

SOVEREIGN 1661

Chapter 1661: The Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion

As a fourth-rated force in the Dao Martial Saint Land, the land area that the Rising Sky Mansion estate occupied was vast, far greater than the Greenwave Han Mansion.

If the Greenwave Han Mansion estate was said to be like a small nation, then the Rising Sky Mansion estate was like an enormous nation. It stretched out as far as the eyes could see, but people were everywhere, making the entire Rising Sky Mansion estate appear flourishing and prosperous.

In this seemingly vibrant and flourishing Rising Sky Mansion, uproar took place in an inconspicuous mansion.

The mansion was slightly dilapidated and was covered with spider webs, as though nobody had come here for a long time.

However, if one paid attention, one could easily see that there were no traces of spider webs in the east of the mansion at all, as though somebody had deliberately opened a road that led straight towards the door of the main bedroom in this mansion.

Standing by the door of this main bedroom was a young man that looked like a door deity. This young man was slightly hunched back and had a pair of shifty eyes. In just one glance, you could tell that he had ill intentions.

“N-No... No! Nooo!” Right at this moment, a helpless shriek echoed from the main bedroom. Just from the scream alone, one could hear that it was a woman.

After a while, the woman stopped shouting abruptly as though she never existed.

Just as the woman’s voice disappeared, another low voice resonated from inside, “Get rid of her!” As the voice resonated, it sent a shock through the young hunchback man. Instantly returning to his senses, he opened the door and entered the main bedroom.

A dried corpse was lying on the floor of the main bedroom.

Upon closer attention, one could still distinguish that the body belonged to a woman. The dried corpse was still emitting heat. Obviously, she had just died not long ago.

Behind the dried corpse was a bed and a devilish-looking young man was sitting cross-legged on the bed with a gush of black aura that had hints of bloody mist emanating off his body. As time went by, his body absorbed this aura.

At the same time, one could see that this devilish-looking man was glowing with ruddy health, as though the black aura with hints of bloody mist was his tonic.

At that instant, the young man opened his eyes as quickly as lightning and stared straightly at the hunchback who had just entered.

“Young Mansion Master!” Under the intense stare of the devilish-looking young man, the hunchback was scared until he turned ashen. His body shuddered and he collapsed to the floor.

“I’m sorry, Young Mansion Master! I didn’t mean it!” Seeing the devilish young man’s brows knit together, the hunchback hastily crept up from the floor. As he did so, he reached out a hand to snatch the dried corpse closer. After he lifted it up, he hastily retreated from the room and closed the room door behind him, as though the devilish young man was a dreadful monster.

After the hunchback had left, the devilish young man’s frown eased up and at the same time, he muttered to himself, “If I can get enough young women in the next ten months, I’ll be able to make a breakthrough to the Mastery Refined Saint Stage at the very least before the Rising Sky Rankings Battle starts with the help of the Devouring Dark Devil Technique. If there are enough virgins among these young women, then it’ll be possible for me to make a breakthrough to the peak of the Refined Saint Stage when the Rising Sky Rankings start!”

As the young man daydreamt, his eyes brightened like the array of stars in the night sky, glistening with splendor.

“In ten months, the first place in the Rising Sky Rankings is destined to be mine, Xu Jing’s!” The devilish-looking young man’s eyes flashed even brighter. The words that he uttered were filled with great, unparalleled confidence.

Xu Jing!

This devilish looking young man was none other than the son of the current Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion. At the same time, he was also the person who would be marrying Han Xue Nai in a year.

However, from what he just said, it turned out that he had actually cultivated the Devil Technique!

In addition to that, it was the extremely vicious Devouring Dark Devil Technique.

There were countless Devil Cultivators in the Dao Martial Saint Land and innumerable Devil Cultivation Techniques too. Perhaps nobody had heard of the normal ordinary Devil Technique before, but once the Devouring Dark Devil Technique was mentioned, none of the Martial and Dao Cultivators who had some semblance of knowledge would find it foreign.

Even though the Devouring Dark Devil Technique was not widely spread, it had created a powerful Devil Cultivator before and made a hell of a fuss in the Dao Martial Saint Land, so everyone was informed about it.

Many years ago, after an ordinary endowed Martial Cultivator had cultivated the Devouring Dark Devil Technique, his strength was rapidly improved and in just several dozen years, he managed to transform from a Mortal Shedding Stage Martial Cultivator that originated from a ninth-rated force to an unparalleled powerhouse who could annihilate a fourth-rated force with his own strength. This had taken the entire Lower Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land by shock.

If it was just the achievement in the latter, he deserved praise from everyone in the Lower Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land.

However, somebody had pointed out that it was because he had cultivated a Devil Cultivation Technique called the Devouring Dark Devil Technique that allowed him to level up in such a short period of time.

Once the Devouring Dark Devil Technique was cultivated, one would have to devour the vital essence and blood of young women every once in a while. Otherwise, one would be devoured instead.

If a large number of young women provided the vital essence and blood, the Devil Cultivator who cultivated the Devouring Dark Devil Technique would be able to elevate his cultivation base rapidly.

To such a Devil Cultivator, there would be absolutely no bottleneck in his path of pursuing Martial Dao. As long as he had enough young women's vital essence and blood, his cultivation base would be elevated to a ridiculous, unbelievable level in a short period of time.

Besides, there was no restraint from one's innate talent too.

Ever since the cultivation method of the Devouring Dark Devil Technique was exposed, it had set off an uproar in the Lower Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land, terrorizing countless Martial and Dao Cultivators, while enraging many powerhouses.

These powerhouses included some of the eminent powerhouses in the quasi-third-rated forces.

In the end, these eminent powerhouses from the quasi-third-rated forces and some of the reclusive powerhouses in the Lower Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land stood up publicly and tried to surround the Devil Cultivator who had cultivated the Devouring Dark Devil Technique together. They wanted to attack and kill him together.

That battle was a flurry of chaos and darkness. Even the sun and moon seemed to dim in comparison to it.

The eminent powerhouses of the Lower Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land who had joined forces together finally managed to cast heavy injuries on that Devil Cultivator who had cultivated the Devouring Dark Devil Technique at the cost of losing three people, but were not able to kill him.

This was because an escaping secret tactic in the Devouring Dark Devil Technique that came at a great cost had successfully saved his life.

In the end, that Devil Cultivator who fled vanished without a trace in the Lower Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land and had never shown up ever since.

Many people had said that he must have gone to the Upper Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land.

No matter what, even though he never revealed himself anymore, the people in the Lower Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land now remembered him and the Devouring Dark Devil Technique that he cultivated, a technique that had never been heard in the Lower Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land before this.

Chapter 1662: Devouring Dark Devil Technique

There were many ordinary Devil Techniques that devoured the blood essence to cultivate, but the elevation that followed was not as ridiculous. On top of that, they had many requirements too, just like the Profound Dark Devil Technique that was only one word different from the Devouring Dark Devil Technique.

The Profound Dark Devil Technique was a widely practiced Devil Technique in the Dao Martial Saint Land. As long as the Devil Cultivator in the Dao Martial Saint Land had the intention to, almost all of them could get their hands on this if they wanted to.

The Profound Dark Devil Technique would usually be cultivated by devouring a female virgin's blood essence, but the elevation was not as ridiculous as with the Devouring Dark Devil Technique. Besides that, even if the girl was no longer a virgin, there was no use for the Devil Cultivator to eat her anymore no matter how young she was.

The Devouring Dark Devil Technique was an eminent Devil Technique in the Upper Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land as well, let alone in the Lower Province.

The reason Xu Jing, the Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion, was able to obtain the Devouring Dark Devil Technique was the fortuitous encounter he had three years ago. Back then, he had entered a place by mistake and obtained the Devouring Dark Devil Technique. Other than that, he had also come to know the person who had left the Devouring Dark Devil Technique behind — an almighty Devil Cultivator at that time.

Perhaps other people would have some knowledge about that powerful Devil Cultivator, but as the Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion, he knew about it profoundly well.

This was because among the eminent powerhouses from the quasi-third-rated forces who had joined the slaughter of the Devil Cultivator, one of them was from the Rising Sky Mansion. At that time, the Rising Sky Mansion was not just a fourth-rated force but a quasi-third-rated force instead.

The reason the Rising Sky Mansion could become a third-rated force was all thanks to that powerhouse.

Unfortunately, in that battle, that Rising Sky Mansion powerhouse had died during the battle. Since then, it had cost the Rising Sky Mansion an eminent powerhouse in the Lower Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land.

At first, due to the respect towards that Rising Sky Mansion powerhouse's sacrifice to the Dao Martial Saint Land, nobody voiced out anything at all even though many people knew that this powerhouse's Rising Sky Mansion was no longer qualified to be listed as a quasi-third-rated force.

However, as time continued to pass by, several generations of people were replaced as well.

The sacrifice that the Rising Sky Mansion powerhouse made for the Lower Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land slowly faded. Not many people in the later generations paid respect to him anymore.

The eminent powerhouses at that time, who were old men, had all gone to the Upper Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land one by one too.

This also caused the Rising Sky Mansion that had had several generations of people to be replaced and no eminent powerhouses were born in the Lower Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land to sway in the midst of a raging storm.

Finally, one day, a fourth-rated force that had given birth to an eminent powerhouse in the Lower Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land had charged into the Rising Sky Mansion, trying to replace it as the new quasi-third-rated force.

All the powerhouses of the Rising Sky Mansion went out, but none of them was any match to that powerhouse from that force!

At once, the Rising Sky Mansion could only admit their defeat and obediently let the few best Saint Stone veins in the Dao Martial Saint Land out before moving to the original estate of that force, all the way until now.

Every Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion had a dream, which was to regain the glory of the Rising Sky Mansion's yesteryears.

Unfortunately, as the long years went by, even though the Rising Sky Mansion could maintain its position today, it had never given birth to any eminent powerhouse in the Lower Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land ever since, so it could not become a quasi-third-rated force again.

As Xu Jing's eyes were gleaming brilliantly, he muttered in a deep voice, "By the time I become the Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion, I'll definitely make it the most powerful force in the Lower Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land!"

The reason he dared to say so was because he relied on the Devouring Dark Devil Technique in his hand.

To the Rising Sky Mansion, the Devouring Dark Devil Technique was no doubt a taboo.

By right, as the Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion, after Xu Jing had obtained the Devouring Dark Devil Technique, he should have handed over this Devil Technique to the Rising Sky Mansion so that it could destroy it.

After all, the one that destroyed the Rising Sky Mansion was the owner of this Rising Sky Mansion.

However, due to his greed of the power of the Devouring Dark Devil Technique, Xu Jing made a decision and kept it instead.

At first, although he had kept the Devouring Dark Devil Technique, he did not cultivate at all because he had not made up his mind yet.

It was only a few months ago when a piece of news spread out in the entire Rising Sky Mansion district that made him set on a decision.

That news was nothing much to others, and not only that, to a Xu Jing that had yet to obtain the Devouring Dark Devil Technique, he would not think much too even though he was displeased by the news.

However, having already obtained the Devouring Dark Devil Technique, this news was certainly a heavy blow to Xu Jing!

“Our Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion should be able to enter the top three in the Rising Sky Rankings and get third place!”

“I think so as well. After all, the strongest Martial and Dao Cultivators below the age of fifty in our Rising Sky Mansion are that Flowery Monk and Jing Xu Zi. Their strengths are hard to tell apart, but they are both much powerful than that Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion.”

“I agree on the part where you said that the Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion is indeed not as strong compared to the Flowery Monk and Jing Xu Zi. However, I don’t agree when you say that he can take third place in the Rising Sky Rankings. In fact, among the powerhouses who are below fifty years old in our Rising Sky Mansion district, other than that Flowery Monk and Jing Xu Zi, we still have someone who is quite powerful too!”

“You mean Zhong Gu?”

“Yeah, that’s him! In fact, when our Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion was still at the peak of the Eminent Saint Stage, Zhong Gu’s strength was already much more potent than his. However, in the end, he made a breakthrough to the Refined Saint Stage, so, in everybody’s else’s opinion, he’s still far more powerful than Zhong Gu who has yet made a breakthrough to the Refined Saint Stage. Nonetheless, I’ve just recently received a piece of news saying that Zhong Gu has already made a breakthrough too.”

“Zhong Gu has already made a breakthrough? In that case, he might really threaten Young Mansion Master Xu.”

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This news was also the reason why Xu Jing completely made up his mind to cultivate the Devouring Dark Devil Technique.

Even though he was the Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion, one must admit that he was quite unlucky. This was because, in the same era, the Rising Sky Mansion district had given birth to two powerhouses who had an innate talent much higher than his. They were the Flowery Monk and Jing Xu Zi.

Before the three of them had reached the age of 40, they dominated the first three places in the Heaven Rankings of the Rising Sky Mansion district.

The position between the Flowery Monk and Jing Xu Zi had been swapped many times, but the first and second places still remained theirs.

Xu Jing could only get third place.

It was not that he had never thought of improving, but it was just that he was completely no match for the Flowery Monk and Jing Xu Zi at all. He had challenged them many times but had failed over time.

As for Zhong Gu, even though he was close to their age, he had never challenged anybody from the Heaven Rankings before the age of 40, so he remained unknown.

It was only several years later when Xu Jing, the Flowery Monk, and Jing Xu Zi had left the Heaven Rankings due to their age that Xu Jing and Zhong Gu somehow got into a duel due to a clash. That time, both of them were at the peak of the Pristine Saint Stage and when they were battling with each other. It seemed like Xu Jing was at a disadvantage while Zhong Gu defeated Xu Jing by a narrow margin.

Other than the two colossal opponents, the Flowery Monk and Jing Xu Zi, an additional huge mountain in the form of Zhong Gu appeared on top of Xu Jing's head.

It was only until he had made a breakthrough to the Refined Saint Stage that Zhong Gu finally disappeared.

However, as the news spread from the outside, Zhong Gu appeared once again. As these three huge mountains combined together, they pressed down on him until he could hardly breathe.

At this moment, he recalled the Devouring Dark Devil Technique and the power of the original owner of the technique. Ever since then, he mired down in the mud and could no longer get out of it. In the end, he still could not resist the Devouring Dark Devil Technique's temptation and decided to cultivate it.

Of course, wanting to cultivate the Devouring Dark Devil Technique would require the sacrifice of a great number of young girls.

Therefore, at this moment, he and the lackey by his side, the previous young hunchback just now, started to go around to search for a young woman so that they could kidnap her for him to cultivate.

After cultivating the Devouring Dark Devil Technique, when he was devouring the young girl's vital essence and blood, he could feel the change in his cultivation base at every moment.

After having a taste of sweetness, it started to spiral out of control!

Of course, due to the irreconcilable enmity between the Rising Sky Mansion and the original owner of the Devouring Dark Devil Technique, he dared not expose the fact that he was cultivating the technique. This was because once it was exposed, those old geezers in the Rising Sky Mansion would definitely not allow him to succeed the position of the Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion anymore.

Other than not allowing him to succeed, they might even turn around and kill him for cultivating the Devouring Dark Devil Technique.

After all, right now, he could be deemed as the direct disciple of the original owner of the Devouring Dark Devil Technique.

How could the Rising Sky Mansion possibly let go of their enemy's direct disciple?

"If I merely rely on the Rising Sky Mansion's resources, I don't even know whether I'll be able to make a breakthrough to the Intermediate Refined Saint Stage or not when the Rising Sky Rankings Battle arrives in ten months. Even if I could, I'd just win against Zhong Gu at most, and will still be no match for that Flowery Monk and Jing Xu Zi," Xu Jing continued to mutter to himself, "However, after cultivating the Devouring Dark Devil Technique, I'll be able to make a breakthrough to the Mastery Refined Saint Stage 100%. Not only that, I might stand a chance to break through to the peak of the Refined Saint Stage too!

As long as there are enough virgin girls, I'll successfully make a breakthrough to the peak of the Refined Saint Stage in ten months."

"Young Mansion Master, I've cleaned it up," Right at this moment, a voice reverberated from outside of the door. The hunchback had returned.

Crack!

As Xu Jing left the bed like a gust of wind, the door opened and he appeared in front of that hunchback, sending him into a fright.

"Follow me out for a trip and come back only when the Rising Sky Rankings Battle is about to start," Xu Jing ordered nonchalantly.

"Young Mansion Master, are you planning to go out to cultivate?" The hunchback's eyes lit up. His heart was delighted with joy.

He could not help but be thrilled for the Young Mansion Master who rarely went out to cultivate. He no longer had to worry that he would be exposed for kidnapping so many young girls back to the Rising Sky Mansion.

If the fact about his Young Mansion Master cultivating the Devouring Dark Devil Technique was exposed, other than the Young Mansion Master who would be in trouble, he would face death as an accomplice too.

"Yes." Xu Jing nodded nonchalantly before bringing the hunchback outside to cultivate.

Actually, Xu Jing had already thought about it carefully before he decided to go outside to cultivate. That was because it would be easier for him to find virgin girls.

His target now was to make his cultivation base break through to the peak of the Refined Saint Stage in ten months when the Rising Sky Rankings Battle started. By then, he wanted to rise to the first place of the Rising Sky Rankings with a compelling force!

Chapter 1663: Unsure?

Not long after he left the Rising Sky Mansion, as the Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion, Xu Jing heard a piece of shocking news that came from afar. The news was related to the Devilseal Tablet and Duan Ling Tian.

"The Devilseal Tablet... One of the ten great Super Saint Weapons in the Ten Great Saint Weapons Rankings that is also the only weapon that can restrain a Devil Cultivator among the ten great Super Saint Weapons. Why would this Devilseal Tablet appeared in the Lower Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land?" Xu Jing frowned, his expression slightly grave.

If it had been before, before he started cultivating the Devouring Dark Devil Technique, only greediness would be roused in his heart if he found out about the existence of the tablet. There would be no other emotion at all.

However, right now, because he had cultivated the Devouring Dark Devil Technique, he was already a Devil Cultivator now. Therefore, he was filled with a sense of panic that rose from the bottom of his heart.

“Even if I’ve made a breakthrough to the peak of the Refined Saint Stage, I’d still be no match for an Early Pristine Saint Stage Martial Cultivator who possesses the Devilseal Tablet!” Xu Jing muttered to himself as his face turned even more solemn.

The young hunchback stood behind Xu Jing and after he heard his muttering, he could guess what Xu Jing was thinking about, so he quickly reassured him. “Young Mansion Master, the Devilseal Tablet is in the hands of a Saint Rudiment Stage Martial Cultivator, so it still won’t pose as a threat to you. Besides, there’s only one Devilseal Tablet in the entire Dao Martial Saint Land. The person who has the Devilseal Tablet isn’t necessarily your enemy and won’t necessarily become your enemy.”

Upon hearing the hunchback’s words, Xu Jing’s eyes lit up right away.

“That’s right! You’re correct! Let alone the fact that the Devilseal Tablet is in the hands of a Saint Rudiment Stage Dao Cultivator now, even if it’s in the hands of a Pristine Saint Stage Dao Cultivator, he’s not necessarily my enemy and might not come to deal with me.” As the saying went, blunt were those concerned. Now that the hunchback reminded him, Xu Jing returned to his senses completely and his mood improved.

“However, to think that he could actually get his hands on such a Super Saint Weapon like the Devilseal Tablet, that Saint Rudiment Stage Dao Cultivator who’s called Duan Ling Tian is really lucky!” The hunchback looked envious as he thought about this.

“Hmph! So what if he has the Devilseal Tablet? Not long after that, the entire Dao Martial Saint Land will know that he has the Devilseal Tablet in his hand and he either must hide or be killed... Even if he isn’t killed, he’d be in hiding and daren’t use the Devilseal Tablet easily.” Xu Jing snorted.

However, there were hints of sourness in his tone.

To some extent, the fortuitous encounter of that Saint Rudiment Stage Dao Cultivator called Duan Ling Tian had also elicited jealousy, envy, and hatred in him.

Right now, it would never cross Xu Jing’s mind — not even in his dreams — that Duan Ling Tian, the owner of the Devilseal Tablet whom he thought would not necessarily be his enemy, had now come to the Rising Sky Mansion district for his sake and had decided to kill him in one fell swoop in the Rising Sky Rankings Battle ten months later.

When Xu Jing and his lackey tyrannically searched for young girls outside, particularly virgins, Duan Ling Tian was cultivating diligently with his full force as well.

As time continued to pass by, the Sun True Origin in his body had also started to stabilize and he could finally control it smoothly with just a thought in his mind.

However, Duan Ling Tian did not stop his cultivating because of this.

He continued to cultivate and further strengthen his cultivation base of the Early Pristine Saint Stage.

Right now, his target was to make a breakthrough to the Intermediate Pristine Saint Stage or even the Mastery Pristine Saint Stage before the Rising Sky Rankings Battle started.

Killing Xu Jing, the Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion in the Rising Sky Rankings Battle, was the promise he had made to Han Xue Nai's father, Han Zheng Tian, who was also the Mansion Master of the Greenwave Han Mansion. He would have to do it no matter what, regardless of how difficult how it was.

"If I use the Jasper Celestial Sword, it'll be enough for me to kill Xu Jing instantly with my current cultivation base. Unfortunately, no Saint Weapon or other external power is allowed to be used in the Rising Sky Rankings Battle. Without the Jasper Celestial Sword, my cultivation base will have to be elevated if I want to win against him. It has to go as high as possible." Somehow, an obsession had risen in Duan Ling Tian's heart, an obsession to raise his cultivation base higher.

An obsession could be bad or beneficial sometimes.

At the very least, to Duan Ling Tian, this obsession had become his driving force, not for any other reason, but for Han Xue Nai whom he had always regarded as his biological sister. He must complete the promise that he made to Han Zheng Tian for that was a man's promise. No matter how difficult the journey was, he would still have to complete it even if he had to crawl.

As Duan Ling Tian was preparing for the Rising Sky Rankings Battle, Duan Ru Feng's feelings still had not calmed down in the faraway Azure Cloud Mansion.

The benefactor that he had guessed countless of times turned out to actually be his own son.

Even Duan Ru Feng, who was the Mansion Master of the Azure Cloud Mansion, could not help but be shocked.

However, as he recalled the situation that his son was in now, his heart was filled with anxiety again. How he itched to just send his men to look for Duan Ling Tian and bring him back to the Azure Cloud Mansion! Only then would his heart be at ease again.

However, every time this thought arose in his mind, the Old Prophet's figure would flash across his eyes once again.

According to the Old Prophet, he should not interfere with his son, Duan Ling Tian's growth. Once he did, he might cause an unpredictable impact on his son's future.

He believed the Old Prophet sincerely from the bottom of his heart, so he never doubted his words at all, including this time.

If it were not for the fact that he was reminded about the Old Prophet and the words that he had spoken earlier on, he would have sent out his men to search for his son.

"Tian'er, I hope that you can get through this. I'm still waiting for you to defeat Di Jue, that dragon clan's Five-clawed Golden Dragon, to enter the dragon clan's Saint Land, the Dragon Cleansing Pool!" Duan Ru Feng muttered to himself.

As he was muttering, anxiety could be seen in his eyes.

In this world, not only did mothers worry about their children, but even fathers would be equally concerned too.

It was precisely because of this that Duan Ru Feng did not plan to tell his wife Li Rou about this. He knew that once Li Rou found out about this, she would not be able to take it at all because her psychological endurance was far worse than his.

He did not tell Li Fei either.

He secretly ordered the Azure Cloud Mansion estate to block all news about the Devilseal Tablet and Duan Ling Tian to prevent Li Rou and Li Fei from finding out about this.

Some news were better kept in the dark.

Ignorance was bliss in this case.

However, the fact that the Azure Cloud Mansion did nothing at all did not mean that the Mountainshade Black Market would keep quiet too.

As a series of orders were sent out by the Mountainshade Black Market headquarters, its branches in the various districts of the Dao Martial Saint Land had started their moves as well.

The Mountainshade Black Market spared no effort in searching for Duan Ling Tian's tracks.

If it was said that the reason the Mountainshade Black Market was searching for Duan Ling Tian previously was purely due to the fact that Duan Ling Tian was Duan Ru Feng, the Mansion Master of the Azure Cloud Mansion's son, then the reason for them to look for him now was because he had the Devilseal Tablet in his hand and the latter was desperate to get their hands on it.

Chapter 1664: Nimble Valley

Although the Mountainshade Black Market had deliberately blocked this news on a wide scale, it still reached the Azure Cloud Mansion clearly.

"What is Dugu trying to do?" Duan Ru Feng's expression was grave as cold brilliance flashed across his eyes.

At this moment, he also found out that before the Devilseal Tablet in his son's hand was exposed, he was already being targeted by Leader Dugu from the Mountainshade Black Market.

"Dugu actually knows who my son is and even has his portrait on top of that! Where exactly did he get it?" Duan Ru Feng was puzzled over this.

However, as a lightbulb went off in his mind, he could easily guess that this most likely had something to do with the dragon clan. After all, the reason he went to the dragon clan the last time was because of his son.

“They even have my son’s portrait! It looks like it must be Di Jue, that Five-clawed Golden Dragon from the dragon clan, who’s pulling the strings!” Soon, Duan Ru Feng locked his target down.

After he had his target, his brows knitted together tightly. He never thought that Di Jue would be so unscrupulous. He had already made that five year-promise with his son Duan Ling Tian, yet he still dared to get up to some mischief.

However, even though he was sure that it was Di Jue who was up to no good, he did not have any evidence at all. Therefore, despite his fury, he did not approach the dragon clan to get even with Di Jue.

Di Jue had thousands of excuses, saying that he had nothing to do with this matter.

After knowing that the Mountainshade Black Market had launched such an unbridled movement, Duan Ru Feng was even more worried about his own son’s safety and became even more restless.

However, as he recalled the Old Prophet’s strict words last time, he still bit his tongue. Of course, Duan Ling Tian did not know about Duan Ru Feng’s concerns.

He did not even know that his father was the Mansion Master of the Azure Cloud Mansion, the eminent quasi-third-rated force in the Lower Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land.

At the same time, Feng Tian Wu, who had entered the Greenwave Han Mansion district not long ago, heard about the bustling news and could not help but start to be worried about Duan Ling Tian’s safety. “I hope that blessed are the good men like Big Brother Duan... Where are you actually now, Big Brother Duan?”

However, after coming to the Greenwave Han Mansion district, Feng Tian Wu was not in a rush to leave.

A month after, she came to the Greenwave City and inquired about Han Xue Nai’s identity.

Even though she had never met Han Xue Nai face-to-face before, she had heard of her name more than once from her Big Brother Duan. On top of that, she roughly knew what kind of person Han Xue Nai was.

In the eyes of her Big Brother Duan, Han Xue Nai was of unknown origin and possessed a mysterious identity.

Feng Tian Wu had heard of Duan Ling Tian speaking about Han Xue Nai. On the other hand, Han Xue Nai had also heard her Brother Ling Tian mention Feng Tian Wu too.

For this reason, although the two of them had never met each other properly yet, they had long known about each other’s existence.

It was precisely because of this that when Feng Tian Wu announced her identity and asked somebody to inform Han Xue Nai, Han Xue Nai quickly sent somebody to invite her to the Greenwave Han Mansion, her mansion.

“You’re Sister Tian Wu? I used to always hear Brother Ling Tian mention you!” In the face of Feng Tian Wu, Han Xue Nai was very passionate.

“Xue Nai, I’ve also often heard Big Brother Duan speak about you.” Feng Tian Wu smiled in response, but quickly broached the main subject as she asked, “Xue Nai, your Brother Ling Tian has come to find you already, hasn’t he?”

“Brother Ling Tian is here to find for Sister Fei’er,” Han Xue Nai sighed, “However, someone took her away some time ago. As for Brother Ling Tian, he stayed in our Greenwave Han Mansion for a month and has now left. I believe that he’ll come back to visit me before that. He’ll definitely come...”

In the end, Han Xue Nai was almost muttering to herself.

“He’s left?” After learning that Duan Ling Tian had come to the Greenwave Han Mansion, Feng Tian Wu’s eyes lit up but upon learning that he had merely stayed there for a month before leaving, her heart sank again.

She would not be able to see her Big Brother Duan again.

Looking at Han Xue Nai, Feng Tian Wu’s eyes gleamed brightly as she asked without beating around the bush, “Xue Nai, did Big Brother Duan mention where he was going?”

“No, he didn’t.” Han Xue Nai smiled wryly.

Upon hearing this, Feng Tian Wu was greatly disappointed.

However, the clues about Duan Ling Tian’s trail was also completely cut off right there.

All of a sudden, Feng Tian Wu did not know where she should head. She felt like she had nowhere to go.

With Han Xue Nai’s invitation, Feng Tian Wu temporarily stayed in her mansion in the Greenwave Han Mansion estate.

The news about how another outsider had come to Han Xue Nai’s mansion after several months soon reached Han Xin, the Supreme Elder of the Greenwave Han Mansion again.

Nevertheless, since Feng Tian Wu was a woman, he did not mind.

Time flowed past like a stream of water, trickling quietly through the fingers.

In the Rising Sky Mansion district, the discussion trend about the Rising Sky Mansion had also come to reach its peak as time went by. Soon, it was the month before the Rising Sky Rankings Battle took place.

In the entire Rising Sky Mansion district, people everywhere were talking about the Rising Sky Mansion.

The hottest topic in the Rising Sky Mansion district was undoubtedly the Rising Sky Rankings.

A month time was neither long nor short.

In this one month, the venue where the Rising Sky Rankings Battle would be held was a vast canyon called the Nimble Valley which was a lively and bustling place.

The Rising Sky Rankings Battle was a grand occasion in the Rising Sky Mansion district. There was still one month to go before it officially started, but a group of people had already reached, waiting for the Rising Sky Rankings Battle to start.

In this period of time, there were many genius Martial and Dao Cultivators who fit the requirements that came from all over the Rising Sky Mansion district too.

In the vast Nimble Valley, Martial and Dao Cultivators could be seen everywhere, sitting cross-legged cultivating. Some even sat in the air cross-legged to cultivate while True Origin could be seen revolving around their bodies.

Saint Stage powerhouses did not seem to be valuable right there.

As there were only three more days to go before the Rising Sky Rankings Battle started, somebody shouted loudly and attracted many people's attention at once, "The people from the Rising Sky Mansion are here!"

When the crowd lifted their heads to take a look, they saw a group of people with an extraordinary bearing. Under the guidance of an ancient, old man, they entered the Nimble Valley and forcibly occupied the picturesque tip of the Nimble Valley, forcing the Martial and Dao Cultivators who were originally cultivating there to leave.

In the Rising Sky Mansion district, the Rising Sky Mansion was the absolute colossus; nobody dared to pick any trouble with them at all.

Chapter 1665: Brahma Temple, Flowery Monk!

On the last three days, more people came to the Nimble Valley in succession.

Some of these people came from the fifth-rated forces in the Rising Sky Mansion district, while others were from sixth- or seventh-rated forces.

As for the people from the eighth- and the ninth-rated forces, even if they came, nobody knew them at all.

A majority of the people from these forces dared not even come at all.

Other than having an impetus bearing, the fight between two Saint Stage powerhouses had an extremely shocking force that lingered as well. If one's cultivation base was not enough and they did not put a safe distance in between them, one would most likely be impacted. If the force was light, then one might be wounded, but if it was heavy, one might even be killed.

There were a total of 35 fifth-rated forces in the Rising Sky Mansion.

The Flowery Monk and Jing Xu Zi came from two of the forces.

The Flowery Monk was the disciple of a fifth-rated force called the Brahma Temple while Jing Xu Zi was the disciple of a fifth-rated force called the Pure Yang Shrine.

These two people were also known as the most outstanding geniuses among the middle-aged generation in the Rising Sky Mansion district.

Even the Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion was suppressed underneath them.

However, even though there were many people who came from the Brahma Temple and the Pure Yang Shrine, nobody could see the Flowery Monk and Jing Xu Zi at all. "Looks like the people from the Brahma Temple and the Pure Yang Shrine are here to prepare and occupy a decent space for the people at the back. After all, the Rising Sky Rankings Battle will be held for more than a day and each sect will need a place to rest."

Other than Elder Jiu from the Rising Sky Mansion who had brought his men to occupy the best place, the Brahma Temple, the Pure Yang Shrine and another fifth-rated force had also occupied three strategic places.

The rest of the people who were shooed away did not dare to say anything although they were infuriated.

In this world where the strong ruled, whoever had the strongest punch had the loudest say.

Two days went by and the Rising Sky Rankings Battle were to be held the next day, thus the crowds that came slowed down to a trickle.

However, the number of people who now came was in a larger group than before.

"It's the Flowery Monk! And the people from the Brahma Temple too!" somebody cried out loud. As his voice resonated, it merely attracted the people in the surrounding at first. After all, the Nimble Valley was not small and even though his voice was quite loud, it could not reverberate throughout the entire Nimble Valley.

However, as he and the people surrounding him narrowed their eyes in unison toward the distance to take a closer look, the others also noticed the movement and their gaze followed to look there.

From a distance, a group of people was making their way over in a massive and mighty formation. The person who led them was a bald, old man who was wearing a golden kasaya. He had a pair of white brows and had a long, white goatee on his chin. Ambling in the air in slow steps, he presented an unusual bearing as he gave off an unfathomable feeling.

Soon, somebody recognized the old monk and exclaimed out loud, "It's the Abbot from the Brahma Temple, Master Hui Ci!"

The Abbot of the Brahma Temple was also the leader of the Brahma Temple. He held the highest position in the Brahma Temple.

Behind the Abbot of the Brahma Temple were four people who followed closely behind him. Among them, there were three old monks, who wore silver kasayas. Each and every one of them looked so aged and shaky, giving one a feeling that they had undergone transcendence. It was obvious that they were not just some ordinary old monks.

Standing beside the three old monks who were wearing the silver kasayas was a young man who was wearing a red kasaya. He had an ordinary look and was the type of person who was not easily recognized in a crowd. However, the fact that he could stand together with the three old monks donning the silver kasaya and whose identities were obviously extraordinary was enough to prove that he was not simple.

This young monk was none other than the strongest person among the middle-aged generation in the Brahma Temple, the Flowery Monk.

The reason he was known as the Flowery Monk was that he was particularly promiscuous and had many love affairs, not abiding by the Brahma Temple's rule of refraining from sex.

Of course, even though he was promiscuous, he never forced women at all. He would only touch women who were hell-bent on him and were willing to sacrifice everything for him.

Therefore, even though his reputation was particularly good in the Rising Sky Mansion district, it was not particularly terrible either.

If an ordinary Brahma Temple disciple had broken the celibacy rule, he would be punished by flogging and ordered to reflect upon his sins by facing the wall for a light offense or be kicked out by the Brahma Temple if it was a heavy one.

Without a doubt, the Flowery Monk was an exception.

In addition to the fact that his Master was the Abbot of the Brahma Temple, all of this was mainly because of his innate talent in the Martial Dao that elicited respect from the entire Brahma Temple to the point that nobody would say anything even though he had broken the temple's rules.

Could they just expel him just like that?

In fact, ever since the Brahma Temple was formed, the Flowery Monk was the one who had the highest innate talent in the Martial Dao. Besides that, he might even be able to lead the Brahma Temple to make further progress and become a fourth-rated force.

It was only normal for such a person to have special rights in the Brahma Temple.

"It's the Three Great Guardian Warriors of the Brahma Temple!" To most of the people in the Nimble Valley, the Flowery Monk was no stranger to them as he usually did not like to stay in the Brahma Temple and would always wander around in the Rising Sky Mansion district. Furthermore, his actions were high-profile, causing many people in the Rising Sky Mansion district to know who he was.

Even those who had never met him in real life had at least seen his portraits before and could tell who he was.

As for the three old monks wearing the silver kasayas beside him, only very few people recognized them.

The Three Great Guardian Warriors of the Brahma Temple were just below the Abbot of the Brahma Temple and the Supreme Elder of the Brahma Temple. Their strengths were powerful and they were well-known in the Rising Sky Mansion district.

However, because they rarely showed themselves in front of crowds, not many people recognized them.

When any one of the trio was alone, his strength was already quite notable, but when they joined forces, their strengths were not that much inferior to the Abbot of the Brahma Temple.

“Are they the Three Great Guardian Warriors of the Brahma Temple, Hui Feng, Hui Yun, and Hui Huo?”

“That’s right! It’s them!”

“I heard that ever since they entered the sects, they have since cultivated together. Now that they have spent hundreds of years together, there’s already a tacit agreement between them and they can cast out extremely powerful joint techniques.”

“I heard about that too. I heard that when the three of them join forces together, their strength is in no way inferior to the Abbot of the Brahma Temple.”

“Even the three of them don’t join forces with one another, they are quite eminent powerhouses in the Brahma Temple!”

“Looks like the Brahma Temple takes the Rising Sky Rankings Battle quite seriously as well. Other than having the Abbot making his presence, the Three Great Guardian Warriors have actually come too!”

...

The crowd in the Nimble Valley discussed among each other excitedly.

As for the group of old and middle-aged monks behind the five of them, all of them were completely ignored.

Of course, after a while, some people could recognize these monks. These monks were basically the elders in the Brahma Temple and some of them had strength and positions that were far greater than the Brahma Temple elder who had come to the Nimble Valley a few days ago.

Because the Brahma Temple elder was here as the leader a few days ago, he had also taken the spotlight of many people present.

These elders, on the other hand, had come together with the Abbot, the Three Great Guardian Warriors, and the Flowery Monk, so they served as the foil and appeared like the green leaves to the Flowery Monk and the other four who were like vivid red flowers.

They were the green leaves that set off the beauty of the red flowers!

Chapter 1666: Li Feng

However, among the group of people who came from the Brahma Temple, the person who grabbed the most attention was the Flowery Monk.

He was one of the leading characters in the Rising Sky Rankings Battle this time.

“The strength of the Flowery Monk and Jing Xu Zi of the Pure Yang Shrine have always been neck-to-neck. This time, I wonder who will win and get first place in the Rising Sky Rankings! That’s the ultimate honor in our Rising Sky Mansion district after all! Whoever gets the first place will bring quite an extraordinary meaning to their respective forces.”

“That’s right! Whoever wins first place in the Rising Sky Rankings will definitely have more people fighting to join their respective force!”

“The charm of the champion of the Rising Sky Rankings is no joke at all!”

“Without a doubt, the first and the second place in the Rising Sky Rankings will definitely belong to the Flowery Monk and Jing Xu Zi. I’m just wondering if Xu Jing, the Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion, will be able to get third place or not.”

“I think it’ll be hard. After all, Zhong Gu’s cultivation base has already broken through to the Refined Saint Stage now.”

“I don’t think so though... Even the Rising Sky Mansion will definitely take the Rising Sky Rankings Battle this time seriously as well. Therefore, they’d definitely have used up a great number of resources on Xu Jing. I won’t find it strange even if he has made a breakthrough to the Intermediate Refined Saint Stage now.”

“You have a point! If Xu Jing has made a breakthrough to the Intermediate Refined Saint Stage and Zhong Gu hasn’t, Zhong Gu will be no match for him at all.”

...

In the Nimble Valley, the topics of the discussions among everyone were either the Flowery Monk, Jing Xu Zi, Xu Jing or Zhong Gu.

Without a doubt, the four of them were the main characters in the eyes of the crowd.

After the group of people from the Brahma Temple arrived, they descended at the tip of the Nimble Valley where the Brahma Temple elder had brought people to occupy first a few days ago.

Other than the Flowery Monk, all of the monks were sitting quietly there without moving an inch at all, appearing like an array of statues.

Only the Flowery Monk was swiveling left and right before locking his gaze on one person.

It was a cold and aloof-looking young man who had a simple and unadorned sheathless sword in his hands. Hovering there quietly, he did not move an inch at all as he oozed a series of invisible sharp aura, as though his entire physique had transformed into a sword at that very moment.

Nonetheless, the reason he noticed this young man was not because of this.

When the Flowery Monk just arrived, he already noticed that among all of the people that he could see, this was the only person who had taken a blind eye to the arrival of him and their Brahma Temple posse.

Of course, perhaps this person never even stole a glance at them.

Given the state that this person was in now, he could still see that he had not completely shut off all of his five senses.

With him acting like this, he was either someone who considered himself remote and looked down on their Brahma Temple or he was someone who had remarkable strength and an uncommon background, thus not the arrival of the Brahma Temple posse did not elicit any interest from him at all.

However, the Flowery Monk's intuition told him that this person did not belong to the former.

The Flowery Monk was a straightforward person. After his interest in this aloof man was perked, he straightaway walked over in the air and went to the young man's side before taking the initiative to greet him. "Friend, are you here to join the Rising Sky Rankings Battle too?"

The young man opened his eyes and cast a nonchalant glance at the Flowery Monk before asking, "Is there anything I can help you with?"

"Friend, I'm called the Flowery Monk, but I wonder how should I address you," the Flowery Monk replied with a smile.

"Li Feng." Actually, the aloof man was none other than Duan Ling Tian.

Of course, although Duan Ling Tian's expression remained distant, it was not the appearance that he had disguised as when he went to the Greenwave City. He had changed into another face using the Disguising Secret Tactic and though it was still aloof-looking, it was completely different from the Ling Tian last time.

Right now, he was here for the Rising Sky Rankings Battle.

Li Feng was his name now.

Li was his mother's surname while Feng was taken from the last word of his cheapskate father's name.

"So, you're actually Brother Li Feng! Brother Li Feng, are you here to join the Rising Sky Rankings Battle too?" The Flowery Monk smiled till his eyes disappeared as he asked.

"Yes." Duan Ling Tian nodded indifferently while thinking to himself, 'This Flowery Monk is just like what the rumors say. He's really a vagabond who's without an ounce of etiquette. Though he's a monk, he doesn't have the habit of one at all. No wonder he's labeled as the Variant in the Brahma Temple by the people in the Rising Sky Mansion district. However, the fact that he could win against Xu Jing, that Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion, is enough to prove that he's not that simple as well.'

Of course, Duan Ling Tian, who had come to the Rising Sky Mansion district a while back, had heard of the Flowery Monk too.

In addition to the Flowery Monk, he had also heard of Jing Xu Zi too.

Just as the Flowery Monk was about to open his mouth to say something, he seemed to have noticed something and with a jolt, he tore his gaze away from Duan Ling Tian and looked in the distance.

A group of men was approaching in a great formation.

The person who was leading them was an old man who was wearing a dapo and held a whisk in his hand. The old man was medium-built and had white hair with a ruddy complexion. The robe on his body fluttered without any wind as he appeared to be like a sage.

There was a young man and two old men behind this old man who were all wearing dapo. Of the two old men, one was fat while one was skinny, with a temperament that was as though they had seen through the world.

Behind the four of them was a group of middle-aged and old Taoist priests.

“It’s the people from the Pure Yang Shrine!” At this moment, many people in the Nimble Valley recognized this group of people and they exclaimed out loud one by one.

Right now, the person who was leading the group of Taoist priests making their way there was none other than the Shrine Master of the Pure Yang Shrine.

As for the two old men behind him, they were the two Vice Shrine Masters of the Pure Yang Shrine. Standing beside the two Vice Shrine Masters were Jing Xu Zi, the most outstanding genius Dao Cultivator among the middle-aged generation in the Pure Yang Shrine.

In the Pure Yang Shrine, other than the older and younger generations, the people who were in the same generation as he was called him “Great Senior Brother”.

Hence, in the Rising Sky Mansion district, as long as the Great Senior Brother of the Pure Yang Shrine was mentioned, everyone knew that they were referring to him.

Unlike the Flowery Monk’s unruliness, Jing Xu Zi was a very solemn person. He was serious and stern. As the most outstanding genius powerhouse among the middle-aged generation in the Pure Yang Shrine, both of their strengths were almost on par with each other but their personalities were poles apart.

“Hehe... Jing Xu Zi, it has been quite some time since we last met. I’m taking the first place of the Rising Sky Rankings this time!” Looking at Jing Xu Zi, the Flowery Monk chuckled. His tone was filled with provocation.

In the Rising Sky Mansion district, the Flowery Monk and Jing Xu Zi were a pair of mortal enemies. This was something everyone knew, thus the meeting between the two of them would always be unpleasant.

“Hmph!” In the face of the Flowery Monk provocation, Jing Xu Zi merely snorted and did not say anything more.

Even though he did not utter a word, the meaning he wanted to convey was obvious. He declined to comment on the Flowery Monk’s words. Truth be told, he did not think that the Flowery Monk would beat him and obtain the first place in the Rising Sky Rankings.

Chapter 1667: What A Haughty Manner!

“Jing Xu Zi.” At this moment, Duan Ling Tian’s gaze landed on Jing Xu Zi.

He had long heard about this genius Dao Cultivator in the Rising Sky Mansion district and knew that his strength was almost on par with the Flowery Monk. Besides, both of them were also much more powerful than Xu Jing, the Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion.

Of course, saying that they were much more powerful than Xu Jing only meant that they used to be much more powerful than him.

Tomorrow was the day the Rising Sky Rankings battle would be officially held and for the sake of this day, Xu Jing, the Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion, must have done his preparations too.

Not only that, even the Rising Sky Mansion must have spared no effort in nurturing him and spent a great number of cultivation resources on him.

For this reason, even Duan Ling Tian did not dare conclude that the Flowery Monk and Jing Xu Zi would be able to beat Xu Jing now.

Of course, even though he was not sure, his intuition told him that the Flowery Monk and Jing Xu Zi would be stronger than Xu Jing was.

“Zhong Gu is here too!” Another exclamation reverberated and attracted many people’s attention, including Duan Ling Tian’s.

Duan Ling Tian cast a glance and saw an ordinary-looking, plain-dressed, young man walking in the air toward them from a distance. He had a pair of broadswords that had no sheath on his back. Instead, it was merely tightly wrapped by layers of plain cloth, making him appear particularly low-profile.

However, even though this young man was low-profile, the moment he appeared in the Nimble Valley, he still startled many people because he was Zhong Gu.

If it was said that the most outstanding people in the middle-aged generation not more than 50 years old in the Rising Sky Mansion district were the Flowery Monk and Jing Xu Zi, then other than Xu Jing, the Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion, he was next.

When Zhong Gu was still at the peak of the Pristine Saint Stage, he had once defeated Xu Jing who was on a similar stage too.

However, after Xu Jing had made a breakthrough to the Early Refined Saint Stage, he was no longer a match for him.

Be that as it might, Zhong Gu had also made a breakthrough to the Early Refined Saint Stage now. If Xu Jing was still at the Early Refined Saint Stage now, he might not be a match for Zhong Gu.

Of course, the chances of Xu Jing still being at the Early Refined Saint Stage were slim.

After all, he was the Young Mansion Master of the fourth-rated force, the Rising Sky Mansion.

The Flowery Monk, Jing Xu Zi, and Zhong Gu appeared in succession, attracting the gaze of many people in the Nimble Valley.

On the other hand, Duan Ling Tian, who was hovering in the air not far from the Flowery Monk, did not attract much attention due to his wallflower presence. It was only the Flowery Monk who seemed to express interest in him from the start.

However, after a series of probing, the Flowery Monk did not notice any difference in Duan Ling Tian and this made him puzzled. In the end, after bidding goodbye to Duan Ling Tian, he proceeded to leave and go back to the corner of the Nimble Valley where the other Brahma Temple people were.

As for the group of people from the Pure Yang Shrine, including Jing Xu Zi, all of them had now descended at the Nimble Valley.

As a sectless cultivator, Zhong Gu did not put on such a display of splendor. He found a place alone and quietly rested there. From the beginning till the end, he did not talk to anybody at all, appearing to be particularly cold.

As time passed by, the last fifth-rated force arrived in the afternoon.

Of course, the people from this fifth-rated force had already come to occupy an area before this. They took up a corner in the Nimble Valley as their resting place and proceeded to stay there the moment they arrived.

Even though this fifth-rated force did not have such outstanding genius disciples like the Flowery Monk of the Brahma Temple and Jing Xu Zi of the Pure Yang Shrine, they were not lacking disciples with high innate talent too. This time, they came in a huge group, aiming to participate in the Rising Sky Rankings Battle the next day.

Of course, they dared not think of entering the top three spots.

Furthermore, they dared not even think of claiming the fourth place of the Rising Sky Rankings too.

In the opinions of most of the people in the Rising Sky Mansion district, if no mishaps occurred, the top ten of the Rising Sky Rankings would definitely include the Flowery Monk, Jing Xu Zi, Xu Jing, and Zhong Gu.

Of course, even though the words “no mishaps” were used here, how could there possibly be so many accidents? Therefore, many people were almost certain that the top four in the Rising Sky Rankings would definitely be the four of them.

The target set by this fifth-rated force for its disciples was to make it to the top ten in the Rising Sky Rankings.

Soon, evening arrived and the sky above the Nimble Valley seemed to have been dyed as it completely transformed into a crimson red.

“The people of the Rising Sky Mansion are not here yet.” Many people looked left and right when they did not notice anybody from the Rising Sky Mansion at all.

Of course, the Rising Sky Mansion people currently in the Nimble Valley now had been sent out by the Rising Sky Mansion to occupy the space. The leader was Elder Jiu from the Rising Sky Mansion.

“What’s wrong with the Rising Sky Mansion? Don’t tell me that they only plan to come tomorrow?”

“It can’t be. According to the previous rules of the Rising Sky Rankings Battle, it always starts the moment the sky turns bright in the east. I’m sure it will be the same this time too, so it’s impossible for the Rising Sky Mansion people to come tomorrow. That will be too late!”

“It’s not only the Rising Sky Mansion. The people from the other two fourth-rated forces aren’t here yet too.”

“The powerhouses of the fourth-rated forces abide by the ancestral rule of their respective forces and will come to our Rising Sky Mansion district every 50 years to make sure our Rising Sky Mansion’s Rising Sky Rankings is absolutely fair.”

“Usually, they will come together with the Rising Sky Mansion.”

The discussions in the Nimble Valley were constant and lively.

“The other two fourth-rated forces,” Even Duan Ling Tian had also found out recently that people from two other fourth-rated forces would come during the Rising Sky Rankings Battle.

The people from the fourth-rated forces were the powerhouses of their own respective forces.

The reason these powerhouses came to the Rising Sky Rankings Battle was not due to the Rising Sky Mansion’s invitation, but because they abided to the rule of their respective forces. A long time ago when the Rising Sky Rankings was introduced, in order to ensure fairness, the people presiding the Rising Sky Rankings Battle were not from the Rising Sky Mansion but from two other fourth-rated forces instead.

The strength of these two fourth-rated forces was in no way inferior to the Rising Sky Mansion.

For this reason, none of the powerhouses who walked out of their places feared the Rising Sky Mansion at all. In this case, they would not worried that the Rising Sky Mansion people would overwhelm others with their power and cheat.

It was precisely because of this that the Rising Sky Rankings Battle could be deemed as very fair.

After knowing this, Duan Ling Tian also breathed a sigh of relief. “This way, even if I kill Xu Jing, the Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion in the Rising Sky Rankings Battle, the Rising Sky Mansion powerhouse won’t dare to do anything to me in front of the powerhouses of the two-rated forces.”

He only had one purpose today — to kill Xu Jing, the Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion and rescue Xue Nai from the crisis.

As for his ranking in the Rising Sky Rankings, he did not care at all.

Casting aside the fact that he was not from the Rising Sky Mansion district and did not need such honor at all, even if he was, he had no interest in the Rising Sky Rankings either.

It was merely a bubble reputation.

Throughout the journey, he had gone through so much and was no longer attached to this world.

“They’re here!” An exclamation reverberated, causing Duan Ling Tian to snap back to reality. At the same time, he followed the gaze of the majority of people in the Nimble Valley and looked over.

A group of people was making their way over in a vast formation in the distant sky.

After these people got closer, one could still see that they were split into three waves of people. The three waves of people were walking abreast side by side, in no particular order.

“It’s Xu Cen, the Grand Elder of the Rising Sky Mansion!” Somebody who had sharp eyes looked at the wave of people who were walking in the middle, or to be more precise, the person who was leading the group of people walking in the middle.

It was a curly-bearded, old man. Be it his hair, brows and curly beard, all of them were white. From afar, he appeared to be like a white lion that gave off an invisible pressure to the others.

He was Xu Cen, the Grand Elder of the Rising Sky Mansion.

Even though Xu Cen’s strength could not contend with the top three in the Rising Sky Mansion, making it to the top five was no problem for him at all.

Therefore, his presence sent quite a fright throughout the crowd.

In the Rising Sky Mansion, Xu Cen’s position was merely inferior to the Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion, the two Vice Mansion Masters and that Supreme Elder who was secretive in his movement and trace.

“I can’t believe that Elder Xu Cen would come personally. It looks like the Rising Sky Mansion also places great emphasis on the Rising Sky Rankings Battle this time too.”

“Aren’t you talking nonsense? The Rising Sky Rankings is the ranking that has the most authority in the Rising Sky Mansion district and holds extraordinary meaning. As the ranking that has the most authority in the Rising Sky Mansion district, isn’t it normal for the Rising Sky Mansion to regard it as important?”

“Eh? Why didn’t I see that Young Mansion Master from the Rising Sky Mansion?”

“That’s right! Where’s that Xu Jing, the Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion?”

As the discussions spread out, everyone realized that Xu Jing, one of the lead roles in this Rising Sky Rankings Battle, did not seem to have arrived together with the Grand Elder of the Rising Sky Mansion and the rest.

“Don’t tell me that Xu Jing isn’t coming at all!”

“Impossible! No matter what, Xu Jing is still the Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion and on top of that, his innate talent isn’t bad, so how could he possibly miss the Rising Sky Rankings Battle this time?”

“That’s right! The Rising Sky Rankings Battle is held every 50 years and there’s an age limit. In other words, a person only has one chance to join the Rising Sky Rankings Battle once in his entire life. How could he possibly not come?”

“Even if he doesn’t want any fame, he’ll still want to become the next Mansion Master! As far as I know, a person who has never entered the Rising Sky Rankings will never stand a chance to become the Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion. It’s the law of the Rising Sky Mansion and has been an iron law since ancient times.”

“I’ve heard of that too. Still, although the great battalion of the Rising Sky Mansion has come, Xu Jing who is the Young Mansion Master has not shown up at all. What’s actually going on?”

“Perhaps he has met some sudden situation.”

In the Nimble Valley, the fact that Xu Jing had not come yet had caused a commotion to erupt.

“Hmph! That’s rather haughty of him!”

“In terms of strength, the Flowery Monk and Jing Xu Zi are much stronger than him, yet he’s still not yet here. What show is he putting on now?!”

“The Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion... Tsk Tsk... If he doesn’t have this ring of glory with him and he’s in either the Brahma Temple or the Pure Yang Shrine, he’d have long been suppressed by the Flowery Monk and Jing Xu Zi till he can’t lift his head up at all.”

The Nimble Valley was getting livelier with chatter. Many people even started to mock Xu Jing, the Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion.

Chapter 1668: Nimble Chess Set

In the Rising Sky Mansion district, even though Xu Jing, the Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion had gained quite some fame, it was mostly because of his identity.

In terms of strength, he was no match for the Flowery Monk and Jing Xu Zi at all.

Apart from that, in terms of the same stage, he was no match for Zhong Gu either.

In the Dao Martial Saint Land where the strong ruled, such action from Xu Jing would surely evoke displeasure from many people. Furthermore, he was as famous as the Flowery Monk and Jing Xu Zi.

In the crowd’s eyes, the reason the achievements Xu Jing had today was merely thanks to his identity.

If it were not for his blessed identity, he would be nothing and might not even be able to enter the top ten in the Rising Sky Rankings.

Upon hearing the discussion of the majority of people in the Nimble Valley getting more and more wanton, the expression on Xu Cen, the Grand Elder of the Rising Sky Mansion’s face turned grave at once.

Usually, he would have long overawed the others by force and make them all shut up.

However, now that the powerhouses of the other two fourth-rated forces were here, the strongest powerhouse from either of the forces was not inferior to him. Therefore, though he was enraged by the discussions around, he did not do anything.

In the end, Xu Cen still could not help but announce, “Our Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion has gone out for some training. Of course, he’ll show up in this Rising Sky Rankings Battle. Thanks for your worries, everyone.”

The moment he opened his mouth, his voice that contained True Origin spread out and passed through the entire Nimble Valley. Everyone heard him.

At once, most of the people who were originally talking about it clammed their mouths one by one.

They could hear that the fury in the Grand Elder of the Rising Sky Mansion’s tone.

Of course, a small fraction of people seemed to know that with the people from the two other great fourth-rated forces here, the Grand Elder of the Rising Sky Mansion would not dare to do anything, so they still continued to whisper among one another.

As for the contents of their whispering, every sentence of theirs was related to Xu Jing, the Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion.

Among the group of people to the left of the Rising Sky Mansion people, the old man, who was also the leader, looked at Xu Cen with a grin as he said, “Elder Xu Cen, it looks like the Young Mansion Master of your Rising Sky Mansion is prepared to show himself after the Rising Sky Rankings Battle starts.”

This old man was garbed in green and held a cane. His eyes that had turned into slits looked gentle and affable, like the old man next door.

Upon hearing that, Xu Cen could only flash an awkward smile. “It looks like it.”

“The two of you, let’s go to the side to take a rest first.” Pointing to one of the picturesque nooks in the Nimble Valley, Xu Cen gestured to the old man in green and the leader of another group of people. His tone was polite and he dared not slack at all.

Be it the old man in green or the other man, both of them were from the fourth-rated forces. Their strength was not inferior to Xu Cen, the Grand Elder of the Rising Sky Mansion.

The place where Xu Cen pointed to was where Elder Jiu of the Rising Sky Mansion had occupied.

The three great fourth-rated forces began to rest in the Nimble Valley as such.

‘There are two other great fourth-rated forces — the Sky Hurdle Mansion and the Raging Wave Mansion.’ Duan Ling Tian did not know much about the powerhouses of the two other fourth-rated forces who were presiding the Rising Sky Rankings Battle. Nonetheless, when it came to these two fourth-rated forces, having been in the Rising Sky Mansion district for a long time, he had heard of them before.

The Sky Hurdle Mansion and the Raging Wave Mansion were powerful fourth-rated forces that were just as mighty as the Rising Sky Mansion. They were just adjacent to the Rising Sky Mansion.

The Greenwave Han Mansion was located in the district of the Sky Hurdle Mansion.

'I can't see through that the Grand Elder of the Rising Sky Mansion at all. He's most likely an Eminent Saint Stage powerhouse, and an extraordinary Eminent Saint Stage one on top of that,' thought Duan Ling Tian to himself as he watched the silhouette that soon disappeared before his eyes.

In the face of Xu Cen, the Grand Elder of the Rising Sky Mansion, Duan Ling Tian obviously felt a certain amount of pressure. This pressure was even more immense than the pressure he felt when he first met Han Zheng Tian, the Mansion Master of the Greenwave Han Mansion.

As a conclusion, he was almost certain that Xu Cen, the Grand Elder of the Greenwave Han Mansion's strength was more powerful than Han Zheng Tian.

After the powerhouses of the three great fourth-rated forces, including Rising Sky Mansion, had settled down, the leaders of the Brahma Temple, Pure Yang Shrine and another fifth-rated force each went up one by one to pay respects, as though they feared that some unexpected calamity would fall on them if they slack.

As a fifth-rated force, though its strength was notable, it was nothing in front of the fourth-rated force. Evening gradually faded away and night fell.

At this moment, Xu Jing, the Young Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion had still not appeared yet.

Hovering above a peak in the Nimble Valley, Duan Ling Tian, who did not raise much attention, frowned unnoticeably and thought to himself, 'Does Xu Jing really plan to show himself after the Rising Sky Rankings Battle starts?'

In fact, the purpose he came this time was Xu Jing.

Now that he had not seen Xu Jing yet, it was normal for him to feel slightly in turmoil.

As midnight came, even though there were many people in the Nimble Valley, it gradually quietened down and nobody spoke anymore.

It was silent for the entire night.

Early morning the next day, when the sun rose from the east, almost everybody already was wide awake and they flew up into the air.

A loud bang reverberated. It turned out that an old man from the Sky Hurdle Mansion had raised a hand and pointed his cane to the sky in the middle of the Nimble Valley.

At that very instant, the sky quaked. Ripples that looked like waves appeared and spread out wave by wave before it gradually swept out.

"What's he doing?" Upon seeing this, Duan Ling Tian was stunned.

The next instant, he saw the leader of the Raging Wave Mansion also start to make his move.

He was a bald, stout man dressed in blue. With a raise of his hand, a simple and unadorned gigantic hammer appeared in his hand. The gigantic hammer swept through the sky and crashed toward the sky at the middle of the Nimble Valley.

The final target of the gigantic hammer was where the old man in green from the Sky Hurdle Mansion had pointed at with his cane just now.

Both of them struck the same area.

In the sky, the ripples that were originally spreading out like waves began to crumble abruptly after it was hit by this hammer.

At that second, a crack appeared without warning in that piece of sky in the middle of the Nimble Valley. The crack got bigger and bigger, sending chills down Duan Ling Tian's spine. 'What's actually going on?'

Actually, apart from Duan Ling Tian, many people were also shocked by the scene in front of them. Of course, some were not surprised by this at all.

These people were those who had experienced the Rising Sky Rankings Battle before. They had either participated in it before or watched from the sidelines before.

'Oh, so it's the effects of a formation!' Soon, Duan Ling Tian realized that the shocking scene that he just witnessed was merely the illusory effects of a formation.

To be more precise, the sky in the middle of the Nimble Valley was part of the illusion itself.

As the powerhouses from the Sky Hurdle Mansion and the Raging Wave Mansion made their move, both of them broke the Formation and created cracks in it, displaying everything behind the formation completely.

After everything behind the formation was finally revealed, the scene that appeared right before everybody's eyes was a chessboard that was continuously expanding. At first, the chess pieces were just ordinary size in their eyes, but after a few moments, they turned to become as huge as a fist.

Then, they transformed to become the size of an adult.

In the end, the size of each chess piece became so huge that hundreds of people could stand on one of them.

At that moment, the chessboard and the chess pieces on the chessboard stopped expanding.

'We're in an Illusory Formation!' When Duan Ling Tian returned to his senses from his bafflement, he realized that he had appeared on a chessboard that stretched out to as far as the eye could see. Beneath his feet was a massive chess piece. It would be no problem for 200 people to stand on it if they were willing to cram with each other.

Taking a deep breath, he looked around and after realizing that there was no end to the chessboard, he raised his head again.

Above him was an overcast sky. The dusky sky pressed down, as though it was trapping him and the rest of the people on the chessboard.

"This is the Nimble Chess Set." Right at this moment, a voice reverberated by Duan Ling Tian's ears, stunning him.

“The Nimble Chess Set!”

Soon, from the whispers of some of the people, he finally learned what the boundless chess game in front of his eyes was. It turned out to be a Nimble Chess Set in the Nimble Valley.

Of course, the so-called Nimble Chess Set here was actually a type of Illusory Formation.

At the same time, the Nimble Chess Set was also the stage for the Rising Sky Rankings Battle. As a matter of fact, the Nimble Valley had gotten its name because of the Nimble Chess Set.

Duan Ling Tian only learned about all of these now.

Whoosh! Whoosh!

As two ear-piercing sounds resonated in the air, he narrowed his eyes and looked over. He saw that the old man from the Sky Hurdle Mansion and the bald, stout man from the Raging Wave Mansion had both risen up to the sky. In just the blink of an eye, they hovered high in the sky looking down at everyone.

Even then, a majority of people in the vast Nimble Chess Set had not returned to their senses yet. The scene in front of them made them dumbstruck.

Among the crowd, this was the first time a majority of them came to watch the Rising Sky Rankings Battle.

“Everyone, due to the ancestral rule set by our ancestor, our Sky Hurdle Mansion will send somebody to preside the Rising Sky Rankings Battle that takes place every 50 years. This time, the person that our Sky Hurdle Mansion has sent is me,” declared the old man holding the cane in a loud voice.

Despite his ancient appearance, his tone was full of vigor, completely unlike the voice of a hoary, old man.

“I’m called Ren Zhong, the Vice Mansion Master of the Sky Hurdle Mansion. You can either call me Vice Mansion Master Ren or Elder Ren,” the old man continued to add.

As the words left his mouth, the scene undoubtedly burst out in a commotion.

The Vice Mansion Master of the Sky Hurdle Mansion!

Most of the people in the scene did not know the Sky Hurdle Mansion very well as they were from the Rising Sky Mansion district. On top of that, it was hard for them to come into contact with a force that was at the level of the Sky Hurdle Mansion.

Of course, even though they could not come into contact with such a force like the Sky Hurdle Mansion, it did not mean that they were completely clueless about them either.

In their opinion, as a fourth-rated force, the Vice Mansion Master of the Sky Hurdle Mansion would be no different from the Vice Mansion Master of the Rising Sky Mansion in the Rising Sky Mansion district. He was a person who held quite a stalwart position.

“I can’t believe that he’s actually the Vice Mansion Master of the Sky Hurdle Mansion,” many people mused.

The old man appeared to be very ordinary, to the point that it had never crossed their minds that he was actually the Vice Mansion Master of the Sky Hurdle Mansion. To them, this was a great person who was out of their reach.

Chapter 1669: Rising Sky Rankings Battle

As Ren Zhong, the Vice Mansion Master of Sky Hurdle Mansion introduced himself, the leader of the Raging Wave Mansion's people spoke as well.

The stout and bald man was the representative from Raging Wave Mansion sent here to preside over the Rising Sky Ranking Battle. After Ren Zhong finished speaking, he introduced himself as well, "Everyone! Elder Ren's words are similar to the words I wanted to say. Due to this reason, I'm not going to repeat it. I'm Liu Hong Guang, the Second Elder of Raging Wave Mansion."

Similar to the Sky Hurdle Mansion and the Rising Sky Mansion, the Raging Wave Mansion was a fourth-rate force as well.

However, compared to Ren Zhong, the Vice Mansion Master of Sky Hurdle Mansion, and Xu Cen, the Grand Elder of Rising Sky Mansion, the Second Elder of Raging Wave Mansion did not seem as impressive.

Soon after, when people learned about the stout and bald man's identity, someone exclaimed in a deep voice, "Looks like the Raging Wave Mansion doesn't really care about the Rising Sky Ranking Battle. They only sent a Second Elder to preside over the event."

Since somebody had spoken up, it was only natural for others to begin speaking as well.

Soon after, the gigantic chessboard that stretched out as far as the eyes could see began to bustle with noise again.

"Compared to the Grand Elder of Rising Sky Mansion and the Vice Mansion Master of Sky Hurdle Mansion, the Second Elder of Raging Wave Mansion doesn't seem to be at the same level as them. I really don't understand what the Raging Wave Mansion is thinking when they sent a Second Elder here."

"Exactly! How can a mere Second Elder of Raging Wave Mansion uphold the fairness of the Rising Sky Ranking Battle?"

"In our Rising Sky Mansion's district, the only people who are capable of disrupting the fairness of the Rising Sky Ranking Battle are from the Rising Sky Mansion. If the Vice Mansion Master of Sky Hurdle Mansion is not around, who's to stop the Grand Elder of Rising Sky Mansion from breaking the rules? How's the Second Elder of Raging Wave Mansion going to stop him?"

"That's right! I think the Raging Wave Mansion sending the Second Elder here is just a mere formality... His comparatively weak strength won't make much of an impact at all at the critical moment."

...

Seeing how Liu Hong Guang, the Second Elder of the Raging Wave Mansion, did not seem to mind their words, more people began to shamelessly join in the discussion.

Liu Hong Guang had a calm expression on his face as he hovered in the air as though he could not hear the discussion around him at all.

In truth, with his cultivation base, he could hear the people's discussion clearly even if they were whispering, let alone the people shamelessly discussing out loud.

He remained calm because he was not bothered by their words. However, even if Liu Hong Guang did not care about their words, it did not mean the people from Raging Wave Mansion who came with him was not bothered by it. The elders and disciples from the Raging Wave Mansion looked furious. Some of them even opened their mouths to explain, but their voices were buried by the discussions in the surroundings.

In the distance, when Xu Cen, the Grand Elder of Rising Sky Mansion, heard the discussion, his mouth twitched subtly.

Did these people say Liu Hong Guang was inferior to him?

Although he was much older than Liu Hong Guang, Liu Hong Guang's strength had already surpassed his strength ten years ago. At that time, he had gone to the Raging Wave Mansion with the Mansion Master of Rising Sky Mansion. He and Liu Hong Guang had fought, and in less than 100 moves, he was defeated.

He might not have used any Saint Inscriptions, Dao Talismans or other external aids, but he had used all the tricks he had up his sleeve. However, in the end, he was still no match for Liu Hong Guang. Due to this reason, he knew how strong Liu Hong Guang was.

When he heard the people in the surrounding saying Liu Hong Guang was inferior to him, he instantly felt a burning sensation on his face. He was so embarrassed, he wished the ground would split open and swallow him whole.

"Liu Hong Guang, the Second Elder of Raging Wave Mansion, is not that simple!" Among the people present on the scene, apart from those who were familiar with Liu Hong Guang, there were only Duan Ling Tian and a few others who did not agree with the masses.

Previously, when the three great fourth-rate forces made their appearance together, Duan Ling Tian had noticed an abnormality. Xu Cen, the Grand Elder of Rising Sky Mansion, was not only polite to Ren Zhong, the Vice Mansion Master of Sky Hurdle Mansion, but he was also polite to Liu Hong Guang, the Second Elder of Raging Wave Mansion as well.

They were all members of fourth-rate forces, and Xu Cen was the Grand Elder of the Rising Sky Mansion. Although he had to put on a show of paying respect to the Raging Wave Mansion, he would not have been so polite to Liu Hong Guang if he was weak.

After all, this was a world where the strong ruled.

Those who were of equal standing or stronger would not treat someone weaker in such a way.

Those who shared the same thoughts with Duan Ling Tian were a few other powerhouses from the three great fifth-rate forces in the Rising Sky Mansion's district. Apart from them, there were the Flowery Monk, Jing Xu Ji, and Zhong Gu.

Based on their expressions, it was obvious they did not agree with the discussions in their surroundings.

“Everyone! Can you please let me speak?” As the situation seemed as though it was going out of control, Ren Zhong, the Vice Mansion Master of Sky Hurdle Mansion, finally spoke up. His voice contained True Origin, and it quickly overwhelmed everyone’s voices, causing them to fall silent one by one as they shifted their attention to Ren Zhong.

They wanted to know what the Vice Mansion Master of Sky Hurdle Mansion would say under such circumstances.

When Ren Zhong saw the place had finally fallen silent, he looked at Liu Hong Guang and said with True Origin, “In terms of seniority, the Second Elder of Raging Wave Mansion could be considered as my nephew... However, in terms of strength, even I don’t have the confidence to defeat him!”

The moment Ren Zhong’s words left his mouth, the place turned even more silent if it was even possible.

Ren Zhong, the Vice Mansion Master of Sky Hurdle Mansion, said he was not confident he could defeat the Second Elder of Raging Wave Mansion?

How was it possible?

“What a joke! Just a Second Elder of Raging Wave Mansion possesses strength that’s on par with the Vice Mansion Master of Sky Hurdle Mansion? Is this even possible?”

“I think the Vice Mansion Master of Sky Hurdle Mansion only said so because he doesn’t want the Second Elder of Raging Wave Mansion to feel awkward.”

“I think so too.”

...

Although Ren Zhong spoke up to help Liu Hong Guang out of this situation, it seemed like nobody on the scene believed his words at all. Everyone felt he was only trying to save the Second Elder of Raging Wave Mansion from embarrassment by saying such words.

Ren Zhong frowned when he saw this.

Just as he was about to further explain himself, Liu Hong Guang who standing at the side stopped him. Liu Hong Guang said indifferently, “Elder Ren, I’m not bothered by it so you don’t have to bother with it as well. However, I would like to thank you for your good intention.”

Since Liu Hong Guang had already spoken up, Ren Zhong no longer said anything.

“Hong Guang, you’re even calmer than an old man like me.” In the end, Ren Zhong could not help but sigh emotionally.

No matter what, the main event for today was the Rising Sky Ranking that was about to begin. Due to this reason, the discussion about Liu Hong Guang slowly came to a stop. Everyone’s attention was now focused on the Rising Sky Ranking Battle.

“Everyone!” When the light of dawn hit the ground, Ren Zhong, the Vice Mansion Master of Sky Hurdle Mansion who was also one of the moderators of the Rising Sky Ranking Battle, said in a timely manner, “Today is the first day of the Rising Sky Ranking Battle... I’m sure many of you know about the rules of the Rising Sky Ranking Battle. However, I’m sure there are some people who are unfamiliar with the rules as well. I will now announce the rules of the battle so that everyone is aware of it.”

Ren Zhong began to list out the rules of the Rising Sky Ranking Battle.

The first rule he stated was something Duan Ling Tian already knew. One was allowed to kill in the battle. Naturally, if the other party admitted defeat, the opponent was not allowed to attack anymore. Ren Zhong and Liu Hong Guang who were both moderators of the Rising Sky Ranking Battle would rescue them.

Killing was allowed!

Although almost everyone who came knew about this rule, their hearts jolted when they heard Ren Zhong announcing it again. Since it concerned their lives and deaths, they found it hard to remain calm. Some of them even had thoughts of pulling out.

Although one was allowed to admit defeat, it would be difficult to find a chance to admit defeat unless both parties were equals in strength.

The Rising Sky Ranking Battle did not have any specific rules. The last ten men standing would be ranked in the Rising Sky Ranking.

“No external aids like Saint Weapons can be used during the battle. You’ll be disqualified if you’re found breaking this rule!” Ren Zhong continued to announce.

This was an important rule as well. No external aid was allowed.

One could only rely on one’s strength to compete with the others to make it on the Rising Sky Ranking.

This rule was set in place because the people who created the Rising Sky Ranking was worried disciples from greater forces would possess an unfair advantage since greater forces had no lack of high-grade Saint Inscriptions and Dao Talismans.

If one could rely on external aids, it would not be fair to ordinary sectless cultivators.

“All of you must have heard the Rising Sky Ranking Battle doesn’t really have a specific duel rule... Those who manage to last till the end will make it on the Rising Sky Ranking! Naturally, the end means when no one could continue to challenge anymore. At that time, the Rising Sky Ranking Battle will officially come to an end,” Ren Zhong continued to say.

At this moment, under the watchful eyes of the others, Ren Zhong and Liu Hong Guang exchanged a glance before they raised the cane and gigantic hammer in their hands in tacit agreement before they struck at the sky above the Nimble Chess Set. This time, the directions they struck were different.

Boom! Boom!

As two faint sounds reverberated in the air, everyone could feel the Heaven and Earth Spirit Energy in the Nimble Chess Set began to turn chaotic. It took a while before it regained its tranquility.

At the same time, they could clearly see ten chess pieces flying up from the Nimble Chess Set. They were five black and five white chess pieces.

After the ten chess pieces had risen up into the air, they hovered in the air as though some invisible energy were holding them up.

“T-This...” At the same time, the group of people, including Duan Ling Tian, could not help but widen their eyes.

Chapter 1670: It's Starting

Above the sky, the ten chess pieces began to grow bigger. In the end, every one of the chess pieces had transformed into a vast platform. Although the chess pieces were huge, it was nothing compared to the chessboard of the Nimble Chess Set.

Duan Ling Tian found the ten chess pieces that were like towering giants visually impactful. “Such huge chess pieces are actually hovering in the air... Is this a Mirror Image in the Illusory Formation?”

However, when Ren Zhong asked the people present on the scene to go up on the ten chess pieces, Duan Ling Tian realized these ten chess pieces were no ordinary Illusory Formation's Mirror Images. When he landed on it, it felt as though he was stepping on solid ground.

“What kind of Formation is this?” Duan Ling Tian was astonished. “To think that they're able to make such a life-like Illusory Formation's Mirror Image!”

Although Duan Ling Tian knew some Formation techniques, the formations he knew was nothing compared to the Nimble Chess Set.

‘Even the Illusory Formation set up by my Hallucinogenic Formation is nothing compared to this Illusory Formation... Who was the one who set up this Illusory Formation? It's so powerful!’ Duan Ling Tian was stunned.

Of the three formation compasses that he obtained by chance in the Moon Illumination Sect, Duan Ling Tian had used the Illusory formation compass that could set up the Hallucinogenic Formation. As for the other two formation compasses, until now, one of them had not been repaired while the other one was still being repaired. According to Elder Huo, he would be able to finish repairing it in another six months at most.

However, Duan Ling Tian who possessed the Jasper Celestial Sword and Deviseal Tablet did not rely much on the formation compasses. Due to this reason, he did not feel a sense of urgency when it came to the formation compasses. Elder Huo had told him that as long as there was enough power being supplied to the three compasses, it would be immensely useful to him.

Naturally, Elder Huo had also said the usefulness of three compasses could not be compared to the Jasper Celestial Sword. However, the difference was the Jasper Celestial Sword would deplete a huge amount of Duan Ling Tian's strength while the three compasses would not deplete much of his strength.

Due to this reason, Duan Ling Tian wished that Elder Huo would finish repairing the formation compasses soon even though he had no use for them now. Who knew if they might come in handy in the future?

“The effect of the Illusory Formation is just too lifelike, right?!”

“Impossible! It feels as though I’m really stepping on this chess piece... I can even touch it if I bend forward! What kind of Illusory Formation is this?! It’s amazing!”

“I’m very sure the chess piece beneath our feet is not real at all. It seems like it’s transformed by an energy that has been solidified to support us. This is my first time seeing such an Illusory Formation! My life is really worth living!”

“These ten chess pieces will be the arena of the Rising Sky Ranking Battle?”

As the discussion turned louder, Duan Ling Tian jolted, and he quickly returned to his senses. He shifted his attention to Ren Zhong.

Although there were two moderators presiding over the Rising Sky Ranking Battle, apart from when he was introducing himself, Liu Hong Guang had remained silent. Ren Zhong had been speaking all this while. Due to this reason, almost everyone seemed to think Ren Zhong was the only moderator. As for Liu Hong Guang, it seemed like he had been forgotten.

However, Liu Hong Guang did not seem to be bothered by it at all. He stood quietly next to Ren Zhong with an indifferent expression on his face.

“Everyone! The ten chess pieces you’re standing on will be the arena of the Rising Sky Ranking Battle! You can consider the ten chess pieces as ten rings, and in these ten rings, ten Ring Masters will be born!” Ren Zhong continued to speak, “Whoever’s eligible to participate in the Rising Sky Ranking Battle can battle whichever Ring Master as they like. As long as you can defeat the Ring Master, you’ll replace him and become the new Ring Master. If any of the ten Ring Master has no challenger for the rest of the day, it’ll be considered as him passing and advancing to the real Rising Sky Ranking Battle. Those who fail to become a Ring Master will be disqualified.”

The real Rising Sky Ranking Battle!

Although his words sounded confusing, he was not wrong at all! Although it could be said that the Rising Sky Ranking Battle had begun, 90% of the participants would not be able to participate in the real Rising Sky Ranking Battle since it could only accommodate ten people. It was like this since ancient times, and it was the same now.

Only the final ten Ring Masters would be able to enter the Rising Sky Ranking.

In other words, the final battle between the Ten Ring Masters would be the real Rising Sky Ranking Battle where they would fight for a specific ranking in the Rising Sky Ranking.

“As for now, please retreat to the edge of the chess piece you’re standing on to make some space in the middle. Whoever feels like they’re qualified can go to the middle of the chess piece to become the Ring

Master. You can challenge the current Ring Master or wait for the next challenger.” Ren Zhong’s voice reverberated in the air again. The people on the chess pieces began to retreat to edge immediately.

At the same time, the middle part of the ten chess pieces began to turn empty.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

...

At this moment, the ear-piercing sound of wind whistling reverberated in the air as five people flew out from the Sky Hurdle Mansion and another five flew out from the Raging Wave Mansion. Ten of them appeared in the sky above the ten chess pieces as they looked downward. It was as though they were monitoring the situation on each of the chess piece they were standing above.

“Liu Hong Guang, the Second Elder of the Raging Wave Mansion, and I will be the main moderators for this year’s Rising Sky Ranking Battle... As for these people, they are the vice moderators. Each of them is responsible for the chess piece below them. They’re responsible for checking the age of the participants and ensuring the fairness in the rings,” Ren Zhong announced.

The people on the scene finally understood.

Earlier, many of them had thought the Rising Sky Ranking Battle would be split into ten rounds that would take place at the same time. Moreover, they thought there would be twenty people battling each other at the same time as well. If there were only Ren Zhong and Liu Hong Guang presiding over the match, even if they managed to monitor everything, would they be able to stop the match if there was an abnormality?

Although they were powerful, they would have a hard time if six or seven platforms had problems at the same time.

Many people felt skeptical about this.

However, after seeing the ten vice moderators, they finally understood. As it turned out, the Sky Hurdle Mansion and the Raging Wave Mansion had come prepared. They had nothing to worry about at all.

“It’s finally going to start?” Duan Ling Tian stood at the edge of a black chess piece as he muttered to himself, hugging his sword.

The sword he was hugging was none other than the Jasper Celestial Sword, one of the Celestial Supreme Treasure inside the Seven Treasures Exquisite Pagoda.