

Invincible Conqueror Chapter 166-170

Chapter 166: Unable to Find Out?

Compared to Huang Xiaolong and Fei Hou, Zhao Shu and Yu Ming were much more composed and calm.

It was not like they had not seen Imperial cities grander than Duanren Imperial City.

Take the Asura's Gate headquarters for example. The Asura City itself had walls higher than this!

"Sovereign, shall we go in?" Moments later, Zhao Shu spoke.

Huang Xiaolong snapped out of his daze, and taking a deep breath, he nodded and said, "Let's go in!" As he lifted his foot towards the gate of Duanren Imperial City, Huang Xiaolong could not help but feel his blood boil with anticipation and excitement.

Duanren Imperial City!

Herein lies his goal!

Huang Xiaolong desperately wished he could roar at the top of his lungs to the entire city: "Duanren Imperial City, I, Huang Xiaolong, have come!"

Huang Xiaolong's group followed the large crowd entering Duanren Imperial City, but when they were at the gates, they discovered each individual needed to pay one hundred gold coins as an entry fee.

One hundred gold coins!

One hundred gold coins were enough to support a common household's expenses for a year in most of the kingdom.

Walking along the Imperial City's expansive streets, Huang Xiaolong observed the surrounding shops as he strolled along in a leisurely manner.

The streets were built wide and spacious, approximately three to four hundred meters wide, and Huang Xiaolong noticed that these wide streets were paved with the same type of Bright Marble Stone.

Bright Marble Stone was a kind of extremely hard stone in Martial Spirit World, even tougher than the Starlight Stone used to build Cosmic Star Academy's main square. Of course, the cost of these streets was much more than the price of Cosmic Star Academy's square.

One piece of Bright Marble Stone cost one thousand gold coins. The seemingly endless rows of streets within the Imperial City that spanned countless li were all paved with the same Bright Marble Stone. How many millions, tens of millions, or even hundreds of millions of gold were needed to build all of this?!

These streets in the Imperial City that were paved with Bright Marble Stone emanated a kind of stately aura: domineering, wealthy, and brilliant, representing an empire without being garish.

Even with the endless stream of carriages moving up and down the Imperial City, the streets did not feel crowded at all.

After roughly two hours of sightseeing, it was already noon.

Passing through a place called 'Unforgettable Intoxication' Restaurant, Huang Xiaolong's footsteps halted as he watched the crowded entrance of the restaurant and the endless bustle of customers. He looked over at Zhao Shu, Yu Ming, and Fei Hou and said, "From the looks of it, this restaurant doesn't seem bad. Should we go inside and try something?"

"Yes, Young Lord!" The trio answered in unison.

In public, Zhao Shu too referred to Huang Xiaolong as Young Lord, like Yu Ming and Fei Hou.

Hence, the four of them walked into Unforgettable Intoxication Restaurant.

There were three floors to the restaurant, and when Huang Xiaolong went inside with Zhao Shu, Yu Ming, and Fei Hou, no empty table was available. They proceeded up to the first floor. Although there were a few places available, all of them were meant for two people, and Huang Xiaolong's group was four.

"Let's go up to the second floor." Huang Xiaolong said.

However, when the four of them were about to climb the stairs up, two restaurant workers blocked their path, courteously explaining, "Several Guests, pardon our interruption, but our restaurant's second floor is reserved. Only Guests who hold Duanren Empire's Baron and above noble title can go up to the second floor."

Though the words spoken sounded courteous, it did not hide the condescending disdain in their eyes. Zhao Shu and Yu Ming's eyes sharpened as they looked at the two workers.

Yu Ming then exerted invisible pressure onto them.

In the space above Unforgettable Intoxication Restaurant, a violent tempest gathered, spiraling like a tornado, whistling about angrily.

Suddenly, it felt as if the entire space of Unforgettable Intoxication Restaurant solidified, and the noisy restaurant quieted down in the blink of an eye. From the ground floor, to the first floor, and even to the second floor, every pair of eyes were looking at Yu Ming with fear swimming behind the irises.

Under the pressure exerted by Yu Ming, the two 'small' restaurant workers nearly had their breaths cut off on the spot. Horrified, their legs gave out and they fell to their knees just as their words ended.

"This is... so strong! That middle-aged man is definitely at Xiantian Ninth Order, or maybe even at Xiantian Tenth Order. He must be someone who is infinitely close to a terrifying Saint realm existence!"

“Who are those four people? It seems like that middle-aged man is that young man’s guard?!”

The experts of Duanren Imperial City and other kingdoms on the second floor whispered amongst themselves, feeling the overwhelming pressure coming from Yu Ming.

In Duanren Imperial City, Xiantian experts were not uncommon, but that did not include Xiantian Seventh Order warriors and above. Xiantian First to Third Order warriors were classified as early-order Xiantian; Fourth to Sixth Order warriors were mid-order; and the Seventh to Ninth Order experts were referred to as high-order.

An early order Xiantian realm expert’s status and identity was undoubtedly different from a high-order Xiantian realm expert.

Amongst the most talented imperial princes of Duanren Empire, even Duan Wuhen was still only a Xiantian Tenth Order expert.

While everyone was still alarmed by the scene, a middle-aged man that appeared to be the restaurant owner was seen running up the stairs anxiously with two bodyguards tagging along behind him. The two bodyguards were also Xiantian experts, but they were merely at the Xiantian Second Order.

Arriving on the first floor, the restaurant owner nearly prostrated before Yu Ming, inquiring with utmost politeness what seemed to be the problem.

After finding out the reason, the restaurant owner apologized to Huang Xiaolong, Yu Ming, and the other two people profusely. His complexion paled tremendously, and he wished he could stab the two workers to death.

“This Young Master, we will immediately arrange a private room on the second floor for you.” The restaurant owner said as he led them to a room on the second floor.

Huang Xiaolong initially did not intend to force their way up to the second floor, but Yu Ming acted too quickly by releasing his oppressive aura which resulted in the current situation.

At this moment, he could only go along with the restaurant owner’s ‘kind’ intention and courtesy with Zhao Shu, Yu Ming, and Fei Hou by going up to the second floor private room.

Since those things already happened, then he may as well enter the Imperial City in a high profile manner!

After all, it would be impossible for Huang Xiaolong to maintain a low profile even if he wanted to with the Imperial City Battle in ten days’ time. Since there was no helping it, attracting some attention now did not make much of a difference.

Of course, as someone possessing the Primordial Divine Black Dragon martial spirit who was representing Luo Tong Kingdom and the Cosmic Star Academy in this Imperial City Battle, there were bound to be people from the Duanren Imperial Family and other forces paying attention to him even before this.

Leading Huang Xiaolong's group up to the second floor, the restaurant owner ushered them into private room number three. There was a total of twelve private rooms on the second floor.

The lower number the room was, the more distinguished the guests identity. Above all, room number one was reserved specifically for Saint realm experts, but it was usually empty during the year.

If the restaurant owner knew there was a Saint realm expert amongst the four people, he would have brought them to private room number one so quickly that it would have looked like his butt was lit on fire.

Unforgettable Intoxication was one of the biggest restaurants in Duanren Imperial City, but only during the opening day would a Saint realm expert visit. Hence, private room one had been left empty since the last Imperial City Battle.

The private room number three that they entered was lavishly decorated, similar to a small scale mansion.

As they each took a seat, Huang Xiaolong instructed the owner to serve their famous dishes and wine and indicated him to leave. Nodding respectfully, the restaurant owner left the room.

While Huang Xiaolong was being ushered into private room number three, in private room number two sat a young man wearing a golden brocade robe who appeared to be in his mid-twenties. The young man was... beautiful, albeit exhibiting a somewhat devilish charm. Especially so, in his eyes there were reflecting golden lights every time they moved.

The young man raised his right hand and lightly beckoned the guard behind him, "Go and check that person's identity—I want to know all four people's background in one hour."

"Yes, Young Master!" That guard replied with the utmost respect and backed out of the room.

Long slender fingers drummed on the table surface softly, forming melodious notes as they moved.

At this moment, a beautiful young woman in her mid-twenties, same as the young man with skin so supple and moist as if dew was glistening on them, was sitting beside the young man and laughed, her tinkling peals of laughter were akin to marbles falling onto a bowl, teasing the ears. The two lumps of flesh at the front quivered endlessly like they could escape anytime from their bonds.

The woman's lips curved charmingly as she laughed, red lips moved as she said, "I didn't expect our Heartless Young Noble [1] would one day show interest in another person."

The young man maintained a placid expression on his face, "You, Zhao Wuji, are more interested in them than I am."

Zhao Wuji continued to laugh coquettishly as she looked at the young man, her entire body seemed to lean onto him with the two lumps of flesh pressed against him, "You're wrong this time around, I'm more interested in you than anyone else."

The guards inside private room number two swallowed nervously.

But the young man, Heartless Young Noble, pushed the woman away without any feeling, "I'm not interested in you."

The smile on Zhao Wuji's face became ever more brilliant hearing that, "That's the very reason I'm interested in you."

A short while later, the guard that left earlier returned, reporting to the young man, "Young Master, we've found out. That black-haired young man is called Huang Xiaolong, the representative for Luo Tong Kingdom and Cosmic Star Academy for this year's Duanren Imperial City Battle. His strength is at the peak late-Tenth Order!"

Zhao Wuji snickered with contempt, "Just a peak late-Tenth Order little brat, such an unattractive man, this aunt has no interest whatsoever."

At this time, the guard continued with his report, "However, this Huang Xiaolong is only seventeen this year!"

"Seventeen-years-old!" Heartless Young Noble and Zhao Wuji were stunned, and then their faces turned ugly.

A seventeen-year-old peak late-Tenth Order warrior?!

"How can this be? Impossible! How could a seventeen year old reach peak late-Tenth Order?!" Zhao Wuji blurted out in shock.

According to her knowledge, even the leader of the five big families of Duanren Empire, even Duan Wuhen who was an Imperial Prince did not advance to peak late-Tenth Order at seventeen!

"I have not spoken falsely!" The guard went on, "Subordinate verified Huang Xiaolong's age, and his martial spirit is a Primordial Divine Dragon, a top grade twelve martial spirit!"

"Top grade twelve martial spirit, Divine Black Dragon!" Once again, Heartless Young Noble and Zhao Wuji were shocked.

But in the next moment, Heartless Young Noble frowned; even if this Huang Xiaolong possessed a top grade twelve martial spirit, his cultivation speed would not be this fast!

He too possessed a top grade twelve martial spirit and a wealth of cultivation resources from his clan and yet, his cultivation speed was not as terrifying as Huang Xiaolong's.

Obviously, Zhao Wuji too thought of this point as a shimmering light flitted in her eyes.

"What about the other three people?" Heartless Young Noble questioned that guard.

Being asked directly, the guard quickly continued, "One of the three is called Fei Hou, the Junior Brother of Luo Tong Kingdom's Marshal Haotian, but both Fei Hou and Haotian call Huang Xiaolong, Young Lord.

The strange thing is, Huang Xiaolong comes from a Luo Tong Kingdom small family, and his background is common and ordinary.”

A knowing light flickered in Heartless Young Noble’s eyes, “This Huang Xiaolong has another identity!”

Otherwise, it would be impossible for someone from an ordinary background to have Marshal Haotian referring to them as Young Lord! Zhao Wuji nodded her head in agreement.

“And the remaining two people?” Heartless Young Noble pursued.

The guard hesitated a second before admitting, “The other two, Subordinate is unable to find anything as of yet.”

“Unable to find it out?!” This stumped Heartless Young Noble.

Chapter 167: The Imperial City Battle Begins!

Zhao Wuji was just as stumped as Heartless Young Noble, Yao Fei. She knew the family Yao Fei belonged to very well: the Yao Family’s intelligence network web stretched far and wide throughout Duanren Empire and was known as an omniscient entity, yet they could not find any information regarding the identity of those two people!

“These two people are not from Duanren Empire?!” Zhao Wuji suddenly thought of a possibility and the words flew straight out of her mouth.

Only this explanation could justify the reason for failure.

Heartless Young Noble Yao Fei’s eyes flickered through the possibilities.

“Young Master...?” The guards inquired.

“I have nothing else for you to do at the moment, retreat.” Yao Fei waved the guard away. “Yes, Young Master!” replied the guard as he bowed, then he left the room.

At the same time in private room number three, the restaurant owner was carefully serving the dishes to the table himself. Only after Huang Xiaolong and the rest opened the jugs of wine, tasted them, and uttered some words of praise did the restaurant owner leave the room.

Huang Xiaolong, Zhao Shu, Yu Ming, and Fei Hou toasted as the scent of fragrant wine filled the room.

From the introduction provided by the owner earlier, the wine was called Beauty Allure Wine. As the liquid slid down the throat it reminded one of the taste of a beautiful woman, each taste being different yet also similar.

When tasting the first sip, Huang Xiaolong decided that he liked the wine very much.

It was comparably better than Fiery Wine or Snow Moon Wine; although both wines were not bad, it felt slightly monotonous to drink them all of the time.

Huang Xiaolong's group left the Unforgettable Intoxication Restaurant after two hours. As it was, Huang Xiaolong currently didn't have much in his spatial ring other than some wine.

If Ren Wokuang knew Huang Xiaolong used the Asura Ring mainly to store wine, one could only imagine how he would react.

Leaving the restaurant behind, Huang Xiaolong's group came upon an inn called Solitary Longing. Deciding to stay there, they rented four rooms and went to get some rest.

The venue for the Imperial City Battle's martial competition was going to be at the square across from the Imperial Palace in ten days' time, and the Solitary Longing Inn they had chosen was not far away.

While Huang Xiaolong and the rest were resting inside the inn, within the maze of Duanren Imperial City's Imperial Palace, and in a deep underground palace, sat a middle-aged man wearing a Dragon Robe. The middle-aged man was neither tall nor thin, and there was a clear character imprint in-between his eyebrows. If one were to look carefully, they would find that this single character imprint was actually a shrunken broken blade 1!

"Your Imperial Highness!" At this time, an old man dressed in the Imperial Palace's official robes entered the underground palace, respectfully bowing to the man that was seated.

Your Imperial Highness!

This middle-aged man was Duanren Empire's Duanren Emperor!

In the whole of Duanren Empire, the only person that could be greeted with the title 'Your Imperial Highness' was the Duanren Emperor alone.

"Rise." Duanren Emperor spoke. His voice was soft and light, yet it contained an insurmountable majesty.

"Much obliged, Your Imperial Highness!" The old man in the official robe replied in a humble and respectful tone; only then did the old man stand up. "Your Imperial Highness, Xie Puti, Yanggang, Pang Yu, Cui Li, Dàishānnī, and Huang Xiaolong... these six people have all arrived in the Imperial City."

These six were the talented individuals participating in this year's Imperial City Battle, geniuses who possessed superb talent martial spirits. Every year, participants with superb talent martial spirits would be given extra attention.

Duanren Emperor nodded, "Cheng Jian, according to you, which one of these six will be the champion of this year?"

The old man in the official robe, Cheng Jian, spoke seriously, "Most likely, Xie Puti!"

Duanren Emperor nodded, "Likewise, I agree." However, his tone suddenly changed, "But, that Huang Xiaolong, tell Wuya to pay more attention to him."

“Huang Xiaolong?!” Cheng Jian was surprised.

As far as he knew, amongst these six people who possessed superb talent martial spirits, only this Huang Xiaolong was a Houtian peak late-Tenth Order warrior, whereas the other five had all entered Xiantian First Order and above.

This Huang Xiaolong might have a top grade twelve martial spirit, but his strength was limited at the moment. Whether he could enter the top ten was questionable, yet the Emperor actually wanted them to pay attention to Huang Xiaolong?

While these thoughts were swimming in Cheng Jian’s mind, the Duanren Emperor spoke, “That Huang Xiaolong may not be a Xiantian warrior, but his strength is not weak. He once defeated a Cosmic Star Academy’s Elder, a Xiantian First Order expert! Entering the top ten will not be a problem for Huang Xiaolong, and don’t forget, he’s only seventeen!”

“Yes, Your Imperial Highness, this minister knows what to do.” Cheng Jian respectfully answered.

“En, you can retreat.” Duanren Emperor said, “Regarding matters related to our Imperial City Battle, come report to me at any time.”

Cheng Jiang acknowledged the order respectfully and saluted properly before retreating from the room.

Huang Xiaolong on the other hand, did not tour around with Zhao Shu or anyone else after staying at the Solitary Longing Inn. Instead, he activated the God Binding Ring, entering the ancient battlefield to cultivate.

Huang Xiaolong resumed his attempt to practice Asura Tactics and the Body Metamorphosis Scripture simultaneously. As he persisted in his attempts, the flow of internal force and battle qi became smoother with each round of practice.

While attempting to combine battle qi and internal force practice, Huang Xiaolong started practicing the Fifth move of Asura Sword Skill: Flower of the Other Shore.

Huang Xiaolong had reached major completion in the Fourth move of Asura Sword Skill: State of Abundant Lightning. The only thing he lacked now was more powerful battle qi. As he grew stronger, the attack power of each move multiplied parallel to his strength.

Huang Xiaolong studied the description and battle qi route required to perform the Fifth move, Flower of the Other Shore, from the fragment of the note and committed it to memory. Standing on the ancient battlefield, the Blades of Asura swung out.

When both blades swung out, multiples rays of bright sword lights spun in the air, gathering into two blossoms of an inky, dark purple flowers—the exact color of Huang Xiaolong’s netherworld battle qi.

Two inky dark purple flowers bloomed as they constantly spun in the air, vibrant and vivid.

Spinning in bloom, the two flowers hovered within a thirty-meter radius in front of Huang Xiaolong, with no further actions. Without warning, both flowers disappeared, followed by a rumbling coming from one hundred meters to the front where two huge boulders turned into dust.

Huang Xiaolong closed his eyes, imagining the attack and the flow of his battle qi just now. According to the note's description, the two flowers were called flower of the other shore.

Flower of the other shore, in full bloom on the other side, so far yet so near, so near yet so far. Their attacks were unpredictable, making the opponent hardpressed to defend against them. When the flower of the other shore disappeared from the other side, it took the opponent's life in one attack!

Ten days came and went.

Huang Xiaolong could nearly circulate his battle qi and internal force simultaneously without any resistance during practice, and the Fifth move of Asura Sword Skill had great progress.

During attack, as the flowers bloomed brighter, the duration time of how long they could last would shorten, but at the same time, the attack power was stronger. Occasionally while practicing Flower of the Other Shore, Huang Xiaolong would mix in Tempest of Hell, Tears of Asura, Wrath of Nether King, and State of Abundant Lightning, trying as hard as he could to combine these four moves as well.

For now, Huang Xiaolong had successfully combined Tempest of Hell and Tears of Asura, and the power scale of the attack had increased significantly.

With his diligent practice, Huang Xiaolong's battle qi cultivation advanced a little more during these ten days.

After taking a high Grade Four Spirit Dan and a Fire Dragon Pearl, along with absorbing the spiritual energy in the ancient battlefield, Huang Xiaolong's strength grew every day.

Ten days had passed, and the day of the Imperial City Battle had arrived!

As the morning light emerged, it felt as if the entire Imperial City became excited. A sea of people could be seen on the streets in everything direction.

This time of year had turned into a grand occasion for Duanren Empire Imperial City. Common subjects that resided within the Imperial City would also go to watch the battle.

Huang Xiaolong walked out from his room and saw that Zhao Shu, Yu Ming, and Fei Hou were already waiting for him.

"Sovereign!" Seeing Huang Xiaolong, the three of them quickly stepped out.

Huang Xiaolong nodded, took a deep breath, and said: "Let's go to the Duanren Imperial City's Duanren Square."

Chapter 168: Can I Sit Here?

“Yes, Sovereign!” Zhao Shu and the other two acknowledged Huang Xiaolong’s words in unison.

Huang Xiaolong turned around and stepped out from the inn with Zhao Shu and the rest in the direction of Duanren Imperial Palace’s main entrance.

Walking into the streets, there were heads bobbing along everywhere in the packed crowd, flowing to one destination point.

The main entrance of Duanren Imperial Palace!

Duanren Square!

Huang Xiaolong’s group of four walked patiently, following the flow of the crowd to the square’s direction. Half an hour later, the four arrived at Duanren Square.

Ginormous was not an apt enough description to describe Duanren Square. Duanren Empire’s military parade that was held every decade took place in that very square. Thus, one could imagine the monumental size of Duanren Square.

Straight across Duanren Square was Duanren Imperial Palace’s formidable high walls. The Imperial Palace walls were about the same height as the Imperial City walls, but the difference was in the majestic aura emanating behind the Imperial Palace walls.

Teams of intimidating soldiers were stationed around the perimeter of the square.

Huang Xiaolong, Zhao Shu, Yu Ming, and Fei Hou walked into the arena where ten battle stages were erected, as well as a guest platform.

The outer edge of the battle arena was also heavily guarded by soldiers barricading the crowd from getting too close to the stages. Only geniuses representing their kingdom like Huang Xiaolong were eligible to enter.

By the time Huang Xiaolong arrived, Duanren Square was already filled with people, but luckily the kingdom’s representative geniuses had a special tunnel entrance to the battle arena

Stopping before the special entrance, Huang Xiaolong said to his three companions, “Wait for me outside.”

“Yes Young Lord!” The three answered.

Walking along the tunnel, Huang Xiaolong emerged at the front section of the battle arena, taking out the participation token which Sun Zhang and Xiong Chu had given him. Seeing the token, the soldiers on guard opened up a small gap, allowing Huang Xiaolong to enter the battle arena area.

Entering within, Huang Xiaolong made his way to the rest area prepared for the participating talents coming from all kingdoms. When he arrived, Huang Xiaolong noticed that quite a number of them were

already there, and after sweeping a cursory glance around, he made a rough estimate that there were seven to eight hundred people.

His arrival, however, attracted quite a commotion when geniuses from other kingdoms noticed him walking into the rest area.

“This kid is also a participant in the Imperial City Battle? Please don’t joke, he looks like he’s no older than eighteen years old!”

“Barely eighteen and this kid came to participate in the Imperial City Battle; if it’s not him having great confidence in his strength, then he’s probably an arrogant idiot!”

The genius disciples from Duanren Empire’s fealty kingdoms looked at Huang Xiaolong with different meanings to their gazes. One of the requirements for participating in the Imperial City Battle was being at or under thirty years old. Therefore, most of these geniuses would cultivate until the age of thirty or close to thirty before coming to participate in this event.

An ounce stronger meant a slightly higher chance to achieve a more favorable result.

People who came to participate in the Imperial City Battle before reaching the age of twenty were scarce, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say it had never happened before. As high as Huang Xiaolong’s talent might be, these other kingdom’s geniuses were reluctant to believe that a seventeen-year-old ‘boy’ was strong enough to shake them.

Of course, behind these gazes, contempt swirled within.

Still, amongst this group of geniuses, there was a young man in white robes around twenty-seven to twenty-eight years old who was looking solemnly at Huang Xiaolong ever since his appearance.

Huang Xiaolong! It’s actually Huang Xiaolong!

This little punk also came to participate in this year’s Imperial City battle?!

Why, why so fast?!

The white-robed young man was traumatized.

Two years ago, in the Yuwai Kingdom, the white-robed young man saw the entire scene where Huang Xiaolong defeated Yang An on the street.

Two years’ ago at that time, Huang Xiaolong should have only been a Ninth Order warrior, not even breaking through to a Tenth Order warrior! He remembered that day clearly, the talent Huang Xiaolong had shown greatly impacted him.

He previously thought, give Huang Xiaolong ten years’ time to cultivate, and at that time, the first place of Duanren Empire’s Imperial City Battle would be none other than him, Huang Xiaolong!

Unfortunately, it did not take ten years. In just two short years, Huang Xiaolong was here, participating in the Imperial City Battle!

Two years, how much did his strength increase? Tenth Order? The white-robed young man contemplated inwardly.

This white-robed young man was Yuwai Kingdom's representative for this year, Zhou Jie.

"Just a mere Tenth Order warrior and he dares come take part in the Imperial City Battle?" Zhou Jie furrowed his brows.

In the white-robed young man's opinion, a mere two years was too fast even with Huang Xiaolong's cultivation speed. At most, he should only be a Tenth Order warrior; moreover, he probably just had a recent breakthrough to the Tenth Order.

A Tenth Order cultivation base in all the kingdoms' academies could be considered an expert, but in the eyes of the many geniuses that came to participate in the Imperial City Battle, that was the bottom rung as cannon fodder.

However, since Huang Xiaolong clinched Cosmic Star Academy's overall championship, his strength was definitely not limited to a Tenth Order warrior's level. This was Zhou Jie's final assessment.

Huang Xiaolong listened to the discussions around him, ignoring the gazes directed at him as he walked up to an empty seat. He sat down quietly and waited patiently for the battles to begin.

After Huang Xiaolong arrived, many geniuses from other kingdoms also arrived in succession, when suddenly, there was a commotion in the crowd of people.

"Xie Puti! Xie Puti is here!"

"According to rumours, Xie Puti has a top grade thirteen martial spirit, Black Flame Phoenix! And he supposedly broke through to Xiantian Second Order a year ago!"

"Xiantian Second Order! Black Flame Phoenix martial spirit! This Xie Puti is too scary, no doubt this time's first place is his! Most of the big families and forces in Duanren Imperial City are betting that Xie Puti will take first place this time!"

Hearing endless praises of admiration towards this Xie Puti, Huang Xiaolong became curious and looked over. A young man in fire-red battle gear was walking in his direction.

This young man had a tall stature, as if every muscle in his body contained unimaginable explosive power. Even his eyebrows were fire-red in color. As he walked, a faint ember glow seemed to trail his movements.

This was Xie Puti!

Aggressive and domineering!

Xie Puti? The name flickered in and immediately passed through Huang Xiaolong's mind.

Judging the from the crowd's reaction, this Xie Puti was likely the strongest participant in this year's Imperial City Battle.

Top grade thirteen martial spirit, Black Flame Phoenix? Xiantian Second Order!

Undoubtedly, this Xie Puti would be a strong opponent.

Walking into the resting area, Xie Puti made his way to the empty seats close to Huang Xiaolong and chose a seat five meters away from him.

As Xie Puti sat down, a burst of hot air rushed out. The geniuses originally sitting in that area exclaimed in surprise, all scurrying far away from their seats, recoiling from the sudden burst of heat.

The hot air rushed towards Huang Xiaolong, but when it was still one meter away, it stopped like it met with an invisible barrier of resistance.

Huang Xiaolong sat in a meditative pose, calm as day.

"En?" Xie Puti uttered a surprised sound. Looking over at Huang Xiaolong, a fiery-red spark glinted in his eyes because he did not expect his Phoenix fire qi would actually be resisted by some youth aged no more than eighteen.

The faces of possible top ten candidates flashed one by one in his mind, yet none of them matched the features of this young man near him.

Interesting, Xie Puti thought.

The other geniuses present were also surprised seeing Huang Xiaolong stop Xie Puti's Phoenix fire qi.

"What? That little kid actually stopped Xie Puti's Phoenix fire qi!"

"Where did this kid come from?!"

However, those geniuses that had just avoided Xie Puti's fire qi sneered.

"It was because this little punk cultivates in cold element battle qi, coincidentally restraining Xie Puti's Phoenix fire qi. Moreover, Xie Puti was kind enough to hold back. Do you really think this little kid is so great that he can withstand the heat?"

"Right, that must be the reason!"

Huang Xiaolong remained calm even as the ridiculing words continued.

"It's Yanggang, Yanggang's here!"

At this time, another wave of commotion swept the crowd.

“Yanggang, peak-late Xiantian First Order, his martial spirit is a top grade twelve, Celestial Yin Beast!

A young man in a green brocade robe was seen walking in. Yanggang!

Huang Xiaolong glanced at the new arrival, unperturbed.

Another superb talent martial spirit possessor. He did not expect that in this year’s Imperial City Battle, so many of them would appear. And to top it off, even meet two geniuses in succession that had superb martial spirits above grade eleven.

Including Huang Xiaolong, it totaled at three!

In the past, the Imperial City Battle had only gathered grade eleven martial spirits. At most, the number of those applicants maxed out at two.

Yanggang’s appearance sent the surrounding geniuses into another bout of whispers; this Yanggang was the most probable candidate for second place.

Walking in, Yanggang was dumbfounded by Xie Puti’s presence, and strong flames of war burned in his eyes as he headed straight towards Xie Puti’s position. Yanggang’s actions instantly attracted the attention of many geniuses, and they turned to watch.

Coming to a stand before Xie Puti, Yanggang said, “As for this year’s Imperial City Battle... I will definitely get the first place! Xie Puti, I will absolutely defeat you!”

Xie Puti laughed calmly after hearing these words, “Defeat me? We’ll see after you defeat him.” His eyes hinted at Huang Xiaolong five meters away.

Yanggang looked over in the same direction, and seeing Huang Xiaolong’s face, he was stunned and turned back to face Xie Puti angrily, “What do you mean?”

In Yanggang’s opinion, Xie Puti was comparing him with a seventeen-year-old greenhorn, and there was a strong feeling that he was being underestimated, or worse, disdained!

Xie Puti did not bother to answer.

And that made Yanggang’s face darken gloomily, glaring at Huang Xiaolong. “Little punk, I hope you won’t run into me on the stage. If you do, I’ll make sure you get off the stage sideways!”

Yanggang directed all his rage onto Huang Xiaolong.

“Really?” Huang Xiaolong reacted placidly.

Seeing that Huang Xiaolong dared to retort him in public, the temperature in his eyes dropped dangerously, fierce light glinted in his eyes. However, before the Imperial City Battle began, it was forbidden to fight below the stage. Even he dared not break this rule.

Yanggang's icy gaze cut across Huang Xiaolong's face, then let out a harrumph and sat down in an empty chair.

"Heihei, that brat offended Yanggang, if lady luck is not on his side, and he really runs into Yanggang later on the stage, he'll end up truly miserable!"

Some of the geniuses that ran away unable to withstand Xie Puti's Phoenix fire qi turned schadenfreude at Huang Xiaolong's impending misfortune.

A short while later, the crowd became worked up again.

This time around, it was not a young man, but a beautiful young woman dressed in a flowy turquoise long dress. Her name was Cui Li. She appeared to be in her late twenties and had a sweet smile hanging on her ruddy lips, along with a pair of glistening bright eyes.

The commotion raised by Cui Li's appearance was comparable to Xie Puti's.

Most of the geniuses participating in the Imperial City Battle this year were men, and this was the obvious attraction of the opposite sex.

"Can I sit here?" Arriving, Cui Li seemed to make a beeline towards Huang Xiaolong, and as she stood in front of him, one delicate finger pointed to an empty seat beside him.

Huang Xiaolong became dazed for a moment before nodding, "Feel free."

Sending Huang Xiaolong a sweet-honeyed smile, she said her thanks, "Thank you," and sat down next to Huang Xiaolong.

Her alluring fragrance wafted into Huang Xiaolong's nose.

In that moment, the surrounding kingdom geniuses were all staring at Huang Xiaolong. The many pairs of eyes seemed to spew a strong fire of jealousy.

Chapter 169: Imperial City Battle (1)

Huang Xiaolong treated the burning, jealous gazes directed at him from the surrounding kingdoms' geniuses as if they did not exist. He sat there with the same placid expression on his face.

"You're called Huang Xiaolong, right?" Cui Li asked as she faced Huang Xiaolong sideways after sitting down on the empty chair next to him.

Huang Xiaolong turned sideways to look at her.

Observing Cui Li up close, he noticed underneath her sweet, innocent smile, there was a trace of seductive charm mixed within. A small exquisite nose and cherry red lips on a small mouth made it hard not to be attracted.

They were sitting quite closely, only a gap the width of an adult's arm existed between them. Huang Xiaolong could easily touch Cui Li's face and other body parts if he just stretched out his arm a little.

Cui Li's mesmerizing eyes looked straight into Huang Xiaolong's eyes. Their four eyes were locked in a gaze, lasting more than thirty breaths of time.

"That's right." Huang Xiaolong nodded.

Since this Cui Li knew his name, approaching and then sitting next to him was clearly not a coincidence.

"According to the rumors, you are only seventeen but you've already reached the level of peak late-Tenth Order warrior!"

A Seventeen-year-old, Houtian realm, peak late-Tenth Order warrior!

The crowd of geniuses were taken aback, finding what Cui Li said hard to believe as all of them looked at Huang Xiaolong, including Yuwai Kingdom's Zhou Jie.

Xie Puti and Yanggang were also surprised.

Huang Xiaolong looked at Cui Li, frowning slightly as he shot her a stern glare before looking away, no longer bothering himself with her.

Being so obviously ignored, Cui Li did not show any anger on her face.

Time passed and another two geniuses that possessed superb talent martial spirits arrived, Pang Yu and Dai Shanni. Pang Yu was a man whereas Dai Shanni was another beauty, but compared to Cui Li, Dai Shanni possessed a soft, gentle kind of beauty.

Not long after that, the participating geniuses from all of the other kingdoms arrived and gathered. By this time, the sun was high in the morning sky, shining down on the land as the hot temperature rose.

The sunlight felt warm against Huang Xiaolong's skin. In the next moment, the tightly shut red doors to the Duanren Imperial Palace creaked and opened. A small eunuch scurried out, announcing in his high pitched voice, "His Imperial Highness Second Prince has arrived~!"

Imperial Second Prince—Duan Wuhen!

As the eunuch's voice fell, Duan Wuhen was seen riding out of the palace doors on a majestic lion mount amidst a protective circle of palace guards.

Since thirty years ago, Duanren Empire's Imperial City Battle and the Military Parade affairs was overseen by Duan Wuhen. This was proof of Duan Wuhen's importance in the Empire.

Along with some ministers, Duan Wuhen approached the arena area as the palace guards spread out, defending the four perimeters of the arena.

When Duan Wuhen entered the arena area, all the kingdoms' geniuses stood up from their seats, saluting with half a bow, "Greeting Your Imperial Highness Second Prince!"

"Everyone need not stand on ceremony!" Duan Wuhen waved his hand. His voice sounded laid-back yet majestic, "Please sit!" He moved towards the main seat in the middle of the main platform and sat down.

The ministers that were with him took their seats, and only then did the geniuses from the different kingdoms sit down.

Duan Wuhen's eyes swept across the many faces of these geniuses, and when they came to Xie Puti and Yanggang, they paused momentarily before moving away.

While Duan Wuhen was scanning through the crowd of geniuses, Huang Xiaolong was also observing Duan Wuhen. Compared to two years ago at the Enlightenment Lake, the invisible oppressive aura emanating from Duan Wuhen felt more daunting, like an insurmountable mountain pressing down heavily.

The atmosphere in the square became solemn upon Duan Wuhen's arrival.

At this time, the person sitting next to Duan Wuhen, an older man with a head of white hair and a large build wearing battle gear, moved to the center of the platform. Next, he brought out an imperial edict and starting reading what was written on it out aloud.

The imperial edict came from the Duanren Emperor himself, announcing the regulations of the Imperial City Battle and the rewards.

The white-haired old man's powerful, sonorous voice reverberated in the air above Duanren Square. Every word rang clear in everyone's ears.

Surrounding the battle arena, many different forces and common subjects were listening quietly as well.

It was a full ten minutes later when the white-haired old man finished reading the imperial edict.

Like in previous years, the winners of the first one hundred places from the Imperial City Battle were eligible to enter Duanren Institute to cultivate and study, becoming a student of Duanren Institute.

But, compared to previous years, the rewards this year were doubled.

In the past, from the eleventh place winner to the one hundredth place winner, each person would be rewarded with one hundred pieces of grade two spirit stones and one low-Grade Six Spirit Dan. This year, however, the rewards were two hundred grade two spirit stones and two low-Grade Six Spirit Dans!

From second place to tenth place, each winner was rewarded with two hundred pieces of grade two spirit stones and one mid-Grade Six Spirit Dan. This year, the rewards doubled up to four hundred pieces of grade two spirit stones and two mid-Grade Six Spirit Dans.

The rewards for the first place winner, the champion of them all, was previously ten pieces of grade one spirit stones, one high-Grade Six Spirit Dan. It too also doubled this year to twenty grade one spirit stones and two high-Grade Six Spirit Dans.

Even in the past, the rewards were already extremely attractive. This year however, it was even more enticing!

When the white-haired old man finished reading the imperial edict, the entire area within and surrounding the arena started to boil with excitement!

Especially the many geniuses taking part by representing the different kingdoms; each of their eyes glittered and excitement was written all over their faces.

While the many forces fell into a guessing game over the reason for Duanren Emperor doubling the rewards this year, most of them were of the same opinion. Everyone thought it was likely because this batch of talented geniuses was more impressive than the years before, which made Duanren Emperor increase the rewards.

The Imperial City Battle in the past usually had no more than two geniuses possessing superb talent martial spirits, but this year, six emerged. Furthermore, it had been over three hundred years since a grade thirteen martial spirit genius appeared, and one just so happened to this year.

“That twenty pieces of grade one spirit stones and two high-Grade Six Spirit Dans for the first place winner this year is going to fall into Xie Puti’s hand!” Outside the battle arena area, an expert standing beside Zhao Shu, Yu Ming, and Fei Hou exclaimed enviously.

Zhao Shu, Yu Ming, and Fei Hou glanced at that person from the corner of their eyes but said nothing.

The first one hundred places’ rewards were doubled, and the rules of battle were quite similar to when Huang Xiaolong was competing for Cosmic Star Academy’s year division first place.

Half of the participants were to draw lots to determine their opponents. The number of geniuses that came to participate in the Imperial City Battle this year totaled to one thousand three hundred and sixty-two people this time around.

Thus, six hundred and eighty-one people were arranged to draw lots, and Huang Xiaolong was divided into the group that did the picking.

“Number sixty-two, Mo’er Kingdom, Bai Shou.” Huang Xiaolong looked at the token in his palm which represented his first round opponent, Mo’er Kingdom’s Bai Shou, number sixty-two.

There were ten stages in the arena area, and ten groups will be battling at the same time on these ten stages. Huang Xiaolong was arranged to go up in the sixth round.

After the drawing of lots finished, the first round participants each walked up to their intended stage. What surprised the crowd and the rest of the participants was that Xie Puti actually went up the stage in the first round!

Watching the owner of the grade thirteen martial spirit, Xie Puti, going up on stage, excitement amongst the crowd shot up, which also included the geniuses below the stage.

Xie Puti's opponent was a young man named Chen Bailu from Nike Kingdom.

Chen Bailu was no pushover as an opponent, having a Xiantian First Order strength. Despite that, the majority of the people around could not help feeling pity in their hearts towards him—to go against Xie Puti in the first round, this Chen Bailu was really unlucky.

With Chen Bailu being a Xiantian First Order expert, he would've had a high chance of entering the first one hundred places otherwise.

Chapter 170: Imperial City Battle (2)

Chen Bailu displayed an ugly expression as he came face to face with Xie Puti on the stage.

He did not expect to hit the 'jackpot' in the first round itself, but he was unwilling to walk away without a fight!

A brilliant glow of soft green light flickered, coming from Chen Bailu's body, and behind him emerged a giant green serpent.

This giant green serpent had a thick circular body, yet the strangest thing was the pair of wings on its back. It was a type of variant serpent martial spirit called Two-winged Flower Serpent.

Atop the serpent's head grew a vivid red crown in the shape of a flower.

Chen Bailu soul transformed immediately after calling out his martial spirit in a blinding burst of green light. Two long green wings erupted from his back and he suddenly let out a thunderous roar. With a flap of the wings, he closed in on Xie Puti before one could even blink.

While people were closely observing the fight, they could see that Chen Bailu's eyes were glowing a scarlet red as he attacked Xie Puti's chest with a punch. His fist whistled through the air, piercing towards Xie Puti while energy fluctuated violently and was accompanied by a strange green mist spewing out.

Chen Bailu's attack came so fast and so suddenly that it startled those below the stage.

Watching as Xie Puti was about to be hit by Chen Bailu, many within the spectating crowd had their hearts tighten nervously.

But, right at that moment, Xie Puti's figure blurred out of sight, disappearing right in front of Chen Bailu.

Finding that his fist fell on empty air, Chen Bailu froze.

"Your attack speed is too slow." A cold cynical voice sounded behind Chen Bailu, shocking him greatly. Just as he was about to turn around, a terrifying palm strike slammed onto his back, spreading a

scorching temperature starting at his back and wantonly moving to the rest of his body as if it wanted to roast all of his internal organs.

Wailing in horrendous pain, Chen Bailu was knocked off the stage.

The people below the stage saw red flames dancing across every inch of Chen Bailu's body when he landed on the square floor, incinerating every thread of his robe into ashes.

Gut-wrenching shrieks came from Chen Bailu's throat as he twisted around on the floor.

The scene made the geniuses below the stage turn deathly pale.

This also included Yanggang, who currently wore a grave expression because he had arrogantly claimed he would defeat Xie Puti not too long ago.

At this point of time, several Duanren Empire guards rushed forward and poured buckets of ice onto Chen Bailu, but it seemed to enrage the red flames engulfing his body, making them burn more vigorously.

Moments later, the smell of charred meat filled the air, intensifying the fear inside each of the spectating geniuses.

Huang Xiaolong remained placid.

But, Cui Li who was sitting next to him spoke, "I didn't expect that Xie Puti would be so savage and ruthless. If I ever come across him, will I also be turned into a roast pig due to his phoenix fire?" She was even showing a 'terrified' expression when she finished, both hands exaggeratedly patting her plump bosom.

At her constant patting motions, two proud peaks were pressed down, stretching the fabric of her clothes downward, clearly showing the bottom outline of two large, rounded breasts.

Such voluptuous breasts!

Loud sounds of saliva being swallowed was heard from nearby participating geniuses.

Savage? Being roasted like a pig?

Picking up Cui Li's keywords, Huang Xiaolong secretly shook his head.

However, he remained mindful. This Cui Li may seem gullible with her sweet, charming smile that resembled an angel, but he was certain her strength was not lacking at all. At the very least, she was not as sweet as she projected herself to be on the surface—she was a powerful woman.

"Little brother Xiaolong, if I come across you on the stage, you must know to have pity on the weaker sex. You must be gentle with me ohh~." Cui Li's tone suddenly changed, imploring in the softest voice. Her sparkling eyes echoed the same sentiment as they gazed at Huang Xiaolong, especially when she was saying the words 'be gentle.'

Excited sounds of saliva swallowing was heard once again.

Little brother? Huang Xiaolong looked at Cui Li; this woman, bringing up nonsensical topics. Frankly speaking, Huang Xiaolong was becoming annoyed with her.

But he could not figure out why there was this sudden 'interest' in him?

Was it simply because he was a peak late-Tenth Order warrior at seventeen years of age?

"Once on the stage, in my eyes, all are my opponents." Huang Xiaolong looked away, giving an aloof answer.

The sweet smile on Cui Li's face did not waver, and instead, it deepened, "Little brother Xiaolong, what kind of women do you like? The soft and gentle type, or the cute and cheerful kind?"

Huang Xiaolong frowned. He did not answer or speak, totally ignoring the woman.

By this time, the first round of battles ended. Xie Puti slowly walked down from the stage, returned to the same place and sat down.

With the first round of matches complete, the second round began with the people containing numbers eleven to twenty.

Round after round began and finished, and very soon, it came to Huang Xiaolong's turn. Number sixty-one to seventy had to battle it out on the stage.

Huang Xiaolong stood up from his seat and walked up slowly to stage number two.

Standing across from Huang Xiaolong was a young man about twenty-five years old. He had extremely dark skin and a medium build, and was half a head shorter compared to Huang Xiaolong's height of five foot nine.

Mo'er Kingdom, Bai Shou!

This person was Huang Xiaolong's first opponent.

Perhaps it was due to Cui Li's influence, but the majority of geniuses below the stage were watching the stage Huang Xiaolong was on.

Her eyes did not move away from Huang Xiaolong's figure.

After finding out Huang Xiaolong broke through to peak late-Tenth Order at seventeen, her interest and curiosity towards him exceeded that of Xie Puti.

Her gut feeling said the little guy was not as simple as he seemed on the surface.

“This Bai Shou is a Xiantian First Order expert; in my opinion, Huang Xiaolong will be eliminated in the first round!”

“This Huang Xiaolong’s martial spirit is a top grade twelve, Divine Black Dragon? Heihei, if that is true, then he’s the first person in history to possess a superb talent martial spirit who’ll be eliminated in the first round, failing to enter Duanren Institute!”

Geniuses from various kingdoms began to ridicule and mock Huang Xiaolong.

Hearing these insults, Cui Li’s delicate brows creased slightly as she ‘glared’ sternly at those geniuses that uttered mocking words. As a result, those geniuses were so ‘frightened’ that they quickly lowered their voices.

On the battle stage, Bai Shou stood with his hands clasped behind his back. Looking at Huang Xiaolong, Bai Shou shook his head with a smile on his face, “I didn’t expect that my first opponent would be you. You’re that Huang Xiaolong, right? Summon your superb talent martial spirit, the Divine Black Dragon, and maybe after soul transforming you’ll be eligible to receive one attack from me!”

A Xiantian realm expert was truly different compared to a Houtian realm warrior, there existed an insurmountable wall. Regardless of the fact that he possessed a superb talent martial spirit, in Bai Shou’s eyes, Huang Xiaolong could never be his opponent.

Huang Xiaolong remained calm, not a trace of anger could be heard in his voice as he said, “Against you, it’s not needed.”

Bai Shou was stunned for a second, then he broke out into laughter, “Since you do not value the chance I gave you, I shall not be merciful.” After he finished saying that, Bai Shou did not summon his martial spirit, but instead lightly took a step forward and his entire person seemed to drift towards Huang Xiaolong. “This is a mid-Earth rank battle skill, Pursuing Wind Step!”

“This Pursuing Wind Step skill disappeared many years ago. How does Bai Shou know that skill?!”

“According to rumors, the Pursuing Wind Step is very strange, and its pattern of attack is unpredictable. It’s almost impossible to defend against, and not many people can break this skill!”

Below the stage, gasps of surprise and exclamation resounded.

Cui Li’s heart tightened inexplicably.

A light flickered in Xie Puti’s eyes as he watched Bai Shou displaying the Pursuing Wind Step, whereas Yanggang sneered. He was looking forward to seeing how Huang Xiaolong would receive the incoming attack from Bai Shou.

In the blink of an eye, Bai Shou had arrived in front of Huang Xiaolong.

“Ice Shattering Palm!”

A cruel light gleamed and flitted quickly in Bai Shou's eyes as both palms aimed to strike at Huang Xiaolong's chest. He wanted Huang Xiaolong to be defeated miserably in one move. Thinking that he could cause the person before him who possessed a top grade twelve martial spirit to lose, excitement rushed through his veins.

At last, Bai Shou's palm prints slammed onto Huang Xiaolong's chest.

Bang! A loud blast rang out on the stage.