

Y Master 621

Chapter 621 Combat Power Soars!

More than ten days later, Ye Yuanshan attended the meeting of former senior officials, where a group of retired elders looked to him as their leader, making him the undisputed protagonist of the meeting.

The overall situation was set, and the Ye Family's momentum was unstoppable!

After the meeting concluded, some politically astute magnates made this judgment.

The facts confirmed their judgment—ten days after the old cadres' meeting ended, Ye Wenhao was transferred back from the Southeast Asia Special Zone to Yanjing, taking the most crucial step that basically disqualified several competitors, including Bai Guotao, from the competition.

Just as Hua Xia's political arena was beginning to draw the curtain on a years-long struggle that went from layout to contest, the Hua Xia Cultivation World was surprisingly lively with cultivators from all over gathering at Mount Tian.

All this was due to one piece of news: Just like twenty-odd years ago, the increase in the quantity of Earth's Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi was because of an anomaly on Mount Tian!

As for... the specifics of the anomaly, opinions varied widely.

Some said that Mount Tian, being the holy mountain of Huaxia and even the world, had absorbed the Earth's Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi over the past years and was now returning it; others said there was a supreme formation on Mount Tian that connected to the heavens and the earth, causing a dramatic increase in Primordial Qi; still others asserted that Mount Tian harbored a world-shocking Divine Treasure about to emerge, containing the secrets of the decline and disappearance of the Ancient Cultivation World.

Regardless of which theory it was, any were enough to pique people's curiosity, thus attracting a large number of cultivators to explore the mysteries within.

For them, even if they couldn't unravel the mystery, it didn't matter much; they considered it a form of training and afterward stayed on Mount Tian to watch the biennial Qing bang competition.

Ye Fan was the instigator and witness of this anomaly, yet he did not rush to Mount Tian; instead, he followed Chu Xuanji back to Spirit Mountain.

"Awooo~"

In the early morning, as the distant sky spat out the pale light of dawn, a wolf's howl echoed through Spirit Mountain.

At the summit of Spirit Mountain, a wolf as sturdy as a calf howled towards the sky.

Ye Fan sat cross-legged on a rock beside Little Wolf with the Bloodline Token floating above his head. Streams of pure Primordial Qi flowed continuously from it, entering his Bai Hui point on the top of his head.

That day, Ye Fan had resisted the second level of Dan Tribulation with the help of the Bloodline Token, absorbing a massive amount of Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi.

Although the Primordial Qi wasn't quite essence-level, it was much purer than what he would normally absorb under regular circumstances.

For this reason, over the past period, Ye Fan had been absorbing the Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi from within the Bloodline Token to solidify his Martial Arts Cultivation.

"Logically, after so many days of cultivation, I should have solidified my Martial Arts Cultivation. Why can't I control the Power as easily as before?"

When the first rays of sunset pierced the horizon from east to west, Ye Fan slowly opened his eyes, his features fraught with confusion.

Over the past more than ten days, besides cultivating the Flying Sword Skill, he had devoted all his energy to solidifying his Martial Arts Cultivation.

However, up to now, he still couldn't control the Innate Great Perfection realm's Power at will— the Power in the 108 Power Seeds was like scattered sand, more like wild horses that had broken free, beyond his control.

All this indicated that he had not yet solidified his Martial Arts Cultivation and couldn't use the Innate Great Perfection realm Power at will.

"Could it be because there are too many impurities in the Power, not pure enough?"

Ye Fan pondered thoughtfully, then tried to continue condensing the Power within the 108 Power Seeds, only to find he had reached a bottleneck and couldn't condense it further.

"Where did I go wrong?"

Ye Fan, not willing to give up, used his mental perception to carefully sense each Power Seed, trying to find the reason.

One seed, two seeds, three seeds...

As time passed, Ye Fan's Mind Power swept like threading a needle, carefully sensing the Power Seeds within his body.

"What... what's happening??"

Moments later, just as Ye Fan's Mind Power swept over the last Power Seed, all 108 Power Seeds suddenly began to rotate wildly.

Taken aback, Ye Fan immediately steadied his mind and continued to sense carefully with his Mind Power, only to find that the Power in his body began to condense automatically— as the 108 Power Seeds spun frenetically, impurities were expelled, and then disseminated through his pores to the outside of his body, as if detoxifying.

The whole process was very brief, but Ye Fan was surprised to find that the Power within his body had condensed substantially.

"Now, I should have solidified my Martial Arts Cultivation and be able to control the Innate Great Perfection's Power at will, right?" Overjoyed, Ye Fan was ready to try.

At that moment, another unexpected change occurred!

The 108 Power Seeds simultaneously stopped spinning, and streams of Power gushed from the Power Seeds like fountains, then gathered together into a torrent, rushing to every corner of Ye Fan's body.

In an instant, an indescribable pain spread throughout Ye Fan's body; it felt like thousands of ants were biting him, causing unbearable pain!

However—

Before Ye Fan could understand what was going on, the pain intensified suddenly!

His meridians seemed to tear apart, his internal organs seemed to shatter, his bones felt as though they were being scraped with knives, and his blood flow accelerated...

This sudden onslaught caused Ye Fan to have his hair stand on end. He fell to the ground, curled up, his facial muscles completely distorted, his body convulsing uncontrollably.

Fortunately, his will was extremely strong, and he endured this torment that made life worse than death.

"Wuu wuu~"

Noticing something was wrong with Ye Fan, Little Wolf was frightfully alarmed, immediately coming forward to lick Ye Fan's face, as if asking what was wrong with him.

"Crackle and pop!"

Without response, strange sounds came from Ye Fan's body; it felt like it was about to explode, and the pain from deep within his soul almost blurred his consciousness!

"Awoo!!"

Hearing the distress, Little Wolf howled in fear, sprang up, and darted into the forest, intending to find Chu Xuanji.

Right after Little Wolf left, Ye Fan suddenly discovered that the pain began to lessen, and his consciousness gradually returned.

Hmm?

As consciousness just restored and senses became clear, Ye Fan immediately smelled an offensive odor. Lowering his head, he discovered that his body was covered in black filth, as if he had crawled out of a mud pond.

"After the breakthrough to the Innate Great Perfection realm, all bodily functions had been enhanced, so why are they increasing again?" Seeing this scene, Ye Fan was astonished.

Without an answer, Ye Fan merely felt his flesh become denser, his bones as hard as iron, his meridians resilient, and his organs vibrant with life. Strength filled him from head to toe!

He even had a surreal feeling—he could, relying solely on his physical strength, kill an elephant with his bare hands!

"This..."

The sudden change first caught Ye Fan by surprise, but then a rush of ecstasy filled his heart!

He immediately released his mind to inspect his body.

The next moment.

Ye Fan froze on the spot as if someone had cast an immobilization spell on him.

Because, he shockingly discovered that a torrent of power connected the 108 Power Seeds within him, as if they were one entity.

Besides, the 108 Power Seeds operated on their own, forming a strange connection with each other, exuding a sense of mystery.

"Whew!"

Moved by a thought, Ye Fan suddenly sat up and threw a punch casually.

"Bang—"

With that punch, the torrential inner strength in Ye Fan's body surged into his right fist in an instant, exploding like a bomb, suddenly erupting with a combination of muscular strength, and directly turned the rocks ahead into rubble.

One punch shattered the stone!

Without using any martial arts!

The fearsome power left Ye Fan dumbfounded on the spot.

"You... your Martial Arts Cultivation broke through to the Half-step Gang Qi realm?"

Just then, Chu Xuanji flew over from afar and happened to witness this scene. He was somewhat moved, and after releasing his mental perception and discovering that Ye Fan still exuded the aura of the Innate Great Perfection realm, he too froze in place. Unable to help himself, he asked, "How can the attack power of the Innate Great Perfection realm be so strong? Did you just use Qi Rushes to the Sky? No, that's wrong, there is no evil aura enveloping you! What's going on?"

"I don't know."

Ye Fan replied with a wry smile, "I have been meditating and cultivating all this time, trying to consolidate my Martial Arts Cultivation. Just now, not only did my body's functions get enhanced once more, but the quality of my power also improved. Randomly throwing a punch, and it possessed such might..."

"Er..."

Hearing Ye Fan's explanation, even as a Supreme Strongman, the second on the Dragon Ranking, Chu Xuanji was left speechless with shock, uttering, "This... this is too mystical, isn't it? The power of that punch you just threw is by no means weaker than a full-force strike from a Half-step Gang Qi realm Cultivator, and it was just a casual punch?!"

"I also find it quite mysterious."

Ye Fan nodded in agreement, then with a thought, he faintly felt that all this must be related to his cultivation of the Nine Heavens Profound Skill.

After all, only the Nine Heavens Profound Skill could form Power Seeds in 108 vital acupoints within the body!

Who on Earth created such an aberrant Cultivation Technique as the Nine Heavens Profound Skill, and why did it appear in my mind?

Could it be related to that mysterious Crimson Gold Crown inside me?

That crimson-gold elder seemed to call it an Emperor Weapon?

And who was that crimson-gold elder? Why did he exist in such a way?

Also, what exactly were the sea of consciousness and Qi Sea he spoke of?!

For a time, Ye Fan's mind swelled with more and more questions, but no answers.

He knew that to understand all this, his only option was to break through to the Gang Qi realm and wait for that mysterious crimson-gold elder to awaken.

"I was very worried about your fight with Emperor Bai, but now it seems unnecessary."

Just as Ye Fan was deep in thought, Chu Xuanji gradually recovered from his shock, full of anticipation, "Based alone on your Martial Arts Battle Power, you're stronger than an average Half-step Gang Qi realm cultivator. If you can also bring that mysterious Mind Attack Secret Technique, the Flying Sword Skill, to Great Success, or let's say your Magic Cultivation breaks through to the Half-step Gang Qi Realm, defeating Emperor Bai will not be difficult!"

"I'll give them a surprise," declared Ye Fan confidently with a smile.

"Power into Qi, this is the hallmark of the Half-step Gang Qi Realm, applicable to both Magic and Martial Arts. This requires cultivators continuously condensing their Telekinesis and inner strength, and when Telekinesis and inner strength are condensed to a certain extent, they will turn gaseous, containing even stronger power."

Chu Xuanji reminded, "This is a long process, you can't rush. So, I suggest you spend the next two months focusing on comprehending the Flying Sword Skill. That way, you can maximize your Combat Power."

"Alright."

Ye Fan nodded, then seemingly out of nowhere, asked, "Old guy, do you think if I break through in Magic Cultivation to the Half-step Gang Qi Realm and bring the 'Chun Light' of the Flying Sword Skill to Great Perfection, I could defeat a Gang Qi Realm strongman?"

"The Gang Qi Realm is like an unbridgeable gulf. Counting from ancient times to the present, no one has been able to do that without relying on external aids, at most one could survive the full-force offense of a Gang Qi Realm cultivator."

Chu Xuanji smiled wryly. Although Ye Fan kept surprising him, he did not believe Ye Fan could break this law.

"Really can't?"

Ye Fan questioned himself silently, his face full of anticipation!

Chapter 622 A Gathering of Talents, Sinking or Swimming with the Leader?

Over the next two months, cultivators from various places almost turned Mount Tian upside down, but they found nothing.

"Damn it, two months have passed, and not a single clue has been found. Who the hell said that the increase in Earth's Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi was caused by changes in Mount Tian?"

"Exactly, making us travel all the way to Mount Tian, only to suffer for more than two months for nothing!"

"Suffering is one thing, but being alive is good enough—apparently, quite a few people ended up as meals in the bellies of mutant beasts. By comparison, we are quite fortunate."

"Let's go. Even if Mount Tian really contains earth-shattering secrets, they are not something we can uncover. Let's head to the Tian Shan Sword Sect and prepare to watch the Qing bang competition!"

"If it weren't for waiting for the Qing bang competition to start, I would have left this forsaken place long ago!"

"Stop complaining; let's hurry. The Qing bang competition starts in five days, and we'll miss it if we're late!"

...

At the foot of a snowy mountain in Mount Tian, a few cultivators walked together, grumbling as they hurried toward the Tian Shan Sword Sect.

At the same time, many other cultivators, just like them, stopped exploring the mysteries of the changes in Mount Tian and began converging from different directions towards the Tian Shan Sword Sect, while some who acted earlier had already arrived.

In the courtyard of Sect Leader Cang Bo of the Tian Shan Sword Sect.

"To know shame is the beginning of bravery. In the past three months, not only have you solidified your Half-step Gang Qi realm, but you have also mastered the Heavenly Sword Seventh Form. Not bad at all," Cang Bo said with a smile.

"This Qing bang competition, we are the hosts. You must give your all in each match and strive for outstanding results," Cang Bo added.

"Three months ago, I carelessly lost to that bastard Ye Fan. This time, I will redeem my honor and crush him under my feet!" Tian Shan Sword Sect's foremost genius, Xiao Selang, said fiercely.

Three months ago, he was defeated by Ye Fan, and according to Meng Bai, an elder of the Tian Shan Sword Sect, Ye Fan had not even used his full strength.

This greatly impacted Xiao Selang, but he did not fall into despair; instead, he turned the shame into motivation, strived hard in his cultivation for three months, and achieved great progress, his spirit soaring high.

Although Cang Bo was very satisfied with Xiao Selang's improvement, reason told him that Xiao Selang's hope of defeating Ye Fan was very slim.

However—

Knowing this, Cang Bo did not want to dampen Xiao Selang's spirits and deliberately changed the subject, saying, "It's likely he won't live long enough to compete against you."

"I hope he is lucky enough to encounter Emperor Bai later, to live a few more days," Xiao Selang said, his heart clear as a mirror, sneering coldly.

"He is not only a thorn in Emperor Bai's side."

"As the saying goes, 'The taller the tree, the more likely it is to be blown down by the wind.' He has defied the heavens by successfully concocting the legendary Lifespan Extension Pill, becoming famous throughout the world. With such brilliance, almost everyone will want to use him to make a name for themselves, even Leng Feng of the Yanhuang Organization," Cang Bo shrewdly said.

Yanhuang Organization headquarters.

Leng Feng took an elevator down to a basement chamber, pushing the door open to enter.

Inside the chamber, an elderly man with white hair sat cross-legged, appearing as though he was in deep meditation.

"Elder Gu."

Leng Feng bowed slightly as he greeted him, his tone exceedingly respectful.

As Yan's direct disciple, his position within the Yanhuang Organization was not humble, and he naturally knew that the elderly man before him, Elder Gu, had unfathomable powers, being one of the three great inner sect elders of the Yanhuang Organization and also in charge of the Qing bang competition.

"Whoosh!"

As the sound of Leng Feng's voice fell, Elder Gu suddenly opened his eyes, his gaze sharp as a sword directly scanning Leng Feng, as if he could see right through him, "Leng Feng, I heard from Hong Lie that you've grasped the fifth level of 'Yanhuang's Fury,' not even he can match you now?"

"I've only understood a little bit of it, my senior brother let me win on purpose," Leng Feng modestly said, but the pride in his eyes revealed his innermost thoughts.

"Oh? Attack me with your full might using 'Yanhuang's Fury.'" After a brief contemplation, Elder Gu made a decision and wanted to personally verify Leng Feng's combat power.

"Elder Gu..."

Leng Feng hesitated. Although he held a notable position in the Yanhuang Organization and was a leading figure among the younger generation by virtue of being Yan's direct disciple, he dared not offend Elder Gu, the leader of the inner sect elders.

"Go ahead and attack," Elder Gu interrupted.

"Alright!"

Seeing that Elder Gu was insistent, Leng Feng stopped hesitating. He responded solemnly and then suddenly activated his inner strength.

In an instant, a terrifying war intent surged from Leng Feng, climbing rapidly!

The emergence of the war intent turned Leng Feng into a war machine, his body radiating a cold, murderous aura, inspiring awe in others.

"To have grasped the War Realm to such a degree and to be able to unleash such war intent in such a short time, not bad, not bad at all!" Sensing the surging war intent in Leng Feng, Elder Gu's pupils slightly dilated, and he exclaimed in praise.

"Elder Gu, please pardon my offense!"

Leng Feng shouted lowly, tightly clenched his right hand, and swung out a punch on the spot.

"Pop! Pop! Pop!"

A punch thrown, the air shattered, and an explosive sound continued, a punch ray composed of Gang Qi, carrying terrifying energy fluctuations, blasted towards Elder Gu.

"Pop—"

Elder Gu remained unmoved. The punch ray hit his Protective Aura and was directly dispersed, not harming a single hair on him.

However—

His expression changed!

"Leng Feng, you really are quite something, to have cultivated the fifth level of Yanhuang's Fury to such an extent," Elder Gu said with an initially startled but then joyous expression on his normally stern face, "Such combat power, comparable to the disciple of Sword King, is rare under the Gang Qi realm."

"You flatter me, Elder Gu," Leng Feng said, concealing his war intent and feigned modesty, yet in his heart, he looked forward to confronting Emperor Bai in the Qing bang competition.

Arctic region.

Emperor Bai, carrying the Bloodthirsty Mad Blade, sat cross-legged at the foot of an iceberg, motionless.

The chilling wind howled but could not approach his body, appearing quite eerie.

"Thump! Thump! Thump!"

Suddenly, the dull sound arose as a massive polar bear charged towards Emperor Bai, its eyes flashing with vicious light, as if it saw Emperor Bai as its food, ready to feast.

Swish!

Suddenly, just as the polar bear was less than a hundred meters away from Emperor Bai, Emperor Bai abruptly opened his eyes.

Those were a pair of blood-red eyes, filled with overwhelming murderous intent!

"Woo~"

Seemingly feeling the terrifying murderous intent that suddenly erupted from Emperor Bai, the originally fierce polar bear, like a mouse seeing a cat, shook all over in fright, then with a "plop," it actually collapsed to the ground, scared stiff.

"Huff!"

Suddenly, Emperor Bai moved.

He was sitting cross-legged, turned his hand into a blade, and casually slashed out a blood-red sword light!

"Puchi—"

The next moment.

The sword light flashed, and the polar bear's body was torn into pieces, hot blood spraying out, blooming like blood flowers, adding a dazzling note to the snow-white world.

Hmm?

Not far away, Jie Dao, who was originally in meditation cultivation, suddenly opened his eyes, his eyes flashing brightly.

"Master, let's go,"

Emperor Bai stood up and walked towards Jie Dao.

"Although you haven't taken that step to Break and Stand, breaking through to the Gang Qi Realm, with your current combat power, you are absolutely invincible under the Gang Qi Realm!"

Jie Dao was full of smiles, having specially brought Emperor Bai to the Arctic in an attempt to stimulate him with the harsh environment, which now seemed to be effective.

"I feel I can take that step at any time, now I just lack an opportunity," Emperor Bai confidently stated.

"Opportunity?" pondered Jie Dao.

"To put it precisely, it's pressure. Unfortunately, no one in this Qing bang competition can give me that kind of pressure."

Emperor Bai was arrogantly unstoppable, "After I slay the Ye Family's bastard and sweep through the younger generation, I plan to visit the other Five Great Alliances and fight against a cultivator at the Gang Qi Introduction Realm. This can not only attempt to break the ancient rules but also find an opportunity to breakthrough under pressure, achieving two goals at once."

"With your current combat power, even if you can't break that rule, you can still protect yourself in front of a strong person in the Gang Qi Realm, indeed you can give it a try."

Jie Dao nodded, agreeing with Emperor Bai's plan, then immediately changed the topic with hatred, "As for slaying the Ye Family's bastard, I want you to use only one strike! Slay him with one slash so that Zhe Xuanji loses face utterly!"

"One slash is enough!"

Emperor Bai smiled proudly and put away the Bloodthirsty Mad Blade.

Jie Dao chuckled, no longer wasting words, and with a flash, he arrived in front of Emperor Bai, grabbed him, soared into the air, and flew toward the Tian Shan Sword Sect using Qi Manipulation.

Spirit Mountain.

Ye Fan sat cross-legged under a waterfall, letting the water strike his body, motionless like an ancient Buddha, his expression as calm as water.

Swish!

Suddenly, Ye Fan opened his eyes, and a hint of golden light flickered in his eyes, his features shimmering with gold.

"Awooo~"

In the pool not far below the waterfall, Little Wolf had been playing in the water. Seeing Ye Fan open his eyes, he quickly leaped to the shore and scurried towards Ye Fan.

Ye Fan heard the sound, slowly stood up, turned around, and faced away from the waterfall to meet Little Wolf.

"Clang!"

Just as Ye Fan turned, a crisp sound emanated, and a Xuanye Flying Blade flew out from a hole in the stone wall ahead.

"Swoosh—"

A sharp breaking sound resounded as the Xuanye Flying Blade turned into a streak of white light, whistling towards the waterfall behind Ye Fan.

"Shh—"

The flash of white light briefly halted the flow of the waterfall.

Ye Fan used his mind to manipulate the Xuanye Flying Blade and directly cut off the waterfall!

"Uh..."

Above the waterfall, Chu Ji, accompanying Zhe Xuanji on the rocks, stared at the scene before them, their eyes bulging and mouths agape.

One slash to cut the waterfall!

For a Half-step Gang Qi Swordsman, this wasn't too difficult; they could use sword light to cut through it.

But for a Swordsman at the Innate Great Perfection Realm, it was almost impossible, akin to reaching for the sky.

And at this moment, Ye Fan, using only his mind to control a mere inch-long Xuanye Flying Blade, had cut through a waterfall twenty-something meters wide...

The shock this brought to Chu Ji was indescribable with words!

Not only him, but even Zhe Xuanji, ranked second on the Dragon Ranking, was astounded, seemingly not expecting Ye Fan's combat prowess to have soared to such a degree!

"Old man, it's time to go to Tian Shan,"

Below the waterfall, Ye Fan raised his head to look at Zhe Xuanji and Chu Ji, smiled, and winked, "The Qing bang competition starts in three days. If we're late, and people mistakenly think we've retreated from the battle, how embarrassing would that be?"

Retreat before battle?

"I think those self-righteous old helpers' expressions during the Qing bang competition will certainly be spectacular!"

Chu Ji muttered to himself, his face full of anticipation!

Chapter 623 - Top Ten Seed Players

Although the Tian Shan Sword Sect was established later and did not have the foundation of martial arts sects and cultivation families like the Wudang Sect, Shaolin, Jiang Family, and Lv Family, its rise was extremely rapid. It had become one of the renowned sects in the Huaxia Cultivation World, hosting two Supreme Strongmen in the Gang Qi realm – Sect Leader Cang Bo and his master Hua Jian.

Hua Jian, like Zhe Xuanji, Yan, Jie Dao, and others, was an old antique of the Huaxia Cultivation World. His swordsmanship was so masterful that he was hailed as the number one swordsman in Huaxia, known as the Old Sword King.

The Yanhuang Organization had unexpectedly decided to hold this year's most prestigious Qing Bang competition at the Tian Shan Sword Sect, which undoubtedly elevated the sect's prestige even further.

To show his regard for the competition and his appreciation for the Yanhuang Organization, the Old Sword King, who had been in seclusion for many years, emerged three days before the competition started, causing a huge sensation.

Suddenly, the Tian Shan Sword Sect was overcrowded, attracting members from various major sects and martial arts families of the Huaxia Cultivation World.

As in previous years, before the competition began, many cultivators took this opportunity to organize a trade fair of their own – on the square outside the gates of the Tian Shan Sword Sect, hundreds of cultivators set up stalls along both sides of the road to trade treasures.

"Fifty-year-old Snow Ginseng, comparable to the heavenly Immortal Pill with the power to revive the dead, don't miss it if you pass by!"

"An Essence Stone as large as a well mouth, the only one of its kind above and below the heavens, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity!"

"Although the treasure sword Bi Yue Sword is a low-level magic artifact, it can compare to a mid-level magical artifact, cuts through iron as if it were mud, and kills without staining with blood, truly a treasure for swordsmen!"

On the road, those cultivators at their stalls would shout vigorously at anyone who came by, attracting many onlookers, though few actually made purchases.

All this because those cultivators were all about smoke and mirrors, typically a case of crying wine and selling vinegar.

For instance, that Essence Stone was indeed as big as a well mouth, but it wasn't a natural Essence Stone; rather, a cultivator had injected some Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi into a fairly good quality stone to create a deceiving look.

Similarly, that Snow Ginseng was clearly not even twenty years old.

When there was only one day left before the Qing Bang competition, those cultivators simultaneously packed up their stalls.

All this because the people who arrived on the last day were either competitors or old Jianghu who regularly watched the Qing Bang competition – deceiving these individuals was definitely not an easy task!

According to the arrangements of the Tian Shan Sword Sect, this year's Qing Bang competition was held in the square outside the sect's gates.

In front of the square, there was a specially made monument. Every competitor who arrived had to report to that monument.

The so-called registration method, as in previous years, involved striking the monument with all their might.

What material the monument was made of was unknown, but it was extremely sturdy. It had a total of 998 symbols on it. After a competitor attacked the monument, the symbols would light up. The more symbols that lit up, the stronger the attack power indicated, hence it was called the Attack Power Testing Monument, serving as a kind of entry proof for the competitors.

Since the beginning of the Qing Bang competition, no competitor had managed to light up all eighty-one symbols.

Because, lighting up all eighty-one symbols represented the attack power of a Gang Qi realm strongman!

"The competition is starting in just one day, how come none of the seed players have arrived?"

"Everyone says that this year's Qingbang competition is the most valuable in years. I wanted to see the attack power test results of the seed competitors, and no one has shown up yet. It's really frustrating."

"Could they have arranged to arrive together today?"

"Brother, you're clearly a newbie! What does 'seed competitor' mean? They are the strongest group in this competition, the main contenders for the championship! As a seed competitor, if you don't arrive last, how can you highlight the prestige of being a seed player?"

On the last morning before the competition began, thousands of cultivators gathered on the Mount Tian Sword Sect's square to watch, only to find that not a single seed competitor had arrived, sparking a heated discussion immediately.

"Senior, this is my first time watching the Qingbang competition, and I just arrived today. Who are this year's seed competitors?"

A young man carrying a Short Knife asked full of curiosity towards an elderly cultivator in the crowd.

"If you don't even know who the seed competitors are, why did you even come?"

The elderly cultivator, with a sense of superiority, scolded and then raised his voice intentionally. "This year's seed competitors are also ten people, respectively the Sword King's successor Emperor Bai, Yan's successor Leng Feng, Evil Emperor's successor Ye Fan, the Buddhist Supreme Bodhi Wu Yin's successor Su Liuli, Jiang Family's demon Jiang Ying, Lv Family's demon Lv Zhan, Wudang Sect's demon Yuan Feng, Tian Shan Sword Sect's genius Xiao Selang, Wu Sect's successor Wu Zi, and Dark Sect's successor Ye Hei."

"Ye Hei, Wu Zi, and Su Liuli? I've never even heard of these three. Do they really have the strength of seed competitors?" the newbie questioned skeptically.

"As the saying goes, behind every famous master there is a notable disciple. Bodhi Wu Yin is the Buddhist Supreme, the sole creator of the unparalleled martial arts 'Bodhi Skill'. His successor is naturally extraordinary."

The wise elderly cultivator confidently said, "As for the Wu Sect, it's one of the ancient powers of the cultivation world. Although it has declined, as the saying goes, a lean camel is bigger than a horse, and the foundations of Wu Sect are still there. This Wu Zi is said to be the hope for rejuvenating the Wu Sect, his magic cultivation marvelous enough to astonish the heavens and make ghosts weep. His mastery of Illusion Technique has reached a divine level, capable of instantly trapping someone in a fantastical world, extremely terrifying!"

"What about Ye Hei?"

"Although the history of the Dark Sect is not as ancient as that of the Wu Sect, it has also been handed down from ancient times. Jing Ke, who assassinated the prince, was an ancestor of the Dark Sect. This Ye Hei is said to be the son of the Killing Emperor of the Dark Sect. He has carried out many missions and is rumored to have an unmatched assassination ability within his realm, and it's even said that he can kill beyond his level, which is extremely terrifying!"

"Hey, I really don't know how the organizers choose the seed competitors. Even my senior brother wasn't included. In my opinion, these ten seed competitors are just a gimmick!"

Suddenly, three young men dressed in dark blue robes, each carrying a treasure sword, walked toward them. One of them, hearing the elderly cultivator's words, changed expression and replied unhappily.

Swish!

As the young man spoke, many in the square turned their gaze toward the three men in dark blue robes.

"They are from the Kunlun Sect, and the leader is Kunlun Sect's martial arts genius Wang Kun. It's said he's a half-step Gang Qi realm master, but his actual strength is unknown!" someone in the crowd recognized the three.

"Wang Kun's strength must not be poor, otherwise the person behind him wouldn't be speaking so arrogantly."

"Talk is cheap, true ability is shown in action."

"Exactly, in previous Qingbang competitions, every seed competitor, during the attack testing monument, lit up more than seventy symbols. This year, claiming to be the highest quality yet, should at least light up seventy-five symbols."

"Hmph!"

Amidst the murmurs of the crowd, the face of Kunlun Sect's martial arts genius Wang Kun turned cold, and he snorted disdainfully.

"Snap—"

The next moment.

A crisp sound echoed as he fiercely stomped, shattering the stone tile beneath his foot, and then with a spring, he shot forward like a streak of green light toward the Trial Tablet.

Hmm?

This sudden scene immediately drew the attention of all the cultivators, who spontaneously locked their gaze on Wang Kun.

"Swoosh!"

The next moment.

Under everyone's watchful eyes, Wang Kun swiftly drew his treasure sword from his waist.

"Clank!"

The cold light flashed, and the sharp treasure sword, turning into a beam of white light, fiercely struck the Testing Monument, emitting a crisp sound.

After the crisp sound, the vast square instantly fell silent, everyone stared motionlessly at the Testing Monument, waiting for Wang Kun's Attack Power Testing result!

"It lit up seventy-five symbols!"

"No wonder some were disgruntled that he wasn't selected as a seed candidate, with this level of strength, he indeed qualifies to be a seed candidate!"

"Exactly, the seed candidates already selected may not necessarily be stronger than him!"

...

As the testing results appeared, a buzz of discussion once again erupted in the square, and many cultivators' impressions of Wang Kun immediately changed, no longer showing the slightest disdain but instead envy and jealousy.

This result greatly pleased Wang Kun, who walked towards the gateway of Tian Shan Sword Sect with his head held high and chest puffed out, an air of arrogance about him.

"Your Excellency's attack power is truly rare among the younger generation. Welcome to participate in this Qing bang competition, and I wish you excellent results,"

At the entrance of the Tian Shan Sword Sect, Meng Bai, serving as the Outer Elder in charge of reception, saw Wang Kun and his companions approaching, and immediately smiled and praised them.

"May I ask, what was the Attack Power Testing result of your sect's Martial Arts genius, Xiao Selang?" Wang Kun stopped in his tracks and asked outright, his voice booming across the entire square.

He had received news that Xiao Selang had been defeated by Ye Fan three months ago, so he considered Xiao Selang the weakest among the top ten seed candidates.

"He has not yet tested."

Meng Bai raised an eyebrow, understanding that Wang Kun was dissatisfied with Xiao Selang being selected as a seed candidate.

"Oh, I almost forgot, in previous Qing bang competitions, the organizer's seed candidates do not need to test," Wang Kun casually smiled, his words tinged with sarcasm.

"Could it be that you think your attack power is stronger than mine?"

This time, before Meng Bai could speak, Xiao Selang, dressed in a white robe and holding his treasure sword, stepped out with an unfriendly look towards Wang Kun.

"I heard that three months ago, you were defeated by the Evil Emperor's disciple. At that time, his Martial Arts Cultivation was at the Peak stage of Innate, and his Magic Cultivation was at Innate Great Perfection. Losing to such an opponent certainly makes me doubt your attack power!"

Seeing Xiao Selang aggressively questioning him, Wang Kun did not back down despite it being Xiao Selang's territory; instead, he spoke earnestly.

"Keep your dog eyes wide open and watch closely!"

Xiao Selang sneered and immediately flickered his figure, reaching the Testing Monument in an instant and slashing out with his sword!

Heavenly Sword Fifth Form, Mountain Sword!

Perhaps provoked by Wang Kun, or perhaps Xiao Selang wanted to establish his dominance and dispel people's doubts about him, he started with a focus on power using Mountain Sword!

With a swing of his sword, it was like a huge mountain pressing down, immensely powerful, making the Testing Monument tremble.

Then, under everyone's gaze, seventy-six symbols lit up simultaneously!

Cra—

Seeing this result, the cultivators in the square erupted into an uproar.

"Xiao Selang used the Heavenly Sword Fifth Form, Mountain Sword, a move known for its force, but it was unexpected that it could light up seventy-six symbols!"

"It is said that he has mastered the Heavenly Sword Seventh Form, Thunder Sword, which surpasses the Wind Sword in speed and the Mountain Sword in power—if he had used the Heaven Sword Seventh Form, Thunder Sword just now, the results would have definitely been better!"

"So it seems, Xiao Selang might not be the weakest among the top ten seed candidates this time, someone else might be."

Swish!

Hearing those cultivators' discussions, Wang Kun, who had previously been so arrogant, suddenly withered like a frost-stricken eggplant, stepping into the mountain gate with a face ashen as iron.

"Ye Fan, if you haven't broken into the Half-step Gang Qi realm, the person at the bottom of the top ten seed candidates is definitely you!"

Xiao Selang flicked his wrist, sheathing his treasure sword, and stood proudly in front of the Testing Monument, looking towards the entrance of the square, a cold smirk never ceasing in his heart.

Chapter 624 - Each Demonstrating Divine Skills, Destined to Meet!

After the testing was finished, Xiao Selang didn't leave; instead, like Meng Bai, he stood at the entrance of the Tian Shan Sword Sect, playing the role of a greeter.

The Tian Shan Sword Sect was the host of this Qing bang competition, and as the host's seeded contestant, he naturally wanted to use this opportunity to mingle with the younger generation.

The reason he hadn't appeared earlier was simply that none of the cultivators who had come to register had caught his Dharma Eye!

In the half-hour that followed, the cultivators who came to register were all very ordinary, with none of their attacks causing the Trial Tablet to light up with seventy symbols, which didn't interest Xiao Selang in the least.

"Who is that person? What an odd outfit!"

Later, just as Xiao Selang was considering whether or not to go back to his Sect to rest for a while, a loud exclamation suddenly rang out from among the crowd in the square.

Swish!

As the voice fell, the cultivators on the square were guided by the remark, turning their gazes toward the entrance of the square one after another.

Following their gazes, one could see a pale-faced youth wearing a black robe coming their way. The robe was embroidered with images of various mysterious mutant beasts that seemed so lifelike and vivid, it was startling.

He wore a crown made from mutant beast bones on his head, with a black bead set in the very center of the crown, emitting a dark light that gave off a heart-stopping aura.

The strange attire, the peculiar crown, combined with the youth's pale face, made everyone feel a chill in their hearts.

"He...he is Wu Zi, from the Wu Sect, hailed as the hope for the Wu Sect's revitalization. His Magic Cultivation in Illusion Technique is so profound it shocks Heaven and Earth, grieves spirits and gods, and he can make one instantly lose themselves in an illusory world!"

After a moment's silence, an old cultivator in the crowd thought of something and exclaimed in surprise.

The mysterious seeded contestant, Wu Zi?!

Hearing the old cultivator's words, the crowd stirred, but instead of many discussions or loud chatter, they kept their eyes fixed on Wu Zi, watching as he walked step by step toward the Trial Tablet at the front of the square.

Xiao Selang did not step forward to greet him but, like everyone else, simply watched Wu Zi's every move, apparently curious to see how Wu Zi would test.

"Since he practices Illusion Technique from Magic, how will he test?"

Not just Xiao Selang, but others who were knowledgeable about Magic were filled with doubts as well.

"Brother, may I borrow your treasure sword for a moment?"

As if to answer the crowd's thoughts, just as Wu Zi was about to reach the Trial Tablet, he suddenly turned his head and, with a smile, spoke to a cultivator with a sword.

"Isn't he a Magician who's skilled in Illusion Technique? Why does he want to use Martial Arts Cultivation for the test? Could he, like the Evil Emperor's Disciple, be skilled in both Magic and Martial Arts?"

As Wu Zi's words reached the ears of the crowd, there was an uproar, with everyone looking at Wu Zi in shock.

But the cultivator whom Wu Zi had asked to borrow a sword from was looking at Wu Zi as if he'd seen a ghost. "You...are you sure you want to use my treasure sword for the test?"

"Brother, would you be willing to lend it?" Wu Zi indirectly replied.

"Of course."

The sword-wielding cultivator said and was about to reach out and draw the sword to hand to Wu Zi.

"Brother, I can do it myself."

Wu Zi smiled again, his smile bright but laced with a hint of malice.

"Hm?"

Upon hearing this, the sword-wielding cultivator paused, his outstretched hand hanging in the air, unsure of what Wu Zi was up to.

Not just him, including Xiao Selang, everyone was puzzled: What is he doing?

"Swish!"

In answer to everyone's question was the sound of drawing a sword.

Under the blazing sun, Wu Zi had not moved forward to draw the sword, but that treasure sword unsheathed itself and then... turned into a streak of white light, whistling towards the Trial Tablet in front of him!

"Clang!"

The next moment.

Before the crowd could react, a crisp sound was heard, and the treasure sword fiercely struck the Trial Tablet, causing a trembling sensation that made everyone's heart skip a beat!

"So that's it. Unable to test Attack Power with Illusion Technique, he had to test with Manipulation Stream."

"Is this guy too arrogant?"

"Right, even if he is good at Illusion Technique, even if he mastered Manipulation Stream, controlling a non-Mind Control Magic Tool, the Attack Power wouldn't be high, right?"

With Wu Zi's action, the crowd was once again astir, with almost everyone thinking Wu Zi's test results wouldn't be too good.

However—

The next moment.

The vast square became as quiet as if it had been ensnared by witchcraft.

Everyone's eyes widened, and they stared motionless at the Trial Tablet.

On the Trial Tablet, seventy symbols shone dazzlingly bright!

This...how is this possible?

"Brother, thank you for the sword!"

Wu Zi smiled slightly once again as if responding to everyone before he, without waiting for the sword-wielding cultivator to recover, used his mind to sheath the sword.

After doing all this, Wu Zi took steps forward, heading swiftly toward the Tian Shan Sword Sect's mountain gate.

"Uh..."

Including Xiao Selang, everyone was still immersed in shock.

Because they were all too aware that with the strength Wu Zi had displayed, if he had used a Mind Control Magic Tool to attack the Trial Tablet, he would have lit up at least seventy-five symbols!

And...Wu Zi's specialty was Illusion Technique!

They couldn't imagine how terrifying Wu Zi would be using Illusion Technique, but one thought dominated their minds: He's too strong!

Shortly after, just as Wu Zi reached the entrance of the Tian Shan Sword Sect and was about to step in, Xiao Selang snapped out of his shock and took a step forward: "Brother Wu..."

"Clang!"

Just at that moment, another crisp sound rang across the square, abruptly cutting off Xiao Selang's words!

Whoosh!

Xiao Selang's expression changed in an instant. His gaze swept across the Trial Tablet like a knife, trying to see which blind fool dared to test while he was greeting Brother Wu.

At the same time, the cultivators on the square also turned their attention back to the Trial Tablet.

Even Wu Zi did the same!

What everyone saw was a young man dressed in a black training suit.

The young man sported a crew cut. His features were utterly ordinary—a simple look that wouldn't draw attention in a bustling street.

Perhaps it was because the young man's appearance was so unremarkable that nobody noticed when he arrived at the Tian Shan Sword Sect's square, nor when he approached the Trial Tablet, and they didn't see how he made his move!

But—

Everyone clearly saw the young man's result—seventy-eight symbols lit up on the Trial Board at once!

"My God, seventy-eight symbols lit up on the Trial Board!"

"Who is this guy? How can he be so strong??"

The performance of the young man in black caused a huge sensation on the square, and even Xiao Selang and Wu Zi changed color simultaneously!

The former was shocked by the young man's terrifying attack power, while the latter sensed a dreadful danger emanating from the young man in black—Wu Zi believed his mental perception was peerless among the youth, but it wasn't until the young man in black made his move that Wu Zi became aware of his presence!

In such a situation, he had every reason to believe that if the young man in black wanted to assassinate him, it would be difficult for him to escape!

This conclusion made his back chill and promptly made him retract some of his arrogance as he took the initiative to speak, asking tentatively, "Are you the son of the Killing Emperor from the Dark Sect, Ye Hei?"

"Brother Wu's mental strength is astounding. I hope for your leniency in the competition."

Ye Hei, the son of the Killing Emperor, bared his teeth and smiled naively. Then, without even glancing at Xiao Selang, he flashed into the Huashan Sword Sect with breathtaking speed.

As Ye Hei's words echoed in his ears and watching Ye Hei's departing figure, Wu Zi's face grew sour—Ye Hei seemed to be complimenting him, but in reality, he was taunting him!

Compared to Wu Zi, Xiao Selang's expression was even uglier, ashen with fury!

As the martial arts genius of the Tian Shan Sword Sect and the seed contestant of the host of this Qing bang competition, he was utterly ignored by Ye Hei—an immense humiliation!

"If I had doubts about the value of this Qing bang competition before, at this moment, I'm fully convinced of one fact—this Qing bang competition is undoubtedly the most prestigious one since ancient times!"

"That's right... Both Wu Zi and Ye Hei's strengths are terrifying!"

"With the strength they've demonstrated, they not only do justice to the title of seed contestants but even have the potential to compete with geniuses like Emperor Bai, Lv Zhan, and Jiang Ying for the championship!"

"So it seems, among the top ten seed contestants, the weakest could be either Xiao Selang, Yuan Feng, Ye Fan, or Su Liuli!"

...

With Ye Hei's departure, the crowd burst into another uproar of discussion.

Once again hearing the crowd's discussions, Xiao Selang's face lost all traces of pride and was filled with annoyance and embarrassment. He didn't stay to greet the guests any longer and entered the Tian Shan Sword Sect with an ugly expression, disappearing from everyone's sight.

At the same time.

Two streams of Qi almost simultaneously arrived at the Outer Mountain Gate of the Tian Shan Sword Sect.

"Brother Xuanji, what a coincidence!"

The Lv Family Patriarch, Lv Yuan, descended gently with the prodigy of the Lv Family, Lv Zhan, and greeted Zhe Xuanji with a cupped fist salute.

"Quite a coincidence indeed." Zhe Xuanji let go of Ye Fan's arm and nodded in response.

"Xiao Zhan, you go up the mountain with Xiao Fan. I'll go around with the Evil Emperor," Lv Yuan said to Lv Zhan with a smile, in effect, extending an invitation to Zhe Xuanji indirectly.

"Yes, Great-grandfather!" Lv Zhan nodded.

Zhe Xuanji, however, didn't say anything and leaped up, flying towards the peak of Mount Tian, seemingly in search of the secret to the Earth's increase in Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi.

Lv Yuan, pleased at the sight, also took flight, using Qi Manipulation Flight, chasing after Zhe Xuanji.

"Brother Ye, it's been three months, and you seem even more impressive. I believe your strength must have improved quite a bit," Lv Zhan said to Ye Fan with a smile, approaching him like a long-time friend, without any sense of estrangement.

"Compared to Brother Lv, it's hardly worth mentioning," Ye Fan replied modestly, smiling as he walked shoulder to shoulder with Lv Zhan, entering through the Outer Mountain Gate of the Tian Shan Sword Sect, and began climbing towards the square halfway up the mountain.

"Brother Ye, I heard that Su Liuli, the disciple of the Buddhist Supreme Bodhi Wuyin, is your friend?" Lv Zhan suddenly asked, as if recalling something.

"Hmm, what about it?"

Ye Fan was first taken aback by the question, then nodded gently.

"To my knowledge, Su Liuli will also participate in this Qing bang competition, and like you and I, she's also a seed contestant..."

"You... are you sure she's competing?"

Ye Fan interrupted Lv Zhan, his face alight with excitement.

"Of course, I'm sure. It's information released by the Yanhuang Organization; how could it be false?"

Lv Zhan said, puzzled, "What, Brother Ye, you didn't know about this? That shouldn't be, considering you're friends with her, and your master has good relations with Yan. You should have been the first to know about the contestants, right?"

"Um, after Alchemy ended, I returned to Spirit Mountain to cultivate in seclusion, and I wasn't aware of all this."

Ye Fan tried to calm himself and offered an explanation, but the excitement in his eyes was still evident.

"Brother Ye, I've heard that Su Liuli only trained with Bodhi Wuyin for less than a year, and before that, she was just an ordinary person. Even with a genius talent, her strength can't be that great in just one

year. So how is she also competing? Is Bodhi Wuyin using this Qing bang competition as an opportunity to train her? Do you know the reason?" Lv Zhan asked, voicing his curiosity.

"I don't know."

Ye Fan shook his head gently, looking up toward the middle of the mountain with anticipation on his face.

Anticipation of reuniting with Su Liuli!

Chapter 625 - Focal Character

"Who do you think will be the lowest-ranked of the top ten seed players in this Qing List Competition?"

After Wu Zi and Ye Hei caused a sensation, no seed players appeared for a long time, which made the cultivators on the square feel quite bored, and someone brought up this topic.

"Didn't they just say it? With mysterious seeds like Ye Hei and Wu Zi being so strong, and the strength of people like Emperor Bai and Leng Feng beyond any doubt, the lowest-ranked can only be among Xiao Selang, Yuan Feng, Su Liuli, and Ye Fan," someone replied.

"Brother, didn't you hear me clearly? I asked everyone to discuss specifically who the lowest-ranked is, and there can only be one option!" said the cultivator who raised the topic.

"I guess it's Su Liuli. The Buddhist Supreme Bodhi Wuyin is indeed powerful, but as far as I know, Su Liuli has been practicing with Bodhi Wuyin for less than a year. In one year's time, even if Su Liuli is the reincarnation of a divine being, she couldn't have become that strong, right?"

"Exactly! I also think Su Liuli is the weakest! In fact, in my opinion, the only reason Su Liuli was able to participate in this Qing List Competition and become a seed player is because the organizers wanted to favor Bodhi Wuyin! After all, it was quite difficult for Bodhi Wuyin to take on disciples in his later years."

"I disagree. The seed players of the Qing List Competition are preliminarily judged by the Yanhuang Organization based on strength information of the participating players. The Yanhuang Organization, even if favoring Bodhi Wuyin, would at most allow his disciple Su Liuli to compete, but would never make her a seed player!" someone voiced their disagreement.

"Brother, your view is exactly like mine, the Yanhuang Organization wouldn't arbitrarily pick someone weak as a seed player. If Su Liuli could become a seed player, her strength must not be weak!"

"What a joke, this Qing List Competition has been touted as the most prestigious one yet, where even masters of the Half-step Gang Qi Realm can't become seed players! Su Liuli is a seed player, so are you suggesting that she raised her strength to the Half-step Gang Qi Realm within just one year? Since ancient times, there has been no cultivator who could go against the heavens like that?"

"Maybe the Buddhist sect has some secret technique that can create a master in a short period of time?"

"Secret technique? I'd love to listen attentively and learn what kind of miraculous secret technique you're talking about!"

"You..."

Seeing that the opposition was about to escalate, the cultivator who was a supporter of Su Liuli was getting annoyed and said huffily, "If I knew the reason, I wouldn't be having this pointless debate with you!"

"What do you mean by this, brother? Are you proposing a challenge?"

"A challenge then, who do you think I'm afraid of!"

"Leaving aside the most mysterious seed player Su Liuli, personally, I think it's very likely that the disciple of the Evil Emperor will come in last among the top ten seed players of this Qing List Competition,"

Seeing that a conflict was about to arise, the cultivator who first raised this topic stated his own judgment, deliberately bringing up the controversial figure Ye Fan to shift the focus of the argument.

"Nonsense! The Evil Emperor's disciple defeated Xiao Selang at Mount Tian with Martial Arts at the Innate Peak State and Cultivation at the Innate Great Perfection Realm, and later performed a heaven-defying feat in Dong Hai by successfully creating the legendary Immortal Pill. Moreover, his absorption speed of Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi is one hundred times that of cultivators of the same realm, and he even leveraged the Dan Tribulation to unimaginably breakthrough to the Innate Great Perfection Realm!"

The topic of conversation was successfully diverted, and one of the cultivators who had witnessed Ye Fan's miracles that day couldn't stand it, "Since then, his name has been known all over the world, and he is showing a trend of surpassing his predecessors. Yet you're saying he's likely the lowest-ranked among the top ten seed players of this Qing List Competition? I really don't know where you're getting your conclusions from."

"Brother, I acknowledge that his alchemy skills are unmatched among the younger generation. Likewise, I admit he's a rare genius, possessing the ability to absorb and refine Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi at a rate a hundred times that of fellow cultivators in the same realm, and even to challenge those above his level. But... these still don't prove he couldn't possibly come in last!"

The cultivator who brought up the topic explained, "There are two reasons. First, when Ye Fan defeated Xiao Selang, who had just broken through to the Half-step Gang Qi realm and had not yet stabilized his realm, he couldn't exert the full combat power of the Half-step Gang Qi realm. And now, Xiao Selang has not only consolidated his realm but also mastered the Heavenly Sword Seventh Form: Thunder Sword, which greatly increased his strength. Second, Yuan Feng had appeared at Ao Xiang Villa on that day and stepped into the Half-step Gang Qi realm, and three months have passed since then, his strength must have significantly improved."

"I think this brother is making sense, No matter how defying or impressive the Evil Emperor's Disciple is, it's irrelevant. The seed players in the Qing bang Competition represent the strongest combat power of this competition. If he hasn't broken through to the Half-step Gang Qi realm, he is definitely going to be the bottom seed player of the top ten!"

"Exactly! In previous Qing bang Competitions, it was very normal for cultivators at the Innate Great Perfection Realm to become seed players with his strength enough to be listed among them! But... times have changed, if he hasn't even broken through to the Half-step Gang Qi realm and is selected as one of the top ten seed players, isn't that a joke?"

"How do you all know he hasn't broken through?"

"Shh, the Evil Emperor's Disciple, Ye Fan, is here!"

Somewhat later, just when those cultivators in the square were about to argue again, a cultivator on the edge of the square, with keen eyes, spotted Ye Fan and Lv Zhan arriving at the entrance of the square, and immediately spoke out to alert everyone.

As soon as these words were spoken, the whole place fell silent.

Swish!

All of a sudden, everyone couldn't help but turn their gaze toward the entrance of the square, including the cultivator who was about to walk towards the Trial Tablet!

At this moment, he became the sole focus, capturing the attention far beyond the previously mysterious Wu Zi!

Firstly, he was a figure of legend, shrouded in mystery; people had only heard of him and had not seen him, so they were eager to see his true face today.

Moreover, he was the focal point of everyone's discussions just now, and they all wanted to know whether he had broken through to the Half-step Gang Qi realm!

"The Evil Emperor's Disciple has not broken through and is still in the Innate Great Perfection Realm!"

After a brief silence, an old cultivator in the Half-step Gang Qi realm released his mind and clearly sensed Ye Fan's aura, then announced loudly.

"Wha...What? He absorbs and refines Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi a hundred times faster than cultivators of the same realm, yet he hasn't broken through to the Half-step Gang Qi realm?"

"Breaking through is not just about absorbing and refining Qi quickly; it also relates to comprehension!"

"Since he hasn't broken through to the Half-step Gang Qi realm, then he's definitely the bottom one among the top ten seed players of this Qing bang Competition!"

"Not only is he at the bottom, I personally think his strength isn't even as good as some non-seed players, like Wang Kun of the Kunlun Sect."

"Alas... the Evil Emperor's Disciple is too impatient. If he could wait for two years and participate in the next Qing bang Competition, he could definitely make it as one of the top ten seed players with absolute strength, and even have a chance to win the championship!"

"It's not impatience, but rather he's too full of himself—he foolishly set up a fight with the Little Saber King. If he didn't show up, not only would he lose face, but he would also disgrace his master. Now, he's being pushed onto the stage like a duck on a perch!"

"Since he can challenge beyond his level, maybe he has some trump card that can enhance his combat power, thus contending with the other nine seed contestants?"

"Let's wait and see his test results first."

Above the square, the crowd buzzed with excitement as the cultivators watched Ye Fan, all harboring their own thoughts.

"Brother Ye's fame is really too immense, making this green leaf envious and resentful!"

Seeing that practically all the cultivators were paying attention to, discussing Ye Fan, and completely ignoring his own existence, Lv Zhan said sourly on purpose.

Ye Fan responded with a faint smile, saying nothing.

Ever since he left Spirit Mountain, he had always been at the center of controversy. No matter where he went, he could attract attention, and he was now no longer surprised by it.

"I had heard that in every Qing bang competition there's a test of attack power, but I never expected it to be true. What material is that Trial Tablet made of that makes it so miraculous?"

Later, under the gazes of the audience, Ye Fan and Lv Zhan stepped into the square and walked towards the Trial Tablet. Ye Fan asked with some curiosity.

"I don't know the exact materials, but I do know that it contains a powerful Formation that can accurately measure the attack power of competitors,"

Lv Zhan explained, then with a smirk that was not quite a smile, he said, "Although I don't know why Brother Ye hasn't broken through to the Half-step Gang Qi realm, I'm sure the attack power test will again shock everyone!"

"My god, the person with Evil Emperor's Disciple is the demon of the Lv Family, Lv Zhan. I've seen him at Ao Xiang Villa!"

"It's actually him, how did they come to be together?"

"Evil Emperor's Disciple and Lv Family's demon, I really wonder whose test results will be more impressive."

"Do we even need to ask? It's said that the demon of the Lv Family, Lv Zhan, has already broken through the Half-step Gang Qi realm, and the Lv Family in the Ancient Cultivation World has made a name for itself in battle, with each cultivator from the Lv Family being a fighting fanatic! Lv Zhan is known as this generation's demon of the Lv Family, his strength must be extremely terrifying, enough to compete with the Little Saber King Bai Di and Leng Feng!"

...

This time, before Ye Fan could respond to Lv Zhan, someone in the square recognized Lv Zhan, and cried out in surprise, sparking intense debate. The attention of the majority shifted from Ye Fan to Lv Zhan.

It only took a moment for Lv Zhan to successfully replace him and become the focus!

"Brother Ye, would you like to go first, or shall I?"

After a moment, when the buzz of discussion gradually subsided, Ye Fan and Lv Zhan arrived not far from the Trial Tablet. Lv Zhan asked with a smile.

"You go first."

Ye Fan suddenly sensed several powerful auras. As he was pondering who the owners of the auras might be, he heard Lv Zhan's question and casually replied.

"Alright, then I'll fully embrace being the foil and go make a fool of myself first!"

Just as the cultivator before had said, the Lv Family's cultivators inherently had a fondness for battle, and Lv Zhan was no exception. He did not further stand on ceremony; immediately taking his ancestral Big Halberd in hand, he walked towards the Trial Tablet and stepped forward.

In an instant, the vast square fell silent.

The cultivators on the square, Meng Bai and the greeters at the entrance of Tian Shan Sword Sect, as well as the competing contestants and some powerful entities who had arrived early inside the Tian Shan Sword Sect, all watched Lv Zhan's test attentively.

Under everyone's gaze, Lv Zhan did not approach the Trial Tablet, but stood in place and suddenly swung the ancestral Big Halberd!

"Swoosh!"

A piercing sound of cleaving through the air arose as a terrifying stream of Gang Qi shot out from the Big Halberd, turning into a ray of light that howled toward the Trial Tablet.

"Boom—"

A loud bang echoed, and the Trial Tablet shook violently with seventy-eight symbols simultaneously lighting up, dazzling the eyes.

"Hiss~"

The sound of sharp intakes of breath almost simultaneously rose both above the square and within the Tian Shan Sword Sect, aside from those powerful entities, nearly everyone was startled by Lv Zhan's strike!

Because... the farther the distance, the weaker the power of a Gang Qi attack!

They had every reason to believe that if Lv Zhan had approached the Trial Tablet before launching his attack, he could have, at the very least, caused seventy-nine symbols to light up!

"Brother Ye, I've made a fool of myself, the stage is yours now. Go blind some people's dog eyes!"

Unconcerned with the sensation his strike had caused, Lv Zhan turned around and spoke with a smile.

Chapter 626 - Ye Fan's Test

Ever since Lv Zhan personally witnessed Ye Fan using the opportunity provided by the Dan Tribulation at Ao Xiang Villa to absorb and refine Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi from the tribulation at a rate nearly a hundred times that of a cultivator at the same realm, thereby breaking through his realm, Lv Zhan held no more contempt for Ye Fan.

On the contrary, he believed Ye Fan was an even more demon-like existence than both himself and Emperor Bai—if only Ye Fan were given enough time, he would certainly surpass the younger generation!

Moreover, he felt that since Ye Fan dared to set up a life-and-death battle agreement with Emperor Bai and unhesitatingly participate in this Qing bang competition, he must possess some unknown trump card.

He was filled with curiosity about Ye Fan's trump card.

Similarly, he was curious to see if Ye Fan could create the strongest combat power within the Innate Great Perfection Realm!

The anticipation wasn't just from Lv Zhan alone—whether it was the cultivators on the square or those participants who had entered the Tian Shan Sword Sect, as well as some influential figures, all of them were filled with expectation for Ye Fan's upcoming test result!

However—

They were different from Lv Zhan.

Among them, the cultivators on the square and the participants who had entered the Tian Shan Sword Sect were hoping to confirm if their judgment was correct—whether Ye Fan was indeed the weakest among the top ten seed participants of the Qing bang competition!

And those influential figures wanted to know what Ye Fan relied on to dare challenge Emperor Bai, the first among the younger generation!

For a while, the vast Tian Shan Sword Sect's square quieted down once more, with Ye Fan replacing Lv Zhan as the center of attention.

Realizing that he was locked in by numerous intents and faced with those gazes, Ye Fan's heart remained as still as a ripple-less lake. He strode towards the Trial Tablet.

"What's going on? What does he want to do?"

Ye Fan's actions once again caused everyone to be taken aback.

They all knew very well that Ye Fan was skilled in Magic and Manipulation Stream, and if he wanted to test his strength, there was no need to approach the Trial Tablet—he could simply activate a Mind Control Magic Tool for the attack.

"Could it be... Could it be that the disciple of the Evil Emperor intends to test his Martial Arts Cultivation?"

Watching Ye Fan steadily approaching the Trial Tablet without stopping his steps, someone speculated and exclaimed in surprise.

"His strength lies in Magic, but now he wants to test his Martial Arts Cultivation? What does this mean?"

Someone agreed with this guess, but was very puzzled.

"Isn't that obvious? He knows his power is the weakest among the top ten seed participants, so he's deliberately using Martial Arts Cultivation to test himself. That way, even if the test result is poor, outsiders can't say anything, and they'll only know his true power when the competition starts."

A cultivator, convinced of Ye Fan's low strength, confidently claimed, feeling quite smug with themselves as if they'd spoken an incontrovertible truth.

"That must be the case, otherwise there's no reason for him to test with Martial Arts Cultivation!"

"Not necessarily. You see, he has a life-and-death battle agreement with Emperor Bai. If he has to use such a shameful tactic to protect the dignity of an Evil Emperor's Disciple and a seed participant during the test, wouldn't it be more embarrassing when his true colors are revealed at the start of the competition? I personally think there is something odd about this, and it's not yet the time to make a final judgment. Everything will only be clear after he has finished the test."

...

Before Ye Fan even began his test, the square that was once quiet erupted into noise once again, with everyone airing their views, expressing their opinions.

Half a minute later, Ye Fan arrived in front of the Trial Tablet. All other chatter ceased to exist, and the square was quiet once again, with everyone motionless, staring at Ye Fan.

"The old man said that now, without using martial arts, my full-force punch possesses the Attack Power of a Half-step Gang Qi realm Cultivator. It's time to use this magical Trial Tablet to test it!"

In front of the Trial Tablet, Ye Fan disregarded the surrounding talk. With a calm expression, he thought this to himself as he quietly clenched his right fist.

"Whoosh!"

The next moment.

Under everyone's watchful eye, Ye Fan swung his right fist with all his might, slamming it into the Trial Tablet!

"Crack crack crack crack..."

As the punch was thrown, the force of the punch stirred up the air, creating consecutive explosion sounds as the air in front of the Trial Tablet shattered, forming a temporary vacuum.

"Bang—"

Then, like the striking of a bell, the sound echoed across the square. A condensed force surged and erupted from Ye Fan's right fist, hitting the Trial Tablet.

The Trial Tablet shook violently, its internal Formation activated, and runes started to light up.

One, two, three...

Time seemed to slow at that moment, with everyone unable to look away from the Trial Tablet, watching as one rune after another lit up.

A moment later, the test result appeared—the Trial Tablet lit up with seventy-five runes!

"Er..."

At that moment, the vast Tian Shan Sword Sect square fell into dead silence. The cultivators widened their eyes, motionless as they stared at the Trial Tablet, hardly believing this result was real.

Not only them, but also the participants who had entered the Tian Shan Sword Sect early and were watching from the upper pavilions all wore expressions as if they'd seen a ghost.

Even Lv Zhan, Ye Hei, and Wu Zi were clearly taken aback.

All this, because seventy-five runes constituted a threshold; anyone who could reach this value was proven to possess the Attack Power of a Half-step Gang Qi realm Cultivator!

"How can the Martial Arts Cultivation of the Evil Emperor's Disciple, who is only at the Innate Great Perfection Realm, be so strong?"

In shock, a cultivator on the square unconsciously blurted out, their eyes nearly popping out as if they wanted a clearer view to ensure they hadn't made a mistake.

Why?

Above the square, the cultivators all wore looks of bewilderment.

They were members of minor sects with weak strength and limited experience.

In their understanding, although Half-step Gang Qi realm meant one had only half a foot in the Gang Qi realm with the transformation of inner strength and mind power into Qi, there was still a vast chasm between this state and Innate Great Perfection. It was an insurmountable gap!

But at that moment, Ye Fan, through his actions, shattered that belief, bringing a tremendous shock to them!

Why?

Aside from Lv Zhan, the participating competitors' first thought was of the killing move 'Qi Rushes to the Sky' created by Chu Xuanji.

In their view, it was only with the use of such a heaven-defying move that Ye Fan could have achieved such an effect.

Lv Zhan was the exception.

His mental perception was not only stronger than the other competitors, but he was also quite close to Ye Fan.

Just now, when Ye Fan made his move, Lv Zhan did not sense any surge of evil aura.

"The absence of evil aura means he did not use the killing move 'Qi Rushes to the Sky', so what martial arts did he use? Or to say, did he not employ any martial arts at all?"

Gazing at Ye Fan's solitary figure, Lv Zhan couldn't help but silently question himself.

"He probably didn't use any martial arts!"

Soon, Lv Zhan came to such a conclusion.

Because, as far as he knew, 'Qi Rushes to the Sky' was one of the top-tier killing moves in this world, with few others on par with it.

In such a case, if Ye Fan wanted to prove himself, he would likely use Qi Rushes to the Sky, rather than choosing any other martial arts.

"The power of a casual blow from Innate Great Perfection is comparable to an attack by a Half-step Gang Qi realm cultivator! Good heavens... What sort of monster is this guy?!"

After making his judgment, Lv Zhan was deeply shaken.

He had always been supremely confident in his own talent and strength, considering himself second to none, including Emperor Bai among the younger generation, and thus readily accepted the label of a 'demon'.

However, at this moment, facing Ye Fan, he felt defeated for the first time.

Because, in his opinion, Ye Fan had transcended the category of a 'demon' and was beyond normal judgment!

"The disciple of the Evil Emperor, with martial arts cultivation at just Innate Great Perfection, can have an attack power on par with a Half-step Gang Qi expert. Just with this alone, he has not disgraced the name of a seeded contestant!"

"His martial arts attack is so against the heavens, if he combines it with Magic and Martial Arts, how terrifying would that be? As things stand, I am convinced, in this Qing bang competition, the one who is least likely to be at the bottom among the top ten seeds is definitely not the Evil Emperor's Disciple!"

"Indeed, he is definitely not weaker than the martial arts genius of Tian Shan Sword Sect, Xiao Selang!"

As Lv Zhan was deeply shaken, the square once again filled with discussions, with the vast majority of people believing Ye Fan's strength was not inferior to Xiao Selang.

"How is this possible? Could it be... has he cultivated the killing move 'Qi Rushes to the Sky' to an extremely high realm?"

Xiao Selang, who previously felt humiliated by being disregarded by Ye Hei, stood in a pavilion, staring fixedly at Ye Fan's solitary back, his eyes filled with reluctance to accept this.

Because he was too far from Ye Fan and his mental perception was not as strong as Lv Zhan's, he did not know that when Ye Fan made his move, there was no surge of evil aura around him. He subjectively believed that Ye Fan had used 'Qi Rushes to the Sky'.

Despite this, he was hit hard!

Firstly, he clearly saw that when Ye Fan made his move, he did not wear the High-level Magical Artifact Black Iron Fist set, relying solely on his strength—if Ye Fan wore the Black Iron Fist set, his attack power would have doubled, and would not be weaker than his own when he was testing his attack power!

More importantly, Ye Fan was adept at the Manipulation Stream of Magic, with martial arts cultivation as only an auxiliary. And now, with such strong martial arts cultivation, if Magic and Martial Arts were combined, even if he had comprehended the Heavenly Sword's Seventh Form: Thunder Sword, he would have been thoroughly abused!

After all, martial arts plus magic far exceed the simple sum of one plus one. They would multiply.

Regarding this, Xiao Selang had a profound experience during his last confrontation with Ye Fan.

However—

Despite understanding all this, he could not accept it. Now, hearing the overwhelming discussions around the square, he trembled with anger, his face livid with fury, feeling as if Ye Fan had slapped him hard in front of everyone.

By comparison, Wu Zi and Ye Hei, although they were also alarmed by Ye Fan's actions, quickly regained their composure.

It seemed as though Ye Fan's current display of power was still not enough to be taken seriously by them, not even qualifying as an opponent.

"These two self-important fools will probably end up being slapped in the face like Yuan Feng, the idiot from three months ago!"

Seeing the changes in expression of Ye Hei and Wu Zi, Lv Zhan, who believed in his own judgment, thought pensively.

"Heh, with that level of attack power, he dares to call himself a seeded contestant?"

Just then, a mocking voice suddenly sounded at the entrance of the square.

As the voice fell, a figure appeared!

With unbridled arrogance, Yuan Feng made his entrance into everyone's sight.

"Speak of the idiot, and the idiot arrives... how timely for this fool to show up..."

Upon hearing the sound, Lv Zhan turned around, saw Yuan Feng's arrogant demeanor, couldn't help but twitch the corners of his mouth, nearly bursting into laughter.

Chapter 627 - Arrogant

Ye Fan, much to everyone's surprise, made the Trial Tablet light up seventy-five symbols with his Martial Arts Attack, delivering a tremendous shock to all present.

In the wake of the shock, including the competing participants, no one further questioned Ye Fan's Combat Power, nor did anyone dare to say that Ye Fan didn't deserve to be a seed contestant.

All of this was disrupted by Yuan Feng.

Yuan Feng appeared in a manner that was full of himself. Instead of being shocked by Ye Fan's earlier performance, he spoke arrogantly as if Ye Fan didn't even qualify to battle him.

Whoosh!

In an instant, the eyes of the crowd shifted from Ye Fan to the entrance of the plaza.

At the plaza's entrance, Yuan Feng, wearing a Taoist robe and holding a horsetail whisk, walked toward the Trial Tablet with unbridled pride written on his youthful face, which seemed utterly at odds with his age.

He exuded a powerful aura, and while his steps appeared casual, they had the effect of shrinking the ground beneath him.

All of this caused the cultivators in the plaza and the participants who had entered the Tian Shan Sword Sect not to underestimate Yuan Feng because of his age. On the contrary, they were all completely subdued by this display of his ability.

"He is the Wu Sect's prodigy Yuan Feng. I've seen him at Ao Xiang Villa!"

After a brief shock, an exclamation rang out from the crowd, as a cultivator who had witnessed Ye Fan's deviant act of concocting the Lifespan Extension Pill at Ao Xiang Villa recognized Yuan Feng.

"So it's him, no wonder such a young presence could be so powerful!"

"Since he dares to publicly insult the Evil Emperor's Disciple, he must have the strength to surpass the Evil Emperor's Disciple. I wonder how many symbols he can make the Trial Tablet light up?"

As Yuan Feng's identity came to light, the plaza was abuzz. Those cultivators too weak to participate in the Qing bang contest and reduced to mere spectators were filled with envy, jealousy, and resentment.

Listening to the discussions of the cultivators in the plaza and feeling the envious and jealous gazes, Yuan Feng's vanity was immensely satisfied, and he held his head even higher, as if he wanted to lift his chin to the sky.

He looked at Ye Fan with conceit, only to find that Ye Fan had completely ignored his existence, not even sparing him a glance and instead turning to walk toward the gates of the Tian Shan Sword Sect.

This realization severely irked Yuan Feng, and he suddenly quickened his pace, transforming into a phantom as he dashed for the Trial Tablet.

"Evil Emperor's Disciple, since you concede my point, go back and cultivate for another ten years, lest you embarrass yourself here!" Before he even arrived, his words reached first, Yuan Feng seeming to be hell-bent on humiliating Ye Fan.

Ye Fan paused his stride, turned around, and frowned as he looked at Yuan Feng, considering whether to give Yuan Feng an unforgettable lesson before the contest.

"Little brother Yuan Feng, with such arrogance in your voice, you must have improved a lot over these three months?"

Before Ye Fan could speak, Lv Zhan could not help himself and intervened. He noticed that Yuan Feng's aura had not changed much since three months ago and was curious as to why Yuan Feng dared to publicly humiliate Ye Fan.

"So-so, but more than enough to handle the Evil Emperor's Disciple."

Yuan Feng sneered, then without waiting for Ye Fan to reply, flicked his wrist, and his figure, swift like the wind, streaked toward the Trial Tablet.

Whoosh!

In the blink of an eye, Yuan Feng reached the Trial Tablet, flicked his wrist, and the horsetail whisk in his hand lashed towards the Trial Tablet.

"Swoosh—"

A stream of Gang Qi shot out from the horsetail whisk, turning into a Qi Ray and blasting towards the Trial Tablet.

"Clack—"

A crisp sound was heard as the Qi Ray exploded, and the Trial Tablet shook violently, with one symbol after another lighting up.

The spacious plaza of the Tian Shan Sword Sect quieted down once more. The cultivators intently stared at the Trial Tablet, awaiting Yuan Feng's result!

Not just them, but all participants, including Ye Fan and Lv Zhan, were also looking at the Trial Tablet!

The next moment.

Under everyone's watchful eyes, seventy-eight symbols lit up on the Trial Tablet, glaringly conspicuous.

"Seventy-eight symbols, Wu Sect's Yuan Feng's casual strike is so terrifying, he truly lives up to the name of a prodigy!"

"Indeed, no wonder he dared to arrogantly insult Ye Fan, the Evil Emperor's Disciple. It seems he came prepared and is full of confidence."

Yuan Feng's result immediately caused a wave of exclamations among the cultivators on the plaza, and also made the participating contestants, except for the seed players, look quite solemn.

Amongst the seed players, only Xiao Selang looked troubled.

Ye Hei and the Wu Sect's participants showed a fleeting look of surprise and then glanced at Yuan Feng's horsetail whisk, shifting their attention away, seemingly not taking Yuan Feng seriously.

If even those two didn't, what about Ye Fan and Lv Zhan?

"Little brother Yuan Feng, it turns out you've practiced Wu Sect's secret technique 'Taiyin Mysterious Technique' and brought the Wu Sect's treasured Taiyi Brush. No wonder you were eager to show off."

Lv Zhan commented seemingly in admiration, yet he inwardly disdained Yuan Feng's childish display, deliberately provoking, "However, it seems like you have only recently begun to practice this technique and cannot unleash its full power."

"Enough to deal with the Evil Emperor's Disciple!"

Yuan Feng said with pride. He could clearly sense that whether it was Skills or Martial Arts Cultivation, Ye Fan had not made a breakthrough, and having seen Ye Fan's 'full-power strike' result earlier, he did not take Ye Fan seriously at all.

"Brother Ye, can you really tolerate this?"

Lv Zhan smiled as he turned to Ye Fan, as if he was eager for Ye Fan to engage in a grand battle with Yuan Feng, thereby accurately gauging Ye Fan's true strength.

"A fight isn't won with words, and quarreling with a child is a very boring business."

Ye Fan didn't make a move, responding with a calm demeanor. As he spoke, he didn't even look straight at Yuan Feng.

"That's right, a fight isn't just talk. Evil Emperor's Disciple, do you dare to battle me?"

Ye Fan's attitude thoroughly enraged Yuan Feng, who roared furiously as if ready to pounce and tear Ye Fan apart on the spot if Ye Fan agreed to the battle.

"Fight then, I'm not afraid of you!"

Though Yuan Feng's behavior was childish, Ye Fan felt somewhat displeased, as if there was a fly constantly buzzing in front of him, ready to be swatted dead.

"Good, good, good, today I will make you the first contestant in history to actively withdraw from the Qing bang seed players before the competition begins!"

Seeing Ye Fan accept the challenge, Yuan Feng was as if injected with chicken's blood, howling excitedly while his aura climbed continuously.

"His opponent is me!"

Just then, a resonant voice rang out, leaving no room for doubt.

Huh?

Hearing this certain voice and feeling the strong aura from afar, Yuan Feng instantly guessed the identity of the newcomer.

Whoosh!

Simultaneously, all the cultivators in the square, as well as the contestants who had arrived from the Tian Shan Sword Sect, turned their gazes collectively towards the entrance of the square.

At the entrance of the square, Little Saber King Bai Di appeared clad in red, his eyes electric, his gaze sharp as a knife. With the blood-red Bloodthirsty Mad Blade on his back, he exuded an intense aura of Blood Qi, radiating a terrifying Killing Intent, like the Killing God himself had descended, too intimidating for anyone to look directly at.

Bai Di was not alone in his arrival.

A young girl walked shoulder to shoulder with him.

The girl's long dress fluttered, and her sash danced in the air. Her curvaceous jade~body was delineated by curves and bends, exuding an enchanting gracefulness.

Her beauty outshone even her yet-to-fully-develop figure.

She had a classic oval face with black hair floating like silk, a straight nose, and eyes bright and lively as jewels.

At first glance, the girl next to Bai Di was in stark contrast with him, resembling an Angel beside a Devil.

However—

Upon closer observation, one could see that the girl, just like Bai Di, was full of pride, like a haughty little Peacock, completely indifferent to the gazes from the crowd. She swept a disdainful glance at Ye Fan in the distance, then withdrew her eyes and walked shoulder to shoulder with Bai Di toward Ye Fan and the others.

Apparently, aside from Bai Di, no other was worthy of her attention!

"Little Saber King Bai Di has finally arrived!"

It had to be acknowledged that Bai Di's reputation was indeed immense, and his distinguishing characteristics were so marked that as soon as he appeared, he was recognized by everyone.

"The young girl with Bai Di is the Jiang Family's demon, Jiang Ying. I didn't expect her to arrive with Bai Di."

"Can't you see? Jiang Ying clearly has eyes for Bai Di!"

"In the whole Hua Xia Cultivation World, only a woman like the Jiang Family's demon could be a match for Little Saber King Bai Di!"

Quickly, people recognized Jiang Ying, sparking another wave of discussions.

The crowd's discussions brought much enjoyment to Jiang Ying, her cheeks blushing as she couldn't help but steal a glance at Bai Di, only to notice his eyes were sharp like electricity, shimmering with a red glow as he remained fixated on Ye Fan.

"Since Brother Bai has spoken, I'll leave the opportunity to Brother Bai!"

Yuan Feng was dying to teach Ye Fan a lesson, but he didn't want to offend Bai Di either, thus he had to give up the fight with Ye Fan.

"His head is reserved by me, and without my permission, no one is allowed to kill him!"

Bai Di completely disregarded Yuan Feng's presence, just staring at Ye Fan with full Killing Intent, "If you are defeated before you meet me and drop out of the Qing bang tournament, I will wait for you to heal before I claim your head!"

Clang!

As his words fell, Bai Di fiercely drew the Bloodthirsty Mad Blade from his back, and his Gang Qi surged within him; his Blood Qi boiled over, covering his entire being.

The next moment.

He grasped the Bloodthirsty Mad Blade in both hands.

Two hands on the blade!

This was the sign that Bai Di was about to unleash his Killing Move 'Blood Kill'!

Clearly... Bai Di wanted to establish his supreme authority and was preparing to use his strongest Killing Move!

Instantly, Bai Di's aura peaked, as a vast surge of Gang Qi poured into the Bloodthirsty Mad Blade, making the blade appear blood-soaked, a vivid red.

Whoosh!

Without any hesitation, Bai Di slashed out with his blade!

The blade whirled, the Gang Qi erupting from the tip of the Bloodthirsty Mad Blade. Under the veil of Blood Qi, mixed with Bai Di's horrendous Killing Intent, it formed a two-meter-tall crimson blade light that slashed toward the Trial Tablet!

Kang!!

With a crisp sound, the crimson sword light exploded, Gang Qi scattering in all directions. The Trial Tablet shook incessantly, and a clear mark was left on it, striking terror in everyone's hearts.

"Uh..."

Seeing this scene, both the cultivators in the square and the contestants from the Tian Shan Sword Sect were stunned beyond words.

Lv Zhan, Ye Hei, and the three arrogantly confident demons from the Wu Sect were also truly taken aback for the first time, their faces filled with amazement.

Even Ye Fan furrowed his brow.

Because, since the commencement of the Qing bang competition, no contestant had ever left a mark on the Trial Tablet!

Bai Di was the first!

Chapter 628 - Su Family Liu Li, Strong Debut!

Emperor Bai struck with a knife that shocked the world, leaving a scar on the Trial Tablet unprecedentedly, almost stunning everyone, silencing the previously noisy square once again.

"Could Emperor Bai already possess the attack power of the Gang Qi realm?"

Above the square, almost every cultivator had this thought emerging in their minds.

They fixed their eyes on the Trial Tablet, waiting for the answer to be revealed.

Under the gaze of the crowd, one rune after another lit up on the Trial Tablet, quickly reaching seventy-five.

To this, no one was surprised—given the power of Emperor Bai's strike, if it couldn't light up seventy-five runes, that would be the true anomaly!

However—

Three seconds later, a scene beyond everyone's expectations occurred.

Eighty runes lit up on the Trial Tablet, even the very last rune flickered with a faint light!

This result left all the cultivators and the already registered competitors in the square dumbfounded.

Lv Zhan, Ye Hei, and Wu Zi, three formidable seed competitors, were also struck dumb, their eyes widened as if they couldn't believe the result.

For the first time, Ye Fan's expression became a bit solemn.

Because Emperor Bai's strike was nearly comparable to the full force hit of a Gang Qi realm strong person without using any martial arts techniques!

In other words, Emperor Bai, at this moment, had reached or even surpassed the so-called demonic achievements of those ancient figures in the Cultivation World and could completely rely on his Half-step Gang Qi realm strength to survive, even contend, against Gang Qi realm strong people!

"This strike is too terrifying, really too terrifying!"

"A power that could rival a strike from a Gang Qi realm strong person. Emperor Bai can absolutely sweep through the younger generation!"

"Yes, being the leading figure of the younger generation suits him; with such attack power, he is invincible among his peers, unless someone of the younger generation can break through to the Gang Qi realm!"

...

Time unknown, the originally silent square erupted like boiling water, suddenly bursting into fervor, as those cultivators all began discussing while looking at Emperor Bai, their words filled with awe.

At the same time, the expressions on the faces of Lv Zhan, Ye Hei, and Wu Zi were extremely ugly.

Obviously... they all realized that the combat power displayed by Emperor Bai was definitely not something they could contend with!

"Disciple of the Evil Emperor, I'm really curious, on what basis are you claiming to fight with brother Emperor Bai who is comparable to a Gang Qi realm strong person. Is it due to your martial arts cultivation that can hardly catch the eye, or your overly self-confident Flying Knife Assassination?"

Jiang Ying was also shocked by Emperor Bai's earth-shattering strike. First, she looked at Emperor Bai's proud silhouette with glowing eyes, then she shifted her gaze, looking at Ye Fan full of sarcasm.

Swish!

As soon as Jiang Ying finished speaking, including Lv Zhan, everyone couldn't help but turn their gaze to Ye Fan, waiting for his response.

"The truth will prove everything."

Ye Fan's expression returned to calm. Although Emperor Bai's attack power was beyond his anticipation, he had not lost confidence, nor was he intimidated!

"Hey, some people just won't shed tears until they see their coffins!"

Hearing his words, Jiang Ying immediately sneered.

"Swish!"

Her voice had barely fallen when Jiang Ying swiftly drew the treasure sword at her waist and slashed toward the Trial Tablet.

"Whoosh—"

As the sword was swung, Sword Radiance whistled past, cleaving the air into a vacuum, an intimidating display of power.

"Bang—"

The next moment.

Accompanied by a dull echo, the Sword Radiance exploded, shaking the Trial Tablet violently, and the formation fully activated as the runes lit up one after another.

"As expected of the demon of the Lv Family, to cast a cut through the air and actually light up seventy-nine symbols, such strength could not only rival Little Saber King but also stand out among the younger generation!"

"Yes, if she swung her sword at close range, she could definitely make eighty symbols light up!"

"Too strong, really too strong! To be born in the same era as them, is truly a tragedy!"

Jiang Ying's action likewise caused an outcry, and those cultivators were shocked by her tremendous strength; even Lv Zhan, Ye Hei, and Wu Zi looked very grave.

"With your strength, not to mention encountering brother Emperor Bai, even against me, one hand would be enough to beat you till you're down on the ground looking for your teeth!"

With the praise of the crowd ringing in her ears and seeing the shocked faces around her, Jiang Ying raised her head proudly looking at Ye Fan, her gaze filled with disdain, "Of course, if you encounter me first, I'll let you off so you can be left for brother Emperor Bai."

"Some people really talk bigger than their stink, not afraid of a gust blowing away their tongue!"

This time.

Before Ye Fan could respond, a voice suddenly exploded above the square!

As the voice fell, the person appeared!

A white-clothed young girl, stepping in a mesmerizing pace, floated over with a speed so fast it nearly made the cultivators on the square unable to catch a glimpse of her figure.

After three breaths, the white-clothed girl arrived not far from the Trial Tablet.

She was enveloped in a stream of air, rendering her whole being hazy and indistinct, yet giving off an otherworldly and incomparable feeling.

She exuded not a hint of a strong person's aura, but she made Lv Zhan, Ye Hei, Wu Zi, and Jiang Ying feel extremely threatened; even Emperor Bai's eyebrows raised slightly, showing a hint of emotion.

And Ye Fan's face immediately changed!

The familiar voice, the familiar figure; who else could the girl in white before him be but Su Liuli?

As if noticing Ye Fan's gaze, Su Liuli gave Ye Fan a joyful smile from within the stream of air, then with a shake of her body, the air dissipated, and she appeared before everyone's eyes.

Her eyebrows like crescent moons, her nose slightly upturned, cherry lips lightly pursed, eyes sparkling with animation...

Su Liuli this moment, just like when Ye Fan first saw her on Spirit Mountain, only the ponytail was gone; her black hair loosely hung over her shoulders, dancing in the wind.

Gone were the ponytail and her former petulance, replaced by noble and pure presence, like a Snow Lotus from Mount Tian, or a fairy from the heavens, forever unapproachable.

"Who are you?"

Looking at Su Liuli, whose appearance, figure, and temperament completely surpassed her own, Jiang Ying recovered from her astonishment, her eyes blazing with fire as she stared at Su Liuli.

"Who I am is not important. What's important is, did you just say you were going to beat Ye Fan until he's looking for his teeth with just one hand?"

Hearing Jiang Ying's words, Su Liuli withdrew her gaze from Ye Fan. The smile on her face disappeared, replaced by an icy demeanor.

"So what if I did?"

Jiang Ying could feel a deep hostility coming from Su Liuli but showed no sign of backing down.

"Do you believe that I can wipe you out with just one finger?"

Su Liuli's cold voice rang out, like an enraged fairy, intimidating to all those who beheld her.

"Uh..."

Su Liuli's icy words echoed in her ears. The cultivators in the plaza, the competitors from the Tian Shan Sword Sect, and even the representatives of various sects visiting the Tian Shan Sword Sect were all shocked!

Who was Jiang Ying?

A demon who had stepped into the Half-step Gang Qi realm before turning eighteen, whose distant sword strike could light up seventy-nine runes on the Trial Tablet!

And now, Su Liuli was saying she could wipe out Jiang Ying with just one finger...

The shock this brought them was simply indescribable!

Not just them, even Lv Zhan, Ye Hei, and Wu Zi, as well as Emperor Bai, were completely dumbfounded.

If even strangers felt this way, what about Jiang Ying herself?

"You... what did you say?!"

Jiang Ying's eyes widened, her face filled with disbelief as she asked.

Clearly... she couldn't believe that among her peers, there was someone who dared be so arrogant in front of her!

Even she began to doubt if there was something wrong with her hearing!

"Pop~"

The response to Jiang Ying was a light popping sound.

Su Liuli extended her fair right hand and flicked her finger. A highly condensed Gang Qi shot out from the fingertip, rapidly striking the Trial Tablet in front of her!

"Bang——"

A crisp sound followed. The Gang Qi exploded, and the sturdy Trial Tablet was pierced instantly, with a hole the size of a fingertip appearing as powder trickled down.

A finger pierced through the Trial Tablet!

This result, like a miracle, occurred under everyone's watchful eyes.

Complete silence fell over the field!

Everyone, including Emperor Bai, stared at the fingertip-sized hole, frozen like statues, their minds completely filled with one thought: How... How is this possible?!

"Do you believe me now?"

In the quiet plaza, Su Liuli turned her head and looked back at Jiang Ying as if she were watching a monkey perform at a zoo.

"This... this..."

Jiang Ying was pulled back to reality by Su Liuli's words, but she couldn't accept the result before her eyes, her face filled with horror!

She attempted to say something, but her mind was a blank, unable to form a coherent sentence.

"You think you're the sun and moon when you're merely a firefly's light!"

Su Liuli spoke again, her merciless words like a sharp sword that instantly shattered the pride in Jiang Ying's heart of being the Jiang Family's demon, "It's better to stay humble in life."

"You..."

Jiang Ying trembled violently, her face turning pale, yet she was powerless to retort.

"What's the matter? Don't you agree? Shall we compare our skills?"

Su Liuli took a step forward, and the unique aura of a Gang Qi realm strong person burst forth, like the descent of a deity, crushing pressure rolling towards Jiang Ying!

Without an answer, Jiang Ying trembled, her legs weakening as if she could collapse to the ground at any moment.

In that moment, her face lost all traces of superiority, showing only embarrassment!

"If I'm not mistaken, what you just used was the 'Bodhi Finger'. Are you the Su Liuli, descendant of the Buddhist Supreme, Bodhi Wuyin?"

As Jiang Ying struggled under the pressure from Su Liuli, Emperor Bai frowned, his expression becoming serious without anyone noticing when it changed.

"Are you hoping to fight in her stead against me?"

Su Liuli's gaze shifted to Emperor Bai, her tone still as cold and forceful as ever.

Silence.

Facing the overwhelmingly strong Su Liuli, and feeling the aura of a Gang Qi realm strong person from her body, Emperor Bai fell silent.

Even though he possessed attack power that could match a strong person of the Gang Qi realm, there was a condition—Gang Qi realm strong people must not use martial arts!

If a Gang Qi realm strong person used martial arts, he had no chance of winning!

And Su Liuli's recent demonstration of piercing the Trial Tablet with a finger suggested a level of combat power he simply could not contend with—if he were to fight, he would undoubtedly be defeated!

"Jiang Family's demon, if you don't want your Cultivation Family to lose face in the Qing Bang tournament, you'd best roll back home!"

Above the quiet plaza, Su Liuli spoke again, her voice booming like thunder, lingering long in the air, "As for... you, Little Saber King Bai Di. Everyone believes Ye Fan is bound to lose against you, but I feel the contrary—if you can take his head, I'll take my own life on Mount Tian!!"

Chapter 629 - Goddess's Favor

Atop the square, Su Liuli's domineering and strong words echoed through the skies and lingered for a long time.

"Uh..."

The vast Tian Shan Sword Sect square fell silent, with all the cultivators motionless, watching the girl in white at the center, their hearts completely filled with shock.

Shock?

Jiang Ying, the demon of the Jiang Family, and Little Saber King Bai Di were the strongest competitors in this Qing bang tournament.

Many competitors felt despair because they were participating in the same tournament as them.

Many cultivators felt sorrow for being in the same era as them.

Previously, the two of them had appeared invincible, showcasing their strength and astonishing everyone, while indirectly humiliating Ye Fan.

But just moments ago, Su Liuli made a forceful entrance, piercing through the Trial Tablet with a finger, displaying her absolute strength, then, like a father disciplining his son, she verbally chastised the two!

Neither of them dared to even fart!

This stark contrast brought an unparalleled impact to everyone!

Moreover, since the inception of the Qing bang tournament, no competitor had ever left a mark on the Trial Tablet.

In this edition of the tournament, Bai Di barely managed to leave a mark with his blade, yet... Su Liuli directly pierced through the Trial Tablet with a finger, showcasing the extraordinary style of a Gang Qi realm powerhouse, creating a legend!

Even more crucially, Su Liuli's final statement—she firmly believed that Ye Fan, merely at the Innate Great Perfection Realm, could defeat Bai Di, the invincible under the Gang Qi realm, even betting her own life on it!!

How could all this not shock them?

It wasn't just them; the Tian Shan Sword Sect was also silent, with the competing participants and representatives from various sects stunned by Su Liuli's words and her prior actions.

Even Lv Zhan, Ye Hei, and Wu Zi, the three seed participants, were no exceptions!

And Jiang Ying's face turned bright red, all traces of pride gone from her face, as though Su Liuli had publicly slapped her, completely shattering her arrogant pride as the demon of the Jiang Family.

At this moment, a humiliation she had never experienced before filled her heart, showing on her face.

She wanted to rush forward and trample Su Liuli under her feet, but the lone shred of reason she had left told her that based on the strength Su Liuli had just displayed, a single finger could annihilate her!

After all, the saying that no one is strong under the Gang Qi realm isn't just for show.

One cannot be called strong till one reaches the Gang Qi realm—a chasm lies between Half-step Gang Qi and the Gang Qi realm, a division never breached since ancient times!

"Heh... I'm really curious, what makes you believe he can defeat me?"

Unlike Jiang Ying, after his initial rage, Bai Di suddenly laughed, his smile laced with sarcasm.

What makes her believe?

Su Liuli didn't reply but looked at Ye Fan, her eyes filled with unconditional trust!

What makes her believe?

Whoosh!

Seeing Su Liuli's gesture, everyone thought Ye Fan was going to answer the question, so they all turned their attention toward him, waiting for him to unveil the secret.

No answer.

At this moment, Ye Fan was astounded and touched.

He was shocked at the sheer strength of Su Liuli, completely overturning his understanding of cultivation!

His emotion stemmed not from Su Liuli forcefully humiliating Jiang Ying and Bai Di on his behalf but from her absolute trust in him—she believed he would win, literally staking her head on it!

"If I am not mistaken, your reaching the Gang Qi Introduction Realm within just one year is due to inheriting from the Buddhist Supreme, Bodhi Wu Yin, not from your own arduous cultivation."

Bai Di spoke again, his gaze sharp as a treasure sword, seemingly piercing into Su Liuli's heart, his tone unmatched in domineering energy, "There are no shortcuts on the path of cultivation, and an inheritance will always remain someone else's. I will use you as a whetstone to enter the Gang Qi realm, to completely break the age-old law—on the day of the competition, I shall personally send you off!"

As his words fell, Bai Di spoke no more but resolutely turned around, carrying the Bloodthirsty Mad Blade, and strode towards the Tian Shan Sword Sect.

Hearing this, Ye Fan narrowed his eyes, about to make some gesture, but considering Bai Di said he would make his move on the day of the competition, he neither argued for the sake of arguing nor prepared to settle both new and old scores on the day of their confrontation.

"With strength obtained through inheritance, what right do you have to be arrogant in front of me?"

Previously dejected Jiang Ying, upon hearing Bai Di's words, immediately snapped out of her dispirited state and returned to her noble and aloof demeanor, "At the same realm, I can take on ten of you!"

"Even if it's not the same realm, I will cut you down as easily as slicing cucumbers!"

Finally, Ye Fan spoke up, he moved forward two steps, standing like a mountain in front of Su Liuli, his gaze as sharp as a knife, staring at Jiang Ying.

"Uh..."

Perhaps not expecting Ye Fan to speak at this moment, especially so strongly, the initially revived crowd froze again, their minds completely filled with one thought: could it be... Could the disciple of the Evil Emperor really possess the strength to battle Bai Di?

Impossible!

The next moment, almost everyone shared the same answer in their minds.

Even though Su Liuli showed absolute trust in Ye Fan, even willing to stake her life, and even though Ye Fan himself spoke strongly, they didn't believe that Ye Fan at merely the Innate Great Perfection Realm had the strength to battle Bai Di!

After all, Bai Di had reached the absolute limit of the Half-step Gang Qi, possessing an attack power comparable to a full-force strike from a martial artist not using martial arts in the Gang Qi realm!

Even those spectating cultivators found it hard to believe, let alone Jiang Ying.

"You're asking for death!"

Jiang Ying, unable to contain her anger, transformed her fury into war intent and killing intent, preparing to attack, but then she saw Bai Di stop in his tracks and turn back to look at her.

This discovery initially stunned Jiang Ying, then she abandoned her intention to attack, only looking coldly at Ye Fan, "If it weren't for Brother Bai Di having reserved your head, I would have beheaded you right now!"

Hearing Jiang Ying's clamor again, Su Liuli didn't stand up for Ye Fan as forcefully as she did at the beginning. Instead, she quietly stood behind Ye Fan, staring blankly at his familiar back, her face suffused with a blissful smile.

Once, when she found out about the life-and-death agreement between Ye Fan and Bai Di and Bodhi Wu Yin had told her that Ye Fan's death was certain, she had unhesitatingly decided to accept the inheritance, vowing, "If you want to kill Ye Fan, you'll have to step over my dead body!"

Because of that vow, she had become a contestant in this Qing bang competition and had arrived here.

And at this moment, she willingly stood behind him.

Because she firmly believed that the man she loved was now strong enough.

And because she liked the feeling of him shielding her from the wind and the rain.

Just as before, unforgettable forever!

"Let's go."

Ye Fan did not engage in further verbal conflict with Jiang Ying, but instead completely ignored Jiang Ying's shouting, turning his head to look at Su Liuli.

Su Liuli nodded gently, and she walked shoulder to shoulder with Ye Fan towards the Tian Shan Sword Sect.

"Although I'm really curious about the secrets of these two, asking them now seems a bit inappropriate, like I'd be a third wheel..."

Watching Ye Fan and Su Liuli leave, Lv Zhan scratched his head in dismay and agonized for a long time until the two figures had disappeared, finally heaving a sigh of frustration and giving up on following them.

...

Although the Tian Shan Sword Sect had only received temporary notice from the Yanhuang Organization to host this Qing bang competition, it had managed in just three months to prepare thoroughly, constructing hundreds of wooden houses on an unused hillside within the sect to accommodate the competing participants and representatives from various sects and forces.

After entering the Tian Shan Sword Sect, Ye Fan and Su Liuli each received the keys to their respective accommodations.

Their wooden houses were located on opposite sides, east and west, about two to three kilometers apart from each other, making them the farthest apart houses there.

Realizing this, Ye Fan couldn't help but think back to the words Chu Xuanji had said at the Tian Shan Sword Sect upon finding out that Bodhi Wu Yin had left without notice, understanding that this arrangement was most likely made to consider Chu Xuanji's feelings.

But Ye Fan also felt that if Bodhi Wu Yin were to come to watch the match, this arrangement would be meaningless—they were bound to meet eventually!

Thinking this, Ye Fan didn't go his separate way from Su Liuli. Instead, he escorted her to her place, and asked as they walked, "Liu Li, is your master coming to watch the match?"

"My master transferred half of her power to me, and has been in seclusion ever since. She probably won't come," Su Liuli shook her head.

"So it really is an inheritance..."

Although Ye Fan suspected that Su Liuli suddenly becoming a Gang Qi Introduction Realm cultivator could only be due to inheritance, he was still somewhat surprised by the miracle of the secret technique created by Bodhi Wu Yin, but also somewhat puzzled, "From what I know, Master Bodhi Wu Yin is at the Peak of Gang Qi. Even if she transferred half of her power to you, you shouldn't just be at the Gang Qi Introduction Realm, right?"

"Although my master transferred half of her power to me, it's impossible for me to possess half of her power right away; it requires time to absorb and comprehend. Until now, I have only managed to digest a part of it, not even able to wield the full strength of the Gang Qi Introduction Realm,"

With a light sigh, Su Liuli didn't share with Ye Fan the pain required to accept the inheritance, instead feeling deeply moved.

Because, according to Bodhi Wu Yin's plan, once she had fully digested and comprehended this inheritance, Bodhi Wu Yin would carry out the second inheritance, transferring all the remaining power to her, allowing her to accept the inheritance with great wisdom and perseverance, and thereafter explore that legendary realm.

"This time, the Yanhuang Organization's competition only limited the participation of cultivators under the age of thirty, and did not restrict the cultivators' realms like before. Could it be because they knew you had received the inheritance from Master Bodhi Wu Yin?"

Upon hearing this, Ye Fan secretly felt fortunate that he had previously stopped Su Liuli and Emperor Bai from clashing, and then he thought of something else.

"It shouldn't be, I just received the inheritance three months ago, and I've been in seclusion at Mount Tian since then, it's impossible that anyone would know."

Su Liuli denied Ye Fan's speculation, then realized she seemed to have revealed a secret, her face instantly flushed with a hint of red, and she deliberately turned her gaze towards the distant Snow Summit.

Ye Fan glanced sideways, looking at that familiar and charming face under the sunlight, momentarily dazed.

Once upon a time, he had traveled through thousands of mountains and rivers just to see her again, but had not achieved his wish.

Now, the two had met unexpectedly, as if it were fated, a twist of destiny.

Latter, Ye Fan and Su Liuli walked silently, seemingly enjoying the scenery, but actually deep in thought.

"You..."

"You..."

Moments later, when they were less than a hundred meters from Su Liuli's wooden house, both stopped in their tracks and spoke at the same time, in perfect sync.

The sudden scene made both pause, and then they couldn't help but laugh.

"You go first."

Su Liuli smiled subtly, indicating that Ye Fan should speak first.

"I want to know, why are you so confident that I can defeat Emperor Bai?" Ye Fan asked.

"Because, ever since I've known you, you never do things you're not sure of, but rather like to hide your strength and pretend to be weak, just like back then when you saved Ruoshui at Hanghu..."

While speaking, Su Liuli's expression dimmed as she recalled those happy times.

"Come on, when did I ever hide my strength? I told you I was the Divine Doctor and knew martial arts; it was you who didn't believe me."

Ye Fan, unaware of Su Liuli's troubled expression, replied half-jokingly and then thought about his actions over the past year, sighing, "It's not that I'm always sure about everything, I just don't fight unprepared battles. Even so, I've gambled many times, it's just that Lady Luck has been on my side!"

"You... You mean you're not sure you can defeat Emperor Bai?" Su Liuli was shocked, her pretty face showing worry for the first time.

"This time, I don't need Lady Luck's favor, I must slay Emperor Bai!"

Ye Fan shook his head lightly, his tone firm and confident.

Chapter 630 - The Most Controversial Figure

Night fell, and the lights illuminated the wooden houses, which from a distance looked like the light of fireflies, spreading across the entire Tian Shan Sword Sect.

On the square, lights were also shining, with tents scattered in every corner of the square.

In order to allow the competitors to use the last bit of time to rejuvenate and adjust their condition, the Tian Shan Sword Sect, the organizer of this Qing Bang tournament, did not organize a grand banquet but had meals delivered to each competitor's room instead.

Besides that, the Tian Shan Sword Sect also specifically prepared meals for cultivators who came to watch the competition, providing thorough service.

"Who do you think will be the champion of this Qing Bang tournament?"

After dinner, the cultivators gathered together to chat, and soon the conversation turned to who might claim the championship of the Qing Bang tournament.

"Isn't that obvious? It has to be the disciple of Bodhi Wuyin, the supreme of the Buddhist sect, Su Liuli."

"Yes, Su Liuli is the only cultivator in the Gang Qi Introduction Realm, not even on the same level as other competitors!"

"Exactly, there are no strong competitors below the Gang Qi Realm, and this saying didn't just come out of nowhere—it has never been broken throughout history."

"I disagree. Throughout history, no one has been able to defeat a cultivator in the Gang Qi Introduction Realm while in the Half-step Gang Qi Realm. However, there's a catch—the strength of both parties must come from self-cultivation! Don't forget, the Little Saber King Bai Di said that Su Liuli's strength comes from inheritance, not self-cultivation. Therefore, it's very likely that she won't be able to exhibit the strength of a cultivator in the Gang Qi Introduction Realm. Given this, Bai Di still has a chance to defeat her."

"I also think Bai Di will be the champion. Let's not even talk about the fact that Su Liuli's strength comes from inheritance; she has only practiced for less than a year. After one year, her battle experience, mental state, and martial arts will be almost negligible. On the other hand, Bai Di earned his reputation through battles, and the number of cultivators and mutant beasts that died by his blade is unknown!"

"Not only does Bai Di stand a chance against Su Liuli, but the demon Leng Feng from the Yanhuang Organization also has a chance—he too left a fist seal on the Testing Tablet, and even made the last symbol light up halfway, proving his strength is comparable to Bai Di's!"

While most people were certain that Su Liuli would win the championship without any suspense, a few expressed different opinions, but all generally believed that the champion would be among Su Liuli, Bai Di, and Leng Feng.

"More than who will win the championship of this Qing Bang tournament, I'm more curious about what the Evil Emperor's Disciple has up his sleeve, daring not only to challenge the Little Saber King Bai Di but also claiming that slaying the demon of the Jiang Family will be as easy as cutting melons!"

Soon, someone switched the topic to Ye Fan, who, despite showing a mediocre performance in the attack power test, was, like Su Liuli, one of the most controversial competitors in this Qing Bang tournament.

"The power discrepancy is too large, the Evil Emperor's Disciple is simply bluffing; he will undoubtedly be defeated once they clash!"

"Exactly, if the Evil Emperor's Disciple was really that strong, he wouldn't need Su Liuli to stand up for him!"

Regarding this topic, everyone's response was almost the same, unanimously believing that Bai Di would win. Among them, one even said, "Not to mention against the Little Saber King Bai Di and the demon of the Jiang Family, the Evil Emperor's Disciple doesn't stand a chance against the demon Yuan Feng from Wudang either!"

On this, everyone agreed again, since Yuan Feng made seventy-eight symbols light up on the Testing Tablet during the attack power test, clearly demonstrating his strength.

As the cultivators who had come to watch discussed fervently, most of the competitors within the Tian Shan Sword Sect used the last moments to cultivate, adhering to the idea that sharpening their weapons right before battle, though late, served some purpose.

Aside from that, some competitors were listening to the teachings of their elders, apparently believing that combat experience and mentality were far more important than last-minute preparations.

Inside one of the wooden houses.

"Little Feng, among the seed players in this competition, aside from Chu Xuanji's disciple Ye Fan and the Xiao Selang from Tian Shan Sword Sect, the others are very strong."

The Wudang Sect Leader, Heavenly Master Zhang, remembering that his disciple Yuan Feng, equipped with the Taiyi Brush and tested with the Wudang's secret technique "Taiyin Mysterious Technique," ranked low among the top ten seed players, couldn't help but sigh and said, "I don't ask much of you, these two must be defeated, and just do your best against the other seed players; winning or losing does not matter!"

"If it hadn't been for Emperor Bai's interference, I would have sent that Ye Fan packing this afternoon! And that Xiao Selang, even if he has mastered the Seventh Form of the Heavenly Sword, he is not my match!"

Despite his low ranking in the attack power test, Yuan Feng appeared undaunted and remained arrogant, "As for the others, either they are older than me, have more time in cultivation, or have gained strength by relying on inherited secret techniques—when I reach their age, I am sure to surpass them!"

"Hmm, in terms of potential, you are second to none."

Heavenly Master Zhang nodded slightly, his face clearing of any gloom.

On the one hand, as Yuan Feng said, he was the youngest, with the least amount of cultivation time. If he cultivated for a few more years, even if he couldn't compete with Emperor Bai, he would definitely be no less than cultivators from cultivation families like Lv Zhan and Jiang Ying!

On the other hand, Ye Fan had once slain another genius from the Wudang Sect, and the Tian Shan Sword Sect had replaced the Wudang Sect in hosting this Qing bang tournament. As long as Yuan Feng could defeat both Ye Fan and Xiao Selang, the face of the Wudang Sect could be redeemed!

In another wooden house.

"Granny, originally I planned to heed your advice and not lay hands on the disciple of the Evil Emperor, but that bastard is too arrogant, daring to say he would chop me down as if slicing melons, which is unbearable!"

Jiang Ying angrily said, "I hope he doesn't encounter me first, otherwise, even if Brother Emperor Bai has claimed his head, I would beat him until he's searching for his teeth on the ground! And I'll do it using only one hand, just as I said I would!"

"Hmm."

Perhaps because of what Ye Fan and Su Liuli had done today, which was a bit too demeaning for the Jiang family, Granny Jiang's complexion looked unpleasant, but she did not lose her reason and reminded her, "The successor of Bodhi Wu Yin certainly relies on inheritance, but with your current strength, you are still not her match. Do not act rashly."

"Although I am not her match now, one day, I will trample her beneath my feet and rip her mouth apart!"

Knowing that Granny Jiang spoke the truth, Jiang Ying chose to suppress her anger, but she did not accept it and remembered this grievance, preparing to settle it in the future.

Like Yuan Feng and Jiang Ying, Leng Feng, who had registered at the last minute, did not cultivate on the last night before the competition, but went alone to the residence of Elder Gu Yun from the Yanhuang Organization.

Elder Gu Yun was not only the chief of the Inner Sect elders of the Yanhuang Organization, but he was also the Chief Referee of this Qing bang tournament. He would enforce the law at the event alongside nine other referees, selected from various sects and cultivation families.

These two identities, either of which was extremely prominent, prompted the Tian Shan Sword Sect to arrange a separate courtyard for Gu Yun rather than carelessly assigning a wooden house like they did for other sect representatives.

"Leng Feng, do you have something to ask?"

In the great hall of the courtyard, Gu Yun sat cross-legged, opened his eyes, and addressed Leng Feng.

"Elder Gu, are there really inheritance techniques in this world? Why aren't they recorded in the organization's secret archives?"

Leng Feng asked directly. Being the last seed player to check in, he had been astounded to hear that Su Liuli had pierced a trial tablet with one finger and later learned about the underlying details. Curious about the "inheritance" techniques, he made a special visit to inquire.

'The technique of inheritance is a powerful secret technique that can create strong people in the short term. It was once popular in the ancient cultivation world, but because the technique had serious drawbacks, it gradually fell out of favor with the major sects and cultivation families and was subsequently lost. I never expected it to appear in the current age," Elder Gu explained. As the chief elder of the inner sect of the Yanhuang Organization and an old Timmer in the cultivation world, he knew many secrets unknown to others.

"What are the drawbacks?" asked Leng Feng.

"There are three major drawbacks to the technique of inheritance. First, during the inheritance process, the recipient undergoes unimaginable pain and must have strong willpower, also known as great fortitude in Buddhist terms, otherwise, the effort will likely fail, and the success rate isn't high. If the inheritance fails, it's a complete loss, with the inheritor wasting his own power for nothing."

"Second, even if the inheritance succeeds, it requires a long time for the inheritor to comprehend and assimilate the power. The recipient needs a high level of comprehension, which in Buddhist terms is called great wisdom. If the recipient lacks this, they not only fail to fully accept the inheritance but might also encounter problems during comprehension, resulting in either the loss of their cultivation or, in severe cases, going insane and scattering their soul."

"Third, even if the recipient has great fortitude and wisdom, and fully accepts the inheritance, they will still be marked by the imprint of the inheritor, making it hard for them to break through further. In the ancient cultivation world, many strong people passed on their power to disciples with excellent talent. However, according to records, almost none of these disciples surpassed the strong individuals who passed on their power to them!"

Elder Gu patiently explained.

"Elder Gu, according to you, has Su Liuli initially succeeded in receiving the inheritance?" Leng Feng asked again.

Elder Gu countered, "You intend to confront her in the competition, don't you?"

"Yes!"

Not concealing his intentions, Leng Feng firmly stated, "If Emperor Bai dares to use her as a whetstone to break through to the Gang Qi Entry Realm, I naturally have no fear!"

"This Qing bang competition, with Leader Yan canceling the rule that cultivators of the Gang Qi Realm may not participate, is intended to spur the younger generation with the successor of Bodhi Wuyin, thereby ushering in a new prosperity for the Hua Xia cultivation world! Thus, taking the opportunity of a battle with the successor of Bodhi Wuyin to try to break through the Gang Qi Entry Realm is the correct approach," Elder Gu commented, his tone becoming significantly more stern. "But I must caution you. Bodhi Wuyin, being the Buddhist Supreme, has unparalleled comprehension. In her later years, when she took Su Liuli as a disciple and passed on her life's power, it was not only to preserve her legacy. It's very likely that she wanted her successor to surpass her and explore that legendary domain.

This means, even though Su Liuli has become the first among her generation to enter the Gang Qi realm due to the inheritance, her strength is not as weak as you all imagine. You must approach your duel with her correctly. If by chance you are defeated, remember, don't let your emotions escalate it to a fight to the death. Understood?"

"Yes, Elder Gu!"

Leng Feng bowed in response but didn't take it to heart.

Meanwhile.

Lv Zhan, also a seed player in this Qing bang competition, was neither cultivating in his wooden house nor seeking advice from the Lv Family Patriarch, Lv Yuan, but had gone to visit Ye Fan's residence.

"Brother Lv, you're visiting so late, is there something you need?"

Within the wooden house, Ye Fan, who had been cultivating, got up to greet Lv Zhan on his arrival.

"Brother Ye, the night is long, and I have no desire to cultivate. How about we spar a bit?" Lv Zhan said, filled with anticipation.

"Spar?"

Upon hearing this, Ye Fan was initially surprised, then quickly discerned Lv Zhan's intention and said with a wry smile: "Brother Lv, if we get injured while sparring, won't we be giving others an advantage?"

"We'll stop at the first touch," Lv Zhan reluctantly conceded.

"You want to gauge my strength, don't you?" Ye Fan straightforwardly put it out there.

Seeing his ruse exposed, Lv Zhan, far from feeling embarrassed, shamelessly admitted, "Since Brother Ye is so direct, I won't beat around the bush either. I do want to gauge your strength, and I also want to gauge Su Liuli's strength to see whether people like Emperor Bai and Leng Feng might be headed for a tragedy."

"—" Ye Fan was momentarily speechless; Lv Zhan's thick-skinned nature was indeed a rarity.

"Curiosity killed the cat, but who told you all to be the most controversial figures in this Qing bang competition?" Lv Zhan said righteously.

"Time will tell everything!" Ye Fan narrowed his eyes slightly, giving his reply.