

Chapter 171: The Array Gate

[The Moro Secret Forest]

Xu Xiaoshou stared anxiously at the dark crack in the sky. If he hadn't reacted quickly enough, he would probably have rushed right into it.

To resist the tremendous suction of the crack, he forced himself to the side.

But the redwood trees coming from below were not so lucky and were sucked into the black void.

"Is this the spatially broken flow?"

Xu Xiaoshou remembered Ye Xiaotian's "Ripping Hand of Heaven" technique from the other night when the Master Dean had done the same thing with his bare hands.

BOOM!

The Tianxuan Gate rumbled again, and this time it did not return to a calm state. Instead, the confines of the Small World hummed with a strange energy and trembled.

"What's going on?" Mu Zixi stopped and looked at the earth in panic.

"I'm afraid that something is wrong with the Small World."

No sooner had Mo Mo spoken, when the three of them heard Ye Xiaotian's voice at the same time.

"A quarter of an hour."

"Gather at the Array Gate."

Xu Xiaoshou hurriedly descended to the ground and grabbed hold of his junior sister tightly. He looked around and simply could not locate the Array Gate.

"Whoa, let go of me!" Mu Zixi struggled violently.

"You're close to death now. Stop making a scene!"

"..."

Mu Zixi went silent for a while, then fumed and growled, "Pink pigeon! You're the one who's a pink pigeon! Your entire family comprises pink pigeons!"

"..."

Xu Xiaoshou was baffled and wondered if she was that vindictive.

He turned toward Mo Mo and said, "The Moro Secret Forest is too far from our initial landing point, and I'm afraid the Array Gate is located there."

"It's only a quarter of an hour. Can you make it there?"

Mo Mo lowered her head. Had the gray fog man not fainted, she would have been able to reach in a quarter of an hour, but now...

As she thought about it, she realized that heaven and earth had turned upside down and the world was flying backward.

No!

It was Xu Xiaoshou who picked her up with one of his hands.

She struggled, feeling awkward and somewhat embarrassed. "Let go of me," she hissed.

Xu Xiaoshou ignored her. Judging by her appearance, he knew that Mo Mo was helpless right now.

In her present condition, she was so weak that even walking on her own felt like death itself.

With one in each arm, Xu Xiaoshou carried the two of them and soared into the sky. He employed the Full Master Agility, and flames roared under his feet before his entire body streaked through the air.

"So fast"

"Who would have thought! Surely, his speed has never reached this limit before!"

Mo Mo, secure in Xu Xiaoshou's arm, stirred when she saw the youth's angular jawline. Against the whistling wind, she buried her slightly red cheeks in his chest.

Da, dum. Da, dum. Da, dum.

Pressed against his chest, she could hear his heart thumping. And the rapid heartbeat was in time with her own.

Her long black hair fluttered about wildly, partly covering her face. She touched the white bracelet on her right wrist.

Just at this moment...

"Xu Xiaoshou! Can you not carry me on your shoulder? I'm feeling dizzy!" Mu Zixi cried and bounced on the youth's shoulder, feeling like she was going to throw up.

"Pull off your skirt. It's blocking my face!"

"..."

"Cursed, passive point, 1."

"Can't you turn me over?"

"Yeah, it seems I can."

The corners of Mo Mo's mouth curled up, feeling amused. She looked over the shoulder of the lad and at the black crack in the sky.

BOOM!

The sky exploded once again. Many pieces of mirror-like shards were falling, turning everything in their world into nothingness.

It appeared like after this moment, not a trace of anything would remain here.

There were few people in the Tianxuan Gate. Seeing what was happening in the Small World and hearing Ye Xiaotian's call, everyone realized that something was very wrong and rushed to the Array Gate.

When Xu Xiaoshou arrived, he found that a small group of people had already gathered at the entrance.

These were among the newly promoted thirty-three, each with excellent cultivation levels, especially in escaping skills. Besides, they were not far away from the place, so they arrived promptly.

The only person who was not experienced was Chao Qingteng.

He couldn't even make his way here initially, but...

The lad who not usually one to care, but now a kinder countenance appeared on his face after he looked to the side and saw a woman clad in a purple silk dress.

It's the third life.

Seeing Xu Xiaoshou rush over with the two of them in his arms, they were all excited.

"Here they come. We're all here. The passage should open now!"

"There are still two missing."

"We can't wait for them. We will all die if the passage doesn't open right now."

Xu Xiaoshou stopped and threw the two women to the ground. Then he turned his head around and looked back at the rear.

The space shattered inch by inch, as if it were the end of the world. The black hole seemed to swallow everything, gradually encroaching on the place where they passed only moments ago.

"What passage?"

He looked at the only person with whom he was familiar—Luo Leilei.

"The dean said if the Small World within the Tianxuan Gate does not shatter, the passage could still be forcibly pushed open. But the present situation is too unstable. Probably, a spatial passage connecting the outside world has to be opened first, and even then, will last one second." Luo Leilei explained, which was rare for her.

"One second is enough! What are you waiting for, open it now!"

Xu Xiaoshou was a little anxious. He did a headcount and found there were eight of them in total.

Oh, yes, Yuan Tou was lost.

There is one more...

He turned his head back and forth and realized that most of the guys were those he had met only once. But Zhou Tiansen, whom he was familiar with, was nowhere to be found.

He looked at Chao Qingteng and asked, "Zhou Tiansen hasn't come yet?"

Chao Qingteng frowned and didn't speak, shaking his head slightly.

So, Xu Xiaoshou and Senior Sister Leilei also knew each other?

Damn it!

He clenched his fist, but saw Luo Leilei approach Xu and said, "Xu Xiaoshou, I've asked everyone here. No one has touched the Treasure of Suppressing Barrier."

"What Treasure of Suppressing Barrier?"

Luo Leilei rolled her eyes and rebuked, "The Black Fallen Scabbard!"

"So?"

"So, what else did you take?"

Xu Xiaoshou was on his guard, wondering if Luo Leilei still wanted to snatch it.

"What's it to do with you?"

"Nothing. I'm just asking. Have you also taken the other two?"

Xu Xiaoshou thought about it and figured he got the "Life Spiritual Seal" and "Sealing Stone". Though the latter was only a ring left, it was a treasure.

He nodded his head. He believed this girl would be unable to beat him, so nothing bad would happen to him by admitting it.

"As I thought."

Luo Leilei suppressed the impulse to smack this lad. Seeing the innocent expression on his face, she grew furious.

You have just destroyed this world!

That said, how did he get the other two treasures of suppressing barrier in such a short time?

Who is the spy then?

After taking a deep breath, Luo Leilei spoke no more. "There is no time. Let's communicate with the dean and get out of here first!"

She took out a jade scroll left behind by Ye Xiaotian. She was the first person to arrive and hid it.

"Wait!" Xu Xiaoshou raised his hand to stop her. "The passage has only one chance, but is there only one chance to communicate as well?"

"Right!"

Luo Leilei narrowed her eyes. "You want to wait for the two of them?"

Hearing what she said, the others were anxious, thinking that this world was on the brink of extinction and that they would not have enough time to think of others.

"Xu Xiaoshou, we have agreed that we would leave when more than half of our people assembled here. You're pretty lucky that we waited for you three."

"Indeed, it's better to think more about yourself right now. We do not know what has happened to those two guys. Maybe, they have already died in the spatial rift."

"..."

"Stop!" Seeing the anxiety growing in the crowd, Xu Xiaoshou said, "Whoever said I wanted to save them?"

"Eh?" The crowd looked stunned.

If you didn't want to save them, why did you stop the communication?

"Suspected, passive points, 7."

"What do you want to do?" Luo Leilei asked.

"Can I be the one to communicate?" Xu Xiaoshou looked at the jade scroll in Luo Leilei's hand and rubbed his hands.

Luo Leilei put away the jade scroll instinctively, wondering what the lad intended to do this time.

"Forget it if you don't want to." Xu Xiaoshou gestured with his hands indifferently and said, "But when you communicate, can you ask a question for me?"

"What question?"

Xu Xiaoshou looked a bit embarrassed, and said, "I just want to ask if the other treasures will be blown out when the Tianxuan Gate explodes."

A glint could be seen in his eyes as he thought of the eight other treasures left!

It was a pity not to take them!

Chapter 172: Moxi Moxi?

Luo Leilei had almost struck him with thunder.

This guy must be evil. How could he ask such a question at such a time?

"Xu Xiaoshou," she seethed, suppressing her emotion, then approached him holding the jade scroll, and whispered, "After we get out, you come with me!"

Even if the lad was rather mischievous, his overall strength was undoubtedly outstanding, even outside of the Spirit Palace!

This sort of man was worthy of a second chance.

Xu Xiaoshou was initially tempted by the solicitation, before he deliberately took a step back and said, "I won't go with you!"

"Huh?"

The people around became confused for a moment, and their eyes glowered green with envy.

Though they couldn't hear what Luo Leilei had said, they could hear Xu Xiaoshou clearly!

What is this situation here?

Is he confessing his part in causing the ending of the world?

Is she being cruelly rejected?

Mu Zixi looked at the two of them with suspicion, casting her eyes from one to the other, wondering if Xu Xiaoshou had ended his other love affairs since there was now another woman involved!

"Suspected, passive points, 7."

"Cursed, passive point, 1."

"Resented, passive point, 1."

Resentment?

Xu Xiaoshou instantly stared at Mu Zixi to find out if something was wrong with her!

She had only been dishing out curses so far.

Where did this "resentment" come from?

Luo Leilei's pretty face turned red immediately. She knew clearly that everyone misunderstood their relationship.

Yet, she didn't bother to explain but simply ignored the group and asked, "Why don't you come with me?"

Hearing this, the crowd became excited.

Had it not been because the end of the world was nigh, and given their nature, the group would have pulled out small benches from their rings and sat down to watch.

"I have already told you. What is the point of asking again?" Xu Xiaoshou said, and added, "Let's not delay any further. We have to contact the dean quickly."

Mu Zixi opened her eyes wide. She couldn't believe that her senior brother could be so cruel in his rejection of anyone.

She touched the ring on her index finger, believing that she could get this item was a good outcome.

But...

Pink Pigeon.

“Cursed, passive point, 1.”

Luo Leilei was so angry that she seethed through clenched teeth. “You don’t want to give it a second thought?”

“I refuse!”

Xu Xiaoshou was quite decisive.

Everyone looked sympathetically at the woman in front of them, thinking well of her as a person, and wondering how anyone could fail to cherish her.

This is the end of the world.

Well, not quite!

Someone looked behind and saw that the collapse of the world had already expanded, coming ever closer to them, and said, “Senior sister Leilei, this is not the time to get sentimental. Hurry, we need to contact the dean. You can’t...”

He was really afraid that the woman might sacrifice everybody for love because she was so angry!

Luo Leilei glared at him and then posted the jade scroll on her forehead.

Xu Xiaoshou pondered as he watched her.

Why have the elders not detected the identity of this girl? Does it mean that the masked man will come again after the opening of the Tianxuan Gate since she is so sure that she would be able to leave?

As he was pondering this, he was drawn to the “resentment” that kept appearing on the information bar.

What’s going on?

Who is the good guy who doesn’t pray for something when he’s dying and keeps contributing passive points to me?

His eyes searched around and finally settled on Chao Qingteng.

“What are you looking at me for?”

Chao Qingteng’s body suddenly tensed up, and he wondered if he was a match for Xu Xiaoshou in his current condition.

Though he had a breakthrough, Xu Xiaoshou...

How come he is an Innate?

Isn’t he only at the 9th level?

Is this guy a Fiend?

As Xu Xiaoshou saw the “resentment” changed to “suspicion” on the information bar, his eyes glinted with a playful expression.

The “resentment” seemed to have appeared after Luo Leilei had spoken to him.

It can’t be?

It seemed impossible that the trip into the Tianxuan Gate had bound their two hearts!

He went forward and slapped his right hand on the young man’s shoulder, and said, “Age is not a problem. You just need to be brave enough to tell the other party you love her.”

“Secret love is not desirable!”

The group had already calmed down from the earlier episode, but his remark almost made them think of pulling out their small benches again.

What’s the situation?

Is Junior Brother Chao in love as well?

People are indeed prone to fall in love in their last days!

Chao Qingteng’s handsome face instantly turned red. He pushed Xu Xiaoshou’s hand away. “What are you babbling about? I don’t have a crush on Senior Sister Leilei!”

“Crap!”

Several people were so stunned, they fell to the ground.

Mu Zixi picked herself up with great effort and looked at her peers incredulously. To think that they had only just returned to the Inner Yard for a short time!

It would probably be the first time Luo Leilei witnessed a scene like this. And...

Xu Xiaoshou nodded stiffly and said, “This is what a man should be like.”

Dong!

Chao Qingteng suddenly realized what was going on and collapsed to the ground in a daze.

Luo Leilei was astounded. She took the jade scroll off her forehead and walked over to him.

“No, Senior Sister Leilei, listen to me,” Chao Qingteng said, fumbling with his explanation.

The woman ignored him and walked on toward Xu Xiaoshou, handing over the communication jade scroll. “Asking for you.”

“Huh?” Xu Xiaoshou responded, a little shocked. “Asking for me?”

He took the jade scroll, and a long-lost familiarity re-emerged in his heart.

He put one hand into his trouser pocket and turned around unconsciously. After taking a few steps away from the crowd, Xu Xiaoshou brought the scroll to his ear.

“Hello, who is it?”

The crowd almost fainted, observing how he was speaking to the Master Dean and in such a casual tone.

Xu Xiaoshou frowned when he could hear anyone on the other end of the line.

He moved to the spot where Luo Leilei had made the call earlier and spoke again. "Moxi Moxi?"

Still nothing.

Xu Xiaoshou's heart sank. No way!

He looked at Luo Leilei and asked, "No signal?"

Luo Leilei gave him an incredulous look.

What signal?

She looked at Xu Xiaoshou and immediately saw the way he was holding the jade scroll.

"Put it on your forehead! Sweep with spiritual thoughts!"

She felt the urge to jump up and punch the lad in his face.

Xu Xiaoshou immediately realized his error. He shrugged and put it on his forehead.

"Xu Xiaoshou?" It was the voice of the dean—a very solemn one.

"I am."

"Do you know the locations of all twelve treasures of suppressing barrier?"

Xu Xiaoshou thought of the map, but he wondered if he could tell the dean about it.

In case it was the information that Elder Sang had risked his life for...

"I don't know."

"Very well, go find a site of Suppressing Barrier nearby and put the jade scroll into the seal. Remember, you have little time."

Xu Xiaoshou, "Huh?"

Is he trying to test me?

"I really don't know!"

"No more nonsense. If you keep dawdling, the Tianxuan Gate will blow up. The Black Fallen Scabbard is in your hands, right? After you complete this task, I won't charge you when you get out."

Xu Xiaoshou felt his feet go weak instantly, wondering how the Master Dean knew.

He forced himself to calm down and replied, "Not in my hands. Luo Leilei snatched it from me. She seems a little odd to me."

Some things shouldn't be declared explicitly, for a combination of false and true information could have an unexpected effect.

After a few seconds of silence, the dean said, “We do not need to dwell on this matter for now. You go complete the task I’ve given you first.”

Did I fool him?

Xu Xiaoshou felt pleased, but he soon realized something—Master Dean seemed to know the identity of Luo Leilei.

I need to confirm it!

“My speed is not the fastest.”

He was vague again. As far as the speed was concerned, Luo Leilei was unquestionably the fastest among the group. She was a woman who could manipulate lightning. He was certain that the dean must have known this.

“But you are the most trustworthy!”

As he expected.

Xu Xiaoshou looked at Luo Leilei, standing next to Qingteng, talking about something in a low voice. It seemed like she had just finished speaking.

Since the dean only trusted him...

He thought of the “Life Spiritual Seal” and “Sealing Ring” he had on him, and wondered if he could put the blame on Luo Leilei for everything that had happened here.

One blame is the same as many. Since he was not a friend or relative of this woman, he figured he had nothing to worry about.

However, it’s such a pity. Chao Qingteng was a good guy, but unfortunately, the relationship would be ended even before the romance even began.

“Is there any reward?”

Xu Xiaoshou asked again. The purpose of asking for a reward was so that the others wouldn’t mind about the treasures he got in the Tianxuan Gate, even if he didn’t get the reward after getting out.

Instead, he heard a suppressed growl from Master Dean.

“Do it quickly!”

Xu Xiaoshou was lost for words.

Before he could say anything else, the communication ended with a “beep”.

Chapter 173: Killing Field

“How dare you hang up on me? How rude!” Xu Xiaoshou muttered to himself.

It was a pity that he did not get the answers to his questions. It was probably hard for him to get his hands on the other treasures of Suppressing Barrier.

He looked at the jade scroll in his hand as he thought about the request which the Master Dean had made.

“This appears to be more than just an ordinary communication jade scroll. Could it stall the Small World in Tianxuan Gate from shattering after I put it into the seal of the Treasure of Suppressing Barrier?”

Xu Xiaoshou wondered how such a simple jade scroll could allow people to communicate between the two worlds.

He felt fired up. Could the item possibly be an extraordinary treasure? Perhaps it was. It probably might be.

No, no. It was a life-saving item. Xu Xiaoshou told himself that he should not get too greedy!

“Ladies and gentlemen!”

He looked at the crowd regretfully and said, “I have some bad news to tell all of you. You may have to wait for a while more before you can get out.”

“What do you mean?”

“Although I do not enjoy this. But, as the Chosen One, I might have to be your savior this time!”

Xu Xiaoshou flicked the sleeve of his robe dramatically and looked up at the sky. Then with a soft sigh, he added, “Alas, the Heavens rendered me an important task.”

“Suspected, passive points, 7.”

“Mocked, passive points, 4.”

“Xu Xiaoshou, stop acting so self-important. Just tell us what the Master Dean told you to do. Quickly!”

“Well, if it is about saving the world, it is impossible for it to be you since Senior Sister Leilei is here!”

Luo Leilei felt surprised upon hearing it. She wondered why the Master Dean wanted to talk to Xu Xiaoshou when she was still there.

She had a vague understanding of what was happening.

Xu Xiaoshou had no intention to explain further. He felt that there was no need to speak to them anymore.

Although they were among the Inner Yard thirty-three, they probably did not understand why the Tianxuan Gate was collapsing. It would be useless to say anything more.

His gaze swept across the crowd and finally rested on Luo Leilei.

“Protect the passage. Wait for my return!”

After saying that, he turned around and left.

“Xu Xiaoshou, leave the jade scroll with us. Do not take it with you when you are about to face death!”

The situation instantly incensed the rest of the group. To them, Xu Xiaoshou was merely at the beginning stage of the Origin Court level, and there was little he could do.

The guy was not just taking away the jade scroll, but their lives with it!

Who would not be angry?

One of them wanted to catch up with Xu Xiaoshou, but Luo Leilei stopped him.

“Senior Sister Leilei, what do you mean by stopping me?”

Luo Leilei said nothing. Her pretty eyes narrowed, and her body radiated with electric light.

“Shut up!”

She had figured it out. There was only one passage. If they wanted to get out of there, she had no choice but to trust Xu Xiaoshou, no matter how he had acted earlier.

Besides, she was fully aware of the situation, even though the others were not.

In terms of strength, Xu Xiaoshou was the strongest amongst everyone present. Luo Leilei wondered what he could achieve this time.

Perhaps he would save the world, as he said.

“You...”

Luo Leilei rebuked three infuriated people from the group. They were among the newly promoted thirty-three and became a little wary. Though they were not familiar with Xu Xiaoshou, they knew Luo Leilei very well!

Did the woman intend to fight the three of them by herself?

What kind of joke was it?

“He is doing it to save Zhou Tianshen!”

“Yeah. Look, this world has collapsed to such a state, so what are we awaiting death by staying here?”

Some of them were still sensible, thinking that they should avoid a fight if they could.

However, Luo Leilei felt annoyed, and retorted, “I said, shut up!”

The atmosphere became tense, and they were almost getting to the verge of a fight.

It was then that Mu Zixi and Mo Mo stood behind Luo Leilei, indirectly showing their support.

After some hesitation, Zhao Qingteng walked over and stood with them.

The other three were so full of rage that they burst out laughing as they vented out their anger.

“Do you think that you and these three scums who have just entered the Inner Yard can fight us?”

Luo Leilei glared disdainfully and scowled. “You guys think too highly of yourselves. I have enough to deal with you!”

The three of them bounded toward her. Luo Leilei raised her hand, and a bolt of purplish lightning shot down from the sky, instantly giving them a good roasting.

ZAP!

They did not have the body of a Master. They collapsed to the ground, spurting blood and twitching in pain.

“What the hell! How could she be so strong?”

The three were all bewildered. Luo Leilei was like a different person compared to her previous state.

What was happening?

How could she have improved so much after entering the Tianxuan Gate?

Or perhaps she was all along just pretending to be weak?

After dealing with the troublemakers, Luo Leilei looked at the pitch-black sky, feeling a slight sense of uneasiness.

She was less worried about this world, but when she considered the outside world, it was another story.

She shook her head and stopped thinking about it.

BROOM!

Another bolt of lightning struck from the sky, knocking down the three who tried to get up.

They felt like crying.

They did not wish to fight anymore, and all the three wanted to do was to get up!

But seeing how Luo Leilei was acting, they did not dare to move.

“Wait!”

Luo Leilei looked to the south. It was the direction in which Xu Xiaoshou was heading.

Xu Xiaoshou rushed to the place where the “Killing Field” was located.

If he was right, Zhou Tianshen should be there as well.

“This guy might have over-cultivated, so he does not even know the world is about to blow up!” Xu Xiaoshou muttered to himself. It was a likely situation for the tall guy.

Honestly, he wanted to save Zhou Tianshen, but he had the jade scroll in his hands.

Unfortunately, all he could do was to think about it!

If he made a round trip, the passage would open, and those people would have left by the time he came back. What should he do then?

Should he sacrifice for Zhou Tianshen?

Although he and Zhou Tianshen had a good relationship, the reality was cruel. One death is always better than two deaths, he thought.

He felt much less guilty knowing he was merely abiding by Ye Xiaotian's order.

Since he was looking for a potential Secret Realm to place the jade scroll, he could take a detour to check what the guy was doing.

BOOM! BOOM!

As he heard the explosions in the space up ahead, Xu Xiaoshou hurriedly dashed toward the gradual darkness at top speed, atop a small fireball at his feet.

Xu Xiaoshou could reach the destination in a quarter of an hour at full speed, but the others would take half a day to do so.

A high wall blocked the way.

He felt an ominous sense of murderous energy lurking near him. The heavy smell of blood was disgusting. Xu Xiaoshou covered his mouth and nose. He could feel deep in his heart that the killing energy was attempting to draw out his violent and destructive desire.

Based on the experience of awakening the Berserk Giant, the murderous energy could not form a magic barrier. So, he did not lose his mind.

"This shoddy place is evil!"

Xu Xiaoshou immediately realized why Zhou Tianshen did not come out.

The tall man had probably died. Or maybe the killing energy attacked him, making him lose his mind. So, there was no way he could not leave the place.

"I am too overconfident. I should not have come to look for Zhou Tianshen."

Xu Xiaoshou felt a tinge of regret. He did not have the confidence to stay there for half a day. Zhou Tianshen...

Was he still alive?

He continued to fly onward. And soon, his line of sight passed over the high wall. He could see the view inside.

It was a black-walled arena for gladiators, and bloodstains were visible on the ground. All eight iron doors leading into the center were open, and the steel puppets with swords kept walking out from behind those doors into the arena.

Each puppet was over two meters tall, and they looked powerful!

In the middle of four or five puppets stood a one-armed youth with red eyes. The muscular young man was holding a dazzling golden sword.

Clang! Clang!

The angles of his strikes were rather extreme, for his sword was flashing very close to the stump of his severed arm. With each strike, he was cutting some part of the surrounding steel giant bodies.

“Zhou Tianshen?”

Xu Xiaoshou fixed his gaze on his severed arm. The guy...

Did he chop his arm off himself?

Judging by the way he struck, it was a safe bet. Is the simpleton cultivating an evil spiritual skill?

The power was strong.

The muscular youth did not notice that someone had approached. He had his hands full combating the puppets. Xu Xiaoshou shook his body once and disappeared from the sky.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

After a few muffled sounds, the terrifying steel giants got flung into the sky like toys. Xu Xiaoshou held Zhou Tianshen down by his shoulder.

“Oh?”

Zhou Tianshen turned around and stared at him with his scarlet eyes.

Suddenly, a golden Blade Light bore down from the sky. The terrifying killing energy made the stone plates under Xu Xiaoshou crack.

Clang!

Xu Xiaoshou caught the golden blade with two of his fingers. The red-eyed Zhou Tianshen looked flabbergasted.

He wondered why the man of flesh was even harder than the steel puppet.

Xu Xiaoshou glanced at the information bar and found no additional information. He was quite annoyed after realizing that there was no benefit to gain.

“How dare you attack me!”

He slammed his head onto the tall man’s forehead. Powerful energy waves surged and sent Zhou Tianshen spinning into the high black wall and trapping him there.

His eyes rolled up, and he passed out!

Xu Xiaoshou clapped his hands and nodded with satisfaction.

It was as he had expected. With his current combat power, he could effortlessly defeat someone who had just entered the Innate State, even if they were in a Red-eyed State.

In the past, he had always fought those who were at higher combat levels than him. Sometimes, they were even several levels higher. Often, he had to fight hard at the risk of death.

He finally experienced the joy of fighting at the same level.

He could kill within a second!

Yeah!

He looked around and found more steel puppets walking out from behind the eight iron gates. After assessing the situation, they looked stunned and quietly retreated.

Xu Xiaoshou watched them in silence.

Chapter 174: The Underground Life

Are they intelligent?

Xu Xiaoshou pondered as he watched the steel puppets retreating.

With his heightened perception, he could “see” through the darkness behind the iron door. These enormous blocks of iron surprisingly curled up and laid on the ground after they entered.

There was a light screen in the rear, but it appeared that the puppets could not go beyond that point.

“Hm, I might just need their help if I want to find the seal of the treasures of suppressing barrier. Perhaps I should explore this option?” Xu Xiaoshou muttered to himself, excited by the idea.

He took no action directly and instead advanced toward the side of Zhou Tiansen.

He couldn’t see it from a distance, but upon closer inspection, he realized that this simpleton’s body had cracked completely because of the shock. Perhaps the attacks by those large iron blocks had caused them, he thought.

The internal injuries within his body were also severe. Zhou Tiansen’s tendons and blood vessels were badly damaged.

Xu Xiaoshou also detected a very sinister “sword will” energy that was gradually compromising his body, wounding all of his internal organs. In all likelihood, he wouldn’t survive much longer and would die where he stood.

The most serious...

Xu Xiaoshou carefully pulled part of his garments aside and looked at the broken arm.

The wound had coagulated into a scab. He was unsure if tetanus existed in this world.

It was a miracle that Zhou Tiansen was still alive now!

“Well, I can try my black jade... no, red gold liquids.”

Xu Xiaoshou pulled out a homemade jar of honey, scooped out a heap, and stuffed it into Zhou’s mouth. Then he scooped out even more and applied it to the wound on Zhou’s broken arm.

Searching with his “perception” ability, he couldn’t locate the whereabouts of Zhou Tiansen’s severed arm. Maybe it had been shredded into pieces during the fight.

“What a pity...”

Still, he doubted that the medicinal effect of the red gold liquid could regenerate another arm. After all, it was only a modified version of the tenth-grade magic pill.

But it was a pity that he didn't have a chance to try it, for Zhou Tiansen suddenly stirred.

"Ahem!"

The blood in his eyes gradually faded, but he still looked rather tired, and there was residual blood in his eyes.

"Xu Xiaoshou?" he said, looking at the youth in front of him with surprise.

He gazed up at the sky behind Xu Xiaoshou, and his eyes almost popped out when he saw what appeared like the start of an apocalypse.

"Oh, My God, what's happening?"

Looking at the shock on Zhou Tiansen's face, Xu Xiaoshou pondered for a moment with his hands clasped, and said, "Alas, time flies like a white horse passing through a gap. Ten thousand years had just passed by in the blink of an eye."

Zhou Tiansen looked stunned.

His pupils dilated sharply, then shrank again.

"Really?"

Xu Xiaoshou glanced at the information bar, and didn't find the "Suspected".

This guy believed it?

He is nothing more than a simple-minded swordsman!

Zhou Tiansen swallowed his saliva with difficulty and said, "You are right, it is the end of the world."

"I remember all those years ago when you were still in..." Xu Xiaoshou said, then paused briefly.

Zhou Tiansen frowned and seemed to ponder...

"The Tianxuan Gate!"

He cried, as something triggered in him and his memories, spanning ten thousand years or more, suddenly flashed across his mind.

Xu Xiaoshou pretended to sigh longingly, and responded, "Yes, the Tianxuan Gate. What a nostalgic name."

"How could it be so? How can this be so?"

Zhou Tiansen suddenly panicked and said, "But, why don't I have the memories of these 10,000 years?"

"Ahh...!"

Xu Xiaoshou instantly put on a look of anguish with a mourning, confused expression in his eyes, and lamented in a whisper.

“I don’t have them either...”

“It would seem only two of us have survived!”

He grabbed Zhou Tianshen’s shoulders excitedly and said, “We are the Chosen Ones! Only the Chosen Ones can survive and have...”

He stared at Zhou Tianshen’s forehead, which was red.

“A third eye!”

Zhou Tiansen was baffled. He seemed to sense that he had something between his eyebrows. He focused his will and felt a vague pain there.

I have the third eye?

“I... I’m the Chosen One?”

He felt a surge of elation in his heart.

“But, why don’t you have it?” He looked at Xu Xiaoshou’s eyebrows and couldn’t find the “Chosen Eye”.

“Tsk, tsk, tsk!”

Xu Xiaoshou suddenly laughed wryly, and said, “Of course I don’t have it, because I’m a destroyer, not a savior!”

He turned around and walked away.

“You have already lost to me. I will destroy this world by me!”

Xu Xiaoshou knew that when dealing with the hot-blooded youth like Zhou Tiansen, the idea of saving the world could evoke the most primal reactions in their hearts.

“Xu Xiaoshou, stop right there!”

As expected, it upset Zhou Tiansen. “10,000 years ago I lost to you, but now, I will not lose!”

Xu Xiaoshou was on the brink of laughing out a mouthful of blood, and hurriedly departed without turning his head around.

Zhou Tiansen straightened his body twice and found himself still embedded in the wall. He looked up into the sky helplessly.

“Pull me out of here, so we can have a duel!”

“What kind of hero are you?”

...

Xu Xiaoshou arrived at one of the eight iron doors.

But time was running out. He had no intention to fool around with this simpleton any longer because he had the treasures of Suppressing Barrier to search for.

“Tell me honestly, where is the treasure?”

Facing the cowering steel puppets, Xu Xiaoshou raised his fist.

He confronted the first one. But this particular iron lump appeared enraged. Xu Xiaoshou thought to himself—I thought these puppets were in retreat, but this monster is up for a fight. And he doesn’t think I’m a person at all!

As the puppet straightened up, Xu Xiaoshou smashed his fist down. With a booming sound, the steel puppet fell to his knees again.

“I know you all have some form of intelligence. Tell me honestly and I’ll spare your life,” Xu Xiaoshou declared.

The iron lump did not reply. Xu Xiaoshou’s immediate response was to employ a common strategy in such situations. “If you don’t tell me, I have eight more of your friends remaining for me to extract the answer.”

Suddenly, it occurred to him that the puppet might be unable to speak.

“If you can’t talk, then just nod your head.”

CLANG!

The enormous head of the steel puppet fell to the ground.

Xu Xiaoshou was perplexed and wondered what had just happened. He only asked it to nod its head, not drop it!

Almost in unison, he heard several more clanging sounds outside. He was certain that those were the heads of the other puppets.

Xu Xiaoshou was disconcerted and thought it was rather strange!

Spiritual intelligence?

How can these guys have spiritual intelligence? It should not happen!

And now that all the heads have fallen off. Could it be because...

“Someone is controlling them. Now the controller has taken away the spiritual attribute from them,” he muttered.

Having concluded, Xu Xiaoshou turned around and looked at the ground.

To be more precise, he was looking under the ground.

“Who is it?”

His “perception” sensed that the deep under the ground of this black arena of gladiators there was a faint vitality.

It’s growing vigorous!

“I’m sure that the treasures of Suppressing Barrier should be located there—perhaps it is the seal!”

Xu Xiaoshou looked toward the shattering sky and realized that the time was limited and it was too late to think any further. He had run out of options.

In his heart, he didn’t think that the treasure of Suppressing Barrier could turn the situation around. He rushed to the arena, spreading his hand.

“The Art of Five Fingerprint Seeds!”

His technique generated a high temperature. Xu Xiaoshou thrust his hand down and the arena of gladiators melted through before he touched the ground.

The Infernal Heavens that could burn everything descended in a spiral pattern and bored through the ground until it reached a spot several hundred meters below.

At the depth, the underground life energy greatly surpassed that of ordinary people.

Xu Xiaoshou had a bad feeling, but he thought of the Black Fallen Scabbard and believed that nothing could be stronger than it.

There’s no way a person can suddenly emerge from it!

“Heh!”

Xu Xiaoshou laughed wryly. Suddenly, his hand froze.

He touched a black rock. After the Infernal Heavens burned away the surrounding soil, he discovered it was in reality a waist-high black crystal.

Strong life energy was emitting from it.

Xu Xiaoshou thought of the Six-sided Crystal spiritual technique used by the gray fog man to seal Mu Zixi and wondered if this crystal also had a seal in it.

He touched it cautiously.

One punch.

BAM!

No response at all?

Well, there is a crack!

Xu Xiaoshou had enough power now to punch through a mountain, given enough time to do so. Yet, this black crystal had only a mere crack?

BAM!

One more punch.

The cracks looked like a spider’s web.

Xu Xiaoshou narrowed his eyes. He was resigned to the possibility that he would be fighting this thing all day!

He raised his fist.

BAM!

BAM!

BAM!

Each time his fist struck, there was a corresponding echo inside the crystal. It seemed to have figured out his punching frequency based on his two previous punches.

He punched the crystal with both of his fists. The black crystal soon opened up.

Xu Xiaoshou was dumbfounded!

Gauging by the force of his punch, he figured that the crystal wouldn't break for sure, even if it took a hundred punches.

But now... it was already broken?

There was no doubt the life energy inside it was doing something!

He looked down and found that the black crystal was already open, gradually revealing the content inside its dusty and hazy interior.

A human head?

Chapter 175: Ma Ma

It was a round-shaped head of a bald child. It was hard to tell if it belonged to a girl or a boy.

He was now deep in the ground. Xu Xiaoshou was so frightened that he kept stepping back until he hit the earth wall and mud fell on his head.

"It's a child?"

Many thoughts flashed through his mind in those few moments.

Could it possibly be that the Tiansang Spirit Palace was an evil organization, and the Tianxuan Gate was a prison specifically designed to detain children?

He thought about Elder Sang and Ye Xiaotian.

It was quite possible!

Crack!

There was a noise, then the head raised with great difficulty and looked into Xu Xiaoshou's eyes.

It had red eyes, looking just like those of the frenzied Zhou Tianshen. And it possessed a formidable aura.

Shortly afterward, Xu Xiaoshou realized he was wrong about the head.

Could the thing be...?

It was a puppet!

Unlike those iron lumps outside, the puppet had the external form of a human child.

“Ma Ma.”

The puppet child spoke with a hoarse mechanical voice. It was as if someone forgot to lubricate its throat.

Xu Xiaozhu had goosebumps all over his body.

“Mom?”

In the dim, barricaded underground cavern, the puppet child kept calling for its mother and seemed to have spiritual intelligence.

Damn it!

What kind of place was it?

Could it be the Treasure of Suppressing Barrier?

“Ma Ma.”

The puppet child’s voice rang out again. It appeared to be struggling. Even though it had discarded its black crystal cage, the lower half of its body remained in it, and it could not get out.

“Double sealing?”

Xu Xiaoshou saw it as a bad omen. He wondered if he could defeat the puppet child if it freed itself from the ground.

He was very confident of himself when digging the tunnel, but he wasn’t so sure anymore at that moment.

Boom!

The trembling at the Tianxuan Gate became more pronounced. The soil overhead fell in large chunks. Xu Xiaoshou knew he had no time to go to a different place!

“Ma Ma.”

The puppet child sounded a bit more desperate.

“Child, do not be afraid. Mommy is here, and I will pull you out.”

Xu Xiaoshou reached out his hands with some hesitation and added, “You cannot hit me after you come out. Remember my face. You called me mommy. Do not be mischievous, alright?”

“Ma Ma.”

Xu Xiaoshou felt a chill in his heart and held his hands back momentarily.

“You should stretch out your hands. If you do not put your hands out, I have no choice but to pull your head.”

“Ma Ma.”

The puppet child seemed unresponsive.

Xu Xiaoshou quietly stared at the puppet child and had some doubts.

He took out the communication jade scroll and wondered if the item would react in the sealed land.

However, the jade scroll did not move or respond, which meant that he had to remove the second seal around the puppet child.

He recalled what Luo Leilei had previously said. If the puppet child was a Treasure of Suppressing Barrier, it would mean that the Tianxuan Gate will be in trouble if the child escaped from restraint.

Jade scroll.

The shabby thing looked weaker than the Black Fallen Scabbard. Could it withstand the destruction of the small world?

In the end, Xu Xiaoshou chose the Master Dean’s advice.

Honestly, he could not find a way out and there was little choice but to believe the Master Dean at that point!

Xu Xiaoshou stared at the pair of scarlet eyes, gritted his teeth, and held down its head.

He felt a warm sensation, and the head was soft to touch.

It was the sensory experience of touching a human head!

“Ma Ma.”

The two words uttered by the hoarse voice were strangely eerie. It played with Xu Xiaoshou’s mind as he held the head and gave him goosebumps.

Xu Xiaoshou felt a chill run down his back, and he unconsciously stiffened his body.

“Do not detach your head and spray my face with your blood!”

Without further hesitation, Xu Xiaoshou put his hands under the jaw of the head and pulled forcefully.

Whoosh!

The seal, which bound the lower half of the puppet child’s body, was revealed immediately.

“Ma Ma!” the puppet child called out, sounding agitated.

Xu Xiaoshou shrank back in surprise. The move had almost made him release his hands and let go of the head.

Xu Xiaoshou looked at the puppet child apprehensively. His expression said it all—my goodness, can you stop screaming? You make me feel nervous!

As the two balls of flames under his feet fired up, Xu Xiaoshou used the force to assist in the effort. With a booming sound, the seal ripped apart completely.

“Ma Ma!”

A mournful roar bellowed out close to Xu Xiaoshou’s ears. The seal finally released the lower half of the puppet child’s body, and the child came loose from the ground.

Xu Xiaoshou’s pupils suddenly dilated as he focused on his vision.

It was actually...

The lower half of an ordinary child!

The fleshy body was almost indistinguishable from that of a normal human being. The only difference was that the hands and wrists, feet, and ankles appeared shackled with black iron. And the chains had broken.

He moved his eyes to a spot to satisfy his utmost curiosity.

The puppet child’s crotch was a flat triangle.

“No gender?” Xu Xiaoshou whispered to himself, and he looked baffled.

It was just then that Xu Xiaoshou quickly let go of the puppet child’s head as he sensed lurking danger.

The child opened its arms, intending to wrap them around Xu Xiaoshou’s neck.

“Hey.”

Xu Xiaoshou ducked to avoid it.

“Ma Ma!”

The voice sounded dissatisfied. Xu Xiaoshou saw a blur in front of him and the puppet child disappeared.

The next moment, he felt a pain in his abdomen, and then there was darkness.

When he regained his sight, Xu Xiaoshou found out that he was punched and sent flying high in the air. But he did not fly up through the tunnel he had dug. Instead, he went sent hundreds of meters deep underground!

“Sneak attacked, passive point, 1.”

Poof!

It was then that Xu Xiaoshou felt a sharp pain, and he looked down to see a fist mark on his abdomen. It was bloody.

It stunned him.

He had the body of a Master!

The puppet child was undoubtedly destructive.

“Ma Ma.”

Xu Xiaoshou heard a friendly voice behind him and instinctively dodged. He saw with his Perception Ability that the puppet child had already appeared behind him.

This...

He was still traveling in the air from the powerful punch. He wondered how fast the child was and how the child could catch up with him after one punch.

He did not think that even Luo Leilei was as fast as the child!

“Ma Ma!”

When he heard the voice sounding a little annoyed, Xu Xiaoshou realized that something was wrong. Perhaps he probably should not have dodged earlier.

Boom!

He saw the shattered sky when he opened his eyes again.

“Sneak attacked, passive point, 1.”

A deep crater over a hundred meters wide appeared in the black arena of gladiators. Xu Xiaoshou collapsed in it, unable to move.

A gaping hole appeared on his back, and fresh blood flowed copiously everywhere.

If he had not possessed the passive technique, he would have died!

Dean.

Elder Sang was right. He should believe no one except himself in such a world he found himself in.

It was a piece of misinformation that he could find a sealed place to put the jade scroll in. The Dean should have told him to stay away from that place!

“Ma Ma.”

He heard the affectionate voice again. Xu Xiaoshou did not wish to dodge that time around. He laid quietly on the spot, allowing the curious child to check him out.

“Gazed, passive point, 1.”

The puppet child was in a crouched position. The child did not attack him when Xu Xiaoshou remained still.

“Monster. It is a monster!”

The Eternal Vitality had healed his injury. But Xu Xiaoshou still did not move.

He thought about the steel puppets he had encountered earlier. He was sure they were the same as this child.

However, they were not on the same level!

It was highly probable that the child was a manufactured puppet. But in terms of physical qualities, the puppet child was much superior to those he saw earlier!

What was more important was that it had spiritual intelligence!

Items like the Black Fallen Scabbard were merely psychic at most, while the puppet child could think. But he was not sure if its mind was an anomaly.

“Good baby, I know you are probably expressing goodwill to me by touching me. But to be honest, your strength is a bit too strong for me.”

Xu Xiaoshou craned his neck and tried to communicate with the puppet.

The puppet child’s scarlet eyes looked thoughtful.

Xu Xiaoshou was pleased to see the expression and thought his approach had worked.

Since his strength could not match the child puppet’s, he should try a fresh approach!

The verbal approach is the art of kings!

He opened his mouth to speak again.

BAM!

The puppet child held his head down and pushed it into the cracked ground.

The wind was chilly. The time seemed to have slowed down. Xu Xiaozhu’s legs swayed in the air for a while and then dropped helplessly.

“Sneak attacked, passive point, +1.”

Chapter 176: Be A Good Baby

F*cking piece of shit!

Xu Xiaoshou could feel his face contort from the horrific blow. He could imagine how weird he must have looked and even wondered if his face would be permanently deformed.

The excruciating pain from having his nose broken by that blow made him bleed uncontrollably, and tears formed in his eyes.

He was truly provoked now.

There was an unspoken rule when it came to a fight: Never go for the face! Even if his opponent was just a chunk of a metal block, it should understand the reason behind this rule!

When the puppet child lifted its hand again, Xu Xiaoshou instantly discharged a stream of compressed tinder from his mouth, and it was delivered with an almighty force.

Even at such proximity, that child merely tilted its head sideways and dodged the tinder effortlessly.

“Huh? It even dodged my counterattack?”

Xu Xiaoshou was completely at a loss.

He slammed his feet on the floor and leaped, clawing the air as he formed the Five Tiger. Then, without even looking back, he struck a blow in that direction.

The puppet child was so swift that Xu Xiaoshou could not remotely strike it using his “sense” ability, even when he could capture its movement. Hence, his only option was to predict its movement.

But his strike missed! All he felt was thin air...

To Xu Xiaoshou’s complete shock, the puppet child was standing calmly and observing him with its arms crossed.

And even more shocking, it was standing right behind where he landed.

“I wouldn’t have tried to predict his movement, had I known it could...” Xu Xiaoshou swallowed his saliva with much difficulty, as he felt a great sense of trepidation.

This puppet was just too scary. Who created it? It was a machine created especially for combat!

The puppet child’s terrifying attack, speed, and reaction time had completely overwhelmed Xu Xiaoshou’s physical strength and abilities. It was invincible and did not seem to possess any weakness.

Xu Xiaoshou straightened his back and was preparing to take on the next attack head-on when he realized that this puppet child was showing no intention to strike him. He remained still after a long pause.

“What’s going on? Why are you stopping now?”

He turned around and stared at it. He just could not figure out what it was thinking.

There was a look of confusion in the puppet child’s eyes, as it was no longer looking at Xu Xiaoshou, but toward the sky.

It became clear that the world on the brink of destruction was a lot more interesting than a mere weakling of a human.

“Ma Ma...”

“Hm?”

The puppet child glanced at Xu Xiaoshou again.

The corner of Xu Xiaoshou’s mouth started twitching. He swore he did not mean to mock the puppet child, but he truly was curious about how it processed its thoughts internally.

This was the first time in his life that he had met an inanimate object with a mind of its own. It was so intriguing, and he could not fathom it.

“If you understand what I’m saying... Hey, hey, stop attacking me!”

Xu Xiaoshou was trying to make conversation when he noticed the puppet child’s hand move, and it made him react to it immediately.

It appeared to get the message, retracted its hand, and cross its arms in front of its chest.

“Ma Ma?”

Xu Xiaoshou detected a gentler, almost questioning tone in its voice.

He felt excited and wondered if he had found the way to deal with this puppet child. As long as its arms remained crossed, then he could not strike out for sure!

“That’s right, my child. Keep your hands like that, don’t move around, and talk to Mommy in that sweet voice, okay?”

The puppet child observed Xu Xiaoshou rubbing his hands together in high spirits. The puppet child was indeed a precious treasure. It could easily break the Master Physique with a single punch. If he could bring it along with him, then he would surely like to give Elder Sang a taste of the puppet child’s incredible power.

Xu Xiaoshou noticed the puppet child staring at him, then he realized it was trying to rub its hands together as he had done.

What the heck!

Xu Xiaoshou crossed his arms in mock sternness and said, “Don’t copy me!”

Inwardly, he just wasn’t sure if the puppet child would just rub its hands or decide to smack his face the moment he let go. So, to prevent the worst from happening, he thought it’d be better that they chatted with their hands crossed.

“I’ll forget about the few punches you threw at my face. I won’t hold it against you.”

Xu Xiaoshou could see it was still staring at him, and promptly declared that he would generously forgive its previous misdeeds.

He had no other choice. Since he could not defeat it, all he could do was to play along with it.

“So, you have seen it, too. The sky has cracked up, and this tiny world is on the brink of destruction.”

He pointed at the sky, and the puppet child looked in that direction. Its eyes portrayed a hint of human-like intelligence.

It’s working...

In his heart, Xu Xiaoshou was feeling good about how this was turning out, and continued, “I’m going to be very frank with you. It seems like you are someone who values freedom. So, I rather think you do not wish to be buried alive in this tiny world, am I right?”

“Come with me!”

“The world outside is vast and wide. There are many more beautiful things to see and experience, and maybe you could even find the love of your life!”

Xu Xiaoshou flashed his warmest smile and spoke convincingly in his most earnest tone, but he still did not dare to reach out with his hands.

The puppet child reacted with an utterance. "Ma Ma..."

Xu Xiaoshou was speechless.

So what kind of answer was that? Can I make my move now?

How he wished he could decipher this puppet child's language. But, he could not make out what it meant, and replied, "Sorry to have interrupted you..."

I'll stay put as long as the enemy stays put!

This way, I will avoid getting injured for sure!

Xu Xiaoshou learned the truth.

BANG! BANG!

The destruction of this world had sped up. The looming black sky that stretched across the horizon was approaching rapidly, and it was waiting for nobody.

It seemed like this puppet child was indeed the treasure of this world. Was it because he had broken the seal that the destruction of this world was now hastening?

"Damn it..."

Xu Xiaoshou rolled his eyes and looked down below anxiously. He was thinking if he should risk getting punched in the face again by descending to the ground, or should he just continue engaging the puppet child verbally, as he was now doing?

"How about this, child? Let's keep our hands still. I will slowly move toward you, and you'll do the same, okay? Slowly..."

Xu Xiaoshou took one careful step after another as he advanced toward the puppet child. Then he noticed it trembled slightly. Xu Xiaoshou hurriedly explained in a calm voice. "I'm not trying to hit you, don't worry. You and I are going to save the world, okay?"

He took out the jade scroll and flashed it before the puppet child. "I have to place this where I found you. If not, everyone will die."

The puppet child's eyes widened immediately upon seeing this jade scroll. Despite its frightening red eyes, Xu Xiaoshou could detect emotion hidden within.

"Oh, dear..."

Knowing that this puppet could pounce on him at any time and go for the scroll, he kept it right away.

"Sorry, I can't give you this. If you take it away and bring it back to the hole, then nobody can save you!"

The puppet child looked intimidated as it looked down at the deep hole in the ground. It was only for a fleeting moment, but Xu Xiaoshou could see the fear in his eyes.

Suddenly, Xu Xiaoshou understood everything.

Being confined in darkness was simply too horrifying an experience for any creature with intelligence and wisdom. In addition, he did not know how long was it had been confined within the hole, but he was sure it did not like it very much.

To force the puppet child to return to that world of darkness alone was something it would never agree to. It was impossible to make it go back there!

Xu Xiaoshou saw the opportunity to leverage on the puppet's fear.

Regardless of how powerful a creature was, if it had fear, then it had a weakness that could be exploited.

This puppet child before him had intelligence, but it had not developed in maturity. He could observe this from how it conducted itself. All its actions so far suggested it merely possessed the intellectual level of a child.

It possessed a power that was greater than a Master Physique but had not the wisdom to use it. It was perhaps adequate for its child-like body to function, or perhaps not. Its lack of wisdom limited its true potential for now.

Why the puppet child had beaten him earlier, Xu Xiaoshou did not know, and he suspected even it probably did not know why as well.

Maybe it just wanted to vent off its frustration after being confined for so long? It was understandable, as anyone locked away for a long time would feel that way.

"Be an obedient child and wait for me here. Don't move around. Mama will destroy your prison below, okay?" Xu Xiaoshou said.

"Ma Ma..."

He could not tell its emotional state from its monotonous voice. Xu Xiaoshou frowned and strode bravely toward it. He braced himself mentally and prepared for the worst scenario.

It did not react!

It was looking at him with its arms still crossed!

Chapter 177: Tree seed

It was just a simple hole that did not take too much effort to make. Depth-wise, it could easily bury half the body of a child.

"Can this thing work differently with the jade scroll?"

Xu Xiaoshou was still skeptical as he anxiously took out the jade scroll given to him by the Dean.

To his surprise, the jade scroll began vibrating lightly, before waves of spiritual energy in Tianxuan Gate gravitated toward Xu Xiaoshou and swirled thickly around him.

Suddenly, he felt all the energy surge into him.

Xu Xiaoshou was at a loss for words.

His body had healed completely after undergoing continuous stimulation over the past two days. Hence, his body would automatically absorb any surrounding spiritual energy under any situation, taking it in at the maximum rate.

The jade scroll vibrated even more violently as if it was about to explode at any moment. Xu Xiaoshou hurriedly closed off every pore on his body and managed to regulate the amount of spiritual energy he was absorbing.

The jade scroll then started to draw in the spiritual energy, and it was indeed ravenous.

Could it be that the jade scroll could only transform after being fed an enormous amount of spiritual energy?

Xu Xiaoshou believed so and blew into the jade scroll carefully.

Puff!

Instantly, a surge of spiritual energy, a hundred times denser than it was earlier, flowed into the jade scroll. Then everything fell silent, and the scroll stopped vibrating. Suddenly, with no warning, it blew up.

Xu Xiaoshou looked utterly baffled.

Did I f*ck it up?

He panicked when the jade scroll exploded. A moment later, he realized it did not blow up to smithereens. Instead, an object was left behind that resembled a seed.

The seed had fallen from the sky, and it seemed it had been intentionally dropped into the hole to take root.

Xu Xiaoshou reached out and intercepted it with his hand.

“A seed?”

Looking at how the sky was slowly cracking like a mirror, Xu Xiaoshou could not help but wonder.

Could the seed be some legendary treasure, such as the seed of Yggdrasil, that had been intentionally dropped to provide stable support to this crumbling world?

It was indeed a mythical item!

He suddenly became obsessed with this item and clutched it tightly in his hand. There was no way the seed could break free of the grasp of a Master Physique.

“Since I cannot lay my hands on the other treasures of this world... perhaps, this seed shall...”

“Be mine?”

Xu Xiaoshou was overcome by temptation. A conflict played out in his conscience between justice and evil.

Justice: Excessive greed will eventually cost you your life. Do not commit a crime just because you think it is minor.

Evil: You can only count on yourself... Yourself and nobody else!

Justice: If it does not belong to you, you should not even take a bit.

Evil: F*ck you!

Justice: I concede defeat.

It did not take more than half a second for Xu Xiaoshou to come to a decision. And just when he was about to keep the seed, an anxious voice came from behind him.

“Ma Ma.”

Xu Xiaoshou wavered and scratched his head awkwardly. “Why are you so impatient? I am just about to plant it!”

The puppet child also seemed to recognize the importance of the seed. Or perhaps it just wanted to fill the dark hole that had been his prison for a lifetime.

The moment the puppet child called out, Xu Xiaoshou’s conscience awakened, and there were no more doubts in his mind.

One must not keep ill-gotten gains!

He let out a sigh and hesitated no more. He then threw the seed into the hole.

The seed touched the ground and instantly set off a dramatic explosion. Gigantic python-like roots burrowed through the soil and became intertwined underground.

Xu Xiaoshou took flight immediately as the giant tree below him suddenly shot up a few hundred meters from the deep hole toward the sky.

It was not over yet. It continued to shoot up as if it wanted to pierce the clouds to offer support for the crumbling world.

Spiritual energy came howling from all directions. Xu Xiaoshou could no longer absorb everything, even when he opened all his pores. The intensity and the amount of spiritual energy were incomparable to the conditions earlier.

At most, he could absorb 0.001% of the total reserve.

Xu Xiaoshou was thoroughly shocked.

What a giant tree it was!

After absorbing the essence of Heaven and Earth, it had turned from a mere seed into a sky-piercing tree. A tree which indeed pierced through the sky!

The thick trunk appeared out of thin air and almost filled up the entire black arena. It looked like a tall mountain and was impossible to surpass.

Its height had even exceeded the maximum range of Xu Xiaoshou’s “Sense” and extended to a point beyond his ability to detect.

Xu Xiaoshou regretted his decision!

It was undoubtedly a mythical item, and he could not believe that he had just given it up so easily. Had he known earlier, he would have thrown the other few treasures he possessed into the hole instead!

Maybe they could stop the world from crumbling, and he would get the seed in exchange.

Ring!

At the very moment the giant tree pierced the sky, the disintegrating of Heaven and Earth seemed to slow down. He also noticed that as the tree grew taller, the sky was gradually recovering.

“So it worked?”

Xu Xiaoshou was quite excited, being the person who planted the seed and seeing it grow within a few seconds in front of his eyes. It had given him an immense sense of achievement.

“Ma Ma...”

The puppet child behind him also looked up to the sky and murmured.

...

[At the Array Entrance]

The few of them who had waited there all this while also saw the giant tree soaring skyward. Even the pessimistic trio who were on the ground were quite shocked.

“It worked?”

“Xu Xiaoshou made it work! We do not have to die now?”

Mu Zixi looked at the ancient tree in awe, and she was literally drooling.

What a big mistake! She should have followed him. It had such an overwhelming life force and would have been immensely beneficial if she had been able to even get a small bit.

“Xu Xiaoshou...”

She suddenly thought about Zhou Tianshen and recalled what the tall man had once mentioned at the Spiritual Library Division. He said that if they were to follow the champion around, they would get a share of the spoils.

She did not believe it then, but now, it was clear that Tianshen was well versed in the rules of survival!

[At the Council Hall, Inner Yard]

Every single pair of anxious eyes had turned to Zhao Xidong’s Spirit Curtain Wheel of the 12 Pearls. The item had stopped shaking.

It had been full of cracks, but now it had repaired itself and was glowing with green light.

“Tianxuan Gate has been repaired!” Zhao Xidong immediately announced with much excitement.

Qiao Qianzhi was also elated as his spirit wheel was back in working condition. He now no longer needed to repair the array of Tianxuan Gate, and it would save him so much trouble and effort.

He looked at Ye Xiaotian and said, "Since Tianxuan Gate has been repaired, should we stay on till the last day?"

Unlocking the Tianxuan Gate was an arduous task. So, it was highly beneficial for the youngsters to stay inside for another day.

After all, he had witnessed the development of these youngsters since they were at the Outer Yard. Although there was a spy amongst them, he still wanted everyone else to benefit from the experience.

However, Ye Xiaotian shook his head.

"I understand what you mean. But our small world beyond the Tianxuan Gate has just been subjected to great destruction. Even though the place is being repaired now, it is still too unstable."

"It is just too risky to continue to stay inside. We have to get everyone out right now."

Qiao Qianzhi let out a long sigh. Of course, he knew that the small world of Tianxuan Gate was unstable. And as even Ye Xiaotian could not stabilize it, he could not insist on keeping the youngsters inside.

He took out the Array Token to reopen Tianxuan Gate.

But Ye Xiaotian stopped him.

"Let me do it!"

"The Array supports the space tunnel. There would be some risk of opening the space tunnel at this moment. Since the world inside is being repaired, I will connect the paths connecting the two worlds and also bring the youngsters out."

Qiao Qianzhi nodded.

"Fine, it would reduce the risk from traveling back and forth and reduce any chance of accidents."

They did not speak loudly, but neither were they whispering. The girl with a veil heard what they said and was rather surprised with their casually they made it out to be.

"Connecting the path of two worlds, all by himself?" Yu Zhiwen remarked with a look of shock.

Jiang Bianyan nodded solemnly and said, "If it is Ye Xiaotian, then it is possible. He possesses the Space Elemental power, an object considered rare throughout the entire continent."

Then, they both saw the small child with white hair insert his hands into the void, and used his powers to form two paths.

"Impressive..."

Jiang Bianyan looked at the girl beside him whose jaws dropped open, and said, "It is exceedingly difficult to master the Space Elemental power, so it is not surprising that you have not seen it before."

“Well, since you can now observe the force of the world up close, it is indeed an opportunity to absorb everything!”

“After all, he has something in common with you. He is also from the Central Region...”

Chapter 178: The Spirit Place with full of hidden talents

Yu Zhiwen watched, mouth agape with amazement.

Even though she had a veil covering her face, the look of surprise on her face was evident to everyone around her.

“The Central Region?”

“That is right!”

Jiang Bianyan nodded and added, “How do you think Tiansang Spirit Palace could rise to power so quickly? It has only a couple of decades of history and yet it has already surpassed over ten Spirit Palaces within its vicinity.”

“And they could not have attained all of their achievements without Ye Xiaotian!”

He paused and thought wistfully. Then his eyes suddenly lit up, and he murmured.

“Had he been born earlier and experienced a few more years of cultivation, he would probably have qualified for one of the Ten High Nobles of the Central Region.”

“If that is the case, then he wouldn’t have had stooped so low as to come to such an insignificant corner of the world.”

Being continuously fed with such revealing information, Yu Zhiwen felt she had benefitted a lot from her visit that day.

“The Ten High Nobles?” Yu Zhiwen asked curiously.

However, Jiang Bianyan stopped answering her questions. He shook his head and said, “You are far from their level. Let us not dwell on this topic. We did not come here for this reason. Let us get ready for the White Cave affairs first!”

Yu Zhiwen nodded slightly. Although she looked calm on the outside, her mind was still filled with doubts and even more questions.

Space Elemental power. Was it that powerful?

It seemed reasonable. Yu Zhiwen had not seen anyone with that kind of elemental power, even at the headquarters.

“That’s right!”

She suddenly thought of something and said, “I have heard that the last Palace Master was the man who must be given the most credit for the rise of Tiansang Spirit Palace. What is his name again?”

Yu Zhiwen frowned as she tried to recall the name.

Jiang Bianyan smiled gently and answered, "Elder Sang."

"This old man retired many years ago. He is presently holding the title of the Inner Yard Vice Dean and is hardly at the Spirit Palace. He frequently travels to the different regions."

"Hm, I think he returned recently, yet nobody has seen him at all this time."

"Elder Sang?" Yu Zhiwen asked curiously, "Between him and Ye Xiaotian, who is stronger?"

Jiang Bianyan appeared amused by the question. He chuckled for a moment before answering her. "Little girl, remember, this is not an issue about who is stronger."

"Hm?"

"Would you not say that Ye Xiaotian is exceptionally powerful?" Jiang Bianyan replied to her with a question instead.

Yu Zhiwen looked over at the white-haired kid connecting the two worlds with his hands and instantly nodded with her reply.

"Of course, he is strong!"

She could see he possessed worldly power. How could he not possibly be strong?

"Well, when facing Elder Sang, all even Ye Xiaotian can do is only sit still and listen to his teachings!" Jiang Bianyan surprised her with his words.

Gasp!

Yu Zhiwen almost sucked her veil into her lungs as she replied in disbelief, "He is above the Sovereign Stage?"

"No, no, no. It is deference accumulated over time that led him to be so. It is respect for the elder."

Jiang Bianyan laughed out loud and suddenly realized that all eyes were on him. The piercing gaze of hundreds of the black-clothed men was quite intimidating, and so, he ceased the conversation.

Noticing that Ye Xiaotian did not turn his head, he then lowered his voice further. He whispered, "I heard that Elder Sang had taken a new disciple recently. The Elder has very keen eyes for spotting talents. Maybe you might find yourself a rival here."

"Oh?"

Yu Zhiwen was interested in the disciple's identity and asked, "Who is it?"

"I am not so sure. But it seemed like the new disciple is a young girl too. Maybe you guys will have a chance to meet each other inside the White Cave."

A young girl?

Yu Zhiwen's calm mind suddenly felt troubled. If she had not spoken to Jiang Bianyan, she would probably not have any motivation during the trip.

However, upon hearing the piece of news...

Elder Sang's new disciple?

It was exciting!

"It seems like Tiansang Spirit Palace is full of talents!" Yu Zhiwen exclaimed, feeling a renewed sense of enthusiasm.

"That's right."

Jiang Bianyan had stopped talking, but he seemed to have other things to express. His eyes swept around the area and finally landed on Qiao Qianzhi, who was always half a step behind the rest and perpetually had a silly smile on his face.

He watched as Qiao Qianzhi started laying out the array. Jiang Bianyan could tell that the man, ordinary-looking in terms of cultivation rank, was a person who hid his true strength well.

He was most probably at the level of a Spirit Array Master. Maybe even a Great Master.

If he is the latter, then it would be utterly terrifying!

A Spirit Array Great Master was someone who could beat ten enemies if he had a location advantage. They were a rare few who could defeat people who ranked higher than them, and that was impressive!

Out of the blue, Jiang Bianyan felt fear in his heart.

The strength of Tiansang Spirit Palace was unquestionably high. But why was a letter dispatched seeking help? Could it be that the Holy Vassal was planning to descend to the mortal world?

Hm, it was highly unlikely...

Those shameless flies attracted to the honey of fame and power would never choose to be in the bright sunlight, if at all. If they dared to show themselves, the holy beam of the Holy Divine would exterminate them in an instant!

Buzz! Buzz!

Two soft buzzes interrupted Jiang Bianyan's train of thought. Ye Xiaotian had completed his construction of the world paths.

He did not take more than fifteen minutes to connect the two worlds. Such speed had once again shocked the two of them.

"Mm!" Jiang Bianyan grunted suddenly.

The place went dead silent.

Even Yu Zhiwen instinctively held back on asking more questions. She closed her eyes to feel the surrounding.

It was the same with the hundreds of men in black not far from them. Even Zhao Xidong, holding the Spirit Curtain Wheel of the 12 Pearls, anxiously looked down and carefully studied the wheel.

A faint “Force of Great Path and Rules” slowly manifested. However, what was more tangible was the extremely dense Space Elemental power.

The former was the Path itself, while the latter was the manifestation of the Path.

Only Sovereign-ranked experts could sense the Force of Great Path and Rules. Most of the people there had yet to reach that level. To them, it was the perfect opportunity for a breakthrough!

Just one look was all it took, and many had already entered the world of Zen.

Ye Xiaotian was breaking out in a sweat as it was rare for him to push himself to the limit. So, the opportunity was indeed rare.

Everyone present, including the personnel from the internal of the Spirit Palace, had never seen Ye Xiaotian using his Space Elemental power in such a strenuous manner.

Jiang Bianyan looked at the visible Force of Rules in the path and secretly sighed.

Had he not reached the Sovereign stage and already found his Path, the clear and visible Force of Rules before him right now would surely improve his cultivation by a vast margin.

However, it was impossible at present.

Every Sovereign has his unique Path. The fight for the Great Path was exceedingly cruel, and if Jiang Bianyan rejected his Path over Ye Xiaotian’s, then the path he had already chosen would become meaningless.

He looked away as there was no point staring at two Paths that were destined not to cross.

However, Qiao Qianzhi was meticulously observing the force of space. It could be used in different ways and was exceedingly valuable for one who delved into the world of Spirit Array Caster.

He was thirsty for every moment and had immersed himself in the force as he absorbed everything he could.

Ye Xiaotian could not neglect the most urgent matter, just because everyone was in the Zen mode. To him, the most critical issue at present was to save the people inside the Tianxuan Gate.

With every minute he wasted, it became more dangerous for the people inside!

The path connecting the two worlds had finally stabilized, and Ye Xiaotian projected his voice into it. His command was clear was simple. He shouted, “Get out!”

“A spatial path!”

The three of them, who laid face-down at the entrance of the Tianxuan Gate array, jolted in surprise, pointing to the back of the crowd.

Luo Leilei turned around in surprise and realized that on one side of the array entrance, there was another spatial path that was now open.

“What is going on?”

“Is Xu Xiaoshou not back yet? Who has informed the Dean?”

Mu Zixi stared at the pillar-like gigantic tree and made an assumption. She said, “Maybe after Xu Xiaoshou has succeeded and the mini world gets repaired, perhaps then Mr. Dean can intervene again?”

“Why are we waiting? When are we going to escape, if not now?”

Three of them charged out, and Luo Leilei could not stop them in time. All she could see was the three of them getting into the spatial path and vanishing before her.

“Let us go. Xu Xiaoshou should be able to make it in time, right?”

Momo held the bronze cauldron and checked the bracelet on her arm. She hesitated and then said, “We cannot wait any longer.”

They really could not afford to wait any longer!

None of them was dumb or simple-minded. All the youngsters knew they could wait for too long after the path had opened. For the period it would last was an unknown variable to them.

If they were to wait for everyone to leave together, then they were not guaranteed a safe path back.

Momo stepped onto the path first. Mu Zixi hesitated for a moment, but she followed suit shortly afterward.

Zhao Qingteng walked for two steps and paused. Then he turned back and reached out with his hand and said, “Let us do it together.”

“F*ck off!”

He was speechless.

He turned and left without waiting.

Luo Leilei looked at the spatial path and felt that every step was difficult.

She was not waiting for Xu Xiaoshou. But Luo Leilei feared the world outside.

If she assumed correctly, what awaited her outside was probably an enormous group of men in black clothes.

She clenched her teeth and finally took a leap of faith.

“Brother Shuangxing, please hurry over.”

Chapter 179: Cheng Xingchu’s travel experience

Meanwhile...

After Cheng Xingchu excused himself from the council hall, he did not head straight to his spiritual site to rest. Instead, he took a detour around the inner yard for a long stroll.

“This is really odd. Why have I not seen a single person around? Is this Tiansang Spirit Palace inner yard merely a decoration? Why are there so few people?”

He thought of the letter seeking help.

“Could it be that they have all gone into hiding?”

“Tsk! If it is the case, then the Tiansang Spirit Palace is surely overrated.”

Cheng Xingchu had a cynical smile and decided not to loiter any further.

Although there was nobody in the inner yard, there were still people in the outer yard. There were so many people out there when he arrived, and they possibly had not received any instructions to hide. It was probably why there were still many people having fun outside.

He remembered being mocked by those scums who had reached the Acquired Stage. The memory of it provoked him, but he could not find a place to vent it out.

As for the reason they mocked him, Cheng Xingchu had deliberately wiped it from his mind.

As he walked past the Spiritual Library Division toward the outer area, he soon reached the threshold between the outer and inner yard.

He thought to himself—the guards of this Spirit Palace are seriously weak. I have seen no disciples around. Are they also short on personnel for the law enforcers? There were only a few at the council hall.

He wondered, how could there be no one guarding the inner yard entrance?

Dhak! Dhak!

A slow and rhythmic knocking sound came from around the corner, and Cheng Xingchu tilted his head to look over. What he saw gave him a huge scare.

“Oh, my God, what an ugly blind man!”

It was a man with a badly scratched face. It looked like someone had cut him up badly in a frenzied knife fight. It was impossible to tell his exact age just by looking at his face.

Oh, no!

It seemed someone had undoubtedly cut up the man’s face!

Cheng Xingchu felt nauseous looking at his face as the man walking toward him was not merely ugly—he was exceedingly hideous!

As he watched, he noticed that the man was using a walking stick, and that was the source of the knocking sound.

The walking stick was thin and light-purplish. There were also some carved lines on the handle. The walking stick was the only delicate item on the hideous blind man covered in dust.

“How did you enter the Spirit Palace?” asked Cheng Xingchu.

He was curious and wanted to know if the Tiansang Spirit Palace did not care about its prestigious status. How could they take in such a disciple?

Regardless of how a Spiritual Cultivator could alter the works of Heaven and Earth and manipulate the essence of the Sun and Moon, nobody could salvage such a sorry-looking face!

The blind young man with the walking stick seemed oblivious that someone was talking to him, and he continued to tap on the road and went on his way.

However, the entrance to the inner yard was only that wide, so Cheng Xingchu blocked the blind man by standing in the center of the road.

“Are you deaf as well as blind?” he mocked.

As his eyes rested on the man’s hand holding the walking stick, Cheng Xingchu raised his eyebrows in surprise.

In contrast to the dusty robe he was wearing, the little deaf and blind man’s hands were surprisingly clean. His fingers were slender, and each knuckle was well-defined. It would appear that the man did not do hard chores at all.

This is a pair of hands only a woman could possess, he thought. Even then, it would take a great deal of careful maintenance. Such delicate fingers... how could such a face match up to these?

Cheng Xingchu was feeling conflicted and out of sorts.

With his observation of specific details, such as the man’s hands and the walking stick, his extensive training and experience told him that the man standing before him suffered from mysophobia.

But such people... mm...

How could he possibly tolerate the dirt on his body and the sorry state of his face?

“Excuse me.”

The young blind man spoke. To his surprise, the man had a pleasant voice, and it was rich and slightly deep.

Cheng Chuxing frowned as his intuition warned him to leave immediately, but he stubbornly refused to heed it!

The man had zero cultivation potential and probably belonged with the scums milling outside—presumably, newbies just recruited to the Spirit Palace.

Excuse me?

Did he think he could enter the inner yard?

Did he even have any clue about the rules of this world?

And even more important, was that the proper attitude to show toward a semi-Master expert?

It annoyed Cheng Chuxing to no end. He thought of how Ye Xiaotian had bullied him because of his background. He was so scared that he even peed in his pants.

So, what gave this ordinary man the right to be so calm in front of him?

He had been on the lookout for the few Outer Yard disciples who mocked him. Since he could not find them, this scum would do perfectly...

Ho, ho! It seemed like the blind man ran out of luck for Cheng Chuxing needed to vent out his anger.

“Not this road!” Cheng Chuxing said harshly.

The young blind man finally stopped moving. If he had not done so, they would have crashed into each other.

“Excuse me.”

The man tilted his head and blew out some air from the corner of his lips. His long hair, which was partially covering his face, blew to the side. He spoke in the same tone, and there was not the slightest change in emotions.

Cheng Chuxing was now even more provoked, and his anger sent him into a frenzy.

He despised people who had no actual strength or talent but were pretty good at putting up a show! It was the number one item on his hate list!

“What if I say no?” Cheng Chuxing said as he looked at the man scornfully.

“If you say no? Then, die.”

The occasional night breeze added to the bizarre scene, and the blind man’s unbound long hair tossed about, giving him a charming appeal. If one did not look at his disfigured face, he would have been a perfect sight to behold.

Cheng Xingchu seemed amused as he laughed out loud. He asked, “Die? Who gave you the courage to talk to me like this?”

His eyes focused as if possessed by the haunting memories of Ye Xiaotian. He planned to bring the man down with an almighty force.

At that moment, all he could think about was crushing the blind man’s kneecaps on the ground and shattering them to pieces.

WHACK!

However, after delivering his blow with intense force, the young blind man remained standing in the same position. Cheng Xingchu felt like he had struck at a piece of fabric and there was little effect.

He was speechless.

He focused once again!

WHACK!

He threw another powerful blow at the man.

How could it be possible? Why is there no reaction at all?

He tried to focus one more time.

He could not do it anymore. His eyes narrowed into two slits. If he went any further, he would have to shut his eyes tight.

The situation was awkward. The silence felt like lethal poison, slowly spreading out in the air.

Cheng Xingchu moved the corner of his lips and realized he did not know what to say.

Silence prevailed.

The blind young man waited for a long time and realized that the man in front of him was just a paper tiger. He stayed his ground briefly, then he tapped his walking stick around.

Dhak! Dhak!

It was not an attack. The man was probing to find his way.

He also said nothing. Since the guy in front of him decided not to continue his attack, the blind man treated him as a passer-by.

The young man took a detour, feeling his way around Cheng Xingchu with his walking stick, and walked past him quietly.

“Damn it,” Cheng Xingchu muttered to himself.

His head was burning with fury, and it made his brain feel like it was about to explode.

The feeling of being ignored was far worse than being pranked by Ye Xiaotian. On top of it, the blind man in front of him was an ordinary man with no cultivation power!

“You are asking for it!” Cheng Xingchu roared.

His low, growling voice came out of his clenched mouth. Overwhelmed with anger, Cheng Xingchu threw out a punch infused with spiritual power, and he aimed it at the back of the young man.

SWOOSH!

Instantly, the blind young man did not turn around at all but squatted. Cheng Xingchu’s fist went wide and slipped over his opponent’s shoulder.

By the time Cheng Xingchu realized that something was off, the blind man had pulled his hand forward and threw him to the front using his momentum.

“Huh? He is not an ordinary man!”

Cheng Xingchu’s pupils dilated as the smooth counterattack shocked him. Although he had a rough gauge of the man’s power, it was still a shock to him when he experienced it firsthand.

How did the blind man evade the Spirit Observation Technique—the hidden skill of the Holy Divine Palace?

He had observed the man earlier, and he did not possess any cultivation power for sure. What was this?

Cheng Xingchu did not have too much time to ponder, and it was a bad idea to expose his back to the enemy. After Cheng Xingchu regained his balance, he immediately turned around.

Dhak!

The light-purplish walking stick was pointing at his heart.

Cheng Xingchu swallowed his saliva with much difficulty. The walking stick had become a long sword instead of a harmless stick.

If he had used more force?

“Ugh!”

Before he could apologize, the blind young man had already put down the stick. Then he started probing around again and turned to leave.

It astonished Cheng Xingchu.

“What is going on?”

“Why did he not put an end to me?”

“Ptui! As if he could put an end to me!”

Cheng Xingchu was feeling terrified at heart. The blind man was positively creepy. He resembled a God of Death who was merely passing by and was not interested in taking his life at all.

Was he a Spiritual Cultivator?

But if the man did not have any skills, how could he dodge the attack? He even countered flawlessly.

Why did the man let go of the opportunity to end his life?

Cheng Xingchu was in awe as he stared at the blind young man’s back. He wanted to catch up to him and save his face.

However, his legs felt unusually heavy, as if laden with lead. He could not even move a step as he stood rooted to the ground.

BAM!

Suddenly, a spirit tree exploded from approximately thirty meters away, and it scared the hell out of Cheng Xingchu. He felt a chill running down his spine.

The tree was right on the attack trajectory of the blind man’s walking stick just a while ago!

Was the man trying to warn him?

Crack!

A cracking sound came from his waist. Cheng Xingchu looked down in horror and realized that his protective jade had cracked up.

It was a protection jade that could withstand a full-power strike by a Master Stage expert!

“I...”

Cheng Xingchu fell on his bottom as he stared in disbelief at the blind young man from afar.

He was not dumb and immediately realized that the man probably possessed the power of a Master Stage!

But looking at his age, the man was probably only twenty-seven or twenty-eight years old!

“Are the people from Tiansang Spirit Palace all this powerful?”

His murmurs could not hide his shocked state. All Cheng Xingchu could feel was despair as he picked up the shattered jade. He was in a daze.

It seemed he would have died already.

Chapter 180: Warmth and guilt

[At the council hall]

Even though Ye Xiaotian was sweating profusely, the two paths connecting the worlds were as steady as a rock.

After the worlds connected, one of the paths shone brighter, and a silhouette emerged.

“Someone is coming out!” shouted Zhao Xidong. He looked pleasantly surprised.

Shortly after, a second silhouette and then followed by a third one subsequently emerged from the same path.

The feeling of dizziness brought about by traveling through the connecting path was extremely intense. It took the three of them some time to recover.

However, when they opened their eyes and realizing that there were at least a few hundred men dressed in black clothes, they almost collapsed in shock.

“This is...”

What kind of formation was that? Were the black-clothed men there to apprehend them?

They could not bear to find themselves in such a situation.

They tried very hard to recall their deeds inside the Tianxuan Gate and felt sure that they had done nothing wrong. So why were there so many men in black waiting there?

As they turned to look around, they saw both the Dean and Elder Qiao looking at them with concerned eyes.

“Hello, Mr. Dean!”

“Hello, Elder Qiao!”

“Ugh, Hello Executive Zhao!”

They immediately greeted their Elders and looked rather anxious.

They even greeted Zhao Xidong, who was on the staircase. If they knew the identity of the middle-aged man and the lady behind the veil, they would probably greet them as well.

“Haha!” Looking at the anxious faces of these three, who unwittingly broke the rules all the time, Zhao Xidong’s response was only a mirthless laugh.

However, the three wrongly perceived the laugh and misinterpreted it.

Quite upset, Qiao Qianzhi asked, “Why are you guys here?”

In his eyes, even if the world was on the brink of destruction, they should at least let the younger people escape first.

To him, it was not just a problem of order, but a problem of attitude!

The three of them panicked when they heard the question. The leader of the three looked at Zhao Xidong with teary eyes and frantically explained, “It was not us! We honestly did not blow up Tianxuan Gate!”

Zhao Xidong almost burst out in laughter. Those cowards had assumed that the blame for blowing up the Tianxuan Gate was upon them?

Those guys were not even qualified to make it on the suspect list!

Qiao Qianzhi was speechless and snorted, indicating that he did not wish to talk to these three anymore.

The path of the world shone brightly again, and Momo emerged from it. Like the others before her, she also felt dizzy and took some time to regain her sense of balance.

The others did not react when they saw Momo, but Zhao Xidong started frowning.

“The weird feeling. Has it disappeared?”

Maybe because he had many girlfriends in the past, his sixth sense was very accurate in most circumstances. So he seldom predicted wrongly.

When he was with Elder Sang at the little hut the last time, he had answered Elder Sang’s question of who he thought was the spy. Based on his sharp instinct, he had said it was Momo.

And presently?

“Have I made a mistake?” he muttered to himself.

“No. According to Elder Sang, there are two spies. Luo Leilei is one of them for sure. But the other one? If it is not Xu Xiaoshou, then it could only be her!”

He locked his eyes on Momo. After she had recovered slightly, Zhao Xidong squinted his eyes into narrow slits, and he slowly shifted his gaze away discreetly.

However, he was feeling turmoil in his mind.

Momo had glanced at him first when she recovered!

Why?

He remembered having met her only once in the past. There were so many other prominent people there, such as the Dean and Elder Qiao. She could even have looked at the few hundred men in black clothes. Why did she choose to look at him? He was the least conspicuous person there.

If it had happened in the past and he had received such special attention, Zhao Xidong would feel nothing but wild with joy. However, in the present circumstances, he could no longer enjoy the attention.

“F*ck! A man is indeed happier if he does not care too much about everything...”

Zhao Xidong carefully kept his belongings and stopped thinking pessimistically. Should anything happen, he had the backing of the Vice Dean. So, there was no point worrying about problems that had not occurred yet.

A flash of light sparked from afar again.

After both Mu Zixi and Zhao Qingteng emerged, the path of the world quietened. And then, a girl in a purple veil walked out of it.

It was Luo Leilei!

She was the only one who was unaffected by the dizziness brought about by traveling between the worlds, so she was unquestionably well-prepared.

Once she landed, her eyes immediately fell on the few hundred men in black clothes, and her heart sank.

Nobody uttered a single word nor made any move, but everyone realized the situation had changed.

The atmosphere was heavy with tension, very much like how dark clouds would gather when a thunderstorm was brewing, before destroying anything in its path.

“Is it her?”

Yu Zhiwen suddenly declared, “This woman is exceedingly powerful!”

Jiang Bianyan shook his head and said, “She is not Elder Sang’s disciple. If I’m not wrong, she should be...”

His eyes turned to look at the girl in green with her hair tied up in two ponytails. She was still curiously looking around.

Was it really her? Jiang Bianyan was a little suspicious.

She was one of only two people who had not suffered from the dizziness.

The other one was Zhao Qingteng.

Yu Zhiwen's face underneath the veil changed as she realized she had become competitive a tad too early.

A peak Origin Court Level?

Was that the person Elder Sang had taken as a disciple?

Ugh, maybe she got something interesting hidden up her sleeves!

Ye Xiaotian was still maintaining the paths between the two worlds, and Qiao Qianzhi's eyes locked on Luo Leilei. After destroying her mental line of defense, he then smiled and questioned her.

"Leilei girl, where are the rest of you?"

Luo Leilei had mentally prepared to fight to the death but did not expect that question.

She stared into Qiao Qianzhi's eyes, surprised not to find a single strand of coldness. What she saw was the usual intention of warm encouragement.

Does he know?

But she also wondered why he would still look at her that way.

Luo Leilei clenched her fist as she tried to quell her overwhelming guilt, dismissing all the fond memories of playing around in the outer yard.

She opened her mouth but could find nothing to say.

Damn it! He was just a terrible Elder who would scold her for half a day for taking some cultivation subsidy.

Her nails were pressing into her palms. With much difficulty, Luo Leilei answered, "Xu Xiaoshou went to the other side and has not returned yet. The other two have gone missing."

"The other two?" Qiao Qianzhi let out a long sigh and asked, "Yuan Tou and Zhou Tianshen?"

He did not know about the former, but he roughly knew what was up with Zhou Tianshen.

According to the images from Heaven's Vision, the guy had probably stayed too long in the Slaughter Cape. Basically, after spending three days in Tianxuan Gate, he should be able to wake up naturally. So what happened?

Hm?

The Slaughter Cape?

Somehow, Qiao Qianzhi sensed there was something amiss, but he could not pinpoint the problem.

He tried to analyze, running through the thoughts in his mind.

Xu Xiaoshou seemed on friendly terms with Zhou Tianshen. To finish his mission, he would probably head toward the Slaughter Cape.

If Xu Xiaoshou had discovered the Sky Tree's seed, then he would have inevitably got his hands on the Seal of the Secret Treasure.

"That is right. The Secret Treasure!"

Qiao Qianzhi's pupils were dilating, and he felt increasingly anxious.

He suddenly turned to Ye Xiaotian.

"If Xu Xiaoshou had indeed gone to the Slaughter Cape... Jie?"

Confused by his inconsistent words, Ye Xiaotian got distracted. The two paths of the world started shaking as if they would explode at any time.

Everyone was shocked!

"F*ck! Do not get all worked up. Stay calm!"

Qiao Qianzhi snapped at Ye Xiaotian. Then the paths of the world slowly stabilized. But Qiao Qianzhi felt a sense of trepidation.

There should be no one walking on the paths at present.

Everyone present looked at Ye Xiaotian—they were all shocked.

Their Dean would not even flinch when he had sweat dripping into his eyes. He would not even break a sweat if he saw an entire mountain collapsing. But he had almost let go of the paths of the world. All because of a word uttered by Qiao Qianzhi.

"Jie... What is that?"

Many people had taken note of the odd word.

Jiang Bianyan tried to recall everything he knew about the word. After some time, he realized that there was no such word in his memory, so he gave up trying.

After Ye Xiaotian had once again stabilized the paths, he took a deep breath and murmured to himself, "Xu Xiaoshou... It cannot be. Things should not turn out so badly!"

Qiao Qianzhi looked bitter as he was still relatively confident in the hardworking kid. But at present?

He looked up at the sky. In his eyes, there were looks of uncertainty.

"Hopefully so!"