

Martial 1221

Chapter 1221, Divide Into Camps

Hearing what Dai Yuan said, the other three couldn't help speeding up.

Wei Gu Chang and Dong Xuan'er asked about the Three Suns' Grand Rising Phenomenon while Yang Kai also pretended to be interested and listen carefully.

After Dai Yuan spoke about it for a while, Wei Gu Chang and Dong Xuan'er had a fair understanding of what the Three Suns Grand Risings was, but Yang Kai wore a strange expression.

He found that although Dai Yuan recognized the Red Candle Fruit and knew about the Three Suns Grand Risings Phenomenon, she didn't seem to know everything...

Yang Kai couldn't be sure that this gap in knowledge was the same for everyone, but what he was certain of was that it wasn't just Dai Yuan and him who recognized the Red Candle Fruit. All the most elite disciples on Shadowed Star were currently gathered in the third layer, so there must be others who recognized it.

After two full hours, the group of four arrived at their destination, a small mountain valley probably less than a thousand meters in width. Down inside the mountain valley, there was the familiar dark red cracked landscape filled with gullies and ravines, but surprisingly, if one looked carefully, they would find some dried up trees as well. These trees were blood red in colour and didn't have any trace of vitality, but they were clearly not dead. There was some kind of strange power lingering about that allowed them to survive in this extremely harsh environment.

This mountain valley was surrounded by more than twenty large and larger mountain peaks.

When Yang Kai and his group of four arrived, about half of these mountain peaks were already occupied. Groups from different Sects had taken control of these spots and seemingly settled in.

Most of the cultivators' eyes were scanning the dead trees in the mountain valley, revealing a look of greed, but what was strange was that there was no one actually inside the mountain valley, as if they had all come to some kind of agreement to restrain themselves.

When Yang Kai and his group arrived, countless eyes swept towards their side, many people openly displaying vigilance and disgust. After all, a Heaven defying spirit fruit was about to mature, the fewer people here the better.

However, everyone knew that such an idea was unrealistic. Before the Red Candle Fruit matured, that rising red sun spectacle had already spread across the entire third layer, so it was likely that everyone was either already here or on their way. Even though they were unwilling to accept more competitors, they had no choice but to shoot Yang Kai and his group a glare before turning their eyes away.

Yang Kai also swept his eyes over the crowd and couldn't help becoming vigilant as well.

The scene this time was indeed magnificent. Although not many people had come, each one was an elite from a great Sect.

Yang Kai saw people from Heaven Battling Union, Thunder Typhoon Sect, Coloured Glass Sect, and many others he couldn't identify. In total, there were at least seventy or eighty present.

The four of them had come relatively late it seemed, but there were certainly more on their way, so presumably things would only become more chaotic.

Yang Kai also saw the stern-faced cultivator that had previously occupied the centre of the Soul Cleansing Divine Water pool. This guy had occupied an entire small hill by himself and was standing there as straight as a sword, his arms folded, his expression as indifferent as ever. No one dared to go up and find trouble with him.

Anyone who could arrive here could more or less guess the identity of this man so none of them would even think about trying to annoy him even if they were upset with his attitude and behaviour.

On Coloured Glass Sect's side, Yin Su Die's expression became strange after she caught sight of Dai Yuan, as if she didn't expect that this Senior Sister of hers would appear here with others, but after recognizing Dong Xuan'er, her face relaxed and she immediately turned her attention away, showing no intention to go greet Dai Yuan.

After a quick glance, Wei Gu Chang pointed to one of the unoccupied hills and said, "Let's take that one."

A moment later, the four stood atop the mountain, and, like everyone else, set their sights on the mountain valley down below.

"Where's the Red Candle Fruit?" Wei Gu Chang swept his eyes around but found no trace of any kind of spirit fruit. As far as he could see, all there was in the mountain valley were half-dead trees so he couldn't help asking.

"The Red Candle Fruit won't appear before it fully matures," Dai Yuan slowly shook her head, "But there's no doubt it is somewhere inside this mountain valley. When it matures, it will naturally surface."

"I see!" Wei Gu Chang gently nodded.

"Oh, Senior Brother Li You Nan from Medicine Pill Sect is coming, I wonder what he wants to say," Dong Xuan'er exclaimed lightly as her eyes landed on a middle-aged scholarly dressed man who seemed to have a gentle atmosphere about him. This man was currently approaching their group and was even smiling and waving to them before he arrived.

Yang Kai had also heard of Medicine Pill Sect.

No matter the place, there were always Sects or forces that specialized in Alchemy. Medicine King's Valley in the Great Han Dynasty and the Alchemist Guild in Tong Xuan Realm were examples of such Sects. As for Shadowed Star, Medicine Pill Sect was the representative Alchemy Sect.

This kind of existence was one that most people wouldn't dare to offend because they would inevitably have to seek their services at some point.

Inside Medicine Pill Sect, there were five Origin Grade Low-Rank Alchemists, the largest number by far of any force on Shadowed Star. Each of these five was a Grandmaster whose name was widely known on Shadowed Star and anywhere they went they would be treated as honoured guests.

And since this guy named Li You Nan could penetrate into the third layer of the Flowing Flame Sand Field, he must also be an elite from Medicine Pill Sect. It seems that he, Wei Gu Chang, and Dong Xuan'er knew each other, but whether they shared any real friendship was something Yang Kai couldn't tell yet.

Soon, this middle-aged scholarly man named Li You Nan arrived at the mountain where the group of four were gathered and cupped his fists to Wei Gu Chang before saying, "Brother Wei, you've also come."

Wei Gu Chang returned the courtesy and laughed, "For this kind of matter, naturally I must come join the fun."

Nearby, Dong Xuan'er and Dai Yuan both greeted Li You Nan, with Li You Nan responding in kind, seemingly behaving very politely. He then asked about Yang Kai's name and origin but Wei Gu Chang simply interjected and said he had invited him.

Although Li You Nan felt it was somewhat strange that Yang Kai, a First-Order Saint King, could arrive here, since he was brought here by Wei Gu Chang, he didn't ask much.

"Brother Li, did you perhaps come to find this Wei for something?" Wei Gu Chang narrowed his eyes and got straight to the point.

Li You Nan smiled slightly before answering this question with one of his own, "Brother Wei, since you came here after seeing that vision, do you perhaps know what is here?"

"I heard it was the Red Candle Fruit," Wei Gu Chang replied.

Li You Nan frowned with surprise, but after glancing over at Dai Yuan, he understood and patted his forehead lightly, "It seems this Li has asked a foolish question. Since Ms. Dai Yuan is here, Brother Wei surely would know. In this world, I'm afraid that there is no rare herb that Ms. Dai Yuan does not know of."

"Senior Brother Li is too polite, Dai Yuan is only slightly versed in this subject," Dai Yuan said lightly.

"Haha, Ms. Dai Yuan does not need to act so humble, there are truly few people who can recognize the Red Candle Fruit. Brother Qu from Heaven Battling Union, Brother Fang from Thunder Typhoon Sect, and Sister Yin from Coloured Glass Sect only learned of it after this one explained it to them. If not for this, how could everyone have restrained themselves so? I'm afraid that everyone would already be digging up the mountain valley if not for this Li providing some small insight."

Hearing this, Wei Gu Chang suddenly understood why everyone was simply standing around the mountain valley waiting, it seems Li You Nan had gone around informing them what was happening.

Obviously he had not done this out of goodwill. With such a precious treasure in front of him, there was no way Li You Nan didn't want to keep it for himself.

Him informing others was simply because he didn't want to allow these people to act rashly and interfere with the maturing of the Red Candle Fruit. If someone ignorant of the truth interfered with the Red Candle Fruit and caused it to fail to mature, it would be a great loss to the entire world.

So even though he was reluctant to do so, Li You Nan had worked hard to inform each group of cultivators that arrived about the situation.

"Brother Li's spirit of generosity is truly deep, working so hard for the benefit of the world. This Wei is truly impressed!" Wei Gu Chang wore a sincere look and cupped his fists once more.

Receiving such great praise, Li You Nan continually tried to downplay his actions before quickly shifting the subject to his true objective, "I wonder if Brother Wei is interested in joining forces with my Medicine Pill Sect?"

"Joining forces?" Wei Gu Chang's eyes narrowed slightly as a meaningful grin appeared on his face, "Brother Li, although this Wei is not proficient in the study of spirit herbs, I am aware that there should only be a single Red Candle Fruit here, so how do you propose we work together? If we manage to obtain the Red Candle Fruit, how should it be distributed?"

"Please allow this one to finish explaining before making a decision, Brother Wei," Li You Nan seemed to know that he would react this way so he didn't show any signs of anxiety, remaining calm and relaxed.

"Please do tell, Brother Li, I am listening intently," Although Wei Gu Chang knew what the Li You Nan was up to, he couldn't simply reject him; after all, offending Medicine Pill Sect was never a good idea.

"My meaning is simple. I wish to take the Red Candle Fruit first. Although there is only one spirit fruit, if it is used in Alchemy, it should be able to produce more than one pill," Li You Nan glanced over at Wei Gu Chang, but not seeing any great response, he continued to explain, "As far as I know, your Shadow Moon Hall only has a single Origin Grade Low-Rank Alchemist and that Alchemist only broke through recently and their success rate of refining Origin Grade pills isn't very high. If Brother Wei obtained the Red Candle Fruit, the only option would be to have one of your Sect's Elders take it directly, wasting a lot of its medicinal efficacies."

Pausing for a moment, a proud look appeared on Li You Nan's face as he declared, "This situation is not only the case for your Shadow Moon Hall, but for all the other great Sects, but my Medicine Pill Sect is different. My Medicine Pill Sect has five Origin Grade Low-Rank Alchemists, and although the grade of this Red Candle Fruit is very high, if my Medicine Pill Sect's Elders all collaborate, refining more than a dozen pills is quite possible."

Wei Gu Chang finally had a full picture of what the other party wanted to say, narrowing his eyes further as he asked Li You Nan, "What Brother Li means is that if we help your Medicine Pill Sect obtain the Red Candle Fruit, after it is refined into pills, my Shadow Moon Hall will be able to obtain a portion?"

"Good, that is precisely this Li's meaning!" Li You Nan nodded repeatedly, "I have made this offer not only to Brother Wei, but also to Brother Qu from Heaven Battling Union, Brother Fang of Thunder Typhoon Sect, Sister Yin from Coloured Glass Sect, Brother Qu from Twin Heart Valley, and Brother Tang from Floating Mist Palace."

"And their response?" Wei Gu Chang raised his eyebrows.

“Haha, although they’ve yet to express an opinion yet, this Li believes he can convince them,” Li You Nan spoke with confidence.

Chapter 1222, Hostility

Everyone knew that Li You Nan was talking nonsense. If he really was confident in persuading all these great forces to give up on the Red Candle Fruit and allow Medicine Pill Sect to take sole possession of this Heaven defying treasure, that would truly be strange.

Only the things that were held in one’s own hands really belong to them. Li You Nan’s remarks held no sincerity or weight at all so obviously they couldn’t be believed.

What’s more, how could such an important matter be decided upon by mere Juniors? When Li You Nan brought the Red Candle Fruit back, his Elders would clearly choose death first before recognizing this agreement. Even if all the other Sects at that point jointly destroy Medicine Pill Sect, the Red Candle Fruit would surely already be gone.

Wei Gu Chang understood all this perfectly well and knew that once he agreed he would become the sole target of everyone’s anger, this was precisely why Qu Chang Feng, Fang Tian Zhong, Yin Su Die and Qu Ming Hai, and Tang Yong had not rashly agreed to such an unreasonable proposal.

However, Wei Gu Chang was also not stupid enough to openly offend Medicine Pill Sect, so after pretending to think seriously on the matter for a moment, he nodded slightly and asked, “If Brother Qu, Brother Fang, and everyone else all agrees, then my Shadow Moon Hall will naturally collaborate, but Brother Li... heh, have you spoken to that guy yet?”

Saying so, he quietly motioned towards a nearby mountain.

Li You Nan’s face twitched slightly. Of course, he knew who it was Wei Gu Chang was referring to and smiled shamelessly, “This Li wanted to communicate with everyone else before discussing things carefully with him.”

Wei Gu Chang smiled lightly and shook his head, “This matter cannot be treated so simply. If it were just the few of us here, it would be fine to join forces, but with such a huge variable present, this Wei thinks it best for Brother Li to obtain his agreement first. After achieving that, it won’t be too late to discuss things with everyone else.”

Li You Nan adjusted his expression before cupping his fists and nodding, “What Brother Wei says also makes sense, this Li will take your advice into consideration.”

Saying so, he turned around and returned back to Medicine Pill Sect’s occupied mountain.

After he left, Wei Gu Chang snorted coldly and muttered, “Does he really think I’m an idiot?”

Dai Yuan chuckled to the side and said, “The people from Medicine Pill Sect aren’t ignorant, Senior Brother doesn’t need to pay it any mind. This time, not complying with Li You Nan was the right choice, if you had complied with his request, that would have brought you great trouble.”

“I know that,” Wei Gu Chang nodded seriously, “Enough about that though, this kind of spirit fruit maturing at this time, I don’t know if it is an opportunity or calamity.”

Saying so, he swept his eyes around the surrounding mountains, secretly wondering how many of these people would die in the subsequent fight for the mature Red Candle Fruit.

“Let’s think about that for now. For now, we should cultivate, just breathing the air here feels like it is benefiting me. In any case, there is still some time before the Three Suns Grand Risings Phenomenon Big Sister Dai Yuan told us about finishes, we might as well take advantage of this calm while we can,” Dong Xuan’er proposed.

The other three nodded in agreement before finding spots on the small mountain to sit down cross-legged and immerse themselves in the wondrous fragrance filling the air.

Yang Kai quickly realized that this Red Candle Fruit really was a Heaven defying treasure. It was just as the ancient records described, a few days before it matured, it would exude a rich fruity aroma that could relax one’s mind and body while also promoting a cultivator’s mastery over their power and the comprehension of their realm.

Currently, one a single red sun had risen, yet there was already such a wondrous effect. Once all three red suns finished rising, the effects would surely become several times more potent.

Because he was together with Wei Gu Chang and the others, Yang Kai wasn’t worried about being attacked here, so he only left a small portion of his awareness to monitor surroundings while immersing the rest of his consciousness in this wonderful feeling.

Yang Kai was an Alchemist himself, and Alchemy required a very high degree of control over one’s Saint Qi, so he already had a better starting point than most cultivators present. Now, under the stimulation of the Red Candle Fruit’s fragrance, all kinds of subtle yet novel ideas came to him about how to further enhance his Saint Qi control, something Yang Kai greatly enjoyed. It was as if he had entered a new world, one in which he could perform the most perfect communication with the power in his body and manipulate it with a never before.

While Yang Kai sank into a meditative state to explore this new method of Saint Qi’s control, the other three, Wei Gu Chang, Dong Xuan’er, and Dai Yuan, also fell into different states of enlightenment.

After experiencing the initial wait-and-see period, the cultivators atop the various big and small hills also began sitting down and inhaling the aroma of the Red Candle Fruit, no longer wasting time.

Half a day after Yang Kai’s group arrived, a tense but peaceful situation had developed, with everyone focusing on absorbing the benefits of the Red Candle Fruit’s fragrance.

More people arrived over time, but although most of them were confused when they saw everyone else sitting in meditation, none of them acted rashly and instead quickly found a spot to sit down as well. After inhaling the rich fragrance, the surprise on their faces quickly gave way to a kind of tranquility.

At some point, a young-looking cultivator wearing azure robes arrived here alone. This man was the man who tried to go deeper into the third layer, but having arrived a little late, he found that all the peaks near the mountain valley had been occupied. Glancing around coldly, he secretly considered whether he should try to snatch a spot but he soon dismissed this idea.

He had only taken over this body a short while ago and had yet to even see the blue sky again, he didn’t want to draw too much attention for the time being.

However, when his eyes landed on Yang Kai, who was sitting cross-legged nearby, his eyes suddenly flashed with a look of pleasant surprise. He hadn't expected to see Yang Kai in this place.

But soon, his expression became cold and gloomy.

He was certain that it was this First-Order Saint King that had taken away his most precious treasure, but even after getting this close, he wasn't able to feel any of its aura from this boy.

Did he actually manage to absorb it? But that should be impossible. The kind of power hidden inside that thing was something he knew better than anyone. Let alone a cultivator of First-Order Saint King strength, even an Origin King would not be able to refine it within a day or two; moreover, there was a good chance of suffering a massive backlash for even trying.

Such a strange reality was staring him right in the face. This young First-Order Saint King had obtained his treasure, left the stalactite cave, and in less than an hour later, its aura had disappeared without a trace, and no matter how he urged his tracking method, he was unable to find any clues about its location.

But, if he really were to have fused with it, it would be impossible for this boy to still be alive.

This incomprehensible situation frustrated this young-looking man greatly. He simply couldn't have imagined that it wasn't Yang Kai himself who had merged with that thing but the Soul Warming Lotus that had swallowed it to evolve from six colours to seven colours.

As he was immersed in his confusion, the young First-Order Saint King suddenly opened his eyes and locked his gaze precisely on him across the distance. After the briefest of glances, this man set aside his eyes casually before searching for a not too far away spot and sitting down in meditation like everyone else.

Atop a nearby mountain, Yang Kai's brow wrinkled as a disgruntled look appeared on his face.

He had been deeply immersed in that strange sensibility when suddenly he felt someone's gaze upon him as well as a hint of hostility and murderous intent. He thought that it was Qu Chang Feng, but after seeing the man's face, he couldn't help feeling stunned.

The source of this hostility wasn't Qu Chang Feng, but it was someone Yang Kai had seen before, a man who had entered the Soul Cleansing Divine Water pool back in the stalactite cave.

Having his meditation interrupted, Yang Kai was naturally a little unhappy.

This man's strength wasn't bad, a peak Third-Order Saint King, and Yang Kai vaguely remembered that he came from a Sect called Flowing Cloud Valley.

However, there was an old man and another younger man with him at that time. But now, he appeared to be all alone. It was impossible to tell what had happened to the other two from Flowing Cloud Valley.

Why would this person have hostile and murderous intent towards him though? Yang Kai didn't remember doing anything to provoke the other party nor had he exposed any of his secrets in front of him. Being stared at for no apparent reason made Yang Kai somewhat annoyed.

“Did Junior Brother Yang discover something?” Dai Yuan seemed to perceive that Yang Kai’s aura had changed and opened her eyes. Seeing his thoughtful expression, she couldn’t help herself from asking.

“No,” Yang Kai shook his head before looking over in a certain direction and asking, “Do you recognize that man?”

Dai Yuan followed his gaze and immediately explained his identity, “He’s a Core Disciple from Flowing Cloud Valley named Lu Ye. Why? Does Brother Yang have some kind of grievance with him?”

[Lu Ye!] Yang Kai silently remembered the name before shaking his head, “No, I only encountered him briefly some time ago, but for some reason, he seems to be hostile towards me. It’s really quite strange.”

Dai Yuan’s eyes flashed, also feeling the situation was strange, “This Lu Ye isn’t the type to go around provoking others. Although I have no deep friendship with him, I have spoken a few words with him. His reputation in Flowing Cloud Valley is also quite good, why would he be hostile to you?”

“That’s what I want to know too,” Yang Kai grinned.

Perhaps Dai Yuan misunderstood something, thinking that there really was some kind of grudge between Yang Kai and Lu Ye, frowned, and reminded softly, “Lu Ye is the son of Lu Xiang Dong, the Sect Master of Flow Cloud Valley. Although Flowing Cloud Valley isn’t a top force, it’s strength isn’t bad. If it’s just some minor matter, I can help you to say a few words to Lu Ye, with his temperament, it shouldn’t be difficult to resolve the situation.”

“No need,” Yang Kai shook his head. Without mentioning he really didn’t have any grudge with this Lu Ye, even if he did, he had no need for others to resolve it. If the other party didn’t find trouble with him, Yang Kai wouldn’t find trouble with them, but if he did, Yang Kai didn’t mind solving the issue by cutting weeds and pulling out roots.

Seeing Yang Kai refuse her proposal, Dai Yuan naturally didn’t say anything more and was about to continue her meditation when Yang Kai suddenly gestured with his eyes again and asked, “What about that person?”

Dai Yuan followed his gaze again and saw the lone stern-faced man occupying a nearby small mountain. When she saw this man, Dai Yuan couldn’t help shuddering slightly and immediately retracted her gaze, whispering in a tone filled with the meaning of warning, “Junior Brother Yang shouldn’t inquire about this person too much, I only know that he’s probably from Star Emperor Sect; however, as for his name or details, I have no idea.”

Chapter 1223, Second Red Sun’s Rising

Sure enough, he came from Star Emperor Sect! Since seeing Qu Chang Feng treating this person so carefully back in the stalactite cave, Yang Kai had some suspicions. Only a disciple from Star Emperor Sect could let the arrogant Qu Chang Feng act so humbly. Even after suffering such a great loss, Qu Chang Feng had choked down his anger and dropped the matter, not daring to retaliate.

Dai Yuan seemed to be afraid that Yang Kai didn't comprehend how powerful Star Emperor Sect was so she continued with a serious tone, "On Shadowed Star, it is publicly known that the three most powerful forces are Star Emperor Sect, Heaven Battling Union, and Thunder Typhoon Sect, but in fact, every great force knows that the difference between Heaven Battling Union and Thunder Typhoon Sect and Star Emperor Sect is enormous. It is said that Star Emperor Mountain has over a hundred Peak Third-Order Origin Returning Realm masters. This is a terrifying number incomparable to Heaven Battling Union and Thunder Typhoon Sect. It's also said that the Star Emperor Sect has several powerful Origin King Grade artefacts."

"Are they really so powerful?" Yang Kai was genuinely startled. A Sect that had over a hundred Peak Third-Order Origin Returning Realm masters was something truly astonishing.

"En. Their total number of cultivators though is relatively low as they never openly recruit disciples, which is why despite their shocking reputation they aren't all that famous."

"Then how do they ensure their legacy continued to be passed down?" Yang Kai frowned.

"I'm not completely clear about that, but throughout Shadowed Star's history, there are rumours about some people who possess great fortune and destiny who are met by masters from Star Emperor Mountain and were taken back to be cultivated; however, the number of such cases is quite small," Dai Yuan explained, smiling slightly as she continued, "Star Emperor Sect's people rarely leave Star Emperor Mountain, so although they have many masters, as long as one doesn't try to provoke them, they won't use their strength to bully others, but if someone does provoke them..."

Yang Kai's eyes narrowed as he noticed that Dai Yuan's tender body was shivering slightly.

In his heart, he was stunned, thinking that if someone who really didn't fear the Heavens provoked such a terrifying existence, their fate must have been extremely miserable.

Dai Yuan lowered her voice even further as she whispered, "In general, every few decades, Star Emperor Sect will have one or two of its young generation's disciples go out for life experience. These disciples tend to remain very low key and never reveal their status, so there are times when no one even knows their identity until they return to Star Emperor Mountain. However, I have seen in one of Coloured Glass Sect's ancient records that about two thousand years ago, there was another Sect on Shadowed Star that rivalled Heaven Battling Union and Thunder Typhoon Sect in fame and strength called the Ancient Yang Sect. At that time, a young disciple that had come out from Star Emperor Mountain to wander the world accidentally obtained a rare and precious treasure. Some people from the Ancient Yang Sect learned about this and laid an ambush for him, killed him, and stole that treasure. One month later... the Ancient Yang Sect was exterminated and razed to the ground in a single night!"

Yang Kai paled.

There was no need to even think about it to know that the Ancient Yang Sect was destroyed by Star Emperor Sect. Being able to wipe out an existence equal in strength to Heaven Battling Union or Thunder Typhoon Sect overnight fully explained how much power the Star Emperor Sect commanded.

Dai Yuan smiled lightly as she brushed her hair back and said, "But this is something that happened more than two thousand years ago, no one knows whether it is true or false. The Elders from the Sect also consider this matter a taboo and never mention it and forbid anyone from asking about it."

However, there is a place on Shadowed Star called Grand Hidden Valley where not even grass grows for a thousand-kilometre radius. It is a barren wasteland filled with thick Yin Qi. Supposedly though, it was the original location of the Ancient Yang Sect. Many cultivators enter Grand Hidden Valley in search of opportunities as there are rumours about the Ancient Yang Sect having hidden stores containing all their rare and precious treasures along with astonishing wealth, but so far no one has been able to find such riches. Instead, many people have died trying.”

“Have you been?” Yang Kai asked Dai Yuan with a smile. Although she used words like ‘rumour’ and ‘hearsay’, Yang Kai could hear from her tone that she was certain these rumours were true, so it was quite likely she had been to see this Grand Hidden Valley for herself.

“Naturally I have been there,” Dai Yuan nodded gently. “But I didn’t have any gains. Instead, I was invaded by a strange chill and only after returning to Coloured Glass Sect and taking up some time could I purge the Yin Qi from my body. If Junior Brother Yang is interested, you should see it for yourself, just be careful if you do.”

“Good, if there is a chance,” Yang Kai nodded carelessly, but he wasn’t truly planning on going. Even if there were any hidden stores in the Ancient Yang Sect, after two thousand years, he didn’t believe they hadn’t been found. Running over now to search for treasure would be like trying to draw water with a bamboo basket, Yang Kai wasn’t willing to waste time and energy on such a pointless pursuit.

“Hehe,” Dai Yuan also saw that Yang Kai was just being perfunctory and didn’t bother continuing to talk about this topic, instead saying, “Those who come out from Star Emperor Sect are generally not noticed, but this time things are different thanks to the Flowing Flame Sand Field having opened. Before coming here, my Master told me to be careful about cultivators who are all alone and have unfamiliar faces, because they might just be disciples from Star Emperor Sect. To be honest, when I first met Junior Brother Yang, I thought you were from Star Emperor Sect...”

Yang Kai was stunned, not having expected that she would have such a misunderstanding. However, it was quite reasonable. Yang Kai wasn’t from Shadowed Star so naturally not many knew his face, and since he was able to reach the third layer with just a First-Order Saint King cultivation, he definitely possessed some powerful methods, so Dai Yuan having such a misunderstanding was all but inevitable.

Considering this, Yang Kai suddenly realized that at that time, Meng Hong Liang from Imperial City Sect and Huang Xi from Extreme Path Sect seemed had probably misunderstood his identity after he showed off some of his means. They obviously suspected that he was from Star Emperor Mountain, which caused Meng Hong Liang to become cautious about acting lest innocents be hurt.

Dai Yuan also had a similar misunderstanding, but after learning that Yang Kai and Wei Gu Chang had ties, she immediately denied this conjecture, because Star Emperor Sect’s people would never try to associate with others.

After arriving here, when she saw this stern-faced man, she instantly knew that he was the real disciple from Star Emperor Sect.

After talking for a while, with nothing else to discuss, both closed their eyes and continued to meditate.

The glowing red sun continued rising higher and higher until it seemingly reached the top of the sky.

The fruit scent in the air became more and more intense over time and the perceptions and insights which could be obtained from inhaling it also became more and more profound, causing each of the cultivators here to be delighted.

Suddenly, the earth seemed to shake, and a shocking energy fluctuation appeared.

Such a change naturally caused all the cultivators present to pale, wake from their deep meditation, and stare towards the mountain valley in shock.

A layer of red mist suddenly began filling the mountain valley, one that seemed to contain a terrifying power.

The appearance of this red mist was completely unexpected as there were no signs of it a moment ago, but when the cultivators looked, it had already welled up and within the blink of an eye had filled the entire mountain valley.

Immediately, an astonishing wave of heat burst forth, creating a hot wind which swept across every corner of the Flowing Flame Sand Field's third layer.

This kind of scene had been experienced by everyone already, so witnessing it again at this moment, their anxiety quickly faded as they knew that although this wave of heat looked terrifying, it didn't bring any harm with it.

Sure enough, when the hot wind swept across everyone's bodies and spread farther away, no one was injured.

In the very centre of the mountain valley, another red sun was born, and it slowly began rising up into the sky!

This red sun didn't appear very big, only about as large as a plate, but despite being able to see it with their eyes, none of the cultivators present could probe it with their Divine Sense. On top of that, if they stared at it for too long, they would begin to feel dizzy.

A more intense fruity fragrance burst forth, causing the hearts in each cultivator's chest to pound.

The second red sun had appeared.

This also meant that the Red Candle Fruit was one step closer to true maturity. The disciples from the great forces present who had learned the truth from Medicine Pill Sect's Li You Nan suddenly grew restless and the atmosphere became filled with tension and hostility. Around the mountain valley, everyone was looking at everyone else as if they were irreconcilable enemies they couldn't wait to rush over and kill.

The cultivators from Sects who still didn't know the truth about the mature Red Candle Fruit's miraculous effects were still affected by this atmosphere. Unwilling to let go of any clues, while carefully watching other people's movements, they sent some people to forces they were friendly with to inquire about the situation.

Soon, all kinds of secrets about the Red Candle Fruit spread out, causing every cultivator present to understand what was happening and allowing the tense atmosphere to once again calm down.

Since there would be a Three Suns Grand Risings Phenomenon, and only two red suns had appeared so far, there was no need to act hastily; let alone, before it truly matured, the Red Candle Fruit wouldn't appear before their eyes, so even if someone wanted to try to steal it, they wouldn't be able to.

After the appearance of the second red sun, there was only a brief moment of commotion around the mountain valley before everyone fell silent again and continued to absorb the fruity aroma, realize its mysteries, and enhance their own cultivation.

Yang Kai also immersed himself in this scent, feeling like his comprehension of Saint Qi control had risen to another level and some vague concepts and ideas began filling his head. But although he had caught a glimpse of something, he was still unable to understand it completely.

This situation was like he was itchy all over but unable to scratch himself, causing Yang Kai to become somewhat restless as he focused even more of his attention on this vague concept, wanting to take advantage of this opportunity before the Red Candle Fruit fully matured. If he could comprehend these new insights, Yang Kai didn't doubt his combat power would increase significantly.

Time passed by slowly, but just as everyone was immersed in their own meditation, an angry roar suddenly rang out, "Bastard, you dare try to secretly arrange a Spirit Array?!"

This roar awakened a lot of cultivators who were meditating and comprehending, all of them looking over towards the origin of this shout, their eyes landing on a man from Heaven Battling Union waving a huge fan angrily. This fan gave off a potent energy fluctuation and at first glance, which was obviously a high-grade artefact.

Chapter 1224, Expelling People

The Heaven Battling Union cultivator waved the fan in his hand as he snarled angrily, summoning a dragon phantom condensed of wind from it that rushed out with a loud dragon roar and crashed towards a mountaintop a few hundred meters away where a flustered cultivator stood.

Who this cultivator was or what force he came from wasn't important at the moment, what was important was that he was doing something sneakily just now. He had thought that with everyone immersed in their own meditation, it would be a good opportunity to secretly arrange a Spirit Array, allowing his group to gain an advantage in the struggle which would surely erupt when the Red Candle Fruit fully matured.

How could he have known that although everyone truly was immersed in their own comprehension, there was still someone close by who were vigilantly observing the surrounding area? This man had just started to arrange his Spirit Array but was immediately noticed by a cultivator from Heaven Battling Union.

The loud roar awakened all of the nearby cultivators and in the front of everyone's eyes, before the cultivator who tried to secretly set up a Spirit Array could justify himself, the huge wind dragon, composed of sharp wind blades, opened its great maw and descended upon him.

This cultivator wasn't a pushover though, no one who reached the third layer was, so he swiftly raised his hand and condensed a red light which he pushed towards the approaching dragon's mouth; however his face was still filled with horror and panic.

With a bang, the strange red light exploded directly inside the belly of the wind dragon, erupting with unimaginable power. A red glow splashed around, causing the wind dragon to collapse.

"You dare fight back!?" Heaven Battling Union's Qu Chang Feng shouted as he rose to his feet, grinned, and grasped towards the man in the distance.

An invisible force suddenly bound this cultivator, making him unable to move a muscle.

The Heaven Battling Union cultivator that originally sent out the wind dragon saw this and grinned meaningfully, waving the big fan in his hand again, sending out another wind dragon, this time successfully swallowing the man who tried to set up the Spirit Array .

A scream came out, and although this man was also a Third Order Saint King, facing both Qu Chang Feng and another elite Heaven Battling Union disciple, he was unable to resist. After struggling for a moment, the countless wind blades in the dragon's body cut this man to pieces.

A bloody smell rose as chunks of flesh and blood splattered everywhere.

Immediately after Qu Chang Feng and his fellow Sect Brother killed this man, they set their sights on a nearby mountain with cold and gloomy eyes.

Atop this mountain were three Saint Kings with extremely ugly faces. The one who seemed to be the leader of this group stepped forward and shouted, "Qu Chang Feng, what are you doing? Even if my Flame Shield Union disciple acted a bit out of turn, it wasn't your place to kill him. Could it be you want to stir up a dispute between Heaven Battling Union and Flame Shield Union?"

"Haha, stir up a dispute?" Qu Chang Feng sneered dismissively, "Don't try to intimidate this Young Master with such bold words, you're not worthy. Instead, why don't you ask everyone else here if your Junior Brother sneakily trying to arrange a Spirit Array here is acceptable or not!"

Hearing this, the leader of Flame Shield Union's group swept his eyes around and quickly discovered that every cultivator present was glaring at him angrily, causing his heart to sink as he knew he had stirred up public anger.

The Red Candle Fruit was about to mature, yet someone had dared tried to set up a Spirit Array to try to gain an advantage, how could this be tolerated?

So even if Qu Chang Feng had a bad reputation and many here did not think well of him, everyone was siding with him at this moment. To put it more simply though, everyone was simply defending their own interests.

After Qu Chang Feng shouted, many cultivators on the nearby mountain tops began to condense their Saint Qi, a sign they were preparing to attack.

The faces of the three remaining Flame Shield Union disciples changed greatly and they didn't dare to say anything. They knew that they could no longer remain here and secretly hated that Qu Chang Feng had acted so ruthlessly.

Their companion had only gone to arrange that Spirit Array after discussing it with them and obtaining all of their approval. They all felt that it was a good opportunity to arrange such an array, but after being seen through, they had immediately found themselves in a compromised position.

If they didn't leave now, they would likely be targeted and killed by everyone present.

Having realized this, the leader of Flame Shield Union's group nodded, "Good, Qu Chang Feng, I'll remember you. I will surely collect on the debt of killing my Junior Brother in the future. And all of you people helping this tyrant do evil, just know that such treatment will befall you too sooner or later. Haha, at that time, I hope you put your best into it... Let's go!"

Saying so, he motioned to his two other companions and they quickly left without even looking back.

Seeing the other party act so decisively, Qu Chang Feng was slightly surprised, but he wasn't stupid enough to chase after them as right now wasn't a good time to leave. Him and his Junior Brother being able to instantly kill that man was only because they had caught him off guard, but trying to kill three more without any difficulties wasn't very realistic.

Even if there was a gap in their strengths, three Third Order Saint Kings weren't soft persimmon that could be casually pinched.

With a sullen expression, Qu Chang Feng swept his eyes around and proudly declared, "Anyone else who dares try to act in secret, do not expect this Qu to act politely. The treasure we all seek is about to be born, so I hope everyone here can abide by the rules and compete fairly for it when the time comes, otherwise they best be prepared to face this Qu's wrath."

As soon as these words came out, someone shouted, "Young Master Qu, I just saw that guy secretly try to put something out! See, he's obviously anxious now!"

"Who!" Qu Chang Feng glared coldly as he demanded an answer from the one who spoke.

"It was the people from Myriad Beast Mountain!" The speaker didn't show any fear and immediately pointed towards a mountain top with five high strength cultivators.

The expressions of these five people changed dramatically as they all shot a hate filled glare towards the person who had just spoke, but this man was clearly intent on currying favour with Qu Chang Feng and didn't pay any mind to their silent threat, shouting loudly, "Although I was not able to see what it was he put out, it should be some kind of Monster Beast that is good at concealing itself. Heh, everyone knows Myriad Beast Mountain is good at commanding Monster Beasts."

"So that's how it is!" Qu Chang Feng nodded naturally before turning to the five Myriad Beast Mountain disciples and coldly asking, "Do you have anything you'd like to say?"

The brawny man who appeared to be this group's leader frowned and grumbled for a moment before suddenly bursting out into laughter, "Young Master Qu, verbal statements aren't guarantees, surely you aren't going to simply take one man's word as the truth?"

Obviously, he was completely confident that whatever means he had used couldn't be seen through by others, otherwise he wouldn't be acting so boldly. As long as there was no evidence, Qu Chang Feng couldn't just force drive him off.

With things having reached this point, everyone could see that Heaven Battling Union was only trying to expel people in advance.

They couldn't just rush out and kill others for no reason in this situation and had to provide at least some kind of excuse. The Flame Shield Union disciple who had been killed just now simply got what he deserved. Who made him run out and try to arrange a Spirit Array under watchful eyes? Even after losing his life, he still implicated the remaining Flame Shield Union disciples, causing them to be driven away.

Now, no one knew if these Myriad Beast Mountain disciples were really up to something or not, but no one was going to speak up to support them either.

In this situation, the fewer people around, the better. Most people here were taking an attitude of uninvolved bystanders, allowing Qu Chang Feng to show off his might however he wished, all while secretly hoping he would find a way to expel more people.

The fewer people who remained here, the easier it would be to obtain the Red Candle Fruit.

Hearing what the brawny man said though, Qu Chang Feng's brow wrinkled; although he really wanted to drive away this group from Myriad Beast Mountain, without solid evidence, it wouldn't be good to act rashly.

"Does Young Master Qu think that Heaven Battling Union is so powerful it can not place any other force in its eyes? If so, then this Hai must disagree, my Myriad Beast Mountain won't be so casually bullied." As the brawny man said so, his expression suddenly became gloomy as he summoned a number of fist-sized jet black bees from inside his body. As these bees spread their wings, a dull buzzing filled the air. There were more than thirty of these bees, each one displaying a pointed stinger that seemed to shimmer with cold light. These stingers dripped a jet black liquid which was clearly extremely poisonous, causing many who saw it to shiver.

In addition to Hai Xing, the other cultivators from Myriad Beast Mountain also released their own Monster Beasts.

These Monster Beasts were all rare breeds, each one an Eight-Order Monster Beast that had deadly inborn killing strikes. Hovering and crawling about, these Monster Beasts gathered around the five Myriad Beast Mountain disciples, their red eyes staring around menacingly, waiting for their masters to issue an order to attack.

"Bitter Monarch Bee!" After seeing these thirty-plus bees, Qu Chang Feng's expression changed dramatically, a look of dread spreading across his face as he grit his teeth, "Good good good, no wonder you dare act so boldly, it turns out you've brought so many of Myriad Beast Mountain's famed defenders. It seems Myriad Beast Mountain has invested a lot of capital for this time's Flowing Flame Sand Field expedition."

The brawny man named Hai Xing grinned and said, "I've shown Young Master Qu something embarrassing. We Myriad Beast Mountain disciples only know how to tame and command Monster Beasts, so how could we enter this Flowing Flame Sand Field without some small life-saving measures? This Hai does not want things to become awkward here. If Young Master Qu does not have conclusive evidence, could you stop embarrassing this Hai? This Hai would appreciate it greatly!"

Although these Bitter Monarch Bees gave Hai Xing some confidence, he did not want to have a complete fall out with Qu Chang Feng here. At this time, he wanted to de-escalate the situation, giving both parties a way to back down. Making big things small, and small things nothing would be for the best.

Qu Chang Feng frowned deeply, wondering whether it was time to back down. With the other side possessing more than thirty Bitter Monarch Bees, if they really came to blows, his side would definitely suffer losses.

But before he could speak, pleasant laughter suddenly filled the air, "If you want evidence, it's a simple matter, just let me take a look."

Following the sound of this voice, everyone's eyes turned to the mountain occupied by Coloured Glass Sect where they saw Yin Su Die stand up, her soul-stirring face flashing an enchanting smile as he delicate white hand summoned out a small grey bead the size of a pigeon egg.

This bead looked dull and ordinary and was obviously not something precious.

But when Qu Chang Feng saw this bead, his eyes lit up and he couldn't help laughing out loud.

Chapter 1225, Sneak Attack

Hai Xing, from Myriad Beast Mountain, called out in alarm, "Form Revealing Bead! Yin Su Die, you insane woman, you actually brought that thing here? Were you specifically targeting my Myriad Beast Mountain?!"

Yin Su Die giggled again, her tender body gently trembling, "Why would Brother Hai say such a thing? Your Myriad Beast Mountain and my Coloured Glass Sect are close neighbors and live in harmony with one another like true brothers and sisters, how could I possibly be targeting you? There are many hidden Spirit Arrays and barriers in this Flowing Flame Sand Field, I simply brought this bead in case I encountered one. Why is Brother Hai acting so nervous? Could it be you really did something untoward you wish to conceal from everyone?"

Her voice was sweet and crisp, but when it reached Hai Xing's ears, it only caused him cold chills.

Yin Su Die didn't wait for Hai Xing to say anything before pouring her Saint Qi into the bead, causing a light halo to blossom from it. This light seemed to have an incredible ability that made everyone exposed to it feel as if they were unable to conceal anything from it, a truly disturbing feeling.

Down below in the mountain valley filled with dead trees, a meter long centipede suddenly appeared in everyone's view. It seemed to be lurking a couple dozen meters below the ground and was wriggling unceasingly, causing anyone who saw it to feel their skin crawl.

When the bean's light shone down into the mountain valley, even this creepy-looking Monster Beast centipede which was perfectly hidden a moment ago became illuminated.

Seeing this, Qu Chang Feng shouted, "Red Lines Iron Centipede! What else do you have to say now?"

Hai Xing knew that the situation had become unfavourable the moment that grey bead appeared in Yin Su Die's hands. Just now he had tried to retrieve his Red Lines Iron Centipede which he sent underground, but was ultimately too late. His face turned red as he couldn't answer Qu Chang Feng's question, instead turning a hate filled glare towards Yin Su Die.

Suddenly, the scenes became tense, as if a fight would erupt at any moment.

Kacha...

A brilliant flash of lightning suddenly appeared, one that cut through the tense atmosphere. Looking in the direction of the sound's source, Hai Xing blood cooled greatly and he dismissed his original idea of relying on the powerful Monster Beasts he and his fellow disciples had brought with them to forcibly remain here.

All because the one who sent out this bolt of lightning was none other than Fang Tian Zhong of Thunder Typhoon Sect. The latter had slowly stood up and was now staring indifferently towards Myriad Beast Mountain. Although he didn't say anything out loud, everyone understood what he meant.

Obviously Fang Tian Zhong was also very dissatisfied with other's trying to sneakily gain an advantage here and had decided to ally himself with Qu Chang Feng.

On top of that, Yin Su Die had expressed her attitude, so Hai Xing understood that if he insisted on remaining here, he would have to face all three of these Sect's elites. Even with the Monster Beasts he brought, it wouldn't be enough to resist such a force.

His face became gloomy, Hai Xing didn't say another word and simply heaved a deep sigh, taking back the more than thirty Bitter Monarch Bees flying around him before leading his companions away.

After the people from Flame Shield Union were expelled, the group of five from Myriad Beast Mountain had suffered the same fate. It really was just as the leader from Flame Shield Union had said before leaving!

Neither of these two forces was weak, but they didn't dare to remain here after provoking public anger. The Red Candle Fruit was indeed rare and precious, but in the end, they valued their lives more.

Having been forced out Myriad Beast Mountain, Yin Su Die was in the best of moods, her enchanting smile blossoming even more brilliantly than normal, tugging on the souls of the surrounding cultivators. Many male cultivators who saw this smile felt a nearly irresistible urge to rush out, embrace her, and taster her wondrous flavour.

Myriad Beast Mountain and Coloured Glass Sect were neighbouring Sects, so naturally there was some friction and even battles between them. Yin Su Die bringing the Form Revealing Bead with her this time was naturally out of concern for Myriad Beast Mountain's man Monster Beasts which concealment abilities; however, she hadn't expected it to play such an important role in this situation.

This time, after returning and reporting to the Sect, Yin Su Die was certain she would be able to obtain praise from her Master. Thinking so, she shot a glance over at Dai Yuan, but seeing the other party apparently never having opened her eyes and still immersed in her own meditation, Yin Su Die immediately felt a bit disgruntled.

Just then, Yang Kai coughed and his face went pale, as if he had suffered some kind of trauma.

The mountain valley was essentially silent, with everyone starting around at their neighbours with extreme vigilance. No one even dared to speak and were even trying to breathe quietly, so when Yang Kai's muffled cough echoed, it immediately caught everyone's attention.

Wei Gu Chang quickly asked with concern, "Brother Yang, what happened?"

Yang Kai's pale complexion gradually returned to normal and he sent out a faint smile, "It's nothing, just a small mistake in my perception and I almost injured myself."

"Oh," Wei Gu Chang didn't ask any more, although he felt this explanation was strange.

Even when one was immersed in a deep state of comprehension, a small mistake wouldn't normally result in injuries. Not only was Wei Gu Chang suspicious, even Dong Xuan'er and Dai Yuan were puzzled, with both of them opening their eyes to take a look at him.

"Brother Wei, is there something wrong on your side?" Qu Chang Feng asked coldly. He had just been riding high after showing off his strength and prestige, so suddenly being interrupted by Yang Kai's cough had made him upset. Regardless of whether this First-Order Saint King had done it intentionally or unintentionally, it still displeased Qu Chang Feng so naturally his tone wouldn't be too good.

What's more, he didn't like Yang Kai to begin with. He didn't know why, but every time he saw this kid, he felt angry. This kid had often run into him, and now Qu Chang Feng was wondering just what kind of skill he possessed that allowed him to reach the third layer with such a weak cultivation.

"It's nothing, Brother Qu can continue what it was he was doing," Wei Gu Chang grinned and said meaningfully.

Qu Chang Feng's face sank further as he stared deeply at Wei Gu Chang but he ultimately didn't try to find trouble with him. Instead, he stood tall atop his mountain and loudly proclaimed, "Flame Shield Union and Myriad Beast Mountain's people only have themselves to blame. Just as this Qu said moments ago, I hope everyone will abide by the rules. Before the Red Candle Fruit fully matures, don't try to engage in any mischief. After the Red Candle Fruit matures, everyone will use their own means to compete for it. Of course, this Qu believes that there are others besides those two who are trying to use underhanded means here. Heh, I'd like to give these friends a chance to leave now, if you don't and this Qu finds out later, even if you want to leave, I'm afraid you won't be able to."

Hearing this, many people's complexions changed, all of them realizing they had greatly underestimated Qu Chang Feng's appetite.

Just now, he had expelled both the Flame Shield Union and Myriad Beast Mountain, and although he had some reasons for doing so, and everyone had stood behind him as it could loosely be interpreted as an action taken out of considered for everyone's benefit, what Qu Chang Feng had just declared was clearly overdoing it a bit. This guy obviously wanted to make a clean sweep of everyone here.

As a result, many of the slightly weaker forces glanced over at the peak where Thunder Typhoon Sect was stationed, wanting to see how Fang Tian Zhong reacted.

Everyone knew that Fang Tian Zhong and Qu Chang Feng were constantly at odds with one another and that each time they met there would inevitably be conflict. A moment ago, Fang Tian Zhong and Qu Chang Feng had joined forces, but that didn't mean they would do so again now.

Perhaps Fang Tian Zhong would oppose Qu Chang Feng like normal this time, allowing them to fish in troubled waters.

However, with just a glance, these people's hearts sank.

Fang Tian Zhong was actually sitting there with his eyes closed, completely disregarding Qu Chang Feng show of arrogance!

What did this mean? It clearly meant that Fang Tian Zhong had secretly reached an agreement with Qu Chang Feng and was going to ignore the current situation.

After realizing this, many people shook their heads and laughed bitterly, there were no eternal enemies in the world, only eternal benefits.

For the Red Candle Fruit, even Fang Tian Zhong and Qu Chang Feng could temporarily ally with each other. Since that was the case, how could there be room for any of them?

With the situation set in stone, many smaller forces who only had two or three cultivators present retreated from their respective mountains and left. They believed that even if they persisted, Qu Chang Feng would find an excuse to drive them away, so they figured they might as well depart now before they suffered any further losses.

Naturally, some forces didn't pick up on Qu Chang Feng's not so subtle message, thinking they hadn't done anything untoward, and insisted on staying. However, Qu Chang Feng quickly declared that they were guilty and without even letting them defend themselves projected his murderous intent towards them and attack, successfully expelling several more forces.

He had to look for evidence when dealing with Myriad Beast Mountain because he was concerned about dealing with those Bitter Monarch Bees, but for others, he had nothing to fear. His fist was bigger, so what he said was right.

While Qu Chang Feng was putting on a show, only about a dozen forces remained unconcerned, all of them simply observing the scene in front of them indifferently, showing no intention to interfere either way.

All of them knew that Qu Chang Feng doing this would more or less benefit them, but as long as they didn't get involved, Heaven Battling Union would bear all the notoriety. In any case, Heaven Battling Union already had so many accumulated grudges, why would they fear having a few more?

Qu Chang Feng was swift and ruthless, successfully driving away at least seventy percent of the gather forces, turning the originally bustling mountain valley into a rather sparse scene.

As for the remaining dozen forces atop their own mountain tops, it wasn't that Qu Chang Feng didn't want to drive them away, but that he couldn't. These dozen or so forces weren't weak so he didn't dare to go planting stolen goods to shift blame at will.

After this uproar, the mountain valley quieted down again as the second red sun gradually approached the top of the sky.

As things settled down though, Yang Kai was actually staring back towards the distance, his eyes filled with cold light.

At the end of his gaze was the increasingly estranged cultivator that Dai Yuan just told him was Lu Ye of Flowing Cloud Valley!

Yang Kai had long felt the murderous intent and hostility of this man, but he had never imagined that the other party would dare to attack him in the front of everyone's eyes. On top of that, the method he used was so ingenious that even Yang Kai had barely been able to detect it.

Just now, when Yin Su Die was displaying the power of the Form Revealing Bead, Yang Kai had opened his eyes because he was curious and wanted to see what kind of special ability it possessed that could cause the brawny man from Myriad Beast Mountain to react so greatly.

Unexpectedly though, when the light from the Form Revealing Bead radiated, Yang Kai actually saw a faint trace of abnormal energy not far away that was slowly spreading towards him.

The source of this strange energy was actually from Lu Ye.

Chapter 1226, A Day Felt Like a Year

This mass of Spiritual Energy was concealed so well that even with Yang Kai's incredibly powerful Divine Sense, he wasn't able to notice its approach. If not for the unexpected appearance of the Form Revealing Bead, this attack would surely have succeeded.

The moment he sensed this Spiritual Energy attack, Yang Kai countered.

What surprised him though was that the other party's Divine Sense was no weaker than his own. After the invisible collision between their two Divine Senses, Yang Kai had actually suffered a slight loss.

After this incident, Lu Ye immediately took back his Divine Sense and pretended he hadn't done anything while Yang Kai's cough had actually attracted everyone's attention.

After Qu Chang Feng began expelling people though, Lu Ye's expression became gloomy. With many other cultivators being driven away, he also chose to leave; after all, he was the only one from Flowing Cloud Valley to arrive, and since he was alone, Qu Chang Feng would surely not tolerate his presence. If he didn't leave, it would only cause problems for himself.

[Something is up with that guy!]

Yang Kai knew that if not for him fortunately obtaining the Soul Warming Lotus many years ago, he wouldn't have such a powerful Soul. But how many Soul Warming Lotuses could there be in this world? Even if there was another Soul Warming Lotus, it was impossible for it to be in the hands of a cultivator like Lu Ye.

Yet this Lu Ye's Soul cultivation was truly no weaker than his own, a very strange phenomenon.

Flowing Cloud Valley wasn't a very powerful force, only second class by Shadowed Star's standards. It was impossible for such a Sect to have a Secret Art which could temper one's Soul so profoundly, so how was Lu Ye able to cultivate his Spiritual Energy to such a degree?

Previously, in the stalactite cave, Yang Kai hadn't noticed anything special about this Lu Ye. He was just an ordinary Third-Order Saint King cultivator. Later, when everyone was soaking in the Soul Cleansing Divine Water, Lu Ye had entered too, but he definitely did not obtain enough benefits to explain such a dramatic change.

Acquiring such a powerful enemy for no apparent reason made Yang Kai feel extremely depressed, but no matter how he thought about it, he couldn't understand how he had offended the other party.

Yang Kai swore to find a chance to kill Lu Ye as quickly as possible. Regardless of whether the other person was misunderstanding something or simply bore a grudge against him, having such an enemy always staring at him made Yang Kai unable to relax.

After mulling over these thoughts in his mind, Yang Kai quickly made his decision. Exhaling softly, he no longer thought about Lu Ye and once again closed his eyes to continue meditating. After the second red sun rose, the fruit aroma in the air had become more intense and its efficacy had also become much stronger. All the remaining cultivators refused to waste this rare opportunity and all focused on silently meditating.

Yang Kai continued immersing himself in his understanding of Saint Qi control. He knew that the Red Candle Fruit's fragrance would not linger for long, only until it fully matured, so he didn't intend on using this short time to study the esoteric Dao of Space. As long as he could comprehend how to fully control his Saint Qi in the next two or three days, this little trip would definitely be worthwhile.

Yang Kai didn't know what other people chose to comprehend, but he felt his choice was for the best.

When the second red sun rose to the mid-day position and no longer moved, the mountain valley filled with another layer of red energy. The cultivators who had witnessed this situation twice already did not panic, but that didn't mean they weren't excited, most of them barely able to maintain straight faces.

The emergence of this dark red energy meant that the third red sun was about to rise, and the Three Suns Grand Risings Phenomenon would be completed. This also meant that the Red Candle Fruit was fully mature!

Many cultivators became anxious and this excitement prevented them from continuing to meditate and peacefully comprehend the various profound concepts they were studying. Instead, they opened their eyes and began paying even closer attention to everything in the mountain valley.

The dark red energy began to converge, and the earth trembled lightly. Soon, a great burst of energy erupted. At the same time, the fruity aroma in the air became even richer.

The third red sun then appeared in front of everyone's eyes and slowly began rising up into the sky.

Rustling sounds echoed all around and Saint Qi fluctuations began appearing as some people seemed eager to rush into the valley.

Li You Nan of Medicine Pill Sect saw this and rubbed his forehead in frustration. Unable to care about keeping up appearances, he shouted loudly, "You must not act rashly! The Three Suns Grand Risings is not finished, and the Red Candle Fruit has yet to surface. No one may fight yet! Once anything interferes with the maturing of the Red Candle Fruit, dying ten thousand times won't be enough of an apologize!"

He was the most knowledgeable about the Red Candle Fruit's maturation process, so naturally, he had the responsibility to remind everyone.

At the same time, Li You Nan was cursing in his heart. If he wasn't worried about these people being unable to hold back and really starting a fight, disturbing the maturing of the Red Candle Fruit, he wouldn't have said anything. In fact, it would have been best if these people had killed each other off completely. After they all died, his Medicine Pill Sect would be able to monopolize this Heavenly spirit fruit.

After listening to Li You Nan's words, many people gave him a cold glare; however, they maintained their heightened vigilance and continued to secretly condense their Saint Qi.

Atop Shadow Moon Hall's hill, Wei Gu Chang observed the situation for a moment and concluded that there was still some time left before closing his eyes again and continuing his meditation, not displaying any outwards signs of anxiety.

With the passage of time, the atmosphere around the small mountain valley became tenser and tenser. By the time the third red sun had risen halfway up into the sky, many cultivators who were still meditating were finally unable to hold back and got up to pay closer attention to the movements of this red sun. Not only ordinary cultivators, but even the famous rising stars like Wei Gu Chang, Qu Chang Feng, Fang Tian Zhong, Yin Su Die, Tang Yong, and Qu Ming Hai were the same...

No one could continue to maintain the same indifference as before, all of them carefully tracking the height of the red sun while whispering quietly to the people around them, solemn and serious expressions upon their faces.

"Junior Brother Yang is still immersed in his comprehension!" Dai Yuan eyes flashed with a look of astonishment as she glanced over at Yang Kai's still sitting figure and noticed that his Saint Qi was fluctuating fiercely.

Yang Kai appearing like this clearly indicated that he had arrived at a critical juncture in his comprehension and couldn't even be bothered to pay attention to the maturing of the Red Candle Fruit.

"It seems Brother Yang's harvest this time hasn't been small," Wei Gu Chang smiled bitterly as he felt some envy towards Yang Kai. He had also been immersed in meditation for the past day or two, but because he had been keeping track of the Red Candle Fruit's situation from time to time, he hadn't been able to comprehend anything of significance and only managed to obtain some minor insights. Although he still obtained some benefits, it was far from what Yang Kai grasped.

"That person is also still meditating!" Dong Xuan'er cast his eyes onto another mountain top. On the other end of her gaze was the stern-faced man from Star Emperor Sect who, just like Yang Kai, was sitting cross-legged, his look as tranquil as an ancient well with only his Saint Qi tumbling violently.

“Perhaps this is the gap between us and them,” Wei Gu Chang muttered to himself. He had long been acknowledged as a great genius, Shadow Moon Hall’s most dazzling star, on par with Fang Tian Zhong, Qu Chang Feng and the other leaders of the younger generation, so he had never felt he was inferior to any others.

However, after witnessing the various methods Yang Kai had displayed, he became acutely aware of his shortcomings. Now, in addition to Yang Kai, a disciple from Star Emperor Sect had emerged. Wei Gu Chang inexplicably felt a sense of crisis wash over him.

He knew that if he didn’t work hard, the future Shadowed Star might not have a place for him!

All around the mountain valley, dozens of cultivators were standing atop their own hills, paying attention to the third red sun, so the actions of Yang Kai and the Star Emperor Sect disciple were very eye-catching.

None cared much about Yang Kai. No one knew his origins, but a mere First-Order Saint King couldn’t enter these elite’s eyes.

But the stern-faced man from Star Emperor Sect continuing his meditation actually allowed everyone to secretly breathe a sigh of relief, all of them hoping he would continue his comprehension until the ownership of the Red Candle Fruit had been settled.

Everyone here now truly understood the meaning of the saying ‘a day felt like a year’.

Since the third red sun appeared, it seemed to be moving slower than a crawling turtle as it rose into the sky, making everyone wish they could rush forward and help push it up.

This situation continued for a whole day until finally, the third red sun rose to the mid-day position and joined the other two red suns, completing the Three Suns Grand Risings Phenomenon. These three red suns seemed to form some kind of resonance with each other, causing a brilliant red light to burst forth and illuminate the entire third layer of the Flowing Flame Sand Field. This bright flash blinded all the cultivators who remained in the third layer for a moment and forced them to close their eyes.

A great pulse of energy was released high up in the sky in the next moment, and when the brilliant red light finally dimmed and everyone opened their eyes again, they were shocked by what they saw!

Because the three red suns had actually merged together to form a single giant red sun. This red sun was rapidly rotating and each time it did, it was drawing in an unprecedented amount of energy.

The surrounding World Energy aura became incomparably rich and turbulent all of a sudden.

All of this World Energy gathered together here and was madly pouring into the red sun as if it were a bottomless pit.

Atop Medicine Pill Sect’s mountain, Li You Nan trembled, his eyes going wide as he stared at the scene in front of himself, unable to control his excitement!

It was exactly the same as was recorded in the ancient records, with no differences whatsoever; it truly was a maturing Red Candle Fruit!

After an incense stick worth of time, the World Energy in the entire third layer of the Flowing Flame Sand Field had been consumed, making the surrounding several hundred kilometres a dead zone!

The giant red sun also seemed to have become more solid, hanging in the sky like a real little sun.

Suddenly, it stopped rotating, going from an extremely fast motion to complete stillness.

“Not good!” Li You Nan saw this and immediately began leaking cold sweat. Li You Nan hurriedly summoned out a shield-type artefact which he transformed into a protective barrier around the mountain occupied by Medicine Pill Sect, covering them in a solid defensive shield.

Chapter 1227, Scramble

The moment Li You Nana acted, the other disciples of Medicine Pill Sect also took out their defensive artefacts to protect themselves. Obviously, they had prepared beforehand for this, otherwise, they wouldn't have been able to act so swiftly.

Medicine Pill Sect's actions drew the attention of all the other cultivators present, many of them wondering why they seemed to be in such a panic.

Although they didn't understand everything, everyone realized the situation wasn't good. Li You Nan clearly hadn't told them something about what was about to happen, and whatever was about to occur was clearly dangerous. Why else would Medicine Pill Sect suddenly behave this way?

There was no need to remind anyone as all the cultivators who saw Li You Nan's actions also began summoning their defensive artefacts.

Atop Shadow Moon Hall's hill, Wei Gu Chang snorted coldly before pushing his Saint Qi. A black light curtain immediately covered the hill, one that seemed to have streaks of red lightning flashing across its surface.

Dong Xuan'er also took out a token-like object and poured her Saint Qi into it, transforming it into a stream of light that circled their group.

Dai Yuan summoned her cloth-like artefact once more and shrouded the hill in a protective pink cloud.

The only one who didn't move was Yang Kai as he seemed to still be deeply immersed in his own comprehension. He didn't need to take any action though as Wei Gu Chang and the others were there to guard him.

The disciple from Star Emperor Sect didn't have such luxury though. He had been alone on his mountain top from the start, so after he noticed the strange behaviour of everyone around him, he immediately opened his eyes and stared up indifferently towards the red sun in the sky.

At that moment, thousands of crimson light beams shot out from the red sun in all directions.

These crimson light beams were powerful and extremely fast, in the blink of an eye arriving in front of everyone and battering their defences with a seemingly endless barrage.

Everyone immediately understood why the people from Medicine Pill Sect had assumed a strong defensive stance.

As for the stern-faced man from Star Emperor Sect's expression became even more solemn as he witnessed this outburst and swiftly punched forward. His fist seemed to contain some kind of profound principle that shook the Heavens and Earth, intercepting and destroying all the red light beams which were approaching him.

Seeing this, Wei Gu Chang, who had secretly been paying attention to this man, couldn't help paling slightly.

Although this punch had seemed calm and relaxed, anyone who witnessed it could tell just how tyrannical this Star Emperor Sect disciple's strength was.

The tens of thousands of crimson light beams ended as quickly as they began, all of them disappearing in a flash. Because everyone had made some preparations beforehand, all but a few who hadn't taken action swiftly enough were safe and sound.

Seeing this, Li You Nan couldn't help showing a look of disappointment, knowing that his actions just now were a bit too overt and had caused everyone else to become vigilant as well. If he had been a bit more discrete, the number of injured wouldn't be limited to those few people.

But soon, Li You Nan laughed bitterly, because all the cultivators present were currently glaring at him, apparently blaming him for not explaining the situation clearly and trying to take advantage of this situation to plot against them. It was a truly sinister act.

Li You Nan paid them no mind though. He had already explained all sorts of things about the Red Candle Fruit's maturation process, including the Three Suns Grand Risings Phenomenon, so concealing some things to benefit himself was only natural.

He believed that these people wouldn't be stupid enough to condemn him for such a trivial matter.

Sure enough, everyone just glared at him and said nothing more. In fact, no one had any time to question him because after the tens of thousands of crimson light beams faded, the great red sun high up in the sky suddenly crashed down towards the mountain valley.

In just ten short breaths, the red sun fell somewhere in the mountain valley and it disappeared without a trace.

"Get ready!" Dai Yuan suddenly whispered as she lifted her hand and collected her pink cloud artefact, her beautiful eyes staring fixedly towards the mountain valley below.

"Should we wake up Senior Brother Yang?" Dong Xuan'er nibbled her red lips as she glanced over at Yang Kai hesitantly.

Yang Kai's Saint Qi had been in a turbulent state this whole time so none of them had gone to disturb him for fear of interrupting his perception, but now that the Red Candle Fruit was about to appear, Dong Xuan'er didn't know if they should wake him so he did not miss this great event.

Wei Gu Chang frowned slightly but soon shook his head, “No, Brother Yang definitely knows what’s going on outside. If he is willing to participate in this scramble, he will definitely act. We shouldn’t bother him.”

Dong Xuan’er nodded slightly.

Wei Gu Chang’s words had only just ended when a loud cracking sound suddenly echoed from the mountain valley, as if the earth was splitting apart. Everyone standing on the nearby hills also nearly fell as the ground beneath their feet trembled.

An intense wave of red energy spread out from the cracks below the mountain valley, filling it with a brilliant light that made it impossible to see the situation inside.

But faintly, at the place where the red sun just fell, something seemed to slowly be rising, showing a dark crimson light.

This light was like that of a candle in the wind, seemingly on the verge of being snuffed out, but no matter how the wind howled and rain poured, it remained constant.

A moment later, under the focused gazes of everyone present, this candle-like light finally surfaced.

Naturally, it was a fist-sized dark red crystal-like spirit fruit which looked both delicate and delicious. Its shape was quite strange, almost like the flame of a candle, and it clear there was incredibly pure energy residing within it that seemed to be gently stirring.

“Red Candle Fruit!” Seeing this, Li You Nan couldn’t help but shout.

Before he could even finish his words, a ribbon-like artefact shot out from one of the surrounding mountain tops. This ribbon was incredibly smart and flexible, just like a real woman’s arm. It shot out tens of metres in an instant and was rapidly closing in on the Heaven defying Red Candle Fruit.

Yin Su Die had acted! After waiting for several days, she finally couldn’t hold back anymore and actually made the first attempt to snatch it up.

Almost at the same time, a thunderbolt suddenly struck from a different location and with a crackling sound struck the ribbon artefact, shifting its aim and causing it to grasp nothing but air.

Yin Su Die shouted tenderly as she bit her thin red lips lightly and glared poutingly towards Fang Tian Zhong, stomping her foot in anger, “Senior Brother Fang!”

Fang Tian Zhong’s expression remained indifferent as he continued sending out bolts of lightning, blocking all the other attempts made by the surrounding cultivators to snatch the Red Candle Fruit, ignoring the coquettishness cries of Yin Su Die.

A look of annoyance flashed across this Heaven’s blessed female from Coloured Glass Sect as bitterness filled her heart, but she couldn’t afford to waste any more time on Fang Tian Zhong and instead concentrated on manipulating her ribbon-like artefact to join the scramble.

From a dozen different hills, dozens of cultivators all took action at once as they tried to seize this mature Red Candle Fruit; at this moment, almost all of the rising stars on the Shadowed Star were putting forth their best methods.

In an instant, the light of the Martial Skills and artefact filled the air with a brilliant glow, swiftly turning the mountain valley into a heated battlefield.

However, no matter who it was, they were using a measure of discretion, none of them daring to damage the Red Candle Fruit, all of them trying to avoid their battle affecting it in any way.

On the one hand, they needed to stop others from robbing the Red Candle Fruit, but on the other hand, they needed to work hard to snatch it for themselves. Each force's cultivators had seemingly divided up these roles beforehand and were now working hard to achieve their objectives.

The forces with smaller numbers undoubtedly had it more difficult, as that was the case with Shadow Moon Hall.

Although Dai Yuan had come here together with Wei Gu Chang and Dong Xuan'er, she was acting alone and didn't have any intention of cooperating with them, because everyone knew that this Heaven defying fruit was not something they could ultimately possess. Even if they were to win ownership of it here, it would eventually be turned over to their Sect who would then determine who it belonged to.

Dai Yuan and Dong Xuan'er had a very good personal relationship, but that still paled in comparison to their respective Sect's interests. They didn't dare to assist one another; not interfering with one another was the best they could do.

After removing Dai Yuan, that left just Wei Gu Chang and Dong Xuan'er to represent Shadow Moon Hall. One of them blocked while the other tried to snatch.

As for the stern-faced man from Star Emperor Sect, every attack he launched was filled with shocking might that astonished everyone around, forcing them to pay a significant amount of attention to him.

This man had probably only left Star Emperor Mountain for the first time for life experience and did not understand the concept of the tall tree drawing the most wind. Soon, he couldn't help frowning because whenever he took action, there would be at least ten others from all directions trying to block him while no one else received such treatment.

It seemed that everyone had reached a consensus that he, above all others, must be stopped, while everyone else would compete independently using their respective means.

This cause the pressure Star Emperor Sect's stern-faced disciple faced to multiply. No matter how amazing his strength was, he couldn't compete with so many elites on the scene.

Seemingly becoming angry out of shame, this stern-faced man coldly snorted, stamped his foot, and sent out a shocking energy fluctuation that caused the ground all around him to tremble violently.

The cultivators from the dozen or so other forces who were competing for the Red Candle Fruit couldn't help turning their gazes towards this stern-faced man and staring in shock as they watched him slowly send out a punch which released a massive beam of energy!

"Not good, stop him, he's gone mad!" Li You Nan yelled again in horror, his clothes instantly becoming drenched in sweat as his face paled.

This stern-faced man's punch was actually directed straight towards the Red Candle Fruit. If such an attack were to really hit it, this supreme spirit fruit would be smashed into dust and instantly vanish.

How could Li You Nan not panic? As he spoke, he sent out a storm of fists to try to block this Star Emperor Sect disciple's attack.

The others present didn't need him to remind them and took swift action.

Hong Hong Hong...

Violent explosions rang out as the huge energy column was greatly weakened by the various attacks it suffered, but what was more astonishing was the fact that it had not been destroyed and it soon reached the Red Candle Fruit.

Chapter 1228, Red Candle Stalk

With a look of despair upon his face, Li You Nan nearly collapsed to the ground. Thinking the Red Candle Fruit was about to be destroyed felt as if a blade was being pierced through his heart.

Although the power of the energy beam had been significantly weakened, it had still not been completely dispersed, and under everyone's horrified gaze, it struck the Red Candle Fruit, making everyone feel as if they were the ones being hit.

Xiu...

The Red Candle Fruit, which has not been affected by the fighting so far, under the impact of this energy blast, flew straight out of the mountain valley.

To everyone's surprise, this seemingly fragile, thin, and soft spirit fruit was completely unscathed by this blow.

Everyone was overjoyed and immediately used their movement skills to rush out of the mountain valley, signalling the start of an even more dangerous battle.

Just now, as the Red Candle Fruit sat in the mountain valley and red energy filled the air, everyone had stood atop their individual mountains while trying to snatch it. There had not been any direct confrontation yet, but now that the Red Candle Fruit had left the mountain valley, the situation had become far more chaotic with all the elite disciples from the various Sects struggling against one another.

Atop Shadow Moon Hall's hill, Wei Gu Chang glanced over at Yang Kai and saw that he still showed no signs of opening his eyes, causing him to feel somewhat distressed.

While wondering if he should let Dong Xuan'er stay here and protect Yang Kai, the latter suddenly said, "You three go, don't worry about me!"

Hearing this, Wei Gu Chang smiled happily and nodded before rushing off together with Dong Xuan'er and Dai Yuan. As long as Yang Kai wasn't completely immersed in his meditation, there was no need to worry that he would suffer a sneak attack.

After Wei Gu Chang and the others left, Yang Kai opened his eyes happily, a brilliant and joyful light flashing across their depths.

He had made clear the vague thoughts he was contemplating at the last moment before the Red Candle Fruit matured. Although he felt that his control over Saint Qi had not risen to a new level, now was not an appropriate time to verify his gains.

Casting his eyes a few hundred metres away, even Yang Kai, who had experienced many great storms, couldn't help furrowing his brow at the scene he saw.

Several dozen Third-Order Saint King elite cultivators were desperately unleashing their Martial Skills and pushing their artefacts as they fought in groups of three to five against one another. All of them acted ruthlessly, without the slightest hint of mercy. Although the scene was extremely hot, every force had at least one or two people paying attention to the situation of the Red Candle Fruit.

What was strange was that since the Red Candle Fruit had been blasted away from the mountain valley by the Star Emperor Sect disciple, it hadn't fallen to the ground. Whenever it seemed it was about to fall into the hands of a certain cultivator, there would always be some subtle energy fluctuations that swept it aside, allowing it to continue flying through the air.

The performance of the stern-faced man from Star Emperor Sect was particularly eye-catching in this scuffle. Fang Tian Zhong, Wei Gu Chang, and Qu Chang Feng had formed a kind of temporary alliance and were cooperating to block him from seizing the Red Candle Fruit, but this stern-faced man was able to display incredible power, confronting three people on his own without falling into a disadvantage. Although this wasn't quite a life or death fight, it was still amazing to be able to fight against these three rising stars all by himself.

Yang Kai watched secretly and immediately realised that this man who came from Star Emperor Sect was not affable.

After observing the situation for a moment, Yang Kai knew that if nothing unexpected happened, the Red Candle Fruit's ownership wouldn't be decided for some time. At least a few people would first need to die before everyone really put forward their best after which there was a chance for things to be decided.

But who would be the ultimate winner was impossible to tell.

Yang Kai wasn't uninterested in the Red Candle Fruit; after all, this was an Origin King Grade High-Rank spirit fruit, something even he had never encountered before. Using it in Alchemy would definitely be of great benefit to the growth of his Alchemy skills, and after being refined into a pill, it really might be able to help a Third-Order Origin Returning Realm cultivator break through to the Origin King Realm, such a spirit fruit in the hands of a suitable master may be able to create four or five Origin Kings.

Unfortunately, this battle was simply too chaotic.

Yang Kai estimated that even if he were to participate, he didn't have more than a one in ten chance of obtaining the Red Candle Fruit. For such uncertain benefits, it simply wasn't worth acting.

What's more, this thing was currently a hot potato that only one of a few true elites could take away. If the Red Candle Fruit fell into his hands, someone without a stronger backer, it would only lead to disaster!

Therefore, he had already made up his mind not to fight for the Red Candle Fruit. It was because of this that he had focused all of his attention on his comprehension just now.

However... Although he didn't intend to join the competition for the Red Candle Fruit, it didn't mean Yang Kai had no other plans.

Glancing down at the mountain valley filled with red energy, Yang Kai grinned and while everyone's attention was attracted by the Red Candle Fruit, silently slipped into the cloud of red mist and disappeared.

The Red Candle Fruit was indeed rare and precious, but the plant which gave birth to it was also a great treasure.

The root of the Red Candle Fruit was called the Red Candle Stalk, and if it was planted in a place with rich World Energy, it could absorb that aura and produce a spirit fruit similar to the Red Candle Fruit.

Of course, the fruit produced this way wasn't a genuine Red Candle Fruit and did not possess the magical ability to help an Origin Returning Realm cultivator break through to the Origin King Realm, but it did have the ability to help a cultivator temper their body.

What Yang Kai was after was precisely this ability.

The benefits of a more powerful physique were self-evident. Yang Kai's body was countless times stronger than that of an average cultivator in the same realm. Even ordinary Low-Ranked Origin Realm cultivators couldn't compare with him in terms of pure physical strength.

With the improvement of his own strength, and as he encountered stronger and stronger cultivators, Yang Kai found that the strength of his physique was now somewhat hindering him. He had suffered a number of injuries in these past few days which was enough to raise some alarm.

Moreover, when tearing space, he needed a strong physical body otherwise he wouldn't be able to resist the strain of traversing The Void.

If he could obtain the Red Candle Stalk and consume the spirit fruits it produced from time to time to temper his body further, he could solve this issue. As long as he was given enough time, he could raise the intensity of his physique to new heights.

At that time, when fighting against others and tearing space, he would become much more relaxed.

He couldn't use the Red Candle Fruit for the time being, and he believed that with his own ability, and in conjunction with everything he currently possessed, breaking through to the Origin King Realm shouldn't be a problem; all that he was lacking was the accumulation of time. However, the Red Candle Stalk was something he needed right now, so instead of participating in the competition for the Red Candle Fruit, he focused on stealthily taking away the Red Candle Stalk.

Yang Kai plans seemed just right, but it turned out that someone else had the same idea and had acted first.

When Yang Kai snuck into the mountain valley in order to search for the Red Candle Stalk amidst this bank of red mist, he immediately discovered a blurry figure happily collecting something into his Space Ring.

Who this person was, Yang Kai didn't know, but he was certain that what they had just taken away was the Red Candle Stalk.

Staying behind and collecting the Red Candle Stalk at such a time indicated that person had a deep understanding of the Red Candle Fruit. Dai Yuan was currently fighting outside and so was Li You Nan of Medicine Pill Sect, so it was impossible for it to be one of them.

The most likely candidate was one of the other Medicine Pill Sect disciples, most likely instructed by Li You Nan long ago to remain behind in order to obtain this treasure.

Just as Yang Kai found this man, he too found Yang Kai. In shock, this man pushed his Saint Qi violently, but before he could launch an attack, a loud sound rang out and after a short, pitiful scream, the valley fell silent.

As a bloody scent spread, Yang Kai's eyes narrowed and he immediately summoned his Wind and Thunder Wings as he soared forward towards the figure that had taken away the Red Candle Stalk, snatched his Space Ring, and then swiftly withdrew.

Yang Kai's actions were extremely fast, but in that brief moment of contact, he saw a creepy scene.

The one who had taken away the Red Candle Stalk was indeed a disciple of Medicine Pill Sect, but at this moment he had an arm through his chest, one that was holding his still beating heart.

Moreover, this arm was very unusual and looked extremely dry, like a piece of dead wood, and it was sucking the blood essence out of this unfortunately Medicine Pill Sect disciple. Before Yang Kai stepped back, he clearly saw the body of this Medicine Pill Sect disciple wither and turn into a dry corpse.

There was a third person here!

No matter who this third person was, any cultivator that could launch such a perfect sneak attack on a Third-Order Saint King and instantly kill them couldn't only be described as extraordinary.

Almost as soon as he snatched the Space Ring, the other party's hand also touched it, but they only managed to grab empty space, causing them to call out in surprise.

Pu...

The sound of something bursting echoed, and in front of Yang Kai, the body of the Medicine Pill Sect disciple exploded, leaving nothing behind. The third person who had killed him disappeared strangely, seemingly completely blending into the surrounding environment.

In this mountain valley filled with red energy, with vision that has been incredibly limited, one could barely see anything a metre in front of them.

Yang Kai released his Spiritual energy without hesitation, creating a web of Divine Sense threads all around him, without letting off a single spot, but what startled him was that this third person seemed to

have truly disappeared. Even with Yang Kai's powerful Divine Sense, he couldn't find a single trace of the other party.

However, Yang Kai knew that this man had not left. Since he had come here, he must have been after the Red Candle Stalk, and since that was now in Yang Kai's hands, if the other party wanted it, he would certainly come to him.

Suddenly, a single thread of Divine Sense that Yang Kai had spread out sent back some slightly inconsistent sensations. In normal times, Yang Kai would not pay this any mind, but right now, it was enough to cause his hair to stand on end. Quickly turning around, Yang Kai condensed his Demonic Flame onto his fist and sent out a fierce punch towards the seemingly empty space.

Chapter 1229, Yuan Control Mastery

Hong...

With a loud boom, the Demonic Flames wrapped around Yang Kai's fist struck something and were instantly scattered, sending Yang Kai flying backwards.

At the same time though, in the originally empty space, a faint figure strangely appeared, and while Yang Kai was forced back, the sound of bones breaking echoed and the figure which revealed itself let out an annoyed grunt.

"It's you!" Yang Kai shouted as he steadied himself, instantly recognising the man who had just attacked him.

It was Flowing Cloud Valley's Lu Ye who had left some time ago!

Yang Kai had seen Lu Ye leave the mountain valley and rapidly withdraw from this region but it now seemed the other party had used some profound method to secretly return and had actually gone completely unnoticed by anyone. After the Red Candle Fruit matured, Lu Ye had snuck into the mountain valley to target the Red Candle Stalk just like Yang Kai.

There was no need to even think about who had killed that Medicine Pill Sect disciple.

While Yang Kai shocked by his opponent's means, Lu Ye also seemed a little puzzled. The faint figure didn't disappear this time and instead stood within the red mist, observing Yang Kai. After a while, he said, "You're a bit strange!"

Yang Kai sneered, "You're also not normal!"

Lu Ye never thought that a First-Order Saint King could survive his sneak attack, much less fight him on even terms without suffering any real harm. Yang Kai also didn't expect that this Lu Ye had such amazing concealment abilities, it was simply amazing. If not for Yang Kai's Divine Sense being far stronger than an ordinary cultivator's, he would definitely have been killed just like that Medicine Pill Sect disciple.

At this moment, both of them became a little wary of the other and also more determined to kill one another.

"I haven't offended Flowing Cloud Valley or you, so why are you targeting me?" Yang Kai asked the question which had been plaguing him. Although he didn't fear Lu Ye, such an enemy appearing for no apparent reason greatly confused Yang Kai.

"Hmph, Flowing Cloud Valley indeed!" Lu Ye coldly snorted, a hint of disdain apparent in his tone, only confusing Yang Kai further, but before he could ask anything, Lu Ye simply stated, "You have only yourself to blame for taking that which does not belong to you! If not for that transgression, I wouldn't mind taking you in, you're much better material than those wastes outside."

Yang Kai frowned, feeling that this man's tone was higher than the Heavens. Lu Ye gave him an impression fundamentally different from the one Dai Yuan previously described, as if they were two completely different people.

Moreover, Yang Kai still couldn't figure out why this Lu Ye was so fixated on him. In the Flowing Flame Sand Field, Yang Kai had obtained many good things, a few of which weren't lower in value than the Red Candle Fruit itself, some of them possibly even above it, but this man didn't even show interest in competing for the Red Candle Fruit. Obviously, he didn't care about his Heaven defying spirit fruit, so what was it that Yang Kai possessed that would continually draw Lu Ye's attention?

Regardless of what the truth was, Yang Kai didn't plan to ask anymore, because even if he did, the other party would not answer him. Now, in this misty red mountain valley, between him and Lu Ye, there could only be a battle.

Chi Chi...

A slight sound came from behind him, causing Yang Kai's hair to stand on end. Even though had been on full alert, with Lu Ye's nearly undetectable methods, it wasn't until the layer of Demonic Flame he had put up around him was impacted that Yang Kai realised he was being attacked. The moment he felt the attack, Yang Kai turned his head in the direction of the sound.

However, all he could see was a fuzzy figure which had mysteriously appeared behind him as well as a withered arm that like a sword was being stabbed towards him.

Condensing his Demonic Flames, Yang Kai swung a Profound Heavenly Sword towards the withered arm and shattered it along with the blurry figure it was attached to, his sword collapsing in the process.

"Your Saint Qi is quite interesting. Such power is something really unimaginable for a mere Saint King!" Lu Ye's voice came from behind again, with a hint of mockery. Yang Kai's eyes narrowed and turning around again, he saw the same blurry figure from before, as if it hadn't even moved and the withered arm which had struck him a moment ago was a completely different entity.

[What kind of skill was this?]

Yang Kai was shocked and didn't dare act carelessly. Just as he was about to take the initiative to launch an attack, in all directions, there suddenly appeared multiple blurry figures. These figures were all identical, as if they had been made from the same mould, and in the next instant, all of them sent out powerful attacks towards Yang Kai.

Each attack felt like a real Martial Skill, none of them seeming like illusions.

Yang Kai's face changed slightly, and he immediately summoned his purple shield to protect himself while at the same time condensing another Demonic Flame sword and chopping towards his surroundings.

Chi chi chi...

Wherever Yang Kai's sword waves passed, the blurry figures would disappear together with their attacks, but the number of these figures didn't seem to decrease at all as they struck towards him in an endless stream. This made Yang Kai frustrated.

He had never encountered such a strange method and he wasn't able to find a way to break through it immediately, but after fighting for a while, Yang Kai noticed something was wrong.

Each of the vague figures possessed Lu Ye's aura but nothing else, as if they were shadows of his body or some type of indistinct clone.

Cutting down several approaching figures, Yang Kai opened up a gap in this endless wave of attacks, bit his finger, and quickly smeared Golden Blood over his left eye.

The Demon Eye of Annihilation appeared, and an invisible majesty spread out. Yang Kai's vision in his left eye was no longer hazy and in an instant, he was able to see everything within the red mist, the dim surroundings becoming crystal clear at this moment.

These figures were indeed Lu Ye, there was no doubt about it, but under the Demon Eye of Annihilation's ability to see through all illusions, these vague figures all gave off a slight red glow.

Only one figure in the distance remained unchanged!

Yang Kai's eyes instantly fixed at this particular figure. If he wasn't mistaken, this was Lu Ye's true body while all the others were some kind of illusion or fabrication.

"Oh, some kind of innate ability?" A look of surprise appeared on Lu Ye's face as he stared towards Yang Kai's left eye as if he had discovered something extraordinary, a look of greed soon appearing filling his expression.

Based on his knowledge and experience, it was easy for him to see that the change in Yang Kai's left eye wasn't due to some kind of Secret Art or technique, but rather an inborn ability. Such innate Divine Abilities were incredibly rare and even he had never possessed one.

The golden pupil gave off a kind of awe-inspiring air that drew one's consciousness in, and after staring into it for but a moment, Lu Ye felt that his Soul and Knowledge Sea were becoming turbulent, like they were about to be drawn out from his very body. Startled, he quickly steadied his mind and suppressed the roiling of his Knowledge Sea.

While Lu Ye's felt a sense of fright from this experience, his greed also became stronger. If he could seize Yang Kai's left eye, it would increase his own strength greatly.

He really hadn't expected that this First-Order Saint King could bring him so many surprises.

This boy's eye seemed to be able to see through all forms of illusion, so there was no way for him to implement his original plan. After considering the situation for a moment, Lu Ye dismissed his remaining shadows and transformed them into a series of streams that flowed back into his body.

The next moment, a potent Spiritual Energy wave burst from Lu Ye's side, turning into a sharp thorn and piercing directly towards Yang Kai's Knowledge Sea.

Yang Kai felt a sharp pain the moment his Knowledge Sea's defences were about to be broken and didn't dare to have any reservations, fully pushing his Spiritual Energy to block his opponent's attack.

Although he managed to defend himself, Yang Kai still felt a little dizzy and it was obviously that his Soul had suffered some small wounds.

It seemed that earlier, when the Red Candle Fruit was maturing, Lu Ye had not used his full strength to attack him. On top of that, this guy seemed to have even stronger Soul cultivation than Yang Kai!

Feeling slightly dizzy, Yang Kai knew that his situation had become precarious and quickly slashed out with his sword, sending out a wave of Demonic Flames to break through the red mist and cut through the surrounding air.

Within the red mist, a thick evil Qi and malevolent aura rumbled as Lu Ye let out a wicked laughter that echoed in Yang Kai's ears. He wanted to take advantage of Yang Kai's momentary opening to capture him, after which he could slowly dig up all of his secrets.

But obviously, Yang Kai wasn't going to just sit back and let himself get caught, so he immediately transformed his Demonic Flames into a large number of black light beams and fired them off like arrows from a bow towards a certain spot in the red mist.

"Yuan Control Mastery!" Lu Ye's face sank as he called out in shock.

Yang Kai's performance had continuously amazed him. This kid's natural talent and aptitude were nothing short of astonishing. He possessed innate abilities, Saint Qi, and Spiritual Energy far more powerful than those of ordinary people. Now it seemed he was even able to exhibit Yuan Control Mastery, which greatly shocked Lu Ye.

Although Yang Kai's Yuan Control Mastery seemed a bit rough, as if he had only just comprehended it, this still wasn't a skill that Saint Kings should be able to master. Only when one's cultivation reached the Origin Returning Realm and he or she began to understand Shi would they possibly be able to achieve Yuan Control Mastery.

Even then, Origin Realm cultivators who could transform and manipulate their Saint Qi through Yuan Control Mastery were extremely rare, each one of them a shocking talent that held unlimited potential.

The so-called Yuan Control Mastery Lu Ye spoke of was the result of Yang Kai's painstaking meditation these past few days.

Previously, his use of Saint Qi was based on Martial Skills he had learned or simply by using his Saint Qi as a blunt instrument, but whether he was able to hit or damage his opponent like this would greatly depend on how his target reacted and how strong their defensive abilities were.

However, in the days before the Red Candle Fruit matured, Yang Kai was able reach a new level of control over his Saint Qi, one that required not only a deep understand of Saint Qi but also a powerful enough Soul to mould it. Without meeting both these criteria, Yuan Control Mastery would be nothing but a dream.

Chapter 1230, Short Rod

Superb Divine Sense strength, which was one of the foundations of Yuan Control Mastery, was naturally not something difficult for Yang Kai. In this fight against Lu Ye, Yang Kai also had the intention to experiment with what he had comprehended these past few days, and the results had really given him a pleasant surprise.

The black fireballs had transformed into sharp arrows under Yang Kai's control and pierced straight through the red mist coving the mountain valley, breaking it apart and allowing the thick malevolent aura in his surroundings disperse, reducing the pressure he felt greatly.

Yang Kai grinned as the sound of wind and thunder behind him whirled up and before Lu Ye could react, Yang Kai charged in front of him and chopped down with his Demonic Flame sword.

Lu Ye had already witnessed the terrifying power of these Demonic Flames, and although he was confident he wouldn't be directly burned to death by them, he still thought it best to avoid contact with them as much as possible. His strange wicked laughter came to an abrupt halt as he swiftly withdrew. At the same time, he formed a series of strange hand signs that and condensed a giant red palm above his head that he smashed down towards Yang Kai.

Lu Ye could also use Yuan Control Mastery, and it was apparent that his proficiency with it wasn't inferior to that of Yang Kai who had just realised this Divine Ability, perhaps even above it.

The moment the red palm appeared, it was as if the surrounding space had been blocked, making it difficult to breathe and stiffening Yang Kai's movements significantly.

Yang Kai grunted as he madly pushed the Saint Qi in his body, breaking free of this suppression and sending out a palm of his own.

Another giant hand appeared in the sky. The Nine Heavens Divine Skills Heaven Covering Hand met Lu Ye's red palm head-on, causing an explosion that made the entire mountain valley tremble.

Taking this opportunity, Yang Kai advanced even further, waving his Demonic Flame long sword through the air as he used his Yuan Control Mastery to transform more of his Demonic Flame s into various attacks that flew towards Lu Ye.

Yang Kai realised that Lu Ye had stronger Soul cultivation than him, but his strength was still limited. As long as Yang Kai remained alert enough, Lu Ye's Divine Sense wouldn't pose too much of a threat. On top of that, Lu Ye's Saint Qi wasn't as pure or vigorous as Yang Kai's, while the difference in their physical strengths was even further apart.

That was why Yang Kai chose to enter a melee, as this was his biggest advantage!

The other reason Yang Kai chose this course of action was in order to prevent Lu Ye from escaping. Yang Kai poured his Saint Qi into his purple shield, causing it to emit a brown glow and a moment later create a large-scale sandstorm that engulfed the entire mountain valley!

This was one of the hidden powers of his purple shield, one that Yang Kai was using for the first time.

The purple shield was refined from the carapace of the Scarlet Tailed Purple Armoured Scorpion, and Yang Yan had incorporated the Ninth-Order Monster Beast's Monster Core into it, allowing it to use some of the Scarlet Tailed Purple Armoured Scorpion's own Divine Abilities from before it died.

This sandstorm was an ability that came with this shield!

Sand and dust whirled about as Yang Kai's figure drifted from place to place in an impossible to read pattern. Submerged in this violent sandstorm, Lu Ye had to divert part of his focus to resist this strange attack, finding the position of host and guest suddenly reversed by Yang Kai and slowly being suppressed.

Lu Ye quickly became annoyed. He had never expected that, after finally regaining his freedom from a few tens of thousands of years of imprisonment, the first enemy he bumped into would be so strange and powerful, making it impossible for him easily kill.

This made him feel like he had lost a great deal of face and made him become angry out of shame.

The two of them were just about equally proficient in Yuan Control Mastery as well. Yang Kai's Yuan Control Mastery was rough because he had only just comprehended it while Lu Ye's was unsteady because the Saint Qi in this current body wasn't dense and pure enough. On top of that, in a frontal clash, his Saint Qi was falling greatly behind Yang Kai's Demonic Flame in terms of destructive power.

Inferior in terms of Saint Qi, unable to suppress him in terms of Spiritual Energy, and with a weaker physical body, Lu Ye quickly found himself on the losing end of this battle.

Yang Kai didn't say a word as he was focusing entirely on suppressing his opponent. The Demonic Flame sword in his hand caused some damage to Lu Ye from time to time, but what made Yang Kai depressed was that even his seemingly unstoppable Demonic Flame was unable to contaminate his opponent. A strange flash of blue light Yang Kai couldn't identify would appear from Lu Ye's body and actually extinguish the Demonic Flames which would normally have burnt him, reducing the damage Yang Kai could deal this way to mere flesh wounds.

Since he had made up his mind to kill this inexplicable enemy though, Yang Kai was naturally not planning to hold back.

He hadn't used his Space Force yet though.

His self-created Space Blade wasn't perfected yet so the best time to use it would be when he found a decisive opening. If he failed to hit his opponent and as a result caused Lu Ye to become more vigilant, it would severely reduce this trump card's effectiveness.

Yang Kai was constantly searching for a suitable opportunity to surprise Lu Ye, thinking at as long as he could successfully hit him with his Space Blade, he could seriously injure him if not kill him outright!

Unsurprisingly though, Yang Kai so thoroughly suppressing him aroused great anger from Lu Ye, and after suffering a series of injuries, he roared, "Brat, you court death!"

Saying so, Lu Ye suddenly spat out a puff of black blood. The smell of this blood was extremely pungent, making one want to vomit, but the power it contained was even more terrifying. Obviously it was Lu Ye's Blood Essence.

This Blood Essence transformed into a blood mist before rapidly condensing into a strange short rod in Lu Ye's hand.

This short rod was only about two palms in length and could be easily gripped within one's hand. It looked completely ordinary and inconspicuous, but when it appeared, Yang Kai's heart clenched and an inexplicable sense of crisis well up inside him.

Yang Kai rarely felt this way, but whenever he did, it meant that he was facing incredible danger.

A fierce grin appeared on Lu Ye's face as he madly poured his Saint Qi into this black short rod and a moment later, the entire world inexplicably went dark.

It was as if all the surrounding light was being absorbed by this short rod, making it impossible for Yang Kai to see anything around him and even rendering his Demon Eye of Annihilation useless.

The sandstorm which had been filling the mountain valley was suddenly interrupted, the dust drifting down the ground as all the howling winds abruptly came to a stop.

Yang Kai's face changed greatly. At this moment, he realised that he could barely circulate the Saint Qi in his body regardless of how hard he pushed it. It was also impossible for him to draw out Spiritual Energy from his Knowledge Sea, as if it had been sealed off somehow.

In the darkness, Yang Kai instinctually sensed something approaching him, a kind of death aura that could extinguish anything it touched, sending chills down his spine.

[It can't be resisted! It can't be blocked!]

At this moment, all kinds of thoughts flashed across Yang Kai's mind and he quickly determined that neither his Saint Qi nor Spiritual Energy could block this strange attack, not that he could access either of those under his currently suppressed state. He also couldn't escape as most of his strength was being cut off, much less tear space.

Swiftly making a decision, Yang Kai condensed a drop of Golden Blood at his fingertip, sending out a sensational wave of vitality into the surroundings. He then shot out this drop of Golden Blood towards the deepest part of the darkness.

When the Golden Blood's surging vitality and black death aura collided with one another, there was surprisingly not a single sound, only an explosion of golden and black light which filled the mountain valley. For a time, these two forces actually perfectly counterbalanced one another.

"How is that possible?" Lu Ye's face finally changed. Although he had been suppressed by Yang Kai previously, he wasn't panicked because he had not yet gone all out. But now that he had used such a powerful artefact with complete determination to kill Yang Kai, he firmly believed that this boy wouldn't be able to resist.

However, to his great surprise, when he sent out this trump card, the scene of hashed meat and splatter blood did not appear and instead, an astonishing explosion of vitality had come out and managed to block his attack.

[This boy has to be killed as soon as possible!] Such thoughts flashed through Lu Ye's mind as his expression became fierce.

With just a First-Order Saint King Realm cultivation, this boy could fight evenly with him. If he were to be allowed to truly mature, wouldn't he become an invincible existence? Lu Ye's tens of thousands of years of experience had taught him that such dangers must absolutely be snuffed out while in the cradle.

At this moment, he regarded Yang Kai as a thorn in his side, one that needed to be eliminated as quickly as possible.

A ruthless light flashed across Lu Ye's eyes as he spat out another mouthful of Blood Essence, causing the black light which was competing against the golden radiance to rapidly grow in intensity. The golden light was quickly suppressed and was on the verge of collapsing, after which the death aura would swiftly engulf Yang Kai.

In response, Yang Kai flicked his wrist and set out another drop of Golden Blood, causing the golden light of vitality to instantly grow strong again and pierce through the darkness.

"Ah..." Lu Ye let out a cry of shock as the dark shroud he had condensed was torn apart and the light of day reappeared.

In the mountain valley, both Yang Kai and Lu Ye stood in place, but at this moment Lu Ye's body was shivering and his face was extremely pale, seemingly having suffered serious injuries to his foundation.

On the other hand, although Yang Kai's expression was extremely ugly, it wasn't hard to see that he was both unharmed and full of energy.

Through the red mist, Yang Kai glared at Lu Ye with eyes as cold as an ancient snow-capped mountain.

Lu Ye couldn't help feeling startled!

A jet black blade-like attack suddenly flew towards him, and before Lu Ye could react, it was upon him.

Lu Ye panicked and hurriedly twisted his body to avoid his vitals from being hit, but a moment later, a slight stinging sensation came from his left arm.

Turning his head to look, Lu Ye's soul nearly leapt out of his body as he found that one of his arms had actually be cut off by the attack just now.

What kind of attack was that? Why hadn't he noticed it sooner? It didn't seem to ripple with any kind of aura at all, so why was it so powerful?

What frightened Lu Ye even more though was that the wound on his arm and his fallen severed limb obviously didn't match up. A sliver was missing which made it impossible to simply re-attach his arm. Lu Ye couldn't understand what had happened.

While Lu Ye was in this state of panic, Yang Kai's murderous intent soared and he was clearly preparing to take advantage of this opportunity to settle things once and for all, but before he could act, Lu Ye's figure flickered, transformed into a red light, and quickly vanished.

Yang Kai didn't know what kind of secret technique Lu Ye used, but by the time he found him again with his Divine Sense, this mysterious enemy was already five kilometres away.