

The Brilliant Fighting Master

- Chapter 1: The Hundred Thousand Mountains |

“Xiao Nuo, you’ve been lying to me all along! How cruel you are!”

Jiang Chen woke up screaming from a nightmare. His chest was heaving rapidly, his forehead covered with sweat.

He looked around and surprisingly found himself lying in a strange room. The whole thing made him very confused. Suddenly he recalled something that completely shocked him.

I am not dead? It’s impossible. I was pierced through the heart by the Infinity Sai. Even the Golden Immortality of the Great Overarching Heaven couldn’t have saved me!

Countless images instantly sprung to his mind, some of which were familiar to him, others which were not.

He was left speechless.

The Nine Heavens Continent? Isn’t it in the Planes World, at the border of the Sacred Zone? How come I’ve been reincarnated into a sixteen-year-old boy?

Jiang Chen pinched his own arm hard. From the pain, he knew that this wasn’t a dream.

Five hundred years later?

That’s what really surprised him. No matter how far away the Sacred Zone was, there were ways to travel back. But time and tide wait for no man. So many things could have happened during these five hundred years.

He was caught by anger again at the thought of his current situation.

He was born in the Over Cloud Palace, one of the three most powerful forces in the Sacred Zone. The lord of the palace was his father, who was also one of the Four Sages of the Sacred Zone.

Like father, like son.

Theoretically speaking, Jiang Chen should be extraordinary enough to be a matchless, powerful man, just like his father. However, by a twist of fate, he was born with an exhausted pulse, which made it impossible for him to practice.

Although his father visited almost all men with special abilities in the Sacred Zone, no cure was found.

This meant the son of the lord of the palace was only a useless man who could in no way be strengthened.

But fortunately, the Over Cloud Palace was a heartwarming place, where he was well taken care of by his father's apprentices as well as his parents. They wouldn't allow any injustice to happen to him.

Jiang Chen didn't give up just because he couldn't practice. Instead, he tried to develop other abilities.

As a top force in the Sacred Zone, numerous books were kept in the Cloud Pavilion of the Over Cloud Palace. Almost all subjects were covered. If some of these books had been available outside of the palace, they would have caused bloody riots.

However, he could browse them at will as the son of the lord of the palace.

He showed unusual talents in many things. At 20 years old, his achievements in elixir, tactical formation, ware pattern and beast mastery could already match the achievements of any experts.

Jiang Chen once spent three days and nights discussing elixir arts on Mount Tianshan with the Saint of Medicine. The usually aloof and proud saint described him after meeting him with four simple words – “young but dangerously talented.”

The whole Sacred Zone was shocked to hear such a comment. Soon after that, he cracked the Yin Yang Sextile Formation created by the legendary Xuan Hou, thus helping the Over Cloud Palace acquire countless invaluable treasures from the relics.

People gradually forgot that Jiang Chen couldn't practice. They called him the First Child of the Sacred Zone in appreciation of his talents.

Later, Jiang Chen started to study medicine.

No one ever knew how advanced his medical skill became. But everyone knew if he was willing to help, however difficult the disease was, it would be cured. Even Yama couldn't beat him.

Jiang Chen got to know Xiao Nuo when he was 25. She was a saintess of the Dragon Society. Her master was one of the Four Sages.

She was deemed the most beautiful woman in the Sacred Zone. In addition, she had achieved something unusual in her practice, which left all promising youngsters in the Sacred Zone far behind.

It was natural that Xiao Nuo had innumerable admirers.

However, she fell in love with Jiang Chen, not minding that he couldn't practice. Instead, she appreciated his knowledge and talent.

Jiang Chen was soon attracted to such a perfect woman. What happened next was undoubtedly logical. Their marriage announcement caused quite a stir in the Sacred Zone.

On the day of their wedding, Jiang Chen walked into their wedding room with a sincere heart. He couldn't move his eyes away from his bride, who was sitting on the edge of the bed.

He took one step ahead, then another step, until he was close enough to raise that red silk veil.

He never expected to see a cold face and a cold weapon under the veil.

"Why? Xiao Nuo! Why did you do this to me?"

At this moment, Jiang Chen was searching memories that didn't belong to him, trying to get information regarding the Sacred Zone.

But the Nine Heavens Continent was too far away from the Sacred Zone. The communication channel between them wasn't stable enough.

He was surprised to find that people living there didn't have any idea of the existence of the Sacred Zone or the Planes World.

Of course he knew nothing about what had been happening in the Sacred Zone during the last five hundred years.

Jiang Chen didn't know how his parents were, or what happened to Xiao Nuo after she killed him. There was no way she would be able to escape from the Over Cloud Palace.

Nevertheless, she tried so desperately hard to assassinate him that there must have been an ulterior motive behind the scenes.

He thought of his father's apprentices, Bai Xuan, who drank like a fish, and Yu Qing, who adored Bai Xuan secretly but didn't dare to mention it. Ji Xin and Yi Xing, who always spent all day playing chess.

If nothing unexpected happened, they should still be alive. Please, please don't let anything happen to them! Jiang Chen, who could do nothing to help, was only able to pray for them.

It's impossible to bear the tear of the planes' channel if I haven't achieved the Reaching Heaven State. Does this mean I'm unable to go back for my whole life? Wait, I don't have an exhausted pulse now. I can practice!

By being revived in a new guise, he didn't have a body with an exhausted pulse any more. Although very weak, he had the thing that he once dreamed of.

It won't be difficult for me to achieve the Reaching Heaven State with my ability.

Jiang Chen made up his mind to practice until he was in the Reaching Heaven State in order to go back to the Sacred Zone of today, which was 500 years after his death.

Suddenly he heard some footsteps outside the door, which drew him back to reality. He started to carefully size up the room.

There was a mild sandalwood scent in the room. The winter sun shined through a hollow carved window, turning the shadow into fragments of light. Under him was a big soft bed. The quilts and sheets were all made of the finest silks.

The door was pushed open from outside. A pretty maid in a green and white robe came in. She looked 14 or 15 years old, short and slender.

“Young Master, you are awake! How wonderful it is!”

She saw Jiang Chen sitting on the edge of the bed when she went to enter the room. She opened her almond shaped eyes wide in surprise and ran away quickly after a cheer.

Jiang Chen knew that she was running to notify the Lady, the mother of his body.

The name of his current body was Ning Chen. He was the child of the Ning Mansion. The Nings were a powerful family that controlled the Southwind Ridge of the Hundred Thousand Mountains. They were a dominant force in this area.

It was said that the world was a unified whole before. Then an explosion shattered it into fragments. Each fragment was a plane.

The Sacred Zone was the most intact and the vastest among all fragments; it was the center of all planes.

By contrast, the Nine Heavens Continent was one of the least remarkable.

The continent was composed of various fields. The Hundred Thousand Mountains, where Jiang Chen was currently, was only a small corner of the Fire Field, while the Southwind Ridge was a small corner of the Hundred Thousand Mountains.

Although the Ning Mansion wasn't worth mentioning when considering the whole Fire Field, it was a considerably powerful force in the Hundred Thousand Mountains.

Ning Chen's father, Ning Qingyu, was the pride of the Southwind Ridge. He was especially talented, a quick learner of everything. He achieved the Mental Wander State when he was less than 20 years old, and was also known by people beyond the Hundred Thousand Mountains for his superb swordsmanship.

Later, Ning Qingyu became an apprentice of the Taoist Priest Skywind, a mighty figure in the Fire Field, and learned from him all his skills and abilities.

Ning Qingyu was finally ranked amongst the top 50 powerful men in the Master List of the Fire Field.

However, this influential man had no more big achievements after that.

It was because Ning Qingyu met Ning Chen's mother. They returned to the Ning Mansion and started their warm family there.

Ten-odd years had slipped by when Ning Chen was born. He showed talent as brilliant as his father's- they even said that he would achieve something greater than his father had.

At age 16, Ning Chen celebrated his Pulse Invigorating Ceremony.

The meridian system is fundamental for a person.

You relied on your meridian system to breathe in the spirits of the universe or put your own abilities to good use.

The Pulse Invigorating Ceremony aimed to achieve the greatest potential of his meridian system.

Jiang Chen was an excellent child when he was in the Sacred Zone, until he was found to have an exhausted pulse after they tried to invigorate it. As a result, he was doomed to fail in practice.

Ning Chen, on the other hand, had a perfectly strong pulse. Ning Qingyu took his son to the Black Dragon City, located outside of the Hundred Thousand Mountains, to celebrate his Pulse Invigorating Ceremony.

That was where the Nings were originally from.

The Ning Mansion of the Southwind Ridge is owned by a branch of the Nings of the Black Dragon City, where their clan land is. Every successor of the Ning Mansion goes there to celebrate the Pulse Invigorating Ceremony to show their respect to the clan.

Ning Chen was found to have a unique holy pulse. His pulse was a hundred times stronger than his father's. However, that's also when the misfortune began.

The First Lady of the Ning's original clan was very jealous of him, since her son Ning Haotian celebrated the ceremony with Ning Chen and it turned out that his pulse was not much better than an ordinary human's.

That night Ning Qingyu got very drunk at the banquet. The First Lady took advantage of it and called Ning Chen over with a lie. She deprived him of his holy pulse and transplanted it into her son's body.

Jiang Chen had no idea what happened next.

Ning Chen's memory after that was quite vague. He was too weak to survive after losing his holy pulse. Jiang Chen had taken over his body when he died.

When Jiang Chen woke up, he was lying in Ning Chen's room, which meant they had been back from the Black Dragon City.

At this moment, Jiang Chen heard urgent footsteps coming from outside.

"Son!"

A concerned voice came first before anyone appeared.

An instant later Jiang Chen saw a beautiful and slender woman in a long garnet dress appear in all her glory.

On seeing this face, Jiang Chen couldn't help asking, "Mother, how is father now?" He almost blurted out the question and was totally stunned by himself when he finished the sentence.

"I've taken over this body and his memory. To some extent I am Ning Chen." He didn't struggle too much, but got relieved soon, since he had no other choice.

The woman looked down on hearing him. A deep frown in her face showed a profound sadness.

It was the maid coming in after her who started to speak in anger.

After Ning Chen's holy pulse was taken, on the second day, when Ning Qingyu woke up sober and saw his son lying in bed, in a coma, he flew into a great rage. He picked up his sword and went to seek justice.

As a powerful man in the Master List, although he spent more than a decade only focusing on his family life and accompanying his wife and son, he didn't get any weaker, but stronger.

He, in his white robe and with his sword, turned the whole Black Dragon City upside down. None of the strong ones or elders from the original clan of the Nings could stop him.

That day, numerous people from the Nings' original clan were wounded or killed..

They didn't stop fighting until the Xia Dynasty was informed.

Ning Qingyu insisted that the First Lady should hand her son over.

However, the Ning's original clan claimed that the holy pulse couldn't be transplanted one more time, so if he killed Ning Haotian, the holy pulse would be wasted for no reason. They used this as an excuse, and were only willing to make up for Ning Chen's loss with money.

The Xia Dynasty was on Black Dragon City's side as well, since Ning Haotian and their princess had become engaged. Of course, the dynasty preferred that Ning Haotian keep the holy pulse.

Ning Qingyu wasn't resigned to taking the beating. He would rather die honorably, instead of living dishonorably. He swore to seek justice for his son.

In the end, the Xia Dynasty, who came to make peace, joined the fight too. Xue Jingtian, known as the Dragon General, joined hands with the Ning's original clan.

At last, Ning Qingyu was physically tired and was put down by the Nings' tactical formation.

"The Lord was accused of disrespect, and is imprisoned under the Black Dragon Pool by the Nings."

The woman started to cry when the maid finished the story.

Needless to say, the Black Dragon Pool was an extremely dangerous place.

"They've gone too far! Just too far!"

Jiang Chen became furious after hearing the story. He anxiously asked, "Why didn't you ask the Taoist Priest Skywind for help to seek justice?"

He knew from Ning Chen's memory that his father had a great master.

Gao Yue shook her head with a helpless look.

It turned out that the Taoist Priest Skywind was fighting outside and didn't know about anything that had occurred in the Nine Heavens Continent.

The Ning Mansion had no way to get in touch with him.

If it were not for their fear of the Taoist Priest Skywind, Black Dragon City would not have just kept Ning Qingyu in prison.

"Son, how are you feeling? Are you feeling any discomfort?" Gao Yue wiped away her tears. While asking, she held one of his hands, her long and thin fingers slightly squeezing his wrist.

After a little while she seemed to be in great pain, and looked frustrated and angry. She remained silent.

Jiang Chen didn't bother to ask. He knew that since the holy pulse was robbed, the broken pulse must have been very weak, even weaker than an ordinary human being, and his state had been lowered by many levels.

But these were no problems for him. He used to have an exhausted pulse. What else could be worse than that?

Suddenly, there were noises coming from outside.

"Cher, go to see what's happening out there. Chen needs to stay in a quiet environment to recover." Gao Yue knit her eyebrows, a certain coldness in her eyes.

Cher nodded, trotted out and came back with an apprehensive face soon after.

"Lady, things are bad. Those from the west courtyard have broken in!"

"The west courtyard?"

Gao Yue was very surprised. She didn't understand what they came here for.

Jiang Chen remembered by searching Ning Chen's memory that the Ning Mansion was composed of east, south, west and north courtyards.

The east courtyard was where he was then. It was also where the successor lived.

The other three courtyards belonged to his father's brothers, namely his uncles.

The one who lived in the west courtyard was his second uncle, but he was only Ning Qingyu's half brother, and they didn't get along well.

Ning Chen's grandpa was in charge of the whole Ning Mansion. Nevertheless, since the events in Black Dragon City, he had stopped meeting people and had been excusing his absence by claiming that he was sick.

Now those from the west courtyard were coming in a threatening manner.

"Hello, aunt!"

A 17 or 18-year-old young man in a white silken robe let himself in without knocking. He was a tall upright figure, quite good looking, although he seemed very mean when his lips were pressed into a thin line.

"Ning Jian, are you forcing your way in here with your people?" Gao Yue coldly and majestically asked.

Jiang Chen, who was next to her, could instantly tell that she was not just an average woman. But Ning Jian did not. He started to chuckle. "Aunt, the east courtyard is where the Ning Mansion's successor lives. Since uncle was caught and imprisoned and Ning Chen is disabled, there is no one left in your branch. Shouldn't you move away from this place?"

"Move?" Jiang Chen couldn't believe such a thing had happened when he had just arrived here.

This Ning Jian grew up with Ning Chen, but they didn't get along. He wanted to compete with Ning Chen in almost everything.

Even if he couldn't win, he would just try to insult Ning Chen with mean words.

"It is not up to you to decide," Gao Yue answered.

“Aunt, this is a simple matter. Uncle isn’t here. And it’s impossible for grandpa to pass on the position of lord to this disabled man. Even if you give birth to another son, it has to be uncle’s biological son. However, he is being imprisoned in the Black Dragon Pool now. ”

“How dare you!”

He was touching her sore spot in such a careless way. Gao Yue suddenly stood up and waved her sleeve. A strong wind started and swept over the ground.

Ning Jian was unable to withstand it. He was blown out of the door.

“Aunt, you...” Ning Jian got scared. He had always seen Gao Yue as an ordinary woman. He had never thought that she had such abilities.

Jiang Chen was surprised, too. According to his memory, his mother had never acted like this before.

She is at least in the Mind Wander State. Jiang Chen had never practiced, but he could tell.

No matter which plane you were in, if an ordinary being wanted to gain strength, he had to take in the spirits of the universe and accumulate them in his body to get stronger and stronger.

In this process there was a system to differentiate various states of strength.

In the Nine Heavens Continent, the best known were the Condensing Qi State, the Gathering Yuan State, the Mind Wander State and the Reaching Heaven State.

The Condensing Qi State was where everyone starts. In this state you needed to gather the spirits of the universe, convert them to genuine qi and store it in you. There were nine levels. The highest level is the Cloud Nine, where your genuine qi will be boiling. In just one more step, you will achieve the Gathering Yuan State.

“It’s adult business. You don’t get to talk about it! If you really want us out, ask your father to come!” Gao Yue was teaching him a lesson without showing any mercy.

However Ning Jian didn't leave. He rolled his eyes and then said, "Aunt, maybe my attitude is not good enough. But did I say anything wrong? Even if you kill me, the east courtyard is still doomed to sink."

This was a malicious comment. Gao Yue didn't know how to retort. Her shoulders were slightly shivering.

Jiang Chen knew it was time for him to do something. He got off the bed and shouted, "Ning Jian, you don't get to decide whether I am disabled or not."

"Ning Chen, you are awake! Your holy pulse was robbed. Your remaining pulse isn't strong enough to support your practice. You are doomed. Are you still able to achieve anything?"

Without giving Jiang Chen any chance to speak, he continued, "I am now in Cloud Seven of the Condensing Qi State. You used to be in Cloud Nine. But now, you are no higher than the Cloud Two!"

Ning Chen achieved Cloud Nine before, but after his pulse was robbed, he had lost much of his genuine qi; as a result, he was only in Cloud Two now.

"This is only temporary. No matter what state the east courtyard is in, you don't get to clamor here!" Jiang Chen said in rage.

Ning Jian got angry, but suddenly burst into laughter. He said in a cunning manner, "It will be the winter hunt in a fortnight. You are already an adult and will have to take part in it. But with your current situation, people won't know whether you are disabled or not until then."

"Oh, really? Let's wait and see." Jiang Chen didn't intend to beat him in words, but expected him to leave as soon as possible.

"You just never say uncle!" Ning Jian curled his lips and finally left. He didn't want to rush. Just like what he had said, the winter hunt was about to come.

That was when the show would begin.

Jiang Chen was a 16-year-old man now. If everything went well, he would take part in his first winter hunt.

However, just as Ning Jian had said, his current situation was no better than that of a disabled man.

It would be quite dangerous if he couldn't achieve Cloud Six of the Condensing Qi State.

As soon as Ning Jian left, Gao Yue sat down, fatigued.

"Mother, don't worry. There's no way I would give away the East Courtyard." Jiang Chen was watching his mother's face while he spoke, and he felt confused.

Gao Yue found that her son had changed a lot, as if he had grown up just in one night.

But it made sense. After such a misfortune, he had to grow up quickly, Gao Yue thought bitterly.

"Mother, don't worry. I will break father out of prison," Jiang Chen said again.

Gao Yue's eyes opened wide. She couldn't believe what she had heard and looked over at him. What she saw in her son's face was a firmness that she had never seen before.

Jiang Chen's current body was very weak. His state had been lowered to Cloud Two of the Condensing Qi State.

But it didn't matter, since Jiang Chen wasn't the person he once was any more.

He was from the Over Cloud Palace of the Sacred Zone, where there were countless precious books. He had everything in his mind. He made an effort to memorize things that he couldn't make use of only to know their strong and weak points, so that he could offer help to others when they had to fight.

He had never thought that one day he would be able to practice!

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The Ning Mansion wasn't simply a mansion with four walls. It covered the whole mountain.

The location of the four courtyards corresponded to their names.

At this moment, Ning Jian had returned to the west courtyard. He was talking to his father, the lord of the west courtyard, about what had happened.

“I am too useless to drive them away.”

“I didn’t really expect that you could make this happen. Let it go. My intention is to sound your grandpa out. But it’s quite surprising that that woman has practiced.”

Ning Tianxiong was a big, middle-aged man. He was wearing a fur robe, and he had a square face, a patchy beard, and bright eyes.

He didn’t realize how powerful Gao Yue was. After all, his son was only in the Condensing Qi State, so anyone was able to blow him away.

“To sound grandpa out?” Ning Jian looked at his father, full of curiosity.

“There is no one left in the east courtyard. Of course your grandpa will expect me to inherit the Ning Mansion for the sake of the whole family. But he is afraid that people will gossip and those of the east courtyard will be bitterly disappointed. That’s why he locks himself in his room and refuses to meet people. In a situation like this, it will be perfect if the east courtyard can petition from their side.”

Ning Jian got angry and said, “But it looks like Ning Chen won’t give up.”

“So what? We will take over the east courtyard’s property little by little. It is all the Nings’ property, so your grandpa won’t mind. Speaking of Ning Chen, in a fortnight it will be the winter hunt. You must behave well and make that Ning Chen ashamed of himself. Then I will take the opportunity to petition your grandpa. There will be no problem for us to move into the east courtyard then.”

“Trust me, father. I can guarantee you success.”

Ning Jian was very confident. Ning Chen was a threat to him no more.