

ETERNAL SK 301

Chapter 301: Saved the Both of Them Before

“Then, I want to kill you now. What do you want?”

The emperor’s question was like a sword with a sharp edge that stabbed forth, sealing all of Su Zimo’s retreat paths.

His killing intent was almost tangible at this point.

Shrouded by that killing intent, Su Zimo could not move at all!

The Rain Admiration Pavilion fell into an eerie, terrifying silence!

Even Bai Yuhan, who was standing at the side, felt a sense of trepidation, let alone Su Zimo who was at the vortex of the storm.

The emperor’s cultivation was unfathomable to begin with. Coupled with the unique aura possessed by the emperor, this was a sort of pressure that ordinary people would not be able to endure.

Even if it was a Golden Core in place of Su Zimo, he would be kneeling with a frightfully pale expression.

However, Su Zimo stood upright, neither servile nor overbearing with a straight back.

“You want to kill me.”

Su Zimo finally spoke and paused for a moment.

Everyone’s hearts skipped a beat!

Ji Yaoxue could vaguely sense something and was so anxious that she was about to cry.

Raising his head, Su Zimo had a deep gaze that shone with a demonic glint as he stared back and said slowly, “You want to kill me, so first, I’ll kill...”

“Eh? What are you guys doing?”

Before Su Zimo could say ‘you’, a gentle and soft voice rang from outside the Rain Admiration Pavilion. It was soothing and interrupted Su Zimo’s sentence.

His heart skipped a beat – that was a familiar voice.

Everyone glanced in the direction of the voice.

A young girl in a light pink dress stood with her head tilted to the side. She had an innocent look on her face as she looked into the Rain Admiration Pavilion with a curious and pure expression.

The moment he saw that girl, the killing intent within the emperor’s eyes vanished instantly. While he was still suppressing Su Zimo with his aura, his gaze had turned extremely tender, as though he was worried he might scare the girl.

“Yan’er, why are you here?” The emperor’s tone sounded reproachful and doting.

The girl in pink wheedled, "I heard that sister has returned. I missed her so I came back to take a look too!"

"Eh? Sister, why are you standing there motionlessly and crying?"

When the girl in pink walked into the Rain Admiration Pavilion, she asked with raised brows, looking confused and innocent at the sight of Ji Yaoxue weeping at the side.

The emperor released an invisible force from between his brows inconspicuously, removing the restraints on Ji Yaoxue.

He said in a deep voice, "Xue'er, leave this place first along with Yan'er."

"I'm not leaving."

Ji Yaoxue looked at the emperor with teary eyes and shook her head resolutely.

"Ah!"

Right then, the girl in pink suddenly exclaimed and covered her cherry lips. She looked at Su Zimo with an incredulous expression while her eyes were filled with surprise.

"Young... Young Master Su! Is that you?"

The girl in pink ran to Su Zimo's side excitedly and clutched his arm with a death grip, refusing to let go as though she was afraid he might disappear the next moment.

Everyone was stunned!

Apart from Su Zimo, everyone else in the Rain Admiration Pavilion gaped at the scene in astonishment.

The emperor was stunned as well, subconsciously removing the pressure he was applying on Su Zimo, afraid that the girl in pink might be accidentally injured.

Su Zimo was rather calm.

The moment she entered, he had already recognized her – this was the fiend heir of the Pure Maiden Sect, Demoness Ji!

However, she looked angelic and innocent right now. With a charming and ignorant gaze, she was like a naive and ignorant girl.

If not for the fact that they were identical in appearance, Su Zimo would not have dared to confirm it.

However, he recalled that Demoness Ji indeed had such capabilities.

Be it innocent, charming, elegant or pitiful, she was able to portray all of those images without any flaws.

It was as though split personalities were hidden in Demoness Ji's body and could be switched at will.

Su Zimo did not reply as he did not know what Demoness Ji was up to.

"Young Master Su, I've been looking for you for so long. To think that you would be here."

Demoness Ji clutched at the hem of Su Zimo's robes and pouted her lips in an aggrieved manner.

"Yan'er, you..."

Pausing for a moment, the emperor pointed at Su Zimo with an odd expression. "You know that person?"

"No."

Demoness Ji shook her head. "I only know that his surname is Su but I don't know what his name is. However, Young Master Su saved my life before!"

"Ah?"

The emperor opened his mouth slightly, dumbfounded. His expression froze and his mind was in a mess.

The Imperial Army soldiers at the side, Bald Vulture, Bai Yuhan and everyone else were losing their composure, watching with widened eyes and jaws that nearly dropped to the ground.

What was up with this Su Zimo?

The emperor only had two daughters and he saved both of their lives before?

Was this person born to save princesses?

Ji Yaoxue was also slightly dazed as she blinked her watery eyes and looked on.

Su Zimo had even saved her younger sister as well?

The emperor coughed gently and regained his composure, asking with a frown, "Yan'er, what's going on? When did he save you?"

"Back in Chiyu City!"

Demoness Ji replied, "Three years ago, I went to Chiyu City with Auntie Gu. I sneaked out once while Auntie Gu wasn't around but I ended up coming across six bad guys! If not for Young Master Su's appearance, I would have been doomed!"

With that said, Demoness Ji puffed out a breath of air and stuck out her tongue, as though she was still experiencing lingering fears.

Her words were indeterminable – if Su Zimo had not experienced it himself, he would not have doubted her.

Furthermore, judging from the emperor and Ji Yaoxue's expressions, Su Zimo realized that neither of them knew what sect Demoness Ji was from!

"Silly child!"

The emperor shook his head helplessly.

Demoness Ji continued, "Later on, I pressed Young Master Su for his residence and background so that father could reward him immensely. However, Young Master Su left right away and I couldn't find him even after a long search."

“Ah, I got it!”

Demoness Ji revealed a look of realization as she clapped her hands together and smiled. “Father, did you find Young Master Su to reward him after knowing about this matter?”

The emperor remained silent and smiled bitterly in his heart.

No matter if Su Zimo had deceived him or killed a soldier of the Imperial Army, this was someone who had saved two of his daughters after all.

Initially, the emperor’s attitude towards killing Su Zimo was complicated to begin with and he didn’t have a strong determination to kill the latter.

Now that this happened, the emperor had completely given up on killing Su Zimo.

However, he was worried about something else.

Circling his gaze between his two daughters and Su Zimo, the emperor sighed softly to himself.

He pondered for a while before saying in a deep voice, “Yan’er, I have something else to discuss with Su Zimo. It’s been a long time since you’ve met your sister. You two can leave first.”

“But, what about him? I’m finally able to meet Young Master Su and I’m not going to let him get away again!”

Demoness Ji pouted and hugged Su Zimo’s arm tightly.

Two soft mounds pressed against Su Zimo’s arm, slightly warm and extremely bouncy – he stiffened instantly.

The emperor said in an exasperated manner, “Don’t worry, I’ll let him go after saying a few words to him.”

“Thank you, father.”

Demoness Ji smiled sweetly and walked to the side with a gentle voice. Tugging Ji Yaoxue by the palm, she chuckled. “Let’s go, sister! We’ll wait outside.”

“Yes.”

Ji Yaoxue nodded.

Since the emperor was willing to say that, Su Zimo’s life was naturally not in danger. As such, Ji Yaoxue could finally feel relieved.

The two sisters left the Rain Admiration Pavilion hand in hand.

Chapter 302: Can’t Lie

“All of you can leave as well.”

After the two sisters left the Rain Admiration Pavilion, the emperor waved his hand.

Bald Vulture, Bai Yuhan and the remaining Imperial Army soldiers bowed and left, leaving only the emperor and Su Zimo in the pavilion.

“Didn’t you have no spirit root and was unable to cultivate?”

“I had some opportunities and unexpected circumstances.”

“Who imparted your abilities to you?”

“I’m a disciple of Ethereal Peak.”

“Ethereal Peak. Good, how rare.”

The emperor nodded.

While Ethereal Peak was one of the five major sects, they had produced almost zero powerhouses in terms of weapon refinement.

If Su Zimo had not admitted it personally, the emperor would not have guessed that the current number one Weapon Refinement Master in the entire Great Zhou Dynasty came from Ethereal Peak!

“Su Zimo, Mo Ling. Fufu.”

The emperor laughed and said in a self-deprecating manner, “To think that someone whom I thought to be useless was actually creating waves and grand achievements right under my nose.”

To be fair, although Su Zimo’s reputation in the capital today was in part due to his own capabilities in weapon refinement, more than half of the credit belonged to the emperor as well!

Su Zimo had truly turned famous only after the emperor’s notice.

At that moment, Mo Spirit Weapon Workshop had trampled True Fire Weapon Workshop beneath its foot entirely.

Furthermore, all the cultivators in the capital knew that Mo Spirit Weapon Workshop was backed by the Emperor of Great Zhou – anyone who dared lay a finger on Mo Ling was challenging the emperor’s authority!

Thereafter, it was also thanks to the emperor’s protection that Su Zimo was able to walk out safe and sound despite killing someone on the streets.

That was the reason why the emperor harbored killing intents towards Su Zimo. Other than the anger he felt due to the embarrassment of finding out the truth, it was also because he felt that he was deceived and made use of.

As the emperor, the immensity of his wrath could be imagined when he discovered that he was being toyed with by someone he thought of as a useless person!

Nevertheless, Su Zimo had saved his two daughters before.

The emperor’s killing intent dissipated gradually and instead, he felt a sense of lament in his heart.

The fact that a young man in his twenties could be so composed in the face of such pressure, and even muster a slight intent to retaliate, was indeed rare.

Apart from his initial prejudice, the emperor admired Su Zimo.

However, the emperor had his worries about that admiration towards Su Zimo.

On the one hand, he was worried whether Su Zimo had motives for getting too close with the two princesses.

On the other hand, he could tell that both Yan'er and Xue'er had feelings for Su Zimo judging from their expressions – how should he make a choice?

There's no way he could let this lad take the both of them as his Dao companions – how could he enjoy such a privilege?

The emperor asked, "What happened back in Chiyu City? Who were the six people who attacked Yan'er?"

"I don't know."

Su Zimo shook his head. "I came across it unintentionally and rescued Demo... Miss Ji back then."

Since Demoness Ji chose to hide the truth, there was naturally no way Su Zimo was going to reveal it.

Nodding his head, the emperor asked in a seemingly casual manner, "There are no outsiders here. Tell me, what do you feel about Xue'er and Yan'er?"

Su Zimo replied, "The third princess helped both me and the Su family, so I view her as both a benefactor and a bosom friend. As for the little princess... I'm not close with her either. We merely met by chance."

'He took one of them as his bosom friend and was unfamiliar with the other?'

The emperor could sense that Su Zimo was indeed telling the truth.

In other words, both his initial considerations were no longer existent.

However, Su Zimo's attitude caused the emperor to feel somewhat indignant.

His daughters were both gorgeous and elegant. There was no way they were incompatible to Su Zimo, and yet he had no stray feelings towards either of them?

"If there's nothing else, I'll take my leave, Your Majesty," Su Zimo cupped his fists.

The emperor pondered for a brief moment before saying slowly, "Nothing is changed regarding the sect competition where I've invited you to be the judge for the weapon refinement segment."

That sentence meant that the emperor no longer had any prejudice towards Su Zimo and had acknowledged all of the latter's achievements!

Su Zimo nodded before bidding farewell.

Gazing at Su Zimo's disappearing back view, the emperor smiled gently and lamented, "It's fortuitous that Ethereal Peak produced someone like that to reclaim a position in terms of weapon refinement. Otherwise, they're definitely going to be disgraced at the sect competition."

He paused for a moment before shaking his head and muttering to himself, "However, other than weapon refinement, Ethereal Peak has no means of achieving anything for the other three ranking lists."

...

"Yan'er, what happened in Chiyu City? Share with me how Zimo managed to save your life."

Ji Yaoxue asked curiously outside the Rain Admiration Pavilion.

Demoness Ji blinked and surveyed her surroundings before tugging Ji Yaoxue's hand and tugging the latter to a corner. She made sure that no one was around before whispering, "Sister, I made that up. I don't know that Young Master Su at all."

"Huh?" Ji Yaoxue was stunned.

Demoness Ji covered her mouth and chuckled. "I merely came over to help you because I heard that father was enraged. Hehe, to think that father couldn't tell at all."

"You!"

Ji Yaoxue tapped Demoness Ji's fair and delicate forehead before laughing in an exasperated manner. "Father was not the only one. I bought your story too."

Pausing for a moment, Ji Yaoxue retracted her smile and sighed softly. "However, if you hadn't appeared, Zimo truly might not have survived."

"That Su Zimo... he's the one you fancy?" Demoness Ji blinked her eyes and asked.

Ji Yaoxue blushed slightly and chided softly, "Go away, don't spout nonsense."

"Hehe, it must be!"

"You're asking for a beating, young lady!"

Just as the two of them were bickering, Su Zimo had already exited the Rain Admiration Pavilion and was heading in their direction.

When he approached, he cupped his fists. "Thank you, princesses."

"Hey, Young Master Su! I'm called Ji Yaoyan! Remember that I've done you a favor and you must thank me if there's a chance!"

After saying that, Demoness Ji gave Su Zimo an alluring smile and winked while Ji Yaoxue was not noticing.

Her smile was as beautiful as a flower and could turn the world upside down!

Her eyes resembled water, as though they could draw one's soul into them!

Su Zimo closed his eyes hurriedly and took a deep breath of cold air as a burning sensation spread within him.

That was the fiend heir of the Pure Maiden Sect he remembered!

Ji Yaoxue was a little surprised and turned to look at Su Zimo before glancing at Demoness Ji.

By now, Demoness Ji had already returned to normal and that bewitching smile and seductive gaze disappeared in a flash as though everything was an illusion.

Demoness Ji waved and bid goodbye.

Gazing at Demoness Ji's back view, Ji Yaoxue said to Su Zimo, "You've really got to thank Yan'er. She did not know you at all and specially made up a lie to deceive father."

"Yan'er isn't experienced in the world and she's pure and kind. Someone like her doesn't know how to lie at all. It was really hard on her this time round," Ji Yaoxue sighed gently once more.

Su Zimo was speechless as he thought to himself, "If that younger sister of yours doesn't know how to lie and is pure and kind, there would be no honest soul remaining on the face of this world."

However, Su Zimo could not speak his mind.

After all, he had promised Demoness Ji that he would help her conceal her identity.

Furthermore, judging from the attitudes of Ji Yaoxue and the emperor, even if Su Zimo were to tell them that Demoness Ji was the fiend heir of the Pure Maiden Sect, neither of them would buy the truth at all...

"What does your sister usually do?" Su Zimo asked in a seemingly casual manner.

Ji Yaoyan shook her head. "Yan'er can't cultivate and has been learning how to do business from Auntie Gu. She's just all around the place."

Demoness Ji had cultivated some sort of a technique that could conceal her cultivation realm completely, making her look like a mortal.

However, there was indeed no need for her to dirty her hands personally if she wanted to kill anyone.

She was always making use of others to do it for her!

A single gaze of hers would suffice!

Chapter 303: Sect Competition

The capital of Great Zhou was getting livelier.

Most of the sects within the Great Zhou dominion had arrived by the final few days.

Under the lead of Array Peak's master, Xuan Yi, and Talisman Peak's master, Liu Hui, the group from Ethereal Peak arrived in the capital as well.

Apart from the two Golden Cores, Ethereal Peak only had less than ten disciples.

“Look! They seem to be the disciples from Ethereal Peak! To think that there would be so few of them!”

“It’s good enough that they’re even able to come here. I heard that Ethereal Peak suffered a huge blow after the battle at Dongling Valley and almost all of their Foundation Establishment realm disciples are dead.”

“Yes, I reckon they’re just here to join the fun. There’s almost nothing Ethereal Peak can do for the four ranking rolls.”

Xuan Yi and Liu Hui were expressionless as they walked through the streets and could vaguely hear the discussions around them.

However, the disciples behind them let out indignant expressions.

“They’re really spouting nonsense. Senior Brother Ji is at five meridian Foundation Establishment and he’ll definitely be able to get a spot on the Spirit Ranking,” The person who spoke was round like a ball – it was none other than little fatty of Ethereal Peak.

The Senior Brother Ji that little fatty was referring to wore gray robes and he had slender limbs – he was Ji Chengtian.

Ji Chengtian was already one of Ethereal Peak’s three great legacy disciples to begin with. At the same time, he was the only legacy disciple that survived the battle at Dongling Valley.

Three years ago, Ji Chengtian was only at four meridian Foundation Establishment.

Now, his cultivation realm was at five meridian Foundation Establishment and he was the strongest of the inner sect disciples.

When Ji Chengtian heard little fatty’s words, he let out a bitter smile and his gaze darkened.

Qin Yu, who was initially lauded as the number one of the inner sect disciples and had hopes of breaking through to six meridian Foundation Establishment before the sect competition, had died at Dongling Valley.

Right now, apart from him, the strongest in Ethereal Peak was only at three meridian Foundation Establishment.

The sect did not even have any disciples at three meridian Foundation Establishment.

In other words, there was little hope for everyone else apart from him to vie for a spot on the Spirit Ranking of the sect competition.

Ethereal Peak still had some hope for the Talisman Ranking.

Leng Rou had a deep attainment in terms of talisman crafting and she was best among all the inner sect disciples.

As for elixir and weapon refinement...

Even though the sect had sent a disciple in each segment over, they were merely taking part and had no chance of retaining a position on the Elixir and Weapon Rankings.

Xue Yi said softly, "Actually, if Junior Brother Su was still alive, I'm sure he'll be able to retain a position on the Weapon Ranking given his capabilities."

When they heard the words 'Junior Brother Su', everyone from Ethereal Peak fell silent and sighed.

The two Golden Cores, Xuan Yi and Liu Hui, shook their heads and let out regretful expressions as well.

Ji Chengtian and the others had the most complicated feelings towards Su Zimo.

In that battle three years ago, Su Zimo had slain the young master of the Blood Crow Palace and sacrificed himself to lure more than half of the opposing cultivators away. By doing so, he caused huge chaos in the ranks of their opponents. If not for that fact, all of them would have perished in Dongling Valley!

Leng Rou lowered her head and her gaze was cold. However, there was a flash of sadness in her eyes.

"Get your spirits up!"

Xuan Yi hollered, "Xue Yi, part of the reason why you're here is to take part in the sect competition. But more importantly, it's for you to witness the magnificence of the number one Weapon Refinement Master of the Great Zhou Dynasty!"

"That's right."

Talisman Peak's master, Liu Hui, nodded. "It's said that Mr. Mo will appear during the sect competition as one of the judges for the weapon refinement segment. If you can obtain a couple of insights through Mr. Mo's opinions, you might be able to save yourself ten years of hard work!"

"Yes!"

Xue Yi nodded heavily.

Many Weapon Refinement Masters within the Great Zhou dominion idolized Mo Ling almost blindly and it was the same for Xue Yi as well.

In his opinion, Mo Ling's rise to prominence was like a miracle that left everyone in awe!

Throughout history, there had never been a Weapon Refinement Master who could customize supreme-grade spirit weapons like Mo Ling!

Every single Weapon Refinement Master wanted to see for themselves what the legendary Mo Clan's Spirit Gathering Technique was like.

...

This day, the capital was already bustling with people by the time the sun rose.

There were more than a thousand sects together, let alone the number of disciples each sect had.

At a glance, it was packed with people as the crowds snaked through the streets and alleys, rushing towards the southwest corner of the capital.

Today was the day of the sect competition.

All eyes were on him!

Every sect competition would always be held at the southwest corner of the capital where there was a large and spacious venue that could accommodate hundreds of thousands of people with ease.

The Scarlet Vulture, Azure Falcon and White Hawk guards were all mobilized, all of them riding their spirit beasts as they circled the skies, maintaining order on the streets.

Apart from some itinerant cultivators, most of the sects had Golden Cores leading the teams.

There was a sunken area in the middle of the square where the cultivators taking part in the sect competition would refine weapons and elixirs or create talismans to decide the eventual victors.

There were four huge jade pillars erected in the four corners of the sunken area. White as ivory, they shone with a mysterious luster.

Those four jade pillars represented the four ranking lists for spirit, talisman, elixir and weapon of the sect competition!

Each jade pillar had ten slots for names.

In other words, after the sect competition ended, the forty names shown on those four jade pillars would be the eventual victors of the sect competition!

The sunken area was squarish with four faces, three of which were spectator zones provided for the Foundation Establishment Cultivators of the various sects to watch the sect competition.

The final area had a golden carpet paving the ground and it ascended upwards with 999 steps towards an exquisitely supreme throne right at the top!

That was the seat of the Emperor of Great Zhou!

On both sides of the golden carpet, there were several rows of seats and tables. They were filled with spirit fruits, immortal peaches and jade liquid, giving off a fragrant scent.

Those seats were prepared for the Golden Cores of the various sects.

As Golden Cores, there was naturally no way they could squeeze together and watch the sunken area like the rest of the Foundation Establishment Cultivators.

Naturally, the proximity towards the seat of the emperor was indication of a Golden Core's fame, strength and background!

The seats at the furthest ends were filled mostly with itinerant cultivators.

While they were also Golden Cores, they were weaker and were purely there to join in the fun and expand their horizons.

The commanders of the three city guard squads, Bald Vulture, the bearded man and Bai Yuhan, guarded the edge of the golden carpet – all Golden Cores who wanted to get a seat had to go through the three of them.

The three of them would size the Golden Cores before making the appropriate arrangements.

The group from Ethereal Peak arrived at the sunken area. Turning around, Xuan Yi said in a low voice, "Don't feel pressured for this sect competition. Just do your best."

"Understood!"

Little fatty and the others responded.

Even though they replied readily, every single disciple of Ethereal Peak looked slightly nervous.

The scene before them was way too grand and the number of cultivators surrounding the sunken area increased as more streamed in constantly!

Xuan Yi and Liu Hui exchanged glances – both could tell of the helplessness and worry in the other's eyes.

Before the battle even began, the disciples were already showing fear.

They were without a leader.

The battle at Dongling Valley had dealt way too much damage to Ethereal Peak.

While they had a five meridian Foundation Establishment Cultivator like Ji Chengtian, he lacked sturdiness and dominance. He did not possess the type of fearless confidence that could always push forth.

"If he was alive, perhaps... things would be different."

Scenes flashed through Xuan Yi's mind.

It was a green-robed cultivator with exquisite features. Although he was young, he always maintained his composure – the number one of four peaks who could refine elixirs, weapons, clear the Ten Formations Pagoda and defeat all his foes!

Chapter 304: Who Said That There Is No One From Ethereal Peak That Can Refine Weapons?

The spectator area on both sides of the golden carpet were already starting to fill with Golden Cores. After giving a couple more reminders, Xuan Yi and Liu Hui crossed the sunken area and headed for the spectator area as well.

When they arrived, Xuan Yi and Liu Hui handed their respective sect badges to the bearded man and Bai Yuhan.

This was not Xuan Yi's first sect competition and he already knew the three commanders. However, he still had to go through a symbolic check.

The bearded man smiled and asked, "Fellow Daoist Wen Xuan didn't come this time round?"

When he heard that, Xuan Yi's expression dimmed as he shook his head gently.

There was sadness and anger in Liu Hui's eyes as well.

The bearded man pondered for a moment and vaguely guessed what happened.

It was said that Ethereal Peak suffered heavy casualties for the battle at Dongling Valley and several Golden Cores had perished as well – only one of them managed to survive.

Judging from Xuan Yi and Liu Hui's expressions, Wen Xuan was most likely dead.

Xuan Yi forced out a smile. "Three years ago, Ethereal Peak was attacked and many of our disciples were injured or killed. This time round, we only brought a couple of them over so that they can broaden their horizons. As for the four ranking lists, we don't harbor any hope of taking any positions."

The bearded man shook his head and replied hurriedly, "You're being humble, fellow Daoist. Who would dare look down on any disciple of Ethereal Peak? Even if it's just one person, he's enough to crush all the other prodigies!"

"That's right."

Bai Yuhan smiled as well. "Congratulations. Ethereal Peak's about to become famous again."

"Ah?"

Both Xuan Yi and Liu Hui were stunned for a moment.

The two of them immediately thought that the bearded man and Bai Yuhan were being sarcastic and mocking Ethereal Peak.

In the previous sect competitions, Ethereal Peak would occupy at least three of the ten spots on the Spirit Ranking alone. At its prime, Ethereal Peak could even occupy half of the rankings!

However, for this sect competition, Ethereal Peak could only obtain two of the forty spots on the four ranking lists at the very most.

It would already be fortuitous if they did not embarrass the sect, let alone make it famous.

Liu Hui harrumphed coldly in displeasure.

Xuan Yi frowned, feeling perplexed.

He looked at the gaze and expressions of the bearded man and Bai Yuhan – neither of them seemed like they were being sarcastic. They sounded sincere, as though they were implying something else.

"This way, please."

The bearded man nodded with a smile as he added.

Because there were other Golden Cores lining up behind them, it was inappropriate for Xuan Yi to linger further and he could only enter the spectator area with his doubts.

...

"Look, the peak masters have already sat down."

Beside the sunken area, little fatty pointed at the spectator seats a distance away and said, "The seats of the two peak masters are rather decent. They're quite close to the emperor's throne."

The spectator seats could roughly be divided into several major areas.

The first area only had a single seat – the emperor’s throne.

Beneath the emperor’s throne, there were not many seats in the second area. Till now, they were empty without a single person.

The third area was where Xuan Yi and Liu Hui were seated.

Apart from the two of them, the Golden Cores from the other four major sects, Iridescent Clouds Palace, True Fire Sect, Southern Mountains Sect and Azure Frost Sect were also seated.

Following that was the fourth area where Golden Cores of the other sects within the Great Zhou dominion were seated. This was the largest area with the most seats.

The fifth area comprised of itinerant cultivators at Golden Core realm.

“How ignorant. Even if your Golden Cores of Ethereal Peak are seated in the third area, what can that prove?” Right then, a sneer sounded from the side in a mocking manner.

Another sarcastic voice rang out. “In my opinion, Ethereal Peak’s most likely going to be removed from the five major sects after this sect competition.”

Little fatty and the others frowned and turned to their sides.

The two people who spoke were disciples of True Fire Sect.

Also as one of the five major sects, True Fire Sect sent more than a hundred Foundation Establishment Cultivators.

Of the two leaders, one of the men had a sharp face and high nose bridge. His lips were thin and he exuded a sinisterly ruthless aura.

The other man wore maroon robes and had a haughty expression.

“Whether or not we’re removed is not decided by True Fire Sect. Just mind your own business!” Xue Yi was upset and retorted.

The maroon-robed man turned around and sized Xue Yi up before asking with a smirk, “Fellow Daoist, you seem to be indignant? You’re only at mid-stage Foundation Establishment so I reckon you must be here for the talisman, elixir or weapon ranking lists? But, the Elixir and Weapon Refinement Masters of Ethereal Peak... haha, I can’t comment much about you guys.”

Upon hearing that, everyone burst into laughter.

In previous sect competitions, Ethereal Peak disciples had never gotten a spot on the elixir and weapon ranking lists.

To everyone else, Elixir and Weapon Refinement Masters from Ethereal Peak were nothing but a joke.

Upon hearing the mocking laughter, everyone from Ethereal Peak looked terrible.

The maroon-robed man continued asking with a smile, “So, you’re a Talisman Master?”

“No!”

Xue Yi declared loudly, "I'm not afraid of letting you guys know either that I'm a Weapon Refinement Master and I'm here for the weapon refinement segment!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH."

The maroon-robed man dragged his voice and let out an enlightened expression before giving a fake smirk. "So, you're a Weapon Refinement Master. A Weapon Refinement Master of Ethereal Peak to boot. I've been impolite, please excuse me."

Everyone could hear the mocking tone of the maroon-robed man.

He continued, "What a coincidence. I'm Tao Feng, also a Weapon Refinement Master."

"So, he's Tao Feng!"

"Who is Tao Feng?"

"The number one Weapon Refinement Master of True Fire Sect! Even though he's only 30 years old, he has already managed to refine a superior-grade spirit weapon successfully and is an Advanced Weapon Refinement Master!"

"The rumors out there are saying that Fellow Daoist Tao Feng is the number one Weapon Refinement Master of the younger generation!"

Tao Feng could feel the envious gazes of the surrounding cultivators as he listened on to the discussions. Brimming with pride, he raised his chin slightly and looked at Xue Yi in a smug, taunting manner.

"How do I address you, fellow Daoist? I wonder what grade of spirit weapon you're able to refine?"

Xue Yi blushed and did not say anything.

With his capabilities, he could only refine inferior-grade spirit weapons. Since he could not even refine middle-grade spirit weapons, he was naturally inferior and could not compare to Tao Feng who was before him.

Tao Feng raised his brow and scoffed. "Oh, so you're a nobody."

"You...!" Xue Yi glared at him.

"What's there to be cocky about?"

Little fatty pouted. "Mr. Mo, the number one Weapon Refinement Master of Great Zhou is a hundred, thousands times better than you! If you've really got what it takes, go compete with him!"

Tao Feng declared proudly, "Rumor has it that Mr. Mo is a Golden Core so he must have lived for a few hundreds of years. I dare to say that when he was at my age, Mr. Mo was definitely not at my level!"

None of the cultivators present had the right to refute.

"Additionally..."

Tao Feng looked at Xue Yi and scoffed coldly. “Are you even qualified to call yourself a Weapon Refinement Master? Let me advise you, from now on, don’t make a fool of yourself by coming forth like this anymore. Scram home and stay right there!”

“F*ck...!” Little fatty’s blood surged and he was about to lash out.

“Junior brother!”

At the side, Ji Chengtian frowned and held back the enraged little fatty before shaking his head. “Forget it, let’s not argue with them. Let’s... sigh.”

When they heard Ji Chengtian’s sigh, everyone from Ethereal Peak went silent as a sense of helplessness surged through them.

No matter what, the current Ethereal Peak was indeed inferior to others.

When he saw that, Tao Feng was even more smug as he burst out laughing. “There’s no one in Ethereal Peak that can refine weapons such that any Tom, Dick and Harry could call themselves Weapon Refinement Masters. What a joke! Hahaha!”

“Who said that there is no one from Ethereal Peak that can refine weapons?”

Right then, another voice rang out from the crowd, even revealing a trace of killing intent!

Chapter 305: You’re Not Qualified

“Hmm?”

Many cultivators turned in the direction of the voice with curious expressions.

Upon hearing that voice, little fatty, Leng Rou and Xue Yi froze for a moment as confusion flashed across their eyes.

After a brief pause, little fatty widened his eyes and exclaimed softly, “It’s bro!”

Leng Rou’s expression changed as waves stirred in her eyes.

There could only be one person that little fatty referred to as bro – Su Zimo!

She could naturally tell that the person’s voice was extremely similar to Su Zimo’s. However, it was impossible. Su Zimo was clearly already...

With a trace of anticipation and uneasiness, everyone from Ethereal Peak turned around.

Not far away, a green-robed cultivator walked over from the crowd with Ethereal Peak’s sect badge hanging at his waist. He had delicate features and exuded an elegant aura, making him look like a frail scholar.

However, for some reason, as he walked through the massive crowd, the surrounding cultivators gave way to him subconsciously.

It was as though there was an invisible field of pressure surrounding the green-robed cultivator!

After he walked over, everyone regained their senses with lost expressions, wondering why they gave way to him in the first place.

“Ah!”

At that moment, Leng Rou’s cold demeanor underwent a drastic change as she exclaimed and covered her mouth.

Ji Chengtian was stunned and his eyes were filled with disbelief.

“J-Junior Brother Su! Y-You’re alive?!” Xue Yi’s voice was trembling with excitement.

Little fatty pushed through the crowd and rushed in front of Su Zimo in the blink of an eye. He pounded on Su Zimo’s chest which gave off a resounding echo before grinning foolishly. “It’s real, it’s real! Ha... hahaha!”

Su Zimo smiled gently and his gaze swept past Leng Rou, Xue Yi, Ji Chengtian and the others before nodding his head.

Even though he had asked about the outcome of the battle at Dongling Valley, Su Zimo felt a sense of sadness when he saw the small number of people arriving from the sect.

This should not have been the case.

Ethereal Peak should have had more than a hundred elite Foundation Establishment Cultivators and a majestic form.

Even disciples of True Fire Sect should not have dared to speak so rudely to disciples of Ethereal Peak.

But now, everyone from Ethereal Peak could only lower their heads in helplessness and choose to retreat against the provocations from disciples of True Fire Sect.

Su Zimo was enraged but his expression turned colder.

“Bro, where have you been for the past three years? Why haven’t there been any news of you at all? How did you manage to survive back then?” Little fatty had countless doubts and was waiting for Su Zimo to resolve them.

“It’s a long story. I’ll tell you in the future if there’s a chance.”

Sweeping his gaze across the many disciples of True Fire Sect, Su Zimo asked in a cold manner, “Who was the one who said that there is no one from Ethereal Peak who can refine weapons?”

“I did.”

Tao Feng sized up Su Zimo, twisted his neck and scoffed, “Why? Are you unhappy?”

“You even said that the Weapon Refinement Masters of Ethereal Peak are jokes?” Su Zimo did not answer and continued asking.

“That’s right, I said that!”

Tao Feng laughed. "Also, I'm telling you that it is the truth! If you're unhappy, it's easy to settle things. Just come and compete against me!"

"Junior Brother Su, compete against him! We believe in you!" Xue Yi clenched his fists.

Even though Xue Yi had not seen Su Zimo for three years, he believed that the latter's skill in weapon refinement was still stronger than his. In fact, Su Zimo might even be able to refine middle-grade spirit weapons by now.

"Do you dare to compete, huh?" Tao Feng glared at Su Zimo in a provocative manner.

Su Zimo did not even look back and remarked indifferently, "You're not qualified to compete with me."

The crowd quietened down instantly.

In an instant, it became even noisier.

"Haha! This kid is really funny! He's the first one who dares to say that Tao Feng isn't qualified!"

"Who is this guy? He really doesn't know his place."

"He should be inexperienced and ignorant. To think that he would dare spout of such nonsense without even knowing who Tao Feng is, he's really an embarrassment to Ethereal Peak."

Laughter erupted from the crowd and many cultivators pointed and gossiped about Su Zimo.

Tao Feng was very pleased as he smiled at Su Zimo smugly, as though he was looking at a joke.

"Su Zimo?"

Suddenly, a girl's voice that carried some doubt in it came from the other side of the crowd.

Su Zimo turned around and their eyes met.

There was a slight pause before the two of them peeled their gazes away and returned to normal.

It was Shen Mengqi!

The crowd at that side was filled with disciples from Iridescent Clouds Palace and Shen Mengqi was amongst them!

Ever since they parted ways in the capital of Yan Country, Su Zimo no longer felt any stir in his heart now that he was seeing Shen Mengqi again.

She came to Su Zimo's side and frowned. "It's indeed you. Even after three years, you're still so arrogant!"

"Do you know who he is?" Shen Mengqi pointed at Tao Feng and questioned Su Zimo.

Su Zimo shook his head. "I don't."

With a tinge of reprimand in her tone, Shen Mengqi said in a deep voice, "He's Tao Feng, a Weapon Refinement Master of True Fire Sect! True Fire Sect is renowned for their ability to control flames and

they will occupy at least three spots on the elixir and weapon rankings each time. As for Ethereal Peak, you guys can't even get a single spot! How can you compete with him in terms of weapon refinement?"

"I'm not intending to compete with him. Like I said, he's not qualified," Su Zimo's tone was still as calm and natural, as though he was stating a fact.

However, Su Zimo's words only attracted even more ridicule.

Shen Mengqi laughed out of anger. "Fellow Daoist Tao Feng is lauded as the number one Weapon Refinement Master of the younger generation. Saying that he's not qualified only exemplifies your ignorance and arrogance!"

"Indeed, truly ignorant," Su Zimo nodded with a mocking look in his eyes.

"I believe in Junior Brother Su!"

Right then, Leng Rou spoke all of a sudden. Even though her tone was cold, it was extremely firm.

"If he says that Tao Feng isn't qualified, Tao Feng definitely isn't qualified!"

When he heard that, Su Zimo smiled faintly at Leng Rou and nodded his head.

Shen Mengqi felt inexplicably vexed when she saw that.

"Fellow Daoist, I can understand how you want to support your fellow sect mate. However, you can't do it blindly or it'll only bring shame to Ethereal Peak!"

Shen Mengqi glared at Leng Rou and sneered, "Let me tell you, there's only one person in the capital of Great Zhou who can say that Tao Feng is not qualified. That is none other than the number one Weapon Refinement Master of the Great Zhou Dynasty, Mr. Mo, Mo Ling!"

The crowd fell silent upon hearing the words 'Mr. Mo'.

That name indeed carried a strange magic to it.

Tao Feng nodded as well. "If Mr. Mo is here, I'm willing to listen to his teachings."

He paused for a moment before glancing askance at Su Zimo. "But, who do you think you are!"

When Shen Mengqi saw how indifferent Su Zimo was towards the words 'Mr. Mo', she could not help but shake her head and sigh gently. "Seems like, you've never even heard of Mr. Mo before."

Her sigh revealed a sense of superiority, as though it was an honor worth bragging about to know of Mr. Mo.

Chapter 306: Gathering

Su Zimo turned and asked with a fake smile, "Are you very close to Mr. Mo?"

"I..."

Shen Mengqi was stunned by his question and looked flustered.

As a Foundation Establishment Cultivator, how would she have the chance to know Mr. Mo?

Su Zimo smiled. "Seems like you're not close to him. In that case, have you met him before?"

Su Zimo's gaze seemed to have a deeper meaning and it made Shen Mengqi feel inexplicably frustrated.

Composing herself, Shen Mengqi raised her chin and replied smugly, "I've never met Mr. Mo before but I took part in his auction once! Without experiencing and seeing it for yourself, it's impossible for you to imagine how much influence a Weapon Refinement Master can possess!"

Su Zimo remained silent as he looked at Shen Mengqi with a faint smile on his face.

"You don't have to look at me like that."

Shen Mengqi harrumphed. "Who do you think Mr. Mo is? It's only normal that I haven't seen him before. Even among the thousands of Golden Cores sitting at the spectator area, few of them have seen the true face of Mr. Mo!"

Smiling, Su Zimo looked at Shen Mengqi quietly. "What exactly are you trying to say?"

"I just want to tell you that even though you're here to take part in the sect competition, it doesn't mean anything!"

Shen Mengqi clutched her fists tightly. "You're still as brazen, arrogant and ignorant as ever! You haven't even heard of Mr. Mo before! I advise you to not compete later on lest you embarrass yourself!"

There was something else that Shen Mengqi did not say.

Su Zimo, even though you've entered the cultivation world and are here at the sect competition as well, you'll never be able to beat me!

Shen Mengqi only wanted to prove one thing.

That one single thing that she had never been able to let go for the past few years.

That year, that day, in that small town... she did not make the wrong choice.

"Your master is here too, right?" Suddenly, Su Zimo asked.

"What do you want?"

Suddenly, Shen Mengqi became nervous and frowned. "Su Zimo, I advise you to calm down. Do you have a death wish? My master was truly angered over what happened three years ago!"

Three years ago, in the capital of Yan Country, Su Zimo severely injured a group of disciples from Iridescent Clouds Palace and even killed one of them.

That matter naturally could not be hidden from Perfected Being Cang Lang.

Su Zimo smiled and said slowly, "I heard that your master, Perfected Being Cang Lang, is on good terms with Mr. Mo. In fact, Mr. Mo is even willing to customize a supreme-grade spirit weapon for him for free on just a single condition."

Shen Mengqi's expression changed.

That incident was an absolute humiliation for Perfected Being Cang Lang and had spread through the entire capital in less than a day.

No one in Iridescent Clouds Palace dared to discuss that matter!

With a profound gaze, Su Zimo said meaningfully, "Shen Mengqi, have you ever thought about why Mr. Mo would propose that condition?"

Almost everyone knew that the condition was for Perfected Being Cang Lang to kneel down.

At that moment, Shen Mengqi seemed to have thought of something. Just as she was in deep thought, she heard a call by her ear, interrupting her train of thought.

"Junior sister, he is Su Zimo?"

A man wearing the robes of Iridescent Clouds Palace strode over. He was handsome and extraordinary, carrying an elegance in his graceful steps as he stared at Su Zimo with a hint of killing intent."

"Ah, he is..." Shen Mengqi replied instinctively.

She had vaguely thought of an answer to Su Zimo's question but after being interrupted by Senior Brother Si Yutang, she could not recall anything.

"You were the one who killed one of our disciples, huh?" Si Yutang closed in to Su Zimo and asked coldly with an unfriendly expression.

"That's me," Su Zimo replied indifferently.

"This punk is really daring to kill cultivators of Iridescent Clouds Palace!"

"This time round, Ethereal Peak is already weak to begin with and yet they have a disciple who has so many enemies. In an instant, he offended both True Fire Sect and Iridescent Clouds Palace! I think Ethereal Peak is doomed."

The surrounding cultivators discussed fervently at the side.

Frowning, Shen Mengqi dissuaded softly, "Senior brother, forget it. We're in the capital of Great Zhou."

"Forget it? Fufu."

Si Yutang was unmoved and sneered coldly, "Si Zimo, do you dare to participate in the competition for the Spirit Ranking?"

Before Su Zimo could reply, a shout from the crowd drew away everyone's attention.

"Look, over there!"

"He can actually fly in the capital? Who is he?"

"From the looks of it, they should be the princes!"

In the sky not far away, five men flew through the air under the escort of powerful Imperial Army Golden Cores. They were dressed in rich clothes, descending slowly onto the spectator area with a graceful bearing.

Arriving beneath the emperor's throne, the five of them took their seats in the second major area and nodded to their surroundings.

Before long, there was another commotion among the crowd.

Not too far away, two women appeared in midair.

The woman in front had an extraordinary appearance. She had a smile on her face and body was full of curves, exuding a mature and alluring aura.

The other girl wore a pink dress and had a petite yet exquisitely shaped body. The only pity was that she was wearing a veil and her face could not be seen clearly.

Si Yutang coughed gently and declared proudly, "If I'm not wrong, the person in front should be Chief Steward Gu of the Sky Treasure Auction House!"

"Chief Steward Gu is truly a seductress," Another cultivator looked infatuated as he gulped.

"Who is the girl behind her? Even though she's wearing a veil, her eyes are really pretty and seem like they can speak."

As everyone discussed, the girl in pink suddenly turned around and looked towards them.

Her big and clear eyes blinked before curving into a pair of crescents as she beamed widely.

"Look, that girl in pink is looking at me!"

"Don't talk nonsense. She's definitely looking at me!"

The surrounding cultivators started arguing.

Tao Feng of True Fire Sect sneered internally but he pretended to be calm and nodded towards the girl in pink.

It was the same for Si Yutang who hurriedly nodded and gestured, thinking that the girl in pink had noticed him.

When Su Zimo saw that, he sighed internally – Demoness Ji's methods were truly formidable. If she were to grow further in the future, she would definitely be someone who could overturn the world with her fingers!

Under everyone's watchful gazes, Gu Xi and Demoness Ji descended slowly, arriving at the second spectator area and sat down together with the princes!

Most of the cultivators were unsure who the second area was reserved for. But now, everyone was enlightened!

The second area was occupied either by the royal family or the most influential cultivators in the capital!

There weren't many seats in the second area and there were only two remaining after Gu Xi and Demoness Ji took their seats.

"Look!"

Someone in the crowd pointed into the distance and exclaimed.

In the sky far away, a group of palace maids flew through the air. They wore thin veils with ribbons around their necks, looking extremely ravishing.

They seemed like they were treading on the clouds as they escorted a graceful and luxurious carriage over.

Within the carriage, a slender and exquisite figure sat – her appearance was faintly indiscernible under the guise of the bead curtain.

“This is...”

There were more than 100,000 cultivators surrounding the sunken area. At this moment, all of them watched with agape mouths and shocked expressions.

Chapter 307: Very Beautiful

“That must be the third princess of Great Zhou!”

“I heard that the third princess entered Azure Frost Sect for cultivation under the name of Yaoxue. Now that she has regained her identity, she will most probably not return to Azure Frost Sect.”

“I heard that the third princess is beautiful and ravishing. If only we could take a closer look at her.”

A commotion broke out among the crowd.

Pondering for a moment, Tao Feng’s eyes lit up in realization. “So, it’s Fellow Daoist Yaoxue. In that case, I’ve met the third princess before.”

“Amazing, Senior Brother Tao!”

“Senior Brother Tao, is the third princess really as beautiful as the legends say?”

Many True Fire Sect disciples beside Tao Feng revealed looks of envy as they fought to ask questions.

Tao Feng was delighted.

On the other side, Si Yutang smiled leisurely and said, “I was fortunate enough to have conversed with Fellow Daoist Yaoxue before. Back then, I already had a feeling that she was unique and had an extraordinary aura. So, this is her true identity. It’s no wonder then.”

Si Yutang’s sentence was extremely particular. On the one hand, he was boasting that he had once chatted with the third princess of Great Zhou. On the other hand, he was subtly praising himself for his keen observation.

Naturally, his words attracted flattering from a group of cultivators as well.

Apart from Iridescent Clouds Palace, Ethereal Peak and True Fire Sect, there were hundreds of Foundation Establishment disciples from Azure Frost Sect.

When they heard the discussions over at the side of Tao Feng and Si Yutang, many Azure Frost Sect disciples scoffed coldly.

One of them said, "Senior Brother Jun and Senior Sister Yaoxue are close friends and yet he isn't even saying anything. Yet, you guys are bragging over seeing her or talking to her once. How laughable!"

"Isn't that right! Only Senior Brother Jun is worthy of Senior Sister Yaoxue!"

The Senior Brother Jun that the Azure Frost Sect disciples were mentioning was Jun Hao, the number one of all Foundation Establishment Cultivators in Azure Frost Sect!

He had courted Yaoxue painstakingly for many years but her attitude towards him had always been neutral.

At that moment, Jun Hao was standing in front of the many disciples of Azure Frost Sect. Hands behind his back, he looked dignified and merely smiled faintly without saying anything upon hearing the comments.

As everyone discussed, the carriage that was originally headed for the spectator area suddenly paused. Changing directions, it moved towards them slowly.

"This..."

"Could it be that the third princess is coming over?"

Tao Feng suddenly straightened his clothes, feeling a little nervous.

Si Yutang's heart also started thumping and his mouth was dry.

A thought flashed across their minds at the same moment, "Could the third princess be here to see me?"

The carriage in midair was clearly about to descend in front of them!

"Senior Sister Yaoxue is coming over!"

"Senior Brother Jun, the third princess is definitely here for you!"

A few Azure Frost Sect disciples said excitedly.

Jun Hao of Azure Frost Sect smiled and looked at the person inside the carriage with a gentle gaze.

Splash!

A white lotus-like arm reached out and lifted the bead curtain, revealing a refreshing and flawlessly beautiful face.

Everyone's breathing stopped.

Ji Yaoxue was wearing a faint yellow long robe; it was made of unique materials and had intricate patterns carved on it, looking extremely gorgeous as though it was created by the heavens.

"So beautiful!"

The crowd gasped.

In truth, Ji Yaoxue's appearance could not be considered as peerless nor could she match against Die Yue. She was merely comparable to Leng Rou and each had their own merits.

However, she was the princess of Great Zhou after all.

The light yellow robe on her today was extraordinary and fit her perfectly, accentuating her slim and graceful figure as well as adding a layer of class and elegance.

A Weapon Refinement Master's eyes flickered as he said in a deep voice, "This robe is not simple. It seems to be an extremely high-graded defensive spirit weapon!"

"That's the princess of the Great Zhou Dynasty for you. Even a single robe is a high-graded defensive spirit weapon. By the looks of it, that seems to be customized for her."

Many cultivators revealed looks of envy.

Some of the female cultivators were even feeling jealous, fantasizing about how the pale yellow robe would look on them instead.

With light steps, Ji Yaoxue walked towards the crowd.

The crowd subconsciously parted to make way for her.

Jun Hao of Azure Frost Sect cupped his fists and said sincerely with a smile, "Junior Sister Yaoxue, it's only been a few days since we last met but you're really becoming prettier..."

Jun Hao could not continue.

Initially, he thought that Ji Yaoxue was here for him.

However, she merely glanced at him nonchalantly and nodded her head as a form of greeting.

Brushing by him, Ji Yaoxue did not say a single word at all.

In fact, she did not even pause for a moment.

A gust of fragrant wind blew past, leaving Jun Hao with his hands that were hovering in midair and a slightly stiff expression on his face.

Tao Feng was overjoyed when he saw that!

Although he was looking forward to it, Tao Feng did not bear much hope – after all, he had only met Ji Yaoxue once.

But now, Ji Yaoxue did not bother about Jun Hao from Azure Frost Sect and was headed in his direction!

When he saw Ji Yaoxue approaching, Tao Feng coughed lightly and revealed a bright smile. "Greetings, third princess, I am Tao..."

Tao Feng could not continue either.

Ji Yaoxue glanced at him and walked past without even nodding her head.

She looked as though she was glancing at a stranger.

Little fatty seized the rare opportunity and could not help but laugh. “My, the princess doesn’t even know who you are and yet you’re bragging about meeting her once.”

Tao Feng’s expression darkened as he snorted.

Si Yutang took a deep breath of air and calmed himself down when he saw the third princess headed towards him. He took a few steps forward and bowed slightly, cupping his fists. “I am...”

Ji Yaoxue walked past him without even glancing once at him.

Flushing red with embarrassment, Si Yutang looked awkward and wished he could dig a hole and hide in it.

“Who is the third princess looking for?”

“I don’t know.”

As Ji Yaoxue walked, the crowd dispersed to both sides and only a single person did not budge, looking extremely striking.

“Su Zimo, what are you still standing there for? Make way!”

Shen Mengqi frowned and hollered.

Su Zimo did not say anything.

Scoffing coldly, Shen Mengqi continued, “Su Zimo, perhaps no one could do anything to you in the capital for offending True Fire Sect and Iridescent Clouds Palace. However, if you offend the third princess of Great Zhou, no one can save you!”

Su Zimo remained silent.

“Why are you still as stubborn as when you were young? You refuse to kneel when you’re asked to and now, you refuse to move away as well!”

Shen Mengqi gritted her teeth and walked towards Su Zimo, wanting to push the latter away.

Right then, Ji Yaoxue had already arrived in front of Su Zimo and stopped in her tracks.

Shen Mengqi was also rooted in her tracks instinctively.

The originally noisy crowd quietened down.

Everyone’s gaze was on Ji Yaoxue while her gaze was on Su Zimo.

Their eyes met.

Ji Yaoxue turned her body slightly, causing her pale yellow dress to flutter slightly – she looked like a young girl in love.

Blinking her bright eyes, Ji Yaoxue asked with a smile, “Zimo, how is it?”

Everyone was stunned and their jaws nearly dropped to the ground.

Shen Mengqi’s mind was in a state of chaos.

Zimo?

The third princess was referring to him as Zimo?

Why was she calling him so intimately?

What rights did she have?

Ji Yaoxue's question was vague and no one understood what she was asking.

However, she knew that Su Zimo would definitely understand.

After all, that pale yellow dress was personally gifted to her by this person.

Su Zimo nodded. "Very beautiful."

The next moment.

She smiled like a flower.

Chapter 308: It's Over for Ethereal Peak

In this woman's heart, no amount of praises from anyone else could compare with the two words he had just said.

The woman's smile stunned everyone, causing their hearts to flutter.

Many cultivators froze on the spot, unable to recover from their shocks.

There was something wrong with the conversation.

What were those two doing right in front of everyone?

Many cultivators initially had fantasies towards the third princess of Great Zhou. But now, they felt a sharp pain in their chests as though they had been severely injured.

Xue Yi muttered in disbelief, "This... Junior Brother Su actually knows the third princess?"

"Hehe."

Little fatty pinched his chubby chin as the flames of gossip burned in his eyes. With a perverted smile, he said, "From the looks of it, their relationship isn't simple at all."

Tao Feng's face darkened as he looked at Su Zimo with obvious hostility.

Si Yutang had long returned to the crowd after his utter embarrassment. He had a glum expression and snorted.

"What's going on? She isn't here for Senior Brother Jun?"

"Who is that man? Why is he so close to Senior Sister Yaoxue?"

Many of the Azure Frost Sect disciples frowned and whispered among themselves.

Jun Hao took a deep breath and lowered his eyes. His hands behind his back were clenched so tightly that veins popped out of them for a brief moment before disappearing thereafter.

Ji Yaoxue was delighted upon receiving Su Zimo's acknowledgement and said softly, "Wait here for a while. The sect competition is about to start."

"Yes."

Su Zimo nodded.

"I'll head over first then."

Smiling for a moment, Ji Yaoxue waved at Su Zimo before turning to leave in front of everyone.

Her actions earlier were rather bold and she had mustered up her courage. Now that she thought about it, her heart was still pounding.

In addition to the burning gazes around her, even though she was a princess, she could not help but feel a little shy and embarrassed to continue staying.

Ji Yaoxue noticed the occasional shyness and gentleness revealed by Ji Yaoxue. He could not help but frown with a subtle sadness in his eyes.

Right after, his expression changed and his eyes flickered in thought.

Something was not right!

There was something off about what Ji Yaoxue said!

She said that the sect competition was about to start and asked Su Zimo to stay here for a while – what was she going to do after that?

Or rather, what was this Su Zimo going to do?

Wasn't he merely going to take part in the sect competition?

"I'll head over first then."

That was Ji Yaoxue's second sentence. It did not sound like much at first glance but after thinking about it carefully, there was more to it.

As a princess of the Great Zhou Dynasty, the place where Ji Yaoxue was headed was the second spectator area – why would she tell Su Zimo that she was heading over first?

Unless... the reason why Ji Yaoxue said that was because Su Zimo was going to head over to the same place?

But, was that possible?

What rights does a Foundation Establishment Cultivator like him from Ethereal Peak have compared to the status of the other people seated at the second spectator area?

Subtly, Jun Hao surveyed his surroundings.

Many cultivators were excited as they discussed fervently about the peerless beauty of the third princess as well as her relationship with Su Zimo.

There were also some people who were still immersed in the previous scene and were in low spirits, unable to extricate themselves.

Apart from him, no one else noticed the abnormality in Ji Yaoxue's words.

"Perhaps I'm overthinking it."

Jun Hao muttered to himself.

"I've got it!"

Right then, a cultivator in the crowd suddenly said something as though he had discovered a huge secret.

"What?" Someone else asked.

The person said slowly, "Have you guys noticed that there's a seat left in the second spectator area after the third princess took her seat?"

"Yeah, so what?"

The person smiled smugly and replied, "I dare to bet that the seat is reserved for Mr. Mo!"

Many cultivators pondered for a while before they came to a realization.

"That's right, it must be Mr. Mo!"

"Yes, only Mr. Mo is qualified."

"That seat is alongside the princes and princesses and is merely beneath a single person. Indeed, only Mr. Mo is able to suppress every other Golden Core out there."

When he heard the discussions around him, Jun Hao let out a long breath and burst out in laughter.

"Since that seat is reserved for Mr. Mo, it has nothing to do with Su Zimo. In that case, I have indeed been overthinking things."

...

In reality, among the spectators, the elders of True Fire Sect had seen how Mr. Mo looked like in the palace.

However, there was a huge distance between the spectator area and the sunken area. Furthermore, there were more than a hundred thousand Foundation Establishment Cultivators, making the crowd seem like a black patch – the elders were not paying attention to that side at all.

Most of the Golden Cores at the spectator area were chatting merrily as they toasted one another.

Even though the sect competition was between the Foundation Establishment Cultivators, it was also an opportunity for many Golden Cores to expand their networks and influence.

“Senior brother, what are you thinking about?”

Xuan Yi was staring at the large crowd of Foundation Establishment Cultivators in a daze with a hint of melancholy on his face. When Liu Hui saw that, she could not help but feel worried and asked.

Retracting his gaze, Xuan Yi shook his head. “It’s nothing.”

A commotion broke out in the crowd from afar earlier. In that confusion, he seemed to have caught sight of the sleeves of a familiar looking set of green robes. However, it was drowned in the crowd in the blink of an eye.

Xuan Yi sighed gently, knowing that he was merely hallucinating out of mental exhaustion.

“Fellow Daoist Xuan Yi.”

Right then, a greeting sounded from the side. Glancing over, Xuan Yi caught sight of the person who spoke – Perfected Being Cang Lang of Iridescent Clouds Palace.

Perfected Being Cang Lang raised his glass and asked with a smile, “I heard that Ethereal Peak has an inner sect disciple called Su Zimo. I wonder whose disciple he is?”

Xuan Yi frowned. “Why the question, Fellow Daoist Cang Lang?”

“Fu, nothing much.”

Perfected Being Cang Lang laughed gently. “I’ve got some grudges with that kid and I want to ask for him from Ethereal Peak. I wonder if you could do me the favor.”

“No!”

Xuan Yi rejected him without thinking twice.

Perfected Being Cang Lang narrowed his long eyes slightly. He said slowly with a darkened expression, “That person killed two of my sect’s disciples. How should we settle that debt?”

“They have no one to blame for dying due to their inferiority in skills. Don’t you find it shameful for a Golden Core like yourself to come seek revenge?” Xuan Yi sneered.

Perfected Being Cang Lang replied leisurely, “Xuan Yi, let me advise you not to ruin the relationship between Iridescent Clouds Palace and Ethereal Peak over a mere Foundation Establishment Cultivator!”

“Are you representative of the entire Iridescent Clouds Palace, Perfected Being Cang Lang?”

With just a few words, the both of them were already at odds!

Right then, someone beside laughed sinisterly. “Brother Cang Lang, there’s no need to engage in a verbal battle with him. Ethereal Peak is already declining and yet he is so tough with his words? He’s only asking for trouble!”

“Sima Zhi, what are you trying to do?!” Xuan Yi’s expression changed slightly.

Perfected Being Cang Lang laughed. “Brother Sima, what do you need from me?”

Sima Zhi of True Fire Sect remarked casually, “Ethereal Peak merely brought a couple of people this time round. As long as our sects join forces for the Spirit Ranking competition, Ethereal Peak can do nothing even if they have a five meridian Foundation Establishment Cultivator!”

“Very well, we’ll let Ethereal Peak return empty-handed without a single spot this time round!”

A look of mockery flashed in Perfected Being Cang Lang’s eyes as he laughed. “One of the five major sects? Fufu, it’s over for Ethereal Peak!”

Chapter 309: Please Head to the Spectator Area

“Despicable!”

Xuan Yi clenched his fists and cursed through gritted teeth.

To begin with, Ethereal Peak was already weaker for this sect competition with only a single five meridian Foundation Establishment Cultivator who could compete. If he was specifically targeted, they would stand no chance at all.

“Roar!”

Right then, a heaven-shaking roar could be heard from the distant horizon, shaking the entire void in an extremely imposing manner.

Everyone’s hearts skipped a beat as they looked over.

Five massive and ferocious lions rushed over side by side with an aggressive momentum. They were covered with golden fur from head to toe without any impurities, as though their bodies were burning with golden flames.

“Those are Golden Lions!”

“Golden Lions are ancient remnant beasts that are at Golden Core realm!”

The five Golden Lions were tied with iron chains and dragged an ancient war chariot behind them.

On it, a middle-aged man stood wearing a long golden robe. His eyes were like lightning, exuding authority by themselves and he exuded a domineering aura that swept across the world!

The man on the chariot was none other than the Emperor of Great Zhou!

“Greetings, Your Majesty!”

All the Imperial Army soldiers knelt on one knee and roared in unison. They were so loud that it was terrifying!

All the Golden Cores at the spectator area got up hurriedly and cupped their fists, nodding in acknowledgment.

“Soldiers, please rise. Everyone, please sit.”

The emperor’s tone was calm as he leaped down from the war chariot. Arriving at the highest seat of the spectator area, he sat down.

...

"I finally caught sight of the Emperor of Great Zhou. We didn't come for this sect competition in vain."

"What a strong aura. I almost knelt down because of it too!"

Around the four jade pillars, many Foundation Establishment Cultivators were impressed by the magnificence of the emperor as they discussed excitedly in hushed voices.

Su Zimo's expression was indifferent and his eyes were calm as water – it was as though he was unaffected by the emperor's arrival.

Shen Mengqi swept her glance over and asked in a seemingly casual manner, "Su Zimo, how did you know the princess of Great Zhou?"

"What has it got to do with you?" Su Zimo asked instead without even looking at Shen Mengqi.

She harrumphed coldly. "Shen Mengqi, don't be smug. What's so great about knowing the princess?"

"Besides, let me remind you that you were already enemies of Iridescent Clouds Palace and True Fire Sect to begin with. Now, even the disciples of Azure Frost Sect are showing signs of hostility towards you because of the princess!"

Scoffing coldly, Shen Mengqi continued, "The princess's actions have unknowingly established many powerful foes for you. Let's see how you deal with things later on!"

Su Zimo smiled calmly.

Spectator area.

The emperor pushed his hands down the air and the crowd gradually quietened.

In a low voice, the emperor said, "The sect competition's about to begin soon. Before this, I want to introduce a Weapon Refinement Master that I believe everyone has heard of."

"The number one Weapon Refinement Master of Great Zhou!"

"Mr. Mo, Mo Ling!"

"Of course we know about him!"

Many Golden Cores at the spectator area smiled and nodded with anticipation in their eyes.

The emperor continued, "Although all of you have heard of his name, not many have seen his true appearance."

"That's right."

Perfected Being Yi Ning smiled bitterly. "Previously, I wanted to thank Mr. Mo personally. It's a pity I didn't get to meet him."

Perfected Being Yun Shan of Southern Mountains Sect nodded as well. "That's right. Mr. Mo is way too mysterious."

The emperor smiled and said, "I invited Mr. Mo here to be the judge of the weapon refinement segment for the sect competition this time round. Soon, all of you will be able to meet him."

Many Golden Cores were shaken.

Which Golden Core wouldn't want to befriend a Weapon Refinement Master who could customize supreme-grade spirit weapons?

Perfected Being Cang Lang narrowed his eyes and scanned the surroundings.

He wanted to see who exactly this Mr. Mo was and what grudges they had such that the latter humiliated him in public!

Around the four jade pillars, many Foundation Establishment Cultivators stared at the distant sky with widened eyes, wanting to see the legendary Mr. Mo at the first instance.

"How do you guys think Mr. Mo's going to arrive?"

"Don't worry, his entrance will definitely not be lesser compared to the princes and princesses."

"Given Mr. Mo's status and strength, I believe he can even ride a pure-blooded ferocious beast over."

Everyone discussed excitedly.

Little fatty turned around as well and asked excitedly, "Bro, how old do you think Mr. Mo is? How does he look like?"

Su Zimo replied, "In his twenties..."

"Hahaha!"

The moment Su Zimo spoke, everyone burst into laughter. Many people looked at Su Zimo as though they were looking at an idiot.

Tao Feng's eyes were filled with mockery as he chuckled. "Weapon Refinement Masters of Ethereal Peak are truly jokes! Fufu!"

Shen Mengqi frowned. "Su Zimo, if you don't know, just say that you don't know. Nobody is going to blame you for that. By spouting nonsense, you will only attract ridicule by others and expose your ignorance!"

"Oh?" Su Zimo raised his brow.

Shen Mengqi continued in a low voice, "Mr. Mo can customize supreme-grade spirit weapons. Do you think that someone in his twenties can do that? Even someone like me who doesn't know how to refine weapons know of that logic."

At that moment, the emperor's voice sounded once more.

"In fact, Mr. Mo has long arrived and he's amongst you guys!"

"Ah?"

"Mr. Mo is already here? Where?"

At the spectator area, all the Golden Cores turned around instinctively, only to realize that the people around them were also looking back with confused expressions.

The emperor raised his voice, "Mr. Mo, please head to the spectator area."

The moment he finished speaking, more than a thousand Golden Cores and more than a hundred thousand Foundation Establishment Cultivators fell silent suddenly.

Everyone scanned their surroundings constantly with bated breaths.

Everyone from Ethereal Peak, Tao Feng, Jun Hao, Si Yutang and Shen Mengqi were searching instinctively as well.

All of a sudden!

A figure moved past the crowd, attracting the attention of everyone.

"Su Zimo, what are you doing?!"

Shen Mengqi frowned and yelled.

Su Zimo was unmoved.

Tao Feng laughed coldly. "This guy really doesn't know any better. He's even acting brazenly before the emperor!"

"They're calling for Mr. Mo, not you..." Shen Mengqi shouted again. However, her expression changed starkly, as though she had suddenly realized something.

Seemingly oblivious to everything, Su Zimo continued to walk forward. He patted little fatty who was dumbstricken on the shoulders and smiled faintly before exiting the crowd.

Jun Hao of Azure Frost Sect shuddered as he looked at Su Zimo's back view, guessing a vague possibility.

It did not matter how absurd or crazy that possibility was.

In the blink of an eye, Su Zimo was exposed in the midst of more than a hundred thousand Foundation Establishment Cultivators!

Under everyone's scorching gazes, Su Zimo did not look uneasy at all. Instead, he walked forward calmly with his hands behind his back.

Crossing the sunken area, he headed towards the spectator area.

"Who is that person? Why is he heading there?"

"He's only in his twenties, he can't be Mr. Mo!"

"That's right! How can Mr. Mo be a Foundation Establishment Cultivator!"

Many cultivators in the crowd sneered.

After sneering, everyone looked at Su Zimo who was getting further away from them. Suddenly, a strange silence filled the crowd.

A weak voice sounded, “None of us have ever met Mr. Mo before. Why can’t he be a Foundation Establishment Cultivator in his twenties?”

No one replied.

Everyone was waiting for an answer.

Chapter 310: All Eyes Were on Him!

In the spectator area, the many Golden Cores started scanning their surroundings and discussing the moment the emperor finished his sentence – all of them wanted to spot Mr. Mo right away.

Some Golden Cores noticed a green-robed cultivator approaching from afar but they did not take it to heart.

That was a Foundation Establishment Cultivator in his twenties after all and no one paid attention.

However, as time passed by, no one within the spectator area stood forth. However, the green-robed cultivator who was headed over approached closer and closer.

More Golden Cores were starting to notice this.

Elder Zhang of True Fire Sect had met Mo Ling in the palace before. When he caught sight of the green-robed cultivator heading over, he merely harrumphed.

However, Elder Zhang focused his gaze immediately after and it remained stuck on the sect badge that was hanging on the green-robed cultivator’s waist.

While he had indeed caught sight of Mo Ling’s appearance before, he did not know of the latter’s true identity, let alone know what the latter had to do with Ethereal Peak.

Sima Zhi frowned and asked, “Elder Zhang, haven’t you met this Mo Ling before? Where is he?”

“How could this be? How could this be!”

“H-He’s from Ethereal Peak...”

Elder Zhang did not seem to have heard anything as he muttered to himself in a lost manner.

Golden Cores of the five major sects were seated in the third spectator area.

All of them noticed Elder Zhang’s abnormality and looked down in the direction of his gaze.

The Golden Cores of Azure Frost Sect and Southern Mountains Sect did not have much of a reaction, merely frowning – they were puzzled as to why this Foundation Establishment Cultivator of Ethereal Peak was walking over.

However, Perfected Being Cang Lang narrowed his eyes and there was a flash of killing intent in them!

Su Zimo!

Do you think that I won’t be able to lay my hands on you because you have Ethereal Peak backing you?

Perfected Being Cang Lang sneered and finished his wine in one gulp.

“Ah!”

Liu Hui gasped and looked at the green-robed cultivator who was afar in disbelief.

Xuan Yi’s expression changed as well. In the midst of his emotional turmoil, he leaped up with joy in his eyes!

He’s not dead!

He was indeed still alive!

At that moment, Xuan Yi suddenly felt much relieved.

The fact that Su Zimo wasn’t dead meant that he would have a successor for his sword formation techniques.

Perhaps, if Su Zimo were to head back and cultivate for another ten years, with his talent, he might be able to leave his name on the Weapon Ranking for the next sect competition!

Or perhaps... if he were to train for another ten years, Su Zimo might even be able to vie for the Spirit Ranking!

At that thought, Xuan Yi could not help but smile to himself.

It did not matter even if Ethereal Peak did not obtain a single spot for the sect competition this time round – Su Zimo’s survival meant that there was still hope for Ethereal Peak.

“If Wen Xuan knew that you were still alive, perhaps he would feel better...”

Xuan Yi lamented internally.

...

Many Golden Cores frowned in displeasure as they watched the approaching green-robed cultivator below the spectator area.

After all, the seats were only meant for Golden Cores and not any random Foundation Establishment Cultivators; even a Foundation Establishment Cultivator from Ethereal Peak was not spared from the rules!

The discussions in the spectator area grew louder as many Golden Cores were upset.

At the entrance of the spectator, the three guard squad commanders, the bearded man, Bai Yuhan and Bald Vulture were calm and ignored everyone.

“Hey!”

One of the Golden Cores drank quite a bit and his cheeks were red. With alcohol bolstering his courage, he stood up and shouted to the three commanders.

“Fellow... Fellow Daoists! Who is that!” The man raised his wine glass and pointed to Su Zimo unsteadily while burping.

The three commanders lowered their eyes and remained silent.

The person's body swayed and looked intoxicated as he shouted, "This is the spectator area for Golden Cores! What's that person doing here? You guys are guards of the capital and Imperial Army soldiers! Why aren't you chasing him away!"

The three commanders remained motionless, as if they had not heard anything.

The discussion in the spectator area quietened gradually.

Some of the sharper cultivators slowly regained their senses.

The three commanders were not stopping the green-robed cultivator who was approaching and the emperor was being silent about it as well!

What did that mean?

Psst!

Many cultivators gasped and their expressions changed.

Could it be...

Could that young Foundation Establishment Cultivator be...

The drunk Golden Core sobered up a little as well. Shaking his head, he struggled to open his eyes and look at the approaching person.

At that moment, the gazes of more than a thousand Golden Cores and more than a hundred thousand Foundation Establishment Cultivators landed on that green-robed cultivator who was about to step on the golden carpet!

All eyes were on him!

Su Zimo arrived before the spectator area and the three commanders on both sides bowed with cupped fists. "Please take your seat, Mr. Mo."

Nodding his head, Su Zimo stepped on the golden carpet and walked up with a calm expression!

Boom!

Those words fell as if a gigantic rock was thrown into the middle of a calm lake surface, causing a storm to brew in everyone's hearts!

The massive square was completely silent at that moment, as though everyone was strangled by an invisible force and could not breathe.

It was the same at the spectator area as well.

Above and below, time seemed to have stopped.

Everyone was petrified on the spot motionlessly and the green-robed cultivator on the golden carpet was the only one who was continuing with his footsteps one by one!

Clang!

The wine glass in the hands of the drunken Golden Core fell to the ground with a resounding clash.

That sound seemed to break the frozen time.

Breaking out in cold sweat, that person sobered up instantly and shuddered at the thought of what he had just said. He cupped his fists and bowed hurriedly, saying with a frantic expression, “G-G-Greetings, Mr. Mo!”

The cultivators at the bottom spectator area were all itinerant cultivators.

Most of the itinerant cultivators had not experienced massive events and coupled with how prominent Mo Ling’s name was, they were shocked – some of them even jolted up instinctively.

“Mr. Mo!”

“Mr. Mo!”

As Su Zimo advanced, rows of Golden Cores stood up on both sides of the spectator area, bowing with cupped fists – it was a spectacular sight.

It was a formidable event!

At that moment, everyone forgot about the age and cultivation of that man before them.

All they could feel was shock and awe coming from the green-robed cultivator. He had an aura superior to everything that was impossible to resist!

The higher the stairs, the greater the strength and status of the Golden Cores on both sides.

Initially, some of the Golden Cores at the back had no intention of standing up to greet because of their statuses.

However, they were helpless against the hundreds of Golden Cores before them who were standing up. They would seem like eyesores if they continued sitting.

With almost no time to contemplate, coupled with the fact that their minds were in a mess, they stood up automatically when Su Zimo approached.

As Su Zimo walked, the Golden Cores at the spectator area had all turned into part of the background.

“Well, well, well!”

Xuan Yi’s heart skipped a beat as he remarked repeatedly.

Even as a Golden Core, Liu Hui covered her mouth with reddened eyes. Finally, she could not contain her emotions and cried.

When they arrived in the capital, they had suffered too much ridicule and mocking gazes.

News of how Ethereal Peak was weakened, how Ethereal Peak could not hang on anymore and how they were about to be kicked out of the five major sects spread endlessly.

She had no way of refuting all of that.

But at this moment, all of those rumors were gone with the wind!

She finally understood why the three commanders told them that Ethereal Peak was about to become famous again!

From this day forth, who would dare claim that Ethereal Peak has nobody worthy!

Chapter 311: Regret

Under everyone's watchful gazes, in front of all the Golden Cores who were greeting with cupped fists, Su Zimo came before Xuan Yi and Liu Hui. He bowed deeply and said in a deep voice, "Disciple of Ethereal Peak, Su Zimo, pays his greetings to the peak masters."

"G-Good child! Hurry, get up!"

Xuan Yi hurried forward and raised Su Zimo's arms in an emotional manner.

"So, Mr. Mo's real name is Su Zimo."

"Mr. Mo is so young. He's only at Foundation Establishment?"

"Didn't everyone say that Ethereal Peak is bad at weapon refinement? Why did such a monster appear out of nowhere? This is phenomenal!"

Many Golden Cores muttered softly as they looked at Su Zimo curiously.

Liu Hui turned and wiped her tears, laughing and saying, "Xuan Yi, stop pulling him. Let him get to his seat."

"Right, right!"

Xuan Yi snapped to his senses and replied, "Hurry over. We'll talk when we get back. We've got plenty of time."

"Yes."

Su Zimo nodded and turned to continue forward. His gaze landed on Perfected Being Cang Lang who was not far away.

Their eyes met.

Su Zimo smiled.

Perfected Being Cang Lang glared at the approaching Su Zimo with an ashen face – he truly could not bring himself to smile.

"How could this be?"

Three years ago, when he heard that Su Zimo had also become a cultivator, Perfected Being Cang Lang merely laughed indifferently.

There was no way Su Zimo could ever catch up to him even if the former had stepped into cultivation.

In his eyes, Su Zimo was still the same ant that he could trample, suppress and oppress as he willed!

However, that small ant had merely grown a little more.

He had cultivated for more than two hundred years – what was his identity, strength and status like?

Even the connections that he had accumulated over the past two hundred years were more than enough for him to crush that Su Zimo!

But now, the moment Su Zimo stepped foot on the golden carpet, Perfected Being Cang Lang realized that apart from his own strength, all his advantages were no longer existent!

He could not compare with Su Zimo in terms of status, influence and connections.

Or rather, he could not compare with Mr. Mo.

A month ago, right at the entrance of Mo Spirit Weapon Workshop, Su Zimo promised that his head could be exchanged for a supreme-grade spirit weapon!

At that moment, Perfected Being Cang Lang could clearly feel that many Golden Cores were tempted; some of them even revealed their killing intents.

If not for the fact that he was in the capital and no one would dare to act rashly, there was a high chance he would have been mass attacked!

That was the unique way in which fate worked.

In the past, Perfected Being Cang Lang could delete Su Zimo's life with a flick of his fingers.

But now, his head was almost gone just because of a promise from Su Zimo.

As he passed by Perfected Being Cang Lang, Su Zimo paused for a moment and turned to glance indifferently.

That single glance sent a chill down Perfected Being Cang Lang's spine!

He realized that the frail youth in the past was now a deep thorn in his flesh!

...

In the square, more than a hundred thousand Foundation Establishment Cultivators were stunned.

Apart from everyone of Ethereal Peak who were cheering, the other cultivators had complex expressions.

Earlier on, everyone thought that Su Zimo was a joke. It was only at this moment that they realized that they were the true jokes.

Jun Hao of Azure Frost Sect let out a long sigh.

Even though he had expected it, the blow was still rather huge when the outcome was truly known.

Tao Feng of True Fire Sect had a dark expression on his face. Each time he recalled what he had just said, his face turned paler.

“Hey, Fellow Daoist Tao Feng, you seem like you were upset when my bro said that you’re not qualified?” Little fatty asked with a grin.

Tao Feng’s expression was grim as he remained silent.

“Tsk, tsk, tsk!”

Little fatty pursed his lips and asked, “My, who was the one who was so arrogant that he wanted to compete with my bro in terms of weapon refinement? Why is he silent right now? Don’t be a coward!”

Tao Feng clenched his teeth and shivered. However, he could not say a word.

He had said too much earlier on. But now, every single word he said was being smashed back onto his face, causing it to burn!

Beside Tao Feng, a cold and sinister man stood glaring at Su Zimo in the spectator area with a killing intent in his eyes.

Recalling that he had provoked Su Zimo earlier on, Si Yutang felt a little guilty and laughed dryly, “Who would have thought that he would be Mr. Mo. Ha... ha ha!”

No one cared about him so it was a little awkward.

“Isn’t that right, junior sister?” Si Yutang turned to ask.

Shen Mengqi, who was beside him, seemed to have not heard anything. She stared blankly at the spectator area where that figure was getting further and rising higher, as though she had lost her soul.

Instantly, many things made sense to her.

Why Mr. Mo would send that message for her master, Perfected Being Cang Lang, to kneel down a month ago.

Why Su Zimo would dare declare that Tao Feng wasn’t qualified.

Why Su Zimo was indifferent at the mention of Mr. Mo.

Why Su Zimo would look at her strangely when she mentioned Mr. Mo.

Why even the third princess of Great Zhou would head over.

Why...

All of those questions could be explained with a single answer!

Su Zimo was Mr. Mo!

At that moment, she suddenly felt like a fool.

“The princess’s actions have unknowingly established many powerful foes for you. Let’s see how you deal with things later on!”

Shen Mengqi laughed at herself when she recalled what she had said earlier.

There was no need for Su Zimo to deal with things.

The moment he revealed his identity, it was more than enough.

Shen Mengqi was dazed.

Once upon a time, she thought that she would soar through the skies upon receiving that one in a million immortal affinity. She thought that she would be separated from Su Zimo and become someone of a completely different world from him.

But now, she suddenly realized.

Everything she had possessed in the past couple of years was nothing worth mentioning in front of Su Zimo.

Her life was perhaps lesser than a single promise of Su Zimo.

In that instant, Shen Mengqi regretted.

...

Before long, Su Zimo arrived at the second spectator area where there was only an empty seat.

It was a seat that was beneath a single person and above everyone else; one that ranked equally with the princes, princesses and the chief steward of Sky Treasure Auction House!

The emperor pointed and said, "Go on."

Su Zimo nodded.

Ji Yaoxue was beside the empty seat.

Both of them smiled at each other. The moment Su Zimo sat down, a gust of fragrant wind blew over.

Right after, someone else appeared on the other side of Su Zimo.

He turned over and was slightly stunned.

Demoness Ji had moved her chair and ran to his left hand side to squeeze with him.

As such, Su Zimo's seat was sandwiched between the two princesses.

Coughing gently, Su Zimo looked somewhat uneasy instantly.

"Hehe, I'll sit here!" Demoness Ji chuckled.

Ji Yaoxue looked at her younger sister dotingly and shook her head to smile.

The princes seemed to understand Demoness Ji's temper and did not say anything, merely smiling. Instead, they nodded to Su Zimo as a form of greeting.

Su Zimo's heart skipped a beat. Even though no one could tell, he could vaguely sense that Demoness Ji's laughter was odd!

"I wonder what this demoness is thinking about again."

Frowning in secret, Su Zimo looked straight ahead.

Right then, the emperor's voice echoed in all directions.

"Let the sect competition officially begin!"

Chapter 312: I'll Teach You How to Refine Weapons

"The rules of the sect competition are the same as the previous ones. For the four ranking lists of spirit, talisman, elixir and weapon, we'll choose the top ten of each as the experts for this year's competition!"

"All ten people on the Spirit Ranking can choose a spirit art of their liking; all ten on the Talisman Ranking can choose a talisman method; all ten on the Elixir Ranking can choose an elixir recipe; all ten on the Weapon Ranking can choose a superior-grade spirit weapon! Of course, apart from that, there will be a reward of many spirit stones!"

The Great Zhou Dynasty had been established for more than ten thousand years. After so many years of accumulation and heritage, there was definitely going to be many secret skills and elixir recipes in their treasure vault. In fact, some of them might even be extinct and it was definitely enough to tempt any cultivator out there!

Most Foundation Establishment Cultivators merely used middle-grade spirit weapons.

For Foundation Establishment Cultivators, superior-grade spirit weapons were fatally attractive.

Of course, the most important thing was that the people on the ranking lists could enter the ancient battlefield to train for a year!

With just a few simple words from the emperor, the hundred thousand odd Foundation Establishment Cultivators on the square were burning with zeal and raring to go.

The emperor declared, "Since Mr. Mo was invited as the judge for this sect competition, we'll start off with the competition for weapon refinement. Because Mr. Mo belongs to Ethereal Peak and needs to enter the ancient battlefield as well, it means that there are only nine spots left to contest for in the Weapon Ranking."

The meaning behind the emperor's words was clear – given Su Zimo's ability, he was naturally the number one on the Weapon Ranking without the need to even compete!

No one had any objections to that.

Even Weapon Refinement Masters who had been immersed in the art of weapon refinement for hundreds of years would not dare to compete against Su Zimo, let alone the young Weapon Refinement Masters on the square.

"Is there anything else you'd like to add, Mr. Mo?" The emperor asked.

Rising, Su Zimo gazed at the hundred thousand odd Foundation Establishment Cultivators on the square deeply before saying in a slow manner, "When I arrived, I heard someone mention that there is no one from Ethereal Peak who can refine weapons..."

Upon hearing this, the square and the spectator area entered an uproar.

If it was prior to this, those words wouldn't have been a big deal since it was something everyone publicly acknowledged.

But now, anyone who dared say something as such was definitely stubbing their toes!

Everyone swept their gazes and noticed that Su Zimo had a hint of killing intent on his face – they all realized that the number one Weapon Refinement Master of Great Zhou was about to take someone down!

“Who was the one who said that! Stand forth!”

Su Zimo was almost at the top of the spectator area as he looked down at the square from above. Even though his tone was calm, it was laced with a dominance that was above everyone else!

Swoosh, swoosh, swoosh!

Countless gazes landed on Tao Feng.

Prior to this, everyone around the area had witnessed the conflict between Tao Feng and Su Zimo.

Tao Feng felt the pressure on him multiply – his face was pale and his expression was filled with fear.

“Who is Mr. Mo talking about?”

“Someone from True Fire Sect. I heard that he's the number one Weapon Refinement Master of the younger generation.”

“Pfft, what a joke. Mr. Mo is only in his twenties and this guy dares to claim that he's the number one Weapon Refinement Master of the younger generation?”

The discussions in the crowd grew louder.

The crowd around True Fire Sect gradually dispersed. Seeing that he was about to be singled out, Tao Feng grit his teeth and stood out with a venomous look in his eyes.

He said hatefully, “It was me.”

The Golden Cores of True Fire Sect frowned with ugly expressions.

“Very good.”

Su Zimo nodded. “Since you were so arrogant, I suppose that the standards of Weapon Refinement Masters from True Fire Sect must have already surpassed me. Which one of you is so formidable? Stand forth and let me have a look.”

Sweeping his gaze across True Fire Sect's Golden Cores at the spectator area, Su Zimo's eyes had a mocking look in them.

“Su Zimo, don't go overboard!” Elder Zhang said coldly.

“Overboard?”

Su Zimo shook his head and replied indifferently, “I don't think so. Compared to that unscrupulous assassination attempt from True Fire Sect three years ago, this is nothing.”

Elder Zhang was speechless.

Although there was no evidence of it, everyone was well aware of it. In fact, even the emperor's notice was posted at the entrance of True Fire Weapon Workshop.

"Su Zimo is trying to establish his dominance!"

"Yes, it's not only for himself, it's also for Ethereal Peak. This is equivalent to taking revenge for Ethereal Peak."

Upon hearing the discussions around them, Xuan Yi and Liu Hui exchanged glances – both could read the gratification in the other's eyes.

After Su Zimo appeared, they could clearly sense that the few disciples of Ethereal Peak were in high spirits and were no longer demoralized!

Turning towards Tao Feng, Su Zimo continued, "You even said that the Weapon Refinement Masters of Ethereal Peak are jokes? Let me ask you now, who is the joke?"

Tao Feng was almost grinding his teeth into dust as his entire body trembled. Lowering his head slightly, his cheeks were filled with ferociousness and his eyes were getting more deranged by the second.

"Su Zimo, I'm not convinced of you!"

Suddenly, Tao Feng raised his head and shouted with reddened eyes, "There are more than a hundred thousand cultivators present but no one has witnessed you refine weapons personally! Who knows if you're as good as you claim to be? Why are you able to claim a spot on the Weapon Ranking without even having to refine weapons?!"

Tao Feng seemed to have lost his mind but in reality, his words struck lethally.

Su Zimo was only in his twenties and was at Foundation Establishment realm. However, he was able to customize supreme-grade spirit weapons – that did seem a little ridiculous.

Even if he had started refining weapons in his mother's womb, that would only be twenty odd years at best – could he really be better than Weapon Refinement Masters out there who have immersed themselves in the art of weapon refinement for hundreds of years?

Everyone present had doubts to begin with. After Tao Feng's words, their suspicions only intensified.

Could there be someone powerful expert backing Su Zimo?

That expert would step in when it came to refining weapons while Su Zimo was only a front?

After all, no one had seen Su Zimo refine weapons before.

Many people thought about it and pondered to themselves, "If the Mo from Mo Ling came from Su Zimo, could the Ling be from the expert?"

That thought seemed to have gotten them closer to the truth of things.

The way many cultivators looked at Su Zimo changed slowly, carrying doubt and scrutiny within their gazes.

In the blink of an eye, Tao Feng was now the center of attention as he laughed into the skies. “Su Zimo, if you have the guts, come and compete with me down here! We’ll let everyone judge who the joke is! I believe that everyone would like to see your so-called Mo Clan’s Spirit Gathering Technique!”

The emperor’s expression was calm as he thought to himself, ‘Impressive.’

With those words, True Fire Sect was going to benefit no matter what.

If Su Zimo was not as good as he claimed to be, he would naturally be exposed by competing and Tao Feng would become famous because of this.

Even if Su Zimo truly was Mo Ling, he might end up committing a mistake under such immense pressure in front of everyone.

Furthermore, this would not be of any loss for True Fire Sect as they would be able to observe Su Zimo’s weapon refinement process and even possibly get a glimpse of the secrets within!

You want to learn my spirit gathering technique?

Su Zimo’s heart stirred as he could tell Tao Feng’s intentions.

However, he did not have to fear letting others watch or learn from his spirit gathering technique!

After all, no one would be able to master it!

The Weapon Refinement Masters of Ethereal Peak had that tragic experience – whoever that learned from him were the unlucky ones!

“Su Zimo, do you dare to compete? Say something!” Tao Feng shouted provocatively.

“I’m not going to compete with you, because you’re not qualified. However...”

Changing the topic, Su Zimo continued calmly, “In a bit, I’ll teach you how to refine spirit weapons on the spot. Learn well and don’t embarrass True Fire Sect.”

I’ll teach you!

It was the tone and attitude of an elder teaching the younger generation.

Everyone was dumbfounded.

Chapter 313: What Weapon Refinement Truly Is!

“I’ll teach you how to refine weapons.”

Against Tao Feng’s challenge, Su Zimo’s single statement widened the gap between them instantly.

“Hehe!”

Tao Feng laughed coldly. “I’ll see for myself what Mr. Mo has to teach me!”

The emperor waved his hand. “Let the competition for the Weapon Ranking officially begin.”

As the emperor finished his sentence, cultivators taking part in the Weapon Ranking competition broke free from the crowd and arrived at the spacious sunken area between the four jade pillars.

Tao Feng walked over. His gaze was provocative and had never left Su Zimo.

“All the best, Senior Brother Xue!”

“Junior Brother Xue, go on. With Junior Brother Su around, you can just give it all you’ve got without any pressure.”

Under the encouragement of little fatty, Leng Rou and the others, Xue Yi arrived at the sunken area as well. He was filled with confidence, spirited and in a perfect state.

Xue Yi knew that given his current state, there was even a chance he could outperform himself!

Su Zimo sat high and above, unmoving as he watched everything quietly without any intention of getting up.

No matter what, he was the judge selected by the emperor – his position was unshakable!

There was no restriction to the type of spirit weapon one could refine for the Weapon Ranking competition. However, each person only had three chances.

Within three rounds of weapon refinement, they had to select the spirit weapon with the best grade and quality for the final evaluation.

If they failed all three rounds of weapon refinement, it would mean that they have lost the rights to compete.

There were a total of 1,072 Weapon Refinement Masters taking part in the sect competition this time round and they were all gathered in the sunken area.

Almost at the same time, all of them took out their Weapon Tripods and placed it in front of them.

Swoosh!

Instantly, countless flames soared, illuminating against one another. There were some Level 1 Spirit Fires and even some at Level 3.

He was warming his tripod.

Those who were able to compete in the sect competition were the elites of each sect. Naturally, they were extremely familiar with the process of weapon refinement.

The many cultivators had long chosen their materials. Right after warming their Weapon Tripods, they placed their materials within and increased the temperature of the flames to begin smelting.

For this step, the higher the level of the flame, the more the impurities that could be purged.

Xue Yi had already cultivated a Level 2 Spirit Fire while Tao Feng’s Spirit Fire was at the highest level of 3!

Time slowly passed.

The first to complete the smelting process was Tao Feng.

The next step, forging.

After that, tempering.

Cultivators from both the spectator area and the square were attracted to Tao Feng's weapon refinement technique as they nodded silently.

Tao Feng's technique was indeed far beyond those surrounding him.

It was truly rare for someone to have such an understanding and attainment towards weapon refinement at the age of 30.

However, another name flashed across everyone's mind right after and they could not help but turn to look at Su Zimo who was seated at the top.

At that moment, Su Zimo was calm; Tao Feng's brilliant weapon refinement technique did not seem to have any effect on him.

"Hey!"

Just as everyone was attracted to the thousand odd Weapon Refinement Masters in the square, Demoness Ji snuck to Su Zimo's side. She blew into his ear and called in a seductive manner.

Su Zimo was expressionless and did not move.

When Demoness Ji caught sight of Su Zimo's slightly stiff body and blushed face, she could not help but purse her lips with a smile wheedled, "Second Young Master Su, you're so biased!"

The corner of Su Zimo's mouth twitched as he scanned his surroundings with an unnatural expression. When he saw that no one was looking in their direction, he heaved a sigh of relief.

Leaning close to Su Zimo's body, Demoness Ji exhaled with the fragrance of flowers and whispered, "I heard that you customized the long robe that my sister is wearing?"

"Yes," Su Zimo was helpless and could only reply with the truth.

"I want one too!"

Demoness Ji said exasperatedly, "I don't even have clothes that are suitable for me. Look at what I'm wearing. It's not even fitting at all!"

Su Zimo turned to look instinctively and caught sight of Demoness Ji's fair, white chest.

Instantly, he spun his head back and took a deep breath of air while closing his eyes to compose himself.

Before he knew it, he had broken out in cold sweat and was looking disheveled.

"This demoness..."

Even though Su Zimo knew full well that these were Demoness Ji's methods of seduction, there was nothing he could do to her.

Furthermore, the emperor was behind him and Ji Yaoxue was beside him. An indescribable sense of excitement plucked at his heart strings and it was hard for him to control himself.

By now, in the sunken area, Tao Feng was already one with tempering and had begun on spirit gathering.

Before long, he gathered his first spirit pattern.

Sima Zhi of True Fire Sect nodded to himself. He had witnessed Tao Feng's entire weapon refinement process and there were no mistakes at all – there was a high chance a superior-grade spirit weapon could be refined!

A short while later, another ray of spirit light flashed!

A second spirit pattern!

While it was already a middle-grade spirit weapon, Tao Feng had no intention of stopping.

After yet another short while, a third spirit pattern shone in front of everyone!

Three spirit patterns... it was a superior-grade spirit weapon!

It was only then that Tao Feng let out a sigh of relief.

Before this, he had an extremely high failure rate of refining superior-grade spirit weapons. The fact that he succeeded within a single try today meant that he was in a good condition.

By securing a superior-grade spirit weapon in his first round of weapon refinement, Tao Feng ensured that he could continue pushing to try refining spirit weapons of higher grades in his next two attempts!

Quenching into shape!

A superior-grade spirit weapon was formed.

A wave of shock and astonishment could be heard from the crowd.

There were very few people who could refine superior-grade spirit weapons in the previous sect tournaments!

By refining a superior-grade spirit weapon on his first attempt, Tao Feng had proven his skills as a Weapon Refinement Master.

He turned to Su Zimo, initially wanting to show off his success. However, he realized that Su Zimo was resting on his chair with closed eyes and was not looking at him at all!

As time passed by, all the Weapon Refinement Masters were done with their first round of weapon refinements.

Some succeeded while others failed.

Xue Yi had successfully refined an inferior-grade spirit weapon.

He was in no rush to attempt for a middle-grade spirit weapon and was making use of the first round to familiarize himself with the feeling of refining weapons so that he can get himself to his peak form!

The thousand odd Weapon Refinement Masters rested for a moment before preparing for the second round.

Right then, Su Zimo, who was seated high above, suddenly opened his eyes. Two dazzling lights sparkled for a brief moment before vanishing and calmness returned.

“Hmm?”

Sensing something, many Golden Cores turned their gazes over.

Sima Zhi of True Fire Sect said eccentrically, “My, Mr. Mo, are you preparing to attack?”

“As the number one Weapon Refinement Master of Great Zhou, you’re not going to be refining a superior-grade spirit weapon as well to hoodwink us, right?” Elder Zhang sneered.

The two of them had lived for hundreds of years and were no fools.

They naturally knew that a person’s condition and state of mind had a huge impact towards weapon refinement!

That was why they were trying to provoke Su Zimo with their words.

Right then, Tao Feng raised his voice and declared, “The great Mr. Mo probably doesn’t need three rounds. I heard that the Mo Clan’s Spirit Gathering Technique has an extremely high success rate. Given Mr. Mo’s capabilities, a single round should suffice!”

Pressure!

Continuous pressure!

As long as Su Zimo’s mood was affected, there would definitely be problems in his weapon refinement process!

However, in Su Zimo’s eyes, those people from True Fire Sect were just like clowns.

His spirit gathering technique was completely unrelated to his condition!

After three years of training, Su Zimo was already well prepared and the doubts and mockery of the outside world could not affect his mental state at all!

“You’re right. A single round is enough.”

Su Zimo smiled calmly. “Tao Feng, and everyone else from True Fire Sect. Open your eyes wide and clear to see what weapon refinement truly is!”

Chapter 314: Spirit Saber Refinement

“Bang!”

Su Zimo arrived at the center of the spectator area and retrieved his Weapon Tripod from his storage bag, slamming it heavily on the ground with a loud thud.

At that moment, it was not only Tao Feng and everyone from True Fire Sect; the hundred thousand odd cultivators in the square and the thousand odd Golden Cores at the spectator area... everyone’s gazes were fixed on Su Zimo!

The immensity of that pressure was something ordinary people could not understand at all.

In the eyes of everyone present, be it whether or not Su Zimo had what it takes, he was way too young. If his mental state and willpower were not resolute enough and he showed any signs of fear, he would definitely be faced with huge problems in his weapon refinement process!

With an indifferent expression, Su Zimo gathered a scarlet flame on his palm and began warming the tripod.

After the tripod warming, he retrieved pieces of spirit components that emitted strong spirit qi from his storage bag, tossing them into the Weapon Tripod.

“Heavens, that’s the Violet Feather Rock!”

“That handful of sand is dim and dull! It seems to be Lusterless Sand!”

“Look! There’s also Ice Silkworm Steel, Crimson Gold Crystal and Mystic Lightning Jade!”

A series of exclamations came from the crowd.

Those spirit components were extremely rare and any one of them would suffice to be used as a core material to create a supreme-grade spirit weapon!

But now, he had tossed all of those rare spirit components together!

What was he trying to refine?

That doubt surfaced in everyone’s minds.

The more the rare spirit components that were combined, the higher the difficulty of weapon refinement – that was a risk that few Weapon Refinement Masters would dare to take.

Before long, all the spirit components were tossed into the Weapon Tripod.

Swoosh!

The flames burned furiously at the spirit components in the Weapon Tripod.

Time slowly passed.

After smelting, it was time for the forging process.

Under the countless gazes, a spirit weapon gradually took shape. At the same time, everyone’s eyes gradually widened in shock.

“What’s that? A saber?”

“Holy f*ck! Isn’t that saber way too big?!”

“It even has a handle! If someone were to wield that, putting aside the massive consumption of spirit energy, it would be extremely inconvenient and clumsy! Even if he manages to refine it, it’ll be useless!”

A long saber was gradually formed within Su Zimo’s Weapon Tripod. It was half as tall as a person and had an extremely wide width, slightly larger than an adult’s palm – a heavy and sturdy saber!

Over the past three years, Su Zimo had refined too many spirit weapons.

He had hundreds of supreme-grade spirit weapons.

However, Su Zimo had never refined a saber that was made for himself.

At this moment, Su Zimo felt that the time was ripe.

A man from True Fire Sect said, "That saber has a handle. He should be making it for himself. I heard that he is strong in melee combat."

The person who spoke had a cold and sinister gaze that carried a killing intent as he looked at Su Zimo.

He was He Jiang, a legacy disciple of True Fire Sect.

His younger brother, He Xing, was the Elixir Refinement Master who died in Su Zimo's hands.

"Unfortunately, he forgot one thing."

Tao Feng scoffed coldly. "With so many spirit components smelted together, even if all the impurities are purged, the weight of that saber will be terrifying! He won't even be able to lift it!"

Su Zimo was extremely satisfied at the sight of the spirit saber that was gradually forming.

He possessed divine power and yet he did not know anything about saber wielding techniques – that was the reason why he made such a massive spirit saber that was seemingly clumsy.

With that, the spirit saber that was heavy and ferocious to begin with would be able to unleash extremely terrifying attacks when it was coupled with his immense physique and frightening blood qi!

After forging was over, tempering started.

With spirit energy, Su Zimo condensed a pair of big hands that entered the Weapon Tripod. His fingers struck the blade repeatedly like hammers, letting out a crisp and pleasant sound.

Cling! Clang!

A moment later, the expressions of many Weapon Refinement Masters present changed.

Even though it was hidden in the Weapon Tripod and they could not see Su Zimo's tempering technique, the gap between each striking sound was exactly the same! It was so precise that it was as though everything was calculated!

"This..."

Many Golden Cores had already realized that Su Zimo was undoubtedly Mr. Mo!

Ordinary Weapon Refinement Masters would not be able to master such a tempering technique!

Furthermore, from the step of material selection to tempering, Su Zimo's movements were smooth and fluid like water. It was like a habit of his that was filled with perfection.

Sima Zhi scoffed coldly and thought to himself, "So what if you're Mr. Mo? Once we see your spirit gathering technique later on, we might be able to grasp at the secrets within!"

After a long time, tempering was over.

A thin layer of sweat filled Su Zimo's forehead.

With so many spirit components combined, the difficulty of tempering had increased immensely for him as well.

After tempering came the most crucial aspect of weapon refinement – spirit gathering!

Sima Zhi could clearly feel Sima Zhi and everyone else from True Fire Sect tense up, watching him intently.

“Fu...”

He chuckled softly and said, “You want to see my spirit gathering technique? Alright, I'll let you guys see it clearly!”

Right after, in front of everyone, Su Zimo suddenly did something.

He removed his Weapon Tripod!

Everyone from Ethereal Peak had already expected it and were relatively calm. However, the other cultivators were horrified.

It was especially so for the Golden Cores who were closest to Su Zimo as they were rattled and wanted to retreat instinctively.

However, they realized that they were behaving in an unsightly manner and gave fake coughs while calming themselves down.

Without any protection, Su Zimo began spirit gathering!

Even the emperor frowned when he saw that, not understanding what was the purpose behind Su Zimo's actions.

The risk of removing the Weapon Tripod for spirit gathering was way too great!

If the first spirit pattern failed, it would be equivalent to the explosion of a pseudo spirit weapon and the lethality would be limited.

However, if he were to fail at the fourth spirit pattern, it would be equivalent to the explosion of a superior-grade spirit weapon and the impact would be rather terrifying. Even if it was a Golden Core refining the weapon, he would be severely injured given that he would be unprepared to defend!

Ji Yaoxue frowned slightly and pursed her cherry lips tightly, concern evident in her eyes.

“Sister, don't worry. He's Mr. Mo, he'll definitely be fine!”

Right then, Demoness Ji closed in and held Ji Yaoxue's slightly cold hands while comforting her with a smile.

Ji Yaoxue forced a smile but the worry in her eyes did not lessen one bit.

Whoosh!

Right then, a glow lit up.

The first spirit pattern was condensed successfully!

Su Zimo did not pause and continued to condense the second spirit pattern.

Everyone held their breath and continued watching.

After a while, another light flashed.

The second spirit pattern was condensed successfully!

Gasps could be heard from the crowd.

Ji Yaoxue's palms were filled with sweat.

Even though Su Zimo had managed two successive spirit patterns, she was even more nervous now.

Prior to this, if Su Zimo failed in spirit gathering, he would only lose face. However, if he were to fail later on, what he would lose would be his life!

Ji Yaoxue would rather Su Zimo fail his first two spirit patterns than let him get injured.

Unfortunately, it was already too late.

Su Zimo was already condensing his third spirit pattern.

Chapter 315: Perfect!

The time it took for Su Zimo to condense his third spirit pattern was evidently longer.

Right from the beginning, everyone from True Fire Sect, Tao Feng included, had been observing Su Zimo's every move carefully without letting up a single detail.

However, they had not gained much through their observations.

They only noticed that Su Zimo's spirit gathering process was not completed in one go, but intermittently.

At times, although he had already begun with spirit gathering, for some reason, Su Zimo would give up and go for a new attempt.

There was no pattern to speak of for his repetitions.

"What's this?"

Even though Sima Zhi and the others had been refining weapons for hundreds of years, none of them had seen such an odd spirit gathering technique.

Whoosh!

A slightly blinding glow flashed.

Just as everyone was lost, the third spirit pattern was condensed successfully!

Swoosh!

Xuan Yi and Liu Hui heaved a sigh of relief, looking at one another with lingering fear.

Even though they had heard of Su Zimo's odd spirit gathering technique back in Ethereal Peak, that was three years ago.

Furthermore, Su Zimo was only able to refine inferior-grade spirit weapons at that time and it was relatively easier to condense a single spirit pattern.

But now, Su Zimo had already condensed three spirit patterns!

Ji Yaoxue looked more relaxed and let out a deep breath as well.

At that moment, the faces of the Golden Cores on both sides of Su Zimo changed slightly and they felt a little uneasy.

When they saw that Su Zimo had no intention of stopping after condensing his third spirit pattern, some Golden Cores could not hold on any longer and retreated hurriedly.

At this point, if his spirit gathering failed, it would be equivalent to the explosion of a superior-grade spirit weapon.

Golden Cores who were not strong enough would be injured on the spot and they would look even more pathetic at that time – there was no need to take that risk for the sake of appearances.

Of course, there were some Golden Cores who pretended to be calm because they were strong and did not leave.

On the surface, they watched Su Zimo refine his weapon calmly. But in reality, they were on edge and their palms were placed on their storage bags, ready to crush their protection talismans at the first moment to escape if anything awry happened.

Just as everyone was feeling uneasy, a beam of light burst forth again in a bedazzling manner!

Ah!

Exclamations burst forth from the square and the spectator area.

The fourth spirit pattern!

No one had expected that the fourth spirit pattern would be condensed shortly after the third spirit pattern was formed!

Four spirit patterns, it was a supreme-grade spirit weapon!

By now, no one dared to question Su Zimo's capabilities in weapon refinement.

How confident was he in his spirit gathering technique to condense four spirit patterns without the use of a Weapon Tripod?

Everyone from True Fire Sect frowned.

The situation was completely different from what they had expected – they could not spot anything from Su Zimo's weapon refinement process at all.

Tao Feng glared at Su Zimo coldly and grit his teeth, thinking to himself, "Supreme-grade spirit weapon, huh? I'll attempt it later on! We don't know who's going to win yet!"

"Congratulations, congratulations!"

"Congratulations, Mr. Mo! Yet another supreme-grade spirit weapon has been refined by you."

The Golden Cores who had dodged earlier hurried back with cupped fists.

However, Su Zimo did not seem to have heard anything.

The spirit saber hovered in midair and the surrounding spirit qi had yet to disperse. Staring at the ball of spirit qi, Su Zimo... went for another spirit gathering attempt!

Everyone was stunned.

What was Su Zimo trying to do?

It was already a supreme-grade spirit weapon with four spirit patterns at this point. If he were to continue with spirit gathering, it would be...

A perfect spirit weapon!

Su Zimo was trying to refine a perfect spirit weapon!

The crowd was in an uproar!

Psst!

In the spectator area, the expressions of many Golden Cores changed and they gasped.

The few Golden Cores who had just returned with cupped fists escaped with even greater speed once more.

"What a f*cking lunatic!"

"He's really out of his mind! He's trying to forcefully condense a fifth spirit pattern without the protection of a Weapon Tripod!"

Even the group of Golden Cores who were faking their composure could not sit still anymore as they scurried and fled from Su Zimo with pale faces.

What kind of a joke was that?

If he were to fail the spirit gathering, it would be equivalent to the explosion of a supreme-grade spirit weapon! At close proximity, they would be dead even if they managed to crush their protection talismans!

As for the Weapon Refinement Master himself, he would be blown to bits and pieces.

Ji Yaoxue's heart clenched once more.

Even Demoness Ji furrowed her brows slightly.

She had not expected that Su Zimo would take on such a huge gamble.

The emperor and chief steward of Sky Treasure Auction House, Gu Xi, looked entangled. Apart from worry, they had looks of admiration in their eyes.

While the two of them did not know how to refine weapons, they could tell that this was indeed the best opportunity for Su Zimo to create a perfect spirit weapon!

After all, the momentum was with him and Lady Luck was shining directly on him as well!

...

For the past three years, Su Zimo would spend some time each day on weapon refinement without slacking off at all and his skills climbed steadily.

Subsequently, he discovered that it was truly way too difficult if he wanted to refine a perfect spirit weapon.

Perfect meant that there couldn't be any flaws at all.

In terms of spirit gathering, Su Zimo had no issues. However, there were six steps to weapon refinement.

He had to achieve perfection with every six steps in order to create a perfect spirit weapon!

For every step to be perfect, it was not only dependent on the Weapon Refinement Master's skills; it was also on his mental state, condition and external circumstances.

In fact... there was even a tiny bit of luck involved!

Luck was something that could only be obtained by chance.

Su Zimo had been searching for that mysterious feeling.

Along the way, while he was walking up, Su Zimo felt the vague sense of an opportunity.

Therefore, when he decided that he was going to display his weapon refinement skills, he was already bent on going for a perfect spirit weapon!

For the first four steps of weapon refinement, material selection, smelting, forging and tempering, everything went smoothly without any flaws.

In terms of spirit gathering, Su Zimo had a 100% success rate.

His perfect-grade spirit saber was definitely going to be born today!

At that thought, Su Zimo felt much more relaxed.

"Everyone from True Fire Sect, do you want to know what's the secret behind Mo Clan's Spirit Gathering Technique?"

Just as everyone was feeling tense, Su Zimo suddenly asked.

Everyone's jaws dropped to the ground in shock.

Which Weapon Refinement Master would not give it his all during spirit gathering which was such a tense segment? How could Su Zimo still have the energy to afford the distraction of speaking?!

Su Zimo continued, "Actually, the secret behind Mo Clan's Spirit Gathering Technique is simple. You just have to remove your Weapon Tripod during spirit gathering and place yourself in a state of death. That way, you can better gather your luck and increase your success rate of spirit gathering!"

His words were half-truths – removing the Weapon Tripod was true but it had nothing to do with luck.

"What a load of bullsh*t!" Sima Zhi scoffed.

To him, those words were filled with loopholes and were utterly ridiculous.

Su Zimo smiled calmly without retorting.

He knew that the people from True Fire Sect would definitely believe him.

That was because most of the time, people would rather believe things they had witnessed with their own eyes.

Even if it was fake.

At that moment, a dazzling light shot out like a bright sun, illuminating the void such that everyone could barely open their eyes!

The fifth spirit pattern was condensed successfully!

Chapter 316: Born from Blood

Five spirit patterns, it was a perfect spirit weapon!

A bedazzling light burst out in front of Su Zimo, spreading across the square like a magnificent dawn.

Pausing for a brief moment, the light retracted swiftly and entered the blade!

No one spoke. It was pitch silent both in the square and at the spectator area.

Everyone's eyes were drawn to the gigantic spirit saber that was floating in midair and their mouths were agape in shock.

No matter how illogical the spirit saber seemed with its clumsy appearance and its handle, it was a perfect-graded spirit weapon after all!

Even Golden Cores who had lived for hundreds of years might not even be able to see a perfect spirit weapon being born by the end of their lives.

How lucky was it for them to be able to witness it personally right now?

Perfected Being Yun Shan's gaze was burning.

Southern Mountains Sect was renowned for their melee combat strength and body tempering techniques. In the hands of others, that spirit saber's power was limited. But in his hands, it would definitely be a formidable killing weapon to behold!

That perfect-grade spirit saber was fatally attractive to him!

Everyone from True Fire Sect was shocked, then confused.

Sima Zhi and Elder Zhang, Weapon Refinement Masters who had been immersed in the art of weapon refinement for years, were at a loss as to what to do.

Logically speaking, Su Zimo's explanation of removing the Weapon Tripod was utter bullsh*t.

However, the truth was right before their eyes and they could not help but wonder.

Could removing the Weapon Tripod truly improve one's luck and increase the success rates of spirit gathering?

After all, no one had tried that method before. Perhaps that was truly a secret that was yet to be discovered in the world of weapon refinement?

However, on second thought, if things were really that simple, would Su Zimo reveal the secret just like that without hiding anything?

No matter how they thought about it, they could not figure it out.

But, the fact was that Su Zimo had managed to condense five spirit patterns after removing the Weapon Tripod!

Looking at the spirit saber suspended in midair, Su Zimo heaved a sigh of relief and revealed a bright smile.

This refinement had consumed a large amount of spirit, mental and physical energy. He was almost completely exhausted and his entire body was covered in sweat.

With the final step, the spirit saber would be completely refined.

Su Zimo waved his sleeves and shifted the spirit saber with five spirit patterns into cold water that was prepared earlier.

Sixth step, quenching.

Normally, an ear-piercing sound should be heard alongside billowing green smoke due to the rapid cooling of the spirit saber that was heated to a scarlet shade in cold water.

The exchange of hot and cold would change the internal structure of the spirit saber, causing it to turn sturdier. At the same time, the spirit patterns would be fused into the saber completely as one.

But now, there was no sound nor green smoke being emitted after Su Zimo plunged the spirit saber into cold water!

How could that be?

Su Zimo's expression changed slightly and he frowned.

Right then, a change occurred in the cold water.

The water emitted steam and started bubbling.

It was boiling!

Not only did the basin of water not quench the flames from the spirit saber, it was boiling from the heat emitted by the saber instead!

Broop! Broop!

As the water boiled, many Golden Cores stood up one after another to peek.

“Hahahaha!”

Right then, Sima Zhi burst out into laughter with mockery in his eyes. “Su Zimo, oh Su Zimo! Your perfect spirit weapon’s about to be useless! It’s not meant to be yours!”

Su Zimo’s expression was unchanged as he stared at the boiling water darkly, seemingly thinking about something.

“What’s going on?” Someone whispered.

Sima Zhi replied smugly, “One can’t make any mistakes in the six steps of weapon refinement if they want to create a perfect spirit weapon. How can he possibly succeed in quenching a saber with five spirit patterns using just ordinary cold water!”

Su Zimo sighed internally.

He knew that Sima Zhi was not wrong – he had truly not taken this into account.

Then again, it was not entirely Su Zimo’s fault. There was no mention of what was required to refine perfect spirit weapons in all the ancient books in Ethereal Peak.

Who would have thought that a disciple of Ethereal Peak would attempt to create a perfect spirit weapon after countless years?

Sima Zhi declared loudly in ridicule, “To quench a perfect spirit weapon, you will have to use the rarest spirit liquid such as Northern Frost Ice, Deep Sea Fiend Oil or Zenith Spring Water...”

“Unfortunately, you have none of those! Hahahaha!”

Many Golden Cores were secretly stunned. Each of the three items that Sima Zhi mentioned were extremely rare and were not cheaper than supreme-grade spirit weapons!

To think that they would be required for quenching.

Su Zimo pulled the spirit saber out of the boiling water. He was expressionless and he did not do anything else.

Upon seeing that, everyone knew that Su Zimo had not prepared those items in advance and could not help but sigh.

A perfect spirit weapon was about to be born before their eyes, only to fail at the final step.

“Ugh!”

Xuan Yi clutched his wrist and let out a long sigh with a pained expression.

Ji Yaoxue looked at Su Zimo who was silent and felt her heart wrench. She quickly turned her head and shouted, "Father, help him..."

The emperor said in a deep voice, "Ming Ze, head to the palace's treasury. There should be Zenith Spring Water in it."

"It's too late!"

Sima Zhi pointed at the spirit saber in Su Zimo's hand and sneered, "In five breaths' time, if there is no quenching item, that saber will be wasted!"

Everyone focused their attention – the spirit patterns were already showing signs of dissipating on that fiery red saber.

It was clearly too late to retrieve the Zenith Spring Water at this point!

"Su Zimo, you're still too naive. Fufufufu."

Sima Zhi laughed.

He was delighted because with this failure, the light of providence on Su Zimo would disintegrate and it would be difficult for him to refine another perfect spirit weapon ever again!

This failure would not only waste a saber, but destroy a monstrous Weapon Refinement Master as well!

Ji Yaoxue stood up, prepared to head forward to comfort Su Zimo.

Right then, Su Zimo narrowed his gaze and a strange glint flickered in his eyes. Gripping the saber in his hands, he held it horizontally across his chest with its blade facing down.

Su Zimo stretched out his palm and the saber's blade landed on it, slashing across slowly and forcefully.

Since he did not have any Northern Frost Ice, Deep Seat Fiend Oil or Zenith Spring Water, he would use his blood to quench the spirit saber!

Sima Zhi gave a disdainful stifled laughter. "What a fool. How can your blood compare to Zenith..."

His eyes widened in disbelief as he could not continue anymore.

How could that be? Su Zimo's bloodline...

Poof!

Blood gushed from the cut and spilled onto the scarlet blade.

Shing!

A piercing sound could be heard as thick smoke rose from the saber!

The temperature of the saber dipped rapidly and the spirit pattern that was about to dissipate stabilized, becoming one with the blade!

Furthermore, the five spirit patterns were even devouring Su Zimo's blood!

Even though the temperature of the saber had dropped, the color of the blade was gradually deepening. It changed from the scarlet shade of flames to a grisly shade of blood!

Sixth step, quenching... success.

Clang! Clang!

The blade trembled and produced an intense clanging sound – it was filled with a strong smell of blood that made one uneasy.

Su Zimo caressed the blade gently, muttering softly, “Since you were quenched using my blood... you shall be called Blood Quencher from now on.”

As though it was sentient, the blade went silent.

A perfect spirit weapon that was born from blood!

Chapter 317: So Stupid That They Are Cute

That was completely unexpected.

No one knew the sort of terrifying energy that was hidden in Su Zimo’s bloodline!

Su Zimo cultivated The Mystic Classic of the Twelve Demon Kings of the Great Wilderness, the Void Thunder Manual, devoured a dragon and even brought his bloodline to the blood tsunami realm.

His bloodline was much stronger than the Zenith Spring Water and whatnot.

Everyone from True Fire Sect was dumbfounded.

A person’s bloodline was comparable to rare spirit liquids such as the Northern Frost Ice and Zenith Spring Water?

Before that doubt was resolved, everyone’s eyes and minds were once again drawn in by that newly blood quenched saber.

Its massive and thick blade was grisly red and eye-piercing. Branded onto the blade like blood reservoirs, the five spirit patterns were malefic and were akin to five long blood eyes that were narrowed.

Even though it was merely resting on the spot, the saber gave off a murderous aura!

Sima Zhi rubbed his chin and murmured, “That saber was made with so many rare spirit components. Now that it’s perfect with five spirit weapons, its might should not be inferior to connate spirit weapons.”

Upon hearing that, everyone’s gaze towards Blood Quencher became even more passionate and greedy.

Supreme-grade spirit weapons were already enough to move the hearts of Golden Cores and make them flock for it.

A perfect spirit weapon was something that could lead to a bloody battle!

If they were not in the capital of Great Zhou, or at the foot of the emperor, many Golden Cores would have already taken action and broke out in a wild war!

Sensing that there was something unusual about the gazes and tension in the air, Su Zimo understood.

A man's wealth was his own ruin by causing another's greed.

With a flip of his palm, he put away Blood Quencher in his storage bag.

"Mr. Mo, how much do you want for that blade? Name a price."

At that moment, Perfected Being Yun Shan stood up and spoke.

"That's right, Mr. Mo. It's a rare opportunity. How about selling that saber in an auction here? It'll definitely fetch a good price," Another Golden Core added.

Su Zimo shook his head. "That saber is priceless."

Even though he had managed to refine that perfect spirit weapon successfully, he could not guarantee that he could replicate Blood Quencher even if he were to try again.

Similar to connate spirit weapons, perfect spirit weapons were priceless treasures.

Furthermore, Blood Quencher carried his blood!

"You must be joking, Mr. Mo. Everything has a price."

Perfected Being Yun Shan refused to give up and continued, "Furthermore, given your cultivation realm, it's going to be difficult to wield that saber, let alone utilize it to its fullest potential. You might as well sell it, Mr. Mo."

Su Zimo frowned somewhat impatiently and remarked directly, "I'm sorry, the meaning of priceless is that... I'm not selling it!"

Perfected Being Yun Shan's face darkened and he snorted.

If it was before this, he would have definitely not chosen to be on bad terms with Su Zimo.

However, the birth of a perfect spirit weapon was way too alluring for a Golden Core!

If he could acquire that Blood Quencher, his combat power would be doubled at the very least!

Sima Zhi and Perfected Being Cang Lang exchanged glances – both could read the coldness in the other's eyes.

Su Zimo returned to his seat, holding a superior-grade spirit stone in his right hand as he recovered the spirit energy within his body slowly and rested.

He had already set the bait and was waiting for the fishes to take it.

In the square, the thousand odd Weapon Refinement Masters began their second round of weapon refinement.

Su Zimo's weapon refinement earlier on had a huge impact on those Weapon Refinement Masters.

However, while the majority of them paid attention to Su Zimo's spirit gathering technique, Xue Yi of Ethereal Peak paid attention to his tempering technique.

That was because he had long known that Su Zimo's spirit gathering technique was something outsiders could not mimic.

After thinking through his insights, Xue Yi felt that he had learned quite a bit and his confidence grew tremendously as he began his second round of weapon refinement.

Tao Feng, who had already refined a superior-grade spirit weapon in the first round, was now conflicted.

In theory, he felt that the act of removing the Weapon Tripod was simply courting death!

However, the truth was that Su Zimo had indeed refined a perfect spirit weapon.

Tao Feng hesitated for a long time before taking a deep breath. He decided to believe in his own weapon refinement technique and began the second round.

Since he had already refined a superior-grade spirit weapon in the first round, it was certain that Tao Feng would already have a spot on the Weapon Ranking.

Hence, he decided that he was going to attempt for a supreme-grade spirit weapon for the next two rounds!

Materials selection, smelting, forging, tempering... all of them were done in one go.

According to his own method, Tao Feng began spirit gathering under the protection of the Weapon Tripod.

One spirit pattern.

Two spirit patterns.

The third spirit pattern... failed!

Tao Feng's expression was ugly – Su Zimo's weapon refinement had affected his mental state greatly.

If he continued with his previous method, he might not even be able to refine a superior-grade spirit weapon.

How about giving it a try?

What if removing the Weapon Tripod truly brought about a higher success rate for spirit gathering?

Similar thoughts flashed through Tao Feng's mind repeatedly.

The more he tried to control, the more he couldn't control!

I don't care anymore. Time to give it a try. Since I've already refined a superior-grade spirit weapon, it doesn't matter even if I fail.

At that thought, Tao Feng began his third round of weapon refinement.

Materials selection, smelting, forging, tempering...

At the fifth step, spirit gathering, Tao Feng suddenly removed his Weapon Tripod!

His action naturally attracted countless gazes.

“Look! Tao Feng has removed his Weapon Tripod too!”

“Finally, someone’s going to try it.”

“We’ll know in a bit whether or not that method works.”

Taking a deep breath of air, Tao Feng tried his best to ensure that his mind was calm and he was in peak condition before slowly attempting for spirit gathering.

Whoosh!

A light flashed and the first spirit pattern was condensed successfully.

Right after, another light flashed and the second spirit pattern was condensed successfully.

After a while, another light flashed.

The third spirit pattern was condensed successfully as well!

Ah!

A wave of shock and astonishment could be heard from the crowd.

“Seems like Su Zimo was right. Removing the Weapon Tripod truly increases the success rate of spirit gathering!”

Tao Feng also became excited, his eyes shining.

“As long as I gather another spirit pattern, I’ll be in possession of a supreme-grade spirit weapon!”

At that thought, Tao Feng began on spirit gathering once more.

Right then, Sima Zhi, who was at the spectator area, vaguely sensed that something was amiss and he looked towards Su Zimo instinctively.

At that moment, Su Zimo was watching calmly with a faint smile on his lips.

“Not good!”

Sima Zhi was stunned and was about to turn around.

Boom!

A deafening sound could be heard in the square.

Tao Feng fell to the ground with tightly shut eyes, already fainted. His body was almost riddled with holes from the fragments of the sword as blood gushed out.

There was even a crushed talisman in Tao Feng’s hands.

It was not hard to imagine that he would have been blasted to smithereens if not for that protection talisman!

Now, even if Tao Feng could survive, it would be difficult for him to recover within a short period of time, let alone enter the ancient battlefield along with everyone on the four ranking lists.

This meant that even though Tao Feng's name would be on the Weapon Ranking, his spot to enter the ancient battlefield would be emptied out!

"Su Zimo, you plotted against True Fire Sect!"

Sima Zhi jolted upright and glared at Sima Zhi with a deep killing intent in his eyes.

"He took the bait willingly."

Su Zimo smiled indifferently. "Disciples of True Fire Sect are truly so stupid that they are cute."

Chapter 318: Unlocking Three Meridians

Once that was over, Su Zimo no longer paid attention to the sect competition in the square. Gripping spirit stones in both hands, he calmed down and recovered spirit energy.

Even though he had expended his spirit and mental energy completely to refine Blood Quencher, his cultivation realm that was stuck for a long time was also showing signs of breaking through!

Currently, Su Zimo was at late-stage Foundation Establishment, a single step away from perfected Foundation Establishment!

Nearing noon, the weapon refinement segment was concluded and the names on the Weapon Ranking were out.

Xue Yi did not manage to leave his name on the Weapon Ranking. However, he gained some insights from Su Zimo's weapon refinement process and had successfully refined a middle-grade spirit weapon as well. As such, he was extremely elated.

In another ten years, he would have a chance to contend for a spot on the Weapon Ranking as well!

A mysterious light surged through the Weapon Ranking jade pillar in the northwestern corner, causing names to surface one after another – Su Zimo's was at the top.

After the competition for the Weapon Ranking was over, there was a short break before the competition for the Talisman Ranking.

Leng Rou was the one Ethereal Peak was sending out for the Talisman Ranking competition.

She was not weak to begin with and was already a three meridian Foundation Establishment Cultivator. Furthermore, she had a strong talent in terms of talisman crafting and was the only from Ethereal Peak who had a shot at leaving a name on the Talisman Ranking.

Indeed, after the Talisman Ranking segment was over, Leng Rou managed to suppress all the other cultivators and her name was at the top of the jade pillar in the southwest corner!

Right from the beginning, Leng Rou had already attracted much attention given her cold and aloof appearance that made her look like a fairy descending on the mortal realm. Now that she had obtained the first spot on the Talisman Ranking, she naturally drew even more admiration from everyone else.

Xue Yi smiled. "Congratulations, Junior Sister Leng."

“You’re so amazing! You’re taking a number one spot just like bro!” Little fatty raised his thumb and praised.

“Yes,” Leng Rou replied with an indifferent expression, as though even obtaining number one on the Talisman Ranking did nothing to stir her heart.

For some reason, Shen Mengqi felt upset when she caught sight of that.

Spectator area.

Many Golden Cores congratulated and toasted Xuan Yi and Liu Hui one after another.

“Congratulations, congratulations!”

“Number one on two ranking lists! That’s Ethereal Peak for you.”

Xuan Yi pretended to be reserved and replied humbly, “Not at all. It’s just luck, haha!”

Even though he said that, Xuan Yi was long overjoyed and his face was shining brightly.

Liu Hui added, “We didn’t bring many disciples this time round. There’s not much hope left for the Elixir and Spirit Rankings.”

“That’s not true, fellow Daoist. The fact that Ethereal Peak has obtained number one in two ranking lists is more than enough to make you guys famous through the entire Great Zhou Dynasty after the sect competition!” A Golden Core replied hurriedly.

In reality, Xuan Yi and Liu Hui understood that the fact that they obtained number one on two ranking lists was only part of the reason why these Golden Cores were coming forth to congratulate them – the main reason was due to Su Zimo.

Most cultivators would still want to be on good terms with a Weapon Refinement Master who could refine perfect spirit weapons.

True Fire Sect had tried to assassinate Su Zimo countless times – that was a blood feud and was difficult to resolve.

Perfected Being Cang Lang and Su Zimo’s grudge was even deeper.

Perfected Being Cang Lang of Iridescent Clouds Palace, Sima Zhi and everyone else from True Fire Sect were expressionless. Their eyes would flash with occasional cold glints when they looked at Su Zimo and they would exchange glances between one another, seemingly plotting something.

Perfected Being Yun Shan of Southern Mountains Sect frowned in deep thought.

Right then, Su Zimo, who was initially resting with his eyes closed, shuddered and his aura rose sharply. The spirit energy within his body surged and spewed out!

“Hmm?”

Everyone felt it and turned to their sides.

It was a breakthrough?

Perfected Foundation Establishment!

Xuan Yi and Liu Hui were delighted and nodded repeatedly.

Su Zimo was still not opening his eyes after a while as his spirit energy surged and was almost gathering a storm. Instead of calming down, things were getting more intense!

“This is...”

“He’s unlocking the spirit meridians directly!”

Throughout history, there had always been monstrous geniuses with exceptional talent that could make use of the momentum of breaking through to Perfected Foundation Establishment to unlock spirit meridians.

Of course, that was something extremely difficult to achieve and only a rare few people could unlock their spirit meridians while breaking through to Perfected stage.

Even if they were in possession of heaven or variant spirit roots, it was still difficult to achieve unless they cultivated some unique secret skills.

Perfected Being Cang Lang’s heart skipped a beat.

This was an extremely rare opportunity. If he could secretly interrupt Su Zimo’s breakthrough process and injure his foundation severely, the latter’s cultivation path in the future would be ruined!

Foundation Establishment, as the name suggests, was the process of building a foundation. It was the most important and that was why there was the saying of unlocking eight meridians.

The more meridians one unlocked, the more stable their foundation would be and the greater their chances of breaking through to Golden Core realm or even producing Golden Core phenomenons.

If there was a problem with the process of Foundation Establishment, that would be equivalent to crippling one’s path of cultivation by half.

Just as Perfected Being Cang Lang was pondering over it, the emperor suddenly waved his sleeves. Su Zimo was dragged along with his chair to the emperor’s side before being let down gently.

Throughout the entire process, Su Zimo was not disturbed in the slightest bit.

The emperor’s intention was clear – he was warning those with ulterior motives that they should not harbor designs on Su Zimo!

Expressionlessly, the emperor looked towards Iridescent Clouds Palace.

Perfected Being Cang Lang felt guilty and pulled away the moment he met gazes with the emperor.

Boom!

Suddenly, a dull thud sounded from Su Zimo’s body. Under the cover of his green robes, a spirit meridian shone brightly and appeared indistinctly.

Within just a few dozens of seconds, he had unlocked a spirit meridian!

Xuan Yi nodded silently.

That was the benefit of cultivating Ethereal Peak Foundation Establishment. In the past, there were even people in the sect who managed to unlock two spirit meridians at one go when breaking through to perfected Foundation Establishment!

A look of approval flashed across the emperor's eyes as he nodded.

A moment later, the aura in Su Zimo's body was still rising and spirit energy gushed through his spirit meridian like a tidal wave.

"This..."

"Could he be trying to unlock the second spirit meridian?"

"Ethereal Peak's three major secret skills are truly impressive."

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Explosions sounded from Su Zimo's body repeatedly.

Indeed, his spirit energy surged like a tsunami in a terrifying manner and was charging towards a second spirit meridian!

Each time his spirit energy coursed through, his meridians would expand.

The meridians in his body were like river channels.

If his initial spirit energy was compared to a stream, it was now like a massive river with a surging momentum after it was expanded!

Boom!

Yet another dull thud.

A second meridian appeared.

"He did it!"

Xuan Yi clenched his fists and cheered softly.

As the spirit energy in Su Zimo's body gradually calmed down, everyone heaved a sigh of relief.

All of a sudden!

An even more terrifying aura burst forth and a third spirit meridian appeared faintly beneath his green robes!

Bang! Bang! Bang!

The charging was still continuing.

The retraction earlier on was merely to accumulate strength. Once the accumulation was done, it would burst forth for a third spirit meridian in an even more ferocious manner!

This time, even Xuan Yi was flabbergasted.

Was he trying to unlock three spirit meridians in one go?

The emperor's mouth opened slightly as shock flashed across his eyes.

Gu Xi looked over as well, her beautiful eyes filled with surprise and curiosity.

What spirit root did that Su Zimo possess?

How could the spirit energy that he had cultivated be so pure?

Chapter 319: Fiend Demon

Su Zimo was still attempting to break through his third spirit meridian. On the square, the competition for the Elixir Ranking came right on the heels of the competition for the Talisman Ranking.

This time, Ethereal Peak did not send any disciples but Su Xiaoning of Azure Frost Sect was taking part.

Initially, Su Xiaoning's elixir refinement skills were not enough for her to leave a name on the Elixir Ranking.

However, ever since she obtained that mysterious Elixir Furnace, Su Xiaoning would become extremely focused with every elixir refinement and could reach her peak condition.

During the sect competition this time, Su Xiaoning managed to refine a perfect-grade elixir once again and clinched the first spot on the Elixir Ranking in a shocking fashion!

With the end of the competition for the Elixir Ranking, it meant that three ranking lists were done.

Thirty cultivators who were qualified to enter the ancient battlefield were already chosen.

Naturally, the most watched event of the sect competition was still the Spirit Ranking contest.

The competition for the Spirit Ranking was not the most common one-on-one format. Instead, it would be held in a completely foreign environment where birds and beasts tread and dangers lurked. In that massive battle royale, ten champions would be decided.

The location for the Spirit Ranking competition was extremely particular as well. It was held within a Dharmic weapon possessed by the emperor, the Five Elements Umbrella where a world of its own was formed within – it could accommodate hundreds of thousands of living beings and was extremely obscure.

The Five Elements Umbrella was divided into five major regions of metal, wood, water, fire and earth.

There were Grade 4 killing formations separating the different regions and they could not be crossed.

Out of balance, each sect could only send five cultivators at most to participate in the Spirit Ranking competition.

The participating cultivators would be dragged into the Five Elements Umbrellas and fight in their respective regions until two people remained.

After the battle royale of the five regions ended, the remaining two people of each region would get to leave their names on the jade pillar of the Spirit Ranking.

Since the purpose was to enter the ancient battlefield, the ten remaining cultivators on the Spirit Ranking would not continue to fight one another and there was no distinction between the rankings.

Of course, each cultivator would receive a talisman before entering the Five Elements Umbrella.

If they crush the talisman, they would be teleported out of the Five Elements Umbrella instantly but that would also mean they are disqualified from competing for the Spirit Ranking.

This time, there were no six meridian Foundation Establishment Cultivators in the sect competition.

Each of the five major sects had a five meridian Foundation Establishment Cultivators, the other sects had two in total and there was an itinerant cultivator as well – there were a total of eight five meridian Foundation Establishment Cultivators!

The emperor would definitely spread the eight five meridian Foundation Establishment Cultivators to different regions.

As for the allocation of three and four meridian Foundation Establishment Cultivators, it would be more casual relatively.

What was worth mentioning was that even five meridian Foundation Establishment Cultivators may not survive till the end given the complex nature of the Five Elements Umbrella.

There were no lack of four meridian Foundation Establishment Cultivators who managed to leave their names on the Spirit Ranking for each sect competition!

“All the cultivators taking part in the Spirit Ranking competition, step forward!”

With a command from the emperor, cultivators stepped out from the crowd one after another into the sunken area.

At a glance, there were around five thousand of them.

These five thousand cultivators were the elites of their respective sects but only ten of them would be selected in the end!

Jun Hao of Azure Frost Sect, He Jiang of True Fire Sect, Si Yutang and Shen Mengqi of Iridescent Clouds Palace, Shi Jian of Southern Mountains Sect and Ji Chengtian and little fatty of Ethereal Peak were naturally among them.

The emperor waved his sleeves and a bright light flew towards the five thousand cultivators in the square. Raining on them, it turned into jade talismans.

The word ‘life’ was etched on the jade talismans.

The meaning was obvious – cultivators would be able to leave the Five Elements Umbrella alive as long as they were to crush the jade talismans!

The emperor nodded and Perfected Lord Ming Ze understood before shouting, “The reason why all of you are placed in a battle royale within the Five Elements Umbrella during the Spirit Ranking segment for each sect competition is so that you can have a taste of what the ancient battlefield is like beforehand.”

“I’m not going to talk about the rules but I have some points to remind everyone about.”

“First, don’t attempt to cross the regions. There are Grade 4 killing formations separating the different regions; even Golden Cores who enter them are bound to die.”

“Second, the Five Elements Umbrella is extremely dangerous. Apart from your competitors, there are many birds and beasts. While those are ordinary spirit demons, some of them have survived for tens of thousands of years and their strength is at the peak of the Foundation Establishment realm! The only reason why they aren’t able to form a core is due to the repression from Your Majesty’s Dharmic powers.”

When they heard that, many cultivators’ hearts skipped a beat.

At the peak of Foundation Establishment, spirit demons had the ability to kill them.

Perfected Lord Ming Ze continued, “Although you are all in possession of the jade talisman, there have been incidents in previous sect competitions where cultivators were attacked and killed before they could crush their jade talismans.”

At that point, Perfected Lord Ming Ze paused for a brief moment. “Those who wish to withdraw now, there is still time. Once you enter the Five Elements Umbrella...”

Even though Perfected Lord Ming Ze did not continue, his meaning was clear.

Right then, a cold voice rang from outside the cloud.

“How can my Blood Crow Palace miss out on the Spirit Ranking competition!”

On the square, the crowd dispersed, forming a passageway.

Two cultivators walked over one after another. The person in the lead wore pitch-black long robes and his black hair was scattered casually; sharp as an eagle, his eyes shone with a crimson red.

Blood Crow Palace!

Those words seemed to have a hint of blood to it as the expressions of many Golden Cores present changed; a tinge of fear flashed across their eyes.

The emperor’s face was impassive as he sent his spirit consciousness to scan the person before him. However, it was reflected by a similar energy.

“Hmm?”

Nascent Soul realm!

The emperor frowned slightly and checked with his spirit consciousness – that person should undoubtedly be a Nascent Soul.

However, for some reason, he felt that something was amiss, as though there was something strange about that person.

Turning his head, the emperor looked towards Perfected Lord Ming Ze.

Perfected Lord Ming Ze shook his head as well.

Suddenly, a soft voice sounded in the emperor's mind. "That's a fiend demon! His true form is a crow on Black Crow Mountain!"

Gu Xi, the chief steward of Sky Treasure Auction House, had sent a voice transmission to the emperor using her spirit consciousness!

That was a technique that only Nascent Souls could use and only those involved in the voice transmission could hear it.

At the mention of 'fiend demon', the emperor's eyes were filled with killing intent.

Demons that did not have sentience were called wild beasts.

Demons who had gained sentience and knew how to cultivate with strength equivalent to Qi Refinement Warriors were called spirit beasts.

If they had strength equivalent to Foundation Establishment Cultivators and Golden Cores, they were called spirit demons.

If they had strength greater than Golden Cores, at the Nascent Soul or even Void Reversion realm, they were called fiend demons!

Once a demon forms a demonic core, they could alter their bone structures and take on human form.

However, even if Golden Cores were to take on human form, they could not conceal the demonic qi from their bodies and any cultivator would be able to recognize them.

It was only when a demon cultivated Yin Spirit – similar to a cultivator's Nascent Soul – that they could mobilize their spirit consciousness and wield Dharmic powers to conceal their demonic qi!

Such demons would be able to take on human form and live among humans and even cultivators without being revealed at all.

Unless one had unique Dharmic weapons or secret skills, cultivators of the same level would not be able to detect them at all!

Cultivators referred to such demons as fiend demons.

Chapter 320: I'll Take Your Dog Life!

Once fiend demons infiltrated amongst cultivators, they would pose an immense threat.

Normally, if a fiend demon were to be exposed, especially if it was in the capital of Great Zhou, the emperor would definitely be enraged and kill it right away!

However, that fiend demon came from Blood Crow Palace.

The Palace Lord of Blood Crow Palace had a mysterious background and it was very likely that he came from a forbidden ground of Tianhuang Mainland's North Region!

If it was a living being of Tianhuang's forbidden ground, the fiend demon before them must have already submitted to the Palace Lord of Blood Crow Palace. Even though he was the Emperor of Great Zhou, it was still difficult for him to attack.

The black-robed man did not cup his fists nor did he bow. He merely said indifferently, "My name is Xue Ya. It shouldn't be too late for me to bring Blood Crow Palace's eldest disciple to take part in the Spirit Ranking competition."

Upon hearing the words 'Xue Ya', the emperor realized that Gu Xi was not wrong – this should be the previous overlord of Black Crow Mountain, the Blood Crow King!

"If you want to take part in the Spirit Ranking competition, you just have to take the jade talisman and enter the Five Elements Umbrella."

The emperor pondered for a moment before tossing out a jade talisman that landed in front of the black-robed man.

The Blood Crow King turned slightly, revealing the man behind him.

It was an extremely handsome man whose mouth was slightly curled. He looked arrogant and there was a faint, eerie green light that shone from his eyes.

"It's you, Feng Haoyu!"

At that moment, an angry bellow sounded from the square.

The few disciples of Ethereal Peak glared angrily. Even Leng Rou's eyes flickered with a killing intent as her expression turned colder.

The handsome man behind the Blood Crow King was none other than Ethereal Peak's traitor disciple, Feng Haoyu!

At the mention of Feng Haoyu, Su Zimo who was still breaking through his third spirit meridian beside the emperor frowned, but he did not open his eyes.

Xuan Yi and Liu Hui's expressions changed as they slammed the table and stood up.

Three years had passed since the battle at Dongling Valley, but they still did not know who the mysterious faction that attacked the sect was.

But now that Feng Haoyu had appeared, the mysterious faction had shown its face as well.

It was Blood Crow Palace!

Xuan Yi's face was cold as ice. "Blood Crow Palace, you're responsible for ambushing and killing the disciples of Ethereal Peak at Dongling Valley?"

The Blood Crow King glanced at Xuan Yi indifferently and snorted. "So what if we did? Does Ethereal Peak still want revenge?"

“A life for a life! You killed someone from Ethereal Peak so you’ll have to pay with your life!” Liu Hui hollered angrily.

The Blood Crow King shook his head. “How foolish. You don’t even know that Ethereal Peak’s about to be doomed. Since the young master of Blood Crow Palace died in Dongling Valley, all the disciples of Ethereal Peak will have to be buried with him!”

“How dare you!” Liu Hui’s expression changed starkly.

“Hehehe!”

The sinister laughter of the Blood Crow King sent chills down one’s spine.

If not for the fact that the Palace Lord of Blood Crow Palace was severely injured by the dragon race three years ago, he would have killed Ethereal Peak long ago, let alone wait till now!

However, that was naturally something the Blood Crow King wouldn’t say.

Xuan Yi asked loudly, “Feng Haoyu, how did Junior Brother Wen Xuan treat you?”

Feng Haoyu scoffed coldly.

Xuan Yi continued coldly, “And what did you do? Deceive your own master and ancestor! How many of your fellow sect mates did you kill for your despicable act!”

“Feng Haoyu, I’m going to kill you as revenge for our fallen comrades in Dongling Valley! For Peak Master Wen Xuan!” Little fatty was no longer smiling cheekily like usual as he declared angrily.

“That’s right! Kill him as revenge for Peak Master Wen Xuan!”

Upon hearing those words, Su Zimo’s body trembled slightly. Even though his eyes were still tightly shut, there was a trace of violence in his expression!

“You guys?”

Feng Haoyu’s face was filled with disdain as he laughed coldly. “I’m not afraid to let you guys know that I’m at five meridian Foundation Establishment right now! Even if you come at me together, you’re not my match! Kill me? Hahaha! Make sure you don’t lose your own lives in the Five Elements Umbrella!”

Boom!

Right then, there was a loud bang beside the emperor as three spirit meridians shone brightly and spirit energy surged!

A figure rose slowly, bearing a dark gaze. His entire body exuded a fierce and murderous aura!

The unexpected appearance of Blood Crow Palace almost had everyone forgetting about Su Zimo’s existence.

Even though Su Zimo merely stood up in a simple manner, the cultivators felt as though a dark cloud had descended upon them!

“Hmm?”

The Blood Crow King and Feng Haoyu's expressions changed when they saw Su Zimo.

"Well, well, well!"

The Blood Crow King was stunned for a moment before slowly regaining his senses. He burst into laughter. "To think that you would dare show yourself still! Nobody can save you today!"

A resentful look flashed across Feng Haoyu's eyes.

Back then, being defeated by Su Zimo was the greatest humiliation in his eyes.

Expressionlessly, Su Zimo left his seat and walked down the steps to the side of Xuan Yi and Liu Hui. He asked in a low voice, "Peak Master Wen Xuan is dead?"

"Yes."

Xuan Yi and Liu Hui's eyes dimmed and they nodded.

Liu Hui said, "Back in Dongling Valley, due to Elder Yu's self-destruction of his Golden Core, Senior Brother Wen Xuan was already severely injured by the time he returned with Ji Chengtian and the others."

That battle was way too tragic!

To be fair, if not for an anomaly such as Su Zimo, everyone from Ethereal Peak would have been wiped out completely!

Liu Hui's eyes turned red as she said softly, "In the past three years, Senior Brother Wen Xuan's injuries have not healed at all. Instead, they got worse and his face withered while he turned extremely skinny."

"We all knew that after the battle at Dongling Valley, he was living in endless pain and self-reproach. It was a life worse than death. Three months ago, Senior Brother Wen Xuan passed away and did not rest in peace."

Su Zimo remained silent.

Even though Peak Master Wen Xuan's attitude towards him had never been good, Su Zimo could not help but feel sadness at the thought of the former's later life.

Xuan Yi said, "Wen Xuan had two unfulfilled wishes. One of it was for trusting the wrong person back then and luring a wolf into the sect, allowing Feng Haoyu to learn the three major skills. Yet, he could not take away Feng Haoyu's cultivation personally!"

"As for the second wish... since you're here, I'll tell you."

Xuan Yi sighed. "You know that Wen Xuan has always harbored prejudices towards you because of other matters."

"Before he died, his mind was no longer clear but yet he was still hung up on wanting to meet you again, to speak to you and gain your forgiveness. He even said that he wanted to impart you Ethereal Peak's secret skills personally... unfortunately, sigh."

Su Zimo's heart ached. Gritting his teeth, the coldness in his eyes intensified.

“I’ll help Peak Master Wen Xuan fulfill his wishes!”

After saying that, Su Zimo took a deep breath and turned around. He glared at Feng Haoyu in the square with an icy gaze. “Feng Haoyu, I didn’t manage to kill you back then. I’ll take your dog life today!”

Both in the square and at the spectator area, many cultivators were stunned.

Before everyone could understand what Su Zimo meant by that, he had already turned around and bowed deeply. “Your Majesty, Su Zimo of Ethereal Peak is participating in the Spirit Ranking competition!”

The emperor frowned.

Ji Yaoxue’s expression changed and she revealed worry as well.

Everyone knew that Su Zimo had only just unlocked three spirit meridians while Feng Haoyu was at five meridian Foundation Establishment.

The disparity in strength between the two sides was simply way too great.

Furthermore, Feng Haoyu would not be the only one Su Zimo would be facing in the treacherous Five Elements Umbrella. There were others as well...