

Y Master 1321

Chapter 1321: Leading the Break of the Formation

Everyone was once again shocked by Ye Fan!

Even if they were unwilling to believe Ye Fan's words, reason told them that Ye Fan could indeed break this killing array.

If Ye Fan didn't have an exceptional understanding of this killing array, it would be impossible for him to explain its characteristics so thoroughly.

This was simply incredible to them!

After all, Ye Fan was just a disciple from a small sect in Tianyuan State...

And Qing Zi gritted his teeth with hatred but knew that if Ye Fan didn't lead everyone in breaking the array, given their abilities, they wouldn't know when they would succeed.

Moreover, even if they could break this killing array, the cost would not be small. Even if he didn't care, the two Saint Heirs and others would not agree.

“Brother Ye, how about this? If you are willing to lead everyone in breaking this killing array, the Tianxuan Saint and I guarantee your safety and will not let Qing Zi make a move against you, what do you think?”

At this moment, the Saint Heir of the Ancient Sacred Land stepped forward, proposing that Ye Fan lead everyone to break the array and enter the second layer of the underground palace. Meanwhile, he and the Tianxuan Saint would balance Qing Zi, preventing him from having any chance to strike.

The Tianxuan Saint also nodded and said: “That’s right, as long as Brother Ye is willing to lead everyone to break the array, I am willing to guarantee Brother Ye’s safety.”

Seeing the attitudes of the two Saint Heirs, Ye Fan sighed silently. He knew that using breaking the array as a bargaining chip to entice them to kill Qing Zi was unrealistic.

No matter what, Qing Zi’s sister was the fiancée of a genius of the Di Clan. Killing him would mean making an enemy of the Emperor Clan Ling Family.

Although the Ling Family had lost the Emperor Weapon, they were unwilling to provoke a clan that had once produced a Great Emperor, as the foundation of the Di Clan was too terrifying.

“Although I am willing to trust the promises of both of you, I still want to hear what he has to say!”

Saying this, Ye Fan turned his gaze towards Qing Zi, whose face was ashen. It was clear that he was forcing Qing Zi to make a statement!

Everyone present understood that if Qing Zi didn't make a venomous oath, Ye Fan would not lead the array-breaking efforts.

For Ye Fan, whether he broke the array or not made no difference, but they would lose the opportunity to seize a great chance.

No one knew how long the Mist Sea would remain open. Once time was up and the deadly killing intent returned, everyone would perish inside.

Thinking of this, everyone turned their gaze towards Qing Zi, with a clear meaning that he should make a venomous oath, ensuring he would not strike during Ye Fan's array breaking, or he would be the enemy of everyone.

Hmm?

Feeling the implication of everyone's gazes, Qing Zi was startled. He could see that if he didn't agree to make the venomous oath and tried to strike against Ye Fan again, it could provoke everyone's anger, and they might join forces against him.

"Fine, I swear..."

All of this made Qing Zi feel extremely aggrieved, but he had no choice but to make an insincere venomous oath, declaring he would not make a move during Ye Fan's array breaking.

“Brother Ye, Brother Qing has made a venomous oath now, do you feel reassured? A cultivator’s venomous oath is not something to be made lightly. Once broken, it will undoubtedly be fulfilled.”

After Qing Zi swore an extremely severe venomous oath, the Ancient Saint walked over and said to Ye Fan.

Ye Fan nodded, saying solemnly: “Everyone, step back. I need to deduce the location of the safe pathway!”

Now Ye Fan’s words were the imperial decree of the Great Emperor, no one dared to disobey. Even the two Saint Heirs retreated to a safe place, not daring to disturb Ye Fan’s thoughts.

Standing at the edge of the killing array, Ye Fan’s eyes shot out two rays of strange light, continuously deducing in his mind based on Elder Xuan’s guidance.

The most formidable aspect of the Star Chess Array was that it not only utilized Earth Vein Dragon Qi but also employed Heavenly Star Power. If one did not understand the trajectory of the array’s operation and ventured in recklessly, even a Lord Level strong person would be sliced alive by the array.

After thorough deduction, Ye Fan gradually figured out a safe pathway through the killing array, though this pathway was constantly changing.

Testing the path with a stone!

Even though Ye Fan had deduced the route to safety, he still needed to test it; otherwise, if he was wrong, he would be the first to die in the array.

Ye Fan threw a stone into the killing array. If his deduction was wrong, the stone would be ground into powder by the array; if he was right, nothing would happen.

The stone fell into the killing array without any reaction, not even a trace of corpse qi emerged, indicating that his deduction was correct.

“Everyone can come over now, stay close to me, and make no mistakes, otherwise I cannot guarantee your safety.

With those words, Ye Fan stepped directly into the killing array, his eyes emitting two rays of strange light, continuously deducing the next step’s landing point in his mind.

The Star Chess Array seemed very ordinary, without any distinctive features, but a single wrong step would activate the killing array, killing everyone here.

“If this child survives, he will definitely be extraordinary in the future!”

Seeing Ye Fan safely enter the killing array without being surrounded by corpse qi or encountering any accident, the older cultivators couldn’t help but sigh with emotion.

The Ancient Saint was the first to follow Ye Fan into the killing array, with Qing Zi closely behind.

Tianxuan Saint was behind him, with the two Saint Heirs sandwiching Qing Zi to prevent any unusual actions from him.

It's important to know that this was within the killing array, and except for Ye Fan, no one else could walk out alive. At this time, acting against Ye Fan meant disregarding the lives of everyone else.

The Star Chess Array was terrifying with its endless changes, as if Ye Fan's brain was a high-speed computer sorting out the tangled threads to reveal the safest pathway.

"That's nothing special, is it really that terrifying?"

Right after everyone delved into the killing array, a young cultivator skeptically tested his hand outside the path opened by Ye Fan.

He believed Ye Fan was being unnecessarily mysterious, thinking the killing array wasn't as terrifying as it seemed.

However——

The moment his hand reached outside the safe path, a surge of corpse energy suddenly shot up from the ground, enveloping him completely.

“Ah...”

The young cultivator let out a sky-splitting scream, and soon his entire body turned pitch black. His once healthy face quickly withered at a speed visible to the naked eye, turning him into what looked like a dried corpse.

“Hrrk hrrk...”

He made an unpleasant sound, akin to two pieces of metal grinding together, then positioned his hand like a knife, aiming it at the heart of a nearby elder cultivator.

“Foolish!”

The elder cultivator reacted swiftly, being at the peak of the Holy Embryo Realm, his hands flashed with light, and holy power morphed into a segment of purple vine, binding the young corpse-infested cultivator like a dumpling.

“Die for me!”

The elder cultivator shouted fiercely and tossed the man out from the safe passage.

A flash of light occurred, and before the body could even hit the ground, it was struck by a Light of Destruction from out of nowhere, instantly turning it to dust, from which black corpse energy emerged and idly lingered in the killing array.

“Let me reiterate: do not touch anything here, or you’ll bear the consequences!”

Ye Fan coldly glanced at the few young cultivators behind him, who had been scared speechless by this scene, and said, “This killing array is such that many parts are interconnected. Once triggered, no one escapes. It’s your choice how to proceed.”

“Everyone heard Brother Ye’s words, right? Let me put it bluntly, if anyone wants to die, I’d be happy to oblige, but don’t drag everyone else down!”

The Ancient Saint swept his killing intent from Qing Zi to everyone. He had seen the previous scene; had it not been for the elder cultivator’s quick reaction, any conflict sparked in the array wouldn’t end well for any of them.

“Indeed, no one is allowed to move recklessly anymore. Just follow us, and if anyone acts out of line, don’t blame me for being ruthless!” Tianxuan Saint echoed.

With the two Saints speaking, even the dissatisfied could only hold their tongues and refrain from making trouble.

Moreover, hadn't they already seen the young cultivator's fate?

In terms of strength, that young cultivator was about the same as them, and he couldn't even struggle before being taken over by corpse energy. If it were them, they'd likely face the same outcome.

Moving through the killing array, Ye Fan constantly changed directions, and sometimes had to backtrack a few steps to proceed, until finally he reached the edge of the killing array.

From there, the entrance to the second layer of the underground palace was clearly visible.

Seeing this scene, everyone breathed a sigh of relief, their gazes at Ye Fan filled with complex emotions.

On one hand, they were shocked by Ye Fan's superior abilities—this very killing array that even the Saints from two great sacred places and numerous elder cultivators couldn't break, was dismantled by him.

On the other hand, they lamented such a brilliant, endlessly potential young genius wasn't part of their faction.

If he grows in the future, he'll inevitably be a formidable competitor among the young geniuses of the Southern Domain.

At this moment, many were calculating in their minds, thinking such a genius shouldn't be allowed to live, else he'd become a future menace!

"Open up!"

After meticulous deduction, Ye Fan finally identified the location of the killing array's array eye. With a punch, he shattered the array eye, then stepped out, walking into the second underground palace.

Upon entering, Ye Fan immediately sensed something was wrong, as his entire body's True Yuan was unexpectedly sealed by some mysterious force, unable to exert even the slightest amount of power.

"What's going on? Is there some kind of restriction here?"

Ye Fan muttered to himself while observing his surroundings. The second layer of the underground palace was a vast hall-like space with several massive stone pillars standing around it.

Flames blazed on the stone pillars, brightly illuminating the entire space. The domed ceiling was inlaid with numerous spirit stones, their light sparkling like the starry sky.

Ahead, on the stone wall, was a giant bronze gate with many strange shapes of Xuan Beasts carved into it, like Qilin, resembling Divine Dragons.

At this moment, the Ancient Saint, Qing Zi, and Tianxuan Saint also rushed into the second underground palace.

“Heh heh...”

Qing Zi, not yet steady on his feet, let out a cold laugh filled with killing intent and said, “The killing array is broken, your death is upon you. Let’s see who can save you now?”

Chapter 1322: Body Combat (Making Up For Missed Chapters)

“Are you sure you can kill me?”

Ye Fan looked at Qing Zi mockingly, completely unafraid.

“Hmph! Even at death’s door, you’re still stubborn. Watch me cut you down...”

Just as he said this, Qing Zi suddenly realized that his Holy Power was actually being suppressed and he couldn’t exert it at all.

“Wh... what’s happening? My Holy Power has been sealed!” Qing Zi was greatly alarmed.

“My Holy Power is also sealed!”

“Mine too!”

At this moment, the Ancient Saint and Tianxuan Saint also noticed the anomaly here. A mysterious force was sealing the cultivators’ Holy Power, preventing them from exercising their powerful Holy Power.

“No wonder you’re so fearless. Did you know all along that everyone’s Holy Power would be sealed here?”

Qing Zi sneered coldly and continued, “But this doesn’t change your fate at all. Even without using Holy Power, I can kill you effortlessly.”

“Is that so? Then feel free to try!”

Ye Fan was not afraid at all and confronted Qing Zi head-on. Even without using Holy Power or True Yuan, he was unafraid to fight with just his physical body.

“Such courage!”

Qing Zi shouted angrily, about to make a move.

As a peerless genius of the Qing Family, Qing Zi had his pride. For so many years, besides the family ancestor and his sister, no one dared speak to him in such a manner.

“Brother Qing, hold on!”

The Tianxuan Saint moved and blocked Qing Zi, saying in a deep voice, “Brother Qing, the current situation is unclear. There are many dangers in the Thunder Venerable’s tomb. We must not fight among ourselves; we should advance and retreat together. What do you say?”

Qing Zi’s eyes flickered with light, and he seemed to make some kind of decision. He said coldly, “Brother Wang, there’s no need to say more. I must kill this person, otherwise, even if I seize a great opportunity, I would have no face to see everyone again.”

After hearing Qing Zi’s words, Tianxuan Saint Wang Ruisheng fell silent. He knew why Qing Zi said this—because Ye Fan had killed Qing Zi’s fiancée; if he didn’t avenge her, he couldn’t hold his head up in the Cultivation World!

Meanwhile, other cultivators also passed through the Killing Array and came to the second level of the underground palace. Just about to cheer, they suddenly sensed the atmosphere was strange and restrained themselves, looking at Qing Zi and Ye Fan with peculiar expressions.

They knew something about the enmity between the two. Not only had Ye Fan killed Qing Zi’s fiancée Lou Manyue, but he was also the killer of Lou Mangong.

Additionally, many young geniuses from Qing Province had died at the hands of this seemingly harmless young man.

Earlier, because they needed to break the array, and Qing Zi made a deadly vow not to act against Ye Fan in the Killing Array.

Now that the Killing Array was broken and everyone safely entered the second level of the underground palace, Qing Zi naturally would not endure any longer.

Here, Ye Fan could no longer threaten everyone by activating the Killing Array, and they were eager to see Ye Fan killed.

This little cultivator from Tianyuan State had stirred up endless turmoil in the tomb, making them resentful, while also sensing the threat!

In the previous encounter, Ye Fan had triggered the array's restrictions, resulting in several cultivators' Divine Souls being tainted by Corpse Qi, turning them into mindless demons obsessed with slaughter. Among these were their relatives and friends.

"Brother Qing, are you sure you want to do this?"

The Ancient Saint's eyes flashed with a hint of murderous intent. The Ancient Sacred Land and the Qing Family had long been at odds. Although there hadn't been any open conflicts, everyone knew there was discord between the two great forces.

"Ancient, do you intend to stop me?"

Qing Zi also knew that if he didn't act with strength now, he might not be able to kill Ye Fan, as the Ancient Saint might interfere.

"I have no such leisure, but I remind you that this is a grudge between you two; if you get beaten, don't call for help!"

The Ancient Saint laughed, though he didn't know what trump card Ye Fan held, the fact that he'd escaped Qing Zi's pursuit proved his exceptional skills.

Moreover, seeing Ye Fan so calm without any panic, the Ancient Saint believed Ye Fan must have some backing, and if Qing Zi attacked rashly, he might not gain any advantage.

Seeing Qing Zi suffer a loss would be delightful for him, and if anyone tried to assist Qing Zi, he wouldn't stand by idly.

In his view, Ye Fan was indeed a potential investment, worth supporting, and even if not for Ye Fan, he'd act for the prior enmity between the Ancient Sacred Land and the Qing Family.

"Prepare to die!"

Qing Zi shouted and threw a punch at Ye Fan's face, with great force. Even without using Holy Power, his physical strength was formidable.

“Just you?”

Ye Fan remained unafraid, swung a counterpunch, using Blood Gang from the Domineering Fist. His fist was wrapped in surging energy and blood, with an astonishing might.

Unable to use True Yuan and Holy Power, he was unafraid of battling any young genius. The power of the Nine Heavens Profound Body wasn't something an ordinary cultivator could imagine!

Especially since Ye Fan's Nine Heavens Profound Body seemed to have been Cultivated to the second realm, tempered by Thunder Liquid, and undergoing countless rebirths, making his body as strong as a Spiritual Artifact.

“This kid doesn't know his own limits, daring to fight Young Master Qing!”

“Even without Holy Power, he can't possibly be a match for Young Master Qing!”

“I bet he won't last a single move before being blasted away by Young Master Qing!”

Some young geniuses with close ties to the Qing Family saw that Ye Fan dared to confront Qing Zi and started discussing, almost all believing Ye Fan couldn't possibly match Qing Zi.

No wonder they thought that way. Ye Fan was merely at the Peak of True Yuan Realm and hadn't condensed the Holy Embryo to step into the Holy Embryo Realm.

In their eyes, no matter how strong Ye Fan's physical strength was, he was definitely not a match for Qing Zi, who had undergone the washing of Holy Power and reached the Holy Embryo Realm.

However, some elder cultivators slightly frowned without saying anything.

These elder cultivators, although only in the late-stage or Peak of the Holy Embryo Realm and hadn't entered the Divine Power Realm, had lived for many years. Their insight and knowledge couldn't be matched by these young people.

From Ye Fan's fearless expression, they could guess that Ye Fan must have something to rely on. Although they didn't know what it was, it didn't affect their judgment.

If Qing Zi wanted to defeat Ye Fan, it might not be so easy, and with one wrong move, he might even lose.

At this moment, Ye Fan's fist collided with Qing Zi's.

"Crack!"

The sound of a bone breaking, accompanied by a scream, echoed through the second underground palace. Ye Fan, like a heavenly god, maintained his punching posture like a statue, without even a tremor in his fist.

Looking at Qing Zi, his face was twisted with pain, and his right fist was bent weirdly, clearly fractured.

One punch!

Relying solely on physical strength, Ye Fan injured Qing Zi with a single punch!

“Hiss~”

This scene made everyone involuntarily gasp, their gazes at Ye Fan filled with fear.

How could this be possible?

In a pure physical brawl, Qing Zi couldn't be a match for Ye Fan?

At that moment, those cultivators who assumed Ye Fan wasn't Qing Zi's match were completely bewildered.

Everyone was very clear about Qing Zi's strength, having cultivated to the pinnacle of the Holy Embryo Realm, only one step away from comprehending Elemental Power and entering the Divine Power Realm.

However—

Such a powerful genius, unable to use Holy Power, wasn't a match for Ye Fan, a little cultivator at the Peak of True Yuan Realm. They could hardly believe their eyes.

"No... this is impossible!"

Qing Zi looked at his shattered fist incredulously, shouted, and quickly took an elixir pill into his mouth.

Crackle!

With the sound of bones snapping, Qing Zi's shattered fist bones instantly healed, and it seemed he could use some Holy Power.

As the leading family in the Southern Domain, the Qing family naturally lacked neither precious elixir pills nor forbidden artifacts. Qing Zi, as the hope and future of the clan, carried many good items.

"Give me your life!"

Qing Zi, looking crazed, clawed with both hands. Though unable to use Holy Power, he nonetheless executed his unique martial arts, the Golden Peng Thirteen Strikes.

The Golden Peng Thirteen Strikes were purely a clawing technique. His hands became like the sharp talons of a Golden Roc, capable of tearing through Holy Armor.

“The one who will die is you!”

Ye Fan pounced without hesitation, both fists out, once again using the Domineering Fist to counter.

“Bang! Bang!”

The two loud noises sounded in everyone’s ears. Qing Zi, as if hit by a furious Xuan Beast, was flung backward in midair and fell heavily to the ground.

Meanwhile, Ye Fan’s sleeves were gone, and ten white marks appeared on his arms.

Clearly, he had been hit by Qing Zi’s Golden Peng Thirteen Strikes. But Ye Fan’s body was incredibly tough, and Qing Zi’s full-force double claw only left white marks on Ye Fan’s arms, not harming him at all.

“You’re done, now it’s my turn!”

Ye Fan shouted, launching his movement technique, rapidly closing the distance to Qing Zi, and using the Domineering Fist’s most powerful move: Domineering Fist.

He wanted to completely kill Qing Zi!

Since enmities had already been formed, he certainly wouldn’t show mercy. For someone who wanted to kill him, sending them off was the best choice.

Moreover, Qing Zi had killed five of the Ye Family brothers!

This grudge must be avenged!

Chapter 1323: Peerless Freak

Ye Fan took the lead in breaking the formation, leading the group into the second layer of the underground palace. Before they could go deeper, Qing Zi made a move, attempting to kill him.

In response, Ye Fan chose to confront him head-on, relying on his mighty physical strength to injure Qing Zi with a punch, and then engaged in a fierce battle with him.

“Bang!”

In the heat of the battle, despite Qing Zi using every technique to block, he was still sent flying by Ye Fan's punch, feeling particularly stifled.

At the same time, he was also extremely shocked. As the future hope of the Qing Family, Qing Zi had been raised on the milk of a Xuan Beast since birth, his constitution vastly different from ordinary people.

A bit older, he tempered his body with the essence blood of Xuan Beasts, his strength and physical toughness surpassing cultivators of the same realm.

Especially after successfully condensing a Holy Embryo, Qing Zi further refined his body with Holy Power. Besides his bloodline, his physical strength could definitely stand out among his generation.

This is why he insisted on attacking Ye Fan despite knowing he couldn't use Holy Power.

He believed that even without Holy Power, with his strength and physical toughness, killing a mere Ye Fan was not a problem.

However—

What he didn't expect was that although Ye Fan's realm was far inferior to his, his physical strength was even more terrifying than his.

This... was unacceptable to him!

In fact, Ye Fan was also a bit surprised, shocked that Qing Zi's body was exceptionally strong as well.

Even though he had the upper hand, it was impossible to kill Qing Zi in a short time.

Geniuses in the Holy Embryo Realm are not so easily killed, even in a place where Holy Power cannot be used.

"Ah..."

Constantly being suppressed, Qing Zi was furious. Ignoring his injuries, he forcefully performed a Forbidden Technique from the Qing Family's secret skills, rapidly swelling his physical strength.

"I refuse to believe I can't kill you!"

With disheveled hair, looking like a madman, Qing Zi's eyes were blood-red as he grappled with Ye Fan in a bare-knuckle fight.

Having used the Forbidden Technique, Qing Zi's overall strength was almost on par with Ye Fan, the two evenly matched, neither able to do anything to the other.

Witnessing all this, the crowd was dumbfounded!

"Why is Ye Fan's body so strong?"

In their shock, their hearts were filled with this question.

In their view, Ye Fan was just in the True Essence Realm, yet his body was so strong. If he entered the Holy Embryo Realm, purely in terms of physical strength, the heirs of the Holy Land and Di Clan would be no match for him.

Why?

No answer!

Just as Ye Fan and Qing Zi were fiercely battling, the huge bronze gate ahead slowly opened at some point, and a black mist began to seep out.

In the black mist, rows of corpse soldiers donned in Black Iron armor emerged in an orderly fashion, full of murderous intent!

“Not good, the corpse soldiers have appeared again!”

A cultivator, looking unintentionally toward the bronze gate, suddenly noticed a large number of corpse soldiers continuously pouring out from the bronze gate and exclaimed in shock.

“This is big trouble!”

Tianxuan Saint grimaced and then shouted to Ye Fan and Qing Zi, “You two, stop fighting! Dealing with these corpse soldiers is more important!”

“How can there be so many corpse soldiers?”

The cultivators, seeing a massive number of corpse soldiers emerging from the bronze gate, were so frightened their legs almost cramped.

They had faced the corpse soldiers before and knew their terrifying nature, especially the corpse qi, which could definitely corrode a cultivator’s divine soul once it invaded.

Back then, they could rely on their Holy Power to resist the corpse qi. Now that the Holy Power was completely restricted, they felt like crying.

“You two, stop it!”

Seeing Ye Fan and Qing Zi unwilling to stop, the Ancient Saint and Tianxuan Saint glanced at each other, quickly intervening, standing between Ye Fan and Qing Zi.

Tianxuan Saint blocked Qing Zi from continuing, while the Ancient Saint prevented Ye Fan from attacking Qing Zi.

There were already not many cultivators who entered the second layer of the underground palace. If they continued to fight amongst themselves, they would surely be no match for the corpse soldiers.

It was hard to get here, and to retreat now would be heart-wrenching for them.

“Wang Ruisheng, don’t stop me, let me kill this kid!”

Qing Zi, driven mad, struggled to break free of Tianxuan Saint’s restraint, desperately wanting to fight Ye Fan to the death.

However, having battled Ye Fan for some time, his stamina was greatly depleted, making it nearly impossible to break free from Tianxuan Saint’s hold.

After being stopped by the Ancient Saint, Ye Fan did not continue his attack. He also noticed the corpse soldiers and was well aware of their menace.

Moreover, he realized that although he had the upper hand, killing Qing Zi, who had endless trump cards, was almost impossible.

Instead of mutual destruction, it was better to cease fire and deal with these corpse soldiers, or all would perish here if the soldiers gained the advantage.

“Are you done?”

Seeing the corpse soldiers drawing closer, with Qing Zi still unrelenting, Tianxuan Saint roared angrily, “Brother Qing, come to your senses! Here, Holy Power is restricted; we cannot fight these corpse soldiers using Holy Power. Look, there are so many corpse soldiers. If we don’t cooperate sincerely, we will all die here, including you!”

Qing Zi, momentarily blinded by anger, regained his composure upon hearing Tianxuan Saint’s roar and was terrified at seeing dozens of corpse soldiers.

More than terrified, Qing Zi felt stifled!

His realm was clearly superior to Ye Fan’s, yet due to the restriction of Holy Power here, he was relentlessly suppressed by Ye Fan, making a fool of himself in front of everyone.

The most shocking still was Ye Fan's formidable body and strength.

The Golden Peng Thirteen Strikes was a highly sharp attack secret technique. His hands, after being refined by Holy Power, could easily break metal, yet they only left white marks on Ye Fan upon striking.

Whether shocked or frustrated, Qing Zi understood that continuing the fight was purely asking for humiliation.

Given Ye Fan's current state, he is bound to ultimately lose!

To put it another way, even if he keeps fighting without losing, when his energy is depleted, he'll surely die at the hands of these corpse soldiers.

"We don't have time. If you all continue fighting, we won't stick around. Whatever opportunity there is, forget it, I don't want to die here!"

The Ancient Saint coldly chuckled while looking at Qing Zi, fully aware that Ye Fan was sensible. Although he wished Ye Fan would kill Qing Zi, he knew Qing Zi couldn't die yet.

Likewise, Ye Fan couldn't die; otherwise, the rest of them would have to retreat the way they came.

"Fine, I'll let you live a little longer!"

Qing Zi stubbornly retorted, knowing full well he wouldn't win against Ye Fan if they continued fighting, but still left some harsh words.

Ye Fan smiled faintly, not taking his words seriously at all.

Meanwhile, the corpse soldiers were less than a hundred meters away from everyone.

The group quickly discussed, and it was decided that Ye Fan, Qing Zi, the Ancient Saint, and the Tianxuan Saint would each lead a team in four directions to attack these corpse soldiers.

No one objected to Ye Fan leading a team, as in this special environment, his combat power was much stronger than theirs.

...

At the same time, news that Ye Fan had taken the lead in breaking through the Star Chess Array and physically overpowering Qing Zi in the second layer of the underground palace spread through special channels to the outside of the Thunder Gate.

The news was leaked by the Saint of the Ancient Sacred Land, intending to embarrass the Qing family — what's the number one genius in the Southern Domain? Humiliated by Ye Fan of the True Essence Realm in public!

When the Ancient Saint received the news, he was initially shocked, but then he turned his eyes and loudly announced the news leaked by the Ancient Saint.

“Latest news...”

The Ancient Saint used divine power, his voice booming like a bell, ensuring everyone could hear it even if they didn’t want to, not to mention that the people outside were all keenly listening for information.

“...that Ye Fan kid didn’t die, he made it to the depths of the first layer of the underground palace, led the way in breaking through the Star Chess Array at the second layer’s entrance, and entered the second layer...”

“Wha... what? It’s impossible!”

“Ye Fan clearly jumped into Thunder River, how could he have survived?”

“Incredible, that kid must have some life-saving spiritual artifact on him, otherwise there’s no way he could have survived!”

This piece of news instantly caused an uproar outside the Thunder Gate, with forces from every state discussing it.

The Ancestor of the Lou Family looked as though he'd swallowed a fly, his expression as unpleasant as could be.

He greatly doubted the truthfulness of this message, but his rational mind told him that the Ancient Saint wouldn't joke about something like this.

Since the message came from the Ancient Saint, it shouldn't be wrong, but how did that Ye Fan kid survive?

The Qing Family Ancestor's expression also changed. Although he hadn't seen the terror of Thunder River firsthand, he could guess it from the information Qing Zi sent back.

Even Qing Zi didn't dare venture into Thunder River, which must have been filled with destructive power, so how did Ye Fan survive?

Unlike them, Yaling's lips curled into a long-lost smile.

"I knew you wouldn't die so easily."

As the leader of the expedition, Yaling felt terrible because all five Ye Brothers who came to seize the opportunity died within the tomb, a considerable loss for the Treasure Pavilion.

“What kind of background does this Ye Fan have? He actually knows the Star Chess Array, truly a prodigy of the ages.”

“Could he be an illegitimate child of some powerful clan?”

Some neutral sects and clans were speculating, believing that Ye Fan might be an illegitimate child of some major power, if not an imperial clan, then must have strong background and origins.

“Ahem! There’s more news!”

The Ancient Saint cleared his throat and continued, “After breaking the formation and entering the second layer of the underground palace, a mysterious forbidden restriction inside seals all of a cultivator’s power, leaving only physical strength.”

“The Qing family kid hastily attacked after entering the second layer, intending to kill the Ye kid, but unexpectedly was suppressed and humiliated in public in physical combat... hehe...”

In the end, the Ancient Saint couldn’t help but laugh, glancing mockingly in the direction of the Qing Family Ancestor.

“Impossible! That kid couldn’t possibly be a match for him!”

The Qing Family Ancestor was infuriated, his face turning livid, almost steaming from the ears; he couldn't accept that his family's genius was beaten by a mere True Essence Realm ant.

"Heh, are you accusing me of lying?"

The Ancient Saint laughed coldly, "Of course, I also find it incredible... after all, your family kid is hailed as the number one genius in the Southern Domain..."

"Hiss~"

The Qing Family Ancestor shuddered in anger but did not respond, nor did he make a move.

Although he was infinitely close to the Venerable Realm, the Saint of the Ancient Sacred Land was no weaker, and if they fought, no one could predict the outcome.

Moreover, it was just a battle of words, not in the style of strong people like them to resort to violence over it.

"This kid is a freak!"

Zuo Fengshan shook his head with a wry smile at Jueluo Empire Emperor Lei Xiaotian.

“This kid is indeed a freak!”

Lei Xiaotian fully agreed with Zuo Fengshan’s statement; even at the True Essence Realm, he could suppress Qing Zi, the so-called number one genius in the Southern Domain. What else could he be but a freak?

Chapter 1324: Through the Second Level

Outside the Thunder Gate, the many strong people were again shocked beyond measure by Ye Fan’s actions, and discussions continuously emerged.

Inside the underground palace, Ye Fan was unaware of all this; he was currently in the midst of a difficult battle.

Though the Holy Power and True Yuan of cultivators were suppressed in the second layer of the underground palace, the same suppression applied to the corpse soldiers’ Corpse Qi—they could not use the Corpse Qi to attack the crowd and had to rely solely on powerful physical strength and martial arts.

There was no coffin in the second layer of the underground palace, but there were many vessels, likely burial items, although none of them were valuable and were instead everyday items.

Fortunately, these vessels provided some obstruction, allowing Ye Fan and the others to maneuver against the corpse soldiers.

Though the bodies of the corpse soldiers were as hard as refined gold, their movements were not swift, allowing the group to breathe a sigh of relief amidst the tension.

In the complete absence of Holy Power and True Yuan, physical strength became increasingly important.

The elder strong individuals could kill the corpse soldiers noticeably faster than the young cultivators because their bodies had been refined by Holy Power over a much longer period.

Even without using Holy Power, they had a more refined control over their strength compared to the young cultivators.

However—

There was a clear gap compared to the Ancient Saint Heir, Tianxuan Saint Heir, and Qing Zi.

The two saints had cultivated the Holy Embryo Realm to its peak, and their physical strength was equally powerful, swiftly killing the corpse soldiers.

These corpse soldiers felt no pain; they had to be struck in the head or have their limbs severed to be killed; otherwise, they would continue to fight.

Initially, no one knew how to deal with these corpse soldiers except for Ye Fan, whose speed in killing them was the fastest.

No corpse soldier lasted more than three moves in his hands before he shattered their heads, causing them to fall with a crash.

The formidable physical strength he displayed while dealing with the corpse soldiers was incomparable, even stronger than during his battle with Qing Zi, making everyone's eyelids twitch.

Everyone was curious, wondering what kind of monster Ye Fan was or what encounter he might have had; how could his physical body be this strong?

This already surpassed their understanding!

Though the two saints and Qing Zi were not slow in killing the corpse soldiers, compared to Ye Fan, it was like a child's play to a grandmaster, not even on the same level.

"Pow!"

A muffled sound, and the head of a corpse soldier was smashed by Ye Fan's punch; black liquid splattered as Ye Fan's feet moved ghostly a few times to dodge the black liquid.

This black liquid, splashing onto the ground, quickly corroded the hard stone into small pits, emitting an unpleasant smell, indicating how potent the toxin in the black liquid was.

As one corpse soldier after another was slain, the number of corpse soldiers in the second layer of the underground palace dwindled, and Ye Fan was the first to attack toward the bronze gate.

The bronze gate was the entrance to the third layer of the underground palace and also the stronghold of these corpse soldiers; the corpse soldiers had to be completely cleared before entering the third layer of the underground palace.

Ye Fan did not know if there were similarities between the tombs in the Xuan Realm and those on Earth, especially since Thunder Venerable did not follow ordinary paths, making his tomb even harder to predict.

Corpse soldiers continually gushed out from the bronze gate, and no one knew how many were inside, but at this point, there was no turning back, and everyone could only grit their teeth and fight through.

"If you can use a Spiritual Artifact, do so to save energy; we don't know how many corpse soldiers are left."

After killing an unknown number of corpse soldiers, Ye Fan suddenly remembered he had a replica of the Thunder Emperor Spear in his Space Bag; though it was a forgery, it might be quicker against these corpse soldiers than bare hands, right?

Thinking this, Ye Fan hastily checked his Space Bag, only to find out that without the use of True Yuan, he couldn't open the Space Bag.

“We can’t use Holy Power, so what do we do if we can’t open the Space Bag?”

It wasn’t just Ye Fan; everyone else was the same, unable to open their Space Bags, and even if they had Spiritual Artifacts, they couldn’t be used, leaving them no choice but to fight the corpse soldiers with their bare hands.

At this moment, Ye Fan suddenly spotted a large furnace underfoot, a meter high, appearing very heavy, with three legs and two ears, exuding a majestic presence.

Without a second thought, Ye Fan grabbed one leg of the bronze furnace with one hand and swung it fiercely at an approaching corpse soldier.

Bang!

The bronze furnace, incredibly heavy, combined with Ye Fan’s strength and the force of the swing, smashed the corpse soldier to pieces.

“Hiss...”

Witnessing this violent scene, everyone gasped in shock, and their eyes toward Ye Fan changed.

In their eyes, Ye Fan seemed like a human-shaped Xuan Beast, having fought for so long yet still possessed such tremendous strength—it was simply incredible.

Seeing Ye Fan's one-hit kill with the bronze furnace, cultivators started to mimic, searching for another bronze furnace.

"Rise for me!"

One cultivator shouted, straining his face red and neck thick, barely lifting the bronze furnace; it wasn't even usable against enemies, but at least he didn't smash himself.

Ye Fan's move was not something everyone could imitate; without sufficient strength, it was impossible.

The Ancient Saint Heir and Tianxuan Saint Heir both tried to imitate, as their strength was not inferior to Ye Fan's, allowing them to similarly use weapons to fight.

"Hmph!"

Seeing this, Qing Zi snorted coldly, also lifting an incense burner similar to Ye Fan's furnace, and smashed it down on the corpse soldiers before him.

Clearly, none of them wanted to be outdone by Ye Fan.

After a tough battle, everyone finally fought their way to the bronze gate, completely killing the corpse soldiers in the second layer of the underground palace.

Behind the bronze gate was pitch black; no one knew what lay inside.

But there was only this one entrance in the second layer of the underground palace, so the entrance to the third layer must be here.

Boom!

After a short rest, just as everyone was ready to head towards the bronze gate, it suddenly slammed shut with a booming sound.

“What happened?”

“Could there be some new development?”

The sudden change left everyone looking at each other, filled with confusion and apprehension.

“Let’s try together to see if we can push it open!”

The Ancient Saint suggested.

“Alright!”

The Ancient Saint’s suggestion quickly received unanimous agreement from everyone.

“Open!”

Everyone placed their palms against the bronze gate, shouting loudly, exerting their strength simultaneously.

However, the bronze gate seemed like a Divine Mountain, completely unmoving. Despite their red faces from exertion, they couldn’t push the gate open.

“Everyone, something’s wrong. If it could be pushed open, with our strength, we would have done it by now. It definitely can’t be opened by brute force; there must be a Forbidden mechanism.”

Ye Fan quickly realized that the bronze gate was the tomb door to the main burial chamber. Although Thunder Venerable master had never been to Earth, the design principles of tombs were similar.

He even believed that Thunder Venerable master deliberately set this as a test; if they couldn’t even open the tomb door, they were not qualified to receive the inheritance and treasures.

“Then tell us, how should this bronze gate be opened?” Qing Zi stared coldly at Ye Fan, wishing he could swallow Ye Fan alive.

Ye Fan ignored Qing Zi and started examining the patterns on the bronze gate and the nearby items.

In his view, if there was a Forbidden mechanism, it must be among these elements, as this was the design principle of Imperial Family tombs on Earth.

The bronze gate was immense, engraved with various patterns, including dragons and phoenixes, legendary creatures.

Though the Xuan Realm doesn't regard dragons as the totem of the Huaxia Clan like on Earth, they still hold a deep reverence for dragons, creatures only existing in legends.

Ye Fan examined all the creatures on the bronze gate, then tentatively pressed a few suspicious spots, but there was no response from the bronze gate.

“Hmph! You're just embarrassing yourself by continuing without capability!”

Qing Zi never missed a chance to strike against Ye Fan. Their deep-seated enmity was unresolvable, and he would seize any opportunity to act against Ye Fan.

However, it was evident by now that no one knew how to open the massive bronze gate, and everyone pinned their hopes on Ye Fan. He couldn't afford any wrong moves at this moment.

Moreover, he knew well enough that even if he fought, it wouldn't be advantageous; he thoroughly understood the terrifying aspect of Ye Fan's physical combat prowess earlier.

There was no hope at the bronze gate, so Ye Fan checked the surroundings but still found no suspicious areas.

"Could it be that Master's experience is useless here?"

Ye Fan, grumbling internally, aimlessly glanced around. This method of finding the way to open a tomb door was a skill taught by Chu Xuanji, falling outside the realm of the Outer Eight Sects.

Hmm?

Suddenly, Ye Fan noticed a huge wolf head sculpture on the bronze gate, lifelike but without pupils, looking particularly eerie.

"Lift me up there!"

Ye Fan said to the Ancient Saint and the Tianxuan Saint.

The two exchanged glances, grabbed Ye Fan's shoulders from either side, and with a combined effort and Ye Fan's own jumping ability, he was propelled onto the top of the bronze gate, pressing his hands into the wolf head's eyes!

Click!

A slight sound echoed, followed by a rumbling noise, as the bronze gate slowly opened, revealing the passage within!

"That's it!"

Ye Fan let out a long breath, slowly descended, landing right at the threshold of the bronze gate!

"I assure you, your luck ends here. If you dare to enter next, I will definitely cut you down!"

As soon as the bronze gate opened, Qing Zi sneered, rushing swiftly to the entrance, determined to be the first to enter the third layer of the underground palace.

"The restrictions inside might not continue to suppress Holy Power. Will he really go in?"

With Qing Zi's words, many turned their gaze to Ye Fan, filled with curiosity.

Whoosh!

In the next moment.

Ye Fan's figure flickered, and he was the first to enter the passage.

He responded with action!

Chapter 1325: Immortal Elixir

"Heh, doesn't know life from death!"

Qing Zi didn't expect Ye Fan to actually dare to be the first to rush into the passage. With a sneer, he and the Ancient Saint and the Tianxuan Saint, all rushed towards the bronze gate without distinguishing who was first.

"Oh my god, he's really gone in?"

"He's too arrogant, people like that usually don't live long!"

“Once the Forbidden doesn’t constrain the Holy Power, he’s definitely not a match for Qing Zi, he’s doomed!”

“What a pity, such a genius, to die here!”

Seeing Ye Fan enter the bronze gate without hesitation, cultivators started discussing, believing that Ye Fan could no longer have such good fortune, even if the Ancient Saint wanted to protect him, he couldn’t.

The Ancient Sacred Land and the Qing Family, although they had old grievances, had not reached the point of tearing each other apart. It’s impossible for them to fight Qing Zi for a little Ye Fan.

Especially since Qing Zi’s strength is not inferior to that of the Ancient Saint. If they really fought, it’s hard to predict who would win or lose. The Ancient Saint wouldn’t take that risk.

After all, the scramble for opportunity is of utmost importance, and he couldn’t sacrifice the great opportunity to protect Ye Fan.

These cultivators also rushed into the dark passage with their movement techniques after the four of them entered.

They knew well that although they might not be able to compete for fortunes with the two Saint Heirs and Qing Zi, it’s possible for them to sip the soup while others eat the meat.

Thunder Venerable Master was the number one person under the Great Emperor. No one would believe that there are no good things in this passage tomb.

The passage wasn't long. In just the blink of an eye, Ye Fan crossed the passage and entered the Third Layer of the underground palace.

This was a hall, extremely vast, with not a single pillar, with a dome-shaped ceiling. The hall was filled with soft light, but the source of light was unknown.

As Ye Fan entered the hall, Qing Zi, the Ancient Saint, and the Tianxuan Saint also rushed in without distinguishing who was first.

"Huh? Where does that medicinal aroma come from? It's so potent!"

The Tianxuan Saint exclaimed, quickly rushing toward the source of the aroma.

"This scent? Could it be an Immortal Elixir?"

The Ancient Saint's eyes lit up, rushing toward the source of the aroma without caring about anything else, determined not to let the Immortal Elixir fall into the hands of the Tianxuan Saint.

“I’m definitely getting that Immortal Elixir; don’t even think about snatching it from me!”

Upon hearing that the fragrance ahead was from the legendary Immortal Elixir, Qing Zi no longer bothered to cause trouble for Ye Fan. In a flash of light, he chased after the Ancient Saint.

His cultivation was equal to that of the Ancient Saint and the Tianxuan Saint. Without the Forbidden to constrain the Holy Power, his speed was in no way slower than the two Saint Heirs.

Ye Fan’s heart stirred, and he rushed over quickly, believing that with Elder Xuan’s help, as long as he could pick the Immortal Elixir, it would undoubtedly be his. Neither the two Saint Heirs nor Qing Zi could compete with him.

Behind him, other cultivators also rushed in. Even though these old strong people had never seen an Immortal Elixir, they could guess that such an aroma must be from an Immortal Elixir. Aside from the Immortal Elixir, not even Divine Medicine had such a rich scent.

Immortal Elixirs are extremely precious, with not many in the entire Xuan Realm. Each Immortal Elixir is unique, capable of allowing a Great Emperor to live another lifetime, showing its preciousness.

A Great Emperor already stood at the absolute peak of this world, and nothing could prolong the life of a Great Emperor except for the Immortal Elixir.

Though Thunder Venerable Master had not proven his Dao to become an emperor, he was the number one under the Great Emperor. Even a Quasi-Emperor wasn't his match, so possessing an Immortal Elixir was possible.

Immortal Elixirs have spirits, and aside from the strongest, they will not follow anyone. Even if someone is lucky enough to obtain an Immortal Elixir, they will eventually lose it.

These were told to him by Elder Xuan.

The Nine Heavens Xuan Emperor once had an Immortal Elixir following him, so Elder Xuan understood Immortal Elixirs better than anyone else.

The Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi grew more and more concentrated, almost becoming liquid. In such an environment, Ye Fan's Nine Heavens Profound Skill operated autonomously, quickly absorbing the surrounding Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi.

Suddenly, Ye Fan saw a small pool not far ahead, filled with mist and emitting a precious light.

In the center of the pool, a budding Nine-colored Immortal Lotus emitted a mesmerizing light, with drops of Heaven and Earth Source Liquid continuously dripping down from above the pool.

"It's a Nine-colored Immortal Lotus?"

The Ancient Saint was so excited that his face flushed. As the Saint Heir of the long-standing Ancient Sacred Land, he knew much about the secrets of the Cultivation World.

The Nine-colored Immortal Lotus was one of the few Immortal Elixirs, definitely exclusive to the Great Emperor. It was unexpected that Thunder Venerable Master had subdued it; it was truly challenging.

Just as everyone was still some distance from the Nine-colored Immortal Lotus, it suddenly rose from the pool, transformed into a peerlessly beautiful woman in a flash of light, more sacred even than the Holy Maiden of the Sacred Land.

“Quick, chase it, don’t let it escape!”

The Ancient Saint, experienced and knowledgeable, knew that the Immortal Elixir would transform into a human. Once it escaped, it would be difficult to see it again, let alone pick it.

“Restrain it!”

The Ancient Saint, the Tianxuan Saint, and Qing Zi simultaneously acted, unleashing a light of restraint, trying to pin down the Immortal Elixir. As for to whom the Immortal Elixir would ultimately belong, that would depend on strength.

But what’s most important now is to first confine the Immortal Elixir, not allowing it to escape, otherwise it’s really like drawing water with a basket—an exercise in futility.

The glow from three restraints falls on the woman formed from the Nine-colored Immortal Lotus, but she easily dissipates them.

Then, she flickers—in an instant disappearing from everyone’s sight at a speed that leaves them slack-jawed.

“Where are you running?!”

At this moment, an elder strongman shouts, smashing the void with a palm, attempting to intercept the Nine-colored Immortal Lotus.

Boom!

With his action, the entire Third Layer of the underground palace suddenly transforms, shifting stars and moving heavens, beams of Slaughter Light shoot forth, instantly reducing that elder cultivator to a sieve, ending his life.

Not just him, even those around him suffer from the calamity, affected by the beams of Slaughter Light, dying on the spot.

In a brief moment, five of the cultivators who entered are already dead, leaving only a dozen people.

Everyone looks at each other, bewildered by what's happening—those beams of Slaughter Light are extremely sharp, completely disregarding everyone's defenses. Had they not been at a distance, none would have escaped death.

"Anyone who dares to act recklessly, don't blame me for being rude. This place is riddled with restrictive enchantments; once triggered, we're all doomed."

Witnessing this scene, the Ancient Saint's face turns ashen, gloomily warning everyone while keeping an eye on Qing Zi, preventing him from making rash moves towards Ye Fan.

Qing Zi's face looks very grim. He originally planned to seize the Immortal Elixir first, then act against Ye Fan—slay him. Unexpectedly, such a twist occurred.

"Brother Qing, you absolutely mustn't act rashly. If you trigger the enchantments, none of us will make it out alive; that's not the result you desire, is it?"

Tianxuan Saint also communicates with Qing Zi, urging him to be patient, not to act on impulse causing irreparable consequences.

Qing Zi nods slightly with a steely face, indicating he knows what to do. Although Lou Manyue was his fiancée, she's already dead; the dead cannot come back to life. No matter how consumed by hatred, it's futile.

Ye Fan is merely an ant of the True Essence Realm, not worth perishing with him. Once out of here, he can eliminate him anytime. There's no rush now.

Seeing Qing Zi reconsider, Tianxuan Saint secretly breathes a sigh of relief, genuinely fearing Qing Zi might act recklessly. If he triggers the enchantments, even he wouldn't be spared.

Ye Fan also secretly breathes a sigh of relief, temporarily safe. After all, Qing Zi dares not challenge the world's disfavor, disregarding everyone's survival. Otherwise, he'd become everyone's enemy.

Even if the Qing Family is powerful in Qing Province, with kinship ties to the Emperor Clan Ling Family, it makes no difference; the Southern Domain is too vast, the Qing Family can't dominate it all.

"These are Heaven and Earth Source Liquid! Even without the Immortal Elixir, since it has grown here, this Heaven and Earth Source Liquid surely is of higher quality than elsewhere; snatch it!"

With no hope of seizing the Immortal Elixir—their speed too fast, and unknown enchantments everywhere—once touched, all would be doomed, the group abandons finding the Immortal Elixir, instead dividing up the Heaven and Earth Source Liquid.

Providing a growth environment for the Immortal Elixir, the purity of this Heaven and Earth Source Liquid is incredibly amazing, containing a massive amount of Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi, it's precisely the kind of rare item sought by cultivators.

When Immortal Elixirs are present, people discard these as worthless. But, when there's no Immortal Elixir, the value of Heaven and Earth Source Liquid becomes apparent.

Everyone brings out containers to divide the Heaven and Earth Source Liquid. For a moment, the area around the small puddle is filled with people, each exhibiting their divine skills, fighting over the scarce Heaven and Earth Source Liquid.

Ye Fan pulls out a Jade Bottle—gotten from Lou Manyue’s belongings—which has its own space. While not capable of holding rivers, lakes, and seas, it can contain a pool effortlessly.

The remaining people are all elite from various major forces; even the elder cultivators have many treasures, all being summoned now.

There’s an Azure Wood Furnace, Purple Gold Gourd, Jade Purifying Bottle—various containers make their appearance, each showing prowess, absorbing Heaven and Earth Source Liquid from the puddle.

The small amount of Heaven and Earth Source Liquid is quickly divided, not a drop left on the ground, exposing everyone’s greed.

Someone even tries to dig open the place where Heaven and Earth Source Liquid is dripping to see if there’s more.

Hmm?

At that moment, Ye Fan suddenly feels something staring at him—a massive threat makes his blood run cold.

Instinctively, Ye Fan looks towards Qing Zi; here, his greatest enemy is Qing Zi—the only one always wanting to kill him. If there's danger, it should come from him.

However—

Ye Fan finds that Qing Zi isn't looking at him, yet the feeling of being watched remains strong, as if a hidden gaze is on him.

“What is this thing? Could there be some living creature in this tomb?”

Ye Fan becomes vigilant. Despite it being his first time exploring the tomb, he isn't unfamiliar with its dangers. Aside from traps and formations, undead and unknown creatures also pose significant threats to those entering.

Chapter 1326: Entering the Main Tomb

The unknown danger is the most unsettling; even Elder Xuan could not discern where those eyes, secretly watching everyone, were located, which made Ye Fan deeply uneasy. At the same time, he remained secretly alert, ready to act or escape at any moment.

After dividing the Heaven and Earth Source Liquid, everyone advanced while exploring, fearing they might encounter some forbidden restriction, and walked with extra caution.

Along the way, Qing Zi kept looking towards Ye Fan's direction, the killing intent in his eyes completely undisguised.

If it weren't for the concern that Ye Fan would trigger an unknown prohibition in his desperate situation, leading to mutual destruction, he would have acted long ago.

Although Qing Zi is ruthless and regards human lives as insignificant, he values his own life very much and is unwilling to take risks to kill Ye Fan. In his view, Ye Fan is not worth that risk.

Ye Fan observed all this but made no response.

The situation in the underground palace was complex. Besides a large hall, there were also two side halls. According to Earth's funerary principles, these side halls should contain burial artifacts.

However, when Ye Fan took advantage of the others being distracted and checked, he found the two side halls were actually empty, with nothing inside.

"Could it be that Thunder Venerable put all the good things in the main burial chamber?" Ye Fan wondered.

Although the most precious items are certainly buried with the tomb owner in the coffin, there should still be some daily objects, right?

Thunder Venerable, being the first under the Great Emperor, had such an austere burial, which was indeed surprising.

According to Elder Xuan, Xuan Realm's funerary customs are not much different from Earth's. Many grand clans or Holy Lands have their own cemeteries, and whenever a person of importance passes away, there are always abundant burial goods.

Of course, some strong people make arrangements before death, distributing their most powerful spiritual artifacts or other items among their descendants, rather than taking them into the grave, as it would be meaningless.

Throughout his life, Thunder Venerable had many disciples, so perhaps he distributed his treasures among them. However, his most intimate possessions would surely be buried with him.

"Woo woo..."

Just as Ye Fan was lost in thought, a faint, intermittent sound reached his ears. He couldn't distinguish whether it was the wind or some creature's call.

"Who?"

Qing Zi suddenly stood still, shouted loudly, and looked into the darkness ahead with sharp eyes.

"What ghostly thing? Come out!"

The Ancient Saint also shouted loudly. Everyone became alert. They were all together, so what was that sound? It definitely wasn't human, as no human could make such a sound.

However—

When everyone quieted down to listen carefully, that wooing sound vanished as if it had never appeared.

“Everyone, be vigilant!”

The Tianxuan Saint reminded, taking out a mass of silvery glittering material that looked like a torn fishing net.

But Ye Fan knew that to be regarded so highly by the Tianxuan Saint, this object must certainly be an extremely powerful spiritual artifact.

Actually, without his reminder, everyone was already on high alert, carefully guarding against potential dangers that might arise.

They were all cultivators of the Holy Embryo Realm, with the weakest being in the late-stage Holy Embryo Realm. Their spiritual sense was not much weaker than Ye Fan's, and they also sensed eyes in the dark secretly watching them, so they dared not be careless.

Perhaps noticing everyone's wariness, those eyes in the dark, though continuing to watch, never showed themselves.

The more this happened, the more pressure everyone felt. No one knew what those eyes watching in secret belonged to. Were they human? A Xuan Beast? Or an undead creature?

Ye Fan and the others were extremely tense, needing to guard against the owner of those hidden eyes suddenly launching a sneak attack, while also being wary of forbidden restrictions that might appear at any moment.

The tomb of a Venerable second to the Great Emperor is not so easy to enter. Although no abnormalities were visible on the surface, hidden dangers were lurking, and a slight oversight could lead to total annihilation.

Ye Fan was almost certain that of all the people present, he was probably the only one who truly understood the tomb.

However, what he understood was only Earth's funerary customs. The funerary customs of Xuan Realm were as unfamiliar to him as if he were blindfolded.

After continuous attempts, Ye Fan and the others finally arrived deep in the third layer of the underground palace without incident, where a gigantic stone platform stood, about ten meters high, with stairs leading up to it.

On top of the stone platform, a large coffin, as big as a room, lay there, exuding an aura of terror.

Ye Fan felt as if his soul was being suppressed, with an urge to kneel and worship arising within him.

The others were not much better off; several cultivators were already kneeling, with reverent expressions, as if they were in a religious ceremony.

In front of the gigantic coffin stood a dark purple Big Spear, about six meters long, its tip glinting coldly, emanating an endless war intent, as if it wanted to pierce through the firmament.

Seeing this, no one doubted that this was indeed the center of Thunder Venerable's tomb, where the main burial chamber was located.

The enormous coffin must contain Thunder Venerable himself, as the Big Spear exuding boundless war intent was the legendary Thunder Emperor Spear—the real Thunder Emperor Spear!

Only Thunder Venerable, although he never became an emperor, his weapon was called the Thunder Emperor Spear, yet it still wasn't considered an Emperor Weapon, but merely something just below an Emperor Weapon.

Plop!

Plop!

As the pressure grew stronger, even Qing Zi and the Ancient Saint knelt on the ground, submitting to the coffin of the Thunder Venerable master.

No one laughed at them, because apart from Ye Fan, everyone else who entered had knelt, without exception. Kneeling to a strong person second only to the Great Emperor was no shame.

Ye Fan was barely holding on, feeling he had reached his limit. If the pressure continued to increase, he would eventually kneel.

In his bones, Ye Fan had accepted the orthodox education of Huaxia, knowing that a man of honor kneels to heaven, earth, and parents, and no one else is worthy of his kneeling.

This unwavering belief was what allowed him to hold on until now—everyone else had knelt, yet he persisted.

Though it was only a moment, Ye Fan was already drenched in sweat, his whole body trembling violently, but his eyes shot forth with near-crazy determination. Under no circumstances would he kneel.

Elder Xuan remained silent in Ye Fan's sea of consciousness, not offering any guidance. This was a test of his willpower. If he endured, it would have endless benefits for his future cultivation.

"I can't, I'm going to give in..."

“No, I must hold on, I must not kneel!”

Ye Fan was highly arrogant, which had been well proven on Earth. Not even Old Sir Ye could make him kneel, let alone anyone else?

Just as Ye Fan was about to give in, the terrifying pressure stopped increasing, allowing Ye Fan to secretly breathe a sigh of relief, his gaze fixed on the coffin on the stone platform.

Although he had cultivated the Treasure Technique of the Thunder Venerable master, there was no master-disciple relationship between them, so he did not need to kneel.

As Ye Fan looked up at the coffin, the terrifying pressure retreated like a receding tide, disappearing instantaneously.

Only then did Qing Zi and the others dare to stand up, looking at Ye Fan with complex expressions.

They never expected Ye Fan to withstand the terrifying pressure and not kneel.

In this aspect, Ye Fan’s steadfastness of will was definitely stronger than theirs, which left them incredulous!

“Phew!”

Just as a mix of emotions simmered in everyone’s hearts, the Thunder Emperor Spear’s purple light surged, and from the spear body emerged a tall, shaggy-haired man’s phantom.

This phantom, upon exiting the big spear, immediately locked its gaze on Ye Fan. Though just a phantom, its gaze was sharp, seemingly able to penetrate a person’s soul.

Once caught by its gaze, Ye Fan felt as if his soul was being laid bare, with no secrets, and his heart instantly tensed.

He was from Earth, a great secret hidden deep within him, known to none.

“Don’t worry, it bears no malice.”

Noticing Ye Fan’s tension, Elder Xuan waved his hand in Ye Fan’s sea of consciousness, calming his agitated divine soul, and said, “There’s no need to be nervous. This guy is the Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear, similar in nature to me, and it has noticed me.”

“What if it attacks me?”

Ye Fan asked Elder Xuan. As fellow Artifact Spirits, Elder Xuan was much more appealing than the Thunder Emperor Spear’s Artifact Spirit.

“It won’t. It’s not stupid, and it has also sensed the presence of Thunder Power within you, so it wouldn’t attack you.”

Elder Xuan comforted him and then said arrogantly, “Even if it did attack, it would be futile. Though the Nine Heavens Mysterious Crown was severely damaged, it’s still an Emperor Weapon. It’s no match for me.”

While Ye Fan and Elder Xuan communicated through their consciousness, Qing Zi and the others noticed this peculiar scene, observing that the phantom emerging from the Thunder Emperor Spear was intensely staring at Ye Fan.

Seeing this, and recalling that Ye Fan possessed Thunder Power, they all felt that the Thunder Emperor Spear had chosen Ye Fan as the heir of the Thunder Venerable master’s legacy, instantly filling them with envy and anxiety!

“What a lucky dog, acknowledged by the Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear; it’s just not fair.”

“Comparisons are odious, some goods just can’t stack up! What makes us inferior to a True Essence Realm ant like him? Why didn’t it choose us!”

Qing Zi and the others were filled with envy, jealousy, and hatred, wishing they could kill Ye Fan with a palm and take his place to receive the Thunder Venerable master’s heirloom legacy.

They had to know, the Thunder Venerable master was unrivaled in attack power, a strong person second only to the Great Emperor. Once one receives his legacy, there is great hope of treading the Emperor Road to strive for supremacy, ultimately proving Dao and becoming an Emperor, standing atop the pinnacle of this world!

Chapter 1327: Trial

In front of the Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear, none of Qing Zi's people dared to act rashly, otherwise, even though the opponent was just an Artifact Spirit, it could still easily destroy them.

While everyone was filled with envy and jealousy, the apparition emerging from the Thunder Emperor Spear finally shifted its gaze away from Ye Fan.

Glancing at Qing Zi and the others, the Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear said in a deep voice, "For tens of thousands of years, according to the master's calculations, Tianxuan Continent will usher in the most glorious era of Emperor Road's contending."

Hm?

Upon hearing the words of the Thunder Emperor Spear's Artifact Spirit, everyone looked at each other in disbelief. Would such a glorious era really arrive?

Before everyone could come to any conclusion, the Artifact Spirit continued, "In accordance with the master's will, he wants to leave his legacy in this glorious era, passing down the Thunderclap Treasure Skill. He did not prove the Dao to become an Emperor, hoping that the one who inherits his legacy can fulfill this wish on his behalf."

“It is precisely for this reason that the master’s underground palace opened this time. You are very lucky to be the candidates for inheriting the master’s legacy.”

The Artifact Spirit’s voice was small, but it struck everyone’s mind like a clap of thunder.

Except for Ye Fan, everyone present was ecstatic.

Previously they thought there was no hope, but unexpectedly, there was a twist, and there was still hope to inherit the Thunder Venerable’s legacy. How could they not be ecstatic?

Qing Zi looked at Ye Fan with a sneer, but unexpectedly, Ye Fan didn’t even look at him, making his full-strength punch feel like it landed on air, with no point of force.

“Kid, although you have cultivated the Thunderclap Treasure Skill, the Thunder Venerable’s legacy may not be yours!”

Inwardly, Qing Zi was steely determined. In terms of cultivation and comprehension, he believed he was no worse than anyone, especially stronger than Ye Fan. He didn’t think his hopes were smaller than Ye Fan’s.

“Let me say this: the master’s legacy is not so easily inherited. To receive the legacy, you must pass through two tests set by the master. Those willing to stay and take the test, step forward. Those unwilling, I can send them away now!”

The Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear glanced at everyone, continuing before they could act: “However, once you stay and fail the tests, the only path is death. Consider carefully!”

Scrsh!

Upon these words, everyone’s expressions changed!

Among them, many older generation Holy Embryo Realm Peak cultivators began to consider retreating.

Although they didn’t know what the tests entailed, it was obvious that they were unlikely to succeed; otherwise, they would have broken through to the Divine Power Realm long ago, and not been stuck at the Peak of Holy Embryo Realm for so many years.

Pa!

Ye Fan took a firm step forward; he believed he could pass the test. Even if he ultimately couldn’t, he certainly wouldn’t die—Elder Xuan wouldn’t watch him die.

Seeing Ye Fan choose to stay and accept the test, many were deeply stirred, prompting even some of the older strong people, who initially intended to quit, to grittily decide to stay.

Even a Little Cultivator at the Peak of the True Essence Realm like Ye Fan wasn't afraid to die, so why should they be? Instead of just leaving, why not take a leap of faith, maybe it would lead to a bright future!

Pass the test, accept the legacy; fail, death! It's that simple!

Listening to the Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear, Qing Zi also hesitated. Though he had confidence, there were others on-site like the Ancient Saint and Tianxuan Saint who were on par with him in talent and comprehension. He wasn't certain of victory.

However, seeing Ye Fan having the courage to take the risk, Qing Zi gritted his teeth, steeling his determination, and with great difficulty, took a step forward, expressing his willingness to stay.

Yet, a few still chose to withdraw, not daring to risk their lives for an intangible future.

With so many people present, in the end, only one would inherit the legacy, while the rest would die. They couldn't gamble on being the only winner.

"Congratulations, you are quite self-aware. Let me send you away now!"

The Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear smiled, waving at the few cultivators who chose to leave, then they flickered in place and disappeared.

After teleporting those people away, the Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear acted as if it had done something trivial, and continued to address those who stayed, including Ye Fan: “You are the excellent ones, truly courageous. Congratulations, you passed my test.”

Everyone looked around at each other, puzzled by the Artifact Spirit’s intention. They hadn’t done anything; how had they passed its test?

“Great perseverance, great fortitude, putting life and death aside, believing in oneself; this is the test I have for you!”

The Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear laughed mischievously, “In other words, I deceived you earlier. Failing the test won’t result in death, only being sent away. The master is benevolent; how could he kill the innocent randomly? I just wanted to see if you had the courage to face death and emerge victoriously.”

“So that’s it!”

Everyone couldn’t help but harshly scorn the Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear in their hearts. This fellow was too sly. Who could have guessed an Artifact Spirit of a dignified Venerable’s weapon would lie?

However, everyone couldn’t help but breathe a sigh of relief, knowing that failing the test wouldn’t lead to death was certainly good news.

“But don’t get too happy too soon. Although there are only two assessments, they are not easy to pass.”

The Artifact Spirit chuckled, “The two assessments are tests of willpower and comprehension; those who are fully qualified in both will inherit the master’s legacy, gaining the complete Thunderclap Treasure Skill legacy. If none can pass, I will seek candidates from other realms until a qualified one is found.”

“Enough talk, let’s begin the first test: willpower. Based on your inner minds, you will be sent into the Illusion Realm. Those who can extricate themselves from it on their own will pass, those who can’t will be eliminated.”

Upon saying this, the Artifact Spirit waved its hand, casting its Spell.

Ye Fan felt a dizzy spell, finding previous memories seemed to be sealed and couldn’t be recalled.

When he regained consciousness, he found everything before his eyes significantly familiar; the snow-covered mountain peaks, clear skies unmarred by any clouds.

“Awoo...”

With a joyful wolf howl, an azure wolf, as large as a calf, came bounding towards him from afar.

“Little Wolf?”

Ye Fan cheered. He couldn't remember how long it had been since he'd last seen this little guy. Now it was majestic beyond compare, its blue fur shining like satin, smooth and glossy!

The azure wolf arrived before him like a whirlwind, placing its large paws on his shoulders and licking his face full of saliva, more affectionate than long-separated lovers.

That long-forgotten feeling!

Ye Fan couldn't help but sigh. How many years had it been? Since he came to the Xuan Realm, he had never returned to Earth, and wasn't this his master's secluded retreat on Mount Tian?

"Ye Fan, stop fooling around. Your master is waiting for you. Aren't you going to see him?"

With a crisp voice, Ye Fan shook violently, reluctantly pushed the wolf's paw from his shoulder, and turned to look.

A graceful woman was smiling at him and Little Wolf, her every smile and frown so familiar.

"Liuli..."

Ye Fan's eyes blurred as he ran over and tightly embraced Su Liuli, afraid she would disappear if he loosened his grip.

"What are you doing? Be careful, lest your master sees..."

Su Liuli mockingly struggled for a moment before holding him tight, feeling each other's heartbeat and warmth!

"Liuli, wasn't your soul scattered? How come you're fine now?"

Ye Fan vaguely remembered, before the space passage between Earth and the Xuan Realm, Su Liuli's soul had been scattered, leaving her a vegetative state. How was she okay now?

"It's like this, it was Master and Master Yan who jointly performed a heaven-defying secret technique to forcibly gather my soul, bringing me back to life."

As Su Liuli spoke, she led Ye Fan towards Chu Xuanji's secluded little cottage. Everything felt so familiar, every grass and tree unchanged.

"You little rascal, you still remember how to come back?"

Approaching the small cottage, Ye Fan heard a voice so familiar it couldn't be more so. Following that, Chu Xuanji, clad in a coarse blue robe, came out of the room, holding a traditional book in one hand and a Taishi Chair in the other.

"Master..."

Ye Fan couldn't help but let his emotions show, taking a few quick steps, kneeling before him, clinging to Master Chu's leg, and bursting into tears.

"Oh dear, the sun rises in the west today, you actually called me Master."

Chu Xuanji sighed as he helped him up, looking him over.

Ye Fan's nose tingled; he had always called Chu Xuanji "old man," rarely addressing him as Master.

"Kid, you're back for good this time, right? Liuli is okay now. Pick a day, and marry her and Yuxin together, and lead a good life." Chu Xuanji teased as he looked at Ye Fan and Su Liuli.

"Master, you old rascal!" Su Liuli blushed, stamped her foot, and fled into the room.

Watching Su Liuli's retreating figure, Ye Fan, caught in the illusion, struggled to calm his emotions.

“This feels too real, doesn’t it?”

Once calm, Ye Fan sighed internally. He, too, was a magician, very knowledgeable about illusion techniques. From the moment he appeared on Mount Tian, he knew it was all an illusion, yet he couldn’t bear to break it because it held his most cherished memories.

But he knew, no matter how lovely, illusions were still illusions, and he must break it to return to himself.

“Master, although I know you’re just an illusion in my mind, I still want to kowtow to thank you for your nurturing through the years!”

With that, Ye Fan knelt once more, heavily kowtowing three times to the non-existent Chu Xuanji.

“Xiao Fan, what are you doing?”

Chu Xuanji seemed bewildered as he stood up from the Taishi Chair, saying, “Are you still going to leave?”

“Thank you for giving me such a beautiful illusion.”

Ye Fan spoke to the void, then bellowed, "Break for me!"

Whoosh!

With his voice, a small sword shot out from his brow, and under the sweeping sword Qi, he seemed to hear the sound of glass shattering in his mind.

Soon after, Ye Fan's vision went dark, instantly regaining clarity. He stood again in the burial chamber, facing the tall stone platform and coffin.

The artifact spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear still stood on the stone platform, but its gaze towards Ye Fan held a hint of the unusual!

Chapter 1328: Inspiration

After waking up from the Illusion Realm, Ye Fan looked around and found that many people were still trapped in various illusions.

Some looked as if they had gone mad, crying and shouting, while others were all smiles, as if encountering a very happy and warm scene.

Ye Fan knew that these were illusions tailored for them by the Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear, perhaps reflecting their deepest desires, or their greatest fears.

No matter which, an illusion is, after all, an illusion, and it is very difficult to escape unless one can recognize their true heart and trace back to the origin to possibly break free.

If one is unable to escape the illusion on their own within a certain time, they can only be eliminated, indicating that their willpower is insufficient to overcome the Heart Demon of the illusion.

However, what puzzled Ye Fan was that Qing Zi, the Ancient Saint Heir, and the Tianxuan Saint Heir were all absent. He wondered if they had already escaped from the illusion or been teleported away.

Ye Fan felt it should be the former, because with their Martial Arts Will, the illusion should not be able to trap them.

“Come up, you have passed the first test!”

Just as Ye Fan was feeling puzzled, the voice of the Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear suddenly came to his ears.

Turning back, he saw the Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear standing on a stone platform, waving at him.

Ye Fan nodded, stepped onto the stone steps, and ascended the stone platform step by step, only to find Qing Zi and the others sitting cross-legged to the side, seemingly having some inspiration.

“Congratulations on passing the first test.”

The illusory image of the Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear seemed much more solid at this moment, with those robust muscles bulging like coiled dragons.

“Only you know what your illusion was, I don’t know what you experienced in the illusion, but did you gain any insights? Whether sorrowful or beautiful, standing firm amidst death if it’s sorrow, breaking your ideals with your own hands if it’s beautiful—doesn’t it feel cruel? But this is the truth of martial arts, whether beauty or despair, they are Heart Demons in your heart, and only by overcoming them can you walk further on the path of martial arts.”

The Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear spoke eloquently. Although his words might not be perfect, they encapsulated the essence of cultivation. Ye Fan indeed realized something from his words.

“Thank you for your teachings!”

Ye Fan thanked the Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear very humbly, then chose a spacious place to sit down and closed his eyes, contemplating everything he had experienced in the illusion.

Emotions are both the shackle and the drive of cultivation, whether familial or romantic. Without the obsession of saving Su Liuli, the obsession of searching for his mother, he might not have been so desperate in his cultivation.

Regarding the beauty, Ye Fan felt that keeping it in one’s heart is the best. No matter when it is revisited, the heartwarming scene always touches the heart.

Suffering can also allow a person to grow rapidly, as life's experiences are nothing more than joys and sorrows, the flavors of life, and without any one of them, life is incomplete.

What he didn't know was that when he was immersed in his own illusion and finally uttered those words, even the Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear was stunned.

Qing Zi and the Ancient Saint Heir, and the Tianxuan Saint Heir, although they had all walked out of the illusion on their own, it truly took a great deal of effort, and they felt a bit lost at the moment of breaking free.

But he had known all along that it was an illusion, and instead of rushing to escape, he deeply enjoyed the process.

He only used the Divine Soul Sword Technique to break the illusion and came out of it when he felt he was ready to leave.

Most importantly, he felt no sorrow at all; for him, the illusion was just a beautiful dream, and when the dream ended, everything returned to the original point.

This kind of willpower was absolutely terrifying. The Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear, who had seen many people, had never witnessed such terrifying willpower before.

During the time Ye Fan was reflecting, a few more individuals managed to come out of the illusion relying on their own abilities, but it was only by exerting all their effort that they managed to come out by luck.

Most people were trapped in the illusion, either unwilling to come out or completely losing themselves.

“Time’s up!”

With a wave of its hand, the Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear cloaked those still trapped in the illusion in a layer of purple light, and in an instant, they disappeared from the burial chamber, being teleported to outside the tomb.

These people had no idea what had happened until they sensed a violent shock in their consciousness and then woke up, only to find themselves outside the Thunder Gate.

Suddenly, with so many people appearing, the Saints of the two great sacred places, the Ancestor of the Lou Family, the Qing Family Ancestor, and others were all taken aback.

Some had already come out earlier and had informed them about what was in the burial chamber, causing a commotion. No one expected that Ye Fan would persist until the very end, entering the main burial chamber.

What comforted them was that this Thunder Gate indeed led to the tomb of the Thunder Venerable Master, and since entering the main burial chamber, there would definitely be some gains.

However, what made other Family Heads and Sect Leaders uneasy was that according to those who came out, anyone left behind and failing the assessment would have no path but death.

So many people stayed in the main tomb chamber, and in the end, only one person can pass the examination and receive the inheritance. Wouldn't it be a huge loss if the one who ultimately receives the inheritance is not from one's own sect?

However, just as they were worrying, another large group of people suddenly appeared outside the Light Gate, as if they had directly fallen out of space.

"What exactly happened inside? Who finally passed the examination? Who got the final inheritance?"

"Did you see our sect's Lan Yeyun?"

"How is the genius from our family?"

As soon as these people came out, many immediately surrounded them with questions, some inquiring about the final result, others about the geniuses from their own sects or clans.

For a time, outside the Thunder Gate was bustling and noisy, like a marketplace.

Fortunately, this time quite a few people were transported out, and they were all invited aside and questioned carefully about what exactly happened inside.

In less than an hour, these people outside understood what had happened inside, and it caused a huge uproar!

No one expected that Ye Fan, a little cultivator at the peak of the True Essence Realm, could safely make it to the end and pass the first test. It was simply incredible.

Especially those cultivators who had retreated earlier felt a burning embarrassment on their faces. They didn't even have the courage to stay, already losing in terms of determination.

"I'm growing more fond of this kid. What kind of freak is he? How could he manage to make it safely to the end among a group of Holy Embryo Realm cultivators with just a True Essence Realm cultivation?"

The Ancient Saint couldn't help but be curious upon learning of Ye Fan's situation. In his view, Qing Zi, his Saint Heir, and the Tianxuan Saint were all outstanding figures of the younger generation. It was not surprising for them to make it to the end, but Ye Fan making it there was completely beyond his expectations.

"I don't have high hopes for him. Although inside the tomb he could evaluate various forbidden measures making Qing Zi hesitant to act recklessly, what about outside? He can't always stay in the tomb. Once he fails to obtain the inheritance, he's doomed outside."

The Tianxuan Saint was more rational. Although he was also interested in Ye Fan, he knew that Ye Fan would eventually die. A genius who perishes prematurely cannot be called a genius.

“Hmph! Just a little ant. If not for worrying about harming the innocent, my Qing’er would have crushed him like a stinking insect long ago!”

The Qing Family Ancestor was very proud. He knew well Qing Zi’s talent and comprehension, believing that the Thunder Venerable’s inheritance could only manifest between Qing Zi, the Ancient Saint, and the Tianxuan Saint. As for Ye Fan, passing the first test was already fortunate; passing the second was almost impossible.

This was also the thought of most others. Ye Fan’s realm was too low, a whole Great Realm lower than Qing Zi and the others, not something to be trifled with. With such a gap, he didn’t even have the ability to protect himself. What could he use to compete with others?

However, contrary to their views, Yaling was confident that Ye Fan had a chance to obtain the Thunder Venerable’s inheritance.

Unlike others, she knew well that among all these people, Ye Fan was the most likely to obtain the Thunder Venerable’s inheritance — Ye Fan had practiced the Thunderclap Treasure Skill, although not necessarily fully, he had at least been exposed to it, unlike the others.

In terms of aura, Ye Fan had the Thunder Power, making his compatibility with the Thunder Venerable’s inheritance the highest and the most likely to obtain it.

While everyone was making judgments in their hearts, the Ancestor of the Lou Family’s face was extremely grim. None of their members were left inside.

This time, in the struggle for opportunities, he had deployed almost all the elite young members of the Lou family, ending in complete annihilation, igniting his fury.

Though he said nothing, from the fury in his eyes and the aura of killing intent he emanated, it was clear that once Ye Fan emerged alive from the tomb, the Ancestor of the Lou Family would certainly take action!

In the competition among the younger generation, the elder generation was not supposed to intervene. Although there was such an unwritten rule in the cultivation world, did the Ancestor of the Lou Family care at this moment?

Their family's two most promising young members were all killed by Ye Fan. If he did not tear Ye Fan to pieces and grind his bones to ashes, how could he quell the hatred in his heart?

As for the other sects, most who remained neutral were observing. Although they also didn't think Ye Fan could escape the tomb alive, it wasn't their concern, so they saw no reason to worry.

Anyway, the situation was already clear: only a few who went in could pass the illusion realm examination. Either the Thunder Venerable's inheritance would appear among them, or not at all, depending on their comprehension and fortune.

However, no one left. They were all waiting for the final result. The Thunder Venerable, a supreme being second only to the Great Emperor tens of thousands of years ago, whose inheritance held the interest of many.

Moreover, even though other regions were not directly involved, they had affiliated clans or sects in the Southern Domain. Through these people, they too were closely monitoring this affair.

...

“Have you all gained something? Now, we will proceed to the second test, the comprehension test!”

While discussions were rife outside, inside the tomb chamber, Ye Fan and others had finished their comprehension. The spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear glanced over everyone and announced the commencement of the second test.

Chapter 1329: Comprehension Test

Several dozen people entered the main tomb, but ultimately less than ten remained, showing how difficult it was to pass the test of willpower.

Most people were trapped in the illusion realm, unable to extricate themselves. Those who truly managed to escape were individuals with extraordinarily strong will and resolute minds.

The Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear was very satisfied. It had initially thought that so many people wouldn't pass, especially Ye Fan, who impressed it greatly.

Deep down, it greatly admired Ye Fan because he was the only one who didn't kneel under the immense pressure.

Moreover, Ye Fan was merely at the True Essence Realm Peak and hadn't condensed a Holy Embryo. For the inheritance, this was undoubtedly the best result—Ye Fan was like a naturally formed uncut jade, capable of being shaped in many ways, unlike others who already have fixed styles, making change too difficult.

What surprised the Thunder Emperor Spear's Artifact Spirit the most was that Ye Fan had traces of Thunder Power within him. Although weak, such kindred elements couldn't be hidden from its spiritual sense.

However, the Thunder Emperor Spear's Artifact Spirit was somewhat frustrated; such a fine piece of jade unexpectedly had an Emperor Weapon Artifact Spirit within his sea of consciousness.

No matter how strong it was, it couldn't compete with an Emperor Weapon's Artifact Spirit and had to grudgingly choose to relinquish.

It believed that since Ye Fan had already received the Great Emperor's inheritance, its own master could not compete with the Great Emperor over the successor.

Although its master was infinitely close to the Great Emperor, he ultimately hadn't become an Emperor and thus couldn't compete with the Great Emperor.

"Excuse me, sir, how is the comprehension test conducted?"

After waiting for a while, seeing no action from the Thunder Emperor Spear's Artifact Spirit, Qing Zi couldn't help but ask.

He was very confident, as he was the first to escape the illusion realm during the willpower test. He had exceedingly strong will, believing himself to be the rightful heir of the Thunder Venerable master.

If that's the case, let's quickly complete the test to avoid prolonged uncertainty.

Awakened by Qing Zi's words, the Thunder Emperor Spear's Artifact Spirit calmly replied: "The second test is simple, yet difficult. In a moment, an Ancient Scripture will appear from the master's coffin. Each of you shall comprehend it; those who can grasp the true essence of the scripture will pass, otherwise, you will be eliminated."

After speaking, the Thunder Emperor Spear's Artifact Spirit respectfully bowed to the coffin and said: "Please, Master, bestow the scripture!"

Following its words, the coffin of the Thunder Venerable master emitted a brilliant light, seemingly alive, astonishing Qing Zi and the others, causing them to step back several times, nearly slipping off the stone platform.

Just then, a pair of ghostly white eyes shot out from the darkness, directly onto the coffin of the Thunder Venerable master.

"Little White, come forth, over so many years, it's time to grant you freedom!"

As the ghostly white eyes appeared, the Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear spoke kindly to those eyes.

No one knew there was life in the tomb room, including Ye Fan, all eyes turned towards those ghostly white eyes.

With the voice of the Thunder Emperor Spear's Artifact Spirit, Ye Fan heard a booming sound, followed by an amber-like thing bursting open, from which emerged a snow-white White Wolf as large as a calf.

To Ye Fan and the others' shock, this White Wolf had no pupils, its eyes were entirely white, and there was nothing black on its body, making it look strangely eerie.

"Awooo..."

Released from captivity, the White Wolf howled longingly at the sky and dashed like lightning onto the stone platform, crouching before the Thunder Venerable master's coffin, whimpering softly, its voice filled with sorrow and attachment.

Where did this White Wolf come from?

The question emerged simultaneously in everyone's mind, but no one provided any answers.

Just then, a low chant echoed from the Ancient Scripture of the Thunderclap Treasure Skill, with each word distinctly entering the hearts of the audience.

Hmm?

Their consciousness shook violently as Ye Fan and the others quickly focused their minds to memorize the section of the Ancient Scripture before slowly comprehending it.

Yet, along with the low chant, golden-purple ancient characters flew out from the coffin, constantly flashing and arranging themselves in the tomb room's air.

"This?"

Everyone was stunned, because these ancient characters were precisely the scripture just chanted, yet they weren't following the original order, instead, constantly changing.

Subsequently, one by one, the ancient characters decomposed, continually regrouping to form a complex, mysterious Star Map in the tomb room sky.

Ye Fan sat cross-legged on the stone platform, his eyes emitting two beams of peculiar light, deeply imprinting the Star Map in his sea of consciousness, echoing the Ancient Scripture.

"Hey!"

Qing Zi sneered, disdainfully glanced at Ye Fan, discovering that Ye Fan paid him no mind at all, and he snorted irritably, focusing on comprehending the true essence of the Ancient Scripture.

Present were the Southern Domain's most outstanding young talents, far surpassing their peers in both talent and comprehension; though the Ancient Scripture was profound, they still had their insights.

After imprinting both the Ancient Scripture and Star Map, Ye Fan began to understand the essence within the scripture. This section was headless and tailless, its origin unknown, each word required hundreds of others for explanation.

Moreover, the most critical issue is that each ancient character has dozens of interpretations, thus even a slight deviation could stray from the true intention of the ancient scripture.

The saying "a miss by a millimeter can lead to a difference of a thousand miles" aptly illustrates this principle.

Ye Fan felt neither joy nor sorrow; this was a test for him alone, and Elder Xuan would not aid him. Furthermore, relying on Elder Xuan to pass the test implies risking the disdain of the Thunder Emperor Spear's artifact spirit, potentially forfeiting the inheritance and earning its contempt.

This was a situation Ye Fan was utterly determined to prevent, hence, he must rely on his own strength to comprehend this ancient scripture and the star map formed from it.

One by one, the ancient characters flowed through his mind; Ye Fan silently contemplated, hoping to truly grasp the true meaning of the ancient scripture.

However, this section of the ancient scripture was without head or tail, and no one knew which ancient book it was excerpted from, making any meaningful comprehension exceedingly difficult.

Uncertain of how much time had passed, Ye Fan suddenly thought of another ancient scripture in his sea of consciousness from one interpretation of the ancient text.

It was not the Nine Heavens Profound Skill ancient scripture of the Nine Heavens Xuan Emperor, but the general preface of the Thunderclap Treasure Skill's introduction.

The Thunderclap Treasure Skill preserved by the Xuanwu Sect might only be the introduction, yet its general preface holds a summary effect.

Comparing the general preface from the remnant introduction of the Thunderclap Treasure Skill obtained from Xuanwu Sect, Ye Fan suddenly grasped that this section of scripture was precisely a part of it.

With the summary provided by the general preface, Ye Fan's comprehension surpassed others, allowing for rapid insights without significant deviation.

From the ancient scripture, he envisioned the star map; though Ye Fan closed his eyes, the star map seemed to flash before him without further change.

“Is this... array patterns? Or a route map among the stars?”

Ye Fan was startled by his own thought. A star route map—who could possibly view the stars with such ease? Traverse between stars?

As an Earth person, Ye Fan deeply understood that the distances between seeming proximity of two stars are in fact tremendously vast, often requiring dozens or hundreds of light years. Could a human really traverse between stars?

Isn't that ludicrous? Likely no one could traverse interstellar distances, unless they are immortals.

However, even as immortals, the feat might be impossible. Huaxia's ancient mythology includes many tales, among them, the twenty-eight constellations named after celestial stars.

Nonetheless, these are merely mythological tales. Ye Fan believed humans could cultivate, and the Mythical Era might indeed have existed.

Yet, interstellar traversal seemed unfathomable; even the Monkey King's Somersault Cloud measures mere eighty thousand miles, incomparable to interstellar distances measured in light years.

Leaving aside other aspects, even a journey from Earth to the Moon required multiple leaps, let alone to stars as distant as Beidou or Nandou.

In the Xuan Realm, however, such a possibility appeared real, with the Great Emperor indeed able to traverse between stars—a truth Elder Xuan once shared with him.

Interstellar traversal doesn't necessitate flying physically through the vacuum of space; grand transmission arrays can achieve this feat.

Each Great Emperor is adept with array patterns, substituting for transmission arrays to traverse far while remaining stationary.

Under this interpretation, this star map could feasibly be a route map among stars.

Following this path, Ye Fan indeed found many footholds, leading eventually to a purple planet.

Though unaware of what this star signifies, Ye Fan knew purple denotes supreme, signifying thunder; seemingly, it should be the domain of the Thunder Venerable master.

At this juncture, an extraordinarily absurd thought emerged in Ye Fan's heart—the Thunder Venerable might not be from the Xuan Realm but rather inexplicably arrived from that purple planet.

It was an exceedingly bizarre notion, but Ye Fan did not entirely dismiss it.

Upon entering the Xuan Realm, he realized that outside Earth, there were indeed other worlds harboring humans. What then would be peculiar about human existence among the stars?

Technology is not the sole means of exploring stars; the Xuan Realm answers this question—upon attaining the highest realm, one's body can traverse interstellar distances.

If the Xuan Realm exists, why couldn't there be other habitats for human existence? Even entirely different prosperity than Earth and the Xuan Realm?

The more he thought, the more Ye Fan felt his insights were accurate; beyond such explanations, no other could perfectly connect the ancient scripture and star map.

Meanwhile, Qing Zi and others continued to ponder, each with differing insights—no two were identical.

A thousand minds possessing a thousand Hamlets, similarly, each ancient scripture inspires personal insights, never mirroring another.

"Alright, time's up! Now, place your hands on the master's coffin sequentially, transmit your insights to the coffin. Those acknowledged by the master remain; the rest step aside to witness the master's legacy examination."

Four hours later, the Thunder Emperor Spear's artifact spirit announced the end of comprehension, ready to assess Ye Fan and others' insights.

Chapter 1330: Test Results

“Woo...”

Hearing that everyone was preparing to undergo the examination, the White Wolf seemed extremely reluctant, looking pleadingly at the Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear, as if not wanting everyone to be tested.

“Little White, a great era is about to descend. The master’s legacy must be passed down, allowing the Thunderclap Treasure Skill to reappear in the world. This is the master’s wish, do you want to defy it?”

Seeing the White Wolf’s attitude, the Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear said in a deep voice, then waved a hand, enveloping it in a beam of light and placing it aside.

“Awoo...”

The White Wolf seemed to be restrained, constantly howling, but unable to move, with two streams of clear tears flowing from its white eyes.

“Who’s first?”

The Thunder Emperor Spear’s Artifact Spirit glanced around at the crowd and asked.

“I’ll go first!”

Qing Zi was the first to step forward without hesitation, confident in his own inspiration, feeling that if he passed the examination first, the others had no chance, so rather than waste time, he should be the first to be tested.

“Hmph! I hope you can maintain your confidence after being eliminated.”

The Ancient Saint sneered contemptuously at Qing Zi, not believing that Qing Zi could obtain the Thunder Venerable master’s inheritance.

“Whether I’m confident is not for you to decide. If I get the inheritance, I’ll take down that Ye kid first, and you’ll be next. Clean your neck and wait!”

Qing Zi laughed coldly, confronting the Ancient Saint.

He was not afraid of the Ancient Saint at all, for the Qing Family was also an extremely large clan. Although they had never produced a Great Emperor, there had always been strong people emerging through generations, keeping the Qing Family standing strong.

Despite several dark turmoil eras, the Qing Family persisted, with very deep foundations, unafraid of successors from the Holy Land.

With that, Qing Zi was the first to walk towards the coffin of the Thunder Venerable master, bowing deeply before placing his right hand on the coffin, closing his eyes slightly, and channeling his inspiration into the coffin through his palm.

The giant coffin remained motionless, silent as ever, but it did not repel him.

The transmission of consciousness was very fast, and in just a moment, Qing Zi had conveyed his inspiration into the coffin.

Subsequently, the coffin burst into light, and Qing Zi was pushed away by a gentle yet powerful force, standing at the edge of the stone platform.

“Not qualified!”

The Thunder Emperor Spear’s Artifact Spirit would not show mercy to anyone, not even Qing Zi. Even if it were an Emperor’s disciple, if they were not qualified, they were simply not qualified!

“Hahaha...”

The Ancient Saint burst into laughter: “Qing Family genius? Still so confident now? Weren’t you claimed to be the Southern Domain’s number one genius? Turns out you’re just so-so!”

“You...”

Qing Zi was full of shame and anger. He never expected that his inspiration, which he thought was very exquisite, would be unqualified, dealing a significant blow to him.

Especially with the Ancient Saint ridiculing him on the side, fueling his raging anger.

However, he also knew that he absolutely could not make a move now; otherwise, if he angered the Thunder Emperor Spear's Artifact Spirit, not even the Qing Family Ancestor could protect him.

"Ancient Saint, don't be too complacent. Even if I'm not qualified, I fear you won't be either." Qing Zi worked hard to calm himself, replying coldly.

"I have a good mindset! It's great to get the inheritance, but if not, it's no big deal, unlike someone who probably has a mind to kill themselves!"

Although the Ancient Saint spoke lightly, he was also extremely tense inside. After all, Qing Zi's comprehension was not far off from his; since Qing Zi couldn't pass the examination, he had no confidence either.

But he still mentally prepared himself. Even if he couldn't pass the examination, he wouldn't fall from the clouds to the abyss, like Qing Zi.

Next, the second person stepped forward for the examination, and as expected, was again pushed away.

“Not qualified!”

The Thunder Emperor Spear’s Artifact Spirit declared unemotionally, announcing that person’s elimination.

As one examiner after another was eliminated, the Thunder Emperor Spear’s Artifact Spirit’s expression grew more unpleasant, because if none were qualified, it would have to go to other domains to find someone who could inherit the Thunder Venerable master’s legacy, which was quite troublesome.

Finally, only Ye Fan, the Ancient Saint, and the Tianxuan Saint were left, and those who didn’t pass looked at the three with increasingly peculiar gazes.

In their eyes, Ye Fan was merely in the True Essence Realm, unable to pass the test, indicating that the successor would be born between the Ancient Saint and the Tianxuan Saint.

They knew well that although Ye Fan’s strength and realm did not match, since he was still unable to condense the Holy Embryo in his twenties, it suggested his talent wasn’t very high.

At this moment, the Ancient Saint and the Tianxuan Saint were also drumming with anxiety, but at this point, they could only muster up their courage. They had done their best, and there was no regret even if they couldn’t pass the test.

The Tianxuan Saint slowly stepped forward, placed his right hand against the coffin, and closed his eyes to send his inspiration into it.

A minute passed, and the Tianxuan Saint was not ejected; the Thunder Emperor Spear's Artifact Spirit's eyes gleamed, thinking there was hope.

Then suddenly...

The Tianxuan Saint was also pushed away, stepping aside with a dejected face.

"Uh... didn't pass?"

The Thunder Emperor Spear's Artifact Spirit looked stunned. He knew that if the test was passed, there would certainly be an unusual phenomenon exhibited by the Thunder Venerable master's coffin. Now, with nothing happening and being pushed away, it's clearly a failure!

"Brother Li, what's going on here?"

At this moment, the Ancient Saint couldn't remain calm and asked the Tianxuan Saint, very eager to know what kind of experience it was to undergo the test.

"Well... it's something that can only be understood but not explained. I can't really put it into words, you have to experience it yourself."

The Tianxuan Saint seemed unwilling to talk much, his mood was extremely low.

“I protest, this test has no standard at all. What kind of inspiration is deemed qualified? Why is it that out of so many people, not a single one is qualified?”

Qing Zi felt it was unfair for him to be disqualified, being particularly confident in himself, never expecting such a blow.

Seeing almost everyone who went up for the test being pushed away, he finally exploded.

“Whose inspiration is qualified, the master will judge. It’s not your place to criticize here. If you don’t shut up, I’ll send you out directly!”

The Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear gave a cold glance at Qing Zi, immediately making him shut up, not daring to speak again.

Following this, the Ancient Saint walked to the coffin and placed a single palm on it, transmitting his inspiration into it.

A moment later, as expected, the Ancient Saint was also pushed away, failing the test as his inspiration also couldn’t meet the Thunder Venerable master’s requirements.

In the end, only Ye Fan was left. The Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear gave him a deep look, eyes shooting out beams of peculiar light.

Ye Fan calmly met his gaze, without any expression of fear, and instead, walked steadily toward the coffin.

“Is he also going to take the test?”

“None of us passed, and yet he, a mere ant in the True Essence Realm, wants to obtain the Thunder Venerable master’s legacy? It’s utterly delusional!”

“I don’t think it’s necessary for him to even take the test, right? None of us passed, there’s no way he can pass, it’s just a waste of time.”

As Ye Fan walked toward the Thunder Venerable master’s coffin, Qing Zi and others started discussing, believing it’s impossible for Ye Fan to pass.

While everyone was buzzing with discussions, the Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear suddenly appeared before Ye Fan, silently looking at him.

Ye Fan stopped in his tracks but did not ask why he was being blocked.

At this moment, the Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear had a brief secret dialogue with Elder Xuan, seemingly reaching some agreement, before finally making way.

Ye Fan walked steadily to the coffin, placing both palms on it, the left palm transmitting his inspiration regarding the Star Map, the right palm transmitting his understanding of the Ancient Scripture.

As his palms touched the coffin, the scene in front of his eyes changed suddenly, as if he was in a cloud with a tall man with flowing black hair standing before him.

Ye Fan knew this man was the Thunder Venerable master, perhaps just a thought that he left behind or merely an imprint, but it still showcased the Supreme's charisma.

"I have waited for tens of thousands of years, finally waiting for a qualified descendant. Your inspiration is correct, it's indeed a Star Map, and the final star is called Thunder Star!"

The Thunder Venerable master's voice was deep and powerful. Without waiting for Ye Fan to ask questions, he continued, "Do not speak to me, I am just a remnant imprint. After I pass on the complete Thunderclap Treasure Skill, I will dissipate completely!"

"Now, are you ready? To accept the transmission of the Treasure Skill!"

Ye Fan nodded heavily. Despite his confidence in his inspiration, the actual reception of the legacy still left him very shocked.

At this moment, in Qing Zi and others' eyes, Ye Fan's figure was enveloped in a layer of purple Thunder Power, seemingly merging with the coffin.

The Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear, eyes gleaming with excitement, muttered, "He passed, he really did! He is receiving the master's legacy, and my mission is nearly complete."

"How... how is this possible? None of us passed, but his inspiration was actually acknowledged?"

The cultivators who didn't gain acknowledgment were all filled with envy, jealousy, and hatred. How could such a great opportunity exclude them and instead be granted to someone they considered no more than an ant?

Qing Zi's eyes shot out two fierce beams of light, his fists clenched tightly, emitting cracking sounds from his knuckles.

He was eager to strike and kill Ye Fan immediately, but feared unforeseen consequences, knowing the Artifact Spirit of the Thunder Emperor Spear would never allow him to kill the Thunder Venerable master's successor in front of him.

"I never thought, after all our efforts, we ultimately worked in vain, completing him instead!"

"Fate toys with people!"

Tianxuan Saint and Ancient Saint sighed with envy and jealousy.