

# INVINCIBLE 161

## **Chapter 161: No Escape for Huang Xiaolong**

“That’s right.” Huang Xiaolong’s admission was aloof.

Sun Qing shuddered hearing this. In front of the guards and Steward Liu Wen, Sun Qing suddenly fell to his knees, “This little one deserves death! It was due to a moment of confusion, and I did not realize it was Young Master Huang! I should die! I should die!” He was beginning to speak incoherently, unable to string a proper sentence.

As he carried on, Sun Qing slapped the left side of his own face fiercely.

Moments later, blood was trickling down from the corner of his mouth.

The Castellan Manor guards were stupefied watching what was happening with Castellan Sun Qing.

*Young Master Huang?!*

All the guards and Steward Liu Wen looked at Huang Xiaolong.

However, not one of them could recognize who Huang Xiaolong was. Even so, the reaction of their Castellan explained enough to tell them that they were in big trouble!

Liu Wen and the rest of the guards swiftly knelt down like Sun Qing, not daring to even breathe loudly.

Huang Xiaolong looked at Sun Qing kneeling on the floor and said, “You’re not in the wrong, stand up.”

Only then did Sun Qing stop punishing himself, thanking Huang Xiaolong profusely before getting up.

“All of you go back now, I’m just passing through this place and don’t want to attract attention.” Huang Xiaolong spoke.

“Yes, yes, Young Master Huang!” Sun Qing nodded his head vigorously, then saluted towards Huang Xiaolong, and hurried out. All the Castellan Manor guards swiftly followed behind him with unease on their faces.

The night was calm again.

Daybreak gradually brightened the sky, and Huang Xiaolong’s group of four exited Southern Cliffs City, crossed over the Luo Tong Kingdom’s border, and entered Baolong Kingdom.

Stepping onto Baolong Kingdom’s soil, Huang Xiaolong, Zhao Shu, Yu Ming, and Fei Hou wasted no time and headed directly to Big Sword Sect’s headquarters.

On the way, Fei Hou explained the ‘connections’ to Zhao Shu and Yu Ming between Huang Xiaolong and Big Sword Sect, the Martial Ning Family, and Clear Cloud Pavilion.

Violent Dragon County was located at the most northern point of Baolong Kingdom, and it was full of meandering hills and mountains. Atop this mountain range stood a huge palace-like building. This was the headquarters to one of the Baolong Kingdom’s prominent sects: Big Sword Sect.

Main hall of Big Sword Sect's headquarters.

Yu Chen was listening to a disciple report about matters in Southern Cliffs City, and after that, he asked, "Wei Xiaodong was actually murdered, what's everyone's opinion on this?"

Wei Xiaodong was one of Big Sword Sect's core disciples, and this time, it was Yu Chen himself that sent him to Southern Cliffs City. He did not expect that Wei Xiaodong would meet his end there, together with all the other Big Sword Sect disciples that were also killed.

"According to the report, the person that saved Sun Lin was a young man around seventeen or eighteen, and there were four in his group altogether. Castellan Sun referred to him as "Young Master Huang" with great respect. Could that Young Master Huang be Huang Xiaolong?" On the main seat, Lin Zhiren's sullen voice asked.

Someone that could raise fear from Castellan Sun with the surname Huang, and coupled with the description of that person, it was not difficult to guess Huang Xiaolong's identity.

"It should be Huang Xiaolong. He took the Cosmic Star Academy's overall championship and is probably traveling to Duanren Empire to participate in the Imperial City battle. Most likely, he was passing through Southern Cliffs City on the way." One Big Sword Sect Elder agreed.

"Huang Xiaolong wants to head to Duanren Empire to participate in the Imperial City Battle, but he must travel across our Baolong Kingdom. In my opinion, he would pass by our Big Sword Sect territory within a month or two. Old Sect Leader, at that time we should lay a siege and kill Huang Xiaolong!" Another Big Sword Sect Elder suggested.

"That's right Old Sect Leader, this time we absolutely must kill Huang Xiaolong! Otherwise, if he were allowed to grow, this monstrous freak will break into the Xiantian realm within the next two years. Once he's broken through into the Xiantian realm, it would be difficult for our Big Sword Sect to annihilate him at that time!"

"And this time around, he won't have Marshal Haotian protecting him, only that Fei Hou is beside him. This is a golden opportunity!"

The Big Sword Sect Elders voiced their opinions.

Yu Chen's gaze sharpened. He raised his hand to silence the Elders, and when everyone quieted down, his cold voice sounded, "Pass down my order, all Big Sword Sect disciples move out, and stake out the possible routes Huang Xiaolong would take—cut him off!"

All Big Sword Sect disciples moved out; this time, Huang Xiaolong couldn't escape!

"Yes, Old Sect Leader!" The Big Sword Sect Elders replied.

However, several painful howling sounds were heard as Big Sword Sect disciples were seen flying into the main hall.

Everyone in the huge hall was startled and looked over quickly.

"Huang Xiaolong!" Yu Chen's eyes narrowed and he jumped up from his seat. Lin Zhiren and the Elders also stood up from their seats.

“Huang Xiaolong, I didn’t expect you would have the guts to step into my Big Sword Sect’s headquarters!” Yu Chen slowly walked out from the main hall, and step by step, he was fully releasing his battle qi as his gaze locked onto Huang Xiaolong.

The Elders spread out in the huge hall, encircling Huang Xiaolong’s group of four in the middle.

Suddenly, the sound of a clear bell ringing cut through the tense atmosphere.

In that moment, all of the Big Sword Sect’s disciples rushed to the main hall.

One hundred thousand Big Sword Sect disciples came whistling through the air.

In no time at all, all one hundred thousand disciples arrived, blocking all exits of the main hall to a point where not even water could leak out.

Lin Zhiren looked at Huang Xiaolong and sneered coldly, “Huang Xiaolong, I want to see how you will run this time?!”

“Run?” Huang Xiaolong showed indifference, “Who said I wanted to run?”

Yu Chen quickly glanced over the four people on Huang Xiaolong’s side. At the end, his eyes fell onto Zhao Shu and Yu Ming’s body. He was filled with doubt; could these two people be Huang Xiaolong’s trump card?

Both Zhao Shu and Yu Ming had their aura hidden. Of course, Yu Chen could not tell their cultivation levels with his pitiable level of strength.

“Huang Xiaolong, do you think that just the four of you can go against the entirety of my Big Sword Sect disciples?” Lin Zhiren smirked conceitedly, and glanced over the four faces, “Do you think you have a Saint realm expert amongst you?”

Relying on one person’s power to exterminate a prominent sect of a kingdom, only a Saint realm expert had the ability to do so.

But, just as Lin Zhiren’s voice ended, Zhao Shu reached out and made a twisting action. Over the distance of hundreds of meters, countless shadows of gigantic hands were seen grasping at Lin Zhiren, lifting him up in midair.

An earth shattering aura exploded from Zhao Shu.

The weather within ten thousand li of the Big Sword Sect headquarters changed as clear blue skies darkened gloomily and thunderbolts struck simultaneously. An overwhelming pressure locked onto every corner of the Big Sword Sect headquarters.

Lin Zhiren, Yu Chen, and the Big Sword Sect Elders were flopping like fish out of water under the pressure. Their eyes protruded out of their sockets, and their mouths were agape as if they were on the verge of taking their last breath at any moment.

All the spiritual energy within that ten thousand li dissipated!

“Saint...Saint realm expert!” Lin Zhiren was scared out of his wits, shivering from head to toe. His throat moved with much difficulty to utter those words.

*Saint realm expert!*

Only a Saint realm expert could release such terrifying pressure. Only a Saint realm expert could ignore space distance to control a Xiantian expert like Lin Zhiren.

Only a Saint realm expert could manipulate the law of space to control certain spatial areas.

Zhao Shu's cold eyes glanced at Lin Zhiren and immense pressure swept across space. Lin Zhiren's neck was then snapped right in front of everyone's eyes. Following that, his body was released and he fell limply to the floor.

A Xiantian expert died!

Zhao Shu turned around, looking at Yu Chen and the others of the Big Sword Sect.

"Se, Senior, mercy, mercy ah!" Fear and panic warped Yu Chen's face as he pleaded.

Zhao Shu snorted, and suddenly Yu Chen spurted blood from his mouth as if he took a heavy blow, and just like that, he tumbled to the floor. It was then that the Big Sword Sect Elders realized there was a wound deeply ingrained in Yu Chen's chest, but no one knew when it happened.

In the blink of an eye, Lin Zhiren and Yu Chen, two of Big Sword Sect's strongest Xiantian experts had fallen.

An atmosphere fraught with death spread throughout the surrounding space.

### **Chapter 162: About to Break Through Xiantian Realm?**

All the Big Sword Sect Elders in that main hall became ashen with fear, desperation, and despondency.

A Saint realm expert!

That man was actually a Saint realm expert!

How could there be a Saint realm expert amongst them?!

Even if they flipped the entire Duanren Empire upside down, the number of Saint realm experts were very few, easily counted with ten fingers on one's two hands.

One of these terrifying existences actually appeared just to destroy the Big Sword Sect!

A Saint realm expert accompanied that little punk Huang Xiaolong!

Huang Xiaolong could actually request the assistance of a Saint realm expert? What was his real identity?!

Just when the Big Sword Sect Elders and disciples thought Zhao Shu came on Huang Xiaolong's request, they witnessed Zhao Shu turning around and asking Huang Xiaolong respectfully, "Young Lord, how do we deal with these Big Sword Sect Elders and disciples?"

*Young Lord?!*

The Elders and disciples of the Big Sword Sect stared at Huang Xiaolong in disbelief.

Huang Xiaolong's eyes swept passed the surrounding Big Sword Sect Elders and disciples, "Kill them all!"  
Kill them all!!

Eliminate weeds from the root!

This time, Huang Xiaolong was leaving the Luo Tong Kingdom and traveling to Duanren Empire for an indeterminate period, so it was imperative that he not leave these hidden dangers behind that could potentially harm his family. He had sworn to his father that he would uproot the Big Sword Sect eight years ago.

The Elders and disciples of Big Sword Sect quivered as Huang Xiaolong's words drummed into their ears. Everyone panicked, fighting over each other in order to escape from the main hall.

However, just as these people were about to make their move, they suddenly felt the space around them freeze. All were fixed in place.

Zhao Shu looked placidly at these people that were frozen like statues. His hands waved out and the power of space pierced through the Elders and disciples' chests like invisible wind blades.

Bodies fell from midair, twitching on the ground. Puncture wounds could easily be seen in their chests.

As the power of space continued to spread out from inside the main hall, the Big Sword Sect disciples that were assembled outside fell to the ground en masse.

Before long, the tens of thousands of Big Sword Sect's disciples had fallen, and not one person was left standing.

Looking at the vast sea of the Big Sword Sect disciples' black human heads, both Huang Xiaolong and Fei Hou were silently alarmed.

A Saint realm expert was this terrifying!

With just a simple wave of his hand, a prominent large sect of a kingdom was annihilated?!

A day later, the news about Big Sword Sect's annihilation and its hundred thousand disciples' deaths exploded like an atomic bomb in Baolong Kingdom. From the King and the many nobles, to the common folk and even the shameless street thugs, all knew about it and found it hard to believe.

The tens of thousands of Big Sword Sect disciples, including two Xiantian experts, Yu Chen and Lin Zhiren, were killed!

The enormity of the news was too shocking!

When the news started spreading, everyone thought that the person telling it to them was joking.

But ten days later, the news of the Martial Ning Family's annihilation dropped like a second bomb in the Baolong Kingdom. This raised earth-shattering quakes throughout the entire Kingdom. Another ten days after that, a new message spread out: the Clear Cloud Pavilion's headquarters' several thousand experts were decimated.

Big Sword Sect, Martial Ning Family, and Clear Cloud Pavilion!

Any one of these forces were considered a tyrannical existence in Baolong Kingdom!

But now, within one month's time, all three of these large forces were wiped off the face of the planet!

Baolong Kingdom fell into a gloomy atmosphere of shock, confusion, and infinite fear.

Fear of the unknown infected neighboring kingdoms. Discussions and whispers were nearly everywhere. Everyone was making their own deductions about who annihilated the Big Sword Sect, Martial Ning Family, and Clear Cloud Pavilion. Who would have the power to destroy those three large forces?

No one discovered who uprooted the three forces, but judging from the similar method used, most forces were of the opinion that all three were done in by the same culprit.

While Baolong Kingdom and its neighbors were still immersed in guesswork, Huang Xiaolong's group of four arrived at the border of Baolong Kingdom, crossing the border into Black Iron Kingdom.

For the shortest route to Duanren Empire from Luo Tong Kingdom, Huang Xiaolong needed to cut across Baolong Kingdom, Black Iron Kingdom, and around twenty other kingdoms before he could arrive at his destination.

Therefore, seven months until the Imperial City Battle may seem far away, but Huang Xiaolong and the rest were making the best time possible just in case they ran into any delays. According to Huang Xiaolong's estimation, at their speed, they would need at least six months or so before arriving at their destination.

After Baolong Kingdom, the rest of the journey went on smoothly.

Five months passed.

During the rushed travel, Huang Xiaolong still made time to practice Asura Tactics.

Within these five months, the battle qi in Huang Xiaolong's Qi Sea and meridians condensed, becoming more concentrated. Most of his battle qi flowing along his meridians and Qi Sea had already converted to liquid form.

When all the battle qi in his body was converted to a liquid state, it would signify Huang Xiaolong's ascension to the Xiantian Realm. Once he stepped into the Xiantian realm, a new door would open to an entirely different perspective.

As they continued on their journey, another ten days passed quickly.

On one quiet night, the moon was particularly bright.

The four of them decided to stop and rest for the night at a barren hill before continuing their journey onward.

The bonfire crackled, and strong flames cast light on the surrounding.

Occasionally, the howling of wolves could be heard through the night.

Huang Xiaolong, Zhao Shu, Yu Ming, and Fei Hou were sitting in a circle around the bonfire, an aromatic fragrance wafted over from the meat roasting on the fire.

Such a scene and atmosphere reminded Huang Xiaolong of years past when he whisked his parents and little siblings away from the Huang Clan Manor and took them to Luo Tong's Royal City. It was just like the nights they spent sleeping outside and eating roast meat from the bonfires.

That year, his little sister promised she would cultivate diligently, grow strong, and defeat Huang Wei.

At that time, they did not know Huang Wei and the rest of Huang Clan Manor had all been murdered by the Big Sword Sect. However, eight years later he successfully returned the favor, destroying Big Sword Sect completely.

"Sovereign, we should arrive at Duanren Empire in roughly two weeks." At this time, Yu Ming suddenly spoke.

Huang Xiaolong stopped thinking of the past, nodding at Yu Ming. That's right, in two weeks' time he would be stepping into Duanren Empire.

Duanren Empire!

This was Huang Xiaolong's next step!

It was imperative that he get first place in the Imperial City Battle!

The delicious smell coming from the roasted meat thickened, indicating it was ready. The four of them each cut a piece off and started to eat.

"I wonder how that little guy is doing?" Huang Xiaolong suddenly remembered the Spirit Devourer Violet Monkey.

At first, Huang Xiaolong planned to bring the little monkey with him to Duanren Empire, but it went into the Silvermoon Forest. Thus, Huang Xiaolong could only give up and decided to bring it along next time upon his return to Luo Tong Kingdom.

During the past two years, the little violet monkey not only advanced to Stage Ten just as he did, it also reached peak late-Tenth Order.

By the next time Huang Xiaolong encounters it, the little monkey would very likely have already broken through to the Xiantian realm as well.

Huang Xiaolong took out the jugs of Fiery Wine and Snow Moon Wine he had stored inside the Asura Ring, enjoying them with Zhao Shu, Yu Ming, and Fei Hou.

Although rushed traveling was a little dull, the wine and roast meat made it bearable.

Sated from the meal, Zhao Shu, Yu Ming, and Fei Hou kept watch whereas Huang Xiaolong initiated the God Binding Ring and entered the ancient battlefield.

Huang Xiaolong had a feeling his Xiantian realm breakthrough would happen within the next two days.

Running the Asura Tactics cultivation technique, the black and blue dragon emerged behind Huang Xiaolong, hovering above his head as they greedily devoured the netherworld spiritual energy gushing down from the void.

His breakthrough in the last year had greatly enhanced and solidified his martial spirit's corporeal bodies. Each of the dragon scales on their bodies were distinctive, reflecting light on their smooth surface as if they could turn into real life dragons at any moment.

The netherworld battle qi in Huang Xiaolong's Qi Sea and meridians were surging vigorously, and they had completely turned an inky blackish purple.

The deepest and darkest purple colored battle qi appeared was daunting and intimidating at first glance, and when Huang Xiaolong circulated his battle qi, it looked like the Cocytus River that flowed up from the underworld.

When Huang Xiaolong was absorbing the overflowing netherworld spiritual energy, the netherworld battle qi within his body started vibrating violently.

This is...? Huang Xiaolong was startled, was he breaking into the Xiantian realm right...*now*?

### **Chapter 163: Battle Qi Breakthrough–Xiantian Realm**

The battle qi within Huang Xiaolong's body was akin to a wild stallion that escaped its reins, galloping wildly away. All signs pointed to an impending breakthrough.

Ever since he started cultivating, Huang Xiaolong had experienced breakthroughs many times; thus he was quite familiar with the signs of an impending breakthrough.

Concentrating his focus, Huang Xiaolong ran Asura Tactics, forcefully reigning in the netherworld battle qi that was charging throughout his body.

Netherworld battle qi coursed and crashed through Huang Xiaolong's Qi Sea and meridians time and again.

At the same time, outside of Huang Xiaolong's body, a black mist swirled around and upward, condensing and becoming more and more thick. In the end, the black mist turned into thick fog that totally enshrouded Huang Xiaolong within.

Huang Xiaolong's figure seemed to blend in and out of the thick black fog.

The twin black and blue dragons floated in mid-air behind Huang Xiaolong, roaring endlessly as their bodies grew bigger and more solid and real among a pulsating glow. The bright light enveloping their bodies burst out, and the twin dragons' body seemed to then double in size. As the twin dragons went through physical changes, dragon scales fell from their bodies, and then they continued to grow and fall off again in a seemingly endless cycle. When these dragon scales fell, fresh blood dripped.

Dragon blood!

Real, tangible dragon blood!

As the blood fell to the ground of the ancient battlefield, it seemed as if the slumbering gods of the ancient battlefield were aroused by the smell of the dragon blood.

A loud rumble echoed throughout the ancient battlefield.



Subsequently, beating war drums filled the air. The ground shook as thousands of horses began charging to the frontline, and swords and spears were clashing. It was the sound of a massacre!

Multiple scenes flashed passed Huang Xiaolong's consciousness.

He saw the scenes where the four-winged, six-winged, and eight-winged ancient God Tribe fell.

All the while, the bright light exuding from Huang Xiaolong's body grew ever more dazzling. The battle qi inside his body vigorously crashed against the Xiantian barrier, and the severe, splitting pain that tore at the core of his soul seemed to follow this rhythm.

*Pain!*

It was as if someone was ripping his soul apart!

Huang Xiaolong had a feeling that his head was about to explode and was close to being unbearable. Just as Huang Xiaolong was on the brink of being completely overwhelmed, the Linglong Treasure Pagoda and God Binding Ring inside his body broke out in an aureate light. The moment these two mysterious lights appeared, Huang Xiaolong's consciousness felt a comfortable cooling sensation, and the pain coming from his soul vanished almost instantly.

Every time Huang Xiaolong was about to reach his breaking point and faint from the pain, the Linglong Treasure Pagoda and God Binding Ring would release that mysterious glow of energy to nourish Huang Xiaolong's soul.

The process repeated over and over again.

Huang Xiaolong seemed to fall into a world of fire and ice.

Not knowing how much time had passed, Huang Xiaolong's body suddenly trembled as if a giant fissure had split the world in two. The tough Xiantian barrier finally gave way to Huang Xiaolong's netherworld battle qi's persistent smashing.

It was as if the Earth was devastated by widespread disaster, yet life tenaciously struggled to emerge from the deepest recesses of the planet.

His netherworld battle qi cheered as it rushed into the meridian route that represented stepping into the Xiantian realm, flooding forward.

A strong vitality aura broke out from Huang Xiaolong's body, and the ground around where Huang Xiaolong sat cross-legged in the ancient battlefield started to sprout discernable green vegetation!

The green of life!

Simultaneously, the moment when Huang Xiaolong broke the barrier to the Xiantian realm, the bright light around his twin dragon martial spirits expanded greatly, covering a hundred li outward with Huang Xiaolong as its fulcrum. A mighty dragon's oppressive aura surged out like a tsunami. Waves upon waves of pressure spread out in all directions within the ancient battlefield.

Gradually, the blazing light around the black and the blue dragons dimmed and stopped flickering. On the dragons' bodies, pieces of black and blue scales as thick as armor were growing on the surface, layer after layer. They had four powerful, stout legs, and atop each dragon's head were two dragon horns.

Both the black and blue dragon had condensed into a solid entity, emanating the potent aura of the Primordial Divine Dragon race!

Not until a long time had passed did the thick, black fog enshrouding Huang Xiaolong's figure recede, revealing the person inside.

Just like his twin dragon martial spirits shedding their scales, Huang Xiaolong also shed a layer of old skin. His initially brownish grain colored skin was replaced with a much fairer skin color.

Huang Xiaolong opened his eyes and a powerful energy fluctuation swept out, sending the dust and sand in the ancient battlefield flying.

Expressing the joy in his heart, Huang Xiaolong hollered towards the sky.

The battle qi finally broke through to the Xiantian realm!

Xiantian!

Internal force, battle qi, both had reached the Xiantian stage!

With his current strength, killing an average Xiantian Second Order expert was achievable without exerting much effort!

Getting up, Huang Xiaolong's eyes focused on the black and blue dragon that was hovering above him, and undisguised excitement showed on his face.

Finally, his twin dragons had transformed into solid entities, transforming into real Primordial Divine Dragons!

Stepping into Xiantian realm, the black and blue twin dragons both had grown, surpassing twenty meters in length.

Passing his thoughts through his spiritual connection with them, the two dragons hovering mid-air suddenly growled and flew down, coming to a stop in front of Huang Xiaolong. Although his martial spirits had transformed into solid entities, they were connected to Huang Xiaolong's consciousness, just like a part of his body. With a mere thought, he could call upon them at any time.

Looking at the black and blue dragons floating before him, Huang Xiaolong leaped up and his feet landed on top of the black dragon's head, whereas the blue dragon wrapped around Huang Xiaolong's body. The wind blew against Huang Xiaolong's face.

"Black dragon, fly!" Huang Xiaolong tapped the black dragon underneath him.

Roaring softly, the black dragon flew up, bringing Huang Xiaolong with it.

Once they reached a high altitude, Huang Xiaolong gazed down at the thousand zhang ancient battlefield. Huang Xiaolong sighed in his heart: *so, this is the feeling of flying!*

In Martial Spirit World, only Saint realm experts that comprehended the law of space could fly in the sky. Even if it was a peak late-Xiantian Ninth Order expert, they could stand on air at most, but not move.

But Huang Xiaolong could fly! With his twin dragon martial spirits, he could be like Saint realm experts and fly in the sky.

Standing on the black dragon as it flew while the blue dragon wrapped around his body, Huang Xiaolong suddenly had a feeling that he was grand! A feeling that he was extremely cool!

Watching the horizon before him, Huang Xiaolong suddenly had a flash of enlightenment on the path of his future cultivation.

He wanted to be a real Primordial Divine Dragon, soaring above the Nine Heavens!

Exhaling deeply, Huang Xiaolong was observing the ancient battlefield as he stood on the flying black dragon when a thought suddenly flashed through his mind. All this time, he had been entering the ancient battlefield to practice, but he never knew exactly how big this place was. Since his twin dragon martial spirits had transformed into solid bodies, why couldn't he check it out now?

Riding on the black dragon martial spirit, they flew onward, but what surprised Huang Xiaolong was that after more than an hour of flying, there was no end in sight.

It was as if the ancient battlefield's dimensional space went on infinitely with no end!

But Huang Xiaolong clearly felt something was calling him from far, far away.

This feeling was similar to the time at the Enlightenment Lake, just like when the God Binding Ring was calling.

"It seems I can only wait for now. Whatever is there at the edge of this ancient battlefield has to wait." Huang Xiaolong thought to himself. Although his twin dragon martial spirits had transformed into real entities and could fly, the speed was a little slow in his opinion.

However, as he grew stronger and his strength increased, so too would his martial spirit's strength. At that time, the flying speed would increase exponentially.

Telling the black dragon to stop, Huang Xiaolong changed mounts. After hopping onto the blue dragon, he discovered the blue dragon's flying speed was much faster than the black dragon's.

"Now that I've broken into the Xiantian realm, doesn't that mean I can open the second layer of the Linglong Treasure Pagoda? I wonder what is stored in the second layer?" Huang Xiaolong mused.

Huang Xiaolong called out the Linglong Treasure Pagoda. An aureate light suddenly flashed in midair.

After entering the Xiantian realm, the lustrous shine on the Linglong Treasure Pagoda's surface vaguely seemed brighter than before.

#### **Chapter 164: Second Layer of Linglong Treasure Pagoda**

Huang Xiaolong infused battle qi into the Linglong Treasure Pagoda and it broke out in a sphere of aureate light. With a quick flash, Huang Xiaolong's eyes blurred and he appeared in a different space.

There were some similarities between this new space and the first layer of Linglong Treasure Pagoda. Floating above the first layer of Linglong Treasure Pagoda were Fire Dragon Pearls. Red clouds typically formed thick fire dragon qi, but there was no such thing here.

The upper part of Linglong Treasure Pagoda was empty other than the item placed on the ground in the center, a cauldron!

A hexagonal-shaped cauldron that looked like it was made from crystal. Other than that, there was nothing else in that space.

Huang Xiaolong stared dumbly at the crystal cauldron. This was a cauldron used for refining pellets?

He had imagined there would be a high-grade treasure like the Fire Dragon Pearls on the second floor—Huang Xiaolong thought the second floor would contain spiritual treasures that could enhance a Xiantian realm expert's strength. But amongst the many possibilities that went through his mind, never did he think the second layer of the Linglong Treasure Pagoda would contain nothing more than this cauldron!

Huang Xiaolong walked one full circle around the cauldron. The crystal cauldron was slightly over a meter tall, and on the cauldron's body were carvings of some ancient runes and some bizarre looking demonic beasts.

After studying the cauldron for a moment, Huang Xiaolong approached and tried to lift it up. However, he found he could not actually move the cauldron even an inch with his current strength. No matter how much battle qi or internal force Huang Xiaolong used, the crystal cauldron remained immovable.

It seemed this cauldron was 'one' with the Linglong Treasure Pagoda!

Frowning, Huang Xiaolong pondered for a moment before calling out one of the blades and sliced his finger, dripping a drop of blood on the cauldron. The instant the drop of scarlet red blood fell onto the cauldron, it vibrated strongly and a hum echoed in the space.

At the same time, pieces of memories appeared in Huang Xiaolong's mind...

Memories related to the cauldron.

The cauldron was named the Thousand Beast Cauldron. There were two big array formations carved inside it: one was called the Thousand Demon Engulfing Destruction Array, and the other was named Heaven and Earth Origin Reverting Array.

The Thousand Demon Engulfing Destruction Array could swallow living beings into the cauldron. As for the Heaven and Earth Origin Reverting Array inside the cauldron... it could refine everything within, reverting it back to its source of origin, ending in pellet form!

These two arrays complemented each other, and their miraculous combination could swallow thousands of living beings, turning their essence into pure energy!

Huang Xiaolong was flabbergasted.

*Isn't this too terrifying?!*

According to the memories he just received, as long as the owner of the Thousand Beast Cauldron grew stronger, the more powerful the cauldron would be too—the implication would be that even swallowing a sacred mountain or a vast sea was not a problem! As he got over his shock, Huang Xiaolong became wildly ecstatic.

Swallowing any and all living beings, refining them into a pellet... didn't that mean the higher the quality was of the object being swallowed coupled with the larger amount of energy it consumed, then the pellet grade it refined would also be higher?!

He could refine as many Grade Four or Grade Five Dans as he liked?! Huang Xiaolong's eyes twinkled brightly.

It was sometime later that Huang Xiaolong managed to calm the surging waves in his heart as he took out a Stage Ten beast core from the Asura Ring.

This Stage Ten beast core was taken from a peak late-Stage Ten demonic beast.

Expelling some of his battle qi, the Thousand Beast Cauldron flickered as a strong suction force came from inside the cauldron, swallowing the beast core in Huang Xiaolong's palm. Subsequently, the Heaven and Earth Returning Origin Array activated, and a lucent glow surrounded the Thousand Beast Cauldron as it shook. A mist of water vapor steamed out from the cauldron's body, lasting for an hour before the Thousand Beast Cauldron quieted down.

A ray of dazzling light rushed out, and a thumb-sized, round blackish-yellow glossy spirit pellet that exuded an aromatic scent flew out from the depth of the cauldron.

Delighted, Huang Xiaolong waved his hand and a suction force brought that small spirit pellet into his palm. In one swift flick, he popped that small round pellet into his mouth. He could instantly feel a warm energy spreading out inside his body.

Huang Xiaolong sat down cross-legged, running Asura Tactics to refine the pellet's energy.

A short while later, Huang Xiaolong stood up.

After absorbing the energy from the thumb-sized spirit pellet refined from a peak late-Stage Ten beast core, Huang Xiaolong determined it was at least at the high Grade Four Spirit Dan level.

High Grade Four!

Though a high Grade Four Spirit Dan may not be as valuable as high Grade Five Spirit Dan, it was still so scarce in supply that it could fetch a high price of at least thirty thousand gold in the auction houses.

And a peak late-Stage Ten beast core roughly cost about ten thousand gold coins on the market.

If a peak late-Stage Ten beast core produced a high Grade Four Spirit Dan, then what about a Xiantian level beast core? That would very likely produce a Grade Five Spirit Dan!

In Luo Tong Royal City, a Grade Five Spirit Dan was not something one could buy even with gold coins. This was because the success in refining a Grade Five Spirit Dan was too low.

In general, a Grade Five Spirit Dan needed fifty to sixty types of ingredients, each requiring a minimum age of two to three hundred years old. Even if all the ingredients gathered were of premium quality, something may go wrong during refining, causing failure. In the end, the chances of success were only fifty-fifty.

Huang Xiaolong took a deep breath.

Grade Five Spirit Dan was useful even for a Xiantian realm expert!

A Grade Five Spirit Dan should have some value in Duanren Empire as well, right?!

But, in the next moment, Huang Xiaolong's eyebrows scrunched together.

Earlier, when he pushed his battle qi to support the cauldron for an hour's time, it actually drained all his battle qi!

Since breaking through the Xiantian realm, his netherworld battle qi was richer than an average Xiantian Second Order expert, yet he could only refine one high Grade Four Spirit Dan.

If he managed to hunt a Xiantian realm beast and obtain its beast core, didn't that mean he would be sucked dry and become a mummy if he wanted to successfully refine a Grade Five Spirit Dan?!

He could only solve the problem when the time came. Huang Xiaolong sighed. After coming to this realization, he decided to exit the ancient battlefield.

On the outside, Zhao Shu, Yu Ming, and Fei Hou were already waiting anxiously—Huang Xiaolong had stayed inside the ancient battlefield for three days and three nights.

Seeing Huang Xiaolong come out, all three of them secretly let out a sigh of relief.

In the next instant, Zhao Shu and Yu Ming displayed a shocked expression on their faces while staring at Huang Xiaolong. With their keen eyesight, they immediately noted that there was a difference after Huang Xiaolong came out from practice compared to three days ago.

"Sovereign, you've reached the Xiantian realm?!" The words flew out from Zhao Shu's mouth.

Fei Hou was stunned. He quickly turned towards Huang Xiaolong.

Watching the three faces in front of him, Huang Xiaolong smiled faintly, "I broke through accidentally."

In Huang Xiaolong's opinion, it was indeed an accident. He did not expect it would happen so fast.

However, to Zhao Shu, Yu Ming, and Fei Hou's ears, these words were like a dizzying spell. *He broke through accidentally?*

A seventeen-year-old Xiantian realm expert!

It would be a sensation in the Snow Wind Continent if it was made known.

Even a Saint realm expert like Zhao Shu felt deeply shocked.

Huang Xiaolong then asked Zhao Shu, Yu Ming, and Fei Hou how to deal with the problem of overdrawing battle qi while supporting the arrays within the cauldron when one was refining pellets.

None of the three thought too much about it, and Zhao Shu answered, "It can be substituted with spirit stones."

"Spirit stones?" Huang Xiaolong's eyes lit up. This was his first time hearing about spirit stones.

"Yes, Sovereign. Spirit stones are formed from accumulated spiritual energy over many years, a type of mined stone that contains pure spiritual energy inside. Most Xiantian experts refining Grade Five Spirit Dan would use spirit stones to activate the arrays within the cauldron. In general, a grade three spirit stone is sufficient to support the refining process of one Grade Five Spirit Dan." Zhao Shu explained.

One grade three spirit stone could help refine one Grade Five Spirit Dan.

Zhao Shu went on to explain the different grades of spirit stones. The grades were grade five, grade four, grade three, grade two, and grade one, with grade five being the lowest. Above grade one spirit stone was heaven grade spirit stone.

### **Chapter 165: Promptly Arriving in Duanren Empire**

A single grade three spirit stone was apparently sufficient to refine one Grade Five Spirit Dan, whereas grade four and five spirit stones could be used to refine a Grade Four Spirit Dan and below. Grade two and grade one spirit stones were used in refining Grade Six and Grade Seven Spirit Dams.

However, the price of spirit stones did not come cheap: just one grade three spirit stone would usually cost somewhere around thirty thousand gold coins.

Considering a grade three spirit stone's price was thirty thousand gold coins, grade two spirit stones were a little intimidating, going up to fifty thousand gold coins.

Rather than feeling fear, Huang Xiaolong was actually relieved instead. Grade two spirit stones at a price of fifty thousand gold coins sounded colossal, but for Huang Xiaolong's Nine Tripod Commerce, lacking gold coins was the least of his worries.

Thus without further delay, the four of them continued onwards in their journey.

Ten days passed and they were closer to their destination – the Duanren Empire.

Over the past ten days, Huang Xiaolong swallowed one high Grade Four Spirit Dan and Fire Dragon Pearl per day, cultivating in the ancient battlefield.

Stabilizing his recent breakthrough, Huang Xiaolong diligently practiced Asura Tactics and the Body Metamorphosis Scripture at the same time, enhancing both of them simultaneously.

It was now night.

Huang Xiaolong stood on a small barren hill. His right leg stepped out to the right and he lowered his body in a squat while his upper torso leaned forward. Both hands pressed down, supporting his weight. His head tilted up, breathing rhythmically the whole time.

This was the Body Metamorphosis Scripture Stage Ten: Crouching Tiger.

As he breathed in and out, spiritual energy rolled and surged towards Huang Xiaolong. Multiple layers of white fog shrouded his figure. As time wore on, these layers of white fog became denser, as if they

would solidify the within next moment. From far away, all anyone could see was an enormous pool of white fog.

“This is what Sovereign mentioned before, the so-called internal force cultivation technique?” Zhao Shu asked, standing some distance away.

Fei Hou promptly responded, “That’s right, Left Custodian Zhao Shu.”

Yu Ming sighed in awe, “Is this internal force cultivation technique something that was created by Sovereign? It actually allows someone to cultivate without possessing a martial spirit. If news about such a cultivation technique existed, it would cause a bloody storm in Martial Spirit World.”

Zhao Shu nodded in agreement, “That’s true. Fei Hou, since Sovereign was willing to pass that Liquid Thunder Arts cultivation technique to you, you must take care not to leak it out.”

“Yes, Left Custodian Zhao.” Fei Hou acknowledged respectfully, and then said, “Sovereign said he is working to improve two sets of internal force cultivation techniques. Once they are complete, he will pass them to Left Custodian Zhao Shu and Master.”

Zhao Shu and Yu Ming trembled hearing that-- the excitement was evident from their eyes.

Both had already come to the conclusion that the main reason Fei Hou’s cultivation increased with such drastic speed was because he practiced both battle qi and internal force simultaneously.

The darkness of night gradually receded.

At the first ray of light, Huang Xiaolong ended his practice.

As he ended his Body Metamorphosis Scripture practice, Huang Xiaolong fell into a ponderous mood. Although cultivating Asura Tactics and Body Metamorphosis at the same time greatly enhanced his strength, practicing the methods individually was too troublesome and time consuming.

Inadvertently, this line of thought may be helpful for him to reduce the time it took to practice battle skills.

There were twenty-four hours in a day. Other than rushing on the road, most of Huang Xiaolong’s time was divided between practicing Asura Tactics and Body Metamorphosis Scripture.

“I wonder if the Asura Tactics and Body Metamorphosis Scripture could be initiated simultaneously, practicing both at the same time?” this thought suddenly flashed through his mind.

If it was possible, then he could save a lot of time.

Thus, Huang Xiaolong stood there trying to run Asura Tactics and Body Metamorphosis Scripture at the same time.

However, as he ran Asura Tactics and started to adjust his breathing, his battle qi stopped flowing. At the same time, the gathering of his internal force was met with a certain degree of unknown resistance.

About an hour later, Huang Xiaolong stopped.



After experimenting for more than an hour, Huang Xiaolong was pleasantly surprised to find that both battle qi and internal force could be circulated simultaneously. Unfortunately, the duration did not last long.

Although the duration was short, Huang Xiaolong believed that if he persevered in this direction, he would definitely be able to circulate both Asura Tactics battle qi and Body Metamorphosis internal force unimpeded at the same time.

This was akin to the time he summoned the twin dragon martial spirits separately.

When he first attempted the separate summoning, both of his twin dragons appeared at once. Only with time and practice, over and over again, did he successfully control their appearance, whether it was summoning a single martial spirit or both of them together.

“Sovereign!” Seeing Huang Xiaolong had ended his practice, Zhao Shu and the rest flew over from where they were waiting.

Huang Xiaolong nodded, and then his voice grew serious: “Zhao Shu, Yu Ming, I have two internal force cultivation techniques that I made with some revisions; I’m willing to pass them to you, are you willing to cultivate them?”

Zhao Shu and Yu Ming blanked for a second and were flooded with joy while nodding their heads in unison to show their willingness to learn. Both knelt down to thank their Sovereign’s kindness.

Huang Xiaolong told them to get up and passed two different sets of cultivation techniques to Zhao Shu and Yu Ming.

The internal force cultivation techniques Huang Xiaolong passed to Zhao Shu and Yu Ming were things he had obtained by luck in his previous life on Earth. As a whole, these two cultivation techniques could not be compared to the Body Metamorphosis Scripture, but in some aspects they weren’t any worse either.

While passing an internal force cultivation technique to each of them, Huang Xiaolong explained the problems that might be difficult to understand during their cultivation. The two took everything he said with utmost seriousness.

It was a few hours later before the group of four continued their journey.

Three days passed in roughly the same manner.

For the past three days, Zhao Shu and Yu Ming practiced according to the internal force cultivation techniques Huang Xiaolong taught them. After a few short days of practice, to their delight, Zhao Shu and Yu Ming noticed that their battle qi cultivation speed did indeed increase significantly.

Whenever they had questions about the techniques, they would seek advice and guidance from Huang Xiaolong, helping to easily solve things that baffled them. It was as if his answers were a bright light at the end of a tunnel.

Today, the sun shone brightly in the sky, and Huang Xiaolong and the other three were riding on beast mounts as they made their way through the mountains.

“Sovereign, estimating our speed, it will be one more day before we arrive in Duanren Empire.” Zhao Shu informed to Huang Xiaolong.

Huang Xiaolong nodded.

One more day!

Even though they were arriving in Duanren Empire tomorrow, it would take another half a month for them to reach the Imperial City.

They were in the seventh lunar month. By the time they made it to the Imperial City, there would be about ten days left before the battle commenced, so the timing was just right.

*I hope things in Luo Tong Royal City are fine.* Huang Xiaolong thought to himself.

With these several months of travel, the places they passed were mostly barren hills or the wilderness, and there hadn't been any contact with Luo Tong Royal City.

But, the Big Sword Sect, Martial Ning Family, and Clear Cloud Pavilion were already destroyed, and there was still Marshal Haotian keeping an eye over things in Luo Tong Kingdom. Since that was the case, the safety of the Huang Family should not be an issue.

One day later, the group finally arrived in Duanren Empire!

Entering Duanren Empire, Huang Xiaolong could see many other people from other kingdoms that came to participate in the Imperial City Battle just like him. Additionally, there were also experts from different forces that came to watch the battle.

The Imperial City Battle of Duanren Empire was an open event, therefore, royal families and forces nearby would come to watch the event.

Entering Duanren Empire, Huang Xiaolong, Zhao Shu, Yu Ming, and Fei Hou did not dally, rushing onward straight to Duanren Empire's Imperial City.

Two weeks later, Huang Xiaolong's group arrived at their destination.

Standing in front of the Imperial City walls, Huang Xiaolong's mind went blank as he stared at the grand sight in front of him – the behemoth city gates and the colossal walls.

The Luo Tong Royal City, Yuwai Royal City, and all the royal cities he had seen along the way while passing through some other kingdoms were nothing compared to the Imperial City gates standing before his eyes. It was similar to comparing a small mud brick house seated next to a palace.

The walls of Duanren Empire's Imperial City boast a height of over a hundred zhang!

*Exceeding one hundred zhang! Stupendous!*

The people walking below the city walls were akin to ants that were crawling on the ground. Yes, ants that crawled on the floor.

Looking at Duanren Imperial City gates, Huang Xiaolong felt very small. This feeling wasn't limited to Huang Xiaolong though, Fei Hou did as well.

Even though this was the second time Fei Hou saw the Imperial City gates, the shock he felt was still just as strong.

### **Chapter 166: Unable to Find Out?**

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

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

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

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

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

Duanren Imperial City!

Herein lies his goal!

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

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

One hundred gold coins!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Yu Ming then exerted invisible pressure onto them.

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

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

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

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

"Who are those four people? It seems like that middle-aged man is that young man's guard?!"

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

In Duanren Imperial City, Xiantian experts were not uncommon, but that did not include Xiantian Seventh Order warriors and above. Xiantian First to Third Order warriors were classified as early-order

Xiantian; Fourth to Sixth Order warriors were mid-order; and the Seventh to Ninth Order experts were referred to as high-order.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The guards inside private room number two swallowed nervously.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Being asked directly, the guard quickly continued, “One of the three is called Fei Hou, the Junior Brother of Luo Tong Kingdom’s Marshal Haotian, but both Fei Hou and Haotian call Huang Xiaolong, Young Lord. The strange thing is, Huang Xiaolong comes from a Luo Tong Kingdom small family, and his background is common and ordinary.”

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

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

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

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

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

**Chapter 167: The Imperial City Battle Begins!**

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

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

Only this explanation could justify the reason for failure.

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

"Young Master...?" The guards inquired.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

Your Imperial Highness!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“Huang Xiaolong?!” Cheng Jian was surprised.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ten days came and went.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Chapter 168: Can I Sit Here?**

"Yes, Sovereign!" Zhao Shu and the other two acknowledged Huang Xiaolong's words in unison.

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

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

The main entrance of Duanren Imperial Palace!

Duanren Square!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Yes Young Lord!" The three answered.

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

Entering within, Huang Xiaolong made his way to the rest area prepared for the participating talents coming from all kingdoms. When he arrived, Huang Xiaolong noticed that quite a number of them were already there, and after sweeping a cursory glance around, he made a rough estimate that there were seven to eight hundred people.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Of course, behind these gazes, contempt swirled within.

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

Huang Xiaolong! It's actually Huang Xiaolong!

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

Why, why so fast?!

The white-robed young man was traumatized.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Xie Puti! Xie Puti is here!"

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

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

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

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

This was Xie Puti!

Aggressive and domineering!

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

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

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

Undoubtedly, this Xie Puti would be a strong opponent.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Interesting, Xie Puti thought.

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

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

"Where did this kid come from?!"

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

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

"Right, that must be the reason!"

Huang Xiaolong remained calm even as the ridiculing words continued.

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

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

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

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

Huang Xiaolong glanced at the new arrival, unperturbed.

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

Including Huang Xiaolong, it totaled at three!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Xie Puti did not bother to answer.

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

Yanggang directed all his rage onto Huang Xiaolong.

“Really?” Huang Xiaolong reacted placidly.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Her alluring fragrance wafted into Huang Xiaolong’s nose.

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

### **Chapter 169: Imperial City Battle (1)**

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

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

Huang Xiaolong turned sideways to look at her.

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

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

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

“That’s right.” Huang Xiaolong nodded.

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



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

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

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

Xie Puti and Yanggang were also surprised.

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

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

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

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

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

Imperial Second Prince—Duan Wuhen!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

While Duan Wuhen was scanning through the crowd of geniuses, Huang Xiaolong was also observing Duan Wuhen. Compared to two years ago at the Enlightenment Lake, the invisible oppressive aura

emanating from Duan Wuhen felt more daunting, like an insurmountable mountain pressing down heavily.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Chapter 170: Imperial City Battle (2)**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Your attack speed is too slow." A cold cynical voice sounded behind Chen Bailu, shocking him greatly. Just as he was about to turn around, a terrifying palm strike slammed onto his back, spreading a scorching temperature starting at his back and wantonly moving to the rest of his body as if it wanted to roast all of his internal organs.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Huang Xiaolong remained placid.

But, Cui Li who was sitting next to him spoke, "I didn't expect that Xie Puti would be so savage and ruthless. If I ever come across him, will I also be turned into a roast pig due to his phoenix fire?" She was

even showing a 'terrified' expression when she finished, both hands exaggeratedly patting her plump bosom.

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

Such voluptuous breasts!

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

Savage? Being roasted like a pig?

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

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

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

Excited sounds of saliva swallowing was heard once again.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mo'er Kingdom, Bai Shou!

This person was Huang Xiaolong's first opponent.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Below the stage, gasps of surprise and exclamation resounded.

Cui Li’s heart tightened inexplicably.

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

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

“Ice Shattering Palm!”

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

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

*Bang!* A loud blast rang out on the stage.