

God Emperor 111

Chapter 111: Elder Yue Jingchan

There were 12 students standing outside of Divine Power Palace now that Zi Qian, Prince Huo Xing, and Yao Qingtong had joined them. Each one of them was a genius.

Boom!

When the first ray of light spilled upon the palace roof, the heavy palace doors slowly opened.

A silver-robed old woman and a golden-robed old man walked out from the doors. They stood on the nine-floors-high white stone stairs, looking down upon the 12 young warriors.

The silver-robed old woman looked about 90 years old and had a hunch back. She walked using a cane. Her brows and hair were grey, making her seem wizened.

She was none other than Qing Hua, one of the two Deputy Headmasters of the Western Campus.

Her voice was loud and clear as she said, "I'm Qing Hua, the Deputy Headmaster of the Western Campus. I believe the older disciples are already familiar with me and the new ones will know me from now on. As per the rules, the Divine Power Palace will be opened once a month. Only the first ranked disciples of each year are allowed to enter and practice for two hours."

"It'll be a little different this year. We have four freshmen with talents beyond imagination, so they're all allowed to practice inside the palace."

"Furthermore, I will introduce you Elder Yue Jingchan, a golden-robed presbyter from the internal school."

Everyone looked respectfully at the golden-robed old man and saluted him. "Greetings to Elder Yue Jingchan."

In the Western Campus, only the Headmaster was allowed to wear a golden robe. For Elder Yue Jingchan to wear something similar meant his status was equal to the Lord of the Western Campus.

Elder Yue Jingchan wore a generous smile. "The Western Campus is doing very well with its many talented students. This year is particularly noteworthy. It's amazing there are four of you who passed the first obstacle on the third floor in the Wu Tower. Out of all the freshmen from the four campuses, that's enough to put the Western Campus in second place this year."

Deputy Headmaster Qing Hua also wore a pleasant smile. Their freshmen typically came up last each year, but they managed to produce four prodigies and pushed the Western Campus to second place. She was naturally proud as the Deputy Headmaster.

Prince Huo Xing puffed out his chest and brought his hands together in a respectful gesture. He smiled and said, "It's our honor to be an external student of the School of the Martial Market."

Elder Yue Jingchan smiled at Prince Huo Xing. "Perhaps you're all not familiar with me. Let me briefly introduce myself. I'm an Array Master, not a warrior."

Deputy Headmaster Qing Hua added, "Elder Yue Jingchan is the leading Array Master in the internal school. His Spiritual Power has reached level 39, making him the strongest person in the Martial Market School."

The students looked shocked to learn the man managed to reach level 39 in Spiritual Power. They could only look at him admiringly.

"You can increase your Spiritual Power by practicing in Divine Power Palace. It's considered a waste of time and a stupid act for ordinary warriors, yet essential for true prodigies like you to elevate your Spiritual Power. Who can tell me the reason why the school wants you to do this?" Elder Yue Jingchan asked.

The oldest student, Mu Tuozi, took a big step forward. "Prodigies can cultivate quickly, allowing us time to develop our Spiritual Power. As long as our Spiritual Power is strong enough, we can study arrays, refine pills, refine weapons, and tame animals."

Yue Jingchan shook his head, unsatisfied with this answer. "You've complicated matters because you spent too much time practicing your Spiritual Power. That's why you still haven't achieved a breakthrough into the Earth Realm."

Embarrassed, Mu Tuozi stepped back and returned to his original spot.

Huang Yanchen took a step forward, standing straight. She looked composed as she said, "We practice our Spiritual Power so we can achieve an easier breakthrough into the Heaven Realm or even the Half-Saint Realm."

Elder Yue Jingchan nodded gently and praised her answer. "Correct! There's not much to do with Spiritual Power in your practice before the Heaven Realm, but if you want to achieve that realm, there's a condition. Your Spiritual Power must reach level 20."

"Many warriors only realized the importance of practicing Spiritual Power after reaching the Completion of the Earth Realm, but it's too late by then. They'll need to put in 10 times more effort to reach level 20 and some wouldn't succeed even until the day they die."

"Besides, the stronger your Spiritual Power, the faster you cultivate in the Heaven Realm. The School conducted an experiment many years ago where two 30-year-old top geniuses were given the same resources and environment for practice. The only difference was their level of Spiritual Power. One was at level 20, the other at level 30."

"The one with a Level 20 Spiritual Power spent five years to break into the Mid Stage of the Heaven Realm and spent a further 15 years to reach the Advanced Stage."

"Guess how long did it take the genius with a Level 30 Spiritual Power?"

Yuchi Tiancong replied, "The further you get, the more difficult it is to break into realms. I guess that the genius with a Level 30 Spiritual Power needs at least 15 years to break into the Advanced Stage of the Heaven Realm."

Elder Yue Jingchan gently shook his head.

Xue Ling said, "10 years?"

Elder Yue Jingchan said, "That genius with Level 30 Spiritual Power spent only two years to break through to the Mid Stage of the Heaven Realm, and took another three years to reach the Advanced Stage. It only took him five years in total."

Boom!

The students were all stunned.

Both were top geniuses who had reached the Heaven Realm when they were 30, but one took 20 years while the other only needed five. The difference was immense! Evidently, their gap would only continue to grow in the future.

Just then, everyone realized the importance of Spiritual Power. Since they were geniuses, they had to consider their future paths.

Ordinary students needn't consider their future as they may not even reach the Heaven Realm. There was no need for them to think about the future of their cultivation after that.

Prince Huo Xing became excited for he wasn't merely a warrior but a talented Beast Trainer as well. He had been practicing his Spiritual Power since young and was now at level 17.

He glanced at Zhang Ruochen, revealing a trace of contempt as if to ask him, "So what if you're talented? Your Spiritual Power is far behind me and I'll only be walking further ahead of you in the future."

Elder Yue Jingchan continued, "Since everyone now understands the importance of Spiritual Power, how many of you know how it can help you right now?"

This time, everyone remained silent.

Didn't he mention that Spiritual Power was only useful after reaching the Heaven Realm?

Could it benefit warriors at a lower realm? But how? Refining weapons, refining pills, or perhaps taming animals?

Evidently, Elder Yue Jingchan was referring to Martial Arts.

Zhang Ruochen looked around at the other students and saw that no one seemed to know the answer. He thought for a moment before taking a step forward. "I think if your Spiritual Power is stronger, you'll be able to grasp the superior levels of the sword faster compared to your peers."

Elder Yue Jingchan's eyes lit up. He stared at Zhang Ruochen and said, "What's your name?"

"Zhang Ruochen!" he replied.

Elder Yue Jingchan showed an expression of sudden understanding. He laughed and said, "I've heard your Headmaster mention your names many times before we arrive at the Western Campus. He said you're a genius that can only be seen once in a century, praising you up to the high heavens."

"After we arrived, he purposely told me that you've already mastered the Advanced Stage of the Sword Following the Mind. He had been showing off half the day. I didn't believe him at first, but I now do now that I've met you. Tell me, Zhang Ruochen, what is your Spiritual Power level?"

His Spiritual Power was so immense that when he imbued it into his eyes earlier and looked down at the students, everyone avoided his eyes and lowered their proud heads.

Only Zhang Ruochen remained calm under his gaze. He thought this young man could not be any ordinary person and was no longer surprised after learning his name.

How could the Spiritual Power of a 16-year-old young man who could practice the Advanced Stage of the Sword Following the Mind be weak?

Truth to be told, Zhang Ruochen wasn't sure of his current level. He only knew that he had reached level 32 in his previous life.

In this life, he had triggered the Time and Space Sacred Mark and drew the Chord of Gods when he reached the Ultimate Realm in the Yellow Realm. He felt his Spiritual Power had risen significantly, but he wasn't sure the exact level. He would have to test it to know.

Of course, he wouldn't tell everyone his Spiritual Power had already reached level 30. When he felt everyone's eyes on him, he hid the truth and said, "I'm not sure. I suppose I'm at level 25!"

Besides Elder Yue Jingchan, no one else believed his answer. He was still so young! How could his Spiritual Power be at level 25?

"Would he die if he didn't boast?" Huang Yanchen glared at Zhang Ruochen.

She had entered the Divine Power Palace dozens of times to practice yet her level was only at level 20. How could she believe Zhang Ruochen had already reached level 25?

Prince Huo Xing was even more in disbelief. He smiled and said, "Zhang Ruochen, everyone can brag. I can even say my Spiritual Power has already reached level 30, but who would believe it?"

"It's fine if you don't believe me!" Zhang Ruochen appeared not to care.

He couldn't be bothered to explain even if no one believed him. It wasn't a big deal to him anyway.

Besides, he didn't want everyone to learn about his true Spiritual Power level. If he appeared to be too talented, he would draw even more assassins to him.

Prince Huo Xing became even more convinced that Zhang Ruochen was lying. Since this was the case, why not take this opportunity to embarrass him in front of everyone?

He clasped his hands together respectfully and bowed at Elder Yue Jingchan with a smile. "Elder, I have a suggestion. Before we enter the Divine Power Palace, let's all test our Spiritual Powers. It'll be clear who among us are talented and mediocre."

Chapter 112: The Spiritual Power Test

Elder Yue Jingchan agreed with the suggestion for he also wanted to take the opportunity to see how powerful the Western Campus prodigies were.

A Sacred Testing Stone was soon placed on a metal frame in front of the door to the Divine Power Palace.

Deputy Headmaster Qing Hua gazed at the 12 students and said, "You must do your best in the test. Elder Yue Jingchan can only offer you guidance if you fully understand your Spiritual Power. Now, line up according to your age. Tuo Muzi, you're the oldest. You go first."

"Yes!"

Tuo Muzi was confident in his Spiritual Power for he was after all the first ranked student nine years ago. He had 12 chances to enter Divine Power Palace ever since joining Western Campus as an external student.

In those nine years, he had elevated his Spiritual Power to a particularly high level.

The muscular Tuo Muzi walked up to the Sacred Testing Stone and placed his palm on it.

"Whoosh!"

Light streaks appeared on the surface of the stone.

One, two, three light streaks... In the end, it stopped at the appearance of the 24th light streak.

Tuo Muzi wiped the sweat from his forehead. Satisfied with his result, he let out a loud laugh.

"He truly lives up to his reputation as our oldest senior! His Spiritual Power is so strong!"

"I heard that he also knows how to refine weapons and train beasts. He's a second-class Weapon Refiner and Beast Trainer. It's really nice to have strong Spiritual Power, isn't it?"

Elder Yue Jingchan nodded. "It's pretty incredible that you reached level 24 before the age of 30. If you get yourself together and focus on either refining weapons or training beasts, you'll definitely be a powerful Weapon Refiner or a tamer in the future."

Though Elder Yue Jingchan appeared to be complimenting Tuo Muzi, he also seemed to be criticizing him.

Tuo Muzi was a highly talented warrior, that much was obvious to everyone. If he had focused on practicing Martial Arts, he would have reached the Earth Realm long ago.

If he had focused on refining weapons or training beasts, he would have been considered a third-grade Weapons Refiner or Beast Tamer by now.

But he was talented in all three areas and wanted to cultivate everything. That was precisely what was holding him back.

He naturally understood Elder Yue Jingchan's criticism and humbly asked for advice. "Teacher, which path do you think I should take?"

Elder Yue Jingchan replied, "The path is below your feet. How you choose is up to you." "I can only give you some suggestions. If you choose Martial Arts, you must give up Weapon refining and Beast training. You can see them as your hobbies but you mustn't spend too much energy on them. Given your talents,

you'll probably be able to achieve the Earth Realm in the Intermediate Relic Exploration Test early next year and become an internal student," he added.

Tuo Muzi's eyes brightened when he heard about the Intermediate Relic Exploration Test.

He wasn't the only one. Huang Yanchen, Duanmu Xingling, and a few other older students also became excited.

They finally learned something about the Intermediate Relic Exploration Test.

Elder Yue Jingchan spoke again, "If you want to go for the other two, you're absolutely qualified to enter the internal school and practice given your level 24 Spiritual Power. I can introduce you to a Weapon Refiner or Tamer presbyter to be your master. Tuo Muzi, what's your choice?"

Tuo Muzi clenched his fists as if he had already made his choice. He smiled and said, "I've always wanted to be a strong warrior. If I wanted to break through to the Earth Realm, I would've done it four years ago."

"I've been studying Beast Training and Weapon Refining in the last four years because I've been waiting for the Intermediate Relic Exploration Test. Since the school is opening the middle-level heritage, I'll definitely choose the warrior path and enter in my best condition."

Elder Yue Jingchang looked surprised, his expression conflicting with tears and laughter. "You've been refusing to break through to the Earth Realm because you're waiting for the Intermediate Relic Exploration Test in the next year?"

"Correct," Tuo Muzi said.

It was a difficult task to break into the Earth Realm, so the School of the Martial Market held the Elementary Relic Exploration Test once every two years.

The Elementary Relic Exploration Test was nothing more than a leveling up exam. Only students who had reached the Completion of the Black Realm were eligible to participate.

The test not only provided students plenty of precious practice resources but also allowed them to experience many harsh and tough moments. Many of those stuck at the Completion of the Black Realm were able to reach the Earth Realm and become internal students through such experiences.

The test was held once every two years and only warriors who had reached the Completion of the Black Realm could participate.

On the other hand, the Intermediate Relic Exploration Test was held once every 10 years. Only the top 10 students of the four campuses were allowed to join. Since it was a very rare opportunity, participation came with even more benefits as well. Thus, the top geniuses in the campuses had always suppressed their cultivations, awaiting the test.

Zhang Ruochen glanced at Huang Yanchen and Duanmu Xingling. No wonder there was only one first ranked freshmen who made it to the Earth Realm and became an internal student. Everyone else was waiting for the test.

He wondered if he should fight for the chance as it would be another 10-year-wait if he missed it.

Tuo Muzi stepped down. The second student to be tested for his Spiritual Power was Ju Hailan, a 26-year-old student who was the first ranked freshman seven years ago.

“Ju Hailan, Level 18 Spiritual Power.”

Ju Hailan was fairly satisfied with his result. It was better than most warriors of the Earth Realm even if it wasn't comparable to Tuo Muzi.

The third student was the 24-year-old Hua Lian. She was the first-ranked student six years ago.

“Hua Lian, Level 16 Spiritual Power.”

The fourth was the 23-year-old Yuchi Tiancong, the No.1 freshman two years ago.

“Yuchi Tiancong, Level 12 Spiritual Power.”

The Spiritual Power of typical warriors usually hovered at level 10.

Yuchi Tiancong had only entered the school and started practicing his Spiritual Power two years ago. His result was impressive given how little time he had to practice.

The fifth was the 22-year-old Xue Ling, the No.1 freshman last year.

“Xue Ling, Level 12 Spiritual Power.”

The sixth one was Zi Qian, aged 22.

Since Zi Qian wasn't from an aristocratic family, she didn't have any resources when she was young. Yet for her to acquire her current cultivation meant she was an outstanding warrior among the relatively poor ones. If she wanted resources for practice, she had to kill people for money so she could buy pills, martial techniques, books, and weapons.

“Zi Qian, Level 16 Spiritual Power.”

When Elder Yue Jingchan read out the strength of Zi Qian's Spiritual Power, the students below were all surprised. They found it unbelievable for a freshman to reach level 16.

The seventh was the 21-year-old Huang Yanchen, the first ranked freshman five years ago.

“Huang Yanchen, Level 21 Spiritual Power.”

A smile floated on her face when she saw her result. She didn't realize her Spiritual Power had increased by one level.

Though it was just one level, such an increase in Spiritual Power couldn't be underestimated. It was incredibly difficult to do so after reaching level 15.

The eighth to be tested was the 21-year-old Prince Huo Xing.

“Huo Xing, Level 17 Spiritual Power.”

Elder Yue Jingchan looked at Prince Huo Xing approvingly, praising all the freshmen this year. They all had real abilities and strong Spiritual Powers.

Yet Prince Huo Xing wasn't satisfied with his result. He had been planning to give everyone a shock with the strength of his Spiritual Power. However, Huang Yanchen's performance was too startling and completely overshadowed him.

They were both 21 years old, yet Huang Yanchen's Spiritual Power was at level 21. That was four whole levels higher than his.

There was nothing for him to be proud of.

The ninth was the 19-year-old Yao Qingtong.

"Yao Qingtong, Level 15 Spiritual Power."

The ones who felt the worst at the moment were Yuchi Tiancong and Xue Ling. They were senior students but were overshadowed by the freshmen. It was acceptable if it was just one freshman, yet all three had obtained higher levels of Spiritual Power than theirs. How could they take on such embarrassment?

The tenth was the 18-year-old Duanmu Xingling, who joined three years ago.

"Duanmu Xingling, level 20 Spiritual Power," said Elder Yue Jingchan with a smile.

The eleventh student was the 17-year-old Luo Shuihan, who joined four years ago.

"Luo Shuihan, it's your turn to test your Spiritual Power!" Elder Yue Jingchan said smilingly.

Luo Shuihan didn't come from an ordinary background. She was the descendant of Luo Xu, the No.1 genius of the Western Campus in its history of 460 years. Four years ago, she joined the Western Campus as the first-ranked freshman at the age of 13. This had sent shockwaves across the entire School of the Martial Market.

The Luo family was a large and wealthy family. There wasn't any need for her to practice at the Western Campus, but she was a proud person and wanted to surpass her ancestor, Luo Xu.

Therefore, she came to Western Campus and followed after her ancestor's footsteps. She wanted to become someone as powerful as her ancestor.

She was only 17 but she was widely accepted as the No.1 warrior of the Western Campus. Even Tuo Muzi, Huang Yanchen, and Duanmu Xingling couldn't match up to her.

Zhang Ruochen was also curious about this person who lived in Heaven No.1. He turned to look at her.

Luo Shuihan was wearing a plain white robe without any adornments, looking very plain. No one would notice her in a crowd, but once they did, they wouldn't be able to look away from her beauty. She didn't look like she belonged to this world. Rather she looked like a fairy who had fallen from the heaven.

Zhang Ruochen couldn't find a single flaw in her. There was nothing to criticize her at all. She was a beautiful and unique woman, without the frostiness of Huang Yanchen or the strangeness of Duanmu Xingling. She had an unearthly aura, like a woman would only be observed from afar and never to approach.

Chapter 113: The No. 1 Spiritual Blood Genius in History

Under everyone's attention, Luo Shuihan walked toward the stone and placed her tiny hand on it.

"Beep!"

The stone gradually lit up, with its splendor getting brighter, and finally formed 26 light rings in total.

The students below were stunned speechless.

"Level 26 Spiritual Power at the age of 17?" Though Elder Yue Jingchan was prepared for this result, he was nevertheless surprised.

He had only reached level 39 after specializing in Spiritual Power for over 80 years. There was barely anyone in the 36 commanderies of the Omen Ridge who was his rival.

"The young students are getting stronger each year. We're getting old!" Deputy Headmaster Qing Hua sighed.

Looking upset, Duanmu Xingling stared at Luo Shuihan and murmured, "Freak!"

Both she and Huang Yanchen's Spiritual Power were above level 20. That was enough to mark them as outstanding but now they appeared so much weaker compared to Luo Shuihan.

The three female devils were far more talented than ordinary warriors and they shared a common point: they all became first-ranked freshmen before turning 16. Huang Yanchen became one when she was 16, Duanmu Xingling at 15, and Luo Shuihan at 13.

Something went off in Zhang Ruochen's head as if he had figured something out.

He also became the first-ranked freshman at the age of 16, so the three female devils could accept him as No. 1 of the Yellow Board in Dragon Martial Temple.

Everyone's gazes shifted toward Zhang Ruochen. He was the only one who had not been tested by the Sacred Testing Stone yet.

Prince Huo Xing glanced at him and smiled. "Didn't someone claim that his Spiritual Power has reached level 25? Why isn't he going to verify it?"

Xue Ling scoffed. "How can you believe what his nonsense? You really think he's more talented than Senior Sister Luo?"

Prince Huo Xing laughed and said, "That might not be true. The Ninth Prince is a talented genius of Martial Arts. I'm sure his Spiritual Power will exceed everyone's expectations, reaching above level 25."

Zhang Ruochen didn't concern himself with their sarcasm. He walked toward the stone and placed his palm on it.

Everyone turned their attention to the stone.

Though they didn't believe his Spiritual Power had reached level 25, they thought he would at least reach level 20 considering his ability to cultivate the realm of Sword Following the Mind. That was the best assumption they had for him.

“Swish!”

The surface of the Sacred Testing Stone lit up.

One ring, two rings, three rings... 10 rings, 11 rings...18 rings, 19 rings, 20 rings...

When the Sacred Testing Stone reached the 20th ring of light, Prince Huo Xing, Xue Ling, and Yuchi Tiancong turned pale. They couldn't believe what they had just seen.

Yet the rings of light on the stone didn't end but continued to grow.

21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th...

Zhang Ruochen didn't want to show off. He might bring himself more trouble if his Spiritual Power ended up surpassing Luo Shuihan, so he decided to stop.

When the stone revealed the 25th light streak, he took his palm away and rejoined the crowd.

“Impossible... He made it to level 25.” Huang Yanchen bit her red lips, staring at Zhang Ruochen with a complicated expression.

“He's a freak like Luo Shuihan! This is absurd!” When Duanmu Xingling saw that Zhang Ruochen was walking past her, she forcefully stepped on his foot.

He didn't foresee her sudden attack, leaving his foot to suffer in pain. He glared at her as if he was saying, “Crazy woman! Why did you step on me?”

She crossed her arms over her chest and lifted her snow-white chin, looking rather pleased.

“Amazing. He almost caught up to Luo Shuihan.” Deputy Headmaster Qing Hua stared at Zhang Ruochen, finding him incredible. She reminded herself to focus on training him in the future.

She laughed. “Elder Yue Jingchan, both Zhang Ruochen and Luo Shuihan can be ranked in the top 10 students with the highest Spiritual Power in the history of the school, can't they?”

Elder Yue Jingchan nodded with a smile. “Luo Shuihan's Spiritual Power is strong enough to be ranked as No. 3 among all the geniuses in the history of the school. Zhang Ruochen can be ranked as No. 4.”

Duanmu Xingling asked, “Who's the No. 1 genius of Spiritual Power? And No. 2?”

Elder Yue Jingchan responded, “The No. 1 student reached level 28 when he was 16 but he was a Weapon Refiner specializing in Spiritual Power. He, therefore, can't be compared to warriors who focus on Martial Arts.”

“The No. 2 student was Luo Xu. When he was 16, he elevated his Spiritual Power to level 27 and became the No. 1 genius among warriors specializing in Martial Arts. No one was able to surpass him since then.”

Just as everyone was stunned by the strength of Zhang Ruochen and Luo Shuihan's Spiritual Power, the latter raised a point that caused another wave of shock.

She stared at Zhang Ruochen. “Junior fellow, you're holding back. Level 25 isn't the complete strength of your Spiritual Power.”

Zhang Ruochen was caught off guard. He didn't expect her to notice that.

"He's at level 25 but he has been holding back?" Huang Yanchen was in disbelief. For her, level 25 was already an unbelievable achievement.

Could it be his Spiritual Power was higher than level 25?

Now that his secret was exposed, Zhang Ruochen was feeling embarrassed. He smiled and said, "You indeed have a sharp eye, Senior Sister. I can't hide anything from you, can I? It's true I'm holding back but not by a lot. I don't see the point of fully demonstrating my ability."

Luo Shuihan responded indifferently, "Were you worried about overshadowing me? Don't worry. I won't be jealous if your talent is incredible. Rather I would admire you even more."

Even Deputy Headmaster Qing Hua was stunned to hear the words 'admire' coming from Luo Shuihan and she kept giving Zhang Ruochen a meaningful look.

No one understood the nobleness of Luo Shuihan's status more than Deputy Headmaster Qing Hua. If Zhang Ruochen showed a magnificent talent and obtained Luo Shuihan's appreciation, he would definitely be a great warrior in the future with one word from the latter.

Deputy Headmaster Qing Hua said solemnly, "Zhang Ruochen, you should demonstrate your high talent if you're gifted with it. The School of the Martial Market is the place for you to show your talent in its entirety. Only the truly talented students will receive more resources and get better endeavors in their journey in practicing Martial Arts. If you can surpass the No. 1 Genius of Spiritual Power in the history of the Omen Ridge, I'll immediately get 10 drops of Half-Saint Essence from the School for you."

Prince Huo Xing, Yuchi Tiancong, and Xue Ling had been planning to humiliate Zhang Ruochen with this test but now they were embarrassing themselves instead.

If Zhang Ruochen truly surpassed the No. 1 Genius of Spiritual Power in the history of the school, he would definitely gain Luo Shuihan's recognition and receive great attention from the senior school officials. His achievement would truly go through the roof then.

The 10 drops of Half-Saint Essence was too important for Zhang Ruochen to give up on.

He walked toward the Sacred Testing Stone again. As he lifted his palm, he turned around and asked, "Deputy Headmaster, are you sure you can get those 10 drops of Half-Saint Essence for me?"

Deputy Headmaster Qing Hua had the sudden urge to punch Zhang Ruochen. He was only willing to demonstrate his true talent just to get the Half-Saint Essence! What an insolent brat!

She scoffed. "Don't you worry. If you truly show a high talent, the school will never mistreat you."

"Good then."

Zhang Ruochen nodded and placed his palm on the stone.

"Swish!"

The stone brightened up again, reaching 20 rings of lights in just a second but not stopping until it reached 25 rings.

The speed of the light began to slow, stopping momentarily before lighting up the 26th ring, and then the 27th ring...

Of course, Zhang Ruochen wouldn't really demonstrate the full extent of his Spiritual Power. Though he would receive more resources and better fostering if his Spiritual Power was higher, he knew it would just bring him disaster if his Spiritual Power was shown to be at level 30.

He played smart this time. He pretended to be strained, struggling to reach even more rings. His forehead was full of sweat and his body was shivering. The stone finally lit up with the 29th ring.

"Pfft!"

Zhang Ruochen took a deep breath and retrieved his hand. Wiping the sweat off his forehead, he said to Deputy Headmaster Qing Hua and Elder Yue Jingchan, "I've tried my best and can only reach 29 rings of light."

When he lifted his head, he realized both of them were looking at him, as if they had become petrified.

He then looked at the students below and saw their facial expressions were even more exaggerated. They looked at him as if they were looking at a monster.

Oh no!

Zhang Ruochen knew something was wrong. He had thrown himself into a trap to get those 10 drops of Half-Saint Essence.

Just then, he saw Luo Shuihan looking at him calmly. She nodded at him, giving him an admiring and appreciative look.

Elder Yue Jingchan was the second to snap out of his shock. He laughed heartily, saying, "Great! There's an incredible young student in Western Campus! Looks like your school should be ranked No. 1 in terms of the quality of your freshmen, not No. 2!"

Deputy Headmaster Qing Hua looked flushed with pride. "Zhang Ruochen, you have my word. I'll definitely get those 10 drops of Half-Saint Essence for you."

Prince Huo Xing's face was twisted with envy. In front of Zhang Ruochen, he was nothing more than a mediocre person.

"What's wrong with the assassins of the Hades Department? Why haven't they killed Zhang Ruochen yet?" Prince Huo Xing said, his teeth clenched. He felt a deep sense of irritation whenever he saw Zhang Ruochen.

Deputy Headmaster Qing Hua said, "We've spent too much time on testing your Spiritual Power. Now, enter Divine Power Palace to practice. Remember, you only have two hours. You must make good use of your time inside."

The 12 genius students entered Divine Power Palace.

For the four freshmen, they found it mysterious and exciting to finally have the opportunity to practice in Divine Power Palace.

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Chapter 114: Half-Saint's Sacred Glyph

Everyone remained silent, as they walked into Divine Power Palace without making any noise or even talking. It was their rare chance to enter the palace and they only had two hours to practice. They didn't want to waste any second of it.

On the first floor of the palace, there were 12 Golden Foil Paintings hanging in 12 different directions on the wall.

Xue Ling, Yuchi Tiancong, Hua Lian, and Ju Hailan entered the palace and chose one painting each. They started cross-legged under their respective paintings and began practicing.

Since all of them were mature students, it was not their first time entering the Divine Power Palace. They remembered all the way and clearly understood the regulation to practice in the Palace.

"Twelve Half-Saint's Sacred Glyph!"

Zhang Ruochen was stunned to see the paintings. This school was just too wealthy! This was just the external yard, yet they were willing to put out the Twelve Half-Saint's Sacred Glyph for their students to practice with.

He walked closer to the Glyph and noticing something off about it.

The Twelve Half-Saint's Sacred Glyph didn't look authentic. Rather, they looked like the Rubbings Scrolls.

He was right. These were the Rubbings Scrolls.

Each Sacred Glyph represented a Half-Saint's Martial Arts and its Spiritual Determination.

The students could rely on the Spiritual Determination of the Half-Saint's Sacred Glyph to enhance their Spiritual Power.

Of course, they could even get the chance to figure out some secret technique or Martial Arts of the Half-Saint classified as lost knowledge.

The paintings on the wall weren't authentic. They were the Rubbings Scrolls that could only imitate the Half-Saint's Spiritual Determination, not its Martial Arts.

The array of the palace transferred Spiritual Qi into the Rubbings Scroll, allowing it to display the Half-Saint's Spiritual Determination to foster the students' Spiritual Powers.

To maintain the Half-Saint's Spiritual Determination for two hours, the palace had to consume 5,000 Spiritual Crystals.

5,000 Spiritual Crystals were equivalent to five million silver coins.

Since this required too many silver coins, the palace was only open once a month.

Zi Qian picked one of the paintings and sat cross-legged under it. She started practicing. There was a small sentence carved on the bottom left corner of the glyph that read 'Bloody Half-Saint Spirit Glyph'.

The description was also carved on the wall next to the glyph, indicating that it was suitable for female warriors as well as those looking for speed and slaughter.

The fighting style that Zi Qian was pursuing matched perfectly with the description — speed and slaughter. Therefore, she picked it to enhance her Spiritual Power.

Prince Huo Xing and Yao Qingtong had also chosen their respective glyphs.

On the other hand, Luo Shuihan, Tuo Muzi, Huang Yanchen, and Duanmu Xingling were walking toward the second level of the palace. When Duanmu Xingling was going up the stairs, she glanced at Zhang Ruochen as if to signal him to follow her.

Zhang Ruochen got her message and followed her.

Duanmu Xingling murmured, "Students with Spiritual Powers below level 20 are required to practice on the first level. Those beyond will practice on the second level."

"Will we practice with Half-Saint's Sacred Glyphs as well?" he asked.

Duanmu Xingling said, "The Half-Saint's Sacred Glyphs in Divine Power Palace are all inauthentic Rubbings Scroll. The Spiritual Determination of the glyphs depends on how much Spiritual Qi we activate and transfer to the glyphs."

"Though all the glyphs here are Rubbing Scrolls, those on the first level can only increase a person's Spiritual Power up to level 20. But the six scrolls on the second level can increase Spiritual Power up to level 30. It's said that there's a Saint Sacred Graph of the Rubbings Scroll on the third level but only Luo Shuihan is strong enough to practice there so far," she added.

Zhang Ruochen nodded and didn't ask any more questions.

When Zhang Ruochen and Duanmu Xingling arrived at the second level of the palace, Tuo Muzi was already seated cross-legged under a Half-Saint's Sacred Glyph. No one wanted to waste time in Divine Power Palace.

Huang Yanchen and Duanmu Xingling were respectively practicing under the Wind Half-Saint's Sacred Glyph and the Icing Half-Saint's Sacred Glyph.

Zhang Ruochen finally picked one glyph, where 10 stars were painted in a straight line and connected like a string of pearls.

It was an incredibly ordinary painting. If it wasn't in the palace, no one would be able to tell it was a Half-Saint's Sacred Glyph.

He read the words carved on the bottom left corner of the glyph: "Half-Saint Xue Wan Sword, leave behind the True Thought."

Every single word was full of power, as if they were carved using a metallic sword.

He sat cross-legged underneath the glyph, focusing on it as he calmed himself down.

Something boomed inside his mind after a minute passed and everything went dark before his eyes.

When his vision returned, he found himself lying on the cold and dark land paved with grass. 10 stars floated above his head in a row as they did in the painting.

“Is this the world within the glyph?”

He gradually smiled. He didn’t feel even the tiniest of fear as he had once entered the world within a glyph to practice his Spiritual Power. He knew clearly that he had entered the glyph mentally through his Spiritual Power, not physically.

“Boom!”

The 10 stars floating in the sky lit up with a dazzling splendor and became light beams that shined on him.

He felt the weight on his shoulder doubling when each of the light beams hit him. When all 10 light beams fell on his body, it felt so heavy that it was like 10 massive mountains were pressing on him.

“Such a powerful Spiritual Determination!”

He kept his feet pressed firmly on the ground as the center of his gravity sunk. His knees bent as he took on the pressure. It was so unimaginably heavy that both his feet were digging into the ground.

Just as he had finally stabilized himself, a man dressed in white fell from the sky and lunged at Zhang Ruochen with his sword.

“Clash!”

With a thrust of the man’s sword, thousands of sword shadows emerged.

The shadows merged into a white light sword that pierced into Zhang Ruochen’s heart.

“Boom!”

Zhang Ruochen activated his Spiritual Power to create a sword in his hand. He slashed hard at the white light sword, shattering it into strands of white smoke.

A knowing smile appeared on the face of the man in white. “You still managed to produce a sword and destroy my attack under the pressure of the 10 stars. Your Spiritual Power has reached level 30 at least. This Rubbings Scroll won’t be of any help to you. You should leave!”

Swoosh!

A white light flashed.

Zhang Ruochen’s Spiritual Power was forced out of the glyph.

“Your Spiritual Power has reached level 30!” A sweet and melodious female voice drifted from behind him.

Shocked, he turned around and saw a woman dressed in white standing three steps away from him.

She was beautiful with a tall and slim figure. She stood behind him elegantly, her bright eyes focused on the 10 stars of the Half-Saint True Thought Painting. She looked deep in thought, though he wasn't sure about what.

Zhang Ruochen stood up to greet Luo Shuihan. "Greetings to Senior Sister Luo."

She looked into his eyes and said, "I knew you didn't show your full capability when you tested your Spiritual Power the second time. I'm curious. What's your exact level?"

Zhang Ruochen laughed. "There's really no hiding from you."

"Follow me to the third level of Divine Power Palace!"

Luo Shuihan's voice was placid as she walked toward the third level of the palace, her flawless figure swaying gently. The subtle and delicate fragrance coming off her seemed as if it could stay in the air forever, making people drunk with infatuation.

Zhang Ruochen followed after her up the stairs. "I heard you're the only one who can enter the third level."

She asked, "Do you know why?"

"Why?"

"There's an authentic Half-Saint's Sacred Glyph hanging on the third level. I brought it here from the Luo household," she said.

Zhang Ruochen's footsteps halted and he said calmly, "Since you brought the Half-Saint's Sacred Glyph from your home, that's your personal treasure. I better not go up."

She turned around and looked into his eyes. "Zhang Ruochen, there's something you need to understand. Since it's my personal treasure, I have the right to invite you to practice together. You're the only one out of the entire Western Campus that qualifies to do so."

"I'm impressed by your generosity," said Zhang Ruochen.

When they arrived at the third level of the palace, they immediately spotted the Half-Saint's Sacred Glyph hanging in the middle of the wall.

Though it looked similar to the other Golden Foil Paintings, it was inherently different from the Rubbing Scrolls. Zhang Ruochen could feel a massive pressure coming from the glyph just by standing close to it. The pressure was so great that it was suffocating.

He walked under it and lifted his head to observe the glyph in detail. Water currents were drawn on the painting where creeks were linked to brooks, brooks to rivers, rivers to streams, streams to the sea.

There were at least thousands of creeks, hundreds of brooks, tens of rivers, and nine streams on the glyph.

The nine streams gathered before flowing into the sea.

“There is the glyph that my ancestor, Luo Xu, created when he reached the Half-Saint realm. It’s said that this glyph not only contains his Spiritual Determination but his powerful Martial Arts as well. Unfortunately, none of the many talented Martial Artists from the Luo family in the last 200 years was able to comprehend the Martial Arts inside this glyph,” said Luo Shuihan regretfully.

Chapter 115: Walking on Water

“This is the Half-Saint’s Sacred Glyph of predecessor Luo Xu!”

Zhang Ruochen admired Luo Xu so much that he gave a slight bow toward the Half-Saint’s Sacred Glyph to show respect to predecessor Luo Xu.

When Luo Shuihan noticed Zhang Ruochen saluting toward the Glyph, her eyes brightened and she gave a slight nod. It was possible that her appreciation of Zhang Ruochen was increasing.

Even though he was an outstanding, talented warrior, he behaved humbly at all times, and that would lead him to a splendid future.

Luo Shuihan said, “There are altogether 1,894 creeks, 325 brooks, 64 rivers, nine streams, and a massive sea on the Half-Saint’s Sacred Glyph. The creek, brook, river, stream, and the sea represent five different realms of Spiritual Power. Let’s try and see if you can reach any of the realms!”

Zhang Ruochen nodded. He sat cross-legged under the Glyph and fully released his Spiritual Power.

At the same time, Luo Shuihan lifted up her white rope slightly and sat next to Zhang Ruochen. She also activated her Spiritual Power and looked closely at the Half-Saint’s Sacred Glyph.

“Beep!”

“Beep!”

Shortly after, both of their Spiritual Power had simultaneously entered the Half-Saint’s Sacred Glyph and arrived on a piece of land that was surrounded by water that was shuttling back and forth.

Luo Shuihan looked like a white Sacred Butterfly as she exposed her snow-white legs with bare feet and walked into the water. Eventually, she walked to the middle of the creek, looking like something out of a fairytale.

She turned around and looked at Zhang Ruochen, who was standing on the shore. She said with her soft voice, as if she had turned into an angel, “There are thousands of pathways for cultivation. Yet, all the pathways will, in the end, converge into one and lead everyone in the same direction.”

“In the world, 3,000 pathways, and yet, the same goal will be reached,” said Zhang Ruochen.

Then, he walked over to the creek and closed his eyes. When he lifted up his leg and stepped on the surface of the water, his sole sunk down slightly but did not fall into the water in the end.

He did not think too much, but just kept walking. Both of his feet moved along the water’s surface toward Luo Shuihan as if he was walking on the ground.

When Luo Shuihan noticed that Zhang Ruochen could walk on the surface of the water, she nodded her head slightly. She continued to walk following the water current.

Zhang Ruochen quickened his pace and caught up with Luo Shuihan on her left. They walked side by side with both of their eyes shut. There was a sense of peacefulness and coziness and no words could explain how amazing that was.

“Zhang Ruochen, your talent is indeed very high, higher than all the geniuses that I’ve ever met. Can you tell me how you cultivate your Spiritual Power to such heights?” Luo Shuihan kept her eyes closed and continued walking by relying on her instincts.

“Senior sister apprentice Luo, I’m sorry but I can’t expose that to anyone. I’d prefer keeping the secret to myself,” Zhang Ruochen said as an apology.

Luo Shuihan did not force him to answer. She then asked, “Well, do you know what exactly the Spiritual Power is?”

Zhang Ruochen responded, “Since human brains are full of potential, the Spiritual Power comes from the Spiritual Stage of our brains. Ordinary people can only utilize one-tenth of their brains. Therefore, their Spiritual Power is only at level 10. By practicing Spiritual Power, we can open up the treasure house in our brains and display different possibilities.

“It is said that if ordinary people who have never practiced Martial Arts were able to use up to 50% of their brain, which is equal to level 50 of their Spiritual Power, then they would be able to break through the limitation of human beings and become Saints by refining Spiritual Power.”

“A Spiritual Power Saint is scarier than a Martial Arts Saint. Some of them are able to summon thunderbolts, some of them can control the clouds and rains, some can awaken dead bodies that have been dead for thousands of years, some can communicate with the gods, and some can predict the future.”

Luo Shuihan nodded and said, “Spiritual Power Saints are indeed stronger and stranger than Martial Arts Saints. Yet, becoming a Spiritual Power Saint is hundreds or a thousand times harder than becoming a Martial Arts Saint. When it comes to the later stage of practicing Spiritual Power, the degree of difficulty will be doubled. Elevating to one level higher is as difficult as climbing up into the sky. For example, Elder Yue Jingchan, who has practiced Spiritual Power for 80 years and reached level 39, needs at least 40 more years, if he wants to reach level 40 of his Spiritual Power. But, do you think he still has 40 more years left to live?”

At this time, they had passed through the creek and entered a brook.

Once again, they walked on the brook’s surface and made their way toward the river.

The water current in the brook became rapid. There was a strong wind on the water’s surface, which stopped Luo Shuihan and Zhang Ruochen from going forward.

Shortly after, they entered the river.

The water current of the river was even more turbulent. The wind on the water’s surface was also getting stronger, it seemed as if both of them were going to be blown away.

When they had finally crossed half of the river, Luo Shuihan's voice entered into Zhang Ruochen's ears.

She said, "This is my limit, I can't go any farther!"

Zhang Ruochen stopped and looked at Luo Shuihan next to him. Luo Shuihan's entire body had been submerged in the water with only her beautiful face barely remaining above the water's surface. He had no idea when it had happened.

If she kept going forward, she would definitely drown.

Luo Shuihan said, "I'll stay and practice here. Once my Spiritual Power has increased, I'll be able to float up and go farther.

"Take care!"

Zhang Ruochen could do nothing to help so he kept moving forward, hoping that Luo Shuihan would be able to catch up with him.

Walking out from the river, Zhang Ruochen entered a wider stream.

If he followed the water flow of the stream, he would be able to reach the sea.

From the creek to the brook, the brook to the river, the river to the stream, and the stream to the sea... Zhang Ruochen's field of view had been getting wider, which required a stronger Spiritual Power the farther that he went.

When he first stepped into the stream, he legs sunk down slightly with the water coming up to his ankles.

He continued moving 3,000 meters forward, where the water reached his knees.

2,000 meters more and the water had risen to his waist.

Another 2,000 meters and the water was up to his chest.

Despite the difficulties and obstacles, Zhang Ruochen kept going step by step, requiring overwhelming effort to move forward. Yet, he never thought of giving up.

The water in the stream had been hammering his Spiritual Power.

When he was immersed in the water up to his neck, Zhang Ruochen did not have a choice but to stop and struggle with the water current so he could maintain his breathing and not drown.

Time slowly passed by. Zhang Ruochen's body eventually floated up and the water had gone down to his waist.

Suddenly, Luo Shuihan shouted from the shore, "Zhang Ruochen, it's time!"

Zhang Ruochen awoke from the process of elevating his Spiritual Power. He looked toward Luo Shuihan at the shore and asked, "That's too fast!"

Luo Shuihan said, "If you decide to choose the path of the Spiritual Power Saint, I can lend you this Half-Saint's Sacred Glyph so that you can keep refining your Spiritual Power. But, you'll have to give up practicing Martial Arts."

"If you decide to continue practicing Martial Arts, you have to leave the Half-Saint's Sacred Glyph now!"

Zhang Ruochen certainly understood what Luo Shuihan meant.

A warrior could surely practice both Martial Arts and Spiritual Power. However, he could not overindulge himself in practicing Spiritual Power. Otherwise, it would greatly affect his Martial Arts. This was a taboo that a warrior always needed to avoid.

It was impossible for Zhang Ruochen to give up Martial Arts. Therefore, he made his way toward the shore.

At the same time, he noticed that there was a faint human shadow on the river's surface far away. The shadow stood in the middle of the water's surface as if he was demonstrating a high-level fist technique.

Yet, the human shadow disappeared in a second when Zhang Ruochen looked over again.

"What are you looking at?" Luo Shuihan asked.

"I think I just saw a human shadow that looked very much like predecessor Luo Xu," Zhang Ruochen responded.

Luo Shuihan was surprised. There was a sense of curiosity showing in her eyes. She asked instantly, "What was the human shadow doing?"

Zhang Ruochen shook his head slightly and said, "When I looked over again, the shadow had already disappeared. Perhaps I didn't see clearly."

Luo Shuihan looked disappointed and said, "Maybe you did see clearly. There's a high possibility that it was the illusory image of my ancestor practicing his Martial Arts."

"Maybe!" Zhang Ruochen did not worry too much about it. He left the water and went over to the shore.

Luo Shuihan appeared to be frustrated. She glanced at Zhang Ruochen and asked, "Do you know which level your Spiritual Power is at after practicing in the Glyph?"

Zhang Ruochen smiled and replied, "I'm not too sure."

"Level 34," Luo Shuihan exclaimed.

Zhang Ruochen was not surprised by his achievement. The Chord of Gods had greatly elevated his Spiritual Power last time. Reaching level 34 was not something that was out of his expectation.

Luo Shuihan continued, "Do you know what the level of my ancestor's Spiritual Power was when he reached Half-Saint? His Spiritual Power was only at level 38 at that time. And when he became a saint, he had broken through level 40."

“Zhang Ruochen, you have already reached level 34 at the Advanced Stage of the Black Realm. I guess you can be ranked in the top 10 throughout the history of the entire Kunlun’s Field. If you give up Martial Arts and focus on Spiritual Power now, there will be a 50% chance for you to become a Spiritual Power Saint.”

Zhang Ruochen certainly understood what Luo Shuihan was saying. He looked determined and said, “There’s no way that I’ll give up Martial Arts.”

“Okay then. You are the one who decides which way to go. Follow your heart!” Luo Shuihan added, “Regarding your Spiritual Power level, I won’t tell anyone. This secret is safe with me!”

“Thank you so much, senior sister apprentice Luo!” Zhang Ruochen said with appreciation.

Afterward, Luo Shuihan and Zhang Ruochen left the Half-Saint’s Sacred Glyph and walked toward the Divine Power Palace.

Watching Luo Shuihan and Zhang Ruochen walking out of Divine Power Palace together, the students that had been waiting outside the Palace all revealed looks of jealousy and envy.

Especially Yuchi Tiancong and Prince Huo Xing—they were extremely jealous of Zhang Ruochen. They kept staring at Zhang Ruochen as if they wanted to kill him with their menacing gazes.

The door of the Divine Power Palace had been closed again. The 12 students all made their way and left the palace.

Going back to Black No.1, Zhang Ruochen was going to enter the Time and Space Spinel and practice the sword technique to prepare for the quarterly assessment held in two months.

“Bang!” The door of his room was opened by a palm. Duanmu Xingling rushed into his room with a weird smile on her face. She asked, “Zhang Ruochen, has senior sister apprentice Luo brought you to the third level of the Divine Power Palace?”

Zhang Ruochen smiled and said, “Yes, she did.”

Duanmu Xingling asked, “What is on the third level of Divine Power Palace?”

“That I can’t tell you,” Zhang Ruochen responded.

Duanmu Xingling stared at him angrily and said, “Fine! Keep the secret to yourself. I was going to tell you what you need to pay attention to at the quarterly assessment in two months. But since you won’t tell me about the third level, I won’t tell you about that either!”

Zhang Ruochen laughed bitterly and exclaimed, “Senior sister apprentice Duanmu, I really can’t tell you!”

Duanmu Xingling stared at Zhang Ruochen harshly. All of a sudden, she put a gorgeous smile on her face. “Okay. But you need to tell me your method to practice Spiritual Power to such a terrifying level!”

Zhang Ruochen thought for a while and said with sincerity, “Talent.”

Duanmu Xingling clenched her fists tightly and wanted to choke him to death.

Chapter 116: The Assassins Arrive

Duanmu Xingling calmed her anger and said glumly, "The quarterly assessment is two months away. It has two rounds. Round one is the Freshmen's Tournament held by the four external houses. Round two is the Ranking Evaluation inside Western Campus. Are you confident?"

"Confident about what?" Zhang Ruochen asked.

Duanmu Xingling said, "As the No.1 freshman on the Western Campus, it's your responsibility to fight for the honor of Western Campus. If you can lead our freshmen to beat the other three campuses at the tournament, you will for sure get lots of merits as a reward."

Huang Yanchen's cold voice came from outside the door, "Although you're the most talented freshman on the Western Campus, your practical ability is not the best. Not to mention that there are countless geniuses in the other three campuses. It's not easy for you to become No.1 of all four campuses."

Zhang Ruochen and Duanmu Xingling both stared with surprise at Huang Yanchen as she was walking in.

Duanmu Xingling asked, "Sister Chen, why did you come here?"

Huang Yanchen did not seem happy now. She said, "I went to Yellow No.1 to visit Zhang Ruochen, but he wasn't there. I guessed that he must be in your room. Xingling, I didn't expect that you would fall for this pervert."

"I didn't! Sister Chen, you must listen..." Duanmu Xingling said.

"Say no more!" Huang Yanchen stared at Zhang Ruochen, took out a tiny jade jar, passed it to him, and said, "Pervert, this is one drop of Half-Saint's Essence. I'd like to trade it with you for a space treasure."

Zhang Ruochen looked at the tiny jar, then turned his eyes to Huang Yanchen. Dissatisfied with her attitude, he frowned and shook his head. "Sorry. Deputy Yard Master Qing Hua has already promised to apply for 10 drops of Half-Saint Liquid for me. I'm not short of it now."

In fact, Zhang Ruochen felt quite guilty about what he had done to Huang Yanchen. He had even planned to give her a space treasure, but due to her current attitude, he had second thoughts.

Huang Yanchen widened her royal blue eyes, seeming very cold. "Duanmu Xingling can trade you one drop of Half-Saint Liquid for a jade space bracelet, but I can't? It seems that she is much closer to you. That's fine! Name your price."

Duanmu Xingling was afraid that Huang Yanchen would misunderstand, so she kept winking at Zhang Ruochen.

But Zhang Ruochen pretended that he did not see anything and said, "Five million silver coins. No less."

Hearing Zhang Ruochen's words, Huang Yanchen drew her sword and directly pointed it at Zhang Ruochen's neck and said, "Say it again."

Zhang Ruochen ignored the insistent sword, stared into Huang Yanchen's eyes, and said mildly, "Five million silver coins. No less."

Huang Yanchen had a fierce temper, which was triggered by Zhang Ruochen's words. She said, "I finally realize why Duanmu Xingling interfered with me when I planned to harm you. You two have colluded for a long time! In that case, why should I spare you? Today, I will make you pay the price for what you did that night. You will be a eunuch from now on!"

Originally, Huang Yanchen had planned to visit Zhang Ruochen and trade a space treasure with him. She had even intended to repair their relationship.

But, when she found out that Zhang Ruochen stayed with her best friend, she was outraged and felt betrayed.

"Clash!"

Huang Yanchen turned her hand to cleave Zhang Ruochen with her sword, aiming at his penis.

Zhang Ruochen was shocked by the feeling of a chill passing over the lower part of his body. He stepped backward immediately and narrowly escaped from Huang Yanchen's attack.

Huang Yanchen was really not letting this go. She gathered the Sword Breath and thrust at him again.

"Boom!"

Duanmu Xingling also took out her sword and waved backhanded to counter Huang Yanchen's movement, saying, "Sister Chen, calm down. Please listen..."

Seeing that Duanmu Xingling had made a move, Huang Yanchen became even angrier. Her endless movements were as fast as the wind, forming a huge Sword Breath vortex.

"Duanmu Xingling, we've never battled it out. Today, let's find out who's stronger."

With her long hair flying and her robe waving, in just a few moves of her sword, Huang Yanchen gracefully drew Duanmu Xingling into her Sword Breath vortex.

"Boom!"

Two flows of strong Sword Breath crashed together, causing a huge hole in the roof, where azure stones continually fell down from.

The two girls rushed up and out through the hole, flying over the eaves and running on the walls, making the tiles clang.

The sound of the battle was gradually fading away, leaving a terrible mess inside the room. Zhang Ruochen was at a loss for words. "Senior sister apprentice Huang is a real ruffian. Everywhere she goes turns into ruins. It seems that I need a new room now."

Suddenly, Zhang Ruochen sensed a murderous feeling and all of the hair on his body stood up at once.

Zhang Ruochen lunged forward instinctively and rolled over on the ground.

"Clash!"

A green poisonous arrow went through the wall, closely passing Zhang Ruochen's neck, leaving a bloodstain on his skin.

In just the blink of an eye, the skin around the bloodstain became dark purple.

Zhang Ruochen immediately took out a Detoxification Pill from the Time Spinel and swallowed it.

The murderous sense did not disappear. It was like a viper hiding in the dark, ready to shoot again at any moment.

Zhang Ruochen had already practiced the Purifying Jade Genuine Qi, which could purify many poisons. But the poison on the green arrow was especially powerful, and he was only able to suppress the poison from spreading with the help of both the Detoxification Pill and his Purifying Jade Genuine Qi.

“Have the Hades Department assassins come at last?”

Zhang Ruochen lay on his stomach on the ground, not daring to move. He quietly released the Space Domain.

Under the Space Domain, Zhang Ruochen detected the auras of the two assassins. One was hiding in the attic, only seven meters away from him.

The other was farther, hiding in the foliage of a huge iron pine tree. If it were not for his Space Domain, Zhang Ruochen would never have found her.

She had to be the one who shot the poisonous arrow.

Two assassins—one near, one far.

Zhang Ruochen could sense their martial cultivations. They were both in the Completion of the Black Realm. Their Genuine Qi was so strong that either one of them had the power to kill Zhang Ruochen.

“What a coincidence that the assassins would come for me when I’ve just finished practicing in the Divine Power Palace! Does that mean that, apart from Zi Qian, there are other Hades Department assassins among the 12 genius students who practice in the Divine Power Palace?”

Zhang Ruochen thought quickly. The situation was very critical and something had gone badly wrong.

“I hid in Black No.1 so senior sister apprentice Duanmu could help me deal with the assassins. All of a sudden, Huang Yanchen showed up and lured her away. Then, the assassins appeared. How could there be such a coincidence? Maybe Huang Yanchen is also a Hades Department assassin?”

Zhang Ruochen held his breath and covered his aura with the power of the Space Domain. He then had a plan in mind.

His greatest advantage now was that he could locate the two assassins without being located himself.

In that case, he should kill the closer assassin as fast as he could, then kill the farther one.

Yet, they were both in the Completion of the Black Realm and were way more powerful than Zhang Ruochen. It was quite difficult for Zhang Ruochen to kill either one of them. So, how could he kill them both?

Just then, Zhang Ruochen sensed Blackie in the Space Domain.

Blackie had stolen another two books. He tucked them under his forepaws and proudly walked into the room through the front door on his hind paws, not knowing that there were two powerful assassins hiding inside Room One of Titled Black.

Zhang Ruochen summoned the Yin-Yang Wooden Graph from his Qi Pool. He held it in his hand and poured his Genuine Qi into it to send a message to Blackie.

“What the hell is Zhang Ruochen doing? Does he plan to seal me into the Yin-Yang Wooden Graph again?” Blackie felt the sealing power of the Yin-Yang Wooden Graph, which was drawing him inside.

At this moment, Zhang Ruochen’s voice reached Blackie’s ears via the Yin-Yang Wooden Graph’s power.

After getting Zhang Ruochen’s message, Blackie’s ears stuck up. He looked over in the direction indicated by Zhang Ruochen with his round eyes.

“It’s no wonder that they are professional assassins. To their credit, they did a good job of hiding. It’s impossible to find them without carefully searching. Now, the show is on!”

Blackie laughed and skittered into the bushes.

With Blackie’s help, Zhang Ruochen was much more confident.

“Weapon of Thunderbolt!”

Zhang Ruochen’s Martial Soul had the nature of space-time and thunderbolt at the same time.

Activated by his Genuine Qi, it gathered all of the Spiritual Qi in a 25-meter radius to form a group of sparks.

The tiny sparks converged and intertwined, becoming stronger.

“Slap!”

A thunderbolt flashed across the space void and struck at the assassin who was hiding seven meters away from Zhang Ruochen.

“Pfft!”

Being caught off guard, the assassin was seriously injured by the thunderbolt. There was smoke all over his body and he coughed out a mouthful of blood.

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Chapter 117: Big Fish Falls

“Where did the thunderbolt come from?”

The killer was shocked and decided to retreat at once.

“Boom!”

After knocking down the wall, Zhang Ruochen thrust his Flash Shining Sword to the killer's glabella at high speed.

However, the killer in black was more nimble than Zhang Ruochen's sword and he drew back after hearing the sound of wind.

"Clash!"

Zhang Ruochen waved his arm and cut a piece of black lapel from the killer's neck.

That killer touched his neck, discovering his head was still attached, he sighed with relief, "You indeed have some superiorities and deserve the first one. Can you tell me what's going on with that thunderbolt?"

Zhang Ruochen knew the killer was putting him off and waiting for another faraway slayer killing him, thus he continued his sword and said, "Go ask the King of Hell!"

"Humph! You are just a freshman in the Advanced Stage of the Black realm. You attempt to kill a stronger person in the completion of the Black Realm? You are too arrogant!"

A cold glare emerged in the killer's eyes and he took out a very thin sword from one sleeve.

Fish Intestines Sword Hidden in Sleeve.

"Clash!"

With glittering flashlights, the Sword Breath like a white rainbow stabbed to Zhang Ruochen's heart.

His speed was inconceivable fast at the speed of 50 meters per second, in a flash, his sword stabbed towards Zhang Ruochen's heart.

Just when he thought he would surely be able to kill Zhang Ruochen, suddenly, the space in front of Zhang Ruochen distorted. The sword unexpectedly changed its direction, stabbing through Zhang Ruochen's one armpit.

"How could this be? No!"

That killer could be no more frightened.

For two Martial Arts masters who were fighting with each other, a little mistake meant a dead end to each of them.

"Pfff!"

Zhang Ruochen pierced his sword to the ankles of that killer, having his legs' tendons picked off.

Then, Zhang Ruochen twisted his body, coming behind the killer and pointed to the Sacred Meridian of the kill's spine with his two fingers together.

"Slap!"

His Sacred Meridian was broken and cultivation was scrapped.

The killer in black fell to the ground!

Zhang Ruochen had no time to look at the appearance of that killer in black, carrying the Flash Shining Sword and jumping down the attic, he went to another killer by leaps who was 40 meters away.

That killer, hiding behind the leaves of a giant pine tree, was shocked when she seeing Zhang Ruochen rushing to her with a sword.

“How did he find out where I was hiding?”

This female killer drew out two green long poison arrows from her back, while riding them on the bowstring, and then she pulled the black longbow like a full moon.

She was very confident of her archery. Even a completion warrior of the Black realm could not survive within 40 meters.

“Mew!”

At this moment, she heard a voice of meow behind her.

A black shadow quickly flashed through in front of her eyes.

That black shadow stretched out a sharp paw and stroke on her one wrist.

“Pfff!”

The right hand of her was cut off by the paw and fell down from the tree.

Crimson blood gushed from her wrist and dyed her black robe to red.

A sharp pain came from her wrist so that she made a muffled voice.

“Boom!”

Below her, Zhang Ruochen chopped the giant pine tree trunk off, making the tree crash down.

Falling heavily on the ground from an over 20-meter high tree, the female killer was just trying to escape while she found a sword tip with a cold light pointing to her head.

“Still want to run away?”

Zhang Ruochen picked out the veil from the female killer’s face with his sword, a quite gorgeous face exposed.

“It’s you!” Zhang Ruochen was amazed slightly.

This female killer was Hua Lian, the newborn first of Western Campus six years ago.

Hua Lian bit her teeth tightly, revealing a hint of sneer and looked at Blackie who was not far away, then said unwillingly, “I did not expect you have raised a strong savage beast, we are miscalculated!”

“You called who is a savage beast? Your ancestors had not yet been born when I was shocking the world,” Blackie said unpleasantly.

Zhang Ruochen asked, “Tell me, in Western Campus who else are Hades Department Killers?”

“Zhang Ruochen, you looked down on me!” Hua Lian showed a strange smile.

“Boom!”

A five-meter-diameter Blood Wave took shape under Hua Lian’s feet, emitting glaring blood lights, which shook Zhang Ruochen and Blackie away together.

“Go to hell!”

Drawing a thin sword from her one sleeve, Hua Lian stabbed it to the glabella of Zhang Ruochen as quick as a flash.

It was so fast.

Zhang Ruochen hardly saw her techniques clearly.

“Damn, I looked down upon her. Hua Lian was the newborn first six years ago, and her cultivation was definitely very profound. Even if she was not a Warrior of Division Profound she could not be much weaker than them.”

Zhang Ruochen quickly ran the Genuine Qi in his body and was ready to exert the power of space warps again.

“Pufft!”

A sound of blade piercing into flesh went off loudly.

Hua Lian’s whole body shook and fell to the ground after she suddenly stopped her paces, staring at Zhang Ruochen who was in front of her.

Standing behind Hua Lian, Huang Yanchen withdrew her bloody sword and hummed coldly, “The killers of Hades Department are increasingly rampant, they even dare to kill people in Dragon Martial Temple.”

Zhang Ruochen looked toward Hua Lian who was lying on the ground. Huang Yanchen’s sword was very precise, she pierced the heart of Hua Lian accurately from the back.

Staring at Huang Yanchen, Zhang Ruochen asked, “Why did you kill her?”

Huang Yanchen frowned slightly and said very unhappily, “If I hadn’t killed her, you could have been killed by her. Could you dodge her sword techniques just now?”

Zhang Ruochen said, “You just could break down her Sacred Meridian or destroy her cultivation, why you had to kill her? Maybe we could get some information from her if she were still alive.”

Huang Yanchen laughed, “You are too naive, I can’t believe you intended to ask something out from the killers of Hades Department?”

“Clash!”

Huang Yanchen withdrew her sword and turned away.

Staring at the back of Huang Yanchen, Zhang Ruochen was very puzzled, “Whether she is a killer of Hades Department or not?”

“What are you thinking about?”

Duanmu Xingling stood next to Zhang Ruochen and looked at the direction where Zhang Ruochen was staring at Huang Yanchen's exquisite back shadow, then asked in surprise, "Aren't you doubting that Sister Chen is another killer from the Hades Department?"

Zhang Ruochen shook his head and said, "I just feel it was too coincidental!"

"Yes, it is."

Duanmu Xingling nodded and said, "But you don't need to doubt her because she absolutely can't be a killer of Hades Department."

"Why?" Zhang Ruochen asked.

"First of all, killers of Hades Department mainly committed crimes in Western Nine Prefectures and Sister Chen is not from there. Secondly, killers are mainly for wealth to kill people and Sister Chen neither lacks money nor practice resources. By the way, do you know Sister Chen has another identity?" said Duanmu Xingling.

"What identity?" Zhang Ruochen asked.

"She is the favorite daughter of Qianshui Commandery Prince. You should have heard of Qianshui Commandery, do you?" said Duanmu Xingling.

Zhang Ruochen nodded and said, "Yes, I do. But I really didn't expect that she has such a distinguished identity."

As a superior class commandery, Qianshui Commandery doesn't belong to the Western Nine Prefectures but nearby.

The whole territories of Western Nine Prefectures are less one quarter than that of Qianshui Commandery.

The east of Yunwu Commandery was bordered by the Qianshui Commandery, and in a sense, Yunwu Commandery was even attached to Qianshui Commandery.

Every year Yunwu Commandery sent a large number of tributes to Qianshui Commandery in order to obtain asylum of it, otherwise, the Yunwu Commandery would have been annexed by Square Commandery.

Since Huang Yanchen was the daughter of Qianshui Commandery Prince, then there was no possibility that she was a killer of Hades Department.

"Senior sister apprentice Huang has a hot-tempered, not like a princess at all." Zhang Ruochen shook his head.

"Sister Chen's character is straight and she doesn't know how to disguise. If you contact her for a long time, you will find that she is actually a very good girl." Duanmu Xingling laughed.

Zhang Ruochen went back to Black No.1 to check the killer who was destroyed cultivation by him.

When he returned he found that killer had been murdered.

“He died from a strong palm which shattered his heart.” Zhang Ruochen touched the kill’s heart and it had been torn apart.

Duanmu Xingling chased up and saw it. “How could this be? We were in the courtyard where was only 30 meters away from the attic. Who did this without a trace?”

Zhang Ruochen’s face fell and said, “At least the one who killed him has cultivation reached the completion of the Earth realm , even the myth of martial arts of the Heaven realm.”

Duanmu Xingling was surprised and said, “There is a terrible killer lurking in Western Campus, we shall tell the Lord.”

“No need! The Big fish has been caught!”

The lord of Western Campus bore his hands and walked in from outside with a faint smile on his face.

“Who?” asked Zhang Ruochen.

Looking toward a rockery in the distance, the lord of the Western Campus said, “Why do you hide yourself when you already have come, Elder Situ?”

Chapter 118: Breaking through the Dawn State

A man in black with a cloak walked out from the back of the rockery and laughed in a hoarse voice, “It’s sinister of you, Lord of the Western Yard. Did you deliberately draw us out with Zhang Ruochen?”

The Lord of the Western Yard replied, “It’s a pity that I didn’t draw all of you out. But you are one of the leaders, if you are caught, it won’t be difficult to catch the others.”

Since Elder Situ had been recognized, he decided not to hide his identity. He took off the cloak to show his skinny, old face. Then, he stared at the Lord of the Western Yard with sharp rays of light in his deep eyes.

“Lord, I haven’t seen you fight with others for over a decade. I just wonder about the level of your present cultivation.” Elder Situ took out two crimson spears from his robe. Then he operated inscriptions to combine them, forming a 266-centimeter-long Blood Dripping Spear.

The spear was as crimson as blood.

When the long spear was waved, it looked like a blood waterfall pouring down.

The flaming Genuine Qi poured out from Elder Situ’s palm and fully covered the long spear.

Hot air came from the spear and heated up the surroundings to a high temperature.

When all thought that there would be a duel between Elder Situ and the Lord of the Western Yard, Elder Situ suddenly stared at Zhang Ruochen coldly, with his left palm beating on the end of the long spear.

“Whew!”

The 266-centimeter-long Blood Dripping Spear looked like a flaming arrow as it came off of the bowstring, and it gave out a harsh sound when it broke through the air and flew rapidly towards Zhang Ruochen.

Crackling sounds emanated in the air.

At that moment, Elder Situ moved a step to the right, stood on his tiptoes, and jumped into the air. He was like a giant bird and flew several dozens of meters away. Then he jumped out of Dragon Martial Temple and escaped in the distance.

He knew that he could never defeat the Lord of the Western Yard. However, Zhang Ruochen was the Achilles' heel. So long as the Lord of the Western Yard attempted to save Zhang Ruochen, he would have the opportunity to escape.

Zhang Ruochen stepped back quickly with his eyes fixed on the crimson spear which was heading straight towards him.

The Lord of the Western Yard caught the spear immediately when the Long Blazing Spear flew in front of Zhang Ruochen. Then the Lord swung his arm and threw out the long spear in a stronger power to make it faster.

“Boom!”

The crimson spear flew out like a fire dragon and broke the enclosing wall of the Dragon Palace.

A terrible screech came from the outside of the wall.

Built with bricks, the enclosing wall of Dragon Martial Temple was seven meters high and one meter thick. However, the Long Blazing Spear had broken the wall and caused a big hole two meters in diameter, making the thick wall topple down.

Through the hole, it could be seen that Elder Situ had been pierced through and fell down in a pool of blood.

Zhang Ruochen looked at the Lord of the Western Yard and was amazed by his powerful martial cultivation that had killed Elder Situ in one attack, which was a drop in the bucket of his real strength.

Having seen the dark-purple poisonous wound on Zhang Ruochen's neck, the Lord of the Western Yard took out a medicine bottle and said, “You have the hypertoxic poison ‘Netherworld Water’ from Hades Department. Fortunately, it is not enough to kill you. Here is the tailored Detoxification Pill. Take it right now.”

Zhang Ruochen removed the Detoxification Pill from the bottle and took it. Immediately, the dark purple in the neck began to fade and the wound soon healed completely.

The Lord of the Western Yard stared at Zhang Ruochen, nodded with satisfaction and laughed, “Yue Jingchan told me that your Spiritual Power had reached to the twenty-ninth level, which makes you the unprecedented top genius of Spiritual Power in the School of the Martial Market. Aha! Good boy. I feel quite satisfied with your achievements. And I will show off in front of my peers the next time I go to the School of the Martial Market.”

The Lord of the Western Yard stopped for a while and said in a serious voice, "But I have to ask you seriously. Do you want to be a Saint of Spiritual Power?"

Without any hesitation, Zhang Ruochen answered, "No, I won't give up Martial Arts."

The Lord of the Western Yard stared at Zhang Ruochen and said, "Zhang Ruochen, do you know how brilliant your talents are in Spiritual Power? You can probably be in the top 10 even throughout the history of the whole Terran in Kunlun's Field. Based on your talents and cultivation from the School of the Martial Market, the possibility for you to become a Saint of Spiritual Power is at least 50 percent."

Zhang Ruochen refused, "Lord, I will never give up Martial Arts no matter how hard you try to persuade me."

The Lord of the Western Yard said, "Well! Actually, you also have brilliant talents in Martial Arts and you will make great achievements in the future. Deputy Headmaster Qing Hua promised to help you apply for 10 drops of Half-Saint's Essence. You will be able to apply within three days."

"If you have any questions about Martial Arts, feel free to ask me at any time. The quarterly assessment will be held in two months. Thus, you need to spare no efforts to practice. I am looking forward to your success in the competition among freshmen from four campuses to win honors for the Western Campus."

Zhang Ruochen replied, "I will try my best."

The Lord of the Western Yard stared at the body of Elder Situ, thought for a while and said, "Although Elder Situ died, there must be other killers from Hades Department lurking in the Western Campus. However, they have little cultivation. Little Duanmu, you will be responsible for his safety in the next two months. Is that ok?"

"Of course, Lord. I promise you." Duanmu Xingling smiled.

The Lord of the Western Yard nodded and commanded others to clean up the bodies of the three killers from Hades Department and hang them on a 30-meter-high bloody wall on the Western Campus.

After being killed, all the spies from the Black Market and the Moon Worship Demonic Sect were hung on the bloody wall for three days. This was used as a warning to other spies.

"Senior Sister Apprentice Hua Lian! I didn't imagine that she is a killer from Hades Department. She once gave some guidance on my archery."

"Elder Situ was in the Western Campus for decades. I had never imagined that he was a heretic from the Black Market. Fortunately, he has been killed by the Lord. Otherwise, countless genius students would have been assassinated by him."

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The death of the three killers caused a great sensation in the Western Campus and attracted many students to the bloody wall.

Zi Qian stood in the crowd and stared at the three bodies on the wall, with unspeakable solemnity in her heart. Perhaps one day she would be killed as well, and her body would be hung on that bloody wall.

Since she chose to be a killer, she made full mental preparation to be killed someday.

Not only Zi Qian, but also two other students in the crowd were frightened. They left silently.

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In Dragon Martial Temple, Duanmu Xingling laughed with her arms folded across her chest. "Spies from Hades Department have been struck heavily. Even the Elder Situ has been killed. I suppose that no one would dare to assassinate you in the short run."

Zhang Ruochen stared at the debris and collapsed wall on the ground and said, "Now Black No.1 has been ruined. It may take a month to repair it. Where can we live?"

Duanmu Xingling stopped, touched her chin and laughed. "Let's move to Sister Chen's room."

"You just fought with her and have a bad relationship with her now. Will she let you live in Earth No.1?" asked Zhang Ruochen.

"Don't worry! Since I already had a fight with Sister Chen, she should be calmed down now. Let's go! Trust me, she will accept us," said Duanmu Xingling.

The gate of Earth No.1 was open when Duanmu Xingling and Zhang Ruochen arrived. They went straight into it.

Suddenly, Zhang Ruochen stopped.

"Chew!" A blue sword flew out of the window and passed by Zhang Ruochen's nose.

Huang Yanchen walked out of the room and stood above with arrogance. She stared at Duanmu Xingling and Zhang Ruochen and said in a grim voice, "What are you doing here? Get away right now if you don't want to die."

Duanmu Xingling chuckled and jumped towards Huang Yanchen. She held Huang Yanchen's arms, acting like a spoiled child, and said in a delicate voice, "Now Yellow No.1 and Black No.1 are both destroyed. We have nowhere to go. Sister Chen, I beg you to let us live here for the sake of our helpless situation. I beg you!"

Zhang Ruochen stood below and said in an unflappable voice, "If Senior Sister Apprentice Huang is still angry at me, I will go to my fourth brother's room to live with him. Farewell!"

"Who told you that I was still angry? When was I angry at you?"

The solemn expression on Huang Yanchen's face disappeared and she giggled with a smile. "Now that you are here for my protection, how can I refuse to take you in? Follow me!"

Huang Yanchen stretched her arms with Genuine Qi bursting out from her palm and forming a twisted wind power.

Driven by the wind power, the blue sword that was stuck in the stone wall beside Zhang Ruochen returned to her palm with a swish.

"Telekinesis." Zhang Ruochen squinted and thought more highly of Huang Yanchen.

With her perfect control of Genuine Qi, she would spend little time to reach the Advanced Stage Realm of Sword Following the Mind.

“From now on, Xingling will live with me on the second floor and you in the lobby downstairs. And you can never come to the second floor without my permission. Do you have any questions?” Huang Yanchen stared at Zhang Ruochen through her beautiful eyes with warped eyelashes.

The lobby was really capacious, containing not only a single room but also a study room, an instrument room, and a Martial Arts practice hall. There was a public bathhouse outside the instrument room, beside which grew a line of maple trees. The environment was quite elegant.

Zhang Ruochen said, “Well! From now on, I will live in the Martial Arts practice hall and never disturb you.”

After finishing his words, Zhang Ruochen walked into the Martial Arts practice hall with Blackie.

The Martial Arts practice hall was very spacious at eight meters long and six meters wide. Except for the entrance, the room was all surrounded by stone walls with the Inscription of Array carving to protect them from being broken through by the Sword Breath.

“Zhang Ruochen, I’m going to read in the study room!” Then, Blackie left the Martial Arts practice hall like a flash.

Over the following three days, Zhang Ruochen practiced the Sacred Sword Skill in the Martial Arts practice hall in the daytime and entered into the internal space of the Time and Space Spinel to take in pills and practice Genuine Qi when the night fell.

Zhang Ruochen carried a great number of pills that he obtained them by searching the students in the first exam of the Martial School.

The total amount of pills was more than 300 bottles, including pills to increase Genuine Qi, pills to increase his power, pills to heal wounds, antidotes, and pills to strengthen Spiritual Blood.

After a rough estimation, Zhang Ruochen was sure that so many pills were enough for him to practice to the Completion of the Black Realm.

Three days later, Deputy Yard Master Qing Hua carried 10 drops of Half-Saint’s Essence to Earth No.1 and handed them over to Zhang Ruochen.

Zhang Ruochen could not wait to refine the 10 drops of Half-Saint’s Essence the moment he got them.

“Blackie, guard me when I practice. If Senior Sister Apprentice Huang and Duanmu come here, tell them that I am secluding myself for refining.”

Zhang Ruochen told this to Blackie and he entered the internal space of Time and Space Spinel. Then he took out the first drop of Half-Saint’s Essence, swallowed it, and started to refine the body.

Zhang Ruochen spent eight days in the Time and Space Spinel refining two drops of Half-Saint’s Essence and his cultivation eventually broke through the Dawn State of the Black Realm.

Chapter 119: Shadow of the Royal Wind Dragon

Having reached the Dawn State, the volume of Zhang Ruochen's Qi Lake once again increased.

For each realm that was achieved, the Qi Lake was expanded to 10 times its size. However, this time, the Qi Lake expanded nearly 20 times its size.

Although it was only twice as much, the increase should not be underestimated. When it came to battling with true Martial Arts masters, a little advantage could be all the difference between victory and defeat.

"Half-Holy Water is really amazing. Not only does it increase my Body of Martial Arts, it can also enlarge the size of my Qi Lake." Having achieved a new cultivation, Zhang Ruochen felt very happy.

With the help of 10 drops of Half-Holy Water, Zhang Ruochen was confident that he could reach the Medium State of the Black Realm before the quarterly assessment.

Absorbing the Half-Holy Water to increase cultivation was actually secondary in purpose.

The most important aspect of Half-Holy Water was its ability to strengthen the Body of Martial Arts. With the help of Half-Holy Water, Zhang Ruochen's physical quality increased, his meridians widened, and he was able to burst out with more power.

"On reaching the Dawn State of the Black Realm, it's possible to use Animal Spirits Fixing Beasts. I wonder what Blood Beast's illusory image I will be able to conjure?"

Zhang Ruochen walked out of the Time and Space Spinel and went into the training room.

"Animal Spirits Fixing Beasts!"

Zhang Ruochen stood at the center of the training room. Following the circulation of Genuine Qi through his meridians, threads of Spiritual Blood seeped out of his pores and enveloped his body.

The sound of dragons and elephants roaring emanated from the Spiritual Blood.

A seven-meter-tall illusory image of an elephant formed behind Zhang Ruochen. Its legs were as thick as trees, its trunk was like a long spear, and its body was full of strength.

There was also a shadowy, seven-clawed dragon curled up on the back of the elephant. The dragon snapped its jaws and waved its claws, its head towering far above, and a great pair of dragon eyes flashed with purple lightning.

Although the image of the dragon and elephant were very light, they emitted a very strong and powerful aura, as if they had brought Zhang Ruochen back to the Reckless Waste.

Unbelievable, it's a dragon and elephant shadow. It's even stronger than the thunder dragon in my last life.

Zhang Ruochen drew the Spiritual Power back into his body, and the illusory image of the dragon and elephant also gradually disappeared.

"Now I will test my current speed."

The training room was too small, so Zhang Ruochen went to the courtyard in Dragon Martial Temple to test it.

Walking out of Earth No.1, he stood in front of his door and circulated his Genuine Qi into his legs. With a whoosh, Zhang Ruochen moved like the wind, leaving behind only a shadow.

A moment later, Zhang Ruochen reached the other end of the courtyard and slowed down his footsteps. His face was full of delight as he said, "Without the power of the blood, I can already reach 50 meters per second. If I use the power of the blood and create the dragon and elephant image, I should be able to achieve 52 meters per second."

For normal warriors, they could reach up to 36 meters per second while in the Dawn State of the Black Realm, 40 meters per second in the Medium State, 44 meters per second in the Final State, and 48 meters per second in the Completion.

Students of the Martial Market School were a lot stronger than other warriors in the same realm as them.

Even the weakest of the students at the school could reach 50 meters per second, when they reach the Completion of the Black Realm.

Zhang Ruochen was only in the Dawn state and could reach 52 meters per second. His speed was comparable to some of the students on the Western Campus who had reached the Completion of the Black Realm.

"Given my current ability, I am confident I could defeat a warrior in the Completion of the Black Realm." Zhang Ruochen clenched his fists. He could clearly feel his ability increasing.

"In the Ultimate Realm of the Black Realm, one can reach 81 meters per second.

"At my level, I can reach 70 meters per second when I reach the Completion of the Black Realm, but I will definitely not be able to reach 81 meters per second."

Zhang Ruochen was not satisfied, although 70 meters per second was faster than some warriors of the Earth Realm. He wanted to reach the Ultimate Realm of the Black Realm. Only if he achieved the best possible in each realm would he have expansive room for growth in the future.

"I must practice a high-class, speed-related martial technique. It will improve my chances of reaching the Ultimate Realm."

Zhang Ruochen searched his memory, and quickly chose a superior-class Spiritual Stage speed-related martial technique. It was called the "Shadow of the Royal Wind Dragon".

The Shadow of the Royal Wind Dragon was already the lowest class of speed-related martial techniques that he could remember, and it was perfect for him to practice right now.

At his current cultivation, to complete the practice of a low-class Spiritual Stage martial technique would take two to three months. A mid-class Spiritual Stage martial technique would take about a year to complete practicing, and a superior-class Spiritual Stage technique would take five years at least.

It was because his Spiritual Power was so strong that he was able to practice so fast.

Otherwise, if it were a normal warrior in the Dawn State of the Black Realm, they would need at least a year to practice a low-class Spiritual Stage martial technique, 10 years for a mid-class, and at least 60 years for a superior-class.

The higher the realm of Martial Arts, the quicker it was to practice the martial techniques.

Stronger Spiritual Power also sped up the practice of martial techniques.

Zhang Ruochen did not expect to fully complete the Shadow of the Royal Wind Dragon in a short time, he only wanted to partially complete it first.

Even partial completion would greatly increase Zhang Ruochen's speed, like a Royal Wind Dragon.

The Shadow of the Royal Wind Dragon only had a total of nine paces. And each pace had nine changes for a total of 81 changes.

When rushing during travel, one only needed to use the nine paces of Royal Wind. Once it was practiced to the Small Success, every nine steps would take you more than two kilometers.

If one used the 81 changes when fighting against an enemy, the enemy would not be able to defend against it. They would only be able to see a shadow and be unable to touch one's body.

It was also Zhang Ruochen's first time to Practice the Shadow of the Royal Wind Dragon, so he could only fumble along.

At the very beginning, he was only able to follow the nine simplest steps. After walking those dozens of times, he began to increase his speed.

As he moved faster and faster, Zhang Ruochen's legs looked as if they had changed into shadows. Dozens of legs appeared to be walking on the ground.

Far away, Huang Yanchen and Duanmu Xingling sat on a tower. They watched Zhang Ruochen practicing in the courtyard.

"He seems to be practicing a high-level body skill. It's at least a low-class Spiritual Stage body martial technique," Duanmu Xingling said.

Huang Yanchen rested her chin on her pale finger and said, "Body martial techniques have always been rare. I'm currently practicing a superior-class Human Stage body martial technique. The Western Campus does have one low-class Spiritual Stage body martial technique called the 'Jingang Thunder Step'. Pity that it's not suitable for women to practice. In the Palace of a Thousand Waters, there are two low-class Spiritual Stage body martial techniques, but both have flaws and are not suitable for me to practice. It looks like I'll have to wait, until going to the Internal School to find Spiritual Stage body martial techniques that are suitable for me."

Duanmu Xingling's eyes held a strange glitter. She stared at Zhang Ruochen, who was currently practicing his paces, and said, "How about... we have junior apprentice brother teach us?"

"A low-class Spiritual Stage body martial technique is very precious. It would cost at least 2,000,000 silver coins to purchase. Even in the Martial School, it would cost 1,000 merits to borrow," Huang Yanchen said coldly. "Do you think that he will teach us?"

Duanmu Xingling touched her space jade bracelet, smiled, and said, "Brother Zhang has never been a stingy person."

"He isn't stingy towards you," Huang Yanchen said in ill humor.

Duanmu Xingling said, "We should at least try, right? Besides, I've found the body martial technique he is practicing is rather special. It doesn't seem as limiting as other body martial techniques, so maybe it will be very suitable for us to practice. Sister Chen, if we miss this opportunity, it will be very difficult to find another suitable body martial technique!"

"OK!" Huang Yanchen was somewhat convinced. If the body martial technique Zhang Ruochen was practicing really did suit her, she was willing to pay a high price to obtain it.

Huang Yanchen and Duanmu Xingling were like two stunning otherworldly beings, with their clothing floating about them and their figures poised. They floated down from the tower and walked toward Zhang Ruochen.

Seeing them approach, Zhang Ruochen stopped practicing.

"Junior apprentice brother, what high-level martial technique are you practicing?" Duanmu Xingling fluttered her beautiful eyes and asked curiously.

Zhang Ruochen smiled and said, "It isn't any high-level martial technique. It is only a speed-related martial technique. If senior sister apprentices wish to learn, I can teach you!"

Duanmu Xingling and Huang Yanchen met each other's eyes. Originally, they had been a bit awkward and unsure of how to ask. They did not expect that Zhang Ruochen would be a step ahead of them and be able to see their purpose.

Huang Yanchen's face was cold, "I won't learn for nothing. I will pay you however much you want in merits or silver coins."

Zhang Ruochen stared at Huang Yanchen's beautiful face and smiled leisurely, "I'm afraid to say, I don't think Sister Huang can afford this martial technique."

Of course, Zhang Ruochen saw their purpose. He offered to teach them for free mostly because Huang Yanchen had previously saved his life by striking out in time to kill Hua Lian.

Revenge had to be taken, and kindness also had to be returned.

Hearing what Zhang Ruochen had said, Huang Yanchen's eyes went cold. "Who do you think can't afford it? Today, I will buy it for sure."

Zhang Ruochen lightly shook his head and did not speak.

The worst superior-class Spiritual Stage martial technique would sell for 8,000,000 silver coins, never mind something like the Shadow of the Royal Wind Dragon. Furthermore, it was the best of the superior-class Spiritual Stage martial techniques. On the market, it would at least sell for 30,000,000 silver coins, or even more.

Even if Huang Yanchen was the Commandery Prince of the Qianshui Commandery, she would not be able to pay 30,000,000 silver coins. If she sold herself, she might be able to make the price. At least, the Qianshui Commandery Prince would definitely buy her back.

“Zhang Ruochen, what is that expression? You dare to look down on me?” Huang Yanchen stared with wide eyes, and ground her teeth. She did not look favorably upon Zhang Ruochen.

“I didn’t mean to look down on Sister Huang. Everything I said is true. If you want to learn, it’s best to be modest and not overly arrogant. If you insist on buying this speed-related martial technique, then I will lower the price for you. 10,000,000 silver coins, nothing less,” Zhang Ruochen said very seriously.

Chapter 120: Impart

A new student dared to tell her to not be arrogant. As a “female devil”, how could Huang Yanchen stand for that?

“Zhang Ruochen, do you dare to repeat that? You don’t think I’ll break both your legs and have you thrown out?” Huang Yanchen extended her five fingers. Threads of Genuine Qi began to converge between them, and a small whirlwind formed in her palm.

Zhang Ruochen remained calm and said softly, “Sister Huang won’t need to do anything. I’m leaving now.”

Having said that, Zhang Ruochen headed to Earth No.1 and began to pack, preparing to move. He did not want to stay in the Dragon Martial Temple anymore. Huang Yanchen was entirely illogical. Staying with her had made Zhang Ruochen feel unsafe, as if his life could be threatened at any moment.

Whoever married her in the future would be damned for eight lifetimes.

“Junior apprentice brother, Sister Chen is just joking with you. Please don’t take it to heart.” Duanmu Xingling caught up to and stood next to Zhang Ruochen. Narrowing her eyes, she revealed a stunning smile.

“Really?” Zhang Ruochen glanced at Huang Yanchen.

Huang Yanchen stood pencil-straight in the distance. She worked to control her anger and squeezed out a smile, “Of course I was only joking.”

“OK then! For Sister Duanmu’s sake, I can teach you to practice the Shadow of the Royal Wind Dragon. But whether or not you can practice it successfully depends on your talent.”

Zhang Ruochen wrote down the spell for the Shadow of the Royal Wind Dragon, and handed it to Huang Yanchen and Duanmu Xingling. “Now, I can only give you the spell. As for the steps, it’s impossible for me to draw its essence at my current cultivation. I can only practice and teach you at the same time.”

Zhang Ruochen spoke the truth. Although he was once a warrior at the Completion of the Heaven Realm, he could only draw out the essence of martial techniques that were up to the low-class Spiritual Stage.

The Shadow of the Royal Wind Dragon was a superior-class Spiritual Stage martial technique. Given his understanding of the martial technique, even if he managed to draw the steps, they would only have 10-20% of the essence. Practicing with those steps, Huang Yanchen and Duanmu Xingling would not be able to successfully practice the technique.

Huang Yanchen and Duanmu Xingling took the written spell and read it together. In the beginning, they were very focused, but the more they read, the more shocked they became.

Having finished reading the spell, Huang Yanchen's gaze was like two ice swords. She stared hard at Zhang Ruochen and said, "The spell is extremely exquisite. It is definitely not as simple as a low-class Spiritual Stage martial technique. Exactly what class of martial technique is this Shadow of the Royal Wind Dragon?"

"Can't say."

Zhang Ruochen spoke again, "If you want to learn, then I will teach you sincerely. If you don't want to learn, please go back!"

"We will learn! Who says that they're not learning? I am definitely going to learn!" Duanmu Xingling naturally saw how powerful the Shadow of the Royal Wind Dragon was. Even if she only partially succeeded, it would greatly increase her power in battle.

Huang Yanchen's look was unsettled, "Xingling, you memorized the spell, right?"

"Of course I remembered it. Sister Chen, did you forget that if your Spiritual Power reaches level 20, you will remember everything you see?" Duanmu Xingling smiled and replied.

Huang Yanchen nodded and ripped the spell into pieces.

She was very aware of the price of the Shadow of the Royal Wind Dragon. If someone else were to see it, it would certainly bring them no end of trouble.

Afterward, Zhang Ruochen demonstrated the nine steps of the technique for them, and then explained the 81 different changes.

Because Huang Yanchen and Duanmu Xingling were both top prodigies, they were able to very quickly grasp the basics and learn through analogy, and they quickly began practicing.

Zhang Ruochen practiced along with them and was clearly practicing faster.

After night had fallen, Zhang Ruochen returned to Earth No.1, but Huang Yanchen and Duanmu Xingling continued to practice the technique in the courtyard. They were no less obsessed with this martial technique than Zhang Ruochen was.

Zhang Ruochen had only just reached the Dawn State of the Black Realm, so his Martial Arts realm was comparatively low. He needed to spend a great deal of time practicing his Genuine Qi, and could only spend a limited time practicing martial techniques.

Huang Yanchen and Duanmu Xingling had already reached the Completion of the Black Realm, and so they could spend all of their time practicing martial techniques. This was their advantage!

After returning to the training room, Zhang Ruochen entered the Time and Space Spinel. He consumed a Triple-purity Genuine Qi Pill, and began to absorb it.

He was not lacking in pills and could eat them like candy. As long as they increased his practicing speed it was fine.

After practicing for a day inside the Time and Space Spinel, Zhang Ruochen absorbed 18 Triple-purity Genuine Qi Pills and could clearly feel that the Genuine Qi in his Qi Lake had substantially increased. He had finally consolidated the Dawn State of the Black Realm.

When he exited the Time and Space Spinel, it just happened to be the dawn of the next day. He saw that Huang Yanchen and Duanmu Xingling were still practicing in the courtyard.

Zhang Ruochen looked into the distance and could only see two elegant shadows moving back and forth. Their footwork was elegant and the wind sounded like a dragon's roar as they moved at an astonishing speed.

They lived up to their names of masters of the Profound Board. With just a day and night of practice, they had managed to get a feel for the Shadow of the Royal Wind Dragon. They were almost in the Beginner Realm.

Their current steps were only similar to the Shadow of the Royal Dragon. Only when they achieved Resemblance in Spirit would they be at the level of the Beginner Realm.

Beginner, Small Success, Succeed, and the Perfection of Martial Arts—all martial techniques had these four realms.

Between the two of them, Huang Yanchen was clearly faster than Duanmu Xingling. In at most another day, she would reach the Beginner Realm.

It was to her advantage that she opened a Gale Sacred Mark. The Genuine Qi in her body was of wind nature. Her physical quality and Genuine Qi were both highly compatible with the Shadow of the Royal Wind Dragon, and so her practice was obviously quicker.

“Whew!”

Duanmu Xingling flew over to Zhang Ruochen's side. She used her sleeve to gently wipe the fine sweat on her forehead and said radiantly, “Junior apprentice brother, Sister Huang and I had a discussion. We think it is more suitable to practice this technique in the wild where there is wind. Dragon Martial Temple is all flat ground and there is very little breeze. It is not suitable for practicing this high-level martial technique.”

Zhang Ruochen nodded and asked, “So, what do you plan to do?”

Duanmu Xingling replied, “There is a valley in Omen Ridge called Devil's Wind Valley. Hurricanes are common there and it's the perfect place to practice the Shadow of the Royal Wind Dragon. Would you like to come with us?”

Zhang Ruochen asked, “How far is that valley from the Western Campus?”

Huang Yanchen walked over and said, "Devil's Wind Valley is about 200 kilometers away. Given our speed, if we rush the whole way, we could be there in an hour. We are just unsure if you can keep up with us."

Zhang Ruochen smiled and said, "My cultivation has already reached the Dawn State. Although that is still some distance away from you, I shouldn't hold you back."

"You just broke into the Advanced Stage of the Black Realm, how could you have already reached the Dawn State?" Duanmu Xingling had some disbelief as she looked at Zhang Ruochen with doubt.

Huang Yanchen said, "He received 10 drops of Half-Holy Water. Given his absorption speed of Half-Holy Water, it shouldn't have been a difficult matter to reach the Dawn State in such a short time.

"Half-Holy Water is, after all, a treasure that is very efficient for refining the body and increasing the size of one's Qi Lake. In the lower realms, it has very obvious effects on cultivation. Following the development of one's cultivation, the efficiency of Half-Holy Water to increase cultivation gets weaker."

Zhang Ruochen agreed with Huang Yanchen's words. When he was in the Advanced State, he absorbed three drops of Half-Holy Water to reach the Dawn State.

Although he still had eight drops of Half-Holy Water, it would not be enough to reach the Medium State.

So, he planned to use other pills first to practice the Genuine Qi in his Qi Lake to completion, and then take the eight drops of Half-Holy Water to break through to the Medium State.

That was not to say that Half-Holy Water was not powerful medicine, as the main purpose of Half-Holy Water was not to increase cultivation.

"Senior apprentice sisters, I will go back and pack some things." Zhang Ruochen thought about Blackie and was not at ease about leaving him alone in the Western Campus. If there was no one to control him, who knew what trouble he would cause?

"We'll wait for you outside of the main gates of the school. You'd best be quick," Huang Yanchen said.

Zhang Ruochen returned to Earth No.1 and opened the study door. As expected, he saw Blackie sitting on a chair, intently reading a book.

"Blackie, I'm going to Omen Ridge to practice. You must come with me," Zhang Ruochen said.

"OK! I also want to tame a familiar, if I could tame a rosefinch, that would be good! It's a pity that my cultivation is locked in the Yin-Yang Wooden Glyph. There's no way I can tame a rosefinch, I can only tame some lower level savage beasts... Hmm... I guess I'll wait to do that!" Blackie jumped down from the chair, clasped his book, and walked with Zhang Ruochen toward the outside of the Western Campus.

Zhang Ruochen and Blackie had just left the Western Campus when the news reached the ears of Prince Huo Xing.

"You're sure that Zhang Ruochen left the Western Campus alone?" Prince Huo Xing suddenly stood up, and his eyes glittered with cold murderous intent.

A student thought and replied, "With a cat!"

“It’s not necessary to report about a cat!” Prince Huo Xing’s face revealed a cold smile, and said to himself, “Zhang Ruochen, ah, Zhang Ruochen! You don’t take the path to heaven, but beat against the doors of hell. While you remained in the Western Campus, I could not act against you. But now that you have left, death is the only end that awaits you. This time, I will personally kill you.”

The student was a little doubtful and said, “Even Feng Zhilin died at the hands of Zhang Ruochen. Given Your Majesty’s cultivation, you probably can’t kill him.”

“Idiot!”

Prince Huo Xing glared at him and said, “Do you think that I will strike personally? The Square Commandery has 400,000 troops stationed around Omen Ridge. I only need to go into one of the camps and choose an elite warrior. To them, killing Zhang Ruochen would be like shooting fish in a barrel.”

Not long after Zhang Ruochen had left the Western Campus, Prince Huo Xing also left. He headed toward a battalion that was camped a few hundred kilometers away.

“Senior apprentice sisters! Let’s head out now!”

Zhang Ruochen saw Duanmu Xingling and Huang Yanchen on a mountain outside of the Western Campus.