

Chapter 381: The Arrival of the Strong

Northgate Kong sighed. "It really is that serious. Lu Yin alone might not matter too much, and our Northgate family could even take responsibility if he dies. The Lockbreaker Society, Astral-10, and Outerverse won't give us trouble just because of one fatal accident. However, since he's representing the Ten Arbiters here, anything that happens to him is a reflection on them. If he's defeated, then it means that the Ten Arbiters have made a mistake in who they assigned, and it might even cause them to be laughed at. Have you thought of what might happen if the Ten Arbiters become angry? It won't be a student they send next time. Instead, it'll probably be someone at the top of the Top 100 Rankings. You two should know how many such experts the Ten Arbiters Council controls."

The two youths' faces changed.

"And if such a thing happens, Lie'er's future within the Ten Arbiters Council will definitely be affected."

Northgate Lie spoke up. "Father, Lu Yin has not become a subordinate of any one of the Arbiters."

Northgate Kong wearily replied, "If you defeat him, then you'll offend whoever has arranged for him to be assigned here."

Northgate Lie's mind immediately jumped to a specific name: The Ten Arbiters' Scholar.

Even more concerning, the Ten Arbiters' Scholar, Wen Sansi, was from the Erudite Flowzone's Wen family, and the Erudite Flowzone was not that far from their own Northline Flowzone. Or, in other words, the Northline Flowzone was within the Erudite Flowzone's realm of influence.

Northgate Lie now regretted acting too impulsively at the gathering.

"Father, what should we do now?" Northgate Lie appealed, asking for advice.

Northgate Kong frowned and was deep in thought. "Try to come up with a way for Lu Yin to cancel this battle."

"He won't. To do so would be too embarrassing." Northgate Gang's lips curled up.

Northgate Kong became infuriated and ruthlessly threw his son back a dozen meters. Northgate Gang spat out some blood, but before he could even take a breath, his father berated, "Unfilial son! This is all because of you, and yet you still dare to speak?"

Northgate Gang quickly choked back what he had been about to say and lowered his trembling head.

Northgate Lie sighed. "Father, I'll think of a way to save Lu Yin face while also canceling the appointed battle."

Northgate Kong rubbed his temples and waved his hand to dismiss his sons. He just hoped that things would go well.

From start to end, they had never even considered the possibility that Lu Yin might win. Although Lu Yin's battle results were impressive, at the end of the day, he was still just a Limiteer. He might be a Realmbreaker, but that was just against ordinary Explorers. Anyone on the Top 100 Rankings was an

entirely different story since each expert on the rankings was also a Realmbreaker. Fighting against one of those experts as a Limiteer was equivalent to crossing two realms and challenging a Cruiser. Thus, no one believed that Lu Yin had any hope of victory.

At the same time, completely clueless of the Northgate family's struggles to come up with a way to cancel the scheduled battle, Lu Yin returned to his hotel room to rest. But right when he closed the door, the earth and sky seemed to shudder from an earthquake. An incomparably large astral eagle descended and let loose a keening cry, shocking everyone on the Northgate Platform.

Everyone looked up and stared up, horrified. This was the arrival of a super powerhouse.

Lu Yin also saw the giant eagle whose wings covered the skies and knew that the Ross Empire's Duke Blackhawk must have arrived. This was a powerhouse whose power level had almost reached 200,000. He was a peak Hunter who was only lacking the final step to break through and become an Enlighter.

Lu Yin wasn't sure if the Northgate Platform held any powerhouses who could keep Duke Blackhawk in check. If not, Duke Blackhawk would be considered the strongest person in the Northline Flowzone with his arrival.

But before the crowd could react, another powerful strength descended that caused the skies to split in two.

On Northgate Platform, everyone's faces paled as they saw a floating mountain appear. No, it wasn't a mountain, but rather an astral beast that had the appearance of a mountain. This was the Beast Tamers Flowzone's famous Giant Devil Mountain. Few could tame this beast, but the witness that the Beast Tamers Flowzone had sent to attend the Northgate Platform Competition had tamed one as his beast. The appearance of this Giant Devil Mountain was indicative of Fayde's arrival.

Duke Blackhawk from the Blazing Mist Flowzone's Ross Empire and Fayde from the Beast Tamers Flowzone's First Grade Hall had both appeared at around the same time, causing the situation at the Northgate Platform to become somewhat unstable.

Just based on power level alone, these two surpassed Firesmelt Planet's master, Yan Wujiu. Even if battle techniques were taken into account, Yan Wujiu still would not be able to compare to these two at all. They were true super powerhouses. To Lu Yin, although he could see them, they were completely out of his reach.

"Fayde, it's actually you." The giant astral eagle stared at the top of the Giant Devil Mountain, where a man stood; it was Fayde. Just by standing there, he distorted the void.

Fayde looked at the astral eagle with a complicated expression. "I never thought that you would come here as well. It's been a long time since we last met."

"We haven't met since the Chaotic Domain. You left a deep impression on me back then."

"So did you. There are only a few from the Ross Empire who don't use firearms, but you're one of them."

Duke Blackhawk sneered. "Few cultivators from the Beast Tamers Flowzone are able to train their physical body to be so tough, but you're one of the rare ones as well."

The two stared at each other, and although no animosity could be heard from their conversation, many of the onlookers could feel the rising tension in the air. It seemed that the last meeting between these two had not been pleasant at all.

On Northgate Platform, the Northgate family, Lily family, Barthe Jacques family, and the other seventeen ruling families of Northline Flowzone looked up. They all had powerhouses that could try to force their way into the exchange overhead, but it would take an Enlighter to actually scare the two foreign powerhouses into backing down.

The Northgate family's head, Northgate Kong, the Lily family's head, Lily Liana, and a few others looked towards the Barthe Jacques family.

The next moment, Northgate Platform turned a scarlet red hue as the air was visibly scorched. A deep pressure descended upon the platform, causing countless people to turn deathly pale.

Lu Yin clenched his fists, as he could feel an unimaginable pressure from above. He had felt something similar once before from the Nine-Headed Ape; it was an Enlighter's pressure.

Duke Blackhawk and Fayde simultaneously lowered their heads, but they did not see anything. Suddenly, they felt something that caused them to turn around, only to see that a man had appeared behind them and been silently watching them. He was wearing a scarlet-red outfit, and his appearance was sinister and terrifying, as if he had walked out from a pool of blood.

"Scarlet hand Tie Sa." Fayde solemnly greeted the newcomer.

The man looked at Fayde and then at Duke Blackhawk before slowly speaking. "Please give me some face. Don't fight in the Northline Flowzone."

Fayde and Duke Blackhawk exchanged looks and could see the unwillingness in each other's eyes. However, there was no point as the person making the request was an Enlighter. Anybody who could reach such a realm was a genius and would have been a Realmbreaker in their younger years. They were considered freaks by countless people, and they became even stronger the higher they climbed. The two Hunters would not be confident in challenging such a person even if they were within the same realm, let alone when they were an entire realm below them. The difference of one realm could be as great as that of heaven and earth.

"My apologies. We don't have any intentions of starting a fight." As Duke Blackhawk spoke, his appearance changed as the enormous astral eagle vanished and a seasoned-looking middle-aged man appeared. He was the Ross Empire's Duke Blackhawk.

Tie Sa then looked towards Fayde.

Fayde waved his hand, and the Giant Devil Mountain vanished, transforming into a tattoo that appeared on his arm.

Both had left their battle state.

Tie Sa nodded. "My thanks. I represent the Barthe Jacques family, and I welcome the two of you." And with that, he vanished.

After Tie Sa disappeared, both of the two Hunters released a pent up breath. The pressure on them had been a little too great when facing an Enlighter.

The people on the Northgate Platform also relaxed since they would no longer need to worry about becoming innocent bystanders caught in the crossfire.

An Enlighter was an existence of great power who could suppress everything, and an organization would not casually send one out. No one knew how much the Barthe Jacques family had spent to recruit Tie Sa, but no one dared to ask either.

Regardless, Tie Sa's presence meant that the Enlighters of the three great families of Northline Flowzone had teamed up, which meant that outside forces could not easily provoke their Flowzone.

Lu Yin watched as the sky returned to normal and released a breath. He was still too weak and was not even fit to view such a battle. He suddenly had a question—if the Nine-Headed Ape had been stomped silly by a giant lightning rabbit, then what of this Tie Sa? If that rabbit came and stomped on this Enlighter, then would he be stunned as well? It seemed very possible.

He longed for the day when he could once again see that lightning rabbit stomp on some creature, though he was looking even more forward to borrowing the creature's lightning again. After all, that electricity had been powerful enough to wipe out a genuine Hunter in the blink of an eye!

Time passed, and in the blink of an eye, it was already the day of the Northgate Platform Contest.

The Northgate Platform had a central plaza that had a radius of a few thousand kilometers. A normal person would take days to walk across it, and even a normal cultivator would not be able to see the whole thing at once; only space-exploring powerhouses could do so.

The plaza, which was the location for every single Northgate Platform Contest, was built on a sturdy area and surrounded by statues representing the seventeen families.

Lu Yin had stopped at one of the tallest stone platforms beside the plaza. Next to him were the other witnesses for the gathering such as Duke Blackhawk and Fayde.

With the exception of Lu Yin, all of the other witnesses on the stone platform were space-exploring powerhouses.

Duke Blackhawk frowned when he saw Lu Yin, appearing to be rather unhappy. He was almost at the Enlighter realm, so he was not pleased to see a junior receiving the same treatment as he himself. However, he had already heard beforehand that Lu Yin represented the Ten Arbiters Council, and the Ten Arbiters were definitely qualified to be viewed on equal terms as someone like him.

Still, being qualified was only the first step to truly becoming considered equals. It also depended on each side's individual abilities, just like the Ten Arbiters.

At this moment, the witnesses on the stone platform and everyone from the Northline Flowzone's families looked at Lu Yin. They all were eager to see if he would be able to take his seat.

Lu Yin scanned the stone platform while his heart quivered and his mood plummeted. He was nothing more than a witness for this gathering, but now, he was being treated like the main character. He had no choice in the matter either, since his status and power did not match up. Currently, any discrepancy

would be closely scrutinized. If someone like Northgate Lie was acting on the Ten Arbiters' behalf instead of Lu Yin, then such a situation would not have occurred.

Those who could move freely throughout the universe were in a completely different class from those who could not. The higher one climbed, the greater the pressure.

Duke Blackhawk was not alone, as the others held similar feelings. Lu Yin was feeling a sense of rejection from the space-exploring powerhouses due to them feeling like their dignity was being stepped on if they sat with a Limiteer.

Lu Yin's brows furrowed; it was not his first time facing such a pressure. Fortunately, possibly due to him frequently reciting the Stonewall Scriptures, or maybe for some other reason, this pressure could not cause his spirit to collapse. As long as he could maintain a sliver of his consciousness, he would be able to walk across the stone platform.

Atop the platform, infinitesimal specks of dust floated up and disintegrated. The pressure had reached the point where it had visibly materialized.

Northgate Kong walked out at this moment and stepped onto the stone platform. His step was like a stone breaking the calm surface of a lake, and all of the pressure that Lu Yin was facing immediately dispersed.

"Ladies and gentlemen, the Northgate Platform Competition is about to start. May all of you bear witness," Northgate Kong spoke courteously as he nodded amicably to Lu Yin.

Lu Yin exhaled. If the pressure had increased any further, then his body might not have been able to withstand it even if his spirit had remained intact. These old folks were just too shameless! They had ganged up on him with numbers. If not for Northgate Kong's intervention, then Lu Yin would have had to resort to one of his hidden tricks.

Chapter 382: The Strength of the Top 100 Rankings

The seating on the platform was not arranged by who had arrived first or last, but rather with the strongest individuals sitting in the middle.

Lu Yin maintained a low profile and sat to the side, and beside him was the cold-looking male from the Tempest Flowzone with a scorpion tattoo on his face. He seemed rather strange.

This person paid no heed to Lu Yin, but he had not been included in the crowd's combined pressure when Lu Yin had arrived on the scene.

"Seventh Bro, this bunch of scoundrels are shameless! You'll need to be more careful about people scheming against you." The Ghost Monkey was unhappy with what had just happened.

Lu Yin naturally knew all this. It was normal that he was not viewed favorably by Duke Blackhawk since he was from the Ross Empire. Fortunately, the Beast Tamers Flowzone's Fayde had not acted against him. Otherwise, he may not have been able to resist the combined pressure.

The stone platform where Lu Yin was seated was where the witnesses were watching from. There were also seventeen other platforms floating around the plaza where the seventeen families were located.

The Seventeen families sounded like there were too many, and Lu Yin gave them nothing more than a glance. The only ones that were actually noteworthy were the three great families.

And Lu Yin paid the most attention to the Barthe Jacques family, but that was just because they were the richest.

His gaze swept across the crowd and towards the Barthe Jacques family's floating platform. His eyes met a scene of such wealth and opulence that his mind went momentarily blank.

The floating platforms of the other families had concise layouts, with the sole exception of the Barthe Jacques family. Their platform appeared to be similarly furnished as Northgate Mansion. No, their platform was even more luxurious than Northgate Mansion! It wasn't the platform's decorations that stood out, but more so the various delicacies and wines. Lu Yin obviously could not recognize anything, but there were actually fluctuations of star energy coming off of the food, which was evidence that it was astral beast meat.

Lu Yin swallowed a gulp of saliva. This setting was just too luxurious and over exaggerated. Their family was clearly demonstrating to everyone else that they suffered from no lack of money.

On the Barthe Jacques family's floating platform, the family head, Henry, suddenly turned to exchange glances with Lu Yin. His lips rose in a faint smile as he raised his wine glass to offer a toast from a distance. Lu Yin nodded in reply and maintained a slight smile, but internally, he was screaming. Those people were too rich, and everything that they ate was precious resources. If Lu Yin was given all of the Barthe Jacques family's wealth, then he would dare to point at anyone in the Top 100 Rankings and challenge them.

"Father, that's Lu Yin," said a youth from behind Henry. His name was Harold, and he was one of the Barthe Jacques family's heir. He was the same age as Northgate Lie, but he was still a Limiteer. The family did not care much about their heir's power levels since money could invite any powerhouse to act as their bodyguard, just like how they had hired Tie Sa.

"I know. He's an enthusiastic fellow who has great potential for investment," Henry replied with a smile.

Harold's eyes flashed. "Does Father intend to rope him in?"

Henry laughed. "Rope him in? Your thinking is too simple. This brat is not someone that we plutocrats can hope to rope in. Even the Sword Sect failed to entice him. We just have to maintain a good relationship."

"I've heard he's offended the Daynight clan," Banico spoke up. He was another one of the family's heirs, as well as one of Harold's competitors.

"It's just a conflict between juniors," Harold replied.

Banico contemptuously said, "Given the temperament of the Daynight clan, Lu Yin will run out of luck one day."

"Not necessarily. It was also someone from the Daynight clan who proved Lu Yin's innocence, which just goes to show that there are also people within that clan who support him," Harold rebutted.

“But he offended Nightqueen Yanqing, Arbiter Zhenwu’s own sister. She’s a powerful person with great influence within the Nightking Clan.”

“It’s not Nightqueen Yanqing’s turn to make decisions for the Nightking Clan yet.”

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Henry frowned. “Alright, it’s not time for either of you to argue about such things either. We are just a family focused on business, so we have no need to meddle in such matters.”

“Yes, Father.”

“Yes, Father.”

Lu Yin did not know that his single glance of awe had incited two heirs of the Barthe Jacques family to argue about him. He was no longer a nobody, and the influence from his status was actually very impressive, especially within a specific context.

The time left until the start of the Northgate Platform Competition slowly dwindled away.

Suddenly, the sky became boiling hot, and everyone looked up to see a blue-green flame burning the void apart. A bone-deep chill struck everyone and caused their hair to stand on end. The chill was not from the cold, but was rather an innate response to the appearance of something life-threatening.

Suddenly, the scarlet radiance flashed once again and dispersed the bone-piercing chill. “Mister Poison Flame, please sit atop the high platform.”

The last witness to appear was the Blaze Realm’s Poison Flame. There were rumors that his fire was abnormal.

Lu Yin’s eyes narrowed when he saw Poison Flame. This Poison Flame was the person who posed the greatest threat to Lu Yin out of everyone gathered here. Duke Blackhawk or Fayde would never act against a junior like him, but Poison Flame might not show such restraint since people from the Blaze Realm seemed to be more rash. And that wasn’t even mentioning the fact that Lu Yin had a grudge against his faction as well.

The Astral Combat Academy acted as a miniature model of the universe, and the conflicts within the academy were often extensions of real conflicts between great powers. Lu Yin had suppressed the Blaze Realm within the Astral Combat Academy to a point where they could no longer raise their heads, so to them, he was their enemy.

Poison Flame landed on the high platform and looked straight at Lu Yin. In that moment, Lu Yin’s heart raced, and his entire body tensed up.

Poison Flame frowned. “Why is there a Limiteer junior here?”

Northgate Kong stood up with a smile. “Mister Poison Flame, please don’t mind him. That’s our little friend Lu Yin, who’s representing the Ten Arbiters as a witness for the Northgate Platform Competition.”

Poison Flame stared at Lu Yin with icy eyes while the scorching temperature from his flames caused the high platform’s color to change. Lu Yin felt this crushing pressure even more acutely than the previous

one since Poison Flame was targeting him. This was different from Duke Blackhawk and the others; their pressure had been naturally exerted due to the difference between their realms, but Poison Flame had a grudge against Lu Yin, which caused the pressure he emanated to be different.

Lily Liana, the Lily family's head, stood up and was about to intervene, but Lu Yin suddenly asked. "Why are Astral-10's mentors not present?"

This one sentence caused Poison Flame's pressure to dissipate. He could suppress Lu Yin, but he did not dare to be disrespectful towards Astral-10. Even if others were unaware, how could those from great powers not know of Astral-10's terror? That place was a prison, and those qualified to guard the prison were all freaks.

Lily Liana smiled. "We've sent out invitations to Astral-10's mentors long ago, but they responded that they were busy with their duties there and are too busy to attend. My sincere apologies in forgetting to pass this news to Student Lu."

Lu Yin smiled and replied with some courteous remarks before sitting back down and directing an unsatisfied face towards Poison Flame. He relaxed, delighted that he had had the foresight to bring Astral-10 to the Northline Flowzone. All of these old bats were shameless! He could not place his hope on the Northline Flowzone's experts. They would eventually make a move to help him, but they would quite possibly be just a step too late. It was better for him to retain control of the initiative.

All around the plaza, the descendants of the seventeen families gave Lu Yin strange looks, almost as if they were looking at a deity. This person was hated by so many people, and the stronger he became, the more he was targeted.

Lu Yin felt helpless. This was all because he had obtained a position that did not match his current age and strength. Others his age were playing in the academy, not being ordered to join in the local "fun" here. This had resulted in him being targeted.

He suddenly envied Xia Luo and the others' carefree lives. No, he should be envious of Lulu; she was rich, but she still spent her days playing around.

Not long after Poison Flame arrived, a loud boom rang through the sky. The Northgate Platform Competition had officially begun.

According to the schedule, each family would take turns reporting their contributions to the Northline Flowzone and detail what their family had invested in the Flowzone and what returns they had obtained. It was nothing more than a self-praising session, and the entire process was arduously long. Many people started daydreaming and some even fell asleep.

Lu Yin looked around and saw that even Fayde had closed his eyes and was recuperating his energy. Evidently, this was not these people's first time witnessing the Northgate Platform Competition. Their appearance was purely to represent their organizations' friendship and to allow the Northline Flowzone to publicize its strength.

Lu Yin had nothing else to do, so he started silently reciting the Stonewall Scriptures.

The man beside him with the scorpion tattoo on his face never even looked at Lu Yin a single time.

A few hours passed, and when the seventeen families finally completed praising themselves, they moved on to praising each others' achievements. The three great families had the most accomplishments, especially the Barthe Jacques family. When it was their turn to report their contributions, Lu Yin specifically sat up and paid attention, completely stunned. According to the family's records, they sustained almost half of the Northline Flowzone's economy.

They're too rich! Lu Yin estimated that he would not even be able to count the family's entire wealth.

He looked at the family with an increasingly gentle and friendly gaze, impatient to run to their family's floating platform to have a chat.

There were many details throughout the entire process of the Northgate Platform Competition, but the only one that attracted Lu Yin's attention was the Juniors' Tournament.

There were more than a hundred cultivators among the younger generation of the seventeen families, and when it was time for the Juniors' Tournament, they all went onstage to battle. Quite frankly, the battles were nothing special, and they even fell a few levels short of the Astral Combat Tournament's matches.

Of course, there were space-exploring powerhouses even amongst the juniors, but one's power level was just one part of their strength. If judged with the Astral Combat Academy's standards, these Explorers were about comparable to an academy leader, but those leaders were only at the Limiteer realm.

The truly astounding one was Northgate Lie, and his appearance even roused Duke Blackhawk, Fayde, and Poison Flame. After all, this youth ranked within the Top 100 Rankings, and even if he was at the tail end, he still was one of the Top 100 fighters in the younger generation. Barring any unforeseen events, this person's reputation would definitely eventually surpass their own. After all, these super powerhouses had never been able to step into the Top 100 Rankings in their youth.

Northgate Lie was the poster child of the Northgate family, as well as the entire Northline Flowzone. The Northgate family had united with Shangwu Academy to pour all of their resources into grooming him, so he could not possibly be weak.

Lu Yin also paid special attention to Northgate Lie. The Ten Arbiters' Divine Fist had once mentioned that his Thirty Stacks had been able to defeat an expert at the tail end of the Top 100 Rankings. However, times were different now, so even if Lu Yin felt like he could rival those at the bottom of the rankings, it was still just a feeling.

In the middle of the plaza, Northgate Lie looked around before his gaze finally settled on Lu Yin.

His family had tasked him with finding a way to have the battle agreement rescinded, so he had to let Lu Yin know how arduous the battle that lay ahead of him would be. As long as some other certain measures were used, both sides could save face. Of course, this was assuming that Lu Yin was not foolish and that he would understand that he was not Northgate Lie's opponent.

Everyone looked at Northgate Lie. His opponent was the strongest youth of a family, and he was an Explorer with a power level roughly equal to Northgate Lie's: about 30,000.

“Brother Northgate, let’s begin.”

Northgate Lie remained calm. “I won’t hold back. As a sign of respect to you, I’ll use my full strength.”

His opponent’s face turned ugly, as his power could only be considered above average within his realm. Actually, he could only barely be considered a genius within the Northline Flowzone even after his family had expended all of their resources on him. There was still too far a gap between him and Northgate Lie, but he had thought that they could have a few rounds. His heart sank when he heard that Northgate Lie would use his full strength, and he hurriedly responded with a smile, “Brother Northgate, this battle’s not that important is it? There’s no need for Brother Northgate-”

But before he could finish speaking, a round wheel whirled past his neck. Just a few inches more, and his head would have been separated from his body.

Chapter 383: Mooching While Secretly Helping Others

That man’s face paled, and he slowly retreated. He stared at Northgate Lie in shock before forcing out a smile and running away.

Northgate Lie turned to Lu Yin with a smile. This was his battle technique, the Phantom Disc. Lu Yin, are you confident that you can take that?

At this moment, Northgate Lie wasn’t the only one looking at Lu Yin, as many others were as well. They could tell that Northgate Lie had demonstrated his full strength specifically for Lu Yin.

On top of the stone platform, Lu Yin’s face grew solemn. He had been studying Northgate Lie the entire time, but he truly had not been able to see Northgate Lie’s sneak attack just now.

“The Northgate family’s Phantom Disc is still very strong. It’s able to shuttle through the void and leave no trace. Right from the start, this move caused so much suffering,” Duke Blackhawk said with a sigh.

Poison Flame solemnly replied, “It’s rumored that not only has Northgate Lie learned the Phantom Disc, but he’s also learned Shangwu Academy’s most powerful technique, the Dark Loosening Technique. It’s no wonder why he’s an expert within the Top 100 Rankings. If this kid becomes a Hunter before we’ve broken through, the victor of a battle between us and him would be unclear.”

There were various discussions all around the platform.

Lu Yin squinted. The Phantom Disc and Dark Loosening Technique were both integral parts of Northgate Lie’s strength. He could not see it, but Lu Yin had never relied on his sight in battle. He had his domain and his Cosmic Art for that. Even if Northgate Lie’s Phantom Disc was faster than that, it still would not be able to surpass the Cosmic Art’s sensory abilities. That technique was the nemesis of extreme speed. The moment the wheel bore through the void, it would be sensed by the Cosmic Art. Moreover, Lu Yin still had the Giant Emperor’s third eye and the Secret Sidestep, neither of which could be ignored.

If Northgate Lie had intended to use the Phantom Disc to scare Lu Yin, then he had miscalculated.

“Seventh Bro, that guy’s trying to frighten you. Let’s not be afraid so we that can give him a good beating!” the Ghost Monkey tried to tempt Lu Yin, but Lu Yin just grunted for him to shut up.

Beside Lu Yin, the man from the Tempest Flowzone turned to look at Lu Yin, a perplexed expression on his face.

Lu Yin felt embarrassed. "That wasn't intended for you."

"I know. I didn't even speak." As the man spoke in a cold voice, as the scorpion tattoo on his face squirmed, disgusting Lu Yin.

Northgate Lie exited the plaza in high spirits, feeling proud of himself. There were only a hundred people in the younger generation across the entire universe who could step into the Top 100 Rankings. They were dispersed across the entire universe, and most people would never even meet one throughout the course of their entire lives. He, Northgate Lie, was definitely one of the top few in his generation, as not even the Ross Empire had any youths on the rankings.

After Northgate Lie's battle, the others felt even more dull, as many were still mesmerized by his Phantom Disc.

"Sis, do you think that Lu Yin's afraid?" Lily Shu'er muttered as she approached Lily Anne on the Lily family's floating platform.

The older sister looked at Lu Yin on the high platform. "Probably not."

"Such manliness. Sis, he's really heroic," Lily Shu'er said longingly.

Lily Anne did not reply. She could understand the apprehensions that Lu Yin held due to his position, but she was focused on other matters at the present moment.

On the Northgate family's floating platform, Northgate Gang was excited. "Bro, that Lu Yin must be frightened silly. Look, he's still staring at you."

Northgate Lie smiled and glanced at his brother before quietly saying, "There's a limit to how strong a competition amongst students can be. In the finals of the Tournament of the Strongest, Tian Hou was said to be a legend that no one in the same realm could defeat in single combat. But from what I know, the Ten Arbiters could totally disregard that Cosmic Hou. If the legends were true, then Tian Hou would have never been able to return home."

"I know. It's all self-exaggeration put out by the Astral Combat Academy," Northgate Gang said, agreeing.

Northgate Lie did not deny the allegations. The Astral Combat Academy was the most significant institution in the entire universe, which already incited a great deal of discontent from the other academies. They had promoted the Astral Combat Tournament and the Tournament of the Strongest to ridiculous degrees, but that had only caused many to think that the strength displayed in the Tournament of the Strongest had been exaggerated.

The Northgate Platform Competition would go on for a few days, and the first day passed in the same manner as it had started.

Even at the end of the day, the most eye-catching person was Northgate Lie. His strength and demeanor caused people to gasp, and he showed no mercy in his matches. Every time, he used his entire power as a show of respect for his opponent. This was the disposition of a true powerhouse.

The person who had been instantly wiped out by Northgate Lie in the first round was now speechless. He had truly hoped that Northgate Lie would give him a chance to go for a few rounds, but he had not been able to even withstand a single strike. Fortunately, his family did not blame him.

The next day, the Juniors Tournament continued, but there were no attention-grabbing individuals on the second day. The Barthe Jacques family, one of the three great families, held very little interest in fighting. The only one that drew some remarks from the crowd was Lily Shu'er. She had just entered Shangwu Academy this year, but she was already able to defeat a fellow academy member many years her senior, which drew much praise from the crowd.

On the third day, Lily Anne astounded the crowd as well, easily defeating a space-exploring powerhouse from her generation. Many had thought that she was not that powerful, but her match forced them to recall that she had actually graduated from the Astral Combat Academy.

Being able to graduate successfully from the Astral Combat Academy was proof that one was not weak.

However, Lily Anne's record of having studied at the Astral Combat Academy caused many from the seventeen families to be angry at her success, to the point where some even urged Northgate Lie to fight her in the next round.

But Northgate Lie could not be bothered to do so. While the three great families were indeed competing against each other, they actually shared a good relationship, so they would not intentionally humiliate each other. The rapport between the three families was not that easily broken.

Northgate Lie could no longer be considered a young person, and he would no longer be a part of the younger generation after just a few more years. The Northgate Platform Competition was held every fifteen years, so at the next gathering, Lily Anne would still be a part of the younger generation. Clearly, during the next Juniors Tournament, Lily Anne would easily be the strongest competitor there. In other words, it was highly likely that the champion of the next Northgate Platform Competition would be the Lily family. This was the three families' rapport.

However, Lily Anne had suddenly spoken up and challenged Northgate Lie, shocking many. Even the Lily family had not expected such a scenario to unfold.

Northgate Lie was astonished. "An'er, you want to challenge me?"

Lily Anne smiled. "Brother Lie, don't be angry. I'm not challenging you per se—I just want to test out Brother Lie's Dark Loosening Technique. I was unable to study in Shangwu Academy, which is truly one of my life's regrets. Can Brother Lie satisfy this junior's wish?"

After her words, many felt their irritation towards her diminish. It turned out that she still cared about Shangwu Academy.

Still, the older folks did not view it in the same light. If she really cared about Shangwu Academy, then she would not have gone to the Astral Combat Academy in the first place. It seemed like this brat had another agenda.

But Northgate Lie was clueless and readily walked onto the stage. "Alright, since An'er wants to try out the Dark Loosening Technique, then I will satisfy your wish. I'll stand still and let you beat me. As long as you can make me retreat by even a single step, it'll be your victory."

Lily Anne smiled. "Brother Lie thinks too highly of me. The Dark Loosening Technique is famed for its defense as well as its ability to increase your star energy absorption rate. The one being attacked will appear to be imprisoned, but their mountain-like motionless has an underlying flexible strength that causes the opponent's attacks to dissolve. How could I cause Brother Lie to take a step back?"

Northgate Lie laughed. "An'er, just don't hold back when attacking me."

"Alright then, I'll start." And with those words, Lily Anne slammed an unassuming palm into his chest, sending shockwaves coursing through the ground as a gale swept across the arena, which then rose into the air and released a soft rumble. Northgate Lie did not take even a single step back while Lily Anne had to take a few steps back.

"It certainly lives up to its reputation. My palm strike was reduced to a third of its strength, and there's also a retaliating effect. Brother Lie, is this a backlash effect against my attack?" Lily Anne asked in astonishment, her voice extremely loud.

Northgate Lie nodded. "That's right. An'er can try again."

"Alright then, I won't hold back." Lily Anne then displayed her battle technique, the Flower-Plucking Palm. Her star energy formed into petals that overlapped with her palm strike as she struck at Northgate Lie's chest once again. The void shuddered, and a giant spatial crack appeared beside Northgate Lie that stretched far into the distance.

"So this is the Dark Loosening Technique. It possesses a strength that diverts my attack, and this strength is roughly..."

"How powerful, Brother Lie's Dark Loosening Technique should even be able to withstand a Cruiser's attack. I wonder how strong an attack must be to break such a defense."

"This must be the Dark Loosening Technique's secret defense, so it's..."

...

The crowd's gazes became stranger and stranger, as Lily Anne seemed to be talking too much. It almost felt like she was explaining all of the Dark Loosening Technique's details. This seemed less like a consultation and more like an overt plot to reveal information about the Dark Loosening Technique.

Northgate Lie's face grew uglier by the minute, as he could tell that this brat was testing him out for Lu Yin. In other words, she was trying to secretly help an outsider even though she was a native of the Northline Flowzone.

"Alright, Lie'er, there's a limited time to the Northgate Platform Competition. Stop playing around." Northgate Kong finally could not take it anymore and firmly interrupted.

Northgate Lie relaxed and pushed Lily Anne aside. He forced out a smile. "An'er, this ends here. I'll coach you by myself in future."

Lily Anne nodded and replied, "Thank you Brother Lie." She then walked off without any subtlety.

Northgate Lie was furious, but there wasn't really much that he could do. He glared at Lu Yin with hatred filled eyes; what relationship did that bastard have with Lily Anne that she was willing to do such a thing for him?

On top of the tall platform, Lu Yin blinked. Even a fool would now know what Lily Anne had been doing. He wondered why this woman was helping him so much, and she had even revealed so many details of Northgate Lie's technique. Lu Yin had already known how the Dark Loosening Technique worked; it was a defensive style technique that diverted attacks. Thus, Lu Yin already knew how to deal with it.

This Dark Loosening Technique was not even worth mentioning when compared to the Daynight Restoration Technique, but it would still be difficult for Lu Yin to breach it if someone much stronger used it. Lu Yin calculated for a moment. Hmm, Thirty Stacks should still be enough to break through.

"Sis, that was brutal!" Lily Shu'er shot her sister a thumbs-up when Lily Anne returned to the Lily family's floating platform.

In front of the sisters, Lily Liana barked, "Nonsense! An'er, go and apologize to the Northgate family later."

Lily Anne acknowledged the family head's order.

"Sis, answer truthfully. Do you like Lu Yin?" Lily Shu'er slyly coozied up towards Lily Anne with gleaming eyes.

Lily Anne tapped her sister's forehead. "Don't spout nonsense! We may need that person's help for certain things in the future."

"Pfft, who are you trying to deceive? Our Lily family might not be that strong, but we still won't ever need help from someone from the Outerverse! Brother Lie is part of the Ten Arbiters Council, so we'll have no use for that person."

Lily Anne looked at Lu Yin. It was precisely because he was from the Outerverse that they might need him in the future.

The Juniors Tournament lasted for another two days, though the majority of the onlookers were bored out of their minds by the end. Lu Yin was no different, and he passed the time by reciting the Stonewall Scriptures, though not to the extent of fainting.

On the final day, Lu Yin was sitting around idly when he haphazardly glanced at the man with the facial scorpion tattoo again. Curious, he searched him up on the network. Lu Yin quickly found the information that he was looking for. This man was part of the Fire Scorpion Sect, a powerful sect in the Tempest Flowzone. The sect's power was second only to the ruling faction of the Tempest Flowzone, the Feng Clan. The Fire Scorpion Sect also reared astral fire scorpions and harvested their poison. This meant that they were skilled in both fire and poison battle techniques.

Chapter 384: A Terrifying Power Level

Lu Yin glanced at the man beside him once again and involuntarily shifted away. Poison posed a thorny problem to most cultivators.

Before long, Northgate Lie appeared once again, but this time, he did not display any of his battle techniques. He used only pure star energy to domineeringly overwhelm his opponent, but it was still another instant victory. Northgate Lie was displaying the full terror of someone on the Top 100 Rankings.

Not long after Northgate Lie's battle, Lu Yin received a message from Lily Anne saying that she wanted to meet him in person. So, Lu Yin left the high platform and headed to the meeting point.

His destination was close, and when Lu Yin arrived, he saw that Lily Anne was there, as well as Northgate Lie.

"Brother Lu, I'm really sorry to disturb you, but Brother Lie wanted to speak with you," Lily Anne said apologetically to Lu Yin.

Lu Yin nodded and looked at Northgate Lie. "Is Brother Northgate looking for me so that we can arrange the time for our battle?"

Northgate Lie shot a look at Lily Anne, wordlessly indicating for her to leave. With no other choice, she could only comply.

After she left, Northgate Lie looked at Lu Yin with a serious expression. "Brother Lu, there is no animosity between us. There's really no need for us to fight."

Lu Yin felt like something was strange. "Did Brother Northgate ask me to come here just to say this?"

"Is Brother Lu confident in emerging victorious?"

Lu Yin muttered to himself and then shook his head. "No one would dare be certain of their victory against someone in the Top 100 Rankings. Also, I'm still just a Limiteer after all."

"That's true. Brother Lu represents not only yourself, but more importantly, you represent the Ten Arbiters as well. If Brother Lu is defeated, then the Ten Arbiters will also be embarrassed, which would affect Brother Lu's position in the Ten Arbiters Council. What are your thoughts on this?"

Lu Yin's eyes flashed, immediately guessing at why Northgate Lie had called him out to talk. The Northgate family was afraid that Lu Yin's imminent defeat would embarrass the Ten Arbiters. Honestly, he had truly not considered this possibility, and it was completely normal and almost expected that the Northgate family would have such apprehensions about the fight. Over the past few days, many rumors had circulated through the universe, claiming that the Northgate family was trying to kick the Ten Arbiters Council out of the Flowzone.

For the Northgate family, if Lu Yin was defeated, then the rumors would definitely spread to the Ten Arbiters, and people would treat it as if the Northline Flowzone was challenging the Ten Arbiters Council's authority. This might also cause the Northgate family to have to directly confront the Ten Arbiters, and that was just too big of a risk for them to take. The Ten Arbiters represented not just those ten individuals, but also the unimaginably enormous powers behind them.

The Northline Flowzone already had to use the Northgate Platform Competition to unite the seventeen families against the other surrounding Flowzones. They obviously did not dare offend the powers behind the Ten Arbiters.

Even the Northgate family was afraid, but the more afraid they became, the more obvious their disdain for Lu Yin's abilities was. They had clearly never even considered the possibility that Northgate Lie might lose, which showed how much confidence they had in an expert who was in the Top 100 Rankings.

After thinking things through, Lu Yin's mind became more nimble. It felt like he could see a path to heaven open up before him; he could see a new way of earning money!

Lu Yin coughed twice and then replied in a righteous manner. "Brother Northgate, a man in this universe must establish himself. It's been my lifelong dream to challenge someone in the Top 100 Rankings, and even a defeat would be honorable."

Northgate Lie's face twisted into an ugly expression. "Brother Lu, you must consider this carefully. Once you're defeated, the reputation that you've earned from the Astral Combat Tournament and the Tournament of the Strongest will be damaged. More importantly, you'll embarrass the Ten Arbiters, which might even ruin your future in the Ten Arbiters Council."

Lu Yin waved a hand. "No worries, there are some things that a man must do."

Northgate Lie was rendered speechless, as Lu Yin seemed inflexible and uncaring towards the aftermath of defeat. If they truly battled, then this person would definitely lose and cause the Northgate family to suffer heavy repercussions. However, it was also impossible for Northgate Lie to lose on purpose in order to preserve the Ten Arbiters' reputation. If he lost, then Lu Yin would replace Northgate Lie on the Top 100 Rankings, which was something that Northgate Lie could not accept no matter what else.

"Brother Lu, I heard that you previously made an agreement with the Sword Sect's Liu Shaoqiu to challenge the Top 100 Rankings together. If you go back on your word at this time, then it wouldn't be too good, right?" Northgate Lie tried to probe.

Lu Yin remained proud. "There are some things that a man must do."

Northgate Lie was once again left speechless; were they even talking about the same thing?

The conversation suddenly entered an awkward lull. One was racking his brains on how he could get his opponent to give up on the battle while the other was trying to bring up the topic of money.

Lu Yin had lost his opportunity with Yue Xianzi and An Shaohua, not receiving any money from either of them because he had been too subtle. Still, he had to preserve some face, and he couldn't just straight up tell Northgate Lie that he wanted money; that would be too embarrassing.

Both became rather depressed.

At that moment, Northgate Gang walked over. Lu Yin saw the younger sibling, and his eyes gleamed. He intentionally positioned his back towards Northgate Gang and then rubbed his thumb and two fingers together in an obvious motion.

Northgate Gang was stumped when he saw Lu Yin's fingers. He seemed dazed, but then he seemed to connect the dots in his head. He pulled Northgate Lie aside and whispered to him.

Northgate Lie was incredulous at first, but then, he became skeptical when he glanced at Lu Yin's hand behind his back. There were three fingers still rubbing together in a movement that was universally recognized.

Lu Yin's expression was expectant. This should be obvious enough now!

"Brother Lu, are you short on money?" Northgate Lie asked in a probing manner, but Northgate Gang quickly said, "Brother, that's too blunt!" He then directed a displeased look at Lu Yin. "Brother Lu, since it's your first time visiting the Northline Flowzone, our Northgate family has prepared a welcome gift for you that we hope you'll appreciate."

Lu Yin's lips rose up, and he gave Northgate Gang an appreciative look. Although this person wanted to oppose him, that had only been because he did not have a clear understanding of the situation. "Well, since your Northgate family has extended such kindness, I'll gladly accept it."

Northgate Lie was now completely certain that Lu Yin wanted money, and his respect for Lu Yin immediately dropped by a hundred levels. His internal disdain was almost written on his face; this person was the champion of the Tournament of the Strongest!? The Astral Combat Academy had certainly fallen in standards. He no longer even wanted to speak to Lu Yin.

"Brother Northgate, regarding what you just said about our upcoming battle, I've thought it through, and you're indeed correct in that it's inappropriate. But given the rampant rumors, suddenly canceling the match would also cause some embarrassment for both myself and the Ten Arbiters."

Northgate Lie coldly replied, "Don't worry about that, Brother Lu. I will leave tomorrow, and then no one will be able to blame Brother Lu. Just make sure to remember to announce that our battle will merely be postponed."

Lu Yin nodded. "That should be fine."

From a little ways in front, Northgate Gang shot an odd glance at Northgate Lie. The older brother then tossed a cosmic ring to Lu Yin. The ring had an odd design, but its unadorned features gave it its own charm. "This is a cosmic ring that I picked up in the Fallen Star Ocean with an enormous capacity. It would require at least two cubes of star essence for an average person to purchase one like this. Will this gift be enough?"

Lu Yin actually wanted star essence, but then he saw the large space within the cosmic ring, which was several times larger than what he currently possessed. He had wanted to buy such a cosmic ring since a long time ago, but had never been able to justify the cost. After thinking it over for a few moments, Lu Yin nodded. "It's enough. Thank you, Brother Northgate."

Aside from a rich, second generation scion such as Lulu, the Inverse's heirs generally did not have that much money. The fact that Northgate Lie could give Lu Yin a cosmic ring worth two cubes of star essence was already very unexpected. Lu Yin had actually wanted to chat with Northgate Kong afterwards, but Northgate Lie had resolved the situation with his timely departure, which did not require approval from the family head. Lu Yin knew to quit when he was ahead, and obtaining a cosmic ring of this size was still a pretty decent deal.

Northgate Lie had no further thoughts of being involved with Lu Yin anymore, and he turned to leave. Lu Yin was completely unscrupulous in his eyes. Northgate Gang similarly despised this extortionist.

Lu Yin could not be bothered with either of them. So what if they looked down on him? Improving his own power was the most important thing.

“Seventh Bro, even I’m embarrassed of you. You threw away not only your self respect, but also threw your character,” the Ghost Monkey said with a sigh.

Lu Yin smiled. “Is it really that embarrassing? The initiative of challenging someone within the Top 100 Rankings still lies with me, not Northgate Lie.”

“What do you mean?”

“I mean, I can challenge Northgate Lie at any time I like. History is written by the victors. No matter what happened leading up to it, a victory is still a victory.”

The monkey felt strange. “Seventh Bro, you seem very confident that you’ll win.”

“Perhaps, or at the very least, I will after earning some more money,” Lu Yin casually responded. So what if he was despised by others? After he defeated Northgate Lie, who would still despise him? Money might seem like a crude desire, but who didn’t need it? Lu Yin hoped that the many members of the Northgate family would spread news of his poverty throughout the universe; that way, he would be able to increase his power even faster.

As for his reputation, power was also one’s reputation. Once he reached the level of the Ten Arbiters, and similarly made his name taboo, who would dare to talk ill of him?

Lu Yin suddenly had a wicked thought; had the Ten Arbiters restricted their names because their names were tied to too many evil deeds? Had they forbidden people from mentioning their names to prevent people from talking about such things?

This season’s Northgate Platform Contest winner was almost certain to be the Northgate family, so Duke Blackhawk and the rest were all ready to leave.

Suddenly, on the Barthe Jacques family’s floating platform, the eyes of the Enlighter, Tie Sa, widened as he stared northwards. Then, Poison Flame, Duke Blackhawk, Fayde, Northgate Kong, and all the rest all looked northwards at the same time as the void shuddered.

Lu Yin only felt his scalp turn numb, and he also turned to stare at the north in horror. Was this terrifying sensation coming from a battle between powerhouses?

The Northgate Platform was trembling, and even the air was shaking. Or rather, it felt like the entire universe was quaking.

Tie Sa’s eyes gradually turned scarlet. “Head, there’s a battle between Enlighters nearby.”

Henry dryly replied, “To the north is the Northgate family.”

Northgate Kong had an extremely ugly expression. The power fluctuations were coming from, without a doubt, the same direction as his family’s holdings. And these aftershocks were definitely from a battle between almighty powerhouses whose power levels had reached at least 200,000 units. Otherwise, cultivators of their power level should not have been this fearful of the aftershocks. Fortunately, Elder Northgate was around, so things should be fine.

Everyone could feel the heavy atmosphere. The battles between the juniors abruptly stopped as everyone stared northwards.

Someone had attacked the Northgate family.

Everyone's expression was different.

Northgate Kong glanced at everyone, as if he was trying to discover something.

In the next moment, an indescribable strength streaked across the Northgate Platform, and the very air seemed to burn to nothingness. Everyone shuddered as they felt an unprecedented, terrifying strength descend upon them.

At this moment, even Tie Sa, the Enlighter, felt horrified. "This, this is--"

The pupils of Duke Blackhawk and the others all shrank. This strength definitely surpassed 300,000, no, maybe even 400,000 units. When had such a powerhouse arrived in the Northline Flowzone?

Northgate Kong's face paled. Just who had forced the Northgate family to such extremes?

Lily Liana cast a fearful look at Northgate Kong. Legend had it that the Northgate family had an elder who was cryogenically sealed and whose power level was extremely terrifying. When the Northgate family governed the Northline Flowzone in the past, the elder had been alive back then and continued to live on into the present. She had never believed the legends herself, but the show of strength just a moment ago terrified her. She looked at Northgate Kong; did that rumored elder really exist?

The entirety of Northgate Platform fell silent.

Chapter 385: Ancient Centipede

Lu Yin raised his hand and carefully felt the air. Every single thread of star energy in his body was being suppressed, and this was his first time experiencing such a devastating power. In comparison, the strength of someone like Poison Flame was nothing. This strength made Lu Yin feel like he was facing off against the entire universe.

There was a boom, and it felt like the universe had exploded as a spatial crack appeared from somewhere in the north, extending all the way to the platform. The fissure emanated a raw strength that left everyone horrified. Their hearts leapt into their throats, and for the first time ever, many people became aware of how little control they had over their own lives.

Lu Yin felt like he had been transported back to the apocalypse on Earth, when his life had been in someone else's hands.

If the crack's course had been different by just a few degrees, then the entire Northgate Platform would have been swallowed up, and nobody would have been able to escape.

This was the most terrifying power that Lu Yin had ever witnessed.

Everyone fell silent, as if they were waiting for heaven's judgment.

Quite a while later, Northgate Kong's gadget beeped. After taking a look, his expression changed, and he quickly left.

Northgate Kong's departure was like a signal granting the rest of them permission, and the rest of the crowd also immediately left, heading towards the north.

Explorers and above could tear through the void and freely enter outer space, but Lu Yin was still a Limiteer. With a rather dejected feeling, he knew that he would have to find a spacecraft.

At this time, the Northgate Platform Competition and whatever remaining battles were the last thing on anyone's mind. Everyone was curious about what had happened in the Northgate family's region.

By the time Lu Yin found a spacecraft, it had already been twenty minutes since Northgate Kong left.

"Are you really going, Seventh Bro? The power level of that attack was definitely above three or four hundred thousand. An expert like that can kill you with a thought. You shouldn't go!" The Ghost Monkey tried to persuade Lu Yin otherwise.

Lu Yin firmly answered, "I'm not afraid. So many people already went, and Northgate Kong didn't speak up to stop them. Thus, there shouldn't be any more danger. Besides, the most valuable things are always found in places of great danger."

The monkey did not reply. All cultivators lived on the edge between life and death, and if one was afraid to die, then they were better off not cultivating in the first place. No one became strong by growing up in a luxurious environment, and every powerhouse had survived through extremely dangerous moments during their life. This was an indisputable fact.

Lu Yin stole a spacecraft, but he felt no shame about it. Before long, he entered outer space and headed north with everyone else.

The Northgate Platform, where the competition between the various families of the Northline Flowzone was held, sat at the heart of the Northline Flowzone and was surrounded on all sides by the seventeen families. It was a prime location for the Flowzone.

Far to the north of the Northgate platform was the region governed by the Northgate family. A short distance south of their holdings was a gigantic, ferocious looking centipede floating in space. It was so massive that it was about the size of a continent.

The gigantic size of the centipede was shocking, and it was comparable to hundreds of Zenyu Stars linked together. In fact, there was even enough room for numerous large spacecraft to land on the creature.

When Northgate Kong arrived at his destination, his face immediately paled upon seeing what was before him. "An ancient centipede? I didn't think that they actually existed!"

The closer he got, the more clearly he was able to feel the ancient centipede's overpowering strength. Thankfully, it had been dead for quite some time. Otherwise, just the creature's pressure alone would be enough to kill Northgate Kong if he took a single look.

There was an indistinct figure beneath the ancient centipede, using both hands to hold the gigantic centipede back. This person was an elder of the Northgate family who rarely showed himself, but his power level was definitely over 400,000. He was Northgate Taisui, the living fossil whose existence allowed the Northgate family to retain their current power.

Below him were two other elders from the Northline Flowzone's families and Tie Sa. The two elders consisted of a male and female one. The male was Elder Northgate, who was the Enlighter from the Northgate family, and the female was Granny Chan, the Enlighter from the Lily family.

Elder Northgate, Granny Chan, and Tie Sa were working together with Northgate Taisui. The four most powerful people of the Northline Flowzone managed to hold up the weight of a dead ancient centipede. If not for them, the centipede would have fallen down and crushed the Northgate family's headquarters.

"What are you all standing there in a daze for? Get over here and help out!" Elder Northgate yelled at Northgate Kong upon seeing him arrive.

Northgate Kong gritted his teeth and charged over to Elder Northgate. As soon as he arrived, he raised a hand and released his power at full force.

Shortly after, Lily Liana, Duke Blackhawk, Fayde, Poison Flame, and others arrived. Elder Northgate asked all of them to help as well.

Lily Liana immediately moved forward to help. The rest of the new arrivals weren't from the Northline Flowzone and were much more interested in inspecting the ancient centipede than helping.

At that moment, Northgate Taisui spoke up, "Please help out, dear friends. The Northgate family will definitely display our gratitude once this is all over."

Since an old monster with monstrous battle power had spoken, and since Duke Blackhawk and the rest of the powerhouses didn't dare to say no, the crowd immediately moved forward to give assistance.

The witnesses for the Northgate Platform Competition weren't the only ones to move; rather, everyone who was a Hunter with a power level of over 100,000 moved forward to help as well. With the help of dozens of people, the ancient centipede was slowly lifted up. However, it still wasn't enough. Next, Cruisers moved forward to try to help. Before long, there were more than a hundred people gathered beneath the centipede working together with Northgate Taisui to lift the massive centipede. They were attempting to redirect where the ancient astral beast corpse would fall to save the Northgate family's holdings.

Cruisers were the lowest level cultivators that could help out. Anyone weaker than a Cruiser was of no real assistance.

Lily Anne, Northgate Lie, and the rest of the younger generation weren't Cruisers yet, so although they were stronger than many Cruisers in combat, no one paid any mind to them. Everyone was completely focused on the awe-inspiring ancient centipede. They all felt an irreverent yet ineffable terror towards the corpse. If this enormous beast was still alive, then the entirety of the Northline Flowzone would be doomed.

Even a freak like Northgate Taisui wasn't able to move the beast on his own. It was impossible to tell just how terrifying this centipede had been while it was alive, but its power level must have had at least reached 500,000 units.

"Look! I think there are buildings inside its body!" someone exclaimed in surprise.

At that moment, quite a few people saw the same thing. The ancient centipede had numerous legs, and one of them had broken off, revealing some structures within it.

This discovery was shocking to many people. What sort of beings lived inside the body of a monster? Architecture indicated that there were intelligent beings there, and based off of the design, they should have been humanoid.

Northgate Kong and the others made the same discovery, and their eyes gleamed.

The centipede had fallen through the spatial cracks after a fight between Northgate Taisui and another powerhouse. It had initially been in another dimension, just like the Shenwu Continent. It was impossible to tell how old the body was, but since it was an ancient being with buildings inside of it, there must be other incredible things such as battle techniques, skills, and treasures inside. With this in mind, quite a few people's eyes lit up with greed.

A gutsy Explorer suddenly charged towards the broken leg. Nobody stopped him. Instead, they all merely watched on, including Northgate Taisui.

Soon enough, the Explorer safely entered the centipede and disappeared from sight.

Everyone grew extremely excited now that they knew that it was possible to enter the centipede's body, and they all charged forward like maniacs. If the centipede was still alive, then it went without saying that no one would dare to approach it. However, now that it was dead, they had nothing to fear. Cultivators often encountered dangerous situations, but it wasn't because they didn't fear death. Rather, when the threat wasn't too great compared to the potential spoils, they would be very willing to put themselves in danger.

Even Northgate Lie darted forward to join with the others.

One of the Hunters who was helping Northgate Taisui hold the centipede suddenly moved forward as well, but before he could get close to the leg, Northgate Taisui attacked him. "All Cruisers and above are to assist me with the centipede! If you don't, I'll kill you."

Everyone froze, afraid to make a move.

He was a monster with a power level of over 400,000 who could kill Hunters with ease. Northgate Taisui was the most horrifying being here.

For the Northgate family, all they needed to do was stop the Cruisers and above from leaving. This was the Northline Flowzone, so those who entered the centipede's body were primarily experts from the Northline Flowzone. Of them, Northgate Lie was the strongest, so they definitely held the upper hand in collecting the treasures.

Northgate Kong trusted Northgate Lie's abilities and was certain that the youth would be able to obtain the best treasures. The family head only hoped that there weren't any dangers inside, but thankfully, Northgate Taisui was here.

More and more people arrived in the area. Anyone who was a Cruiser or above was held back, but the rest of them all charged straight into the centipede's body. Included among those charging in were some Limiteers and even a few Melders. Nobody could resist the temptation of this ancient creature.

When Lu Yin finally arrived on the scene, many had already gone ahead. He didn't hesitate at all and entered straight away with his spacecraft.

"It's a centipede? That thing's an astral beast from ancient times, and it's even one of the most terrifying ones!" The monkey trembled in fear. As an astral beast himself, he felt a special terror rise up in his heart when he saw the centipede, as if it was his natural enemy.

"Was this thing very powerful?" Lu Yin asked curiously.

"Powerful? Let me put it like this: see that old man who's the closest to the centipede? His power level is astounding, but if that centipede were still alive, then that man would be instantly devoured," the monkey stated.

Lu Yin sucked in a cold breath of air. This creature had been able to swallow a being with a power level of hundreds of thousands when it was alive? How terrifying.

"I didn't think that I'd see the centipede in this era. This is amazing! I'm sure that it'll draw the attention of a lot of people and that there will be various expeditions, research, gathering teams, and so on... Everything that you humans can think of will be done on to this body," the monkey said.

"If you're lucky, you might even see a monster with a battle power of over 500,000. Those kinds of people are absolute powerhouses who can freely travel wherever they wish in the universe."

The spacecraft entered through the broken leg, but before Lu Yin could even land, some people attacked him. A strange energy penetrated through the spacecraft to attack Lu Yin, and not too far away from him, a middle-aged man was standing there, snickering. Where did a person who wasn't even an Explorer find the courage to come here? They must have a death wish! This man was just an ordinary Explorer who had no intention of vying for treasures against people like Northgate Lie. He didn't quite have the courage to explore the area. Thus, he had stayed at the entrance, eliminating any of the approaching cultivators who weren't Explorers. It wasn't much, but he could still turn a bit of profit by doing this.

He'd already killed quite a few people and there was a whole pile of ruined spacecraft.

However, this time, the battle technique that usually worked for him seemed to have no effect on his target. The spacecraft smoothly proceeded to land atop an abandoned building as its hatch opened. Lu Yin walked out, looking a bit put out as he surveyed his surroundings. Where's the attacker?

The middle-aged man was no fool. After realizing that his attack had been useless, he immediately fled the scene. He was afraid that he might have run into one of those genius Realmbreakers. He'd already heard that Lu Yin of the Astral Combat Academy was here, and he was exactly who the middle-aged Explorer was most afraid of running into.

However, sometimes, fearing something meant that there was a high possibility of encountering it. The middle-aged man thought that he could still run away, but Lu Yin managed to hunt him down by tracing the man's star energy. The Explorer wasn't that quick, and he hadn't gotten very far. When Lu Yin

caught up to the man, he immediately attacked. Following that, the Explorer died without any resistance.

Lu Yin grabbed the man's cosmic ring, opened it, and was immediately delighted; other than some useless bank cards, there were 100,000 star crystals inside. It wasn't much, but it wasn't a small amount either. There was also a whole pile of useless items as well as a memory chip. He plugged it into his gadget and found that it contained a battle technique. Lu Yin tossed it aside since it was useless to him; he had far too many techniques already.

After properly securing his spacecraft, Lu Yin carefully checked his surroundings again. The break in the centipede's leg was just a crack, but it had still exposed a rather large area, and the buildings extended far into the distance. However, most of them were in ruins from the passage of time.

Chapter 386: Bizarre

Whoosh! A figure streaked past Lu Yin. It was a space-exploring powerhouse.

Figure after figure rushed by as various Explorers hurriedly charged towards the interior of the centipede.

Lu Yin carefully examined the buildings. "Monkey, can you tell which period these structures are from?"

"Seventh Bro, you must really think of me as an archaeologist. I only read the records of some powerhouses. I haven't researched anything at all about whatever periods."

Lu Yin casually pressed his hand against a wall, only for it to collapse to the ground and turn to dust. Nothing could be preserved forever, and even the words on the buildings had long since faded.

"This civilization must have been rather powerful if they settled down in such an enormous centipede's body. Their construction materials must also have been different from what we use. But despite all that, this building can do nothing but turn to dust today. The time that has passed since they were first built can only be imagined."

Lu Yin felt like something was strange. "So why is this centipede's body perfectly preserved? Why hasn't it disappeared after all this time?"

"I don't know about that. Logically, this thing should have indeed vanished."

"Right Seventh Bro, you can put that spacecraft in your cosmic ring," the Ghost Monkey suddenly suggested.

Lu Yin frowned. "It won't fit."

"You're thinking about a normal cosmic ring. The one you have now is from Northgate Lie, so the thing might actually fit."

Lu Yin's eyes gleamed, and he hurried back to where he had parked the spacecraft to try the monkey's suggestion out. Unfortunately, the vessel still could not fit since it was too big. The ring's maximum storage size was a cubic meter, so the only way he might be able to store the spacecraft would be by tearing it apart.

“Forget it. We’ll try again after getting a better cosmic ring.”

At that point, a spacecraft landed heavily nearby. Lu Yin’s heart jumped, and he slowly approached the vehicle.

It was a small-sized spacecraft that could hold up to a hundred people.

The hatch opened, and the occupants walked out one after another. They all wore similar uniforms, and it was clear from just a glance that they were mercenaries, though not particularly strong ones.

The last one to walk out was a middle-aged man with thick muscles and a stern gaze. He looked at Lu Yin who was walking over. There was still smoke in his mouth, and as he exhaled, he puffed out a smoke ring that slowly vanished.

“Go, bring him over here,” the man ordered.

Several mercenaries immediately moved to surround Lu Yin and escorted him back to the middle-aged man.

“When did you enter?” The man only glanced at Lu Yin before casually asking him this question with a relaxed attitude.

Lu Yin looked at him. “You should have a set of universal armor.”

The man frowned. “Answer the question. When did you enter?”

“Give me a set of universal armor.”

The people surrounding him all gave Lu Yin strange looks.

The leader of the group became furious. “I’m asking you a question! Answer me honestly, or I’ll kill you!”

Lu Yin frowned, and a gust of air swirled around his body, sweeping everyone aside. An intense pressure enveloped everyone, and even the muscular man who was an Explorer felt it. Despite his realm, he was pushed back several steps by the pressure. He looked at Lu Yin in shock. How can a Limiteer be so powerful? Hold on, this person looks familiar.

“I said, give me a set of universal armor, and I won’t make things difficult for you,” Lu Yin said without any rush.

The middle-aged man immediately tossed a set to Lu Yin without any hesitation or words.

Lu Yin examined it before nodding in satisfaction and turning to leave.

The man relaxed after he saw Lu Yin leave. It was absolutely terrifying that a Limiteer could have such strength, and he must be some great power’s freak genius. Such a person could not be provoked, no matter how familiar he might seem.

“Captain, what do we do next?” one mercenary asked.

The captain waved a hand. “Let’s head in. I doubt that there will be freaks like him all over the place. With the strength of our group, we should be able to get some good stuff, and it’ll be good for us to gain

some experience as well. Right, make a record of the surroundings along the way too. It might be valuable.”

“Yes, captain.”

After acquiring a set of universal armor, Lu Yin was no longer worried about being exposed to outer space in any further accidents. With that issue sorted out, he proceeded into the depths of the centipede's body.

This centipede's body was too massive, and no one knew what was inside, so everyone was making their way forward very cautiously.

“Monkey, do you think that there will be any living creatures in here?”

The monkey muttered, “It’s not easy to tell. Maybe, maybe not.”

“There shouldn’t be any, since the centipede died a long time ago. No living creatures should be able to survive here.”

The Ghost Monkey didn’t interrupt, since everything they were saying was nothing more than conjecture. After enough time passed, any object could undergo unimaginable changes.

And regardless of what guesses they made, it was all pointless since they could only forge on ahead.

Not long after, Lu Yin ran into a corpse that caused him to feel rather gloomy. The corpse belonged to a man who had recently died. Although death was common for cultivators, this corpse was very strange; the man seemed to have been scared to death!

Both of the man’s eyes were wide open, and his pupils were dilated to the extreme. His face had even turned green and rigid. There was not a trace of injury anywhere on his body, but he had still died in such a strange manner. It almost felt like this was an empty shell that had been stripped of its soul.

A chill ran down Lu Yin’s spine as he stared at the strange corpse on the ground. This person was an Explorer, someone who could be considered a powerhouse since Cruisers and above were not allowed inside. Even if Lu Yin had wanted to kill this person, he wouldn’t be able to avoid leaving some trace of injury on the person’s body, so how had this man died?

“Seventh Bro, do you feel scared to the point of being panicked?” the monkey asked in a sinister manner.

Lu Yin’s eyes narrowed. “Cut the crap or I’ll block you.”

“Hehe, there’s no need to try and scare me. You can’t block me in a place like this since it would mean crippling your right arm. After seeing this corpse, you still want to handicap yourself?” the monkey asked confidently.

Lu Yin didn’t bother replying as he took a closer look at the corpse. Through the influence of his domain, he found that the person truly had no injuries, but his spiritual force had been depleted. This meant that there was still vitality within the corpse and that it was his soul that had perished.

Did humans really have souls? Countless people in the universe had pondered this question. Some believed that spiritual force was the human soul, others believed that the soul was an uncontrollable form of energy, while still others were certain that humans could reincarnate as long as they were able to completely merge their entire spiritual force into another body. If they could accomplish such a thing, then that person would have successfully reincarnated.

Such discussions and debates hadn't stopped even after countless years. Lu Yin leaned towards the soul side of the debate, since didn't his die's Possession ability essentially strip away his soul and merge it with someone else's body? Also, the Daynight clan's techniques that attacked the spiritual force were basically targeting one's soul.

On Driftcharge Planet, the unnamed elder had told him that humans were split into body and spirit. Was the spirit that the old man had mentioned the same as a soul? Lu Yin could not understand what had happened to this Explorer, but it seemed apt to describe it as the man's soul being wiped out. In other words, his soul had been obliterated.

The monkey was right; Lu Yin had indeed panicked out of terror. He had never encountered an attack that could directly wipe out a person's spiritual force. Even the Daynight clan's battle techniques could only harm it, and Hunters could only pressure someone's spiritual force. If there wasn't some battle technique similar to the Daynight clan's that was able to wipe out one's soul, then had this person died by someone's hand or some existence in the centipede's body?

"Monkey, have you ever heard of a soul attack?"

"Soul attack? Seventh Bro, do you really believe in that stuff? It's just a superstition."

Lu Yin slowly walked forward. "Then how do you explain the Daynight clan's battle techniques?"

"The human body has spiritual force, and their battle techniques target that. That does not mean that the spiritual force is one's soul. Spiritual force is more akin to an energy that's produced within the human body, and that humans just haven't discovered it yet. Seventh Bro, you're thinking too much into it. There are no souls, no ghosts, no reincarnation. Otherwise, how would Progenitor Wushang have died? He would have achieved eternal life."

Lu Yin let out a light sigh. Something that the ancestors had futilely researched for countless years was truly worthy of discussion.

Whoosh!

High above him, another Explorer hurriedly streaked past with a few more Explorers behind, apparently with some vendetta.

Lu Yin was walking on the ground, and he occasionally picked up his speed. Ever since he had seen the corpse of the person who had been scared to death, he had become a bit more apprehensive about this place.

An unknown amount of time elapsed before Lu Yin's gadget informed him that a day had already passed. More and more people rushed past Lu Yin, though he also discovered more and more corpses as he continued on his way. Most of the people here had died to other cultivators, but he also found another two people who had been frightened to death.

Lu Yin wasn't sure if anyone else had noticed these oddities, but he was becoming more and more afraid of what lay ahead of him.

Even after a long period of traveling, it still seemed like he had not walked out of the centipede's broken leg. This showed the enormous size of the centipede's body, and it was enough to shock the universe.

There were more than just buildings within the leg, as there were also many shells that were covered with mud and other substances. Walking over them felt just like walking on solid ground.

Gradually, Lu Yin caught up to the majority of the other cultivators who had entered since the people ahead of him had dramatically slowed down for some unknown reason. The people had even formed a small-scale bazaar where resources were being exchanged.

Lu Yin did not greet anyone. He quietly minded his own business and sat in a corner to rest. He quickly discovered why the others were not advancing; it was because some living creatures had appeared: white earthworm-like creatures.

These worms were huge, and their defenses were impressive as well. The slippery surface of their bodies were able to neutralize a large portion of any force directed at them. Although they did not have much of an offensive capability, there were simply too many of them. As soon as someone fell into the sea of worms, they would quickly be squashed to death. Quite a few Explorers had already died, and the worms had devoured the corpses in a terrifying manner.

"Those things should be parasites," the monkey said solemnly.

Lu Yin's brows leaped up. "This centipede's been dead for countless eons. Where could these parasites have come from?"

"You'll have to ask someone here about that: who let these parasites out? You should know that some parasites can basically seal themselves, undergoing a cryptobiosis process that allows them to essentially survive eternally. They're different from humans, and there are some beings that can naturally truly attain immortality," the monkey explained.

The people gathered here were definitely waiting for more cultivators to arrive before attempting to charge further in together. Lu Yin changed his appearance to help him keep a low profile. He did not want to be recognized and forced into joining the vanguard that would charge the worms in the first wave.

The area was very wide, and the group near Lu Yin was gathered in one section, while Northgate Lie and the rest of the Northline Flowzone's younger generation had gathered in another, distant section. They were all travelling forward together.

Northgate Lie was the leader of the group, and although they were not from the same family, the Northline Flowzone's group was very united. This was all according to the Northline Flowzone's rules: they were unanimously united against all foreign powers. Lily Anne, Northgate Gang, and the rest were all on this team.

Chapter 387: Pattern And Pike

Lily Anne was not in a great mood. She had noticed that a few of the corpses that they had run into had died from strange circumstances. Their bodies had no signs of injuries, but when she relayed this situation to Northgate Lie, he hadn't paid much attention to her.

"Miss Anna, there are too many odd techniques in the universe. Some can leave no external wounds since they actually target the internal organs. So it's not that there are no injuries, but rather that we just can't see them. It's quite normal, and all it means is that there's an expert ahead of us."

She frowned; could it really be that simple? This wasn't her first time roaming the universe, so it was unlikely that she would miss even an internal injury on a corpse. But since Northgate Lie did not care, she had no choice in the matter.

There was a rumbling off in the distance as a tower collapsed into dust.

The crowd was already accustomed to such things, as these buildings were just too ancient and they were no longer able to be preserved. It was to the extent that any trace of writing had disappeared from the buildings.

Northgate Lie casually scanned the area, but just when he was about to leave, his eyes suddenly focused onto a stone slab that had not been completely obliterated. It was impossible to tell which part of the tower the slab had fallen from, but there were obvious traces of carvings upon its surface.

His breathing became ragged as he suddenly charged forward. Lily Anne and the rest saw his abnormal behavior and rushed in after him.

Northgate Lie tore through the void and appeared next to the stone slab. He closely studied the pattern of the carving, trying to imprint it into his memory. As soon as Lily Anne and the others arrived, his eyes flashed, and he sent out some star energy through his feet, reducing the slab to dust.

His actions were all done surreptitiously, and Lily Anne's group did not notice anything. By the time they arrived beside him, all they saw was a pile of dust.

"Brother Lie, what did you see?" someone enquired as everyone directed expectant faces to Northgate Lie.

Northgate Lie sighed. "I saw a pattern, but before I could get a good look, the stone turned to dust."

"What pattern?" another person impatiently asked.

Northgate Lie thought for a moment and then used his star energy to draw a rough pattern before everyone. Rather than a proper drawing, it seemed more like a bunch of random squiggles with nine circular images that were surrounding an unknown object in the middle. The crowd was lost, and no one could discern any meaning from the drawing at all.

Northgate Lie grudgingly said, "It's been too long, so the finer details and even the type of diagram had all faded away. These lines were all that I could see."

The crowd felt it was a pity, but of course, not everyone believed Northgate Lie, though they could not continue to question him. Even if they neglected Northgate Lie's strength, Northgate Taisui was still watching from outside as well.

Lily Anne stared intently at Northgate Lie, but then he soon focused on other places.

The crowd did not spend any further time dwelling on the matter, and everyone split up to explore different areas. They all wanted to find some preserved ancient records or carvings. Since a diagram had been left behind, it was proof that not everything had been destroyed.

Northgate Lie also put an act on and continued to search around, but his mind was preoccupied with that pattern. It had not been completely destroyed, and there was a certain shape and charm to it. Although he didn't know exactly what it meant, he was positive that there had been nine circular objects surrounding a flower in the center of the diagram.

He had to share this pattern with his elders after he left this place, since they might be able to recognize it given their extensive knowledge and experience.

In another place, not far from Northgate Lie, a few people from the Tempest Flowzone were making their way through. The man with the facial scorpion tattoo was leading them. He seemed slightly different than before; his face contained a certain level of excitement, and he even seemed a bit unhinged. The man was called He Zhong, and he was a senior disciple from the Fire Scorpion Sect.

"Senior, could this place possibly be related to that place that our sect has always been searching for?" A female walked up and furtively whispered her question in a voice that was similarly excited.

He Zhong looked at her coldly. "Shut up! I've warned you not to speak of that so many times! In the entire younger generation, only you and I know of this. If anything is leaked, then we'll die without a doubt."

"Yes, senior, but someone really wants to know." The girl then wrapped herself around He Zhong's shoulders and exhaled, her body releasing an alluring fragrance.

He Zhong's breathing quickened, and he glanced at the other disciples before quietly saying, "Just hold on and let me confirm some things."

"Thank you, senior." The girl smiled coyly before squeezing He Zhong's shoulders even more tightly, completely burying him in her bosom.

Outside of the centipede's body, powerhouse after powerhouse appeared with the intention of entering the centipede's body to change their destiny, but all of them were stopped by Northgate Taisui. An old monster with a power level in the hundreds of thousands stood in their way, causing some Hunters who had previously felt self-important to reconsider their beliefs. They could only sullenly join the group who were holding the centipede up while dejectedly looking at the out of reach structures within the centipede's leg.

One after another, spacecraft dashed into the centipede's body, as if it were a giant treasure trove.

No one knew if there was actually anything of value within the body, but at this moment, Lu Yin and the rest of the cultivators were in a bad mood. An Explorer had inexplicably fallen dead while in the sky from right above the gathering, his corpse crashing right into the crowd. His manner of death seemed to be exactly the same as the other strange corpses that Lu Yin had run into: frightened to death.

Everyone was stunned, and their blood turned cold. No one knew how the man had died, which made it even more horrifying.

Lu Yin retrieved the Giant Emperor's third eye and unleashed his domain while also activating his Cosmic Art. He vigilantly looked around, suspecting that the man had been struck by an invisible attack, similar to the dangers that came with unlocking sourceboxes. It was possible that there were sourceboxes within the centipede's body, or perhaps the entire corpse was a sourcebox and everyone had already stepped into its danger zone.

"Seventh Bro, things are getting spooky. It's time to take off," the monkey said nervously, now afraid as well.

Lu Yin squinted and looked around.

Bit by bit, the others started gathering in groups and walking with familiar faces as everyone looked around apprehensively. No one dared to speak, and it felt as if an unseen blade were hanging over everyone's heads.

At this point, a wretched cry jolted the crowd, and everyone looked into the distance to see a white wave sweeping towards them. Lu Yin's expression changed, and a chill ran down his spine. What was approaching them wasn't actually a white wave, but rather a countless number of those white parasites. They were frantically wriggling their way towards the crowd of cultivators.

Everyone hurriedly retreated even as countless attacks landed on the flood of the parasites, but only a small percentage of the attacks were effective while the large majority were not.

The parasites' defenses were shocking.

"Only the attacks of Explorers are effective against them. Everyone else, get away!" someone shouted.

Many of the cultivators who were not Explorers yet turned deathly white, and they all ran.

Lu Yin used his Skybeast Claw as a test and directly tore through one of the parasites, and he was stupefied to discover that these parasites had no organs. Instead, they were filled with a milky-white fat substance that was rather disgusting.

"Seventh Bro, let's go! There's too many of them. Look up!" the monkey shrieked.

Lu Yin raised his head to see that some powerhouses had flown into the air to assault the wave of parasites, but they were knocked down by even more parasites that leapt up to grab them. Some of the people even fell inside the flood and vanished in the blink of an eye.

The white parasites covered the entire area, and the ground turned entirely white.

Lu Yin never stopped retreating. He could kill the creatures, but there were far too many of them for him to wipe out. Attacking a larger area meant a weaker attack, and it would also place a heavier burden on his body. He was not so selfless as to help the others out like that.

Numerous spatial cracks shattered the void as many tried to push the parasites into the fissures. Even so, the endless flood of parasites continued spilling forward, and the number of the creatures didn't seem to drop by any noticeable amount.

Someone shouted, and multiple Explorers united to tear open a giant spatial crack that landed directly within the wave of parasites. Many of them were sucked within the crack and never seen again.

As soon as the crowd saw that the method was effective, many more cultivators joined in, and the number of parasites was soon visibly reduced.

The situation appeared to be turning for the better, but the monkey's next comment caused Lu Yin's improving mood to plummet once again. "How many parasites are there in a living being? It should at least be in the range of hundreds of millions, and it might even be incalculable. And to this centipede, these parasites must really be parasites. So, Seventh Bro, how many do you think there are?"

Lu Yin felt his scalp turn numb. He suddenly imagined what hundreds of millions of parasites covering the entire space would look like. Even if more spatial cracks were opened up, they would never be able to eliminate them all. In fact, the cultivators would end up dying from exhaustion.

Currently, there were at most a few hundred thousand parasites making their way forward, but if their numbers increased by a hundredfold, then no one would continue trying to fight them.

The most worrying issue was that the appearance of these parasites meant that any buildings they ran into would be completely destroyed along with anything that they might possibly hold.

Many started considering leaving.

Lu Yin retreated again and again, only attacking occasionally. Although his attacks were not frequent, they were effective and much stronger than the attacks of the nearby Explorers. Every one of his attacks eradicated a significant portion of the parasites.

Suddenly, in the distance, a phantom image appeared that pierced through the void and streaked across the area. An Explorer immediately fell into the flood of parasites below.

Lu Yin's eyes narrowed, since this time, he had finally seen the attack; it was a pike. A phantom image of a pike had stabbed the Explorer and instantly killed him. So it turned out that those frightened-to-death corpses had all been victims of this pike's attack.

The pike was a phantom image that a normal person could not see. Lu Yin had to rely on his Cosmic Art, domain, and his lockbreaking tool to just barely make it out.

Although the scene of the pike killing someone was horrifying, Lu Yin actually relaxed when he saw it. At least he now knew how those people had died. The most visceral fear that all humans held was the fear of the unknown. If Lu Yin had not been able to determine the cause of those strange deaths, then even he would not have had the courage to continue forward.

Still, where had the phantom pike come from? A new question had suddenly arose since there were definitely no living people inside the centipede. Could it be from the parasites?

Lu Yin retreated as he carefully stared deeper into the centipede's leg. Before long, another phantom pike appeared. It streaked through the area and disappeared.

Lu Yin's eyes flickered. This second phantom pike had not attacked anyone; could the attacks possibly be at random?

In order to test his conjecture, Lu Yin greatly increased his efforts in attacking the parasites, and he also teamed up with the other powerhouses to shatter the void. The wave of parasites reduced visibly, their numbers clearly diminished compared to before.

The crowd had barely taken control of the flood of worms' progress.

Another phantom pike shot out. This time, it streaked past an Explorer's shoulder, who didn't notice anything at all as he continued to attack the flood of worms.

After that, every so often, the pike would shoot out in various directions, but there was only one other time that it shot towards someone. Fortunately for them, Lu Yin secretly pushed them out of the way. Otherwise, there would have been one more bizarre corpse upon the ground.

He was now sure that these phantom pikes were not targeting anybody, but were instead randomly shot out. If so, then what was launching them? All of the attacks were phantom pikes, so could there be a unique, original pike somewhere? Lu Yin was getting a little excited, and he hoped to retrieve such a thing.

Some of the cultivators stayed behind to hold back the flood of worms since they wanted to continue exploring further while others simply left the centipede.

The mercenary group that Lu Yin had encountered before was one of the groups that left.

"Captain, you're still the only sensible one. We definitely won't be able to kill so many worms, and who knows how many more there are further in. A timely retreat is the correct decision," someone said, flattering their leader, and the people around him echoed similar sentiments.

Chapter 388: Intent To Kill

The middle-aged captain puffed and blew out some smoke rings. One, two, and then three rings appeared before gradually disappearing. He disappointedly replied. "If not for you guys, I wouldn't have left. However, since you're with me, I'll make sure that you all stay safe. Nothing is more important to me than you guys' safety."

The dozens of people in the group were all very touched.

Puff~

The captain blew out another smoke ring, but this time, it morphed into another image. "People should live for themselves, but I can't force myself to do that. So if we're going to survive, then we'll have to do it together."

"If we're going to die, we're going down together!" everyone yelled, their eyes filled with deep devotion as they looked at their captain. This was the person who they believed was worth following for their entire lifetime.

The emotional atmosphere didn't last for long before it was abruptly cut off. About ten people or so appeared in the air above the group and looked down at them. One of the newcomers was an old man who glared at the middle-aged captain. "Were you further inside? How are things going in there now?"

Before the mercenary captain could speak, a young soldier next to him immediately yelled, "Who do you think you're talking to? Our captain is amazing! You'd better greet him properly!"

The captain nearly choked on the smoke in his mouth as he hurriedly pushed the young soldier aside. He then smiled sweetly at the old man and politely answered, "Well, hello there, sirs from the Blaze Realm. There are waves of worms in there, and there are quite a number of them. Some people have even died from the shock. There's basically nothing in this area, but please stay safe on your way further in."

Up in the sky, the people from the Blaze Realm rushed away, heading deeper into the centipede.

Below them, the dozens of troops stared at their captain in shock.

The captain slowly lit a cigarette and regretfully blew out another smoke ring. "Endure this and you'll be able to succeed in the future. Remember these words: only people who can endure will become strong. Understand?"

The rest were confused.

The middle-aged captain sighed lamentably. "When I die, I'll make sure that it happens in front of all of you."

With just this one sentence, the atmosphere was lifted. Everyone looked at the man in devotion, and the young soldier who had interrupted earlier nearly burst into tears. The captain smiled.

However, the mood was destroyed right away as a young man with a deadpan expression suddenly appeared, staring coldly at the captain. "What happened in there?"

The captain gulped as he looked at the young man, feeling like there was a knife to his throat. "There's a wave of worms in there, and there are also people dying mysteriously."

The young person stepped forward, and in the blink of an eye, he had already shot past everyone and was continuing on his way.

Everyone stared, dazed. The previously jovial mood was gone once again.

The captain looked forlorn, feeling ready to curse someone, Where'd all these monsters come from? He blew out another smoke ring, wanting to say something touching to his soldiers, but then he blinked. Forget it! We need to go!

The flood-like wave of worms had been greatly reduced thanks to everyone working together to drive them into spatial cracks. While there were still many new parasitic worms entering the area, they no longer posed a threat to the group of cultivators.

Lu Yin watched on from the very back of the crowd, ready to carefully observe the phantom pike that appeared. He wanted to see just how powerful it was.

Before long, the people from the Blaze Realm arrived at the front of the expedition.

There were eight large Flowzones in the Innerverse, collectively known as the Eight Great Flowzones. The Blaze Realm was similar to the Blazing Mist Flowzone in terms of its influence, so their appearance caused quite a few people to shudder in fear.

The Eight Great Flowzones had achieved many things that the other tiny Flowzones could not even imagine. The Northline Flowzone had a monster with a power level of over 400,000, but there were certainly other, comparable old freaks like him in the Eight Great Flowzones. Otherwise, there would be no reason for the Northgate family to hide Northgate Taisui's existence, and they would have just dominated the other families.

Upon seeing so many parasitic worms constantly rushing at the crowd of cultivators, the people from the Blaze Realm were astonished. This was their first time seeing creatures like these. The worms had defenses comparable to an Explorer's, but they lacked any offensive capabilities and were also unable to move quickly. They almost seemed like regular lifeforms that wore the shell of an Explorer.

"You, come here." All of a sudden, a familiar voice rang out, and Lu Yin glanced over. Jared?

Jared pointed at Lu Yin. "Didn't you hear me? Get over here right now."

Lu Yin froze for a moment, but then, he remembered that he had changed his appearance. Ordinary cultivators would be discovered rather quickly when they changed their appearance, or else they would be able to easily wreak havoc in the universe. However, Lu Yin had cultivated the Invisible Aura Technique, which eliminated most of the issues that occurred when one changed their appearance. It was also why he hadn't been found out yet.

"What is it?" Lu Yin asked after walking over to the group.

Jared's eyes were cold and he ordered, "Go and fetch me a corpse of someone who died of mysterious causes."

Lu Yin was confused. "Me?"

Jared frowned. "I'll repeat myself once: find me a corpse that died of mysterious causes or die."

Lu Yin was furious, but after scanning everyone from the Blaze Realm, his eyes lingered on the two elders in front, and fear flickered through his eyes. He then nodded and ran ahead to where there was a body. The man hadn't been killed by a phantom pike; instead, he had died when a parasitic worm rammed into him. Still, it didn't matter since Lu Yin just needed to do something for the people from the Blaze Realm.

Soon enough, Lu Yin carried a body back and flung it to the ground.

Everyone from the Blaze Realm glanced over.

"He died from blunt force impact. This isn't a mysterious death," an elder said. After that, he eyed Lu Yin coldly.

Lu Yin explained, "He must have died from mysterious causes, because he fell into the flood of worms and was run into. It must have happened very quickly."

The elder glanced at the wave of worms and decided to accept the explanation despite how incredulous it sounded.

“Tell me then, what kind of death is considered mysterious?” Jared asked coldly.

Lu Yin answered, “When someone dies from fright. There must be a ghost here.”

“How dare you answer with bullshit! Ghosts don’t exist!” Jared angrily retorted.

Next to him, one of the two elders scoffed, “Enough of that. There’s no need to argue about this.” After that, he looked at Lu Yin. “You can leave.”

“Wait a second. Have you seen this person before?” Jared raised his gadget and tapped it, only for Lu Yin’s own face to appear on the display.

Lu Yin shook his head and resolutely answered, “No.”

Jared frowned and waved him away in annoyance. “Leave.”

Lu Yin didn’t go too far and stopped at a place where his domain was still able to cover the group from the Blaze Realm so that he could eavesdrop on their conversation.

“Do you really believe in ghosts?” Jared asked.

An elder sighed. “It’s not about believing it. There’s evidence that spiritual attacks do exist, so we need to be careful.”

“I still think that our main task should be to find Lu Yin,” Jared said.

“Lu Yin is indeed one of our targets. He offended the Blaze Realm in the Astral Combat Academy, and he also destroyed Firesmelt Planet right when they were about to join our Blaze Realm. This proves that he thinks nothing of us. The two of us have been ordered to take care of him,” the elder in charge said.

Jared looked incredibly excited. “With both of you here, we’ll definitely be able to kill Lu Yin.”

“We don’t need to go so far as to kill him. As long as he’s willing to submit to the Blaze Realm, we can consider taking him in.”

“I know this person very well. He’s incredibly arrogant and rude, and there’s no way he’ll join the Blaze Realm. We have to kill him immediately if we want to avoid trouble. This must be what the master wants as well.”

The elder in charge gave Jared a pointed look. “He has a complicated background. He’s a part of the Ten Arbiters Council and the Lockbreaker Society. There are also rumors that he has even more powerful people behind him than that. Killing him will just create even more trouble.”

Jared whispered. “If we were outside, then killing him would indeed be difficult. But right now, since we’re inside the centipede, the network will stop working once we go a bit further in. If you act fast enough, then he definitely won’t be able to send a video out as evidence, so there’s nothing to worry

about. If you're willing to help me out, then I promise that I'll share the Karmic Flame Sword with you two."

After hearing the Karmic Flame Sword being offered, the elders' eyes lit up, and they exchanged a glance before nodding. "Very well, but this matter needs to remain a secret. Otherwise, there'll be great trouble for our Blaze Region."

"Don't worry." Jared smiled mysteriously.

Far away from the group, Lu Yin's expression had turned grim. It turned out that he was actually being targeted by the Blaze Realm. What he'd done to Firesmelt Planet had caused the Blaze Realm to hate him. According to what Lu Yin had just heard Jared say, the Blaze Realm would only be more willing to kill him as time passed.

If that was the case, then there was no need for him to hold back any longer. If those two old fogeys had been sent here to deal with him, then they must be quite powerful. Lu Yin obviously didn't want to face them directly if at all possible. He checked the wave of the parasitic worms which was a ways off and used Flash to vanish.

There were about a dozen powerhouses attacking the parasitic worms in one area when they heard something whistle past before losing consciousness.

Lu Yin quickly dealt with the dozen or so powerhouses. He then flung them away and let the parasitic worms push past the battle zone. With his domain, he hid his aura and concealed himself behind a parasitic worm.

Numerous worms charged past, and the first people who they targeted were those from the Blaze Realm as Lu Yin had deliberately weakened the place that was closest to them.

They had previously been very relaxed behind the defenders, but suddenly, to their surprise, numerous worms had suddenly appeared in front of them. Still, they paid no mind to the change. Their members were much stronger than ordinary Explorers, and even a Limiteer like Jared was strong enough to break through the worms' defenses and kill them. With the powerful battle techniques that the large organizations possessed, their members were much more powerful than what their power levels indicated.

It didn't take long for a tremendous heat to be felt even kilometers away. The group from the Blaze Realm had attacked, killing the worms a lot more quickly than the other groups, though their attacks didn't distinguish between friend and foe. Soaring temperatures spread out, affecting quite a few of the cultivators as well, resulting in a lot of cursing.

However, none of the cultivators thought anything of the matter. Organizations from the larger Flowzones never worried about being too overbearing when they were in a smaller Flowzone.

Lu Yin hid among the parasitic worms and quickly got close to Jared and attacked. He hadn't gotten into a very large fight with Jared while in the Astral Combat Academy, but Jared had put Lu Yin on a kill list in the trial zones. When Lu Yin had dealt with the Daynight clan, he had also taken the opportunity to teach the people from the Blaze Realm a lesson as well. He had thought that everything was done with that, but it turned out that these people wanted to kill him in the real world now, which was why Lu Yin

was now bent on killing Jared. The universe had always been a place where only the strong survived, so there was no way that Lu Yin would hold back.

The attack struck Jared without any issue, and it should have killed him outright. However, Jared was very tough and was only sent flying. While coughing out blood, flames rose up around him, causing the metal to melt away.

Lu Yin felt like this was quite a shame. Jared was wearing a ring armor that, by the looks of it, must be an expensive set unique to the Blaze Realm since it was even able to block an attack from an Explorer. In order to remain incognito, Lu Yin hadn't used the stacking method, but the weakening of the attack had saved Jared's life.

Jared being gravely injured instantly drew the attention of everyone from the Blaze Realm, and numerous disciples started attacking Lu Yin.

Lu Yin easily dodged all the attacks headed his way and then once again charged towards Jared, intent on killing him. Before he could make it near him, however, one of the two elders from the Blaze Realm blocked Lu Yin. Surging flames morphed into a furious, growling lion that leaped towards Lu Yin.

Chapter 389: Looking For Teammates

The amount of strength that the fire lion possessed was quite shocking to Lu Yin. The lion had four lines of battle force covering it, which distorted the air around it. Further away, the elder in charge of the group from the Blaze Realm raised a hand as his flames turned into another furious fire lion that was surrounded by four-lined battle force.

The two flame lions covered in four-lined battle force cornered Lu Yin, ready to kill him.

Lu Yin had never underestimated those elders of the older generation. While older cultivators might have been average when they were younger, as time passed, some of them would become rather powerful and even become comparable to their peers who were geniuses. Additionally, they also had the advantages that came with time that the younger generation lacked, and that advantage culminated in the form of terrifying battle strength.

The void around Lu Yin was incinerated by the flames, and there was no way for him to dodge this attack. He lifted his arms and grabbed a flaming lion with each of his hands. With a frown, he exerted some force and caused the four-lined battle force surrounding the lions to explode. With a boom, the two lions dissipated, though less than a moment later, the two elders had closed the distance. "How dare you attack our people from the Blaze Realm!? DIE!!"

Lu Yin moved his arms in front of him to block their attack, and there was a huge boom as he was sent flying by a ridiculously high temperature heat wave. The two elders were used to working together and quickly attacked Lu Yin once again. However, Lu Yin did not fight back. He was well aware of their abilities and knew that it would be difficult for him to beat them without exposing himself. Therefore, he borrowed the momentum of their attacks to quickly flee the scene.

If Lu Yin wanted to leave, the people from the Blaze Realm were incapable of stopping him. All they could do was watch as he disappeared.

Some of the Blaze Realm's disciples helped Jared up as he coughed out some more blood. He was still shaken since he'd nearly died just now. Thankfully, he had donned his armor beforehand.

The two elders went over to check on Jared while looking serious. "Who was that? He was able to leave you gravely injured and even escaped from us. He must be a monster amongst Limiteers."

Jared's eyes lit up. "It's Lu Yin. It has to be him."

The elder in charge shook his head. "It shouldn't have been him. If that person was Lu Yin, then you'd already be dead."

Jared wanted to retort, but there was nothing that he could actually say since the elder's words were true. Given Lu Yin's abilities, he absolutely could kill Jared in one attack. But if that person wasn't Lu Yin, then who could he be? Jared was an Area Master from the Astral Combat Academy and a genius amongst Limiteers. The two elders with him were also cream of the crop Explorers and were even more of a force to be reckoned with when they teamed up. They were actually powerful enough to contend with a few cultivators at the bottom of the Top 100 Rankings. Jared could not think of any other Limiteer who was powerful enough to escape from these elders.

"That person might still have been Lu Yin, since he could have not gone full force in order to conceal his identity. That would have been enough to allow Jared to survive," one of the elders guessed.

Jared shouted, "Yes! That has to be what happened! He has to be Lu Yin!"

The rest of the Blaze Realm disciples were busy exterminating all the parasitic worms around them, so the two elders did not waste any more time on random guesses. The attacker was already gone, and so what if he had been Lu Yin? It was just a huge pity that they hadn't been able to stop him from escaping.

It was necessary that they move cautiously from now on. If Lu Yin decided that he was going to attack them in secret, then even the two elders were not certain that they would be able to hold their own against him.

Jared shamelessly stole a ring armor from one of the other disciples. He was now terribly frightened after having such a close encounter with death. On top of that, he was currently gravely injured. Even the medicine from the Shamrock Enterprises would not allow him to heal fast enough. A part of him wanted to leave right now.

Far off in the distance, Lu Yin revealed himself and glanced back in shock. Those two elders were very powerful. They had four-lined battle force, battle techniques from the Blaze Realm, and ring armor. It would be impossible for him to take them out without exposing himself, so he would currently forget it. This matter could wait, because he was sure that they would not leave. There would be more opportunities to attack them in the future.

He didn't want to waste too much energy in a place like this, as who knew what kind of dangers were waiting for him in this centipede.

"You've finally experienced how incredible those huge organizations are, eh, Seventh Bro? Those two old dudes were probably just ordinary disciples when they were young, or else they wouldn't be merely at the Explorer realm at their current age. However, they've been cultivating for so many years and can even use battle power, which means that they're powerful enough to hold their own against you when

they team up. That's how powerful large organizations work. There are quite a number of disciples like them in those places," the monkey exclaimed, excited at the predicament that Lu Yin was currently in.

Lu Yin calmly looked up. "It doesn't matter. When I get stronger, it won't matter how many disciples like them there might be."

"What I'm saying is that you can't keep fighting alone. If someone else had helped you just now, then that guy would have died already," the monkey firmly stated.

Lu Yin's interest was piqued. "What are you trying to get at?"

"I know that you want to rule the Great Yu Empire and slowly expand it so that you'll become more powerful. That's a big picture goal. However, you can't just go adventuring around the universe all by yourself—you need to find some teammates," the monkey explained.

Lu Yin muttered to himself. The monkey was right. He really should find some helpers.

"Don't you want to visit the Cosmic Sea? Do you plan on going there all alone? Seriously? Even the Ten Arbiters wouldn't travel there alone."

"What kind of teammates should I look for?" Lu Yin asked.

The monkey rolled his eyes. "How should I know? They can't be annoying, and they also have to be strong I guess. You know, sometimes, I think that you're too focused on titles. All you pay attention to are those disciples from big organizations. There are a bunch of other cultivators who aren't weak and also aren't restricted by any organizations. Your Top 100 Rankings isn't only made up of disciples from huge organizations—quite a lot of them are independent. They've got to be pretty lucky and have built up a lot of life experience."

What the monkey said seemed to open up new doors to Lu Yin. He'd always focused on people with important identities, but if he could convince those who trained on their own to his side, they would be even more valuable. When all of the cultivators in the universe were considered as a whole, most of them had no real backing. Mercenary groups, for instance, were mostly formed from independent cultivators.

The best thing about such people was that they weren't restricted by any sort of organization at all. There were no outside interests influencing them, so they were more easily controlled.

"You're being very helpful today, Monkey," Lu Yin said.

The monkey was incredibly proud of himself. "Of course, Seventh Bro! I'll even give you a suggestion. If you listen to this piece of advice, it'll be very advantageous for you, and it'll be great for when you go to the Cosmic Sea."

Lu Yin excitedly replied, "Go on."

"Get some girls with huge boobs! Nobody will want to kill them. Not only will they look pretty, but they'll also lower the enemy's desire to kill them. Also—" Before the monkey could even finish speaking, Lu Yin blocked him off. This monkey was rarely ever serious.

Though it was a fact that his first suggestion was quite tempting.

After a few days, the parasitic worms had been more or less eliminated. At this time, even the people from the Blaze Realm were exhausted, but nobody was willing to take a rest; everyone continued to move further into the centipede's leg.

They were still near the cracked portion of the creature's leg, but they weren't too far away from the joint that connected it to the main body.

Before too long, the crowd of cultivators ran into another group of people, and everybody headed deeper in together. Along the way, more and more people started to appear. These people had been very lucky and avoided the worms entirely.

Although they didn't run into more worms, more and more people were killed by the phantom pikes. The further in they went, the more people who died of mysterious causes there were. Quite a few started to consider leaving.

Half a day later, the group passed by a huge pile of parasitic worm bodies and saw Northgate Lie and a few others up ahead. Northgate Lie and the others seemed to have stopped there for quite a while already and not headed any further in.

One could deduce that this was the end of the leg, so if they continued any further, they would be in the centipede's body.

The people from the Blaze Realm pushed past the others as Jared walked out. While he seemed a bit pale, he appeared to be in much better shape than before. Although it was impossible for him to be fully healed anytime soon, speaking wouldn't be a problem.

"It's been a while, Mr. Lie," Jared said politely to Northgate Lie.

Northgate Lie looked at him, confused. "Who are you?"

Jared did not get upset and simply answered, "I am the disciple of Poison Flame from the Blaze Realm, Jared."

Northgate Lie made a sound of realization. "So you're Lord Poison Flame's disciple? I remember now. We met in the Blazing Mist Flowzone before."

Jared smiled. "That's right. I still remember how awe-inspiring you were at that time. I didn't expect for us to meet again here."

Northgate Lie nodded and looked past Jared to see the rest of the group from the Blaze Realm. His gaze lingered on the two elders before he continued, saying, "Why are you here, Jared? Did you run into the worms?"

Jared laughed bitterly and told the young master of the Northgate family about how they'd encountered the worm wave.

"I was actually just thinking that there weren't a lot of worms, but I guess most of them went your way and slowed you down," Northgate Lie commented.

Jared felt confused. "Why didn't you continue on?"

Northgate Lie moved aside and waved his hand, indicating that the people up front should step aside. Everyone from the Blaze Realm looked over and saw that a pike had been erected in the ground a distance ahead. Around it there were about a dozen bodies, and they all seemed to have died from fright.

Upon seeing the bizarre scene, the newcomers were shocked. "What's that?"

"I'm sure that you're all aware that there have been people mysteriously dying along the way. It's actually because of that pike. The closer you get to it, the more likely it is that you'll die strangely. It's an attack that can't be seen," Northgate Lie said, at a loss on how to proceed.

Around the two young masters, Lily Anne and the others were similarly out of ideas on how to proceed. The pike released attacks could neither be seen nor avoided, and of all places, it had to be placed right where the leg and the body were connected. There was no way to enter the body from this leg, which made things rather complicated.

It was only now that they understood the reason for the mysterious deaths, and many could not help but shudder in fear. Invisible attacks meant the attack was based around spiritual force. Such attacks were the most terrifying.

"How can we get past here, Mr. Lie?" Jared asked.

Everyone was trapped in the leg with nobody able to enter the body. The most powerful person present was Northgate Lie, and even though there were quite a number of older Explorers here as well, he was not somebody who could be easily surpassed even with time. After all, he was somebody on the Top 100 Rankings. It would only be possible for an older Explorer to beat him if they had also been a genius in their younger years.

The two elders from the Blaze Realm could only contend with Lu Yin when they worked together, and that was also the case for Northgate Lie. Being in the Top 100 Rankings was symbolic in and of itself as it indicated that one was sure to become an expert in the future. With the influence that Northgate Lie held, most people were unwilling to offend him.

Northgate Lie pointed at a middle-aged man in a corner and said, "This person is a Lockbreaker. Only lockbreaking techniques are able to handle the invisible attacks of the pike."

Jared was shocked. "Do we really need to bother a Lockbreaker for this? Is there only one lockbreaker here?"

Northgate Lie nodded. "One Lockbreaker won't be enough. We'll need at least a Perceptive Intermediate Lockbreaker or several Discerning Elementary Lockbreakers. They can't be new Discerning Elementary Lockbreakers either."

"Are we unable to get past here without Lockbreakers?" Jared did not like the current situation.

Northgate Lie didn't bother answering, which was an answer itself. It was impossible to block the pike's attacks with an Explorer's strength. Only lockbreaking techniques would work on it.

"We've already sent some people back to fetch some. The closer they are to outer space, the better the network connection. We'll request for some Lockbreakers to come in, but it might take them some time," Northgate Gang replied.

Jared excused himself and started discussing something with the other people from the Blaze Realm.

Everyone was waiting for Lockbreakers to arrive. Unfortunately, Lockbreakers were just too rare. Even though there were thousands of people present, there was only one Lockbreaker out of all of them.

Chapter 390: The Prestige Of Four Stars

Lily Anne suddenly spoke up. "Brother Lie, Lu Yin is also a Lockbreaker."

Northgate Lie's eyes flashed, and he nodded. "I know."

He Zhong and the rest from the Tempest Flowzone soon arrived and also waited silently.

Lu Yin observed the situation for a moment before quickly realizing that the gathered crowd was waiting for Lockbreakers. The monkey spoke up at that point. "Seventh Bro, are you not going to show yourself? A bunch of people will be grateful to you right now."

Lu Yin unenthusiastically replied, "People will only be grateful when someone appears at the last moment. If I go out now, then they'll believe that me helping them is expected."

"You're actually going to help them get past this?" The Ghost Monkey was puzzled.

Lu Yin was still considering the matter. In his peak state, with his three methods that increased his perception, he could use the Secret Sidestep, which allowed him to avoid all dangers, to enter the centipede's body, but he had no idea what dangers lay ahead after that. He was actually hoping to have someone carve a path forward for him, but if that happened, he would have to fight them if they found any good stuff. Northgate Lie alone was already plenty to deal with, but now, there were the Blaze Realm people to deal with as well as the possibility of hidden experts to deal with. He might not be able to come out on top.

"Alright, we'll let them pass." Lu Yin made his decision.

The monkey could not understand. "Why?"

"If I don't destroy the pike, then they'll need the assistance of Lockbreakers to enter as well as to leave." Lu Yin's lips quirked up as he explained.

The monkey was stunned. "Making for easy targets, huh? Seventh Bro, you're evil."

This was the situation that Lu Yin wanted. People were welcome to leave or try their luck and barge forward on their own, but regardless of what they did, Lu Yin would be able to cause problems for whomever he wanted. This was currently his playing field, and that would only change if a stronger Lockbreaker showed up. His current problem was deciding how he should best take advantage of this opportunity since it would definitely be troublesome if a better Lockerbreaker appeared.

He hesitated for a moment. Then, he returned to his normal appearance and appeared next to Northgate Lie and the others with Flash, startling them quite badly.

“Sorry for being late. I heard that you guys need a Lockbreaker,” Lu Yin announced with a smile.

The crowd was speechless. How could he know that they needed a Lockbreaker if he had just arrived? He had obviously showed up earlier. Still, no one bothered to argue with him about the contradiction. Northgate Lie courteously said, “Brother Lu, you should know what the entire situation is now. How about it? Are you confident?”

Lu Yin looked around and saw the hateful glares from the people of the Blaze Realm, the expectant looks from Lily Anne’s group, and the look of disdain from the other Lockbreaker in the distance. He then started approaching the pike, step by step.

Right when he was a hundred meters from the pike, the other Lockbreaker called out, “Be careful. Don’t disturb its energy or else its attacks will multiply, leading to more casualties.”

The crowd tried to stop Lu Yin upon hearing the man’s words, afraid that a moment of his carelessness would affect them.

Lu Yin frowned; this Lockbreaker was rather sinister and had forced Lu Yin into a corner as soon as he opened his mouth up. If his lockbreaking attempt was unsuccessful, then all of the blame would fall onto Lu Yin. And this wasn’t even mentioning the Lockbreaker’s arrogant manner of speech.

“I didn’t catch your name. You are?” Lu Yin looked at the middle-aged man.

The man was unhappy and refused to say his name. “A four star Discerning Elementary Lockbreaker.”

Lu Yin quietly replied, “What a coincidence. I’m also a four star Discerning Elementary Lockbreaker.”

Previously, on Savage Ape Planet, Lu Yin and the rest had joined forces to unlock the tree-shaped sourcebox, which had raised him to the four star level. He had been just one step from three stars before the Lockbreaker gathering, and the sourcebox had been an intermediate one. If they had not worked together, and Lu Yin had instead successfully unlocked it on his, it would have pushed him to five stars. Still, his current status of four stars meant that he had jumped up by two grades.

The crowd cried out in surprise, as they had not expected for Lu Yin to be a four star Discerning Elementary at his age. There were not many Lockbreakers of his age in the society, and only the Distinguished Five had obtained four stars at such a young age. Even if Dao Bo and Charon were taken into consideration, there were still not that many young Lockbreakers who were as accomplished as Lu Yin.

Northgate Lie was also stunned. Lu Yin had only recently been promoted, so most people were not aware that he had already attained four stars. His talent for lockbreaking was as shocking as his martial prowess.

“What? You have four stars, too?” The man was shocked.

Lu Yin lifted his gadget and activated the screen. When the middle-aged Lockbreaker saw Lu Yin’s Lockbreaker profile with its four shining stars, he was stunned and could only speechlessly stare at Lu Yin. He no longer acted haughtily and instead put on a humble expression, as if he had just encountered a rising star of the Lockbreaker Society.

“I’m truly sorry. I thought that you had no contributions. Instead, it turns out that you’re actually a genius Lockbreaker,” the Lockbreaker spoke apologetically, his attitude experiencing a complete reversal.

Lu Yin did not say anything more and turned to look at the sourcebox catalog section on his page. The number of views on the video of him unlocking the tree-shaped sourcebox was rather high, and it had earned him a bit of money. Although he had to split it with the Lockbreaker Society, his share wasn’t too shabby.

If he had not opened his profile page, then he might have completely forgotten about this method of earning money. As his reputation continued to spread, his monetary gains would similarly increase.

He closed the display, looked at the pike ahead of him, and then stepped forward.

No one stopped him this time. Instead, they all looked on nervously.

Compared to the tree-shaped sourcebox, the pike was much easier to deal with. Lu Yin dodged all of the phantom pikes that occasionally shot towards him. He even warned the people behind him to dodge when necessary, which increased their confidence in his abilities even more.

That middle-aged Lockbreaker gasped in surprise. At best, he could sense the danger before it struck him, but he could not determine the position or direction that the attacks were heading in. This showed the disparity between them.

Lu Yin moved closer and closer to the pike. Soon, he could see that the void near the pike was surrounded by a sharp energy. The phantom pikes originated from this sharp energy, and this sharp energy was also what was currently blocking everyone’s progress.

He reached out to make contact with this fierce energy emanating from the pike. The energy then coalesced into star energy which formed a type of battle technique that had become eternal.

“It’s no wonder why it takes a Lockbreaker to approach this thing. This toy is a simplified version of a predecessor’s strength,” the monkey exclaimed. “However, it’s been here for ages, and the strength has dissipated by a great deal. If you all came here right after this thing was left here, you’d all be dead, Seventh Bro.”

Lu Yin’s palm touched the sharp energy as he tried to resolve the star energy. It was effective, but he progressed at a snail’s pace. It would take him at least several days to open up a path. He turned back to look at the Lockbreaker. “Let’s work together. Follow where I tell you to go, and I promise that you’ll be safe.”

The middle-aged Lockbreaker wanted to reject Lu Yin’s request since he was hoping to work with more Lockbreakers, but Northgate Lie and the others glared at him, drastically increasing the pressure that the man already felt. If he declined, then it would be embarrassing once news of the matter spread.

With no other choice, he slowly moved towards Lu Yin step by step.

Lu Yin gave him clear directions, and the man evaded the occasional phantom pike. Soon enough, he arrived at Lu Yin’s side. “Alright, start unlocking it from this direction.”

The man did not refuse and the two started to work in sync to unlock the sharp energy.

Everyone outside anxiously watched on.

Jared's face had a sinister expression, and he exchanged looks with the two Blaze Realm elders as he revealed a trace of helplessness. "We can't act for now. Otherwise, we won't be able to get out after we enter."

The other two nodded. "Let's play things by ear."

Just as the monkey had said, due to the weathering of time, the sharp energy from the pike had been greatly reduced. Lu Yin and the middle-aged Lockbreaker continuously worked on it for a day. On the second day, another Lockbreaker finally appeared. He was only a two star Discerning Elementary Lockbreaker, but another person helping out was definitely a good thing.

After twenty more hours, Lu Yin finally said, "Alright, you can pass now."

The two Lockbreakers were delighted. They stepped past the pike and into the centipede's body, the first ones to proceed.

Northgate Lie and the others' eyes went wide, and they all turned to look at Lu Yin with expectant expressions.

Lu Yin had not completely removed the sharp energy. It was possible, but there was no reason to do so since he was hoping for the pike to seal the exit for everyone.

"I'll draw a path on the ground, and everyone will be able to enter by following the path. However, I must let you know that this path will only be effective for one day, and it won't be usable after that. We'll have to unlock the pike again in order to exit," Lu Yin announced.

Someone shouted, "Brother Lu, why don't you just finish unlocking it? Then it'll be more convenient for everyone to enter and leave."

Lu Yin looked up. "You intend to have me stay here and keep unlocking this pike for you while you continue on and explore? Fine, but I want ninety percent of whatever you obtain inside."

"That's too much!" That person was astounded.

The crowd didn't take Lu Yin's words seriously since there was no way that he would be foolish enough to help all of them by completely unlocking the pike.

Northgate Lie was the first to head towards the body of the centipede, and he had an admiring look on his face. "Thank you, Brother Lu, for the help. Rest assured, when we get out, the Northgate family will reward you."

That's more like it, Lu Yin thought to himself, but he still acted very courteously.

The rest moved in one after another. As Lily Anne passed by, she whispered to Lu Yin, "Be careful of the Blaze Realm."

A clear path had been carved through the sharp energy, but the phantom pikes had not completely vanished and would occasionally appear. Fortunately, Lu Yin would remind people when that happened, which reassured them quite a bit.

However, before long, another person died to a phantom pike, causing Jared to look at Lu Yin with a furious face. "Brother Lu, why didn't you warn us?"

The person who had died had been from the Blaze Realm, and the rest of the group looked at Lu Yin with burning eyes.

Lu Yin casually replied, "Didn't see it."

Jared was pissed, but he was held back by the elder in charge. The old man calmly looked at Lu Yin. "Little brother, to be of service to others is to be kind to oneself. I hope that you will do your best in the future."

Lu Yin sneered as he replied, "Allowing you to go past is already being kind to you. Anymore nonsense from you, and I'll just throw you out."

"What did you say?" Jared was furious, but then, he had an intense coughing fit. His injuries were still too fresh, and his fury had aggravated his condition, causing him to cough up a mouthful of blood.

Lu Yin cast a sideways glance at him, but then ignored the group from the Blaze Realm as he made his way further deeper into the centipede's body.

The people from the Blaze Realm could do nothing, but the two elders looked at each other with an icy bloodlust. This person had to die.

The centipede's body was huge, and the crowd did not know which direction to explore now that they had finally entered the main body through the broken leg. For the first time ever, the many cultivators separated. Some headed left, others right, and the rest continuing forward.

Lu Yin followed behind Northgate Lie's group and headed to the left. Despite the group from the Blaze Realm's unknown motives, they also followed behind Northgate Lie, causing the overall group to swell to hundreds of cultivators.

"Strange, were these buildings built before or after the centipede's death? If before, then what happened to the internal organs?" someone commented.

"Probably after."

"That can't be right. This thing was hidden in another dimension after it died. If not for that Northgate elder's battle accidentally tearing through the void, this thing might have remained hidden there for who knows how many more years."