

Y Master 1241

Chapter 1241: Returning Fully Loaded (Part 2)

“Since Qingxuan is willing to be patient, it shows that this kid’s plot is definitely not small, so in the short term, the Qingxuan Sect will definitely not get involved in our battle with the Tianyuan Sect or the Chu family.”

At this point, Ye Fan paused slightly, glanced at Tong Qianchen and Zhang Taiyi, and then continued, “If my guess is correct, the Qingxuan Sect’s plan is surely to watch the tigers fight from the mountain and eventually act like a mantis stalking a cicada, unaware of the oriole behind. Their plan is pretty shrewd.”

“Yes, I think so too, but you explained it more thoroughly. When Qingxuan was defeated by Junior Sister Tong earlier, he didn’t choose to battle to the death. That already seemed very strange to me. Given his personality, it is absolutely impossible for him to endure silently.”

Shen Tu was thoroughly impressed by Ye Fan, not only for his formidable strength but also for his accurate and seasoned analysis of human nature, like the wise insight of an old man familiar with the ways of the world.

“Junior Brother Ye, I’m relieved to see you think this way.”

Zhang Taiyi also believed Ye Fan’s judgment was correct. The Qingxuan Sect had always maintained a moderate stance, never interfering in any battles, but secretly they played a role in pushing the tide.

In general, few people could see through the ambitions of the Qingxuan Sect, but Ye Fan's analysis finally brought their conspiracy to light.

"Brother Ye, let's get out too. This place suppresses our strength too much, and it's really eerie here. It's definitely not a good place."

Tong Qianchen felt a bit scared in her heart and didn't want to stay here for another moment. The feeling of suppressed power would make any cultivator panic, not just her. Shen Tu and Zhang Taiyi also felt that leaving as soon as possible was the wisest choice.

Ye Fan shook his head with a smile and said, "Quite the opposite, this is not only a good place but a very good place. The reason I let Qingxuan and the others go first was that I didn't want them to know what we're doing here."

"What bad idea do you have now? Quickly tell us!"

Having shared life-and-death experiences with Ye Fan, Shen Tu spoke more freely. Upon hearing that Ye Fan had an idea, he asked with a smile.

These were the most trusted people, so Ye Fan didn't hold back. With a smile, he said, "You only see the disadvantages of this place but not the advantages. Everything has two sides. It's true that this place suppresses the cultivators' strength, but if you can breakthrough even a little here, how much improvement will there be once you leave?"

His words were like enlightenment, instantly bringing light to the three's eyes. Indeed, while this place greatly suppresses the cultivators' strength, a breakthrough here would be a significant one.

“Ye Zi, just tell us what we need to do. Spare us the philosophy; those old guys have been repeating it so much our ears are about to grow calluses.” Shen Tu interrupted Ye Fan.

“It’s quite simple; cherish all the time left here to cultivate, not just to refine True Yuan but also to forge the body.”

Ye Fan formulated a plan for them, using the same training Chu Xuanji had given him back in the day, placing it upon the three of them.

This kind of training was very rigorous, but the results were evident. Since Ye Fan was adept at the Healing Technique, he wouldn’t let them overtrain, and he crafted detailed and effective training methods for each person.

Generally, not many cultivators focused on training the body. Even if they previously paid attention to body strength, without a set of Body Refining Techniques, the body’s power often grew passively with the increase of strength, and there was seldom active body strength training.

In the training sessions, Ye Fan treated everyone equally, and even Tong Qianchen wasn’t exempt, being trained hard by Ye Fan daily.

Training during the day and recovering from physical fatigue while cultivating techniques and accumulating True Yuan at night enhanced their strength.

Day by day passed, and as the day of the Tianyuan Secret Realm's closure approached, the training volume for Shen Tu, Zhang Taiyi, and Tong Qianchen didn't decrease but actually increased daily.

Only on the last day did Ye Fan lead them to climb up from the cliff. As soon as they emerged, the suppressed strength of the four instantly returned, with varying degrees of enhancement, especially in physical strength.

Ye Fan's hellish training in recent days proved highly effective, as the three could clearly feel a fundamental transformation in their bodies.

"Our strength has improved significantly, this trip to the Secret Realm wasn't in vain!"

Shen Tu howled like a wolf and quickly flew towards the altar to exit the Secret Realm.

"Junior Brother Ye, thank you!"

The usually quiet Zhang Taiyi couldn't help but express his gratitude to Ye Fan.

In just a few days, he felt reborn, all thanks to Ye Fan's training.

Such training had never been seen in the sect. Whether they were the Sect Leader or the elders, or even their masters, although they demanded the cultivation of the body, they never had a systematic training method.

Many disciples, including them, believed that cultivating True Yuan and increasing strength were the ultimate goals. As for physical strength, as long as their strength reached a certain level, it would naturally improve.

Thus, hardly anyone specifically trained their body, thinking it was better to spend that time cultivating more True Yuan for more significant effect.

After this experience, they finally realized the immense benefits of stronger physique, feeling deeply grateful to Ye Fan.

“Senior Brother Zhang, there’s no need to be polite. We are fellow disciples; sharing good experiences with each other is only natural.”

Ye Fan said with a smile, then led Tong Qianchen and the others flying towards the altar.

The Tianyuan Secret Realm can only remain open for a month each time. After a month, the altar automatically disappears, and those lingering in the Secret Realm will never be able to leave.

The altar in the Tianyuan Secret Realm was located at the peak of the highest mountain. By simply stepping onto the altar and activating the Array Patterns, one could be teleported out of the realm.

...

At the same time, Qingxuan and others, along with disciples from other small independent sects, were also heading toward the altar, but they weren't as fast as Ye Fan and his group.

By the time they arrived, Ye Fan and the three others had already stepped onto the altar and began activating the Array Patterns, leaving the others to wait on the sidelines.

"Hmph, Ye, the show is just getting started!"

Qingxuan stared at Ye Fan's back, thinking of the Divine Sense Flame that should have been his, now taken by Ye Fan, and he sneered coldly in his heart.

To him, the incident of Ye Fan killing Chu Hong and taking the Dark Immortal Gold would surely cause a huge sensation—the Chu family would never let it go!

Chapter 1242: The First to Emerge

As the closure time of the Tianyuan Secret Realm approached, the huge square in front of the Tianyuan State City Lord Mansion was crowded, with everyone eagerly awaiting the return of those within the secret realm.

"Ye Fan from the Xuanwu Sect is probably not coming out, such a pity for a genius!"

Around the ancient arena were mostly loose cultivators from all directions. They had no concept of sects, purely worshipping the strong. Ye Fan's performance had won them over, and they all liked this young man.

"Isn't that obvious? Chu Hong, the genius of the Chu Family, would definitely choose to condense the Holy Embryo first upon entering the secret realm. Once he successfully condenses it, killing Ye Fan would be a piece of cake."

"That's right, I also think Ye Fan will probably find it hard to come back alive. The gap between their realms is too vast. A strong person at the Holy Embryo Realm killing a cultivator in the True Essence Realm is like playing."

For a moment, similar voices echoed around the ancient arena, with everyone believing that Ye Fan would not survive, lamenting the loss of such an unparalleled young genius.

"Geniuses are divided into levels. There's no denying that Ye Fan is a genius, but compared to Chu Hong, he still falls short by a lot."

Except for Elder Shen Ximen from the Xuanwu Sect, the sect leaders, family heads, and leading elders from other sects and families all believed that Ye Fan was doomed.

Listening to the unanimous chatter around him, Chu Feng felt delightful as though a small fan was fanning in his heart. He only hated that his cultivation had been crippled, preventing him from entering the secret realm with the others to witness Chu Hong's thrilling moment of killing Ye Fan.

“Some people always overestimate themselves, like mantises trying to stop a chariot, thinking they are remarkable, when in fact, they are just stepping stones for our Hong’er to advance into the Supreme Martial Arts!”

Chu Yuankong, the head of the Chu Family, snorted coldly, feeling complacent and beaming. In his view, Ye Fan was undoubtedly already killed.

Dealing with the True Essence Realm cultivator by a Holy Embryo Realm is a sure thing, with no chances of error. Not only does Ye Fan have to die, but anyone standing in Chu Hong’s way will die too.

In the Tianyuan Secret Realm, where only True Essence Realm cultivators can enter, the Holy Embryo Realm is an absolute god-like existence. No one is Chu Hong’s match!

Swish!

After speaking, Chu Yuankong deliberately glanced at Shen Ximen of the Xuanwu Sect with an undisguised expression of smugness on his face.

“Arrogant when successful, the Chu Family won’t amount to much. Even if they have a peerless genius, it’s useless. They are destined not to be able to compete with the Three Great Sects!”

Seeing Chu Yuankong’s display, many representatives of major forces internally sighed, admitting that the Chu Family had been rising recently.

But what after the rise? How to maintain this strength?

They didn't see it in the Chu Family members.

A large force requires more than just strong strength. There are many ways, and the Chu Family hasn't learned them, destined not to prosper for long.

Faced with Chu Yuankong's mocking and proud smile, Shen Ximen showed no reaction, keeping a calm demeanor and waiting quietly for the results.

Although he appeared unconcerned, he was indeed worried about Ye Fan's safety, as Chu Hong would definitely condense the Holy Embryo in the secret realm, stepping into the Holy Embryo Realm.

"May the past Great Emperors bless, let Ye Fan come out safely..."

At this moment, Shen Ximen, who never believed in anything, couldn't help but pray inwardly, hoping the past Great Emperors would bless Ye Fan to escape this calamity and come out safely.

As long as Ye Fan can come out safely, he has confidence in bringing him back to the sect safely!

"That young boy with the surname Ye from the Xuanwu Sect probably really won't come out alive!"

It's not just others thinking so, even City Lord Lei Bikuan thought it would be tough for Ye Fan to survive, because Chu Hong's previous strength was already on par with Ye Fan. Once he succeeded in condensing the Holy Embryo, killing Ye Fan would indeed be easy.

Moreover, according to his understanding of Ye Fan, if Chu Hong really made a move, Ye Fan would absolutely not run away but choose to fight.

At this moment, almost no one thought Ye Fan could walk out alive, with some reveling in others' misfortune, while others felt regret, nothing more.

Sitting on the platform, Ya Ling, the head of Tianyuan State from Treasure Pavilion, was very conflicted, feeling exceptionally complicated.

On one hand, Ye Fan left her a good impression. She didn't want to see such an outstanding genius like Ye Fan fall, believing he should have a better and brighter future.

On the other hand, she was unwilling to pay the large gambling debt to Ye Fan — Ye Fan once bet heavily on himself with her place.

If compensation is made, the Treasure Pavilion's gambling setup wouldn't earn anything this time and instead would incur a loss, compensating spirit stones to Ye Fan.

This contradictory mindset made her very conflicted, not even knowing what she was thinking, but she kept an eye on the sky above the ancient arena.

Today, all the geniuses who entered the secret realm will return from here, except for those who died inside.

“The secret realm is about to close, they should be coming out!”

Suddenly, Lei Bikuan felt as if he sensed something and looked up at the Light Gate over the ancient arena.

Swish!

Upon hearing Lei Bikuan’s words, everyone’s hearts stirred, and they all turned their gazes towards the Light Gate of the ancient arena.

Under everyone’s gaze, the Light Gate began to become unstable, continuously flickering with white light, looking as if it could collapse at any time.

Once the Light Gate disappears, no one who entered the secret realm will be able to come out!

This situation made everyone extraordinarily tense!

Lei Bikuan was no exception!

He stared at the Light Gate without moving, ready to reinforce it at any moment to prevent its collapse.

Wow!

Suddenly—

The Light Gate shone brightly, the white light illuminating the sky, extremely dazzling, causing everyone to be unable to see anything clearly.

Swoosh, swoosh, swoosh, swoosh...

Ye Fan, Tong Qianchen, Shen Tu, and Zhang Taiyi flew out from the Light Gate one after another, slowly landing on the stone platform, appearing like banished immortals returning from another world.

They were the first to exit the Tianyuan Secret Realm, appearing in everyone's sight!

This scene deeply shocked everyone present!

“Uh...”

Those loose cultivators who believed Ye Fan would not survive and would surely die at Chu Hong’s hands had their mouths wide open like oxygen-deprived hippos, staring blankly at Ye Fan and the others, their mouths open, wanting to say something but unable to voice a single word.

Among them were the Three Cultivators, contestants, and team leaders from various sects and families, as well as strong individuals like Lei Bikuan!

“How did Ye Fan from the Xuanwu Sect come out first?”

Lei Bikuan was extremely shocked.

If not for his strong strength and firm martial arts will, he would have thought he was hallucinating!

Because...

In his wildest dreams, he thought the first person to come out of the Tianyuan Secret Realm would be Chu Hong.

But Ye Fan...

After the shock, almost everyone silently questioned themselves.

No answer!

According to their thinking, it was absolutely impossible for Ye Fan to walk out of the hands of the Holy Embryo Realm Chu Hong alive!

“It’s good that you’re back, it’s good that you’re back!”

Shen Ximen was also quite taken aback, then extremely excited, so much so that he believed in the blessing of the unseen, hoping it had helped Ye Fan escape this disaster and return safely.

“This brat is really lucky to have escaped Hong’er’s pursuit, it’s simply unreasonable.”

Seeing Ye Fan, safe and back, the Chu Family head, Chu Yuankong, was rather upset. He thought Chu Hong would surely kill Ye Fan, but it didn’t happen after all.

“I must have a good talk with Hong’er later about why he didn’t seize the perfect opportunity.”

Although Ye Fan had returned alive, he hadn’t thought that anything might have happened to Chu Hong.

Because, he believed that Chu Hong was the strongest genius, and no one could beat him in the Tianyuan Secret Realm after he successfully condensed the Holy Embryo.

And others thought the same way.

Swish, swish, swish, swish, swish...

One after another, cultivators continuously emerged from the Tianyuan Secret Realm, appearing on the platform.

However, Chu Hong was nowhere in sight!

Chapter 1243: The Truth Revealed, Everyone Is Shocked!

“What happened? Why hasn’t Hong’er come out yet?”

Although Chu Yuankong had great confidence in Chu Hong, watching as countless figures emerged from the Light Gate while failing to see Chu Hong’s silhouette, this confidence gradually faded away.

Not only he, but the leading elder from Tianyuan Sect also felt a vague sense of unease because those coming out were all disciples from other small sects, yet their own sect’s disciples remained unseen.

Some sensitive cultivators also felt that something wasn't right, but no one spoke up. After all, as long as their sect's disciples returned, what did it matter if others did or not?

Mind your own business and stay clear of trouble. As for others' matters, it's best not to meddle to avoid getting caught in a whirlpool of right and wrong.

As more and more figures walked out of the Light Gate, the light emitted from the gate became increasingly dazzling.

Those who had witnessed such a scene before could easily guess what this meant: the Light Gate was about to close.

Whoa!

Half an hour later, the Light Gate finally completely disassembled, transformed into countless array patterns that fell upon the Ancient Arena, merging into it and vanishing entirely, leaving the Ancient Arena restored to calm.

Yet——

By this time, not a single disciple from Tianyuan Sect had appeared, and neither had Chu Hong. Qingxuan and the others all knew that it was impossible for Chu Hong to appear; he had long since vanished without a trace.

“Hong... Hong’er? Where is he? Why didn’t he come out?!”

Seeing the disappearance of the Light Gate and with still no sign of Chu Hong, Chu Family Master Chu Yuankong’s face changed dramatically as he asked, voicing his concerns.

An ominous feeling spread through his heart, making him dizzy and unsteady on his feet.

Chu Hong was the hope for their family’s future, the hope for Chu Family’s rise, but now, with him not emerging from the Tianyuan Secret Realm, what did this signify?

“Could it be... Could something have happened to Little Hong?!”

Chu Feng’s face was as white as paper. Since Ye Fan appeared, the smile on his face had vanished without a trace, replaced by gloom. Amidst this gloom, he was also curious why Chu Hong hadn’t killed Ye Fan, intending to ask Chu Hong clearly once he reappeared.

Now, with the Light Gate vanished and Chu Hong not appearing...

This situation made him extremely anxious, his heart sinking to the bottom!

“What’s going on? What exactly happened in the Secret Realm? Why haven’t the Chu Family genius and Tianyuan Sect’s disciples appeared? Can anyone tell me??”

Lei Bikuan, struck by a thought, swept his gaze over the geniuses emerging from the Secret Realm, hoping to find out what exactly had happened from their mouths.

These people were exceptional young talents, selected as elites from their clans or sects, having significant influence on the future development of Tianyuan State, so they couldn't die here without clarification.

"Reporting to Lord Lei!"

Upon hearing this, Qingxuan stepped forward, adjusted his gaze, and said to Lei Bikuan, "Chu Hong was killed by the Xuanwu Sect's Ye Fan, leaving no remains!"

"Chu Hong was killed by Ye Fan?!"

"This... How is this possible??"

"Even if Chu Hong hasn't broken through to the Holy Embryo Realm, Ye Fan shouldn't be able to kill him. What on earth happened in the Secret Realm??"

...

A statement stirred a thousand thoughts!

Qingxuan's words, although softly spoken, were heard clearly by all around, for they were all strong cultivators.

In no time, the entire square was boiling over; almost everyone couldn't believe Qingxuan's words!

But after a short shock, reason told everyone that Qingxuan wouldn't dare joke about such an event.

Moreover, the Light Gate had closed, making it impossible for Chu Hong to emerge.

More importantly, if this wasn't the truth, Ye Fan would naturally refute it!

At this moment, Ye Fan did not object, proving that Qingxuan's statement was true!

"No... impossible! Absolutely impossible!!!"

Chu Family Master Chu Yuankong seemed to go insane, shaking his head repeatedly, incessantly repeating those words.

He couldn't believe or accept that Chu Hong would die at Ye Fan's hands!

From the previous battles, he had already seen through Ye Fan's overall strength. Though formidable, there was simply no way Ye Fan could counter-kill successfully against a strong Holy Embryo Realm opponent.

Before Chu Hong entered the Tianyuan Secret Realm, he had repeatedly instructed Chu Hong not to obsess over killing Ye Fan or searching for treasures, but rather to first find a hidden place to condense the Holy Embryo.

In his opinion, as long as Chu Hong successfully condensed the Holy Embryo and stepped into the Holy Embryo Realm, killing Ye Fan would be as simple as retrieving something from a bag, as easy as turning over a hand!

Unless Chu Hong didn't heed his advice and directly went to settle accounts with Ye Fan without breaking through to the Holy Embryo Realm.

In that situation, it was possible but by no means certain that Ye Fan could counter-kill Chu Hong!

But now, Qingxuan claimed that Chu Hong died at Ye Fan's hands, leaving no remains. How could he possibly accept this?!

"How could Little Hong die at that Ye's hands? What kind of joke is this? I refuse to believe any of this is real!!"

Not only did Chu Family Master Chu Yuankong refuse to believe this news, but Chu Feng also couldn't believe it. He had been counting on Chu Hong to avenge him, yet, as it turns out, even Chu Hong died at Ye Fan's hands!

"This Ye Fan is simply a freak, how did he manage it?"

"He's only in the True Essence Realm, how could he possibly kill a strong person in the Holy Embryo Realm? Cross-realm kills are usually only achievable by the prodigies of major forces. How did he do it?"

"Could it be that Chu Hong hadn't broken through to the Holy Embryo Realm when he encountered Ye Fan? Or did Chu Hong fail in his breakthrough, get severely injured, and then killed by Ye Fan taking advantage of the opportunity?!"

At this moment, everyone's gaze in the entire square was focused on Qingxuan, waiting for him to reveal the detailed truth of the matter.

They wanted to know exactly how Ye Fan managed to kill Chu Hong.

"Qingxuan, come up and explain how it happened specifically. How did Ye Fan kill Chu Hong?"

Lei Bikuan asked again, filled with curiosity. In his view, unless something unexpected happened to Chu Hong or Ye Fan had a very powerful hidden card, this result wouldn't have been possible.

“Yes, Lord Lei!”

Qingxuan appeared particularly humble as he strode up to the platform, facing everyone, cleared his throat, and narrated the entire process of how Ye Fan killed Chu Hong in meticulous detail.

His eloquence was quite good, with precise wording, and from his narration, it seemed to everyone as if they had witnessed that epic battle in the secret realm themselves.

“...That’s how it happened.”

Qingxuan didn’t embellish the story artistically because he knew he wasn’t the only one who was aware of the truth. He saw no need to cover up Chu Hong’s arrogance and cockiness for the Chu Family.

Moreover, he was also somewhat displeased with Chu Hong’s overbearing behavior and accurately restored the scene at that time. Even Ye Fan and others couldn’t fault him.

Wow!

After listening to Qingxuan’s narration, the entire venue was in an uproar!

Whoosh!

The next moment, they all simultaneously turned their gaze towards Ye Fan.

“How... How could this be?!”

Chu Feng was completely dumbfounded, as if his body had been drained of its strength, he collapsed into his chair, his eyes dull, his heart completely shattered.

“You’re lying, Hong’er isn’t dead; no one could kill him...”

Chu Yuankong was also nearly collapsing, shrieking desperately, utterly unwilling to accept this fact.

Before the Light Gate closed, even though Chu Hong hadn’t come out first, he always believed that Chu Hong would come out safely. But until the Light Gate vanished, Chu Hong never appeared.

At that time, he already had a bad premonition, but he didn’t think Ye Fan could defeat Chu Hong; that was impossible. Even if Chu Hong was really dead, it must have been due to an accident, not because he was killed by Ye Fan.

Yet—

The ultimate result was that after Chu Hong broke through to the Holy Embryo Realm, he confidently went to kill Ye Fan but was counter-killed by Ye Fan!

Huff... Huff...

After his outburst, Chu Yuankong was panting heavily, instinctively turning his gaze towards Ye Fan, eyes cold, filled with murderous intent.

“Humph!”

Shen Ximen snorted coldly and directly stood in front of Ye Fan, fearlessly confronting Chu Yuankong. Ye Fan was the hope of the Xuanwu Sect’s future, and he absolutely couldn’t allow Ye Fan to suffer any harm.

“You brat, give me back Hong’er’s life!”

At this moment, blinded by the terrible news and rage, Chu Yuankong disregarded Shen Ximen and directly attacked Ye Fan, throwing a powerful punch across the distance.

“How dare you?!”

Shen Ximen was constantly on guard, anticipating that Chu Yuankong might take some drastic action, and he wasn't about to let that happen, countering with a punch of his own.

Boom!!

Their fist shadows collided in the air, erupting in a turbulent flux of powerful energies, nearly destroying the vicinity and causing several nearby cultivators to be knocked backwards, spitting blood as they went flying.

"Chu Yuankong! If you dare act on your own again, I don't mind destroying your Chu Family first. Don't believe it? Try me!"

Lei Bikuan glared icily at Chu Yuankong, his face ashen, warning coldly. Daring to attack a junior right in front of him was plainly disregarding him as the City Lord, which made him very furious.

With Lei Bikuan's warning echoing in his ears, Chu Yuankong regained a trace of reason and refrained from continuing his actions.

"Did our Tianyuan Sect disciples also die by your hands??"

Simultaneously, the leading elder of the Tianyuan Sect stared at Ye Fan with eyes like daggers, asking coldly.

He actually already had the answer in his heart, but he still wanted to confirm it, after all, he was the leading elder for this competition. Although Luo Xiaolin's death was already reported to Helian Chang, losing so many elite disciples at once was too much for even a major sect like the Tianyuan Sect to bear; he must give an explanation to Helian Chang.

"For the Tianyuan Sect disciples, I killed one when I saw one; killed two when I saw a pair!"

Ye Fan fearlessly met the gaze of the Tianyuan Sect's leading elder, indirectly giving his response, his tone cold as ice!

Chapter 1244: Unprecedented

The truth of Ye Fan killing Chu Hong shocked the entire audience when it was revealed.

And when Ye Fan forcefully responded to the Tianyuan Sect's leading elder, indirectly admitting to wiping out all four disciples of the Tianyuan Sect, the whole crowd was in an uproar!

Ye Fan's assertiveness exceeded everyone's expectations!

Not only did he forcefully kill Chu Hong and the four disciples of the Tianyuan Sect, but he also dared to speak such bold words when facing the Supreme Elder of the Tianyuan Sect, a Peak of Holy Embryo Realm expert.

"You..."

The leading Supreme Elder of the Tianyuan Sect was nearly driven mad with anger. He had suspected that the four disciples of the Tianyuan Sect might have died at Ye Fan's hands, but he never expected Ye Fan to dare to say such words in front of so many people—Ye Fan not only ignored him as a Peak of Holy Embryo Realm expert but also completely disregarded the powerful Tianyuan Sect!

While people admired Ye Fan's courage, they were also worried for him. After all, the opponent was a massive sect, and it was the leading sect among the three major sects of Tianyuan State, the Tianyuan Sect, with a Supreme Elder who was a Peak of Holy Embryo Realm expert. Offending him was definitely not a wise move.

The leading elder of the Tianyuan Sect was utterly furious, glaring at Ye Fan and saying, "Good, good, good, you little beast, you've got guts!"

For years, this was the first time someone dared to speak to him like this face-to-face.

He was mad with rage, but he had not lost his senses.

He could not act impulsively like Chu Yuankong; doing so would only give people grounds to mock the Tianyuan Sect for being sore losers.

"I hope you can keep being this arrogant, believe me, we will meet again soon!"

The leading elder of the Tianyuan Sect left with hateful words, flicking his robe with a grudge, knowing it was meaningless to stay any longer.

Meanwhile, Chu Yuankong completely regained his senses, realizing that no matter what, he could not avenge Chu Hong today.

With murderous intent, he stared at Ye Fan for a long time, and said word by word, “You little beast from the Ye family, I won’t forget this account, we’ll see!”

Swish!

As his words fell, Chu Yuankong grabbed the soulless, puppet-like Chu Feng and left the square, walking away into the distance, his silhouette filled with despondency, a stark contrast to his previous high spirits.

“Truly a dramatic turn of events, beyond imagination...”

The crowd sighed with emotion; no one had anticipated this outcome—Chu Hong arrived with high spirits, determined to seize the championship, only to have his soul buried in the Secret Realm, making way for Ye Fan who emerged like a dark horse!

Those who bet their fortunes and lives on Chu Hong were utterly devastated.

Some were laughing while others cried; those few who bet on Ye Fan were beaming with joy. Ye Fan lived up to their expectations, not only winning the genius competition but also killing Chu Hong, exceeding all expectations.

The Three Great Sects and Five Great Families have always held out until the end in past competitions, even if they could not win the championship, they could always enter the top ten.

However—

In this competition, Chu Hong, who was the most favored, was eliminated, and the leading sect of the Three Great Sects of Tianyuan State, the Tianyuan Sect, left with nothing, not even one disciple returned alive.

The previously weak Xuanwu Sect shone brightly in this competition; five of them participated, three made it to the top eight, and all five reached the top ten.

This was unprecedented in previous competitions, an unprecedented record!

Unfortunately, Jin Zhanfei from the Xuanwu Sect died in the Secret Realm, leaving only four from the Xuanwu Sect, but even so, the Xuanwu Sect set a record over these years.

After Chu Yuankong and the elder of the Tianyuan Sect left, City Lord Lei Bikuan once again came to the edge of the platform. He also felt very surprised by the results of this competition, with a lot of emotion in his heart.

Shaking his head to let go of his emotions, Lei Bikuan scanned the crowd on the square and announced loudly, “Now, I will announce the list of candidates who advanced to the top ten in this Tianyuan State Genius Competition!”

“First place, Xuanwu Sect, Ye Fan!”

“Second place, Qing Xuan Sect, Qingxuan!”

“Third place, Xuanwu Sect, Zhang Taiyi!”

“ ... ”

Soon, the top ten members were confirmed, with Xuanwu Sect taking four spots; if it weren’t for Jin Zhanfei dying in the Secret Realm, Xuanwu Sect would have taken half.

The Qing Xuan Sect took three places, and the remaining families of the Five Great Families took three places, which was relatively reasonable.

After the list was published, the crowd once again erupted into a round of discussions. It was not surprising that Xuanwu Sect had all five participants emerge, with four securing top ten spots.

Leaving Ye Fan aside, the strength of Zhang Taiyi and Tong Qianchen was evident, and Shen Tu's performance was also commendable, all advancing based on points with nothing false about it, leaving everyone with nothing to say.

After pausing for a moment and waiting for the discussion below to quiet down a bit, Lei Bikuan continued, "Ladies and gentlemen, next I am very honored to announce one more thing, which is about the domain competition a year from now."

"As we all know, our Tianxuan Continent is divided into five domains—East, South, West, North, and Central. Our Tianyuan State is just a state in the Southern Domain."

"Every ten years, a genius disciple competition is held throughout the domain, essentially no different from our current competition. But in the domain competition, you will face absolute geniuses selected like you from each state. Do not underestimate it!"

"What is the domain competition?"

The words of City Lord Lei Bikuan stirred a strong reaction among the crowd, as some did not know what the domain competition was and began to inquire about it from those nearby.

"The so-called domain competition is a grand collision and contest among all the geniuses from various states and large forces within the domain..."

Someone explained, and soon everyone understood what exactly the so-called domain competition entailed.

Just like this Tianyuan State talent competition, the domain competition is only broader in scope, involving more, and the contestants are stronger, but in essence, there is no change.

This is actually a shortcut to success set up for some geniuses. Every genius yearns to showcase their abilities through such competitions, to be chosen by the Holy Land or the two academies, and to embark on the Emperor Road.

Of course, the competition will be more brutal because anyone who can participate in the competition is like Ye Fan and his peers, the best of the best selected from layers of trials within one state.

It can be said that every young genius who can participate in the domain competition is outstanding within their state!

Ye Fan had heard Shen Ximen talk about the domain competition before.

At this moment, hearing Lei Bikuan's words again, Ye Fan was filled with fighting spirit!

He knew that the state competition was just a starting point!

If he truly wants to establish himself in the Tianxuan Continent, protect Earth, and save Su Liuli, he must perform excellently in the domain competition to enter the real genius camp—the two academies!

At the very least, he must be chosen by the Holy Land!

Only then can he obtain the best cultivation resources, rapidly improve his strength, and become a contender in the battle for the Emperor Road, thereby achieving his goals!

While filled with fighting spirit, Ye Fan was also vaguely worried.

The nation's sharp weapon must not be shown to others; this principle is simple. Everyone should have a trump card up their sleeve, otherwise, once all the cards are revealed, others will devise highly targeted strategies to kill you based on your traits.

In this competition, he exposed his magic power to kill Chu Hong. When it comes to the domain competition, his opponents will undoubtedly be prepared and will not be caught off guard.

Tong Qianchen and Zhang Taiyi were both very excited to represent Tianyuan State in the domain competition, which is an honor they fought hard to win.

Shen Tu's behavior was very strange; he showed no signs of happiness, nor did he think as far as Ye Fan. He always felt something was wrong, but couldn't pinpoint exactly what it was.

For Xuanwu Sect, having four people qualify for the top ten to represent Tianyuan State in the domain competition made Shen Ximen extremely happy.

To him, this would be an unparalleled honor. He was fortunate enough to have participated in the domain competition before but unfortunately did not make it into the top ten and was eliminated.

He was confident that in the domain competition a year later, Xuanwu Sect would shine as brightly as today and surprise all participating states!

Because...

He is full of confidence in Ye Fan!

“Ye Zi, help me analyze this. Why do I always feel that representing Tianyuan State in the domain competition is not a good thing? Am I overthinking it or is there something else?”

Shen Tu whispered to Ye Fan, he greatly admired Ye Fan now, believing that Ye Fan could see through the essence of things, and asking him questions when in doubt was the best choice.

Ye Fan smiled faintly and whispered back to him, “Trump card! Your current trump card is fully exposed. If you don’t have a life-saving trump card within a year, you definitely won’t get far in the domain competition!”

“Moreover, we can’t always stay within the Sect. We’ll have to venture out eventually. If all your trump cards are known to others, just guess how much chance you have to survive when faced with danger?”

“Hiss!”

Shen Tu drew a sharp breath; Ye Fan’s analysis precisely pointed out the unease he felt but couldn’t identify.

Exactly, once one’s trump card is known, the opponent will surely be well-prepared when they act, and the outcome would definitely be catastrophic.

As everyone was discussing, City Lord Lei Bikuan motioned with both hands for everyone to stop talking; he had more announcements to make.

In an instant, the entire square fell silent, all eyes on him, not knowing what astonishing news he would announce next.

Seeing this scene, Lei Bikuan smiled slightly and loudly announced, “The talent competition officially ends now. Next, we invite the envoy from Jueluo Empire, Elder Zuo Fengshan, to present the awards to everyone, starting with the mysterious prize for the first prize, the champion!”

Mysterious prize!

These four words immediately piqued everyone’s interest, with everyone guessing what this mysterious prize could be.

“What could the mysterious prize be??”

Ye Fan thought to himself, filled with anticipation.

Chapter 1245: The Mysterious Prize

“Please welcome the champion of this Genius Competition, Ye Fan from Xuanwu Sect, to the stage to receive the award!”

As everyone speculated on what the mysterious prize might be, Lei Bikuan announced for Ye Fan to come on stage to receive his award.

“Ye Fan, go ahead!”

Shen Ximen couldn’t stop smiling; Xuanwu Sect achieved excellent results this time, and as the leading elder, he felt very gratified.

“Congratulations, Brother Ye!”

“Ye Zi, congratulations!”

“Junior Brother Ye, congratulations!”

Tong Qianchen and the others also expressed their congratulations to Ye Fan while secretly being grateful to him.

Because Xuanwu Sect's impressive performance was almost solely supported by Ye Fan's efforts—if Ye Fan hadn't stopped the strongest Chu Hong and Luo Xiaolin, it would have been uncertain how many from Xuanwu Sect could make it to the top ten.

Ye Fan smiled slightly and walked calmly onto the platform; he had been through too many great occasions like this without showing any sign of stage fright.

"This Ye Fan is indeed impressive!"

This was the opinion of everyone on the platform regarding Ye Fan. They had seen many young cultivators whose strength, though not weak, often showed some nervousness and excitement when facing such grand events.

But from Ye Fan, they saw no signs of nervousness or excitement — he was very composed, which was rare.

"Ye Fan, congratulations on winning the championship of the Tianyuan State Genius Competition and becoming the first genius of Tianyuan State!"

Once Ye Fan stood firmly on the platform, Zuo Fengshan approached, first congratulating Ye Fan and then attaching Chu Hong's original title to him — Tianyuan State's First Genius!

"Elder Zuo, you flatter me. This young one dares not accept; it was merely luck."

Ye Fan's calm and respectful demeanor surprised Zuo Fengshan greatly — Ye Fan was the only young person he had ever seen who could remain calm in his presence.

This made him curious — what had Ye Fan gone through to achieve this?

As one of the prominent figures in the Southern Domain, Zuo Fengshan's bearing was excellent. Though very curious, he did not inquire about Ye Fan's experiences but instead said casually, "I did not exaggerate; you deserve my praise."

This time, Ye Fan simply smiled and said no more.

"Ye Fan, for this competition, I have prepared two prizes. The first is a Low Grade Spirit Artifact from the Divine Power Realm — an attack-type Spiritual Artifact. The second is a secret technique I accidentally acquired, 'Divine Soul Sword Technique.' Which one do you choose?"

Zuo Fengshan, seeing Ye Fan's reaction, got straight to the point without further ceremony.

“A Spiritual Artifact from the Divine Power Realm? Oh my, it’s actually a Spiritual Artifact from the Divine Power Realm!”

“Ye Fan is already so powerful; once he has an attack-type Spiritual Artifact from the Divine Power Realm, it might be easy for him to eliminate cultivators in the Holy Embryo Realm!”

“That Divine Soul Sword Technique is also good. Unfortunately, only those who understand the Divine Soul Cultivation Method can use it. Ye Fan probably won’t choose it.”

“Indeed, although the Divine Soul Sword Technique is strong, even more precious than a Spiritual Artifact from the Divine Power Realm, it’s useless if Ye Fan can’t use it. He might as well choose the Spiritual Artifact, which can directly enhance his combat power.”

When Zuo Fengshan announced these two prizes, the audience immediately erupted again with discussions, each of them feeling as if the items would belong to them.

Qingxuan’s eyes almost popped out!

Although he had a cultivation technique for divine soul attacks, he lacked such an attack secret technique that could elevate the divine soul attack to its peak; the Divine Soul Sword Technique was practically made for him.

However—

He could only long for it, as the secret technique was not his destiny.

Almost everyone present believed Ye Fan would choose the Spiritual Artifact from the Divine Power Realm, as it was more practical for him than the Divine Soul Sword Technique.

Ye Fan had to make a choice between the two.

At this moment, all eyes were focused on him, watching how he would choose.

“I choose the Divine Soul Sword Technique!”

Under everyone’s gaze, Ye Fan spoke and made his choice; the Divine Soul Sword Technique was also very useful to him — not only was he a martial artist, but also a magician!

“Are you sure?”

Zuo Fengshan was very surprised; he also believed Ye Fan would choose the Spiritual Artifact from the Divine Power Realm.

“Sure!”

Ye Fan nodded firmly.

“Alright, since you chose the Divine Soul Sword Technique, there’s one thing I need to make clear. Although I give you this secret technique, you cannot pass it on to others; it’s for your use only. Can you do that?”

Zuo Fengshan looked intently into Ye Fan’s eyes, as if he wanted to see through him.

However—

Ye Fan’s eyes were clear and deep, making Zuo Fengshan feel like he couldn’t see through him.

This greatly surprised him!

“I can!”

Ye Fan replied concisely, directly expressing his intent.

“Alright, relax your consciousness and receive the inheritance!”

Zuo Fengshan stared into Ye Fan's eyes once more before speaking, then his right index and middle fingers began to glow, as if they were burning.

Ye Fan relaxed his consciousness and slowly closed his eyes, confidently accepting the inheritance.

He believed Zuo Fengshan wouldn't harm him; the transmission was simply to prevent others from knowing the content of the Divine Soul Sword Technique.

Seeing how quickly Ye Fan met his requirements and was unworried before him, Zuo Fengshan found Ye Fan increasingly remarkable, even somewhat admirable.

"Inheritance!"

Zuo Fengshan uttered softly, and his two fingers glowed intensely. His right index and middle fingers suddenly touched Ye Fan's forehead, with a large amount of information transferred into Ye Fan's sea of consciousness through Zuo Fengshan's fingers.

It seemed just a moment, or perhaps a long time had passed. When Ye Fan opened his eyes, the contents of the Divine Soul Sword Technique were already in his mind.

Ye Fan quickly examined the Divine Soul Sword Technique and found it uniquely innovative, differing greatly from ordinary magic. Though it similarly harnessed the power of the divine soul, its attack power was greatly enhanced.

With the inheritance complete, Zuo Fengshan looked at Ye Fan cheerfully; the more he looked, the more he liked. Although he didn't know why Ye Fan wanted the Divine Soul Sword Technique, he knew that since Ye Fan wanted it, he must have some understanding of the divine soul.

This scene made many contestants below envy; although the Divine Soul Sword Technique was a chicken rib to most of them, seeing Ye Fan achieve the inheritance still inspired jealousy and bitterness.

Especially Qingxuan!

His eyes were almost bleeding from envy!

He longed for the inheritance to be his, not Ye Fan's!

In his view, if he had the Divine Soul Sword Technique, who else in his generation could compete with him?

However—

There's no "if" in this world!

At this moment, he hated Ye Fan down to the soul!

“He is indeed a rare genius, but only a genius who can survive and live long is a true genius!”

“Exactly, the higher you leap, the harder you fall; living safely is almost impossible for him!”

Those from other sects and clans who didn’t win the prize, including disciples, guiding elders, and clan leaders, were very aware that although Ye Fan led Xuanwu Sect to shine and won the championship, achieving Xuanwu Sect’s only glory in hundreds of years.

Things must be seen in two facets; while Ye Fan brought glory to Xuanwu Sect, he also killed two geniuses from the Chu Family and all disciples from Tianyuan Sect who came to compete. The Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect would definitely not let it go, intending to take severe revenge!

Therefore, whether for Ye Fan or Xuanwu Sect, they might face unprecedented crisis soon, possibly even losing their lives.

“Ye Fan, I admire you greatly and wish for you to inherit my teachings. Would you like to be my disciple?”

Amidst some people’s discussions due to their envy of Ye Fan, Zuo Fengshan’s voice suddenly interrupted their daydreams.

Wow!

The word instantly caused a sensation!

No one had expected Zuo Fengshan to intend to take Ye Fan as a disciple!

In the next moment, the square fell silent, the sound of a pin dropping could be heard!

Ye Fan once again became the only focus of the gathering!

Chapter 1246: Competing for Ye Fan

Just when some people were envious and jealous of Ye Fan, saying that it would be difficult for him to survive, Zuo Fengshan suddenly spoke up, inviting Ye Fan to inherit his legacy...

What does this mean?

Once Ye Fan nods, he will immediately become Zuo Fengshan's disciple, gaining a powerful backing; except for people from the Di Clan, Holy Land, and Wu Shang Sect, no one will dare to touch him lightly.

Although Tianyuan Sect and the Chu Family are considered very powerful in Tianyuan State, they are far inferior compared to large regional powers like Jueluo Country.

In such a situation, they do not believe Ye Fan would refuse.

Especially since Senior Zuo Fengshan is not only the envoy of Jueluo Country but also a strong person in the Divine Power Realm, renowned throughout the Southern Domain.

Once Ye Fan nods and inherits Zuo Fengshan's legacy, even if the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect grind their teeth in hatred, they can only swallow their resentment without daring to take any revenge on Ye Fan!

Zuo Fengshan's words surprised everyone, and even Ye Fan himself was taken aback; he felt extremely unexpected.

While surprised, he also quickly analyzed the pros and cons of the situation.

"This Ye Fan, his luck is simply off the charts, even such a good opportunity can fall into his lap."

"Indeed, it's just dumb luck. Senior Zuo Fengshan is a strong person in the Divine Power Realm and skilled in Divine Soul attacks, counted among the top in the Southern Domain!"

"If only Senior Zuo Fengshan would take me as a disciple..."

The reactions of ordinary people were not so intense; after all, it had nothing to do with them. To them, Ye Fan or Zuo Fengshan was a presence that could crush them with just a finger, so they had few thoughts about it.

But the disciples from various sects and clans were dying of envy and jealousy, wishing it was them standing on stage at that moment.

Even the elders and Sect Leaders, Family Heads leading the teams were extremely envious of Ye Fan's fortune.

However, they also understood that this was earned by Ye Fan's strength, with not a hint of trickery involved, so while envious, they did not make too radical remarks.

Qingxuan's face turned ashen, his heart was bleeding; Ye Fan had already received the inheritance of the Divine Soul Sword Technique, and if he became the legacy disciple of Zuo Fengshan, it would almost be impossible for him to receive guidance from Senior Zuo.

"This Ye Fan is probably about to soar to the skies!" A Sect Leader couldn't help but sigh.

He firmly believed that Ye Fan would definitely not refuse this proposal, because it was simply too tempting.

Compared to Xuanwu Sect, Jueluo Country offers Ye Fan a broader world and greater achievements, making this essentially a no-brainer choice.

“I think so too. Once Ye Fan inherits Senior Zuo’s legacy, his identity will immediately undergo earth-shattering changes, with a bright future. The Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect won’t dare to seek trouble with him, avoiding a life-threatening disaster while gaining an immensely dazzling future.”

“Anyone with half a brain can figure out what choice to make.”

Members of neutral sects and loose cultivators discussed among themselves, all believing Ye Fan would unhesitatingly accept on the spot, as there was no need to even consider.

Only the people from Xuanwu Sect were silent, their feelings especially complex.

As the Supreme Elder of Xuanwu Sect and the leading elder for this competition, Shen Ximen felt conflicted, hoping for Ye Fan to have a better future with a broader world, yet unwilling to lose such a genius disciple from Xuanwu Sect.

Although the young disciples of Xuanwu Sect this year were overall quite strong, slightly surpassing previous years, without Ye Fan leading, Xuanwu Sect might likely end up at the bottom again—Ye Fan is the hope for Xuanwu Sect’s rise!

Shen Tu and Zhang Taiyi’s thoughts were similar to Shen Ximen’s. They also knew that Ye Fan turning to Zuo Fengshan would lead to a better tomorrow, and with Senior Zuo intimidating, the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect wouldn’t dare to cause trouble.

But they equally didn’t want to lose such an outstanding brother, especially Shen Tu, whose life was given by Ye Fan, naturally respecting Ye Fan’s own choice.

Only Tong Qianchen showed a face full of reluctance; she knew well that once Ye Fan left Xuanwu Sect, it would be difficult to see him again, or even say they will be worlds apart, never intersecting again.

“Are you destined to just be a passerby in my life? If you truly are a passerby, why did you let me know you??”

Tong Qianchen looked melancholic; to love someone means wishing them success, and she finally resolutely decided to respect Ye Fan’s choice. No matter what choice he made, she would silently bless him in her heart.

Yet within her heart, it was filled with nostalgia and reluctance.

The nostalgia and reluctance gave her an urge to cry!

Time seemed to freeze in that moment; though the plaza had tens of thousands of people, it was silent like a cemetery, with no sound at all, not even the small merchants were loudly hawking their wares.

There are many loose cultivators who came to watch the competition this time. They are here not only to watch the competition but, more importantly, to barter.

Each loose cultivator inevitably holds some items that they do not use or do not need at the moment, but just because they don’t need these items doesn’t mean others don’t.

This competition attracts not only all the cultivators from Tianyuan State but also loose cultivators from other states, who might have something others need?

Bartering is the best choice, as one might exchange for urgently needed elixirs, artifact refining materials, alchemy materials, and so on.

Under such circumstances, besides watching the competition every day, the remaining time is spent by these loose cultivators spontaneously opening up a corner of the square as a place for transactions.

Of course, Lei Bikuan, ever opportunistic, would not miss this chance to profit. Although it's a place the loose cultivators opened themselves, as the City Lord, he still collects a fee for the venue without fail.

With Jueluo Country backing him, these loose cultivators dare not refuse. Moreover, Lei Bikuan is quite tactful, never killing the goose that lays the golden eggs. So even though he collects a hefty venue fee, it remains within the tolerable limits of these loose cultivators.

Furthermore, these loose cultivators understand that if it wasn't for this genius competition, gathering so many loose cultivators together would not be easy, so as long as the demands are not too extortionate, they endure it.

But today, none of these loose cultivators engage in transactions anymore, especially now, as all their eyes are fixed on that not-so-tall figure on the stage.

At the same time, on the platform, representatives from other powerful forces are all in deep thought, wondering what they're contemplating.

Among them, Yaling, the representative from the Treasure Pavilion, slightly furrows her beautiful brows, her eyes flickering with a decision, seemingly weighing something, constantly glancing at Ye Fan and Zuo Fengshan.

"Hey! Kid, although Jueluo Country is just a country in the Southern Domain, its strength far surpasses Xuanwu Sect, and its cultivation resources are more abundant. If you join the Jueluo Country camp, with Zuo Fengshan's status, it would be greatly beneficial for your future development. Consider it!"

Just when Ye Fan was hesitating, Elder Xuan spoke in his sea of consciousness, objectively giving his evaluation.

After reminding, Elder Xuan remained silent, leaving the decision for Ye Fan to consider on his own.

He knew Ye Fan is a person who values emotions and loyalty, making it hard to sever ties with Xuanwu Sect.

This is Ye Fan's fatal weakness, but it's also the trait Elder Xuan admires the most!

After analyzing the pros and cons, Ye Fan sensed Tong Qianchen and Shen Tu's gaze and turned to look at them.

From their expressions, Ye Fan could see their worry and hesitation, which made him smile slightly, signaling them to rest assured.

“Ye Fan, don’t rush to agree or reject just yet. I have something to say. I hope you’ll listen before making your choice.”

Later, just as Ye Fan was about to express his decision, Yaling, the representative from the Treasure Pavilion, suddenly spoke on the stage.

“Miss Yaling, please go ahead!”

Upon hearing these words, Ye Fan was momentarily taken aback, then motioned for Yaling to continue.

“Senior Zuo, my apologies!”

Yaling smiled sweetly, made an apologetic gesture towards Zuo Fengshan, and then continued, “Ye Fan, after careful consideration, I now formally invite you to join our Treasure Pavilion! As long as you choose us, I assure you, the Treasure Pavilion will spare no effort to nurture you, providing you with the best treatment and cultivation resources!”

Whoa—

In an instant, the previously silent square boiled over as if it were a boiling pot of water!

Because...

The Treasure Pavilion spans the entire Tianxuan Continent, with strong people like clouds and immense resources. Even the Di Clan, Holy Lands, and Wu Shang Sect would give Treasure Pavilion some respect.

In terms of strength and status, Treasure Pavilion is far above Jueluo Country. In fact, the two are not even comparable!

In such a situation, Yaling inviting Ye Fan to join the Treasure Pavilion and promising to provide excellent cultivation resources and conditions was truly shocking to everyone!

However—

Before everyone could recover from the shock, an elder next to Yaling stood up, looked at Ye Fan, and said, “Ye Fan, I also represent Spirit Manor in extending an invitation to you! All the promises made by the Treasure Pavilion, our Spirit Manor will not fall short! Moreover, you should know what Spirit Manor specializes in, as long as you join Spirit Manor, spirit stones are yours to use at will!!”

Chapter 1247: Displaying Divine Skills

After Zuo Fengshan, Yaling and the Lingzhuang Tianyuan State representative spoke one after another, inviting Ye Fan to join the Treasure Pavilion and Spirit Manor.

This was like two bolts of lightning exploding, stunning everyone into silence!

What kind of organizations are the Treasure Pavilion and Spirit Manor?

One is a business organization spread throughout the entire Tianxuan Continent, with countless precious treasures, even including extremely powerful cultivation techniques and martial arts.

Spirit Manor is equally not simple, like Treasure Pavilion, it is a large organization spread across the mainland, a place for storing and extracting Spirit Stones, equivalent to a bank on Earth.

However, what is deposited and withdrawn in a bank is money, while in Spirit Manor it is Spirit Stones.

Some cultivators possess Space Bags, but the Spirit Stones those Space Bags can store are limited, the transportation and storage of large sects' Spirit Stones are completely dependent on Spirit Manor.

Even some Holy Lands require Spirit Manor's power to transport Spirit Stones back to their Holy Land after mining them from veins, which shows how great Spirit Manor's influence is.

Although the Treasure Pavilion and Spirit Manor may fall short when compared to Holy Lands, the Di Clan, or Wu Shang Sect, they are definitely much larger than Jueluo Country, which is merely a force in the Southern Domain.

After the extreme shock, everyone came back to their senses and saw through the intentions of Zuo Fengshan, Yaling, and the Lingzhuang Tianyuan State representative.

The main reason they spared no effort in recruiting Ye Fan is because they saw Ye Fan's extraordinary potential!

On the surface, Ye Fan's age does seem a bit older, but to be able to defeat Chu Hong, in the early-stage of the Divine realm, with a late-stage True Yuan Realm cultivation, such ability and potential is rare throughout the mainland, definitely comparable to the heirs of great powers.

Such an extraordinary unpolished gem, if not contended for now, then when?

Even though they guessed so, envy and jealousy were inevitable.

Especially for the disciples of various sects and clans, they were green with envy over Ye Fan's opportunity, but could only envy!

On the stage, Zuo Fengshan never expected that Yaling and Spirit Manor's representatives would compete with him for recruits, feeling quite depressed, he gritted his teeth and added another offer, saying: "Ye Fan, if you are willing to join my Jueluo Country, I am willing to persuade His Majesty the King to accept you as a disciple, the two of us will teach you with devotion, would you agree?"

Wow!

This remark immediately caused a strong reaction from the audience below, as if the pot had been stirred, they started discussing fervently.

“Oh my, has Senior Zuo gone all out? He’s made such a promise, if Ye Fan doesn’t nod now, it would be unreasonable.”

“His Majesty Jue Shifang is one of the top strong people in our entire Southern Domain, his cultivation is unfathomable, if Ye Fan becomes his disciple, it would be akin to rising to great heights immediately!”

“Indeed, Senior Zuo seems determined to spare no cost in recruiting Ye Fan to Jueluo Country, but is such a cost worthwhile?”

The name of Jueluo Country’s Emperor, Jue Shifang, is known to everyone in the entire Southern Domain.

He has almost no equal in the Southern Domain of the Tianxuan Continent!

If Ye Fan can indeed be valued by Jue Shifang and accepted as a disciple, no one in the Southern Domain would dare provoke him in the future.

At this moment, everyone believed that Ye Fan’s opportunity for meteoric rise had arrived, with three sides to choose from, no matter which one he aligns with, his future would be very bright.

“Ye Fan, although the strength of Jueluo Country is not bad, and Emperor Jue Shifang’s strength is one of the best in the Southern Domain, it is limited to the Southern Domain only.”

Yaling fearlessly spoke again: “But our Treasure Pavilion is different, our forces are spread across the entire continent, and although we cannot compare with Holy Lands and the Di Clan, there are many strong people in our organization, much stronger than Emperor Jue Shifang, I guarantee you will find a master whose strength surpasses him, what do you think?”

“Hmph!”

The elder representing Spirit Manor let out a cold snort and said to Ye Fan: “Ye Fan, our Spirit Manor’s influence is also spread across the continent, with countless experts, if you choose our Spirit Manor, I can also help you find a powerful master, and provide you with an inexhaustible supply of Spirit Stones for your cultivation.”

“Think about it, in the entire cultivation world, what is most important? Cultivation resources are most important, and what is cultivation resource? Spirit Stones are the best cultivation resources, without Spirit Stones, no matter how great your talent is, how much can you achieve?”

“Elder Xie, that’s not the whole story, our Treasure Pavilion doesn’t lack Spirit Stones either, and also has various cultivation techniques, martial arts, and strange treasures, do you have these in your Spirit Manor?”

Yaling was not to be outdone, her intentions to recruit Ye Fan had two reasons, the first was naturally seeing Ye Fan’s extraordinary potential, believing he is bound for greatness in the future.

The second reason is a bit hard to articulate, and that's because Ye Fan has wagered ten stalks of Thunderfire Grass this time. The value is immense. If Ye Fan chooses to join the Treasure Pavilion, the bet doesn't need to be paid, saving the sect a significant amount of Spirit Stones while bringing in a member with unlimited potential.

"What are treasures worth? With Spirit Stones at hand, are we afraid we won't be able to buy rare treasures? Everything has its value; it's just a matter of price."

The representative of the Spirit Manor, Elder Xie, retorted with disdain. In his view, nothing is unattainable as long as you have enough Spirit Stones, and what Spirit Manor lacks the least is Spirit Stones.

"Some things are priceless, even with all the Spirit Stones in the world, they can't be bought. Otherwise, why would the saying 'Priced but not for sale' exist? No matter how many Spirit Stones you have, if they don't sell it to you, what's the use?"

Yaling snorted coldly. As the person in charge of the Treasure Pavilion in Tianyuan State, she has seen many things that are priced but not for sale. Many absolute items cannot be bought with Spirit Stones.

"Things that cannot be bought with Spirit Stones are extremely rare, and each one is a world-shocking treasure. Even your Treasure Pavilion doesn't have many, would you be willing to give them to him? Besides, you have no say in this, you're just a maid with a key, not the head of the household. Yaling, don't try to fool him!"

Elder Xie of the Spirit Manor stood his ground, not giving in at all. He is the person in charge of the Spirit Manor in Tianyuan State, with considerable authority within Spirit Manor.

“Enough, enough! I say, aren’t you guys being a bit unfair? Trying to steal someone from me, don’t forget, I was the first to propose taking him as a disciple. What is this? Why didn’t you say anything before?”

Zuo Fengshan, frustrated, interrupted the two of them from continuing their bickering. Although he is one of the top experts in the Jueluo Empire with a very high status, he dared not get angry with Yaling and the Spirit Manor elder, only persuading them with reason.

“So what? He hasn’t agreed yet, has he? You just spoke a bit faster than me; does that mean competition isn’t allowed?”

Yaling, with a coquettish smile, winked at Zuo Fengshan and continued, “In our Treasure Pavilion, any treasure is given to the highest bidder, it’s only natural, isn’t it?”

“He is not a treasure!”

Zuo Fengshan corrected in frustration.

Yaling immediately replied, “Since he’s not a treasure, why are you still competing? Why not be kind and let him go, I’ll definitely appreciate it.”

“Alright, alright, let’s stop competing and let the person involved, young brother Ye Fan, make his own choice. See if he’d choose the inexhaustible cultivation resources or something else!”

Elder Xie from Spirit Manor rolled his eyes, saying not to compete anymore, but he subtly hinted at the endless cultivation resources available at Spirit Manor, which was highly tempting.

“Sun God Gold, a Great Emperor’s exclusive treasure, the millennial Divine Medicine that revives the dead, Heavenly Level martial arts, capable of destroying heaven and earth...”

Yaling only mentioned the big ones, but these items indeed exist in the Treasure Pavilion. However, whether they would offer them to Ye Fan was uncertain.

“Enough, enough, just shut up, let me say only one sentence.”

Zuo Fengshan was completely defeated by the tactics of these two. However, he also had his final measures, looking at Ye Fan, he said, “Ye Fan, don’t forget the Divine Soul Sword Technique you chose. I dare say, in the entire Southern Domain, even in the entire Tianxuan Continent, only I can teach you. I can let you grasp the essence of this Divine Soul Sword Technique the fastest!”

This is truly a difficult choice, all three parties have their advantages, choosing any of them is destined to lead to a glorious future, far better than staying in the Xuanwu Sect.

At this moment, everyone’s eyes once again focused on Ye Fan, they all felt troubled for him, and curious as to what Ye Fan would ultimately choose.

In Ye Fan’s sea of consciousness, Elder Xuan smiled faintly, thinking Ye Fan was troubled by which side to choose, he took the initiative to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of the three parties.

“The Treasure Pavilion has many treasures, as that young girl said, there are indeed some things that Spirit Stones cannot buy, in this regard, the Treasure Pavilion holds an advantage.”

“The Spirit Manor is powerful, with even greater financial resources, even surpassing the Holy Land, holding an unimaginable advantage in cultivation resources, and the one drawback of the Nine Heavens Profound Skill is that it consumes a lot of Spirit Stones, which fits your characteristics perfectly.”

“However, speaking of it, the advantages of the Treasure Pavilion and Spirit Manor are obvious, but their shortcomings are equally clear. In such large forces, there is more competition and scheming, whereas Jueluo Country is somewhat weaker in strength, but the competition is relatively less fierce, and since you have a mind for using rules, you will naturally find it advantageous.”

“But with your solar temperament, wisdom, and talent, you’re naturally unafraid of competition, so the Treasure Pavilion and Spirit Manor are also good choices.”

Indeed, being the Artifact Spirit of an Emperor Weapon, Elder Xuan is knowledgeable and analyzed it very thoroughly.

“I’ve analyzed the pros and cons for you, now it’s your turn to make a choice.”

As he finished speaking, Elder Xuan, like everyone else, waited for Ye Fan’s decision.

Chapter 1248: Ye Fan’s Decision

Time seemed to stand still.

At this moment, everyone's eyes were focused on Ye Fan, waiting for him to make a choice.

"Thank you to the two seniors and Miss Yaling, but I'm sorry, I can't give you an answer right now."

In front of everyone's eyes, Ye Fan, the absolute protagonist of today, spoke slowly.

He didn't agree with any side!

This response was shocking to everyone!

No one expected Ye Fan to refuse such a good thing; it was simply incredible.

Clever!

After the shock, almost everyone suddenly understood the key point and secretly praised Ye Fan's cleverness.

In their view, the reason Ye Fan didn't choose any side now was for two reasons: one was to avoid putting the other two sides in an awkward position, choosing later would avoid this issue, and even without choosing, he saved face for them.

Another reason was to take this opportunity to see which of the three forces would offer the most benefits and maximize his interests.

"Ingenious, kid, cunning indeed, you thought it through thoroughly, why didn't I think of this point?"

In the sea of consciousness, Elder Xuan gave a thumbs up, secretly praising Ye Fan's clever move, avoiding awkwardness among the other forces and making them continue to increase their offers, achieving two goals with one stroke.

"Elder Xuan, actually I didn't think that much!"

Facing Elder Xuan's praise, Ye Fan spoke truthfully: "I just feel that my mentor Wu Xinhai and the Xuanwu Sect treated me well, helping me when I was most helpless. I can't be ungrateful and abandon them for a better choice."

"What? You want to give up the opportunity to join the three major forces?? Are you crazy?!"

Upon hearing Ye Fan's words, even someone as seasoned as Elder Xuan was shocked. He couldn't believe Ye Fan would give up such a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

Joining any of the three major forces would offer him greater prospects than his development in the Xuanwu Sect, allowing him quicker access to higher domains of this world.

Especially the Spirit Manor, with its vast Spirit Stone support, was equivalent to finding a Spirit Ore Vein, which is a rare opportunity—Ye Fan cultivates the Nine Heavens Profound Skill, a cultivation technique that consumes a vast amount of Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi. Without a large support of Spirit Stones, progress would be very slow!

“Yes, I give it all up.”

Ye Fan replied honestly: “But I’m not crazy; I know what I’m doing.”

“Kid, you are loyal and righteous, there’s nothing wrong with that, but you should understand the principle of seizing an opportunity when it comes. The Xuanwu Sect, to put it plainly, is just a third-rate small sect, only able to flutter about in a limited area in Tianyuan State and restrained by the Tianyuan Sect and Qing Xuan Sect, unable to compare with the three major forces.”

“If you join any one of the three major forces, especially the Spirit Manor and Treasure Pavilion, it will greatly benefit your future cultivation. Are you really not tempted at all?”

Facing Ye Fan’s stubbornness, Elder Xuan had no choice but to earnestly advise him to join one of the three major forces, as any choice would be better than developing in the Xuanwu Sect.

“Elder Xuan, do you think there is anyone in the three major forces who is more suitable to guide my cultivation than you?” Ye Fan asked in return.

“No!”

Elder Xuan confidently replied.

“The strength of Jueluo Country is limited. Even King Jue Shifang is not particularly strong. Among the elders of his two forces, there might be some Venerables, but these Venerables will never take you as their disciple, at least not now.”

“Furthermore, in terms of cultivation experience, insights, and knowledge, they can’t compare with me, not even the Venerables. If the Nine Heavens Mysterious Crown is restored to its peak, I could easily defeat them as if playing.”

“Besides, I know you best and understand the best way to guide your cultivation.”

“In that case, why should I join them?”

Ye Fan spread his hands and said: “What they can offer me is one, a good mentor; two, cultivation resources; and three, protection. Now I already have a good mentor. As for cultivation resources, I placed a big bet before the competition, and those Spirit Stones are enough to support my cultivation until the competition in the Southern Domain.”

“Regarding cultivation techniques and martial arts, I have the Nine Heavens Profound Skill, Thunderclap Treasure Skill, and Xuandi Fist, so I don’t need any more cultivation techniques and martial arts from them.”

“As for protection, I always believe that tamed tigers are less adapted to life in the jungle than wild wolves. Often, while protection offers security, it can also become an invisible obstacle on the path of cultivation.”

“A comfortable environment can make one lose fighting spirit, ultimately turning into someone with no competitive ability, so I don’t need any protection!”

Ye Fan paused for a moment, allowing Elder Xuan to ponder his words before continuing: “Moreover, the Supreme Elder of the Xuanwu Sect, Wang Qingshan, is about to breakthrough to the Divine Power Realm. Once he breaks through, the Xuanwu Sect will completely dominate Tianyuan State, becoming the strongest sect in Tianyuan State. In the short term, I won’t be in danger either.”

Ye Fan’s analysis was logical and connected, with a touch of being somewhat forceful, yet one had to admit he did have a point.

Elder Xuan pondered for a moment, lifted his head, and said with appreciation: “Listening to your analysis, it seems I was being petty. You’re right, you are the heir of the Great Emperor, and if you are to join any power, it should be the Two Institutes. Such a small power can’t contain you.”

“That’s right, my plan is to stand out in the Southern Domain’s genius competition and gain the opportunity to join the Two Institutes, so there’s no need to join any power now.”

Towards Elder Xuan, Ye Fan did not conceal anything, nor was there any need to. He had to let Elder Xuan know his every thought so that Elder Xuan could better guide him in his cultivation.

The communication between Ye Fan and Elder Xuan was all conducted through Divine Sense, so although it seemed slow, it was actually completed in an instant.

This is the difference between communication via divine consciousness and language; divine communication is more convenient and faster, without any communication barriers.

Once the two of them finished their communication and reached an agreement, only a split second had passed.

“Ye Fan, as always, I hope you can join Jueluo Country and become a disciple of mine and His Majesty.”

At the same time, Lei Bikuan looked at Ye Fan with a complicated expression. He hoped Ye Fan would enter Jueluo Empire, but he also knew the saying: a twisted melon is not sweet.

“The doors of Treasure Pavilion are always open for you!”

“Spirit Manor always welcomes your arrival!”

Not only him, but Yaling and the person in charge of Spirit Manor Tianyuan State understood this and all expressed their positions.

“This Tianyuan State genius competition has successfully concluded. Everyone can stay a bit longer, so I can show you some hospitality!” Seeing Yaling and the person in charge of Spirit Manor Tianyuan State expressing themselves, Lei Bikuan stepped to the front of the platform and announced in a voice as loud as a bell.

“It’s over. Next time we’ll have to wait ten years...”

Upon hearing Lei Bikuan’s words, everyone felt somewhat sentimental; the genius competition is a major event for the entire Tianxuan Continent, yet it’s held only once every ten years.

Although the Tianyuan State competition has ended, almost everyone wouldn’t leave Tianyuan City immediately—those betting on Ye Fan winning the championship need to collect their payout at Treasure Pavilion, while those who lost are curious to see Ye Fan’s final choice.

Whoosh whoosh whoosh whoosh whoosh whoosh...

After sighing, the sound of something piercing through the air rang out, the crowd dispersed, spreading in all directions, and the audience gradually left the square to return to their respective places.

Once people from all sides had dispersed, Zuo Fengshan, Yaling, and Spirit Manor’s representative, Elder Xie, all looked deeply at Ye Fan full of meaning and expectation before leaving.

They knew that Ye Fan would not make a decision at this time, but a private talk might bring this genius among geniuses over.

At this moment, they were all considering what conditions would be necessary to fully entice Ye Fan, unaware that Ye Fan had long decided not to join any one of these forces.

“Let’s go; we should head back too!”

Shen Ximen led the departure from the square, heading to their accommodation.

On the way back to their residence, Shen Ximen, Tong Qianchen, and the group didn’t speak, feeling extremely complex and momentarily unsure of what to say.

The four were happy for Ye Fan for his imminent soaring success, but at the same time, saddened by his impending departure from Xuanwu Sect, leaving them.

“Ye Zi, congratulations!”

Shen Tu was the first to break the awkward situation, forcing a smile as he offered his blessing to Ye Fan. As a brother, he felt he shouldn’t obstruct Ye Fan’s better development, but instead, be happy for him.

“Junior Brother Ye Fan, wherever you go, I’ll always be your brother.” Zhang Taiyi extended a hand of friendship to Ye Fan, sincerely looking at him.

“Ye Fan, regardless of your choice, Xuanwu Sect will forever be your home, and its doors will always be open for you.”

Shen Ximen felt very conflicted but still wanted to advise Ye Fan for his bright future.

“Xiao Fan, if you’re making a choice, I think Treasure Pavilion and Spirit Manor would be better, though ultimately the decision is in your hands.”

“Yeah, Ye Zi, you’d do well to choose one of these two forces; it’ll be beneficial for your cultivation.”

Shen Tu and Zhang Taiyi also advised this; they similarly felt that Treasure Pavilion and Spirit Manor were more suitable for Ye Fan, at least their force was stronger than Jueluo Country.

“Brother Ye, will I be able to see you again?”

Tong Qianchen approached, trying hard to hold back tears, but her eyes brimmed with unshed tears.

“Hmm, what are you all doing?”

Ye Fan forced a bitter smile, looking at the four and said, “When did I say I was leaving? In my view, no force is better than our Xuanwu Sect. I’m not going anywhere!”

“Wha... what??”

Shen Ximen and Tong Qianchen halted in astonishment.

“I will continue to stay at our Xuanwu Sect, make it famous globally at next year’s Southern Domain genius competition, letting everyone witness the rise of Xuanwu Sect!”

Ye Fan spoke again, his tone resolute, “This is my promise to Master, and also to all of you!!”

Chapter 1249: Afraid to Act Rashly

“You... you’re not planning to join any of the factions?”

“You’re staying?!”

Shen Ximen and the four others could hardly believe their ears. Such a great opportunity, a step to success, anyone else would unhesitatingly leave the small sect and join a major sect that could provide a larger platform.

Yet Ye Fan chose to stay at this moment...

This... completely exceeded their expectations!

“Are you not happy I’m staying?” Ye Fan jokingly asked with a smile.

“Welcome, of course, we welcome you!” Shen Ximen said excitedly.

He was truly shocked. In his mind, even if he were in Ye Fan’s position, could he resist such temptation?

The answer was no.

He couldn’t resist such temptation; if he were in Ye Fan’s position, despite hesitations and struggles, he would ultimately choose to join one of the three major forces.

However—

Ye Fan placed the honor of the sect first, choosing to stay and contribute his strength to the sect’s rise, a noble sentiment that earned Shen Ximen’s admiration.

“That’s wonderful, Brother Ye, you’re really not leaving?”

Tong Qianchen suddenly jumped up, the tears on the verge of falling turned into tears of happiness rolling down, her mood changed vastly from just moments ago.

“Of course, I eat well and sleep soundly here, why would I leave?”

Ye Fan smiled, pointing at the tears on Tong Qianchen’s cheeks, playfully saying, “Stop crying, you’ll be less pretty if you cry more.”

“I want to! I just want to cry! Boohoo...”

Not only did things not improve, but once persuaded, Tong Qianchen cried even harder, though the cries were filled with happiness and joy.

“Good brother, for life...” Shen Tu murmured.

“Junior Brother Ye, you are the pride of our sect and also our role model!” Zhang Taiyi, usually not good with words, couldn’t help but praise.

While Shen Ximen and the four others were excited about Ye Fan staying, some of the surrounding individuals criticized Ye Fan, subjectively believing he was leaving the Xuanwu Sect, but everyone in Xuanwu Sect was reluctant, leading to the current scenario, where many cursed Ye Fan for being ungrateful and ignoring the feelings of his fellow disciples and sect, acting recklessly.

But if things happened to them, their performance might not be as good as Ye Fan's. However, this didn't stop them from speaking at the moral high ground.

Unconcealed voices like these were naturally heard by Ye Fan and the others, but they didn't explain anything, nor did they pay attention.

Shen Tu raised his brows, preparing to argue with these people.

Ye Fan immediately stopped him, saying, "Senior Brother Shen, forget it, why bother with these people? Let them say what they want to say, things will become clear one day, saying something now won't convince anyone, let them be."

"What's with these people? I can't stand their behavior."

Though he said this, Shen Tu didn't go looking for trouble with those people but rather sped up with Ye Fan and the others towards the restaurant.

"Xiao Fan, considering your outstanding contributions to the sect, I solemnly promise you, once we return to the sect, I will have the Sect Leader mobilize all the sect's cultivation resources, giving you priority access, you don't have to worry about anything, just focus on your cultivation."

Back at their residence, just seated, Shen Ximen made this promise to Ye Fan. As the Supreme Elder in Xuanwu Sect, Shen Ximen absolutely held strong authority, his proposal would not be ignored even by Sect Leader Tong Tianhao.

Both Shen Tu and Zhang Taiyi felt that this promise was nothing but normal, Ye Fan definitely deserved such treatment from the sect.

In this competition, if it weren't for Ye Fan repeatedly turning the tide, let alone getting first place, Xuanwu Sect wouldn't even have a few people break into the top ten.

If not for Ye Fan blocking the strongest few from Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect, they wouldn't have a chance against Chu Hong or Luo Xiaolin.

On the contrary, they might die from brutal attacks by opponents, leaving their lives on the arena forever.

So, no one had any objections to Shen Ximen's proposal, Tong Qianchen especially had no qualms, as for her, Ye Fan staying in Xuanwu Sect was more joyful than anything else.

"Everyone is tired, let's rest for a bit, once we're done resting, we'll enjoy a feast and celebrate!"

Shen Ximen waved his hand, letting Ye Fan and the others rest. He wasn't interested in anything else, except he had a unique fondness for eating, which was also his biggest characteristic.

Unlike the celebration on Ye Fan's side, the Chu Family was shrouded in grief and anger, though they didn't know that Ye Fan was about to reject the olive branch extended by the three major forces.

Chu Family Master Chu Yuankong had an extremely sullen face, like a trapped beast pacing back and forth in the room, contemplating the countermeasures.

Ye Fan crippled his biological son and killed the Chu Family's future hope, the two most promising individuals in the Chu Family fell at Ye Fan's hands, how could this not make him exceedingly angry?

From others, he learned that Ye Fan was favored by Zuo Fengshan, Treasure Pavilion, and Spirit Manor.

Furthermore, the three major forces promised great rewards to win over Ye Fan!

"Why is it like this?!"

Chu Yuankong nervously muttered to himself as he paced the room, initially unable to believe his ears when he heard the news.

He had already planned, at any cost, to set an ambush outside the city to crush Ye Fan to avenge this grudge.

But this news disrupted his plan; if Ye Fan joined any of the three major forces, Chu Family was no match for them.

In Tianyuan State, Chu Family could be considered a large clan, but to forces like Treasure Pavilion and Spirit Manor, Chu Family was like an ant.

If Ye Fan joined any of these forces, should Chu Family dare to act recklessly and get discovered, any of these forces could easily wipe Chu Family off the map.

“Father, what should we do? Can we just let this go? I can’t swallow this anger!”

Chu Feng’s eyes were red, initially collapsing to the ground when he heard the news that Ye Fan was being fought over by the three major forces.

He had endured too many blows, supported only by a firm conviction—to kill Ye Fan no matter what.

If he couldn’t see Ye Fan dead, he would not rest even in death, yet now, if Ye Fan joined any of the three major forces, he would have no hope for revenge in this lifetime.

“What can we do? How am I supposed to know what to do? What do you think we should do?!”

Chu Yuankong, annoyed by the questioning, vented his anger on Chu Feng, “You brainless fool, why provoke such a bane? Now he’s become a hot commodity, fought over by the forces, regardless of which force he joins, we can’t afford to provoke it, understand? We can’t provoke!”

“—”

Chu Feng was scolded thoroughly but couldn't say a word, his hatred soaring, Ye Fan became his life's significant grievance.

At the same time, he knew Chu Yuankong was right, Chu Family wasn't a match for any of the forces, any power could easily crush them.

“For now, we can only watch and wait for the opportunity, we absolutely can't act rashly, or it would plunge the entire clan into the Bottomless Abyss!”

Chu Yuankong was still clear-headed, not blinded by hatred, knowing what to choose and discard, at this moment, he could only swallow his bitterness.

Similarly, the Supreme Elder of Tianyuan Sect also learned of Ye Fan being valued and fought over by the three major forces.

After learning the news, the Supreme Elder of Tianyuan Sect froze for a long time, his teeth clenching hard, and his mouth twitching.

“What to do? How should I account to Sect Leader?”

This time, he led five disciples to compete, but the result was all five perished, none survived, in such circumstances, how could he account to Sect Leader Helian Chang?

The five strongest young generation of Tianyuan Sect all perished at Ye Fan's hands, this vendetta must be avenged.

But if Ye Fan joined any of the three major forces, his identity and status would be different, something Tianyuan Sect could never contend with.

Even Sect Leader Helian Chang had to be cautious and vigilant facing any of these forces, for they could easily obliterate Tianyuan Sect.

In Tianyuan State, Tianyuan Sect could be considered a large sect, but compared to the Jueluo Empire, it was nothing, let alone compared to Treasure Pavilion and Spirit Manor spread across the mainland.

Tianyuan Sect's Supreme Elder gnawed his teeth with hatred but had no solution, now he could only watch and wait for the result.

Chapter 1250: In the Spotlight

Just as the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect had temporarily given up on the plan to kill Ye Fan, choosing to wait and see after learning that Ye Fan was being fought over by the three major forces, Ye Fan prepared to enter Virtual Space for cultivation.

Before cultivating, he habitually used his Divine Sense to scan the surrounding area.

This was a cautious good habit he had developed.

At any time, safety comes first. There is no absolutely safe place in the world, so staying vigilant is very necessary.

Upon this investigation, Ye Fan suddenly discovered something unusual—the sound of sobbing seemed to come from Shen Tu’s room.

Whoosh!

Ye Fan’s heart stirred, his figure flashed, and he swept out of his room, quickly arriving at the door of Shen Tu’s room, directly pushing the door open.

Upon entering the room, Ye Fan found that there was no one else inside, only Shen Tu silently sitting on the bed with tears flowing down.

Seeing Ye Fan barging in, Shen Tu forced a smile and said, “Ye Zi, what’s up? Don’t you know it’s rude to break into someone else’s room?”

“What’s wrong? If there’s anything difficult, you can say it, and we can all try to find a solution together.”

Ye Fan ignored Shen Tu's teasing, speaking earnestly, as he knew very well about Shen Tu's character, a cynical guy who never seemed to know sadness.

But once such a person gets sad, it's definitely no small matter, and as a brother, Ye Fan felt he should help him.

"Ye Zi, thank you, I'm really fine, it's just that I miss Old Jin a bit. Old Jin died because of me, I failed him!"

Shen Tu grabbed his own hair with both hands, remorseful, "I am such a coward! Why did I leave him and escape on my own? If I had stayed with him and held on together, maybe Old Jin wouldn't have died!"

Shen Tu's words left Ye Fan speechless. There's no way to comfort in such a matter. Shen Tu is loyal and true-hearted, although he may seem dodgy and bad, he would definitely defend a friend, a brother with all his might.

"Senior Brother Shen, listen to me, if Brother Jin were still alive, he would definitely not want you to blame yourself like this. In that situation, only one of you could escape, Brother Jin didn't die in vain! I swear, Tianyuan Sect won't last long, blood debts need to be repaid with blood, I will make them pay a heavy price!"

Ye Fan could only comfort Shen Tu in this way, and everything he said was sincere. The existence of Tianyuan Sect posed a significant threat not only to Xuanwu Sect, but also to the entire Earth, and he must completely eradicate Tianyuan Sect.

After Ye Fan's guidance, Shen Tu slowly walked out of his grief and guilt, and the two walked out of the room side by side.

The restaurant had prepared a very sumptuous dinner, and everyone had a big meal, during which they talked about many interesting anecdotes, making the atmosphere particularly lively.

After dinner, Shen Tu and Zhang Taiyi left the restaurant for a walk outside, while Shen Ximen sat drinking wine and eating a beggar's chicken, not caring about anything.

"Brother Ye, can you chat with me?" Tong Qianchen asked Ye Fan expectantly.

"Sure!"

Ye Fan immediately agreed, unable to refuse such a request from Tong Qianchen.

"Follow me!"

Tong Qianchen smiled playfully and walked upstairs.

Ye Fan smiled wryly, following Tong Qianchen all the way to the top floor, then watched as Tong Qianchen pushed open a window, flipped out, and went up to the rooftop.

Ye Fan, feeling a childlike excitement, performed the Lizard Wall Climbing Skill, sticking his whole body to the wall as he climbed up, quickly reaching the rooftop.

By then, Tong Qianchen was already sitting on the ridged tiles of the rooftop, knees together, resting her chin on her knees, staring dreamily into the distant starry sky.

Ye Fan sat down next to Tong Qianchen, accompanying her in watching the starry sky. Since coming to this world, he hadn't yet emptied his mind to enjoy the night and the starry sky's beauty.

The starry sky of Xuan Realm was utterly different from Earth's, with none of the familiar constellations present, but there were many that he couldn't recognize at all.

"The starry sky is beautiful!"

Tong Qianchen murmured, her eyes dreamlike, not knowing if she said it for Ye Fan to hear or for herself.

"Mm."

Ye Fan nodded gently in response.

This was the first time he let go of everything in Xuan Realm, not thinking about anything.

The feeling was relaxing and pleasant.

Yet—

For Ye Fan, the relaxation and comfort were brief. After a while with Tong Qianchen on the rooftop, he returned to his room and entered Virtual Space to cultivate.

That night, the three forces of Jueluo Country, Treasure Pavilion, and Spirit Manor seemed to have agreed as none of them came to look for Ye Fan, giving them a rare period of peace.

Early the next morning, the major sects, clans, and the three forces were all closely observing Ye Fan's movements, eager to see what choice Ye Fan would ultimately make.

In fact, since yesterday, many sects and clans have been quietly observing Ye Fan, hoping to glean some insight from his actions.

Yet—

To their surprise, none of the three forces went to find Ye Fan.

This was understandable, as they believed the three forces chose not to approach Ye Fan to leave the choice to him and to prevent him from raising his demands to a level they couldn't accept, which would save face for everyone involved.

Moreover, if any one of the three forces approached Ye Fan alone, it would surely displease the other two forces, and they were avoiding damaging their relations.

This situation made the people from various sects and clans even more curious, speculating about which force Ye Fan would choose.

Amidst everyone's eager anticipation, Ye Fan leisurely finished his breakfast, then dawdled in his room for a whole hour, frustrating those with curious minds who wished they could drag him out.

Just when everyone was getting impatient, Ye Fan leisurely walked out of the restaurant and headed in the direction of Treasure Pavilion.

"Ye Fan is going to Treasure Pavilion!"

"Ye Fan is most likely choosing Treasure Pavilion!"

This scene quickly spread, and those familiar with Tianyuan City could tell from Ye Fan's direction that he was likely to choose Treasure Pavilion.

Regarding this, they were not surprised.

Even if Ye Fan needed more Spirit Stones, the Treasure Pavilion could fully afford it. Moreover, the Treasure Pavilion had an advantage, with many rare treasures, which even the Holy Land didn't possess. Ye Fan choosing this was reasonable.

Zuo Fengshan and Elder Xie from Spirit Manor also arranged people at the tavern. When Ye Fan headed towards the Treasure Pavilion, they received the news.

Upon learning that Ye Fan chose the Treasure Pavilion and not Spirit Manor, both Zuo Fengshan and Elder Xie were very frustrated, but they could do nothing. This was Ye Fan's own choice, and they had no right to interfere.

At the same time, Yaling also received the news.

When she learned that Ye Fan was heading towards the Treasure Pavilion, she was very happy, her smile radiant.

"When Ye Fan arrives, just let him come in to see me, do not stop him!"

To welcome Ye Fan, Yaling specifically instructed her subordinates not to stop him and to directly bring Ye Fan to her room.

Under the watchful eyes of various forces, Ye Fan unsurprisingly arrived at the Treasure Pavilion.

“Brother Ye, Miss Yaling has been waiting for you for a long time.”

At the entrance of the Treasure Pavilion, someone was already waiting. As soon as Ye Fan arrived, they hurriedly approached him, invited him into the Treasure Pavilion, and brought Ye Fan to Yaling’s room.

“Little brother, I knew you were a smart person and would ultimately choose our Treasure Pavilion!”

Seeing Ye Fan, Yaling showed her trademark charming smile and personally brewed him a cup of cultivator’s tea infused with the Essence of Heaven and Earth. She intentionally or unintentionally blew a fragrant breath over it before handing the tea to Ye Fan.

“Sorry, Miss Yaling, I think you might have misunderstood. I came here to take back my gambling stake, not to join your organization.”

Taking the tea Yaling offered, Ye Fan smiled bitterly. The kindness of a beautiful woman was hard to refuse, but he thought it best to state his purpose early to prevent further misunderstandings.

“Take...back the gambling stake?”

Yaling's eyes widened in shock, her seductive lips parted slightly, and the coquettish smile on her face instantly froze, filled with disbelief, "You... you're not joining our Treasure Pavilion?"

"Yes, Miss Yaling." Ye Fan nodded, confirming once again.

"Then have you chosen Spirit Manor?"

Yaling looked at Ye Fan; he didn't seem like he was joking, and she instantly regained her composure, blurting out the question.

"No!" Ye Fan shook his head.

"Did you... you actually choose the Jueluo Empire?"

Yaling's expression changed again. She could hardly believe Ye Fan would make such a choice.

"I chose to stay with the Xuanwu Sect." Ye Fan revealed his choice,

"__"

Yaling was utterly dumbfounded, completely speechless.

She then stared at Ye Fan like she was looking at a monster for a long while before asking, "Little brother, are you sure your head wasn't kicked by a Xuan Beast? How can a small sect like the Xuanwu Sect compare to our Treasure Pavilion and Spirit Manor? Why would you make such a choice? Could it be that our offered conditions weren't enticing enough?"

"None of those. Both the Treasure Pavilion and Spirit Manor are very powerful. I'm very grateful for your high regard, but I cannot leave the Xuanwu Sect for now; I apologize for any presumption." Ye Fan said apologetically.

"Alright, although I don't know why you made such a choice, the future will tell you how unwise your choice was."

Yaling shook her head. It was really hard for her to imagine why Ye Fan would make such a choice, but since it was Ye Fan's own choice, she had nothing more to say, so she instructed the people below to bring Ye Fan's gambling stake and hand it over to him personally.

In the genius competition, Ye Fan bet heavily and earned a huge amount of Spirit Stones, which Yaling converted into Spirit Tickets for him.

"Miss Yaling, I would like to ask you a favor." Ye Fan said, accepting the Spirit Tickets.

"Go ahead, if it's within my capability, I will do my best to help you."

Yaling laughed and said, although Ye Fan didn't choose to join the Treasure Pavilion, her instincts and logic both told her that Ye Fan would definitely not stay hidden in the Xuanwu Sect in the future, so she was naturally willing to maintain a good relationship with him.

"You know, I obtained Dark Immortal Gold in the Tianyuan Secret Realm. Dark Immortal Gold is an Immortal Material for crafting Spiritual Artifacts, something even the Great Emperor would be interested in..."

"You want to sell the Dark Immortal Gold to our Treasure Pavilion?" Yaling's eyes lit up; of course she knew how precious Dark Immortal Gold was, and she also knew that Ye Fan might be afraid that carrying the Dark Immortal Gold would attract trouble.

In such a situation, if Ye Fan chose to sell the Dark Immortal Gold to the Treasure Pavilion, the Pavilion could make a fortune from it.

"No. I plan to keep the Dark Immortal Gold for myself."

Ye Fan scratched his nose, somewhat embarrassed, "But I'm afraid someone might target it, so I want Miss Yaling to help spread a false message saying that I sold the Dark Immortal Gold to the Treasure Pavilion."

"Uh..."

Hearing this, the excitement on Yaling's face gradually faded, and she then smiled wryly, "You really have a good plan."

"To show my appreciation, I am willing to pay some Spirit Stones..." Ye Fan felt a bit embarrassed.

Yaling waved her hand, "No need for Spirit Stones, I will help you with this favor."

"Thank you, Miss Yaling."

Ye Fan expressed his gratitude, then asked, "By the way, Miss Yaling, do you have any powerful one-time-use Spiritual Artifacts capable of killing cultivators at the Holy Embryo Realm and above?"

"You want to purchase a powerful one-time-use Spiritual Artifact for self-defense?" Yaling's heart moved.

"Yes, I'm afraid someone will try to harm me, so I must be prepared!"

Ye Fan took the opportunity to ask without revealing his true intention—to destroy the Tianyuan Sect and the Chu Family!