

## **A Record 141**

### Chapter 141: Pill Refinement Examination

Manager Lu's brows furrowed ever so slightly upon hearing this, but his expression then quickly returned to normal.

"Rest assured, Manager Lu, I'm willing to cover all expenses for the examination," Han Li added.

Manager Lu didn't hesitate any longer upon hearing this, and he replied, "In that case, it would be downright rude of our Thousand Medicine House to turn you down. Please come with me, Senior."

With that, he promptly made his way out of the room, leading Han Li back downstairs, then emerged from the rear hall on the first floor before traveling along a path that led to the backyard.

Deep in the backyard was a circular archway that separated it from the front yard.

Even before arriving at the archway, Han Li detected a transparent light barrier present in the air within the archway, and judging from the spatial fluctuations emanating from it, it seemed to have been a teleportation array.

Upon arriving at the archway, Manager Lu stopped in his tracks, then turned back to Han Li as he said, "Please wait here for me while I make our presence known, Senior."

He then flipped a hand over to produce a purple badge, which he waved at the archway up ahead, and a burst of bright light immediately appeared within the archway.

Upon stepping into the archway, Manager Lu instantly vanished.

Han Li inspected his surroundings for a moment, following which the archway lit up again, and Manager Lu's voice rang out from within.

"Please come in, Senior."

Han Li did as he was told, stepping into the archway.

As soon as he did so, he immediately arrived in a hot environment with a rich and complex medicinal aroma in the air.

He looked around to discovered that they seemed to be in a hall that resembled an underground palace, and there were several wide paths leading in all directions.

On the walls on either side of the path were a series of copper doors, each of which was around 10 feet tall, and the light of flames could just barely be made out beyond them.

Before Han Li had a chance to take a good look at his surroundings, Manager Lu led him down one of the paths, which led to a spacious guest hall.

Inside the room sat a red-haired elderly man with a medium build, wearing a short dark purple robe. He was holding a teacup with one hand and the lid of the teacup in the other.

Han Li was immediately able to sense from the man's aura that he was a Grand Ascension cultivator.

Upon seeing the arrival of Han Li's duo, the elderly man set down his teacup and rose to his feet.

Manager Lu turned to Han Li as he introduced, "This is Master Zhu, an A-grade Temporal Pill Master, and he's agreed to conduct your examination."

"You have my thanks, Master Zhu," Han Li said as he extended a salute.

The red-haired elderly man could sense that Han Li's cultivation base wasn't inferior to his own, so he didn't dare to show any disrespect and returned Han Li's salute as he said, "If you want to examine your pill refinement skills, then I suggest we each refine a Sunray Pill, and by comparing the quality of our pills, we'll be able to determine your skill level."

Han Li's brows furrowed slightly upon hearing this, and he asked, "Sunray Pill? I'm afraid I don't know the refinement method for this pill. Is this something sold by your pill shop?"

"Oh?"

The red-haired elderly man was rather taken aback to hear this, seemingly rather surprised by Han Li's lack of knowledge, and he was beginning to look down on Han Li a little.

"There's no need to purchase the recipe. Sunray Pills are considered to be quite valuable among temporal pills, but its recipe is quite readily available in this area, so it's not worth much, and I'm happy to give it to you as a gift."

The red-haired elderly man swept a sleeve through the air as he spoke, sending a white jade slip flying toward Han Li.

Han Li caught the jade slip before injecting his spiritual sense into it, and he couldn't help but feel a little dismayed by what he saw.

The pill recipe was free, but all of the medicinal ingredients listed were quite expensive, and he had to pay for two batches, so this was quite a steep price to pay.

The red-haired elderly man then began to elaborate on some things that had to be kept in mind during the refinement of Sunray Pills.

Han Li listened carefully to his instructions, committing everything to memory. At the same time, he was pondering the steps that he was going to take and how he was going to control the temperature of his flame based on his past pill refinement experience.

A few minutes later, the two of them each accepted a storage pouch from Manager Lu, within which contained all of the ingredients required to refine Sunray Pills, following which each of them made their way into a pill refinement chamber.

A loud clang rang out as the heavy bronze gate was shut, and Han Li inspected his surroundings to find that the pill refinement chambers here were rather different from the ones he had seen in the Spirit Realm.

There was barely anything in the chamber, with only a purple copper pill refinement furnace positioned at the center of the room. There was no firepit on the ground, nor were there any fire-starting runes on the furnace.

Complex runes had been engraved onto the walls and the ground, seemingly forming some type of restriction that was capable of condensing and sealing the spiritual qi within the chamber.

After taking a moment to familiarize himself with his surroundings, he began to focus on the task at hand.

He raised a hand before snapping his fingers, and a silver flame flew into the pill furnace like a bird.

Scorching silver flames instantly rose up within the furnace, and only after about 15 minutes had passed, once the furnace had reached a sufficient temperature, did Han Li gradually begin to add medicinal ingredients to it.

As one spirit ingredient after another flew into the furnace, a medicinal aroma began to waft through the entire pill refinement chamber.

Around two hours later, a faint sound rang out from within the pill furnace, and Han Li caught sight of a cloud of faint purple mist beginning to rise up out of the gap on the top of the furnace. It lingered above the furnace without dispersing, presenting an intriguing sight to behold.

According to the red-haired elderly man's instructions, this was the point when he should've been adding the Cloudform Herb.

However, as Han Li picked up the Cloudform Herb, a hesitant look appeared in his eyes.

He had refined countless pills in the past, and there was a hierarchy of importance that applied to all ingredients used in pill refinement. The purposes served by the ingredients differed depending on their level of importance.

The Cloudform Herb wasn't a spirit ingredient that was unique to the Immortal Realm. Instead, it was something that he had used back in the Spirit Realm, so he knew that its properties were quite mild, and it was normally used to balance out the medicinal effects of the other ingredient. In the case of the Sunray Pill, it served that same purpose.

At this point, the purple mist had only just begun to rise up from the furnace, which meant that the other ingredients had only just begun to release their medicinal effects, and there was no need to balance them out yet. Hence, this was definitely not the best time to be adding in the Cloudform Herb, and that was the reason for his hesitance.

However, he quickly made a decision, sticking by his gut instinct.

Around another hour passed, and the purple mist billowing out of the pill furnace had become a lot denser. Only then did Han Li lift the furnace lid before tossing in the Cloudform Herb.

As a strong medicinal aroma wafted into his nostrils, a hint of elation appeared in his eyes.

Right at this moment, the surrounding walls suddenly began to glow, and the array patterns engraved upon them were activated of their own accord.

A small vortex instantly took shape in the entire pill refinement chamber, sweeping up the spirit power that was escaping from the pill before directing it back to the pill furnace.

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Around four hours later, the red-haired elderly man had already emerged from his pill refinement chamber, and he was waiting together with Manager Lu outside Han Li's pill refinement chamber.

Around another 15 minutes passed, and the door of Han Li's pill refinement chamber also swung open, following which he emerged with a white vial in his hand.

Manager Lu smiled as he said, "Looks like you've successfully refined the Sunray Pill as well, Senior. Congratulations."

"I don't know how well I was able to refine the pill, so I'll have to trouble the two of you to appraise it for me," Han Li said as he offered them the vial.

Manager Lu accepted the vial before pulling out the stopper, and a rich medicinal aroma immediately wafted out from within.

The red-haired elderly man expression instantly changed slightly upon catching a whiff of the aroma, and he unconsciously sidled up closer to Manager Lu to take a closer look at Han Li's pill.

Placed on Manager Lu's hands were the two batches of three Sunray Pills that Han Li and the red-haired elderly man had refined. On the surface, they didn't look very different, with the only notable disparity being that Han Li's pills appeared a little smaller.

Han Li turned his gaze to the red-haired elderly man, and he was just about to ask for his opinion when the latter heaved a faint sigh before departing without a word.

Manager Lu made no effort to stop him. Only after he had completely disappeared out of view did he turn to Han Li with a peculiar look on his face as he explained, "Please don't take it to heart, Senior. Master Zhu is not trying to be rude, he's just feeling a little... defeated."

Han Li immediately understood what Manager Lu was trying to say, and he waved a hand with a smile as he said, "In that case, I'll have to trouble you to appraise these pills, Manager Lu."

Manager Lu wasn't a pill refinement master, but he was a very skilled pill appraiser, and he said, "If what you said earlier is true, and you really haven't come into contact with any high-grade pills of the Immortal Realm prior to this, then I can only say that you have immense talent for pill refinement.

"Your control over temperature is incredibly precise, allowing you to eradicate all of the impurities in these Sunray Pills while also completely preserving the medicinal effect. The quality of these pills exceeds that of the ones refined by Master Zhu."

"So where would I rank as a pill refinement master in the Immortal Realm?" Han Li asked as a faint smile appeared on his face.

"Even though you only refined the Sunray Pill on this occasion, judging from the quality of the pill, you are undoubtedly already an A-grade Temporal Pill Master," Manager Lu replied with a serious expression.

Han Li nodded in response with a contemplative expression.

Even though he didn't have to display the full extent of his skills in the refinement of a pill of this caliber, the level of complexity and difficulty of refining this pill was not inferior to that of the top-tier pills of the Spirit Realm.

With that in mind, his past pill refinement skills would've most likely only landed him the rank of C-grade Temporal Pill Master in the Immortal Realm.

Manager Lu could see that Han Li didn't seem particularly excited about this appraisal, and he added, "Given your current pill refinement skills, there's definitely a chance that you could become an Earthly Pill Master in the future."

"Thank you for kind words, Fellow Daoist Lu," Han Li replied, and right there and then, he made up his mind, resolving himself to become a Heavenly Pill Master.

Once he reached that level, all he would need to do would be to find a suitable pill recipe, and he would be able to refine those mysterious crystals produced by the Heaven Controlling Vial into dao pills.

He had a unique advantage over others in that it was far easier for him to obtain spirit materials that contained the power of laws.

After a brief hesitation, Manager Lu asked, "May I ask if you're planning to settle permanently in Black Wind City, or are you just visiting on a temporary basis?"

Han Li's brows furrowed slightly upon hearing this, and Manager Lu hurriedly explained, "Please don't misunderstand, Senior, I only wanted to invite you to join our Thousand Medicine House as a guest pill master. Given your skills, I'm sure you'll be ranked second only to Master Hao in no time, and once you get there..."

Han Li waved a hand to cut off Manager Lu as he said, "I'm only stopping by in this city for a short time, but I appreciate the kind offer."

Manager Lu could tell that Han Li didn't seem to be lying, so he could only heave a forlorn sigh and drop the subject.

After that, Han Li purchased some more Origin Return Pills, then paid for them along with the cost of the Sunray Pills before promptly departing.

Of course, the six Sunray pills refined by himself and the red-haired elderly man had also been taken by him.

## Chapter 142: Best of Both Worlds

After leaving the Thousand Medicine House, Han Li didn't immediately return to his cave abode on Mount Youyang. Instead, he began to explore some of the larger shops nearby.

The pills that he had purchased up to this point had almost completely exhausted his stash of spirit stones, and he was definitely going to need spending money, so he was planning to sell some of his materials and treasures for top-grade spirit stones.

After walking for a while, he made his way onto a crowded main street, and he spotted a tall building that occupied the best spot on the entire street.



The building was three stories tall, and it was entirely constructed from fire clay bricks. There was a pair of gold-plated pillars in front of the entrance, supporting a hexagonal eave, atop which were glazed green tiles and golden rooftop beasts, presenting a stunning sight to behold.

Above the entrance was a large red plaque with a golden border, upon which was inscribed the words "Exotic Treasure House" in majestic gold-plated text.

Han Li took a glance at the plaque, then made his way up the stone steps before striding over the doorstep to enter the shop.

There were quite a few customers in the shop, gathered together in small groups in front of a series of redwood counters, examining and pointing at the treasures and materials placed on the shelves behind the counters.

Each group was accompanied by an azure-robed attendant, who were either offering descriptions and explanations of the shop's wares, or pulling down items from the shelves so the customers could examine them more closely.

Han Li took a brief glance at his surroundings, and he discovered that even though the treasures and materials on the shelves weren't of a particularly high caliber, with even the best ones among them only suitable to be used by Deity Transformation cultivators, they were all of an extremely high quality.

Right at this moment, he was spotted by an azure-robed attendant, who quickly excused himself, then approached Han Li with a smile as he asked, "What are you looking for? Do you require my assistance with anything?"

"I'm not here to buy, I'm here to sell," Han Li replied with a smile.

The azure-robed attendant was rather taken aback to hear this, then said, "I see. In that case, please come with me. Master Hai and Master Hu have always been the ones overseeing the purchase of items in our Exotic Treasure House, so I'll take you to see them."

Han Li merely nodded in response.

He was led by the attendant up a spiral wooden staircase straight to the third floor.

The layout of the third floor was completely different from that of the first floor. Rather than a shop, it bore a much closer resemblance to a tea room, and there was a series of separate rooms here.

The attendant made his way to the door of one of the rooms, then called out, "Master Hai, Master Hu, I've brought a customer."

The door of the room swung open, and Han Li was greeted by the sight of two people seated across from one another with a go board placed on the table between them, upon which were dozens of black and white stones.

The two of them looked up at Han Li, and upon sensing his aura, they immediately rose to their feet before extending a salute to him.

Among them was a scholarly azure-robed middle-aged man, and he waved a hand to dismiss the attendant, then said, "My name is Hai Wuliang, and this here is my colleague, Hu Dayou. May I ask your name, Fellow Daoist?"

The short-haired elderly man's attention was still on the game, and his gaze remained on the go board. He merely put on a faint smile and nodded at Han Li in an absent-minded manner.

"You can call me Liu Shi," Han Li replied.

"The two of us have always been responsible for the appraisal and purchase of items here in the Exotic Treasure House. The fact that you've been brought here must mean that you have something to sell to us, right?" the scholarly man asked with a warm smile.

"That's right. I have a water spirit bell here that I would like to have appraised," Han Li replied with a smile.

He flipped a hand over as he spoke, and a small blue bell appeared on the palm of his hand, The bell was glittering and translucent, with complex runes inscribed on its surface, and there were also several streaks of light that resembled roaming dragons swirling around it.

Hai Wuliang's eyes instantly lit up at the sight of the bell, and the short-haired elderly man also finally shifted his gaze away from the go board.

The two of them carefully accepted the water spirit bell, and after some close examination, they exchanged a glance with one another, following which one of them said, "This is a treasure of a very high caliber, and it can only be used by cultivators who are at least at the Grand Ascension Stage. However, it appears to not be an offensive or defensive treasure. Instead, it can only be used to seal all of the spiritual qi in an area."

This was a treasure that Han Li had secured from Han Qiu's storage bracelet, and just as the short-haired elderly man said, it was a rather niche treasure.

Hence, this was the first treasure that Han Li wanted to sell.

"You are indeed correct, Fellow Daoist. However, this is an exceptional treasure for those who are using water-attribute cultivation arts or want to conceal certain water-attribute spirit items. I'm sure you'll give me a fair price," Han Li said with a smile.

After a brief moment of contemplation, Hu Dayou asked, "I can do three top-grade spirit stones. What do you think Fellow Daoist?"

Han Li thought about this offer for a moment, and he felt it to be a fair price, so he nodded in response.

After that, he flipped his hand over once again to summon a white bead, which was giving off glacial qi that was visible even to the naked eye.

As soon as the bead appeared, the temperature of the room instantly plummeted, and a burst of faint crackling rang out from the teacups placed beside the go board. As it turned out, the tea inside had been instantly frozen solid.

The eyes of the two appraisers lit up once again, and they began to carefully examine the bead...

Around an hour later, Han Li slowly emerged from the Exotic Treasure House. Hai Wuliang and Hu Dayou had insisted on accompanying him down to the first floor and out of the shop.

Prior to his departure, they had invited him repeatedly to come back if he had any more treasures that he wanted to sell, and they assured him that they would give him good prices.

Han Li thanked them with a smile, then turned to depart, and the two appraisers watched him until he was completely out of sight before returning to the Exotic Treasure House, much to the bewilderment of all of the shop's attendants and customers.

They had purchased five treasures and a spirit material from Han Li, and they were ecstatic, thinking that they had made a massive haul.

However, in reality, they had only purchased around a tenth of everything that Han Li wanted to sell.

After leaving the Exotic Treasure House, Han Li visited the largest few shops in the city one by one, and only as night began to descend did he leave Black Wind City and return to his temporary cave abode on Mount Youyang.

After activating all of the restrictions in the cave abode, he went straight into his secret chamber.

Inside, he flipped a hand over to summon his azure cow mask, then placed it onto his face.

He then tapped his index and middle fingers against his glabella while chanting an incantation, and a burst of azure light flew out of the mask to form a giant array plate on the wall.

His gaze roamed over the right side of the array plate for a moment, following which he began flicking his fingers through the air.

One streak of light flew forth after another, and they all contained treasures that landed on the azure array plate.

Even though Han Li had altered his appearance several times and sold his stash of treasures and spirit materials in several batches, he still kept several of the most valuable treasures in his collection, including that black metal spike he had obtained from Wyrms 16.

These remaining treasures were virtually all scavenged from the bodies of the deceased Transient Guild members during his last trip to Red Moon Island, and most of them were signature treasures of theirs, so revealing them in Black Wind City could spell trouble for him.

Hence, he had decided to sell them all in the Transient Guild.

After that, a thought suddenly occurred to Han Li, and he turned his gaze to the left side of the array plate before writing something in the air.

As one glowing azure character flew into the array plate after another, a mission that was requesting leads for dao pill recipes quickly took shape.

After doing all of that, he stowed away his mask and closed his eyes to meditate.

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Several days passed by in the blink of an eye, and Han Li thought that it was going to be a very long time until he heard back about his dao pill recipe mission, but to his surprise, that was the first thing that he received a response on.

However, he hadn't been given any dao pill recipes. Instead, he was informed that what he was requesting was too precious, and such a thing generally wouldn't appear in normal trades.

Only higher-level core members of the Transient Guild could occasionally encounter someone willing to put a dao pill recipe up for trade, but even then, the trade conditions were always extremely rigorous and virtually impossible to satisfy.

Han Li was also informed that if he could obtain the title of Heavenly Pill Master and a piece of suitable collateral, then it would be far easier to obtain dao pill recipes.

In fact, if he could satisfy those two conditions, then he wouldn't even have to actively seek out dao pill recipes on his own. Instead, other guild members would supply him with recipes and ingredients so that he could refine the pills for them.

After that, Han Li inquired about some matters related to the three paramount laws, and he was told that there were many scriptures that claimed to be able to allow one to cultivate the paramount laws, but most of them were under the ownership of powerful entities in the Immortal Realm, and they were generally kept secret from outsiders.

As for some that were circulating in the outside world, they were either incomplete or flawed and unreliable, so no one would dare to cultivate them.

Furthermore, during the past few days, all of the treasures that Han Li had put up for sale in the Transient Guild were sold one after another.

In addition to the spirit stones he had obtained from selling treasures and materials in Black Wind City, he had made a small fortune of over 600 top-grade spirit stones.

This was an astronomical sum of wealth for the average cultivator, but in Han Li's eyes, it was nowhere near enough for the grand auction that was coming up in three years and the steep cost that would be required to leave the Black Wind Sea.

However, he wasn't overly concerned, and he released another mission to the Transient Guild, this one to search for Soulbirth Flower seeds.

According to his estimates, with the assistance of the Heaven Controlling Vial, he would definitely be able to nurture a Soulbirth Flower above 10,000 years old prior to the commencement of the grand auction.

With such a precious item up his sleeve, he was confident that he would be able to exchange it for whatever he required.

However, if he were to use the spirit liquid to accelerate the maturation of a Soulbirth Flower, then the rate at which his Earthly Deity Avatar was deriving heavy water would undoubtedly be negatively impacted.

However, this was unavoidable, and it was impossible to get the best of both worlds.

## Chapter 143: Missing Person

Several days later.

Han Li was cultivating in his secret chamber when his eyes suddenly sprang open, and he emerged from the room before releasing an incantation seal with a sweep of his sleeve.

The gate of his cave abode was opened, and Mu Xue was revealed standing outside.

Mu Xue hurriedly extended a respectful bow toward Han Li as he said, "Senior Liu, I've managed to find out some information on the matter that you entrusted to me last time."

"Come in," Han Li replied with a nod, gesturing for Mu Xue to enter the cave abode.

After entering the cave abode, Mu Xue jumped straight to the topic without wasting any time.

"According to the information I've been able to gather up to this point, there are two official ways through which one can obtain a teleportation spot."

"What are they?" Han Li asked.

"The first way requires one to be at the True Immortal Stage or above and serve as a guest elder at the island master's manor, doing his bidding for 100 years, and at the end of that period, they would be given a spot. The second way is to complete some of the missions occasionally released by the island

master's manor, and these missions will occasionally grant a teleportation spot as its reward," Mu Xue said.

Han Li fell silent upon hearing this.

The first of those two methods was naturally not one that he was going to consider.

The wanted notice from the Ubiquitous Pavilion and the person who had sealed his nascent soul were like a pair of swords constantly hanging over his head, and that was one of the main reasons he was in such a hurry to leave the Black Wind Sea. 100 years was simply far too long, and he had no idea what could happen during that time.

As for the second method, any missions that could grant a teleportation spot as a reward were definitely going to be quite difficult to complete, but it was definitely more feasible than the first method, so this was something that he could keep an eye on.

After a brief silence, Mu Xue lowered his voice slightly as he continued, "Aside from these two official methods, I heard that these teleportation spots have been traded in the black market as well, but the price is always... very steep."

"How much does it usually cost for a spot?"

"Five immortal origin stones at the very least, and even then, I've heard they're very difficult to purchase."

Han Li shook his head upon hearing this. In addition to the required teleportation fee, that would amount to a total of 10 immortal origin stones.

For an early-True Immortal cultivator, even if they didn't cultivate at all, it would still take 1,000 years to refine 10 immortal origin stones.

He had inquired about immortal origin stones in the Transient Guild earlier, and he was told that it was occasionally possible to find immortal origin stones up for trade, but the asking price for each one was



generally around 100 top-grade spirit stones, and as soon as one appeared, it would immediately be traded.

Given the current circumstances, it was clear that the master of Black Wind City wasn't very keen on the idea of allowing people to leave the Black Wind Sea.

"Alright, thanks for your hard work."

Han Li flipped a hand over to produce a high-grade spirit stone as he spoke, then tossed it at Mu Xue.

Mu Xue was ecstatic, and he said in a grateful manner, "Thank you, Senior Liu! If you require my services for anything else, please feel free to tell me."

Han Li merely smiled and waved a hand to dismiss Mu Xue.

Following Mu Xue's departure, Han Li began to pace back and forth in his cave abode with his hands clasped behind his back, seemingly pondering something. Moments later, he left his cave abode altogether before flying toward a certain direction.

At the center of Black Wind City was a series of connected black buildings.

In stark contrast with their surroundings, these black buildings were entirely constructed from extremely high quality building materials, and they took up a vast area. The buildings had clearly also been arranged in a meticulous fashion, with countless pavilions, gardens, and bodies of flowing water inside. This was an enormous manor.

The entire manor was emanating a burst of faint black qi, making it appear as if it were enshrouded under a layer of black mist.

All of the passersby gave the manor a wide berth and were walking very quickly, not daring to approach the manor.

This was the island master's manor, which belonged to Island Master Lu Jun.

At the entrance of the manor was a huge plaza, at the edge of which stood a tall black palace. Above the entrance of the palace was a plaque that read "Talisman Letter Palace."

This was quite a lively and bustling place with many people frequently entering and exiting the palace. All of the visitors were at least at the Body Integration Stage, and the occasional Grand Ascension cultivator could be seen as well.

A streak of azure light shot forth from afar, then landed outside the palace to reveal Han Li.

He took a glance at the palace before him, then made his way inside.

The palace was rather empty, with only a bluestone wall that was over 100 feet tall standing at its very center, upon which was inscribed some lines of text.

A pair of black-robed men were standing on either side of the palace, and judging from their attire, they seemed to be serving the island master's manor.

At this moment, there were around a dozen cultivators littered throughout the palace, looking up at the stone wall, and there were also some familiar acquaintances among them discussing the missions on the wall.

Han Li drew to a halt near the stone wall before looking up at it to find that it was laden with around 20 to 30 missions, all of which were accompanied by clear descriptions and rewards.

Han Li immediately began searching for missions that granted teleportation spots as their reward, and he quickly found two, one of which was to search for a spirit material known as Azure Radiance Jade, while the other required one to be at or above the True Immortal Stage and oversee an island for 100 years.

Han Li's brows furrowed slightly upon hearing this.

He had read about Azure Radiance Jade in scriptures on Dark Veil Island, so he knew that it was a spirit material that was said to contain the power of laws, so that definitely wasn't going to be easy to find.

Even if he could track down this spirit material, he would have to ponder whether it was worth exchanging it for a teleportation spot.

As for the other mission, that required 100 years to complete, so it was definitely not something that he was going to consider.

Right as a hint of disappointment appeared in his eyes, he suddenly spotted something that caught his attention.

There was a rather special mission at the very top of the stone wall, and it required one to search for a missing person, but the identity of the missing person wasn't specified.

The reward for this mission was massive, and anyone who completed it would be able to state a request to the island master to be fulfilled, as long as it was within reason.

The mission had only been released not long ago, and there was a note attached to it, stating that only those at or above the True Immortal Stage could take on the mission.

A contemplative look appeared in Han Li's eyes.

This was a rather mysterious mission, and it didn't look like it was going to be easy to complete, but it was definitely more feasible than the other two missions.

After some contemplation, he began to approach the stone wall.

One of the black-robed men extended a salute toward Han Li, then asked in a respectful voice, "Would you like to take on a mission, Senior?"

"I'll take on this mission. Are there any more details available?" Han Li asked as he pointed at the mission.

Everyone around him immediately turned their attention to him with different looks on their faces.

The black-robed man's eyes immediately lit up, and he began to make his way out of the palace while gesturing for Han Li to follow along. "Please come with me, Senior."

"Does that mean he's a True Immortal cultivator?"

"That should be obvious! The fact that he dares to take on this mission clearly indicates that he's a True Immortal."

"I've never seen him before, so he's most likely not from the city."

As Han Li and the black-robed man made their way out of the palace, everyone erupted into spirited discussion.

There were countless cultivators gathered on Black Wind Island, but True Immortals were still exceedingly rare in the Black Wind Sea, and no one had expected such an unremarkable-looking young man to be a True Immortal.

Han Li paid no heed to the chatter behind him as he followed the black-robed man toward the island master's manor.

The guards at the entrance of the manor granted them free passage, and after passing through a series of winding corridors, they arrived in a large hall.

At this point, there were already around a dozen people gathered in the hall.

Upon hearing the sound of footsteps, most of them turned to glance at Han Li for a moment, then averted their eyes again.

All of these people were giving off enormous auras, clearly indicating that they were True Immortals as well.

Han Li didn't display any outward reaction to this, but internally, he was rather taken aback to discover that there were so many True Immortals on Black Wind Island.

"Please take a seat and wait here, Senior, someone will be here to deliver a debriefing on the mission soon," the black-robed man said.

Han Li nodded in response, then found a place to sit in the hall.

An azure-robed attendant approached him before offering him a cup of spirit tea that was giving off a delectable aroma.

Han Li raised the teacup to his lips, taking the opportunity to size up the other people in the room.

It was clear that they had taken on the same mission as him, and their cultivation bases were also all quite similar to his. Most of them were seated on their own with no verbal communication taking place, and some had even already closed their eyes to meditate.

However, not everyone was on their own.

There were three people seated next to one another in a rather conspicuous spot in the hall, and the trio consisted of a burly and imposing man, a young woman with a black veil over her face, and a thing young man, all of whom were chatting amicably with one another.

"Greetings, Fellow Daoist, my name is Guan Yong."

While Han Li was observing the people around him, a voice rang out beside him, and as it turned out, he had been approached by a chubby young man with a smile on his round face.

"My name is Liu Shi. It's a pleasure to make your acquaintance, Fellow Daoist Guan," Han Li replied with a nod as he set down his teacup.

"I don't recognize you, Brother Liu. Could it be that you only recently came to Black Wind Island?"

Guan Yong clearly had a very naturally outgoing personality, and he was already referring to Han Li as brother.

Han Li raised an eyebrow as he replied, "Indeed, I only arrived at Black Wind Island just a few days ago. How did you know that?"

"I have a very outgoing personality and like to make friends, and there aren't many True Immortal cultivators in Black Wind City, so I know almost everyone," Guan Yong explained with a smile.

"I see. Your ability to make friends is very admirable," Han Li said with a nod.

Guan Yong was a rather chatty man, and Han Li had nothing better to do anyway, so he engaged in a casual conversation with Guan Yong.

He asked Guan Yong about some of the other people present, and he was able to learn quite a bit from the conversation.

Close to half a day passed by, during which time two more True Immortals had arrived in the hall.

At the stroke of noon, the sound of footsteps rang out from behind the hall, and an authoritative-looking middle-aged man wearing a black brocade robe emerged.

As soon as he arrived, the entire room instantly fell silent, and even the trio that had been chatting amicably with one another had stopped their conversation.

Han Li's pupils contracted slightly at the sight of the man standing before him.

He felt as if he were looking at a tall mountain, and the aura emanating from the man's body was making his heart shudder with apprehension.

"Island Master!" Guan Yong was the first to rise to his feet before extending a salute toward the middle-aged man.

Han Li and the others also extended salutes of their own as he carefully sized up the most powerful figure in the entire Black Wind Sea.

#### Chapter 144: The Island Master's Missing Daughter

"There's no need for such formalities. Please take a seat, everyone."

The brocade-robed man's expression was calm and tranquil, but there was a barely detectable hint of agitation concealed deep within his eyes.

Han Li and everyone else in the room did as they were told, returning to their seats.

"I'm not going to waste any time here. The missing person that I'm searching for is none other than my daughter, Yuqing. Two days ago, she suddenly disappeared along with several companions, and these are some leads that I've managed to gather following her disappearance. If any of you can help me find my daughter, I'll be sure to reward you handsomely."

Lu Jun swept a sleeve through the air as he spoke, releasing around a dozen jade slips at once, all of which landed on the tea tables beside the cultivators in the room.

Han Li picked up the jade slip, then pressed it against his forehead before injecting his spiritual sense into it.

The jade slip contained a visage of Lu Yuqing, and she was a young woman dressed in white who appeared to have been around 18 to 19 years of age.

He was rather taken aback to discover that Lu Yuqing was none other than the white-robed young woman he had run into at the Thousand Medicine House not long ago.

Following her visage were the visages of several more people. These were the companions that had gone missing with Lu Yuqing, and their identities were clearly stated as well.

The first one was the blue-robed young man who had accompanied Lu Yuqing on her visit to the Thousand Medicine House, and his name was Fang Leng.

He was a Temporal Pill Master, and he was the disciple of a renowned Earthly Pill Master in the Black Wind Sea.

As for the others, they were all guards that had been assigned to Lu Yuqing.

All of them had left Black Wind Island using a teleportation array two or three days ago, and they had been missing since then.

The jade slip also contained a list of places that Lu Yuqing often frequented.

There wasn't much information in the jade slip, so Han Li was able to read through everything quite quickly, following which a contemplative look appeared on his face.

"Island Master, do you have any idea of why Young Mistress Yuqing may have suddenly disappeared?"

The question had been raised by the burly man in the trio, and everyone immediately turned their attention to him upon hearing this.

Han Li's gaze also fell upon the burly man. According to Guan Yong, these three had come from a place known as Splendid Mountain Island, and they referred to themselves as the Three Scourges of Splendid Mountain.



No one knew their names, and to outsiders, they were merely known as the First Scourge, the Second Scourge, and the Third Scourge, with the burly man being the First Scourge.

All three of them were itinerant immortals who had no set residence. Furthermore, they always worked together and had a reputation for being ruthless, so they were quite renowned in the Black Wind Sea, and no one dared to mess with them.

A hint of sorrow flashed through Lu Jun's eyes upon hearing this question, but he quickly composed himself as he replied, "My son, Lu Mo, left on a journey several years ago, but not only has not returned, his Origin Soul Lamp has also been snuffed out. To this day, I still have no idea what's happened to him.

"Yuqing has always been very close to her brother, and she had always wanted to go and find out the cause of his death, but I've never allowed her to go. I presume her sudden appearance may have something to do with this."

Everyone fell silent upon hearing this.

Han Li thought back to Lu Yuqing's conversation with Fang Leng back at the Thousand Medicine House on that day with a contemplative look in his eyes, and he recalled that they were indeed discussing something about Lu Yuqing's brother.

The First Scourge exchanged a glance with his companions, then said, "In that case, would it be possible for us to have a copy of Young Master Lu Mo's information as well? I'm sure that would help us in our search for Young Mistress Yuqing."

"That's a good idea," Lu Jun replied with a nod, then pulled out a jade slip along with around a dozen blank jade slips.

After making copies of the initial jade slip, each person in the room was given a copy.

Han Li injected his spiritual sense into the jade slip to find a rather messy and disorganized collection of information on Lu Mo.

All of a sudden, he caught sight of a rather surprising piece of information.

It was a visage of a blue tiger mask, but it wasn't very clear.

The mask was very similar to the ones worn by Transient Guild members, and it was rather familiar to Han Li.

That mask belongs to Wyrms 16

Han Li quickly recalled that Wyrms 16, with whom he had carried out a mission on Red Moon Island, had been wearing a blue tiger mask.

Could it be that Lu Mo is Wyrms 16?

Han Li couldn't be sure.

Right at this moment, Lu Jun swept his sleeve through the air once again, and around a dozen black badges were released before landing beside everyone in the room.

"These are Black Wind Badges. With these badges, you'll be able to use all of the teleportation arrays on Black Wind Island while carrying out your mission," Lu Jun explained.

Everyone immediately extended collective words of gratitude toward Lu Jun.

There were many teleportation arrays on Black Wind Island that were connected to other islands in the Black Wind Sea. Due to far all of the islands were away from one another, it would've normally been very expensive to travel to those islands through teleportation arrays, so these Black Wind Badges would save everyone a lot of spirit stones.

All of a sudden, a cold and forbidding look appeared on Lu Jun's face as he continued, "One more thing: none of you are to tell anyone about this mission. Otherwise, don't blame me for turning on you. If I

want to have someone in the Black Wind Sea killed, they won't be able to get away no matter where they hide!"

"Rest assured, Island Master, our lips are sealed!" everyone in the room hurriedly assured.

Lu Jun's expression reverted back to normal as he said, "If any of you manage to bring back my daughter safely, I'll be sure to follow through on my promise and grant you one request."

"In that case, we'll begin our search right away. We'll be taking our leave now."

The First Scourge cupped his fist in a parting salute toward Lu Jun, then departed with the other two scourges.

Han Li and the others quickly departed as well, and before long, Lu Jun was the only one left in the room.

Right at this moment, a black-robed elderly man abruptly appeared beside him in a wraith-like manner. His hair and beard were all completely white, but his face was as delicate as an infant's. His aura was enormous, indicating that he was a mid-True Immortal cultivator.

"Can we really count on those people to save Yuqing? You should send me instead, Island Master," the black-robed elderly man said.

Lu Jun immediately shook his head as he sighed, "No. There's recently been a lot of activity taking place on Azure Feather Island, and it seems like they're about to make a big move, so none of us can leave Black Wind Island at a time like this. I'll simply have to count on those people to find Yuqing. I've promised them quite a handsome reward, so I'm sure they'll do everything in their power to find her."

"But..." The black-robed elderly man wanted to protest the matter further, but Lu Jun raised a hand to cut him off.

"We must keep our priorities in check. Unfortunately, there are more important things for us to worry about right now than Yuqing," Lu Jun said with a hint of weariness in his voice.

The black-robed elderly man heaved a resigned sigh upon hearing this. "I can't believe Yuqing would choose to run off at a time like this."

"She does whatever she wants because I've spoiled her rotten! Once she comes back, I'm going to teach her a good lesson!" Lu Jun harrumphed coldly.

"Yuqing is not entirely to blame. It's already been so many years, yet we still haven't been able to find out the cause of Mo'er's death, so it's no wonder that she would grow impatient," the black-robed elderly man sighed.

Lu Jun rose to his feet with an agitated expression, clasping his hands behind his back as he paced back and forth in the room.

He then drew to an abrupt halt as he said, "If this is just a simple disappearance, then that wouldn't be a cause for concern. What I'm most worried about is that she's inadvertently exposed her own identity and fallen into the hands of cultivators from Azure Feather Island. If that's the case, then we'll all be in a terrible situation."

The black-robed elderly man's brows furrowed slightly as he said, "Yuqing is a little sheltered, but she's a very bright and intelligent girl. On top of that, she's carrying several powerful spirit treasures, so I'm sure she'll be fine."

"I certainly hope so," Lu Jun sighed.

.....

After departing from the island master's manor, Han Li and the others all flew toward the same place in silence.

Moments later, everyone had arrived in front of a huge rhomboid brick building in the city.

On the first floor of the building were around a dozen teleportation arrays of different sizes, all of which were giving off glowing white radiance, and a destination island was marked out beside each array.

Han Li raised an eyebrow upon seeing this.

He had already been on Black Wind Island for several days, and during this time, he had learned extensively about Black Wind Island and the nearby region.

The islands that were marked out in the teleportation hall were all technically subsidiaries of Black Wind Island.

Unlike a small and rural island like Dark Veil Island, Black Wind Island was situated at the center of the Black Wind Sea, and it wasn't the only powerful island in the region. Hence, the smaller islands near the most prominent islands in the area would form alliances with those larger islands for protection.

Due to the fact that Black Wind Island had a teleportation array that led to the outside world, it had a unique advantage, and that was why it was such a thriving city.

However, it was also exactly because of this that it was attracting a great deal of envy from nearby island alliances. As a result, it had many enemies, and there were conflicts constantly taking place.

Thankfully, Lu Jun was a late-True Immortal cultivator, and he had many powerful guest elders at his beck and call, so he was able to keep all of the nearby forces in check, thereby ensuring the peace of Black Wind Island and also contributing to the peace of the entire Black Wind Sea to a certain extent.

However, none of these conflicts had anything to do with Han Li. All he had to do was find Lu Yuqing, and he would be able to leave the Black Wind Sea.

None of the other people had any idea where Lu Yuqing could be, but he already had a good guess of her location.

With that in mind, a faint smile appeared on his face, and he directed his gaze toward the teleportation arrays in the hall.

At this moment, the hall was completely empty aside from the cultivators in charge of overseeing the teleportation arrays.

Han Li's gaze fell upon one of the teleportation arrays, and he began to make his way toward it.

This was one of the islands that had been mentioned in the jade slip. Its name was Assembly Island, and according to the jade slip, Lu Yuqing had previously left Black Wind Island using this teleportation array.

Hence, if he wanted to find her, then Assembly Island was naturally the first place to visit.

Everyone else was thinking the same thing, and after a brief pause, all of them made their way toward that teleportation array.

A gray-haired elderly man beside the teleportation array was rather taken aback to see such a large group of people approaching him, and he hurriedly asked in a respectful voice, "Are you all here to take the teleportation arrays, esteemed seniors?"

"Why else would we come here? Hurry up and stop wasting our time! I'm in a hurry!" the First Scourge harrumphed coldly, then flashed his Black Wind Badge at the elderly man before stepping onto the array.

Everyone else also brought out their Black Wind Badges before stepping onto the array as well.

"Yes, my apologies, Senior."

The gray-haired elderly man didn't dare to delay, and he immediately cast a series of incantation seals, following which Han Li and everyone else vanished from the array amid a flash of radiant white light.

Chapter 145: Search

All Han Li saw was a burst of blinding white light, and in the next instant, he found himself in an azure stone hall, standing atop a teleportation array.

As soon as everyone emerged from the teleportation array, several people immediately flew out of the hall, including the three scourges.

Only one person could complete this mission, so the competition was very fierce.

Han Li and the rest of the cultivators exchanged a few glances, then made their way out of the hall in silence.

The hall was situated on a plot of elevated land, and one could see a complex system of streets and roads down below, as well as countless humanoid figures that were as tiny as sesame seeds.

It was clear that this was also a city, and it appeared to have been quite a large and bustling city as well, but it naturally couldn't compare with Black Wind City.

"You seem very confident, Brother Liu. Could it be that you already have an idea of where to begin your search?" Guan Yong asked with a smile.

A wry smile appeared on Han Li's face as he replied, "I'm afraid not, Brother Guan. I'm currently racking my brains, trying to think of where Young Mistress Lu could be. What about you? Have you thought of anything?"

"I'm just as lost as you are. Looks like all we can do is search for her by brute force," Guan Yong sighed.

The two of them chatted for a short while before parting ways, and at this point, everyone else had also already left.

Han Li flipped a hand over to produce a jade slip, which contained a detailed map of the Black Wind Sea. He then injected his spiritual sense into the jade slip and quickly tracked down the location of Assembly Island.

Looks like I was right.

A contemplative look appeared in his eyes, and he rose up as a streak of azure light before hurtling away into the distance. Before long, he had already flown out of Assembly Island, and he flew around the nearby sea for a while to ensure that he wasn't being followed.

He then made a hand seal, and countless arcs of silver lightning erupted out of his body, instantly forming a round lightning array with a diameter in excess of 100 feet.

There were countless silver runes flashing within the array, and the array abruptly vanished amid a resounding thunderclap, leaving behind only several arcs of silver lightning that also quickly dissipated.

Several days later.

A flash of lightning appeared somewhere on the Black Wind Sea, and a silver array appeared out of thin air before quickly vanishing to reveal Han Li, who was looking a little weary.

He took a glance at his surroundings, and he spotted a black dot on the horizon, which seemed to have been an island.

"Finally," he murmured to himself, and instead of continuing to use his lightning teleportation array, he flew toward the island as a streak of azure light.

Given his current speed, it didn't take him very long at all to arrive at the island.

The earth on the island before him had a peculiar red hue, and the same applied to all of the vegetation on the island as well. This was none other than Red Moon Island, the island that he had previously visited on his mission for the Transient Guild.

Assembly Island was the closest of Black Wind Island's subsidiary islands to Red Moon Island, and in addition to that, Han Li was aware that there was a very good chance that Lu Mo was Wyrms 16, so he knew that it was very likely that Lu Yuqing had also gathered sufficient leads to find out that Lu Mo had perished on Red Moon Island.



Even though this was all just speculation from Han Li, he had no other leads, so there was no other direction for him to pursue.

He cast his gaze toward Red Moon Island, and his brows furrowed slightly.

The island was too massive, so even with his spiritual sense, it would take an extremely long time to scour the entire island.

After a moment of contemplation, he shot forth as a streak of azure light once again, flying toward the Red Moon City in the Kun Province, where Wyrn 16 had met his demise.

At the same time, his spiritual sense was fully activated to inspect his surroundings.

He couldn't search the entire island, so he could only pick out the likeliest locations.

It took him no more than half a day to cover close to half of the journey to his destination Red Moon Island, but he hadn't been able to find any further leads along the way thus far.

All of a sudden, he seemed to have noticed something, and he drew to an abrupt halt before descending onto the ground.

Down below was a lush forest, and there was a long trench in the ground that was thousands of feet in length. The soil on the edge of the trench had been completely charred black, as if it had been incinerated.

"These signs of battle are very recent, so the battle seems to have taken place not long ago," Han Li murmured to himself.

There was still some heat emanating from the charred soil, and judging from the damage caused, the person responsible had to have been at least a Grand Ascension cultivator.

Han Li didn't linger here any longer as he rose up into the air once again and continued to fly onward.

He made sure to be extra vigilant, and sure enough, he discovered many more similar signs of battle along the way.

Close to an hour later, Han Li had descended onto a grassland.

The ground up ahead was completely charred black and riddled with countless craters that were thousands of feet deep, clearly indicating that a fierce battle had recently taken place here.

He spread his spiritual sense through the area, then beckoned toward a certain direction, and the soil in one of the large craters up ahead stirred slightly, following which a piece of black cloth flew out from within and into Han Li's grasp.

Looking at the piece of black cloth, Han Li was reminded of the black attire worn by the cultivators serving the island master's manor on Black Wind Island. The material was identical.

With that in mind, he immediately rose up into the air once again as a streak of azure light, vanishing into the distance in a flash.

A short while later, silver lightning flashed above the giant crater, and he returned to the same spot.

There weren't any further signs of battle up ahead.

He didn't know who Lu Yuqing's enemies were, but it was clear that she and her companions had been defeated here, and it was unclear whether she was dead or alive.

All of a sudden, bright blue light began to glow from Han Li's eyes, and at the same time, his Law Destruction Eye appeared on his glabella amid a flash of black light.

The three bursts of light, one black and two blue, converged in front of him to form a huge black and blue eye, which was releasing waves of black and blue light that proliferated outward in all directions.

All of the world's origin qi in the surrounding area instantly appeared in his mind with exceptional clarity, resembling countless specks of light that were moving around in all directions in a chaotic fashion.

Even though there seemed to be no rhyme or reason to these chaotic specks of light, he was able to spot a trail of crimson light that seemed to have been drifting in a certain direction.

He immediately set off toward that direction, flying as quickly as he could, vanishing into the distant horizon in a flash.

Shortly thereafter, Han Li drew to an abrupt halt, then flew in another direction.

The person who had left the aura behind had changed directions here.

Only after several more directional changes did the lingering aura finally follow a single direction, and Han Li was able to truly commence his pursuit.

A rumbling thunderclap rang out as countless arcs of silver lightning erupted out of his body, and another loud thunderclap rang out as he vanished from the spot.

In the next instant, he reappeared hundreds of kilometers away, then disappeared once again amid another flash of lightning.

He didn't dare to teleport too long a distance each time for fear that his target would change directions again, but even so, he was still traveling at an extraordinary speed.

The lingering aura in the air was becoming clearer and clearer, indicating that he was closing in on his target.

In a region of the sea somewhere near Red Moon Island, a streak of bright red light was hurtling through the air at an incredible speed, containing a fiery red flying ark.

Atop the flying ark stood three figures, two of which were a square-faced middle-aged man and an elderly man with a white beard. Both of them were wearing azure robes with an azure feather design emblazoned on the sleeve.

The two of them were standing beside a gorgeous white-robed young woman, whose entire body had been bound by a chain of red light, and she was glowering at the two men with intense fury and resentment in her eyes.

"Speed up a bit more," the elderly man urged as he inspected his surroundings with tightly furrowed brows.

"This is already as fast as this Dragon Feather Ark can go, Brother Qi. Any faster than this and the ark's spiritual nature will be harmed. Besides, we've already killed all of those Black Wind Island cultivators and changed directions multiple times, surely no one will be able to track us down," the square-faced man said in a nonchalant manner.

"We can't afford to grow complacent before we return to Azure Feather Island. Keep accelerating, I'll cover the costs to repair any damage to your ark," the elderly man urged.

"Fine."

The square-faced man gave a slightly exasperated shrug, then released a series of incantation seals.

Countless crimson runes instantly appeared around the flying ark, resembling an undulating wave.

The ark immediately sped up by about 30%, hurtling along so quickly that the surrounding scenery had turned into a complete blur.

The elderly man's expression eased slightly upon seeing this, and he flipped a hand over to produce an array plate.

However, right as he was about to activate the array plate, his expression changed drastically, and he swung around to look behind the ark.

"What is it, Brother Qi?" the square-faced man asked with a perplexed expression.

"Someone's chasing after us!" the elderly man exclaimed with a grim expression.

The square-faced man immediately turned to look behind the ark as well, and a surprised look appeared on his face.

Sure enough, a speck of silver lightning had appeared on the horizon, and it was flashing incessantly.

Furthermore, with each flash, the silver lightning would become a little larger, indicating that whoever was chasing after them was quickly closing in.

"What incredible speed!" the elderly man exclaimed with a stunned expression, while a hint of elation appeared in Lu Yuqing's eyes.

"Shit!"

The square-faced man gritted his teeth, then expelled a mouthful of blood essence, and he made a rapid series of hand seals while the blood essence transformed into a ball of crimson light that vanished into the flying ark.

Streaks of fiery red light instantly erupted out of the ark, and it was as if the entire ark had been set alight. As a result, it sped up by twofold and began hurtling through the air as a red blur.

Even though the flying ark had accelerated even further, its speed was still clearly inferior to its pursuer, and the distance between them was still slowly diminishing. Before long, the pursuer was only several dozen kilometers away.

A dark look appeared on the elderly man's face upon seeing this, and he was just about to spring into action when another flash of silver lightning appeared behind him before vanishing in a flash.

In the next instant, a rumbling thunderclap rang out directly above them, and a ball of silver lightning appeared, followed by another resounding thunderclap as a bolt of silver lightning that was as thick as a water tank came crashing down with devastating power.

## Chapter 146: The Two Azure Feather Island Cultivators

The elderly man immediately raised a hand upon seeing this, releasing a burst of black light that contained a small black flag.

The small flag instantly unfurled and began to glow with dazzling black light, which formed a menacing ghostly head that chomped down onto the bolt of silver lightning.

A layer of silver runes appeared on the surface of the silver lightning, and it abruptly accelerated, vanishing into the ghostly head's mouth in a flash.

The elderly man's expression changed slightly upon hearing this, yet before he had a chance to do anything, the ghostly head exploded violently amid a resounding boom.

The bolt of lightning emerged from the other side, having shrunk down significantly, then struck the flying ark with tremendous force, causing it to explode into pieces.

Before the ark was destroyed, the two azure-robed cultivators had already taken Lu Yuqing and fled to several thousand feet away.

Meanwhile, the silver lightning in the sky flashed a few times before dissipating to reveal Han Li. His gaze roamed over the pair of azure-robed cultivators before settling on Lu Yuqing, and he was very relieved to see that even though she was bound, she was largely unharmed.

The elderly man's face had paled slightly, and he yelled, "Who are you? I'd advise you not to meddle in the business of our Azure Feather Island unless you have a death wish!"

Han Li raised an eyebrow upon hearing this, and his gaze fell upon the azure feather design on the elderly man's sleeve.

Azure Feather Island was a vastly renowned island in the Black Wind Sea, and it was one of the most powerful islands aside from Black Wind Island. Its island master, Daoist Master Azure Feather, was no less renowned than Lu Jun, having already reached the pinnacle of the mid-True Immortal Stage countless years ago, and it was anyone's guess whether he had progressed to the late-True Immortal Stage.

At the moment, Azure Feather Island was also Black Wind Island's most formidable enemy.

In particular, Azure Feather Island had been constantly recruiting other nearby powers under its wing, and it was beginning to pose a serious threat to Black Wind Island.

However, this wasn't the time to be considering such matters, and in the next instant, Han Li vanished on the spot once again amid a flash of silver lightning, not bothering to answer the elderly man's question.

In the next instant, he appeared behind the pair of azure-robed cultivators in a wraith-like manner, and silver lightning flashed all over his body as he made a grabbing motion.

A giant hand formed by silver lightning instantly appeared above the pair of cultivators before swooping down with tremendous force.

Even before the giant hand arrived, a burst of terrifying power had already come crashing down like a mountain.

All of a sudden, a series of purple devilish patterns appeared over the elderly man's exposed skin, and two balls of purplish-black devilish flames appeared before intertwining with one another, rising up to form a pillar of flames that enveloped his entire body.

A rumbling thunderclap rang out as the giant silver hand grabbed onto the fiery pillar, resulting in an eruption of silver and purple light, as well as a burst of shockwaves that swept through the air in all directions.

Ultimately, the giant lightning hand seemed to have been kept at bay.

Right at this moment, crimson light flashed from the square-faced man's body, and the 13 short crimson blades that he had already summoned rapidly swelled to over 100 feet in length, with crimson flames surging over them.

The 13 huge fiery blades shot forth through the air, striking the giant lightning hand with tremendous force and piercing deep into it.

The giant hand instantly exploded into countless arcs of silver lightning that erupted in all directions, transforming the entire surrounding area into a sea of silver lightning that was several hundred feet in size.

The pair of azure-robed cultivators were caught off guard by the shockwaves resulting from the explosion, and they involuntarily stumbled back a few steps.

However, the silver lightning and the shockwaves left Lu Yuqing completely unharmed, parting down the middle and surging past her body right as they were about to strike her.

Lu Yuqing had been so terrified that she had closed her eyes in fear, but her expression eased slightly as she realized that she hadn't been harmed.

Immediately thereafter, the chaotic arcs of lightning abruptly drew to a halt, then rapidly converged to form a silver lightning array around Lu Yuqing in the blink of an eye.

"Stop him!" the square-faced man exclaimed in an alarmed voice, and he swept a sleeve through the air to send a burst of crimson swordlight hurtling directly toward the lightning array.



At the same time, a burst of black and purple devilish flames shot forth from the other side, sweeping toward the lightning array as well.

However, it was already too late. Silver lightning flashed within the array, and Lu Yuqing vanished into thin air, only to instantly reappear beside Han Li with the chains of light binding her body completely gone.

The square-faced man's expression stiffened upon seeing this, while the pillar of purplish-black flames receded to reveal the elderly man.

The devilish patterns on his body made it impossible to glean his expression, but the fury in his eyes was very apparent.

Lu Yuqing was ecstatic, and a grateful look appeared on her face as she said, "Thank you for saving me! May I know your name?"

"My name is Liu Shi, and I've come to save you under instructions from your father," Han Li replied in an indifferent voice.

Lu Yuqing faltered slightly upon hearing this. "My father..."

Before she had a chance to say anything else, Han Li suddenly swept a sleeve through the air, and a silver lightning array instantly took shape around the two of them, following which they vanished from the spot amid a flash of lightning.

In the next instant, several giant fiery blades descended out of the sky, striking the spot where the two of them had just been standing.

The fiery blades naturally missed their target, and they plunged into the sea down below, causing the entire surface of the sea to boil and churn, raising a series of ferocious waves.

Han Li and Lu Yuqing were standing in mid-air not far away, and the latter had a look of lingering fear in her eyes, having only just realized what had just taken place.

"Get back," Han Li instructed.

Lu Yuqing immediately did as she was told, hurriedly flying away into the distance.

Meanwhile, the giant fiery blades arrived once again, hurtling toward Han Li from all directions to ensure that he had no course for retreat.

In response, Han Li raised both of his arms, and several thick bolts of silver lightning shot out of his palms. Countless silver lightning runes were flashing over the surfaces of the bolts of lightning, and they instantly transformed into several huge balls of silver lightning to meet the giant fiery blades.

Countless silver runes were flashing over the balls of lightning, and this was none other than the Lightningwield Technique that he had mastered back in the Spirit Realm.

Now that he possessed immortal spiritual power, he was able to unleash all types of secret techniques with a far higher degree of speed and proficiency than before.

The balls of lightning clashed with the fiery blades, resulting in an eruption of scintillating silver radiance amid a string of earth-shattering booms, and a series of rifts had appeared in the nearby space.

Immediately thereafter, several short fiery blades shot back out of the epicenter of the explosion. The spiritual light radiating from the blades had dimmed significantly, clearly indicating that they had been severely damaged, and the square-faced man stumbled back in an unsteady manner before throwing up a mouthful of blood.

All of this had taken place in the blink of an eye, and in the meantime, the purple devilish patterns on the elderly man's body had begun glowing brightly. Furthermore, a giant purplish-black devilish shadow with three heads and six arms had appeared behind him. It was impossible to make out the shadow's facial features, and the only features clearly visible were its six sinister purple eyes.

The devilish shadow threw its head back and let loose a thunderous roar, then thrust its six giant palms forward at once.

A burst of rumbling instantly rang out from the space around Han Li, following which the entire space began to collapse. Six giant inky-black vortexes then appeared out of thin air, surrounding him from all directions to ensure that he couldn't escape.

His brows furrowed slightly upon seeing this, and silver lightning flashed from his body once again as he attempted to create another lightning teleportation array.

However, right at this moment, countless streaks of black light rapidly shot out of the black vortexes, then wound themselves tightly around Han Li's body.

In the face of the streaks of black light, all of the silver lightning and the protective spiritual light around Han Li's body completely faded, and even the circulation of immortal spiritual power within his body had become very slow and sluggish.

"This is what you get for meddling with Azure Feather Island!"

A cold gleam flashed through the elderly man's eyes as he made a string of hand seals, and a huge pillar of purplish-black devilish flames erupted out of the mouth of the giant devilish shadow, then transformed into a purplish-black spear of fire.

The spear shot through the air like lightning before plunging viciously into Han Li's, then exploded violently amid an eruption of dazzling light and scorching flames.

A concerned look appeared on Lu Yuqing's face as she saw this from afar, but she chose not to flee the scene.

In contrast, both of the azure-robed cultivators were quite relieved to see that the attack had landed, but in the next instant, both of their expressions changed drastically.

As the dust settled, it was revealed that Han Li's chest remained completely unharmed, and his entire body was encompassed within a faint membrane of light that kept the black light at bay.

An incredulous look appeared on the elderly man's face, and he was able to immediately identify what this light membrane was, much to his horror and dismay.

"Run! We're no match for him!" the square-faced man yelled in a panicked voice.

Han Li gave a cold harrumph as a seven-star constellation appeared on his lower abdomen, and a burst of terrifying power erupted out of his body, causing the nearby space to rumble and shudder.

The streaks of black light around him were instantly snapped, and the six black vortexes vanished as well.

The elderly man had only just turned around to flee when the six arms of his devilish projection abruptly exploded without any warning, and the devilish projection itself also quickly dissipated moments later.

An unnatural flush appeared on the elderly man's face, and he gave a muffled groan as he stumbled unsteadily almost losing his footing in the process.

In the next instant, Han Li appeared directly behind him before throwing a vicious punch.

A suit of black devilish armor appeared over the elderly man's body amid a flash of black light, and a layer of complex array patterns was engraved onto the surface of the suit of armor, which was giving off a faint metallic sheen.

At the same time, a burst of black light appeared in his hand, yet before he had a chance to do anything else, a cold harrumph suddenly rang out beside his ears.

He immediately felt as if a sharp spike had been driven viciously into his consciousness, and he let loose an agonized howl as the black light in his hand instantly faded.

Meanwhile, Han Li's fist sped through the air before striking the suit of black devilish armor, tearing through it with ease before emerging on the other side straight through the elderly man's chest.

The elderly man's body instantly exploded into a vast cloud of blood mist amid a dull thump, and not even his nascent soul was able to escape before it was destroyed by a burst of tremendous power.

## Chapter 147: Intercepting the Spoils

At the same time, a streak of azure light was flying rapidly into the distance, vanishing in the blink of an eye.

Inside the streak of light was the square-faced man, who was fleeing with a panicked look on his face.

Han Li hadn't even withdrawn his fist before he vanished on the spot amid a flash of silver lightning.

Several resounding booms rang out from the horizon, and dazzling silver light flashed several times in the distance before peace and quiet returned. The streak of crimson light had also vanished, indicating that the square-faced man had been disposed of as well.

Meanwhile, Lu Yuqing was looking on with her eyes wide with shock, seemingly still yet to comprehend just how quickly and drastically the situation had turned.

A few seconds later, a streak of azure light returned, then faded to reveal Han Li.

Lu Yuqing cast her gaze toward the rather unremarkable-looking Han Li with a complex look on her face, and it seemed that she didn't know what to say.

"Let's go, Young Mistress Lu. Your father is waiting for you," Han Li said.

Lu Yuqing turned her gaze to Red Moon Island in silence, and it seemed that she was still a little reluctant to leave.

"Those two may not be the only Azure Feather Island cultivators in this area. As for the matter regarding your brother, I'm sure your father will look into it," Han Li said.

"How do you know about that?" Lu Yuqing asked with a surprised expression.

"Your father already told us everything before we set off to search for you," Han Li explained.

"We?" Lu Yuqing asked.

"Aside from myself, there are around a dozen other fellow daoists searching for you. I was just lucky that I happened to be nearby. Your father has gone to great lengths to ensure your safe return," Han Li explained.

"Alright, I'll go back with you," Lu Yuqing sighed in a slightly dejected manner.

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In the sky above the boundless sea, two streaks of light were flying through the air alongside one another at an incredible speed, covering hundreds of kilometers in an instant.

Within the two streaks of light were a man and a woman, and they were none other than Han Li and Lu Yuqing.

Lu Yuqing's face was slightly pale, and she took a glance at Han Li, who was flying slightly ahead of her, seemingly wanting to say something.

Han Li's gaze remained fixed on the sky ahead, but he consoled, "Rest assured, we'll be reaching One Pine Island soon, and there's a teleportation array on the island that'll take us to a place near Black Wind Island."

"Thank you, Brother Liu," Lu Yuqing replied with a nod.

She had sustained some injuries earlier, and even though she had taken some pills to improve her condition, the past few days of rigorous travel had taken a toll on her.

Han Li merely waved a hand in response and didn't say anything.

He didn't have any suitable flying treasures that could carry both of them, so he had been traveling below his top speed this entire time in order to ensure that Lu Yaqing could keep up.

A short while later, right as the two of them were flying over a cluster of islands, Han Li's brows suddenly furrowed slightly, and he drew to a halt as he said, "Hold on a second."

Lu Yuqing was rather taken aback by this sudden stop, and she was just about to ask a question when she spotted three streaks of light hurtling rapidly toward them from the distant sky.

An alarmed look appeared on her face, but she could see that Han Li was still quite calm and composed, and that instilled within her a sense of confidence and security.

The three streaks of light drew to a halt several thousand feet away, then faded to reveal two men and a woman.

The trio was led by a burly man, followed by a young woman with a black veil over her face, and a thin young man.

It was none other than the Three Scourges of Splendid Mountain.

An elated look appeared on the First Scourge's face at the sight of Lu Yuqing, and he smiled as he said, "Thanks for your hard work, Fellow Daoist. You can hand over Young Mistress Lu to us now, and we'll make sure to keep her safe the rest of the way back to Black Wind Island."

"What's the meaning of this?" Han Li asked.

"If you know what's good for you, then you won't ask any questions. While we're still in a good and merciful mood, piss off!" the thin young man chuckled.

"I understand that the reward for the mission is very alluring, but it won't do you any good if you're dead," the young woman said in a meaningful voice.

Han Li raised an eyebrow upon hearing this, and he said in a cold voice, "I am the one who found Young Mistress Lu. Don't you think you're going too far here?"

A cold look appeared on the First Scourge's face, and he chuckled, "Now that you mention it, you're right. In that case, you can stay here, and we'll send you on your way."

Han Li's expression remained unchanged upon hearing this, but Lu Yuqing decided to step forward after a moment of hesitation.

"There's no need to escalate this into a physical conflict. There may still be unforeseen danger on the rest of the way back to Black Wind City, so why don't you all work together? Once we get back, I'll be sure to ask my father to reward all of you equally," Lu Yuqing said.

A hesitant look appeared on the First Scourge's face upon hearing this, and he seemed to be considering this option.

The veiled young woman remained silent, and it was impossible to tell what she was thinking.

Right as Lu Yuqing thought that a peaceful resolution could be reached, a sly look suddenly appeared on the thin young man's face as he said, "The promised reward is quite a handsome one, but it's still a finite reward, so the fewer people we have to share it with, the better."

A hint of killing intent flashed through the First Scourge's eyes upon hearing this.

Han Li stroked his chin with a contemplative look on his face.

Right at this moment, Lu Yuqing's voice rang out in Han Li's mind. "Brother Liu, it seems like the safest course of action for you is to leave for now. Once I return to Black Wind Island, I'll inform my father of what happened."



"The mission released by Island Master Lu only requires your safe return, there's no requirement on who takes you back to him, so even if they kill me and take you back to Black Wind Island, they'll have completed the mission. Besides, your father isn't going to punish them for the sake of a stranger like me," Han Li said as he turned to Lu Yuqing with a faint smile.

Lu Yuqing was stumped upon hearing this, and it was clear that she hadn't considered this.

"Besides, they never intended to let me go to begin with, isn't that right?" Han Li asked as he turned to the three scourges.

The First Scourge did away with his hesitant facade upon hearing this, and he admitted, "We didn't want to get violent in front of Young Mistress Lu, but it looks like it can't be helped."

A cold look appeared on Lu Yuqing's face upon hearing this, and she took a step forward, placing herself in front of Han Li as she declared, "I owe Brother Liu my life, so if you want to kill him, then you'll have to get through me first."

The three scourges were rather surprised to hear this, and Han Li was also slightly moved by her courageous gesture.

"I appreciate the gesture, but I don't have a habit of hiding behind women," Han Li said as he gently laid a hand onto her shoulder and stepped around from behind her.

As soon as his voice trailed off, he abruptly vanished from the spot.

In the next instant, a burst of silver lightning erupted behind the thin young man, followed by a resounding explosion.

A net of silver lightning that was over 1,000 feet wide instantly unfurled. Countless thin arcs of lightning shot forth in all directions, while a blurry azure shadow flew out from within.

An agonized howl rang out from within the lightning, and a humanoid figure that was completely encased in black ice crystals fell out of the silver light toward the First Scourge.

The burly man and the veiled young woman were both quite alarmed to see this, clearly not expecting Han Li to be so fast and strike so decisively.

In the blink of an eye, he had already struck down the thin young man.

Lu Yuqing was greatly startled by this abrupt turn of events, and she was completely rooted to the spot. However, she then thought of the power that Han Li had displayed earlier, and she was feeling a bit more reassured.

The sound of cracking ice crystals rang out, and the thin young man reappeared. His robes were in tatters, his skin had been charred black, and there was black smoke rising up from the top of his head, presenting a very sorry sight to behold.

The man quickly swallowed a pill as he spat through gritted teeth, "Make sure you don't kill him too easily! I'm going to peel off his skin and use it for a new drum!"

He then swept a hand through the air, and a large black drum appeared in front of him amid a flash of black light.

It was a flat cylindrical drum with a layer of waxy yellow skin draped over the outside, and at first glance, there didn't appear to be anything remarkable about it, but upon closer inspection, one would discover some harrowing details.

As it turned out, there was an old and wizened face on the side of the drum. Its mouth and eye sockets were all empty, and it resembled a complete set of facial skin that had been peeled straight off someone's body.

Han Li's brows furrowed slightly upon seeing this, and he flipped a hand over to produce a black longsword, which he held in his grasp before slashing it at the thin young man.

Hundreds of dizzying black sword projections instantly appeared in the air before surging toward the thin young man like a series of crashing waves.

Right at this moment, a crisp clang rang out, and a burst of ripples that were invisible to the naked eye began to spread through the air, releasing bursts of gentle force that shattered the black sword projections one after another.

The First Scourge had positioned himself in front of the thin young man, and he was holding an antiquated black pot in one hand and a copper pestle with a strange beast head engraved on it in the other.

Meanwhile, the veiled young woman had also pulled out a white bone lute, and her fingers were gently gliding over the lute's black strings.

#### Chapter 148: Battling the Three Scourges

"This is not an opponent to be underestimated, so we should use that technique right away," the First Scourge said as his brows furrowed slightly.

Before the other two had a chance to reply, a burst of urgent and insistent tapping rang out, and the huge waves instantly rose up on the surface of the sea amid gusts of ferocious wind.

The clouds in the sky quickly converged, forming an inky-black cloud that cast a dark shadow over a huge area with a radius of several hundred kilometers, making it appear as if dusk had suddenly arrived.

The veiled young woman began to play her lute, and two bursts of white light suddenly appeared within the dark cloud, resembling a pair of giant pagodas that were projecting through the cloud.

Han Li looked up to find that the cloud was surging and tumbling incessantly, as if there were a gargantuan creature wreaking havoc inside.

He then turned back to take a glance at Lu Yuqing, who was also looking up at the sky with a stunned look on her face, and after a moment of contemplation, he suddenly swept a sleeve toward her, releasing a burst of azure energy that enveloped her entire body.

Before she had a chance to react, she had already been carried thousands of kilometers away by the burst of energy.

Now that Han Li didn't have to worry about Lu Yuqing, he was able to focus on the battle at hand, and he tightened his grip around the hilt of his sword before springing up into the heavens, charging directly at the three scourges.

Another crisp clang rang out in the air, and the massive dark cloud in the sky abruptly parted to open up a massive rift, as if the gate leading to the heavens had suddenly opened up.

In the next instant, a white bone blade that was several thousand feet in length came crashing down out of the dark cloud amid a flash of white light.

There were near-transparent white flames burning along the entire length of the blade, and the flames were giving off scorching heat, as well as releasing a devastatingly destructive aura.

Han Li drew to a halt, and with a flick of his wrist, he raised his sword toward the heavens before slashing it upward.

A vast expanse of black sword projections instantly took shape, stacking on top of one another to resemble a black mountain that hurtled directly toward the bone blade.

Heaven and earth rumbled and swayed violently as the mountain of sword projections was destroyed and reduced to countless fragments, while countless specks of white flames came drifting down from the heavens.

The white bone blade shuddered violently before flying back into the dark cloud, and the three scourges, who had summoned the bone blade, gave a collective muffled groan.

Meanwhile, Han Li was descending rapidly through the air, and only after falling for close to 1,000 feet was he able to steady himself.

Even after landing on the surface of the sea, the specks of white flames continued to burn resembling countless glowing white lotus flowers that basked the sea down below in a bright white radiance.

Han Li looked down at the black longsword in his hand to find that there were still white flames clinging to its blade, scorching it incessantly.

He gave a cold harrumph upon seeing this, and a layer of golden scales appeared over his hand before he gently rubbed his hand along the blade of the longsword.

All of the white flames were instantly wiped away like dirt and grime.

All of a sudden, the thunderous beating of a drum rang out in the air, immediately followed by the sound of a strumming lute and a tapping pot.

The dark cloud in the sky churned violently as a mountainous white bone foot descended out of the heavens, stomping down directly upon Han Li.

Han Li raised his sword while activating his Azure Origin Sword Arts, and his robes began to flap audibly around him despite the lack of wind.

He then stomped heavily down onto the air beneath him, and a burst of violent force was sent hurtling downward, causing a massive indentation that was several thousand feet in size to appear on the surface of the sea, while Han Li himself was launched into the heavens.

Gusts of ferocious wind swept through the air as a series of sword projections that resembled small mountains appeared in a radius of several kilometers around him, then began to rise up into the heavens alongside him.

Scorching white flames were burning over the giant bone foot, causing the air to crackle and pop incessantly, and the foot continued to stomp down from above, clashing violently against the rising sword projections.

An earth-shattering boom rang out as the giant bone foot exploded violently, and a white bone giant that was over 10,000 feet tall stumbled out of the dark clouds before plunging into the sea, sending massive waves erupting in all directions.

The vast expanse of black sword projections was also all shattered, and they fell out of the sky alongside countless specks of white flames, causing the surrounding sea to bubble and boil, while clouds of water vapor rose up into the air.

Han Li emerged from the cloud of mist and water vapor in a flash, and the black longsword in his hand had already snapped in half, perhaps from being scorched by the white flames, or perhaps because it was unable to hold the handle the astonishing sword qi unleashed by his Azure Origin Sword Arts.

He heaved a faint sigh as he stowed the two pieces of the sword away, and he couldn't help but lament over the loss of his Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords again.

Immediately thereafter, Han Li suddenly opened his mouth to let loose a thunderous roar, and his muscles bulged as his body rapidly swelled in size, quickly transforming him into a giant golden ape that wasn't inferior in stature to the white bone giant.

The three scourges had already realized that Han Li was an extremely formidable opponent, and their expressions darkened even further upon seeing this. All three of them began to chant incantations, and the tempo at which they were playing their instruments had clearly sped up as well.

Under the trio's combined efforts, the bone giant swiveled around before striding over the surface of the sea, swinging a white bone saber directly at the giant golden ape.

The golden ape clenched its fists tightly and strode forward to meet the attack head-on.

The two massive figures clashed over and over again, sending countless enormous waves that were thousands of feet in height sweeping over the surface of the sea in all directions.

At this moment, Lu Yuqing was far away from the battlefield, and even though the shockwaves resulting from the clashes were too far away to reach her, she could still sense the violent surging of the world's origin qi in that direction, and she couldn't help but feel astonished.

All of a sudden, white light flashed within the eyes of the bone giant, and two incredibly thick pillars of white flames erupted forth like a pair of fiery dragons, twisting through the air as they swooped directly at the golden ape's face.

The giant ape let loose another thunderous roar as it slammed its fists down upon the pair of fiery dragons, and the latter exploded violently into a vast flurry of white flame that inundated half of the golden ape's entire body.

Despite the immense fire-resistant properties of the giant ape's fur and skin, plumes of white smoke began to rise up from its body along with a sharp and acrid charred smell.

However, the golden ape paid no heed to the white flames clinging to its body as it continued to barrel forward with ferocious might, springing high up into the air before raising its right fist and slamming it heavily down toward the bone giant's head.

The bone giant hurriedly lowered its center of gravity while raising its bone blade with both hands to shield itself, and a resounding crack rang out as the golden ape's fist struck the blade with tremendous force, snapping the blade and sending bone fragments flying in all directions.

The three scourges were controlling the bone giant collectively, and they immediately shuddered violently before throwing up a mouthful of blood in unison.

The giant ape continued to press its advantage, closing in on the bone giant while slamming its fists repeatedly into the giant's chest.

A string of earth-shattering booms rang out as a series of massive cracks appeared on the bone giant's body. At the same time, bone fragments were constantly falling off its enormous frame, and it wasn't going to be able to withstand this ferocious assault for much longer.

"Activate the Heaven Incinerating Blood Flames! Hurry!" the First Scourge hurriedly yelled in an urgent voice.

He then brought a finger forcefully down onto the edge of his antiquated pot, and a section of his finger was severed before falling into the pot, which instantly began to glow red.

At the same time, the veiled young woman sliced her finger open with the string of her lute before rubbing her blood onto the lute, while the thin young man stuck a finger into the mouth of the human face on the side of his drum.

All three of them were feeding their blood essence to their respective treasures.

Right as the golden ape was about to smash open the bone giant's head, a burst of bright red light suddenly appeared behind the latter, and the bone giant's entire body took on a red hue.

The white flames that enveloped its enormous frame instantly turned red as well, as did the flames that were clinging to the giant ape's body.

A sharp burning pain spread over the golden ape's entire body, causing it to roar in agony as it reflexively stumbled back.

Layers of golden scales surfaced over its body, attempting to keep the red flames at bay, but to no avail, and the excruciating pain wasn't lessened in the slightest.

With the emergence of the red flames, the temperature in the area had been elevated to a terrifying degree, causing massive volumes of seawater to evaporate into water vapor, to the extent that the sea level in the area was falling at a discernible rate.

Right as the giant ape was overcome by the red flames, the bone giant's aura swelled drastically, and all of the cracks on its body began to heal at a rapid rate.

It extended a hand forward, and a crimson bone blade appeared out of thin air. The bone giant grabbed onto the blade, then lashed out with ferocious might.

A resounding boom rang out, and the golden ape felt as if it had been struck in the abdomen by a mountain, sending flying horizontally through the air, raising a trail of massive waves in its wake.



Before the golden ape had a chance to get up, the crimson bone giant sprang high up into the sky, then grabbed the hilt of its saber with both hands before plunging its tip directly down toward the ape's head.

The giant ape quickly rolled to the side to just barely evade the attack, then took a step back in retreat.

At the same time, a burst of radiant silver flames suddenly appeared on its shoulder, then rapidly spread over its entire body, and the silver flames completely inundated the crimson flames before beginning to devour it in a frenzy.

Immediately thereafter, the sharp cry of a bird rang out, and the silver flames around the golden ape transformed into a giant fire raven that slammed straight into the bone giant's chest with tremendous force.

Silver flames erupted in all directions, spreading over the bone giant's entire body, and before it had a chance to react, the silver flames had already formed a massive fiery cloak that enveloped its entire body.

The crimson flames on its body rapidly retreated in a desperate attempt to escape from the silver flames, but it was all in futility, and the silver flames quickly commenced their feast.

## Chapter 149: The Grand Auction

"What the hell is that?"

The First Scourge's face had turned deathly pale at the sight of the silver flames, and the other two scourges were also horrified, looking as if they were about to turn and flee at any moment.

Meanwhile, the golden ape had many charred sections all over its body, but the ferocity in its eyes hadn't abated in the slightest, and seven specks of starlight appeared on its chest and abdomen as it launched a massive fist at the bone giant.

A huge golden fist projection was sent hurtling through the air before crashing into the bone giant's chest with devastating force.

An earth-shattering boom rang out as countless bone fragments were sent spraying through the air in all directions.

Only half of the bone giant's body remained, and after swaying for a moment, it collapsed into the sea in a limp and powerless manner before quickly disintegrating into nothingness.

At the same time, the instruments in the hands of the three scourges also exploded violently into three balls of white light. Powerful shockwaves that were visible to the naked eye swept through the air in all directions, causing the surrounding space to rumble and quiver incessantly.

The three scourges were throwing up blood uncontrollably as the shockwaves sent them flying back over 1,000 through the air.

Meanwhile, Han Li reverted back to his human form, and the silver fire raven flew back to him at his behest before vanishing up his sleeve in a flash.

Through their spiritual connection, Han Li could sense that the Essence Fire Raven was very excited after devouring those crimson flames, clearly having benefited immensely from the feast.

"Run!"

As soon as the First Scourge steadied himself in the air over 1,000 feet away, he immediately called out to his two companions, who flew to his side in a blind panic.

The three of them then each made a peculiar hand seal with one hand, and their other arms exploded in unison, forming a cloud of blood mist that enveloped them in an instant.

Within the cloud of blood mist, the three of them flew away as a streak of crimson light, displaying incredible speed as they did so.

Countless arcs of silver lightning instantly appeared over Han Li's entire body, and he vanished on the spot amid a rumbling thunderclap.

Close to 100,000 kilometers away, the three scourges drew to a halt, and their faces were deathly pale and still etched with shock and horror.

The three of them were just about to catch their breath and take some pills when a resounding thunderclap suddenly rang out overhead.

Thick bolts of silver lightning flashed through the, intertwining with one another to form a lightning array with a diameter in excess of 100 feet.

Han Li was standing at the center of the array with a cold look on his face.

He made a forward-grabbing motion with one hand, and the arcs of silver lightning that were lingering in the air around him instantly converged to form a silver ball of lightning over the palm of his hand, from within which thunderclaps were ringing out incessantly.

With a casual flick of his wrist, the ball of lightning descended from the heavens.

The three scourges were in complete despair as they felt the terrifying pressure descending upon them from afar.

They were severely injured and had completely depleted their energy reserves, so it was impossible for them to get away. Hence, all they could do was summon as many protective treasures as possible to try and keep the ball of lightning at bay.

A pillar of silver lightning that was as thick as a water tank came crashing down from above, swallowing up the three of them in the blink of an eye.

A thunderous explosion rang out alongside a string of bloodcurdling howls, and the Three Scourges of Splendid Mountain were completely destroyed in both body and soul in an instant.

Han Li took a glance at the spot where the three scourges had just vanished into thin air, then conjured up another lightning teleportation array and vanished from the spot.

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Around half a month later.

A brocade-robed man with a powerful aura was seated on an ornate wooden chair in the island master's manor in Black Wind City, looking at the azure-robed man standing before him with undisguised praise glowing in his eyes.

"It's all thanks to you that my daughter was able to return safely to Black Wind Island, Fellow Daoist Liu. I promised you a reward, and it's time to deliver. What request would you like me to grant for you?" the man asked with a smile.

The azure-robed man in the room was naturally none other than Han Li, and he replied in a calm manner, "I took on this mission for the sole purpose of securing a teleportation spot that would allow me to leave the Black Wind Sea the next time the teleportation array is used."

"That's it?" Lu Jun asked as a look of disbelief appeared on his face.

"That's it," Han Li confirmed.

"Yuqing has already told me what happened while the two of you were on the back to Black Wind Island. As I'm sure you're aware, I like to surround myself with talented individuals, and I'd like you to stay here on Black Wind Island. I could even grant you one of the deputy island master positions," Lu Jun offered.

"Thank you for the kind offer, Island Master Lu, but there are certain reasons why I must leave the Black Wind Sea, so I'll have to turn down the offer," Han Li said with a hint of apology in his eyes.

Lu Jun could tell that Han Li wasn't lying, so he could only drop the matter.

"In that case, I won't force you to stay against your will. In addition to a teleportation spot, I have some other gifts that I'd like to present to you, and I hope you won't refuse this time."

He swept a hand through the air as he spoke, and a blue storage pouch flew out before coming to a rest in front of Han Li.

Han Li accepted the storage pouch, then expressed his gratitude before taking his leave.

Following his departure, Lu Yuqing emerged from the rear hall, having already changed into a set of clean clothes, and she made her way over to Lu Jun's side with a hint of disappointment in her eyes.

"Why didn't you make more of an effort to try and convince Brother Liu to stay, Father? Are you doubting my claims about his powers?" she asked.

"On the contrary, I have a feeling that he's even more powerful than what you described," Lu Jun replied with a serious look on his face.

"In that case, why did you..."

Before Lu Yuqing had a chance to finish, Lu Jun cut her off with a wave of his head.

"Someone of his power and talent is clearly unwilling to stay in our Black Wind Sea, and on top of that, I don't completely trust him, so it may not be a good thing to keep him here. Hence, this is the best outcome for all of us."

"But..."

Lu Yuqing still wanted to protest further, but she was cut off once again by Lu Jun as he said in a stern voice, "Yuqing, the current situation that our Black Wind Island is facing is far more complex than you can imagine. Your brother has already gone missing, do you know how catastrophic the consequences would've been had you not been saved by Liu Shi?"

"I'm sorry, Father," Lu Yuqing apologized in a dejected voice, and tears were beginning to well up in her eyes.

Lu Jun heaved a faint sigh as he embraced her and gently patted her shoulder, unable to bear scolding her any further.

Meanwhile, Han Li had already flown out of Black Wind City and was returning to Mount Youyang.

Upon returning to his cave abode, he made his way straight to the backyard.

After deactivating several concealment arrays, a small medicine field was revealed.

At the very center of the medicine field was a dark purple seedling that was completely unremarkable in appearance, looking no different from the weeds that one would find on the side of the street.

However, in reality, this was actually a seedling that Han Li had painstakingly grown from the Soulbirth Flower seed that he had obtained from the Transient Guild prior to traveling to Black Wind Island.

The germination rate of the flower was very low, so even though he had purchased quite a few seeds, he was only able to sprout one of them after exhausting close to half his supply of seeds.

After checking on the flower to ensure that nothing was amiss, Han Li reactivated the concealment arrays before returning to the cave abode.

He pulled out the storage pouch that Lu Jun had given to him earlier, but instead of opening it right away, he carefully examined it with his spiritual sense.

Only after verifying that there was nothing amiss did he refine the storage pouch and remove its contents.

There were only two types of items in the storage pouch, namely a palm-sized black badge and a small pile of top-grade spirit stones.

Han Li counted the spirit stones to find that there were about 200 of them, which was a small fortune.

He casually stowed the spirit stones away, then began to carefully inspect the badge.

The badge was riddled with spirit patterns, and on one side was engraved the words "Black Wind" while the word "Teleportation" was inscribed on the other side.

Han Li heaved an internal sigh of relief upon seeing this.

It had been quite a tumultuous journey, but he had finally achieved his objective.

The seasons passed by, and over three years flew past in the blink of an eye.

At this particular point in time, there was a particularly high number of cultivators in Black Wind City, particularly high-grade cultivators at or above the Body Integration Stage, and there were decorations put up all over the city, as if some type of celebration were taking place.

The centenary Black Wind Island grand auction was about to commence, and it was a major event.

All types of precious and exotic materials and ingredients, high-grade cultivation arts, and premium pills were always put up for sale during the grand auction, and there were even some special treasures that would only appear in the grand auction.

Almost all of the high-grade cultivators in the entire Black Wind Sea would gather here for the grand auction, and even some enemy islands of Black Wind Island would call a temporary truce and send people to participate in the auction.

On the summit of Mount Youyang, Han Li emerged from his cave abode, having adopted a disguise using his Transient Guild mask, transforming him into a burly man with a dark complexion and a coarse beard.

Even from his cave abode, he could clearly see the lively and bustling scenes in Black Wind City.

A faint smile appeared on his face, and he was also rather looking forward to this centenary auction.

With that in mind, he flew toward the city as a streak of azure light.

At the center of Black Wind City was a majestic golden palace that was hovering in mid-air.

The palace was roughly 1,000 feet tall, and it took up a huge area. It was entirely constructed from golden jade, and it was giving off a radiant golden glow, presenting a dazzling sight to behold.

Inscribed in majestic, flowing characters on the plaque above the main entrance of the palace were the words "Golden Cloud Pavilion".

Aside from the main entrance, each of the pavilion's other three sides also had an entrance.

Four massive golden staircases extended out of the palace, and there were occasionally streaks of light landing upon them before making their way into the Golden Cloud Pavilion.

This was the venue for the grand auction.

## Chapter 150: Bidding

A streak of azure light descended onto one of the staircases outside the Golden Cloud Pavilion, then faded to reveal a burly man with a coarse beard, and it was none other than the disguised Han Li.

He took a glance at the majestic palace before him, then strode directly toward the entrance.

Many black-robed attendants were standing on either side of the entrance, tending to each and every arriving cultivator.



A black-robed attendant immediately approached Han Li with a smile as he asked, "Are you here for the grand auction, Senior?"

"What else could I possibly be here for?" Han Li asked as his brows furrowed slightly with displeasure.

"Please allow me to explain, Senior. This year's auction is a little different from the auctions of previous years," the black-robed attendant said.

"How so? Han Li asked."

"There are far more participants in this year's auction than previous years, so in order to restrict the numbers and keep out patrons who only intend to watch the auction with no intention of purchasing anything, it's been decided that each participant must issue a sum of spirit stones as an entrance fee. However, all you need to do is purchase any item during the auction, and the entrance fee will be returned to you," the black-robed attendant explained in a respectful voice.

"I see. How many spirit stones do I need to pay?" Han Li asked.

The black-robed attendant was just about to reply when a middle-aged man who appeared to have been a supervisor hurriedly arrived on the scene as he yelled, "How dare you be so insolent to this esteemed senior? Get out of here, I'll attend to this senior myself!"

Han Li took a glance at the middle-aged man to find that he was a Body Integration cultivator.

"Please don't take any offense, Senior, he's just an ignorant little brat that has no idea what he's doing. These rules only apply to regular patrons. For an esteemed True Immortal cultivator like yourself, you can go straight through the VIP passageway, and there's no need to submit an entrance fee. Please come with me, Senior," the middle-aged man said in a respectful voice.

Han Li was rather amused to hear this.

It seemed that power was paramount no matter where he went, and those with superior cultivation bases were always given preferential treatment.

Han Li gave the middle-aged man a slight nod, then made his way into the golden palace.

From the outside, the palace didn't appear to be all that remarkable, but only after stepping into the palace did he realize just how astonishingly massive it was.

The palace was split up into three levels, with the bottom one being a vast hall that resembled a giant plaza.

At the very front of the hall was an auction platform, which was still completely empty at this moment.

There were countless seats positioned around the hall, forming a series of tiered stands, and most of the seats were already occupied, giving the area a rather rowdy and crowded atmosphere.

"These seats are prepared for the ordinary cultivators. Please come with me to the VIP area on the second floor, Senior," the middle-aged man said as he led Han Li up the staircase to the second floor.

There were several hundred wide and spacious seats on the second floor, with large gaps between the seats. There was a tea table beside each seat, upon which were placed some fruits and spirit tea.

Many of these seats had been occupied as well, and all of the people on the second floor were True Immortal cultivators, several of which Han Li recalled seeing at the island master's manor a few years ago.

Han Li was led to a seat by the middle-aged man, and there was a very good view from this position, allowing him to clearly see the auction platform down below, granting all those on the second floor a sense of superiority over those in the hall below.

Han Li nodded in response, then turned his gaze toward the third floor as he asked, "Who are the ones up there?"

On the third floor was a series of independent rooms that had restrictions placed upon them, making it impossible to see into the rooms from the outside, and it was clear that they were reserved for guests of even higher prestige than the ones on the second floor.

Han Li wasn't disgruntled by the fact that he hadn't been invited to the third floor, he was merely curious.

"The third floor is reserved for all of the island masters," the middle-aged man explained.

Han Li nodded in response, then withdrew his gaze and didn't say anything further.

The middle-aged man was rather busy, and he called over a beautiful female attendant to tend to Han Li before excusing himself.

Han Li wasn't bothered by this at all, and he sat in silence, waiting for the auction to begin.

Time slowly passed by, and it didn't take long before the hall on the first floor was at full capacity, and there were barely any available seats on the second floor, either.

Over two hours later, three loud gong strikes rang out, reverberating throughout the palace.

The rowdy venue immediately fell silent, and an elderly man with a white beard and a rosy complexion made his way onto the auction platform. It appeared that he was the auctioneer.

"That's Master Wen!"

A flurry of quiet chatter rang out within the hall, and Han Li's expression changed slightly as he realized that this elderly man was a guest elder of Black Wind Island and only one of three Earthly Pill Masters on the island.

"Thank you for attending our centenary grand auction. I am extremely honored to be serving as your auctioneer today," the elderly man declared in a boisterous voice that echoed throughout the entire venue.

As soon as he began speaking, all of the chatter immediately died down, and the venue became extremely quiet.

"There are lots of familiar faces here, and of course, there are also some friends who are only attending the auction for the first time, so I'll have to lay out some rules for the auction. All items are sold with top-grade spirit stones as the unit of currency, and if you don't have enough spirit stones, you can use immortal origin stones instead at an exchange rate of one immortal origin stone to 100 top-grade spirit stones.

"Alternatively, you can submit items in exchange for spirit stones, and the value of those items will be appraised by these three here," Wen Hua said.

As soon as his voice trailed off, a trio of cultivators drifted their way onto the auction platform, consisting of a white-haired elderly man in a gray robe, a muscular man in a short blue robe, and an elegant middle-aged woman, all of whom were at the True Immortal Stage.

The three of them made their way over to a long table beside the auction platform before taking a seat.

"I'm sure many of you recognize these three fellow daoists. As elders of the Eternal Prosperity Trading House, the Dark Moon Trading House, and the Taibai Trading House, they have a vast wealth of knowledge and experience, and they'll be sure to appraise all items without any bias, so you can all rest assured.

"In order to ensure the safety of our attendees, fighting is strictly prohibited in Black Wind City, and anyone caught engaging in battle will be punished. Alright, that's enough from me. Without further ado, let the auction begin!" Wen Hua declared as he swept a sleeve through the air.

A muscular man in black carried a giant pristine white box onto the platform, then opened it to reveal a red crystal that was around the size of a human head. There were flame-like patterns on the crystal's surface, and even from several thousand feet away, one could still sense the astonishing fire-attribute spiritual power fluctuations emanating from the crystal.

"This is a piece of high-grade Fire Pattern Bright Jade, an exceptional spirit material for refining top-tier spirit treasures. The base price is 20 top-grade spirit stones, and each bid must go up by an increment of at least one top-grade spirit stone," Wen Hua declared.

"20 top-grade spirit stones!"

"21!"

"25!"

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As soon as the piece of Flame Pattern Bright Jade was revealed, many people's eyes instantly lit up, and a bidding war quickly began.

Han Li was seated in his chair, watching the unfolding scene down below with a calm expression.

Flame Pattern Bright Jade was indeed a great material, but it was still not enough to catch his eye.

The bidding war continued, and the price quickly rose to 50 top-grade spirit stones, upon which the bidding war finally ceased.

"Sold for 50 top-grade spirit stones!" Wen Hua declared with a wide smile.

He wasn't expecting the first auction item to be sold for such a high price, and this was a very good sign for things to come.

Shortly thereafter, the second auction item was also brought onto the platform, and it was a 30,000-year-old spirit herb, which also went on to sell for a high price.

Time slowly passed by, and one auction item was brought on after another, consisting of all types of precious materials, pills, and spirit treasures, but they had clearly all been prepared for the Body Integration and Grand Ascension cultivators on the first floor.

Han Li was looking on in a detached manner, and up to this point, very few of the True Immortal cultivators on the second floor had cast any bids.

Several hours quickly passed by, and the prices of the auction items were gradually rising. Some extremely precious treasures were beginning to appear, including Divine Spirit Treasures, pills and treasures to be used during tribulation transcendence, and some pills that aided one in breaking through bottlenecks. At this point, the True Immortal cultivators on the second floor were finally beginning to cast bids on a semi-regular basis.

Shortly thereafter, another auction item was carried onto the stage, and it was a huge piece of jade that was dark red in color, and a series of blood-red patterns could be seen on its surface, forming the image of a fire phoenix. Furthermore, the item was giving off potent fire law fluctuations.

Wen Hua's gaze slowly roamed over the auction attendees, then settled on the piece of jade as he introduced, "The next item is this piece of Phoenix Blood Fire Jade, which was formed by the blood essence of a late-True Immortal Stage fire phoenix true spirit following its demise. It contains the power of fire laws, and it's an exceptional primary material for refining Acquired Immortal Treasures.

"The base price is 200 top-grade spirit stones, and each bid must go up by an increment of at least 10 top-grade spirit stones."

This piece of Phoenix Blood Fire Jade contained a remarkable amount of power of laws, and even Han Li was tempted to make a bid for it. However, he didn't have a particularly large stash of spirit stones at his disposal, so after some contemplation, he decided against making any bids.

"210!"

"240!"

"280!"

"300!"

There were many people interested in the piece of Phoenix Blood Fire Jade, but most of the bidders were True Immortal cultivators on the second floor. Even if those on the first floor wanted to get their hands on this precious material, the price was simply too steep for them.

The price for the Phoenix Blood Fire Jade was quickly bid up to 450 top-grade spirit stones, a bid that had been made by a bald red-robed man on the second floor.

With the submission of this bid, the second floor fell silent as well, and no further bids were made, much to the red-robed man's elation.

"500!"

Right at this moment, a bid was made by someone in one of the booths on the third floor. Judging from the voice of the bidder, it seemed to have been a woman, and she had raised the price by 50 top-grade spirit stones in one go.

The red-robed man faltered slightly upon hearing this, following which a hint of anger flashed through his eyes, but after some contemplation, he slowly lowered his hand and didn't make any further bids.

"Sold for 500 top-grade spirit stones!" Wen Hua declared with an elated expression.

The piece of Phoenix Blood Fire Jade was quickly taken to that booth on the third floor.

Han Li took a glance in that direction before withdrawing his gaze. In his opinion, the price paid was more than the item was worth.