

Chapter 1281: Way of Doing Things

"I admit defeat!" Xia Luo suddenly shouted. Across from him, Bu Kong's eyes opened even wider, and the power of the star energy that he was controlling increased yet again. Then, he smashed it at Xia Luo without holding anything back.

Xia Luo appeared indifferent to the assault, and his body disappeared.

Star energy shot through where he had just been standing, shattering the void, but causing no damage to Xia Luo at all.

Bu Kong clenched his fists. He had been one step too late.

On the second layer, Xia Jiuyou heaved a sigh of relief even as he angrily glared at Bu Kong. Bu Kong had almost killed Xia Luo with that attack, and if Xia Luo died, then Xia Jiuyou would have also been damaged.

Lu Yin was surprised. He had been watching the fight with Bu Kong and had seen Xia Luo's expression change. Something had to have happened between the two combatants.

While considering this, Lu Yin looked at Xia Luo from the second layer, and it just so happened that Xia Luo looked down at Lu Yin at the same time. Xia Luo's eyes were solemn, and he opened his mouth to speak, but his voice was only transmitted to Lu Yin.

Lu Yin was surprised at what he heard, and he stared blankly at the battlefield. It was no wonder how Bu Kong had casually dispersed the star energy from Lei Nü's body. Was there really such a method?

Bu Kong continued to stare at Xia Luo, and when he saw his ex-opponent speaking to Lu Yin, Bu Kong's expression changed completely.

Xia Luo had reached the Worldliness realm of star energy control, so it was not a surprise that he had managed to see through Bu Kong's methods.

Bu Kong glanced at Xia Luo and then stared at Lu Yin, waiting for the two of them to say something to others, but fortunately, they did not.

At this moment, Lu Yin looked through the void.

Bu Kong looked at Lu Yin, and Lu Yin smiled back before turning to look back at the first layer.

Bu Kong secretly hated knowing that his methods had been seen through.

Honestly, Lu Yin had not expected Bu Kong's comprehension of sourcebox arrays to have already reached such a level. This usage of a sourcebox array reminded him of a phrase: there were no trashy innate gifts, only people who could not use them properly.

The battle continued.

Lu Yin really wanted to see Liquor Hero's abilities, but unfortunately, her opponent was merely an Explorer. Thus, there was nothing of value to see.

Nightqueen Yanqing, God Taiyi, Gu Xiao'er, Xin Nü. All of these people were powerhouses who had fought, but their opponents had not been anyone impressive.

Mira appeared on the first layer. She and her Red Lotus Witchbow had once guided Lu Yin. If not for Mira, Lu Yin might have lived a very different life.

Mira still looked incredibly seductive as she walked through the air with her bare feet. Her opponent was a Void Wanderer from the Astral Beast Domain.

Lu Yin was surprised to see a Void Wanderer in ZENITH. While these creatures were ranked ninth on the Celestial Beast List, they had mostly reached this rank because of their gift for roaming the void and their inexhaustible numbers. A single Void Wanderer was easily killed.

Of course, the species also had powerful members, like that Void Wanderer elder who was powerful enough to trap the Third Nightking.

This Void Wanderer was qualified to participate in ZENITH, so it should not be weak.

This Void Wanderer was known as Xu Ling, and it had already proven itself to not be weak, though it also was not overly powerful.

Mira pressed ahead and fought to the end, but she could not land a single hit. The Void Wanderer was far too slippery for her to catch. Her attacks that shattered the void were useless, and in the end, Xu Ling landed a powerful counterattack. Thus, when her star energy was nearly exhausted, she finally lost.

Their battle went on for three days.

Many members of the audience were trolls on the network, and they all started cursing the Void Wanderer. It was too scared of death and Mira, and it could slip away faster than anyone else.

Void Wanderers were able to travel through the void, and Mira could not even find the beast's hair.

It had to be said that Mira was quite unfortunate, and she felt even more wronged when she ultimately lost. She had been exhausted to death.

Although Mira eventually lost, her beauty, talent, and Red Lotus Witchbow had amazed a great number of people, especially those from the Sixth Mainland. Many looked at her with burning eyes.

Mira had always been a beautiful woman who radiated a strange seduction. No one actually cared about the results of her battle, as they were simply staring at her figure.

Lu Yin carefully observed the incredibly timid Xu Ling. This Void Wanderer seemed to be very strange. It traveled through the void differently from the other Void Wanderers. Otherwise, with Mira's strength as a Cruiser, she definitely would have destroyed the beast.

Where had it gone? Lu Yin could not find it.

The creatures of the Astral Beast Domain despised humans, and they had the power to back their arrogance. For example, the Celestial Demons were born into the Hunter realm, so how could they not look down on humans?

On the other hand, humans' greatest advantage was their comprehension. Throughout all of history, how many Progenitors had risen from the Astral Beast Domain? And what of the Human Domain—how many Progenitors had they produced?

The next battle featured another one of Lu Yin's acquaintances. Sixteen was from the Sixth Mainland's Lingtong clan, and he was someone who liked to slap people and flatter Xu San. His opponent was Hui Santong.

Upon seeing Hui Santong step out, everyone knew that Sixteen was doomed to a tragic fate.

Sixteen was not weak, but it was absolutely impossible for him to measure up to someone like Hui Santong.

The result was not unexpected, and Sixteen was brutally defeated.

Darkvoid also had a match, and his opponent was Starsibyl. There was no suspense in this match either.

When it was Feng Liu's match, the Celestial Ice Phoenix piqued the curiosity of countless people. The beast was so beautiful that everyone wanted to take it as a mount, but this Phoenix's luck was so terrible that no one could say anything at all: her opponent was Shang Qing.

When Feng Liu saw Shang Qing, she felt despair fill her heart. This person was not predicted to just end up in the top ten, but to be the ultimate champion of ZENITH.

Shang Qing remained completely calm; no matter who he faced, nothing would affect his mood. He still gave off the impression of being some sort of god or immortal.

A tri-colored beam of light swept toward Shang Qing as Feng Liu attacked, but it took less than half a minute for the Celestial Ice Phoenix to be completely defeated.

The Celestial Ice Phoenix was a large beast that was relatively slow, and she could not evade the strand of qi like the other contestants. The beast's cold breath and tri-colored beam had no effect on the strand of qi. Feng Liu was unable to attack, and she was also unable to defend.

This battle made it clear to everyone that it was necessary to be small and fast in order to go up against Shang Qing. Otherwise, no matter how powerful one was, they would similarly be out of luck.

Still, very few had luck as terrible as Feng Liu, and it was impossible for most people to face a powerhouse who was predicted to enter the top ten like Shang Qing.

For example, Lilyrose won her match as did Dao Bo, Ye Xingchen, the Sixth Mainland's Young Master Changbai, and Autumnfrost Qing. All of them won their matches. Only a few had the unfortunate luck to face an elite powerhouse who was guaranteed to enter ZENITH's finals.

Nong Zaitian held high hopes of continuing the lucky streak that he had enjoyed so far, but unfortunately, lady luck was not with him; his opponent was Xie Xiaoxian.

The Seven Courts were very famous even in the Sixth Mainland. Although Xie Xiaoxian was not the most powerful inheritor from the Seven Courts, she was still the Xie family's only descendant. Before ZENITH, all kinds of bookmakers had predicted how far she would make it into the competition, and she had

received a great deal of attention. This was not only because of her background, but also because of how she dressed, as her outfit was rather eye-catching.

She could be regarded as the participant with the most recognizable figure in all of ZENITH. Even if the other contestants were similarly voluptuous, they hid it while Xie Xiaoxian was very forward.

Nong Zaitian considered himself a simple man. He generally sneaked glances at beautiful women, and he would occasionally have an idle dream or two. However, it was no fantasy to encounter such a woman in ZENITH.

Xie Xiaoxian's clothes were very revealing, but that was simply because of the Xie family's bone-based battle techniques. She had to wear such clothes even if she was actually a rather conservative girl.

Seeing Nong Zaitian staring at her instantly made Xie Xiaoxian uncomfortable, and bones quickly pierced through her skin to form a battle armor that spread across her body. At the same time, a white bone spike appeared in her hand. She looked completely domineering, and she pointed her weapon straight at Nong Zai Tian. "Come! Let me see the Sixth Mainland's imprints."

Nong Zaitian blinked and swallowed hard before silently raising a hand high in the air. "I admit defeat."

Xie Xiaoxian was stunned; it was that easy?

Many people from the Sixth Mainland were stunned, and then they began to curse wildly.

Nong Zaitian did not care one bit about the spectators. This was the philosophy of the Nong family that Nong Zaitian adhered to. He would always be cautious and act carefully, only fighting if luck favored him.

This was what his ancestors had taught him.

Nong Zaitian came from a family that had originally been peasants, but they had a glorious heritage. He believed that, one day, he would make his way back home after finding his fortune just like his ancestor.

Outside Zenith Mountain, the older powerhouses from the Sixth Mainland shot strange looks at Nong Laohan.

Madam Hong sneered. "This little guy is quite good at searching for good luck and avoiding unfavorable situations."

Nong Laohan's face convulsed. He was not angry with his descendant, as this was the style of the Nong family. This did not matter. It really did not...

Xie Xiaoxian felt like she had won without any effort.

Lu Yin still remembered the time when he and Nong Zaitian had fled away from Blood Loony together. Thus, he was not at all surprised by Nong Zaitian's choice to surrender.

It would have been amazing if Nong Zaitian had been able to take out his hoe for the battle, but unfortunately, ZENITH did not allow anyone to use power vessels or natural treasures, which was a pity.

"Fat Bro, I'm going! Be sure to cheer for me!" A loud shout was heard. On the first layer, a thin man shouted at the second layer.

On the second layer, many people gave a fat man strange looks as he shouted back words of encouragement. These two were clearly crazy.

A figure appeared in front of Skinny Bro. This person had a dull expression, as though in disbelief. It was Ling Que.

Lu Yin's expression was amazing to see after he noticed that Ling Que was Skinny Bro's opponent. There was a sense of getting revenge.

In the past, Ling Que had roamed the Inniverse with a crowd of cheerleaders that supported him. But during a conflict, Lulu and the others from Astral-10 had paid off those cheerleaders to switch their support over to Lu Yin, which had been incredibly humiliating to Ling Que. At this moment, Ling Que was up against Skinny Bro, who was even more of an embarrassment than himself.

Ling Que's expression was quite wonderful as he watched Skinny Bro and Fat Bro cheer each other on. He felt the cold approach of death, as though he had just swallowed a dead fly.

ZENITH was the ultimate stage for the entire universe, and countless people from both mainlands were watching everything that was taking place, and yet Ling Que had to suffer such humiliation.

Ling Que considered himself to be quite thick-skinned, but compared to the two in front of him, he was nowhere close.

Seeing the fat and skinny duo endlessly cheering each other on, Ling Que was no longer able to stand the situation, and his Que's Might Slash shot out at Skinny Bro.

A dull ringing noise reverberated through the arena when Skinny Bro was struck by the massive blade, and he was knocked back a few steps. He whirled around to glare at Ling Que. "A sneak attack? You're despicable!"

Ling Que was surprised. Was this guy really uninjured?

As he contemplated this, the massive blade slashed out once again, locking down the void this time. There was a burst of lightning and a scorchingly hot temperature that accompanied the blade as it shot out.

This was the strongest attack that Ling Que was capable of unleashing without using the Soulsplitting technique.

Skinny Bro crossed his arms in front of him, and the dull ringing sound was heard once again. The lightning shredded the void apart and shot out in all directions, sending sparks everywhere.

Even the strongest Que's Mighty Slash had failed to wound Skinny Bro.

On the second layer, Ling Gong's face grew solemn. She was fully aware of the power of Que's Mighty Slash. If even her brother's most powerful attack was useless, then this battle would be quite dangerous for Ling Que.

Lu Yin's brows rose. The thin man's rune lines were constantly growing, especially after his imprint appeared behind him. At that moment, the number of rune lines on him was massive.

Ling Que also felt Skinny Bro's power growing, and he quickly split into three different bodies that surrounded Skinny Bro. All three figures raised the massive blade and attacked as one.

Skinny Bro stretched out a hand as both of his hands moved about strangely as he unraveled all three attacks. In the end, there was only a dull ringing sound as the massive blades were shattered after Skinny Bro clenched his hands. He raised his head and stared at Ling Que before rushing forward with a raised hand. Skinny Bro's hand fell as he unleashed a secret technique: Reversal Cycle.

Chapter 1282: State of Mind

The Ling Que that Skinny Bro had attacked dissipated, and he turned to attack another of the Ling Ques.

Ling Que pulled back from Skinny Bro and said, "I give up!"

Skinny Bro paused and then grew ecstatic. He turned to look at the second layer. "Fat Bro, did you see that? I won! I won!"

On the second layer, the fat man cheered, "Skinny Bro, we're the strongest! Skinny Bro, I'm so proud of you! Hey, are you getting thinner?"

"Hahahaha! Fat Bro, are you getting fatter?"

"Hahahaha."

...

Ling Que's mouth fell open, making him look as though he had gone stupid. How had he actually been defeated by this idiot? Ling Que was a genius of the Lingling clan with Que's Mighty Slash and the Soulsplitting Technique; wasn't he supposed to be superior?

He felt an urge to die.

It was all over. His clan would definitely kill him for this. He was done for.

The entire universe had watched Ling Que be humiliated, and an idiot had managed to beat him. His reputation, his image, and his cheerleaders were forever gone.

Ling Que felt tremendously humiliated.

On the second layer, Ling Gong stared at the thin man's hands. The battle technique that he had just used had actually managed to shatter Que's Mighty Slash, which showed that it was very powerful.

Lu Yin frowned. Skinny Bro had very strange and powerful battle techniques.

Wang Yi's eyes were bright; sure enough, it was that kind of battle technique.

It was unknown if Ling Que had started a new trend, but the next person to appear on the first layer was Mu Rong, and his opponent was Wu Taibai.

The battle between Ling Que and Skinny Bro had revealed the strength of his Que's Mighty Slash, as well as the miraculousness of the Soulsplitting Technique. Ling Que had drawn a great deal of attention from many of the Sixth Mainland's people, amazing them. They asked about Ling Que's background while Mu Rong, who had once been famous for being the most powerful Limiteer, did not attract much attention. After all, his opponent was Wu Taibai, and Mu Rong would be easily defeated.

It was not that Mu Rong could no longer compare to Ling Que. As soon as the battle began, he played a song on his flute and summoned the illusion of the grassy plains with the cow-herder and the cows!

However, to the eyes of those from the Sixth Mainland, Mu Rong's forcefield was not that impressively powerful. Still, Mu Rong's domain was quite powerful, and if he fought Ling Que, Lu Yin believed that Mu Rong would emerge victorious. It was just that their opponents were on different levels.

Mu Rong's opponent was Wu Taibai, who easily shattered Mu Rong's forcefield.

Although Mu Rong's defeat appeared simple, Wu Taibai still expressed his admiration for Mu Rong. Wu Taibai said something at the end of the match, but no one heard what was said.

Lu Yin suddenly disappeared, only to reappear on the first layer.

He was caught off guard; this was really quite the coincidence. First Ling Que, then Mu Rong, and finally Lu Yin. Of the four who had been heralded as peerless Limiteers for a time, Ye Xingchen had been eliminated at the beginning, and both Ling Que and Mu Rong had lost in a row. Finally, it was Lu Yin's turn.

A figure appeared on the first layer: Lu Yin. When Lu Yin appeared behind the first barrier on the battlefield, countless people in the Great Eastern Alliance cheered. However, when people saw Lu Yin's opponent, they were all stunned.

This was not because Lu Yin's opponent was more famous than him, but rather because this person was incredibly odd; he was actually sleeping.

Lu Yin's opponent was actually Sleeping Prince.

Lu Yin's expression changed when he saw Sleeping Prince appear on the battlefield.

Lu Yin had not forgotten about how this person had nearly killed him on Planet Pyrolyte. In fact, if Wendy Yushan had not suddenly appeared and intervened with the Yu Secret Art, then Lu Yin might have actually died right then and there.

This person had been the reason why Wendy had been forced to reveal that she possessed a secret technique, which had directly led to Enlighters targeting the Great Yu Empire, which had in turn led to the events that had caused Lu Yin to gain the title of Enlighters' Bane.

After thinking through all of this, a murderous light appeared in Lu Yin's eyes.

Sleeping Prince opened his eyes. "I give up."

Many people cursed when they heard his surrender, as his appearance on the battlefield had tricked them.

It was not an easy thing to have such a bizarre appearance, and the fact that someone had appeared on the battlefield while sleeping when their opponent was Lu Yin had led many people to believe that Sleeping Prince was an absolute powerhouse. They had been prepared for an exciting and riveting battle, but it turned out that the guy was nothing but a coward.

The greater the expectations, the greater the disappointment. More and more people started cussing out Sleeping Prince.

Lu Yin calmly looked at his opponent.

Sleeping Prince stretched his waist before looking at Lu Yin and speaking in a serious tone. "Alliance Leader Lu, I know that you want to kill me. The whole time, the matters on Planet Pyrolyte were for each party to get as much for themselves as possible, and we Graceful Mercenaries were hired hands, so we naturally had to do our best. If you still hold any grudges, then please forgive us with your magnanimity."

Lu Yin's expression softened slightly. "What sort of techniques are you practicing?"

He had always been curious about this.

Sleeping Prince answered with a smile. "The Dream Heart Sutra is a very powerful technique by ordinary people's standards, but it is not enough to deserve your attention, Alliance Leader Lu."

As his voice cut off, the two disappeared from the first layer.

After Lu Yin and Sleeping Prince, more than ten of the next consecutive matches were boring, as no powerhouses appeared among them. Still, these battles dragged on and took up two whole days.

Finally, Wang Yi appeared, and many people became excited.

The only participant from the Technocracy was very mysterious, but he was also very powerful. The manner in which he had defeated Yao Gu had given many people chills.

Wang Yi's opponent was Li Zimo, and most people looked at him with pity. It was nothing more than a joke for an Explorer to try to face off against Wang Yi.

People sighed; even if Wang Yi was not going against Bu Kong, it still would have been great for him to face Zhi Yi, as that would be a marvelous battle.

Li Zimo stood on the second layer and calmly stared across the battlefield at Wang Yi.

Wang Yi's eyes seemed ethereal, as though he did not care at all about Li Zimo before him. Still, Wang Yi did not seize the initiative.

Soon, half an hour passed.

Wang Yi still did not make a move, and his eyes were out of focus. It was as though he was wandering about outside of his own body.

The serenity in Li Zimo's eyes grew more distinct.

Many people were in a hurry. "Will you fight already? What in the world do you even think you can do as an Explorer? Just end things already!"

"Come on, you're just wasting time."

"Get off if you don't want to fight!"

"Get off! Quit acting like that! If you're afraid of death, then you're afraid of death."

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Whether it was the people on Zenith Mountain or beyond it, or even those right in front of the barrier, more and more people started hounding the two combatants. It really was too slow for them to just stand there instead of fighting. Also, every time two competitors with similar strength were paired up, they were forced to fight with wits and courage, which ate up even more time. Thus, many people were growing impatient.

Even though most of the audience could not fully understand the fights between the powerhouses, it did not stop them from feeling the thrill of excitement of seeing someone be crushed. They loved seeing one side brutally dominate the other and force out a victory in seconds.

A few hours later, Wang Yi was still the same as ever with his eyes looking as though he was seeing something out of the world.

Li Zimo's eyes remained as tranquil as those of a corpse.

In the Inniverse, above the Sword Sect, Elder Lianxin was calmly observing the scene on a screen when Liu Qianjue's voice came out from behind her. "This child is extremely talented. He is able to suppress his emotion even in this situation. His heart is steady as a rock. You have excellent eyes."

Elder Lianxin casually replied, "It's just a pity that the gap in their strength is too large."

Liu Qianjue smiled. "That's fine. There's still time. Comprehension of the Inner Peace Sword Arts does not look at age or wisdom—it only matters if one can calm their mind. This child is most suited for the Inner Peace Sword Arts."

"I also took a fancy to his self-created sword technique, Silence, as it is similar to my Inner Peace Sword Arts. That is why I accepted him," Elder Lianxin said with a hint of admiration in her voice.

After that, she turned her attention to Wang Yi. "Sect Master, what do you think of this person?"

Liu Qianjue looked at Wang Yi and shook his head. "The Technocracy has always been mysterious, and the way in which that child defeated Yao Gu is something that I have never seen before. His battle technique even included his blood flow. It is a very powerful battle technique."

"I have never seen that kind of battle technique before."

Elder Lianxin stared at Li Zimo, the admiration in her eyes growing ever more intense, though she was also extremely worried. The youths in ZENITH could not help but rush to last through the rounds, and

although no one had tallied the number of deaths, they definitely numbered in the hundreds of thousands at the very least. She was hoping that Wang Yi would not be too harsh with his attack.

For an entire day, the two contestants did not move, and they both stood there like statues.

Even if the others' battles had taken more time, at least there had been action to watch. These two were on the second layer of Zenith Mountain's final portion, but they did nothing to appease the audience. Just what was going on?

More and more people started to mock the two combatants, and they had moved on from merely cussing out Li Zimo to also including Wang Yi in their criticism. After all, why had he not ended things yet?

Lu Yin carefully observed Li Zimo's eyes. Those eyes were not dead, but calm, and his heart was still like an old well. Li Zimo was completely unconcerned with external factors, and he had actually forgotten about everything around him, including even ZENITH.

He was not happy, but neither was he sad; this was how Lu Yin interpreted Li Zimo's emotions at this time.

On the second layer, Liu Shaoqiu was simply amazed. He had seen the Inner Peace Sword Arts before, and this new disciple's understanding of the technique was truly rather terrifying.

Liu Tianmu was solemnly watching Li Zimo, his eyes flashed brightly. Li Zimo was a genius who could even compare to Liu Shaoqiu within the Sword Sect. The Thirteen Swords were representative of the Sword Sect, but that was not the only technique that the Sword Sect held. The Inner Peace Sword Arts was another of their treasured techniques.

Five days—five entire days passed with neither Li Zimo nor Wang Yi moving a single muscle. The two merely just stood there.

The various critics already felt powerless, and some of the audience just stopped watching, waiting for the battle to be over.

Lu Yin and the others no longer waited either.

Finally, Wang Yi moved. His eyes returned to normal, and he looked at Li Zimo. "Unfortunately, you were born in the wrong place."

After speaking, Wang Yi's body disappeared, and when he reappeared, he had already appeared behind Li Zimo.

Li Zimo slowly squatted down. Blood dripped down his abdomen, and he fell to his knees.

Wang Yi turned his back to Li Zimo and indifferently commented, "What a pity. You have an amazing talent for the sword."

Li Zimo had been defeated. He had not moved even once, just standing on the battlefield for five whole days.

Most people only knew enough to mock him, and many people ridiculed him, claiming that he had not moved because of a paralyzing fear of death. However, a few people had managed to see what he had endured.

ZENITH was an event that no one could ignore. When under the eyes of the entire universe, even the most determined person could not truly be free of sadness or joy and truly calm themselves. However, those who could achieve such a thing would reach a strange realm, and although this realm could not increase their combat power, it was incomparably useful for one's path of cultivation.

Wang Yi was someone capable of reaching such a state, and Li Zimo was the same. Their match had greatly helped Li Zimo, and it could be said that their match had created a solid foundation for his future.

It really was a pity that the gap in the two's strength had been so great that Li Zimo had not even been able to draw his sword.

Above the Sword Sect, Elder Lianxin let out a sigh of relief. Fortunately, Wang Yi had not attacked seriously, for if he had, Li Zimo definitely would have died.

He was only an Explorer, and no matter how powerful he was within his realm, he was still limited to being an Explorer. Even if Lu Yin had faced off against Wang Yi as an Explorer, and Lu Yin was widely considered to be the most talented person in the current universe, he also would not have been able to stand up to Wang Yi. In fact, Lu Yin would have been lucky to escape with his life.

Lu Yin also let out a sigh of relief. It was good that Li Zimo had not died.

Lu Yin solemnly stared at Wang Yi. The man's combat skills were incomprehensible, and the number of rune lines that Lu Yin had seen in that single attack had been very few, and they could not even compare to the Greenmen Duo's. However, Lu Yin was absolutely certain that if either of the Greenmen Duo faced Wang Yi, they would be no different from Li Zimo and would fall from a single attack in a matter of seconds.

This man was very, very strong.

Chapter 1283: Horrifying Spiritual Force

Thus far, the second elimination round was about halfway through, so there were still a number of people who had not yet fought.

Ling Gong appeared in the next match, and to no surprise, her opponent was absolutely powerless to fight back. Even when they released their imprint, it was completely useless.

No. 0007, who had defeated Zhuo Daynight, also easily won his match.

At this point, although there were still a few people who had managed to remain in the competition due to luck, not many of the remaining contestants were able to draw much attention from the audience.

When Liu Tang appeared, Bai Qian was actually the one facing off against the Astral-2 alumnus.

Lu Yin had not expected Bai Qian to also participate in ZENITH, and he was quite curious about the woman. She had been the first person from Earth to discover Nightking Qingyu, the first to leave the planet, and also the first to make it to the Neoverse.

Bai Xue had spoken exceptionally highly about her sister.

For some time, Lu Yin had actually forgotten about Bai Qian, but everything had come rushing back when he ran into her in the CyNet World. She was quite strong, and she had also been a student of Astral-1 for a time.

Her particular match was basically a battle between two students from the Astral Combat Academy's Astral-1 and Astral-2.

However, the match ended quickly.

Liu Tang certainly was not weak, and his sword qi and battle techniques were executed viciously within his domain, but Bai Qian instantly froze the arena without even taking a single step.

The difference between them was just too much.

Lu Yin had expected Bai Qian to win, but her strength nonetheless still surprised him, stoking his curiosity about her even more.

Nearly half of the people on the second layer of the mountain had been eliminated by now, as the losers were all sent down to the third layer, leaving only the winners on the second layer.

More than half a month had passed since the first one-on-one battle. The chain of victories and defeats had led some people in the universe to make a fortune while others had lost everything.

Many had placed their hopes on a distant star, but would still end up losing in the end. Others would remain skeptical but ultimately emerge as winners. There was a certain element of luck when it came to betting on the contestants.

Whether it was Xia Luo, Lan Si, Feng Liu, Sleeping Prince, Black, or White, every last one of them had suffered bad luck in their matchups. And next to join them was Wendy Yushan, who had been matched up against Zhi Yi.

Anyone who had to fight against one of the Daosource Three Skies had the worst luck.

Wendy Yushan had long since broken through to the Cruiser realm, and she was only a single step away from breaking through to the Hunter realm. Once, she had been ranked within the top thirty of the Top 100 Rankings, but after she revealed her secret technique, public sentiment had placed her within the top ten or even top five.

Xia Tian, who had been ranked first on the Top 100 Rankings, had merged back with Xia Jiuyou. The second ranker, Tai Yuanjun, had been overwhelmed by what he had seen in the Mountain and Seas Zone, and the third on the list, Qing Longlong, had been defeated by the Brahman Realm's Realmling. Avery and Cang Mu had both been defeated while several of the others in the Top 100 Rankings had already reached the age where they were no longer a part of the younger generation. All in all, nearly the entire echelon of the Top 100 Rankings had been eliminated from ZENITH, with the exception of Cool Sis.

Wendy Yushan was strong enough to place within the top ten of the list, but she had never put any efforts into raising her rank. No one was optimistic about her chances of winning the match, including Lu Yin.

However, the moment the battle started, Wendy Yushan's strength stunned countless people.

She even managed to pierce through Zhi Yi's Vitality Qi with her sword.

This surprised not only Zhi Yi, but also Lu Yin.

He was quite familiar with the power of Zhi Yi's Vitality Qi. That ability was why she had obtained her position as one of the Daosource Three Skies so easily. Her Sky Dipper could not be pierced, but her perfect defense had just been broken by Wendy Yushan, who was not even a Hunter.

Zhi Yi stared at Wendy Yushan's sword in confusion. The weapon was nothing special, and it possessed no strange power either. Why had it been able to tear through her Vitality Qi? This did not make any sense.

No one from the Sixth Mainland could understand what had happened, especially the Daosource Three Skies.

Vitality Qi was one of the Sixth Mainland's Daosource Sect's most powerful abilities, and anybody who successfully cultivated it would instantly become one of the Daosource Three Skies. This showed the value that the Sixth Mainland placed on Vitality Qi, but it had just been overcome by a mere Cruiser.

A bang shook the entire arena.

Although Wendy had managed to break through Zhi Yi's Vitality Qi, the gap in strength between Wendy and Zhi Yi was simply too great. Wendy's sword was shattered by a single finger from Zhi Yi. Then, the Daosource Three Skies member waved a hand, unleashing a blast of Vitality Qi that forced Wendy Yushan back.

Blood could be seen leaking out from the corner of Wendy's mouth. She stood there, a broken sword in hand, staring at Zhi Yi.

"How did you do it?" Zhi Yi asked sharply.

Wendy's long hair drifted in the wind above her broken sword, and a few strands were cut off. It gave others the impression that she was both helpless and unwilling. "I admit defeat."

Zhi Yi stared at Wendy Yushan and shouted, "Tell me, how did you do it?"

As she yelled, Zhi Yi moved to grab Wendy. However, Wendy Yushan's figure had faded away and reappeared down on the third layer.

Zhi Yi turned her head to stare down at the third layer. Inexplicably, she then turned to look at Lu Yin, who happened to be staring at her.

Was it him? Was he the one behind whatever it was that had allowed that woman to break through her Vitality Qi? Lu Yin was the only person that Zhi Yi could think of, as he was the only one who had ever ignored her Vitality Qi.

If Lu Yin had the means to allow others to overpower Vitality Qi as well, then he had just become her worst enemy.

Zhi Yi glared at Lu Yin with cold eyes.

Lu Yin was confused; why was that woman staring at him? He could not understand the situation, and he was similarly clueless as to how Wendy had managed to pierce through Zhi Yi's Vitality Qi. If Vitality Qi was so easy to overpower, then Zhi Yi would have never become one of the Daosource Three Skies.

On top of everything else, there was a gap of two realms between Wendy Yushan and Zhi Yi.

Life was truly amazing sometimes. In order to help Xin Nü, Lu Yin had stunned Shang Qing with his spiritual force, but Shang Qing had believed that Yao Xuan was the one behind that attack.

At this moment, Zhi Yi had misread Lu Yin's intentions.

Almost half of the contestants on the second layer had been removed now, and there was only one match left.

Many people turned to look at White Silkworm with sympathy in their eyes.

The only two people on the second layer who had not yet fought were White Silkworm and Yao Xuan.

"That kid's so unlucky!" Ku Wei's face was filled with schadenfreude. He had been incredibly lucky so far, as none of his opponents had been very strong, which was why he was still a contestant in ZENITH.

Qian Zou's eyes were full of sympathy, as he had also been quite lucky.

Gu Xiao'er also believed himself to be lucky, though he was also much stronger than these two. Initially, he had been concerned that he had not been predicted to be a finalist on any of the prediction lists, but he honestly believed that he had an excellent chance of reaching the final ten.

He was not the only one with such confidence as Wu Dan, Cursewind, Bai Ling, and others were similarly confident in their own strength. Out of everyone, the most confident was actually Xi Qi, or rather, the fish atop her head.

"A group of two-legged and four-legged beasts can't possibly compare to Lord Fish! Lord Fish has taught you two tricks to settle things properly." The fish kept slapping the top of Xi Qi's head.

Xi Qi had been quite lucky as well. She had been paired up with someone who had only been a mere Melder, so she had easily won.

It was truly amazing that Xi Qi had managed to last so long through the contest while only being a Melder herself.

Not far away, God Taiyi gave Xi Qi a strange look as he stared at the fish on her head. After a moment, God Taiyi blinked strangely. The fish could talk, so was it a creature from the Astral Beast Domain?

"Hey, what are you looking at, you ugly two-legs?" the fish shouted as he glared at God Taiyi while flapping his fins all about and jumping all over.

God Taiyi blinked. Two-legs?

"Ha, it's a stupid two-legged beast! When you see Lord Fish, how dare you not rush to kowtow and be a mount. When Lord Fish is happy, I can give you anything! The ability to break through to new realms, cross the shores, marry the daughter of a Progenitor, and leave now. When you reach the pinnacle of your life, your life will shine—it won't even be impossible to become a Progenitor!" the fish shouted.

God Taiyi was stunned and dumbfounded by the fish's proclamation.

On the other side, Wu Taibai commented, "How can one of us marry the daughter of a Progenitor? The age difference would be too big."

The fish turned to stare at Wu Taibai. "Stupid! Even if she's an old hag, you'll have to marry her, as that will allow you to reach the pinnacle of life in the future! Life, that's life. Don't be fooled by appearances."

"How bold! You're nothing but a fish, so how dare you speak in such a manner?" God Qingguang snorted as he shot a threatening glare at Xi Qi.

Xi Qi panicked, as she had not been the one to speak.

The fish turned to stare at God Qingguang. "Bah, get out of the way, you dead two-legged beast! You and the other two-legged beasts around you actually have the audacity to put the word "God" in your names! Hurry up and become a mount for Lord Fish for eighteen million years. Then, Lord Fish might be able to forgive you."

Not far away, Qing Zhiyu pursed his lips as he watched things play out. That fish was an absolute menace, and Qing Zhiyu did not dare to take a second look for fear of being dragged into the mess.

Lu Yin had heard everything. That fish had created far too many enemies for Xi Qi, and Lu Yin could not understand where the fish's confidence had come from.

At this moment, White Silkworm and Yao Xuan had already appeared on the first layer.

White Silkworm did not hesitate, and his imprint immediately appeared as he charged at Yao Xuan. Coincidentally, White Silkworm had climbed up the northern face of Zenith Mountain, and Yao Xuan had been the gatekeeper of that side's checkpoint.

Although the Sixth Mainland's cultivators generally had excellent spiritual force, Yao Xuan's spiritual force made White Silkworm panic, as he felt powerless against it.

White Silkworm was from the Blackblood Domain's Sightless Clan. Their family possessed the bloodline of the eyeless silkworm, which was hailed as an invincible bloodline. No matter how many injuries they suffered, they could restore their body by entering a cocoon, later being reborn in perfect condition. It was somewhat similar to how the people from the Progenitor of Secret Arts' Territory could use the Secret Technique of Resurrection. The greatest strength of the eyeless silkworm bloodline was that it could metamorphosize, and after each transformation, one's strength would improve by leaps and bounds.

White Silkworm was the Sightless Clan's inheritor, and he believed that his strength was sufficient to put him on the same level as Shang Rong, the Realmking of the Blackblood Realm. White Silkworm's power was practically the same as that of the Realmkings, which made him a top powerhouse in ZENITH.

On the first layer, White Silkworm rapidly approached Yao Xuan.

Yao Xuan's mouth had curved up into a strange smile.

White Silkworm approached closer and closer. Five meters, four meters, three meters, two meters, until he was only one meter away from Yao Xuan. Then, he passed by and rushed away from Yao Xuan.

Everyone stared at White Silkworm strangely as they watched White Silkworm oddly attack the empty air. Many people's expressions changed. This battle was already completely under someone's control: Yao Xuan was controlling White Silkworm with his spiritual force.

At this moment, Bu Kong, Zhi Yi, Wu Taibai, and all of the others grew solemn.

It was only possible to seize control of someone's spiritual force if there was a massive gap in power between the two's spiritual forces.

White Silkworm was as strong as a Realmking, but he was being completely controlled by his opponent. Yao Xuan's spiritual force was completely unfathomable.

Lu Yin frowned; the Celestial Beast Empire's crown prince had a terrifyingly powerful spiritual force!

There was a thud as White Silkworm collapsed to the ground without any sign of resistance. From the beginning to the end of the match, Yao Xuan had not moved a muscle, still wearing that strange smile on his face.

But despite his strange smile, the crown prince was charming and handsome. With his alluring charisma, he had won over many women, even Ling Que's cheerleaders—they could not help themselves from cheering for the prince.

In the western area of Chaos Flowzone, in the Upper Realm, the people from the Sixth Mainland were completely at a loss for words when they saw White Silkworm's loss.

The disdain and contempt that they had once held for the Fifth Mainland was gradually disappearing.

White Silkworm was a top elite from the Sixth Mainland, second only to the Realmkings, but he had been toyed with like a fool. Other than him, Little Arrow Saint, Tong Zhan, Mojiang Xiao, and many others had already been eliminated. The Fifth Mainland might not have any Progenitors, but they had truly hidden their strength deeply.

When the Sixth Mainland had invaded both the Fifth Mainland's Human Domain and Astral Beast Domain, they had never encountered any young powerhouses like Shang Qing or Yao Xuan. This sudden reveal of power was proof that the Fifth Mainland was more complicated than what the Sixth Mainland had initially believed.

Chapter 1284: Exposed

ZENITH continued on with the next round of elimination matches after just a single day of rest.

Perhaps it was because he had leaped too high earlier, or perhaps his luck just changed, but regardless of the reason, Gu Xiao'er was the first to appear on the first layer. He was first to fight in the second round of elimination matches.

Another figure appeared in front of Gu Xiao'er, still suspended in midair while being surrounded by three strands of qi and emitting a godly aura.

Many people were dumbstruck; this luck was a bit too impressive.

Lu Yin rolled his eyes; that guy was gone.

Gu Xiao'er stared blankly at the indifferent Shang Qing before him while feeling like he had just stepped in shit.

How could this happen? There were still a hundred people left, which was equivalent to fifty matches, so why had he, Gu Xiao'er, immediately run into Shang Qing? This was too much!

There was a roar from within Smoke-Eater Peaks. "You bastard! You must have visited Azure Mansion before ZENITH, causing your luck to be taken away by those girls! I'll skin him alive when he gets back."

No matter what anyone thought, these results would not be changed.

Gu Xiao'er raised his head with grief and indignation clear on his face. "Who set this up? Is there some grudge against my Smoke-Eater Peaks? Has there been some offense?"

Across from him, Shang Qing attacked.

It did not take long for Gu Xiao'er to be defeated, and he reappeared down on the second layer while Shang Qing remained on the first layer.

Although the first layer was not as large as the third, it was still quite big.

After winning his match, Shang Qing appeared at the edge of the first layer. This layer had no barrier around it. Instead, the barrier only isolated the battlefield.

Immediately after the first match ended, Ye Xingchen appeared up on the first layer. His opponent was Fan Shun.

Ye Xingchen, Lu Yin, Mu Rong, and Ling Que had once been called the four peerless Limiteers, but when Ye Xingchen had been a Limiteer, he had always been in the Cosmic Sea.

It was not until after the Sixth Mainland had invaded and the war reached the Cosmic Sea that Lu Yin had met Ye Xingchen.

Ye Xingchen's innate gift was meteor shower. He was in no way weak, but there was simply too large of a gap in strength between him and Fan Shun. Regardless of if it was cultivation realm or battle strength, Ye Xingchen could not compare at all.

In the end, he lost without any surprises during the battle.

Experts both known and unknown appeared on the first layer, and the winner of each match would stay behind while the losers reappeared on the second layer. This stage was the greatest platform in the current universe.

Autumnfrost Qing lost to Qiu Shi, Lilyrose lost to a man named Ze Cu, and Qian Zou lost to God Taiyi. No matter how unbelievable Qian Zou's strength was, God Taiyi simply weakened his runes, rendering Qian Zou's strength nothing more than ordinary.

Dao Bo lost to Liu Tianmu, and Liu Shaoqiu lost to Yao Xuan. These two battles in particular attracted a lot of attention since both users of the Thirteen Swords had appeared.

However, Liu Shaoqiu never revealed anything to do with the Thirteen Swords throughout his battle.

Yao Xuan smiled. "I want to see Liu Tianmu's Thirteen Swords, not yours."

This single phrase was all that was said before Liu Shaoqiu collapsed. Yao Xuan's spiritual force was unfathomable.

Long ago, Liu Shaoqiu had been a favorite to win the Astral Combat Tournament, and he had been expected to eventually replace one of the Ten Arbiters. However, he was not able to make any waves in ZENITH at all. The level of this tournament was just too high for him.

On the first layer, the Leaf King was defeated by Yōu Qi. The Leaf King possessed powerful battle techniques and was able to transform his opponents' star energy into leaves, but Yōu Qi simply ignored all of his opponent's attacks while the Leaf King was unable to do anything to Yōu Qi.

If he had fought against almost literally anyone else, then the Leaf King would have been able to put up a fight. However, he was perfectly countered by Yōu Qi.

Even at this stage of ZENITH, there were still a few people who had managed to rely on their luck to get through, such as Ku Wei. He ran into a Limiteer for this round, but Ku Wei was quickly running out of luck.

The goal of ZENITH was to determine the top ten youths, and any position outside of the top ten was completely meaningless. Also, it was impossible to enter the top ten with sheer luck, as even getting into the top twenty by being lucky was impossible.

Yao Ji was frustrated, as he had encountered Yuhua Mavis.

As the Cosmic Sect's fourth true disciple, even if he knew that he was destined to lose, he still had to do his best. Otherwise, he would not be able to face his sect after returning.

Of course, as soon as he appeared on the first layer, he was stunned by a fist.

With only fifty matches in this round, there were eye-catching battles every few matches.

After the battle between Yao Ji and Yuhua Mavis ended, Bai Ling appeared, and her opponent was Yōu Ye'er.

Most people were unfamiliar with Yōu Ye'er and had no clue who she was.

Only a small number of people knew that she was from the Yōu clan and that the Yōu clan was a part of the Court of Seven Names.

The Innerverse and Outerverse believed that the Innerverse's Yōu family was a branch of the Seven Courts' Yōu clan, but Lu Yin was aware that the Innerverse branch was actually the main branch of the family as they possessed the Yōu clan's secret technique.

Down on the foot of Zenith Mountain, Yōu Qin stared at a screen showing Yōu Ye'er with a complicated expression. On the bright side, Yōu Ye'er was a descendant of the Yōu family, but unfortunately, it turned out that the family's true inheritor was a little girl who only looked like she was eleven or twelve years old.

The first layer was directly below the highest point of Zenith Mountain, and it was very close to the peak.

Yōu Ye'er looked up at the peak, remembering the warning that Elder Su had given her.

There were too many powerhouses in ZENITH, and if Yōu Ye'er continued to hide her strength and her secret technique, then it would practically be impossible for her to enter the top ten. Elder Su wanted Yōu Ye'er to give up on ZENITH and look at the bigger picture. News of the Yōu secret technique could not be revealed to the world as it was information that could not be allowed to spread.

Although Yōu Ye'er was the Yōu family's inheritor, she was also nothing more than a vessel for the clan's secret technique.

But Yōu Ye'er was not willing to accept this outcome. She had given up too much for her family, and she was not even allowed to make any decisions regarding her own marriage; why? She wanted to try to climb the highest mountain. She was not seeking the position of Pinnacle Youth, as she simply wanted to enter the top ten. Although it was an extravagant hope, it would be wonderful to end up in the top ten. She really wanted to go all out.

Across from Yōu Ye'er, Bai Ling completely disregarded Yōu Ye'er, as she was nothing more than an Explorer.

Strange lines entwined towards Yōu Ye'er. She still had the appearance of a little girl, and she stared at those lines in a pitiful manner.

Many people could not bear to watch this battle.

Down on the second layer, Liu Shaoqiu frowned. He was betrothed to Yōu Ye'er, and although he did not care about it, the girl was truly his fiancée.

Liu Shaoqiu clenched his fists when he saw Bai Ling attack.

In the Innerverse, the Yōu family watched. In the Neoverse, near the Netherworld River, many people from the Yōu clan were also watching the battle.

The strange lines exploded. Bai Ling's attack was strong enough to even frighten an Enlighter with a power level of 300,000.

Many people grew nervous, as they were afraid that that Yōu Ye'er would be beaten to death.

After Bai Ling unleashed her attack, she no longer was concerned with her opponent. But inexplicably, four pillars formed from star energy suddenly surrounded Bai Ling. "Encompassing Lockdown Array."

Bai Ling was surprised; had that little girl not died?

Four squares formed the base of the Encompassing Lockdown Array, and this was one of the Yōu clan's inherited battle techniques.

Bai Ling let out a cold snort, causing more and more strange lines to appear all around the battlefield. As long as sound existed, she could use it. However, the strange lines of her innate gift that were formed from sound could not penetrate the Encompassing Lockdown Array.

She suddenly felt the power of an Enlighter.

Bai Ling's pupils instantly constricted as Yōu Ye'er appeared in front of her. The opponent who had previously looked like a twelve year old girl was now an adult woman. This woman was extremely beautiful, and she felt like a black rose surrounded by thorns. When she raised a hand, star energy formed a sword.

Bai Ling had no time to react before her arm was pierced through by the sword.

Yōu Ye'er was not an Explorer, but rather an Enlighter. What's more, she was not the same age as Liu Shaoqiu, as she was actually from the same generation as the Ten Arbiters. She was the Yōu clan's true inheritor.

When Yōu Ye'er revealed her true strength, she shocked countless people.

The Sixth Mainland cultivators blankly stared at Yōu Ye'er; what had happened to the little girl? They had all been worried about that little girl just now.

In the Inniverse, at the Sword Sect, Liu Qianjue's face fell. "The Yōu Secret Art: Age Concealment. They've quietly hidden themselves for so many years."

In the Neoverse, along the Netherworld River, Yōu Kexin, the matriarch of the Yōu clan, was infuriated. Stupid! Just stupid.

The Yōu clan had purposely split up all those years ago to hide their secret technique, but all of their efforts had just been destroyed by Yōu Ye'er.

Lu Yin was surprised to see Yōu Ye'er reveal her secret technique. This was quite interesting; was she that confident in entering the top ten?

Liu Shaoqiu was in a daze; what had just happened? Yōu Ye'er had actually transformed, suddenly revealing a level of strength that completely surpassed him. What was going on?

Liu Tianmu's eyes went cold; so they had been protecting the Yōu clan's main branch all along. Their Sword Sect had been tricked.

Regardless of the outside world's reaction, Yōu Ye'er had just demonstrated a shocking display of swordsmanship, and this swordsmanship actually came from Liu Qianjue.

The Yōu clan was connected to the Sword Sect by marriage, and thus, they were protected by the Sword Sect. Yōu Ye'er had even been personally taught swordsmanship by Liu Qianjue, which was a favor that the Sword Sect had shown to the Yōu clan.

The moment that Yōu Ye'er's swordsmanship was revealed, even Bai Ling was caught off guard.

Although it was not a peerless technique like the Thirteen Swords, Yōu Ye'er's swordsmanship had merged with the Yōu family's slashing techniques, making it completely different from the Sword Sect's techniques. Yōu Ye'er's sword was strange and unpredictable, but it was also fierce and unusual.

Bai Ling became extremely angry. She had been deceived! This woman was extremely powerful and incredibly skilled with the sword. Bai Ling could not dodge the attack, so she summoned her imprint, which caused her power level to spike. A strange bell rang out. This was the spiritual force technique that Bai Ling had once used to reduce thousands of people to idiots.

Yōu Ye'er immediately retreated into the Encompassing Lockdown Array, and the ringing of the bell could not enter the array.

Bai Ling's eyes went wide, and her expression grew cold. She raised a hand, and her voice rang out in various tones as she bombarded the Encompassing Lockdown Array.

Cracks appeared in the array. Although Yōu Ye'er was also an Enlightener, the Fifth Mainland's cultivators were innately suppressed by their peers from the Sixth Mainland. Bai Ling's advantage was even greater than most as she possessed both an imprint and a martial print.

With a loud noise, the Encompassing Lockdown Array shattered.

A terrifying sound swept out. Bai Ling wanted to vent her hatred by turning Yōu Ye'er into an idiot.

In the Yōu family's territory, a middle-aged woman sighed. The Yōu Secret Art had been exposed. Against a true powerhouse, this secret technique could not really affect the outcome of a fight, and many people in ZENITH had their own secret techniques. Thus, it was basically impossible for Yōu Ye'er to enter the top ten when she could not even deal with a Realmling.

This woman had to think of a way for the Yōu family to return. The Sword Sect would no longer be their safe haven, and they would certainly move against their family.

On Zenith Mountain, Lu Yin's eyes narrowed. Yōu Ye'er had exploded with her full strength, but she still was not Bai Ling's opponent. Logically the battle should be over, and it was possible that Yōu Ye'er had already suffered a miserable end. Still, for some reason, Lu Yin had a feeling that Yōu Ye'er would not lose so easily.

He still remembered what he had witnessed all those years ago when he had Possessed that Specter clan member. He knew that Yōu Ye'er had hidden herself very deeply, and since she was willing to expose her true power here, she should not be defeated that easily.

Suddenly, Lu Yin was taken aback, as Yōu Ye'er's rune lines suddenly skyrocketed.

On the first layer, Bai Ling's voice swept through the battlefield, but it was suddenly blocked by a blood-red lotus.

Yōu Ye'er appeared atop the blood-colored lotus flower. Her whole body was surging with blood energy, and even her clothes had been stained red. She went from looking like a black rose to a blood-colored rose.

No one had expected such a shocking scene to appear.

Even Madam Yōu, the leader of Yōu family, and Yōu Kexin, the Yōu matriarch, were both at a loss, as they did not know what Yōu Ye'er had just done.¹

No one knew just what battle technique Yōu Ye'er had just used on the battlefield within the barrier of light, not even Arch-Elder Zen, as this technique had never appeared before.

The blood-colored lotus easily blocked Bai Ling's attack.

Chapter 1285: The Strength Of A Palm

Yōu Ye'er had a ruthless expression as she raised her hand. "Heart-killer Lotus, come into the world."

As her voice fell, the blood-colored lotus flower beneath her feet grew ethereal before flying out towards Bai Ling.

Bai Ling's face revealed her shock. She was dazed, and she lowered her head to see a blood-colored lotus mark appear on her chest. Then, it suddenly disappeared. The very next moment, Bai Ling's eyes changed, and her face grew pale. The light slowly left her eyes as she gradually collapsed to the ground, completely dead.

Everyone was silent as they blankly stared at the battlefield.

Had one of the Sixth Mainland's Realmings, Bai Ling, died just like that? She had died without any explanation.

Shang Qing's face was solemn as he stared at Bai Ling's body. That bloody lotus had actually killed her.

The blood-colored lotus was not any kind of power vessel, but rather Yōu Ye'er's battle technique. She had used it to instantly reverse the tempo of her match and even killed Bai Ling.

At this moment, Yōu Ye'er's actions had left countless people utterly speechless.

Bai Ling had killed too many people in the Starfall Sea during the war, and she had accumulated a great number of blood debts. Many people from the Fifth Mainland were happy to see her die, but nobody could understand what Yōu Ye'er had done.

The more unknown something was, the more frightening it became.

Bai Ling, a Realming, had died so mysteriously. Thus, Yōu Ye'er gave everyone the chills, especially when she normally looked like she was only eleven or twelve years old. That somehow only made her even more frightening.

On the first layer, Yōu Ye'er retracted her hand. She had not expected her killing lotus to be so powerful, but this was better. Her mouth curled into a smile as she stepped onto the blood-red lotus, looking at the other winners while exuding a strange charm. She stared at Shang Qing and the others before looking up at the peak of Zenith Mountain. They would have to fight it out for the title of Pinnacle Youth.

Lu Yin frowned slightly. Yōu Ye'er's battle techniques were by no means ordinary. If he had guessed correctly, then she had to have used a Progenitor's battle technique just now. It was just like how Nightking Zhenwu had inherited the Arrow Progenitor's battle techniques, though it seemed that Yōu Ye'er had received something even more evil and terrifying.

Was that your family's inherited battle techniques? That shouldn't be the case, as I can't even defeat Yōu Qin that easily. Still, it's hard to say since Yōu Qin is certainly not a true member of the Yōu clan while Yōu Ye'er is their inheritor and the master of their secret technique.

No matter who it was, at this moment, everyone had just become a million times more cautious of Yōu Ye'er.

In the Neoverse, Yōu Kexin stared at her screen with a complicated expression. At this moment, most of her screen was filled with a close up shot of Yōu Ye'er.

She was the Yōu clan's true inheritor.

The Seven Courts advanced and retreated together, but that was entirely because of Progenitor Chen's Mausoleum. There was still a fierce competition between the different families.

Yōu Ye'er's appearance would make the other families uneasy, especially her heart-killing lotus, which would chill any opponent.

The match between Yōu Ye'er and Bai Ling had caused the atmosphere to grow tense. Although no one could understand what had happened at the end of the battle, that was not enough to stop the Fifth Mainland from cheering. After all, one of the Sixth Mainland's Realmling's had just died.

The people of the Sixth Mainland felt dazed and speechless.

The next battle was between Yun Feifei and Xu Ling.

Their fight was actually quite riveting, but Yōu Ye'er had already stolen the limelight, and many people were still focused on her.

In the end, Xu Ling won.

Lu Yin had carefully observed their match. He was aware of Yun Feifei's strength. She was ranked second among the Cosmic Sect's inner disciples, but after Yao Ji had become the fourth true disciple, she had moved up and become the first ranked inner disciple. She was certainly not weak, but she could not compare to Xu Ling.

In the end, she was defeated by a sneak attack from Xu Ling.

Lu Yin grew curious as to why Yun Feifei had not been able to touch Xu Ling. She was a disciple of the Cosmic Sect, and she primarily focused on cultivating the Cosmic Art. Thus, speed should be pointless against her, though Xu Ling was not particularly fast. Still, her attacks had not landed, which was bizarre.

Outside Zenith Mountain, Wu Da was feeling quite depressed. He had originally believed that he would be able to broadcast all of ZENITH, but he had since discovered that he could not even understand what was happening in the matches.

The beginning had been quite smooth, as he had simply focused on describing how the five gatekeepers each protected their own pass and calling out those who successfully passed through the checkpoints and those who failed. Everyone had been watching the same thing, but Wu Da had been a vivid commentator and had even inserted some gossip about certain contestants' feuds and grudges between his commentary. Gossip was wonderful.

However, when the hundred-person battle royales had started, his broadcast had started running into difficulties. There were simply too many competitors that Wu Da could not understand, such as Yao Xuan, God Taiyi, the Sixth Mainland's Zhi Yi and Wu Taibai, and many more.

Finally, when the elimination matches started, he had understood even less of the battles.

Wu Da's dream was to report on world-shaking events and deliver news that everyone paid attention to. However, he was at a loss for how he could describe these powerhouses' battles, and it was because he did not understand anything that was happening.

When Yōu Ye'er's blood-red lotus flower appeared, he had been completely stunned. What was he supposed to say about this?

Yun Yun was also struggling. She was not as good as Wu Da, as he had graduated from the Astral Combat Academy at the very least. Thus, Wu Da struggled to understand the fights while Yun Yun could not even follow the speed at which the fights were taking place.

Most of the people in the universe who were watching the broadcast of ZENITH could not understand the fights, but that did not stop them from cheering the participants on.

The next match was Cursewind versus Lu Yin.

The huge blue lion smashed onto the ground and roared defiantly.

Across from him, Lu Yin had a completely indifferent expression. He had not expected to encounter Cursewind here. It really was a small universe when it came to old enemies. Truthfully, Lu Yin could have stopped the lion from ever making it to the final checkpoint, but he had decided to let the lion pass through and continue on in order to throw him down from higher up the mountain.

Cursewind was feeling very depressed at the moment, as he wanted nothing to do with Lu Yin.

Originally, Cursewind had possessed the courage to go up against Lu Yin, but as Lu Yin revealed more and more of his abilities throughout the course of ZENITH, Cursewind's confidence had gradually vanished. The biggest shock was when he had witnessed Little Arrow Saint's tragic fate.

When Cursewind saw the chilling curve of Lu Yin's smile, wind rushed out of the blue lion's left eye while fire swept out of his right eye at the same time. The temperature of the battlefield immediately spiked as the air turned red. It looked as though a star had fallen upon Zenith Mountain.

Even the people at the foot of the mountain were able to feel the immense heat.

Bone-eroding wind and soul-burning fire—this was Cursewind's terrifying innate gift. His strength was almost comparable to the Ten Arbiters', and if he was directly compared, then in terms of star energy and physical strength, the blue lion was very similar to Lan Si.

In Lu Yin's vision, the number of rune lines that he saw from Cursewind was very similar to what he had seen from Lan Si.

Lu Yin subconsciously glanced over at Lan Si. Despite facing fierce flames that seemed to burn down the sky itself and soul annihilating, bone-eroding winds, Lu Yin did not move. Part of the storm opened up in front of Lu Yin, and a passage connecting Lu Yin straight to Cursewind appeared. This was a result of Lu Yin using a Vacuum Palm. His attack had shot straight through the wind and flames, brutally striking Cursewind.

Cursewind had already prepared himself to receive Lu Yin's Vacuum Palm, but those preparations were completely useless. Vacuum Palm was a freakish attack, and his only two options were to either dodge or resist it. Although he wanted to dodge, Cursewind lacked the necessary speed, and he also did not have the physical power of Yuhua Mavis.

There was a loud bang as the huge blue lion's body was directly struck. A terrifying shockwave exploded from his back, spraying out a cloud of blood that splattered to the ground.

The storm made of wind and fire sputtered out, revealing Lu Yin, who was still completely clean.

In the distance, Cursewind's massive body collapsed with a bang.

Many people from the Astral Beast Domain were shocked. Cursewind had been defeated in a single blow, just like what had happened with Little Arrow Saint. This was entirely due to the power of Lu Yin's Vacuum Palm. Even if one looked at all of the contestants from ZENITH, just how many people could stand up to such an attack?

This was not an innate gift or a secret technique. It was just a single palm attack. Lu Yin was demonstrating to countless people what an invincible power was.

Cursewind was not weak, and he was strong enough to go up against anyone on the same level as the Ten Arbiters. However, Lu Yin had far surpassed that level, and his master had even ordered him to take the title of Pinnacle Youth.

Off in the distance, Shang Qing stared at Lu Yin's right hand in surprise. He was rarely surprised, but Lu Yin's progress really gave the first Honor Chosen an incredible feeling.

The events that had taken place in the Mountain and Seas Zone were still vivid in Shang Qing's memory. Back then, Lu Yin had only managed to receive seven of Yuhua Mavis's punches, but the power that Lu Yin had just revealed greatly exceeded the power of Yuhua Mavis's seventh punch, and it was possible that not even she could come away unscathed after receiving Lu Yin's Vacuum Palm.

It was no wonder why Yuhua Mavis had been tossed aside by Lu Yin, and it was also no wonder why he had been chosen to be a gatekeeper.

Yuhua Mavis's eyes sparkled with excitement. This was the opponent that she wanted! If Lu Yin was even stronger, then she could even release her full power without holding anything back. She really wanted to see who could endure more punches between the two of them.

Cursewind had been seriously injured and was on the verge of death, so his body was directly sent out to the white skeleton next to Zenith Mountain.

Lu Yin appeared near Shang Qing and the other victors.

The next match was a battle between two lucky Explorers: one was from the Neoverse and the other was from the Sixth Mainland.

Outside Zenith Mountain, atop the white skeleton, Cursewind was saved.

"Lilac Snow, is that the person you were talking about? The one you called the most powerful human being who managed to win the Tournament of the Strongest? His progress is too fast!"

"Yes. It'd even be difficult for an Enlighter with a power level of 300,000 to injure Cursewind's body, but he was defeated in a single palm. If the attack had been aimed slightly to the side, then his organs would have been destroyed, and his death would have been guaranteed. This can actually be considered a lucky outcome."

"His name is Lu Yin, and he is the current master of the Human Domain's Outerverse. Back when the Outerverse was isolated from the Innerverse, a large part of why we were unable to breach Ironblood Weave was related to him. Also, he saved Wang Wen after he was kidnapped by Cursewind."

"Humanity has always been able to produce incredible geniuses. I hope that he won't turn out to be the next Progenitor Chen. It would be better for the crown prince to kill him."

"That's impossible. A Progenitor hasn't appeared in countless years."

"What do you think the purpose of this ZENITH is? A Progenitor will arise sooner or later."

...

On Zenith Mountain's first layer, not far from Lu Yin, God Taiyi turned to look at him. "Has anyone said that you improve so quickly that you make other people panic?"

The moment these words were spoken, Qiu Shi, Yuhua Mavis, Yōu Qi, Liu Tianmu, and even Shang Qing and Yao Xuan looked over.

There was a great deal of information about Lu Yin available, and the most well known detail was that he had only cultivated for a bit less than fourteen years. Shockingly, he had gone from being an ordinary person to his current level in that amount of time.

Lu Yin shrugged. "This is just what it means to be a genius."

God Taiyi praised Lu Yin. "Indeed, you really are a genius."

Lu Yin smiled. Was he just showing off? No, this did not count. His goal was to rank first in ZENITH.

However, even the strength that he had revealed so far was not enough for people to place him within the top ten. Well, perhaps he would make it into the top ten, but definitely not the top five. Shang Qing was the only contestant who was publicly recognized as a truly matchless powerhouse. There was no way that that would change.

A winner was finally decided on the battlefield; the Sixth Mainland's Explorer had won.

Before long, two more people appeared on the battlefield, and shock filled Lu Yin's face. Wu Taibai had appeared, and opposite him was Fat Bro, one of the Greenmen Duo.

So far, there had been very few matches in ZENITH where two powerhouses from the Sixth Mainland had faced off against each other. Therefore, this match instantly garnered a great deal of attention. Fat Bro was not weak by any means, but he was up against Wu Taibai.

The Daosource Three Skies were above the heavens for the Sixth Mainland's youths, and this was naturally true of the Greenmen Duo as well.

When Fat Bro saw Wu Taibai standing across from him, he immediately posed a question. "May I admit defeat?"

Wu Taibai smiled. "Yes."

This was the reverence that was given to the Daosource Three Skies: even a surrender had to be allowed. The respect that the Sixth Mainland cultivators felt for the Daosource Three Skies was something that had permeated into the very bones of some individuals.

Chapter 1286: Liquor Hero's Strength

After admitting defeat, the fatty turned his head to look at the second layer, an expression of grief and indignation painting his face. "Skinny Bro, Fat Bro had to step down, so you have to work hard!"

On the second layer, the thin man shouted back, "Fat Bro, I'll work hard!"

"Skinny Bro, you must lose weight."

"Fat Bro, you will definitely get fatter."

"Skinny Bro!"

"Fat Bro!"

...

Zhi Yi looked away, embarrassed, as the corners of her mouth twitched.

Everyone from the Sixth Mainland instinctively wanted to hide their faces, as these two were just too embarrassing. How could things have gotten this far? Most of the Sixth Mainland would actually have preferred for the Greenmen Duo to not make it so far into ZENITH.

Wu Taibai appeared not far from Lu Yin and smiled at him.

Lu Yin spoke up, "I always felt that your name was very strange."

Wu Taibai smiled and said, "Yes, that makes sense."

"What does it mean?" Lu Yin asked casually, as he did not expect Wu Taibai's name to have any significant meaning.

Wu Taibai smiled and replied, "You'll know later, or possibly never."

"How could I learn about your private matters?" Lu Yin wondered out loud.

Wu Taibai stopped talking and turned to look at the battlefield.

At this moment, a huge shadow covered everyone on the first layer; Star Devourer had appeared, and his opponent was just some Explorer from the Sixth Mainland.

"I give up." The cultivator from the Sixth Mainland did not hesitate at all.

The next few matches were nothing impressive, at least not until Starsibyl appeared. Her appearance caused many people's expressions to change, as one of the predicted top ten finalists had appeared.

Also, Starsibyl's opponent was Nightqueen Yanqing.

Upon seeing Nightqueen Yanqing, many people began talking about her, and a great deal of attention was turned to Lu Yin.

The most sensational thing that Lu Yin had ever done was practically overthrow all of Daynight Flowzone. He had even caused the Daynight clan to go into seclusion after the death of Arbiter Zhenwu. Even for ZENITH, Nightqueen Yanqing was the only participant from the Daynight clan.

A commotion broke out even in the Neoverse.

The Daynight clan's power was not something that was well known only in the Innerverse and Outerverse, as the Cosmic Sea and the Neoverse were also familiar with them. The clan was a true monster, but they had been suppressed by a lone youth.

Nightqueen Yanqing appeared with a blank expression. Her entire personality had changed after the events of the Daynight Feast, and she had become a very silent person.

In fact, aside from the grudges that had long since existed, Lu Yin still felt a bit of admiration for Nightqueen Yanqing. The woman had her own pride and self-respect. Even if she faced countless ridicule, she still dared to face everything straight on. She had behaved like this on Planet Pyrolyte, and she still maintained this behavior even during ZENITH when under the entire universe's observation. Even on the greatest stage in existence, where youths from two mainlands were competing, Yanqing was still the same as ever.

The Daynight clan had been suppressed, and so, they had been abandoned by all other outside parties. The Xun family, the Blaze Realm, the sylvan dragon clan, the Frostmoon Sect, and many more had once been under the Daynight clan's authority, but they no longer associated with the clan.

Despite these circumstances, Nightqueen Yanqing had still dared to attend ZENITH, and the psychological pressure that she was facing would be insurmountable for any ordinary person.

On the first layer, Nightqueen Yanqing and Starsibyl faced each other.

"I admire you greatly, and you uphold the dignity of the Daynight clan," Starsibyl said with admiration in her voice as she stared at Nightqueen Yanqing.

Starsibyl had met and interacted with far too many people, and there were exceptionally few who could earn her admiration.

Nightqueen Yanqing's eyes stared back at Starsibyl before turning purple. Yanqing's innate gift of purple pupils could petrify everything that she saw.

Starsibyl's image gradually disappeared from where she had stood, and Nightqueen Yanqing's eyes narrowed. Her head snapped up as Starsibyl landed while blue lines appeared all over Yanqing's body, shrouding her entire form in blue stripes. She had activated her seven lined battle force at the same time as her Nightking's Body.

Off in the distance, Lu Yin was surprised to see that Nightqueen Yanqing had managed to cultivate seven lined battle force, as it was an amazing improvement. Still, it was a pity.

Nightqueen Yanqing had made great progress. With her seven lined battle force and the Nightking's Body, she was powerful enough to go toe-to-toe with an heir from an Imprinter's clan from the Sixth Mainland. The Daynight clan had devoted an impressive amount of resources into improving Yanqing's strength in hopes of doing well at ZENITH, but unfortunately, she still lost. When it came to going against Starsibyl, let alone Yanqing, even if Nightking Zhenwu was resurrected, he would find it very difficult to win.

Starsibyl had remained silent for a long time, but she was anything but weak, especially since she had cultivated the Nine Clones Technique. Like Xia Jiuyou, Starsibyl had not merged with all of her clones yet, but her strength was still rather unfathomable.

In the Daynight clan's ancestral land, many of the Daynight clan members sighed. Would they still be defeated at this stage? Fortunately for them, Zhuo Daynight and Zhanlong Daynight had already been defeated, which meant that Nightqueen Yanqing was the most successful out of the Daynight clan's youths, even when including the traitors.

At this moment, less than twenty people were still waiting to take part in their matches. Lu Yin glanced around, and sure enough, Wang Yi was the biggest threat out of everyone left.

During the next two matches, Xin Nü and No. 0007 both won their matches.

Xin Nü defeated Qing Zhiyu, who was one of the Inverse Lockbreaker Society's Distinguished Five.

Qing Zhiyu was a five star Perceptive Intermediate Lockbreaker, and his combat style revolved around dissolving his opponent's star energy, but unfortunately, he ended up facing Xin Nü, who was an Advanced Lockbreaker. Thus, he was doomed from the start of the fight.

As for No. 0007's opponent, he faced Gods' Origin's God Xiaobai. She had also reached the Clarity realm of Truesight, which amazed Lu Yin. Unfortunately, none of her attacks were able to injure No. 0007 at all. Their fight allowed everyone to see No. 0007's abilities, which seemed to have militaristic roots. It looked very simple, but that belied the deadly spear techniques.

Right after God Xiaobai's fight, Gods' Origin's Qingguang God had his match. These people who referred to themselves as deities were all famous in the outside world as madmen.

God Qingguang's opponent was Liquor Hero.

Truthfully, of the Ten Arbiters, the least known one was Liquor Hero. Even if War King and Serati Phoenix were unable to participate in ZENITH due to their ages, they still had more of a presence in the universe than Liquor Hero.

Besides drinking, the woman only drank more. She spent most of her days clinging to a barrel of alcohol, as she was scared of being robbed.

People stared dumbfoundedly at Liquor Hero when she appeared. She was wearing long clothes and was even holding onto a wine barrel when she appeared on the battlefield.

God Qingguang frowned. "Woman, I don't want to do anything, so admit defeat."

Some distance away, God Taiyi commented, "Be careful and don't underestimate her. She's an Arbiter you idiot!"

God Qingguang's frown grew even more pronounced, and his pupils transformed into runes as he stared at Liquor Hero and weakened her.

After Liquor Hero's runes were reduced by an entire level, God Qingguang raised a hand. All kinds of strange weapons manifested in the void before fiercely attacking Liquor Hero.

The people of Gods' Origin referred to themselves as gods not because they were able to weaken their enemies, but rather because they were able to create something out of nothing.

Although Lu Yin also practiced Truesight, he did not understand the technique to create something out of nothing.

The audience stared on in awe as God Qingguang miraculously conjured numerous weapons into existence. Even though items and power vessels were forbidden in ZENITH, it was useless since these items were all self-created. Thus, they were considered a part of his skill.

Various weapons surrounded Liquor Hero. They instantly tore the void apart with an overwhelming strength that could compare to the Lan Si's earlier Vacuum Palm. This was an attack worthy of Gods' Origin.

Liquor Hero hiccupped and looked up to glance at God Qingguang. Then, there was a thud as the barrel of wine slammed onto the ground. All of the surrounding weapons attacked in unison, but they all strangely targeted the wine barrel before disappearing and leaving nothing behind at all.

Everyone who saw this felt stunned and confused; what had just happened?

Off in the distance, Lu Yin's pupils shrank as he stared at the battlefield in shock; what had he just seen?

"Creation realm." Close to Lu Yin, Xin Nü's face was solemn.

On the other side of the first layer, Bu Kong looked up, his eyes filled with surprise. "The Creation realm of star energy control."

Qiu Shi's expression grew serious. Someone at the same age as her had reached the Creation realm of star energy control, but just how had Liquor Hero managed to do such a thing?

There were many Advanced Lockbreakers watching this fight, and even some Array Masters. However, not a single one of them had suspected that one of the youths had already reached the Creation realm of star energy control. This was unheard of.

No one had ever considered that one of ZENITH's participants would have already reached the Creation realm of star energy control; Liquor Hero had surpassed all of her peers.

Some cultivators pursued the pinnacle of physical strength, others the pinnacle of spiritual force, and still others the pinnacle of a domain. Liquor Hero was striving for the pinnacle of star energy control.

At this moment, Liquor Hero had not only shocked Lu Yin and the other youths, but also the older powerhouses from both mainlands, especially the Lockbreakers. All of them stared at her with shining eyes.

For her star energy control to reach the Creation realm was proof that Liquor Hero was a natural Lockbreaker, and she would definitely be a peerless Lockbreaker in the future. But what Lockbreaker level had she reached thus far?

In the Neoverse, Xiu Ming immediately requested for Liquor Hero's Lockbreaker information to be pulled up, but there were no results. The girl was not a Lockbreaker.

Xiu Ming stared at his screen; Was she really not a Lockbreaker? What a pity. She had managed to reach the Creation realm of star energy control at such a young age; it was a pity for such a talent to not be a Lockbreaker.

There were only a few people who managed to understand Liquor Hero's response, and while most people did not have any idea what had happened, their cluelessness did not stop them from being amazed.

God Qingguang also fell into this group.

Creating something out of nothing was the foundation of the self-proclaimed gods from Gods' Origin, but this woman had managed to absorb all of God Qingguang's attacks into a wine barrel. This looked like something beyond the abilities of a god, so just who was this deity?

Liquor Hero let out another burp. "Do you drink?"

God Qingguang gulped. "You- how did you do that?"

Liquor Hero grinned. "I'll tell you when we drink."

God Qingguang blinked. "Alright, I'll drink."

He was too curious to say no.

Liquor Hero picked up her barrel and tossed it over. God Qingguang raised a hand to grab it, and God Taiyi shouted from the distance, "Be careful!"

God Qingguang did not react in time. The wine barrel seemed to weigh hundreds of millions of kilos, and the impact knocked him unconscious.

Liquor Hero pouted. "If you can't take it, then you don't deserve to drink my wine!"

With that, she staggered over to God Qingguang, clearly intending to retrieve her barrel.

ZENITH had brought the most talented youths of the entire universe together. No one was willing to give up a chance to enter the top ten, and one hidden powerhouse after another was being revealed here.

Yōu Ye'er had been one, and Liquor Hero was another. Who would have suspected that someone who had been sleeping in her cups throughout the entire competition was actually superior to all other youths in one aspect? Liquor Hero was undisputedly without equal when it came to controlling star energy.

After Liquor Hero's victory, Hui Santong was up next, and his opponent was Xiao Qing.

This match should have garnered everyone's attention, but many people were still distracted by the drunkard, preventing them from focusing on the next match.

As an inheritor from the Seven Courts' Hui family, Hui Santong was considered a contender for the top positions in ZENITH, but he was not Xiao Qing's match.

Others were unaware, but Lu Yin knew that Xiao Qing was the Sage Martial Realm's true Realmling, not Sword Scholar.

Regardless of if it was Hui Santong's golden meteor battle technique or the Hui secret technique, nothing was strong enough to overpower Xiao Qing's Azure Silk Swordsmanship.

Although they had known each other for a long time, Lu Yin had never seen Xiao Qing's true power due to the limited time they had together.

Chapter 1287: Supreme Statue

When Lu Yin saw Xiao Qing's Azure Silk Swordsmanship, it was a glimpse as to her true strength. Although Hui Santong did his best to avoid her attacks, he was still defeated by a sword aimed directly at his throat.

However, there were certain aspects of their battle that seemed rather strange; Hui Santong was just too weak, much like Lan Si when he had been fighting against Yuhua Mavis. They both had been rather powerless.

The next battle featured the Greenmen Duo's Skinny Bro, and the moment he appeared on the battlefield, he yelled out, his voice echoing down to Fat Bro. The audience was irritated by his behavior, and Skinny Bro's opponent was actually another person from the Sixth Mainland; Young Master Changbai, whom Lu Yin had fought before.

Dismay appeared on Young Master Changbai's face. He was an old acquaintance of the Greenmen Duo, as they were all from the Progenitor of Secret Arts' Territory's Brahma Realm. However, one was from the Azure Realm while the other was from the Bright Rainbow Realm.

Young Master Changbai had always looked down upon the Greenmen Duo, and it wasn't until ZENITH started that he learned just how powerful the two actually were.

On the second layer, Hui Santong was unreconciled with his loss as he looked up at Xiao Qing on the first layer. He had not lost to Xiao Qing's swordsmanship, but rather another aspect of the battle. She was not an easy opponent.

Xiao Qing seemed to feel something, and when she noticed Hui Santong's stare, she returned a smile to him.

Hui Santong averted his gaze, looking back over to the battle between Young Master Changbai and the thin man.

Young Master Changbai used everything he had in this battle: his innate gift, his imprint, his battle techniques, his secret techniques, and everything else. He used his entire arsenal, but he still ended up losing to the skinny man.

The thin man's defense was unexpectedly robust, and he used a palm-based battle technique that broke through Young Master Changbai's innate gift and techniques surprisingly easily.

The fat man had a similar level of strength, but unfortunately, he had run into Wu Taibai.

Skinny Bro punched Young Master Changbai in the face, marking his unwilling defeat.

It seemed that every round of the elimination matches would end with some powerhouses fighting it out. The final match of the first elimination round had been between White Silkworm and Yao Xuan.

Although their fight had ended quickly, it had still revealed Yao Xuan's strength.

For the final match of the second elimination round, it was Toolwielder against Wang Yi.

Toolwielder was the heir of the Sixth Mainland's Toolcasting family. This family focused on forging weapons, and Toolwielder was the Realmking of the War Martial Realm. He looked down upon all his peers, and he was even able to seize control of other people's weapons.

Lu Yin's biggest impression of the Realmking was that he liked Wendy Yushan.

The Toolcasting family had once been led by Toolwielder Ancestor, one of the most powerful experts in the Sixth Mainland. But during the invasion of the monsters, their ancestor had died, causing the Toolcasting family to fall in prominence and the family to leave everyone's attention. Still, Toolwielder was a Realmking.

Toolwielder clenched a fist as he stared across the arena and at Wang Yi. Yao Gu's tragic fate was still vivid in his mind. What's more, he had also climbed up the north face of Zenith Mountain, and he had actually been somewhat close to Wang Yi at the beginning of ZENITH.

However, Toolwielder had not even been able to glimpse Wang Yi's attack.

This battle's conclusion was already foreshadowed and not very dependent on luck.

Wang Yi's eyes looked out of focus. Like when he had faced Li Zimo, Wang Yi was just standing there without attacking. No one knew what was going through his mind at this moment.

It did not take long for Toolwielder to make a move, and his imprint appeared as he did so. He no longer had his ancestor's imprint. Instead, the imprint was from one of his family's World Imprinter elders. Within the Toolcaster family, the elder was considered a ninth stage Augmenter.

A martial imprint also appeared as Toolwielder raised his hand and aimed it at Wang Yi. In an instant, the sky and the earth were torn apart, seemingly as though the starry sky had been cut away.

Toolwielder had not been able to see how Wang Yi had attacked Yao Gu, so he knew that he would only have one opportunity to attack Wang Yi. If this attack missed, then Toolwielder would suffer a similar fate as Yao Gu.

Not even a Void Thunderbeast had been able to dodge Wang Yi's attack, so there was no need to mention Toolwielder.

Toolwielder's attack struck out, and on the first, second, and even the third layer of Zenith Mountain, many people felt their weapons tremble, as though from the echo of an attack.

Wendy Yushan stared up at the first layer. She had first run into Toolwielder in the Daosource Sect's ruins, and at that time, Toolwielder had used Wendy's sword to kill an enemy. She would never be able to forget that scene; someone else had moved her sword.

At this moment, the weapon control that Toolwielder wielded was truly amazing.

On the other side of the battlefield, Wang Yi's eyes regained their alertness as he watched the person opposite him charge at him while tearing through the void. Wang Yi took a few light steps backwards and disappeared. When he reappeared, he was behind the charging Toolwielder. Toolwielder's movements grew sluggish until he slammed into the ground. He had already lost.

Some distance away, Lu Yin's eyes narrowed as he observed the fight. Wang Yi's speed was unprecedented, and it surpassed everyone's that Lu Yin had seen before. He had moved at a staggering speed, and the power of his attack had also been truly terrifying. Wang Yi had simply severed Toolwielder's energy channels with one hand.

Lu Yin had been carefully watching Wang Yi the moment Toolwielder appeared on the battlefield, and he had even used Truesight to see the situation more clearly. It was likely that no more than ten of the contestants had been able to clearly see Wang Yi's attack.

He was pretty scary.

Elsewhere, Wu Taibai stared at Wang Yi with evident surprise in his eyes.

Shang Qing's eyes narrowed, and he suddenly appeared a lot more dignified.

So far, aside from Shang Qing, who was still the unquestionably peerless participant in ZENITH whom no one could defeat, very few people had managed to shock everyone. However, Wang Yi's speed had managed to do so.

He had made everyone cautious of him.

As the second round of the elimination matches drew to a close, an alarm was heard, drawing everyone's attention to the peak.

At the top of Zenith Mountain, a huge statue that was tens of thousands of meters tall suddenly rose up. It had no face and or any distinguishing facial features, but the statue had been crafted in a pose that seemed to suppress all others with a single hand.

Beneath the statue, ten stairways descended from the area just beneath the mountain's peak. Those stairs were the only way to access that area.

Those ten staircases represented ten people. Only ten people would be able to climb up those stairs to reach the top of the mountain, and those ten would be the ten finalists of ZENITH.

As for the featureless statue, it had been left for the eventual champion and Pinnacle Youth. Once an ultimate victor was determined, the features of that one person who was truly invincible within their generation throughout the entire universe would appear on that statue.

Everyone raised their heads to look up at the huge statue with excited eyes.

Throughout their life, how many opportunities to stand at the peak of the universe would a person have? This sight could only be seen by someone who was truly peerless, and their moment of ascension would be seen by the whole universe.

At this moment, even Shang Qing felt his blood heat up a bit; after all, it would not be long before that statue assumed his appearance.

The moment the statue appeared, a new round of betting exploded in the entire universe's major markets. Everyone started guessing who would be the Pinnacle Youth and the other members of the top ten.

At the foot of Zenith Mountain, Yao Gu woke and looked up. The statue was very far away from him.

On the third layer, Ce Jiu felt helpless. It was shocking to think that he, an inheritor of the Seven Courts' Ce family and someone who had received the best resources and had even comprehended a secret technique, would not even have the chance to touch that statue.

Ku Lei gritted his teeth. No matter how hard he tried, he just ended up moving farther and farther from the top.

Lei Nü was very calm. As the Hall of Honor's second Honor Chosen, she knew that her defeat had drawn harsh criticism from some people. But the simple truth was that she had been defeated. There was nothing more to say.

On the second layer, Xia Luo appeared calm. He looked as though he was doing the same as everyone else and wondering about whose face would appear on that statue.

Mira's eyes betrayed her complex emotions. She was determined and had clearly hoped to enter the top ten.

Nong Zaitian's mouth fell open as he stared at the statue in a daze. If his face could appear on that statue, it would be amazing. What an honor that would be to his ancestors! Damn that Fifth Mainland woman.

Ling Que's eyes hid a terrible amount of envy. If the statue could take his appearance, he would never need to pay his cheerleaders, as countless beauties would freely join to cheer him on. What a beautiful scene that would have been.

Sleeping Prince was sleeping.

At this moment, there were still fifty contestants fighting in ZENITH. They needed to reduce their numbers to twenty before fighting one last round for the right to climb up the ten staircases.

However, the solution had already been given, which was a third round of elimination matches. This time, there would be ten, three-person battles. For this round of ZENITH, not only strength was needed, but luck too.

Luck was an illusory thing. It was ephemeral yet indispensable.

Lu Yin remembered that someone had once told him that if he entered the top ten of ZENITH, luck was needed to advance further.

Luck was also a part of the ultimate test.

Just what sort of chance could make luck this important? Lu Yin was very curious.

Of the fifty people still standing on the first layer, some were lucky while others had been amazingly lucky. There was actually a Limiteer among them, which certainly drew some eyes.

Siggy was the Limiteer's name. He was from a small island in the Cosmic Sea. As expected, he had worked very hard on his cultivation, and he was also especially lucky. Even in the harsh environment of the Cosmic Sea, even when his sect had been destroyed, he had still managed to survive and make it to the Innaverse.

When ZENITH had been announced, Siggy had registered just for the fun of participating. Truthfully, for his cultivation realm, his strength was excellent. If not for ZENITH, he had planned to find some powerhouse at the bottom of the Top 100 Rankings to challenge.

Siggy had believed that his strength was enough to become famous during ZENITH, but once the competition started, he had been stunned. What kind of freaks were these people? There were Explorers, Cruisers, Hunters, and even Enlighters running around all over the place!

When he saw that, Siggy had felt like his decision to join ZENITH had been a mistake. Siggy had watched as some powerful guy from the Sixth Mainland with arrows had flown ahead, only to suffer a miserable fate. That sight had left a mental scar on Siggy. He intended to forfeit the competition at that stage, but the gatekeeper, Lu Yin, had not made any moves to stop the people when Siggy had approached the checkpoint. He had watched many other people pass through the checkpoint, so he tried it as well and got lucky enough to make it through.

For someone who had intended to give up on the competition, nobody had expected him to make it all the way to the first layer, especially since he was a Limiteer, just a Limiteer!

Even if Siggy was not able to see it, he could feel countless eyes staring at him, filled with envy, jealousy, and all kinds of emotions.

He was truly suffering a tremendous amount of pressure given that he was surrounded by veritable monsters.

The participants were given a day off to rest, and on the next day, the third round of elimination matches began.

Siggy's eyes flashed, and he appeared on a distant battlefield with someone in front of him. This person looked young, and his eyes were timid, giving off the immediate impression that he would be easy to bully. Siggy felt that his chances of winning were great.

"He- hello," the young man said.

Siggy smiled. This person even stuttered, so they had to be easy to deal with.

However, the appearance of another figure plunged Siggy into the abyss. A Three- three- three-way battle?

With only fifty competitors remaining, there would be ten three-person battles and ten two-person matches. Siggy had not expected to be unlucky enough to have been selected for a three-way battle. The cowering stutterer was not Siggy's only opponent.

Buuuurp!

Siggy looked up to see one of the Inniverse's Ten Arbiters: Liquor Hero. It was just like seeing a ghost. How was Siggy supposed to deal with such a monster? He was just a Limiteer! There was no point in fighting against such a powerhouse. How was he supposed to fight Liquor Hero? What a joke!

Across the arena, the stutterer was similarly stunned. "Li- Li- Liquor Hero?"

The first match was a three-person battle featuring a stutterer, Siggy, and Liquor Hero.

Chapter 1288: Regression of the Times

Liquor Hero was in the same half-drunk state as always.

The stutterer's face showed obvious distress, but he had already reached this point. During the last round, his opponent had been one of the Lockbreaker Society's Distinguished Five, and he had also been in the top ranks of the Top 100 Rankings, but the stutterer had ultimately managed to come out on top. The truth was that the stutterer's strength was high enough to qualify to participate in the Mountain and Seas Zone's competition and fight for the Astral Tower. Although his strength was not overwhelming, he did match up to those at the top of the Top 100 Rankings.

I thought that my luck would continue, but I ended up running into Liquor Hero here. Looking to the side, the stutterer grew desperate. Even if he wanted to team up with the third participant to go up against Liquor Hero, it was impossible. Actually, how in the world had a Limiteer reached this stage of ZENITH?

"I give up!" Siggy reacted immediately. He felt that it was a man's responsibility to know when it was time to step down and let go.

The stutterer was speechless. "Me- me- me--"

Before he could even finish what he was trying to say, he already back at his original position on the first layer while Liquor Hero had appeared at the bottom of one of the staircases leading to the top of Zenith Mountain. Reaching the top of those stairs meant that that person had entered the top ten.

Against Liquor Hero, there was no shame in admitting defeat.

The stutterer was in a daze. He had not wanted to admit defeat at all! Even though he had known that he would absolutely lose, he did not have the courage to admit defeat, as his master would beat him to death after ZENITH! The stutterer had wanted to say, 'Be serious, and don't give up!'

Ku Wei was off to the side, and he gave the stutterer a sympathetic look. "Brother, that was really tough luck to run into Liquor Hero."

The stutterer looked at Ku Wei. "Ben- ben- ben-"

Ku Wei grew angry. "You're stupid! Your whole family is stupid!"

"It was- it was-," said the stutterer.¹

Ku Wei did not hear the end of the stutterer's sentence, as he had already appeared on the battlefield. As soon as he appeared, a familiar voice entered his ears. "Hey, two-legged cook, get over here and be a ride for Lord Fish! Lord Fish is in a good mood, so I'll teach you and guide you until you become a Progenitor."

Ku Wei turned to look at the source of the voice and instantly found the fish. He reflexively asked, "Do you like chili powder?"

The fish was infuriated, and he slapped his fins about fiercely. "Stupid two-legged beast! Lord Fish was giving you a chance. Hey, two-legged beast, have you changed?"

The fist stared at Ku Wei and carefully observed him before asking, "Have you gotten bigger?"

Others were not able to understand this question, but Ku Wei did, and he stared at the fish as though he had seen a ghost. Had this rotten fish actually noticed that he was able to transform into a guardian giant? No, this fish's eyes were too evil!

"The face becomes bigger and uglier, so don't do it! You stay away from Lord Fish!" The fish spat in contempt.

Ku Wei was furious.

Xi Qi felt like she had been wronged. "I'm sorry! I'm sorry! Don't get angry."

At this moment, another figure appeared, and Ku Wei and Xi Qi looked over in unison. After a flicker of lightning flashed by, the two looked at each other with pale faces.

Wang Yi! Why was it him?

In the distance, Lu Yin pursed his lips. Ku Wei was very unlucky with this matchup. The three people were supposed to fight against each other, but they had been matched up against Wang Yi. There was no luck in this match.

Still, it certainly was not bad for Ku Wei to have reached this point in ZENITH.

Wang Yi's appearance had already determined the match, and there was no suspense at all.

Only the fish was in disagreement. "Hey, two-legged beast, Lord Fish can see that your bones are very strange, so hurry up and serve as a ride for Lord Fish! Lord Fish can teach you how to become a Progenitor when I'm in a good mood."

Xi Qi quickly covered the fish's mouth. "Don't talk! This is ZENITH, there are no punishments for killing somebody, don't offend them any more."

Ku Wei carefully distanced himself away from Xi Qi. That rotten fish could say anything, and Ku Wei was scared of being dragged down along with it.

Wait, why not just surrender? Ku Wei's eyes lit up. Against Wang Yi, it did not matter even if Ku Wei transformed into a guardian giant, as he would definitely lose. Since that was the case, he might as well just quickly surrender. He had already seen what had happened to Yao Gu and Toolwielder.

"I give up," Xi Qi said simply. She was terrified the fish would continue spouting nonsense.

The fish was furious and kept flapping its fins.

Ku Wei also quickly spoke up. "I admit defeat."

Wang Yi appeared right below one of the staircases near the top of Zenith Mountain.

Soon, three more figures appeared on the battlefield: there were two Explorers, one from the Sixth Mainland and the other from the Neoverse, and the Greenmen Duo's Skinny Bro.

Upon seeing the matchup of this three-way battle, Lu Yin became convinced that the pairings were not being randomly assigned.

Of the fifty people who had made it all the way to the first layer, more than ten of them were clearly much weaker than the others. Almost all of these people had relied upon luck to reach this point. From the participants of the two three-person battles that had just taken place, the four people who had been eliminated were among those ten weaker individuals. There were dozens of people who could be paired up, so these matchings were intentionally eliminating certain people.

In this third battle, the thin man from the Greenmen Duo easily eliminated the other two, though the thin man himself was not a real powerhouse either.

The match quickly ended, and next, Shang Qing appeared on the battlefield.

As soon as Shang Qing appeared, the rest of the contestants' eyes all showed a bit of stress. No one would have a good time if they had to face off against Shang Qing. Even if Lu Yin was confident that he had the strength to fight against Shang Qing, it would cost Lu Yin dearly to face Shang Qing at this time.

The massive Star Devourer also appeared in the field, as he was Shang Qing's opponent.

This was another three-way battle, and the final participant was Xie Xiaoxian.

As soon as Xie Xiaoxian appeared, she wanted to cry, but there were no tears.

In the Mountain and Seas Zone, Xie Xiaoxian had been the first person to witness the true power of the Tri-Yang Technique's ancestral qi. In that place, up on the golden stage, Shang Qing had transformed two qi strands into copies of Progenitor Chen, and Xie Xiaoxian would never forget the aura of invincibility that had washed over her at that time. Shang Qing was an Enlightener, as were the copies he had summoned. But even if he had been a Hunter, those qi strands were not something that Xia Xiaoxian could deal with.

For Progenitor Chen, crossing realms to battle could not have been any easier, as any genius in the universe was basically nothing more than a regular person before Progenitor Chen.

Xie Xiaoxian started to consider whether or not she should immediately admit defeat. On the other side, Star Devourer's huge body had already begun pressing upon Shang Qing.

When he had arrived at the fifth checkpoint, Star Devourer had made the smart decision to not provoke Shang Qing, instead shrinking down in order to pass by. Even if Star Devourer looked down upon humans, there was no need to recklessly go up against someone who could use Progenitors like hired muscle. However, at this stage of ZENITH, it was impossible not to fight.

Star Devourer had the appearance of a creature that was a cross between a wolf and a tiger with six eyes on his forehead. Every time an eye opened, his power would increase explosively.

Shang Qing easily evaded the massive creature as a strand of qi shot out to attack Star Devourer.

Star Devourer easily shattered the strand of qi. Although there was no way to permanently deal with the qi strands, as they quickly reformed after being shattered, for the moment, the qi was of no threat to Star Devourer.

Shang Qing frowned slightly as Star Devourer's massive tail whipped down from above. The movement of the tail caused the void to warp in its wake, and the power of this attack was no less than what Yuhua Mavis could unleash.

Yuhua Mavis represented the pinnacle of human strength while Star Devourer represented the pinnacle of the astral beasts' strength.

A human's physiology was inherently limited, but Star Devourer's was not. He was even able to swallow entire planets.

Shang Qing evaded the attack, and the huge tail smacked into the ground, shattering the earth where it fell. Xie Xiaoxian was forced back multiple steps by just the shockwave, and she stared on in horror. The strength of this creature reminded her of Corpse Beast.

When she had seen Corpse Beast's strength after undergoing a third corpse king transformation, the creature's physical power had been astounding. However, she had a feeling that the power she was currently seeing from Star Devourer might not be any less than what Corpse Beast had been capable of back then.

Star Devourer roared as he suddenly opened his fifth eye. His right paw rose up to slap down at Shang Qing.

From where he watched, Lu Yin's eyes narrowed. The power of this attack was infinitely close to what Corpse Beast had unleashed, and it was even at the level of Lu Yin's physical strength. This was something that far surpassed Yuhua Mavis's physical power.

Yuhua Mavis had a serious expression on her face. Star Devourer deserved his species' reputation as being the strongest of all astral beasts. Only five eyes had been opened, but he had already surpassed her strength. Still, that was just physical strength, and a Mavis did not use power as crudely as Star Devourers.

As she was thinking of such things, Yuhua Mavis glanced over at Lu Yin. His Vacuum Palm was not something that Star Devourer could measure up to even now.

Strength was a form of power, but it greatly depended on how strength was exerted.

Xie Xiaoxian could not interfere in this battle, and she kept her distance. However, Star Devourer did not make any moves against the girl, focusing entirely on Shang Qing.

The strand of ancestral qi was useless against Star Devourer, and everyone watching started to grow nervous; it was time for Progenitor Chen to appear.

It did not take long before Shang Qing rose high into the sky. The strand of qi that had been attacking Star Devourer began to transform until it gradually took on the form of a human.

Star Devourer was not stupid. Although his brain was not anything special, he was very sensitive to danger. As soon as he saw the qi begin to transform, he raised a paw and attacked it.

There was a loud bang as the ground trembled and deep claw prints appeared in the ground.

Countless people nervously stared at their screens.

Star Devourer stared at the ground, and his originally indifferent gaze suddenly turned to one of pain. Blood spurted out as the glint of a knife flashed from up above, slashing through Star Devourer's right paw. A figure then leaped into view: it was Progenitor Chen.

Star Devourer roared in pain, and his huge tail rampaged in all directions.

High in the sky, Shang Qing's expression remained as tranquil and indifferent as ever. Two strands of qi swirled around him, giving him the appearance of a god.

Below, the Progenitor Chen formed from the strand of qi attacked Star Devourer with a knife, though there was no hint of any battle technique being used. However, there were also no extraneous movements. Each time the knife flashed by, the figure of the summoned human would disappear, though the knight light would remain behind.

Star Devourer's huge tail was attacked and cut in half. No matter how powerful the creature was, his strength was useless against Progenitor Chen.

In the distance, Lu Yin gradually clenched his right hand: Progenitor Chen, this was Progenitor Chen. In the past, atop the golden stage, no one had been able to do anything to Corpse Beast at all, but as soon

as a strand of qi had transformed into Progenitor Chen, the figure had blocked Corpse Beast with a knife, eventually slicing off Beast's arm.

Corpse Beast was not some powerhouse from the younger generation, and the Neohuman Alliance had no youths who were powerful enough to undergo a third corpse king transformation, let alone integrate with death energy.

Yuhua Mavis, Xia Jiuyou, and the others would not be inferior even if they were compared to the most talented youths throughout history. However, all of them combined had still failed to defeat Beast, which showed how remarkable Progenitor Chen was for defeating the corpse king with nothing but a knife.

That was the power of Progenitor Chen, the invincible Progenitor Chen.

At this moment, no matter how powerful Star Devourer might be, he was like a child before Progenitor Chen. The giant creature's right paw and tail had been immediately wounded, forcing Star Devourer into a position where he no longer dared to attack.

Only the people who were physically present could fully appreciate the horror of Star Devourer. He released a boundless pressure that caused people to collapse, but the people watching ZENITH through the broadcast screens could not feel any of the pressure and could only see Shang Qing's invincibility.

Outside the Zenith Mountain, atop the white skeleton, someone commented, "That's humanity's top Progenitor. No matter what point in time it is, Progenitor Chen was invincible among his peers. Who can defeat a Progenitor in the same cultivation realm as them?"

"Unless another Progenitor takes action."

"That's useless. According to the legends, when the Fifth Mainland and the Sixth Mainland were at war, Progenitor Chen used his Nine Clones Technique to face off against nine other Progenitors. He was truly invincible."

"That's why this human is recognized as the only one eligible to take the title of Pinnacle Youth, not unless someone else can surpass the power of Progenitor Chen when he possessed their cultivation realm."

"He has more than one clone of Progenitor Chen."

These words left all of the other beasts silent.

Star Devourer was a unique lifeform that possessed incredible physical strength and fed on entire planets. He had the greatest physical strength out of everyone participating in ZENITH. He was immovable, but even he was completely powerless against Progenitor Chen.

On the first layer, Xie Xiaoxian swallowed as she stared up at Progenitor Chen in fear. As she watched this figure wield a knife, her eyes lit up. This was the invincible Progenitor Chen, so how sad must the people born in the same era as him have been?

Chapter 1289: How Many Punches?

The figure of Progenitor Chen did not use any impressive battle techniques, as its simple knife attacks prevented Star Devourer from making any moves. One person with one knife was invincible.

Star Devourer's five open eyes stared at Progenitor Chen, and then, finally, he opened his sixth eye. In that instant, a strange power swept out in all directions. In the distance, the expressions of Zhi Yi, Bu Kong, Wu Taibai, and the other people from the Sixth Mainland all suddenly changed; why were they feeling this?

Anyone from the Sixth Mainland was born with an innate suppression over all the cultivators from the Fifth Mainland. There was no way to remove or overcome this suppression. However, at this time, they were feeling that same sort of suppression from Star Devourer. Even though the creature was from the Fifth Mainland, he actually was able to give them an oppressive feeling. Just what was going on?

When all six of Star Devourer's eyes opened, the sky and ground both trembled. A power visible to the naked eye rippled out in an arc around the creature. As Star Devourer roared to the sky, all of Zenith Mountain shook. A matchless power spread throughout the entire mountain, and it even cracked the nearby planets. One after another, older powerhouses appeared to block this energy, and they all looked shocked.

This was the first time that any sort of attack or energy had spread out of Zenith Mountain and into the surrounding area. Star Devourer had revealed his full power, and he truly did possess an invincible strength, with no one able to match up to the beast's raw physical prowess.

It had reached the pinnacle in this aspect.

At this moment, even Shang Qing was shocked, as this power was not something that humans could possess.

The knife flashed, abruptly cutting Star Devourer's roar short. All six of the beast's eyes blinked before his body slammed into the ground. The illusionary Progenitor Chen stood high in the sky with his blade pointed directly away from Zenith Mountain, and everyone who saw the blade felt chills run down their spines.

Progenitor Chen then slashed at Star Devourer with the knife.

Blood flowed down the neck of Star Devourer, dyeing the ground red, as the huge body quickly shrunk down.

Star Devourer had lost.

From where he was standing some distance away, Lu Yin's eye twitched. At this moment, Lu Yin could not even see the knife, as his vision had been overwhelmed by the terrifying number of rune lines that had flashed before Star Devourer fell.

This was Progenitor Chen's power, as Star Devourer had never even had an opportunity to unleash his full strength.

Progenitor Chen was invincible. That was how he had been recorded down in history, and the Sixth Mainland had not even dared to record his existence.

Everyone went silent.

When Yuhua Mavis and others had fought atop the golden stage in the Mountain and Seas Zone, they believed that they had seen Progenitor Chen's full abilities there, but the Progenitor Chen that they had seen had never felt any pressure. Thus, they had not seen his true power at all.

At that time, Shang Qing had fallen for Silver's plan and had been nearly kidnapped, which was proof of the power of Silver's pet, Corpse Beast, as even Progenitor Chen had been unable to react in time.

In terms of physical strength, Star Devourer was truly invincible, but in terms of brute force, he still could not match up to Corpse Beast.

Star Devourer had not been given the opportunity to use his strength. What did it matter for if his strength was matchless? It was all useless since he could not stop Progenitor Chen's sword.

Yao Xuan's eye twitched as he stared at Progenitor Chen, who gradually transformed back into a strand of qi. The crown prince then looked at Shang Qing and contemplated how he would face this opponent.

No matter how arrogant Yao Xuan was, no one dared to claim that they could match up to Progenitor Chen when at the same level of cultivation, which made Shang Qing an unsolvable problem.

Perhaps it would be better to directly attack Shang Qing himself, but Shang Qing was not someone who would go down easily either. After all, he was the Hall of Honor's first Honor Chosen.

At this moment, everyone realized that Shang Qing had only been heralded as unbeatable because of the Tri-Yang Technique—no one knew anything at all about his other abilities. His possible innate gift, secret techniques, his physical strength, and everything else was all completely unknown. He was practically a complete mystery.

This realization horrified the remaining contestants.

When they looked at Shang Qing again, the three strands of qi swirling around him really did give him an otherworldly appearance.

Lu Yin let out a long breath. If he wanted to defeat Shang Qing, then he would have to defeat a clone of Progenitor Chen that had the same cultivation realm as Shang Qing. That was the greatest challenge, Progenitor Chen.

Outside Zenith Mountain, Mu En smiled. This was the Hall of Honor's greatest technique. Regardless of if the opponent was from the Sixth Mainland or anywhere else, the Hall of Honor was fully confident that whoever cultivated the Tri-Yang Ancestral Qi Technique would be invincible within the same realm. Even if this invincibility was derived from another's strength, so what? The user would still be invincible.

The most humiliated person at this moment was Xie Xiaoxian. Many people stared at her. Star Devourer had already lost after facing Shang Qing.

Shang Qing's eyes moved over, and a strand of qi finally moved away from his body.

Xie Xiaoxian felt helpless and quickly spoke up. "I admit defeat."

No one laughed. This was only right, as a decisive surrender would speed up the matches.

No one could blame Xie Xiaoxian either, as it was better to admit defeat when facing Shang Qing.

Shang Qing appeared at the bottom of another stairway, separated from both Liquor Hero and Wang Yi.

Many people's expressions changed. Perhaps they could win their matches now, since they would not have to face any of these three people. This thought made many people grow hopeful of their own matches.

A nervous looking woman appeared on the battlefield. She was only an Explorer, and she was from the Cosmic Sea. Across from her, Xia Jiuyou appeared.

When she saw Xia Jiuyou, the woman's face went pale. Xia Jiuyou was an absolute powerhouse who was expected to end up in the top five of all of ZENITH. Although the predicted leaderboards were not necessarily accurate, she was not able to face anyone who qualified to potentially enter the top ten.

The woman was helpless, as it seemed that her luck had run out.

Elsewhere on the battlefield, a man appeared. Many people were interested in this person. He was called No. 0007, which was a very strange name. Also, he was certainly not weak.

Lu Yin was particularly interested in this man, as anyone who could defeat Zhuo Daynight would arouse Lu Yin's interest.

Zhuo Daynight had even been able to affect Nightking Zhenwu with her Night's End, Daybreak when she had been much weaker than her current state. Despite that, No. 0007 had actually managed to defeat Zhuo Daynight as a Hunter, the same realm that Nightking Zhenwu had been in. No. 0007 was not from the Sixth Mainland or the Neoverse, which was something that greatly interested Lu Yin.

Naturally, Xia Jiuyou was also concerned about No. 0007. This person gave off an aura of iron and blood. At first glance, he was a soldier. His eyes were devoid of emotion, and when he looked at anyone, it was as though he was staring at an enemy.

He held a spear in his hand, which was the standard weapon for many armies.

Many people had noticed that No. 0007 was a soldier, as even his name sounded like it had been assigned to him by the military. However, how had a soldier managed to enter ZENITH and make it so far into the tournament? Also, he was clearly very young, so what kind of army could train such a person?

Xia Jiuyou thought no more about the matter. He glanced at his two opponents before raising a hand and releasing a Yōu Reinforced Palm.

The unprepared woman was struck head on, and she froze. Her vitality began to drain away.

No. 0007's eyes lingered on Xia Jiuyou for a moment before he leaped forward and stabbed at Xia Jiuyou with his spear. No. 0007 charged forward all on his own, but he carried the feeling of being accompanied by thousands of other soldiers and horses. With his spear in hand, it felt like thousands of soldiers committed to fighting to the death were charging forward.

Xia Jiuyou did not move. His innate gift of echo released a second Yōu Reinforced Palm. The palm hit No. 0007 without any issue, but No. 0007's expression remained unchanged. Even if he had been struck, rendering half of his body frozen and numb, his spear still moved forward.

His expression never wavered in the slightest, and his weapon remained steady.

From his distant vantage point, Lu Yin came to vaguely understand how Zhuo Daynight had been defeated. This No. 0007 was not strong, and he was actually greatly inferior to Nightking Zhenwu. At best, this soldier's strength approached the level of strength of the Ten Arbiters, but the strength of his will was something rare. Although Nightking Zhenwu had been superior to most of the other Arbiters, it was possible that No. 0007 had surpassed the dead Nightking in this aspect.

A soldier who saw death as his home would possess an unshakable will, even when lost in illusion.

Coupled with a higher cultivation than Zhuo Daynight, it was perfectly normal for her to have lost to this man.

But it was a pity that No. 0007 was up against Xia Jiuyou, as his will was only able to hold out long enough to ensure a victory in a fight against those with the same cultivation. It was completely useless against a stronger powerhouse.

The spear stopped less than a centimeter away from Xia Jiuyou, frozen, as No. 0007 had been completely frozen.

Since he had already won, Xia Jiuyou did not kill his opponents, and he canceled the effects of his palm attacks that had struck No. 0007 and the woman, saving their lives.

"Where are you from?" Xia Jiuyou asked as he looked at No. 0007.

No. 0007 appeared on the lower level of the mountain without ever saying a word.

Xia Jiuyou appeared at the bottom of a stairway.

Progenitor Chen had been the invincible Progenitor of the past, and Xia Jiuyou was the inheritor of Progenitor Chen's descendent clan. Thus, the strength of this youth who had cultivated the Nine Clones Secret Technique did not rouse any surprise among the spectators, especially since his opponents had not been strong.

Lu Yin was just about to look around to see who would next appear on the battlefield when he suddenly disappeared and reappeared in the arena.

It was his turn.

Many people were shocked to see Lu Yin appear, and many had expressions of awe while others panicked, afraid they would be matched up with Lu Yin.

A short man appeared in front of Lu Yin, and the two looked at each other.

The man's hand shot into the air. "I give up!"

Lu Yin was speechless; the other participant had not even appeared yet! This guy had to hold the record for fastest forfeiture in ZENITH.

"Bro, what's the problem?" someone said.

The short man's expression was ugly. "I personally saw it when that guy from the Sixth Mainland was beaten to death by a palm strike. I- I don't want to die!"

Lu Yin's brows rose high, and he grew serious, as well as a bit impressed. When Tong Zhan had attacked Lu Yin, this short man had also been there. Clearly, he had suffered psychological damage after seeing Tong Zhan's death up close.

As long as they were conscientious about it, cultivators were capable of remembering things from long ago.

The short man had already conceded when the third contestant appeared to the side. The battle was initially supposed to be between three people, but it had become a one-on-one now.

A green brilliance appeared as green grass swayed over the ground. This scenery was all too familiar. Yuhua Mavis had appeared.

Upon seeing that Lu Yin's opponent was Yuhua Mavis, whether it was on Zenith Mountain, outside of it, or in front of the screens across the universe, countless people straightened up and paid attention. A fight between two true powerhouses was about to begin.

Lu Yin's expression changed, but then he smiled. He had not expected to meet Yuhua Mavis so soon, though he had been waiting for this moment for a long time.

In the past, he had been struck down from the golden stage in the Mountain and Seas Zone by Yuhua Mavis's seventh punch. At that time, he had felt helpless and unwilling to accept his situation. When he had directly compared his strength with hers, he had lost. After becoming a Hunter, one of Lu Yin's greatest desires was to go up against the woman once again, and if she attacked him with seven punches, then he would return every single one of them.

Across from him, Yuhua Mavis had also not expected to meet Lu Yin so soon, but it was exactly what she wanted. She had been very disgruntled when Lu Yin had tossed her through the checkpoint, but now, they were face to face.

"Do you remember what you said before ZENITH?" Yuhua Mavis asked, staring at Lu Yin in a serious manner as excitement and fighting intent filled her eyes.

The corners of Lu Yin's mouth curved up. "I remember."

"How many punches are you going to let me face? Or are you confident in taking on my punches?" Yuhua Mavis provoked.

Everyone stared at the battlefield, and many people swallowed nervously.

Chapter 1290: Infinite Power

Lulu Mavis was nervous. Both of the people currently in the arena were quite close to her, but she naturally hoped that Sister Yuhua would win, though she also hoped that Lu Yin would not lose too badly.

Lulu belonged to the Mavis family, and she was aware of the horror of the Treeheart Descendent. Lu Yin definitely did not fully understand what having infinite power meant. He would certainly lose, but Lulu nonetheless hoped that it would not be too bad for him.

In the Neoverse, the Mavis family lived on the back of their massive ancestral tortoise. At this moment, many of the members of the Mavis family had gathered around a screen. "Sister Yuhua's fighting! She'll let them see what real power is."

"Those monsters from the Astral Beast Domain are only able to use brute force, which is why our Mavis family is the representative of strength."

"Sister Yuhua isn't just powerful—she's also our Treeheart Descendant."

"Lu Yin isn't weak either. Supposedly, he took on seven of Sister Yuhua's punches in the Mountain and Seas Zone. He is actually very powerful for a human, but unfortunately, he's unlucky enough to meet Sister Yuhua once again. He's done for in ZENITH."

"Sister Yuhua, come on! Show your true strength and let humans know what it means to be strong!"

...

Most of those who knew about the Mavis family were Neoverse powers.

When they saw that Lu Yin's opponent was Yuhua Mavis, none of them believed that he stood any chance, even if he had been given the role of gatekeeper. So what if he had managed to take out Little Arrow Saint with a single attack? The Mavis family was absolutely terrifying, and this was well known.

On Eversky Island, Highsage Grandmaster had a calm appearance. This was the true beginning of ZENITH.

In the Honor Zone, Arch-Elder Zen smiled as he watched on. Little guy, let me see what sort of strength you have.

On Zenith Mountain, on the first layer, Lu Yin faced off against Yuhua Mavis. He raised all of his fingers, before lowering three. "Seven punches."

Yuhua Mavis arched a brow. "Are you intending to go up against me for another seven punches?"

Lu Yin smiled. "I hope that you can take all seven of my punches."

Yuhua Mavis's expression fell. "Okay, seven punches. Let's see how powerful you really are."

When they had fought atop the golden stage in the Mountain and Seas Zone, Lu Yin had managed to match up to four of Yuhua Mavis's punches with pure strength, but the last three had forced him to also use battle force and the Overlaying Stacks Path. In reality, he had only matched four of Yuhua Mavis's punches, and clearly, she had not put her full strength into any of those punches either.

If Yuhua Mavis had unleashed her full strength with her first punch, then there would have been no chance of Lu Yin enduring such an attack.

At present, Lu Yin had no intention of exploding forth with his full strength either, and he lightly stepped forward and threw a punch at Yuhua Mavis.

Yuhua Mavis's gaze grew sharp, and she lifted a fist. This was a conversation of strength.

Boom!

There was a deafening noise as the void shattered and the ground broke apart around the two. Both of them plummeted into the hole at the same time.

At the foot of Zenith Mountain, people could feel ripples of power spreading out that tore open countless space cracks. This was a truly shocking sight.

This clash not only stunned people present at and around Zenith Mountain, but also the countless people watching the live broadcast.

Even if they had not traveled to watch ZENITH in person, they were still able to feel the terrifying power of this clash.

This was only the first punch, but it already contained more power than the seventh punch that Lu Yin and Yuhua Mavis had exchanged in the Mountain and Seas Zone. What's more, this was also just the starting line.

Back then, Yuhua Mavis had punched Lu Yin, and each subsequent attack had been a bit stronger than Lu Yin's. She had been able to suppress him without seriously injuring him, which showed her excellent control over her own strength.

However, Lu Yin did not bother with any of that. Although he did not divert any of his fatesand, he had thrown the strongest punch that his physical body was capable of, as he believed that Yuhua Mavis could handle it.

The power of this one punch was domineering and terrifying.

The first layer of Zenith Mountain cracked.

Yuhua Mavis's right fist was red where it had collided with Lu Yin's.

Lu Yin smiled casually. "Here's the second punch. Let's keep going."

As his voice fell, he diverted his fatesand. At this moment, all of the fatesand that had merged together and gathered around his heart was released, and a terrifying power filled the air as the two combatants rushed towards each other and their fists clashed.

The same scene as before took place once again. The peak of Zenith Mountain trembled, and shockwaves swept the area, tearing through the void and leaving spatial cracks in its wake. There was the sound of a thunderous explosion, which terrified many people.

Yuhua Mavis took a few steps back and shook her right hand right as the aftershock from their clash slammed into the other contestants still on the first layer.

The other youths were separated from the battlefield by a barrier that the shockwaves slammed into. Although it did not shatter, the force of the shockwaves still shook the youths' hearts as it slammed through the air.

Several Explorers immediately began to bleed from their seven orifices, as they were unable to endure even these remnant shockwaves.

People stared at Lu Yin and Yuhua Mavis as though they were looking at monsters.

Lu Yin raised his right fist. This was his current strength. After breaking through to the Hunter realm, his strength had increased tremendously. He had even been strong enough to go toe to toe with Corpse Beast after a third corpse king transformation, which was something that Yuhua Mavis and the others had not been able to do.

"If this is all the power you have, then I'll be disappointed," Lu Yin looked at Yuhua Mavis and gently prodded her.

Who in the entire universe could say such a thing to a member of the Mavis family? Even if one looked through all of history, there had been very, very few. Even powerful Progenitors knew better than to underestimate the power of the Mavis family.

Outside Zenith Mountain, Qin Mavis' face fell. "It has been a long time since my Mavis family has borne a Treeheart Descendant, and she is truly being underestimated."

Not far away, Mu En's expression changed; it was true. Yuhua Mavis was a Treeheart Descendant of the Mavis family, which meant that she was not the same as a regular member of the Mavis family. She possessed another source of power.

The Mavis family possessed a battle technique known as Infinite Power. Most of the universe believed that the Mavis family used this technique to raise their strength to new heights in battle, and while it was true that the technique could be used in such a manner, that was not its original purpose. It had not been created for the regular members of the Mavis family, but rather for their Treeheart Descendants, and it still belonged to the Treeheart Descendants.

On the first layer, Yuhua Mavis took a deep breath and moved her hand. There were traces of blood on her fist, her blood. When they had been comparing strength just now, she had used her full power, just like when she had fought against Corpse Beast. She had unleashed the greatest strength that a human could possess.

However, Yuhua Mavis was not an ordinary human. She was the Mavis family's Treeheart Descendant, born from their ancestral tree. She was part of humanity, but she was also not quite human.

"Actually, that corpse king from the Neohuman Alliance was really lucky," Yuhua Mavis calmly stated.

Lu Yin's eyes flashed. "What do you mean?"

Yuhua Mavis looked at Lu Yin. "The Mavis family has a battle technique known as Infinite Power."

Lu Yin was puzzled; he was familiar with this battle technique. "When you used that technique against Corpse Beast, it looked like you were the one who lost. It's useless to boost your strength with that technique."

Yuhua Mavis wiped away the blood from her right fist. "That's why I said that that corpse king was lucky."

Lu Yin's eyes narrowed. Her meaning was too obvious; she had not actually used the battle technique at that time.

"No matter if it's in the Neoverse or throughout all of history, the Mavis family's Treeheart Descendants have truly used Infinite Power very few times, and there are almost no records of it. After all, it is seldom necessary or even helpful when a Treeheart Descendant is the one making a move.

"Lu Yin, you deserve to go down in history since you're the first human in modern times capable of facing Infinite Power. Here's a reminder—don't treat me like a human from now on." Yuhua Mavis looked calm, and her face had taken on a very soft and pious expression as she spoke.

An alarm suddenly went off in Lu Yin's heart as he stared at Yuhua Mavis. He suddenly remembered the Ghost Monkey's words: the Mavis family's Treeheart descendants had almost never lost throughout history, and the Mavis family was absolutely extraordinary.

The Ghost Monkey had been created by Progenitor Wushang, which lent credence to the power of the Mavis family.

The Mavis family's Treeheart Descendants were truly invincible.

If he wished, Lu Yin could take action immediately, and he was capable of using his domain or spiritual force to attack Yuhua Mavis, which would leave her unable to use her so-called "Infinite Power" battle technique. However, he did not do this. His intention was to suppress the Mavis family in a battle of strength.

Yuhua Mavis pressed her hands together as though in prayer.

Lu Yin felt a chill run down his back when he saw this posture.

It was easy to be intimidated by anyone who made such a gesture. Who knows what they were praying to? But praying meant that they were able to borrow some form of power.

Lu Yin's strongest impression of such behavior came from his fight against Nightking Zhenwu. At that time, the members of the Fireplume Tribe had behaved in this manner as well, and they had succeeded in breaking Zhenwu's innate gift.

Yuhua Mavis's body shone with a green light as branches and leaves grew from the soles of her feet, lifting her up high. There were only green leaves and no flowers, but these leaves were even more beautiful and alluring than flowers.

The branches and leaves twined about each other as Yuhua Mavis moved high into the sky. She lit up the entirety of Zenith Mountain, as well as the entire local region of space. The light even illuminated many of the people watching from the countless screens.

This sight left everyone amazed. Yuhua Mavis looked like an elf in a tree, beautiful and distinct. Even by just seeing her on a screen, countless people felt as though Yuhua Mavis had cleansed their hearts.

Yuhua Mavis was a beautiful woman. She walked through the air with bare feet while plants bloomed wherever she went, and at this moment, she appeared to be completely unblemished. Lu Yin stared at her for a moment, as he felt that the moment he made a move, he would destroy the beauty of the moment and become a sinner .

Suddenly, Yuhua Mavis's eyes opened, and she looked around. The glowing green leaves that illuminated the sky gradually shrank and condensed onto her forehead to form an image of green leaves that shone with a faint green light. Yuhua Mavis then landed on the ground and looked at Lu Yin. Her eyes were strange, and her expression was as though she was looking at a mere ant.

"It's been a long time," Yuhua Mavis said lightly.

When he saw Yuhua Mavis in this state from his distant position, Shang Qing's expression grew serious. As the Hall of Honor's first Honor Chosen, he was privy to a great deal of information about the universe's history, and that included information about the Mavis family. Infinite Power was a specialized battle technique that had been created specifically for the Treeheart Descendants, and once the technique was used, they were no longer human.

If Yuhua Mavis had previously been considered a human who represented the pinnacle of physical human strength, then she could no longer be considered human. Shang Qing did not know what she actually was at this moment, only that this condition had been mentioned few times in the historical records.

Of all of the contestants in ZENITH, the participant who had been truly unmatched concerning physical strength was Star Devourer. When he opened all six eyes, the sky and the ground had both trembled, and even the area beyond Zenith Mountain had been affected. Yuhua Mavis clearly was not able to exert the same level of power, but neither could Lu Yin, who was facing her.