

Y Master 1251

Chapter 1251: Forbidden Artifact

“Little brother, if you join our Treasure Pavilion, I guarantee that no one in the entire Southern Domain would dare to touch a hair on your head!”

Yaling couldn't help but continue to persuade, “Of course, I'm not deceiving you. The younger generation is not included in this, as each faction encourages competition among the youth. It's normal for the young generation to fall in competition, and it's generally agreed that the elders shouldn't interfere or seek revenge.”

Obviously, Yaling hadn't given up on recruiting Ye Fan.

To take a step back, for a genius like Ye Fan, even if he can't be recruited into the Treasure Pavilion, it's important to maintain a good relationship.

“Thank you for the reminder, Sister Yaling. I have my own plans and can't leave the Xuanwu Sect just yet.”

Ye Fan smiled bitterly. How could he not hear the underlying message in Yaling's words?

He wouldn't say he wasn't moved by Yaling's goodwill recruitment, but he definitely wouldn't change his decision.

The Xuanwu Sect had given him tremendous help when he needed protection the most, and he couldn't possibly abandon them at this time.

Even if he has to leave one day, he needs to help the Xuanwu Sect rise up in Tianyuan State first, reaching the top among powerful forces.

"Okay, I don't know what your plans are, but as your sister, I will help you as much as I can. Do you know why?" Yaling asked with a playful smile.

"I don't know." Ye Fan shook his head.

"You give me a peculiar feeling, and my intuition tells me that getting along well with you is a wise decision. As a woman, sometimes I choose to follow my feelings." Yaling said, blinking her eyes, hinting at more than she said.

"Hmm..."

Ye Fan was speechless. He didn't expect it to be because of this.

"Hehe... Alright, let's talk serious business next."

Seeing this, Yaling laughed flirtatiously and then said, “With me, there are only two single-use spiritual artifacts with immense power that can kill strong people in the Holy Embryo Realm or even the Divine Power Realm. But they are incredibly expensive. Are you sure you want to purchase them?”

“Yes.”

Ye Fan nodded, no matter the cost, he must acquire them. They are a crucial part of his plan.

“In that case, I’ll decide this time; I’ll sell you these two disposable spiritual artifacts at cost price!” Yaling thought for a moment and said.

“Thank you.” Ye Fan expressed his gratitude.

Shortly, someone from Yaling’s treasury brought two powerful single-use spiritual artifacts, handing them over to Ye Fan. Ye Fan paid the Spirit Stones, and as Yaling mentioned, they were extremely expensive, but Ye Fan thought it was worth it.

The two disposable spiritual artifacts looked like two alien grenades but were semi-transparent, resembling poor-quality crystals.

Inside, one could see something flowing that looked like purple liquid. To the naked eye, these spiritual artifacts appeared ordinary, like two very common items.

“Primordial Qi Thunder? The Treasure Pavilion is indeed formidable; they even have Primordial Qi Thunder. This is a great thing!”

In Ye Fan’s sea of consciousness, Elder Xuan immediately recognized what these two disposable spiritual artifacts were and exclaimed in surprise.

“Elder Xuan, is this Primordial Qi Thunder powerful?” Ye Fan asked Elder Xuan.

“It’s not exactly powerful but very rare...” Elder Xuan replied.

According to Elder Xuan’s explanation, Primordial Qi Thunder is actually the lowest level of forbidden artifacts.

Its power is extremely strong and very difficult to produce. That the Treasure Pavilion’s Tianyuan State branch can produce two at once speaks to the vastness of its resources.

The use of these artifacts is very simple, but their power is immense. According to Elder Xuan’s guess, after these two Primordial Qi Thunders explode, they are likely a hundred times more powerful than the most powerful Super Nuclear Bomb on Earth, and the power is highly concentrated, causing more damage to the target while reducing environmental destruction.

After hearing Elder Xuan’s explanation, Ye Fan couldn’t help but take a cold breath, knowing well the power of nuclear bombs. The fact that these were ten times more powerful than a Super Nuclear Bomb was simply terrifying.

Carefully storing the Primordial Qi Thunders, Ye Fan, after thinking for a while, asked Yaling, "Sister Yaling, I would like to ask you to help me collect some materials. As long as you find them, I will purchase them. Here's the materials list; take a look and see if you can gather them."

As he finished speaking, Ye Fan handed a materials list to Yaling.

"Hiss~"

Yaling took it and, after a quick glance, couldn't help but take a deep breath.

The materials listed on the sheet were extremely rare. Even with her vast experience and knowledge, she recognized a few materials by name but had never seen them in person.

However, she didn't ask Ye Fan what he needed these materials for; instead, she just reminded, "Little brother, I have to remind you, these materials are very hard to find, and even if someone has them for sale, the price will be substantial. You need to be mentally prepared."

"Miss Yaling, you don't need to worry about that as long as you can find them, I will find a way to gather the necessary Spirit Stones."

Ye Fan's expression was very serious. The materials he gave to Yaling were exactly those needed for the Elixir recipe of the Soul Gathering Pill that Elder Xuan had once given him.

However, to prevent the recipe from leaking, Ye Fan deliberately left out a main material, specifically the Soul gathering Grass.

He already had the Soul gathering Grass, and as for that main material, according to Elder Xuan, it can only be found deep within the Forbidden Zone. Even for a Supreme, finding it is highly improbable and it can be considered a priceless treasure, absolutely not purchasable with Spirit Stones.

“Alright!”

Looking at Ye Fan’s serious expression, Yaling understood that the items on this materials list were crucial to Ye Fan, so she agreed immediately.

Rationality told her that if she could help Ye Fan with this favor, establishing a good relationship with him would be a piece of cake.

Although she thought that with Ye Fan’s current strength and wealth, buying those extremely rare materials was almost impossible.

But her intuition told her that if she could find them, Ye Fan would definitely be able to produce the Spirit Stones needed for the purchase.

She herself didn’t know why she had such an intuition, but she chose to trust it because a woman’s intuition is often very accurate.

Yaling never dreamed that this choice she made based on intuition would bring unimaginable returns for her and the Treasure Pavilion in the future!

“Sister Yaling, thank you for your help. Lastly, I have a request. After I leave, I hope you can spread the word that I didn’t choose the Treasure Pavilion, but I hope you can keep my purchase of two one-time Spiritual Artifacts a secret. Is that okay?” Ye Fan, seeing Yaling willing to help him gather materials, was full of gratitude, and then made his final request.

“I understand the purpose behind you buying these two one-time Spiritual Artifacts.”

Yaling almost instinctively guessed Ye Fan’s intention and was shocked by his audacity but also admired his meticulous thinking.

There was no doubt that as soon as she announced that Ye Fan did not choose the Treasure Pavilion, the Supreme Elders of the Chu Family and the Tianyuan Sect would definitely not let it rest.

And Ye Fan deliberately concealed the fact that he had two Forbidden Artifacts so as to catch the Chu Family and the Tianyuan Sect off guard.

Understanding this, Yaling couldn’t help but take a sharp breath; Ye Fan was about to change the entire power structure of Tianyuan State—if the Chu Family Master and the Tianyuan Sect’s Supreme Elder were killed, it would definitely cause significant upheaval in both factions, potentially reshuffling Tianyuan State’s power dynamics!

“Very well, I shall keep your secret!”

After grasping all this, Yaling had a new understanding of Ye Fan, thinking that Ye Fan was not only incredibly strong in combat but also had a shrewd mind, coming up with such a strategy that surely spelled trouble for the Chu Family and the Tianyuan Sect.

“Thank you, Sister Yaling, I’ll take my leave then.”

After thanking Miss Yaling, Ye Fan left the Treasure Pavilion with a massive gambling fund and two Forbidden Artifacts, heading towards the tavern.

“Ye Fan refused to join the Treasure Pavilion!”

Even before Ye Fan could return to the tavern, Yaling had already spread the news, causing a huge stir!

“Is this boy crazy? He actually refused the olive branch offered by such a vast power spread across the entire continent like the Treasure Pavilion.”

“Who knows what he was thinking, ignoring an opportunity to soar instantly while offending a power like the Treasure Pavilion that even the Holy Land wouldn’t lightly provoke—it really isn’t wise.”

“Hmph, using his own words about Sect Leader Helian Chang of the Tianyuan Sect, ‘his brain is muddled.’ To not choose a behemoth like the Treasure Pavilion, what exactly is he up to?”

“Or perhaps he’s considering joining the Spirit Manor; after all, rare materials aren’t very useful to him, and precious ones have limited uses—Spirit Stones are more practical.”

“I agree, Elder Xie from the Spirit Manor also said, ‘As long as you have Spirit Stones, what strange treasures can’t you buy? Everything has a price.’”

“Exactly, even some Holy Lands and Di Clans sometimes borrow Spirit Stones from the Spirit Manor to get through tough times, so Ye Fan’s decision isn’t wrong.”

Once people learned that Ye Fan did not choose the Treasure Pavilion, rumors spread across Tianyuan City.

People were curious about Ye Fan’s decision while forming their own judgments; the vast majority believed that since Ye Fan didn’t choose the Treasure Pavilion, he must have chosen the Spirit Manor.

Because, the influence of the Spirit Manor spans the entire continent, and its relationship with the Holy Lands is also quite good, which would greatly benefit Ye Fan’s future development.

And the Jueluo Empire, which only established its dominance in the Southern Domain of the Tianxuan Continent, couldn’t compare to the overwhelming might of the Spirit Manor.

...

“He made the right choice!”

When Elder Xie, the head of Spirit Manor’s Tianyuan State, heard that Ye Fan did not choose the Treasure Pavilion, his eyes immediately lit up with excitement. He realized that such a promising disciple was an absolute treasure, and might even be cultivated as the Saint Heir of Spirit Manor in the future.

To secure this infinitely promising genius, Elder Xie decided to make a trip himself to see Ye Fan.

Soon, Elder Xie arrived at the inn where Ye Fan was staying and made his way directly to Ye Fan’s room.

“I’m very pleased that you did not choose the Treasure Pavilion but chose our Spirit Manor. Rest assured, I keep my word; once you join our Spirit Manor, everything I promised will come to fruition!”

Elder Xie entered the room and got straight to the point.

As he finished speaking, the excitement on his face was as unconcealable as the springtime bloom of March!

Chapter 1252: Hunter and Prey, Death Trap!

“In addition, I will strongly recommend you to the Manor Master, granting you a status equal to that of a Saint Heir. This is a rare opportunity.”

Elder Xie offered the greatest promise he could give. Anything higher, he dared not promise, even considering Ye Fan's exceptional talent and potential.

To hold a status equal to a Saint Heir within such a mighty force as Spirit Manor— isn't this a chance many dream of?

One must know, the Saint Heir of Spirit Manor holds a position almost comparable to a true Saint Heir from the Holy Land, nearly on equal footing.

It must be said, the condition Elder Xie offered was incredibly enticing. If it were anyone else, no matter how resistant to temptation, they would surely agree.

From a disciple in a declining small sect, suddenly receiving Saint Child Level treatment from a colossal power second only to the Holy Land and the Di Clan, is without a doubt akin to ascending to Heaven in one step.

Faced with such allure, Ye Fan's expression didn't change at all; he remained calm and humble, waiting for Elder Xie to finish before speaking, "Elder Xie, first I thank you for your misplaced favor and generous promise, but I must still say sorry— I do not intend to join any faction and have disappointed your kind regard!"

"Wh—what? You rejected Treasure Pavilion not because you wanted to join our Spirit Manor, but... but intend to continue in Xuanwu Sect?"

Elder Xie was deeply shocked, utterly perplexed by Ye Fan's choice. In his view, such a favorable condition was rare indeed, yet Ye Fan refused it, choosing instead to remain in a pitifully small sect like the Xuanwu Sect.

"Yes." Ye Fan nodded, apologizing once again, "Truly sorry, I do not wish to be someone who forgets past kindness."

"Ah..."

Be it incredible or incomprehensible, upon hearing Ye Fan's words again, Elder Xie said no more, merely sighed, a touch of disappointment on his face.

Came excitedly, left disappointed!

This was Elder Xie's true portrayal.

Soon, the news of Elder Xie's disappointment at Spirit Manor spread, and Ye Fan's decision not to join any of the three major forces also circulated through this event.

"This Ye Fan's head must have been kicked silly by a Xuan Beast's hoof!"

“Indeed... in anyone else’s shoes, they would never make such a choice!”

In no time, the entire Tianyuan City was abuzz, with nearly everyone believing Ye Fan made a foolish choice, even those without a stance felt there was no doubt in his foolishness.

It must be noted, in this contest, he had thoroughly offended both the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect, and two colossal forces were eyeing him vengefully, waiting for a chance to retaliate when he is alone.

If Ye Fan chose to join any of the three major forces, the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect would just have to swallow their losses, not daring to retaliate.

However—

Ye Fan chose not to join any faction, and in such circumstances, how could the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect miss this opportunity?

In many people’s views, Ye Fan’s safe return to the Sect would be nothing short of a miracle; assassination attempts were guaranteed along the way, even with Shen Ximen’s protection it would be futile.

After all, the Family Head of the Chu Family, Chu Yuankong, and the Supreme Elder of Tianyuan Sect are both strong people at the Peak of Holy Embryo Realm. One alone could stall Shen Ximen, while the other could easily kill Ye Fan, a little cultivator with only True Essence Realm cultivation, as easily as slaughtering a chicken.

As the commotion outside grew, Ye Fan arrived at Shen Ximen's chamber.

Shen Ximen looked at Ye Fan with confusion, sighed, "Xiao Fan, how could you do this? I know you have feelings for the Xuanwu Sect and do not wish to join any faction, which I admire and appreciate you for. But even if you don't want to join them, you could delay the decision momentarily, not spread it out, and wait until we return to the Sect."

"But now, it's almost everywhere, everyone in Tianyuan City knows you refused the three major forces and chose not to join any faction. In this situation, the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect might take retaliatory actions!"

"Elder Shen, please rest assured, I anticipated all these consequences long ago."

Ye Fan stayed calm, yet his eyes flickered with a chilling murderous aura, as his voice consumed with coldness, "Actually, I did this intentionally. I want the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect to know that I have no backing, inciting them to seek revenge."

"What are you..."

Shen Ximen knew that Ye Fan never fought unprepared battles, and since he spoke so assuredly, there must be confidence in preventing the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect from having their way.

On the contrary, if the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect really came for assassination, they would likely end with no return, as he discerned sharp murderous intent in Ye Fan's gaze.

“Time will tell!”

Ye Fan deliberately, left a bit of mystery.

...

That day, the entire Tianyuan City was buzzing over the tales of Ye Fan, the great fool. Everyone felt that while Ye Fan was powerful with unrivaled potential, his emotional intelligence was too low, and he was wholly inept in social dealings.

Moreover, he neglected the situation, ignoring the invitation from Treasure Pavilion and Spirit Manor, powerful forces second only to the Holy Land and Di Clan, choosing to remain in a small sect like the Xuanwu Sect, cutting off his developmental path.

These words naturally reached the ears of Chu Family Master Chu Yuankong and Tianyuan Sect Supreme Elder Jiang Qingfeng.

“This is truly a case of Heaven having a road you refuse to take, No Gate to Hell but you choose to come, simply seeking death of own accord!”

Upon hearing the news, Chu Yuankong could hardly believe his ears. After confirming multiple times, the killing intent he had suppressed exploded entirely.

Originally, were Ye Fan to join any of the three major forces, the Chu Family would have had no chance for vengeance.

Although the Chu Family is powerful, it's only somewhat famous in a small place like Tianyuan State. It's not even comparable to the Three Great Sects such as the Xuanwu Sect and the Qing Xuan Sect, let alone competing with the Treasure Pavilion and the Spirit Manor whose influence spans the entire Green.

Unexpectedly, things took such a turn. Ye Fan didn't choose any faction, which instantly gave him great confidence in seeking revenge.

As long as Ye Fan hasn't joined any of the three major forces, he has the courage to kill Ye Fan, to avenge his son and nephew.

"Father, since that beast hasn't chosen any faction, we absolutely cannot let him go this time. We must flay him alive and grind his bones to dust!"

Chu Feng was consumed with hatred. If it weren't for Ye Fan, he would have been the top genius of the Xuanwu Sect and might even have taken over the entire Xuanwu Sect in the future.

But all of this was ruined by Ye Fan, and he himself was stripped of his cultivation, with no hope of rejoining the ranks of cultivators for life!

“Don’t worry, I will not let that little beast return to the Xuanwu Sect alive!”

Chu Yuankong lovingly patted Chu Feng’s hair, his face ashen. He had decided that no matter the cost, he must kill Ye Fan, or he would be unable to face his own son.

“Is Brother Chu here? This old man has arrived!”

As Chu Feng and his father were agreeing that Ye Fan must be killed no matter what, an old voice suddenly came from outside the door.

Hmm?

Upon hearing the voice, Chu Yuankong was taken aback at first, then joyful at heart.

Tianyuan Sect, Jiang Qingfeng!

He was too familiar with this voice. Ever since Chu Feng was crippled, Chu Yuankong knew that the Chu Family and the Xuanwu Sect were already at loggerheads.

But even as the strongest of the Five Great Families, the Chu Family did not have the strength to contend with the Xuanwu Sect alone, and he had to find a solid ally.

And with the unresolved enmity between the Tianyuan Sect and the Xuanwu Sect, the Tianyuan Sect was naturally the best ally.

While secretly pleased, Chu Yuankong immediately opened the door and welcomed Jiang Qingfeng inside.

“Elder Jiang, please sit. Feng’er, serve tea to Elder Jiang!”

Chu Yuankong knew why Jiang Qingfeng had come to see him, but he didn’t point it out and instead courteously entertained, waiting for Jiang Qingfeng to speak first.

Jiang Qingfeng also understood Chu Yuankong’s thoughts, and with a wave of his hand, he set up a soundproof barrier in the room to prevent eavesdropping, then said grimly, “Brother Chu, no need for formalities. I believe you’re aware of my intentions. Our goals align, so there’s no need to beat around the bush.”

“Please speak, Elder Jiang!”

Chu Yuankong felt a stirring in his heart. He naturally knew what Jiang Qingfeng wanted. Their objectives were the same, so there was no need for any scruples.

“Cooperation! Brother Chu, as you know, with Shen Ximen in the Xuanwu Sect, neither of us alone can match him in a solo fight. But it’s possible to hold him off for a while. So, I came to find you, suggesting we join forces to intercept and kill all in the Xuanwu Sect for our children’s revenge. What do you say?”

Jiang Qingfeng was straightforward. All five disciples from the Tianyuan Sect who came to compete perished, not a single survivor.

And the Chu Family was no better!

The disciples of both sides were all killed by Ye Fan alone. Under these circumstances, there's no need to beat around the bush, and he believed Chu Yuankong would cooperate with the Tianyuan Sect.

Because the hatred between the Chu Family and Ye Fan is even deeper than his own. He was merely the leading elder of the sect. Although the outstanding disciples of the sect all died, he still had some face left compared to Chu Yuankong.

Chu Yuankong's own son was stripped of his cultivation. This hatred must be avenged, or how could the Chu Family still hold its head high in Tianyuan State?

"Alright, since Elder Jiang is so straightforward, I will also be frank. How should we cooperate? Does Elder Jiang have any specific plans?"

Since Jiang Qingfeng had clarified his intentions, Chu Yuankong also dropped the pretenses, his face becoming extremely sinister as he asked Jiang Qingfeng.

He didn't send Chu Feng out because Chu Feng was his own son, and he wasn't worried about the leak of information.

With the soundproof array separating them, their conversation couldn't be overheard by a fourth person, so they unabashedly plotted how to set up an ambush to slaughter Ye Fan and his party completely on the road to eliminate future troubles.

Meanwhile.

Treasure Pavilion, Tianyuan State branch, Yaling's office.

"This kid plans to pit Tianyuan Sect and the Chu Family against each other!"

Yaling stood by the window, looking in the direction of the inn, secretly shocked by Ye Fan's plan.

Chapter 1253: The Fish Takes the Bait

The mission in Tianyuan City has been basically completed, and on top of that, Ye Fan wants to return as soon as possible to create an impression of urgency in leaving, making it appear to the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect that there is no time to ponder.

Therefore, under the guidance of Elder Shen Ximen, Ye Fan and the others canceled their room at the tavern, packed their things, and headed directly to the City Lord Mansion.

Before leaving, they naturally needed to bid farewell to City Lord Lei Bikuan to let him know as well as indirectly inform the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect of this message.

Soon, Ye Fan and his party arrived at the City Lord Mansion. Lei Bikuan personally came out to greet them and instructed preparations for a farewell banquet in honor of Ye Fan and the others.

The relationship between Lei Bikuan and Shen Ximen was good, but this time, following Ye Fan's suggestion, they did not stay for the feast. Instead, they briefly explained the situation to Lei Bikuan and took their leave.

Lei Bikuan was very puzzled by Ye Fan's choice. In his view, even if Ye Fan didn't join the Jueluo Empire, he would definitely choose either the Treasure Pavilion or Spirit Manor.

After all, even the weakest among the three major forces, the Jueluo Empire is much stronger than the Xuanwu Sect, and they can protect him from revenge by the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect.

However—

Unexpectedly, Ye Fan didn't choose any of them but opted to remain in the Xuanwu Sect, which was the most perplexing aspect for him.

Now that Ye Fan did not choose any, and chose to stay in the Xuanwu Sect, the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect no longer have concerns and will definitely take action.

In such a situation, Ye Fan and his people made such a grand departure instead of leaving silently. What are they up to?

Lei Bikuan did not inquire further but felt that this matter was not simple.

Although he did not know what support Ye Fan and his people had, he vaguely felt that this was a conspiracy, only he didn't know what this conspiracy exactly was.

Lei Bikuan still felt very regretful that Ye Fan did not choose to pledge allegiance to the Jueluo Empire.

He himself was part of the Jueluo Empire's royal family, and naturally hoped for the empire's growing strength. Ye Fan's talent and potential were undoubtedly excellent.

Losing such a talent to the empire made him regretful, but he had no way to change it, as it was ultimately Ye Fan's choice that needed to be respected.

Zuo Fengshan was even more vexed. As the envoy of the empire, while monitoring this competition, he was also tasked with recruiting talents for the empire.

Watching such an excellent talent slip away from right under his nose, he was unable to retain him.

He felt guilty for the trust and great responsibility bestowed upon him by His Majesty the King, but now he had no means to change the situation. In terms of competitiveness, the gap between the Jueluo Empire and massive entities like the Treasure Pavilion and Spirit Manor is too great.

After bidding farewell to Lei Bikuan, Ye Fan and his party, led by Shen Ximen, left the city directly, and after exiting the city, flew towards the Xuanwu Sect.

Shen Ximen and the others were already aware of Ye Fan's plan, and having seen the two powerful Forbidden Artifacts, their confidence solidified.

This is also why Shen Ximen followed Ye Fan's advice to leave Tianyuan City swiftly.

Indeed, it was safe in Tianyuan City, with no risk of retaliation, but it would also give the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect's Elder Jiang Qingfeng time to plan.

Only by leaving quickly could they leave Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng with no time to think, ensuring a smooth trap for Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng.

He firmly believed that Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng would stake everything and would not allow them to return safely to the Xuanwu Sect.

Once they made it back to the Xuanwu Sect, it would be too difficult for Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng to enact revenge, with an ambush mid-route being their best chance of success.

Ye Fan had already assessed their strength thoroughly; the Chu Family only had their Family Head Chu Yuankong left with fighting capacity, while Chu Feng was a total invalid, one that could be ignored outright.

As for the Tianyuan Sect, they were entirely wiped out, leaving only the Supreme Elder Jiang Qingfeng, but both were formidable at the Peak of the Holy Embryo Realm, equaling Shen Ximen in cultivation.

In Ye Fan's estimation, if Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng execute their plan, if the two acted together, one could entangle Shen Ximen while the other could easily kill all four of Ye Fan's people.

Then, they could join forces to kill Shen Ximen, leaving no evidence of their deeds. By then, even if Tong Tianhao did not want to let it go, he would have no means to do anything.

Whoosh!

Leaving Tianyuan City, Shen Ximen directly activated the Cloud Boat, which expanded against the wind, and all five of them sat upon it.

Shen Ximen maneuvered the Cloud Boat while cautiously probing around, as the Cloud Boat was not extremely fast.

"Ye Zi, do you think the old geezer from the Chu Family and that old coffin-dweller from the Tianyuan Sect will pursue us?"

Shen Tu blinked his small eyes and asked Ye Fan. He was someone who couldn't stay idle, even on the Cloud Boat he couldn't sit still, and felt uncomfortable if he didn't talk.

“I think they will. Junior Brother Ye killed so many of their disciples, and now without any force to protect him, I would find it strange if they didn’t come!”

Before Ye Fan could speak, Zhang Taiyi, who rarely spoke, surprisingly voiced his thoughts, and his voice was extremely calm, devoid of any hint of tension.

Ye Fan had given them confidence, ensuring that even if Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng pursued them, the outcome would leave no doubt.

“I also think they will definitely pursue us, but they might not follow us directly, and could rather intercept us midway. Our speed is not extreme, and they have time to set an ambush ahead after getting the news.”

Tong Qianchen also expressed her judgment. Although she knew there would be no danger, she was still a bit nervous. After all, facing two strong people at the Peak of Holy Embryo Realm with strength equivalent to Elder Shen Ximen, a little carelessness could lead to a disaster.

Ye Fan smiled faintly and said, “I’m just afraid they won’t come. Don’t worry, they definitely won’t miss this good opportunity.”

Ye Fan had an extremely precise grasp of people’s minds, completely understanding the two’s intentions, not worrying about them not taking the bait.

As long as Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng are eliminated, it will deal a heavy blow to the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect, then slowly deal with them afterward.

Sooner or later, the entire Tianyuan State will have only the Xuanwu Sect ruling. If the Qing Xuan Sect is sensible, they can stay a bit longer. If not, just destroy them directly.

Shen Ximen did not participate in the discussion but listened quietly, while expanding his Divine Sense to monitor all movements around.

Although he knew there wouldn't be any danger, Shen Ximen was still a bit nervous because he was unsure when and where the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect people would set an ambush.

Hmm?

At this moment, Shen Ximen suddenly sensed a murderous aura ahead, immediately slowing down the Cloud Boat, cautiously flying forward.

It was several thousand miles from Tianyuan City, with a vast mountain range below, desolate and uninhabited, the perfect battlefield.

No matter how big a battle occurs here, no one else would know about it. Shen Ximen admired their choice of location, and also greatly admired Ye Fan's judgment.

Ye Fan had said earlier that once they chose to intercept him, it would definitely be far away from Tianyuan City, and not nearby, as that would easily be discovered by others.

Tianyuan Sect and the Chu Family are strong forces within Tianyuan State. If such actions were spread by others, it would be a fatal blow to their family and sect's reputation.

Therefore, Ye Fan concluded that the best ambush spot would be in the sky above the vast forests thousands of miles away, and he was indeed right.

"Truly, the mountain doesn't move, but the water does. I didn't expect we'd meet again so soon. Why are you all in such a hurry to leave?!"

Just as Shen Ximen slowed down, he quickly saw Tianyuan Sect Elder Jiang Qingfeng and Chu Family Master Chu Yuankong appearing in front of him.

Behind them were many disciples from both sects, including Chu Feng, menacingly blocking their path in a fan shape.

"Jiang Qingfeng, what is the meaning of this?"

While admiring Ye Fan's precision in judging human nature, Shen Ximen immediately stood on the Cloud Boat, directly activating the Defensive Spiritual Artifact, protecting Ye Fan and the others.

Shen Tu, Zhang Taiyi, Tong Qianchen, and Ye Fan also activated their Defensive Spiritual Artifacts, cautiously standing ready.

Of course, it was all an act, premeditated by Ye Fan, first creating a complacent atmosphere to mislead the opponent.

Letting them mistakenly believe there was no preparation on their side, preparing for a sudden assault.

“What do you mean? Shen, you’re a smart person, can’t you see?”

Jiang Qingfeng had no immediate intention of attacking. Anyway, the prey wouldn’t escape, so why not let them taste a bit of fear and despair?

“Jiang Qingfeng, Chu Yuankong, I really didn’t expect you to be such despicable and shameless people. Your disciples were outmatched and died in a competition, and they deserved it. Yet you shamelessly ambush a few juniors. You’ve disgraced our generation!”

Shen Ximen reprimanded Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng sharply, while displaying a bit of tension and panic to deceive the opponents.

“Shut up, Shen, today is your death day! If all of you die, who would know what happened today? Rest assured, we will handle the scene properly, no one will suspect us.”

Chu Yuankong's face was livid, his gaze bypassing Shen Ximen, directly looking at Ye Fan. His hatred for Ye Fan was extreme, vowing to kill him for the revenge of his family's disciples and son.

At this time, Chu Feng stepped out from the crowd, riding on a gigantic Ancient War Chariot.

With Chu Yuankong's protection, even with no cultivation, Chu Feng could still move freely in the air.

"Scum Ye, and now you have your day too??"

Chu Feng stared fiercely at Ye Fan, his eyes like a venomous snake, like a wolf, ruthless and brutal, filled with deep-seated hatred, eager to tear Ye Fan to pieces!

Chapter 1254: Blasted to Ashes!

Facing Chu Feng's sarcasm, Ye Fan's expression remained calm, without the slightest change.

He was waiting.

Waiting for the best moment to strike—the moment when the enemy is most reckless, which is also when their guard is the lowest!

However—

Chu Feng misunderstood!

When he saw that Ye Fan did not retort, he became even more arrogant and laughed wildly, “Ye, you fool, this is called having a path to Heaven that you don’t take, but choosing to enter No Gate to Hell—you could have escaped this calamity, but you’re too stupid, giving up the chance to enter the three major forces, so you can only blame yourself!”

“If you had joined the three major forces, we would fear their retaliation and wouldn’t dare to act recklessly, but you foolishly forsake that opportunity. Today, this place will be your burial ground, any last words you’d like to leave behind!”

“Oh, right, I almost forgot, no need for last words because it would be pointless and meaningless.”

“Hahaha...”

Chu Feng’s words elicited a wave of cold laughter from Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng and others.

Even if Chu Feng’s power is gone, his sharp tongue still delivers satisfaction to them.

“A waste like you has no right to bark in front of me. If it weren’t for your family’s power, you would flee faster than a rabbit at the sight of me!”

As the saying goes, when sending a Buddha to the West, act true to the role. Facing Chu Feng's blatant humiliation, Ye Fan retaliated.

"You..."

The thing Chu Feng feared the most was having the wound revealed. If it hadn't been for Ye Fan abolishing his cultivation, how could he have ended up like this?

Ye Fan's words instantly hit Chu Feng's sore spot, driving him completely mad!

"Father, kill him! Slice him into pieces, destroy his body, avenge me!"

Chu Feng shouted hoarsely, he wouldn't die peacefully unless he personally witnessed Ye Fan being killed.

"Son, I'll let you witness his miserable death personally!" Chu Yuankong stared at Ye Fan coldly, speaking in a hoarse voice.

Cold and filled with murderous intent, paired with a low, hoarse voice...

Instantly, Ye Fan felt as if he was being watched by a venomous snake, his chest seemed weighed down by a mountain, making it hard to breathe.

The force of intimidation!

At this moment, Chu Yuankong was leveraging his peak Holy Embryo Realm power to emanate an intimidating force, giving Ye Fan a feeling of suppression!

But it lasted only for a moment!

Soon, Ye Fan's expression returned to normal, fearlessly meeting Chu Yuankong's gaze.

"Chu Yuankong, Jiang Qingfeng, don't you fear the Xuanwu Sect's retaliation?"

At the same time, Shen Ximen pretended to be extremely frightened, bringing up the Xuanwu Sect, deliberately creating an impression of self-doubt for them.

"Hahaha..."

Jiang Qingfeng laughed wildly, saying, "Fear? Of course, we fear, but only if Tong Tianhao knows we've killed you can there be retaliation? But... you think you still have a chance to tell that old fool Tong Tianhao?"

“You’re the old fool, your whole family are old fools!”

Insulting her father made Tong Qianchen furious; she stood up and pointed angrily at them, delivering a string of curses.

Unfortunately, Tong Qianchen was well-raised, and unable to curse effectively, repeating harmless words that made Shen Tu anxious to scratch his ears.

If it were about the skill of cursing, he could definitely make the group of opponents so angry their heads would burst.

Sadly, his sharp tongue was potent but not suitable for opening now, or else it might alert the opponents to something being wrong.

“Enough, stop wasting time and finish them quickly; we should head back soon to avoid unnecessary troubles!”

As Chu Yuankong finished speaking, he and Jiang Qingfeng started to encircle Ye Fan’s group from left and right.

Meanwhile, Chu Feng rode his Ancient Battlefield to retreat backwards.

What would follow was a great battle; being crippled, he couldn't lend a hand, but keeping a distance to watch without getting hurt by the aftermath was another matter.

Under the leadership of Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng, the other disciples of Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect assumed a surrounding formation, intending to enclose Ye Fan and others at the center and eliminate them.

At the same time, under the cover of Shen Tu and Zhang Taiyi and Tong Qianchen, Ye Fan began to inject True Yuan into the Forbidden Artifact Primordial Qi Thunder, preparing to detonate it, ambushing Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng.

As Elder Xuan said, the Primordial Qi Thunder's power is immense, capable of even killing strong people in the Divine Power Realm!

While injecting True Yuan, Ye Fan followed Elder Xuan's instructions and infused divine consciousness into the Primordial Qi Thunder, using the consciousness to control the timing of the explosion.

A critical moment.

Success or failure depends on this!

Whoosh!

Whoosh!

The next moment, as Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng with their followers stepped into the explosion range, Ye Fan's divine consciousness moved, and two Primordial Qi Thunders suddenly shot out from his Nine Heavens Mystic Crown, like two beams of white light, whistling through the air.

"Wh- What is that ghost-like thing?"

"Such terrifying energy fluctuations...!"

As soon as the one-time attack Spiritual Artifact appeared, it radiated terrifying energy waves, shocking the disciples of Tianyuan Sect and Chu Family.

"No, scatter!!!"

Just then...

A scream of horror echoed through the heavens!

Well-versed in experience, Jiang Qingfeng immediately recognized the Primordial Qi Thunder, nearly scared out of his wits, screaming as he burned True Yuan, desperately fleeing to the distance.

Whoosh!

Not just Jiang Qingfeng, even Chu Yuankong realized something was wrong, retreating quickly at the same time Jiang Qingfeng spoke.

Because...

He and Jiang Qingfeng both knew very well how terrifying the power of the Primordial Qi Thunder could be.

As they swiftly fled for their lives, they also realized this was a conspiracy — whether it was Ye Fan not joining the three major forces or intentionally leaving Tianyuan City in a hurry, it was all about digging a pit for them to jump into, thereby killing them!

But—

Too late!

Whoosh!

Shen Ximen activated the Cloud Boat with all his might to retreat rapidly, while also deploying a Defensive Magic Tool.

“Explode!”

On the Cloud Boat, Ye Fan’s expression was as solid as Profound Ice, unmoved. He let out a faint shout and used Divine Sense to detonate the Primordial Qi Thunder.

Boom!!!

The Primordial Qi Thunder exploded in response, the thunderous sound echoing through the sky!

A terrifying energy storm, centered at the explosion, swept across like a tornado, turning everything in its path into dust.

Flowers, grass, trees, the earth and rivers...

Everything, vanished without a trace!

The earth crumbled, mountains collapsed, as if doomsday had arrived!

Faced with such terrifying energy, humans were insignificant!

Including Chu Feng, all disciples of the Tianyuan Sect and the Chu Family couldn't understand what had happened, before being engulfed by the energy storm and disappearing instantly.

This was a force True Essence Realm cultivators couldn't withstand!

Not only them, even Ye Fan and his group were affected!

Despite Shen Ximen following the plan, activating the Cloud Boat in advance to escape, and deploying a top-grade Defensive Spiritual Artifact of the Holy Embryo Realm, he was still caught in the impact.

His top-grade Defensive Spiritual Artifact of the Holy Embryo Realm was directly shattered!

Besides that, he activated the Xuanwu Armor Technique to protect Ye Fan and others. The armor, formed from True Yuan, was broken into pieces, nearly destroyed.

"What a powerful Primordial Qi Thunder!"

After the explosion, Shen Ximen said, still filled with dread.

Just now, in that brief moment, his Holy Power was consumed by more than eighty percent. If the explosion's force had been slightly greater, he might not have been able to withstand it.

However, Ye Fan was unscathed.

First, Shen Ximen bore the brunt, absorbing more than ninety percent of the force, and secondly, he activated the Xuanwu Armor Technique for protection, along with the cultivation of the Nine Heavens Profound Body, which had already shown its potential. His bodily defense was nearly invincible at the True Essence Realm — both combined made his defense unbelievably strong.

Though uninjured, Ye Fan himself was surprised that the power of these two Primordial Qi Thunders was so terrifying, even the space was fractured, forming a temporary spatial black hole.

If it hadn't been for those spatial black holes absorbing a large amount of energy, the destructive force of these two Primordial Qi Thunders would have been even greater, flattening everything within a hundred miles.

Tong Qianchen, Shen Tu, and Zhang Taiyi, their defenses were not as strong as Ye Fan's and they were all injured to varying degrees.

The three quickly took an elixir pill for healing and sat cross-legged on the Cloud Boat to recuperate.

Shen Ximen was also slightly affected, suffering minor injuries, and his True Yuan was severely depleted, requiring adjustment.

Under such circumstances, only Ye Fan could investigate the results.

“Ye Fan, although Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng are most likely dead, be careful nonetheless!”

Shen Ximen cautioned that True Essence Realm cultivators couldn’t survive such a powerful explosion. Yet Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng, if they possessed extremely powerful Defensive Spiritual Artifacts, might still be alive.

Moreover, Holy Embryo Realm cultivators, with an indestructible Holy Embryo, could take over another body and be reborn!

“Understood!”

Ye Fan nodded, and in a flash, he descended from the Cloud Boat, quickly flying to the site of the explosion.

He knew well that True Essence Realm cultivators couldn’t survive such a powerful explosion,

“There!”

Soon, Ye Fan saw two humanoid shadows not far away and with the release of Divine Sense, found that it was indeed Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng.

Both weren't dead, but their bodies, Holy Embryos, and Divine Souls were all severely injured, completely losing combat power, lying there unable to even move a finger, watching Ye Fan descending from the sky.

At this moment, their faces showed no trace of arrogance, only despair, deep despair!

And a hint of fear!

This fear stemmed from their current situation — they were like fish on a chopping block, soon to be butchered by Ye Fan!

“You... you're ruthless...”

Chu Yuankong couldn't open his mouth, only sending a faint Divine Sense to Ye Fan.

“Ruthless?”

Ye Fan's face remained expressionless, “Your own sins lead to your demise, I'll send you off!”

“Boom!”

“Boom!”

As his words fell, Ye Fan waved his hand and unleashed a Punch Ray, obliterating Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng into dust, leaving only two Space Bags on the ground.

Swish!

Ye Fan waved his hand and grasped the two Space Bags into his hand!

Chapter 1255: Ye Fan’s Strategy

If someone had previously told Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng that they would die at the hands of Ye Fan, a little cultivator who had just broken through to the late-stage True Essence Realm, they would surely have thought the person was mad.

However—

The irony of the situation was that two peak Holy Embryo Realm powerhouses died at Ye Fan’s hands.

Regarding all this, Ye Fan felt neither excitement nor thrill, but calmly examined the space bags of Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng.

The two space bags were the lifetime's wealth of Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng!

At this moment, both Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng were dead, and their space bags became Ye Fan's spoils, but inside them remained their divine consciousness seal.

Ye Fan must break the seal to see what is inside the space bags.

Just as Ye Fan was preparing to remove the divine consciousness seal left by Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng in their space bags, Shen Ximen arrived like a breeze.

Earlier, his True Yuan was overly consumed, and he suffered significant shock, temporarily making him unable to mobilize his True Yuan, so he let Ye Fan come and check the result alone.

After Ye Fan left, he regretted it!

Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng's cultivation were almost the same as his, and each had their life-saving unique skills, and even powerful defensive spiritual artifacts.

He worried that Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng might still be alive!

If Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng still had the capability to fight, Ye Fan would be in grave danger.

Because of regret and concern, he recovered slightly, and hurried over as fast as possible.

However—

When he got to Ye Fan's side, he did not see Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng, but saw the two space bags in Ye Fan's hands.

Therefore, he was very clear that these two space bags were most likely Chu Yuankong's and Jiang Qingfeng's!

"Hahaha... Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng probably never dreamed that they would fall in such a way!"

Shen Ximen laughed wildly, he had fought with Jiang Qingfeng all his life, neither able to best the other, yet today, unexpectedly, they were blown up by Ye Fan's two Primordial Qi Thunders.

"Xiao Fan, this place is not safe to stay for long, let's take a short rest and leave immediately to avoid being discovered."

After his ecstasy, Shen Ximen immediately realized the severity of the situation, and although Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng were dead, and the danger was gone, if this matter was discovered and spread, how could the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect let it go?

“Hmm.”

Ye Fan nodded, stored away the space bags, then followed Shen Ximen back to the Cloud Boat to meet with Tong Qianchen and the others.

After reuniting, at Shen Ximen’s suggestion, the group descended below, sitting cross-legged, rapidly operating their Qi and adjusting their breathing.

Ye Fan did not adjust his breathing like Shen Ximen.

Firstly, he was not injured, and secondly, the True Yuan required to launch the Primordial Qi Thunder was very little.

“Should those who were to come have arrived?”

While Shen Ximen and the others were operating their Qi and adjusting their breaths, Ye Fan looked toward the distant forest, silently speaking in his heart.

“Kid, you guessed correctly, ten miles to the right, there has been a presence staying there, likely these are the people you talked about.”

“They actually came!”

Ye Fan sneered, he had already considered everything in, and could even guess who the spy was.

Who would take such an interest in his affairs?

Who most wishes for the Xuanwu Sect, Chu Family, and Tianyuan Sect to clash?

The answer is evident.

Qing Xuan Sect!

As one of the three major sects of Tianyuan State, Qing Xuan Sect ranks slightly above Xuanwu Sect in overall strength but below Tianyuan Sect. If they want to dominate alone, they must instigate the Xuanwu Sect and Tianyuan Sect to fight, including the Chu Family, which is rising and poses a threat to the three major sects, to reap the fisherman’s loot.

Although Elder Xuan discovered the Qing Xuan Sect members, Ye Fan took no action, not even alerting Shen Ximen and the others.

“Let’s go!”

A moment later, Shen Ximen and the others ceased their Qi operation, stood up, ready to leave.

“Elder Shen, ten miles out, there seems to be someone watching us.”

As Shen Ximen and the others rose, Ye Fan reminded them, but did not mention the Qing Xuan Sect.

Though he was confident his judgment was right, it was better to confirm first.

After all, there’s no certainty in this world, especially since it was all something Ye Fan inferred when setting the plan.

“Are you sure?”

Upon hearing Ye Fan’s words, Shen Ximen was stunned, quickly using his divine consciousness to probe, indeed finding that there seemed to be someone on the right about ten miles out.

Swish!

Shen Ximen's face immediately darkened—if this matter were to spread, the Xuanwu Sect would surely face a joint attack from the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect.

Can the present Xuanwu Sect withstand such an intense assault?

He dared not imagine, if the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect united strongly, the Xuanwu Sect, already weakened, might face the calamity of extinction!

“Let's go, see who it is!”

Elder Shen Ximen decided to take a look, and if possible, he would certainly act decisively to silence these people, lest the matter leaks out.

“I must see which bastard dares to meddle in our affairs!”

Shen Tu said with murderous intent, having eliminated two strong people at the peak of Holy Embryo Realm, Jiang Qingfeng and Chu Yuankong, in one battle, inflating his confidence, forgetting there were only two Primordial Qi Thunders, both consumed just now.

Such Forbidden Artifacts are not easy to obtain; Ye Fan managing to get two was very fortunate. If not for the Treasure Pavilion happening to have them, whether they could return to the sect alive was uncertain.

The distance of ten miles passed in the blink of an eye!

Soon, Ye Fan and his group saw the people ten miles away!

As Ye Fan had predicted, they were indeed members of the Qing Xuan Sect.

The elder leading the Qing Xuan Sect team didn't expect Shen Ximen to discover them so quickly, smiling awkwardly.

Only Qing Xuan appeared natural, as if merely passing by, coincidentally bumping into Ye Fan and others, without any sign of awkwardness.

"Greetings Senior Shen, greetings fellow senior brothers and sisters."

Qing Xuan smiled and stepped forward, bowing respectfully to Elder Shen Ximen and the others, showing no hint of awkwardness at being discovered.

"Dear nephew, you seemed to enjoy the show just now, didn't you?"

Shen Ximen asked coldly, with a Xuan Han tone, though addressing Qing Xuan, he was looking at the elder leading Qing Xuan Sect.

Because he wanted to gauge the intentions of the Qing Xuan Sect from the leader's expression.

"Enjoy the show? Why would Senior Shen say that? The competition ended, we were just preparing to return, happened to pass by, sensed your presence, and noticed you approaching rapidly, thinking we encountered a band of robbers, thus staying alert on the spot, didn't expect it was you," Qing Xuan said with genuine confusion, making it seem real.

Listening to Qing Xuan's words, watching Qing Xuan's puzzled expression, Ye Fan, though knowing Qing Xuan was acting, couldn't help but admire Qing Xuan's patience and disguise skills.

However, Ye Fan didn't expose Qing Xuan, as it aligned with his intentions, being part of his plan—to use Qing Xuan and others to spread what happened here to the ears of the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect.

"I hope that's the case."

Shen Ximen, unaware of Ye Fan's follow-up plan, feared the exposure, even contemplating silencing them but hesitated to act—since Qing Xuan Sect's leader was not inferior in strength, unlikely to be retained.

Furthermore, he believed Xuanwu Sect should avoid further enmity with a giant like Qing Xuan Sect, or else Xuanwu Sect's situation in Tianyuan State would become extremely difficult.

“If Senior Shen has no other instructions, I must take my leave, as I’ve been delayed long enough and fear my mentor will worry.”

Qing Xuan noticed this, thus wasn’t worried about Shen Ximen being disadvantageous to him, knowing despite Ye Fan’s strength, if he intended to flee, he could escape, while Qing Xuan Sect’s leader could resist Shen Ximen.

Despite realizing Shen Ximen wouldn’t act, Qing Xuan still felt immense pressure facing him, making him eager to leave.

“Farewell!”

Shen Ximen weighed his options and finally decided to let the Qing Xuan Sect people leave.

“Take care Senior Shen, fellow senior brothers and sisters, Qing Xuan bids farewell!”

Qing Xuan, quick to seize the moment, respectfully bowed to everyone, then hurriedly left with the leading elder and fellow disciples.

“I have a bad feeling; this kid will surely spread what happened here. If the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect find out, they might retaliate.”

Zhang Taiyi expressed his concern, knowing Qing Xuan's nature, typically two-faced and treacherous.

Not only him, but Tong Qianchen and Shen Tu, including Shen Ximen, shared the worry that the Qing Xuan Sect people spreading the news would lead to Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect jointly attacking Xuanwu Sect.

Ye Fan noticed everyone's worry, smiled slightly, "Don't worry, all of this is within my plan—even if Qing Xuan Sect doesn't spread the news, I would make sure it leaks."

"Wh...What?"

Shen Ximen and his companions were shocked.

Indeed...

They were genuinely shocked!

To them, exposure of this matter equals bringing disaster to Xuanwu Sect, but Ye Fan claimed it was part of the plan...

This couldn't help but shock them?!

“The reason is simple.”

Ye Fan smirked coldly, his eyes flashing with a fierce killing intent, “Eliminating Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng is only the first step. I want to seize this opportunity to wipe out the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect, eradicate future threats, making Xuanwu Sect rise up thoroughly, becoming the undisputed number one sect of Tianyuan State!”

“Um...”

Hearing Ye Fan’s words again, Shen Ximen and the others were dumbfounded, their shock surpassing earlier instances.

Because...

They couldn’t fathom the source of Ye Fan’s confidence and assurance.

“Elder Wang Qingshan should have finished the breakthrough!”

Ye Fan provided the answer.

Chapter 1256: Meticulous Planning and Foresight

A word awakens the dreamer!

Ye Fan's words instantly enlightened the four of them.

Wang Qingshan had entered the half-step God realm long ago, and after some training, his chances of ascending to the Divine Power Realm were very high.

This was also why Tong Tianhao had opened the Thunder Primordial Secret Realm early to find Thunderfire Grass for Wang Qingshan!

Before Ye Fan's arrival, Wang Qingshan had already chosen to go into seclusion, and by calculation, he should have succeeded in his breakthrough.

As long as Elder Wang succeeds in his breakthrough and steps into the Divine Power Realm, annihilating the strong people of the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect would be easy!

Because...

Neither the Tianyuan Sect nor the Chu Family had any strong people in the Divine Power Realm in charge. Once Wang Qingshan broke through to the Divine Power Realm, he would be the only strong person in the Divine Power Realm among the Three Great Sects.

Even Shen Ximen admired Ye Fan's strategic foresight at this point. Every seemingly reckless move had been meticulously calculated, so well-thought-out that even he was surprised and felt inferior.

...

"Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng were blasted to death by Ye Fan of the Xuanwu Sect using Primordial Qi Thunder!"

Just as Ye Fan had anticipated, the news of Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng leading their people to ambush Ye Fan, only to be countered and killed by him with two Primordial Qi Thunder bombs, spread rapidly as if it had wings.

"This... it's simply unbelievable that a late-stage True Yuan Realm cultivator could actually kill two peak Holy Embryo Realm strong people!"

"The Primordial Qi Thunder truly lives up to its reputation as a Forbidden Artifact, its power is astonishing!"

"A conspiracy! This is definitely a conspiracy! The Xuanwu Sect had it all calculated, digging a pit for Tianyuan Sect and the Chu Family to fall into, annihilating Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng in one fell swoop!"

News reached the closest Tianyuan City first, causing an uproar, with everyone discussing the event.

Some were shocked, some were impressed, and others discussed conspiracy theories.

All of this pushed Ye Fan, who had left Tianyuan City, back into the limelight, making him a focal point once again.

Naturally, City Lord Lei Bikuan also received the news, and his first reaction was disbelief, but after repeated confirmations, he couldn't help but accept it, secretly admiring Ye Fan's deep scheming and decisive ruthlessness. Killing even the Tianyuan Sect's Supreme Elder without hesitation.

Similarly, the news reached Yaling of the Treasure Pavilion. She had no doubt because those two Primordial Qi Thunder bombs were sold to Ye Fan by her, so she knew more about this matter than anyone else.

"Just as I expected, he truly is far-sighted!"

When Yaling learned that Ye Fan had killed Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng with Primordial Qi Thunder, she couldn't help but sigh. Ye Fan was a young man with a mindset and depth far beyond his age.

She had to admire Ye Fan's ruthless decisiveness and strategic foresight, having been fully prepared before the incident even occurred.

However, she was also very puzzled. By doing this, Ye Fan would undoubtedly push the Xuanwu Sect into a very dangerous situation. Was it really worth it?

It's important to know that the Chu Family and the Tianyuan Sect were not easily provoked. In the entire Tianyuan State, they were considered very powerful forces, akin to local tyrants.

Once these two join forces, the Xuanwu Sect would inevitably face a tremendous disaster, and whether they could survive it was uncertain.

Logically, Ye Fan shouldn't have overlooked this point, so why did he still do it?

Could there be another trump card that she wasn't aware of?

At this moment, Yaling suddenly had a feeling of being unable to see through Ye Fan, sensing that this young man was shrouded in a layer of mystery.

Just as Ye Fan and his group returned to the sect, the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect also received the news.

The entire Chu Family was wiped out, with no survivors returning!

This news caused a great shock within the Chu Family—the death of their young generation elites and Chu Yuankong was almost a catastrophic blow to the rising Chu Family!

Everyone in the Chu Family was filled with extreme anger and immediately decided to request the Patriarch, who was in seclusion, to come out and avenge the Chu Family's disciples.

The Patriarch of the Chu Family was in seclusion in a very quiet place behind the family mountain, not to be disturbed unless there was a significant matter.

There was a small Dragon Vein under this mountain, though small, it contained Dragon Energy in the Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi, making it an excellent cultivation site.

On this day, thousands of members of the Chu Family collectively came to the back mountain, kneeling before the cave where the Patriarch was in seclusion, and they selected a representative to sound the Chu Family's Dragon Skin Drum.

The Dragon Skin Drum of the Chu Family was not to be easily sounded; striking it indicated a major event had occurred.

Dong!

Dong!

The muffled sound resonated across the entire Chu Family.

When the third sound rang out, a majestic and loud voice echoed from within the cave: “What happened? Why was the Dragon Skin Drum sounded?”

Following the voice, a tall and mighty elder, with unruly hair and a bushy beard entwined, leopard head and circular eyes, smashed the stone door blocking the cave entrance with a single punch, appearing before the Chu Family members.

“Patriarch, something significant has happened... You must avenge us!”

The appointed representative exaggerated the incident, claiming how insidious and cunning Ye Fan and the Xuanwu Sect were, not only killing the Chu Family genius but also trapping and killing the Chu Family Master.

“What... what? Xiao Hong got killed?”

Upon hearing this news, the Chu Family Patriarch flew into a rage, exuding an oppressive aura so formidable that it blew the surrounding Chu Family members away; such was the terror of his power.

Chu Yuankong is dead, and although it’s a tremendous loss, it wasn’t enough to make the Chu Family Ancestor lose his mind. However, the death of Chu Hong deeply pierced his nerves!

This equates to cutting off the hope for the Chu Family’s rise!

“Ancestor, have you already broken through to the Divine Power Realm?”

The Chu family members who were blasted away didn’t have the slightest complaint; instead, they were somewhat excited. Such a powerful aura, in their view, could only be achieved by a cultivator at the Divine Power Realm.

“Not yet, but I’ve already taken a crucial Half-step; I’ve just reached the Half-step God realm.”

The terrifying aura of the Chu Family Ancestor was collected as soon as it was released. From the Holy Embryo Realm to the Divine Power Realm is incredibly difficult, and many cultivators get stuck at this barrier. To take this crucial Half-step is already exceptionally defying the universe.

Logically speaking, a cultivator of his age would hardly make any progress in cultivation, yet he broke this restriction and successfully took a Half-step.

Once this crucial Half-step is taken, the remaining half becomes manageable; it’s merely a matter of time and, as long as he doesn’t die, he will eventually break through to the Divine Power Realm.

With each breakthrough to a new realm, a person’s life span increases significantly.

True Qi Realm cultivators can only live up to 150 years, while those in the True Essence Realm reach 200 years, and those in the Holy Embryo Realm soar directly to 300 years.

The Divine Power Realm extends it to 500 years. The Chu Family Ancestor is already nearing the end of his life span; if he cannot break through, he will inevitably die within ten years.

But now, he saw the hope of reaching 500 years. Gaining an additional 200 years of life span is a powerful allure for anyone.

Though the Chu Family Ancestor is extremely angry, he also understands that revenge requires careful strategic planning — relying solely on the strength of the Chu Family to defeat the established Xuanwu Sect is almost impossible, so he must seek allies and unite!

The best ally would undoubtedly be the Tianyuan Sect for two reasons: firstly, the Tianyuan Sect is the most powerful among the Three Great Sects; secondly, there is existing enmity between the Tianyuan Sect and Xuanwu Sect. More importantly, the Tianyuan Sect has suffered a complete defeat this time too!

Under such circumstances, the Chu Family Ancestor firmly believes that the Tianyuan Sect will definitely retaliate against the Xuanwu Sect!

Swish!

Understanding all this, the Chu Family Ancestor wasted no time, stepping directly out and vanishing from the back mountain, heading straight for the Tianyuan Sect.

The location of the Tianyuan Sect at Tianyuan Mountain is undoubtedly the best in the entire Tianyuan State, surrounded by beautiful mountains and rivers, encapsulating the spiritual essence of Heaven and Earth, where Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi diffuses into mist.

The Chu Family Ancestor arrived at the Tianyuan Sect, bypassed the mountain gate entirely, and appeared directly in the Tianyuan Sect's square, striding straight towards the grand hall.

"Who are you? Why have you come to our Tianyuan Sect?"

Many disciples of the Tianyuan Sect were on the square and suddenly spotted this imposing elderly figure who appeared very unfamiliar, promptly blocking his path.

However, these disciples were perceptive enough to realize from the aura of the Chu Family Ancestor that he was beyond their ability to hinder, so one core disciple respectfully inquired about his purpose.

"I am Chu Hao, please have He Lian Sect Leader come out for a meeting; I have matters to discuss with him."

Although the Chu Family Ancestor prides himself on his strong cultivation, he did not act recklessly on the ground of the Tianyuan Sect.

"So it's the Chu Family Ancestor, please sit in the hall for a while, our Sect Leader is in seclusion and will emerge soon. Once he does, I'll report immediately."

The disciple who inquired hadn't met Chu Hao but had heard of the great name of the Chu Family Ancestor Chu Hao.

Upon hearing the name from the other party, he immediately understood Chu Hao's intent, donned an extremely respectful demeanor, courteously ushering him into the hall to wait, while instructing others to serve him carefully.

Internally, the disciples of the Tianyuan Sect also wished to rush to battle against the Xuanwu Sect to avenge Elder Jiang Qingfeng and Luo Xiaolin, among others. Yet, since Helian Chang is at a critical stage of retreat, they dare not disturb him.

Helian Chang's retreat location is very austere, a simple cave carved from the rock wall, with nothing but a cushion, albeit surrounded by numerous Spirit Stones.

Breaking through from the Holy Embryo Realm to the Divine Power Realm is extremely difficult, and even if he doesn't use them, preparations with Spirit Stones must be ample.

Aside from essential defense and patrols, nearly all disciples of the Tianyuan Sect waited outside Helian Chang's retreat cave, a scene that perhaps surpassed even that of the Chu Family.

The aura emerging from the cave suggested that Helian Chang could come out any moment, though it's uncertain at what level, or if he could achieve an instantaneous breakthrough to the Divine Power Realm.

Boom!

Amid the anxious waiting of the disciples and elders of the Tianyuan Sect, the cave gate was directly shattered as Helian Chang emerged, his powerful aura instantly spreading and retracting.

At the same time, Chu Hao immediately sensed this aura, disappearing instantly from the main hall and appearing before Helian Chang's retreat cave.

"Senior Chu, sorry to have kept you waiting!"

Chu Hao's generation is older than Helian Chang's, so despite Helian Chang being the Sect Leader, he had to perform the courtesy befitting of a junior in front of Chu Hao.

"He Lian Sect Leader, I presume you already know the purpose of my visit — I want a straightforward answer from you: cooperate or not?"

Chu Hao got right to the point, articulating his intention clearly and letting Helian Chang choose. He believed Helian Chang would undoubtedly cooperate with him.

"The Xuanwu Sect has gone too far, killing my sect's disciples; this hatred cannot coexist under the same sky!"

As expected by Chu Hao, Helian Chang's expression turned fierce and murderous: "Let's join forces to destroy the Xuanwu Sect together!!"

Chapter 1257: The Pride of the Sect

At the same time the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect were plotting to unite and destroy the Xuanwu Sect, Ye Fan and others peacefully returned to the Xuanwu Sect.

The Xuanwu Sect had long received the news of Ye Fan's strong elimination of geniuses, winning the Tianyuan City Genius Competition, and refusing to join the three major forces. Thus, Sect Leader Tong Tianhao personally led the sect elders and disciples to wait at the sect entrance.

"Look, they're back!"

In the wait of Tong Tianhao and others, Ye Fan and his group appeared in the distant sky on the Cloud Boat. A sharp-eyed elder was the first to see them and alerted the rest.

Swish!

The next moment, everyone including Tong Tianhao unanimously cast their gaze in the direction of the incoming Cloud Boat, and the scene instantly quieted down.

"Ye Fan! Ye Fan!"

After a brief silence, a deafening cheer erupted, and all the disciples of the Tianyuan Sect uncontrollably called out Ye Fan's name.

Even Tong Tianhao and the elders were extremely excited, feeling a strong urge to join the disciples in their cheers!

Because...

Ye Fan is the hero of the Xuanwu Sect, and the pride of the Xuanwu Sect!

Amidst the sky-shaking cheers, the Cloud Boat slowed and began to land.

Standing on the Cloud Boat, Ye Fan looked at the densely packed crowd and listened to the resounding cheers, feeling deeply moved.

Once upon a time, when he came to participate in the Xuanwu Sect's Outer Disciple selection, he was despised for being too old and for being too close to Tong Qianchen, even accused of relying on connections to gain the qualification for the selection.

"Brother Ye, all the disciples are expressing their admiration for you in this way. We are proud of you!"

Listening to the thunderous cheers, Tong Qianchen was extremely excited, feeling as if the one being worshipped was herself, not Ye Fan.

At this moment, she was more convinced than ever that bringing Ye Fan to the Xuanwu Sect was the wisest decision of her life!

“Since joining the sect, for the first time, I find the sect so cohesive!”

Even Zhang Taiyi, usually not one for many words, couldn’t help but sigh at the scene, “Junior Brother Ye, you’ll be written into the history of the Xuanwu Sect!”

“In my opinion, this is just the beginning, the Xuanwu Sect will become unprecedentedly strong because of Ye Zi!” Shen Tu also spoke up, showing a rare serious expression on his usually slick face.

Even Zhang Taiyi and Shen Tu noticed the enhanced cohesion of the Xuanwu Sect due to Ye Fan, let alone Tong Tianhao and the other elders?

Tong Tianhao’s excited heart couldn’t calm down for a long time.

As he rejoiced in his foresight of recognizing talent, he also greatly admired Ye Fan, who, despite facing great temptations, still prioritized the sect’s interests over personal desires, which is extremely rare.

Not only Tong Tianhao, but the other elders were deeply moved as well. They felt that Ye Fan achieved something they couldn’t, prioritizing the sect’s honor over great temptations, and they felt ashamed.

They were well aware of the temptations Ye Fan faced at the time. Not to mention the numerous promises given, especially the Spirit Manor’s promise to treat him as a second Saint Heir, something they dare not even dream of.

Even now, if the three major forces extended an olive branch with significant promises, they couldn't confidently say they wouldn't betray the sect.

Therefore, they admired Ye Fan even more, for having such courage at such a young age to withstand temptation, which is very rare, even more so than his potential.

Especially Great Elder Wu Xinhai, who was so moved that his eyes reddened; Ye Fan is his disciple, and such performance undoubtedly brought him great pride as a master.

Wu Xinhai couldn't help but sigh, "With such a disciple, what more could one ask for?"

The Seventh Elder, who had a grudge against Ye Fan, felt a mix of emotions. Although his two disciples had suffered at Ye Fan's hands, and by logic, he should detest Ye Fan, such a display left him unable to harbor any resentment.

He knew well the character and temperament of his two disciples; in terms of achievement, they could never reach Ye Fan's level, nor would they have Ye Fan's magnanimity and loyalty to the sect.

No matter what, the Seventh Elder is a pillar of the Xuanwu Sect; he knows the current situation of the sect, and what the sect most needs is someone like Ye Fan.

"Ye Fan, thank you for everything you've done for the sect. On behalf of the entire Xuanwu Sect, I express our gratitude, and welcome you back!"

When the Cloud Boat landed at the entrance of the Xuanwu Sect, Ye Fan and his group disembarked one by one. Tong Tianhao stepped forward proactively, shook Ye Fan's hand, and spoke excitedly and gratefully.

The Xuanwu Sect had long been weak, not having won the Tianyuan State Genius Competition several times. This was the first time they received such an honor.

It was Ye Fan who withstood the strongest opponents and ultimately led the Xuanwu Sect out of a tight encirclement to win the championship of this competition, allowing the Xuanwu Sect disciples to occupy four spots in the top ten, letting the Xuanwu Sect hold their heads high in front of everyone.

"This is what a disciple should do, the Sect Leader is overpraising!"

Ye Fan smiled politely, without a hint of pride or arrogance, just humility.

"Xiao Fan, as your master, I am proud of you!"

Originally, Elder Wu Xinhai wanted to say more, but when it came to speaking, he didn't know where to start and just said this one sentence to express his gratification.

Since accepting Ye Fan, he hadn't given him much guidance, yet Ye Fan never disappointed, on the contrary, continually creating miracles, making him proud.

“Cough, cough...”

The Seventh Elder coughed twice and also stepped forward, sincerely saying to Ye Fan: “Ye Fan, I’ve been narrow-minded and often wronged you before. Please don’t take it to heart.”

Ye Fan was quite surprised, but seeing the sincere look in the Seventh Elder’s eyes, he knew the apology was genuine and not just an act.

Since he, as an elder, could lower himself to apologize, Ye Fan naturally wouldn’t hold any grudges.

“Seventh Elder, I too had faults in the past. How can I let you, an elder, apologize to someone like me, a junior? It would be too overwhelming for me.”

Ye Fan quickly stopped the Seventh Elder from continuing to apologize to him and said, “Seventh Elder, let’s not dwell on past matters. From now on, we need to unite both within and outside the sect to prevent being bullied again.”

“What? Has someone bullied you?”

The Seventh Elder, still hot-tempered, immediately raised his eyebrows upon hearing Ye Fan’s words and glanced at Shen Tu and others.

“Little Seven, here’s what happened...”

Supreme Elder Shen Ximen detailed the event on the intercept-kill by the Chu Family Master Chu Yuankong and Tianyuan Sect’s Supreme Elder Jiang Qingfeng to those present.

“Damn it, this is outrageous! Do they really think our Xuanwu Sect is devoid of people?”

After hearing Shen Ximen’s account, the Seventh Elder immediately jumped up, swearing angrily. Although his strength wasn’t the greatest, his sense of sect belonging was very strong. Upon hearing about Chu Yuankong and Jiang Qingfeng intercepting Ye Fan, he was instantly unwilling to accept.

“They’re playing with fire!” Tong Tianhao was also very furious, “We must retaliate in kind!”

Initially, he didn’t believe the Chu Family would do such a thing, as Chu Feng apprenticed under him, and the Xuanwu Sect and Chu Family originally had a good relationship.

But upon hearing that Chu Yuankong intercepted Ye Fan, Tong Tianhao felt as if he’d been stabbed in the back by friends.

“Yes, the Sect Leader is right. We must teach them a lesson, let them know our Xuanwu Sect isn’t easy to mess with!”

“We must retaliate, otherwise our Xuanwu Sect disciples will have no face to continue in the Tianyuan State!”

Many disciples shouted angrily; they had all heard Shen Ximen’s words and felt great indignation toward the shameless actions of the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect.

“They won’t wait for us to find them; they’ll come to us, and based on my reckoning, they’re bound to join forces to cause us trouble!”

Ye Fan spoke again, looking at Tong Tianhao, and asked the question that weighed heavily on his mind. “Sect Leader, how is Elder Wang lately? Has he exited his secluded meditation yet?”

“Not yet, but Elder Wang has successfully broken through to the Divine Power Realm and is currently stabilizing his realm. I trust he’ll emerge soon.”

Tong Tianhao was startled upon hearing this, and then he faintly guessed Ye Fan’s intentions, looking at Ye Fan with admiration and amazement.

However—

If he knew that all of this was a result of Ye Fan’s early planning, he would probably be stunned.

“Given this, the Chu Family and Tianyuan Sect are destined to fall!”

Ye Fan smiled very confidently; he had done his homework before, having an in-depth understanding of both the Tianyuan Sect and Chu Family. Neither had strong people at the Divine Power Realm; the strongest were only half-step God realm at best.

Since Wang Qingshan had broken through to the Divine Power Realm, even if the Tianyuan Sect and Chu Family joined forces, they couldn't pose any threat to the Xuanwu Sect!

After all, the difference between half-step God realm and Divine Power Realm, though only two words apart, is like heaven and earth!

Once the Tianyuan Sect and Chu Family attack en masse, it's the moment for the annihilation of the two forces!

...

That day, Tong Tianhao arranged a feast in the great hall, and the entire Xuanwu Sect celebrated this hard-won victory and honor with unrestrained festivity.

As the central figure, Ye Fan was naturally present and seated at the same table as the Sect Leader, Supreme Elder, and Great Elder, which was the highest honor bestowed upon him.

In the history of the Xuanwu Sect, only Ye Fan has had such an honor, with no other disciple being able to sit alongside the Sect Leader, Supreme Elder, and others.

While previously, there were other disciples who envied and resented Ye Fan's impressive achievements, now all that remained was admiration and veneration!

After the welcome-back banquet, Ye Fan accompanied Wu Xinhai back to the Xuanwu Summit.

The master and disciple did not fly but strolled along the mountain path under the moonlight. It was very quiet, with only the chirping of some unknown insects adding a bit of vitality to the tranquil night.

"Xiao Fan, you make me very proud, but even more moved!"

Elder Wu Xinhai looked toward the towering summit in the distance, his eyes a little red and misty, making the scene before him somewhat blurry, "Treasure Pavilion and Spirit Manor, such huge forces, offered generous conditions to recruit you, but because of the bond between master and disciple and the duty to the sect, you resolutely refused, which truly moved me deeply!"

"Master, repaying even a small favor with great gratitude is my principle. You and the Xuanwu Sect have shown me kindness; I cannot be ungrateful."

Ye Fan softly replied.

Wu Xinhai shook with emotion, his face wet with tears.

Chapter 1258: One Sword to Immortality

“No matter what, for you to make such a choice, I am proud of you as your master. For so many years, I have been reluctant to take on disciples because too many people succumb to temptation, often betraying their loyalty when faced with great interests.”

Elder Wu Xinhai felt deeply moved. Over the years, he had seen too many instances of masters and disciples turning against each other over interests. However, Ye Fan had given him an unexpectedly satisfying answer.

“Master, if it hadn’t been for you taking me in back then, I would not have achieved what I have today. As I said earlier, even a small kindness should be repaid generously. Your kindness is something I can never fully repay in this lifetime. No matter where I am, you will always be my master, and the Xuanwu Sect will forever be my home.”

Ye Fan said sincerely, straight from the heart. From a young age, he was raised by Master Chu Xuanji and understood the feeling of master and disciple being like father and son more profoundly than others.

“It’s late, get some rest. Walk me to here, and in the future, your path will be longer and more challenging. I hope you always maintain such a pure heart and do not let the splendor of the outside world cloud your mind.”

Hearing Ye Fan’s heartfelt words, the usually easygoing Wu Xinhai wiped away the tears from his face. He felt deeply fortunate. Ye Fan was outstanding in both mindset and other aspects.

Such a disciple is a once-in-a-lifetime encounter.

For any master and any sect, such a disciple is a treasure.

Of course, he also understood that one should not place too much burden on such a disciple—Ye Fan already bore too much himself, and as a master, he could only help ease some of this within his ability, not add to it.

“I’ll walk with you a bit more and take the chance to visit home!”

Ye Fan’s words were softly spoken, but they sent a violent tremor through Wu Xinhai.

Visit home!

Such a simple phrase, yet filled with warmth, provided a sense of spiritual belonging.

“Alright, let’s chat a bit more like family!”

Wu Xinhai did not refuse. He was also reluctant to refuse; in the hearts of every elder, there is a need for warmth. Although Wu Xinhai was eccentric and reclusive, he was no exception. In fact, the more a person is like this, the stronger their psychological needs.

The two walked along the mountain path, chatting as they went. Under the bright moonlight, the scene appeared particularly warm.

For how many years, Wu Xinhai had forgotten such experiences.

Ye Fan was very strict with himself, always either cultivating Martial Arts or the mental realm, rarely allowing himself such relaxed moments.

He escorted Elder Wu Xinhai all the way to the small cottage on the mountain peak. After chatting for a while longer, Ye Fan took his leave, as he needed to return to his retreat on Spirit Turtle Island.

He was planning to enter seclusion. In this recent competition, he had gained much insight, not only acquiring the “Divine Soul Sword Technique,” an attack secret technique of divine soul, but also learning a great deal from competing with others, which he aimed to digest into his own.

Wu Xinhai also knew Ye Fan was unwilling to waste any time. Watching him leave, he retired to rest, feeling satisfied.

Ye Fan returned to Spirit Turtle Island, heading directly to his secluded Spirit Cave. He pressed a mechanism, and the cave’s entrance slowly sealed.

In the darkness, Ye Fan immediately summoned the Nine Heavens Mysterious Crown, placed it on the ground, and stepped into the virtual space within the Nine Heavens Mysterious Crown.

Due to the different speed of time, Ye Fan could have more time to cultivate in the virtual space. This was his greatest trump card.

Upon entering the virtual space, Ye Fan did not immediately cultivate the “Divine Soul Sword Technique” but first revisited and reflected on the insights gained from the matches and battles.

This combat experience was extremely valuable, especially the battle with Chu Hong, which brought him great gains. The differences before and after with Chu Hong, the differences in True Yuan, all gave him a profound understanding of the Holy Embryo Realm.

Later, he specifically sought advice from Elder Shen Ximen and learned that after True Yuan condenses into a Holy Embryo, the power undergoes a qualitative change.

After successfully condensing a Holy Embryo, True Yuan transforms into Holy Power, and its power increases exponentially.

This was also why Chu Hong was so difficult to deal with after condensing the Holy Embryo and advancing to the Holy Embryo Realm.

At that time, Ye Fan had already broken through to the late-stage True Essence Realm but had to use almost all his trump cards to defeat Chu Hong.

This period of seclusion lasted three days, but the three days in virtual space felt different from reality; in real life, only four hours had passed.

During those three days, Ye Fan gained a lot of insights by recalling the various moments from this genius competition.

Although his strength had not increased, his combat skills had significantly improved, and his understanding of Martial Arts had deepened considerably.

This was what set Ye Fan apart from others; he was good at summarizing and absorbing.

On the fourth day, Ye Fan began reviewing the Divine Sense attack secret technique “Divine Soul Sword Technique” inherited from the predecessor Zuo Fengshan in his sea of consciousness.

“Man has a soul, which elevates to spirit; spirit transforms into god, forming worlds and transforming all things. It is the most mysterious yet the most fragile, the strongest...”

The opening doctrine of the Divine Soul Sword Technique seems contradictory, but it actually contains the ultimate principle of heaven and earth. During his enlightenment, Elder Xuan remained by his side, yet did not offer any guidance, leaving it entirely to Ye Fan to explore and comprehend.

Chapter 1259: One Sword to Immortality

The reason is very simple: the “Divine Soul Sword Technique” itself is a very mysterious secret technique. If it could be easily understood, it wouldn’t be worthy of being one of the secret techniques.

Most importantly, Elder Xuan wants to see to what extent Ye Fan can understand the Divine Soul Sword Technique.

As the Spirit Soldier of the Emperor Weapon, Elder Xuan has a very thorough understanding of Divine Souls. Although the Divine Soul Sword Technique is considered a secret technique, in his eyes, it is merely so.

However, this secret technique is perfectly suitable for Ye Fan to cultivate at this moment—Ye Fan has reached his limit in cultivating “Flying Sword Skill” to ‘Shattering Void,’ and it’s impossible for him to make significant progress in the short term.

The “Divine Soul Sword Technique” happens to fill this gap, and since this secret technique was obtained in the Xuan Realm, it won’t raise suspicion.

Elder Xuan remains silent, and Ye Fan doesn’t ask; instead, he starts researching and comprehending it word by word from the general outline.

The human Divine Soul is the most mysterious, and many people cannot control their own Divine Soul unless they reach the Divine Power Realm—cultivators in the Holy Embryo Realm are very powerful, but not too knowledgeable about the Divine Soul.

After reading the essence of the “Divine Soul Sword Technique,” Ye Fan is deeply shocked!

This secret technique is indeed exceptionally powerful, divided into ten levels, with each level possessing different powers, successively stacking.

The first level is the hardest to practice, called Divine Consciousness Sword, meaning one must condense the Divine Sense into a sword, since it's swordsmanship, naturally there must first be a sword, making this entry step the most challenging.

The second level is Polarization, which divides one previously unified Divine Consciousness Sword into two distinctly different Divine Consciousness Swords, with their strengths and weaknesses being clear at a glance.

The third level is the Sancai Sword Formation, where the two swords further split out a third sword, forming the Heavenly Sword, Earth Sword, and Human Sword, which can unleash the power of the sword formation.

The fourth level is the Four Extremes Sword Formation, as Heaven and Earth have four directions, and the year has four seasons, four directions called up, down, left, and right, and four seasons called spring, summer, fall, and winter, changing unpredictably with limitless power.

The fifth level is the Five Elements Sword Formation, where the five elements, metal, wood, water, fire, earth, transform the Divine Sense into swords belonging to five different attributes, embodying the world's might.

"The sixth level..."

"The seventh level..."

Up until the ninth level, the Divine Sense transforms into nine Divine Consciousness Swords, flying around with overwhelming power, slicing souls and killing stealthily.

And the tenth level is the Ninety Nines Return to One, merging the nine Divine Consciousness Swords into one, forming a gigantic Divine Consciousness Sword, capable of opening heavens and earth with unmatched might.

After finishing the reading, Ye Fan couldn't help but be amazed by such a secret technique, impossible to obtain on Earth, truly far ahead of Earth in cultivation terms.

After reading, Ye Fan then began to enter a state of comprehension and cultivation, with Elder Xuan watching from the side, stunned.

He couldn't have imagined Ye Fan had gained insight into the "Divine Soul Sword Technique" within such a short time...

To be precise, Ye Fan's understanding of the "Divine Soul Sword Technique" had its personal elements, but comprehension is one thing, being able to successfully condense the Divine Consciousness Sword is the most crucial.

Condensing Divine Sense into a sword is extremely difficult because the Divine Sense is inherently intangible, and transforming from intangible to tangible is the hardest part.

On his first attempt, Ye Fan failed. Transforming Divine Sense into a sword shape isn't difficult; the thought alone can form it, but maintaining it is challenging.

If the attention is even slightly distracted, the Divine Consciousness Sword will disperse, unable to exert any power.

Ye Fan doesn't get discouraged or give up, believing that with such a secret technique it must be feasible to cultivate, but certainly failing initially, which is inconsequential.

If the Divine Consciousness Sword could be easily formed successfully, the Divine Soul Sword Technique wouldn't be worthy of being called a secret technique, rather an ordinary thing.

Since it's so powerful, it's normal for the cultivation process to be difficult, and Ye Fan has an open mind about this.

With repeated attempts and failures, creating the Divine Consciousness Sword, wanting to maintain it is incredibly difficult, but no matter how challenging it is, once chosen, there is a commitment to persevere.

Ye Fan, who practices Dual Cultivation of Magic and Martial Arts, naturally excels in mind and Divine Sense, with stronger control over the Divine Soul than others.

After countless failures, Ye Fan finally manages to maintain the sword form of the condensed Divine Sense for two seconds.

Although it's only two seconds, this is indeed a breakthrough; with two seconds comes three seconds, successfully initial forming the sword shape of Divine Sense. What remains is to extend the duration of this state.

Because...

Only when the Divine Consciousness Sword can be maintained for long enough can one carry out attacks and achieve the goal of defeating the enemy!

However, this is not easy and requires gradual practice, striving to extend the duration of the Divine Consciousness Sword, reaching the stage of externalizing the shape for it to truly cause powerful damage.

“Have you seen iron forging before?”

Just as Ye Fan repeatedly condenses Divine Sense into a sword, Elder Xuan suddenly asks from beside him, a seemingly unrelated question.

Ye Fan is stunned, ponders for a while, and soon understands Elder Xuan’s meaning, as the Divine Sense is like Divine Iron, easy to condense into a Divine Consciousness Sword but hard to shape properly.

Elder Xuan’s implied advice is to use his consciousness to forge the Divine Soul, applying a forging technique to thoroughly transform the Divine Soul into a sharp sword, which would allow for longer maintenance.

This marks another phase of long-term exploration, as Ye Fan repeatedly attempts, using consciousness as a hammer to forge the Divine Soul into the shape of a sharp sword.

Although the Divine Soul can morph into anything, it is intangible and without substance, making it extremely challenging to forge into a fixed shape.

In the virtual space, the sound akin to iron forging repeatedly echoes, yet it doesn't transmit beyond the virtual space, so no one knows what Ye Fan is really doing in retreat.

Moreover, the time flow in virtual space is not synchronized with reality, though much time has passed in the virtual space, only a few days have elapsed in reality.

After countless failed attempts, Ye Fan succeeds in forging his Divine Soul into a rough blade shape, with silver light gleaming and extraordinarily sharp.

Yet the shape of this sword doesn't quite meet aesthetic expectations—initially, Ye Fan just focuses on achieving a formed state mainly, the appearance being secondary, as long as it can exert the powers of the Divine Soul Sword Technique.

Being a pragmatist, Ye Fan doesn't have high demands for weapon aesthetics; impact is what counts, while lavish ornamentations serve no practical purpose.

So, the Spirit Sword Ye Fan forged is extremely basic, having only the form of a sword with no engravings or decorations.

Ye Fan grins, as this Divine Soul Sword is quite reminiscent of a Stone Age stone sword, stripped of the superfluous, leaving only the truth of the sword, with all else being void.

With the Divine Soul Sword finally shaped, Ye Fan begins practicing the attack techniques in the Divine Soul Sword Technique, with a silver radiance faintly flashing from his Niu Wan Palace.

Whoosh!

A soft sound accompanies a silver sword of just one inch in length flying out from Ye Fan's Niu Wan Palace, directly piercing through a fist-sized Spirit Stone before him, like a strong bow shooting into tofu, without any resistance.

"Hiss~"

Ye Fan sharply inhales; this is simply the most lethal ace up one's sleeve. In a battle with opponents, launching a surprise Divine Soul Sword attack promises absolute success.

All of Ye Fan's efforts are seen by Elder Xuan, who can't help but marvel that Ye Fan seems born for cultivation, mastering any martial arts secret skill with exceptional speed, and with astounding comprehension.

Though this all sounds quick, who knows what kind of pain and setbacks Ye Fan experiences while refining the Divine Soul Sword Technique?

With every failure and retry he becomes more motivated, persevering to achieve today's accomplishments.

Having attained initial success, subsequent matters become easier, as Ye Fan continually cultivates and finally perfects the first technique of the Divine Soul Sword Technique, One Sword to Immortality.

In the virtual space, silver Sword Radiance shoots like lightning serpent dragons, piercing sky and ground with formidable power, far surpassing the effect of controlling the Xuan Ye Flying Blade with Divine Sense.

However, this also exhausts Divine Soul Power significantly, requiring Ye Fan to rest after every hour of cultivation, or else his Divine Soul wouldn't sustain.

After a long time, just as Ye Fan pauses for rest, a hurried bell resounds outside the cave, shaking the entire Xuanwu Mountain!

Chapter 1260: Joint Attack

"Xuanwu Bell?"

Ye Fan immediately recognized that the Xuanwu Bell had been sounded, and his face changed slightly.

According to the sect regulations of the Xuanwu Sect, the Xuanwu Bell cannot be rung casually; it can only be sounded in times of great emergency.

And at this moment, judging from the urgency and intensity of the bell tolling, the Xuanwu Sect must be facing an extremely significant event.

“Have the Tianyuan Sect and the Chu Family finally become impatient?”

Ye Fan stood up, his eyes shooting out two beams of battle intent, and with one step, he exited the virtual space, putting away the Nine Heavens Mysterious Crown and preparing to face the battle.

From the day he returned to the Xuanwu Sect, he had been waiting for this day—the joint attack of the Tianyuan Sect and the Chu Family!

Ye Fan guessed correctly; after a period of preparation, Helian Chang and Chu Hao could no longer hold back, gathering elites and leading a large number of strong people to strike at the Xuanwu Sect.

The forces of both sides surrounded the Xuanwu Sect, leaving no gaps, and standing on Xuanwu Mountain, looking around, the surroundings were full of strong people from the Tianyuan Sect and Chu Family.

Tong Tianhao decisively ordered the activation of the Mountain Protection Array, enveloping the entire Xuanwu Mountain in a hazy formation in an instant.

The entire Xuanwu Sect was immediately in a state of tense First Level combat readiness; the survival of the entire sect was at stake, requiring all strong people in seclusion to emerge.

Helian Chang and Chu Hao did not forcibly attack the Mountain Protection Array but instead flew into the air, observing the movements of the Xuanwu Sect from above.

Tong Tianhao and the elders stood on the square in front of the main hall, looking up at Helian Chang and Chu Hao in silence.

“Little Tianhao, quickly hand over that little beast Ye, and I might spare your life; otherwise, once the formation is broken, not a single living thing in the Xuanwu Sect will remain!”

In the sky, Chu Hao was extremely arrogant, confident that the long-weak Xuanwu Sect could not withstand the combined forces of the Chu Family and the Tianyuan Sect; the destruction of the Xuanwu Sect was imminent.

“Is handing over that little beast Ye enough? You must also compensate us with sufficient Spirit Stones, or the Xuanwu Sect will be bathed in blood!”

Helian Chang’s face was gloomy; his hatred for the Xuanwu Sect was even greater than Chu Hao’s.

Not only did Ye Fan kill his most prized disciple, but he also humiliated him face to face. As a sect leader, how could Helian Chang swallow this insult?

Moreover, Ye Fan holds the secret to accessing Earth; capturing Ye Fan would make invading Earth and turning it into the Tianyuan Sect’s rear base a dream come true.

What's more, there are irreconcilable grudges between the Xuanwu Sect and the Tianyuan Sect; destroying the Xuanwu Sect is imperative. If the Xuanwu Sect is allowed to recover, such an opportunity might never come again.

"Presumptuous!"

"Arrogant!"

"If it's battle you want, then battle it is!"

Tong Tianhao had not yet spoken, but the other elders could not hold back, sternly criticizing the demands of Chu Hao and Helian Chang as excessive, declaring that the Xuanwu Sect would never submit.

Tong Tianhao pressed his hands down, silencing the others, and squinted at Chu Hao and Helian Chang, saying, "Chu Hao, Helian Chang, do you think I'm a three-year-old child? Even if I hand over Ye Fan right now, would you spare our Xuanwu Sect? Enough of this nonsense; if you're so confident, go ahead and break the formation!"

With Tong Tianhao's words, several elders flew to the array eyes, using their Holy Power to maintain the operation of the array, preventing it from being breached.

The defense of the Mountain Protection Array is extremely strong, but it is easy to move from the inside out. Therefore, Tong Tianhao ordered all the disciples of the Xuanwu Sect to hold their positions, forbidding any unauthorized actions.

“Humph, stubborn fool, I’ve already given you the chance, but you didn’t take it. Now, even if you voluntarily hand over that little beast Ye, there is no reason for the Xuanwu Sect to continue to exist!”

Chu Hao’s face turned cold, he glanced at Tong Tianhao and the others, then flew away. He had no idea how significant Ye Fan was to the Tianyuan Sect.

Helian Chang naturally wouldn’t say a word, snorted coldly, and then also flew back to the Xuanwu Sect’s gate, commanding everyone to attack the Mountain Protection Array with all their might.

“Break the formation!!”

With the order from Helian Chang and Chu Hao, the people of the Tianyuan Sect and the Chu Family began a joint, fierce attack on the Xuanwu Sect’s Mountain Protection Array.

Boom!

Helian Chang let out a long howl that sounded like a dragon’s roar, and with a punch, his Holy Power transformed into a dragon claw, striking the Mountain Protection Array violently, causing its lights to flicker.

Helian Chang, the sect master of the Tianyuan Sect, actually had a dragon as his Holy Embryo, revealing his great ambition. The Dragon, Phoenix, Turtle, and Qilin are the Four Spiritual Beasts, not only possessing immense power but also a large potential for growth.

Helian Chang's punch was like a signal. For a moment, many strong people from the Tianyuan Sect unleashed their strongest attacks, focusing on one point, hoping to break through the Xuanwu Sect's Mountain Protection Array in the shortest time possible.

"Break it for me!!"

The Chu Family's Ancestor was unwilling to be outdone; with a thunderous shout and sound waves rolling like lions roaring, he then revealed the prototype of his Holy Embryo, which turned out to be a Double-headed Green Lion.

For a time, the Xuanwu Sect's Mountain Protection Array was in extreme danger. With so many strong people focusing their attacks, if not for the Xuanwu Sect's emphasis on defense, the array might have been breached long ago.

The Xuanwu Sect has unparalleled defense, especially the Mountain Protection Array, which is like a sturdy turtle shell, evenly distributing force from any direction of the attack across the entire formation.

As a result, the Xuanwu Sect elders guarding the array eyes found it particularly arduous, as they had to maintain the formation's normal operation. The support from only Spirit Stones and natural supplementation of Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi was insufficient; they had to bear part of the pressure the array endured.

“Pff—”

Soon, an elder could no longer hold on, his Holy Power severely depleted, spurring a mouthful of blood and nearly collapsing.

Seeing the unfavorable situation, without waiting for Tong Tianhao to instruct, another elder immediately went over to replace the blood-spewing elder to heal at the spot.

“Little Tianhao, I’d like to see how long you can hold on.”

Chu Hao was extremely conceited, believing their combined power far exceeded the total power of the Xuanwu Sect. Moreover, both he and Helian Chang had taken a crucial half-step, becoming strong people of the Half-step Divine Power Realm.

In his eyes, the people of the Xuanwu Sect were as fragile as clay chickens and pottery dogs. Once the array was broken, no one in the entire Xuanwu Sect could escape from their hands!

“If you don’t surrender, once the array is breached, the Xuanwu Sect will be bathed in blood, leaving no one alive!”

Helian Chang also echoed arrogantly, full of confidence, believing that breaching the Xuanwu Sect’s Mountain Protection Array was just a matter of time, and destroying the Xuanwu Sect would happen today.

“Is that so?”

Just as Helian Chang’s voice faded, a dignified voice resounded from within the Xuanwu Sect.

The words fell, and a person appeared!

Wang Qingshan, one of the Xuanwu Sect’s three Supreme Elders, suddenly flew out of the formation like a Jiao, splitting his hands and charging at the Chu Family’s Ancestor and Helian Chang!