

A Record 371

Chapter 371: Illusion or Reality

The transparent figure was naturally none other than Han Li in Ling Yunzi's body, and after following the middle-aged man through the light barrier, he didn't immediately pursue him.

Instead, he remained on the spot and looked up at the pavilion before him. At the same time, he released his spiritual sense to examine the surrounding area, upon which his eyes immediately lit up.

Meanwhile, the middle-aged man quickly made his way over to the entrance of the pavilion, and he was just about to enter the building when Han Li abruptly directed his gaze toward him.

At the same time, a layer of translucent light appeared on Han Li's glabella, and a tiny translucent sword projection shot forth, covering a distance of thousands of feet in the blink of an eye before piercing straight into the middle-aged man's mind.

The entire process lasted no more than a second, and it was extremely silent and discreet.

All of a sudden, the middle-aged man stopped cold in his tracks, following which his eyes bulged, and he tipped forward without any warning before falling to the ground.

"Administrator Wang! Are you alright?"

The gray-robed elderly man hurriedly approached the middle-aged man before lifting him up from the ground, only to discover that his breathing had ceased, and there was no longer any hint of vitality left in his body.

After taking a moment to compose himself, the gray-robed man swept his gaze through the surrounding area while also releasing his spiritual sense to examine the entire area encompassed within the restriction.

However, with his cultivation base, it was naturally impossible for him to see through Han Li's concealment technique, and after a brief moment of hesitation, he suddenly yelled, "Help!"

A burst of commotion instantly rang out within the scripture library, and several cultivators emerged from the building. Upon spotting the gray-robed elderly man and the lifeless middle-aged man, they immediately had a rough idea of what had happened, and everyone erupted into a blind panic.

Han Li paid no heed to these people as he drifted calmly through them before entering the scripture library and releasing his spiritual sense once again.

The scripture library was split up into three floors, with the bottom two floors containing some miscellaneous books, including things like travel journals and illustrated handbooks.

None of these things were particularly valuable, so the bottom two floors were unguarded, and there were no restrictions set up there, either.

As for the third floor, it contained some cultivation arts, and the entire level was enshrouded within an intricate restriction.

Han Li naturally had no interest in those cultivation arts, and he began reading through the scriptures on the first and second floors.

At this point, everyone in the scripture library had already rushed outside, so Han Li didn't have to worry about being noticed.

He had intentionally chosen to kill the middle-aged man at the entrance of the scripture library to draw everyone outside, and he quickly read through one scripture after another, learning a great deal about the Bramble Wood Continent in the process, but this information wasn't very useful to him.

He turned to the left to find that fewer than a quarter of the Time Dao Runes on the Mantra Treasured Axis projection remained lit.

He didn't know what was going to happen once all of the Time Dao Runes were snuffed out, but he had a rough idea of what was going to transpire.

However, he had no time to worry about things like this, and he quickly withdrew his gaze before continuing in his reading.

A short while later, he suddenly stopped what he was doing, then cast his gaze toward a book that was slightly yellow with age.

This was a travel journal written by a cultivator who enjoyed exploring the continent, and an image on one of the book's pages had caught Han Li's attention.

The image depicted a bald and browless golden figure with a pair of long golden feelers on its head, as well as some golden hooked spikes on its body, presenting a fearsome sight to behold.

This was quite similar to a Gold Devouring Beetle Monarch.

After the illustration came a passage of text.

"Today, I traveled to the Golden Flame Mountain Range and encountered an almighty battle that shook the heavens and laid waste to the earth. I presume this was a battle between immortals, but thankfully, I was able to get away in time to avoid a terrible fate. This creature was one of the two immortals in the battle, but I wasn't able to identify it..."

Han Li's eyes lit up slightly upon seeing this.

This clearly wasn't the same Gold Devouring Beetle Monarch as the one that he had before, so perhaps it was another one.

Up to this point, he still hadn't managed to recover his Gold Devouring Beetle Monarch, and he had invested a great deal of effort into trying to recover it, but hadn't been able to gather any useful leads thus far.

After committing this snippet of information to memory, Han Li didn't delay any further as he continued to read through the book, but there was no further information about the Gold Devouring Beetle Monarch.

This left him feeling a little disappointed, but time was of the essence, and he quickly picked up another scripture about spirit plants.

After flipping through a few pages, he stopped once again.

On the page that he had stopped on was a vibrant purple flower, the very same type as the one that he had seen in that mountain range earlier.

"The Spirit Devouring Flower attracts living beings with its aroma before devouring them for sustenance. The flower can be used as an ingredient for body refinement pills, but it contains a type of corpse poison that must be expelled through the use of a secret technique before it can be used as a medicinal ingredient, and the secret technique is one that's quite difficult to execute."

An enlightened look appeared on Han Li's face upon seeing this.

It was no wonder that the purple flowers appeared to have been quite abundant in spiritual qi, but they were left alone without anyone willing to pick them.

Right as he was about to keep reading, a burst of buzzing suddenly rang out nearby, and Han Li turned to discover that all of the Time Dao Runes on the Mantra Treasured Axis projection had already faded.

Immediately thereafter, the projection began to glow brightly while quickly taking on a more substantial form, and it was also rapidly revolving and giving off a loud buzzing sound.

Han Li cast his gaze outside, upon which a hint of intrigue appeared in his eyes.

The buzzing sound was extremely loud in his ears, but it seemed that none of the people outside were able to hear it at all.

Despite how rapidly the Mantra Treasured Axis was revolving, it didn't cause any harm to its surroundings, and it seemed to have been somehow detached from this reality.

All of a sudden, a speck of black light appeared at the center of the vortex, and it rapidly expanded, staining the entire axis black in the blink of an eye.

As the Mantra Treasured Axis continued to revolve, a black vortex that was very similar in appearance to the green vortex on the wall of light emerged, and all of this had taken place in an instant.

Before Han Li had a chance to react, a burst of enormous suction force erupted out of the vortex, latching onto his soul and sucking it out of Ling Yunzi's body. All the while, he was completely powerless to resist.

The final thing that he saw was a glimpse of Ling Yunzi's body, which abruptly shuddered before disintegrating to countless specks of light that dissipated into nothingness.

Immediately thereafter, Han Li felt his vision go black, and his consciousness began to fade.

After an indeterminate period of time, he gradually awakened and opened his eyes.

Once again, he was greeted by the sight of the wall of light, and the black vortex on its surface flashed a few times before vanishing into thin air.

The wall of light itself also quickly disintegrated, and everything returned to normal.

Looking at the familiar cave abode around him, a mixture of elation and disappointment flashed through Han Li's eyes.

He was very glad to be back, but at the same time, he felt rather disappointed that he hadn't been able to reap any substantial benefits from this phenomenon generated by the Heaven Controlling Vial.

He immediately closed his eyes and quickly thought back over the entirety of the strange out-of-body experience that had just transpired, trying to find something useful from it, but ultimately, his efforts proved to be futile.

He heaved a faint sigh, then made a hand seal, and his Mantra Treasured Axis appeared behind him amid a flash of golden light.

As expected, the 360 Time Dao Runes on the surface of the axis had all been snuffed out, just like last time that wall of light had been conjured up.

The golden time law thread was wound around the Mantra Treasured Axis, but it had also become very dim.

Han Li made a beckoning motion with one hand, stowing the time law thread into his own body, and right at this moment, a loud thunderclap rang out in front of him, following which Daoist Xie emerged amid a flurry of golden lightning.

"Congratulations on finally mastering the laws of time, Fellow Daoist Han," Daoist Xie congratulated.

"Even with the assistance of a second-tier dao pill, I was still very fortunate to have been able to master the laws of time. As one of the three paramount laws, the laws of time are truly profound. By the way, you saw everything that happened here just now, right?" Han Li asked.

"What are you referring to?" Daoist Xie asked in a puzzled voice. "All I saw is that you seemed to have spaced out for a moment after conjuring up that wall of light. Is there something wrong?"

Han Li faltered slightly upon hearing this, but instead of offering an explanation, he remained silent as a contemplative look appeared on his face.

Judging from Daoist Xie's answer, the 360 seconds that his soul had spent in the Golden Origin Immortal Region seemed to have only been the equivalent of an instant in the real world.

In that case, did this so-called Golden Origin Immortal Region truly exist? And was there actually such a sect as the Iron Beast Sect?

On top of that, were Ling Yunzi and Li Yuanjiu real people, or were they just figments of his imagination?

If all of that had been just an illusion, then why was it that it felt so incredibly real?

Han Li's brows became slightly furrowed, and he was unable to make sense of what had just transpired.

A long while later, he shook his head with a wry smile.

What had just happened had been extremely peculiar, and he couldn't wrap his head around it at the moment, so he would just have to think about it at a later date.

Chapter 372: Unexpected Gains

Han Li heaved a faint sigh and wasted no further time contemplating this topic.

Seeing as he had already mastered the laws of time, his top priorities now were to secure the second half of the Spirit Refinement Technique and make a breakthrough to the Golden Immortal Stage.

With that in mind, he put on his Transient Guild mask, then summoned the array plate projection, only to find that his Spirit Refinement Technique acquisition mission still hadn't received any responses.

He heaved a faint sigh, then stowed the mask away, but he wasn't overly disappointed.

After all, this was a matter of luck, and at the very least, it seemed that he wasn't going to enter that deranged state again anytime soon.

At this point, he was only one immortal acupoint away from reaching the Golden Immortal Stage, and if he could make the breakthrough, then that would significantly increase his chances of survival in the Immortal Realm.

However, he still had no idea how to complete the breakthrough.

A contemplative look appeared on his face, and he flipped a hand over to produce the gray stone slab that contained the Great Universe Origin Arts.

He had released a mission in the Transient Guild searching for the second half of the Great Universe Origin Arts, but that mission hadn't received any responses up to this point, either.

He stared at the stone slab for a moment, then abruptly rose to his feet before making his way outside.

Just now, he had decided to cultivate the Great Universe Origin Arts. Even though he only had the first half, perhaps it would provide him with some inspiration with regard to how he could break through the final immortal acupoint.

Even if that didn't prove to be the case, the Big Dipper Origin Arts had significantly enhanced his physical prowess, so cultivating the more complete Great Universe Origin Arts certainly couldn't have been detrimental.

Han Li handed his Heaven Controlling Vial to his giant ape puppet, instructing it to continue watering the spirit plants in his medicine garden, then flew out of his cave abode and arrived on a mountain at the center of the island.

This was the highest point on the entire island, and from there, everything on the island was laid bare before his eyes.

Han Li swept a sleeve through the air to release a streak of azure sword qi, which shaved off a small chunk of the mountain summit to create a flat and smooth stone platform.

After that, he swept both sleeves through the air to release a series of materials, all of which were giving off bursts of starpower.

These materials had virtually all been acquired from Tao Yu's portly guard. That man had also been cultivating starpower-based abilities, and he had also been a late-True Immortal cultivator, so he possessed a huge supply of starpower materials.

From there, Han Li opened his mouth to produce a ball of azure flames that enveloped the mountaintop, quickly melting it down into a soft and malleable texture.

He then made a hand seal, and a series of materials came flying out before landing in the azure flame, where they were quickly refined and fused as one with the mountain.

The originally mundane and unremarkable mountain quickly began to glow brightly, and four or five days passed by in the blink of an eye.

At this point, the mountain summit had already undergone a complete makeover. The mountain had already been cylindrical in shape, but it had been transformed into a pagoda, resembling a giant stone platform that was giving off radiant blue starlight.

There were also numerous runes that depicted all types of star designs engraved onto the stone platform, forming an extremely complex array.

Everything here was very similar to the Star Gathering Platform back in the Origin Realm Temple, except it was far more grand and spectacular.

Han Li had created the array on the stone platform by referencing the Star Gathering Array on the Star Gathering Platform, while also infusing elements of star array design that he had mastered over the years.

The portly guard's storage tool contained some very intricate star arrays, as well as some cultivation arts and secret techniques related to stars. In order to refine the Seven Bright Star Rings, Han Li had previously taken some time to study those arrays, cultivation arts, and secret techniques.

A Seven Bright Starlight Array had been integrated into the array on the stone platform, so its ability to gather starlight would've undoubtedly been superior to that of the Star Gathering Platform of the Origin Realm Temple.

Most importantly, this Seven Bright Starlight Array was closely linked to the Seven Bright Star Rings, so when using this array, Han Li could draw upon the power of the Seven Bright Star Rings to enhance the array's effects.

After doing all of this, Han Li descended onto the platform, then gave a pleased nod.

He sat down onto the ground with his legs crossed, then closed his eyes as he began to study the gray stone slab in his hand.

Before long, day had transitioned into night, and countless stars appeared in the night sky.

Han Li opened his eyes before casting his gaze upward, then swept a sleeve through the air to release eight blue crystals, which were giving off a collective aura that was very similar to that of the Starwash Stone.

These crystals were called Starheaven Stones, and just like Starwash Stone, they contained extremely pure starpower, except the starpower in Starheaven Stones was far more abundant than in Starwash Stones, making them an even superior energy source for star arrays.

These Starheaven Stones had also been acquired from the portly guard's storage tool, but there weren't many of them, so they weren't going to last very long.

However, that wasn't a problem as he had already released a Starheaven Stone acquisition mission in the Transient Guild. Starheaven Stones were quite precious, but not as rare as dao pill ingredients, so it shouldn't be too difficult to acquire them.

The eight Starheaven Stones were accurately embedded into the eight slots around the array, and bursts of blue light instantly emerged within those slots before quickly flowing over the array on the stone platform.

Before long, the entire array had lit up with dazzling blue radiance, while the stone platform had taken on a translucent appearance.

The blue light that was radiating from the platform projected a series of star diagrams in the air, and these diagrams were slowly revolving around the stone platform, presenting a stunning sight to behold.

Right at this moment, the starlight in the sky abruptly brightened, then came raining down from above, forming an incredibly thick pillar of light that converged toward the stone platform before encompassing the platform in its entirety.

This burst of starpower was at least 10 times as formidable as what the Star Gathering Platform had been able to summon, and Han Li nodded to himself with a pleased expression, clearly quite happy with his own handiwork.

However, this level of starpower still wasn't quite sufficient for his current needs, so he made a hand seal and began to chant an incantation, upon which the Seven Bright Star Rings flew out of his body before hovering above his head.

As soon as the seven rings were summoned, the array on the stone platform instantly brightened considerably, and seven huge spots of blue light appeared, each of which was around the size of a millstone with countless runes flashing within them.

The seven spots of starlight appeared to have been arranged in a haphazard fashion, but in reality, they were organized in the arrangement of a profound array.

Right at this moment, the Seven Bright Star Rings also descended out of the sky and onto the seven spots of blue light on the platform.

The blue light radiating from the stone platform brightened even further, while the pillar of starlight descending from the heavens also brightened considerably.

Bursts of starpower were cascading down like a waterfall, producing a massive commotion, and only upon seeing this did Han Li close his eyes before channeling the Great Universe Origin Arts.

This cultivation art also contained the manifestation method for the first seven profound acupoints, and it was far more complex and profound than the Big Dipper Origin Arts.

A dull thump rang out as the pillar of starlight split up into seven smaller pillars of light that surged into Han Li's body.

Even though the pillars of starlight had shrunk down, the starlight that they contained had become even more concentrated, virtually forming substantial pillars.

Seven specks of blue light instantly appeared on Han Li's body, and those were the seven spots where the seven pillars of starlight had descended upon.

Enormous starpower surged into the seven profound acupoints, and Han Li's brows furrowed slightly as a pained look appeared on his face.

A burst of tearing pain immediately shot through the profound acupoints that had already opened up, and it was as if there were countless steel needles poking around inside.

He took a deep breath and closed his eyes, and his brows quickly unfurrowed again.

This level of pain was still tolerable to him.

He cycled through a series of different hand seals, and the starlight cascading down from the heavens became even brighter as it flooded into his body.

A vast expanse of blue mist emerged to encompass the entire stone platform, and Han Li's body was also enveloped in starlight.

The night passed by in the blink of an eye, and as the sun began to rise, the stars in the sky quickly faded, while the starpower descending from the heavens also vanished.

At this point, Han Li's robes were drenched in blood, and his complexion was also a little pale.

He opened his eyes, and he was looking a little weary, but there was a hint of excitement on his face.

The seven profound acupoints on his body had clearly become larger than before, while the True Extreme Form that had appeared over his body had also become slightly brighter and denser.

The Big Dipper Origin Arts that he had previously cultivated had only been a simplified version of the Great Universe Origin Arts, and now that he had begun cultivating the latter, the profound acupoints that had already been opened up in his body had expanded even further, while his physical prowess had also been enhanced.

He clenched his fists tightly as he sensed the changes that had taken place in his body, and even though he had only been cultivating for one night, his True Extreme Physique was already displaying some measure of improvement.

If he could open up all 18 profound acupoints, then his physical prowess would undoubtedly be enhanced even further.

He slowly exhaled as he suppressed the excitement in his heart, then took a restorative pill before closing his eyes to meditate.

A gentle azure glow appeared over his entire body, forming a ball of azure light.

It didn't take long before night arrived once again, and the ball of azure light faded to reveal Han Li, who had already made a full recovery at this point.

He opened his eyes and took a glance up at the starry night sky, then immediately activated the array once again.

The array on the stone platform was activated, quickly drawing down rays of starlight that enveloped his entire body, and Han Li immediately began channeling his cultivation art to absorb the starpower cascading down upon him.

Over a year passed by in the blink of an eye, and Han Li had refined his seven existing profound acupoints once again using the method described in the Great Universe Origin Arts.

At this moment, he was seated with his legs crossed on the stone platform with blue light flashing over his entire body.

His seven profound acupoints had become around twice as bright as before, while his physical prowess had also been significantly enhanced, and his True Extreme Film was looking even denser and more radiant.

A hint of excitement appeared on Han Li's face as he felt all of these changes in his own body.

The physical enhancements were naturally quite welcome, but that wasn't what he was excited about.

During this past year of cultivation, he discovered that the immortal acupoint in his body that overlapped with his existing profound acupoints had also expanded significantly and also become more resilient, allowing them to take in more of the world's origin qi.

This was very much a pleasant surprise, and he had never heard of immortal acupoints being able to undergo changes after they were opened.

Chapter 373: Response

Han Li took a deep breath to compose himself.

He had only made an initial foray into his cultivation of the Great Universe Origin Arts. Furthermore, he had already previously opened up the first seven profound acupoints, and that was why he had been able to progress so quickly, but the remaining 11 profound acupoints most likely weren't going to be so easy to cultivate.

With that in mind, Han Li exhaled before closing his eyes again.

The array on the stone platform began to operate once again, drawing a vast expanse of starlight down from the heavens and funneling it into Han Li's body.

Five years passed by in the blink of an eye.

On this day, a thunderous commotion suddenly rang out from the island, resonating across the entire heavens.

In the next instant, a glowing blue figure rose up into the sky from the island before flying around in the air like a prowling dragon.

All of the space within a radius of hundreds of kilometers around the island was buzzing and trembling incessantly, while massive waves swept over the surface of the sea, and all of the clouds in the sky were also scattered far and wide.

Some time later, the commotion ceased, and the blue figure also stopped in their tracks, revealing none other than Han Li.

At this moment, his entire body was enveloped within a translucent blue film of light that almost had a substantial form.

The film of light was adhered to the surface of his skin, and it was very similar to the True Extreme Film that had arisen following his attainment of his True Extreme Physique.

At this point, it was more appropriate to call it a suit of True Extreme Armor rather than a True Extreme Film.

Numerous streaks of blue light were surging incessantly over the film of light, making it appear as if there were countless stars orbiting around Han Li's body.

On top of that, there were 18 specks of blue light shimmering on Han Li's chest and abdomen.

After five years of arduous cultivation, he had finally mastered the first half of the Great Universe Origin Arts.

Even he was rather surprised by how quickly he had been able to master this cultivation art.

Given his past experience, he had originally predicted that it would've taken him a considerable amount of time to master this cultivation art, a projected time span of at least several dozen years, yet during his cultivation, he discovered that all of the bottlenecks that he thought he would encounter simply failed to pose any resistance, and he was able to open up one profound acupoint after another with ease.

All of these profound acupoints overlapped with the immortal acupoints that he had previously opened.

In retrospect, he could only speculate that perhaps the immortal acupoints that he had previously opened made it easier for him to subsequently cultivate profound acupoints, and that was why he was able to master the first half of the Great Universe Origin Arts in such a short time.

Initially, he had been concerned that he wouldn't have sufficient Starheaven Stones, but as things turned out, he had some to spare.

What was even more encouraging to him was that the immortal acupoints that overlapped with his profound acupoints had been significantly bolstered and expanded.

Right at this moment, Han Li let loose a low roar as he threw a punch at the sea down below.

A burst of tremendous force erupted out of his fist before striking the surface of the sea, and a massive fist-sized black hole was smashed into the sea, parting all of the seawater around it.

The force unleashed by Han Li's punch pierced straight through the waves before slamming into the seabed, creating another unfathomably deep hole, at the bottom of which faint glimmers of red light could be seen.

Han Li then unclenched his fist before bringing his hand down in a chopping motion, and the sea down below was parted once again as a massive trench emerged.

Once again, the seabed was also split apart, forming an enormous rift that was just as unfathomably deep as the hole from before.

Han Li slowly withdrew his palm and gave a pleased nod upon seeing this.

Even though he had only mastered the first half of the Great Universe Origin Arts, his already extremely formidable physical body had been significantly enhanced.

He had only put less than 30% of his strength into the two strikes that he had unleashed just now, yet they were already extremely formidable blows.

The True Extreme Film around Han Li's body faded at his behest, and he flew back down onto the island, quickly descending onto the stone platform.

He then swept a sleeve through the air to release a burst of azure light that enveloped the entire stone platform, and a burst of dull rumbling rang out as the stone platform was separated from the mountaintop.

After that, Han Li began to chant an incantation, and the stone platform rapidly shrank down before being stowed away.

Even though he had already mastered the first half of the Great Universe Origin Arts, this stone platform was something that had taken him a great deal of effort to construct, so he naturally wasn't just going to discard it.

After doing all of this, Han Li flew back to his cave abode and arrived in his bedroom.

During these past five years, he had been going through a constant cycle of cultivating the Great Universe Origin Arts at night and recovering from his injuries during the day, so it had already been a very long time since he had taken a proper rest.

Now that he had successfully mastered the cultivation art, he was finally allowing himself to relax, and a wave of exhaustion instantly swept over him.

Before long, he fell into a deep sleep on his bed, and only after a day and a night did he awaken before emerging from his bedroom, completely reinvigorated.

The first thing that he did was check on the medicine garden, where he discovered that all of the spirit plants were thriving as usual.

The giant ape puppet had followed Han Li's instructions, using most of the spirit liquid produced by the Heaven Controlling Vial on the primary bean, and at this point, it had already sprouted, so Han Li could look forward to another harvest of Dao Warriors soon.

From there, Han Li explored all of the other parts of his cave abode briefly before arriving in his secret chamber, where he sat down and began to consider his future plans.

At the moment, his top priorities were to find the second half of the Spirit Refinement Technique and make a breakthrough to the Golden Immortal Stage.

However, both of these objectives were rather difficult to achieve in the Black Wind Sea, and he couldn't help but be tempted to leave this secluded region.

Several centuries had already passed by, so the efforts that the Northern Glacial Immortal Region was taking to hunt him down would've surely lessened significantly. On top of that, he had become far more powerful than back when he faced Tao Yu in battle.

At his current level of power, he was confident that he would be able to take care of Tao Yu even without Daoist Xie's assistance.

As soon as this thought appeared in his mind, it immediately began to take root.

Even though he had made significant strides in his cultivation during his time in the Black Wind Sea, it had also been a very miserable experience.

After some extensive consideration, Han Li decided not to leave the Black Wind Sea for now. At the very least, he had to get a good grasp on the situation in the outside world first.

With that in mind, he put on his Transient Guild mask and made a routine examination of the missions that he had previously released.

All of a sudden, an ecstatic look appeared on his face.

He had received a response on his Spirit Refinement Technique acquisition mission.

He immediately made a hand seal, and a burst of azure light emerged from the passage of text detailing the mission.

Around 15 minutes later, the burst of azure light flew out into Han Li's secret chamber, where it took on the form of a gray figure.

The figure was dressed in a gray cloak with an azure cat mask on their face that carried the number "16".

The figure behind the mask inspected Han Li with a sharp and piercing gaze, while Han Li cupped his fist in a salute and said, "Greetings, Fellow Daoist."

The gray figure merely nodded in response.

"You've taken on my mission, so I presume you already know what I want, right?" Han Li asked.

"There's no need to be so ambiguous about it, Fellow Daoist," the gray figure chuckled in a slightly raspy voice. "There are all types of shady dealings taking place in the Transient Guild. You're looking for the second half of the Spirit Refinement Technique, isn't that right?"

Han Li raised an eyebrow as he smiled and said, "In that case, I won't waste any time. Do you have the second half of the cultivation art, Fellow Daoist?"

"Of course," the gray figure replied, "Why else would I have taken on your mission?"

"That's good to hear. Can we finalize things today? Rest assured, I'll be sure to offer you satisfactory compensation in exchange for the cultivation art," Han Li immediately replied.

"The compensation that you're offering is indeed quite substantial, but the second half of the Spirit Refinement Technique is extremely valuable, so I'm afraid what you're offering won't be sufficient," the gray figure said.

Han Li's brows furrowed slightly upon hearing this, and he asked, "In that case, what do you propose, Fellow Daoist?"

"If you really want to obtain the second half of the Spirit Refinement Technique, then come to this place in a month, and we'll speak in person," the gray figure replied before specifying a location.

Before Han Li had a chance to reply, the gray figure ended the communication.

Han Li's brows furrowed even tighter upon seeing this, and he slowly removed his mask.

He then flipped a hand over to produce the jade slip that contained the map of the Black Wind Sea, then directed his gaze toward the location specified by the gray figure, which was a location that was truly on the very outskirts of the Black Wind Sea.

Han Li stared at the jade slip in silence, and there was a contemplative look on his face.

Only after sitting in silence for half a day did he raise his head with a determined expression, seemingly having arrived at some type of decision.

After that, he stowed the jade slip away, then rose to his feet and quickly made his way to his medicine garden.

He slowly swept his gaze across his medicine garden, then abruptly began making a string of hand seals to release numerous streaks of azure light.

All of the restrictions in the entire medicine garden were instantly undone, and a series of array tools flew out of the garden before landing in his grasp.

In the blink of an eye, the entire garden had been deconstructed.

Immediately thereafter, Han Li released more streaks of azure light out of his hands to stow away all of the spirit plants in the garden along with the spirit soil beneath them.

The primary bean was also stowed away, and it didn't take long before the entire garden had been cleared out.

After emptying out the medicine garden, he quickly departed and stowed away everything else in the cave abode as well.

Chapter 374: Exchange

Close to an hour later, Han Li appeared in the sky above the island.

With a sweep of his sleeve, a series of restrictions appeared around the island before disintegrating one after another, following which sets of array tools flew out into the open before vanishing up his sleeves.

He had already been cultivating on this island for several centuries without any incident, but during his cultivation, he had triggered astonishing phenomena on quite a few occasions on the island, so it was no longer safe to continue to stay here.

Han Li took one final glance at the island, yet right as he was about to depart, a white demon beast appeared on the surface of the sea down below with a loud splash, then began calling out to him.

Han Li raised an eyebrow as he looked down, and he was amused to find that the demon beast was none other than the Pig Dolphin Beast.

He descended toward the Pig Dolphin Beast, and the latter immediately began swimming toward him, splashing through the water with its tail.

"Have you come to say goodbye?" Han Li asked as he stroked the Pig Dolphin Beast's smooth head with a smile on his face.

The Pig Dolphin Beast began rubbing its head gently against the palm of Han Li's hand, and Han Li smiled as he flipped a hand over to produce a pill that he tossed through the air.

The Pig Dolphin Beast's eyes immediately lit up as it opened its mouth to catch the pill.

"I have to thank you for the Hard Ink Crystal that you have me. It really did help me a lot. That pill is my parting gift to you," Han Li said.

The Pig Dolphin Beast faltered slightly upon hearing this, seemingly rather unwilling to part with Han Li.

Han Li gave the Pig Dolphin Beast's head one final pat, then flew away as a streak of azure light, quickly vanishing into the distance.

The Pig Dolphin Beast stared blankly at the direction that Han Li had flown away in, and a long while later, a determined look appeared in its eyes as it sank down into the sea.

.....

A month later, on the outskirts of the Black Wind Sea.

A streak of azure light appeared above an island that was close to 10 kilometers in size, then faded to reveal none other than Han Li in his azure tiger mask.

He was meeting someone from the Transient Guild, so he hadn't adopted a disguise and was merely wearing his Transient Guild mask.

He inspected his surroundings briefly, then descended onto the island.

This was an extremely secluded area of the Black Wind Sea, and there were sparse black clouds in the sky, obscuring the light of the sun like a layer of black mist.

These clouds weren't just normal dark clouds, and they were giving off a cold and forbidding aura.

Han Li took a brief glance at the thin black clouds in the sky, then quickly withdrew his gaze before sitting down with his legs crossed, and a layer of azure light quickly surfaced over his body.

This was the location that had been specified by the gray figure, and Han Li had actually already arrived here in secret two days ago.

During the past two days, he had conducted a thorough examination of the nearby area.

He had been invited here by someone completely unfamiliar to him, and they were about to engage in a transaction concerning a forbidden art, so he naturally had to take the necessary precautions.

Before long, close to a day had already passed by.

All of a sudden, Han Li opened his eyes before rising to his feet, then cast his gaze toward a certain direction.

There, on the distant horizon, a speck of gray light appeared before approaching the island at an incredible speed, appearing in the sky above the island in the blink of an eye.

The gray light then faded to reveal a gray-robed figure wearing an azure cat mask that bore the number "16", and it was none other than the same gray figure that Han Li had spoken to earlier.

The two of them examined each other momentarily, following which the cat-masked figure cupped their hand in a salute as they said, "You must be Fellow Daoist Raccoon 11. I am Wildcat 16. Sorry for being late."

"It's fine, I only just got here as well," Han Li replied as he returned the salute.

"That's good, I'm glad to hear I didn't keep you waiting for long," Wildcat 16 said.

Han Li's brows furrowed slightly as he said in an indifferent, "Let's skip the formalities and discuss the matter at hand."

Wildcat's demeanor was very different from during their last communication, and that left Han Li feeling a little perplexed.

"Of course, but this is not the place to talk, so please come with me, Fellow Daoist Raccoon 11," Wildcat 16 replied with a nod, then flew through the air as a gray shadow.

Han Li hesitated momentarily before deciding to follow along.

Before long, they had been flying for half a day, and Han Li had remained a set distance behind Wildcat 16 this entire time while also constantly keeping tabs on his surroundings using his spiritual sense.

The further they flew, the denser the black clouds in the sky became, and in the end, the entire sky was filled with dense black clouds that were giving off an astonishing glacial aura.

The sea down below had also been influenced by the yin qi in these black clouds, and the water had been stained black while also releasing bursts of bone-chilling glacial qi that were so formidable that even Body Integration cultivator would've quickly been frozen solid here.

Han Li's brows furrowed slightly as he inspected his surroundings.

Meanwhile, Wildcat 16 continued to fly onward, displaying no indication of stopping.

Han Li was growing more and more apprehensive, and he suddenly stopped cold in his tracks.

Wildcat 16 also drew to a halt, then turned around and asked, "Why have you stopped, Fellow Daoist Raccoon 11?"

"We've already been flying for a very long time, so I think it's only right that you tell me where we're going. I don't exactly enjoy being led on a trip into the middle of nowhere," Han Li said in an indifferent voice.

"Rest assured, Fellow Daoist Raccoon 11, we're almost there. This is a matter that concerns a forbidden art of the Immortal Realm, so even though we're already on the outskirts of the Black Wind Sea, we can't afford to get complacent. If anyone finds out what we're up to, we won't be able to remain in the Black Wind Sea any longer, so it's best that we go somewhere safe before we continue our conversation," Wildcat 16 said in a serious voice.

"Don't try to placate me, Fellow Daoist Wildcat 16. There's not a single soul to be seen here, so I suggest you come clean and tell me the truth. Otherwise, I'll have to take my leave," Han Li harrumphed coldly.

Despite his abrasive words, Wildcat 16 appeared to be completely unbothered, and after a brief moment of contemplation, they said, "I understand your concern, Fellow Daoist Raccoon 11. Truth be told, I do not have the second half of the Spirit Refinement Technique. Instead, it's in the possession of a friend of mine, and that friend is waiting up ahead for us."

Han Li faltered slightly upon hearing this, and Wildcat 16 continued, "Just as I said, this is a very serious matter, and my friend doesn't wish to deal with this matter in person. That's why they asked me to meet you on their behalf."

Han Li fell silent upon hearing this, and it seemed that he was contemplating something.

"I can assure you that I'm telling the truth, Fellow Daoist Raccoon 11. If you don't believe me, then there's nothing I can say to convince you, and we'll have to call off the deal," Wildcat 16 said in a resigned manner.

Han Li continued to remain silent, and his mind was racing as he weighed up his options.

Wildcat 16 also waited in silence, making no effort to try and hurry Han Li.

"Alright, in that case, I'll come with you, but do tell me how much longer we have to go," Han Li said after some extensive contemplation.

A hint of relief flashed through Wildcat 16's eyes upon hearing this, and they replied, "There's not far left to go. At our speed, we'll definitely be able to get there within two hours."

Han Li had noticed the fleeting hint of relief that had flashed through Wildcat 16's eyes, but he made no comment on it.

With that, the two of them continued onward, and after flying for close to another hour, a burst of faint rumbling suddenly rang out up ahead.

The further they went, the louder this rumbling became, and a wary look appeared in Han Li's eyes.

Shortly thereafter, the two of them drew to a halt.

Gusts of inky-black yin wind had suddenly appeared up ahead, with the largest gusts resembling enormous tornadoes, while the smallest ones were only the size of houses.

The countless gusts of black yin wind filled the entire space up ahead, and the sound of ghastly howling and sobbing could be heard ringing out within the yin wind.

Just these harrowing sounds alone were enough to strike Han Li with a sense of dizziness, and he hurriedly activated his Spirit Refinement Technique to alleviate this rush of dizziness, but the apprehension in his heart had been further exacerbated.

His current spiritual sense was not inferior to that of the average Golden Immortal, so there was no way that the sounds ringing out from within the gusts of yin wind should've been able to affect him.

All of a sudden, an alarmed look appeared on Han Li's face.

It was only very faint, but a hint of instability had arisen within his spiritual sense, and his heart immediately sank, thinking that the backlash from the Spirit Refinement Technique was about to strike again.

"Is this your first time seeing this Soul Stirring Wind, Fellow Daoist Raccoon 11? They have an extremely potent disruptive effect on one's soul, and unless the proper protective measures are taken, even True Immortal cultivators like ourselves won't be able to last very long in there at all," Wildcat 16 said.

Han Li was rather relieved to hear this, and he asked, "Are you saying that we have to venture into these winds?"

"That's right, but rest assured, we won't be venturing very far into these Soul Stirring Winds, and I've also prepared some things for this very purpose," Wildcat 16 replied with a nod.

Han Li offered no response to this, seemingly waiting to see exactly what Wildcat 16 had prepared.

Wildcat 16 didn't waste any more time words, either, and he raised a hand to produce an egg-sized black bead that appeared to have countless shadows flashing within it, presenting quite a profound sight to behold.

He then began to chant an incantation, and a ring of black light surged out of the black bead, stretching to a radius of over 100 feet to encompass both Han Li and Wildcat 16.

The ghastly sounds ringing out up ahead immediately became much more subdued, while the biting chill in the air also subsided significantly.

Chapter 375: The Second Half

"I didn't think that you would have a treasure that could keep out the Soul Stirring Winds," Han Li said as he took an intrigued glance at the black bead.

"It's not that remarkable a treasure. Let's go," Wildcat 16 said in a casual manner, seemingly not wanting to explain too much about the black bead.

With that, he led the way forward, flying into the vast expanse of yin winds up ahead, followed closely by Han Li.

As they flew onward, the surrounding yin winds became more and more ferocious, encompassing the entire space around Han Li's duo.

However, the ring of black light released by the black bead remained resilient against the yin wind, and at most, the Soul Stirring Winds were only able to create some ripples on the surface of the ring of light.

With their powers, they were naturally able to ward off the effects of this significantly weakened Soul Stirring Wind, and they quickly continued onward.

All the while, the surrounding Soul Stirring Winds continued to become more and more formidable, and it was as if there were tens of thousands of evil spirits wailing around them.

"Do you know the origins of this Soul Stirring Wind, Fellow Daoist Wildcat 16? It feels as if these winds are blowing straight out of the depths of hell, and without that treasure of yours, I wouldn't have dared to venture so far into this area at all," Han Li suddenly said as he inspected the surrounding gusts of yin wind.

"You're far too kind, Fellow Daoist Raccoon 11. These Soul Stirring Winds have already existed here for countless years, so I'm afraid I do not know their origins. However, there's a rumor in the Black Wind Sea that this place is connected to the Infernal Realm, and that's where the Soul Stirring Wind is leaking out from," Wildcat 16 replied.

"Does the Infernal Realm really exist?" Han Li asked.

"The so-called Infernal Realm is nothing more than an unsubstantiated legend, and no one knows for sure whether it actually exists, so take these stories with a grain of salt," Wildcat 16 replied with a smile.

"I've heard that these Soul Stirring Winds encompass a massive area, and it's virtually impossible to pass directly through them. That's why the Black Wind Sea is only connected to the outside world through

the teleportation array on Black Wind Island. I wonder if it's possible for a Golden Immortal to pass through these winds," Han Li mused with a contemplative look on his face.

"According to my knowledge, some powerful cultivators from the Black Wind Sea have previously attempted to pass through these Soul Stirring Winds, but none have succeeded. Many years ago, a Golden Immortal Stage senior attempted this feat, and he was trapped inside for several decades before being forced to come back out.

"According to him, the Soul Stirring Wind in the deepest part of this area is extremely formidable, so much so that even a Golden Immortal Stage soul isn't able to withstand it," Wildcat 16 replied with a shake of their head.

"I didn't think that these Soul Stirring Winds would be too formidable even for a Golden Immortal cultivator to pass through," Han Li mused with a contemplative expression.

Now that he had mastered the laws of time and had Daoist Xie by his side, he was wondering if it would be possible to force his way through these Soul Stirring Winds to leave the Black Wind Sea if his true identity were ever exposed, but it seemed that this was not a feasible course of action.

"This is why this place is known as an impregnable natural barrier. Perhaps only cultivators at or above the High Zenith Stage would be able to pass through these Soul Stirring Winds, but it's yet to be seen whether there are even any High Zenith Stage Jade Immortals at all in the Northern Glacial Immortal Region," Wildcat 16 said.

Han Li nodded in response and didn't speak any further on the subject.

Both of them flew onward in silence for some time, yet for some reason, past a certain point, the surrounding Soul Stirring Winds seemed to have reached a stable state and wasn't growing any more formidable.

Right as Han Li was speculating about why this could be the case, Wildcat 16 suddenly stopped in his tracks.

"Have we arrived?" Han Li asked as he also drew to a halt.

Wildcat 16 nodded in response, and after taking a couple of cautious glances at his surroundings he made a hand seal, upon which the black light radiating from the black bead instantly swelled, encompassing the two of them as they descended into the sea down below.

The seawater here had already turned as black as ink, and it was giving off a bone-chilling glacial aura that was quite uncomfortable for Han Li's duo even with the protection of the black bead.

Han Li swept a sleeve through the air to draw a ball of seawater into his grasp, and he discovered that it was giving off extremely abundant yin qi that was not inferior to that of some yin-attribute true waters, but the energy that this seawater contained was extremely chaotic, rendering it unusable.

The two of them quickly sank down to the seabed, and Wildcat 16 was clearly very familiar with this place, leading Han Li into a marine trench.

There, he flipped a hand over to produce a black jade badge, then chanted an incantation, and the badge immediately began radiating a vast expanse of black light that illuminated the seabed, causing it to tremble as five black stone pillars slowly emerged.

Each pillar was as thick as a water vat with countless runes that were radiating faint black light inscribed upon them.

Han Li stood off to the side with his hands clasped behind his back as he observed the proceedings through narrowed eyes.

Wildcat 16 continued to chant his incantation, and the black light radiating from the five stone pillars grew brighter and brighter before connecting together to form a ball of black light that was over 100 feet in size.

The ball of light began to revolve, picking up more and more speed as it did so, and all of a sudden, a faint crack rang out as an inky black cylindrical spatial passageway appeared.

Han Li was quite intrigued to find that this black spatial passageway was very similar to the one leading to that secret area on Dark Veil Island.

He attempted to release his spiritual sense into the spatial passageway, only for it to be kept at bay by a burst of gentle force.

"This is the place that I mentioned earlier, Fellow Daoist Raccoon 11. After you."

Wildcat 16 stepped away to the side and made an inviting hand gesture as he spoke.

Han Li nodded in response, then flew into the spatial passageway without any hesitation.

Wildcat 16 was a little surprised by Han Li's willingness to cooperate, but he immediately followed along.

On the surface, Han Li appeared quite calm and collected, but deep down, he was feeling rather resigned.

Given how careful and cautious he had always been, he definitely wouldn't have entered an unknown place like this so easily under normal circumstances.

However, for the sake of the Spirit Refinement Technique, he had no choice but to cooperate. He had already made it to this point, and it was too late to turn back.

However, that didn't mean that he was completely at the mercy of whoever was waiting for him in the secret area.

Aside from his laws of time and Mantra Treasured Axis, Daoist Xie now possessed Golden Immortal Stage power, so if anything were to go awry, then he was confident that he would be able to strike down Wildcat 16 in a very short time and take his bead treasure before fleeing the scene.

As soon as Han Li stepped into the spatial passageway, his body was immediately enveloped by a burst of power, and his surroundings transformed into a complete blur.

He immediately drew upon the immortal spiritual power in his body, preparing to unleash his most powerful treasures at a moment's notice, but thankfully, he didn't have to.

Shortly thereafter, he found himself in a space with a radius of several dozen kilometers, and the entire area was filled with lush vegetation, similar to the environment in the secret area on Dark Veil Island.

At the center of this secret area stood a black mountain that was tens of thousands of feet tall, and there were several cave entrances on the mountain, indicating that there were cave abodes inside.

Furthermore, there was some type of restriction in this secret area that rendered Han Li unable to release his spiritual sense out of his body at all.

Han Li inspected his surroundings while drawing upon his immortal spiritual power, and a burst of golden lightning emerged over his body before fading in a flash, following which an elated look flashed through his eyes.

He had just discreetly examined his connection with the lightning teleportation array that he had set up in the Black Wind Sea, and the connection was still intact, so he could teleport out of this place at any moment.

Right after he left his cave abode on that secluded island, he had made a trip to the lightning teleportation array to find that it was completely untouched.

After that, he had taken some time to bolster the array, and with this life-saving trump card up his sleeve, he was feeling a bit safer.

Right at this moment, Wildcat 16 emerged beside Han Li.

"My friend is waiting for you up ahead, Fellow Daoist Raccoon 11," Wildcat 16 said, then flew directly toward the black mountain before Han Li had a chance to reply.

Han Li trailed along behind Wildcat 16, and the two of them quickly flew into one of the cave entrances.

After traveling along a passageway for a while, a hall appeared up ahead.

The furnishings in the hall were quite minimalistic, with only a stone table, several stone chairs, and a black screen that was shimmering with black light and had different designs occasionally taking shape on its surface.

A tall red-robed man was standing in front of the screen with his back facing Han Li's duo, and Han Li was struck by a sense of familiarity at the sight of the man.

The red-robed man turned around upon hearing the sound of footsteps, and Han Li was rather taken aback to discover that he was none other than Wyrms 3.

"Fellow Daoist Raccoon 11, this is Fellow Daoist Wyrms 3, and he's the one who's actually taken on your mission," Wildcat 16 said.

Wyrms 3 took a glance at Han Li, then sat down on one of the chairs as he made an inviting hand gesture and said, "Take a seat, Fellow Daoist Raccoon 11."

Han Li did as he was told, while Wildcat 16 cupped his fist in a salute toward Wyrms 3 before turning to depart.

"I'll leave you two to speak in private."

Han Li turned to look at the departing Wildcat 16 with a peculiar look in his eyes, while Wyrms 3 said, "Don't mind him, Fellow Daoist Raccoon 11, I can explain the situation to you."

"Alright, in that case, I won't waste any time with idle chatter. Do you have the second half of the Spirit Refinement Technique, Fellow Daoist Wyrms 3," Han Li asked in a direct and straightforward fashion.

While Wildcat 16 had referred to Wyrms 3 as a friend of his, from Han Li's observation, it appeared that they were more like superior and subordinate.

"Of course," Wyrms 3 replied with a smile, then swept a sleeve through the air to send a gray jade slip flying toward Han Li.

Han Li caught the jade slip, then cast an inquisitive gaze toward Wyrms 3.

In response, Wyrms 3 made an inviting hand gesture, and Han Li pressed the jade slip to his own forehead.

The restrictions here prevented him from releasing his spiritual sense out of his body, so he had no choice but to examine the jade slip through direct contact.

The jade slip contained a cultivation art, but only the first few lines were visible, while the rest were enshrouded in a concealment restriction.

However, the first few visible lines alone were enough to tell Han Li that this was indeed the second half of the Spirit Refinement Technique that he had been searching for.

Chapter 376: Reincarnation Disciple

After reading through the first few lines in the jade slip several times, Han Li carefully swept his spiritual sense briefly over the concealment restriction that obscured the rest of the cultivation art, then promptly withdrew his spiritual sense from the jade slip.

He didn't know exactly what this restriction was, but given his extensive experience and master in this field, he could tell that this was definitely no ordinary restriction. If he were to try and break through it by force, the jade slip would most likely be instantly destroyed, and his spiritual sense would be severely harmed in the process as well.

Han Li swept a sleeve through the air to send the gray jade slip drifting back to Wyrms 3's side, then said, "Let's not waste any time here, Fellow Daoist Wyrms 3. What do you need me to do in exchange for the full cultivation art?"

A smile appeared on Wyrms 3's face as he set the jade slip down onto the stone table beside him, following which he replied, "Before we discuss that, I have something to ask you, Fellow Daoist Raccoon 11."

"Go ahead," Han Li prompted.

"How much do you know about this Spirit Refinement Technique?" Wyrms 3 asked in a calm manner.

This was a completely unexpected question to Han Li, and he contemplated the question momentarily before replying, "According to my knowledge, this is a forbidden art of the Immortal Realm, and it can enhance one's spiritual sense, but most of the people who cultivate it end up becoming deranged monsters who wreak havoc across the Immortal Realm. Hence, it's banned in all immortal regions, thereby making it a forbidden art."

"Is that all you know about it?" Wyrms 3 asked.

"That's all. Is there something wrong with what I've said?" Han Li asked.

"That's only the basic information that everyone knows about the Spirit Refinement Technique. If I'm not mistaken, you've already mastered the third level of the Spirit Refinement Technique, right? May I ask who it was that taught you the technique, and did they not go into further details about it back then?" Wyrms 3 asked.

The image of the immortal by the name of He Kang surfaced in Han Li's mind, but he naturally wasn't going to reveal that information, and he replied, "I obtained the first half of the Spirit Refinement Technique by chance, and at the time, I wasn't aware that it was a forbidden technique, so I cultivated it on my own."

This wasn't exactly a lie. All He Kang had done was bestow upon him the first three levels of the Spirit Refinement Technique, and he hadn't gone into any further detail beyond that.

Wyrms 3 seemed to have been astonished to hear this. "You're saying that you managed to master the first three levels of the Spirit Refinement Technique on your own without any guidance?"

"Is there a problem?" Han Li asked as his brows furrowed slightly.

Wyrms 3 was silent for a moment, then replied, "Not at all, I'm simply stunned by your exceptional cultivation aptitude."

"You're far too kind, Fellow Daoist. I was merely very fortunate to have made this much progress in the Spirit Refinement Technique," Han Li replied in an indifferent voice.

"Seeing as you don't know much about the Spirit Refinement Technique, I'll start from the beginning. Otherwise, it'll be difficult to proceed with the rest of our discussion," Wyrms 3 said.

"Please enlighten me," Han Li prompted as a hint of intrigue appeared in his eyes.

"What you just said is all true. The Spirit Refinement Technique has a very severe drawback, but it's also an extremely formidable secret technique that was once vastly renowned in the Immortal Realm.

"However, the Spirit Refinement Technique isn't a forbidden art just because most of those who cultivate it end up becoming insane. Additionally, the other main contributing reason to its forbidden status is the fact that it came from the Reincarnation Palace," Wyrms 3 revealed.

"The Reincarnation Palace?" Han Li was quite taken aback to hear this.

Wyrms 3 was rather surprised by Han Li's reaction, but he then smiled as he remarked, "It seems like you're already aware of the Reincarnation Palace, Fellow Daoist Raccoon 11."

"I have heard some things about the Reincarnation Palace, but not much. Please continue, Fellow Daoist Wyrms 3," Han Li replied.

"Seeing as you've heard of the Reincarnation Palace, I'm sure you're also aware that the Reincarnation Palace is an enemy of all of the Immortal Palaces. At this point, all those who have cultivated the Spirit Refinement Technique have some ties to the Reincarnation Palace, and that's why they're being hunted so vehemently," Wyrms 3 said.

"I have heard about that," Han Li confirmed with a nod as thoughts of Baili Yan and Daoist Hu Yan sprang into his mind.

"It's said that the Spirit Refinement Technique was created by the founder of the Reincarnation Palace, and it's always been a symbol of one's affiliation with the Reincarnation Palace. However, countless years ago, the first half of the cultivation art was somehow leaked, but only the Reincarnation Palace has the second half.

"Furthermore, due to the fact that the first half was leaked, extra precautions have been taken to ensure that the second half isn't also leaked, and it's forbidden to bestow the second half of the cultivation art upon anyone outside of the Reincarnation Palace," Wyrms 3 continued.

"Does that mean you're a member of the Reincarnation Palace, Fellow Daoist Wyrms 3?" Han Li asked.

"That's right," Wyrms 3 replied with a nod.

Han Li was rather taken aback to hear this.

Wyrms 3 was a very important figure in the Transient Guild, and Han Li certainly wasn't expecting him to be a member of the Reincarnation Palace as well.

It wasn't exactly an uncommon occurrence for people from different sects and powers to join the Transient Guild, but the majority of the guild's members were ordinary members like Han Li.

The fact that Wyrms 3 held such a lofty status in the Transient Guild yet was also a member of the Reincarnation Palace was a rather intriguing revelation.

"If you want to obtain the second half of the Spirit Refinement Technique, then all you have to do is actually something very simple," Wyrms 3 continued.

"Are you saying..."

"That's right. As long as you're willing to join our Reincarnation Palace, I'll hand over this jade slip right away," Wyrms 3 declared in a direct and straightforward fashion.

Han Li gently drummed his fingertips against the surface of the stone table as he fell silent.

Meanwhile, Wyrms 3 also remained silent as he waited patiently.

Right at this moment, the sound of footsteps rang out, and a servant entered the room, carrying a platter that held two cups of spirit tea.

The teacups were translucent, and it was unclear what type of material they had been crafted from. The spirit tea that they were holding was also quite remarkable, and even though it wasn't giving off much of an aroma, the white vapor that drifted up from the tea would occasionally take on the form of cranes that flew around the teacup briefly before slowly dissipating.

"How rude of me to not have offered you any tea, even though you've already been here for so long. This White Mist Spirit Tea is unique to our Reincarnation, and it's quite exquisite. Have a taste, Fellow Daoist Raccoon 11," Wyrms 3 said with a smile.

The servant set the two cups of tea down onto the stone table before quickly departing.

Han Li was still engrossed in his own thoughts, and only after hearing what Wyrms 3 had to say did he turn his attention to the tea on the table, upon which a hint of surprise appeared on his face.

The white mist wasn't just normal water vapor. Instead, it was extremely rich immortal spiritual qi, and the fact that it could manifest certain forms on its own indicated that it was an exceptional spirit tea.

The immortal spiritual qi that was contained in this single cup of tea was enough to make up for a month of cultivation for him, and this was by far the most exceptional spirit tea that Han Li had ever come across.

However, he didn't have a habit of drinking tea in unfamiliar places, so even though he was rather tempted, he decided not to touch the tea in the cup.

Wyrms 3 was rather amused by Han Li's cautious approach, and he picked up his own teacup before taking a sip.

Meanwhile, Han Li remained seated in silence, and he appeared quite calm on the outside, but internally, he was feeling quite conflicted.

The crisis that had taken place in the Blaze Dragon Dao had left a very deep impression on him. Baili Yan had already been on the cusp of reaching the High Zenith Stage, yet just because he was a member of the Reincarnation Palace, most of the Golden Immortal Stage dao lords had turned on him and plotted his downfall in collaboration with the Northern Glacial Immortal Palace.

Daoist Hu Yan clearly had close ties with the Reincarnation Palace as well, and it was unclear whether he was dead or alive.

Han Li didn't know much about the Reincarnation Palace, but he knew that it was a sworn enemy of the Northern Glacial Immortal Region and even the Heavenly Court.

Even though he was currently being hunted by the Northern Glacial Immortal Palace over his killing of Tao Yu, he still didn't want to join the Reincarnation Palace and place himself in direct opposition against the Immortal Palaces.

He was still only a late-True Immortal cultivator at the moment, and he wanted to avoid trouble at all costs.

However, if he didn't join the Reincarnation Palace, then he wouldn't be able to obtain the second half of the Spirit Refinement Technique, and that would be no different from an extended death sentence.

Neither of these options were particularly appealing to Han Li, and he remained silent for a long while.

Finally, Wyrms 3 set down his teacup as he broke the silence. "Are you worried that joining our Reincarnation Palace will pit you against the Northern Glacial Immortal Palace?"

"That's right," Han Li replied in a candid fashion.

"I'm assuming you must've been residing in the Black Wind Sea for a long time, so you don't know much about the world outside. The Northern Glacial Immortal Palace is quite a formidable power, but our Reincarnation Palace isn't the only force that can stand against it. It's just that none of those forces are willing to step forward for no good reason.

"On top of that, our Reincarnation Palace has always resided in the shadows, so it won't be easy for the Northern Glacial Immortal Palace to find us," Wyrms 3 said with a smile.

"Is there any proof to support your claims? Surely you can't expect me to just take your word for it," Han Li said in a solemn voice.

"Eventually, you'll come to find out whether I'm telling the truth or not. The fact of the matter right now is that you've mastered the first three levels of the Spirit Refinement Technique, so if you're caught by the Immortal Palace, you'll be dealt with as a member of our Reincarnation Palace anyway.

"On top of that, I can tell that you've recently suffered a bout of backlash from the Spirit Refinement Technique, so if you can't secure the second half of the cultivation art in a timely fashion..."

Wyrms 3's voice trailed off here, but it wasn't difficult to tell what he was implying.

Han Li's heart sank slightly upon hearing this.

He had already done everything in his power to restrain his spiritual sense, but Wyrms 3 had still managed to detect the spiritual sense crisis that had recently befallen him.

Han Li fell silent once again as he continued to tap the stone table in an absentminded manner, but at this point, the choice was becoming rather clear to him.

Wyrms 3 could tell that Han Li needed one final push, so he continued, "I don't mean to brag, Fellow Daoist Raccoon 11, but our Reincarnation Palace is no less formidable than the Northern Glacial Immortal Region.

"We have all types of pills, materials, secret techniques, and cultivation arts, and we're not inviting you to join our Reincarnation Palace as just an ordinary member. Instead, this is an invitation for you to become a Reincarnation Disciple."

Chapter 377: Joining the Reincarnation Palace

"What is a Reincarnation Disciple?" Han Li asked.

"Just think of it as the most core members of the Reincarnation Palace, and not just anyone can become a Reincarnation Disciple. Not only does the candidate have to possess special aptitude, they can only be selected by the Reincarnation Palace," Wyrms 3 explained in a concise fashion.

"I'm just an ordinary itinerant cultivator with no special talents or aptitude to speak of," Han Li said.

"Don't be so modest, Fellow Daoist Raccoon 11. You're a Dao Pill Master, and that's certainly an exceptional talent in my books," Wyrms 3 said with a smile.

Han Li immediately rose to his feet upon hearing this, and he was glowering intently at Wyrms 3 with a sharp and piercing gaze.

Wyrms 3 looked back at Han Li with a calm expression, directly meeting his gaze.

The two of them stared at each other for a long time, and Wyrms 3 remained calm and collected the entire time.

After a while, the sharpness in Han Li's gaze slowly faded, and he asked, "How do you know about that?"

"Your Dewform Herb was obtained from me, and you released quite a few other dao pill ingredient acquisition missions in the Transient Guild, so it wasn't difficult to figure out what you were up to," Wyrms 3 explained with a smile, while Han Li remained silent.

Wyrms 3 continued, "That pill tribulation that took place in the Black Wind Sea not long ago was triggered by you, right? Given all of those factors, I would have to be a fool not to have deduced that you're a Dao Pill Master."

"I assume that must mean Ge Yu is also a member of your Reincarnation Palace, right?" Han Li asked.

"That's right. He already realized at the time that you were a Dao Pill Master, and he simply chose not to confront you on the matter," Wyrms 3 conceded with a nod.

"The Reincarnation Palace truly is just as formidable as you proclaim. I thought I managed to fool him at the time," Han Li said as a self-deprecating look appeared on his face.

At the same time, he was feeling quite relieved.

It seemed that the Reincarnation Palace had only found out that he managed to refine a dao pill, but that was the extent of what they knew about him.

It wasn't really a big deal that his identity as a dao pill master had been exposed.

"There's no need to feel disheartened, Fellow Daoist. Ge Yu was only able to see through your ruse as he's proficient in the use of a sensory secret technique. If someone else had been in his place, they would've most likely been fooled.

"Having said that, if Ge Yu hadn't found out about your dao pill refinement, then you wouldn't have been able to obtain the second half of the Spirit Refinement Technique, so it all works out in your favor anyway," Wyrms 3 said with a smile.

"While your introduction has given me a rough understanding of the Reincarnation Palace, I still don't know much about its internal structure. Would you be able to enlighten me on that subject, Fellow Daoist Wyrms 3?" Han Li asked as he sat back down.

"Of course. Our Reincarnation Palace is different from other sects in that we have no set territory. Instead, we're a relatively decentralized organization, and we don't require our members to stay in certain places.

"On top of that, members communicate using special treasures, so it's very convenient for itinerant cultivators like yourself who are accustomed to freedom," Wyrms 3 replied with a smile.

"That sounds a lot like the Transient Guild," Han Li mused as he stroked his own chin.

Wyrms 3 fell silent upon hearing this, and it seemed that he was hesitating about something.

"Is there something wrong, Fellow Daoist Wyrms 3?" Han Li asked.

"I was hesitating about whether to reveal a certain piece of information to you, but I suppose it can't hurt," Wyrms 3 replied.

"Please go ahead," Han Li prompted.

"There are many powers in all of the immortal regions that are quite formidable, but they're often unable to deal with everything that they need to address all the time. Hence, they'll permit some smaller powers to become subsidiaries of theirs and work for them. The same applies to our Reincarnation Palace, and you can actually think of the Transient Guild as a subsidiary organization of ours," Wyrms 3 revealed.

"I see," Han Li replied with a surprised look on his face.

This revelation did explain some things. For example, it was no wonder that Wyrms 3 was a high-ranking member of the Transient Guild while also being a member of the Reincarnation Palace.

"Almost no one in the Transient Guild is aware of the relationship between the Reincarnation Palace and the Transient Guild, and even in the Reincarnation Palace, only Reincarnation Disciples are made aware of this.

"After all, our Reincarnation Palace is a sworn enemy of the Heavenly Court, and if word of this were to be leaked, then members of the Transient Guild would be hunted down by the Heavenly Court. Hence, make sure you keep this a secret," Wyrms 3 said in a solemn manner.

"Rest assured, Fellow Daoist Wyrms 3, I'll be sure to remain tight-lipped about this subject," Han Li replied as a complex look appeared in his eyes.

It seemed that Wyrms 3 was revealing such an important piece of information to him as a sign of trust, but in reality, it was a very forcing gesture.

Now that he had been made privy to such an important secret, he most likely wasn't going to be able to leave this place unless he agreed to join the Reincarnation Palace.

"For the sake of convenience, all Reincarnation Palace members will wear Transient Guild masks when carrying out missions, and just like in the Transient Guild, members use these masks to communicate, conduct exchanges, and release and accept missions," Wyrms 3 said as he pointed at the mask on his face.

"I'm assuming members of the Reincarnation Palace have certain obligations to fulfill, just like members of the Transient Guild, right?" Han Li asked.

"That's correct. Once every 1,000 years, a Reincarnation Palace member must complete a mission. Of course, they can choose not to complete the mission, but they'll need to issue Immortal Origin Stones or other resources equivalent in value to the mission content," Wyrms 3 replied with a nod.

"In that case, high-ranking members of the Transient Guild may not necessarily be members of the Reincarnation Palace, but members of the Reincarnation Palace, including Reincarnation Disciples, are generally high-ranking members of the Transient Guild, right?" Han Li asked.

"You can think of it that way. That's about as much information on the Reincarnation Palace that I can reveal to you at this point," Wyrms 3 said before taking another sip of tea.

Han Li was silent for a moment, then said, "You've been very earnest in your invitation for me to join the Reincarnation Palace, so it would be quite rude of me to continue to refuse. I agree to join the Reincarnation Palace."

"Great! I knew I was right to have approached you. While it's true that itinerant cultivators enjoy more freedom, the more you progress in your cultivation, the greater your demand for cultivation resources will become, and eventually, you'll hit a dead-end, so it's definitely a wise decision for you to join our Reincarnation Palace," Wyrms 3 said as he set down his teacup.

"From this day forth, both of us will be members of the Reincarnation Palace. Please look after me, Fellow Daoist Wyrms 3," Han Li said with a smile.

"No problem. If you have any questions, feel free to ask me. You're a Dao Pill Master, so I'm certainly more than happy to be on good terms with you," Wyrms 3 chuckled in a joking manner.

A faint smile appeared on Han Li's face as he cupped his fist in a salute toward Wyrms 3.

Now that he had agreed to join the Reincarnation Palace, an unspoken barrier of apprehension between them seemed to have been torn down, bringing them a lot closer.

Wyrms 3 flipped a hand over to produce a crimson lion mask, upon which was inscribed the number "5", and he handed the mask to Han Li as he said, "This is your new mask. From this day forth, you'll be Dragon Five, but you're free to keep your Raccoon 11 identity if you so choose."

Han Li nodded in response as he accepted the crimson lion mask.

He had been looking for a new mask, so this had come at the perfect time.

He made a hand seal and cast a streak of azure light into the mask, but to his surprise, it displayed no reaction.

"This mask is different from ordinary Transient Guild masks, and you can only use it with a special incantation seal of the Reincarnation Palace," Wyrms 3 said as he swept a sleeve through the air to send a jade slip flying toward Han Li.

Han Li caught the jade slip before pressing it against his forehead, and moments later, he chanted an incantation before casting an incantation seal into the crimson lion mask, upon which it immediately released a crimson light screen.

Han Li didn't go any further beyond that, withdrawing his hand seal to scatter the light screen.

"On the surface, this mask doesn't appear to be remarkable in any way, but it's actually specially made by the Reincarnation Palace, and it has one additional benefit outside of all of the uses of a Transient Guild mask, and that's its ability to conceal the aura of the Spirit Refinement Technique. It's not perfect, but as long as you exercise some caution, you won't be easily caught by the surveyors of the Heavenly Court," Wyrms 3 added.

Han Li's eyes lit up slightly upon hearing this, and he took another glance at the crimson mask before stowing it away, then turned his gaze back to Wyrms 3.

Wyrms 3 seemed to be aware of what Han Li wanted, and he picked up the gray jade slip on the table and began chanting an incantation while casting several incantation seals into the jade slip.

A layer of murky gray light appeared over the surface of the jade slip, and it was interspersed with specks of black light, presenting an intriguing sight to behold.

The gray light then vanished in a flash, and a hint of excitement appeared in Han Li's eyes upon seeing this.

"According to the rules of our Reincarnation Palace, all those who join will receive one level of the Spirit Refinement Technique for free. This jade slip contains the fourth level of the Spirit Refinement Technique, so you'll have to earn the rest of the cultivation art," Wyrms 3 said as he handed the jade slip to Han Li.

Han Li accepted the jade slip with a hint of disappointment in his eyes.

He had thought that this jade slip contained the entire second half of the Spirit Refinement Technique, but it appeared that things weren't going to be so easy for him.

Having said that, the fourth level of the Spirit Refinement Technique was already sufficient for his current needs.

He pressed the jade slip to his forehead once again before injecting his spiritual sense into it, and sure enough, the concealment restriction inside had already been removed, and everything was revealed to him.

He suppressed the excitement in his heart as he quickly read through the cultivation art, which wasn't very long, only spanning several thousand characters, and it didn't take long for him to commit the entire thing to memory.

After that, he took a deep breath and closed his eyes as he sat still in his chair.

Wyrms 3 also sat in silence, and only after a full 15 minutes had passed did Han Li exhale as he opened his eyes.

The Spirit Refinement Technique had always been a major problem weighing on his mind, and now that it had been resolved, he felt as if a huge load had been lifted from his shoulders.

Chapter 378: Earthly List

After Han Li opened his eyes, Wyrms 3 said, "Now that you've become a Reincarnation Disciple, there's one more thing that you must be made aware of."

Wyrms 3 swept a sleeve through the air to release a streak of yellow light as he spoke, and Han Li caught it to discover that it was a jade slip, then took a glance at Wyrms 3 before pressing the jade slip to his own forehead.

Moments later, he removed the jade slip from his forehead, then made a hand seal as he began to chant an incantation, and a layer of crimson light immediately emerged from his crimson mask before forming a crimson screen of light in front of him.

After sweeping his gaze over the screen of light, Han Li reached out a finger without any hesitation before tapping on a tiny stone plaque icon in the corner, upon which a projection of a white stone plaque that was around 10 feet tall instantly shot out of the icon.

At the top of the stone plaque were the words "Earthly List" inscribed in golden seal text, while down below were some lines of small golden text that laid out different cultivation arts, secret techniques, and pill recipes.

After those came some lines of small silver text that provided descriptions of the items on the list, and each of them ended with a number that seemed to be denoting the prices of the individual items.

It only took a quick glance over the list before an elated look appeared on Han Li's face.

"Mountain Body Refinement Arts, earth-attribute Profound Immortal cultivation arts, uses the essence of mountains to refine the physical body... Can be cultivated to the Golden Immortal Stage 150 points."

"High Zenith Spirit Eyes, an ocular ability that lays bare everything between heaven and earth to the cultivator. 200 points."

"Recipe for the Origin Spirit Pill..."

"What you're seeing right now is the Reincarnation Palace Earthly List that's only accessible to Reincarnation Disciples. The cultivation arts and secret techniques on the list have all been gathered by the Reincarnation Palace over the course of countless years, and I won't go into detail about how valuable they are.

"As for the numbers at the end, they lay out the number of contribution points required to secure each item, and you earn contribution points by completing Reincarnation Palace missions," Wyrn 3 explained.

"I see. It seems like there are many perks to joining the Reincarnation Palace. Any one of these items would be extremely sought after in the outside world, but it appears all I can do for the moment is take a look at the list," Han Li replied with a nod.

"That's not true. All new Reincarnation Disciples receive 100 contribution points in addition to a free level of the Spirit Refinement Technique. You can choose something within 100 contribution points on the list now, or save up for the future."

Wyrms 3 flipped a hand over to produce a crimson jade badge as he spoke, then pointed it at the stone plaque projection in front of Han Li, releasing a streak of red light that vanished into the stone plaque in a flash.

Immediately thereafter, the number "100" appeared at the bottom of the stone plaque, and Han Li's eyes instantly lit up upon seeing this.

He expressed his gratitude to Wyrms 3, then began browsing the items on the Earthly List.

There were many items on the list that were extremely tempting to him, and these 100 contribution points couldn't have come at a better time.

All of a sudden, Han Li's eyes lit up as he spotted all seven levels of the Spirit Refinement Technique on the stone plaque.

Perhaps it was because the first three levels had already been leaked, but those levels were quite cheap to obtain, but from the fourth level onward, the number of contribution points required spiked up drastically.

Among them, the fourth level cost 2,000 contribution points, while the fifth level cost a staggering 10,000.

Han Li's brows furrowed slightly upon seeing this.

He didn't know how much compensation he could expect to earn from completing missions, but judging from the contribution point costs of the other items on the list, it was clear that 10,000 contribution points was an astronomical sum that wasn't going to be easy to accumulate at all.

Having said that, this was only to be expected. There weren't going to be many avenues at all in the entire Northern Glacial Immortal Region that he could obtain this cultivation art through, so its rarity further increased its value.

Now that he already had the fourth level of the cultivation art, he would be able to stave off the spiritual sense crisis for the time being, and that should give him enough time to save up contribution points for the subsequent levels.

With that in mind, Han Li continued to browse through the list, and before long, another item on the list had caught his attention.

Recipe for the Golden Soul Pill... Didn't Daoist Xie previously mention the Golden Soul Pill to me?

With that in mind, he turned his attention to the description for the item on the list, and his eyes immediately lit up.

The Golden Soul Pill wasn't a pill that could enhance one's cultivation base or provide any restorative effects. Instead, its only use was to stabilize one's soul.

Most importantly, the description claimed that this pill could increase a late-True Immortal cultivator's chances of breaking through their Golden Immortal Stage bottleneck.

In order to prepare for his Golden Immortal Stage breakthrough, Han Li had read many scriptures throughout the years, and the process required one to open 36 immortal acupoints and overcome the first three decays in order to trigger an evolution in their immortal spiritual power.

After that, their soul would also evolve from an ordinary soul into a Golden Immortal Soul.

This process wasn't as difficult as opening the 36 immortal acupoints or overcoming the three decays, but it was definitely no easy feat, either.

He then turned his gaze to the listed price for the pill recipe to discover that it was exactly 100 contribution points.

"It seems like you're interested in this Golden Soul Pill recipe," Wyrms 3 remarked.

Han Li nodded in response. "Do you know why this pill recipe only costs 100 contribution points, Fellow Daoist Wyrms 3?"

"The reason for this is that even though a Golden Soul Pill can be very conducive to a successful Golden Immortal Stage breakthrough, the primary ingredient required to refine it is a complete Golden Immortal Stage nascent soul, which is obviously something extremely precious.

"It's very difficult to earn contribution points in the Reincarnation Palace, so I suggest that you exercise prudence in your use of these 100 contribution points and don't just spend them rashly," Wyrms 3 cautioned.

Han Li nodded in response with a contemplative expression.

While it was true that finding a complete Golden Immortal Stage nascent soul was extremely difficult for other True Immortal cultivators, he just so happened to have one in his possession right now.

With that in mind, he quickly browsed through the remaining items on the list before his gaze fell back upon the Golden Soul Pill recipe, and he reached out a finger toward that item on the list.

Wyrms 3's brows furrowed slightly upon seeing this, and he interjected, "Fellow Daoist Dragon Five..."

"Thank you for the words of advice, but I've already decided to spend my 100 contribution points on this pill recipe," Han Li said in a determined voice.

"It's up to you how you spend your contribution points, but do keep in mind that anything that you secure from the Earthly List must be kept secret, even from those closest to you, and anyone who goes against this rule will be severely punished," Wyrms 3 said in an indifferent voice.

"I'll be sure to keep that in mind," Han Li replied with a nod.

He then tapped a finger on the Golden Soul Pill recipe, and his 100 contribution points were instantly deducted, while a teleportation vortex appeared at the center of the stone plaque projection.

Moments later, a white jade slip emerged from the vortex, and Han Li pressed the jade slip against his forehead before injecting his spiritual sense into it.

Shortly thereafter, he removed the jade slip from his forehead, and his expression remained unchanged, but internally, he was quite elated.

Aside from the Golden Immortal Stage nascent soul, none of the other ingredients required to refine the Golden Soul Pill were all that precious, so they should've been easy to gather.

"Fellow Daoist Dragon 5, I know that it's a little unfair to push a mission onto you right after you've joined the Reincarnation Palace, but at the moment, there's a very important mission that we need you to complete right away," Wyrms 3 suddenly said in a serious voice.

"That's fine. What's the mission?" Han Li asked.

"Don't worry, this mission doesn't pose any danger to you. It's a pill refinement mission," Wyrms 3 revealed with a smile.

Han Li's expression eased slightly upon hearing this.

"After you complete this mission, you'll be free to do whatever you want for the next 1,000 years, and you'll also receive 50 contribution points," Wyrms 3 continued as he summoned a jade slip before handing it to Han Li.

Instead of accepting the jade slip right away, Han Li asked, "Dao Pill Master's may be rare, but I'm sure there are others in the Reincarnation Palace, so why are you assigning this mission to me?"

"We do have another Dao Pill Master, but he's busy with some other things at the moment, so we have no choice but to turn to you," Wyrms 3 explained.

Han Li remained silent as a series of thoughts flashed through his mind.

"Truth be told, while this is a Reincarnation Palace mission, it's somewhat related to me as well, so please lend me your assistance, Fellow Daoist Dragon Five," Wyrms 3 continued with a hint of an imploring tone in his voice.

"You're the one who introduced me to the Reincarnation Palace, so seeing as this is a matter that concerns you, I'm obligated to help. I'll accept this mission," Han Li said with a smile.

A hint of elation immediately appeared on Wyrms 3's face upon hearing this, and he cupped his fist in a salute as he said, "Thank you, Fellow Daoist, I'll remember this favor."

"There's no need to be so formal, Fellow Daoist Wyrms 3. We're part of the same organization from now on, so it's only right that we help each other," Han Li said with a dismissive wave of his hand.

One of the reasons why Han Li had decided to accept this mission was so that Wyrms 3 would owe him a favor, and with that in mind, he accepted the jade slip before pressing it against his own forehead.

The jade slip contained a pill recipe, but it was a recipe for a dao pill.

However, it was also not quite the same as other dao pills as the refinement process was simpler. It seemed that some steps had been removed, while some ingredients had also been replaced, producing a rather strange recipe.

The primary ingredient for this recipe was a type of yin-attribute material, indicating that it was a recipe for a yin-attribute dao pill.

After Han Li removed the jade slip from his forehead, Wyrms 3 immediately asked, "Will you be able to refine the pill, Fellow Daoist Wyrms 3?"

"I've never come into contact with this pill recipe before, but the refinement process isn't all that complicated, so I should be up to the task," Han Li replied.

Wyrms 3 was ecstatic to hear this.

"Fantastic! You're doing me a huge favor, Fellow Daoist Dragon 5!"

Chapter 379: Imprisoned

"I'm confident in my abilities to refine this pill, but there's something that I have to make clear in advance," Han Li said.

"Go ahead, Fellow Daoist Dragon 5, I'll be sure to help you in any way that I can," Wyrms 3 prompted.

"Rest assured, Fellow Daoist Wyrms 3, I'm not going to state any unreasonable demands. It's just that this is a completely unfamiliar pill to me, so I'll require many batches of ingredients for practice. I'm sure that's something you're already aware of," Han Li explained.

Wyrms 3's expression eased slightly upon hearing this, and he flipped a hand over to produce a storage ring as he replied, "There's no need to worry about ingredients at all, Fellow Daoist. I've already considered this matter, and I've prepared 30 batches of ingredients for you to experiment with."

"It appears my concerns were unnecessary," Han Li said with a faint smile, then accepted the storage ring and stowed it away without examining its contents.

He couldn't release his spiritual sense out of his body, so it would've been rather inconvenient for him to examine the storage ring's contents, but he was sure that there wouldn't be any problems.

Additionally, he also developed a new understanding of just how wealthy the Reincarnation Palace was. The ingredients required to refine this pill weren't quite as rare and precious as those for the dao pill, but they were certainly not easy to come by, either, so 30 batches would've amounted to an astronomical sum in Immortal Origin Stones.

"Ingredients are easy to come by, but a Dao Pill Master is far rarer. All you need to focus on is refining the pill within 10 years. Don't worry about ingredients, if there's not enough there, I'll find a way to get you more," Wyrms 3 assured with a smile.

Han Li's expression changed slightly upon hearing this, and he said, "10 years? I'm afraid that might not be enough time for me to guarantee a successful outcome."

"At the very most, we can only wait 15 years. This is a very important matter, so please do your best, Fellow Daoist. Our Reincarnation Palace will be sure to reward you handsomely for your efforts," Wyrms 3 said with a solemn expression.

"I'll be sure to do my best, but I still can't make any guarantees. After all, I only recently became a Dao Pill Master, so my skills may not yet be up to scratch," Han Li replied.

Wyrms 3 merely continued to look at Han Li in silence upon hearing this.

"Time is of the essence, so I won't delay any longer. I'll be taking my leave now," Han Li said as he cupped his fist in a parting salute.

"You wish to leave this place, Fellow Daoist?" Wyrms 3 asked.

"That's right. I'll return to my cave abode right away to study this pill recipe, and I'll contact you if I need anything," Han Li replied with a nod.

"There's no need to do that. We have a pill refinement chamber and a cauldron prepared for you, so just refine the pill here. If you need anything else, I would also be able to deliver them to you in a timely fashion," Wyrms 3 said.

"I appreciate the kind offer, but I'm more accustomed to refining pills in my own cave abode," Han Li said as his brows furrowed slightly.

Wyrms 3 cleared his throat, then said in a meaningful voice, "Truth be told, the Black Wind Sea is not very safe at the moment, so if you trigger another pill tribulation, you may not be able to make a safe retreat as you did last time."

"But..."

Before Han Li had a chance to protest, Wyrms 3 raised a hand to cut him off as he said in a cold voice, "If there aren't any other problems, then I'll take you to the pill refinement chamber right away."

Han Li could only give a resigned nod in response.

"Come with me, Fellow Daoist," Wyrms 3 said as he turned to depart.

A wry smile appeared on Han Li's face as he followed along.

The two of them quickly emerged from the cave, following which Wyrms 3 summoned a flying carriage that carried the two of them toward the outskirts of the mountain before landing halfway up another tall mountain.

This was quite a large area, but it was riddled with huge trees, and there was a waterfall nearby, but aside from the splashing of the waterfall, the environment was quite peaceful.

On the mountain face up ahead was an opening that was sealed by a large gate with a layer of azure light over its surface, and there were numerous runes surging incessantly over the azure light barrier, presenting a rather mysterious sight to behold.

Wyrms 3 strode forward before pulling out an azure badge, then waved it through the air to release a streak of azure light that vanished into the stone gate in a flash.

The azure light barrier outside the stone gate quickly faded, and the gate was slowly opened.

"This is where you'll be staying, Fellow Daoist Dragon 5. I assure you that no one will come to disturb you during your pill refinement," Wyrms 3 said.

Han Li nodded in response, then made his way into the cave abode.

In the next instant, he was surprised to discover that the spiritual sense restriction had completely vanished as soon as he stepped into the cave abode, but his spiritual sense was still only restricted to the confines of the cave abode.

The cave abode wasn't very large, but it was immaculately maintained and had everything that one could require, including a pill refinement chamber, a secret chamber, and a medicine garden.

"This is quite a nice cave abode," Han Li remarked to Wyrms 3.

"I'm glad you like it, Fellow Daoist. If you need anything, feel free to contact me anytime. In the meantime, I'll be counting on you," Wyrms 3 said before departing from the cave abode, and as soon as he left, the gate of the cave abode swung shut, following which Han Li heaved a faint sigh.

It appeared that he had been imprisoned.

Following Wyrms 3's departure, Han Li briefly explored the cave abode while flicking his fingers through the air to release a series of array tools that vanished into different parts of the cave abode.

Close to an hour later, Han Li arrived in a secret chamber in the cave abode before sitting down with his legs crossed.

The first thing that he did was remove the azure mask from his face before replacing it with the crimson lion mask, and the mask immediately released a burst of gentle energy that spread over his entire body at his behest.

Han Li could sense that at this moment, his aura had been perfectly concealed, indicating that the restrictions in this crimson mask were more profound than the ones in his azure mask.

Most importantly, the special spiritual sense fluctuations generated due to his cultivation of the Spirit Refinement Technique had also been concealed.

Ever since he arrived in the Immortal Realm, Han Li had always been rather apprehensive when it came to meeting others, particularly those who possessed a superior cultivation base to his. He would always do his best to restrain his spiritual sense fluctuations so that no one would be able to detect that he had cultivated the Spirit Refinement Technique, and thankfully, he hadn't encountered any surveyors up to this point.

Now that he had this new mask, even if he did encounter some surveyors who had cultivated special detection secret techniques, he should've been able to fool them as long as their cultivation base wasn't far superior to his.

Han Li made a hand seal, and a layer of red light immediately emerged over the crimson mask before forming a crimson light screen in front of him.

After that, he released several missions in succession, all of which were acquisition missions for the other ingredients required to refine the Golden Soul Pill.

After doing all of that, he swept a sleeve through the air to wave the crimson light screen away, then flipped a hand over to produce the gray jade slip that contained the fourth level of the Spirit Refinement Technique.

Even though he only had 15 years to refine the pill, he wasn't planning to begin right away.

For other Dao Pill Masters, 15 years would've indeed been a very tight timeframe, but this was naturally not a problem for Han Li.

At this point, only several of the Time Dao Runes on his Mantra Treasured Axis had recovered since the last time it had conjured up the wall of light, but all he needed were 18 functional Time Dao Runes to fulfill his pill refinement needs.

Furthermore, the refinement process for this pill was far simpler than that of the Time Dao Pill, and with his Mantra Treasured Axis up his sleeve and so many batches of ingredients at his disposal, he naturally had no concerns.

Hence, his top priority at the moment was to cultivate the Spirit Refinement Technique and resolve his spiritual sense crisis.

With that in mind, Han Li injected his spiritual sense into the jade slip and carefully read through the fourth level of the Spirit Refinement Technique, then sat down with his legs crossed and began to cultivate.

Meanwhile, Wyrms 3 was walking down a black passageway countless kilometers away from Han Li with a contemplative look in his eyes.

The passageway wasn't very long, so he was able to quickly reach the end, at which point a black stone gate that was over 30 feet tall appeared before him.

With a sweep of his sleeve, he sent an incantation seal flying through the air, and the black stone gate slowly opened to reveal a spacious hall, at the center of which stood a figure dressed in a black cloak.

There was a cross design embroidered onto the sleeve of the cloak, and upon hearing the sound of footsteps, the cloaked figure turned around.

It was a middle-aged man, but there was a horrific scar that ran across his forehead from its left corner all the way to his right eyelid before continuing down his cheek, presenting a menacing sight to behold.

"What are you doing here?" Wyrms 3 asked in a cold voice.

"I came here because I have something to speak to you about. Rest assured, no one would've been able to track me here," the cloaked man replied.

"Have you found out something?" Wyrms 3 asked.

"Just as you predicted, it really is under Red Moon Island, but due to the involvement of Black Wind Island, our people are unable to get close to the area for the time being," the cloaked man replied.

"Black Wind Island? How are those people possibly able to stop us?" Wyrms 3 asked.

"What if I were to tell you that there are Golden Immortal cultivators among them?" the cloaked figure replied with a faint smile.

A sharp gleam immediately flashed through Wyrms 3's eyes upon hearing this. "Could it be..."

"According to the information that we've gathered so far, the situation is exactly as you're thinking right now," the cloaked figure replied with a nod.

"I don't care how you do it, but you have to figure everything out about the situation on Red Moon Island before the Origin Void Pill is successfully refined," Wyrms 3 said in a categorical voice.

"I would've done that even if you hadn't told me. I came here because I wanted to confirm something. I heard that you're planning to assign the Origin Void Pill refinement mission to a new member who's only just joined our Reincarnation Palace, is that correct?" the cloaked man asked.

Chapter 380: Unexpectedly Smooth Progress

"That's right. Right now, his name is Dragon 5," Wyrms 3 replied without any hesitation.

The cloaked man's brows furrowed slightly as he asked, "How much time did you give him?"

"15 years," Wyrms 3 replied.

"Pardon me for being blunt, but I don't think even Master Ximen would be able to guarantee the successful refinement of an Origin Void Pill in 15 years," the cloaked man said in a meaningful voice.

"That may be true, but at the moment, Master Ximen isn't in this immortal region, and we have less than 20 years left to make our move. Do we have any other choice?" Wyrms 3 asked.

The cloaked man was silent for a moment, then said, "This is an extremely important matter, and that person has only just joined our Reincarnation Palace. Are you sure he's reliable?"

"I don't know, so I never didn't allow him to leave," Wyrms 3 replied.

"What if he can't complete the mission within 15 years?" the cloaked man asked with a concerned expression.

"So many things have happened recently. There weren't many Reincarnation Disciples in the Northern Glacial Immortal Region to begin with, and the battle of the Blaze Dragon Dao has certainly not helped our cause. If we can succeed in this endeavor, then everything that we've sacrificed up to this point will be worth it. Hence, success is our only option," Wyrms 3 said in a determined voice.

"It sounds like you're very confident in this person. Could it be that you've already been secretly observing him for some time?" the cloaked man asked.

"No, I've only just come into contact with him," Wyrms 3 replied with a shake of his head.

The cloaked man's brows furrowed tightly upon hearing this.

"Rest assured, I take sole responsibility for this matter. All you need to do is focus on the task assigned to you and figure out what's happening on Red Moon Island," Wyrms 3 continued.

"Alright, if you're that confident, then I won't speak any further on this subject," the cloaked man said.

"I've answered all of your questions. This is not a place you should stay at for any extended period of time, so you should leave, and let's not meet again anytime soon," Wyrms 3 said in a cold voice.

"Alright, I'll be taking my leave then," the cloaked man said as a burst of black light appeared over his body, and he faded into the darkness like a shadow.

Wyrms 3 sat by himself for a moment, then rose to his feet and cast his gaze in the direction of Han Li's cave abode.

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10 years flew by in the blink of an eye.

Han Li was seated with his legs crossed in his peaceful cave abode, sitting as still as a stone statue.

His head was enshrouded within a layer of bright translucent light, making his facial features appear rather blurry and indistinct.

The translucent light was gently flowing like water, presenting a pleasant sight to behold.

Right at this moment, Han Li's eyelids fluttered slightly before his eyes sprang open.

The translucent light circling around his head instantly surged into his glabella, vanishing without a trace.

Han Li exhaled as an elated look appeared on his face.

After 10 years of tireless cultivation, he had finally made some inroads into the fourth level of the Spirit Refinement Technique.

His spiritual sense hadn't been enhanced by much, but the lurking unrest in his spiritual sense had already subsided, restoring it to a stable and uninhibited state.

However, in the next instant, the elation in his eyes faded and was replaced by a hint of befuddlement.

According to the jade slip, the fourth level of the Spirit Refinement Technique was far more profound than the third level, and it should've taken more than 10 times the amount of time to master the fourth level, so it should've taken him decades, perhaps even over a century to make the progress that he had already achieved.

Hence, he wasn't even planning to get this far, and his initial goal was only to settle the unrest in his spiritual sense. After all, he still had the pill refinement mission on his plate, so he didn't have much time to work with.

However, to his surprise, his cultivation of the fourth level of the Spirit Refinement Technique had been extremely smooth, and he hadn't encountered any bottlenecks, thereby allowing him to make rapid progress.

His mind was racing as he tried to find a reason for this, but he remained completely stumped.

At the moment, he could only attribute it to aptitude. Perhaps his current constitution was simply very suited to cultivating secret techniques of this nature.

Thinking back, he had had a similar experience in his cultivation of the Great Development Arts.

In any case, he had to stop now. There were only five years left of the allotted 15 years, so he had to commence the pill refinement process.

With that in mind, he flipped a hand over to produce a storage ring, the very same one that had been given to him by Wyrms 3.

He then injected his spiritual sense into it to confirm that there were indeed 30 batches of ingredients inside.

Right as he was about to commence his first pill refinement attempt, his expression suddenly changed slightly, and he pulled out a batch of ingredients from the storage ring.

He paid no heed to the other ingredients as he focused his gaze on a fist-sized black crystal.

The crystalline material was giving off a layer of faint black light that seemed to be able to suck in all of the surrounding light, and at the same time, it was also giving off a burst of formidable law power fluctuations.

This was none other than the primary ingredient required to refine the Origin Void Pill, and it was called the Black Marrow Crystal.

Han Li reached out to pick up the Black Marrow Crystal, and he was immediately struck by a burst of sharp pain in his fingertips.

The peculiar law powers being released by the Black Marrow Crystal were extremely corrosive, and it was almost too painful for him to hold onto even with his Profound Immortal physique.

A burst of spiritual light appeared over the surface of his palm, instantly forming a layer of azure light that protected his fingers from the Black Marrow Crystal.

At the same time, he flipped his other hand over to produce the Hard Ink Crystal.

These two items were very similar in appearance and aura, except the aura emanating from the Black Marrow Crystal was many times more formidable than that of the Hard Ink Crystal.

It seemed that these two materials were somehow related, and he couldn't help but wonder if Wyrms 3 had previously asked him about the Hard Ink Crystal for the sake of these Black Marrow Crystals.

However, even Hard Ink Crystals were extremely rare in the Black Wind Sea, so how had he managed to acquire so many Black Marrow Crystals?

As soon as this thought sprang into his mind, Han Li immediately shook his head to cast it aside.

His mission was only to refine an Origin Void Pill, so there was no point in thinking about other unnecessary things.

With that in mind, he stowed the Hard Ink Crystal away, then pulled out the jade slip that contained the pill recipe before pressing it against his own forehead.

Half a month passed by in the blink of an eye.

At this moment, Han Li was seated with his legs crossed and his eyes closed, and there were exactly 30 piles of identical spirit materials laid out on the ground around him.

All of a sudden, his eyes sprang open, and he swept a sleeve through the air to release a streak of silver light, which landed on the ground in front of him before transforming into a silver cauldron.

Immediately thereafter, he opened his mouth to release a stream of silver flames that began scorching the underside of the cauldron.

Han Li gave a slight nod upon seeing this, then raised a hand, upon which a certain material from one of the 30 piles of materials rose up into the air before flying into the cauldron.

At the same time, his Mantra Treasured Axis appeared behind him amid a flash of golden light, and his time law thread shot out of his fingertip before wrapping itself around the axis.

The time law thread was looking a little brighter than before, but it was still far from returning to its peak.

At this point, only 18 of the 360 Time Dao Runes on the Mantra Treasured Axis were lit, while the rest remained dim.

It seemed that the time law thread was connected to his Mantra Treasured Axis, and it was most likely the case that the time law thread would only make a full recovery once all of the Time Dao Runes were restored.

With that in mind, he made a hand seal, and a burst of golden ripples surged out of the Mantra Treasured Axis to encompass the cauldron, instantly causing everything unfolding within it to slow down.

With only 18 Time Dao Runes restored, the axis's time-slowing effect was quite limited, but it was already sufficient for Han Li's needs.

While Han Li was busy with his pill refinement, the centennial teleportation array activation day had arrived on Black Wind Island.

The streets and shops in Black Wind City were looking far less lively and bustling than before, and aside from some of the prosperous streets at the center of the city, the rest of the city appeared rather bleak and deserted.

There weren't many pedestrians on the streets, and many shop employees looked as if they were on the verge of nodding off to sleep.

For some reason, there had been a huge spike in the number and frequency of natural disasters taking place in the Black Wind Sea of late, including tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, and ferocious storms.

Many islands were destroyed during these disasters, resulting in countless deaths and casualties, and the entire Black Wind Sea was in a state of unease and apprehension, with some rumors even suggesting that the entire region was facing imminent destruction.

Even the conflict between Black Wind Island and Azure Feather Island had temporarily subsided in the wake of these horrific disasters.

Black Wind Island wasn't affected by these disasters, but business in Black Wind City severely impacted, and there weren't even many people who had gathered to watch the activation of the teleportation array, an event that had always been highly anticipated in the past.

The teleportation array inside the pagoda was buzzing while radiating dazzling light, and two figures were standing nearby, one of whom was none other than the master of Black Wind Island, Lu Jun.

At this moment, he was looking intently at the teleportation array with a hint of excitement in his eyes, and he was accompanied by a white-robed man, the very same one with the Feng surname who had led that group of True Immortal cultivators into the Black Wind Sea.

He was also looking at the teleportation array, but he appeared far calmer and more indifferent.

All of a sudden, an enormous pillar of light erupted out of the teleportation array, causing the entire teleportation pagoda to tremble slightly.

The pillar of light faded after a few seconds, and a group of around two dozen people emerged within the teleportation array.

These people were split up into two roughly equal factions, and the two factions were standing quite far apart from one another.