giving him no time to react, and he was directly sent flying with a punch.

At the moment Ye Fan's fist struck him, it felt as if he was hit by an enraged Peak True Yuan Realm Xuan Beast, instantly shattering his protective True Essence Armor.

Fortunately, after his True Essence Armor was shattered, no True Yuan invaded his body, only three of his ribs were fractured.

For this, He Yunhua knew that Ye Fan had shown mercy, otherwise, with Ye Fan's previous strength of obliterating Chu Yue with a single punch, he would have been reduced to a pile of flesh by now!

"What tremendous physical strength!"

Lei Bikuan's heart was immensely shaken.

He had witnessed Ye Fan's move and had not intervened to stop or disrupt the match, as he detected no True Yuan fluctuations from Ye Fan.

However—

Even so, Ye Fan managed to injure He Yunhua relying solely on physical strength!

This result left him thunderstruck!

Swoosh!

In his shock, City Lord Lei Bikuan quickly dashed to He Yunhua's side, examining He Yunhua's injuries, and upon confirming they were not serious, he breathed a sigh of relief.

"In this match, Xuanwu Sect's Ye Fan wins, gaining three more points, while Tianyuan Sect's He Yunhua loses, with zero points!"

After doing all this, Lei Bikuan announced the match results and intentionally asked the struggling He Yunhua beside him, "Are you convinced of this decision? If not, you can sign a life-and-death contract to continue the fight to the death."

"Con... convinced! No... no life-and-death battle..."

He Yunhua quickly responded, fearing that a slow response would lead to a misunderstanding by Lei Bikuan.

He didn't want to follow in Chu Yue's footsteps!