

I Am Loaded 191

Chapter 191: What a Ruthless Calculation!

The sudden commotion caused everyone present to freeze!

Everyone watched Xu Xiaoshou run away with Mu Zixi in his arms. They were all dumbfounded, seemingly unable to recover from this unexpected commotion.

The confrontation between the dean and the “Saint Servant,” two powerful swordsmen, shouldn’t be interfered with by a disciple of the Outer Yard. How could he dare to get involved?

Suspected, Passive Points +465.

Admired, Passive Points +166.

Worried, Passive Points +2.

“...”

In the blink of an eye, several mental activities and emotions gave thousands of Passive Points to Xu Xiaoshou.

Lei Shuangxing felt the wind brush past his shoulders and seemed to see Xu Xiaoshou’s receding back as he left.

He was shocked.

He held two major jade stones in his hands, wondering how anyone could dare to act like this.

His idea of ruling the whole place seemed to fizzle out all of a sudden, and he felt an inexplicable emotion growing in his heart that hadn’t appeared there for many years.

Displeasure?

Resentment?

Or was it the pain of being ignored?

Xu Xiaoshou sure had a way of drawing hatred. Lei Shuangxing subconsciously aimed the jade stone at his back, but just as he was about to crush the jade stone, he was suddenly taken aback.

“No! He did this on purpose!”

He realized that everyone had overlooked the Sword Sand Gravel because of Xu Xiaoshou drawing everyone’s hatred to himself.

The Ancient Sword Technique he’d cultivated had already reached Master Level. If this guy wasn’t a sword master, then how else could he have temporarily suppressed his sword will?

He was trying to provoke him into striking!

Realizing this, Lei Shuangxing broke out in a cold sweat.

He only had two jade stones left. If he shot one of them at the youth, Ye Xiaotian would definitely take advantage of the opportunity to strike.

Yet if the last Sword Energy Jade Stone couldn't cause damage to Ye Xiaotian, or the damage wasn't enough to kill him, the result...

He would definitely be killed!

"This lad, what a ruthless calculation!"

Finding that his only weakness seemed to have been unearthed by this unknown lad, Lei Shuangxing was filled with shock as he tightly squeezed the purple cane.

Although he held the killing power of the throne, this power was most threatening when it wasn't unleashed. Once employed, he would be like a lamb that had lost its divine power and would be completely at the mercy of others.

"Who is he?"

Lei Shuangxing didn't turn his head around. He didn't have any spiritual cultivation, and he couldn't even see clearly, but that voice was definitely to be remembered forever.

The person who could make such a judgment and take action in such a situation wasn't an ordinary one!

Luo Leilei, imprisoned in the empty space, had also witnessed the figure of Xu Xiaoshou leaving with someone in his arms, a complicated expression on her pretty face.

She'd also figured out Xu Xiaoshou's intention and knew the stalemate would soon be broken.

"It's really you, as expected."

This was the very reason why Luo Leilei had tried persuading Xu Xiaoshou to join the Holy Vassal. The guy could always do something ridiculous at the critical moment and make a perfect breakthrough.

Ye Xiaotian, after a moment of confusion, understood Xu Xiaoshou's intentions.

He was indeed worthy of being chosen by Elder Sang. That move was an excellent way to solve the situation!

"Everyone, retreat!"

Not wanting to wait any longer, he ordered all the law enforcers to leave.

Lei Shuangxing's Sword Sand Gravel was temporarily suppressed, and just as he was about to rise up again, the crowd scattered like fleeing birds and beasts.

He suddenly felt a little powerless. The situation had obviously been under his control, but he'd lost all his hostages and now feared it would be difficult to save Luo Leilei. "D*mn it."

"Great. As expected, those guys didn't figure it out!"

Xu Xiaoshou, who had started it all, was dashing through the woods, his heart full of happiness.

He'd thought that when the blind man attacked him, he could return his attack with Everything as a Sword and employ his Master Level body to at least resist the strike. As long as he could avoid fatal injuries, he would be able to survive.

He didn't expect the guy to be slow to react and not strike.

"It's like God is helping me!"

Master Level Agility was really excellent. As soon as Xu Xiaoshou started to fly, he escaped in the blink of an eye.

It was at that moment that notifications flooded the information bar.

Admired, Passive Points +56.

Thanked, Passive Points +77.

"..."

Xu Xiaoshou was startled when he saw a large group of black-clad people following behind him and couldn't help but shrink back with fear.

How had these guys come out of thin air like ghosts? How could the Spirit Palace still pursue the spies when it was in such a dire situation?

Unexpectedly, when they approached him, they patted his shoulder like they were old friends, not people out to arrest him.

"Xu Xiaoshou, good job!"

"Hey, man, that was a great move. If I'd known, I would have rushed to the outside!"

"Come on, could you've broken through the Sword Sand Gravel? You would've rushed out for nothing."

"Who would have thought the guy was merely a paper tiger? But I'm curious. How did you dare to do it? What if he'd had more than two jade stones? What would you have done then?"

"..."

Praised, Passive Points +44.

Xu Xiaoshou was confused, but before he could ask any questions, he understood what was going on from the group's words. He didn't know whether to laugh or cry.

"I didn't think too much about it. I just wanted to take a leak at the time."

Mu Zixi, who was in Xu Xiaoshou's arms, had grown more feverish. He had no idea what kind of wrong medicine she'd taken, but things would become much worse if the fever damaged her already muddled brain.

He had to hurry to find Elder Sang!

"Man, stop being modest. I knew you weren't simple when I saw you employ the Striking Feng Kong the other night. The others didn't believe me when I told them."

“Yeah, I knew you weren’t an ordinary person after you escaped from the masked man. Today, you’ve proved that you’re really extraordinary, like you’ve turned into a dragon.”

“...”

Suspected, Passive Points +32.

Praised, Passive Points +21.

Xu Xiaoshou was almost carried away by all these praises and compliments, and he nearly wanted to turn around and fight the enemies.

Yet he was still sensible enough to know that these guys were obviously very grateful to him for saving their lives, and that they were acting this way to show their gratitude, nothing more.

He shouldn’t be too conceited!

Xu Xiaoshou held back for a while. When he saw the Passive Points stop appearing, he couldn’t help but giggle.

“If you know how to talk, keep going. Don’t stop!”

The crowd was startled, but they soon started talking again. Soon after, the Passive Points piled up like the rainbow hung in the sky.

Praised, Passive Points +46.

“...”

Complimented, Passive Points +21.

Xu Xiaoshou: “...”

Finding that the praises had gradually become tasteless and increasingly unpleasant, he finally became clear-headed.

After his sanity returned, he paused and looked at the crowd, finding that something was missing.

“Where’s Zhou Tiansen?”

“Huh?” All were dumbfounded. Yeah, where was Zhou Tiansen?

Well, Zhou Tiansen wasn’t the only one missing. Zhao Xidong and four Masters, and those who’d lost their ability to move, still seemed to be in the gazebo!

“I...” Xu Xiaoshou’s heart wrenched.

Judging by the expressions on all their faces, he realized that they’d just focused on their own escape and forgotten about those people!

Someone in black had also regained his senses and said solemnly, “It’s too dangerous for them there. Somebody must go back to save them.”

Everyone stopped in their tracks, and their gazes unanimously converged onto Xu Xiaoshou.

Xu Xiaoshou's face turned green from resentment.

"What the h*ll does this mean?" he thought. "They want me to go back again? What a joke! That's a job for you guys, the law enforcers!"

He tightened his arms around the girl pressed against his bosom, his voice full of urgency as he said, "Sorry. I have an urgent matter to take care of."

"Xu Xiaoshou!" A man in black stepped forward. "As much as I hate to admit it, at the moment, apart from the five people lying there, it seems that you are the only one among us who can fight against that blind man's sword will."

"I can't!"

Suspected, Passive Points +46.

Xu Xiaoshou: "..."

"As a law enforcer of the Spiritual Law Division, I order you to perform your task immediately," the black-clad man bellowed. Then, he lowered his voice and advised:

"Xu Xiaoshou, make up for your mistakes. If you save them, you'll be able to prove that you aren't a spy!

"Dozens of people present could testify for you."

"I..." Xu Xiaoshou looked at the crowd surrounding him, his eyesight growing blurry.

"You're a group of white-eyed wolves," he thought. "Ungrateful!"

Chapter 192: The Choice of Tao

Xu Xiaoshou didn't put up that much of a struggle. Obviously, he couldn't anyway.

It was rather unpleasant being watched by dozens of law enforcers!

He didn't care much about the injuries of those in the gazebo, but if Zhou Tiansen was targeted by the blind man, he would be finished.

After all, it was Aje who'd injured him.

Back then, it was just a savior's joke to begin with.

"D*mn, if I'd known it would turn out like this, I wouldn't have cheated that big dumb guy!" Xu Xiaoshou had finally tasted the evil consequences of lying.

This was a fable, and such an ending was very profound!

He handed the girl in his arms to the man in black and said, "You should know where the Spiritual Library Division is. Give her to Elder Sang. She should be treated as soon as possible. Otherwise, I don't know what will happen to her."

"This is..."

"Don't ask me more questions. I don't know either!"

Xu Xiaoshou vaguely felt that something was wrong.

Though Mu Zixi was usually a devilish girl, her life force was always in the overflow state, so she couldn't have such an incident all of a sudden.

Yet, everyone had their secrets. He didn't intend to dig deeper.

Well, after all, she was currently unconscious, so even if he'd wanted to dig deeper, he couldn't have.

The man in black moved to pick up Mu Zixi, but the girl bit Xu Xiaoshou's clothes and gripped him tightly with her small hands without any sign of letting go.

Xu Xiaoshou: "..."

He plucked at her hands a little, finding that he had no way of removing her.

Well, he could yank her away if he tried a little harder, but his clothes would be ruined, which wasn't worth it.

"Xu Xiaoshou, help me," Mu Zixi seemed to be murmuring unconsciously.

Hearing this, Xu Xiaoshou felt his headache grow worse. Why did everyone seem to suffer when the Spirit Palace had an accident?

Were there more disasters to follow?

He gently patted the little girl's head and found that the back of her head was burning hot as if it were filled with boiling water.

A mishap would occur if the fever continued!

"Sweetheart, go get treatment!"

After coaxing her in a comforting tone like he would have a child, he found that Mu Zixi seemed to have loosened her grip a little, and he immediately plucked her hands off of him and said to the man in black:

"Quickly, the Spiritual Library Division! If there's no one there, take her to the Spiritual Medicine Division for treatment right away!"

Everyone was stunned. His plucking technique was unexpectedly crude.

Before the man in black could reach out his hands, Mu Zixi took this opportunity to wrap her vine-like hands around Xu Xiaoshou's wrists, and she moved to his back like a wooden snake.

"Don't leave me."

With a gurgling noise, Mu Zixi opened her small mouth, revealing an amiable pair of glistening tiger teeth.

Feeling a chill on his neck, Xu Xiaoshou suddenly recalled an incident at the "Windcloud Competition."

As expected, the next second the little girl bit him, chewing a large mouthful of vitality.

"What level of teeth are these?"

Xu Xiaoshou was shocked. He didn't expect that the small girl could penetrate his master Level body.

It was so painful that he pushed her chin away, but the little girl instantly became displeased and started punching and kicking.

"You want to eat me!"

"You must have wanted to for quite a long time!" Xu Xiaoshou thought, feeling rather uncomfortable when he realized that he had a junior sister who wanted to eat him. It was quite creepy no matter how one looked at it!

"Forget it. She'll stay with me. You guys go ahead!"

Looking at the law enforcers, who were somewhat at a loss, Xu Xiaoshou couldn't help but sigh.

It looked like Mu Zixi couldn't leave him in such a state. He was her senior brother of the same master, after all, and decided that he couldn't abandon her.

He said goodbye to the law enforcers and flew up with the girl on his back in the direction of the gazebo.

Seeing that no one was around, Xu Xiaoshou used the hand holding her chin to pull out the "Life Spiritual Seal" and stuffed it into the girl's mouth.

"Eat, and hurry up!"

Xu Xiaoshou regained his status as a sinister senior brother. "For biting me!"

"Whoa."

It was impossible to break the item. Choked, Mu Zixi started drooling uncontrollably.

She struggled a little. After sucking once, she found that it had more life force than Xu Xiaoshou, and immediately settled down.

"Whoa, whoa!" The sound of heart-felt happiness rang out.

Xu Xiaoshou: "..."

There was something wrong with this girl. Why did Elder Sang take such a disciple? Was his brain damaged?!

Gazebo.

Assisted by the sword energy, the five corpse-like men were floating in the empty space. These five men couldn't die. If they did, Ye Xiaotian might not be able to resist.

Lei Shuangxing had control of the five master law enforcers, and Ye Xiaotian had imprisoned Luo Leilei. It was a stalemate.

This blind young man's intentions were self-evident. His real goal was to stall Ye Xiaotian rather than save Luo Leilei.

As the dean of the Inner Yard, Ye Xiaotian's combat power was undoubtedly extremely strong and more terrifying than that of other elders.

The price the “Saint Servant” had paid was a swordsman with no cultivation plus three jade stones.

Lei Shuangxing had achieved the stalemate, even though their strengths were unequal. He’d achieved this because of his extraordinary reaction, which was as strong as someone at Throne Level, and because Ye Xiaotian didn’t want to lose the hostages.

After all, five hostages were truly quite many.

He could lose one at any minute.

When Xu Xiaoshou arrived at the Assembly Hall again, he was stunned by the harmonious scene in front of him.

The affectionate glance at each other, and the silent stubbornness.

Were all fights so polite now?

“Xu Xiaoshou?” Luo Leilei, high above the ground, saw the back figure of the youth, feeling uneasy vaguely.

What was he doing here?

It was a hard-earned stalemate.

“Xu Xiaoshou?” Ye Xiaotian was also a little surprised. What was this lad trying to do by returning? But the lad always had clever ideas up his sleeve. Maybe he could help break the stalemate.

“What do you want to do? Go ahead, then. I’ll protect those five people,” Ye Xiaotian said through the voice transmission. He was short of a fighter right now, and the incoming lad was just what he needed.

Xu Xiaoshou felt a little amused at the thought of someone at Throne Level being stopped by a swordsman, and he couldn’t help but recall how Elder Sang had advised Ye Xiaotian to quickly make up his mind the other night after the battle with the masked man.

He didn’t know so much about the indecisiveness of the Master Dean. Judging by the situation, what that ruthless old man with a conical hat had said was true.

Perhaps what Ye Xiaotian was doing was right. Deep down, Xu Xiaoshou approved of his approach and thought he was much more humane.

If it were Elder Sang in this situation, even if it was a weakened version of him, one blind man wouldn’t be enough for him to kill.

“Is this the choice of Tao?”

Seeing the somewhat absurd scene before him, and thinking of Elder Sang’s brainwashing lessons, Xu Xiaoshou seemed to understand something.

The pyramid of cultivation was climbed by each person through the path they’d created. At the bottom, the general public pursued the peak hard, hoping someone would lend them a helping hand.

There were many choices on the road to the peak. One had to make choices all the time, and to gain something meant losing something at the same time.

Elder Sang had chosen a lonely road, and no one could use “affection” to trap him. Thus, he could charge ahead, and, naturally, wasn’t liked by those at the bottom.

Ye Xiaotian wanted to take into account everything, and the people behind him had also slowed him down. After all, the top of the pyramid was very narrow, and few could reach the top.

“Choices...”

“....And life in all its forms.”

Xu Xiaoshou seemed to have gained some understanding. He’d pondered how he should speak and achieve a desirable result, but now he felt relieved.

There’s no perfect choice in the world. No tree has the same leaf, and no one is perfect. A road might be dark all the way to the end. The side one sees is the side one has to face.

He looked at Lei Shuangxing, and the blind young man also turned his head to look at him.

“Hello.”

The voice sounded like the voice of the person who’d run away first, but Lei Shuangxing was unsure why he was greeting him.

Xu Xiaoshou was very direct and asked while pointing to the floating corpses in the empty space, “You have five people. Can you give one to me?”

Chapter 193: A Blatant Plan to Move People

Lei Shuangxing’s face twitched.

Was this lad really not following the routine?

Lei Shuangxing was quite chagrined, because he’d let Xu Xiaoshou run away when he was confused by the lad’s unruly behavior.

It was like a quarrel during which one party says something strange and leaves while the other party is left behind and frozen in place.

Yet, the other party always thinks that he will be able to respond in time if the quarrel restarts.

The opportunity had really come...

“Impossible!”

Lei Shuangxing decided that he wouldn’t let Xu Xiaoshou go, even if he was at risk of being attacked by Ye Xiaotian.

Xu Xiaoshou laughed.

“Sorry, I’m not discussing this with you.”

No sooner had he finished this remark than his body disappeared. By the time he reappeared, he’d already arrived at the side of Zhou Tiansen, who was floating in the empty space.

The sword energy of “Everything is a Sword” was manipulating the big tall man, but Xu Xiaoshou ignored it. He took out a white ring and pressed it on Zhou Tiansen at the speed of lightning.

Under the white fog, the sword energy ceased to function.

Xu Xiaoshou picked up Zhou and ran away without hesitation.

Lei Shuangxing was dumbfounded. When he recovered from his shock, he wanted to squeeze that big tall man to death, but, unexpectedly, his sword energy was sealed off.

“What is that thing... a ring?” he thought.

What kind of ring could cancel Master Level sword energy?

He was so angry that he tightly gritted his teeth. But, on the other hand, this lad was too fast and had once again caught him off guard.

Yet, as he recovered, intending to shift his target to Xu Xiaoshou and control his body, he found that Xu Xiaoshou had already hidden behind Ye Xiaotian.

A hostage was taken away...

And he did it right in front of his eyes!

Lei Shuangxing felt uncontrollable anger inside. He faced Ye Xiaotian and almost crushed the jade stone.

The white-haired Daoist boy could dodge his attack, but Xu Xiaoshou must not be able to!

“No!” Luo Leilei yelled from above, somewhat clearing Lei Shuangxing’s mind.

Yeah, he wasn’t the only one who had hostages. Ye Xiaotian was also holding Luo Leilei as a hostage...

Lei Shuangxing’s expression was apologetic. He told himself to hold back and not act impulsively!

“What, you still won’t make a move?” There was a hint of a smile on Ye Xiaotian’s face.

He was waiting for a mad Lei Shuangxing to make a move. In so doing, the blind young man would be in an unstable state, and his reflexes would be slower. As such, the stalemate might be broken.

It was obvious that Lei Shuangxing had also thought of this, which was why he’d restrained himself.

This man had a mature mind... He must have experienced many things and had a good handle on his emotions, something that didn’t befit his age.

“How did I do?” Xu Xiaoshou asked while hiding behind Ye Xiaotian, but he was too tall compared to Ye Xiaotian to fully hide.

Ye Xiaotian stared straight ahead, but his tone was somewhat appreciative as he said, “Well done.”

Without turning around, he could still see Xu Xiaoshou put away the white ring, not leaving a trace, with his spiritual thoughts.

He felt that this seemed a bit familiar, but he couldn’t remember what it was. He had no choice but to give up.

Yet, wasn't important. What was important was that Xu Xiaoshou had really succeeded in saving a person!

It's true that to deal with disgusting guys you have to use more disgusting... well, cleverer... means!

Xu Xiaoshou handed Zhou Tiansen over to Ye Xiaotian. After all, he was carrying Mu Zixi on his back, and his Master Level Agility would be affected if he had to carry the big guy as well.

Complete caution was needed when confronting a skillful opponent.

After successfully taking away a hostage, Xu Xiaoshou was feeling a bit excited. He stuck his head out from behind Ye Xiaotian when Lei Shuangxing didn't strike for a long while.

The blind young man's face had turned blue. He was apparently very angry.

"Whoa, he can even put up with this..." Xu Xiaoshou inwardly complimented him. "Look, didn't you say it'd be impossible for it to happen again?" he said. "Why, after I took away a hostage, have you still not done anything?"

Lei Shuangxing opened his blind eyes so wide that he could almost see. He uttered a "whoa" and fell silent.

Even though he couldn't see, he could imagine how hateful the speaker looked judging by his voice!

Cursed, Passive Points +1.

After forcefully taking a breath, Lei Shuangxing said calmly, "I still have four hostages..."

Xu Xiaoshou's eyes lit up. "Yeah, you still have four. Could you give me another one?"

"..."

D*mn it...

"Your name is Xu Xiaoshou, right? I'll remember you!"

Remembered, Passive Point +1.

Xu Xiaoshou wasn't very affected by the word "remember" anymore. This man would have to stand in line. After all, the masked man, Elder Sang, and the gray fog man were all ahead of him as far as "remembering" was concerned, and these guys were a lot more terrifying than him.

"Thank you for remembering me. I also like your name. Lei Shuangxing, the tears of double line. Very poetic. Why do you have such a name?"

Xu Xiaoshou thought that parents usually wouldn't give their children this kind of name. Unexpectedly, his thoughtless words made the blind young man fall silent.

There was a story?

Xu Xiaoshou had an idea. He said casually, "But compared to your name, I like your character more..."

Lei Shuangxing was momentarily perplexed. "Character?"

They'd met twice and had only exchanged a few words, yet he'd already figured out his character?

"Tsk, tsk..." Xu Xiaoshou continued, "Yes, you have a heart as soft as the bean curd, although your words are as sharp as a knife. You said 'impossible,' but let others do whatever they want. I like such character the most!"

Lei Shuangxing was so angry he almost spurted out a mouthful of blood. From a dark blue, his face turned pale, and his anger could've made the first Buddha appear and the second Buddha ascend to the heavens.

"Xu... Xiao... Shou!"

A low air pressure instantly enveloped the entire Assembly Hall.

Hearing the shout in the empty space, Luo Leilei was startled. She'd done the same in the Tianxuan Gate herself when she was in a totally insensible state after being angered.

How could Senior Brother Shuangxing, who was usually rather calm, be caught by such a simple trick?

This shouldn't be...

She wanted to say something, but was suddenly at a loss for what to say. If it were her, she would've lost her temper a long time ago.

Shouted at, Passive Points +1.

Xu Xiaoshou glanced at the notification and smiled, thinking that his plot had worked and he could act again.

"Yeah!" He responded, a puzzled expression on his face. "I'm right here. Why did you yell so loudly..."

Lei Shuangxing was so angry that he was having a hard time holding onto the cane in his hand.

It was just then that Xu Xiaoshou paused in the middle of his remark, a horrified look on his face. Alarmed, he turned his head to look at the small forest.

"The... the masked man?"

Everyone's heart skipped a beat. Ye Xiaotian's pupils shrank. Looking in that direction, he told himself that this wasn't good.

"It must be him. That's why I didn't detect him in advance!"

Lei Shuangxing and Luo Lei Lei were also astonished. The masked man, their chief, had appeared, which meant...

Their mission was completed?

He came over to offer his support?

Feeling happy and surprised, the two of them turned their heads almost simultaneously. Luo Leilei tried but failed to turn her head because she was confined and unable to move.

The other two, who could turn their heads, were also frozen in place. They could see nothing as far as their eye could see.

Not even a bird was in sight, let alone the masked man!

“Deceived?”

Both of them had the same thought. It was then that Luo Leilei’s shout rang out, “Over there!”

Luo Leilei, who couldn’t turn her head, was the only one to witness Xu Xiaoshou move people again.

He used the same ring and carried a person. The only difference was that the person being carried was a different one...

Zhao Xidong!

Lei Shuangxing was trembling from head to toe, feeling like his intelligence had been greatly insulted. It was obviously a clumsy trick, but he’d put on a believable act.

No!

The voice had sounded horrified and trembling. How had he made it sound so authentic?

Xu Xiaoshou had moved someone again. Yet, he couldn’t hold back this time, and laughed out loud.

“Haha, you’re so stupid. How could you be tricked so easily?”

Chapter 194: Secret Technique, Human Shield

Though Xu Xiaoshou said this to Lei Shuangxing, Ye Xiaotian, who was in front of Xu Xiaoshou, also felt insulted, which was a kind of collateral damage.

“I was the first to turn my head earlier...” he thought. “And I’m being chastised too!”

However, he couldn’t complain. This was indeed a good way to provoke Lei Shuangxing, yet, even though the insult was directed at the other person, he was insulted at the same time.

“Was this a planned scheme? Well, he probably didn’t do it on purpose...”

Thinking all this, Ye Xiaotian somehow didn’t utter the compliment he’d intended to offer.

On the other side, Lei Shuangxing was on the verge of exploding.

He felt like he’d experience enough emotions to last a few years in just this day alone, and all of them had been highly charged.

“Xu Xiaoshou, you’re pushing it!” Lei Shuangxing opened his eyes so wide that his eyeballs almost popped out.

“Oh?” Xu Xiaoshou ventured. “You’re going to crush the jade stone?”

“You think I wouldn’t dare?”

“Yes, I know you’d dare, so it’s better not to do it!”

“...”

Lei Shuangxing's words caught in his throat. Someone like him, who seldom spoke, was no match for Xu Xiaoshou when it came to talking.

After taking two deep breaths, he felt that he could no longer suppress the flood of power in his body.

Judging by the time, the chief's task was almost complete. Perhaps... he did not need to stay here.

Xu Xiaoshou saw he was silent and stole a glance at the remaining three hostages in the empty space, thinking it would be a little difficult moving them. But he decided to speak anyhow.

“Look... I heard that your sword energy can lock on to the target?”

Lei Shuangxing grunted and said no more, finding that it was best not to talk to this lad.

Fondling the jade stone in his hand, Lei Shuangxing imperceptibly gave a signal to Luo Leilei in the empty space. He was ready to strike.

His target was naturally that d*mned lad!

Xu Xiaoshou Sensed his intentions and asked while tilting his, “Why are you bending your fingers? Is it a signal?”

Lei Shuangxing: “...”

Luo Leilei: “...”

How could he detect such a subtle signal?

Did he have eyes on the back of his head?

Cursed, Passive Points +2.

Lei Shuangxing was annoyed. He didn't say anything more and raised the jade stone in his hand high, ready to crush it!

Whoosh!

It was just then that Xu Xiaoshou shook his body once and disappeared from behind Ye Xiaotian. By the time he reappeared, he was behind Luo Leilei.

Secret Technique, Human Shield!

“Sorry.”

He picked up the shocked Luo Leilei by her waist as his human shield.

Unexpectedly, it was the empty space that Ye Xiaotian detained. Unless he could pick up the person and the space, he'd have no way of moving the woman.

Xu Xiaoshou: “...”

Awkward!

A major embarrassment!

He gently grabbed the woman's shoulders and, sticking his head out from behind her, said casually, "Come on, strike me. Can your sword energy go around, or cut me from behind?"

Lei Shuangxing grew furious again, but he loosened the hand that was about to crush the jade stone.

"This..."

This was too shameless!

For the first time, he wanted to curse someone, but, because he was a civilized person, he found that his vocabulary was seriously limited.

"Xu Xiaoshou, what the h*ll do you want to do?" Lei Shuangxing poked his cane into the ground.

"Nothing. You want to stall for time, and I want to save people. That's all." Xu Xiaoshou smiled gently.

"Therefore, let's make a deal..."

"No way!"

Lei Shuangxing refused him without a second thought. He already knew what the result would be even before making a deal with him.

Xu Xiaoshou kept on smiling. "You think about it again."

He squeezed his five fingers together and turned them into a palm blade, the "Sharp Light," and cut Luo Leilei's neck. Blood poured out.

Luo Leilei: ???

"Why am I the one to get hurt when you two are the ones fighting?" she thought.

Lei Shuangxing's face was completely emotionless as he said calmly, "You think you can threaten me by doing this?"

"Can't I?" Xu Xiaoshou said, an insightful expression on his face that seemed to say he'd seen through his motivations. "On the surface, it seems that you're stalling to give the others more chances, but isn't saving people one of the purposes of your trip?"

"If you ask me, this should also be one of the primary tasks. Luo Leilei... can't die yet."

He tightened his fingers slightly, and Luo Leilei's aorta was cut open. More blood poured out. Seeing this, Ye Xiaotian's eyelids twitched wildly.

"Is this guy messing around?" he thought.

Xu Xiaoshou had thought that Luo Leilei was merely a dispensable pawn of the "Holy Vassal." As such, they would save her if they could, and would abandon her if they had difficulty doing so.

This was the very reason why he didn't dare to match Lei Shuangxing in harming hostages.

In his opinion, any one of the five hostages held by Lei Shuangxing was much more important than Luo Leilei.

But...

Watching the slight change in Lei Shuangxing's expression after he cut Luo Leilei, Ye Xiaotian realized that he'd been tricked.

How did Xu Xiaoshou... know so much?

Suspected, Passive Points +2.

Suspected, Passive Points +1.

"..."

The information bar was flooded with notifications. It was obvious that several people present had a lot going on inside their heads. Xu Xiaoshou calmly waited.

He didn't exert more force, because Luo Leilei probably wouldn't be able to survive if he did.

She didn't have a Master Level body.

As for how he knew Luo Leilei was important, it was because he'd figured it out based on how she'd boldly invited him to join the Holy Vassal in the Tianxuan Gate and was being saved by someone.

In the eyes of the "Holy Vassal," Luo Leilei definitely wasn't a simple pawn!

"You want to exchange hostages?" Lei Shuangxing finally couldn't help but say.

The corners of Xu Xiaoshou's mouth curled up. He'd guessed right!

"No. You have three hostages, and I only have one. That's not fair. You let two people go first!"

"You..."

Lei Shuangxing was so angry that his lungs nearly burst. This lad was getting ahead of himself!

"Who's more important—Luo Leilei or the three hostages in your hands? Think about it yourself. To be honest, if I weren't a good guy, I'd have no intentions of saving any of the three.

"After all, I barely know them..."

Ye Xiaotian glared at him, and Xu Xiaoshou's voice faltered.

Lei Shuangxing hesitated. If he gave up two hostages, Luo Leilei's important identity would also be known.

Yet, even if he couldn't see, judging by the smell of blood in the air, he could tell what Xu Xiaoshou was doing.

Pah, pah!

The sword energy exploded, and two bloody figures fell to the ground.

"Sure, I'll give them back to you."

Though they were returned, their breaths were barely detectable.

Xu Xiaoshou grew cold. "You've messed them up!"

"An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth."

The air was quiet for a second.

With a swooshing sound, Xu Xiaohu's palm broke through Luo Leilei from her back to her chest, and blood poured out.

"Sorry, I didn't want to, but your friend forced me to."

Xu Xiaoshou hesitated for a moment, then explained in a low voice, "Don't worry. I have experience. I've avoided the vital areas this time."

Luo Leilei's pretty face turned pale. When she heard what he said, she was so stunned blood almost spurted out from the corners of her mouth.

Those present were all dumbfounded. They all wondered how the two of them had started hurting people without speaking first.

Saving hostages wasn't supposed to end up like this!

Ye Xiaotian realized that the situation had gotten a bit out of control, but he didn't stop Xu Xiaoshou. Now that he'd chosen to believe in him, he had to support him to the end.

A great many sword energies came out from Lei Shuangxing's body, and the sword energies condensed and turned into thousands of small white swords hovering in the empty space.

The Assembly Hall, the old acacia tree, and a large woodland in the rear had all turned into large swords inserted into the ground, ready to fly up.

Master Level Sword Will was ready to strike at full strength!

The heavens and earth were in awe.

Chapter 195: The Terrifying Blind Man!

Xu Xiaoshou, however, turned a blind eye to all this.

The reason why he dared to do so was because Lei Shuangxing was merely a swordsman and there was a limit to his strength. On the other hand, he had a Master Level physique. Hence, he wasn't weaker than the blind man.

Secondly, Ye Xiaotian, whose cultivation was at Throne Level, was watching from the rear. Thus, no matter how angry Lei Shuangxing was, he had to take this into consideration when he wanted to strike.

"Do you dare to strike?"

"If you really dare to strike, you shouldn't just pose like you're going to. You should come over."

Seeing Lei Shuangxing becoming increasingly upset, Xu Xiaoshou felt assured.

This guy and Ye Xiaotian were basically the same: two paper tigers that could only threaten, not act.

He wanted to move forward by dragging Luo Leilei but found that the woman was still confined. He couldn't help but glance at the Master Dean.

Without hesitation, Ye Xiaotian released the confinement. It was apparent that Luo Leilei couldn't escape from Xu Xiaoshou.

"One for one exchange?" Xu Xiaoshou took a step closer.

A struggle went on in Lei Shuangxing's mind. He wanted to hit the unconscious man floating in the empty space, but he was afraid of provoking the lad, who often behaved unconventionally.

If he struck with his palm one more time, Luo Leilei would be finished.

"Okay."

Lei Shuangxing grabbed his hand in the empty space, and the "floating corpse" arrived in his hands.

He couldn't afford to gamble. All the people in the entire Tiansang Spirit Palace weren't worth one hair on Luo Leilei's head!

The two of them approached each other. They were so close that it looked like they were going to complete the hostage exchange in a face-to-face fashion.

Ye Xiaotian was a little worried. "Let me do it?" he said, transmitting his voice.

Xu Xiaoshou shook his head slightly and winked at him while tilting his head.

Ye Xiaotian "..."

"What do you mean?" he thought. "Secret code? But I don't understand you. You're using a secret code we've never discussed before. Do you think I can read minds?"

Suspected, Passive Points +1.

All he could do was stay alert and take more precautions.

It was obvious that the hostage exchange wouldn't go as smoothly as imagined.

As the two of them drew closer, Lei Shuangxing became more formidable. He had no intentions of backing down. He took a step forward every time Xu Xiaoshou took one.

Soon, the blind young man's formidable aura paused, and he had no choice but to halt.

"Phew."

Because he could feel Xu Xiaoshou's warm breath on his face.

With a slightly flushed face, Lei Shuangxing had to take a step back. He couldn't stand such a close distance.

Yet, with this retreat, the formidable aura he'd accumulated earlier went away.

Lei Shuangxing gritted his teeth. He couldn't hold it in any longer.

"Xu Xiaoshou, how do you want to trade?"

“We hand over the hostages at the same time!”

Lei Shuangxing: “...”

“Hand me Luo Leilei first,” he said.

“Okay.”

Luo Leilei was already unconscious due to the excessive blood loss caused by Xu Xiaoshou’s strikes. With a sincere expression on his face, Xu Xiaoshou extended his blood-stained hand.

“To show our sincerity, let’s shake hands first?”

Luo Leilei was hanging on top of his wrist.

Lei Shuangxing almost exploded with anger. Trembling, he held his cane, admonishing himself over and over again to pick up her first.

“Hold on, hold on!” he thought. “This isn’t the time to do it!”

“You’re Xu Xiaoshou, right? You won’t live long because of that striking palm you wielded today!”

One of his hands was holding the jade stone, and the other was trembling so hard that the purple cane dropped.

It was at this moment that he seemed to have forgotten the purple cane that he regarded as a precious treasure, letting it fall to the ground. He reached out his hand in an attempt to touch Luo Leilei.

However, just as he was about to touch the girl’s delicate body, Xu Xiaoshou withdrew his hand.

“Lei Shuangxing, you don’t want to shake hands with me, nor do you want to give me the hostage; but you intend to take Luo Leilei away. You have a perfect plan. Why don’t you call yourself Lei Perfect Plan?” Xu Xiaoshou mocked.

Lei Shuangxing murmured, but couldn’t make a sound. He threw the person in his hand to Xu Xiaoshou and snatched Luo Leilei back.

Xu Xiaoshou had no intentions of stopping him. He was a man of his word. Since he’d promised to exchange hostages, going back on his word was impossible.

Mesmerized, his eyes fell on the purple cane that had fallen on the ground.

“I have to admit, your cane is quite chic.”

Lei Shuangxing was startled, and for half a second, the air seemed to freeze. The next second, a loud roar rang through the air:

“Xu Xiaoshou, die!”

Charge! Charge!

Two heavenly sword energies appeared almost simultaneously from the bodies of two approaching opponents. It turned out that the two of them had both employed the controlling technique of “Everyone is a Sword”!

Lei Shuangxing was stunned. He wondered how this lad knew he would strike and what technique he would use to strike to where he employed a similar technique.

But how did he know this technique? It was the chief's signature technique.

Instantly, Lei Shuangxing recalled the suppressed Sword Sand Gravel from earlier.

D*mn!

He'd been deceived by this guy's abominable face. He should've figured out that he was a sword cultivator, one with an outstanding sword will!

Suspected, Passive Points +1.

There was a teasing look on Xu Xiaoshou's face. He'd already signaled Ye Xiaotian. He believed that even if he could only control the situation for half a second, the Master Dean should have enough time...

What?

How come nothing happened?

"Sensing" the confused expression on Ye Xiaotian's face, Xu Xiaoshou knew things hadn't proceeded as he'd anticipated. It turned out that the Master Dean hadn't understood his secret code at all.

How come there wasn't a tacit understanding between them?

He was in a panic. He wouldn't be able to match this swordsman relying on just his sword will.

As expected, Lei Shuangxing had forcefully dismantled the control within half a breath. He held Luo Leilei with one of his hands and lifted the jade stone with the other.

It was at this critical moment that Xu Xiaoshou broke himself free by means of his Master Level physique. With a quiver in Xu Xiaoshou's chest, an iron ball swept forward at a high speed and hit Lei Shuangxing's face before he could crush the jade stone, making him bleed.

"Dean!"

There was no response after his startled cry. It was then that Xu Xiaoshou realized that something was wrong and that the dean had definitely been held back by something.

With his Sense, he saw that one of Ye Xiaotian's eyes had turned black and the other white, and that he was completely shrouded in a black and white fog that was completely controlling his mind.

"Illusion? Pupil magic?"

Xu Xiaoshou was stunned. What kind of spiritual technique could control someone at Throne Level.

There was no one else here!

His heart skipped a beat. He turned toward Lei Shuangxing again, an incredulous expression on his face.

A blind man and pupil magic.

No way. This guy must be more than a swordsman.

“Sh*t! F*ck me!”

This miscalculation because of misinformation could cost him his life. Without a second thought, Xu Xiaoshou wanted to fly away from this place.

Buzz!

At the critical moment, the purple cane on the ground trembled slightly, emitting a spiritual sword sound.

With clicking sounds, the surface of this cane cracked inch by inch, revealing a very thin...

Sword?

The cane sword was silver in color, with a slender conical shape. Its carved dragon pattern could sting one’s heart at first sight.

It seemed like it could suck one’s soul into its endless illusionary vortex.

Xu Xiaoshou felt petrified. He had the same feeling he’d had when he saw Su Qianqian’s “Epitaph of City Snow!”

“A famous sword?”

“D*mn it!”

Thousands of divine beasts were galloping in his mind. It was at this moment that Xu Xiaoshou felt like he wanted to curse. Just what kind of people did the “Holy Vassal” have?

It seemed that the blind man was a swordsman without cultivation who just wanted to save someone and stall for time as long as possible.

In fact, this swordsman could even control someone at Throne Level!

What was more frightening was that this guy had a famous sword, one of the twenty-one on the whole continent!

This guy had been underestimated by everyone!

He wasn’t just anyone. He must have a significant position in the “Holy Vassal”!

“Don’t worry. It’s over.”

Not far away, Lei Shuangxing was stroking Luo Leilei’s pale cheeks and murmuring in a low voice.

He didn’t lift his head. He didn’t even want to face the young man opposite him, not even a slight spiritual thought.

Blindness didn’t affect killing others!

Lei Shuangxing waved his hand and drew a silvery residual shadow with the purple sword cane, disappearing from the heavens and earth.

“Goodbye!”

Chapter 196: Death?

Swoosh!

The sword light swept over at a high speed, so high that even his Sense could only catch a flash of a silver line.

Xu Xiaoshou didn't even have time to feel shocked before feeling a pain in his chest.

The sword in the cane had broken through his Master Level physique reinforced by several passive techniques.

Clang!

There was a clash of flesh and sword, but the sound of blades rang out when they met. Hearing this, the group was baffled.

What kind of a body was this?

Lei Shuangxing's face was full of disbelief. He hadn't expected there to be something his "divine cane" couldn't penetrate.

As Xu Xiaoshou had guessed, the cane was one of the twenty-one famous swords on the continent!

The Cane Sword, the God Whipping Cane!

"So he has a Master Level physique?" Lei Shuangxing found the thought of this mischievous lad having the legendary Master Level physique a little absurd.

But apart from this explanation, what else could explain him being able to withstand a thrust from the famous sword?

Even if this thrust wasn't the true blow of the "God Whipping Cane"!

On the other hand, Xu Xiaoshou was surprised at the speed of the thin sword. It was completely beyond his expectations. Even with his Master Level Agility, he'd failed to react in time.

"Famous sword."

He believed that this sword wasn't simple at all. After all, this was the first time he'd met such a sword. Even his Recoil couldn't knock it off.

The "God Whipping Cane" was extremely thin. Even though he had a Master Level physique to protect himself, a large part of the sword had still pierced through him. Xu Xiaoshou didn't feel anything, but he heard a gurgling behind him.

"It hurts."

Cursed, Passive Points +1.

Xu Xiaoshou: "..."

Mu Zixi!

All this time, he'd hardly felt the existence of this little girl. After she'd transformed into a wooden snake and wrapped herself around his back, he'd no longer felt the weight of her body. Judging by the way she'd woken up, he wondered if she'd been stabbed.

He lowered his head and found that he could only see the hilt of the sword. He was afraid that she hadn't just been just stabbed, but pierced through!

Mu Zixi, whose eyes were tightly closed, looked like she were in pain. But she, with the "Life Spiritual Seal" in her mouth, wouldn't die, even though she'd been pierced through.

Instead, she'd woken up from a coma because of the stabbing pain. As if she were freeing herself from some sort of nightmare, she suddenly opened her eyes.

"Whew."

Mu Zixi blinked her eyes after exhaling some warm air, her eyes completely dull.

Sweeping with her spiritual thoughts, she came to learn the situation, but she also felt more puzzled.

"Xu Xiaoshou, what happened?"

Xu Xiaoshou: "You were stabbed."

Mu Zixi: ???

"Don't you believe me? Look down!"

She was on his back. To lower her head, she had to climb over Xu Xiaoshou's shoulder. Yet, as soon as she moved a little, she felt a sharp pain in her abdomen.

The pain caused her mouth to open wide.

"Xu Xiaoshou! Don't you know how to pull it out?"

"Well, I wanted to."

Xu Xiaoshou found that this thing wasn't as simple as imagined. His Master Level physique being able to partially block the sword was pretty good. But if he wanted to pull out this sword...

He'd have to kill the blind man!

As he was pondering this, he found that Mu Zixi, who was on his back, had suddenly fallen silent. Checking with his Sense, Xu Xiaoshou found that the girl's attention was drawn by Ye Xiaotian.

To be more precise, she was probably shocked by his black and white pupils.

"Don't look! Hold me tight and be careful!"

Xu Xiaoshou grabbed the cane sword and tried his hardest to prevent it from going deeper. However, Lei Shuangxing was obviously quite powerful. He curled his finger, and the God Whipping Cane thrust deeper.

"I think I can dismantle it," Muzi Shi suddenly said, her focus obviously still on Ye Xiaotian's black and white pupils.

Xu Xiaoshou was startled. Was she making a joke?

The Dean, who was at Throne Level, couldn't even dismantle it. How could she do it?

Lei Shuangxing was also stunned by this statement. After a long pause, he sneered, "Haha, you two imbeciles..."

Before he could finish this remark, Mu Zixi opened her beautiful eyes wide, and the black and white fog in Ye Xiaotian's eyes actually started to fade.

However, bloody tears came out from Mu Zixi's eyes a second later. Seeing this scene, Xu Xiaoshou was astonished.

"Don't force it!"

Mu Zixi closed her eyes from the pain. She felt that sharp pain in her brain again, but the difference this time was that she clearly knew the source of the pain.

The pupils!

Lei Shuangxing was shocked. How could this little girl dismantle the unique "Divine Magic Pupils" invented by the Tear Sect?

"Who are you?"

He suddenly trembled all over, and he wondered if this girl was also from the Divine Hall, and a beneficiary of that incident.

No, that was unlikely!

Then that left only one other possibility.

It was just then that Ye Xiaotian's body suddenly quivered, interrupting Lei Shuangxing's thoughts.

It was obvious that this white-haired Daoist boy had been struggling hard. What he'd needed was an external intervention, and Mu Zixi had just offered that.

The moment he opened his eyes, the color of the heavens and earth seemed to change. The power of Throne Level pressed the entire sky down, and the ground started to crack.

There was an angry look in Ye Xiaotian's eyes. When he extended his hand, the space of several miles around was sealed!

"Since you're here, stay!"

Realizing that the situation had gotten out of control, Lei Shuangxing reached out his hand to call back the God Whipping Cane.

He never expected that his final defeat would come from this little girl. This was something no one could have predicted.

Without the hindrance of hostages, who could resist the Master Dean?

He would be like a wild beast out of its cage!

“Dean!” Xu Xiaoshou was overjoyed. Ye Xiaotian could take over now that he was awake.

“Can I get out of here now?” he thought.

Crack!

The discordant sound of a stone echoed in the empty space.

Without turning his head around, Xu Xiaoshou knew from his Sense that the jade stone of sword energy had shattered. As Lei Shuangxing wielded his fist, the formidable and magnificent sword energy arrived a second time.

The energy had almost touched his forehead at a terrifying speed by the time Xu Xiaoshou found it!

“Be careful!” Ye Xiaotian shouted, flexing his ten fingers.

The power of space displayed the advantage of not needing to care about distance. He transferred Xu Xiaoshou, along with Mu Zixi on his back, to the rear of the sword energy!

Boom!

A black gap was created in the empty space, and the terrifying black hole sucked Xu Xiaoshou inside.

Ye Xiaotian waved his hand, and the space instantly repaired itself.

“My goodness!”

Xu Xiaoshou’s clothes were drenched in a cold sweat, and it wasn’t until then that he realized that his earlier action had been the same as courting death.

That wasn’t a blow he could’ve blocked at his current level. He couldn’t even react in time!

Ye Xiaoshoutian felt relieved, yet he didn’t dare to transfer the sword energy. He couldn’t afford to gamble.

If Xu Xiaoshou died on the spot because of the broken space, he would have to face a stormy Elder Sang!

Not to mention that Mu Zixi was on Xu Xiaoshou’s back.

Two of his disciples.

While everyone let out a sigh of relief, a corner of Lei Shuangxing’s mouth lifted upward.

“As I said, this sword energy can lock onto the target.”

Almost at the same time, as if he were trying to prove his words, the white sword energy that could tear the sky apart came back and shot toward Xu Xiaoshou.

Xu Xiaoshou instinctually recoiled and pushed Mu Zixi away from his back.

Horrified, the little girl shot out the vine from her hand in an attempt to hook Xu Xiaoshou again.

Unfortunately, it was too late.

Ye Xiaotian didn't expect him to do so either. He'd forgotten what Lei Shuangxing had said earlier during their confrontation. Who would've cared about such a comment in all of this?

He reached out his hand in an attempt to transfer the tall and thin figure again, but at the same time...

It was too late!

The white sword energy was rapidly expanding in Xu Xiaoshou's pupils. Like his own sword energy, its speed couldn't be resisted.

The only thing he could do was reach out his hand slightly, like a mantis trying to block a boulder.

Boom!

The sword energy arrived with a whistling sound. It was deadly silent!

Chapter 197: Extravagant Fight

Time seemed to freeze for half a second.

As the powerful sword energy approached him, Xu Xiaoshou, at the crucial moment between life and death, couldn't afford to panic, and made his heart as calm as the water in an ancient well.

He seemed to unconsciously reach out his hand. In fact, the move was a natural reaction he'd gained after many battles.

In the blink of an eye, he employed all the major passive techniques and added some "ordinary wills." As such, when the sword energy arrived, he parried slightly.

The Whitecloud II: Sword-draw style!

Yes, this was the pure sword-will move that had parried Zhou Tiansen's "Deity Mountain-Lifting Technique."

He'd beaten a strong opponent at that time, employing a slight force to overcome a stronger force. They were different approaches, but it was similarly effective now.

The terrifying sword energy he'd learned from the masked man seemed impossible to resist, but, in fact, it stemmed from the same source as Xu Xiaoshou's. It was the direct feedback from the pure sword-will combat.

Yet, Xu Xiaoshou's sword will wasn't strong enough, nor was Lei Shuangxing's.

However, with his strong foundation of "Sword Mastery," his skill foundation was truly profound. He could detect the origin of almost any sword move in the world.

He struck down his two hands to block the key point of the terrifying sword energy, then let go of it.

He didn't let the sword energy change its path. However, his body stayed out of the path of death.

Even if it was only half of his body!

...

Boom!

As the sword energy straightly passed by, a small part of the Assembly Hall was destroyed.

Xu Xiaoshou survived, but the flesh and blood of his hands exploded, leaving only a cracked bone.

It was merely a momentary contact on his fingertips, but his arms were almost broken off.

The power of sword energy was truly terrifying!

Moreover, the residual sword will didn't disperse. Like maggots attached to bones, the sword will invaded Xu Xiaozhu's body and couldn't be dispersed, and pain like tens of thousands of ants biting occurred in the blink of an eye.

"Eternal Vitality" was working like crazy to gradually restore his flesh and blood.

Attacked, Passive Points +1.

Attacked, Passive Points +1.

"..."

Lei Shuangxing was dumbfounded when he saw the lad resist the sword energy that the man at Throne Level couldn't.

What kind of a weirdo was this lad?!

"Sword thought?"

He seemed to smell a familiar odor. This technique had been invented by the Chief, so how did the lad know it?

"No, it's not the sword thought, but a similar one..." Lei Shuangxing confirmed it again and again, and finally came to a judgment.

"Is it a coincidence?..."

Ye Xiaotian was also stunned. He didn't expect Xu Xiaoshou to resist this blow by himself. At the moment, he was full of self-reproach.

This blow was obviously something he should've faced, yet he'd let a disciple at the early Origin Court Level do it. It was so inexcusable.

With a wave of his hand, he transferred Xu Xiaoshou and Mu Zixi to his side.

"Sorry, I was careless. You guys take a rest!"

Xu Xiaoshou shook his head. He thought he was a very cautious person, but he'd failed to take everything into account, including the information he'd obtained long ago, in real combat.

He couldn't blame anyone for this blow. It wasn't his fault Ye Xiaotian couldn't react quickly.

Nevertheless, he could only say it was lucky he'd survived.

Mu Zixi felt her heart ache for Xu Xiaoshou. Xu Xiaoshou's first reaction was to withstand the blow all by himself at the moment of crisis. Though she couldn't help in any way, she was truly touched by him taking care of her.

She hastened to take the "Life Spiritual Seal" from inside her mouth, and handed it over.

"Quick, hold it in your mouth!"

"..."

"Do you have any misunderstandings about the usage of this thing?"

Three black lines descended from Xu Xiaoshou's forehead. At the moment, "Eternal Vitality" had almost restored all of his flesh and blood.

He took the spiritual seal, then frowned, finding it rather slippery in his hand.

"Come here."

"Why?" Mu Zixi approached him, not understanding.

Xu Xiaoshou wiped the spiritual seal off on her small skirt and said, "Your saliva should of course go back to you."

Mu Zixi: "..."

Cursed, Passive Points +1.

Looking at Ye Xiaotian and the other two, Lei Shuangxing got a bad feeling inside.

He'd acted a bit impulsively!

The sword energy jade stone had originally been prepared for Ye Xiaotian. It was something that could harm or kill anyone who touched it. He didn't expect Xu Xiaoshou to appear and successfully divert his hatred.

Moreover, the sword energy hadn't killed him, and he was merely someone at the early Origin Court Level!

Judging by his recovery, it seemed that he was gradually getting better.

"Is a Master Level physique truly so strong? Or is the Chief's sword energy not as terrifying as imagined?"

For the first time, Lei Shuangxing had some doubts about the invincible Chief.

He waved the last jade stone in his hand, warning Ye Xiaotian he shouldn't make a move.

It had nothing to do with cultivation level. Xu Xiaoshou was able to survive the blow because he'd sensed the sword will and had a Master Level physique. Furthermore, he'd parried the sword energy like he was being assisted by the divine being at an opportune moment.

However, whether Ye Xiaotian would be able to survive the blow was uncertain!

Yet, Ye Xiaotian was enraged. He was like an outsider when he'd been controlled. In the end, he'd had to let a child suffer all this.

Seeing the injuries Xu Xiaoshou had suffered, he could no longer restrain himself, and ripped the empty space with both of his hands.

"Fragmentation!"

Boom! Boom! Boom!

In shock, Xu Xiaoshou saw the space before him distort, wrinkle, and be torn into fragments like a tablecloth by Ye Xiaotian's ripping hands, creating countless black spatial cracks.

Among the cracks in the empty space, countless sub-fragments formed, each of which was as sharp as a blade. They all shot at Lei Shuangxing.

"This..." Xu Xiaoshou was dumbfounded. Was this the true battle power of Throne Level?

Mu Zixi felt the same. Her jaw dropped, and she had a hard time swallowing her spit.

She glanced at Ye Xiaotian, and found for the first time that this white-haired Daoist boy was actually not as cute as he seemed.

Lei Shuangxing held Luo Leilei in his arms, and ignored all this. He calmly pulled out an array plate and crushed it.

Dang!

A transparent light shield enveloped the two of them, blocking the sharp sub-fragments that could even cut through space!

"The Array Plate?" Ye Xiaotian's eyebrows furrowed in disbelief. "Saint Servant also has a Grand Master?"

Grand Master?

Xu Xiaoshou recalled Elder Qiao. "That array plate can only be made by a Grand Master?"

"Yes." Ye Xiaotian nodded. "Including the sword energy jade stone. Without a Grand Master of spiritual array involved, the masked man couldn't have made it on his own."

"Tsk, tsk."

For the first time, Xu Xiaoshou had the idea to rob someone. This blind man was so rich!

If he could get his hands on this item, he would dare to face someone at Throne Level.

Ye Xiaotian looked at the shield's gradually dimming light and suddenly clenched his hands in an attempt to transfer the two people within it out.

Yet, at the same time, Lei Shuangxing crushed a purple jade just in time to confine the space inside the light shield!

"Spatial transfer doesn't work for me."

Xu Xiaoshou's eyelids twitched wildly. It'd happened again.

It was the purple jade this time. What was next?

Lei Shuangxing picked up the God Whipping Cane and raised his head, seemingly looking at the completely darkened sky. Then, he pulled out a golden bead filled with a rich spatial aura.

Xu Xiaoshou: "..."

"The teleporting bead?" Ye Xiaotian's pupils shrank when he saw the object.

"It's almost time."

The blind young man held up the God Whipping Cane and pointed it at Xu Xiaoshou, then in Mu Zixi and Ye Xiaotian's direction.

"See you again if fate allows!"

Snap!

The bead was crushed, and the figure instantly disappeared.

Chapter 198: Holy Vassal's Motive

"Want to run?"

Ye Xiaotian gave a cold laugh. Even though the gold-colored teleportation pearl was a priceless treasure, for them to use it in front of a person with space attributes...

They would have to pay a price, even if they managed to escape!

He instantly teleported to where the two people had vanished, not even scanning the area with his Sense. He balled his hands into tight fists and slammed them downward.

"Heaven Travels!"

An explosion was heard as the council hall was reduced to ashes. Not only that, everything in a several-hundred-meter radius was decimated, and a massive black hole appeared out of thin air.

Xu Xiaoshou quickly pulled on Mu Zixi and flew away. In shock, he looked at the dean, whose white hair was still swaying in the wind as he stood in the middle of the black hole.

It wasn't over!

Ye Xiaotian reached his hands into the nameless land and continued to pull, and Xu Xiaoshou saw two bloody figures being forcefully pulled back!

"Oh, f***!"

His jaw nearly dropped in shock. He could forcefully pull back people who'd teleported away?

Was he not going to leave them with any chances of survival?!

A space-attribute innate elemental power sure lived up to its reputation...

He was just thinking this when the flickering figures in the black hole once again took out a bead, which they shattered, and teleported away.

“...”

“Darn it, these guys... still have beads!”

Seeing this scene, Xu Xiaoshou was stunned, and the fiery passion in his eyes nearly singed his brain.

He'd thought he'd turned into a rich man after snatching over the four treasures of the Tianxuan Gate, but, seeing a truly rich man before him, he was dumbfounded.

“Are they Doraemon? They're not fighting. They're burning money!”

“You should've told me earlier you were going to use these things. I'll steal Luo Leilei for you. Can't you just give me the items?” Xu Xiaoshou thought inwardly.

They had many treasures but were using them like this. It was such a waste!

The tempest finally stopped after Lei Shuangxing teleported away.

Ye Xiaotian appeared before Xu Xiaoshou with a look of pity. “What a pity,” he sighed. “I nearly got him.”

“They seemed to be injured?” Xu Xiaoshou didn't know if the bloody figures he'd seen were real or not.

Ye Xiaotian nodded. “That's right. The teleportation was disrupted by an external force. Just the currents of space in the place would be enough to give them a bit of trouble.”

“That's a pity. Those two gold-colored teleportation pearls...” Xu Xiaoshou raised an eyebrow. “They're expensive?” he asked.

“Yes.”

“Even if I were to cooperate with a spirit array master, I wouldn't be able to obtain a pearl within a year.”

Xu Xiaoshou gasped. Even a space-element Sovereign Stage fighter had to spend two years to obtain one, and with the help of a spirit array master at that.

The value of the gold teleportation pearl was unimaginable!

They'd spent an exorbitant amount of money in this world!

Ye Xiaotian seemed to know what Xu Xiaoshou was thinking. “It wasn't just those two pearls,” he said. “All of the treasures that you used before this are also priceless.”

He knitted his brows tightly and paused for a moment before saying, “It's hard to imagine the Holy Vassal would spend this much to save Luo Leilei.”

“Perhaps she might be the illegitimate daughter of the masked man!” Xu Xiaoshou guessed.

Ye Xiaotian didn't know what to say at that moment.

“According to the Holy Vassal’s activities over the years, they’ve always completed their missions with a small number of people and the lowest price possible. They put in such a large sum of money this time. It’s not their style.”

He suddenly looked straight at Xu Xiaoshou and changed the topic. “Your Black Scabbard. You have to take good care of it.”

Xu Xiaoshou froze for a moment. He didn’t know why the dean specifically emphasized his scabbard.

However, that was a good thing, because it meant that he’d passed his trials as a spy and could probably hide the rest of his treasures from the dean.

He quickly acknowledged the dean’s words.

The scene quickly became silent. The shattered space was slowly recovering under the instructions of the Great Path. However, they might have to rebuild the council hall.

They probably had to rebuild the forest on this land.

The only special thing was that the old japonicum had remained unmoved under the protection of the gold light and looked as good as it had before.

Ye Xiaotian didn’t know that the young man in front of him was harboring indecent thoughts. He gave him an instruction before lapsing into deep thought again, muttering unknowingly, “The Holy Vassal...

“Perhaps it isn’t a massive and convoluted organization like the Holy Divine Palace deduced, but an elite organization with few members?”

Xu Xiaoshou was also deep in thought. He recalled the three members of the Holy Vassal he’d met. All seemed to be elites at various states of cultivation.

Even Luo Leilei had managed to become the strongest person in the Inner Yard in her generation. She was even miles ahead of second place.

He was also deeply interested in the Holy Vassal. However, he hadn’t been able to obtain any information from Elder Sang previously. Would he be able to ask about the Holy Vassal now that Ye Xiaotian had mentioned it?

“Just what kind of entity is the Holy Vassal?”

On the so-called spectrum of good and evil, even though the organization was involved in many strange things, they didn’t seem like terrorists.

Even though the masked man had suppressed everyone with his appearance the other day, he didn’t kill a single person.

Today, Lei Shuangxing had come to save Luo Leilei. Even though he’d taken some people hostage, he didn’t kill a single one of them.

Was it because that wasn’t their motive?

Even so, Xu Xiaoshou had rarely seen the members of the Holy Vassal have any disdain for the weak. It was as if they...

Didn't think lightly of human life?

As for why the masked man and Luo Leilei had invited him to join them even though he was weak...

In that sense, it seemed as though even the Tiansang Spirit palace was more... overbearing than the Holy Vassal?

"That seems like it..." he thought.

Xu Xiaoshou was shocked by his ideas. Who was the evil organization here?

He shook his head inwardly to dispell these thoughts. Perhaps what he was seeing was merely the tip of the iceberg.

Ye Xiaotian freed himself from his spiral of thoughts when he heard Xu Xiaoshou's question. He smiled and said, "The Holy Vassal? They're merely an extremist organization. I've thought too much about the matter. We shouldn't concern ourselves with these matters."

"Extremist?" Xu Xiaoshou repeated. "But they don't seem interested in killing anyone. Where's the extremism in that?"

Ye Xiaotian froze. The question had stumped him.

"I'm not too sure of that myself. If we were to dig deeper into this, I'm afraid that only the Holy Divine Palace knows what the Holy Vassal has done over the years."

"Their aims seem to be different from those of a typical evil organization."

Ye Xiaotian laughed and continued, "Since everyone on the continent thinks of them this way, do you really think they can be considered an organization of justice?"

"Who knows..." Xu Xiaoshou couldn't help but mutter. He wasn't one to take sides, even though he was in the spirit palace's camp.

At the very least, what he'd seen told him that the members of the Holy Vassal didn't seem to be as evil as he'd imagined.

"What's their motive?" Xu Xiaoshou asked.

"I'm not sure. I've only heard some rumors. It seems to be..." Ye Xiaotian suddenly froze, and he hesitated for a moment, as if he were deliberating whether or not to finish what he'd been about to say.

"Be what?" Xu Xiaoshou's curiosity was piqued.

Ye Xiaotian ultimately decided to be honest. "Demon beasts!" he said. "The Holy Vassal's motive probably has something to do with demon beasts."

Xu Xiaoshou inwardly shivered with fear.

Demon beasts?

Things like the grey mist figure?

Why was the Holy Vassal looking for those things? To eliminate them?

... Wasn't that a righteous thing to do?

Ye Xiaotian was a little shocked when he saw Xu Xiaoshou's reaction. "You know about demon beasts?"

How could a person at this stage of cultivation know about demon beasts?

Xu Xiaoshou calmly nodded. "No, I don't know."

Ye Xiaotian was speechless.

Doubted, Passive Points +1.

"Perhaps you've heard of the name. But remember, curiosity kills the cat. There are things that you cannot come into contact with now. Concentrate on your cultivation.

"You have massive potential. Don't let yourself down."

Ye Xiaotian looked at the arms of the young man before him. They'd already completely healed. "Master physique?"

"Yes." Xu Xiaoshou nodded. However, he was a little distracted.

He felt that this world was full of coincidences. Many of the things he'd encountered were inextricably connected for some reason.

Demon beasts?

Was it Mo Mo?

Chapter 199: An Old Man

Ye Xiaotian seemed a little taken aback. Did he truly have a Master Physique now?

He recalled the last time he'd seen the young man. The latter's cultivation and physique had appeared underwhelming. He hadn't expected such a transformation after a single trip to the Tianxuan Gate.

It seemed that Elder Sang had a really good eye for picking disciples!

Some people might seem a little eccentric, but sometimes you need someone to think out of the box to win a fight. That didn't sound bad, did it?

He remembered their encounter with Lei Shuangxing. If it'd been someone else instead of Xu Xiaoshou and his odd antics standing against the man, he would have found it a feat to find a way out of that predicament.

"Alright, hurry back and hide yourself. The Spirit Palace is in the middle of an emergency now. Don't go running around unless you have to," Ye Xiaotian said as he collected his thoughts and threw a glance at the young man and young woman.

Lei Shuangxing had been dealt with. Even if they were to take him seriously as a threat, he was still only a Master Level threat.

The man who'd appeared at their gates, and the masked man, who was lurking in the dark and whose whereabouts remained unknown, were their biggest threats.

Buzz...

As if to prove Ye Xiaotian's words right, the Spirit Palace's array flared suddenly, as it was as if the world had suddenly cracked.

A streak of panic coursed through Xu Xiaoshou. He nodded hurriedly and watched as Ye Xiaotian left with the unconscious men and women.

He must be heading off to help Elder Qiao and the others at the gate!

"Who could it be? Why haven't they managed to take him down after deploying so many Sovereign Stage cultivators?" Xu Xiaoshou felt slightly alarmed. The Holy Vassal seemed overwhelmingly powerful...

"Where are we going?" Mu Zixi looked at Xu Xiaoshou with mild bewilderment. She wanted to return to her residence but had a feeling that it wasn't safe there either.

"Has your fever gone down?" Instead of replying to her question, Xu Xiaoshou stuck his hand to her forehead, surprised to find that her fever had gone. What...

"This must be some kind of joke. That was some strange fever you got."

Mu Zixi somewhat coyly pushed his hand away. "What fever?"

"You don't know?"

There was a look of confusion on the young woman's face.

Xu Xiaoshou was momentarily speechless. The young woman appeared clueless.

He remembered Mu Zixi's glare as she'd helped Ye Xiaotian out of his tough spot. Without that glare, they might not have been able to turn the tables on their opponent.

"Do you have some kind of backstory?" Xu Xiaoshou asked.

"What backstory?" Mu Zixi blinked her wide eyes in confusion.

Xu Xiaoshou looked away and sighed. He gave up. He couldn't tell if the young woman was feigning ignorance or was actually clueless.

"Forget it. If we have the chance, let's grab a drink one day."

Mu Zixi was speechless.

"I'm underage!"

Xu Xiaoshou gave her a once-over. "Yeah, I can tell."

Mu Zixi was once again rendered speechless.

Cursed, Passive Points +1.

“Let’s go. We should head for the Spiritual Library Division and check if the old geezer is there.” Xu Xiaoshou stared at the sky. The frequency at which the Spirit Palace’s array was flaring up was increasing at an alarming rate, and he couldn’t help but feel worried.

“I hope nothing terrible happens!”

...

The Tiansang Spirit Palace sat on the top of the tallest mountain in the mountain range, a spot most rich with spiritual energy. Its gates faced east, allowing for an easy flow of natural energies in and out of the Spirit Palace that further nourished and filled its air with spirit energy.

A heavenly mist surrounded the mountain that was populated with cranes. To the commoner, it was a place where deities resided.

To the ordinary person, a spiritual cultivator was a deity who had gained enlightenment on the Great Path.

Such a group of deities was currently sprawled on the ground before the gates of the Tiansang Spirit Palace, moaning in pain.

They were the law enforcers of the Spirit Palace!

Wails of pain filled the air as an old man with a slight hunch slowly walked toward the gates.

With a pole over his shoulder and a small axe hanging from his waist, he looked like an ordinary old man who frequented the woods.

The only thing missing from the picture was two bundles of firewood, each tied to either end of the pole.

Everyone lying on the ground shrank away from the old man in terror as he walked past them, and the look they gave the kind-looking old man was one usually reserved for one’s greatest nightmare.

A kind smile lit up the old man’s face as he briskly walked down the uneven, meandering mountain path. One law enforcer attempted to climb to his feet, but with a casual swing of his pole, the old man shoved the law enforcer back onto the ground, then laughed brightly.

“You kids have done quite well for yourselves achieving such a level of cultivation at your age! You have a bright future ahead of you!

“I knew nothing when I was your age.

“I was climbing up and down mountains all day, chopping wood with my little axe, toiling all day long just to make a living. Come to think of it...”

A look of nostalgia colored the look on his face as he paused. “I miss those days when I wasn’t killing and beating other people up!”

A law enforcer whose face was swollen from his bruises tried to hurriedly creep past the old man, but he was too slow. With a swing of the pole, he was sent flying into the air.

Thud!

The impact of the man landing heavily on the ground sent dust flying and yellowing the air.

Everyone's heart skipped a beat, and they couldn't help but glance around and stare at their fellow law enforcers, who were either suffering from swelling bruises on their faces or other parts of their bodies...

...all of which had been inflicted by that cursed pole!

The old man stopped in his tracks. He'd reached the top of the mountain. Before him stood five men.

They were Xiao Qixiu, Qiao Qianzhi, Jiang Bianyan, and two white-haired founding elders of the Spirit Palace.

That made five Sovereign Stage cultivators!

"Haha, what a pity! A pity indeed..."

The old man laughed unexpectedly as he stared at the five intimidating cultivators before him. He casually placed the tip of his pole on the ground, and the light touch sent the Spirit Palace's array rippling.

"What's the pity for?"

A solemn look darkened Qiao Qianzhi's face. The power that the old man displayed was terrifying.

It finally struck him why Xiao Qixiu had called for reinforcements. The five of them might not be a match for this old man!

"For the two of them..."

The old man pointed at the two white-haired founding elders. "Look at those two young fellows with their white hair at such a young age! Isn't that a pity? What can be more pitiful than that?"

Everyone was stunned when they heard those words. Young fellows?

He'd called them young fellows. These were old men who'd lived more than a hundred years.

This old man...

Was he doing it on purpose? Could it be that his age gave him the right to call them young fellows?

The founding elders immediately blew up. This was the first time they'd come across someone so audacious. Did he believe that he could do whatever he wanted simply because he'd managed to preserve his dark hair despite his age?

"Don't attack!"

Xiao Qixiu stopped the founding elders before they could lash out, then tilted his head toward Jiang Bianyan. "Hallmaster Jiang, do you know this man?"

Jiang Bianyan had been studying the old man for some time but couldn't tell who he was or where he hailed from.

As a hallmaster of the Holy Divine Palace, he'd accumulated a wealth of experience and many connections. While he might not be able to claim that he knew every Sovereign Stage cultivator on the continent, he was confident that he knew more than half of their numbers.

Yet, he hadn't the slightest clue who the man before him was.

"I don't know him. I know almost every Sovereign Stage cultivator who's reached the Sovereign Stage within the past century. But this man..."

"Haha... the past century?" The old man interrupted Jiang Bianyan with sudden laughter. "I've been a hermit for more than a century. Do you know any Sovereign Stage cultivator who was alive more than a hundred years ago?"

He swung his pole over his shoulder and eyed Jiang Bianyan with a look of anticipation. He seemed to show a keen interest in whether his juniors still knew who he was.

The five cultivators reeled back in shock.

"More than a hundred years?"

Chapter 200: Come and Have a Game of Chess With Me!

They stared at one another, their eyes full of shock.

Spiritual cultivators weren't true deities. Of those who'd gained enlightenment on the path and advanced to the Sovereign Stage, thus extending their lifespans, few had been able to live past two hundred years old.

The highest level of cultivation that a Sovereign Stage cultivator might achieve during such a finite lifespan was known as their "path level."

All five of them were at the Sovereign Stage in their path level. What they competed against the others on was the depth of their enlightenment, the strength of their enlightened path, and the level of adeptness they achieved upon the path.

The two founding elders had stumbled upon ordinary paths of enlightenment that had allowed no opportunity to develop further mastery or expertise. That might very well be the height of their achievement in cultivation. In fact, they might reach the end of their lifespan soon and pass on.

But levels beyond the path level afforded a drastically different future.

Sovereign Stage cultivators who gained a deep understanding of the path, successfully cleaved it, and advanced to the Cutting Path Level would not only gain a drastic boost to their cultivation, but would extend their lifespans by almost tenfold.

The old man before them had called the two founding elders young fellows. Could he be a Sovereign Stage cultivator who'd attained the Cutting Path Level?

Jiang Bianyan eyed the old man's pole before casting a glance at the small axe hanging from the old man's waist. He swallowed hard.

"Is the venerable senior's last name by any chance Cen?" he asked tentatively after appearing to have arrived at some conclusion.

He instinctively addressed the old man respectfully, even though the latter was clearly an enemy. Jiang Bianyan's deference revealed the shock that he was probably reeling from.

The old man's eyes instantly lit up. "I can't believe it! You know who I am?"

The other four cultivators appeared bewildered. They turned their eyes to Jiang Bianyan and gave him looks of confusion.

"Who is he?"

Jiang Bianyan took a deep breath, as if he were trying to calm the waves of shock and disbelief swelling inside him.

"Cen Qiaofu!"

The old man nodded approvingly without denying it in the slightest.

The other four cultivators froze momentarily before a look of sheer incredulity filled their eyes.

Qiao Qianzhi instinctively glanced at the axe hanging from the old man's waist and already knew the answer to his question. "Is he the legendary Woodsman Qiao Fu, Cen Qiaofu?" he asked.

He was unsurprised to see Jiang Bianyan nod. Waves of shock swelled inside him.

There were numerous powerful spiritual cultivators in the world, but few who'd transcended to become legends remembered by everyone else.

Woodsman Qiao Fu was one of them.

According to the legends, Woodsman Qiao Fu was an ordinary man who'd spent his life traveling between his home and the woods to make a living. His daily work had consisted of chopping wood and ferrying buckets of water. For more than a hundred years, he'd lived such a life.

Then, the old man stumbled upon enlightenment at an age when he should've passed on. Within a single night, he cleaved the path and entered the Sovereign Stage. From that day, he went on to make a name for himself with his axe and pole and caused an uproar that reverberated across the world.

The spiritual cultivator would explain that the culmination of experience that he'd gathered during his entire lifetime had led him to his eventual enlightenment. And, with a little cultivation, he'd then reached the peak of his cultivation.

True geniuses were few and far between. The Eighth Sword Deity was one of them. As for this old man, his entry to the path was undoubtedly unique.

Helplessness colored the eyes of the four cultivators when they realized who the old man was.

They couldn't possibly fight this man!

He was a legend hundreds of years ago.

That made him a dinosaur that predated all of them. Even if they were to have twice their numbers now, they wouldn't be able to take down this dinosaur.

"Senior Cen, didn't you retreat to the mountains as a hermit? Why have you appeared before the gates of the Spirit Palace?" asked Jiang Bianyan.

Cen Qiaofu burst into laughter. "I did. But I was no match against conniving youngsters and their unscrupulous means. They used trickery and deception and lured me into joining their venture."

"Are you saying... that the masked man got you out of retirement?"

"That's right."

Jiang Bianyan fell silent. It'd suddenly dawned on him that this was why Ye Xiaotian had looked so sullen when he'd brought only two young cultivators with him.

When he'd received the letter requesting aid, he'd thought he would be showing the greatest respect to the Spirit Palace by turning up personally to help them.

But he hadn't expected the Spirit Palace to be faced with such powerful foes.

His arrogance had not only resulted in him overestimating his own abilities, but it had caused him humiliation as well!

He could've had ten of him here and still wouldn't have felt confident of his chances against this old man!

An obstinate streak in Jiang Bianyan compelled him to ask the old man, "Has the venerable senior really joined the Holy Vassal?"

"Young fellow, you may cease your questions. Return to the Holy Divine Palace alive and let them have this news as soon as possible. I might be paying your headquarters a visit sometime soon."

The genial expression on Cen Qiaofu's face belied the terrifying words he'd just uttered.

The looks on the five cultivators' faces instantly darkened. This was terrible news!

The Holy Vassal had drastically expanded its influence right under their nose, and they'd even managed to get someone as powerful as Cen Qiaofu out of retirement to fight for their cause!

Thud!

The old man stopped joking around with them and smacked the tip of his pole against the ground again. The Spirit Palace's array rippled and flared violently.

"Honestly, I don't really kill these days. Why don't we play a game instead?"

"What game?"

The five cultivators eyed the old man with trepidation. They could feel all the hairs stand on end and their bodies tense up. Hypervigilance had them noticing every blade stirring in the slightest breeze.

If Cen Qiaofu decided to fight, he could maim half their numbers in a single blow.

The old man smiled and shrugged when he caught the look on their faces. "Don't get so uptight!

"I harbor no ill will toward anyone. But I have my mission, which means that all five of you and any other Sovereign Stage cultivator who turns up...

"...will be stuck with me."

The rest of them froze momentarily. Was he simply a diversion?

Qiao Qianzhi and Xiao Qixiu exchanged looks. This was terrible. If the old man was simply the diversion, who was the main force of the attack?

The answer was as clear as day.

It was the masked man!

"Everybody, come on, take a seat."

Cen Qiaofu pulled out a mahogany chessboard and two boxes of chess pieces and started to reminisce.

"I made these in my younger days. You could gain enlightenment just by playing a single round of chess. We don't have anything better to do anyway. Why don't we have a friendly chat over a game of chess?"

He propped his walking stick up and began thinking. "Hmm... we're missing something."

His eyes lit up shortly. "Do you have nuts?"

Everyone fell silent.

Was he seriously suggesting that they nibble on nuts while playing a game of chess? The Spirit Palace was in the midst of a crisis. No one could afford the luxury of playing a game of chess with the old man!

The two hot-tempered founding elders couldn't take it any longer. They would rather be killed in battle than suffer insult. Their enemy had appeared at their gates and openly provoked them. Who could take that lying down?

The founding elders exchanged a look with each other, then unleashed their spiritual source. The next instant, they appeared on either side of Cen Qiaofu.

The battle with the masked man had led the founding elders to a realization—their strength was limited. Yet, they didn't care if they burned like moths that had thrown themselves into the flames. They would do anything to win any shred of hope for the future of the Spirit Palace!

As long as they could injure Cen Qiaofu, Xiao Qixiu would definitely be able to swoop in with his Sovereign Stage swordsmanship, overpower the more powerful foe, and kill the latter...

Thud! Thud!

Cen Qiaofu whipped out his pole, sent one of the founding elders into the air and another straight into the ground, then sighed.

"Such hot-blooded young men..."

The sight sent the eyelids of the law enforcers twitching violently.

Did he just take the founding elders down with a single attack?

How the h*ll were they supposed to fight this man? Was he a monster?

The founding elders and the Cen Qiaofu might not share the same sub-level, but they were all Sovereign Stage cultivators. Shouldn't he have given them the chance to unleash their spiritual source in respect to their dignity?

But he'd struck them dumb with that pole.

Thud!

Cen Qiaofu slammed his pole into the ground and once again sent the Spirit Palace's array quavering violently.

His hits were getting increasingly more powerful. The next one might just shatter the array.

Qiao Qianzhi's face darkened. Repairing such an array was no easy feat.

"Senior, didn't you promise not to attack the Spirit Palace? The array..."

Cen Qiaofu shrugged and said casually, "It's just a warning. Don't worry. I won't break that array of yours.

"But I have to let the rest know that there's a fight going on here somehow and that it's getting more intense. Otherwise, no one will come to your aid, am I right?"

What?

The cultivators were stupefied.

Was that why he'd kept up with his occasional attacks on the array?

Qiao Qianzhi grimaced inwardly and prayed fervently that no more reinforcements would arrive. Otherwise, all of them would be trapped in a fight with this old man.

Whoosh.

At that precise moment, a small figure suddenly appeared. Power emanated from the slight form as his snowy white hair drifted in the wind.

"Who dares trespass upon our grounds!"

Ye Xiaotian was feeling extremely displeased. He couldn't believe that he'd failed to take down a mere Master Stage swordsman. Unless the intruder who'd appeared at the Spirit Palace's gates was the masked man, he swore he was going to teach him a good lesson!

No one seemed happy to see him, though. The light in their eyes had dimmed with sorrow.

Ye Xiaotian was perplexed. Had their morale been beaten out of them?

He surveyed the area and found no traces of any huge fight that had taken place...

“What’s going on?”

“Another Sovereign Stage cultivator?” Cen Qiaofu was elated. He stuck his pole into the ground, grabbed his chessboard, and squatted down.

“Come and have a game of chess with me!”