

A Record 161

Chapter 161: Perilous Battle

"If you trust me, then I can give it a shot," Han Li replied without any hesitation.

Gan Jiuzhen wasted no time with words as she sped up in her hand seals, and the flames around her instantly began to burn more fiercely.

Han Li noticed that the trail of fire that connected the two of them had grown thicker, and the crimson flames around him had also begun to burn with greater ferocity, further protecting him from the cold.

Blue light flashed within his eyes as he quickly scanned his gaze over the crystalline wall around them. He then abruptly sprang up before charging forward, and thanks to the layer of flames around him, his speed wasn't impacted much by the glacial qi in the air.

All of a sudden, he drew to a halt in front of a certain part of the crystalline wall, following which a layer of golden scales appeared over his arm as he threw a punch at the space up ahead.

A resounding boom rang out as Han Li's fist slammed heavily into the crystalline wall.

The entire crystalline wall trembled violently while releasing bursts of blinding white light, but not only did it remain intact, not even the slightest crack had appeared on its surface.

Right at this moment, a burst of silver light shot out of the crystalline wall, then rapidly expanded to swallow up Han Li in a flash, freezing him alongside the layer of crimson flames around him.

"It seems like I was right," Gan Jiuzhen murmured to herself, and she wasn't very surprised to see what had happened to Han Li.

It seemed that she had already anticipated that this would happen, and she had intentionally used Han Li as cannon fodder to test out what would happen if the crystalline wall were attacked.

However, right at this moment, a loud thump rang out as bright golden light erupted out of Han Li's body, instantly shattering the ice around him.

Gan Jiuzhen was rather taken aback to see this, following which she praised in a heartfelt voice, "Given how powerful your physical body is, you must be a dual cultivator who focuses on refining both magic power and the physical body. It seems like I underestimated."

"Don't blame me for turning on you if you try this again," Han Li replied in a cold voice.

However, Gan Jiuzhen merely nodded in response with a calm expression, seemingly feeling as if she had done nothing wrong.

Outside the crystalline wall, the effeminate man's brows furrowed slightly as he exclaimed in incredulity, "Once someone is sealed by the glacial qi, their dantian and magic power will all be frozen! How was he able to escape?"

"If I'm not mistaken, that man is most likely a Profound Immortal. It seems like we made a mistake by going after him, but it's too late to turn back now. In any case, this seems like the perfect opportunity to try out that technique," the hideous man said as a hint of cold killing intent flashed through his eyes.

As soon as his voice trailed off, he immediately drifted over to the crystalline wall before laying a hand onto it.

As he did so, he began to chant an incantation, and a faint buzzing sound rang out as a vast expanse of azure light appeared over his body.

The azure light resembled countless glowing azure wings that extended out of both sides of his body, presenting a stunning sight to behold.

Inside the crystalline wall, a hint of unease welled up in Han Li's heart upon seeing this, and Gan Jiuzhen's brows also furrowed slightly.

Immediately thereafter, the crystalline wall began to glow with bright silver radiance, intertwining with the azure light to form a series of circular arrays, each of which was around the size of a millstone.

The hideous man let loose a forceful yell, and all of the glacial qi within the crystalline wall instantly formed countless sharp ice spears that were roughly 10 feet in length each, all of which hurtled directly toward Han Li's duo.

The ice spears shrieked through the air as they reached Han Li and Gan Jiuzhen in the blink of an eye.

Han Li clenched his hands into tight fists before swinging them rapidly through the air, unleashing hundreds of golden fist projections to clash against the ice spears.

Meanwhile, Gan Jiuzhen summoned a huge crimson sword with a flick of her wrist.

She was making a hand seal with one hand while swinging her sword in the other, conjuring up a vast expanse of crimson sword projections that resembled a bright red sun. Balls of crimson flames were flying incessantly out of the crimson radiance to meet the spears of ice.

A string of resounding booms rang out as the golden fist projections and crimson fireballs were shattered one after another, but the ice spears didn't break. Instead, they were merely knocked back, and after pausing momentarily in mid-air, they began to hurtle toward their targets once again.

Han Li continued to swing his fists through the air to keep the ice spears at bay, and at the same time, he was scouring his surroundings with his Brightsight Spirit Eyes.

He discovered that every single one of these ice spears seemed to have been imbued with an extremely thin thread of law powers, and that was what granted them such incredible durability and penetrative power. Even with the body of a Profound Immortal, he definitely didn't want to be struck by those spears.

However, what was quite perplexing to him was how these two men were able to use so many law threads at once when they were clearly both only at the early-True Immortal Stage.

On top of that, a hint of surprise and recognition also flashed through his eyes at the sight of the huge crimson sword that Gan Jiuzhen was wielding.

This was the exact same weapon that Wyrms 3 had wielded on Red Moon Island, so unless Wyrms 3 had been slain and had their treasure taken, or had lent their sword to this woman, then she was none other than Wyrms 3.

He was rather taken aback by the notion that the Transient Guild member that had led everyone on the mission to kill Gong Shuhong would be a woman.

At the same time, the crystalline wall was continuing to get thicker and thicker under the effeminate man's continued efforts. The glacial qi inside was also becoming denser and denser, and Han Li and Gan Jiuzhen were slowly being cornered.

"We can't keep going like this, Fellow Daoist Liu. At this rate, we'll either be overwhelmed by these ice spears or get frozen to death by the glacial qi," Gan Jiuzhen said to Han Li through voice transmission with a grim look in her eyes.

"Do you have a way out of this?" Han Li asked.

He was naturally aware of this as well, and he had already instructed his Essence Fire Raven to remain in his body and protect his internal organs against the infiltration of glacial qi, so he was going to be fine for the time being, but the situation would undoubtedly turn quite grim if he were trapped in here for an extended period of time.

"I have a way to break this array, but I'll need you to protect me while I make preparations," Gan Jiuzhen said.

"Alright, I can do that," Han Li replied.

After arriving at the realization that Gan Jiuzhen was most likely Wyrms 3, he had already decided that he would conceal his powers in order to avoid exposing his own identity as Wyrms 15, so he was naturally glad to follow this arrangement.

Thus, he knocked back the oncoming wave of ice spears with his fists, then positioned himself in front of Gan Jiuzhen before sweeping a sleeve through the air, releasing the set of nine flying swords.

The radiant white swords flashed through the air, leaving chaotic trails of white sword projections in their wake.

After releasing the swords, Han Li made a string of hand seals, and the flying swords immediately began to buzz incessantly before transforming into a vast expanse of white sword threads, which intertwined to form a sword net that was several hundred feet in size, encompassing both Gan Jiuzhen and himself within it.

Gan Jiuzhen immediately stowed her giant crimson sword away upon seeing this, then sat down onto the ground with her legs crossed.

After that, she flipped a hand over to summon a dark red square jade pendant, which had several fearsome beasts engraved upon it and was giving off an indescribable primordial aura.

A cold look appeared in the eyes of the hideous man outside the crystalline wall upon hearing this, and he communicated something to the effeminate man through voice transmission, following which the effeminate man responded with something, also via voice transmission.

The two of them then switched to different hand seals in unison, and the bodies of the six snow toads around the crystalline wall began to glow brightly as they continued to emit the same high-pitched screech.

At the same time, the layers of frost covering their skin began to melt away, revealing their glittering and translucent black bodies underneath.

Simultaneously, the hideous man's body also began to glow brightly, while his hand that was pressed against the crystalline wall turned as black as ink. A series of black veins then began to extend out of his hand in all directions, instantly crawling over the entire crystalline wall.

A hint of foreboding welled up in Han Li's heart upon seeing this, and with a flick of his wrist, several balls of Heavy Water Veined Lightning fell out of his sleeve before landing in his grasp.

However, before he had a chance to unleash them, his entire body abruptly stiffened, and he was completely immobilized.

The dark red jade pendant in Gan Jiuzhen's hand had already begun to glow with crimson light, clearly having reached a critical stage in its activation, but all progress was halted there as well.

Han Li quickly realized that he had been frozen by the power of ice laws within this space, which had become drastically more potent all of a sudden.

He immediately instructed the Essence Fire Raven in his body to help him regain his mobility, but all he could hear in response were the raven's anguished cries within his consciousness.

It was clear that it had also been immobilized by the power of ice laws and was powerless to help him.

Meanwhile, all of the ice spears in the surrounding area had already turned black, and they began to hurtle toward Han Li and Gan Jiuzhen while giving off even more powerful law fluctuations.

A grim look appeared in Han Li's eyes upon seeing this.

With his Profound Immortal body, he would perhaps be able to withstand the assault for a while, but Gan Jiuzhen was in an extremely perilous situation.

If she were to be killed, then he would have to face the two enemy immortals and snow toads on his own, which was far from an appealing prospect.

With that in mind, he began to burn through his blood essence in order to stimulate the immortal spiritual power within his body. Even so, he was only able to draw upon less than a thousandth of the total immortal spiritual power that he possessed, and he directed it into the ball of Heavy Water Veined Lightning in his hand.

A flash of lightning appeared, and the ball of Heavy Water Veined Lightning fell out of Han Li's sleeve.

A thunderous explosion rang out as a black sun appeared no more than a foot away from Han Li. Contained within the black sun was a vast expanse of silver light that inundated Han Li's entire body.

An instant later, Gan Jiuzhen was also swallowed up by the explosion of black and silver light.

A string of rumbling thunderclaps rang out as countless tiny black particles erupted in all directions, forming a spherical shockwave that expanded rapidly, causing the surrounding space to tremble and quake.

In the face of the violent explosion, all of the oncoming ice spears were finally shattered, and the entire space was plunged into complete chaos.

Chapter 162: A Gift

The surrounding crystalline wall began to tremble violently as it struggled to contain the powerful shockwave, and a burst of deafening rumbling rang out.

The six mountainous snow toads also shuddered violently, and black blood began to seep out of all of their eyes as their auras quickly fell into decline.

Before the explosion had even completely subsided, several draconic roars suddenly rang out in rapid succession from within the crystalline wall.

Immediately thereafter, a vast expanse of fiery radiance erupted out of the black and silver light as three fiery wyrms formed by crimson flames emerged. Each wyrm was over 1,000 feet in length, and scorching flames were pouring out of their mouths as they pounced toward the surrounding crystalline wall.

A resounding boom rang out as the crystalline wall shuddered violently, and it instantly began to melt away as plumes of black smoke rose up from its surface.

A loud sizzling sound rang out, and before long, the three crimson fiery wyrms had already melted a large hole into the crystalline wall. Upon flying out of the wall, the three wyrms intertwined to form a churning river of crimson fire that swept directly toward the pair of enemy cultivators.

At this point, the hideous man had already flown back onto the head of the golden-eyed snow toad, and the two men hurriedly made a series of hand seals with alarmed looks on their faces as they witnessed the destruction of their array.

In the next instant, the six snow toads opened their mouths in unison to blast forth a vast cloud of black glacial qi, which formed a wall of ice in mid-air to oppose the river of flames.

Meanwhile, Han Li also flew out of the crystalline wall, and he appeared in a rather sorry state with his robes in complete tatters. However, aside from some slight jostling to his internal organs, he remained largely unharmed.

He raised his head to look up at the scorching river of crimson flames up above, and a complex look flashed through his eyes.

The fiery river didn't just contain the power of fire laws. Instead, it was imbued with the power of blood laws, the aura of which was very similar to that of the deceased Gong Shuhong.

He turned to discover that Gang Jiuzhen's dress had also been torn in many places, revealing large sections of her fair and delicate skin. The red veil that was covering her face had also disappeared, and her gorgeous features were looking a little pale.

Despite this, her eyes were filled with cold killing intent, and the square jade pendant clutched in her hand continued to glow brightly while the runes inscribed upon it flashed incessantly, but its crimson color had significantly faded compared with before.

At this point, Han Li could basically confirm beyond a reasonable doubt that this woman was indeed Wyrms 3.

Back on Red Moon Island, Wrym 3 had declared that she had some matters to take care of following Gong Shuhong's demise, and it seemed that these matters had mostly involved collecting the treasures left behind by Gong Shuhong.

A string of loud crackling rang out incessantly as plumes of black mist rose up from the point where the river of fire was clashing against the wall of ice, resembling a dark cloud that obscured the night sky.

At this point, the two cultivators standing atop the toad's head were looking far less comfortable and composed than before.

Their cultivation bases were inferior to Gan Jiuzhen's, and now, the Six Toad Fire Melting Array that they had been relying heavily upon had been broken. The two of them exchanged a glance, and both of them were beginning to consider fleeing the battle.

The three snow toads on the other side had also arrived on the scene, but the glacial qi surging out of the mouths of the six toads was only just enough to keep the river of crimson flames at bay.

Gan Jiuzhen gave a cold harrumph upon seeing this, and she opened her mouth to expel a ball of blood essence, causing her complexion to pale even further.

She then pointed a finger at the ball of blood essence, and it transformed into a miniature dragon before instantly vanishing into the jade pendant in her hand.

Yet another draconic roar rang out, and the crimson light glowing from the jade pendant became even brighter as a fourth crimson fiery wyrm flew out from within before joining the river of fire, granting it a boost in power and momentum.

At the same time, the color of the jade pendant had faded even further.

With the inclusion of the fourth fiery wyrm, the river of flames was expanded even further, and a fearsome aura began to spread through the surrounding area.

The two cultivators standing atop the toad's head immediately felt their heart rates elevating drastically, while the blood in their veins also began to churn and surge in an uncontrolled manner.

The two of them were understandably alarmed by this turn of events, and they hurriedly diverted a part of their immortal spiritual power to quell the unrest in their bodies. As a result, there was less immortal spiritual power to support the six snow toads, and the glacial qi surging out of their mouths instantly became diminished.

The surging river of flames instantly overwhelmed the diminished glacial qi, inundating the snow toads and the two men in the blink of an eye.

Two agonized howls rang out from within the flames, and flashes of light began to appear from the treasures being frantically summoned by the two cultivators, but it didn't take long before those flashes of light and their anguished screams subsided.

Han Li withdrew his nine flying swords upon seeing this, then swept a sleeve through the air, releasing wisps of immortal spiritual power out of his fingertips to collect all of the heavy water particles that had scattered throughout the area following the explosion of the Heavy Water Veined Lightning.

Moments later, all of the commotion within the sea of crimson flame finally subsided.

Gan Jiuzhen made a hand seal with one hand, then reached out with her other hand, and the vast expanse of crimson flames instantly reverted back into four crimson wyrms that rose up into the heavens before vanishing into the jade pendant in her hand.

All that remained in mid-air was a pair of severely ravaged bodies that were tumbling down toward the ground.

As for those snow toads, their bodies couldn't compare with the body of an immortal, and they had been incinerated to the point that there was nothing of them left.

Gan Jiuzhen flipped a hand over to produce several pills that she devoured, then made a beckoning motion, and two storage bracelets rose up into the air before falling into her grasp.

However, she didn't even look at them before tossing one of them to Han Li, who caught the storage bracelet without any hesitation.

"Fellow Daoist Liu, there's a question that's been on my mind this entire time. Have we met somewhere before this trip?" Gan Jiuzhen asked as she turned to Han Li with a hint of scrutiny in her eyes.

Han Li's expression remained unchanged as he replied in a calm voice, "If I had met someone as stunning as you before, I would be sure to remember you, but I don't recall any previous encounters between us."

Gan Jiuzhen's eyes narrowed slightly upon hearing this, and it was clear that she didn't really believe what Han Li was saying.

However, she had no intention of pursuing this matter any further, and she said, "In any case, I owe you my thanks for today. I don't like to owe anyone any favors, so you can have this Azure Wind Lock Immortal Talisman as a gift."

She swept a sleeve through the air as she spoke, and a purple talisman flew out toward Han Li.

Han Li raised a hand to catch the talisman, and he took a glance at it to find that it was riddled with extremely profound silver runes, indicating that it was a high-grade talisman that had been written in beveled silver text.

The talisman contained an abundance of spiritual power, and it appeared to have been of an even higher caliber than the High Zenith Invisibility Talisman and the Armor Origin Talisman.

"You have my thanks, Fellow Daoist Gan." Han Li cupped his fist in a salute, then stowed the talisman away for further examination later.

"I'll ignore the fact that you followed me here this time, but don't blame me for turning on you if this happens again," Gan Jiuzhen declared, then promptly turned and departed.

A wry smile appeared on Han Li's face as he watched Gan Jiuzhen's departing figure, and he didn't linger here any longer, quickly flying back the same way he had come to return to the ark.

The battle had taken place very far away from the ark, so no one else had noticed anything, and the two Body Integration Stage elders of the Chengquan Trading House had been seated on the deck this entire time.

Han Li took a moment to conceal himself, then returned to his room on the ark in a stealthy fashion.

The night quickly passed by, and the flying ark continued on its journey at first light the next day.

It naturally didn't take long before the man with the Kou surname discovered Gan Jiuzhen's disappearance.

Aside from Han Li, no one on the ark knew what had happened that night, and Han Li naturally wasn't going to tell anyone about what had transpired.

The man with the Kou surname was a little perplexed and dismayed, but there was nothing he could do. After all, they hadn't arrived at their destination yet, and he hadn't issued the reward for the mission, so essentially, Gan Jiuzhen had protected the ark for a large stretch of their journey free of charge.

In contrast with the Lost Grave Forest, the Black Rock Desert was extremely desolate, with not even a single living creature to be seen.

The flying ark was traveling at top speed, and not even the concealment restrictions had been activated as all of the spiritual power was contributing toward further acceleration.

The ark was flying so quickly that it was nothing more than a white shadow in the air, and even though there were no signs of any demon beasts in the area, Han Li was still requested by the man with the Kou surname to stand on lookout duty with the two Body Integration Stage elders.

Close to half a day passed by very quickly, and the flying ark was venturing quite deep into the Black Rock Desert.

Han Li was standing on one side of the ark, surveying the ground down below, and just a moment ago, he had clearly felt the gravitational force in the area beginning to increase.

The flying ark was somewhat affected by this, and the white light glowing from its surface began to flicker slightly, while its speed was also negatively impacted.

After a moment of contemplation, Han Li released his enormous spiritual sense, sending it several thousand feet deep into the ground.

There's a vast abundance of Origin Magnetic Profound Iron here. No wonder it's able to generate such tremendous suction gravitational force.

Aside from that, he had also verified that there were no dark beasts lurking in the area, unless they were hiding even deeper underground.

Han Li continued to probe even deeper underground with his spiritual sense, and a surprised look quickly appeared in his eyes.

Due to the presence of the underground ore veins, there were all types of chaotic underground energies and gravitational forces intertwining deep beneath the earth, preventing his spiritual sense from being able to extend down any further.

Instead of forcing the issue, he made a compromise and began to spread his spiritual sense outward instead.

A short while later, Han Li abruptly raised his head and cast his gaze forward, seemingly having spotted something.

However, after a moment of contemplation, he decided not to raise the alarm, but blue light was flashing in his eyes as he took a closer look.

Moments later, one of the Body Integration Stage elders on the other side of the ark suddenly sprang to his feet, having detected the presence of some black lizards up ahead with his spiritual sense.

Having already made this trip many times, he was quite familiar with the Black Rock Desert, and he immediately identified these black lizards to be a type of dark beast known as Darkback Iron Lizards, which were quite commonly seen in the Black Rock Desert. Their bodies were as hard as iron and steel, but they weren't particularly powerful, and the ones up ahead were roughly around the Foundation Establishment Stage.

The only concern that he had was that these lizards were social creatures that often resided in packs that numbered in the hundreds of millions, and their sheer numbers alone could prove to be very difficult to deal with.

Furthermore, according to his knowledge, these creatures shouldn't have been active during the day.

Chapter 163: Beast Tide Crisis

A hint of befuddlement flashed through his eyes, but he wasn't particularly concerned, seeing as these were just a few low-grade Darkback Iron Lizards.

The other Body Integration Stage elder soon noticed the Darkback Iron Lizards up ahead as well, but just like the other elder, he decided that they posed no threat.

However, as the flying ark continued onward, the expressions of the two Body Integration Stage elders were becoming more and more uneasy.

Initially, the Darkback Iron Lizards had only emerged in batches of a few at a time, but they quickly began coming out in droves, and they were also becoming more and more powerful. At this point, there were already some lizards at or above the Core Formation Stage.

"Fellow Daoist Liu, I get the sense that something isn't quite right," the Body Integration Stage elder on the left hand side said in a grim voice.

A thought seemed to have occurred to Elder Liu upon hearing this, and judging from his reaction, it wasn't an encouraging thought.

The spiritual sense of the other people on the ark wasn't able to reach as far and wide as that of the two Body Integration Stage elders, but they were also beginning to notice the large numbers of Darkback Iron Lizards in the area, and everyone was becoming more and more uneasy.

The man with the Kou surname flew over to the two elders, then asked in an urgent voice, "What's the deal with all these lizards, seniors?"

The two elders exchanged a glance with one another, following which one of them replied, "We don't know what's going on at the moment, but these Darkback Iron Lizards are supposed to be dark beasts, and we've never seen them active during the day. As long as we get out of this area quickly, there shouldn't be any problems."

"Full speed ahead! We have to get out of here as quickly as possible!" the man with the Kou surname instructed as he turned to one of his subordinates.

Meanwhile, Han Li had remained silent this entire time, surveying his surroundings with his hands clasped behind his back.

The man with the Kou surname was rather displeased with Han Li's detached attitude, but he couldn't openly criticize Han Li for his attitude, and all he could do was shake his head slightly in displeasure.

Out of the two Body Integration cultivators that he had hired, one of them had suddenly disappeared for some unknown reason, while the other one was clearly unfamiliar with the area. At this point, he could only pray that no major mishaps occurred, and that they could get out of this dangerous area as quickly as possible.

As the flying ark continued onward, the gravitational force coming from down below was becoming more and more pronounced.

The ark was a treasure of a decent caliber, but its enormous size and weight meant that it inevitably slowed down in the face of the increased gravity.

What was even more concerning was that the number of Darkback Iron Lizards up ahead was increasing exponentially, and some of them had even begun roaring at the flying ark, looking as if they were going to pounce.

Upon spotting several larger lizards that possessed Nascent Soul Stage powers, the two Body Integration Stage elders were finally unable to maintain their composure any longer.

The man with the Kou surname could also see that something was clearly amiss, and he suggested, "Given the current situation, I suggest we turn back and wait for a few days before attempting to cross this Black Rock Desert again. It'll only be a delay for a few days, and safety is paramount."

Both of the Body Integration Stage elders were also tempted by this proposition.

They hadn't been traveling through the Black Rock Desert for a very long time, so if they were to turn back now, they should've had enough time to get out of the desert before nightfall.

However, right as Elder Liu was about to respond, an unforeseen turn of events suddenly began to unfold.

A burst of rumbling rang out up ahead, and the earth in a radius of several dozens of kilometers began to tremble violently. Even the flying ark was somewhat affected, swaying slightly as if it were experiencing turbulence.

Everyone on the ark cast their eyes forward with astonished looks on their faces.

Far away in the distance, a series of thick black pillars were erupting into the heavens, much like an array of black mountains abruptly rising up from the ground.

The black pillars then collapsed into countless black particles, all of which began surging toward the flying ark like a black sea.

Through their spiritual sense, the people on the ark could detect that these black dots on the horizon were all Darkback Iron Lizards of different sizes.

In the blink of an eye, the entire landscape up ahead was completely inundated by this surging black wave, to the point that barely anything else was visible.

"We've run into a beast tide!" Elder Liu exclaimed with an alarmed expression.

Everyone instantly turned deathly pale as this realization dawned on them, and Han Li's brows also furrowed slightly.

The book that he had read concerning the Black Rock Desert had mentioned this type of beast tide, and it was an extremely perilous phenomenon. In some circumstances, these beast tides could even wear down an immortal until they died.

A layer of cold sweat instantly beaded up on the forehead of the man with the Kou surname, and he desperately yelled, "Turn the ark around! Hurry!"

The entire ark was instantly plunged into chaos, with everyone stumbling around on deck in a blind panic.

Dazzling white light erupted out of the ark as it was forcibly drawn to a halt, following which it quickly turned tail to flee back the same way it had come from.

However, it wasn't able to get very far before an earth-shattering boom rang out up ahead, and the earth opened up to release another massive pillar of Darkback Iron Lizards that obstructed their escape.

The ark was caught in between countless lizards, which were closing in from both the front and the rear.

There were still openings on either side of the ark, but the two swarms of lizards in front of and behind the ark were rapidly spreading, quickly forming an encirclement that completely surrounded the ark from all directions.

Everyone's faces had paled even further upon seeing this. No matter how sturdy the ark was, there was no way it would've been able to last very long in the face of such a formidable beast tide.

"What do we do, seniors?"

The man with the Kou surname was sweating and trembling uncontrollably as he turned to the three Body Integration cultivators on the ark.

The expressions of the two Body Integration Stage elders had turned extremely grim, and at this point, they had no choice but to fight for their lives.

Given their cultivation bases, if they were to abandon the ark and flee on their own, perhaps there was a 50% chance that they would be able to escape alive. However, as elders of the Chengquan Trading House, which was one of the three largest trading houses in the entire immortal region, they were bound by duty to protect the trading house's interests in times of peril. If they were to flee here, then they would be condemned and hunted across the entire Northern Glacial Immortal Region.

Han Li's brows were slightly furrowed, but he remained calm and collected. He took a few glances on either side of the ark, following which an intrigued look appeared on his face.

"Have you discovered something, Fellow Daoist Liu?" Elder Liu hurriedly asked upon seeing this.

"If you take a closer look, it seems like these lizards aren't targeting us," Han Li replied.

The two Body Integration Stage elders faltered slightly upon hearing this, then turned to inspect their surroundings, and sure enough, the lizards were fighting among themselves, ferociously biting and clawing at one another.

Furthermore, everyone quickly noticed that the two swarms of lizards were slightly different in appearance. The lizards up ahead had some dark red patterns on their bodies, while the ones behind the ark were completely black in color, indicating that they were different species.

"I see what's happening now. These two swarms of lizards are fighting over this territory! No wonder they've appeared during the day," Elder Liu mused as an enlightened look appeared in his eyes.

"In any case, seeing as we're not their target, we have to think of a way to get out of here as soon as possible. Otherwise, we'll still get swept up in their conflict regardless," the other elder said in a grim voice.

The man with the Kou surname immediately nodded in response, and after issuing a series of instructions, the flying ark began to glow with dazzling white light as it flew toward the left.

At this point, the two swarms of lizards had already completely clashed and were engaged in a fierce battle.

Blinded by their bloodlust, they were lashing out at anything that wasn't one of their brethren, and the giant flying ark was no exception.

A protective light barrier instantly appeared around the ark, advancing arduously as it warded off attacks from countless iron lizards.

Han Li and the two Body Integration Stage elders immediately sprang into action upon seeing this.

Elder Liu began to chant an incantation while making a rapid string of hand seals, and a burst of black flames instantly surged out of his body.

The black flames then transformed into countless fiery black threads at his behest, and the fiery threads intertwined to form an enormous net that was several thousand feet in size before sweeping toward the masses of surrounding iron lizards.

All of a sudden, the fiery black net exploded violently, causing the entire space to tremble as waves of fire surged forth in all directions, instantly forming a sea of black flames that was several kilometers in size.

All of the iron lizards that came into contact with the sea of fire instantly had their bodies blown into pieces before falling out of the sky as chunks of charred flesh.

Meanwhile, the other elder made a hand seal with one hand, and blue light flashed around him, following which a pair of massive blue lightning pythons sprang forth. Each of the pythons was several hundred feet in length, and both of them had dazzling blue lightning crackling around them as they pounced toward the lizard tide.

Upon making contact with the iron lizards, the blue lightning pythons instantly exploded, sending countless thick bolts of lightning erupting in all directions.

All of the iron lizards struck by the lightning instantly exploded, sending countless destroyed bodies raining out of the sky.

As for Han Li, he had turned to his trusty set of nine flying swords, which had transformed into countless sword threads that were slicing through large swathes of iron lizards with ease.

The three of them were each standing on one side of the ark, doing their best to slay the oncoming iron lizards.

However, there were simply far too many of these creatures, and despite their best efforts, they were only able to keep some of the iron lizards at bay, with countless more still able to crash into the ark.

A string of loud thumps rang out incessantly, and the ark resembled a small raft in a turbulent sea, just barely holding onto dear life in the face of the lizard tide.

The protective light barrier around the ark was also trembling violently, much to the panic and horror of everyone on the ark.

All of a sudden, a grating roar that resembled the harsh sound of metal grinding on metal rang out up ahead, and it was clearly audible even through the commotion of the unfolding battle.

Everyone on the ark felt a burst of sharp pain in their heads, as if they had just been pricked by steel needles, and their faces had paled even further.

The hearts of the two Body Integration Stage elders also shuddered upon hearing this roar.

Over 10,000 feet up ahead, a giant iron lizard that was around 500 to 600 feet in size had emerged out of the ground. Its body was completely black, and there were several thick black hooked spikes on its back, while sharp fangs were jutting out of its mouth, giving it an extremely fearsome appearance.

Chapter 164: Hidden Powerful Being

An enormous aura was emanating from the body of the giant lizard, indicating that it possessed Body Integration Stage power.

Before everyone had a chance to react, another thunderous roar rang out from behind them.

The earth exploded as another giant lizard of roughly the same size as the Body Integration Stage lizard emerged, and it was just as fearsome in appearance, with bright patterns all over its back and a pair of long dark red horns on its head.

Furthermore, it was also giving off a Body Integration Stage aura!

"Those are both iron lizard kings! No wonder there are so many of them here," Elder Liu murmured to himself as his pupils contracted drastically.

The eyes of the man with the Kou surname suddenly lit up as he asked, "Does that mean that if these iron lizard kings die, then the battle will be over?"

"That may be the case, but the two of them are quite evenly matched, so I'm afraid there won't be a decisive outcome anytime soon. Under normal circumstances, Elder Qi and I would perhaps be able to slay the lizard kings, but given the current situation..." Elder Liu's voice trailed off here, and he heaved a faint sigh at the sight of the countless iron lizards around the ark.

Right at this moment, the two lizard kings exchanged a glance from afar, then sprang up into the air as fast as lightning.

The two massive creatures clashed violently amid a resounding thump in the air not far away from the ark, then engaged one another in a ferocious tussle.

Violent shockwaves were sent sweeping through the air in all directions, interspersed with bursts of dazzling black and red light.

All of the smaller iron lizards nearby were instantly sent flying, and some were even torn to shreds by the shockwaves.

In the face of the powerful shockwaves, the protective light barrier around the ark was trembling violently, and the ark itself was forcibly diverted away from its original path.

The man with the Kou surname took a glance at the gradually thinning light barrier, and he urged in a panicked voice, "The ark isn't going to be able to last much longer! You have to think of something, seniors!"

However, the two Body Integration Stage elders were only able to do their best to keep the waves of iron lizards at bay, and even that was proving to be a tall order for them, so there was no way for them to do anything else.

Right at this moment, Han Li suddenly raised a hand before flicking a finger through the air.

A burst of blinding white light abruptly erupted out of nowhere, causing everyone to instinctively close their eyes.

Furthermore, a burst of peculiar energy fluctuations had surged out of the white light to completely disable the spiritual sense of everyone on the ark.

In the next instant, Han Li vanished from the spot amid a flash of silver lightning, then reappeared an instant later directly above the heads of the two giant lizard kings several thousand feet away.

Golden light flashed from his fists as he sent them crashing down upon the heads of the lizard kings, and the two giant creatures didn't even have any time to react before their heads were shattered with ease like a pair of eggs, sending huge volumes of blood and intracranial fluids splattering in all directions.

The two giant lizards didn't even have a chance to cry out before they were reduced to a pair of corpses that fell out of the sky before slamming heavily down onto the ground.

Meanwhile, silver lightning flashed from Han Li's body once again, and in the next instant, he had already returned to the ark.

All of this had transpired within the span of no more than a second, and all of the white light vanished immediately thereafter, as if it had never even appeared in the first place.

Everyone on the ark was completely rooted to the spot.

"What was that white light just now?" someone asked.

No one had an answer, and even the two Body Integration Stage elders were feeling completely dumbfounded.

All of a sudden, one of the Body Integration Stage elders realized that all of the iron lizards in the area had suddenly stopped fighting. Furthermore, the bloodlust in their eyes had faded, replaced by a look of shock and panic.

In the next instant, several loud roars rang out from within the hordes of iron lizards, and the two opposing armies quickly separated before scurrying away and fleeing back into the earth. In the blink of an eye, more than half of the iron lizards in the area had disappeared, and the landscape finally became visible again.

"Look! The two iron lizard kings are dead!"

Someone on the ark had spotted the pair of iron lizard king bodies laying on the ground several thousand feet away, and at this moment, the pair bodies were being carried away by some slightly smaller iron lizards.

Everyone was astonished to see this, including the pair of Body Integration Stage elders.

"Regardless of what happened here, I think our best course of action would be to get out of here as quickly as possible," Han Li said.

The man with the Kou surname hurriedly nodded in response. "You're right, Senior Liu. Full speed ahead!"

The flying ark began to glow with bright white radiance as it continued onward at full speed, quickly flying out of the area.

They weren't pursued by any iron lizards, and everyone heaved a collective sigh of relief upon seeing this.

"What happened just now?"

"I don't know. After that flash of white light, both of the iron lizard kings were killed!"

"If you ask me, there must've been a hidden powerful being on the ark, and they must've been the one that killed the two iron lizard kings, but they didn't want to blow their cover, so they used that white light to disguise their actions."

"That's preposterous! If you ask me, some immortal must've just so happened to have been passing through. There's no way any ordinary person would've been able to kill two Body Integration Stage demon beasts in the blink of an eye!"

"If it really was just some immortal passing by, then why did they release that white light as a smokescreen?"

Everyone on the ark was discussing what had just happened, and the atmosphere had become a little peculiar.

The two Body Integration Stage elders were also subtly examining everyone on the ark, as if they were trying to figure out who this hidden powerful being was.

However, they didn't dare to pry excessively.

Given how that person was able to kill those two iron lizard kings so quickly, they had to have been at least a Grand Ascension cultivator, or even a legendary True Immortal, and they certainly didn't dare to risk irking such a powerful being.

Meanwhile, Han Li was seated with his legs crossed on the deck of the ark, and he occasionally came under scrutiny from those around him, but he paid those prying eyes no heed.

The rest of the trip was very smooth, and they emerged from the Black Rock desert that night without coming under any further attacks, much to everyone's relief.

After flying out of the Black Rock Desert, they were greeted by the sight of a vast grassland.

Time slowly passed by, and everyone's curiosity toward the identity of that mysterious powerful being gradually faded as the days of monotonous travel continued.

Over half a year passed by in the blink of an eye, and the ark was flying over a bleak desert.

Their destination, Bright Hill City, was already very close, situated just on the other side of this desert.

The journey had been quite smooth, and the ark had encountered some perilous situations, but none as dire as the one they had run into in the Black Rock Desert.

At this moment, Han Li was seated with his legs crossed in his room.

He was making a rapid series of hand seals as a ball of heavy water was slowly fusing with the arcs of silver lightning in front of him.

Soon, a black ball emerged, and it was another ball of Heavy Water Veined Lightning.

An elated look appeared on his face as he stowed the ball of lightning away.

Along this journey, Han Li had been refining Heavy Water Veined Lightning whenever he had some spare time, and at this point, he had already exhausted close to half of his supply of heavy water to produce over 30 balls of Heavy Water Veined Lightning.

He took a moment to adjust his robes before rising to his feet, then emerged onto the deck and cast his gaze toward the yellow desert down below.

The desert was called the Boundless Sand Sea, and it was extremely vast, but the demon beasts here were very weak and sparse, so it was a very safe area.

Even the two Body Integration Stage elders weren't standing on lookout duty on the deck.

This journey had taken a long time, but once he arrived at Bright Hill City, he would have access to teleportation arrays that would significantly speed up his travels.

The man with the Kou surname just so happened to be nearby, and he immediately approached Han Li before extending a greeting, in response to which Han Li gave a slight nod.

The man with the Kou surname was looking rather excited as he said, "We're less than a day away from Bright Hill City now, Senior Liu. Thank you for your efforts over the course of this journey."

"You're far too kind, Fellow Daoist Kou. I took on this mission, so it's only right that I fulfill my duty," Han Li replied with a smile.

"What are your plans after reaching Bright Hill City, Senior Liu?" the man with the Kou surname asked.

"I..." Han Li's voice abruptly trailed off here as he suddenly turned his gaze to the right.

Several shadows had appeared on the distant horizon in that direction, alongside an extremely faint howling sound.

He immediately released his spiritual sense, upon which a grim look appeared on his face.

"What's wrong, Senior Liu?"

The man with the Kou surname followed Han Li's gaze while also releasing his spiritual sense, and his expression instantly changed drastically as he yelled, "It's an astral wind storm! Stop the ark and dig a hole for the ark to hide in! Hurry!"

None of the books that Han Li had purchased mentioned this so-called astral wind storm, but judging from the reaction displayed by the man with the Kou surname, it had to have been something quite dangerous.

The ark erupted into complete pandemonium as others quickly began to notice the approaching storm on the horizon, and those who were familiar with the climate in the area were extremely alarmed.

The ark gradually drew to a halt, following which the two Body Integration Stage elders flew out of their rooms.

Elder Qi flipped a hand over to produce a large yellow flag, and the flag swelled drastically to several dozen times its original size at his behest, radiating dazzling yellow light as it did so.

The elder swept a sleeve through the air, and a thick pillar of yellow light shot forth before hurtling into the desert sand down below.

The earth in a radius of several dozen kilometers trembled violently as the earth abruptly split open before parting in either direction.

Moments later, a massive black rift appeared on the ground, resembling a dark abyss that was several thousand feet deep.

Meanwhile, the black shadows in the distance were quickly approaching, revealing themselves to be a series of giant black clouds, within which a thunderous howling sound was ringing out incessantly.

Ferocious gusts of wind were whipped around the ark, sending vast volumes of sand flying up into the sky.

"Hurry!" the man with the Kou surname urged.

The ark immediately descended into the massive rift in the ground, quickly vanishing into it.

Elder Qi then swept the flag that he was holding through the air, and the rift closed itself from above, forming a massive underground cavern around the ark.

Meanwhile, ferocious gusts of yellow wind swept over the desert up above like a flight of massive wind dragons that obscured the entire sky.

The sand of the desert was whipped up into a frenzy by the wind, and the entire area had been plunged into complete chaos.

The gusts of wind resembled the whip of a giant that was repeatedly lashing against the ground with devastating impact, and even though the flying ark was several thousand feet beneath the ground, everyone could still clearly hear the thunderous commotion ringing out up above.

Chapter 165: Familiar

The man with the Kou surname was standing next to Han Li, and he said in a relieved voice, "It's a good thing that Senior Liu noticed it very early. Otherwise, we would've been in grave peril."

"What is this astral wind storm that you speak of, Fellow Daoist Kou?" Han Li asked as he raised an eyebrow.

"The astral wind storm is a type of natural phenomenon that only arises in this desert, and it's a very rare occurrence, but once it does arise, it'll wreak havoc over the area in a radius of hundreds of thousands of kilometers.

"The only way to deal with this disaster is to hide deep underground and wait for the storm to pass before returning to the surface," the man with the Kou surname explained, and he was clearly extremely wary of this form of natural disaster.

"I've crossed this desert no fewer than 100 times, and this is only the second time I've encountered this disaster. At the time, I witnessed a flying ark that was unable to make it underground in time being instantly pulverized into dust by the storm," Elder Qi said with a hint of lingering fear in his eyes.

"Apparently, this desert was once a city, but for some reason, an astral wind storm suddenly swept over the city one day, instantly razing it to the ground, and that's how this desert came to be," Elder Liu added.

"I see," Han Li replied with a nod.

"We're no more than a day away from our destination, but it looks like we'll have to wait a few more days until this astral wind storm passes before we continue onward," the man with the Kou surname sighed.

He then departed to examine whether any of the goods on the ark had been damaged.

Meanwhile, Han Li sat down with his legs crossed and closed his eyes to meditate.

The desert above Han Li and the others was currently being ravaged by the astral wind storm, but all was peaceful and tranquil hundreds of thousands of kilometers away from the Boundless Sand Sea.

Along a vast mountain range that stretched for tens of thousands of kilometers were countless lush forests, interspersed throughout which were a series of cities, towns, and villages.

At the center of the mountain range was an azure city that took up a massive area. Its walls were over 1,000 feet tall, and inscribed in large golden characters above the city gates were the words "Bright Hill City".

The city appeared to have been no smaller than Black Wind City, and it was filled with tall buildings that differed in construction style compared with the ones in Black Wind City in that these ones were more unrefined and rough around the edges, but appeared more imposing and majestic.

One thriving street after another was visible in the city, stretching as far as the eyes could see.

At the center of Bright Hill City was a massive white pagoda, standing out as a particularly eye-catching landmark, even compared with all of the tall buildings around it.

This was where the teleportation arrays in the city were situated, and people were regularly entering and exiting the building, presenting a lively and bustling sight to behold.

Right at this moment, two figures emerged from the entrance of the giant pagoda side by side.

One of them was an elderly man with a head of white hair coupled with a white beard. He was wearing a five-colored brocade robe, and despite his apparently advanced age, he was looking very sharp and full of vigor.

Beside him was a handsome young man in a tight-fitting black robe with a cold look in his eyes.

"Brother Fang, if I recall correctly, there aren't going to be any more teleportation arrays along the rest of your journey. On top of that, the Black Wind Sea is situated in the westernmost region of the continent, and I've heard that it's a very difficult place to access," the brocade-robed elderly man said.

"Given how much time has passed, we don't even know if he's still in the Black Wind Sea. As a safety precaution, I'll have to trouble you to verify his location again," Fang Pan said as he took a glance up at the sky.

"Very well."

The brocade-robed elderly man nodded in response, then flipped a hand over to produce a plate treasure. He brought his index and middle fingers together before pointing them directly at the plate, then began chanting an incantation.

As he did so, the plate began to radiate dazzling golden light, and a speck of flickering crimson light emerged extremely close to the center of the plate, much to the elderly man's surprise.

"Has he already left the Black Wind Sea?" Fang Pan asked, clearly already expecting this outcome.

"Not only that, but he's currently very close to this city," the brocade-robed elderly man replied with an incredulous expression.

Fang Pan faltered slightly upon hearing this, then asked, "Oh? Is he located to the west of us?"

"That's right, but for some reason, he seems to have stopped," the brocade-robed elderly man replied with a perplexed expression.

"Come with me," Fang Pan said as he flew out of the city as a streak of light, and the elderly man hurriedly followed along.

A short while later, the two of them appeared on the summit of a tall mountain several hundred kilometers away from the city, watching the astral wind storm that was ravaging the landscape far away in the west.

"It looks like he's taking shelter from some type of natural disaster. There's no need to wait any longer, let's go straight to him," Fang Pan said.

The brocade-robed elderly man's brows furrowed slightly upon hearing this. "We've already tracked him for so long, why the hurry now? Given his current location, his next destination will surely be Bright Hill City, so why don't we make some preparations here and ambush him once he arrives?"

"You can wait here if you like, but I'm not going to wait even a moment longer!" Fang Pan declared as he abruptly sprang up from the mountain summit, then instantly vanished into the distance.

The brocade-robed elderly man shook his head as he heaved a faint sigh, then also vanished from the spot amid a flash of five-colored light.

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Meanwhile.

Inside the underground cavern, the sound of the howling wind ringing out up above was clearly audible, and everyone, including Han Li, was seated with their eyes closed in silent meditation.

All of a sudden, his brows suddenly furrowed tightly as his eyes abruptly sprang open.

Just now, the blood essence in his body had suddenly become extremely agitated, churning through his veins in a frenzy, to the point that he was feeling an unnatural heat coursing through his veins.

Is something approaching me?

A strong sense of unease welled up in his heart.

After a moment of contemplation, he instantly rose to his feet, and everyone around him was startled by this sudden movement as they also opened their eyes to observe him with wary expressions.

He paid no heed to everyone's reactions as he abruptly vanished from the spot amid a flash of azure light.

The other people in the underground cavern with him didn't even get a chance to say anything, and they could exchange bewildered glances with one another.

After flying out of the underground cavern, the violent astral winds came surging toward him from all directions like countless sharp blades.

Han Li's entire body was enveloped within a layer of azure light, but that still wasn't enough to prevent the coarse sand from lashing against his face.

His eyes narrowed slightly as he turned toward a certain direction, then began to fly through the astral winds as a streak of azure light.

Inside the violent storm, visibility was virtually zero, and even though it wasn't very difficult for Han Li to traverse through the storm, his speed was significantly limited, so he wasn't able to get very far even after flying for an entire hour.

Right as he was about to accelerate to full speed and fly out of the area encompassed within the storm in one go, he suddenly detected two powerful auras appear within several thousand feet of him without any warning.

He immediately drew to a halt and swept his gaze across his surroundings, upon which he discovered a pair of indistinct humanoid figures situated in the storm to his right.

Only after the two of them had flown a further several hundred feet did they gradually become clearly visible to Han Li, revealing themselves to be a young man in black and a brocade-robed elderly man.

Each of them was enveloped in a light barrier that kept the storm at bay, and the swirling sand was only able to leave some faint white marks on the light barriers.

Han Li took a quick glance at the two figures, and his heart sank slightly as he asked, "Why are you getting in my way, fellow daoists?"

Both of them were mid-True Immortal cultivators, and it was clear that they hadn't approached him with friendly intentions.

Furthermore, for some reason, the two of them felt vaguely familiar to him, but he couldn't recall where he had seen them before no matter how hard he tried.

The brocade-robed elderly man was quite taken aback by this question, and he turned to the young man in black with a perplexed expression.

However, the latter's gaze remained fixed firmly on Han Li as he harrumphed coldly, "You think you can fool us with that disguise of yours, Han Li?"

Han Li was quite alarmed at the fact that he was being referred to directly by name, and a dark look appeared on his face as he asked, "Who are you?"

"I don't think he's putting on an act, Brother Fang. It seems like he really doesn't know who we are. Could it be that he lost his memories?" the brocade-robed elderly man asked as his brows furrowed slightly.

"Who cares if he's putting on an act or not? We'll just have to kill him, then search his soul, and everything will become clear," Fang Pan replied in a cold voice.

As soon as his voice trailed off, he abruptly vanished from the spot amid a flash of black light.

All Han Li saw was a blur flash past his eyes before the young man reappeared directly in front of him, and he was lashing out with a long black saber.

Han Li hurriedly raised a fist to oppose the saber, yet all of a sudden, Fang Pan vanished yet again.

As a result, Han Li's fist struck nothing but empty air, causing the space up ahead to shudder violently as he stumbled forward out of sheer momentum.

Immediately thereafter, he spotted a streak of black light out of the corner of his eye, and the runes on the blade of the black saber had begun flashing as it slashed at him from below at an extremely awkward angle.

It was too late for him to dodge the attack, so he could only take it head-on, and a layer of golden scales immediately appeared over his skin, alongside his True Extreme Membrane.

A loud clang rang out as Han Li retreated several thousand feet through the air, leaving a trail of blood in his wake.

After steadying himself, a grim look appeared on his face. The unremarkable-looking slash unleashed by the black-robed young man had managed to slice through both his True Extreme Membrane and his golden scales.

The slash had run out of steam after that and wasn't able to inflict any substantial harm, but Han Li was still quite alarmed by its power.

However, the black-robed young man's brows furrowed slightly upon seeing this, indicating that he was dissatisfied with the outcome of that attack.

As for the brocade-robed elderly man, he didn't participate directly in the battle. Instead, he was holding a round array plate in one hand while tracing the index finger of his other hand through the air incessantly, as if he were inscribing something.

Furthermore, a series of triangular yellow flags were flying incessantly out of his sleeve before vanishing into thin air.

Han Li's gaze roamed over his two assailants for a moment before a white longsword appeared in his grasp amid a flash of white light.

The black-robed young man took a step forward, immediately traveling close to 1,000 feet through the air, leaving a trail of afterimages in his wake as he lashed out at Han Li with his saber again.

Han Li raised an arm to block the attack, managing to keep the saber at bay, yet before he had a chance to do anything else, a startling turn of events abruptly unfolded before his eyes.

The afterimages left behind by Fang Pan were still lingering in the air, and one of them suddenly sprang forth amid a flash of black light, wielding an identical black saber that it lashed out at Han Li's abdomen.

This second figure was identical in appearance to Fang Pan, and it was also giving off a mid-True Immortal Stage aura!

Chapter 166: The Laws of Speed

Is this an avatar? No, it's something else...

Despite his surprise, Han Li's reactions remained as sharp as ever.

Seven specks of white light instantly appeared on his chest and abdomen, and one of his arms abruptly swelled drastically in size as he swung his fist at the second figure.

A resounding boom rang out as the second figure was sent flying back by the tremendous force behind the punch, but right at this moment, Han Li suddenly felt a chill run down his spine, and he had only just managed to turn his head slightly before he struck by a sharp blade on the shoulder near his neck.

Several of the scales on his shoulder were broken, and blood splattered in all directions as he was sent plunging forward through the air by the force of the attack.

He had only just managed to steady himself slightly when he caught sight of a third black-robed young man behind him, and this one was also completely identical to the other two in both aura and appearance.

Han Li hurriedly used his momentum to tumble through the air, then steadied himself over 1,000 feet away as he activated his Brightsight Spirit Eyes.

At the same time, the set of nine white flying swords also flew out before revolving through the air around him, forming a dense net of sword threads that protected him from all directions.

A hint of mockery appeared on the faces of the three black-robed young men in unison upon seeing this.

All of a sudden, the three of them pounced at Han Li from three different directions, and the runes on the surface of their black sabers were flashing brightly, causing the surrounding space to twist and warp.

Bright blue light was glowing in Han Li's eyes as he scrutinized the three figures intently, assessing all of the visual information that he could gather, including their movement trajectories, their actions, and even the looks on their faces.

In doing so, he discovered that all three of them seemed to have been real.

This is a clone technique that he's unleashing through the use of the laws of speed!

An enlightened look appeared on his face as he arrived at this realization, but his brows only became even more tightly furrowed with this revelation.

A sharp clang rang out, and one of the flying swords was struck, causing it to draw to a shuddering halt.

As a result, a gap appeared in the sword net, and before it could be filled, a saber projection shot through, hurtling directly toward Han Li's chest from behind.

Han Li swung around violently before launching a fist through the air to strike the saber projection head-on.

Immediately thereafter, a string of erratic clanging rang out, and he spotted a black-robed man wielding a long saber flashing incessantly around him, picking apart the defenses of his sword net bit by bit.

Thanks to his Brightsight Spirit Eyes, Han Li was able to track his opponent's movement with his eyes, but his flying swords were always just a little too slow to react, and it didn't take long before the sword was cast into complete disarray.

Furthermore, the other two clones of the black-robed young man were constantly lurking, lashing out at Han Li's vital regions whenever the opportunity arose.

Before long, around a dozen deep gashes had already been sliced into Han Li's body.

Thankfully, his physical body was extremely hardy to begin with, and his physical constitution was bolstered even further thanks to his True Extreme Physique, so even though he was frequently struck, none of the attacks proved to be lethal.

However, he knew that the situation was about to take a turn for the worse soon as the brocade-robed elderly man had already reached the final stage in setting up his array.

A faint buzzing sound rang out as the space within a radius of several thousand feet around Han Li shuddered. A burst of earthy yellow light swept through the area, and the astral wind storm was halted in its tracks, as if it had been sealed by some type of invisible force.

Han Li immediately made a hand seal without any hesitation upon seeing this, and a burst of thunderous rumbling instantly rang out as countless arcs of silver lightning sprang out of his body, instantly forming a silver lightning array around him.

An urgent look appeared on the brocade-robed elderly man's face upon seeing this, and he immediately pointed a finger at the array plate in his hand, upon which dazzling yellow light erupted within the array, sending a burst of even more overwhelming pressure surging toward Han Li.

As a result, the activation of Han Li's lightning array was also slowed down.

Fang Pan certainly wasn't going to pass up such an opportunity, and cold killing intent flashed through the eyes of his three clones as they converged from three different directions, unleashing a string of powerful saber projections that closed in rapidly on Han Li.

Han Li gritted his teeth tightly as he activated his Lightning Bird bloodline to its limits, and a flash of blinding silver light appeared in the air, following which Han Li abruptly vanished along with the lightning array.

Almost at the exact same moment, a vast expanse of earthy yellow light surged forth from all directions in a frenzy.

The flurry of saber projections also arrived, completely shredding the area around the spot where Han Li had just been standing a moment before, forming a violent black tornado that instantly destroyed all of the silver light lingering in the air.

Immediately thereafter, the three Fang Pans in the air fused back into one, glowering at the spot that Han Li had just vanished from with a dark expression.

The brocade-robed elderly man also deactivated his array before arriving by Fang Pan's side, then gently sniffed the air as he remarked, "I can smell quite a bit of his blood lingering in the air. In order to prevent us from spoiling the activation of his lightning array, he took an attack from you and your clones head-on, so I'm sure he's carrying some severe injuries right now."

After a moment of contemplation, Fang Pan said, "Not only did he not die 300 years ago, he's attained the body of a Profound Immortal now, so I doubt that attack would've inflicted any meaningful damage. Brother Feng, I'll have to trouble you to track him again. We can't afford to let him get away."

The brocade-robed elderly man nodded in response, then began to initiate his tracking technique...

Meanwhile, a rumbling thunderclap suddenly rang out in the air above a sand dune several hundred thousand kilometers away.

A bolt of silver lightning that was as thick as a water tank came crashing down from the heavens, and Han Li stumbled out of the bolt of lightning in a disheveled manner before falling onto the ground.

As soon as he landed on the ground, he immediately released his spiritual sense to scour the entire area within a radius of tens of thousands of kilometers, and only after verifying that there was no danger nearby did he flip a hand over to produce a pair of pills that he promptly swallowed.

He then closed his eyes to meditate, and moments later, his aura gradually returned to a tranquil state, but his expression was still as dark as ever.

He still had no idea who his two assailants were, but given how intent they were on killing him, he had a rough idea of who they could be.

The first possibility was that they were hunting him for the reward offered by the Ubiquitous Pavilion, while the second possibility was that they had something to do with how he had lost his memories of the past 300 years.

What was most perplexing to him was how they had seen through the disguise that he had adopted using the mask of the Transient Guild.

Regardless of what their objectives were, this wasn't something that he could verify in the current situation. Not only were they both superior to him in terms of cultivation base, their abilities made them extremely difficult to deal with.

One of them had mastered the laws of speed, while the other seemed to be a master of arrays and restrictions, so it definitely wasn't wise for him to fight fire with fire.

As these thoughts were running through his mind, he rose his feet, then flipped a hand over to produce the jade slip that contained the map of the Primordial Wave Continent.

After taking a brief glance at the map, he stowed the jade slip away, then began to fly toward a certain direction as a streak of azure light, vanishing into the distance in the blink of an eye.

Half a day later, Han Li was flying through the air above a short mountain range, and he descended toward a forest down below with a grim look on his face.

After landing on the ground, he immediately sat down with his legs crossed, and he took a pill to recover his energy, then released his spiritual sense as he closed his eyes to meditate.

However, no more than 15 minutes later, his eyes abruptly sprang open, and a bewildered look appeared on his face.

"How did they manage to catch up to me so quickly?" he murmured to himself as he immediately rose to his feet.

Two powerful auras had suddenly appeared at the edge of his spiritual sensory range, and they were approaching him at an incredible speed.

Han Li immediately shot up into the sky as a streak of azure light once again, vanishing from the forest in a flash.

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Two days later.

A streak of indistinct azure light suddenly appeared in the sky above a vast, primitive forest, and a tall figure emerged from within, then plummeted toward the lush forest down below in an unsteady manner.

A resounding boom rang out as a massive tree was struck by the figure, causing it to explode violently, sending countless branches, leaves, and scraps of wood flying in all directions.

Countless birds and beasts in the forest immediately began to flee the area in a panicked frenzy, further contributing to the commotion.

The figure that had struck the giant tree was none other than Han Li, and he sat up from the remnants of the tree, then wiped the forest dew from his face with his hand.

He had adopted another disguise, giving him the appearance of a square-faced middle-aged man.

His eyes held a sharp gleam, but the weariness on his face was very apparent.

During the past two days of constant fleeing, he had exhausted almost all of his immortal spiritual power, yet he was still unable to shake Fang Pan and the brocade-robed elderly man off his trail, and they seemed to be determined to kill him.

I can't just keep running like this. At the very least, I have to figure out who they are, Han Li thought to himself as he quickly devoured several pills.

With that in mind, he closed his eyes to meditate, recovering his immortal spiritual power as quickly as he could.

Around 15 minutes later, he reopened his eyes, detecting a burst of powerful spiritual sense within the range of his spiritual sense once again.

However, this time, he didn't continue to flee. Instead, he slowly rose to his feet, then flew up into the air above the forest as he cast his gaze toward the horizon.

A streak of azure light was hurtling rapidly toward him from that direction, and after just several seconds, it was no more than 10,000 feet away from him.

Within the streak of azure light was Fang Pan, who was holding his long black saber with a cold look in his eyes, while the brocade-robed elderly man was nowhere to be seen.

Judging from the cold killing intent in Fang Pan's eyes, Han Li could already tell that his disguise had failed, and he asked, "Why are you so determined to hunt me down?"

Fang Pan faltered slightly upon hearing this, but he had no intention of answering Han Li's question. Instead, he conjured up a series of indistinct afterimages in the air as he prepared to pounce.

Han Li's eyes narrowed slightly upon seeing this, and he immediately activated the true spirit bloodlines in his body.

Chapter 167: The Nascent Soul Sealing Vendetta

A low roar rang out as a burst of dazzling golden light erupted out of Han Li's entire body.

Enshrouded within the golden light, his body was rapidly expanding while strands of golden fur sprouted out of his skin, and he transformed into a giant golden ape that was several dozen feet tall in the blink of an eye.

At the same time, Fang Pan had already split up into three identical clones that were closing in around the giant ape in a triangular formation. The long sabers in their hands were gleaming with black light, forming a dense black saber net in the air that surrounded Han Li from all directions.

The golden ape threw its head back and let loose a long roar as it swung its arms violently through the air, releasing a burst of tremendous force that caused the surrounding space to tremble and quiver.

In the face of this burst of immense force, the black saber net was quickly destroyed, and even the air around the golden ape had become extremely heavy.

The three clones formed by Fang Pan swayed slightly, then withdrew their sabers in unison as they abruptly vanished from the spot.

In the next instant, azure light flashed behind the giant ape, and three saber-wielding Fang Pans appeared at the same time before slashing their sabers viciously at Han Li.

In the instant that the three sabers began their descent, they abruptly fused into a single saber projection with black light swirling around it, producing a sharp screeching sound as they sliced through the air, causing the nearby space to become blurry and indistinct.

The attack was so fast that the giant ape had no time to take evasive measures, but it was still able to conjure up a True Extreme Membrane over its body.

A loud metallic clang rang out as the black saber projection struck the golden ape on the back with devastating force, and the saber projection was instantly shattered as a burst of black and golden light erupted forth, sending a powerful destructive aura erupting in all directions that caused the air to buzz and tremble.

The golden ape was instantly sent flying forward, and its True Extreme Membrane had been torn open, while a gash had appeared on its back.

The gash wasn't very deep, but it was still bleeding profusely, staining its golden fur red.

Fang Pan was also involuntarily sent flying back over 1,000 feet from the force of the impact before stabilizing himself in mid-air.

He took a glance at the giant ape, which had landed on the ground not far away, and a slightly grim look had appeared on his face. It was clear that he wasn't expecting the golden ape to be able to take that attack head-on with such minimal injuries.

Just like Fang Pan, Han Li was also feeling rather bewildered.

Thankfully, he had taken on his Giant Mountain Ape in time. Otherwise, that attack would've dealt far more severe damage. At the same time, it seemed that he had found a way to deal with Fang Pan's attacks, despite Fang Pan's speed advantage.

After a moment of contemplation, Fang Pan split up into three once again before pouncing at Han Li.

This time, the three figures blurred as they sped through the air before splitting up even further, conjuring up dozens of clones, both substantial and insubstantial, in the blink of an eye. At the same time, thousands of black saber projections were sent raining down upon the giant ape.

The golden ape paid no heed to the injury on its back as it swung its massive fists rapidly through the air, unleashing countless fist projections in all directions.

A burst of tremendous power erupted forth, causing the surrounding space to tremble violently, forming rings of powerful shockwaves that swept through the air in all directions.

The dozens of clones conjured up by Fang Pan were struck by the ferocious shockwaves, and most of them instantly disintegrated, leaving only three substantial clones behind, all three of which had survived thanks to the protective light barriers around their bodies.

Before the giant ape had a chance to do anything else, a peculiar grin suddenly appeared on the faces of the three Fang Pans in unison, following which all three of them abruptly vanished from the spot.

The golden ape faltered slightly upon seeing this, seemingly having recalled something.

All of a sudden, a burst of bright yellow light erupted out of the ground beneath its feet, and a series of rope-like bursts of yellow light surged up from the earth. The bursts of yellow light twisted and writhed like spirit snakes for a brief moment, then wound themselves around the giant ape's entire body while giving off powerful law fluctuations.

Immediately thereafter, a giant yellow umbrella appeared out of thin air. The umbrella was over 1,000 feet in size, and all of the bursts of rope-like yellow light were connected to the interior of the umbrella. At this point, the golden ape had already been wrapped up in a yellow cocoon, making it resemble the umbrella's shaft.

The golden ape was greatly alarmed by this, and it let loose a thunderous roar as the muscles on its body writhed and squirmed frantically as if they were living creatures. Dazzling golden light was radiating from its entire body as it struggled with all its might.

However, these ordinary-looking bursts of yellow light were extraordinarily sturdy, and Han Li was unable to break free even with the incredible strength of the Giant Mountain Ape.

All of a sudden, the huge yellow umbrella closed itself around the giant ape, trapping it within.

Immediately thereafter, spatial fluctuations erupted above the umbrella, and the brocade-robed elderly man appeared as he chortled, "I've finally got you now! Even if you have three heads and six arms, you won't be able to break free from my Earth Net Umbrella!"

"Well done, Brother Feng!"

Fang Pan appeared beside the giant umbrella in a flash, then raised a hand as he began to chant an incantation.

An inky-black chain appeared out of thin air, and it was gleaming with black light with faint black mist swirling around it.

Furthermore, it was giving off a special type of law fluctuations.

The golden ape within the giant umbrella was extremely alarmed as he sensed the aura emanating from the chain. This was an aura that he was extremely familiar with, the aura of the Origin Separation Law Chains that had bound his nascent soul for over 300 years!

"You were the one who sealed my nascent soul!" the giant ape roared within the umbrella.

"Looks like you finally remembered! The three of us had to go great lengths to take you down, and we thought that our secret had perished with you, but to my surprise, you were still alive," the brocade-robed elderly man above the giant umbrella said.

Bright golden light erupted from the golden ape's body once again as it struggled and thrashed violently within the giant umbrella.

"Cease your futile struggles!" the brocade-robed elderly man said with a cold smile as he thrust a palm downward.

A burst of dazzling yellow light instantly erupted out of the surface of the giant umbrella, and a flurry of yellow runes surged forth in a frenzy before revolving around the umbrella, causing it to tighten even further.

At the same time, Fang Pan had completed his incantation, and he was rapidly making a series of hand seals.

The black light glowing from the black chain quickly brightened as countless black runes appeared around the chain, and those runes were rapidly expanding in size while giving off faint spatial fluctuations.

Right as Fang Pan was about to complete his preparations, a resounding boom rang out within the yellow umbrella, following which an incredible scene unfolded.

Lights of all types of different colors suddenly erupted out of the bulging yellow umbrella, and yellow light surged over the umbrella's surface as it bulged even further.

A bewildered look appeared on the brocade-robed elderly man's eyes upon seeing this, yet before he had a chance to do anything, he suddenly threw up a mouthful of blood, and his complexion instantly paled.

In the next instant, a resounding boom rang out as the yellow umbrella was violently torn apart.

The spiritual light on the surface of the umbrella quickly faded, while a golden figure emerged from within before rapidly expanding to over 1,000 feet in size while rising up into the air.

It was a giant golden ape with three heads and six arms, and the bursts of yellow light that were previously wound around its body were already nowhere to be seen.

The giant ape quickly made a string of hand seals with all six of its hands, and countless arcs of dazzling silver lightning emerged to form a huge lightning array around it.

All of this had taken place in the blink of an eye, and Fang Pan was furious as he opened his mouth to release a ball of blood essence into the black chain before him.

"You're not getting away!"

The black light radiating from the chain brightened even further as it abruptly swelled to several times its original size, then vanished from the spot before appearing directly in front of the giant ape, then passed straight through its chest and abdomen.

Almost at the exact same moment, dazzling silver light erupted within the lightning array, and the giant ape abruptly vanished, causing the chain to strike nothing but empty air.

Fang Pan was glowing at the slowly fading remnants of silver light in the air, and he was gritting his teeth in fury.

He took a deep breath to compose himself, then made a beckoning motion to withdraw the black chain.

The brocade-robed elderly man also flew over to him with a dark expression as he said, "I didn't think that he would be able to forcibly break free from the Earth Net Umbrella's law powers."

Fang Pan stowed the black chain away, then said, "That's only a secondary concern. The main problem we have to deal with is that lightning array of his. If we can't find a way to counteract it, he'll just keep running away, and we'll never be able to hunt him down! Brother Feng, you're an expert in arrays and restrictions, do you have any way to stop him?"

"Having already observed his lightning array twice, I have a rough idea of how it works. It's something that combines the power of space and the power of lightning, and it's actually not so difficult to counter it, but special talismans must be prepared, and I don't have any such talismans on me right now," the brocade-robed elderly man replied with slightly furrowed brows.

"Is there no other way? If we can crack the secret that he's holding, we should be able to break through our bottlenecks with no problems at all," Fang Pan said in a meaningful voice.

"There are other ways to counteract his lightning array. I once learned a secret technique called the Blood Incinerating Breath, which requires one to burn through their blood essence to unleash. It's a secret that can sever the spiritual power flow of all arrays, and it should be able to stop his lightning array from taking effect," the brocade-robed elderly man replied.

Fang Pan's eyes immediately lit up upon hearing this, and he said, "Perfect! Once we catch up to him next, use that secret technique to prevent him from getting away."

"The problem is that using the secret technique is quite taxing on the body, and I most likely won't be able to help you deal with Han Li," the brocade-robed elderly man said in a slightly hesitant voice.

"Rest assured, all you need to do is prevent him from getting away, and I'll take care of the rest," Fang Pan chuckled.

He raised a hand as he spoke to release a burst of azure light that enveloped both himself and the brocade-robed elderly man, then sped into the distance at an incredible speed, vanishing into the distance in a flash.

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Chapter 168: Pursuit

High up in the sky above a snowy mountain range hundreds of thousands of kilometers away, countless arcs of lightning appeared out of thin air before intertwining to form an array.

A giant figure appeared within the array amid a flash of silver light, and it was a huge golden ape with three heads and six arms.

As soon as the giant ape appeared, it rapidly shrank down, reverting back to its human form while the silver lightning array disintegrated around it.

He flipped a hand over to produce a pill before swallowing it, then flew toward a certain direction at full speed as a streak of azure light without pause.

This type of long-distance teleportation was extremely taxing on the Lightning Bird's power of lightning, and at the moment, he didn't know whether there was a distance limit on how far away Fang Pan and the brocade-robed elderly man could sense him from. If he were to be caught with all of the power of lightning in his body completely exhausted, then he would have no course for retreat.

However, he wasn't able to fly very far before he felt his blood begin to churn within his veins, and it was clear that Fang Pan's duo was using the same tracking technique once again.

Hence, he immediately began to fly in a different direction without any hesitation.

At the same time, he was digesting the pill that he had just taken as quickly as he could while carefully inspecting every single inch of his own body with his spiritual sense, trying to find out exactly where a mark had been planted on him.

However, no matter how much he searched, he wasn't able to find anything.

Even though Han Li was fleeing as quickly as he could, Fang Pan was too fast for him to shake off, and close to a day later, they were gradually beginning to close in on him.

This time, Han Li had no intention of facing them in battle at all, and in the instant that they appeared in his field of view, silver light instantly began to erupt out of his body.

Countless arcs of silver lightning appeared one after the other, yet right as it was about to form a lightning array, Fang Pan's voice rang out like thunder from several hundred kilometers away. "You're not getting away!"

As soon as his voice trailed off, bright azure light that contained countless dancing azure began to glow over his palm, and he thrust his palm into the body of the brocade-robed elderly man beside him.

An azure halo instantly appeared around the brocade-robed elderly man, within which countless azure runes were surging incessantly.

The elderly man instantly vanished into thin air, then reappeared not far away from Han Li.

At this point, Han Li was no more than half a second away from completing his teleportation. A silver lightning array had already taken shape around him, and he was just about to be inundated by silver light when a vast expanse of crimson flames suddenly appeared on the brocade-robed elderly man's body, instantly transforming him into a crimson sun.

Blinding crimson light spread through the entire area within a radius of several kilometers, and as soon as the lightning array around Han Li came into contact with the crimson light, it immediately disintegrated, much to Han Li's alarm.

Right at this moment, a bright saber projection appeared in Han Li's field of view, and initially, it was extremely far away, but it was upon him in the blink of an eye like a bolt of lightning, piercing directly toward his heart at an incredible speed.

Han Li's pupils contracted drastically upon seeing this, and bright azure light began to glow from his body as he sped toward the side.

In the next instant, Han Li appeared several hundred feet away from his original spot. A huge gash had been sliced onto his arm, exposing the bone within, and blood was gushing out profusely.

However, he had no time to tend to the wound as he instantly adopted his Giant Mountain Ape form amid a flash of dazzling golden light. At the same time, countless golden scales appeared over his entire body.

Meanwhile, Fang Pan appeared behind the saber, then reached out to grab it.

Immediately thereafter, he began darting from side to side, and four identical Fang Pans appeared on either side of him.

Each of them was wielding a bright long saber as they charged directly at Han Li at lightning-fast speeds while unleashing five dazzling saber projections.

All of a sudden, the five Fang Pans overlapped with one another, and the five saber projections also combined into one. At the same time, it abruptly accelerated to several times its original speed, leaving layers of overlapping afterimages in its wake as it pierced directly toward the giant ape's heart.

Everything around the saber projection seemed to have become extremely slow, as if everything were moving in slow motion in comparison.

The dream-like saber projection pierced into the golden ape's body before emerging on the other side, but it had missed the giant ape's heart by a small margin.

The golden ape threw up a mouthful of blood as a stunned look appeared on its face, and it then slammed a palm heavily down onto its own chest.

The giant ape was sent flying back by the force of its own blow, throwing up another large mouthful of blood that transformed into a burst of crimson light before fusing into its body.

Its skin instantly turned as red as blood, and at the same time, a massive crimson rune appeared on both his chest and his back, radiating dazzling crimson light.

The giant ape's body instantly exploded into a ball of crimson light, which instantly shot out of the area encompassed within the crimson light released by the brocade-robed elderly man.

Countless arcs of silver lightning then sprang out of the ball of crimson light, forming a lightning array in the blink of an eye.

Following a flash of lightning, Han Li was once again nowhere to be seen, leaving the brocade-robed elderly man to look on with his mouth agape in astonishment.

All of this had taken place in the blink of an eye, and before either of them had a chance to react, Han Li had already vanished from the spot.

The five Fang Pans fused as one once again, and he was glowering at the spot where Han Li had just vanished from with a furious expression.

Meanwhile, the brocade-robed elderly man chanted an incantation to snuff out the crimson flames burning on his body. His complexion was quite pale, and he hurriedly summoned a pill before devouring it.

"Damn it! He got away again!" Fang Pan spat through gritted teeth with a hint of agitation on his face.

Now that Han Li was aware of the elderly man's secret technique, he was definitely going to be even more cautious from this point onward, and it was most likely not going to be feasible to use the same secret technique on him again.

"I didn't think that he would be so cunning. What do we do now?" the brocade-robed elderly man asked, and his complexion still hadn't returned to normal.

Fang Pan was silent for a moment, then said, "Let's catch up to him first."

He then swept a hand through the air to release a burst of azure light that enveloped both of them.

Meanwhile, hundreds of kilometers away, a lightning array emerged before quickly disintegrating.

The crimson light faded, and Han Li stumbled out from within, looking as pale as a sheet.

There was still a wound on his chest near his heart that was bleeding profusely, and a hint of lingering fear flashed through his eyes as he looked down to inspect the wound.

If he hadn't moved himself to the side at the last moment, his heart would've already been pierced through and completely destroyed.

His eyes narrowed slightly as he thought back to that dream-like strike.

It was clear that Fang Pan had been hiding his true power prior to that point, and even Han Li had almost fallen prey to the surprise attack.

The only silver lining on the situation was that it clearly required some time for Fang Pan to unleash those nascent soul sealing chains of his.

With that in mind, Han Li flipped a hand over to produce a green talisman, which he pressed against the wound on his chest.

The talisman released a burst of gentle green light that surged into the wound, and his bleeding immediately stopped, while the wound itself also quickly healed.

He then consumed an Origin Return Pill, and while digesting the pill, he flew toward a certain direction as a streak of azure light.

Unsurprisingly, it took only less than a day before Fang Pan's duo caught up to him again.

Thanks to the effects of the Origin Return Pill, Han Li had already mostly recovered from his injuries.

Having learned his lesson from last time, he immediately teleported himself away using his lightning array as soon as Fang Pan and the brocade-robed elderly man entered his spiritual sensory range.

Fang Pan was naturally both infuriated and frustrated by this.

If he couldn't even get close to Han Li, then there was no way for him to do anything.

However, at this point, there was naturally no way that he would just give up and let Han Li go.

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Several days later, a streak of azure light was flying rapidly through the air above a black forest.

There was a thick blanket of dark clouds in the sky above the forest, and huge bolts of lightning would come crashing down from the clouds occasionally, giving the area the appearance of a forest of lightning when viewed from afar.

Within the azure light, Han Li wore a grim expression as he sped through the air while dodging the lightning that was crashing down from above.

Meanwhile, Fang Pan and the brocade-robed elderly man had just arrived at the edge of the forest close to 100,000 kilometers away. The two of them took a slightly concerned glance at the forest of lightning up ahead, but seeing no other choice, the two of them immediately flew in to continue their pursuit of Han Li.

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Half a month later, a streak of azure light was flying like the wind over a crimson mountain range.

The entire mountain range down below was covered in scorching flames, releasing plumes of black smoke that obscured the entire sky.

The streak of azure light was traversing through the world of fire and smoke in a straight line without taking any evasive measures.

Hundreds of thousands of kilometers away, Fang Pan and the brocade-robed elderly man were flying along in hot pursuit with dark looks on their faces.

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As the chase continued, over a month passed by in the blink of an eye.

Right at this moment, countless arcs of silver lightning appeared to form a lightning array in the sky above a massive swamp.

A loud thunderclap rang out, and Han Li appeared at the center of the array with his brows tightly furrowed.

He had been fleeing non-stop for close to two months at this point, and despite his large stash of pills, he was still rapidly exhausting the power of the Lightning Bird in his body. Even though he was intentionally limiting the number of times he was using his lightning array, it was still less than half as effective as it had been at its peak.

As a result, the distance that he was able to teleport with the array was decreasing with each successive use, and this time, he was only able to teleport no more than 250,000 kilometers.

Fang Pan and the brocade-robed elderly man had clearly detected this as well, and they were speeding up in their pursuit, much to Han Li's dismay.

If things were to continue like this, he would eventually be worn down and killed by his two pursuers.

Through the observation that he had conducted during this period, he had discovered that the one who had been tracking him this entire time wasn't Fang Pan. Instead, the tracking technique was being used by that brocade-robed elderly man.

Not only was that man able to track him, he was able to counteract his lightning array and possessed an Acquired Immortal Treasure capable of trapping someone inside. Hence, he was a huge thorn in Han Li's side that had to be eliminated.

With that in mind, he quickly hatched a plan, then began flying in another direction.

Moments later, the sound of splashing waves rang out up ahead, and a massive sea appeared before him. The seawater had a faint red hue, and it was giving off a sharp rusty smell.

He looked down at the churning seawater for a moment with a contemplative expression, then continued to fly deeper into the sea. Moments later, he drew to a halt near a crimson island that was several dozen kilometers in size.

"This place will have to do," he murmured to himself, then took a deep breath before raising both hands up into the air.

Dozens of balls of blue spiritual light flew out in all directions in unison, then vanished into the seawater down below.

Chapter 169: Retaliation

The balls of blue spiritual light that Han Li had just released were dozens of array treasures, each of which was several inches in size.

In the next instant, balls of blue light rose up from the surrounding sea, forming a series of profound arrays of different sizes, all of which began to revolve on the spot.

Meanwhile, Han Li flicked his fingers through the air, and a series of near-transparent azure threads shot out of his fingertips before vanishing into the surrounding arrays, causing them to fuse with one another before vanishing once again.

Close to an hour later, all of the surrounding arrays had vanished, following which Han Li made a hand seal, and countless arcs of silver lightning erupted out of his body to form a lightning array beneath him.

Han Li vanished from the spot amid a flash of lightning, then reappeared around 150,000 kilometers away, but he was still situated in the same crimson sea.

Meanwhile, countless kilometers away, Fang Pan and the brocade-robed elderly man were enshrouded within a streak of azure light as they sped through the air like lightning.

The brocade-robed elderly man was holding a golden array plate with one hand while chanting an incantation.

Once every few moments, he would unleash the tracking technique again in order to receive the latest updates on Han Li's location.

"He just teleported again," the brocade-robed elderly man reported.

"In which direction?" Fang Pan asked as his brows furrowed slightly.

"Northeast, but this time, he was only able to teleport less than 150,000 kilometers," the brocade-robed elderly man replied.

"Great! It looks like he won't be able to last much longer." Fang Pan was ecstatic to hear this, and he immediately began flying in the northeastern direction.

This time, they spotted Han Li in the distance no more than four hours later.

Han Li's face was extremely pale as he took a panicked glance behind him, and he conjured up his lightning array once again, but this time, he was only able to teleport himself less than 100,000 kilometers away.

Fang Pan was even more encouraged to see this, and he took a pill to recover his immortal spiritual power before speeding up even further.

Close to three hours later, Fang Pan caught up to Han Li once again.

Han Li frantically accelerated to his top speed, but he was still quite a bit slower than Fang Pan. The distance between the two of them was rapidly shrinking, and soon, they were separated by only a few hundred kilometers.

With a wave of his sleeve, arcs of silver lightning appeared over Han Li's body once again.

Fang Pan's expression darkened slightly upon seeing this. He knew that at this rate, he would be able to hunt down Han Li eventually, but he had already been pursuing Han Li for close to two months, and he had run out of patience long ago, so he wanted to end this as quickly as possible.

"Hurry, Brother Feng!" Fang Pan yelled as countless glowing azure runes arose from his hand, following which he thrust his palm into the brocade-robed elderly man's body.

An azure halo appeared around him once again, and in the next instant, the elderly man reappeared in very close proximity to Han Li.

A vast expanse of crimson flames had already appeared over his body, releasing dazzling crimson light that instantly encompassed the entire surrounding area in a radius of close to 10 kilometers.

At this point, Han Li still hadn't conjured up his lightning array yet, so there was no way that he could get away.

Fang Pan's eyes immediately lit up upon seeing this, and he made a grabbing motion to summon a bright saber into his grasp. At the same time, countless azure runes appeared around him, and his speed increased once again by roughly twofold.

Right at this moment, a burst of silver lightning erupted out of Han Li's body, and he transformed into a silver Lightning Bird that was several hundred feet in size, with thick bolts of lightning crackling and revolving incessantly around it.

The Lightning Bird spread its wings, and it vanished on the spot amid a flash of silver lightning before reappearing hundreds of kilometers away.

"Your struggles are futile!" Fang Pan harrumphed coldly as he appeared beside the brocade-robed elderly man, then grabbed onto his shoulder with one hand.

A burst of azure light appeared around him to envelop both of them, then transformed into a blurry azure shadow that set off in pursuit of the Lightning Bird, appearing directly behind it in the blink of an eye.

The Lightning Bird flapped its wings, and it fled another several hundred kilometers amid a flash of silver lightning, yet Fang Pan's duo were just as fast and remained hot on its heels.

Silver lightning flashed incessantly from the Lightning Bird's body as it unleashed its lightning movement ability over and over again, and each time, it was just a little bit faster than Fang Pan's duo, allowing to escape capture.

Thus, the chase continued, with a bolt of silver lightning and an azure shadow traveling rapidly over the surface of the sea.

The azure shadow remained as bright as ever, yet the arcs of silver lightning around the Lightning Bird were becoming dimmer and dimmer.

With another flash of silver lightning, the Lightning Bird appeared near a crimson island.

At this point, the arcs of silver lightning around it had become extremely dim, and it was flying directly forward, seemingly no longer able to unleash its lightning movement technique.

Even so, it was still extremely, but far slower than the speed its lightning movement technique had allowed it to reach.

The gap between the azure shadow and the Lightning Bird was rapidly shrinking, and Fang Pan's duo was ecstatic to see this.

However, the brocade-robed elderly man's brows suddenly furrowed slightly as he called out, "Hold on..."

However, Fang Pan's attention was completely fixed on the Lightning Bird up ahead, and he sped up once again, closing the gap between himself and the Lightning Bird to less than 1,000 feet.

Layers upon layers of saber projections were released by the saber in his hand, and he was just about to lash out when his surroundings suddenly turned into a complete blur.

The Lightning Bird up ahead had vanished, and he found himself situated in a blue space.

As soon as he entered this blue space, he immediately felt a burst of vortex-like suction force surging forth from beneath him. The suction force wasn't very powerful, but it was constantly acting upon him, forcing him to decelerate.

A string of afterimages appeared in his wake as he abruptly shot forward, trying to break out of the blue space, but a dull thump suddenly rang out as a burst of strange ripples suddenly appeared in the space up ahead, and a watery blue barrier appeared to stop him cold in his tracks.

Fang Pan immediately lashed out with the black saber in his hand, releasing a massive black saber projection that struck the barrier up ahead with a resounding boom, leaving a long crack on its surface.

A cold sneer appeared on Fang Pan's face upon seeing this, and he raised his saber to strike the barrier once again, only for the barrier to instantly return to its original state amid a flash of blue light.

The brocade-robed elderly man arrived by his side, and his brows were slightly furrowed as he said, "This is a high-grade water-attribute array that can draw upon the vast power of water of the sea to constantly replenish itself. It's renowned for being difficult to break through, and brute force along won't be enough to break it."

"He's become even more troublesome to deal with than 300 years ago," Fang Pan spat through gritted teeth.

"Having said that, it seems like he's close to exhausting all of his power of lightning, and he set up this array as a last resort to try and slow us down. Once we break through this array, it won't take us long to hunt him down," the brocade-robed elderly man said.

"I'll be counting on you, Brother Qian," Fang Pan replied with a nod.

With that, the brocade-robed elderly man rose up into the air, hovering directly above the center of the blue space as he began to make a series of hand seals while chanting an incantation.

A burst of red light flashed around him, and crimson flames were ignited over his body.

However, right at this moment, silver lightning suddenly began to crackle above his head, and Han Li swooped in from outside the array.

While it was true that he had expended a huge amount of his power of lightning, he hadn't completely run out, and he had only made it appear as if that were the case in order to lure Fang Pan's duo into his trap.

He made a hand seal with one hand, then thrust it down downward, and the True Water Pouch in his other hand instantly began to bulge. A burst of black light erupted out of the opening of the pouch, and boundless heavy water came gushing out like a turbulent river through a broken dam, transforming into an inky-black heavy water wyrm that pounced directly toward the brocade-robed elderly man.

The heavy water wyrm was as heavy as a mountain, and the entire space beneath it began to tremble violently under its enormous weight.

At this moment, the elderly man resembled a crimson sun, and he was at a critical juncture in his Blood Incinerating Breath secret technique. If he were to be cut off here, then not only would all of his prior efforts go to waste, he would be severely injured by secret technique backlash.

He hurriedly summoned an antiquated dark azure suit of armor onto his body, and at the same time, he yelled to Fang Pan, "Help me, Brother Fang!"

Even before the cry for help, Fang Pan had already sprung into action, conjuring up a series of clones, one of which slashed its black saber viciously through the air.

Meanwhile, two other clones rose up into the air, leaving trails of afterimages in their wake as they sped directly toward Han Li.

Han Li completely ignored Fang Pan's attacks as he quickly made a hand seal, and the heavy water wyrm accelerated in its descent toward the brocade-robed elderly man at his behest.

In contrast with refining Heavy Water Veined Lightning, which required meticulous and precise control over heavy water, wielding such a massive volume of heavy water like this was more of a test of one's immortal spiritual power reserves and powers of concentration.

The heavy water wyrm came crashing down from above, and the first thing that it struck was Fang Pan's black saber, but it immediately swallowed up the saber with a dull thump.

In the next instant, the wyrm crashed directly into the crimson sun that was burning around the brocade-robed elderly man.

A thunderous boom rang out as the elderly man's body came plummeting directly downward as if a mountain had fallen onto his head, and all of the crimson light around him instantly disintegrated. The suit of armor that he had donned was releasing countless dark azure runes, all of which were hurtling up toward the heavy water wyrm.

A string of dull thumps rang out in rapid succession as the heavy water wyrm's body was completely scattered by the dark azure runes.

However, not only was Han Li not dismayed in the slightest to see this, a triumphant smile had appeared on his face. Lightning flashed around him as he just barely evaded the attacks from the oncoming Fang Pan clones, then rapidly shot back in retreat.

A hint of foreboding immediately welled up in Fang Pan's heart upon seeing this, and all three of his clones fled toward the outskirts of the blue space as quickly as they could.

Meanwhile, 20 or so fist-sized black balls had emerged without any warning from in the wake of the destruction of the heavy water wyrm's body. The balls were hovering in mid-air, not giving off any spiritual power fluctuations.

As for the vast expanse of heavy water that the wyrm had disintegrated into, it rose up toward Han Li in a black wave before vanishing into his body.

Right at this moment, the silver patterns on the black balls suddenly began to light up, and thin arcs of lightning appeared within them.

Chapter 170: Demise

The brocade-robed elderly man's heart jolted slightly at the sight of the flashing balls around him, and he was overcome by an intense sense of foreboding.

He hurriedly swept his sleeves through the air, releasing seven or eight protective treasures at once as he braced himself for what was to come.

An earth-shattering boom rang out, immediately followed by a string of thunderous explosions as the 20 or so balls of Heavy Water Veined Lightning exploded like fireworks one after another.

Arcs of silver lightning erupted violently in all directions, instantly encompassing the entire surrounding area within a radius of 10,000 feet.

The runes being released by the brocade-robed elderly man's suit of armor were instantly destroyed as soon as they appeared, and all of his other protective treasures were also swallowed up by an enormous black sun.

A burst of powerful shockwaves swept through the area in all directions, causing the surrounding space to fold in on itself in layers as a series of alarming black spatial rifts appeared.

The crimson sea down below was also severely ravaged, and the seawater began to boil, sending large plumes of red water vapor rising up into the air.

At the same time, a massive crater appeared on the surface of the sea as if the seawater had been forced down by some type of tremendous weight, and massive waves hundreds of feet tall rose up around the edge of the crater before collapsing toward its center. The blue space that encompassed this area of the sea was also unable to withstand the force of the explosions and was violently shattered.

The astounding commotion continued for several moments before gradually subsiding.

At this point, all that remained of the small island were several small rocky sections that were jutting out of the surface of the sea, while massive waves continued to surge through the area.

On one of the remaining small sections of the island laid the brocade-robed elderly man in a puddle of his own blood. His suit of armor had been completely destroyed, and there were many protective treasure fragments scattered around him, but he was still alive, albeit extremely severely injured.

All of a sudden, Han Li appeared around 10,000 feet away, and his gaze instantly locked onto the elderly man down below.

The elderly man also looked up at Han Li at the same time, and his eyes were filled with burning resentment.

Han Li harrumphed coldly as killing intent gleamed in his eyes, and he was just about to swoop down from above when several bursts of azure light suddenly appeared around him, and five identical Fang

Pans emerged out of thin air in unison, all of which were slashing their sabers at him from different directions.

The five black saber projections fused as one, layering on top of one another in a dream-like fashion as they pierced directly toward Han Li's heart, and Han Li immediately sped up in his descent upon seeing this.

A loud thump rang out as the saber projection struck him on the back, instantly shattering his True Extreme Membrane and inflicting a bleeding gash that was deep enough to expose bone.

Han Li took advantage of the force of the impact to further accelerate in his descent toward the elderly man, and at the same time, he sent a small bead flying down at his target with a flick of his wrist.

At this point, all of the brocade-robed elderly man's protective treasures had already been destroyed, and he was carrying extremely severe injuries, rendering him unable to evade the oncoming attack.

A determined look immediately appeared on his face as he thrust a palm down onto the top of his own head, and a golden nascent soul shot out of in a flash of before attempting to flee.

However, before it was able to get away, the Heavy Water Lightning Bead that Han Li had purchased at the grand auction exploded without any warning.

A black sun the size of a mountain instantly appeared out of thin air, releasing hundreds of thick bolts of azure and purple lightning, as well as a burst of devastating law powers.

The bolts of azure and purple lightning resembled whips of the lightning god as they lashed out in all directions, destroying the brocade-robed elderly man's body and nascent soul in a flash.

However, right at this moment, a burst of azure light suddenly flew rapidly out of the elderly man's destroyed physical body. It was traveling so quickly that its speed rivaled instantaneous teleportation, and it flew straight into Han Li's body as he was frantically flying away from the explosion.

While Han Li was putting an end to the brocade-robed elderly man's life, Fang Pan had darted back in retreat, and a black chain had appeared in front of him, around which countless black runes were circulating incessantly.

Immediately thereafter, he shot forth through the air in direct pursuit of Han Li.

An earth-shattering boom rang out as the mountainous black sun exploded into a vast expanse of black light that rapidly expanded in all directions.

Han Li and Fang Pan were able to just barely fly out of the black light's range, but they were still inevitably struck by the shockwaves resulting from the explosion, sending them flying away in a rather unsteady fashion.

Bright azure light appeared around Fang Pan as he darted through the air several times in succession, moving in a way that defied reason as he intermittently vanished before reappearing, reaching Han Li in the blink of an eye.

With a flick of his wrist, the black chain in his hand shot forth in a flash, hurtling directly toward Han Li's lower abdomen.

The oncoming chain was too close for Han Li to evade, and he immediately opened his mouth to release several balls of blood essence, which erupted into a large cloud of blood mist around him.

The black chain shot straight into the cloud of blood mist, but at virtually the exact same moment, a crimson figure flew out of the blood mist, and it had fled to hundreds of kilometers away in just a few flashes, then vanished altogether with one more flash.

The cloud of blood mist scattered quickly thereafter, and the chain was also nowhere to be seen.

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Close to 100,000 kilometers away, a flash of silver lightning appeared in the sky above a dark blue sea, and Han Li stumbled out from within with his entire body covered in blood. He almost fell out of the sky before steadying himself, and his complexion had paled even further.

The Blood Shadow Movement Technique that he had just unleashed had worsened his condition even further, and his constant fleeing over the past nearly two months was taking a real toll on his body.

He took a deep breath to compose himself, and only after devouring an Origin Return Pill did a hint of color begin to return to his cheeks. He then closed his eyes and directed his spiritual sense into his own dantian, and sure enough, four extremely familiar black chains had appeared around his nascent soul.

However, he was quite relieved to see this.

Thankfully, he had managed to react just in the nick of time, so Fang Pan was unable to completely unleash the power of these troublesome chains. Otherwise, if he were to have his nascent soul sealed again, then he would've been as good as dead.

Even so, half of his immortal spiritual power had still been sealed away.

Immediately thereafter, his brows furrowed slightly as he noticed a glowing black mark hovering beneath his nascent soul, and it had been left behind by that streak of azure light that had shot out of the brocade-robed elderly man's body right before his demise.

This wasn't a restriction or anything of that nature. Instead, it was most likely some type of tracking mark.

Given sufficient time, he would be able to eradicate the mark, but Fang Pan clearly wasn't going to afford him that luxury.

What was rather peculiar was the aura emanating from the mark belonged to Fang Pan as opposed to the brocade-robed elderly man.

Right as Han Li was pondering this matter, he suddenly turned to take a glance in a certain direction as a peculiar look appeared on his face, and after a moment of contemplation, he began to fly deeper in that direction as a streak of azure light.

Around 15 minutes later, he drew to a halt above a certain section of the sea, and a rather perplexed look appeared on his face.

His spiritual sense told him that the surrounding sea in a radius of close to 100,000 kilometers was extraordinarily peaceful. There were many ordinary fish in the area, but barely any demon beasts.

With that in mind, he began to fly deeper into the area as a streak of azure light, and at the same time, he completely concealed his own aura, sinking toward the seabed like a rock.

As he did this, he released his enormous spiritual sense to envelop the mark in his body one layer after another in a bid to keep it as concealed and undetectable to the outside world as possible.

Not long after Han Li sank to the bottom of the sea, Fang Pan appeared above the surface of the sea amid a flash of azure light.

He closed his eyes to sense Han Li's location for a moment, then cast his gaze downward.

Even though the tracking mark he had left behind was being suppressed by something, he was still able to vaguely sense it.

A cold smile appeared on his face as he shot straight down toward the surface of the sea as a streak of azure light, then plunged into the water.

With his speed, he was able to reach the seabed in the blink of an eye.

It was completely dark and silent at the bottom of the sea, and he quickly scanned his gaze across his surroundings before focusing his attention on an unremarkable-looking giant rock several thousand feet away.

He then rushed toward the rock without any hesitation, unleashing a black saber projection that was several thousand feet in length, parting all of the seawater in its path as it surged along the seabed.

The saber projection struck the giant rock, but much to Fang Pan's surprise, the rock wasn't split apart.

All of a sudden, Han Li shot back from the other side of the rock as a streak of black light, and there was a barely detectable smile on his face.

A pair of clones appeared on either side of Fang Pan, and they slashed their black sabers through the water, sending a pair of saber projections hurtling toward Han Li from both the left and the right.

The two saber projections came together to form a black cross as they sped toward Han Li, stirring up all of the seawater in their wake.

Han Li seemed to have already been prepared for this, and he crossed his scaly arms in front of himself to form a barrier.

A loud clang rang out as he was sent flying back like a cannonball from the force of the impact, and right at this moment, a thunderous roar rang out from afar, causing the entire seabed to tremble and quake.

The seabed in the distance then exploded violently, sending countless rock fragments flying in all direction as a mountainous black shadow slowly emerged, giving off a terrifyingly powerful aura.

As it turned out, that seemingly unremarkable giant rock from before had actually been one of the fleshy bulbs on the mountainous creature's body.

Fang Pan was naturally quite alarmed by this unexpected turn of events, and he immediately paused in his pursuit of Han Li.

Meanwhile, Han Li gave Fang Pan a gloating grin, then vanished into a nearby trench on the seabed, completely vanishing out of sight. Even his aura had completely faded.

Fang Pan's heart immediately sank upon seeing this, and right as he was also about to conceal his own aura, a pair of giant green eyes suddenly opened up before him, and it was glowering at him with furious killing intent.

An unprecedented sense of fear immediately welled up in Fang Pan's heart.

At this point, he had already caught a clear glimpse of the black shadow's complete form, and it was a gargantuan purplish-black octopus that was over 10,000 feet in size. Its body was riddled with black bulbous growths that resembled giant rocks, and its massive, scaly tentacles were swinging through the water violently, churning up the entire sea.

A rift opened up beneath the pair of eyes, revealing a huge black hole, within which an array of sharp white teeth could just barely be made out, and it was clear that being devoured by this creature would be sure to spell one's demise.

This is a late-True Immortal Stage sea beast!