

Y Master 1281

Chapter 1281: Secluded Cultivation and Waiting

The Mist Sea has always been a forbidden zone for human cultivators. This time, the inexplicable dissipation of the mist has led many to believe it's a signal indicating that the crisis of the Mist Sea has been resolved.

Under such circumstances, sects big and small all wish to venture in to find out.

As a powerful force spanning the entire Tianxuan Continent, the Treasure Pavilion naturally won't lag behind.

This time, the Treasure Pavilion has assigned the shrewd and capable Yaling to lead a team of five geniuses from the Southern Domain of the Treasure Pavilion to try their luck.

Yaling holds a special identity within the Treasure Pavilion, and she specifically instructed the other regional heads of the Southern Domain that if they encounter Ye Fan, they must extend a warm welcome and foster good relations.

Therefore, when the head of the Treasure Pavilion in Chi Yang City learned that Ye Fan was heading to the Mist Sea, he informed Ye Fan that Yaling would also be going.

"Sister Yaling is going too?"

Ye Fan didn't expect that it would be Yaling leading the way on his trip to Old Man Wu, which truly surprised him.

"Indeed, she is heading to the Mist Sea as well."

The official smiled faintly and continued, "Our Treasure Pavilion has selected five geniuses this time, led by her, and they will surely arrive here within ten days. As for the work in Tianyuan City, naturally, someone will take over for her."

"According to the accurate information we've received, a Supreme Strongman skilled at calculations has predicted that the true crisis of the Mist Sea will be eliminated in about twenty days. So, I suggest that you wait here a bit and go together with Miss Ya Ling and the others for mutual care. What do you think?"

The official blinked his small eyes, looking at Ye Fan with a half-smile.

His meaning was clear: if Ye Fan ventured into the Mist Sea alone, the danger would increase significantly. Even if he found precious treasures and herbs, they might be snatched away, possibly leading to disaster.

Those brave enough to enter the Mist Sea are certainly not benevolent, and they would absolutely resort to murder and plunder.

The world of cultivators is cruel. To live longer, besides having extremely strong personal power, one must rely on powerful forces.

Whether from a sect or clan, even loose cultivators have concerns about large forces, fearing their retaliation.

It's only by depending on these powerful forces that one can better survive in the perilous cultivation world and avoid being wiped out due to various incidents.

Ye Fan understood this reasoning. The reminder was intended to make him feel favorable toward the Treasure Pavilion, ideally owing them some favors during the Mist Sea adventure.

In this way, when the Treasure Pavilion tries to recruit him again, he won't easily refuse. As the saying goes, monetary debts are easy to repay, but favors are hard to return.

Though Ye Fan was aware of this, and could see through the tricks of the Treasure Pavilion, he still decided to stay and wait for Yaling and the five other geniuses from the Treasure Pavilion.

"Alright, I'll wait for Sister Yaling and go with you guys to check out the Mist Sea."

Ye Fan was not someone who didn't know the situation; he understood that alone he might end up with nothing and encounter unforeseen dangers.

“Great! Do you have a place to stay? You might as well stay here. I’ll specially prepare a chamber for you to cultivate in.”

The plump official was delighted, immediately instructing his subordinates to prepare a quiet chamber for Ye Fan to cultivate in.

Ye Fan thought about it and decided that there was no harm in retreating there, so he agreed, as cultivating is the same everywhere.

Recently, Ye Fan had just broken through to the late-stage True Yuan Realm in the Tianyuan Secret Realm, and his realm was not very stable. He needed time to stabilize his realm.

Moreover, he didn’t have much time and energy to enhance his strength back then; he focused more on martial arts inspiration. Therefore, this time he must enhance his overall strength well.

Thanks to a considerable amount of spirit stones seized this time, Ye Fan is not lacking in spirit stones for his cultivation, placing many mediocre-quality spirit stones around him.

The Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi contained in these spirit stones isn’t much, but the accumulation is significant.

These spirit stones would be enough for others to crash through their meridians, but for Ye Fan, they’re only enough to stabilize his realm.

The reason is simple: his physique and cultivated techniques are quite different from others. Each acupoint has a True Essence Sea, equivalent to having a hundred more dantians than others.

While stabilizing his realm, Ye Fan is also cultivating and gaining inspiration from the Flying Sword Skill, Divine Soul Sword Technique, and Thunderclap Treasure Skill.

Flying Sword Skill and Divine Soul Sword Technique share some similarities: one uses the divine soul to control the flying sword for long-distance assaults, the other uses the divine soul to condense into a sword, attacking the divine souls.

Although the Divine Soul Sword Technique is deep, with Ye Fan's incredible comprehension and understanding, he can still cultivate to the entry level, as he can already form a Divine Soul Sword, which is considered entry-level.

However—

The Thunderclap Treasure Skill can't even be considered entry-level yet. He can merely wield some Thunder Power to coat his fists for attacking, far from the power described after mastering the Thunderclap Treasure Skill.

This frustrates Ye Fan, as the Thunderclap Treasure Skill's biggest difference from other secret techniques lies in its profundity; every word has many meanings, and the text is verbose and hard to understand.

Ten days passed in a flash, especially during closed-door cultivation, where time seems only a concept.

Yaling did not let Ye Fan wait ten days; she arrived by the evening of the ninth day, only she did not disturb his cultivation.

In these ten days, Ye Fan gained quite a bit. While gaining insights into the Divine Soul Sword Technique, he learned various other things by drawing parallels, borrowing some sword control methods from the Flying Sword Skill.

Additionally, the Divine Soul Flames obtained in the Tianyuan Secret Realm also played a significant role.

The primary role of the Divine Sense Flame is to temper the owner's divine soul uninterruptedly. From the moment Ye Fan obtained the Divine Sense Flame, it has been continuously helping him purify and refine the power of the divine soul.

Under the tempering of the Divine Sense Flame, the impurities in Ye Fan's divine soul have been almost entirely refined, making his divine soul exceptionally pure, naturally more powerful than an ordinary cultivator's divine soul.

The essence of the Divine Soul Sword Technique lies in the Divine Soul Sword leaving the body to attack a person's divine soul in an instant. After this period of cultivation and insight, Ye Fan can now wield the Divine Soul Sword as effortlessly as an arm.

He now possesses another trump card; during close combat, if he can unexpectedly attack the opponent's divine soul, even causing just a moment of distraction, he is confident of finishing off his opponent with a punch.

Having mastered the Divine Soul Sword Technique, Ye Fan decided to temporarily abandon cultivating the Flying Sword Skill.

On the one hand, after reaching Shattering Void in the Flying Sword Skill, it hits a watershed. The difficulty in gaining further inspiration and practice will greatly increase.

On the other hand, the attack power of the Flying Sword Skill is quite average, mainly used for surprise attacks, catching the opponent off guard.

Yet the Divine Soul Sword Technique can accomplish this entirely and even do better, truly catching the opponent unawares.

More importantly, the power of the Divine Soul Sword Technique is greater!

“Although my realm hasn’t improved, my combat power has increased a bit from this seclusion, so it’s somewhat beneficial.”

Ye Fan stood up, muttering to himself, and then the graceful figure and enchanting smile of Yaling surfaced in his mind, “I wonder if Miss Yaling and the others have arrived?”

Chapter 1282: Ye Brothers

The five contact disciples who came with Yaling this time were all selected from the Southern Domain.

These five were orphans from a young age, taken in and nurtured by the Treasure Pavilion, named Ye Yi to Ye Wu.

On the evening of the ninth day, after a long journey, the group of six finally arrived at the Chi Yang City branch.

After settling in a quiet courtyard, Yaling left the five brothers in the courtyard and went alone to see the person in charge of the Chi Yang City branch, the plump Wang Jingfu, to discuss and arrange related matters.

Meanwhile, the Ye Brothers stayed behind and discussed Ye Fan.

On the way, Yaling had already told them stories about Ye Fan and mentioned that the Treasure Pavilion intended to take Ye Fan with them into the Mist Sea to seek opportunities.

They were well aware that Yaling made such a decision merely because she valued Ye Fan's extraordinary potential.

This made them particularly unconvinced.

They were geniuses too, and they firmly believed that if they participated in the Tianyuan City genius contest, Ye Fan would be out of the picture, and the championship would definitely be theirs—being a state-level genius contest, heirs of major forces do not participate but go directly to the domain-level genius contest.

This also gave smaller sects and loose cultivators more opportunities.

“Yaling really values him too much, doesn’t she? Someone like him is also considered a genius? It’s simply insulting the word ‘genius’.”

Ye San said discontentedly, seriously doubting Ye Fan’s abilities. Can someone over twenty who hasn’t even condensed a Holy Embryo still be called a genius?

If such a person can be called a genius, then is the term ‘genius’ devalued?

“Exactly, such a person is not qualified to travel with us. When I see him tomorrow, I’ll certainly teach him a lesson.”

Old Four strongly agreed with Ye San, having already learned some things about Ye Fan from Yaling on the way. They considered Ye Fan to be nothing significant.

“I think so too. The Southern Domain branch hasn’t conducted a thorough investigation and wants to bring in such trash to our Treasure Pavilion, which is simply nonsense.” Ye Wu nodded in agreement.

“Our Treasure Pavilion is not a charity; not just any random person can enter. But that kid is quite arrogant, actually refusing to join our Treasure Pavilion, which I didn’t expect.”

Ye Yi's eyes flickered with a contemplative gleam; unlike his fellow junior brothers, he considered matters more thoroughly.

But no matter how he thought, he couldn't understand why Ye Fan would give up on the opportunity to join a super force like the Treasure Pavilion, as it defied logic!

"Hmph! I don't find it surprising. Although Yaling praises his abilities highly, I reckon he is just famous for nothing, not daring to enter the outer sect Treasure Pavilion. Otherwise, if he were found out to be an impostor, the consequences... hehe..."

Ye Er didn't state the consequences, but his brothers understood that one key reason for the Treasure Pavilion's strength was its strict rules, absolutely not allowing freeloaders to mix within.

So, if Ye Fan didn't have sufficient strength and potential, entering the Treasure Pavilion would be disgraceful, and he would lose his status in a small sect like the Xuanwu Sect, gaining nothing in return.

"A genius, what's a genius? A genius can be seen from a very young age, like our eldest and second brothers, who successfully condensed the Holy Embryo before they were twenty and are now at the mid-stage Holy Embryo Realm, that's a true genius. And that Ye guy, reportedly over twenty and only reached the late-stage True Yuan Realm, in my eyes, is far from being called a genius."

Ye Wu belittled Ye Fan while praising Ye Yi and Ye Er. Although his words might be seen as flattery, reaching the mid-stage Holy Embryo Realm in the early twenties certainly qualified as genius across the Southern Domain of the entire Tianxuan Continent.

“It doesn’t matter what we say now, when that kid comes out, we’ll give him a harsh introduction, and let him understand what a true genius is.” Ye Si sneered as he spoke.

His words immediately resonated with the other four. Indeed, talking was useless now; when they met Ye Fan, teaching him a lesson with their strength was the main task.

“Yes, we want Elder Ya to see that her so-called rare genius is no more than an ant in front of us brothers.”

The five of them simultaneously held their breath, waiting for the chance to meet Ye Fan and give him a harsh lesson, to teach him the truth that there’s always someone stronger.

...

On the morning of the tenth day, Ye Fan ended his cultivation, appearing as if he had undergone a rebirth. Despite only ten days of cultivation, he had gained immense benefits.

Especially in the cultivation of the Divine Soul, under the tempering of the Divine Soul Flames, Ye Fan’s Divine Soul had become sharper and purer, like a sword out of its sheath.

Hmm?

Stepping out of the retreat chamber, Ye Fan saw a staff member of the Treasure Pavilion waiting at a distance of three Zhang from the door, and he couldn't help but feel amazed. The Treasure Pavilion's dominance on the Tianxuan Continent was not without reason.

As the saying goes, a single leaf can indicate the coming of autumn; observing a detail reflects the whole. Although this was just a small detail, it demonstrated the management philosophy of the Treasure Pavilion.

Seeing Ye Fan come out, the Treasure Pavilion staff member quickly approached, respectfully saying to Ye Fan, "Honored guest, Yaling and the five disciples accompanying her have arrived and are in Jing Garden. Yaling instructed that after you exit your retreat, you can go directly to find her in Jing Garden."

"Thank you, I appreciate your effort!" Ye Fan replied with a smile.

"You're too kind, this is my duty, it's what I should do."

The staff member quickly moved ahead of Ye Fan and said, "I'll take you to Jing Garden!"

Ye Fan nodded, following the staff member, genuinely admiring his work efficiency.

If he really had to find Jing Garden on his own, while he wouldn't exactly get lost, it would certainly take some extra effort.

After all, he wasn't familiar with the layout of Treasure Pavilion's branch here, nor did he know where Jing Garden was located.

Passing through a quiet and winding corridor, Ye Fan soon arrived at a small courtyard.

This was a courtyard similar to those on Earth, with a central courtyard featuring a skylight, and several flourishing trees growing within, though he couldn't identify their species.

"Are you Ye Fan?"

As Ye Fan appeared in the small courtyard, five people approached him, among whom Ye San harshly inquired.

"Yes, it's me!"

Ye Fan smiled slightly, having already judged that the five people before him were the geniuses the person in charge at Treasure Pavilion in Chi Yang City had mentioned.

Besides, he had already noticed that the five people were all around twenty years old, similar to himself, but their strength was remarkable, at the very least at the early-stage of the Divine realm, with two of them even at the mid-stage Saint Embryo Realm.

“Hehe, although Manager Yaling says you’re an exceptionally rare genius, we five brothers don’t think you’re worthy to accompany us to Misty Sea, nor worthy of Treasure Pavilion lowering their stance to recruit you...”

“Indeed, if you wish to accompany us to Misty Sea and gain protection from Treasure Pavilion, you must first prove your strength before us to see if you’re truly qualified.”

Ye Si and Ye Wu both voiced their sarcasm, not sparing Ye Fan any face. They didn’t even plan to accompany Ye Fan to Misty Sea, only intending to severely teach and humiliate Ye Fan, making him understand that not anyone can rely on the power of Treasure Pavilion.

“Hehe...”

Faced with the trio’s barrage of challenges and sarcasm, Ye Fan suddenly began to laugh, catching the three off guard, unsure why he wore such an expression.

“What are you laughing at?” Ye Wu, impatient by nature, asked coldly.

“You’re overthinking.”

Ye Fan stopped laughing, speaking seriously: “First, I never intended to join Treasure Pavilion. As for what the higher-ups of Treasure Pavilion think, that’s not something I can interfere with.”

“Secondly, it wasn’t my suggestion to travel to Misty Sea with you and Sister Yaling; it was the proposal of the person in charge here, and I agreed because it seemed feasible.”

At this point, Ye Fan took a deep breath and continued, “Thirdly, as for proving strength and qualifications, how should I prove them?”

“Very simple. If you can take ten of my moves, we’ll acknowledge your qualification to join us on the trip to Misty Sea and will never trouble you again. Do you dare accept?”

Ye Wu stepped forward, coldly glaring at Ye Fan.

In his view, Ye Fan was no more than late-stage True Yuan Realm, and it would be a miracle if he could withstand five moves from him.

The reason he mentioned ten moves was because of the high regard Yaling had for Ye Fan, considering him a rare genius. Despite his impetuous nature, Ye Wu wasn’t foolish and allowed himself a way out.

Ye Yi and the others stood by with smiles, not stopping Ye Wu’s words, clearly agreeing that Ye Fan couldn’t possibly withstand Ye Wu’s ten moves, and were simply waiting to enjoy the spectacle.

“Why wouldn’t I dare?”

Ye Fan smiled slightly, accepting the challenge, and also said, "Let's do it this way, to avoid any hard feelings, let's just go until one of us yields."

"Rest assured, I won't kill you; otherwise, I couldn't account for it to Manager Yaling."

Ye Wu arrogantly glanced askance at Ye Fan and said, "Of course, if you're too weak, there's indeed a risk of injury, so consider it well."

"You've misunderstood; what I mean is if you lose, don't get angry out of shame and fight me desperately!"

Ye Fan explained with a smile.

Chapter 1283: The Strong and the Weak, Instantly Decided

"Wha... What?"

Ye Fan's words shocked the five Ye brothers.

Between the True Essence Realm and the Holy Embryo Realm, there's an insurmountable chasm; no matter how much of a demon one is, breaking this myth is impossible.

Many cultivators at the peak of the True Essence Realm are stuck at this barrier, unable to make any progress for life, unable to successfully congeal a Holy Embryo.

Or even if they congeal a Holy Embryo, it is often something like a mosquito with no attack power, causing them to be unable to unleash the true strength of the Holy Embryo Realm in subsequent battles.

Ye Fan is merely at the Mid-stage True Essence Realm, whether he can successfully congeal a Holy Embryo is still unknown, wanting to compete with Ye Wu seems nearly impossible.

Yet Ye Fan says Ye Wu will lose...

The shock this brings is imaginable?!

“Xiao Wu, this guy is too arrogant, you must give him a good lesson.”

“Exactly, his tone is bigger than his foot odor, what does he take us Ye brothers for?!”

After the shock, the five Ye brothers were infuriated, among them Ye San and Ye Si spoke consecutively, insisting Ye Wu teach Ye Fan a lesson.

“Good, good, good, since you say so, then I must experience this properly, please!”

Although Ye Wu was extremely angry, he still held back without launching the first attack because he thought if he attacked first, it would appear a bit petty.

No matter what, he's a genius from Treasure Pavilion, whereas Ye Fan is merely a disciple from a small sect like the Xuanwu Sect; they aren't on the same level at all.

"You said let me take ten moves from you, if you don't attack, how can I take them? Moreover, if I attack first, I fear you won't even have the chance to strike."

Although the Ye brothers hold no harmful intentions, Ye Fan knew if he didn't show a bit more force, who knows what issues might arise afterwards, so he decided to thoroughly show his might.

"You..."

Hearing Ye Fan's words again, Ye Wu was utterly furious and launched into attack without another word.

Perhaps because Yaling had praised Ye Fan, or simply due to Ye Fan's excessively arrogant tone, Ye Wu didn't hold back and directly used eighty percent of his power from the start.

At the instant Ye Wu made his move, Ye Yi and the others set up a defensive barrier around the small yard to prevent the dispersing attacks of the two from damaging the buildings in the yard.

Whether it's the Holy Embryo Realm or the True Essence Realm cultivators, their destructive power is very strong, without the protection of a defensive barrier, fear is that once the battle ends, this quiet small yard would cease to exist.

Whoosh!

Even if Ye Wu only used eighty percent of his power in his frenzy, the unleashed attack power was very strong, Holy Power congealed into a sharp wolf claw, attempting to grab Ye Fan's chest.

Though Ye Fan wasn't a cultivator of the Holy Embryo Realm, he had a lot of understanding about it. From Ye Wu's punch, he could tell Ye Wu's congealed Holy Embryo should be a Howling Wolf.

The Howling Wolf's strength as a Xuan Beast is also very powerful, especially its claws and teeth, which are terrifying in destructive ability.

However, Ye Fan wasn't concerned at all, having fought with Holy Embryo Realm cultivators before, he had gained a lot of experience.

Whoosh!

Ye Fan's eyes narrowed into slits, his gaze sharp like a blade, tightly focusing on the Holy Power wolf claw, then swung his fist to strike!

In an instant, Ye Fan's True Yuan surged within his body, combined with his physical strength, focused on his right fist, and struck towards the roaring Holy Power wolf claw.

This punch, Ye Fan also did not use his full strength, only his physical strength and part of his True Yuan, not reaching his full-out state.

However—

Despite that, the power was considerable.

Bam!

With a loud sound, Ye Fan's Iron Fist fiercely smashed onto the Holy Power-congealed wolf claw, power burst, directly shattering it, emitting a sound like clashing metal.

"Good! There's indeed something to it, come again!"

After having his Holy Power wolf claw shattered by Ye Fan's punch, Ye Wu became more cautious, frequently using his ultimate moves, each strike carrying powerful Holy Power, attempting through the quality of power to completely suppress Ye Fan.

“Come!”

Ye Fan issued a long cry with deep resonance, his entire being like a Serpent Dragon stretching his body, Iron Fist unleashed like the wind, each punch hitting the necessary route of Ye Wu’s attacks, constantly blocking Ye Wu’s offensive making him extremely uncomfortable.

Turn around, seven moves had passed, Ye Wu still couldn’t break through Ye Fan’s defense.

This was making him quite anxious!

His words have already been spoken, if he can’t defeat Ye Fan, how could he face the other four of the Ye family?

“So strong!”

Ye Yi and the others were also deeply shocked.

In their thoughts, although Ye Wu’s power was inferior to theirs, standing at the bottom among them five, he should be far stronger than Ye Fan, defeating him within ten moves should be no problem at all.

Yet now, within seven moves, Ye Wu hadn’t gained any advantage.

Whereas Ye Fan's True Yuan seemed endless, like the rushing Yangtze River.

Quantitative change causes qualitative change, when the quantity reaches a certain level, even a True Essence Realm cultivator might combat a Holy Embryo Realm cultivator.

"The eighth move!"

Ye Fan began his counterattack, approaching closely, combining physical strength and True Yuan, the True Yuan flawlessly merged into his body, punching out, with faint sounds of wind and thunder, several streaks of purple Thunder Power coiled around his fist.

Ye Wu had completely lost his previous confidence. In facing Ye Fan, he didn't even feel like he was confronting a True Essence Realm cultivator whose realm was far lower than his own, but rather, someone far stronger.

This feeling gradually eroded Ye Wu's confidence. They had exchanged seven moves already, and not only had he failed to defeat Ye Fan, but his fists were trembling from Ye Fan's ridiculously powerful physical strength, something that had never happened before.

Relentless, domineering fist reigning over the world!

Ye Fan delivered this punch with the essence of the Dominating Fist's move, "Fist Dominating the World," to perfection. His unimpeachable and invincible demeanor made him look like a mighty hero capable of pulling mountains and overshadowing the world.

Whoosh!

Ye Wu was terrified, his expression changed drastically!

Ye Fan's punch posed a huge threat, a danger capable of endangering his life.

In his frantic state, Ye Wu unleashed all his life-saving skills and alternately punched, retreating backward.

Bang!

Ye Fan's punch ray collided with Ye Wu's punch ray, and the violent thunder power fully exploded.

Swoosh!

The terrifying force made Ye Wu's entire body tremble, nearly collapsing his protective holy power, as he flew backward.

After the eighth move, the strength disparity became clear!

Ye Wu lost!

Although he was uninjured in this exchange, his protective holy power was nearly dispersed, and the holy power within him was somewhat chaotic.

In such a situation, if Ye Fan pressed his advantage and continued his fierce attack, within three moves, Ye Wu would be defeated, possibly injured, even killed.

“How... how could this happen?”

Defeated, Ye Wu stood there stunned, with constant expressions of humiliation, unwillingness, disbelief appearing on his face, making his expression particularly complex.

“Ye Wu actually lost?!”

Ye Yi and the other three were completely stupefied.

In their view, no matter how strong Ye Fan was, it should have been impossible to defeat Ye Wu, after all, there's a significant realm difference between them.

The cultivation of martial arts becomes increasingly difficult to improve realms as one progresses, yet each realm upgrade signifies a qualitative improvement in a cultivator's power.

Even crossing each small realm is hard, yet Ye Fan crossed a great realm to defeat Ye Wu!

"Xiao Wu was too complacent!"

Ye Yi looked quite displeased, he believed that although Ye Fan's strength was quite unexpected, it was primarily because Ye Wu was too careless; otherwise, Ye Fan couldn't possibly defeat Ye Wu.

Ye Er, Ye San, Ye Si also looked unhappy, as Ye Wu represented them, his defeat was akin to their defeat, and they must accept Ye Fan joining their team, traveling to Mist Sea with them, which they were unwilling to see.

"Clap, clap..."

At this moment, the sound of crisp applause echoed, and Yaling walked out of a room, smiled at Ye Fan, and said, "Little brother, long time no see, your power has stepped up another level, congratulations!"

"Sister Yaling, I didn't expect to meet you so soon again."

Ye Fan replied with a smile, he didn't refute Yaling's statement of him having advanced in power because he knew it was pointless to dispute, as he couldn't hide his strength from Yaling.

Especially after the battle just now with Ye Wu, he was quite clear Yaling might have been watching, so there was no need to conceal anything, nor could he.

Additionally, changing the subject to something far off was the best way to prevent awkwardness.

Predictably, Yaling sighed, "I can't help it! I'm just busy like this, as Mist Sea opens, many forces are moving, and our Treasure Pavilion naturally has to go."

"By the way, Sister Yaling, the person in charge here said Mist Sea might have some main materials I need, is that really the case?"

Ye Fan was most concerned about this issue. His primary purpose in going to Mist Sea was to find the spiritual medicine needed for crafting the Soul Gathering Pill, if there wasn't any, his trip would be pointless.

"Based on the speculation, there should be, since Mist Sea's environment suits the growth of those spiritual medicines, and there might be treasure medicine or divine medicine—even, Mist Sea hasn't been entered for a very long time, surely there will be divine medicine there."

Yaling couldn't be certain whether those existed inside, but speculation suggested it should be there, Mist Sea's vast expanse hasn't been explored for centuries, so divine medicine growing there is normal unless it lacks Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi.

But this is almost impossible, in the Xuan Realm, there's no place void of Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi except life forbidden zones which have never been explored, such places might exist.

During Ye Fan and Yaling's casual conversation, Ye Yi and the four brothers stood there with faces pale, silent, clearly unwilling in their hearts.

Their expressions were observed by Yaling, who with piercing eyes, said, "From your looks, there's still some discontent. How about I give you a chance to save face."

"Compress your cultivation to the True Essence Realm, and the five of you shall attack little brother Ye Fan with full force. If you can remain undefeated, I will reward you, but if you're beaten, you better keep a low profile afterward, don't make the Treasure Pavilion lose face!"

Later, Yaling's voice turned very severe. Her sharp, phoenix-like eyes were terrifying.

Swish!

Ye Yi and four others immediately changed color, even their bodies couldn't help but shudder.

"It seems that Yaling holds high status in Treasure Pavilion, not merely just a manager."

Seeing this scene, Ye Fan made this speculation.

Because geniuses are proud, if Yaling were merely a Divine Power Realm manager, the Ye brothers wouldn't fear her so much!

Chapter 1284: One Against Five

At the moment Ye Fan was making his guess, the Ye Brothers looked at Ye Fan with eyes full of malevolence, as if they were about to swallow him alive.

How could the five brothers endure such humiliation?

In the Southern Domain headquarters of the Treasure Pavilion, although they were not the strongest geniuses, they were still quite ranked, otherwise, Yaling wouldn't have brought them along to the Mist Sea on this lucky venture.

At this moment, Yaling unexpectedly asked the five of them to confront Ye Fan alone. Although she requested them to suppress their realm and limit their power, deeply stinging them, yet they dared not contradict Yaling and had to turn their anger towards Ye Fan.

Seeing this, Ye Fan sighed inwardly.

He knew very well that Yaling arranged this to use the opportunity to test Ye Fan's real combat power, while simultaneously ringing alarm bells for the Ye Brothers, to let them understand that they were not the strongest geniuses and that many others in the world could surpass them.

This proposal seemed casual, yet it was a cunning plan that hit two targets with one arrow!

This also indirectly proved Yaling was not simple.

Although she was a woman, whether in cultivation or shrewdness and wit, she was not inferior to male cultivators, and even in some aspects, stronger.

“Yaling Manager, no need for them to act, I am enough. Isn’t it just suppressing power to the True Essence Realm? If you’re not assured, you can personally seal my power, and I’ll ask Brother Ye Fan for guidance to see where exactly it is that you value him so much.” Ye Yi spoke, being the eldest and strongest of the Ye Brothers.

“Ye Yi, I understand your feelings, but I know Ye Fan’s strength better—you at True Essence Realm being able to last three rounds against him would be a miracle. As I previously said, you should all go together!”

Yaling shook her head, refusing Ye Yi’s suggestion. She knew very well the terror of Ye Fan.

In her view, those capable of defeating Ye Fan at True Essence Realm were only descendants of the Di Clan and Holy Land.

“Um... I think let’s forget it, fighting back and forth is so exhausting, why not everyone sit down for tea, chat, and share cultivation insights instead.”

Ye Fan truly didn't want to fight the Ye Brothers. Firstly, such combat was meaningless, and secondly, he wished to keep a few cards hidden.

In the Xuan Realm, more hidden cards mean better chances of survival in critical moments, an age-old truth.

"You can't win their respect without showing strength to defeat them."

Yaling chuckled, not expecting Ye Fan to be humorous. All along, Ye Fan left her the impression of being steady, capable, and very witty, planning far and possessing keen and shrewd vision.

Sometimes Yaling even suspected Ye Fan had been overtaken by a mysterious great person, otherwise, how would such wisdom forged from experience appear in a young man like Ye Fan?

Moreover, from her wide-reading experience, Ye Fan must have undergone extraordinary events to forge his current steadiness and composure.

Of course, she also knew that Ye Fan said so mostly to avoid exposing his true combat power.

The Ye Brothers couldn't think as deeply.

Upon hearing Yaling's words, they felt even more humiliated, and one by one, hardened their resolve to make Ye Fan look bad in the upcoming spar.

One against five, they absolutely didn't believe Ye Fan could defeat the five of them!

After all, they had all passed through the True Essence Realm, experienced many battles, and now entered the Holy Embryo Realm. In terms of power control, they believed Ye Fan couldn't possibly be stronger than them.

"Since Yaling Manager said so, we five brothers will follow orders, Brother Ye Fan, please!"

Ye Yi practically squeezed these words from between his teeth, his eyes almost able to emit fire. They were young geniuses, naturally unwilling to concede at this moment.

"I seriously don't want to duel you. It's meaningless!"

Ye Fan continued to decline, knowing well that facing five people together would mean losing if he tried to conserve his strength, and he didn't want to lose, so the best option was not to fight.

"Is that so? Little Brother Ye, you better reconsider! If you refuse sparring and make me embarrassed by losing, then I won't be as eager as before in helping you locate Alchemy Materials... Are you sure you won't spar with them?"

Yaling grinned slyly at Ye Fan, practicing an open strategy that she knew Ye Fan couldn't be deceived by, opting to mention Alchemy Materials.

“Uh... alright!”

Upon hearing this, Ye Fan was instantly left speechless, his Achilles heel firmly in others’ hands, making it impossible for him to refuse sparring with the Ye Brothers; he had to reluctantly agree.

“That’s better, this courtyard isn’t suitable for you to compete, let’s change place.”

Yaling triumphed in her open strategy and immediately smiled brightly like a flower, leading Ye Fan and the Ye Brothers to a larger venue.

This was the competition venue built by the Treasure Pavilion at great expense, every spot was protected by Defensive Array Patterns, able to support battles of the Holy Embryo Realm, even Divine Power Realm strong people, without worrying about destroying the entire Treasure Pavilion branch in Chi Yang City.

The biggest difference between the True Essence Realm and Holy Embryo Realm is that True Essence condenses into Holy Embryo, converting True Essence into Holy Power, which cannot be changed. Even if they suppress their power to the True Essence Realm, the Holy Power remains Holy Power, unchanged.

To ensure fairness, Yaling personally intervened to suppress the Ye Brothers’ cultivation to the True Essence Realm, preventing their power from returning to the original level until the spar was completely over, thus avoiding anyone using Mid-stage Holy Embryo Realm power abruptly in anger, severely injuring Ye Fan.

The venue was extra smooth, engraved with numerous Defensive Array Patterns on the ground. Some Array Patterns looked familiar to Ye Fan, probably replicated from the arena of Tianyuan City, yet with modifications.

“Begin, we have no rules. Defeated, you withdraw.”

Saying so, Yaling stomped hard on the ground, causing the shining Array Patterns below to glow continuously, forming a giant egg-shaped space, enveloping everyone within.

This Defensive Array Patterns act better from inside, with outside forces easily breaking it, but within it, even Divine Power Realm strong people fully striking might not break the defense, ensuring surrounding buildings aren’t affected by battle aftermath.

“Please!”

Ye Fan stood in the center, unmoving like a mountain, glancing at the Ye Brothers who suppressed their cultivation, secretly adjusting himself to peak condition, True Essence coursing in his body, Blood Qi surging.

With those words, Ye Fan’s divine consciousness stirred, mobilizing True Essence, his whole self draped in Xuanwu Armor.

This was an exclusive Absolute Technique of the Xuanwu Sect, Xuanwu Armor Technique!

“Let me probe first, to see how much he weighs!”

Ye Er smirked coldly, thinking that even with suppressed cultivation, dealing with Ye Fan, a True Essence Realm Little Cultivator yet to Condense Holy Embryo, would be no hassle.

He hardly needed to use a Spiritual Artifact, viewing it unnecessary for a Mid-stage Holy Embryo Realm cultivator if it was needed against a True Essence Realm Little Cultivator, it would be embarrassing.

“Second brother, be careful, don’t repeat Old Fifth’s mistake.”

Ye Yi advised, despite confidence in Ye Er’s strength, he still warned against recklessness, being careful never goes wrong.

“Don’t worry big brother, he’s merely in Late-stage True Essence Realm, defeating him is certain!”

With that, Ye Er stepped before Ye Fan, saying, “My cultivation is higher, initiating would be bullying, you start first!”

“Alright!”

Choosing battle, Ye Fan no longer backed down, nodding in response while True Essence in his body and Blood Qi surged, overflowing with War Intent.

Chapter 1285: Duel and Encirclement

“Attack!”

Ye Fan shouted loudly, sending a punch directly towards Ye Er’s chest. His originally fair fist instantly turned into a purple-golden color, entwined with strands of Thunder Power.

Thunderclap Treasure Skill!

Right from the start, Ye Fan used the Thunderclap Treasure Skill, merging it with the “Blood Gang” from “Domineering Fist,” combining it with his powerful physical strength to attack Ye Er with full force.

Blood Gang was originally a martial arts technique that combined one’s own blood and Gang Qi to unleash a powerful attack, the essence of Tyrant’s lifetime teachings.

However, after Ye Fan’s improvements, Blood Gang was no longer a combination of Gang Qi and physical strength, but True Yuan and one’s own blood, plus the integration of the Thunderclap Treasure Skill, making its power several times greater than before, with a formidable momentum.

A lion fights a rabbit with all its strength!

Although Ye Er outwardly looked down on Ye Fan in many ways, once engaged, he was not careless at all and gave it his all right from the start.

He punched out, Holy Power surging wildly, his right fist immediately engulfed in a layer of light, emanating strong energy fluctuations.

Head-on collision!

Boom!

Ye Fan and Ye Er clashed head-on without any fancy moves, and the energy storm swept all around. If it weren't for the defensive formation, the surrounding buildings would have been razed to the ground.

After the hard clash, Ye Fan remained unmoved, his fist not even trembling, while Ye Er was directly shaken and sent flying backwards!

A single move determined the victor!

This result exceeded everyone's expectations!

Even Yaling didn't expect that Ye Fan's combat power had become even stronger.

While shocked, Yaling vaguely felt that this was still not Ye Fan's strongest capability.

"Impossible, this is impossible!" Ye Er couldn't accept this fact, shaking his head like a rattle drum.

Originally, in his view, even if he was suppressed to the True Essence Realm, defeating Ye Fan would be no problem.

But now, he was defeated by Ye Fan in just one move!

This stark contrast dealt him a blow that was simply indescribable with words.

At this moment, his heart was filled with disbelief and unwillingness—he still had many powerful martial arts techniques he hadn't used.

However—

Whether it's disbelief or unwillingness, facts speak louder than words.

He lost, utterly defeated!

This lost him the qualification to continue sparring alone with Ye Fan, and he could only retreat silently with humiliation and anger.

“Your ability is indeed remarkable, no wonder Manager Yaling speaks so highly of you. Next, I will battle you! I will give it my all!”

As Ye Er returned defeated, Ye Yi stepped forward, speaking with a solemn expression.

Although Ye Fan had fiercely defeated Ye Er, Ye Yi still decided to defeat Ye Fan one-on-one instead of surrounding him as Yaling suggested.

Because, for them, even defeating Ye Fan through a gang fight would be a shame, not an honor.

“Alright!”

Ye Fan also knew that if he didn’t fight, Yaling would definitely not go to any trouble to help him find the materials for refining the Soul Gathering Pill.

The Soul Gathering Pill was of great significance to him, and he had to find it no matter what!

Moreover, he could be sure that if he didn't strongly defeat the five brothers of the Ye Family, they wouldn't submit.

Additionally, he wanted to give the five brothers, who had mocked him in various ways before, a lesson.

Ye Yi, unlike Ye Er, let Ye Fan attack first, striking decisively, as experts often compete over that slight advantage. Whoever takes the early advantage usually wins.

Once at a disadvantage, it is almost impossible to reverse the situation when the strength is similar.

"Attack!"

Ye Yi shouted loudly, seizing the moment, forming a palm as a blade, and slashed towards Ye Fan's shoulder.

Although it was a hand blade, under Ye Yi's power, it was not much different from a real Divine Weapon.

If Ye Fan were to be struck by this, even with his strong body, he would inevitably suffer some injuries.

Ye Fan knew that the so-called sparring was not simply defeating the five people; there would likely be more challenges waiting for him, so he absolutely couldn't be injured.

Since he couldn't take it head-on, Ye Fan wasn't foolish enough to stand there. With a ghostly-like flicker of his feet, leaving a shadow behind, he directly charged towards Ye Yi.

He wanted to fully utilize the advantage of his strong body, engaging in close combat with Ye Yi, only then could he defeat him in the shortest time possible.

"Hey!"

Ye Yi didn't know how strong Ye Fan's body truly was, and seeing Ye Fan dare to engage in close combat made him smirk coldly.

His body had long been tempered and baptized by Holy Power, far stronger than True Essence Realm cultivators.

Woosh!

Transforming his palm to a fist, Ye Yi unhesitatingly punched towards Ye Fan's face. Although his strength was already suppressed to the True Essence Realm Peak, he was still ahead of Ye Fan by a Xiao realm.

Ye Fan tilted his head to dodge, simultaneously thrusting a knee strike towards the area above Ye Yi's Dantian, because it was sparring, naturally, he couldn't go for the kill, otherwise Ye Fan's knee strike would have hit Ye Yi's Dantian.

Bang! Bang!

Two muffled sounds, Ye Fan's shoulder took a punch from Ye Yi, instantly shattering the armor formed by condensed True Yuan, striking solidly on his shoulder.

But Ye Fan seemed unfazed, it didn't cause him any harm.

However, Ye Fan's knee strike sent Ye Yi flying, the fierce and domineering True Yuan directly breaking through Ye Yi's defense like a hot knife through butter.

The strong and weak were instantly distinguished!

Ye Yi, like Ye Er, also lost to Ye Fan!

"This..."

This result left the other four brothers of the Ye Family somewhat dumbfounded, their eyes wide open as they stared at Ye Fan, seemingly asking: How could he be so strong?

Is he strong?

Yaling's brows shifted slightly, and her eyes sparkled repeatedly, secretly glad of her decision—to continue ingratiating herself with Ye Fan, striving to bring him aboard the Treasure Pavilion's ship!

Is he strong?

After landing, Ye Yi's face was twisted in pain, he couldn't imagine how both he and Ye Er, two genius cultivators at the mid-stage Holy Embryo Realm, could not even pass a single move against Ye Fan after suppressing their cultivation level, the blow was too much for him!

Is he strong?

"The five of you should all come at me together, in one-on-one, none of you can win against me."

Ye Fan looked at the five of the Ye Family, speaking once more, after two warm-up fights, he already had a certain understanding of the combat power of the five in the True Yuan Realm and was confident of victory.

Swoosh!

Upon hearing Ye Fan's words, the faces of the five from the Ye Family flushed from green to white, feeling extremely aggrieved.

Before seeing Ye Fan, the five brothers were jealous of Ye Fan being favored by Yaling, constantly mocking him in various ways, and after meeting him, they also ridiculed him in various ways.

And now, in the same realm, they had to join forces to battle Ye Fan...

It was like a slap across their faces, leaving them feeling incredibly depressed!

Despite the depression, they all knew, whether due to Yaling's orders, or to regain some face, they now had to besiege Ye Fan!

"Then we brothers won't hold back!"

Ye Yi stood up, steadying the slightly chaotic qi and holy power within, speaking in a deep voice.

At this moment, his face no longer had any contempt, only caution.

Not just him, but the other four brothers of the Ye Family as well.

Crackle! Crack!

They all held their breath, going full force from the onset, their movements accompanied by the sound of wind and thunder, with astonishing power.

Only Ye Wu was extremely cautious, having already lost to Ye Fan once, he did not wish to repeat that mistake.

But Ye Si and Ye San thought otherwise, immediately assuming the most powerful combat prowess they could muster after suppressing their realm, targeting Ye Fan's lower body to keep him busy, creating a better opportunity for Ye Yi and Ye Er to strike.

This was a tactic honed over a long time training together, displaying their extreme coordination.

Ye Fan also knew he couldn't afford to delay, otherwise the longer it dragged on, the more unfavorable it would be for him—draining energy and allowing his opponents to understand his abilities.

Therefore, he needed a quick victory, to swiftly defeat them before they could gauge his strength and complete this bout.

Bam!

Bam!

Ye Fan, with lightning speed, blocked the punch from Ye Er, and at the same time met Ye Wu's palm with his left hand, directly forcing him back.

Then, Ye Fan executed his most exquisite chain of movements, not withdrawing his left hand, the wrist flicked and gripped Ye San's pulse point, pulling him in front to block an attack from Ye Yi.

Simultaneously, Ye Fan used a back thrust, relying on his formidable defense, slamming into Ye Si's chest, sending him flying backward.

In just a brief moment, the combined attack of the five from the Ye Family was neutralized by Ye Fan, each defeated swiftly using his advantage in speed.

Ye Yi and Ye San were not injured, when Ye Yi saw his target become Ye San, he realized something was wrong and retracted his fist, sparing Ye San a disaster.

In just a moment, the combined assault formation of the five crumbled, directly allowing Ye Fan to use his immense physical strength and combat skills to defeat them one by one.

This dealt an even greater blow to the five of them!

Simultaneously, they began to believe Yaling's words, Ye Fan was simply a freak—with late-stage True Yuan Realm strength, yet able to fight five at once, defeating them all in a single encounter!

One must know, although they had suppressed their cultivation, they were strong people of the Holy Embryo Realm, even suppressing their cultivation, their strength's essence would not change and was still Holy Power.

Yet under such circumstances, Ye Fan was still able to defeat the five individually in a brief period, what does this illustrate?

"If you five fight individually, not only do you stand no chance, but you can't even force out Ye Fan's true combat power."

As if responding to the five, Yaling spoke again, her tone especially harsh, "At this point, are you still afraid of embarrassment? The Treasure Pavilion's face has already been completely lost by you! Quickly form a formation, go all out!"

Chapter 1286: Sincerely Convinced

Swish!

The words of Yaling rang in their ears, and the five Ye Brothers were all shocked, their faces filled with shame.

As Yaling said, they were indeed disgraceful.

First, they arrogantly mocked Ye Fan, then were defeated by him, and finally, even joining forces, they were still unable to prevail...

“Form the formation!”

Ye Yi shouted in a low voice, and the other four immediately moved their feet, changing positions to form the Five Elements Formation, encircling Ye Fan in the center.

As soon as the formation was completed, its power was immediately displayed, even without making a move, it gave Ye Fan a faint pressure.

There’s a fundamental difference between setting a formation and reckless fighting; the formation can maximize the attacks of all five, forming a unified whole.

At this moment, Ye Fan was no longer facing five individuals, but a unified entity, giving him tremendous pressure.

The fact that the five could be the most outstanding talents in the Southern Domain of the Treasure Pavilion, besides their strong cultivation, owed much to this formation.

Even cultivators much stronger than them would find themselves at a disadvantage when facing the five-man formation, and might even end up defeated.

But this wasn’t quite effective on Ye Fan.

Chu Xuanji on Earth was definitely a martial arts generalist, besides mastering various martial arts, he had profound knowledge in medical divination and Qimen Eight Diagram.

Back in the day, whether Ye Fan wanted to learn or not, he was forced to absorb all the good things Chu Xuanji thought worth learning.

This resulted in Ye Fan having virtually no childhood—where others spent their childhood playing and learning, he spent it entirely focused on learning and gained extensive knowledge.

But these things turned out to be immensely useful later, helping him out of danger numerous times during extremely difficult missions.

This time was no exception!

The principle of the Five Elements Formation is derived from the changes and interrelationships of the five elements in heaven and earth, and it is exceedingly powerful.

Ye Yi and others occupied the positions representing gold, wood, water, and fire respectively, while Ye Wu acted as a support, connecting the four of them.

However, on Earth, there's also a saying of five elements: the West is gold, sharp and aggressive, with great attack power, the East is wood, symbolizing life and growth.

The South is fire, also with fierce attack power, and the North is Xuanwu, representing water, which can dissolve any attack yet with strong offensive capabilities.

Unfortunately, Ye Fan occupied the central Wuji earth, leaving Ye Wu simply as a nexus for the other four.

Thus, although Ye Wu's attack power is not strong, he is the central link of the entire Five Elements Formation, and defeating him will break the formation.

Ye Fan understood this principle, but breaking the formation was not an easy task, especially with Ye Yi, Ye Er, and others fully protecting Ye Wu and launching powerful attacks on him.

Whoosh!

Whoosh!

Whoosh!

In an instant, silhouettes flickered, and the wind of fists howled.

Ye Fan found himself in dire straits, completely suppressed, with only the ability to defend and no opportunity to counterattack.

The cooperation among the five was exceedingly harmonious, absolutely not lingering in battle, their strategy was to strike and retreat swiftly, complementing each other to block Ye Fan's attacks, keeping him trapped within the formation.

Moreover, this was just a spar, not a life-and-death duel!

For this reason, Ye Fan was somewhat conflicted.

On one hand, he had to fight alongside them in the future; escalating conflicts now was absolutely not what he wanted to see.

On the other hand, if he couldn't defeat the five, Yaling might not be as dedicated in searching for the materials for the Soul Gathering Pill.

To ensure Yaling's utmost effort in finding the Soul Gathering Pill materials, he could only defeat the five.

But... how could this be easy?

After the five formed the formation, they practically became one entity, attacking in any direction would elicit simultaneous counterattacks from the other four directions.

For a moment, the battle between Ye Fan and the five Ye Brothers came to a stalemate!

Ye Fan couldn't manage to defeat the five, and they too couldn't easily take him down in a short time.

The five grew increasingly shocked as they fought!

As the sparring continued, their underestimation of Ye Fan turned into admiration.

Because, even if they formed a formation, saints and the Emperor's disciples at the True Essence Realm from the Holy Land might not gain the upper hand.

Besides the terrifying attack power, Ye Fan's defensive power also left the five Ye Brothers utterly astonished.

Although their cultivation was suppressed, the nature of their Holy Power remained unchanged, yet several attacks landed on Ye Fan without having the expected effect.

They felt as if they were surrounding a Divine Mountain, no matter how they attacked, they couldn't cause any harm to Ye Fan!

On the contrary, every counterattack from Ye Fan made everyone feel overwhelmed.

If the five hadn't shared the burden of Ye Fan's attack, no single person could withstand it.

The longer the night, the more dreams there were. Ye Fan knew that it would absolutely be disadvantageous for him if this dragged on.

Although with his strength, it would be no problem to persist for a few more hours, for the Soul Gathering Pill, he had to break this formation quickly.

To break the formation, Ye Wu was the key. As long as he could be taken out, the formation would break naturally. Once it lost Ye Wu's connection, the four would have to fight individually. Then, Ye Fan could leverage his own advantage and defeat them one by one.

But Ye Fan understood this principle, and so did Ye Yi and the others. They were extremely focused on protecting Ye Wu, making it difficult for Ye Fan to attack him, let alone defeat him.

"It seems I can only expose my strength!"

After weighing the options, Ye Fan had no choice but to reveal his strength for the sake of the Soul Gathering Pill's materials.

Whoosh!

Upon thinking, he acted. Ye Fan's eyes instantly turned silver, and with a thought, the Divine Soul Sword shot out from the Niu Wan Palace. Although only one finger wide and three inches long, it was unmatched in sharpness.

The moment the Divine Soul Sword was unleashed, the flickering of the defensive array patterns accelerated significantly.

Shh!

The Divine Soul Sword struck directly at the center of Ye Wu's forehead, flashing and vanishing, directly attacking Ye Wu's Divine Soul.

Ye Wu was struck as if by lightning, his entire body froze, and he experienced a brief moment of blankness.

An opportunity not to be missed!

"Hoo!"

Ye Fan decisively attacked, delivering three consecutive punches with Domineering Fist, the three punches uniting with unmatched power, directly knocking Ye Wu away.

Ye Wu was defeated and withdrew, creating a huge flaw in the Ye Family Brothers' formation.

Hoo!

Ye Fan, without hesitation, seized the moment and dealt a punch to send Ye Si flying.

“Ha!”

At the same time, Ye Fan let out a loud shout, using Divine Soul Shock. His voice, like a giant bell, stunned Ye San in an instant.

Ye San's strength was just slightly better than Ye Si's, but in terms of physical strength, compared with Ye Yi and the others, he was far behind. Ye Fan seized the opportunity to defeat him in one move.

In a brief moment, Ye Fan turned his disadvantage into an advantage, victory in sight. Even with a five-person formation cooperating, they were no match for Ye Fan. Now, with only Ye Yi and Ye Er remaining, it was even less likely they could defeat Ye Fan.

The moment Ye Fan defeated Ye Wu, Ye Yi knew it was over. Ye Wu was the most crucial part of the entire formation, the so-called Array Eye. Once he was out, the five-person formation would collapse without attack.

In an individual fight, trying to defeat Ye Fan was nearly impossible.

Just as Ye Fan swiftly eliminated Ye San and Ye Si, Ye Yi sighed deeply, “No need to continue, we admit defeat.”

“Clap, clap, clap...”

As Ye Yi’s words fell, Yaling clapped while smiling, withdrew the defensive array patterns, and walked towards Ye Fan.

“I told you, having gotten the Divine Soul Sword Technique rewarded by Zuo Fengshan, it’s impossible that you haven’t cultivated it. Turns out I guessed right!”

Coming up to Ye Fan, Yaling smiled mischievously while secretly amazed — how long had Ye Fan had the Divine Soul Sword Technique? Not only had he forged his Divine Soul into a sword, but he could attack with it, truly a freak.

Ye Yi and the others hung their heads, utterly ashamed. Remembering their ambitious intentions to give Ye Fan a hard time, they wished they could find a hole to crawl into.

Moreover, they understood that Ye Fan showed mercy, otherwise, it would not just be a mere defeat; there could have been casualties.

This made them wholeheartedly convinced!

Ye Yi composed himself, stepped forward, and with admiration, said, “Brother Ye Fan, our brothers were at fault earlier, I hope you won’t take it to heart.”

“Let’s not dwell on past events. As long as you brothers don’t use that formation against me again, it’s fine.” Ye Fan joked with a smile, easing the originally awkward atmosphere significantly.

“Brother Ye Fan, I have a question. I hope you can satisfy my curiosity.”

As the atmosphere relaxed, Ye Yi hesitated for a moment and asked the question in his heart, “Although your realm is low, your combat power is astonishing, especially your physical strength, which is practically unbeatable in the True Essence Realm. Even the disciples from the Holy Land and Di Clan may not surpass you in the realm of physical strength — how on Earth do you cultivate??”

Chapter 1287: Invited to the Gathering

“Please, Brother Ye, don’t hesitate to inform us.”

At this moment, all five Ye brothers gathered around. Although they were defeated just now, they were thoroughly convinced, holding extreme admiration for Ye Fan. They were also very eager to know how someone from a small sect like the Xuanwu Sect, like Ye Fan, became such a prodigy.

Not only them, but even Yaling was secretly listening attentively; she was very curious as to why Ye Fan’s combat prowess was so formidable.

She had seen people like this before, but they were always Saint Heirs of Holy Lands or young successors from the Di Clan.

However, Ye Fan was just a disciple from the small Xuanwu Sect in Tianyuan State, with cultivation resources that couldn't compare to a vast power like a Holy Land. Yet, he possessed strength and potential comparable to a Saint Heir, which made her extremely curious.

Looking at their curious expressions, Ye Fan smiled faintly and said, "Actually, if I'm truthful, it's nothing much. I once practiced the Thunderclap Treasure Skill and acquired some Thunder Liquid in the Thunder Primordial Secret Realm, using it to temper my body. Thus, my combat power and realm are slightly higher than my actual realm."

"It's really like comparing people to the point of death, and goods to the point of discard!"

Upon hearing Ye Fan's explanation, Ye Yi and the others sighed ceaselessly. They themselves were geniuses, and being part of the Treasure Pavilion, what treasures couldn't they procure?

Yet they hadn't had Ye Fan's luck—the Thunder Liquid is something that can be encountered but not sought, one of the finest Divine Liquids for improving the body!

For a moment, the five expressed their envy for Ye Fan's fortune—being able to obtain such an extraordinary substance like Thunder Liquid while cultivating the Thunderclap Treasure Skill was sheer luck.

What they didn't know was the suffering Ye Fan endured while tempering his body with the Thunder Liquid. Even if they encountered the same opportunity, whether they would dare use the Thunder Liquid to temper their bodies remains unknown.

Ye Fan's trump cards were not just the Divine Soul Sword Technique and Thunderclap Treasure Skill. He also inherited the legacy of Emperor Xuan, was cultivating the "Nine Heavens Profound Skill," and would soon cultivate the "Xuandi Fist." Most importantly, he possessed the Emperor Weapon.

These were Ye Fan's true trump cards, unknown to anyone. Especially in the Xuan Realm, the Emperor Weapon would undoubtedly be a cause for his downfall.

Yaling, smiling and subtly observing Ye Fan, felt through a woman's intuition that while Ye Fan wasn't lying, he must have other secrets—many of them.

However, she didn't press on for answers.

Everyone has their own secrets, herself included; it's better not to pry into what others are unwilling to share. Knowing too much carries no benefit.

Amidst the envy and jealousy of the Ye Brothers, from afar approached a somewhat plump middle-aged man, none other than Wang Jingfu, the person in charge here.

Hmm?

Wang Jingfu's sudden appearance made Yaling's heart flutter, sensing something was amiss. Otherwise, he wouldn't have come here.

"Yaling, so you all were here! It took me quite a search." The chubby Wang Jingfu spoke as he approached the group.

"Does Brother Wang have matters to discuss?"

Yaling smiled at Wang Jingfu and asked. She knew Wang Jingfu well; he was a man of depth, but with a quirky sense of humor. One might inadvertently get trapped by his words.

"It's like this. The Lou Family sent an invitation just now. The Lou Family's genius, Lady Lou Manyue, is organizing a small moon-viewing tea party, inviting Little Yi and his brothers to attend. I came to ask you whether they should go or decline?"

Wang Jingfu was very aware of the gap between himself and Yaling. Although senior in age, Yaling surpassed him in status, position, and strength. Hence, it was best for Yaling to decide on this matter.

What's more, since Ye Yi and his brothers were under Yaling's lead, nominally under her management, he couldn't overstep his authority.

"Is that so?"

Yaling pondered for a moment and said, "Then let them go. After all, there are still a few days before the Mist Sea opens, plenty of time. It'd be good to meet the second pearl of Qing Province. Ye Yi, take Ye Fan and go along."

Hmm?

Hearing this, Ye Fan was taken aback.

To him, the invitation from Lou Manyue to Ye Yi and the others was entirely due to the powerful influence of the Treasure Pavilion. What relevance did he have in going?

"Sister Yaling, the invitation from the Lou Family's jewel was for Ye Yi and his brothers, not me. Wouldn't it be inappropriate for me to go?" Ye Fan expressed his doubt.

Yaling smiled and said, "Brother Ye Fan, Qing Province is not Tianyuan State. Qing Province is one of the most powerful states in the Southern Domain of the entire Tianxuan Continent, with countless geniuses, unlike Tianyuan State. The Lou Family jewel holds a prominent position in Qing Province. By organizing the moon-viewing tea party, many geniuses will surely attend. For you to witness it firsthand is advantageous."

"Very well, if Sister Yaling says so, then I'll attend."

With Yaling's explanation, Ye Fan moved, and after a brief reflection, decided to accompany Ye Yi and the others.

Firstly, as Yaling mentioned, Qing Province has many geniuses, and it's good to gain some experience.

Secondly, he wished to use this opportunity to probe some information, to see if the Lou Family had found any clues about his incident with Lou Mangong, more importantly, if they had traced back to Stone Village.

"Now that the decision to attend is made, I'll inform the Lou Family's people that we'll be there as scheduled."

Seeing Yaling agree, Wang Jingfu quietly heaved a sigh of relief. While the Treasure Pavilion's influence is considerable, doing business requires harmonious relations. Maintaining good relations with every power in the state is paramount.

The Lou Family is a dominant force in Chi Yang City. Declining Lou Manyue's invitation would lead to a negative impression of the Treasure Pavilion, which is a major taboo in business.

...

Chi Yang City is the stronghold of the Lou Family. Apart from those left in the ancestral land, most of the Lou Family's geniuses reside in Chi Yang City.

Throughout the entire Chi Yang City and the surrounding thousands of miles, it falls within the Lou Family's sphere of influence, making it a formidable clan that controls everything with overwhelming power.

As the foremost prodigy of the Lou Family and betrothed to the genius of the largest clan in Qing Province, the Qing Clan, Lou Manyue not only has her own territory in the ancestral land but also possesses a grand mansion of her own in Chi Yang City.

The Bao Tian Lanyue Pavillion is a renowned building within her mansion, located right by the Chi River, seamlessly blending water and sky.

Sitting in the Bao Tian Lanyue Pavillion and looking down from the railing, one can see the Chi River stretching like a ribbon into the distance. Especially on a full moon night, the shimmering waves create an extraordinary scene.

Being able to appreciate the moon and enjoy tea at Bao Tian Lanyue Pavillion is an aspiration for every cultivator with discerning taste, particularly those in Chi Yang City.

Near the Xu Hour, Ye Fan and the five Ye Brothers left the Treasure Pavilion's branch in Chi Yang City and headed towards Lou Manyue's mansion.

Since Lou Manyue was the Lou Family's most outstanding genius and the yet-to-be-wed daughter-in-law of the Qing Family, the Ancestor of the Lou Family naturally held her in high regard. Therefore, her mansion had the best location in all of Chi Yang City, second only to the Lou Family's main base.

Before Ye Fan and the others arrived, they could see Lou Manyue's mansion from afar. The buildings were tall and majestic, brimming with spiritual energy, much like an Immortal Realm, a perfect place for cultivation.

Cultivating in such an environment meant rapid advancement was almost inevitable, showing the Lou Family's level of importance placed on Lou Manyue.

Quickly, the six arrived at the gate. Up close, the grandeur was even more impressive, surpassing any ancient palace on Earth in splendor.

At the gate, two cultivators at the Peak of the True Yuan Realm watched the nearby area with sharp eyes, prohibiting any unauthorized persons from approaching within a hundred meters of the gate.

"Who are you?"

When Ye Fan and the others were still ten meters from the gate, two doorman cultivators approached arrogantly and asked.

"We are invited by your master to attend the gathering!"

Ye Yi, who also had a fiery temper, glared and secretly used Holy Power to fling the invitation towards them.

Meanwhile, the other four Ye Brothers no longer concealed their auras.

Hmm?

The two doormen were startled.

Ye Yi and Ye Er were both at the mid-stage of the Holy Embryo Realm, and the other four, except one unfamiliar face, were early-stage cultivators of the Holy Embryo Realm, not to be trifled with.

Thud, thud, thud...

Although they caught the invitation, they were forced back four or five steps by Ye Yi's powerful Holy Power, their faces turning pale.

After glancing at the invitation, their attitude made an immediate 180-degree turn. They bowed deeply and said, "Oh, it's the distinguished members of the Ye Family from the Treasure Pavilion. We apologize for the earlier rudeness, and please forgive us. The young lady is waiting for the five of you in the Bao Tian Lanyue Pavillion. Please enter!"

They were aware of Lou Manyue's lovers coming to enjoy moon viewing and tea, but there were supposed to be only five Ye Brothers. Seeing six of them made them hesitant.

"At least you know what's appropriate!"

Ye Si sneered, joining Ye Yi and the others as they walked into the courtyard, with Ye Fan following at the end.

Just as Ye Fan was about to enter, one of the guards suddenly extended an arm to block him, coldly saying, "Please show your invitation!"

"I don't have an invitation!" Ye Fan frowned slightly.

"No invitation, yet you dare to enter our young lady's residence? You should know better what kind of place this is. How could a mere True Yuan Realm cultivator just walk in?"

The guard, with a condescending demeanor, had suffered a reprimand from Ye Yi earlier and was now venting his frustration on Ye Fan.

But he was cautious, turning to ask Ye Yi and the others: "Distinguished members, is this person your attendant? Our young lady has instructed that no attendants are allowed entry."

"He is not our attendant, he is our friend and also an esteemed guest of our Treasure Pavilion. Can't he enter?"

Ye Yi looked displeased at the guard, already annoyed by the guard's earlier attitude, and now even more so with their obstruction of Ye Fan.

“Uh... is he really your friend?”

The two guards were shocked and skeptical, unable to believe that the five genius Ye Brothers of the Holy Embryo Realm could be friends with a late-stage True Yuan Realm cultivator.

“What? Can Brother Ye not be our friend? Moreover, is a mere moon-viewing tea party hosted by Lou Manyue so exclusive that our friend, an esteemed guest of the Treasure Pavilion, cannot attend? If that’s the case, then we don’t need to attend either. Let’s go!”

Ye Yi’s face instantly turned cold as he prepared to leave.

Chapter 1288: Sipping Tea and Enjoying the Moon

“Uh...”

Seeing Ye Yi about to lead the departure, the two guards panicked immediately.

Although the Lou family has some influence, it is far inferior to the Treasure Pavilion. If Ye Yi and his group left in a huff due to their poor attitude, they could not bear the responsibility.

After their panic subsided, the two guards immediately changed their attitude, smiling companionably, “Please, don’t be in a hurry! We are just following orders, and it’s beyond our control. If he truly is your friend, then he naturally has the right to attend the tea party...”

Saying this, the two of them treated Ye Fan with utmost respect, inviting him into the courtyard as if he were their master.

“Phew~”

Once Ye Fan and the others disappeared from their sight, the two guards breathed a sigh of relief, yet their hearts were filled with confusion.

To them, Ye Fan seemed not only older in age but his strength also lingered merely at the late-stage True Essence Realm, not even as high as theirs. How could someone like him be a friend of a genius from the Treasure Pavilion and even a VIP?

It seemed utterly unreasonable to them!

“He’s probably a waste from some major force’s younger generation. Because he’s of the direct lineage, though his cultivation isn’t impressive, his status is notable, so he could become a VIP at the Treasure Pavilion.”

In the end, the two made this judgment.

A moment later, Ye Fan and the five Ye brothers arrived at the Bao Tian Lanyue Pavilion and were led upstairs—though Lou Manyue could treat other guests lightly, she dared not do the same with the guests from the Treasure Pavilion, instead sending her personal maid to escort them upstairs.

The entire Bao Tian Lanyue Pavilion had an imposing presence. As night fell, lanterns were hung on the building, illuminating it brightly, and a bright moon hung high in the sky, adding a mysterious beauty to the pavilion.

After ascending the Bao Tian Lanyue Pavilion, Ye Fan immediately noticed that all the attendees were young individuals of both genders with extraordinary auras and profound cultivation levels.

“These are all geniuses from around Qingzhou Chiyang City, I’ll introduce them to you in detail later.”

While Ye Fan was observing these people, a sentence suddenly echoed in his mind; it was Ye Yi communicating with him via divine consciousness.

Ye Fan nodded slightly to indicate his understanding.

“It’s been months since we last met, Lady Lou seems even more ethereal, like a fairy.”

“Lady Lou is the pride of our Chiyang City, destined to walk the Emperor Road in the future.”

“Isn’t that obvious? Lady Lou is gifted and has unparalleled comprehension, incomparable to us commoners!”

Just as Ye Fan ascended the pavilion, he heard a round of nauseating flattery. Everyone was eagerly praising Lou Manyue, seeming as if falling behind would upset her.

“Miss, the Ye brothers from the Treasure Pavilion have arrived.”

After leading Ye Fan and the five upstairs, the maid respectfully reported this, then stepped aside, awaiting further instructions.

“I have long admired the Ye brothers, thank you for coming to enjoy the moon and tea.”

As the host, Lou Manyue’s greeting was quite formal, yet her gaze only swept over the Ye brothers, completely ignoring Ye Fan.

“I have long admired the Ye brothers, meeting you today confirms you are truly outstanding, achieving Mid-stage Saint Embryo Realm at such a young age — truly commendable!”

As Lou Manyue introduced them, others came forward to greet the Ye brothers, subconsciously treating Ye Fan as just their servant, entirely neglecting his presence.

Ye Fan didn’t mind this at all.

After all, his visit was to witness a gathering of geniuses from the Xuan Realm and to see if the Lou family had discovered any clues about him killing Lou Mangong.

In such circumstances, being overlooked was actually advantageous for Ye Fan.

Even if Ye Fan was unbothered, the five Ye brothers were not pleased!

Ye Yi frowned slightly, initially wanting to introduce Ye Fan as their friend rather than a subordinate, but Ye Fan stopped him with a glance.

Hmm?

Ye Si looked puzzled. He knew Ye Fan's strength perfectly well — although his background might not be significant, no so-called genius present could probably defeat Ye Fan. So why was Ye Fan keeping such a low profile?

Soon, the guests had all arrived. The Lou family possessed enormous influence in Chiyang City, and Lou Manyue, being their most outstanding genius, had invitations no one dared to decline.

Moonlight spilled into the pavilion, with tables set with fragrances of rich Spiritual Fruit and Spiritual Tea — all for this gathering.

There's no denying that the Lou family was truly wealthy, and Lou Manyue was generous. Spiritual Fruit and Tea, being favorites of cultivators, held pure Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi, which greatly benefited cultivators when consumed regularly.

“These Spiritual Teas were gathered with much effort by our Lou family; please enjoy.”

Lou Manyue raised her teacup, gesturing for everyone to taste it. The tea party officially commenced, as everyone savored aromatic tea, admired the bright moon outside, and the glistening waves of the Chi River, chatting about cultivation-related anecdotes, interesting events, and legends in a harmonious atmosphere.

After a while of chatting, Lou Manyue softly cleared her throat and said, “The purpose of inviting everyone to this gathering is primarily for two reasons...”

Upon hearing her words, everyone knew that the main topic had arrived. They put down their teacups and stopped chatting, ready to hear her state the purpose of this gathering.

No matter the type of gathering, there is always a purpose. Everyone was aware of this—Lou Manyue wouldn’t whimsically invite people over just for tea and moon gazing.

“I believe everyone knows that the Mist Sea is about to open. Various major forces are moving at the news, but there’s one thing you might not know.”

Lou Manyue glanced around at everyone who was quietly listening, nodded satisfactorily, and continued, “When the Mist Sea first started showing unusual signs, our Southern Domain strong people went to investigate. They found that although the mist was gradually dissipating, there were numerous restrictions inside, one of which is extremely domineering; it can suppress the Cultivators’ strength, reducing even a Supreme to the Holy Embryo Realm! Therefore, each major force is secretly gathering their geniuses and Holy Embryo Realm Cultivators to head to the Mist Sea, waiting for the mist to completely dissipate before they can seek treasures.”

“Is this true?”

The revelation from Lou Manyue instantly shocked everyone. They were unaware of this secret about the Mist Sea, and if what Lou Manyue said was true, it was an explosive piece of information.

“Of course, it’s true. Would I joke about such matters with all of you?”

Lou Manyue watched the astonished expressions with a sly smile. This matter was quite secret, and she received the news from the Qing Family; even her Lou Family wasn’t qualified to know such a secret.

“This search for opportunities in the Mist Sea has stirred the entire Southern Domain. Not only Qing Province, but forces from other provinces will also send people. Some Wu Shang Sects and Holy Lands have even dispatched their Saint Heirs. Moreover, if not for the great distance between domains and the difficult travel, this might have attracted Holy Lands and Emperor Clan descendants from other domains too!”

“It can be said that this treasure hunt has gathered all the forces here. To obtain treasure and opportunity, we not only need luck but more importantly, we need strength, or else even if we get treasure, we won’t be able to keep it.”

With Lou Manyue’s words, everyone fell into contemplation, pondering her statements.

Lou Manyue wasn't in a hurry; she took a small sip of fragrant tea, waiting for everyone to process the news she had revealed.

After a moment, a burly young man stood up and addressed Lou Manyue, "What does Lady Lou need us to do?"

"I don't need you to do anything, just want everyone to consider how we can have a competitive edge in the Mist Sea under such circumstances."

Lou Manyue smiled and gestured for the burly young man to sit down, then continued, "I have a proposal for everyone to consider."

As she spoke, Lou Manyue shared her proposal.

"As the saying goes, strength lies in unity, weakness in division. To obtain treasure and opportunity amidst so many gathered forces, we must form an alliance, advance and retreat together. What do you all think?"

"What a calculation!"

Upon hearing her proposal, Ye Fan saw through it clearly; Lou Manyue was much like Qingxuan back during the Tianyuan Secret Realm, trying to draw people in to act as cannon fodder.

The Lou Family was already a powerful clan, and Lou Manyue was the Qing Family's soon-to-be daughter-in-law, with familial ties to the Emperor Clan Ling Family. Even if there were danger, those Wu Shang Sects would not harm her considering the Ling Family's face, but those allied with her would suffer misfortune.

"Lady Lou's words make sense. To carve out a place amidst such powerful forces, we must unite!"

"I also support Lady Lou's proposal!"

"Count the Xie Family in!"

"..."

For a while, Lou Manyue's proposal received the agreement and support of the majority present. They all expressed willingness to look up to Lou Manyue and unite in action.

Among everyone present, only the genius from Spirit Manor and the five Ye brothers remained silent, neither agreeing to the alliance nor opposing it.

Lou Manyue noticed all this, but she said nothing, for she knew that the Lou Family's strength was not enough to contend against massive forces like Spirit Manor or the Treasure Pavilion.

Then Lou Manyue's expression turned grave. Blushing, she revealed her second purpose.

“Next, I want to talk about something which I believe everyone is somewhat aware of.”

Lou Manyue’s voice was somber, her eyes filled with killing intent, “As everyone knows, my brother Man Gong was killed recently. Our Lou Family has decided, at all costs, to investigate this matter and find out the murderer, to gouge out his heart and liver, avenging my brother. But the murderer acted very cleanly, and even now we have not uncovered a single clue. If any of you have any information in this regard, please do inform me. I, Lou Manyue, promise a handsome reward!”

“Rest assured, Lady Lou, if I discover the murderer of your brother, I will skin him and pull out his tendons, then cut off his head and deliver it to you!”

A genius at the early-stage of the Saint Embryo Realm was the first to speak up, his tone exceptionally spirited and generous, akin to a servant pledging to a master.

His surname was Qin, given name Han, a genius from the Qin family.

He was also Lou Manyue’s most loyal lackey!

Chapter 1289: Sparring for Entertainment

The Qin family is a vassal family of the Lou family and looks up to the Lou family as their leader.

Qin Han chose to speak first, both to show his loyalty to Lou Manyue and to set an example for others, encouraging them to help Lou Manyue investigate the matter, thereby winning her favor.

It can be said that although Qin Han appeared somewhat rough on the surface, he was actually not careless in the slightest. On the contrary, he knew exactly what he needed to do.

In this situation, as long as someone takes the lead, others will certainly follow suit, and even those who originally wanted to stay out of it would feel embarrassed not to express their stance.

It can be said that Qin Han had a very accurate grasp of people's psychology. As he spoke, indeed, many people immediately expressed their own attitudes as well.

"Rest assured, Lady Lou, our Xie family will do our utmost to help you find the murderer," the genius of the Xie family was the second to express his stance after Qin Han spoke.

"We are also willing to help Lady Lou."

"Such ruthless scoundrels, everyone should bring them to justice!"

There were also those standing on the high ground of morality, speaking passionately, but the central idea was still to express to Lou Manyue that they regard the Lou family as their leader and would spare no cost in tracking down and killing Lou Mangong's murderer.

After everyone had expressed their stance, Lou Manyue turned her gaze towards the genius of the Spirit Manor, hoping that he would also express his stance, after all, Spirit Manor is also a vast organization spanning across the Xuan Realm, and if they wanted to find someone, it wouldn't be difficult.

"Lady Lou, gathering information and finding people has always been the specialty of the Treasure Pavilion, you might want to refer to the Treasure Pavilion for help more than us. Our Spirit Manor is truly helpless in this matter."

The genius of the Spirit Manor didn't outright refuse, but even a deaf person could hear his implication – our Spirit Manor won't meddle in this matter, you should solve your own issues.

At the same time, he pushed the Treasure Pavilion to the forefront, which was tantamount to throwing the hot potato to the Ye Brothers.

"No need for Brother Lin to worry, Lady Lou has already come to our Treasure Pavilion with a large sum to find clues, and since we've been paid, we will naturally investigate the matter with full force."

Ye Yi and the others were not impressed with Lin Zihao, the genius of the Spirit Manor. Both sides were geniuses of formidable forces spanning the Tianxuan Continent, and it was normal for them not to be convinced by each other.

Hmm?

Lou Manyue noticed that the Ye Brothers and Lin Zihao of Spirit Manor were both disrespecting her by not expressing their stance when she proposed an alliance, and being dismissive when she requested everyone's help to find her brother's killer, making her face darken.

As the favored daughter of the Lou family, from a young age, Lou Manyue had almost always been pampered and went along with by everyone, and had never been treated like this, making her particularly annoyed.

Cough...

Seeing this scene, Qin Han's eyes twinkled, deciding to ease the somewhat awkward atmosphere on the scene, so he coughed to attract everyone's attention.

Once everyone's gaze was focused on him, Qin Han said: "We've enjoyed the tea and admired the moon, it's still early, why don't we have a martial arts competition for fun?"

Lou Manyue nodded and said: "That's a good suggestion, since we've decided to form an alliance, naturally, it's better to be familiar with each other's strengths, that way we can coordinate better."

"However, to avoid harming the harmony, remember to stop the sparring before going too far, otherwise, it would be disrespecting me, Lou Manyue."

Lou Manyue had her plans, she wanted to take this opportunity to gauge everyone's strength, allowing her to decide whom to discard or retain in future treasure hunts.

Qin Han didn't think that far, but seeing Lou Manyue agree to his suggestion, he was secretly pleased and then suggested again: "Ladies and gentlemen, having a martial arts competition is like tasting fine

food. We start with appetizers and move on to the main course. My suggestion is to start with our respective attendants, what do you think?"

"Mr. Qin has a point."

"It should be this way."

This suggestion of Qin Han quickly gained support from the majority, all feeling that if the geniuses themselves started off the competition, it would devalue their status. Letting the attendants duel first would also highlight the identity and prowess of their masters.

"Since everyone has no objections, then let's settle on this. Since it was my proposal, naturally my attendant will start first, Qin Hu, you're up!"

Qin Han sent his attendant Qin Hu out directly.

Qin Hu flew out of the pavilion, arriving in the air outside, and said: "Who is willing to come down and play?"

"Xie Zhong, go and keep him company. Remember, don't go too far," the genius of the Xie family instructed his attendant.

Xie Zhong silently nodded, stepping out into the void from Bao Tian Lanyue Pavilion step by step, each step very slow.

Although everyone present could do it, and even better than him, he still won over everyone's affection, at least he wasn't arrogant.

"Please instruct me!"

When Xie Zhong arrived at a distance of a hundred meters from Qin Hu, he clasped his hands and took a defensive stance first, clearly indicating he wouldn't attack first.

Ye Fan's gaze swept over the two of them, he sighed inwardly, knowing that although Xie Zhong was strong, he still had some gap compared to Qin Hu. If he started with an aggressive, storm-like attack, he might have a slim chance of winning, but now...

Even though the match hadn't started, Ye Fan could basically conclude that Xie Zhong would undoubtedly lose.

Sure enough, just as Ye Fan judged that Xie Zhong would lose, Qin Hu sneered and said: "Alright, I'll give you some pointers."

Swish!

Saying this, Qin Hu flicked his hands, and from his sleeves instantly appeared a pair of sharp claws about a foot long, crafted from fine steel, reflecting chilling glints under the moonlight.

This pair of claws had wrist guards exactly fitting on his wrists, as if they had grown into sharp steel claws on his hands.

Whoosh!

Qin Hu's figure flashed, leaping in front of Xie Zhong, launching a fierce attack, with the pair of claws striking towards Xie Zhong's critical points. Xie Zhong was caught off guard, forced to only parry, unable to counterattack at all.

The fight lasted only three minutes before Qin Han pointed his claws at Xie Zhong's throat and chest, a slight push would take Xie Zhong's life.

At this moment, sweat uncontrollably dripped down Xie Zhong's face. Although he had known he might not be Qin Hu's match, losing so quickly was still a bit unexpected for him.

At the same time, he was very impressed with Qin Hu's control over his own strength. To master such precision in a battle as fast as a storm or lightning is not easy to achieve.

"I lost!"

Xie Zhong admitted defeat with a bitter expression.

This result made the face of the Xie family's genius a bit unsightly, but he said nothing.

Some were pleased while others were troubled. Unlike the Xie family's genius, Qin Han was very delighted, laughing heartily and saying, "The match was very exciting, both sides performed well, Xiao Hu, come back!"

Whoosh!

Upon hearing this, Qin Hu immediately returned to the pavilion. Though he was slightly out of breath, he remained very composed, indicating that he hadn't exerted his full strength in this battle.

The first match ended. Thinking of Lou Manyue's earlier displeasure, Qin Han turned his gaze toward the five Ye brothers and said with a false smile, "Esteemed Ye family, let your attendant come down and play as well."

As he finished speaking, his gaze fell upon Ye Fan.

This was his first sight of Ye Fan, yet he looked at him sideways, full of disdain, as if to say: Don't you feel embarrassed bringing a late-stage True Yuan Realm attendant?

His reason for targeting the Ye brothers was not just to indirectly please Lou Manyue but also because they underestimated Ye Fan, who was only at the late-stage True Yuan Realm, while his own attendant was at the Peak of True Yuan Realm. It should be a sure thing for his attendant to defeat Ye Fan.

Swish!

Upon hearing Qin Han's words, the expressions of Ye Yi and his four companions turned strange.

On one hand, they had formed the Five Elements Formation against Ye Fan while suppressing their strength, and none of them were his match. Qin Hu lasting a single move against Ye Fan would be a miracle.

On the other hand, the crowd unanimously mistook Ye Fan for their attendant, which caused them some embarrassment.

"Ha, just a late-stage True Yuan Realm. If he can withstand three moves from me, I'll consider it my loss!"

Later, just as the impatient Ye Wu was about to explain the situation, Qin Hu, Qin Han's attendant, looked at Ye Fan with disdain and said arrogantly.

Arrogant!

It must be said, at this moment, Qin Han's attendant was quite arrogant, but Qin Han did not stop him and was happy to see this happen, as he also believed Ye Fan could not possibly be a match for Qin Hu.

And the more arrogant his attendant behaved, the more it displeased the Ye brothers. The Ye brothers' displeasure naturally pleased Lou Manyue.

"Of course, as attendants, we need to have the awareness of attendants. If you think you'll embarrass the Ye family's genius by going in, feel free not to compete, just admit defeat."

Seeing Ye Fan remain silent, Qin Hu spoke again, with a tone full of provocation.

"You..."

This time, Ye Wu was directly vexed and opened his mouth to explain.

However—

Before Ye Wu could say a word, Ye Fan stepped forward, standing in front of him, looking at Qin Hu without any expression, "If you can withstand one move from me, it's your win!"

His words shocked everyone!

As soon as Ye Fan spoke, the whole room was in shock.

Swish!

In the next moment, everyone simultaneously turned their gaze to Ye Fan, their eyes filled with surprise and skepticism.

Surprise, because the talents of Chi Yang City could never have imagined that Ye Fan would say such a thing.

Suspicion, because they were very curious about what gave Ye Fan such confidence!

In their view, if Ye Fan could remain undefeated against Qin Hu, it would already be a blessing!

After all, Ye Fan was just a little cultivator at the late-stage True Yuan Realm, while Qin Hu was a cultivator at the Peak of True Yuan Realm!

The Ye brothers were also quite amazed, but it wasn't at Ye Fan's assertive attitude.

They had already experienced Ye Fan's assertiveness before.

They were just puzzled why Ye Fan didn't clarify his identity and continued to be mistaken as their attendant.

Despite their puzzlement, the Ye brothers did not say anything and wore an expression of anticipation, not stopping the seemingly unfair contest.

"In that case, Xiao Hu, use all your strength in the battle. Don't let the geniuses of the Treasure Pavilion laugh at our Qin family!"

Qin Han didn't notice the joking expressions on the faces of the five Ye brothers but turned his head and spoke to his attendant Qin Hu with a gloomy face.

The implication was very clear, to teach Ye Fan a lesson with full force!

Chapter 1290: Two Slaps

Qin Han proposed a sparring match to liven things up. On one hand, it was to ease the awkward atmosphere and give Lou Manyue a way out. On the other hand, it was to let his follower teach Ye Fan a lesson, pleasing Lou Manyue.

In such a situation, Ye Fan's 'rash words' made Qin Han very angry!

He prepared to have his follower Qin Hu teach Ye Fan a harsh lesson, to vent Lou Manyue's anger while also showing Ye Fan how to be a proper follower—not speaking recklessly without the master's order!

“Ignorant of life and death!”

Upon hearing Qin Han’s words, the five Ye brothers sneered, sitting dignifiedly to the side, waiting to watch the fun.

The other geniuses at the tea party didn’t know Ye Fan’s background; they could only sense Ye Fan’s realm and, recalling Qin Hu’s prior performance, they all shook their heads, believing Ye Fan couldn’t possibly be Qin Hu’s match and was bound to lose.

While making this judgment, they were also puzzled—given the status and position of the five Ye brothers, their followers should at least be at the Peak of True Essence Realm, not just at the Late-stage True Yuan Realm.

Meanwhile, Lin Zihao, a genius of Spirit Manor, frowned slightly.

As a genius of Spirit Manor, he thought differently. Since Ye Yi and the others didn’t stop this seemingly unfair match, they must have confidence in something.

However, he was also curious about what gave Ye Fan the courage to speak such arrogant words?

Or rather, where did Ye Fan’s confidence come from?!

With everyone's eyes on them, Qin Hu respectfully said to his master Qin Han, "Please rest assured, Young Master Qin, I will do my utmost not to disappoint your expectations!"

"Hey!"

As he finished speaking, Qin Hu turned around, sneering at Ye Fan, "Your words are louder than your actions. Aren't you afraid the wind might snatch your tongue away? I mean it, three moves—if you can withstand three of my moves, I'll take my own life publicly!"

"Then go ahead and take your life!"

As soon as the words fell, Ye Fan moved!

Whoosh!

Ye Fan's figure flickered, appearing beside Qin Hu like a phantom. His right hand swung out, True Yuan surged over the back of his hand, wrapped in purple light, and a fierce slap landed on Qin Hu's face.

Smack!

The slap resounded sharply!

A crisp sound echoed clearly in everyone's ears at the scene.

“Ah...”

Qin Hu screamed, spiraling through the air from Ye Fan's slap, with two bloody teeth flying out along with a spray of blood, landing on the ground, vividly striking.

One slap.

Ye Fan slapped Qin Hu flying!

This outcome shocked the entire venue!

Except for the five Ye brothers, everyone dumbly watched Ye Fan, who seemed to have not moved, and Qin Hu, who was slapped flying, petrified.

Originally, they believed, Ye Fan, who was only at True Essence Realm, was undoubtedly going to lose!

However—

At this moment, Ye Fan effortlessly slapped Qin Hu, a cultivator of Peak True Yuan Realm, flying...

What concept is this?

For Ye Fan, to kill Qin Hu was as easy as chopping vegetables or slicing melons!

Moreover, if Ye Fan hadn't held back just now, Qin Hu would have become a cold corpse.

While the geniuses of Chi Yang City and Spirit Manor's difficult domain Lin Zihao were utterly shocked, the five Ye brothers remained calm; they had already anticipated this outcome.

In the morning, even when their five brothers suppressed their strength to Peak True Yuan Realm, they were not Ye Fan's match, let alone the small Qin Hu?

Qin Han was immensely shocked, then, shock turned into anger, his mind completely overwhelmed by rage, he shouted loudly, "It doesn't count, this doesn't count, this brat sneak-attacked, the match hadn't started, he attacked my follower by surprise, I request a rematch..."

Whoosh!

Before the words were finished, Qin Hu lunged fiercely at Ye Fan.

He believed it was his own carelessness that let Ye Fan successfully sneak attack him. If they truly faced each other, the outcome couldn't possibly be the same.

“Hoo!”

In a flash of movement, Qin Hu's True Yuan surged frantically in his body, with a punch nearly full force aimed at Ye Fan's head.

To him, Ye Fan only had two choices: retreat to avoid his sharpness or clash with him head-on with all his might; there were no other options.

The next moment.

His lips curled into a sinister smile.

Because his fist was nearly upon Ye Fan's body.

However—

He quickly realized that his fist hit nothing but Ye Fan's afterimage.

"What's going on?"

Qin Hu was tremendously shocked.

Smack!

The response to Qin Hu was another crisp sound; Ye Fan again backhandedly slapped Qin Hu's face, at the same spot.

This time, Ye Fan increased the force, completely dispersing Qin Hu's defensive True Yuan, hitting his face fiercely, nearly exploding his skull!

"Ah...!"

Qin Hu screamed again, like a fiercely whipped spinning top, swirling out and crashing to the ground with a thud. His Divine Soul quivered, his face as pale as paper.

At this moment, his face showed no trace of unwillingness, only fear!

Earlier, when Ye Fan slapped him flying, he thought Ye Fan had sneak-attacked, catching him unprepared.

Just now, he was the first to strike, but he was still sent flying by Ye Fan's slap...

This completely frightened him awake—his strength and Ye Fan's were simply not on the same level!

"He... he's only at the late-stage True Yuan Realm, how can he be this strong?"

After the shock and fear, Qin Hu stared blankly at Ye Fan, his heart completely occupied by this bewilderment.

At this moment, not only him, but everyone, aside from the Ye Brothers, including Lou Manyue and the Spirit Manor genius Lin Zihao, all looked at Ye Fan with faces full of surprise and doubt—Ye Fan's realm was merely the late-stage True Yuan Realm, so why did he possess such powerful combat strength?

Why?

The geniuses from families and sects close to the Lou Family looked a bit uneasy.

They originally wanted to see Qin Hu defeat Ye Fan, and then mock the Ye Brothers, but the result was the exact opposite, making them extremely embarrassed.

Among them, Qin family's genius Qin Han felt this the most!

His face turned a shade of green, feeling as if he had swallowed a fly while eating—utterly disgusting!

Lou Manyue's expression was equally unpleasant.

She lightly furrowed her brow, her gaze like a knife staring at Ye Fan, as if she wanted to see through him.

With her keen eyes, she could naturally see that Ye Fan defeated Qin Hu with almost no effort.

This was the most shocking part for her!

After all, even when she was at the late-stage True Yuan Realm, she couldn't defeat Qin Hu so easily.

However—

Despite being well-versed in reading people since childhood, Lou Manyue still couldn't detect any clues from Ye Fan's expression.

Ye Fan's expression was like a pool of dead water, extremely calm.

"Is he really just the Ye Brothers' follower?" Lou Manyue was filled with questions.

In her eyes, although the Ye Brothers were geniuses from the Treasure Pavilion and not lacking in strength, based on Ye Fan's stunning performance, there was no reason for him to be a mere follower of the Ye Brothers.

Moreover, recalling every little detail from before, she found that Ye Fan did not act humble in front of the Ye Brothers at all.

Thinking of this, Lou Manyue shifted her gaze and couldn't help but look towards where the Ye Brothers stood.

Qin Han stood not far from the Ye Brothers.

Originally, he planned to help Lou Manyue mock the Ye Brothers after Qin Hu defeated Ye Fan.

At this moment, seeing Lou Manyue's gaze sweeping over, his body trembled uncontrollably, his mouth slightly opened, trying to say something, but not knowing what to say to calm Lou Manyue's anger.

“Young Master Qin, I remember your follower once spoke arrogantly, saying if he couldn’t withstand three moves, he would commit suicide in public? Does the Qin family’s ethos mean one can ignore their words, or do they keep their promises?”

Just as Qin Han was feeling guilty, unsure of how to explain to Lou Manyue, Ye Wu spoke with a cold smile.

Although he was also defeated by Ye Fan, through their encounter, he held immense respect for Ye Fan’s strength and naturally didn’t want to see Ye Fan being belittled or humiliated!

“Young Master Qin...”

Upon hearing Ye Wu’s words, Qin Hu’s soul almost left his body, looking up at his master Qin Han, hoping Qin Han could save his life, while deeply regretting his previous words.

Unfortunately, there’s no medicine for regret in this world.

“Trash!”

Qin Han’s face turned ashen, he angrily shouted, and with a wave of his palm, struck towards Qin Hu’s head.

“Puff—”

With a muffled sound, Qin Hu’s head exploded without him uttering a single scream.

Hmm?

Seeing this scene, everyone was astonished.

Nobody expected Qin Han to be so ruthless, for the sake of preserving the Qin family’s face, he killed his follower without a second thought.

Ye Fan’s eyebrows also twitched.

He too did not expect Qin Han to be such a decisive and ruthless person.

Simultaneously, Lou Manyue’s face was somewhat unsightly.

She knew very well that everything Qin Han had done was to save face for her, but she didn’t expect to end up with such a negative outcome, hoisting a rock only to drop it on his own foot.

Apart from this, she also realized that if she didn't do something at this point, it would likely chill Qin Han's heart, and those who follow her might also have second thoughts.

Thinking of this, Lou Manyue slightly turned her body, glancing back at her follower.

Just one look, very brief.

But the meaning was clear!

"I am Lou Yi, would like to seek your guidance, hope you won't withhold from teaching!"

Lou Manyue's follower, grasping her meaning, stepped forward, his eyes like knives staring at Ye Fan. His voice was as cold as ice.