

Y Master 1521

Chapter 1521: Azure Lotus Holy Embryo

Dang!

A melodious bell rang out, and the noisy voices instantly quieted down. Lan Yingfei stepped onto the Martial Arts Arena, glanced at the crowd, and then said in a deep voice, "This afternoon is the first group's matches. After the first group finishes, the second group will continue. The matches will officially start shortly."

Round-robin matches in groups, two people per match. The matches within the group are arranged by the academy; there's no need for them to draw lots, and even the match order is already set.

The first group has ten people, five matches; the second group also has ten people, five matches. This afternoon, there will be ten matches. Each match must not exceed the time of two incense sticks; if there's no winner after this duration, it will be judged as a draw.

Soon, the opponents and schedule for the matches were announced. These arrangements were made by the academy after careful and prudent comparison.

The first match of the first group: Li Tianfeng versus Yu Tidou.

The second match: Gu Hao versus Ma Mingxiao.

The third match: Ye Fan versus Xiong Kuang.

...

“Hehe...”

Seeing that he was in the same match as Ye Fan, Xiong Kuang couldn't help but laugh. He looked at Ye Fan provocatively and said, “Hot favorite to win the championship, your luck is really not that good, meeting me in the first match!”

“Is that so? I don't think so!”

Ye Fan remained very calm. Although Xiong Kuang was very strong and had Demon Clan bloodline, he still didn't regard him as a significant threat.

“Arrogant!”

Seeing Ye Fan indifferent and not taking him seriously at all, Xiong Kuang snorted coldly, his eyes flashing with a hint of viciousness.

“You're acting arrogant now, but when the match comes, you'll have nowhere to cry!”

Xiong Kuang secretly vowed to trample Ye Fan underfoot.

“First group, first match begins, both sides take the stage!”

With Lan Yingfei’s voice, Li Tianfeng and Yu Tidou’s figures flashed onto the large competition platform of the Martial Arts Arena.

“Hehe... you’re really unlucky to meet me in the first match. No more words, three moves to settle the battle!”

Li Tianfeng was extremely arrogant, not regarding the unknown Yu Tidou at all.

“A toad yawning, big talk. Aren’t you afraid of biting your tongue? I’d like to see how you settle it in three moves!” Yu Tidou’s eyes turned cold, exuding a chilling aura that lowered the temperature on the platform.

“Blade!”

Yu Tidou shouted coldly, and an ice blade formed by the elements of heaven and earth appeared in his hand. The biting cold air almost froze the air.

He knew Li Tianfeng was very strong, so he didn't take chances and directly unleashed his strongest attack.

"It's actually a mutation of the Water Element—Ice Element!"

"This unknown Yu Tidou is indeed not to be underestimated, capable of mutating elements!"

"The new disciples this year are simply too strong, any one of them is impressive. We need to work hard, otherwise, if these junior brothers challenge us successfully, not only will we lose cultivation resources, but it will also be very embarrassing!"

"..."

Seeing Yu Tidou causing the Water Element to mutate into the fearsome Ice Element, some senior disciples in the viewing area became uneasy.

"Interesting, but my words stand, three moves to settle the battle!"

Seeing Yu Tidou perform the Ice Element Divine Power, Li Tianfeng's eyes flared with a fierce light as if he saw prey. He licked his lips and said coldly.

"Reckless!"

Yu Tidou snorted coldly, his blade flashed, and with a swish, it cleaved towards Li Tianfeng's face. The sharp sword light cut through the void, emitting a howl like a ghost's wail, the demonic sound piercing the brain.

At this moment, Yu Tidou seemed completely frozen, even ice crystals hung on his eyebrows. This was the display of him utilizing the Ice Element to its extreme.

If faced with an ordinary Mid-stage Divine Power Realm cultivator, unless they had a naturally restraining Heavenly Fire Divine Ability, this slash would be enough to cleave the opponent apart.

"Which family does this Yu Tidou belong to? Very impressive, showing great potential!" In the VIP seats, a heroic lord sipped fragrant tea and turned to ask the Old Fox.

"From a small family in the Northern Domain, they've lived under the ice layers for years, all clan members can wield Ice Element Divine Power, but he is stronger." The Old Fox stroked his beard and smiled, very pleased to have recruited such a talented disciple this time.

At this moment, Li Tianfeng moved, his eyes suddenly turned fiery red, and a faint layer of azure flame enveloped his fists.

Bang!

A loud explosion, the ice blade shattered instantly!

Just one punch!

With a single punch, Li Tianfeng shattered Yu Tidou's ice blade, and with momentum unabated, his fist, radiating azure flames, struck directly at Yu Tidou's chest.

Swish! Swish! Swish!

Yu Tidou didn't expect his fully charged slash to be shattered by the opponent's single punch. Feeling the extreme heat, his color changed instantly, and with a flick of his hand, he set up three layers of ice shields in front of him to block Li Tianfeng's fist.

Bang!

A layer of ice shield was shattered, Li Tianfeng's fist was slightly slowed down, losing its previous momentum.

Bang!

The second layer of ice shield was pierced through, quickly vanishing under the searing blue flames.

Poof!

The third layer of ice shield cracked, but it managed to block Li Tianfeng's fist, keeping him from breaking through.

Even so, Yu Tidou broke into a cold sweat, surprised at Li Tianfeng's remarkable strength at only sixteen.

However, being battle-hardened and adept at seizing opportunities, he noticed the flaw when Li Tianfeng's fist force expired, the old force ran out and the new hadn't formed yet. He swung his hand decisively, conjuring an ice cone to fiercely stab at Li Tianfeng's vein gate.

"Hey!"

Li Tianfeng let out a strange laugh, his wrist dipped, and he exhaled a stream of innate primordial essence qi, transforming it into a heavenly blade and slashing toward Yu Tidou!

"Ice Crane!"

Seeing Li Tianfeng's power, Yu Tidou dared not be careless and directly manifested his holy embryo. An ice-blue immortal crane appeared behind him, its beak like an immortal sword aimed at Li Tianfeng's forehead.

At the same time, Yu Tidou swung his hand and arranged five ice shield barriers in front of himself to block Li Tianfeng's innate primordial essence qi.

Poof poof poof...

The heavenly blade formed from innate primordial essence qi cut through the five ice shields swiftly, pressing toward Yu Tidou's forehead.

"Kill!"

At this point, Yu Tidou dared not hold back anymore, he spat out a stream of innate primordial essence qi towards the heavenly blade.

Boom!

The two streams of innate primordial essence qi collided with each other, immediately piercing through the void between them, forming a bowl-sized black hole that absorbed all the energy, restoring peace on the stage.

"Not bad! You managed to take two moves. Next, I won't hold back!"

Though Li Tianfeng's two moves failed, he wasn't angry but teased Yu Tidou with a strange laugh.

“Quit talking nonsense, come on then, show me how you finish the battle in three moves.” Yu Tidou took a deep breath and said coldly.

The clash earlier had consumed a significant amount of divine power, making it impossible for him to set up five layers of ice shields again, but for pride’s sake, he would last three moves even if he was subdued, letting Li Tianfeng embarrass himself.

Through the previous exchange, he realized Li Tianfeng’s elemental divine power precisely countered his fire element, especially the Azure Lotus Heavenly Fire, which ordinary flames couldn’t possibly defeat his North Pole Profound Ice.

“Yu Tidou’s strength is indeed formidable, but unfortunately, his North Pole Profound Ice is precisely countered by his opponent’s Azure Lotus Heavenly Fire. This match is without suspense!”

The keen-eyed heroic lords in the VIP seats saw through the mystery with just an instant collision, shaking their heads collectively.

The audience below shared the heroic lords’ opinion, attributing Yu Tidou’s misfortune not to a lack of ability but bad luck.

However, upon reaching the Divine Power Realm, everyone would comprehend an elemental divine power, commonly the five basic elements—gold, wood, water, fire, and earth—inevitably encountering opponents whose powers counter theirs. At such times, it’s about strength and luck.

Li Tianfeng, despite his young age, is highly gifted and had the Li family pour all cultivation resources onto him, reaching the mid-stage Divine Power Realm at only sixteen, refining the ordinary fire element into Azure Lotus Heavenly Fire.

In comparison, Yu Tidou is also strong, capable of fighting across levels without issue, but with his divine power being countered, defeating his opponent became extraordinarily difficult.

At this moment, everyone's eyes were fixed on the stage, watching if Li Tianfeng could defeat Yu Tidou in the final move. Otherwise, his claim of ending the fight in three moves would be a joke.

Swoosh!

A peculiar azure lotus appeared in his hand, burning with blue flames, seemingly made of jade. The terrifying high temperature distorted the void.

"What? He actually condensed an Azure Lotus Holy Embryo?"

"Really don't know whether this kid has incredible luck or happened to have walked into **** luck, to condense such a holy embryo and unleash such terrifying power!"

"This kid, either he has great perseverance or knew beforehand he would comprehend the Azure Lotus Heavenly Fire divine power. Otherwise, who would condense a combatless Azure Lotus Holy Embryo?"

Seeing Li Tianfeng's holy embryo as a mutant blue lotus, even the heroic lords in the VIP seats couldn't stay calm, expressing their astonishment.

However, undeniably, with Li Tianfeng's Azure Lotus Heavenly Fire coupled with the Azure Lotus Holy Embryo, Yu Tidou stood no chance; his divine power was thoroughly countered, and martial arts might not be effective.

"Never expected I would have to use it eventually!"

Seeing Li Tianfeng's holy embryo, Yu Tidou realized his inevitable defeat but was determined to hold through three moves to avoid looking too unsightly in defeat.

Meanwhile, Ye Fan squinted at Li Tianfeng's Azure Lotus Holy Embryo, looking contemplative.

Chapter 1522: Ye Fan Takes the Stage

Li Tianfeng's holy embryo turned out to be a mutant blue lotus, which no one had expected.

Plant holy embryos are generally considered to be useless, without any special abilities.

However—

Once Li Tianfeng cultivated ordinary flames into Azure Lotus Heavenly Fire, this Qing Lian Holy Embryo truly shone, not inferior to cultivators who formed Heavenly Dragon or Fierce Tiger Holy Embryos.

Upon seeing Li Tianfeng's Qing Lian Holy Embryo, Yu Tidou knew there was no need to continue the match; he was doomed to lose. Yet, to avoid an embarrassing defeat, he decided to give it his all, even if it meant revealing his most powerful card.

"I never expected that, in the end, I'd have to use this!"

Yu Tidou shook his head while laying down three layers of crystalline blue ice shield barriers in front of him. Then, with a flash of light in his hand, a black Mystic Iron Hammer appeared.

Crack!

As the Mystic Iron Hammer appeared, Yu Tidou's figure visibly sank, and the bluestone under his feet cracked, showing just how heavy this large Mystic Iron Hammer was.

"None of it matters, let's end this!"

Li Tianfeng shouted, turning into a streak of blue light. The mutant Qing Lian Holy Embryo, emanating scorching heat, pierced through three layers of ice shields and smashed fiercely onto the Mystic Iron Hammer.

Thud!

A muffled thud resounded as the Mystic Iron Hammer was swept away by a delicate blue lotus. Immediately, the Qing Lian Holy Embryo pressed against Yu Tidou's chest, and with just a faint exertion of divine power, it could have taken his life.

"I... lost!"

Yu Tidou's face turned pale as his blood drained away. He never expected that even with the Mystic Iron Hammer, he couldn't withstand Li Tianfeng's attack.

As promised, the battle was resolved within three moves, and indeed, it only took three moves!

Though Li Tianfeng was arrogant, he had the right to be. With immense strength and skills that counter his opponent's, he defeated Yu Tidou in three moves.

"Li Tianfeng is victorious!"

Lan Yingfei appeared in the arena at the right time, separating Yu Tidou and Li Tianfeng, and announced the result. He then said to Yu Tidou, "Don't be discouraged; you didn't lose because of a lack of strength. Go rest, and I look forward to your outstanding performance in the upcoming matches."

"Thank you, elder, I will!"

Yu Tidou clenched his fist, took a stoic glance at the triumphant Li Tianfeng, and walked directly toward the waiting area.

“The second match begins, both contestants, step onto the platform!”

Lan Yingfei didn't give Li Tianfeng the chance to bask in his glory, instead, he promptly announced the start of the second match and removed Li Tianfeng from the stage.

The second match featured Ancient Saint Gu Hao versus Ma Mingxiao. As soon as both stepped onto the platform, they started fighting even before Lan Yingfei could announce the match's start.

Seeing this, a gleam of interest flashed in Lan Yingfei's eyes. He didn't intervene but instead ascended into the air to supervise the intense battle between the two.

“Let's make this quick to free up time for the later matches!” Ancient Saint Gu Hao shouted loudly.

“Just what I wanted! Let's decide the winner within ten moves!”

Ma Mingxiao was equally boastful. Even when facing a long-standing Holy Land Saint Heir, he showed no fear, aggressively attacking and matching Gu Hao evenly.

Bang bang bang bang...

The arena echoed with intense collisions akin to popping corn. The fight was so fierce that the audience could only see two figures entwined, unable to discern the specific combat techniques.

The spectators were disciples of the Immortal Academy, skilled in observation, knowledgeable enough to realize that the two fighters were evenly matched, neither able to gain an advantage, thus heightening the intensity.

In the VIP seats, the Heroic Lords were captivated by the series of thrilling matches.

The vice principal, the Old Fox, laughed like a thief who had pilfered someone's chickens, caressing his goat beard. He was quite satisfied with this year's disciples.

The only thing that irked him was the loss of six disciples in the Immortal Secret Realm; it was a classic case of losing both the chicken and the rice.

Of course, he understood well that the outside of the Ancient City in the Immortal Secret Realm was fraught with dangers, and despite the fast return array platforms, the risk of falling was high. Great wealth comes with great risk; there are no free lunches in the world.

"Qilin Stepping Fire!"

Gu Hao shouted, and a Qilin shrouded in violet flames appeared, charging at Ma Mingxiao with majestic intensity.

“Horse Trampling Void!”

Ma Mingxiao also roared. Behind him appeared a divine Dragon Horse, treading the void, aiming to trample the Purple Qilin’s back.

“Sky-shattering Seven Hammers!”

The Ancient Saint wielded a Bright Silver Hammer, its light flashing in his hand, as if weighing down the void, fiercely smashing towards Ma Mingxiao.

Hmm?

Watching, Ye Fan was secretly astonished. Gu Hao’s progress was immense. He had encountered the Sky-shattering Seven Hammers in the Southern Domain’s genius competition, but now its power had tripled.

“To me, sword!”

Ma Mingxiao brought forth a Thick Blade in his hand, spinning a string of sword light, fiercely aiming at Gu Hao. The sword light spanned several zhang, splitting the void.

“Hah!”

Gu Hao shouted fiercely, wielding the Bright Silver Hammer with both hands. It reflected the blinding light under the sun, disturbing the opponent’s sight, and smashed it fiercely against the Thick Blade.

Dang!

With a loud crash, Ma Mingxiao’s Thick Blade almost slipped from his hand, causing his tiger’s mouth to go numb, and he couldn’t help but take a step back.

Gu Hao seized the moment with a shout, purple flames enveloping his entire body, even wrapping around the Bright Silver Hammer as he smashed it toward Ma Mingxiao again.

Clang!

Clang!

Clang!

Five consecutive hammers, carrying a monstrous fire, directly knocked Ma Mingxiao back five steps, causing the Thick Blade in his hand to fly out.

“Roar!”

Gu Hao roared again, unleashing the final strike of the Sky-shattering Seven Hammers, sending Ma Mingxiao flying and crashing hard into the Defensive Shield, blood spurting from his seven orifices, nearly smashing him to death.

However, Gu Hao knew his limits, and he couldn’t intentionally harm his opponent. Otherwise, it would be considered a foul, at worst leading to severe punishment or outright expulsion from the academy.

Lan Yingfei helped Ma Mingxiao up, checking his injuries. Though he was knocked out, the injuries were not serious. After some massage and feeding him a Restoration Pill, he wouldn’t miss tomorrow’s match, letting Lan Yingfei finally breathe a sigh of relief.

“Gu Hao wins!”

Lan Yingfei announced the result of the match without expression.

In the Immortal Academy, there are no strongest heirs from the Di Clan, no Saint Heirs. Even if sealed, the Emperor’s sons born in this life are of no use here; only names matter, not identity.

As Gu Hao injured Ma Mingxiao with seven hammers, the Purple Fire Qilin and Dragon Horse also settled their match, each returning to their respective hosts to stabilize their injuries.

The Dragon Horse is strong, but ultimately, it is not a real Dragon Horse, but a cultivator's Holy Embryo. It lacks consciousness, and its battle capability is directed by the two duelists.

After Gu Hao gained the upper hand, the Purple Fire Qilin also overwhelmingly tormented the Dragon Horse.

Soon, Ma Mingxiao regains consciousness, knowing that Gu Hao held back, feeling a complicated mix of emotions. Everyone is a genius, and no one is significantly weaker than the other, yet ultimately, he lost!

However, his performance has been praised by many heroic lords; to endure so long against the long-standing Holy Land's Saint Heir is already remarkable.

Lan Yingfei comforted him with a few words, escorted him off the platform, and then announced the start of the third match.

Whiz!

Xiong Kuang's figure flickered, and the next moment he was already standing on the platform, coldly looking at Ye Fan.

Ye Fan smiled faintly, leisurely walking onto the stage, as if strolling, without placing the upcoming match in his mind at all.

“This brat is quite arrogant, Xiong Kuang is already arrogant enough, but he is even more arrogant than Xiong Kuang. I really wonder where his confidence comes from?”

“Is this Ye Fan? The one who was given the lowest odds by Saintess Yaling? Nothing special, really!”

“If he ends up winning the championship, I’ll drink footwash as tea.”

“Don’t say that. He is a weirdo who has set several records and was personally greeted by the Old Bastard. How many in the academy have such an honor?”

“...”

Seeing Ye Fan leisurely stepping onto the stage, the crowd buzzed with discussion, with some people wishing for Xiong Kuang to beat Ye Fan soundly.

Having bet on Qi Tianlin and Zhou Zhaolong to win the championship, naturally, they didn’t want Ye Fan to become the dark horse, harboring some hostility wishing he doesn’t win.

“Old Bear, knock him down.”

“Xiong Kuang, go for it, defeat him, and let him understand there are always stronger people and higher heavens.”

“He’s just an Early-stage Divine Realm, yet dreams of winning the championship; it’s laughable!”

When Ye Fan stepped onto the stage, the audience almost boiled over. Except for Hu Fei and Shi Ye, who had close ties with Ye Fan, almost everyone hoped he would lose.

“This Yaling, she’s causing me trouble!”

Listening to the escalating noise, Ye Fan touched his nose with a bitter smile. Yaling pegging him as a strong favorite for the championship essentially put him in a hot seat.

“Quiet!”

Faced with this situation, Lan Yingfei couldn’t stand it anymore, shouting loudly and suppressing all the voices.

Lan Yingfei, known as the Iron Face Yama, commanded fear among all academy disciples. Once he spoke, everyone immediately quieted down, although soft murmurs still persisted, but wouldn’t interfere with the two on stage.

“Although I don’t know why Saintess Yaling chose you as the favorite, in my view, you’re not my opponent at all, so you’d better give up!”

Once Ye Fan settled, Xiong Kuang spoke, unable to bear Ye Fan’s poor favorability among others – hardly anyone was cheering for him.

“Whether I’m your opponent will only be known after the fight. I don’t have the habit of surrendering, so make your move!” Ye Fan replied calmly.

“Fine, since you don’t surrender, I’ll hit you until you do!”

Xiong Kuang’s eyes flashed fiercely, and his fighting intent soared.

He has great confidence in his strength, with lofty goals for this tournament – aiming to challenge four seed players, at least breaking into the top three!

This is his first battle; he must win and win beautifully!

Firstly, to display his power publicly; secondly, to give Ye Fan a shock, reminding him that the so-called favorite is merely laughable!

Chapter 1523: Testing the Waters

“Ye is bound to lose. He’s just at the Early-stage Divine Realm. Even if he can fight across realms, it won’t matter. Xiong Kuang has the ability to fight across realms too.”

“Who is spewing nonsense? What a stench. What’s so great about Xiong Kuang? If Ye Zi didn’t hold back, Xiong Kuang wouldn’t last even three moves!” Hu Fei glared, his words exceptionally venomous, making many want to beat him up.

However, considering his identity, many chose silence because the Nine Great Bandits are not to be messed with. Just half a year ago, Hu Fei’s grandfather, together with some brothers, ambushed the Di Clan’s Saint. If not for other Di Clan members arriving with a damaged Emperor Weapon, they would have succeeded.

Who dares provoke someone who doesn’t regard the Di Clan seriously?

The competition hasn’t formally begun, but the audience stands and waiting area are already boiling over. Many disciples betting on Qi Tianlin and Zhou Zhaolong’s victory engaged in verbal battles with Hu Fei, Shi Ye, Han Sandong, Sikong Po, and others.

“Make your move, or you won’t get the chance!”

Amid the argument, Xiong Kuang spoke, not displaying any divine skills, standing casually, clearly not taking Ye Fan seriously.

“Ye Zi, hit him, hit him until he doesn’t dare act wildly anymore!”

Seeing Xiong Kuang pose like a lonely master, Hu Fei was fuming, shouting for Ye Fan to strike.

Ye Fan heard this, smiled slightly, without any intention to hit hard.

Because, although Xiong Kuang is arrogant, he's not evil. Besides, the Xiong Family contributed greatly in resisting the Demon Clan, achieving great merit for the Human Race, deserving respect.

"Better you make the first move. I don't have the habit of striking first."

Ye Fan smiled slightly, similarly not displaying any divine skills, as it was really unnecessary.

"Alright!"

Xiong Kuang shouted fiercely, saying coldly, "Since you're so confident, I'll grant your wish. If you can withstand ten of my moves, I count as a loss."

As his words fell, Xiong Kuang roared to the sky, his clothes bursting open, revealing strong muscles resembling the hardest granite, reflecting oily brilliance under the sun.

At this moment, Xiong Kuang, originally very strong, grew even taller. His hands widened like fans, clenched like cauldrons, his whole body's energy and blood roaring like thunder.

Is this still human?

He is practically a humanoid Xuan Beast!

Spectators couldn't help but look at each other. Indeed, Xiong Kuang is powerful. It appeared the ancestral bloodline had been activated, showing signs of atavism.

"Strike!"

Xiong Kuang shouted, his huge fists like cannonballs blasted towards Ye Fan's chest, fierce Punch Ray compressed within a foot, more dazzling than the sun.

Ye Fan's gaze grew cold, knowing Xiong Kuang's punch was merely probing, so he didn't dodge, instead meeting it with his own.

Sixty percent strength!

Ye Fan only used sixty percent of his strength, not wanting to defeat Xiong Kuang at the outset, otherwise, this punch was enough to smash half of his chest.

Boom!

Their fists collided, Ye Fan didn't retreat a step, a faint smile on his face, not even using divine power, only sixty percent of his Physical Strength.

"Impressive, I take back what I said earlier."

With just one move, Xiong Kuang understood Ye Fan's deep and immeasurable strength, even without using divine skills, only with physical strength as potent as his own.

"You're worthy of my full effort, but be careful now, I won't hold back anymore!"

Xiong Kuang took a deep breath; his eyes shot two foot-long beams of Golden Light, shouting, his palms spinning like windmills toward Ye Fan.

Mad Bear Chaotic Dance!

Bei Xiong Family's renowned Absolute Technique, once Heaven and Earth Dharma is deployed, each palm lands as if a mountain suppressing down, ordinary cultivators would turn to pulp with just one slap.

“Quite an impressive martial arts technique, it’s no wonder Bei Xiong Family has stood for so many years.”

In the VIP seats, a Heroic Lord nodded in praise; many would struggle against Xiong Kuang’s attack, even without divine skills, sheer strength alone was terrifying.

“Xiong Kuang is already using Mad Bear Chaotic Dance technique; Ye is likely soon unable to persist, inevitably being slapped away.”

Seeing Xiong Kuang use his Mad Bear Chaotic Dance, a young man wearing the same trousers as Li Tianfeng spoke gleefully.

Boom, boom, boom, boom...

In a blink, Ye Fan clashed with Xiong Kuang several dozen times, divine power surged like rolling rivers, relentless, with Thunder Power swirling on his purple-gold palms.

The more they fought, the more Xiong Kuang was shocked — Ye Fan’s body was terrifying!

Bear in mind, Xiong Kuang didn’t suppress his realm, using Mid-stage Divine Power Realm strength, yet even without divine skills; Ye Fan’s Early-stage Divine Realm shouldn’t withstand it.

Ye Fan's every slap carried fearsome Thunder Power, making Xiong Kuang especially apprehensive.

"What kind of freak is this guy? His body even stronger than mine, a ghostly encounter!"

Xiong Kuang was immensely frustrated; his pride was always his powerful body, yet today faced someone with an even more terrifying body, causing him slight discomfort in pure physical clashes.

Especially since his realm isn't even as high as mine, without suppressing the realm, if I can't even take down a little cultivator in the early-stage divine realm, what right do I have to charge into the top three?

While Xiong Kuang was feeling frustrated, Hu Fei and Shi Ye in the waiting area were grinning widely.

"This big fool, comparing physical strength with Ye Zi, isn't he just asking for trouble?" Hu Fei said with a mischievous grin.

"That's right!"

Shi Ye strongly agreed, even he, a genius of the barbarian clan flowing with War God bloodline, would have to suffer in a pure physical confrontation, let alone Xiong Kuang.

"This..."

The young man who just said Ye Fan would surely be knocked flying seemed to have been slapped hard, his face flushed with embarrassment, unable to utter a word.

Obviously, he realized that while Xiong Kuang was powerful, he couldn't do anything against Ye Fan, having fought for so long without even touching the hem of his clothes.

After executing a set of Mad Bear Chaotic Dance, Xiong Kuang became even more frustrated, his tiger's mouth cracked from the vibration, while the other side seemed fine, not even moving an inch.

At this point, Xiong Kuang couldn't rely on pressing down with realms; it was clear that even though Ye Fan was in the early-stage divine realm, his physical strength far surpassed his own.

To win the competition, Xiong Kuang finally decided to use his divine skills; otherwise, he wouldn't have a chance, and this was his first match, even just for good luck, he couldn't lose.

"Thick Earth Seal!"

Xiong Kuang shouted, and suddenly a large earth-colored seal appeared in the void, shining brightly, seemingly with inscriptions below it, crashing down towards Ye Fan to suppress him.

This was his divine ability, understanding the earth element, after reaching the mid-stage divine power realm, he refined this simple earth element divine skill into the Thick Earth Seal, with immense power, his ace.

He originally planned to use this move to challenge the top three, but if he couldn't even pass Ye Fan, then what top three could he talk about?

He had no choice but to prematurely expose this ace move, believing that once the Thick Earth Seal is deployed, he would definitely win, and Ye Fan couldn't possibly withstand this seal like a giant mountain.

Additionally, he wouldn't remain idle; the moment the seal fell, he rushed over again, throwing a punch at Ye Fan's chest, making it difficult for him to defend himself.

"Xiong Kuang actually mastered the Thick Earth Seal, it's simply too strong."

"Now that Ye's loss is certain, even if his divine power is strong, facing the immensely powerful Thick Earth Seal, there's likely only the path of defeat."

Seeing this, many cultivators cried out in disbelief; even for them, fighting against such a terrifying Thick Earth Seal wouldn't be easy, let alone Ye Fan, who was merely in the early-stage divine realm?

"I suggest you surrender; otherwise, I can't guarantee you won't get hurt!"

Seeing Ye Fan about to be suppressed under the Thick Earth Seal, Xiong Kuang felt a bit reluctant and said while throwing a punch.

“Thank you for your good intentions, I won’t hurt you!”

Ye Fan smiled broadly; he had been preparing to teach Xiong Kuang a lesson. However, since he considered his safety, he couldn’t strike ruthlessly.

“You... arrogant!”

Xiong Kuang was almost choked by Ye Fan’s words; at this point, he still said he wouldn’t hurt him. Xiong Kuang truly didn’t know where his confidence came from?

Soon, he understood.

In front of everyone’s eyes, Ye Fan did not dodge, instead he extended a single hand upward, steadily holding the Thick Earth Seal in his palm, carrying this mountain-like seal towards Xiong Kuang!

Swoosh!

Xiong Kuang’s face changed in fright, hurriedly waving his hand to set up six Thick Earth Shields in front of him to block Ye Fan’s attack.

In his mind, Ye Fan carrying the mountain-like Thick Earth Seal must be slow, he just needs to fend off this wave, victory would be his.

However—

Bang!

Bang!

Bang!

...

A series of explosions rang out, and the six Thick Earth Seals were punched through by Ye Fan and shattered.

In the next moment.

As soon as Xiong Kuang realized, the purplegold fist infused with Thunder Power was already in front of him, just half an inch away from smashing into his head.

“I... I surrender!”

Xiong Kuang stood still, tight as a sculpture, his eyes wide open like walnuts, his face filled with shock, blurting out his surrender, yet completely unable to believe the result!

Chapter 1524: Barbarian

The entire martial arts arena was silent, and the disciples of the Immortal Academy in the stands were all stunned by Ye Fan's divine power!

Even the heroic lords in the VIP seats were also very surprised.

Although they didn't know how terrifying Xiong Kuang's Thick Earth Seal truly was, it certainly wouldn't be light, or else Xiong Kuang wouldn't have considered it as his trump card.

However—

Ye Fan resisted this big seal with one hand, and while holding the Thick Earth Seal with one hand, punched through the Six Paths of Thick Earth Seal that Xiong Kuang laid down, almost scaring Xiong Kuang out of his wits...

How strong must one be to achieve this?

Even Lan Yingfei hadn't expected that Ye Fan would eventually win in such a way, it was truly shocking!

When the Thick Earth Seal appeared, Lan Yingfei even broke into a sweat for Ye Fan. Others didn't know the power of this Thick Earth Seal, but he watched from above and knew full well.

This Earth Element Divine Power's Thick Earth Seal was definitely Xiong Kuang's trump card, and even if it was used against a Late-stage Divine Realm strong person, this big seal could break their bones and tendons, but Ye Fan supported it single-handedly.

This strength was simply astonishing!

"This kid is not simple!"

In the VIP seats, a heroic lord sighed: "He's neither arrogant nor impatient, and respects his opponent. This is definitely not his ultimate combat power. Because he didn't even use his divine skills or martial arts, he achieved this only relying on physical strength and divine power!"

"Indeed, what's even more commendable is his control over his own strength and martial arts. It has reached an amazing level, otherwise, if the strength was too small, he might have lost the match, and if too large, he might have directly crushed his opponent. This benevolence is something that ordinary young geniuses lack." Another heroic lord said.

Their keen eyesight noticed what the disciples of the Immortal Academy couldn't: Ye Fan suppressed his own combat power, allowing Xiong Kuang to display his strongest strength before defeating him.

Both Lan Yingfei and the Old Fox had already seen this, but they didn't point it out. They were also curious to see what level Ye Fan had reached.

The result of the match couldn't have been clearer. Xiong Kuang launched his strongest attack, but he was still defeated.

"Ye Fan wins!"

Moments later, Lan Yingfei announced the end of the match.

"Brother Ye Fan, please wait!"

Just as Ye Fan was about to return to the waiting area, Xiong Kuang caught up with him from behind, with an embarrassed expression: "Now I understand that you were always holding back against me. No doubt about it, Old Bear admits it. From this day on, you are my brother, Ye Fan. Anyone who messes with you messes with Old Bear!"

As he spoke, Xiong Kuang used divine consciousness transmission to say to Ye Fan: "Be careful of that kid Li Tianfeng. This guy is not a good character. I heard he plans to harm you. Don't let him catch you off guard!"

"Thanks!"

Ye Fan responded with divine consciousness transmission as well.

He had already sensed something amiss with Li Tianfeng and judged him to be Zhou Zhaolong's tool.

Even so, he had no intention of letting Li Tianfeng off easily.

Being plotted against without retaliation was not in his character.

He and Li Tianfeng were arranged in the same group and would meet sooner or later. This battle was inevitable!

After Ye Fan and Xiong Kuang stepped off the stage, the fourth match began immediately. Two geniuses showcased their unique skills, each demonstrating their strongest combat power to fight for victory and better rankings, to secure more cultivation resources.

Ultimately, a young genius named Chen Guanglin narrowly defeated his opponent to win the fourth match, although it was a close call, almost ending in mutual destruction.

The fifth match began quickly and ended even quicker. A young genius named Sun Mingyu swiftly defeated his opponent within five moves, winning the match.

With this, all five matches of the first group were completed.

Immediately following, Elder Lan Yingfei announced the start of the second group's first match.

As the matches started and ended one after another, some rejoiced while others lamented. The victors were overjoyed, and the losers bowed their heads in dismay. After all, losing right on the first match was a disappointment.

In the fourth match, Jin Changgeng ended up against Hu Fei. On the stage, they exchanged glances for half a day, ultimately stopping short. After Jin Changgeng used the Jiu Long Barbaric Power, Hu Fei immediately conceded, realizing he stood no chance.

"The fifth match begins, step onto the stage!"

After announcing Jin Changgeng's victory, Lan Yingfei directly announced the beginning of the fifth and final match of the day.

"Barbarian, it's your turn!"

After returning to the waiting area, Hu Fei jokingly said to Shi Ye.

His attitude was exceptionally positive. Even though he lost the first match, he didn't mind since losing to one of his own wasn't a disgrace.

“Finally my turn, darn it, just watching you guys was making me itchy, hoping the opponent can take a beating...”

With that, Shi Ye strode to the stage. At nearly two meters tall, he was like half an iron tower. Coupled with his beast pelt, messy hair, and the stone staff as thick as a thigh in his hand, he looked every bit like a wild man from the wilderness mountain forest, extremely intimidating.

His opponent was also a remarkably robust genius, appearing to be around twenty years old, with well-developed muscles all over, and eyes like a vicious wolf on the plains, radiating a fierce glare.

“Kid, come take a beating!”

Shi Ye wasn’t polite at all, waving him over in a muffled voice, as if summoning a child.

Pfft!

The stands erupted in laughter, even some of the female cultivators couldn’t help but cover their mouths to laugh.

“Courting death!”

Shi Ye's opponent's face turned iron blue, with a cold snort, he directly manifested his holy embryo, a colorful fierce tiger, roaring at Shi Ye.

Immediately, a flash of light appeared in the genius's hand, revealing a gleaming gui tou blade, moving with the blade, directly chopping towards Shi Ye's head.

Shi Ye muttered something, then strode up, raising his stone staff to block the gui tou blade, followed by a solid kick to his opponent's abdomen, almost shattering his dantian.

Ow...

The opponent let out a scream that didn't sound human, directly kicked by Shi Ye into the defensive shield, rebounded back, clutching his stomach, curled up like a cooked shrimp.

Even the fierce tiger was swatted flying by a swing of his stone staff, the sound of bones breaking was crisp, if not for Lan Yingfei stopping him, Shi Ye might have directly chopped the tiger condensed by the holy embryo in half.

In the VIP seats, the heroic lords from various forces had twitches at the corners of their mouths. Others didn't hear what Shi Ye muttered, but they did.

"Too bad it's not a real tiger, otherwise, I could have had a treat!"

Even wanting to eat a tiger condensed by the holy embryo, a foodie cultivating to this level, that's something else!

One kick sent the opponent flying, one swing almost broke the fierce tiger condensed by the holy embryo, such strength left everyone speechless.

Especially Xiong Kuang, watching Shi Ye's wild entrance, he felt a cramp in his calf, that kick made him empathize with Shi Ye's opponent's pain.

With the retreat of the holy embryo, his opponent felt a bit better but continued to retch, almost tying his intestines in knots.

"Admit defeat? Refuse and fight again!"

Shi Ye, looking harmless, swung the big stone staff at his opponent, smilingly asking.

"I admit, I admit, I surrender!"

The opponent hurriedly surrendered, thinking it was a joke. One kick had left him like this; another kick, and he might not survive!

Hearing their conversation, whether it was the new disciples in the academy observing, the contestants in the waiting area who had already finished their matches, or the heroic lords and Deputy Headmaster Old Fox in the VIP seats, they all were at a loss for words.

Shi Ye won with overwhelming superiority, and as he returned to the waiting area, people distinctly heard him mutter, "Couldn't take a beating..."

Chapter 1525: Turmoil

"The sky is getting dark; today's competition is over. Please all return, have a good rest tonight, and prepare for tomorrow's matches!" Lan Feiying announced, casting a helpless glance at Shi Ye.

As Lan Yingfei's voice faded, the various heroic lords in the VIP seats stood up one after another and began to exit, heading towards the academy's restaurant under the lead of the deputy dean, Old Fox.

It was apparent that, in order to gather resources, the academy had to maintain good relationships with these helmsmen from major powers to acquire more and better resources.

Ye Fan and the other participating disciples did not receive this treatment. However, they also quickly got up and left separately; whether they would go to the academy's cafeteria for a meal was unknown.

Having reached the Divine Power Realm, with profound techniques flowing through the body, it was no problem to go days without eating. As long as they constantly absorbed Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi, they could sustain their life needs.

Only the disciples watching the matches were reluctant to leave, still fiercely discussing the scenes from earlier competitions, in high spirits, displaying a masterful demeanor as they pointed out the tactics used.

Some even got into intense debates, spitting all over each other's faces due to supporting different competitors, rolling up sleeves, and getting ready to "spar."

"Xiao Fan, how do you feel? Confident?"

The crowd parted, and Yaling quickly caught up with Ye Fan and his group, smiling as she asked.

"Hmm."

Ye Fan smiled faintly. Although Yaling hadn't mentioned it specifically, he knew she was asking about winning the championship.

He had seen the strength of Qi Tianlin and Zhou Zhaolong, who might have hidden strengths, but he wasn't afraid. He had the strongest Immortal Stele Scattering Hand, which, when fully unleashed, could even be something that those at the peak of the Divine Power Realm might not withstand.

"Then I'm relieved, sister! At least you won't lose both the lady and the soldiers!" Yaling said with a seductive smile, implying something.

"What are you two talking about?" Hu Fei sneakily approached and asked.

“Scram!”

“Go away!”

Yaling and Ye Fan said simultaneously. Then they exchanged a glance, perceiving each other’s thoughts and laughing out loud with a high-five.

“Those two must be up to something...”

Hu Fei muttered to himself. Of course, he didn’t dare to say it aloud, or he’d be asking for a beating since he couldn’t beat either Ye Fan or Yaling.

Hmm?

At that moment, Ye Fan suddenly saw a young man approaching from not far away, blocking their path. His eyebrows furrowed and his eyes narrowed instantly.

Ye Fan recognized this young man; he was a genius named Li Daoheng who was close to Zhou Zhaolong and Li Tianfeng.

In the sunset, Li Daoheng's eyes were malicious and full of intense resentment, like a venomous snake staring at everyone, making people feel particularly uncomfortable.

"Why are you blocking our way?"

The Ancient Saint Gu Hao asked steadily, sensing something was wrong. Although Li Daoheng was fairly strong, he certainly wouldn't dare to obstruct them so audaciously alone; someone must be directing him from behind.

"Good dogs don't block the way!"

Hu Fei was not as courteous as Gu Hao. He often made others roll their eyes with his sharp tongue, and this was no exception, directly regarding Li Daoheng as a dog.

"Ye, I'm here to tell you that you don't even qualify to be Brother Zhao Long's opponent. You won't get past Li Tianfeng; he will definitely defeat you."

Li Daoheng completely ignored the two, treating their words as air, glaring venomously at Ye Fan.

"Are you done talking?" In the face of Li Daoheng's provocation, Ye Fan asked calmly without any ripples of emotion.

"Not yet!"

Li Daoheng then shifted his gaze to Gu Hao, Hu Fei, and others, saying one word at a time, "I've remembered your words just now. In the group round-robin, I will make sure you pay for it."

"You..."

Hu Fei, Gu Hao, Shi Ye, Jin Changgeng, and others couldn't help but become furious. Li Daoheng was merely a servant of Zhou Zhaolong but dared to belittle them, arousing their anger, itching to act immediately and knock him down.

Ye Fan raised his hand to stop everyone's impulse, smiling as he asked Li Daoheng, "Now are you finished?"

"Finished."

"Scram!"

Ye Fan's smile faded as he coldly said, "Go back and tell your master that I've seen through all his little tricks and remembered them. If it wasn't for the Immortal Academy's rule against life-and-death battles, I would have cut him down. Of course, before I cut him, I would cut you to start!"

"Such arrogant words! I'm standing right here; if you want to cut me down, go ahead. Let me see how you'll do it!"

Li Daoheng was especially arrogant, his eyes shooting out disdainful light, completely dismissing Ye Fan and his group.

Ye Fan's eyes were like golden lamps, shooting out two godly radiances several feet long, coldly staring at him for a long time. Then, he casually glanced in a certain direction, causing Li Daoheng's heart to skip a beat, unexpectedly shocked by Ye Fan's terrifying spiritual sense.

In the direction Ye Fan was gazing, Zhou Zhaolong was leisurely walking over with Li Tianfeng and a few trusted allies. Not far behind them was a Law Enforcer of the academy, whose strength was impossible to discern, unfathomable.

Even though Li Daoheng's words were harsh, arrogant, and domineering, he didn't make the first move against them. He only used words to provoke, hoping they would attack first.

Clearly, this was a malicious scheme, aiming to use the academy's rules to trap them. He was just provoking but not attacking first, so even if blame fell, it would at most be a reprimand. Whereas if Ye Fan and others struck first, breaking the academy's rules, they would face severe punishment or even expulsion.

It's certain this malicious scheme wasn't conceived by Li Daoheng; he didn't have the intellect for it. It was undoubtedly Zhou Zhaolong's doing, wanting to use the academy to eliminate him.

Once outside the Immortal Academy, the Ling Family would definitely not let him go. Ye Fan was well aware of this, and Zhou Zhaolong must have known as well, which is why he used the brainless Li Daoheng to provoke him.

“What’s the matter? Afraid? Don’t dare to make a move? Then stop bragging and quietly wait to be defeated by Brother Li Tianfeng in the round-robin!”

Li Daoheng spoke in a blustery yet cowardly manner, suspecting Ye Fan had already seen through their plan, rendering this borrowed-knife-to-kill tactic unusable.

“Just a lapdog barking wildly, if you want to die, I can fulfill your wish. Bring it on!”

Ye Fan’s voice was sonorous, neither loud nor soft, yet it spread across hundreds of meters, drawing attention to the scene.

“You...”

Li Daoheng was furious, veins bulging on his forehead, killing intent suddenly overflowing.

As a genius, he had sought refuge with Zhou Zhaolong, becoming a lapdog in name and reality, yet most resentful of others calling him such. Ye Fan’s words directly hit his most vulnerable spot, igniting his anger.

At this moment, a cough came from not far away, and then Zhou Zhaolong appeared, walking straight to Ye Fan.

“Brother Dao Heng, why bother with an ant, it’s beneath your status.” Zhou Zhaolong glanced coldly at Ye Fan, saying to Li Daoheng.

“Brother Zhao Long, I’m sorry, I was wrong. I shouldn’t have stooped to the level of an ant like him!”

Seeing Zhou Zhaolong’s arrival, Li Daoheng immediately assumed an obsequious demeanor, smugly casting a glance at Ye Fan and others.

He emphasized the word “ant” heavily, his meaning unmistakably clear.

“Who is causing a ruckus here? Do you take the academy’s rules as decoration?” The academy’s Law Enforcer approached with large strides, coldly questioning.

“Nothing much, just a minor skirmish. It’s our fault for disturbing the Law Enforcer; we’ll disperse right away!” Yaling smiled charmingly, addressing the academy’s Law Enforcer.

In the Immortal Martial Academy, all Law Enforcers are disciples of the Law Enforcement Hall. They are naturally very powerful, and many were geniuses of the academy unable to prove Dao due to various reasons. Tired of the outside world, they returned to become Law Enforcers or teachers.

“Is it really like that?”

The Law Enforcer stared intently at Ye Fan, clearly unkind, but since Yaling said so and no real fight had broken out, he couldn't find any faults with Ye Fan.

"If the Law Enforcer doesn't believe it, you could ask others or call Elder Lan Yingfei to resolve this matter. It's up to you!"

Seeing this Law Enforcer seemingly targeting Ye Fan, Yaling's voice turned cold, directly invoking Elder Lan Yingfei. She knew Elder Lan Yingfei was absolutely fair and just. If the matter was reported truthfully, Li Daoheng would surely be punished.

"Since that's the case, you all disperse. Do not let similar incidents occur again, or severe punishment will be enforced."

The Law Enforcer's heart skipped a beat, surprised by Yaling's sharp words, even he couldn't withstand them. After muttering a few words, he excused himself for patrol and left in a hurry.

The incident thus subsided, yet many felt something was amiss, a tense atmosphere permeated the entire academy.

"Ye Zi, why do I feel things aren't right?"

After walking a distance, Hu Fei suddenly said to Ye Fan, "That Law Enforcer was clearly targeting you. Could he be in cahoots with Zhou Zhaolong?"

“It’s very likely!”

Sikong Po frowned, “If that’s true, Brother Ye Fan must be extremely cautious in the future, avoid giving them any leverage or the consequences could be dire!”

“If soldiers come, use generals; if water comes, use earth. As long as they don’t provoke me, I won’t look for trouble, but if they dare to bully me, I won’t spare them!” Ye Fan spoke coldly, his voice firm and resolute.

He wouldn’t court trouble, but he also wasn’t afraid of it.

If others do not offend me, I will not offend them. If they offend me, I will destroy them!

After saying farewell, Ye Fan returned to his residence, directly entering the Virtual Space to cultivate in seclusion. He needed to rest and comprehend the Xuandi Fist and the Thunderclap Treasure Skill overnight to prepare for the upcoming competition.

Whether for his future status and resources within the academy or to fulfill his promise to Yaling, he must go all out to win the championship!

Chapter 1526: A Mantis Trying to Stop a Chariot?

The night is as cool as water, and the crescent moon is like a hook.

The Immortal Martial Academy is permeated with a tense atmosphere before the competition. Everyone is silently cultivating, comprehending martial arts and divine skills, striving to achieve good results in tomorrow's contest.

It must be understood that each competition affects one's future status in the academy and the cultivation resources, so they cannot afford to take it lightly.

Today's competition is merely a signal, but how many of those who can enter the Immortal Academy are unremarkable? None of them wish to fall behind others too much, whether for reputation or future cultivation resources, they have to fight desperately.

Besides Qi Tianlin and the other three, Shi Ye's performance today was also astonishing, making many gasp in shock.

In the same category of genius, to break through an opponent's defense with a kick and directly kick the opponent away, no one can remain calm facing such an opponent.

Even some disciples from previous terms are worried, fearing that after the ranking competition, this wild man might challenge them.

If Shi Ye truly challenges them, how should they respond? Can they fight and win?

Thinking of this issue, many people became unsettled. Xiong Kuang's performance almost qualifies him for the top four, yet he wasn't selected, indicating what kind of prodigies this batch of disciples are.

The new batch of disciples are also on high alert. There is practically no weakling among them, and to defeat an opponent and achieve a good ranking, one must adjust to the best state, allowing no room for error.

Therefore, they are all desperately cultivating, adjusting to their best state, with perfect spirit and energy, capable of facing any competition.

The geniuses who lost in the first day's competition are now reflecting on their mistakes, striving to redeem themselves in tomorrow's competition. Under no circumstances can they afford to be at the bottom, or it would be immensely embarrassing.

For a while, the entire academy is steeped in an imminent tense atmosphere, with everyone prepared to showcase their skills in tomorrow's competition.

The victors naturally want to maintain their winning momentum, while the losers want to redeem themselves by proving their strength.

At dawn, a ray of morning glow pierced the heavens and earth, the red sun rose from the horizon, spreading its brilliance across the land, adorning the Immortal Martial Academy with a glow.

At this moment, the entire Martial Arts Arena, except for the competition platform, is already shadowy and densely packed with people.

Due to the high-quality and exciting competitions yesterday, the number of spectators today has increased, many without seats, standing directly waiting for the competition to start.

Ye Fan and others, on their way here, saw many unfamiliar faces, all full of vigor, heading towards the Martial Arts Arena, obviously to watch the competition too.

The Immortal Academy's Martial Arts Arena usually doesn't even have a bird, even if someone wants to challenge, they don't use this platform—starting this massive platform once is not easy and consumes spirit stones, they usually fight on other arenas.

Yet in these two days, the previously deserted Martial Arts Arena suddenly became lively, filled with academy cultivators and even some loose cultivators rushing over to watch this grand competition.

The Immortal Academy is semi-open, very accommodating towards disciples from some small families and sects. Additionally, since the academy's competition is inevitably a clash between young geniuses, many people want to watch, and the number of people in the Martial Arts Arena suddenly increased, several times more than yesterday.

Dong!

A melodious bell rang, making everyone feel an empty spirit tranquility, and the originally noisy sounds immediately disappeared.

As the bell faded, Lan Yingfei appeared on the competition platform and announced today's competition schedule to everyone.

As Wu Jingtian and Yue Chuan's injuries have not fully healed, their matches continue to be postponed, and today's matches are still divided into two groups.

In order to avoid previously matched competitors from meeting again, this time the matches are arranged by the academy, no drawing lots.

Additionally, through yesterday's matches, the academy realized a serious problem—due to the match rule restrictions, many of the participating geniuses couldn't fully unleash their true power.

To prevent this from happening again and to allow all participants to fully showcase their abilities, displaying the best matches, the academy decided to send two strong figures as referees. In case of life-threatening situations, they will intervene and stop the match.

Of course, once they intervene to save someone, it means that the rescued party loses the match.

With two strong people present, the participants can fully exhibit their strongest combat powers, without worrying about severely injuring or killing the opponent due to their own strong attacks.

As this decision was announced, the audience erupted in enthusiastic applause, for what they most want to see are fierce and exciting matches; if merely going through motions, it wouldn't be interesting.

Every cultivator's blood is hot, they yearn to see scenes of boiling hot blood splattering, desiring to witness the strongest showdowns.

Yesterday's matches, though very exciting, lacked the bloodthirsty vigor that stirs the heart.

With the adjusted rules today, presumably those who lost yesterday will surely bring out their strongest combat power to strive for redemption!

Meanwhile, to save time and quickly reach a conclusion, the academy no longer limits the number of matches each day, playing as many as possible, with the first and second groups alternating matches.

As Lan Yingfei announced the competition rules and schedule, the various heroic lords arrived one after another, sitting in the VIP seats.

In front of them, small tables were set with tea, snacks, and fruits, which was the academy's arrangement; those coming to watch were the heads of various powers, naturally deserving such treatment.

The only different one was the old wild man, who closely resembled Shi Ye, with a jug of wine and dozens of pounds of roast meat before him, eating joyously without caring about the competition.

Dong!

Another bell rang, Lan Yingfei glanced at the twenty competitors in the waiting area, then said: "First match, Xiong Kuang, versus Yuan Daoqing, both sides please take the stage!"

As Lan Yingfei's words fell, Xiong Kuang sneered and leapt onto the tournament stage. At the same time, Yuan Daoqing also appeared on the stage.

"I won't repeat the rules of the match. Just go ahead and fight, no need to worry about consequences! The match begins!"

"Ow..."

As soon as Lan Yingfei finished speaking, Xiong Kuang showcased immense combat power, executing Mad Bear Chaotic Dance without even using Divine Skills, directly overwhelming Yuan Daoqing with a flurry of strikes.

In less than half a stick of incense, Yuan Daoqing was left dazed by Xiong Kuang's mountain-like heavy palms, his body wracked with unbearable pain, nearly smashed to pieces.

Smack!

Xiong Kuang slapped Yuan Daoqing down, forcefully claiming victory in the first match.

"First match, Xiong Kuang wins!"

Lan Yingfei nodded silently, acknowledging Xiong Kuang's undeniable strength, ranking notably even within the Mid-stage Divine Power Realm. It was just unfortunate that yesterday he encountered that demon Ye Fan, resulting in a miserable defeat.

"Hu..."

Upon hearing the match result announcement, Xiong Kuang exhaled a deep breath. After yesterday's suffocating defeat, today he finally felt proud, daring anyone to underestimate him.

"It's not that Xiong Kuang isn't strong enough, but that the one named Ye is stronger. Yesterday, Xiong Kuang lost without grievance!"

Watching Xiong Kuang effortlessly decimate his opponent with an avalanche-like assault until Yuan Daoqing coughed up blood, the crowd finally understood the extent of Xiong Kuang's true power.

"Second match, Hu Fei versus Li Tianfeng! Both sides please take the stage!"

What? Isn't Hu Fei supposed to be in the second group? How did he end up in the first group?

Upon hearing Lan Yingfei's announcement, the other contestants were taken aback, secretly pondering whether Elder Lan Yingfei had made a mistake. Hu Fei was clearly in the second group, so how did he encounter the first group's Li Tianfeng so quickly?

“No need to doubt, you heard correctly.”

Lan Yingfei said: “Since it’s a round-robin tournament, everyone has to face all the contestants eventually. It makes no difference when they encounter each other.”

“Be careful, if necessary just concede, don’t try to endure!”

Ye Fan warned Hu Fei with a solemn expression.

Li Tianfeng, at sixteen, could cultivate to the Mid-stage Divine Power Realm and was among the first batch of people to break through in the Immortal Secret Realm, attracting a great Heavenly Tribulation. Hu Fei might not be a match.

“I understand!”

Hu Fei replied nonchalantly, not taking Ye Fan’s warning to heart. He had just clashed with Li Tianfeng yesterday and now met him on the tournament stage; how could he possibly concede?

Besides, the descendants of the Nine Great Bandits never had the habit of voluntarily conceding. Even when clearly outmatched, they would fight to the death, unwilling to tarnish the name of the Nine Great Bandits.

Whizz!

Whizz!

Soon, Hu Fei and Li Tianfeng stepped onto the stage simultaneously, facing each other with a tremendous aura erupting from both, sweeping across the entire stage.

Boom!

Their auras collided, resembling an explosion, sending waves rolling in all directions. The Defensive Array Patterns flickered, neutralizing the aura-driven assault.

“Heh heh...”

Li Tianfeng grinned cruelly, a trace of viciousness flickering in his eyes as he appraised Hu Fei, saying, “Little bandit, you’ve finally fallen into my hands? Today we’ll settle both new and old scores. If I don’t beat you to a pulp, I might as well write ‘Li Tianfeng’ backward.”

“Less talk, face my blade first!”

Hu Fei roared loudly, a light flashing in his hand as a treasure sword appeared, directly slashing towards Li Tianfeng’s face. The blazing sword light transformed into a lightning bolt, striking Li Tianfeng in the blink of an eye.

“An ant trying to topple a cart, overestimating your strength!”

Li Tianfeng sneered, spewing an Innate Primordial Essence Qi from his mouth, shattering the sword light before viciously lunging at Hu Fei’s chest.

Chapter 1527: Ruthless Strikes!

“Hmph!”

Hu Fei gave a cold snort, his body leaned back until almost flat against the ground, and his right foot kicked up fiercely, sending a blazing Divine Radiance towards the Innate Primordial Essence Qi.

Shua!

Shua!

Shua!

Following immediately, Hu Fei twisted his waist and sprang up, his treasure sword in hand like dense waves of fish scales, one strike following another, launching Hu Family Saber Technique in a frenzied assault on Li Tianfeng.

Driven by Hu Fei's Divine Power, the pitch-black sword light extended over a dozen feet, seemingly capable of slicing the heavens and earth apart, its furious energy causing the Defensive Array Patterns to flare with powerful radiance.

If not for the near-Quasi-Emperor Level patterns laid down by strong people around the arena, it would have long been chopped to ashes.

"He's truly a fierce bandit, no wonder so formidable. Could his sword be that Heavenly Weapon saber of his grandfather?"

"Impossible. I once went to the Northern Domain and had the fortune to see that Heavenly Weapon saber, much mightier than this one."

"Even if it's not that saber, it could be a replica able to exhibit part of the Heavenly Weapon's power!"

The spectators debated loudly, all shocked by Hu Fei's fearless and invincible demeanor — this was a completely reckless fighting style!

Li Tianfeng didn't expect Hu Fei to launch a frenzied attack right away, catching him off guard, forcing him to retreat continually.

However, his strength exceeds that of Hu Fei, and after a brief retreat, he steadied himself and began his counterattack.

Shua!

Li Tianfeng's hand flashed with light, revealing an emerald-like Qing Tian Lotus, with green flames surging, scorching and collapsing the void.

Peng peng peng peng peng...

A series of dense explosive sounds arose, as the treasure sword and Qing Tian Lotus clashed over a hundred times, gradually suppressing Hu Fei's attack.

Li Tianfeng wielded the Azure Lotus Holy Embryo, unleashing powerful attack power, striking horizontally and smashing vertically, each blow carrying divine power capable of destroying heaven and earth, completely enveloping Hu Fei in hazy green flames.

"Ah..."

Hu Fei roared wildly, and instantly a shadow solidified behind him, a Vajra Ape appearing, with massive claws blotting out the sky, like mountain ranges smashing towards Li Tianfeng.

Boom!

Li Tianfeng swept across with the Azure Lotus, knocking the Vajra Ape flying over a dozen feet away, landing heavily, its figure became indistinct, almost collapsing.

The entire arena was engulfed in Divine Radiance, the glow dazzling, the duel reached a heated phase; Hu Fei yelled continuously, unleashing all sorts of marvelous martial arts, rapidly draining his Divine Power.

Boom!

The two clashed again, forcing Li Tianfeng to retreat three steps, his face flushing, while Hu Fei coughed up a mouthful of blood, his face turning pale. Though he didn't retreat, it was clear he suffered a loss in this collision.

"Hehe..."

Li Tianfeng gave a sinister smile, his body like a specter, swiftly advancing on Hu Fei, shaking the Azure Lotus to break through Hu Fei's defense.

Pa!

Li Tianfeng raised his hand and slapped Hu Fei's face, leaving a bright red palm print and trailing a thread of blood at the corner of Hu Fei's mouth once again.

“I’m going all out with you!”

Hu Fei roared angrily, disregarding his surging Qi and blood, forcefully gathering energy, channeling his Divine Power, and punched out again.

“It’s futile, in front of absolute strength, you’re nothing more than a clown!”

Li Tianfeng swung the Azure Lotus, spreading Divine Light to brush aside Hu Fei’s Punch Ray, and then swept it across his body repeatedly.

Peng!

Peng!

Peng!

...

Li Tianfeng wielded the Azure Lotus like a demon god, successively striking Hu Fei who flipped several times, his body covered in blood stains, and half of his clothes turned to ashes, looking utterly miserable.

“Holy Embryo, Unification!”

In crisis, Hu Fei roared loudly, and the previously illusory Vajra Ape merged into his body.

Ka-boom!

Hu Fei’s entire frame cracked with explosive sounds, transforming into a giant that stood tall against the sky, launching a punch at Li Tianfeng, the Punch Ray splitting the sky, the void trembling as if a whole world was crashing down.

“Heaven and Earth Dharma!”

Li Tianfeng realized Hu Fei was desperate, bellowing wildly, he unleashed Dharma Form Divine Power, growing several yards tall, piercing through the blue sky, and stomped towards Hu Fei’s head.

“Stop!”

A loud shout accompanied by a gray silhouette raced into the arena like lightning, quickly rescuing Hu Fei from underneath Li Tianfeng’s foot.

Boom!

Li Tianfeng's giant foot came down, causing the diamond arena to quake violently, the Array Patterns flickered rapidly, dissipating the power of that stomp.

"Consider yourself lucky..."

Li Tianfeng shook his head regretfully, muttering to himself.

A moment ago, he indeed harbored thoughts of killing. Not to mention that Hu Fei and Ye Fan are good friends, just for the old grudge between them, he absolutely wanted to keep Hu Fei permanently on the competition stage and avenge the spirit stone mine robbery from years ago.

The gray-robed elder brought Hu Fei out and immediately fed him a Healing Holy Pill, then activated Divine Power to aid his recovery.

In moments, Hu Fei's injuries healed greatly; he was already out of serious harm, though his body remained somewhat weak.

"The second match, Li Tianfeng wins!"

Seeing Hu Fei was no longer in peril, Lan Yingfei finally announced the result of the match.

“Brother Tianfeng is truly impressive, having already won two consecutive matches; it seems that besides the top four contestants, no one can defeat you!”

“That goes without saying, apart from Fierce bandit Qi and Brother Zhou Zhaolong, who can overcome Brother Tianfeng? I think, even breaking into the top three, Brother Tianfeng would have no problem.”

Li Tianfeng walked down the stage arrogantly, greeted by a few followers, who flattered him obsequiously.

“This Li Tianfeng is indeed powerful, rarely having opponents in the same realm, an absolute demon.”

“He’s only sixteen years old, already a Mid-stage Divine Power Realm strong person. In a few more years, who will be his opponent? Perhaps even some elders will have to acknowledge defeat.”

“However, given his young age, his personality is somewhat excessive.”

Seeing Li Tianfeng win the match with absolute dominance, requiring intervention from the referee to save Hu Fei’s life, many people discussed.

“Hmph!”

Their voices weren't quiet, so Li Tianfeng naturally heard them, sneered coldly, and swept his gaze over the few people discussing, his eyes filled with endless killing intent.

Subsequently, Li Tianfeng directed his gaze towards the area where Ye Fan and others were, ultimately resting on Ye Fan, his eyes filled with undisguised killing intent.

Ignoring Li Tianfeng's provocation, Ye Fan and the others proactively met Hu Fei who was stepping down from the ring, helping him to a seat for rest.

"I truly botched this time!"

Hu Fei looked frustrated and unwilling, initially thinking he could defeat Li Tianfeng—this outcome was unacceptable to him.

"Don't speak. Rest well; you're currently suffering from depleted energy and blood, and mustn't get angry, or it may lead to harm."

As he spoke, Ye Fan tore open Hu Fei's clothes at the chest and placed his right palm over the large acupuncture point on Hu Fei's chest, quickly channeling his thick and pure Pure Yang Qi into his body.

Pure Yang Qi is the most pristine Life Origin in the world; as long as the Divine Soul is unharmed, no matter how severe the body's injuries, Pure Yang Qi can restore them.

Under the astonished gazes of the crowd, Hu Fei's complexion gradually reddened, his energy and blood replenished, sweeping away his previous gloom, as if entirely unharmed, full of spirit, his Essence Qi surging like a vast ocean.

"Brother Ye Fan, you're about to compete soon, yet you exhaust Primordial Essence Qi to heal me, I..."

Hu Fei's voice choked, feeling touched; his eyes turned red—such sacrificial camaraderie truly moves one deeply, especially when one is willing to exhaust Primordial Essence Qi for healing despite an impending match.

"Great gratitude needs no words. From now on, my life belongs to you, my brother; anyone wishing to harm you must first step over my corpse." Hu Fei said earnestly.

Ye Fan patted Hu Fei's shoulder without saying anything.

Subsequently, match after match proceeded, each contesting intensely, all sorts of Divine Power Martial Techniques earning cheers from spectators.

The matches yesterday seemed somewhat restrained; today, these participating geniuses have fully unleashed themselves, unconcerned about causing fatalities, revealing various forbidden martial arts to the crowd's delight.

With the experience of the first day, everyone gained preliminary insight into their opponents, forming considerably targeted strategies and tactics.

Laypersons enjoy the spectacle, but experts look for the intricacies.

Almost none of those attending the Immortal Academy are outsiders; they can perceive or learn some insights from the geniuses' matches.

Individual wisdom is limited, no matter how genius it can't compare with collective brainstorming, especially in martial arts and Divine Power utilization; each genius almost has their unique approach.

If these insights could be learned, it would surely result in a qualitative enhancement in one's strength, which explains the large audience for the matches.

Moreover, the various Heroic Lords on the VIP seats expressed amazement at these geniuses' innovative Divine Power applications and martial arts displays.

Seeing this, the vice president Old Fox grinned, his face's wrinkles blooming like daisies, his mouth almost stretching to his ears.

Ye Fan's match was the seventh, his opponent a martial arts prodigy from a small sect, cold and arrogant, refusing intimacy with anyone.

As a tradition, Ye Fan only defended and didn't attack, allowing his opponent to fully unleash their entire strength before defeating them.

On the surface, Ye Fan's match appeared thrilling and dangerous, but only the prodigy knew Ye Fan's true strength was unfathomable; no matter how strong he was, he couldn't win, losing with complete conviction.

"Thank you, Brother Ye!"

After the match, the prodigy deeply bowed to Ye Fan, then quietly withdrew from the stage, leaving many spectators bewildered—losing the match yet thanking the opponent?!

Only the Heroic Lords on the VIP seats discerned the subtleties.

Like his previous match against Xiong Kuang, Ye Fan merely defended without attacking, allowing his opponent to exert their strongest strength before defeating them.

This requires extreme confidence in one's strength, confidence to withstand any fierce attack from the opponent!

Moreover, Ye Fan could instantly assess his opponent's strength and suppress his own to a level close to the opponent's—this level of judgment is beyond many geniuses.

In fact, even many prodigies from previous sessions at the Immortal Academy hadn't realized Ye Fan was intentionally allowing opponents to fully exert themselves, thinking Ye Fan's strength to be no more than it seemed.

“Could he really defy odds and claim the championship?”

Considering this, some Immortal Academy teachers who discerned the subtleties grew anxious—they had previously participated in Yaling’s wager, placing bets on Qi Tianlin winning the championship in the end.

If Ye Fan became an unexpected dark horse, triumphing all the way to the championship, they would suffer huge losses!

Chapter 1528: Public Slap in the Face

“No way, he can’t win the championship. Even if his strength is exceptional, it’s impossible to surpass a small realm and defeat a peerless genius like Qi Tianlin.”

In the end, the teachers at the Immortal Academy made this judgment.

Because, once a cultivator reaches the Divine Power Realm, the gap between each small realm is significant, and breaking through this barrier is very difficult.

As the competitions progressed, the applause from the spectators rose higher and higher.

To ensure each match was exciting, the academy arranged for opponents with similar strengths, forcing these geniuses to give their all to win and earn points.

Until the third round, Ye Fan encountered an early-stage Divine Realm peak opponent—a genius named Sun Mingyu from a small sect in the Northern East Domain.

Although Sun Mingyu was only at the early-stage Divine Realm peak, his strength was not inferior to that of a mid-stage Divine Realm genius. In yesterday's match, he decisively defeated a mid-stage opponent, shocking many.

In today's first match, his performance was equally stunning, drawing admiration from many spectators. Some strong people were even surprised, believing that at the early-stage Divine Realm, he was invincible. Despite being from an inconspicuous small sect, his potential was limitless, making him a talent worth nurturing.

Additionally, Sun Mingyu had a great relationship with Li Tianfeng, so he was naturally aware of Li's constant targeting of Ye Fan.

On the stage, Sun Mingyu looked Ye Fan up and down with disdain, arrogantly saying, "You're strong, but defeating me is impossible. I've cultivated to the extreme at the early-stage Divine Realm and could break through at any moment. How will you compete with me?"

"Whether I can defeat you will be determined in battle. Make your move!" Ye Fan replied calmly.

"Fine!"

Sun Mingyu roared, his aura surging, clothes fluttering without wind, black hair flying, and his eyes shot two icy currents. "We're both at the early-stage Divine Realm, let's have a fair fight. Today, I'll end the myth you've created—your records will end with your defeat!"

“Too much talk, make your move. Otherwise, you’ll have no chance!” Ye Fan’s words were sharp and forceful, his eyes like electricity, emanating a majestic presence.

“You’re courting death!”

Sun Mingyu’s face twisted with rage. No one had dared to belittle him this much, not even Zhou Zhaolong, who spoke highly of him, calling him a rare genius destined to walk the path of the Great Emperor. How could Ye Fan’s disdain not infuriate him?

“Clang!”

In Sun Mingyu’s hand, a burst of divine light flashed, like a Heavenly Blade, accompanied by a dragon’s roar, slashing toward Ye Fan’s head.

“Sun Mingyu is indeed formidable. Though only an early-stage Divine Realm peak, he has broken the barrier and can defeat a mid-stage genius. Ye’s victory is unlikely.”

“Just this one slash would be hard for an ordinary mid-stage Divine Realm cultivator to handle.”

“Ye is bound to lose. Both are at the early stage, but Sun Mingyu has cultivated to the extreme. What does he have to fight with?”

...

Seeing Sun Mingyu's stunning slash, many watching cultivators couldn't help but discuss. Even they might not have been able to withstand it at the early-stage Divine Realm.

It should be known that this slash might not be Sun Mingyu's strongest ability. Once he exerts his full strength, even a mid-stage genius might not be his match.

The previous matches demonstrated it clearly. Against mid-stage Divine Realm opponents, Sun Mingyu won with a decisive advantage.

In contrast, Ye Fan's matches always seemed "difficult," with his victories attributed to his opponents' mistakes, making the two incomparable.

Hearing such comments, Shi Ye and Hu Fei exchanged glances, stifling laughter.

Others might not know Ye Fan's real strength, but they were fully aware. Sun Mingyu was strong but far behind Shi Ye, who had been thoroughly defeated by Ye Fan, so how could Sun Mingyu possibly compare?

Indeed, just when others were discussing and thought Ye Fan was doomed to fail, he moved.

“Puff!”

Ye Fan flicked his finger, a purple light collided with the divine light, shattering the godlike gleam, and then he threw a punch.

“Bang!”

The Iron Fist swiped through air like a mountain range, brimming with overwhelming force, striking Sun Mingyu’s chest, instantly shattering his Protective Divine Light.

“Crack!”

The sound of bones breaking echoed, Sun Mingyu’s chest bones shattered, internal organs ruptured, and the Thunder Power-infused divine force destroyed several of his major meridians.

This was with Ye Fan holding back, otherwise, the punch could have pierced through his chest.

“Ah!”

Sun Mingyu screamed, coughed up blood, and his complexion paled, like a Little Xuan Beast kicked by a giant, slamming into the Defensive Shield, causing the Defensive Array Patterns to flicker violently, almost cracking.

“Thud!”

Sun Mingyu bounced back from the shield, harshly landed on the hard stage, eyes rolling back, fainting on the spot.

“Swish, swish!”

Two figures landed simultaneously on the stage; one quickly checked Sun Mingyu’s injuries, face turning grim.

Sun Mingyu’s life wasn’t in danger, but his chest bones were shattered, internal organs ruptured, and several main meridians destroyed. The injuries were severe, and it was uncertain if he could participate in future matches even if healed.

“Sun Mingyu lost?”

“And... he was defeated by Ye Fan in one move?!”

“How... how can that be??”

The spectators who originally believed Ye Fan couldn't compete with Sun Mingyu were dumbfounded.

Sun Mingyu's impressive strike, something even mid-stage Divine Realm cultivators might not withstand, was broken by Ye Fan with a flick, then a single punch left Sun Mingyu severely injured!

To note, Sun Mingyu was at the early-stage Divine Realm but had cultivated to its peak, ready to break through at any time, with the ability to fight across realms!

Those who had shouted that Ye Fan would surely lose fell silent, faces burning with embarrassment, wishing they could hide away in shame.

"Who was saying Brother Ye Fan would lose? Stand up and let me see!"

Hu Fei taunted those who had been critical earlier, filled with mockery.

"..."

Blushing deeply, those people regretted their words. No sooner had they declared Ye Fan's defeat, he proved them wrong with a dominant victory, slapping them figuratively loud and clear!

Amidst the crowd, Ya Ling smiled warmly, "This guy, clearly powerful, but loves 'playing dumb to catch the tiger...'"

“Ye Fan wins!”

After checking Sun Mingyu’s injuries, the two strong individuals from the academy carried him off to heal, and then Lan Yingfei announced the match result.

Fists and feet are merciless in matches, and accidents are inevitable. The two strong people from the academy had been careless. Usually, Ye Fan waited for opponents to showcase their full strength before defeating them, but this time, he struck so decisively it caught them unprepared, delaying rescue and leading to this outcome.

However, they had instructed the contestants to give their all without reservations, prepared to intervene at any moment. If blame was to be assigned, it lay with their tardy rescue, holding nothing against Ye Fan.

Some rejoiced, others despaired. Shi Ye and Hu Fei were jubilant, while Li Tianfeng and others had faces ashen with gloom, having intended for Sun Mingyu to gauge Ye Fan’s true power, only to meet with such a result.

Next to him, Li Daoheng and Sun Biyue looked even worse.

Though Sun Mingyu was at the early-stage Divine Realm, his combat power was comparable to theirs. What would happen if they faced Ye Fan?

Considering that terrifying outcome, they felt regret for the first time, having chosen allegiance with Li Tianfeng against Ye Fan. Based on Ye Fan's earlier display of strength, even Li Tianfeng might not be his match, let alone being Ye Fan's peak power.

Because...

Ye Fan hadn't even used the Xuandi Fist or Divine Skills!

However—

Regret as they might, for them, it was too late to turn back now; having chosen this path, right or wrong, it was theirs to follow, with no room for turning back.

"This little brat is still concealing strength, who knows when his true power will be revealed?"

Lan Yingfei shook his head with a wry smile.

He understood Ye Fan's terrifying true strength more than anyone.

In the Immortal Secret Realm, Ye Fan could easily kill even mid-stage Divine Realm Xuan Beasts with one strike, let alone these people.

Chapter 1529: A Battle Between Friends, the Step Technique Revealed!

The matches unfolded one after another, and soon the ten matches of the third round were over. The talented participants each had their wins and losses, with overall strength not differing too greatly.

Talents are also divided into different levels, and coupled with the distinct selection criteria of the Immortal Academy and the Imperial Academy—which doesn't value family or background—many of the strongest heirs of the Di Clan and the Saint Heirs of the Holy Land were all recruited by the Imperial Academy. Naturally, the strength and talent of their recruited disciples vary greatly.

After two rounds of matches, it was nearly noon. Lan Yingfei announced the end of the morning matches, and after a short rest, the afternoon matches continued.

With his words, the various heroic lords in the VIP seats and the participating contestants all exited the scene, as did some of the academy's disciples.

Only the spectators, who were loose cultivators from outside the academy, refused to leave. They were all as if on a rush of adrenaline, eagerly discussing their thoughts on the morning matches, gesturing animatedly as they debated.

Due to the tournament, the Immortal Academy was generous, preparing a sumptuous lunch with heavenly materials and earthly treasures used to stew the Xuan Beast meat, which was incredibly nourishing for cultivators.

Some of the Xuan Beasts used as ingredients were actually powerful to the Lord Realm. Special strong people had to refine their bloodthirstiness from the flesh; otherwise, it could not be used as food.

Ye Fan and the other participants had the good fortune to eat these ingredients considered heavenly materials and earthly treasures by the academy.

After the meal, everyone's Essence Qi was revitalized, and faces were glowing with health, eagerly wanting to engage in battle to expend their excess energy.

After finishing lunch and taking a short rest, the afternoon matches began.

"For the first match of the fourth round, Ye Fan versus Shi Ye, please come to the stage!"

With the words of the referee, Lan Yingfei, Ye Fan and Shi Ye exchanged smiles and both stepped onto the stage, facing each other.

"Brother Ye Fan, since I'm not your match anyway, let's just go through the motions, shall we? Please, don't thrash me," Shi Ye said with a chuckle to Ye Fan.

"Yaling adjusted my odds to the lowest, so I have to win the championship no matter what, I'll have to wrong you," Ye Fan said with a wry smile.

"What are you saying? There's no wrong in it! As long as you can win the championship, I'd be willing to be pummeled by you into a pig-beast!" Shi Ye laughed heartily. "I've even asked Sister Yaling to bet on you winning..."

“You...”

Ye Fan was speechless, surprised at Shi Ye’s confidence in him.

“What’s going on? The match has already started, so why aren’t they making a move?”

Seeing the two chat happily, the spectators below were unsatisfied; they came to watch a match, not a conversation.

Hearing the murmurs of the spectators, the two exchanged smiles, and then Ye Fan was the first to say, “Let’s start, can’t let people say we came for a chat.”

“Alright!”

Shi Ye roared, wielding his stone staff with power over ten thousand pounds, slamming it towards Ye Fan’s head, with the gray-white stone staff shooting divine radiance everywhere.

Even knowing he was not Ye Fan’s match, he chose to give it his all, wanting to test the results of his recent cultivation against Ye Fan.

“Swoosh!”

Ye Fan's figure moved, leaving an afterimage in place, dodging Shi Ye's fierce strike.

"Roar!"

Missing his strike, Shi Ye roared, swinging his stone staff like a windmill, slashing and smashing, with divine radiance piercing through the void.

Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh...

Ye Fan only defended, not attacked, using the Chasing Star Step to leave phantom trails on the stage, slipping through the gaps in Shi Ye's attacks each time.

"This step technique..."

"Could it be that kind of long-lost step technique?"

The faces of several heroic lords in the VIP seats changed, noticing Ye Fan's exquisite step technique, exchanging glances with each other.

"It's said that four thousand years ago, there was an unparalleled sect named Shen Xing Sect. Their sect's ultimate skill was a miraculous step technique, unmatched in speed, claiming to grasp the moon

from the upper nine heavens, to catch turtles from the five oceans, and with one step, mountains and rivers would shift. Ye Fan's current step technique bears similarities to Shen Xing Sect's miraculous technique, could they have a common origin?"

The Saint from the Ancient Sacred Land had a grave expression.

"Impossible? Four thousand years ago, Shen Xing Sect, relying on their unmatched miraculous step technique, thought they could invade the Flying Immortal Palace and obtain the Immortal Elixir to extend the old sect master's life. But they ended up utterly defeated, with no legacy left behind," a heroic lord said doubtfully.

Four thousand years is a vast stretch of time for ordinary people, with countless dynasties rising and falling, leaving behind few secrets. Even preserved ones become legends, their credibility in question.

However, it is different for ancient legacies like the Ancient Sacred Land, which has a deep heritage and possibly even possesses an unrivaled strong person sealed from that era. Four thousand years of history is nothing to them.

"That's right!"

The Ancient Saint nodded, saying, "Four thousand years ago, Shen Xing Sect, relying on their world-renowned step technique, believed they could break into the Flying Immortal Palace and obtain the Immortal Elixir to extend the old sect master's life, but unexpectedly, they were utterly defeated, with their legacy abruptly cut off."

At this point, many heroic lords' expressions turned grim.

The reason is simple: the rapid downfall of an unparalleled sect left its remaining disciples to be divided by the Imperial Academies, unparalleled sects, and Holy Lands.

An unparalleled sect is undoubtedly a treasure trove, from cultivation techniques and martial arts to collections of heavenly materials and earthly treasures, spiritual artifacts, even spirit stones and strange stones, enough to make a small sect rise swiftly.

Yet—

All these eventually ended up in the hands of other Di Clan, Holy Lands, and unparalleled sects, with the Ancient Sacred Land also participating in the division, obtaining some secrets.

While they were discussing, the match on stage had already reached its outcome. Shi Ye had gone on an all-out attack for thirty minutes, yet he hadn't even touched the hem of Ye Fan's clothing, leaving him exhausted and with no choice but to concede defeat.

"Ye Fan wins!"

After Lan Yingfei announced the result of the match, under the watchful eyes of the crowd, Ye Fan and Shi Ye walked off the stage with their arms around each other's shoulders, chatting and laughing.

"Did that Wild Man deliberately throw the match? Otherwise, with his strength, how could he possibly lose to someone like Ye Fan, who's only at the Early-stage Divine Realm?" someone asked doubtfully.

“They are brothers. Even if he threw the match, what can you do about it?”

“Even if all his friends throw matches to let him win, he definitely won’t achieve a complete victory in the round-robin. You should know, many people don’t want him to advance!” someone snorted coldly, their gaze intentionally or unintentionally sweeping toward Li Tianfeng and others.

After these two days of matches, many in the academy had heard of Ye Fan’s “glorious deeds” in the Southern Domain’s genius competition, and naturally knew about the cousin relationship between Zhou Zhaolong and Qing Zi, who died at Ye Fan’s hands.

As the acknowledged second figure among this year’s disciples, Zhou Zhaolong naturally had many loyal followers by his side, among whom Li Tianfeng was one.

Everyone was well aware that since it was a round-robin tournament, Ye Fan and Li Tianfeng would inevitably face each other sooner or later, and when that time came, it would surely be a battle between dragons and tigers.

Up to now, only a few, including Ye Fan and Li Tianfeng, had maintained a perfect record.

As the competition continued, it was likely that only one or two people would maintain an undefeated record until the end, and ultimately only one person could remain undefeated, or no one might advance with an undefeated record.

While people were deep in discussion, Lan Yingfei announced: "Second match of the fourth round, Ling Ziyuan versus Sun Biyue!"

"Wow!"

As soon as Lan Yingfei spoke, the crowd erupted in excitement. Everyone's eyes glowed green, for it was a duel between two beautiful women, which was absolutely a visual feast for the young disciples of the Immortal Academy.

Though there were quite a few female cultivators in the academy, represented by the Four Great Immortals including Yaling, they rarely engaged in battles, focusing instead on quiet cultivation, making a duel between two beauties a rare spectacle.

Undoubtedly, Sun Biyue could be considered a beauty. Although she lacked the grace and elegance compared to Yaling, she was still a charming beauty.

At this moment, Sun Biyue's black hair flowed like a waterfall, her gauzy attire accentuating her curvaceous figure. Her exposed slender arm gleamed like jade, exuding an enticing radiance.

In contrast, Ling Ziyuan donned a purple dress, her demeanor dignified and beautiful, her black hair neatly coiled into a bun adorned with a rosewood hairpin, emanating a soft, noble glow, much like a fairy descended to the mortal realm, exuding an air of immortality amid tranquility.

"Mr. Li, I'll be back shortly!"

Sun Biyue's jade-like fingers caressed Li Tianfeng's face, her enchanting demeanor and captivating gaze enchanting everyone around.

"Go ahead, and I wish you victory!" Li Tianfeng held her jade hand, gently squeezing it, and said lightly.

"Kill!"

As soon as she ascended the stage, Sun Biyue let out a light cry and struck her palm towards Ling Ziyuan, her vast divine power roaring like a mighty river.

Being of the same Mid-stage Divine Power Realm, Sun Biyue dared not be careless, attacking with full force as soon as she entered the stage, hoping to catch Ling Ziyuan off guard and secure a swift victory.

"Purple Qi Comes from the East!"

Ling Ziyuan shouted gracefully, also delivering a palm strike. A purple divine radiance surged, clashing fiercely with Sun Biyue's attack.

"Boom!"

With a loud bang, both retreated three steps simultaneously.

The stage glowed brilliantly, with the defensive array patterns lighting up to nullify the aftermath of their attacks into nothingness.

Without the defensive array patterns, just this one strike would have obliterated the entire stage. Mid-stage Divine Power Realm cultivators could manipulate elemental power from between heaven and earth, wielding unimaginable might.

“Cut!”

Sun Biyue’s fingers formed a knife as she slashed toward Ling Ziyuan, unleashing a blaze akin to a Flame Divine Saber, shining brightly, seemingly ready to cleave the void, with the divine fire fiercely leaping and scorching intensely.

“It’s over!”

Ling Ziyuan snorted coldly, her entire body enveloped in a faint layer of purple light. She punched out, with purple divine radiance splitting the sky, shattering the Flame Divine Saber.

Then, Ling Ziyuan quickly charged forward, executing the Purple Smoke Pavilion’s ultimate technique. Her palm, like a knife, instantly broke through Sun Biyue’s defense, slicing horizontally at her neck.

“Huh?”

Sun Biyue was utterly unprepared for Ling Ziyuan's hidden strength. At the moment her defense was breached, she realized something was wrong, but it was too late. With a muffled groan, she was knocked unconscious by Ling Ziyuan's palm strike.

"Ling Ziyuan wins!"

Lan Yingfei gave Ling Ziyuan a deep look. While in the Immortal Secret Realm, she had been extremely low-key, not participating in any Xuan Beast hunts, leading him to misjudge her. Unexpectedly, Ling Ziyuan's true strength was so formidable!

Soon, Sun Biyue regained consciousness, her face flushed with embarrassment. It truly echoed her own words, "I'll be back shortly," as she couldn't even withstand three moves before being defeated by Ling Ziyuan.

"I lost!" Returning to the waiting area, Sun Biyue said to Li Tianfeng with unease, her head lowered.

"It's okay, it's not your fault. She had hidden her strength earlier." Li Tianfeng comforted her with a few words, then cast his gaze toward Ye Fan.

He knew about Ling Ziyuan's affection for Ye Fan.

In his view, it would feel quite satisfying to crush Ye Fan underfoot right in front of Ling Ziyuan!

Chapter 1530: Ridiculous Clown

“The Holy Maiden of Purple Smoke Pavilion is truly powerful, worthy of being from the Holy Land.”

“Sun Biyue is actually very strong too, but she just met an even stronger opponent, otherwise, she might not have lost.”

“Women can be as strong as men. Ling Ziyuan and Sun Biyue, though women, are stronger than most male cultivators.”

Although the match between Ling Ziyuan and Sun Biyue had ended, many people were still discussing it with great interest.

Subsequently, the matches continued one after another, with all participants demonstrating immense strength, astounding the audience.

The fourth round of matches ended, with Shi Ye and Jin Changgeng each defeating their opponents and earning three points.

However, Hu Fei lost to Yu Tidou due to a gap in strength, and Yu Tidou’s ice attribute divine skill turned Hu Fei into an ice statue, leaving him powerless to counterattack.

This remarkable display of combat left many in awe, showing that ice attribute divine skills could be used to freeze opponents, rendering them helpless.

In the first match, he didn't use this move because Li Tianfeng's Azure Lotus Heavenly Fire restrained his ice attribute divine skill, rendering it ineffective.

The fifth round of matches began, with four thrilling combats in succession, showcasing absolute techniques, and the applause from the audience reached a crescendo, heightening the atmosphere.

"Fifth round, fifth match, Ye Fan versus Li Daoheng," Lan Yingfei announced expressionlessly.

As soon as he finished speaking, the audience erupted, knowing the animosity between Li Daoheng and Ye Fan, promising an exciting match.

"Do you think Li Daoheng can force Ye Fan to reveal his true strength?" Someone posed the question.

"I'm not sure, but even if he can't force out his full combat power, he might at least reveal some of his cards."

After Ye Fan consecutively defeated opponents like Xiong Kuang, people gradually began to believe he was qualified to challenge the top four, though no one knew how strong he truly was.

However, many were aware that Yaling was an astute woman. If she dared to position Ye Fan as a major contender for the championship, she must have her reasons, albeit now it's too late to realize it.

Li Daoheng is from a clan in the Central Domain near the Northern East Domain, a branch of the Eastern Domain Bei Li Family that split off years ago, now a formidable clan as well.

It's because of this connection that Li Daoheng is so close to Li Tianfeng, and with him, joined Zhou Zhaolong, becoming a trusted follower.

Amidst the discussions, Li Daoheng ascended the stage, his eyes shooting two beams of cold light several feet in length, sweeping towards Ye Fan.

Ye Fan calmly stood up and walked to the stage, facing Li Daoheng without emitting any aura, like a still pool of water.

"Courting death!"

Li Daoheng was furious, Ye Fan's demeanor clearly showed he didn't regard him as worthy, as if he weren't qualified to be his opponent.

Whoosh!

Despite his anger, Li Daoheng knew Ye Fan practiced the Xuandi Fist of the Emperor Clan Ling Family, and dared not act rashly, directly revealing his Holy Embryo, a golden-eyed eagle looking exceptionally majestic.

“Holy Embryo, Unification!”

Li Daoheng shouted, and the golden-eyed eagle quickly fused with him, his hands becoming sharp and hard like eagle claws.

Watching Li Daoheng’s Holy Embryo Fusion, Ye Fan remained unmoved, standing calmly as if rooted to the spot.

“Arrogant!”

Li Daoheng snorted and launched an attack, shouting, “Heavenly Eagle Thirteen Strikes!”

Whoosh!

Whoosh!

Whoosh!

...

Accompanied by the sound, Li Daoheng's hands transformed into claws, conjuring countless claw shadows, accompanied by a piercing swoosh, heading towards Ye Fan, powerful and fierce!

The Heavenly Eagle Thirteen Strikes was a martial art comprehended by Li Daoheng's ancestor while watching a divine eagle battle a serpent dragon in the wilderness, extremely sharp. Although consisting of only thirteen styles, it was versatile and could kill opponents beyond one's realm when combined with divine skills.

"Ye Fan is overconfident, letting the opponent attack. Not knowing, Li Daoheng's Heavenly Eagle Thirteen Strikes are extremely fierce and mighty, it's too late for Ye to exert force now!"

Seeing Li Daoheng's countless claw shadows, shining with divine light, about to reach Ye Fan, many believed Ye Fan was undoubtedly defeated, as these claw shadows couldn't be resisted head-on, only by avoiding the edge and seeking opportunities to counterattack.

However, it was too late; the claws were imminent, and Ye Fan couldn't possibly retreat now even if he wanted to.

"Domineering Fist!"

As the countless claw shadows were about to reach him, Ye Fan moved, shouting, with his right hand instantly turning purple-gold, punching at Li Daoheng's true form.

"Boom!"

A loud noise, and the countless claw shadows disappeared.

Ye Fan stood untainted, proudly, while Li Daoheng was forced back two steps by Ye Fan's punch, with his seemingly invincible Heavenly Eagle Thirteen Strikes shattered with a single blow.

"What? Ye actually countered later, so effortlessly breaking Li Daoheng's Heavenly Eagle Thirteen Strikes?"

"In such a situation, he was able to find the true form among thousands of claw shadows and break it with a punch, and still hasn't used his trump card—Ye Fan's true strength is unfathomable!"

Those in the audience who didn't know Ye Fan's background were shocked. They never expected Ye Fan to be so powerful, breaking Li Daoheng's Heavenly Eagle Thirteen Strikes head-on and sending him retreating.

"Calm like the abyss, moving like thunder!"

In the VIP seats, a heroic lord sighed.

That moment just now, he saw it all too clearly. For most people, even those of the same realm as Li Daoheng, would only avoid the edge, yet Ye Fan chose to confront head-on, breaking his Heavenly Eagle Thirteen Strikes with a punch.

This was undoubtedly the best way, a punch that sealed off all of his subsequent clever moves, leaving him with powerful martial arts that he couldn't display.

However, achieving this was extremely risky. If he couldn't hit the true form, the Heavenly Eagle Thirteen Strikes would tear him into pieces.

While everyone was discussing, the battle continued.

"Smack!"

Ye Fan charged past, swinging his violet-gold palm, harshly slapping Li Daoheng's face, instantly shattering his protective divine light and almost cracking his skull.

"Ah..."

Li Daoheng screamed in agony, his pristine big teeth mixed with blood fell to the ground, then he collapsed with a thud.

"This..."

Below the stage, most people couldn't help but draw a sharp breath, their gazes at Ye Fan filled with shock.

Initially, they believed Ye Fan would surely win this match but thought it would take some effort, perhaps even be forced to reveal his true strength by Li Daoheng.

However—

Ye Fan hadn't even used divine skills, resolving the battle with merely a punch and a slap, his true combat power was stunning.

Everyone knew Ye Fan held back, his effortless and fluid movements revealing some clues. If he went all out, Li Daoheng would already be a cold corpse.

"Ye Fan has gone undefeated from the group matches till now, five rounds without a single loss, all victories, and defeated Li Daoheng with crushing humiliation—this must be the strength of a seed competitor, right?"

"Heavens, is the status quo about to change? He's only in the early-stage Divine Realm! So powerful, what kind of combat power would he have if he broke through to the mid-stage Divine Power Realm?"

Exclamations continuously erupted; many found it unbelievable.

“It’s said he made another breakthrough soon after entering the Immortal Secret Realm, overcoming the divine barrier and stepping into the early-stage Divine Realm. Nearly a year has passed, he hasn’t broken through again in the Immortal Secret Realm, which is suited for cultivation, perhaps his cultivation in the early-stage Divine Realm has long surpassed its limit?”

Someone made such a guess, immediately gaining numerous people’s agreement.

“Very possible, a year’s time in the Immortal Secret Realm is sufficient to cultivate beyond the limit in the early-stage Divine Realm. He might be intentionally suppressing his realm, his true battle power already akin to mid-stage Divine Power Realm, only lacking that step forward.”

Recalling Ye Fan’s multiple record-breaking achievements, turning the impossible into possible, many became uneasy.

They had placed bets at Yaling, almost staking everything on Qi Tianlin, naturally not wanting this dark horse Ye Fan to emerge.

“Should be fine, Qi Tianlin himself is a demon; aside from the equally demonic and mid-stage Divine Realm Zhou Zhaolong, no one threatens his top position, Ye Fan doesn’t stand a chance.”

Soon, these people began comforting themselves. In their view, Ye Fan was indeed strong, certainly the best among these twenty, no one could defeat him.

Nevertheless, despite such strength, his realm is evident; amidst demon-level geniuses, Ye Fan cannot leap a realm to defeat Qi Tianlin.

After all, Qi Tianlin also has cross-level combat power, defeating ordinary late-stage Divine Power Realm, even peak Divine Power Realm cultivators isn't a problem.

In such circumstances, if Ye Fan can still cross realms and defeat Qi Tianlin, isn't that implying Ye Fan in early-stage Divine Realm is already capable of sweeping Divine Power Realm cultivators and confronting early Lord Realm ones?

Crossing a Great Realm in combat, even young Ancient Emperors might not achieve; why would Ye Fan?

"There can only be one undefeated, and that's me. You're just leaves complementing my red flowers!"

At this moment, Li Tianfeng appeared, making harsh remarks about ending Ye Fan's winning streak.

Whoosh—

Upon hearing this, the audience instantly boiled over; it's a showdown of strength!

Besides battles among the top four, only Li Tianfeng and Ye Fan have maintained an unbeaten streak in the group matches, defeating their opponents in one move.

Meanwhile, those others achieved their streak due to luck; facing stronger opponents, they'd definitely lose.

"Li Tianfeng is getting desperate!" Someone said gleefully.

Practically everyone knew Sun Mingyu and Li Daoheng were Li Tianfeng's close confidants and right-hand men, both defeated by Ye Fan, it's no wonder he's angry.

"A jumping clown dares to speak boastfully?"

Faced with Li Tianfeng's provocation, Ye Fan rarely kept low-profile and instead responded forcibly with ridicule.