

## **A Record 441**

### Chapter 441: A Sword to Split the Heavens

Finally, Lu Yuqing drew to a halt in front of the ancestral hall at the center of the daoist temple.

Her brows furrowed slightly as her gaze roamed over the memorial tablets before her, and she was looking a little dazed.

Right at this moment, a thunderous boom rang out in the sky, and she shuddered as she instantly snapped back to her senses, then hurriedly made her way out of the daoist temple to look up into the sky.

A streak of dazzling azure light was in the process of rising up from the sea of flames up above, and it transformed into a pillar of azure light that erupted straight into the heavens.

Tremendous sword qi was emanating from the pillar of azure light, stirring the sea of fire up into a frenzy, and the lightning that was crashing down from above was also thrown into a state of disarray.

Han Li's eyes immediately lit up upon seeing this, but before he had a chance to do anything, another resounding boom rang out as yet another pillar of azure light rose up from the sea of flames while releasing an extremely formidable sword qi.

One pillar of azure light rose up after another in rapid succession, and a total of 72 pillars of light had emerged in the blink of an eye, all of which were giving off terrifying sword qi fluctuations.

The sea of fire was snuffed out with ease by this burst of collective sword qi, revealing the white stone altar inside.

The dark clouds up above were also completely scattered by the enormous sword qi in the air, while gusts of ferocious wind swept forth in all directions.

Han Li wore a calm expression as he made a hand seal, conjuring up his True Extreme Film to protect him.

As soon as the film took shape, a wave of scorching heat instantly surged over him, causing the True Extreme Film to crackle and flash incessantly.

However, Han Li remained as still as an immovable mountain within the formidable shockwaves, and his gaze remained focused intently on the altar in an unblinking fashion.

The shockwaves were so powerful that all of the greenery on the mountain summit down below was reduced to powder, and a thick layer of earth was also scraped up from the ground, producing an extremely flat area.

The daoist temple was also swept up in the shockwaves, and the restrictions around it had already been broken by Xiong Shan, so it wasn't going to take long before the temple was also razed to the ground.

Right at this moment, Lu Yuqing summoned her azure feather fan before waving it vigorously through the air, releasing a gust of fierce azure wind that formed an azure tornado to encompass the entire daoist temple.

After traveling over such a long distance, the power of the shockwaves was already significantly diminished, but the azure tornado was still trembling incessantly.

Lu Yuqing's face paled slightly as she bit through the tip of her tongue, then expelled a mouthful of blood onto the azure feather fan in her hand.

The fan immediately began to radiate bright spiritual light, and all of its feathers spread open like the train of a peacock before detaching themselves from the handle of the fan and vanishing into the azure tornado in a flash.

The tornado instantly swelled drastically in size while radiating bright azure light, and it became far more stable than before.

The shockwaves quickly subsided, but the entire mountain continued to sway violently as countless rocks of different sizes came tumbling down in a catastrophic avalanche.

Moments later, the azure tornado around the daoist temple faded, and the temple remained completely unscathed.

Lu Yuqing was panting slightly, but her expression was quite calm, and she quickly swallowed a pill before looking up into the sky.

At this point, the sea of fire and cascade of lightning up above had already disappeared, and all that remained in the sky was the white altar.

Above the altar was a radiant ball of azure light that was several hundred feet in size, and it resembled an azure sun.

An ecstatic look appeared on Han Li's face upon seeing this, and he unconsciously took a step forward.

Right at this moment, the azure sun exploded violently, sending rays of blinding azure light erupting in all directions.

Every single ray of azure light was a peerlessly sharp streak of sword qi that howled through the air, and the white altar was instantly punched full of holes before shattering into countless pieces.

The surrounding eight pillars suffered the same fate, reduced to countless pieces of scrap metal.

An alarmed look appeared on Han Li's face as he flew back in retreat while sweeping a sleeve through the air, and his Heavy Water True Axis instantly emerged before him, then released a thick heavy water barrier to shield him.

He was retreating very quickly, but he was still unable to outrun these rapid streaks of sword qi, and he was only able to get a small distance away before the streaks of sword qi struck his Heavy Water True Axis.

The axis instantly began to tremble violently as a string of metallic clangs rang out in rapid succession, and the black water barrier that it had released was quickly being worn down.

A rumbling thunderclap erupted out of Han Li's body as he accelerated drastically in his retreat, flying back to several dozen kilometers away in the blink of an eye.

As for the azure sword qi, all of it abruptly dissipated after reaching a certain distance away from the altar, much to Han Li's relief.

After waiting for a moment to ensure that there would be no more sword qi coming after him, he swept a sleeve through the air to stow his Heavy Water True Axis away.

Meanwhile, the azure sun in the distance flashed a few times, and the azure light that it was radiating rapidly dimmed before fading away altogether, revealing the 72 Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords hovering in mid-air in a circle.

Han Li's eyes immediately lit up as he flew over to the circle of azure swords.

Following this latest refinement, the outward appearance of the Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords hadn't changed much. They had become more translucent, and bursts of azure energy were just barely visible flowing inside.

Enormous spiritual power fluctuations were emanating out of the flying swords, causing the nearby world's origin qi to shudder and tremble, and a massive spiritual power vortex had taken shape around them.

Upon sensing Han Li's arrival, the 72 flying swords suddenly flew through the air in a blur, transforming into 72 streaks of azure light before vanishing into his dantian in the blink of an eye.

Han Li was quite startled by this, but he could sense that the Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords were merely hovering in his dantian in a still manner.

With the flying swords inside his dantian, he was able to get an even clearer sense of the changes that had taken place within them.

After absorbing such an immeasurable amount of sword essence, it was no exaggeration to say that the Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords had been reborn anew.

In their current form, just a single one of his Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords contained far more spiritual power than any of his other immortal treasures, including even the Heavy Water True Axis that he had painstakingly refined.

However, due to the fact that this spiritual power came from the sword essence of countless different swords, it was a little chaotic and erratic.

This was something that had happened once before after the Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords had absorbed the sword essence from the Thousand Edge Spirit Gathering Sword Array last time, so Han Li wasn't concerned.

Looking at the 72 swords in his dantian, he locked onto one of them with his spiritual sense before sweeping a sleeve through the air, and only after a few flashes of azure light did the flying sword appear before him.

Han Li raised an eyebrow upon seeing this. It seemed that the flying swords had become more difficult to control, and they also felt heavier and more cumbersome.

However, this was only to be expected, considering how much more powerful they had become, and it should be possible to resolve these issues following another bout of refinement.

With that in mind, Han Li made a hand seal before pointing a finger forward, and a layer of azure light instantly appeared over the flying sword's surface.

The sword then moved a few times before falling still again.

Han Li's brows furrowed slightly upon seeing this, and he opened his mouth to release a burst of azure light that enveloped the flying sword in a flash.

The azure light radiating from the flying sword became even brighter, and once again, it moved a little before falling still.

Han Li's expression darkened slightly upon seeing this, and he channeled all of the immortal spiritual power in his body, releasing two bursts of dense azure light out of the palms of his hands, both of which surged into the flying sword.

At the same time, his spiritual sense also flooded into the flying sword, and the azure light radiating from the sword's surface instantly brightened even further.

All of a sudden, the flying sword twisted around before shooting through the air like an azure spirit snake while expanding drastically in size, swelling to over 1,000 feet in length as it radiated blinding azure swordlight.

The entire surrounding space began to tremble in the wake of the tremendous sword intent emanating from the giant sword, and all of the nearby world's origin qi instantly converged toward it.

The light radiating from the huge sword continued to grow brighter and brighter as it pierced back and forth through the clouds like an enormous azure dragon.

The cloud in the sky surged and churned violently before rapidly dissipating to reveal the clear, blue sky up above.

Only then did a hint of relief appear on Han Li's face, and a look of elation surfaced in his eyes at the sight of the giant sword.

The sword had become far more formidable than he anticipated, and it wasn't inferior in the slightest compared with the combined power of the entire set of 72 Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords in their previous form.

All of a sudden, he made a hand seal, and arcs of thick and radiant golden lightning instantly emerged over the giant azure sword.

The arcs of lightning were flashing over the blade of the sword like a flight of prowling dragons, giving off a violent and primordial aura.

In the blink of an eye, the giant azure sword had transformed into a golden lightning sword and was giving off a devastating aura of destruction.

Han Li faltered slightly upon seeing these.

The comparison between these arcs of golden lightning and his Divine Devilbane Lightning from before was no different from that between night and day. Not only had the lightning become at least several times more powerful, there also seemed to be some type of new, unidentifiable property about them.

Han Li hesitated momentarily before making another hand seal, and the giant lightning sword in the sky instantly stopped in its tracks before becoming even brighter.

Immediately thereafter, it swept through the air as if it were being swung by an enormous invisible hand.

A streak of gargantuan azure sword qi swept forth, and it was several kilometers wide with arcs of golden lightning surging over its surface, presenting an astonishing sight to behold.

The azure sword qi erupted in all directions, tearing through the very space itself to create countless black spatial rifts while also causing the surrounding space to warp and tremble violently.

The streak of giant sword qi vanished into space in the blink of an eye, but the disturbance continued to rage on, and the entire secret area was beginning to tremble and sway.

Only after a long time had passed were peace and quiet restored.

Chapter 442: Collapse

There were some mixed emotions in Han Li's eyes as he looked on in silence.

After unleashing that slash, all of the golden lightning around the giant sword dissipated as if it had exhausted all of its power.

That power of that slash was approaching the level of an all-out attack unleashed by Han Li's Profound Heavenly Spiritlash Sword in the past, and this was only the power of a single sword, so it was difficult to imagine just how powerful all 72 swords combined would be.

With that in mind, a surge of excitement welled up in Han Li's heart.

However, the problem was that it was taking virtually all of his immortal spiritual power and spiritual sense to control this single flying sword, rendering him unable to do much else.

With that in mind, much of Han Li's enthusiasm was instantly dampened.

A thought then suddenly sprang into his mind, and he raised an eyebrow as he thought back to how the flying swords had just flown into his dantian on their own.

Perhaps the situation wasn't what he imagined it to be.

With that in mind, Han Li enveloped the 71 flying swords in his dantian with his spiritual sense before attempting to draw upon them, but the only response that he received was a faint flash of azure light.

He then channeled all of his immortal spiritual power before attempting the same thing, but all of the flying swords remained completely still and unmoved.

Han Li heaved a faint sigh upon seeing this.

In their current form, the flying swords in his dantian had become incredibly heavy, and attempting to move them with his current level of immortal spiritual power was no different from an ant attempting to move a mountain.



Thankfully, his spiritual connection with the Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords still remained, so he should be able to use them once he attained sufficient power.

After heaving another faint sigh, he made no further attempt to summon all of the remaining flying swords at once, instead focusing his spiritual sense on summoning just a single additional sword.

A second azure flying sword emerged in front of him at his behest, and Han Li took a deep breath before channeling all of his immortal spiritual power and spiritual sense before making a hand seal.

Bright azure light flashed over the surface of the Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Sword a few times, but it remained completely still.

Meanwhile, Han Li was feeling a little dizzy from overexertion of immortal spiritual power and spiritual sense, and he hurriedly stopped what he was doing.

After that, he stowed the flying sword away as a contemplative look appeared on his face.

It seemed that at his current level of power, controlling a single Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Sword was already his limit.

The giant azure sword slowly flew through the air, and even though all of the formidable arcs of golden lightning on its surface had already faded, it was still giving off mountainous pressure.

Han Li made a beckoning motion, and the giant azure sword flew down while rapidly shrinking before vanishing up his sleeve as a miniature azure sword, following which he drifted back down onto the ground, where he was greeted by Lu Yuqing.

"Congratulations, Brother Han. I can see that your flying swords have become far more formidable," Lu Yuqing congratulated with a beaming smile.

A faint smile appeared on Han Li's face as he asked, "The fact that you're here must mean that all of the puppets from before have been taken care of, right?"

Lu Yuqing nodded in response.

At this point, the phenomena in the sky had completely faded, and the entire secret area was restored to its original state, while the clouds that had been scattered by the Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Sword were also slowly recovering.

"It doesn't look like there are any other treasures in here, and we've already been here for a very long time. The entrance of this secret area is quite difficult to access, but there's no guarantee that Xue Han and the others won't be able to follow us into this place, so it's best for us to leave as quickly as possible," Han Li said.

Lu Yuqing faltered slightly upon hearing this, and a slightly hesitant look appeared on her face.

"Is there something else that you have to do here?" Han Li asked upon noticing her expression.

"No. You're right, Brother Han, it's best for us to leave this place as quickly as possible, but before that, please wait for me for a moment," Lu Yuqing said, then flew toward the ancestral hall of the daoist temple in the distance, where she swept a sleeve through the air to release a burst of azure light that swept up all of the memorial tablets inside before stowing them away.

After that, she flew back to Han Li's side and said, "I'm ready to go."

Han Li was rather taken aback to see this, but he didn't ask any questions, and he began to fly down the mountain, followed closely by Lu Yuqing.

Perhaps it was due to the destruction of the white altar in the sky or the disappearance of all of the flying swords on the meadow. In any case, the boundless sword qi in the air had completely faded, allowing them to fly without any obstruction.

The two of them had only just risen up into the air when a burst of thunderous rumbling suddenly rang out, following which the entire secret area began to tremble violently.

"What's going on?"

Han Li's expression instantly changed slightly as he stopped in his tracks.

All of a sudden, a pillar of white light had erupted into the heavens in the distance behind him.

The pillar of white light was incredibly thick, with a diameter of at least several hundred feet, and it was giving off tremendous spiritual power fluctuations that were quite alarming even to Han Li.

Lu Yuqing was also staring at the pillar of white light in the distance with an astonished look on her face, and right at this moment, another rumbling boom rang out in another direction as the entire secret area shuddered violently once again.

A second pillar of white light had appeared there, and it was also extending directly up into the sky.

Han Li and Lu Yuqing were even more alarmed upon seeing this.

The two pillars of light seemed to be resonating with one another, and the trembling of the entire secret area was becoming more and more violent, presenting a doomsday-like scene to behold.

"This secret area is about to collapse! We have to get out of here!" Han Li exclaimed in an urgent voice as he flew down the mountain as a streak of azure light, and Lu Yuqing hurriedly followed along.

As he was flying down the mountain, Han Li's mind was racing as he tried to pinpoint a reason for the collapse of the secret area.

Could it be that the destruction of the white altar had triggered the secret area's demise, or could it be that the sword strike that he had just unleashed had damaged some important point in the secret area?

However, he then quickly shook his head to rid himself of that thought. There was no point in pondering this matter, and his top priority now was to get out of this place as quickly as possible.

With that in mind, he accelerated even further, and the two of them arrived at the foot of the mountain in the blink of an eye, returning to the place where they had first entered the secret area.

Meanwhile, a third pillar of white light had risen up elsewhere in the secret area, and the tremors running through the entire secret area had become even more severe.

Han Li swept his spiritual sense through the nearby area, upon which his expression instantly darkened slightly.

The space here was extremely stable with no spatial passageways or teleportation arrays to facilitate their escape.

He had always thought that this place served as both the entrance and the exit of the secret area, but it seemed that he was incorrect in that assumption.

Lu Yuqing had sensed the exact same thing, and a grim look had appeared on her face as well.

"Fellow Daoist Lu, I noticed that you've been exploring this secret area over the course of the past three days. Have you discovered any exits or any abnormal places?" Han Li asked as he turned to Lu Yuqing.

"I'm afraid not. The entire secret area seems to have already been ransacked by Xiong Shan, and all I stumbled upon were some damaged buildings and destroyed restrictions," Lu Yuqing replied with a shake of her head.

Han Li cast his gaze forward once again upon hearing this.

At his current level of power, it was not very feasible for him to forcibly tear open a spatial passageway.

After all, the space in the Immortal Realm was far more stable than that of lower realms like the Spirit Domain Realm.

Furthermore, even if he could tear open the space here, there was no guarantee that the resulting spatial passageway would lead to anywhere safe, and there was a very good chance that he would be swept up by the boundless spatial currents and killed.

Right at this moment, a fourth pillar of white light emerged in the secret area with another resounding boom, and the entire secret area was swaying extremely violently at this point.

A string of loud cracks rang out overhead as a series of white rifts appeared up above, and they quickly spread in all directions like cracks on the surface of a mirror.

Lu Yuqing's face instantly turned deathly pale upon seeing this.

"There's no time to waste, let's split up and try to search for an exit," Han Li said in an urgent voice, then immediately flew away in a certain direction.

Lu Yuqing nodded in response before flying away in another direction, but she had only flown a short distance away when she suddenly stopped in her tracks, and a slightly befuddled look appeared on her face as she cast her gaze toward a spot halfway up the mountain.

After a brief moment of hesitation, she flew in that direction as a streak of azure light.

Meanwhile, Han Li was flying back up toward the mountain summit while scouring his surroundings with all his might using his spiritual sense and his Brightsight Spirit Eyes, as well as his Eye of Truth.

At his speed, he was quickly able to scour the majority of the entire mountain, and right at this moment, he suddenly stopped cold in his tracks.

All of the greenery further up the mountain had already been completely uprooted to reveal the bare mountain face, and he could see that there was nothing up there.

No additional pillars of white light had appeared after the fourth one, but the spatial rifts in the sky were rapidly spreading and expanding.

The tremors running through the entire secret area were becoming more and more violent, and an agitated look flashed through Han Li's eyes as he hurriedly flew away in another direction.

Right at this moment, Lu Yuqing's voice suddenly rang out in his mind.

"Brother Han, come to me! Hurry!"

Han Li faltered slightly upon hearing this, then cast his gaze in a certain direction before flying away as a streak of azure light.

At this moment, Lu Yuqing was standing somewhere halfway up the mountain, scrutinizing a section of the mountain face with black light shimmering in her eyes.

Han Li arrived by her side amid a flash of azure light, then cast his gaze toward the same spot with his Brightsight Spirit Eyes, but failed to discover anything.

"Have you found something, Fellow Daoist Lu?"

He summoned his Mantra Treasured Axis as he spoke, then began to observe the mountain face through his Eye of Truth, upon which an elated look instantly appeared on his face.

He flicked a finger through the air, releasing a streak of azure sword qi that struck the mountain face, and the streak of sword qi instantly vanished in a flash, while the mountain face rippled slightly before returning to its original state.

Chapter 443: Now or Never

"There really is a restriction here! Looks like your spirit eyes are sharper than mine," Han Li said as his eyes lit up.

Lu Yuqing faltered slightly upon hearing this, then forced a smile onto her own face as she replied, "Not at all, I was simply lucky to have stumbled upon this place. I wonder what's behind the restriction."

Han Li noticed that Lu Yuqing's expression was a little unnatural, but there was no time for him to ponder such matters as he replied, "There's only one way to find out."

Immediately thereafter, he swept a sleeve through the air to summon a giant azure sword that was radiating dazzling azure swordlight.

Arcs of thick golden lightning sprang forth from the surface of the giant sword, instantly transforming it into a golden lightning sword that was giving off a terrifying destructive aura.

Han Li made a hand seal, and the golden lightning sword crashed heavily into the mountain face with tremendous force.

The restriction on the mountain face immediately began to radiate dazzling white light, forming a thick white light barrier to protect itself, and balls of white spiritual light were dancing around within it like living creatures to oppose the giant sword.

The white light barrier appeared quite profound, but it was torn apart with ease by the golden lightning sword, dissipating into countless specks of white spiritual light to reveal a small valley.

A large azure hall was situated within the valley, and above the entrance of the hall was a plaque that read "Flying Immortal Pavilion".

The gate of the hall was slightly ajar with several dim specks of white light visible through it, interspersed with faint spatial fluctuations.

Han Li and Lu Yuqing were both ecstatic to detect these spatial fluctuations, and they immediately flew through the entrance of the hall to arrive inside.

Despite its large size, the interior of the hall was actually very empty, with only a stone platform inside that was around three feet tall and over 100 feet in diameter.

On the stone platform was a white array that was giving off faint white light, and Han Li immediately flew onto the platform in a flash, then quickly inspected the white array momentarily before giving a contemplative nod.

This was indeed a teleportation array, and it was most likely the exit of this secret area.

There was an Immortal Origin Stones embedded into each of the nodes on the array, amounting to a total of over 200 Immortal Origin Stones.

However, only a small proportion of these Immortal Origin Stones still hadn't immortal spiritual power left within them, while the rest had already become completely transparent.

Right at this moment, a string of resounding booms rang out overhead, and the four pillars of white light dissipated in a flash.

The entire secret area was finally beginning to truly collapse, and a spatial rift had just extended over the mountain.

The mountain summit exploded violently, sending countless giant rocks tumbling down from above, and the valley was also at risk of being crushed under the avalanche.

"Hurry!" Han Li yelled as he swept a sleeve through the air, and the Seven Bright Star Rings shot out in a flash, then connected together with one another to form a larger ring.

Radiant starlight erupted out of the Seven Bright Star Rings, forming a starry light barrier with countless star designs flashing on its surface to oppose the avalanche that was tumbling down from above.

Meanwhile, Han Li and Lu Yuqing immediately sprang into action, plucking out all of the spent Immortal Origin Stones before replacing them with new ones.

With a set of new Immortal Origin Stones installed, the white light radiating from the teleportation array instantly became several times brighter.



Han Li was ecstatic to see this, and he was just about to step into the array when his brows suddenly furrowed slightly as he cast his gaze toward a corner of the array.

At this moment, the entire array was radiating resplendent white light with the exception of that corner, and the flow of immortal spiritual power through that area was also rather labored.

Lu Yuqing had also noticed this, and an anxious look appeared on her face as she asked, "Is the teleportation array damaged?"

Han Li offered no response as he cast a series of incantation seals into the dim corner of the array, and the corner immediately lit up slightly, but then turned dark once again.

Han Li hurriedly stopped what he was doing upon seeing this, and he said, "It looks like the teleportation array is about to lose its effectiveness due to prolonged lack of maintenance."

"What do we do then, Brother Han? Do you have a way to repair it?" Lu Yuqing asked in an urgent voice.

At this point, the tremors running through the entire secret area were becoming more and more violent, and a series of giant cracks had also appeared on the mountain.

"This array is too complex for me to repair, and even if I could, we don't have enough time. Having said that, there's no need to be concerned. The array is still just barely functional, and it should be able to work one more time," Han Li replied, then immediately stepped into the array.

Lu Yuqing's expression eased slightly upon hearing this, and she immediately stepped into the array as well.

Han Li chanted an incantation before casting an incantation seal, and the teleportation array instantly lit up with radiant white light that erupted straight into the heavens.

Meanwhile, Xue Han and the other Ubiquitous Pavilion cultivators had only just emerged at the entrance of the secret area at the foot of the mountain amid a burst of spatial fluctuations.

There was an enraged look on Xue Han's face, and he seemed to be in the process of scolding the other Ubiquitous Pavilion cultivators. "You're all a bunch of useless fools! You can't do anything without me! How has it taken you three whole days just to find an entrance..."

Before he had a chance to finish, his voice abruptly cut off at the sight of the collapsing secret area before him, and everyone else was also instantly rooted to the spot.

"Get back! This space is about to collapse!" Xue Han roared as he immediately turned back the same way he had come from.

However, the spatial fluctuations at the entrance had already subsided, and the space was completely stable, meaning that there was no way back.

A layer of cold sweat instantly appeared on Xue Han's forehead.

He was well aware of just how terrifying a collapsing space could be, and even he wouldn't be able to survive such a disaster.

"Look over there, Master Xue Han!" Layman Bone Flame yelled as he pointed at a burst of dazzling white light that had appeared halfway up the mountain.

Xue Han immediately released his spiritual sense in that direction seeing this, and an ecstatic look appeared on his face as he yelled, "It's them! They're trying to leave using the teleportation array!"

He then immediately set off in that direction as a streak of black light, and everyone else hurriedly followed along.

Inside the hall, the teleportation array was glowing brighter and brighter, but Han Li didn't dare to speed up the process too much for fear of exacerbating the existing damage in the array.

As time passed, the entire array glowed brighter and brighter, with the exception of the one damaged corner, which was only dimming with each passing second.

Droplets of cold sweat were beginning to bead up on Han Li's forehead, and Lu Yuqing was also staring intently at that corner of the array with a tense expression.

All of a sudden, she turned toward the foot of the mountain with an alarmed expression, where several streaks of light were rapidly approaching.

"Brother Han, Xue Han and the others are here!" she immediately yelled in an urgent voice.

Han Li's attention was entirely focused on the array, so he wasn't keeping tabs on what was happening around him, and he immediately raised his head upon hearing this.

At this point, the streak of black light that contained Xue Han had already arrived outside the hall, and it was rapidly approaching.

Han Li's pupils contracted slightly upon seeing this, and he hurriedly made a hand seal, upon which the starlight barrier above the valley abruptly disappeared.

The Seven Bright Star Rings emerged out of thin air, then vanished from the spot in the blink of an eye, and in the next instant, they reappeared in front of the hall before flying into the streak of black light formed by Xue Han.

A furious roar rang out as Xue Han was stopped cold in his tracks, and a ring had appeared around each of his four limbs, his chest, his lower abdomen, and his neck, digging deep into his skin.

"What the hell is this!" he roared in a furious voice as he struggled with all his might, while black light surged over his body.

The black light quickly spread over the Seven Bright Star Rings like ink, overpowering the starlight radiating from them, but they remained resolute around Xue Han's body.

Meanwhile, Han Li opened his mouth to release a ball of azure light into the array, and the white light radiating from the array brightened even further, seemingly having reached a certain threshold.

Bursts of spatial power surged out of the array to envelop Han Li and Lu Yuqing, and in the next instant, both of them vanished into thin air.

At the same time, the damaged corner of the teleportation array also reached its limits, and a series of cracks appeared over its surface.

The white light radiating from the array flashed one final time before fading away as well, and Xue Han was still immobilized outside the hall.

At this moment, there was radiant black light erupting out of his body, and the Seven Bright Star Rings were finally unable to hold on any longer, shattering into countless pieces that flew away in all directions.

Xue Han immediately stormed into the hall, and an extremely grim look appeared on his face at the sight of the damaged teleportation array.

At this point, Layman Bone Flame and the others also arrived on the scene, and their hearts immediately sank at the sight that they were greeted by.

Right at this moment, the secret area finally completely collapsed, and powerful bursts of spatial turbulence erupted out of the spatial rifts.

The entire mountain collapsed violently, sending countless giant rocks crashing down to inundate the small valley.

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In a certain dim space, there was a boundless black desert down below, and the ground was riddled with black rocks of different sizes. Vegetation was extremely sparse here, and the entire area looked extremely bleak and desolate.

The sky was a dark yellow color, and all of a sudden, a rumbling thunderclap rang out.

Immediately thereafter, bursts of black light emerged before forming a ball of black light that was several dozen feet in size, and arcs of black light were flashing incessantly over its surface.

The ball of black light warped and twisted before suddenly elongating to form a spatial rift that was several dozen feet in length, and a pair of figures, one male and one female, stumbled out from within.

The two were none other than Han Li and Lu Yuqing, who had arrived here through the teleportation array, and at this moment, both of them were looking rather worse for wear. In particular, Lu Yuqing was as pale as a sheet, and there was a thin trail of blood running down from the corner of her lips.

#### Chapter 444: Completely Empty

After steadying themselves, both Han Li and Lu Yuqing heaved a collective sigh of relief.

The teleportation array seemed to have transported them out of the secret area earlier, but it had actually suddenly collapsed at a crucial juncture, casting them into an area of spatial turbulence, and it had taken them a great deal of effort to escape.

The spatial rift flashed a few times before abruptly vanishing, and Han Li inspected his surroundings briefly while releasing his spiritual sense throughout the nearby area.

Lu Yuqing's expression eased slightly at the sight of the surrounding environment, and she quickly swallowed a pill, upon which her complexion immediately began to improve.

"Where are we right now? Have we been teleported out of the Infernal Frost Immortal Manor?" she asked in a slightly uneasy manner.

Even a slight deviation in a teleportation array could result in a vast difference in the destination, and the fact that they had been cast into a spatial storm certainly wasn't going to help the matter.

"I don't think so. I can still detect the profound glacial qi that's unique to the Light Frost Region here, so we should still be in the immortal manor," Han Li replied.

"Good," Lu Yuqing said with a relieved expression.

"That teleportation array has already been destroyed, so Xue Han and the others will most likely fall to their demise along with that secret area. We should be able to take some time to rest and recuperate here," Han Li continued.

Lu Yuqing had sustained some rather severe injuries, and even though he was uninjured, he had virtually used up all of his immortal spiritual power in the process of escaping from the spatial turbulence.

This place appeared to be quite bleak and desolate, but at the very least, it seemed to be safe.

Lu Yuqing was in desperate need of some rest, and she immediately nodded in agreement.

Hence, the two of them descended onto the desert, then set up a few restrictions around themselves before sitting down with their legs crossed.

Han Li summoned a pair of Immortal Origin Stones to help himself replenish his immortal spiritual power, and close to a day later, he had made a full recovery.

After withstanding a string of ordeals in the Infernal Frost Immortal Manor, his cultivation base had advanced a little further, but that final immortal acupoint still showed no sign of budging.

A resigned look appeared on his face as diverted his attention away from the stubborn immortal acupoint, then turned to the side to find that Lu Yuqing was still meditating with a spherical azure light barrier around her.

Han Li withdrew his gaze, then swept a sleeve through the air to summon a gray stone slab, the very same one that contained the second half of the Great Universe Origin Arts.

He had been too busy earlier to take a close look at the cultivation art, and he was eager to take advantage of this window of respite.

Blue light flashed within his eyes as he inspected the stone slab closely, and around two hours later, the blue light in his eyes faded as he withdrew his gaze.

He had already completely memorized the second half of the Great Universe Origin Arts, and just like the first half of the cultivation, the second half also laid out the method required to open 18 profound acupoints.

He was confident that if he could master the second half of the cultivation art and open this second set of 18 profound acupoints, then he would be able to break through his final immortal acupoint with no issues.

Just like the first half, the second half of the Great Universe Origin Arts also involved guiding starpower into the body to open up profound acupoints.

However, the second half of the cultivation art was far more complex than the first half, and not only was an enormous amount of starpower required to open the second set of 18 profound acupoints, a considerably long time had to be spent on bodily refinement as well, making the process far more rigorous than what had been laid out in the first half of the cultivation art.

He wanted nothing more than to drop everything and immediately find a place to go into seclusion, but this was clearly not a suitable place for seclusion. On top of that, he still had to help Daoist Hu Yan secure whatever treasure he was searching for in the limited time left so that he could obtain the second part of the Mantra Treasured Axis, so he would have to save the Great Universe Origin Arts for later.

With that in mind, stowed the gray stone slab away again, then cast his gaze forward with a contemplative look in his eyes.

He didn't know where Daoist Hu Yan and Yun Ni were at this moment, and he also had no idea what the treasure Daoist Hu Yan had been referring to was.

The Infernal Frost Immortal Manor was far more complex a place than he had imagined. It was an enormous place that rivaled a small continent, and he had no idea where to find Daoist Hu Yan and Yun Ni.

Han Li shook his head to rid himself of that train of thought, and right as he was about to close his eyes, he suddenly raised an eyebrow as if a thought had occurred to him.

He then raised a hand, and Xiong Shan's storage bracelet appeared in his grasp.

He still hadn't had a chance to examine the storage bracelet yet. Considering he had been quite a formidable swordsman with unknown ties to the Boundless Sword Sect, surely his storage bracelet had to have been a precious treasure trove.

With that in mind, Han Li was feeling a little excited, but his smile instantly stiffened as soon as he injected his spiritual sense into the storage bracelet.

To his surprise, Xiong Shan's storage bracelet was completely empty!

That wasn't entirely the truth as there were some items piled up in a corner of the storage bracelet's internal space, but none of those things were very valuable.

The only things that were even slightly appealing to Han Li were several vials of recovery pills and a few scriptures, and there were barely even any Immortal Origin Stones.

Han Li was initially quite perplexed to see this, but he quickly came to understand why this was the case.

Xiong Shan had already exhausted all of his resources for the sake of his previous sword refinement attempt, and only several centuries had passed since then, so it was only to be expected that he had to empty his pockets again for this second sword refinement.

Furthermore, as soon as he entered the Light Frost Palace, he had immediately traveled straight to the Boundless Sword Sect, so he didn't have any time to collect any treasures along the way, and that was why his storage bracelet was so barren and desolate.

Han Li was slightly disappointed to see this, but he then quickly reminded himself that he had already reaped many rewards in the Light Frost Palace, and asking for any more would only be a sign of excessive greed, which was certainly not a good thing.



With that in mind, the disappointment in his heart quickly faded away, and he swept a sleeve through the air to release all of the storage bracelet's contents, then briefly sorted through them splitting them up into different categories before stowing them away.

Before long, all that remained in front of him was a silver jade box, within which were there jade slips.

He was quite interested in the cultivation arts that Xiong Shan had been using prior to his death, and he picked up one of the three jade slips before injecting his spiritual sense into it.

This jade slip contained a cultivation art by the name of the Great Destruction Yang Sword Arts. The cultivation art could support one's cultivation to the Golden Immortal Stage, and it had most likely been Xiong Shan's primary cultivation art.

According to the description of the Great Destruction Yang Sword Arts, the cultivation art granted one mastery over the laws of metal, and it was rather similar in nature to the laws of destruction.

Han Li hadn't dabbled in metal-attribute cultivation arts in the past, and he had no intention of beginning now, so this cultivation art wasn't very useful to him.

However, there were some sword-related secret techniques and insights recorded at the very end of the cultivation art that could be useful for reference purposes.

He read through the entire cultivation art from beginning to end, then placed it back into the jade box before picking out another jade slip and injecting his spiritual sense into it.

This jade slip contained a body refinement cultivation art by the name of the Golden Arhat Arts, and it appeared to be the secret technique that Xiong Shan had unleashed while climbing the stairs outside of the Light Frost Palace.

This was quite a remarkable body refinement art that granted one tremendous physical prowess, but a mastery over the laws of metal were required to cultivate it.

Han Li immediately lost interest in the cultivation art upon seeing this prerequisite, and he only briefly read through its contents before setting it down again and picking up the final jade slip.

This jade slip contained some pill recipes, most of which were for earthy metal-attribute pills, which would be quite helpful for True Immortals using metal-attribute cultivation arts.

Han Li withdrew his spiritual sense from the jade slip as a hint of befuddlement flashed through his eyes.

None of the jade slips had contained any records of the Thousand Edge Spirit Gathering Sword Array. Could it be that Xiong Shan had destroyed those records?

A contemplative look appeared on Han Li's face as he pondered this matter, and he was just about to stow the jade box away when he suddenly seemed to have noticed something.

He fiddled with the jade box briefly, and it suddenly split apart down the middle with a faint crack. As it turned out, there was a hidden compartment with what appeared to be a piece of gray cloth inside.

What's this?

Han Li picked up the gray cloth to find that it was roughly square in shape, and it resembled a dirty rag, but upon closer inspection, he noticed some faint patterns on the cloth.

These patterns were very strange in appearance, and even with Han Li's vast wealth of knowledge and experience, he was at a complete loss as to what they were.

However, there was something profound about these patterns that convinced him that they definitely weren't just haphazard designs casually drawn onto a cloth.

The gray cloth was very smooth and slightly cool to the touch, and it was unclear what type of material it had been fashioned out of.

Han Li inspected the cloth back and forth for a long while, even using his Brightsight Spirit Eyes and Eye of Truth in the process, but was unable to find anything worthy of note.

The gray cloth wasn't giving off any spiritual power fluctuations, and if it weren't for those profound patterns, it would've appeared no different from a normal rag.

However, the fact that Xiong Shan had stored it away so carefully clearly indicated that it was no ordinary object.

A contemplative look appeared on Han Li's face as he absentmindedly rubbed the cloth between his fingers, upon which a hint of surprise appeared on his face.

With his physical strength, that casual rubbing motion would've been enough to tear a steel slab apart, yet the gray cloth remained completely unscathed.

Han Li grabbed onto the cloth with both hands and attempted to pull it apart, but it refused to budge.

He raised an eyebrow as he exerted even more force through his hands, but the gray cloth was able to easily hold itself together.

An intrigued look flashed through Han Li's eyes as he switched tactics, attempting to tear the cloth apart down the middle this time, but still to no avail.

A hint of elation flashed through Han Li's eyes upon seeing this.

He had exerted sufficient force to tear apart even an ordinary spirit treasure just now, yet this gray cloth remained completely unscathed, so there had to be something special about it.

#### Chapter 445: Boundless Sand Sea

Han Li wanted to test the limits of the gray cloth's resilience, and he continued to exert more and more force until he was going all-out, but he was still unable to tear the cloth apart.

A curious look appeared on his face as he began to inspect the gray cloth again.

After a brief moment of contemplation, he flicked a finger through the air, releasing a ball of crimson flames that enveloped the entire cloth, subjecting it to scorching heat, but it remained completely unscathed.

With a wave of his sleeve, Han Li snuffed out the flame, then released a ball of heavy water to envelop the gray cloth, and once again, it was completely unaffected.

Around an hour later, Han Li was staring at the gray cloth in his hand with a defeated expression.

During the past hour, he had tried everything that he could think of to get any type of reaction out of the gray cloth, but his attempts had ended in complete failure.

After staring at the gray cloth for a while longer, Han Li stowed it away with a resigned smile, deciding that he would look into it another time.

Right at this moment, the spherical azure light barrier around Lu Yuqing flashed a few times before fading away, and as she opened her eyes, her complexion was looking much better.

"Sorry to keep you waiting, Brother Han," she said as she rose to her feet.

"It's fine. Take a look and see if you can identify roughly where we are right now," Han Li said as he gestured at their surroundings.

"According to my knowledge, the Light Frost Region is a very complex place, and there's more than one desert of this description in the region, so I can't tell where we are based only on what I can see right now," Lu Yuqing replied with a shake of her head.

"In that case, let's do some exploring. This place looks quite barren and desolate, but we shouldn't underestimate it," Han Li said as he summoned his azure flying boat before stepping onto it.

Lu Yuqing naturally raised no objections and descended onto the flying boat as well.

Immediately thereafter, the flying boat sped away in a certain direction at Han Li's behest.

Just like the ice field from before, there was a type of invisible force in this area that severely restricted one's spiritual sense, and even Han Li's spiritual sensory range had been reduced to only several hundred kilometers in radius, so he decided to proceed at a moderate speed as a safety precaution.

Moments later, he suddenly raised an eyebrow as he turned in a certain direction, and the azure flying boat also faltered slightly.

"Have you found something, Brother Han?" Lu Yuqing asked.

"I have, but it's not worth very much. So be it, let's go and take a look," Han Li said as the flying boat diverged slightly from its original path, quickly covering a distance of close to 200 kilometers to the left.

Han Li and Lu Yuqing then drifted down onto the ground from the flying boat.

A large patch of dark purple mushrooms were growing over the ground down below, and every single mushroom was around 10 feet tall. The mushrooms were covered in dark purple spots, while their edges were a bright red color, giving them an extremely vibrant appearance.

This cluster of mushrooms took up an area of around an acre, and they resembled a vibrant sea of flowers growing on this barren desert, seemingly completely out of place.

"These are Mull Cloud Mushrooms!" Lu Yuqing exclaimed as her eyes lit up.

"Could it be that you've managed to ascertain our current location thanks to these mushrooms?" Han Li asked.

He had seen some records pertaining to Mull Cloud Mushrooms before, and he knew that they were extremely poisonous and could be used to refine certain poisons or poison-attribute treasures.

However, their poison was only effective against cultivators below the True Immortal stage, while those who had attained immortal bodies were impervious to its effects.

"That's right," Lu Yuqing replied with an excited expression.

She flipped a hand over to produce a green jade pendant as she spoke, then cast a streak of azure light into it, and a burst of green light surged out of the pendant, projecting a green light screen.

The light screen was a map that was comprised of around a dozen components of different colors, and it appeared to be only half of a full map.

"Is this the map of the Light Frost Region that you mentioned previously?" Han Li asked.

"That's right. According to the information that our Black Wind Island was able to gather, the Light Frost Region consists of close to 100 different environments. Unfortunately, this map only contains around a dozen of those areas," Lu Yuqing replied with a nod.

Han Li nodded in response with a contemplative expression, and his gaze began to roam over the map.

The map was extremely detailed and life-like, presenting many details that would've been absent in the average map.

However, it didn't contain the ice field, the black mountain range, and the black sea that they had passed through previously.

"None of the three areas that we passed through prior to this were on my map. Otherwise, we wouldn't have been so lost," Lu Yuqing said.

"So where are we right now?" Han Li asked.

Only now was he beginning to develop a rough idea of the Light Frost Region's layout.

"We're here. This place is called the Black Rock Desert, and according to my sources, there are three or four deserts in the Light Frost Region, but this is the only one where Mull Cloud Mushrooms can be found," Lu Yuqing replied as she pointed at a black area on the upper part of the map.

"It's good that we've finally managed to ascertain our location. Stumbling around in the Immortal Palace without any idea of where we are is far too dangerous," Han Li said.

"The Black Rock Desert is actually one of the safer areas on my map. There are no frost beasts here, nor any large-scale hazards like glacial storms," Lu Yuqing said.

"We're quite lucky not to have been teleported to a more dangerous area," Han Li said in an ambiguous fashion.

"Indeed, we're extremely lucky, Brother Han," Lu Yuqing replied with a meaningful smile.

"Oh? Is there something I'm missing, Fellow Daoist Lu?" Han Li asked as he raised an eyebrow.

"Do you see this place here, Brother Han?" Lu Yuqing asked as she pointed at the upper region of the Black Rock Desert.

"Is there something special about that area?" Han Li asked.

"That place is called the Boundless Sand Sea, and it's the northernmost point of the Light Frost Region," Lu Yuqing replied.

"So what? Are there some precious treasures in this Boundless Sand Sea?" Han Li asked.

"I don't know about that, but as you're already aware, there are other unexplored regions in the Infernal Frost Immortal Manor aside from the Light Frost Region, and it's said that the one must go through the Boundless Sand Sea to access those other regions," Lu Yuqing replied.

"Really?"

Han Li was very intrigued to hear this.

"Of course! The Light Frost Region has already been mostly explored by cultivators who had previously entered the immortal manor, and I've been meaning to go to the other regions to see what I can find there, but I haven't been able to find the Boundless Sand Sea. Who could've predicted that we would end up so close to the Boundless Sand Sea after that mishap?" Lu Yuqing said with an excited expression.

"In that case, we really are extremely fortunate. Time is of the essence, so let's set off right away," Han Li said as he returned to his azure flying boat.

The Light Frost Region had already been scoured countless times, yet even so, he was still able to reap many significant rewards. If he were to go to an unexplored region of the immortal manor, who knew what would be waiting for him there?

Lu Yuqing stowed her azure jade pendant away before also flying back onto the azure spirit boat, following which the flying boat sped away into the distance at Han Li's behest.

Three days later.

Han Li and Lu Yuqing appeared in front of a vast yellow desert.

The sand in the desert was a light yellow color and rather translucent in appearance, reflecting the light of the sun in a blinding fashion.

At the same time, waves of heat were surging through the air, and it was as if this entire place were a massive lit furnace.

"This is the place, right?" Han Li asked.

"That's right, this is the Boundless Sand Sea," Lu Yuqing replied with excitement shimmering in her eyes.



Instead of immediately venturing into the area, Han Li asked, "This doesn't look like a very safe place. Do you know if there are any hazards present here?"

"You have a very sharp eye, Brother Han. There are indeed quite a few hazards in this area. For example, this desert is filled with fire poison, and anyone who sets foot into it will slowly be poisoned. Even Golden Immortals will be affected given enough time," Lu Yuqing replied.

"Fire poison? I'm assuming this is no ordinary fire poison," Han Li said as his brows furrowed slightly.

"Indeed. The poison can't be treated with any ordinary pills, and the only cure is to find a water spirit area in the desert and use the special water spiritual qi there to gradually neutralize the fire poison. If one is unable to find a water spirit area and has become too severely poisoned, then even a Golden Immortal could die in this desert," Lu Yuqing said with a serious expression.

"What other hazards are there?" Han Li asked.

"Aside from the fire poison, it's said that one could fall prey to extremely confounding mirages in the desert that could make one lose their way and become trapped in the desert forever. This desert is extremely notorious for these two hazards, and very few people who enter the Infernal Frost Immortal Manor set foot in this place," Lu Yuqing replied.

"This does sound like an extremely perilous place. You're saying that there's a pathway to another region somewhere in this desert?" Han Li asked.

"The pathway is deep within the Boundless Sand Sea, but there's no need to be concerned, Brother Han. I have a map of the Boundless Sand Sea, so as long as we proceed with caution and follow the map, we should be able to find the pathway just fine," Lu Yuqing replied as she summoned a jade slip before offering it to Han Li.

#### Chapter 446: Tribulation of Life and Death

Han Li accepted the jade slip from Lu Yuqing before pressing it against his own forehead, and a short while later, he withdrew his spiritual sense from the jade slip before handing it back to Lu Yuqing as he

remarked, "This is quite a detailed map. May I ask where you got it from? Was it from that stone plaque?"

"That's right. It's exactly because I have this map that I wanted to come to the Boundless Sand Sea, but even with this map in my possession, I'll be counting on you to get us through the Boundless Sand Sea, Brother Han," Lu Yuqing replied.

"I'll do my best," Han Li said in an ambiguous fashion, following which the azure flying boat beneath his feet flew into the desert at his behest.

Upon entering the Boundless Sand Sea, the two of them instantly felt the air temperature rise dramatically, making them feel as if they had entered a steamer.

"Let's try and determine our current location before we do anything else, Fellow Daoist Lu," Han Li suggested.

"That's a good idea. I don't know exactly where we are right now, but I should be able to determine our location once we encounter two or three of the places recorded on the map," Lu Yuqing replied with a nod.

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At the same time.

There was a certain mountain range in the Immortal Realm that was extremely majestic, filled with steep, breathtaking peaks that resembled swords aimed straight up at the heavens.

Deep within the mountain range was an imposing, antiquated fortress.

The fortress had been constructed in a very unique style that incorporated all types of sword designs into every aspect of its construction, including its roof and all of its walls.

Large swords, small swords, short swords, long swords... Countless swords of all descriptions filled every single corner of the ancient fortress.

The fortress was brightly lit, and there were many people walking or flying back and forth through it.

All of these people were dressed in golden robes with a "Xiong" character embroidered onto the sleeve, and it appeared to be quite a formidable cultivating clan.

Inside a dim secret chamber deep within the fortress was a black stone platform that was around 10 feet in size, upon which laid a young man.

The man's eyes were tightly shut, and he was completely still and lifeless.

On the stone platform around the body were engraved a circle of profound spirit patterns, while a dark azure oil lamp had been placed above the man's head.

However, at this moment, the flame in the lamp was very feeble, and it was constantly flickering, looking as if it could be snuffed out at any moment.

Adhered to the front of the man's chest was a black talisman with a series of profound runes inscribed upon it, and it was giving off a burst of special aura fluctuations.

All of a sudden, the door of the secret chamber creaked open to punctuate the silence, and two figures made their way into the room one after another.

The first figure was an elderly man with a head of white hair, but his face was extremely supple and completely devoid of wrinkles, presenting a rather jarring contrast to behold.

Behind the elderly man was a strange-looking middle-aged man with a dark green complexion and a pair of eyes with tiny black pupils.

The two of them made their way over to the stone platform before turning their attention to the black talisman.

"Today's the day?" the white-haired elderly man suddenly asked.

"It is. My divination tells me that it's today," the green-faced man replied as he pulled out an azure abacus-like object, and the beads on it were occasionally sliding back and forth on their own.

"Shan'er possesses the best aptitude out of everyone of his generation in our clan, but unfortunately, he's had an upbringing as he hails from a side branch of our clan, resulting in a very cold and arrogant personality. He's refused to accept any assistance from our clan and insists on forging his own path. Hopefully, following this ordeal, he can set aside all of his stubborn nature and realize what's truly important," the white-haired elderly man sighed.

The green-faced man nodded in response, and he was just about to say something when he suddenly raised an eyebrow and exclaimed, "It's coming!"

As soon as his voice trailed off, the black talisman on the young man's chest suddenly ignited on its own, erupting into a ball of black flames.

All of the patterns on the stone platform around the body also began to glow with radiant black light, forming a black halo that encompassed the entire body.

The white-haired elderly man immediately flicked a finger through the air upon seeing this, releasing a streak of black light that vanished into the black flame in front of the body.

The flame instantly reared up, then split up into five parts, immediately following which several streaks of black light flew out of the five balls of fire, then connected together with one another to form a pentagram array.

Fierce gusts of yin wind instantly began to sweep through the secret chamber, and the air temperature plummeted, but the white-haired elderly man and the green-faced man paid no heed to this as they stared intently at the pentagram array.

The space at the center of the array suddenly began to warp, and a black shadow appeared, squirming and writhing as if it were a living creature.

The shadow squirmed around for a while, then abruptly split open to reveal a spatial rift.

In the next instant, a ball of golden light flew out of the spatial rift, then vanished into the young man's body in a flash.

Some time later, the body began to radiate dazzling golden light.

The white-haired elderly man's eyes immediately lit up upon seeing this, and he swept a sleeve through the air to release a burst of white light that enveloped the young man's body.

The complexion of the young man's pale and lifeless face quickly reverted back to normal, and his heart also began to beat again as the vitality was restored to his body.

The azure lamp above the young man's head had also suddenly become several times brighter, and its flame had become extremely stable.

Some more time passed, and the young man's eyelids fluttered slightly before slowly peeling back to reveal a pair of dazed and disoriented eyes.

It took a long while for those glazed over eyes to focus, and the young man began to look around in bewilderment, upon which he quickly spotted the two people beside him.

"Uncle, Clan Leader!"

His expression instantly changed drastically as he tried to sit up, only for the white-haired elderly man to press a hand down onto his shoulder as he said, "Lay still, Shan'er. The soul transference technique has only just been completed, so you can't move yet."

The young man opened his mouth to say something, but ultimately remained silent and laid back down.

"What's going on, Clan Leader? I should already be dead by now, why have I returned to the clan?" the young man asked.

"You have your uncle here to thank. A long time ago, he gleaned through divination that you were going to face a tribulation of life and death at some point, but he couldn't determine when this tribulation was going to befall you.

"Hence, when you decided to leave the clan, he secretly planted a soul transference secret technique onto your nascent soul, which ensured that if your nascent soul were to ever sustain lethal damage, it would automatically be teleported back to our clan so that you can possess another body," the white-haired elderly man explained.

The young man was silent for a moment, then turned to the green-faced man as he said, "I see. Thank you, Uncle. If it wasn't for you, I would already be dead by now."

"There's no need to thank me. Don't forget that you and I are related by blood," the green-faced man replied with a dismissive wave of his hand.

A complex look flashed through the young man's eyes as he said, "Uncle, every time you use your divination technique, you lose at least 10,000 years of your cultivation base. In order to glean my fate, you had to have lost at least 100,000 years of cultivation base. How can I repay you?"

"A mere 100,000-years-worth of cultivation base is nothing. I'm just glad you're back safe and sound," the green-faced man said with a smile.

The young man lowered his gaze and remained silent.

"What kind of enemy did you encounter in the Northern Glacial Immortal Region, Shan'er? There's no way any ordinary cultivator could've struck you down," the white-haired elderly man suddenly asked.

A cold gleam flashed through the young man's eyes upon hearing this, but he refrained from answering the question.

"Forget it. If you don't want to tell me, then I won't pry any further. You can take care of this matter on your own," the white-haired elderly man said with a shake of his head.

"Thank you, Clan Leader," the young man replied with a nod.

"Now that you're back, stay here for now. We'll help you recover your cultivation base as quickly as possible, and the Immortal Palace has already sent us several summons, so you should go and accept your post there. As for everything else, we can discuss all of that some other time," the white-haired elderly man said.

The young man's brows furrowed slightly upon hearing this, and he was silent for a moment before nodding in response.

The white-haired elderly man and the green-faced man exchanged a glance upon seeing this, and both of them could see their own elation mirrored in one another's eyes.

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In the sky above a red plain, two balls of radiant light, one red and one golden, were engaged in a ferocious battle.

The two balls of light were clashing violently amid a string of earth-shattering booms, causing the surrounding space to tremble as gusts of fierce wind swept through the air in all directions.

Occasionally, a streak of light or two would spill down from above, smash giant craters into the ground while also sending vast clouds of red dust erupting into the air.

One of the combatants in the battle was none other than the silver-robed woman by the name of Qu Ling, and she was standing atop the back of the mountainous golden beetle, which was radiating dazzling golden light.

She was facing a group of seven or eight figures, all of whom were dressed in red robes with extremely life-like fire raven designs embroidered onto them. These were none other than the True Flame Sect cultivators, but Daoist Hu Yan and Yun Ni were nowhere to be seen among them.

All of the True Flame Sect cultivators were looking rather worse for wear. In particular, the three Golden Immortals among them seemed to all be carrying injuries.

The trio was led by Xu Yangzi, and they had instructed all of the True Flame Sect cultivators to form a flame-shaped array. Hovering above each of them was a large red flag with scorching flames burning upon them, and bursts of fire were erupting out of the eight flags toward Qu Ling and the golden beetle.

The fire was giving off scorching heat that caused the very space in its wake to tremble and warp, but Qu Ling wasn't taking this battle seriously at all.

Instead, she was casually standing on the golden beetle's back while fiddling with a green gourd in her hand, paying no heed to the ongoing battle at all.

Meanwhile, the golden beetle swept its two front legs through the air, releasing streaks of translucent light, each of which was around 10 feet in length.

The streaks of light came as thick and fast as rain to clash against the crimson flames, and a violent explosion rang out as the streaks of light and scorching flames dissipated in unison, with neither side able to get the better of the other.

"Qu Ling, there's no bad blood between you and our True Flame Sect, so why have you suddenly attacked us?" Xu Yangzi roared in a furious voice.

"All of us have ventured into the Infernal Frost Immortal Manor in order to search for treasures, but as you can see, I'm all on my own, and there's only so much that I can do by myself. Hence, prior to entering the immortal manor, I planted some marks on all of you in secret.

"That way, all I have to do is let you go off on your own for a while, then hunt you all down, and all of the treasures that you've found will be mine. Isn't that a much better strategy than going around searching for treasures on my own?" Qu Ling replied with a wide smile.



## Chapter 447: Profound Heavenly Gourd

Xu Yangzi and the others were even more enraged to hear this, but at the same time, they were also extremely alarmed as they hurriedly inspected themselves with their spiritual sense.

A mocking sneer appeared on Qu Ling's face as she swept a sleeve through the air, and an enormous azure silkworm that was several hundred feet in length emerged on one side of her, while a pristine white python of a similar stature appeared on the other side.

Both of the massive creatures immediately pounced at Xu Yangzi and the others as soon as they appeared.

The azure silkworm had quite a bloated appearance, but it was quite a bit faster than the giant white python, and it reached the True Flame Sect cultivators in the blink of an eye before opening its mouth to release a dense mass of azure silk, forming a massive net as it swooped through the air.

These azure silk threads were glittering and translucent, and they were also giving off faint law power fluctuations.

Xu Yangzi and the others were all quite alarmed to see this, and Xu Yangzi hurriedly yelled, "Adopt the Golden Crow Formation!"

Immediately thereafter, he began to make a rapid string of hand seals while opening his mouth to expel a ball of blood essence into the large flag above his head.

The spirit patterns on the surface of the flag instantly began to glow radiantly while turning a golden color, and a pillar of golden fire erupted forth from within.

Everyone else immediately did the same thing, and the flags above their heads also took on a golden hue while releasing pillars of golden flames.

The eight fiery pillars fused as one in the sky above, transforming into a golden bird that was over 1,000 feet in size. The bird had a phoenix comb on its head and a set of long and fiery tail feathers. What was

most remarkable about it was that it had three legs, and it spread its enormous wings before swooping toward the oncoming azure net.

As soon as the azure net came into contact with the golden bird, the former instantly erupted into flames and was quickly incinerated into ashes.

Qu Ling raised an eyebrow upon seeing this.

Meanwhile, the giant white python had also arrived near the True Flame Sect cultivators, and it opened its mouth up wide before releasing a thick pillar of translucent white light.

As soon as the pillar of white light emerged, it instantly shattered in silence into a cloud of white mist that was interspersed with white ice spikes that swept toward the True Flame Sect cultivators from all directions.

The cloud of white mist was giving off bone-chilling glacial qi, and it seemed that even the nearby space had been frozen solid.

Meanwhile, the giant azure silkworm screeched in annoyance at having its attack foiled, and it opened its mouth once again to release a stream of countless silk threads that flew through the air like a volley of arrows.

At the same time, Qu Ling's golden beetle steed was also contributing to the attack, and it swept its two front legs viciously through the air to release two streaks of translucent light, each of which was over 1,000 feet in length.

In the blink of an eye, the two streaks of translucent light appeared in front of the True Flame Sect cultivators before sweeping toward them in a crisscross arrangement.

The collective power of these three beasts was extremely formidable, and an alarmed look flashed through Xu Yangzi's eyes as he hurriedly made a rapid string of hand seals, while everyone else was also looking on with grim expressions.

As the eight flags began to glow more and more radiantly, the flame around the golden bird's body also became brighter and brighter.

.....

In the Boundless Sand Sea, the azure flying boat continued onward at a steady pace.

After flying for close to half a day, Han Li and Lu Yuqing had already traveled a considerable distance into the Boundless Sand Sea, and at this point, both of them were looking a little flushed.

Han Li was clearly faring much better, but Lu Yuqing's cheeks were bright red, and she was giving off an unnatural aura of heat.

Han Li was standing at the bow of the boat, using his spirit eyes to scour the surroundings when he suddenly turned to the left.

There on the horizon was a faint spot of green, and it seemed that there was an oasis over there.

"That must be one of the mirages that this place holds," Lu Yuqing said.

A hint of intrigue appeared in Han Li's eyes upon hearing this.

"These mirages are very difficult to deal with, but we'll have to go there if we want to ascertain our current location. However, I'm not very well-versed when it comes to dispelling illusions, so I'll be counting on you, Brother Han," Lu Yuqing said.

Han Li nodded in response in an ambiguous fashion, and the azure flying boat beneath his feet accelerated significantly at his behest as it sped toward the oasis.

.....

The battle was continuing to rage on above the red plain.

A string of earth-shattering booms was ringing out incessantly, causing the nearby space and the ground down below to tremble violently.

All of the True Flame Sect cultivators were frantically making hand seals, and aside from the three Golden Immortals among them, all of the other cultivators were looking very pale.

The flags hovering above their heads had already taken on a bright golden hue, and the runes on their surfaces were surging incessantly. The golden crow was nowhere to be seen, and it had been replaced by a sea of golden fire that was several thousand feet in size.

The sea of golden flames was keeping all of the attacks from the three formidable beasts at bay, and an impasse had ensued.

"Looks like I underestimated all of you. Then again, you must have some tricks up your sleeve if you're going to enter the Infernal Frost Immortal Manor. In any case, this is a perfect opportunity to test out the power of this thing," Qu Ling said with a smile, then tossed the green gourd in her hand forward.

At the same time, a burst of silver light surged out of her mouth, then vanished into the gourd in a flash.

The gourd instantly shuddered before radiating dazzling green light, and it also swelled drastically in size to over 100 feet in length. The entire gourd looked as if it had been fashioned out of exquisite green jade, and its surface was riddled with profound patterns.

All of a sudden, the gourd began to tremble, and countless tadpole-like spirit runes emerged on its surface, radiating blinding silver light.

At the same time, a burst of tremendous law fluctuations surged out of the gourd in all directions, causing the surrounding space to tremble violently.

"That's an Essential Immortal Treasure!"

The hearts of all of the True Flame Sect cultivators instantly sank upon seeing this.

At the moment, they were completely tied down by the attacks being unleashed by the trio of formidable beasts, and there was simply nothing more that they could do.

A serious look appeared on Qu Ling's face for the first time in the battle, and she made a rapid string of hand seals while releasing several balls of silver light out of her mouth in succession, all of which vanished into the giant green gourd in a flash.

The green light radiating from the gourd instantly became even brighter, while the silver spirit runes on its surface began to writhe and squirm incessantly as if they were living creatures.

All of a sudden, a burst of green light erupted out of the opening of the gourd, then swept directly toward Xu Yangzi and the others.

A green ring then emerged within the stream of green light, giving off a burst of indescribable law fluctuations.

The nearby space instantly collapsed, while all of the world's origin qi within a radius of tens of thousands of kilometers was swept up into a frenzy. Countless balls of five-colored light emerged in the air, then converged toward the green ring before vanishing into it, causing it to swell further in size while the law power fluctuations it was giving off became even more immense.

The stream of green light struck the sea of golden fire in a flash, then pierced straight through it with ease before arriving directly above the heads of the True Flame Sect cultivators.

In the blink of an eye, the streak of green light swallowed up the eight flags suspended above the heads of the True Flame Sect cultivators, and the green ring within it abruptly expanded to encompass the eight flags.

The golden flames burning over the eight flags were instantly snuffed out, following which the flags rapidly shrank down significantly in size.

The expressions of all of the True Flame Sect cultivators instantly changed drastically upon seeing this. Just now, their spiritual connection with the eight flags had suddenly been severed.

A pleased look appeared on Qu Ling's face upon seeing this, and she cast an incantation seal into the air, upon which the streak of green light surged back into the giant green gourd, bringing the eight flags along with it.

Xu Yangzi and the others were completely flabbergasted to see this. Without the support of the eight flags, the sea of golden fire in front of them exploded violently into a vast expanse of fire before quickly fading away, and with that, there was no longer anything standing in the way of the attacks of the three formidable beasts.

Countless azure silken threads swept through the air, ensnaring all of the True Flame Sect cultivators before they had a chance to react.

Immediately thereafter, two thick streaks of translucent light emerged from the nearby space before sweeping toward them like lightning, instantly slicing the bodies of all of the ensnared True Flame Sect cultivators in half.

At the same time, a cloud of glacial mist containing countless ice spikes arrived, releasing such formidable glacial qi that a white mountain of ice that was several kilometers in diameter appeared out of thin air, encapsulating all of the True Flame Sect cultivators within it.

All of the True Flame Sect cultivators had already perished at this point with the exception of the three Golden Immortals, but even they were completely immobilized and only just barely clinging to life.

Qu Ling gave a pleased nod upon seeing this, following which her brows suddenly furrowed slightly as her complexion paled noticeably.

The green gourd was extremely powerful, but she still hadn't refined it yet, so she had to expend an enormous amount of immortal spiritual power to use it.

She took a deep breath, and her complexion quickly returned to normal as she swept a sleeve toward the giant green gourd above her head.

In the blink of an eye, the gourd reverted back to its original size before returning to her grasp.

After that, she turned to the True Flame Sect cultivators encased in the mountain of ice with a cold expression, yet before she had a chance to do anything, a layer of crimson flames suddenly emerged over the bodies of the three Golden Immortals.

The three bursts of crimson fire quickly joined together to release a burst of astonishing power, and the giant mountain of ice shuddered as a large crack appeared on its surface.

The giant white python let loose a furious roar upon seeing this, but it was already too late for it to do anything.

All of a sudden, three streaks of crimson light shot out of the crack like lightning before racing away into the distance, and three nascent souls could be seen within the streaks of light.

A large plume of azure silken threads shot forth, sweeping toward the three nascent souls at an astonishing speed, but they were clearly still too slow to catch the nascent souls.

#### Chapter 448: Brewing Storm

"Why are you running all of a sudden?" Qu Ling chuckled as she casually flicked a finger through the air, releasing a streak of silver light that shot forth like lightning before vanishing into thin air.

In the next instant, it reappeared directly above the three nascent souls, revealing itself to be a small silver vial.

A burst of silver light surged out of the opening of the vial, instantly enveloping the three nascent souls, and the nearby space instantly became extremely heavy.

It was as if the three nascent souls had flown into a swamp, and they were barely able to move at all.

A vicious look appeared on the face of Xu Yangzi's nascent soul as it opened its mouth to release a tiny crimson dagger, which came slashing down upon its own head like lightning.

The nascent soul was instantly sliced into two, and one half of it was instantly set alight, transforming into a tiny fiery figure with countless crimson runes dancing within it.

The fiery figure reached out with both hands to grab onto the surrounding silver light, then brought its hands apart violently, tearing a gash into the silver light.

The other half of Xu Yangzi's nascent soul immediately flew out through the opening, following which the tiny red blade shattered, disintegrating into a ball of crimson light that enveloped this half of its nascent.

As a result, the nascent soul's speed was instantly increased by severalfold, and it vanished into the distant sky in the blink of an eye.

A hint of surprise flashed through Qu Ling's eyes upon seeing this, and it was already too late for her to try and intervene.

However, she paid no heed to this as she pointed a finger at the small silver vial, and it instantly sucked in the other two nascent souls.

Meanwhile, the mountain of ice shattered, and the giant white python carried the storage tools of all of the True Flame Sect cultivators to Qu Ling on its head.

Qu Ling inspected the contents of the storage tools briefly with his spiritual sense, then gave a pleased nod before stowing them away, following which she patted the giant python on the head as she praised, "Well done today."

A fawning look instantly appeared in the giant python's eyes as it bobbed its head at Qu Ling, then transformed into a streak of white light that flew into a small white pouch strapped to her waist.



The huge azure silkworm also flew over to her before vanishing into another pouch that she was carrying as a streak of azure light.

In the next instant, Qu Ling flew onto the back of the golden beetle, and it asked her in a rather tender voice, "Should we keep going?"

"You are the fastest of the three, yet both of the other two intervened to intercept the escaping nascent souls, so why didn't you do anything?" Qu Ling asked as a cold look flashed through her eyes.

"With your powers, if you really wanted to intercept those nascent souls, you could've done so with ease without my help," the golden beetle scoffed in response.

"Don't think that you can just keep getting away with blatant disobedience like this! I'm only pampering you because you have decent potential, but don't mistake my kindness for weakness!" Qu Ling scolded in a cold voice.

The golden beetle merely buzzed in response, paying no heed to her thinly veiled threat.

A hint of anger flashed through Qu Ling's eyes, but she was unexpectedly tolerant of the golden beetle, and she quickly suppressed her anger as she instructed, "Keep going."

The golden beetle didn't say anything else, either, and it continued onward as a streak of golden light.

Qu Ling sat down onto its back, then cast her gaze toward the green gourd in her hand.

A burst of azure light flashed from the opening of the gourd at her behest, and the eight crimson flags flew out before landing in her grasp, upon which a hint of excitement appeared on her face.

"What's the big deal? It's just some crappy gourd," the golden beetle scoffed.

"This is no ordinary gourd! All Profound Heavenly Treasures are born from heaven and earth and contain unmatched power. They are true Essential Immortal Treasures, and this gourd has already been growing

here for countless years. The law powers nurtured within it are the most fundamental secret of this realm, and it's certainly going to be even more formidable than the average Profound Heavenly Treasure!

"I still haven't even refined it yet, and it's already displaying such immense power. Once I have a chance to refine and examine it further, it'll be sure to serve me even better."

Qu Ling's voice sounded quite calm and collected, but there was definitely an underlying hint of excitement.

"I didn't know this gourd was that impressive. How remarkable!" the golden beetle chuckled.

"In any case, I really made the right decision to come here. With this Profound Heavenly Treasure in my possession, the High Zenith Pill will surely be mine! Once I reach the High Zenith Stage and master this treasure, there's a chance I could even ascend to the Great Encompassment Stage in the future! As long as you pledge your absolute loyalty to me, I'll be sure to treat you well," Qu Ling said in an excited voice.

"I'll be thanking you in advance then," the golden beetle replied in an indifferent manner, seemingly unimpressed.

Qu Ling's brows furrowed slightly with displeasure, and she harrumphed coldly, "What an ungrateful little rascal you are!"

She then paid no further heed to the golden beetle as she continued to examine the green gourd in her hand.

All of a sudden, her expression changed slightly as her gaze fell upon the opening of the gourd.

The gourd was entirely green in color as if it had been carved out of a chunk of jade, but the coloration around the gourd's opening was clearly a little light, indicating that it hadn't completely matured yet.

Looks like I harvested it too early, and it's still quite some years away from reaching full maturity. In any case, once I leave this place, I can find some suitable spirit soil and spirit liquid to nurture it, and a million years should be enough for it to mature.

She had found this green gourd in a medicine garden, and she had been ecstatic to stumble upon it. She knew that it hadn't completely matured, but after some consideration, she still decided to harvest it right away.

She knew that harvesting the gourd prior to full maturity was definitely going to have some type of negative impact upon it, but she certainly wasn't going to wait for the next emergence of the immortal manor. Who knew if the gourd would still be there waiting for her next time?

.....

In the sky above a crimson mountain, the Vast Flow Palace cultivators were flying through the air.

They were arranged in a line, collectively forming a long streak of blue light that resembled a giant dragon as they raced through the air.

The crimson mountain down below was filled with lush vegetation, among which there was no lack of spirit plants that were giving immense spiritual power fluctuations.

Some of the True Immortal cultivators of the Vast Flow Palace were clearly tempted to make a detour to scoop up some of the spirit plants below, but Luo Qinghai showed no intention of stopping as he continued onward without pause.

As a result, no one else could stop to search for treasures, and the fair-skinned scholar beside Luo Qinghai said, "I don't think we need to be in such a hurry, Palace Master. Some of the spirit plants down below are quite useful, even to the likes of ourselves."

"Trust me, Junior Martial Brother, I have my reasons for doing this," Luo Qinghai replied.

The fair-skinned scholar faltered slightly upon hearing this, then nodded in response before falling silent.

.....

Meanwhile, the cultivators of the Northern Glacial Immortal Palace were currently standing in front of a blue palace.

The palace was shimmering with spiritual light, and there were clearly many precious treasures inside.

All of the Northern Glacial Immortal Palace cultivators were looking at the palace with intense longing in their eyes, while Xiao Jinhan had his hands clasped behind his back as he declared in an indifferent voice, "You can go in, but you only have 15 minutes. Once the 15 minutes are up, we set off right away."

All of the Northern Glacial Immortal Palace cultivators immediately gave affirmative responses before flying inside, while Xiao Jinhan remained at the entrance of the palace, looking into the distance with a contemplative look in his eyes.

.....

Within a gray cloud, a gray flying boat was racing through the air.

Bursts of black light were flashing within the gray cloud like arcs of black lightning, but all of it was kept at bay by a light barrier around the flying boat.

The Dawn Fall Sect cultivators were seated in the cabin of the boat, with Feng Tiandu situated at the center, while everyone else was arranged around him in a circular formation.

Hints of gray light were emanating from their bodies, and it seemed that they were using some type of secret technique.

A long while later, Feng Tiandu's eyes suddenly sprang open, while his brows furrowed tightly.

"How could this be? I can't detect the auras of those two Origin Separation Law Chains at all now... Where could he have gone?" he murmured to himself with a contemplative look on his face.

.....

Elsewhere in the immortal manor, a ball of crimson light was flying through a vast sea of clouds in the sky at an extraordinary speed.

The ball of light contained none other than Daoist Hu Yan and Yun Ni, and both of them wore serious expressions as they flew along in silence.

.....

In the sky above a swamp, the group of Southern Dawn beings had been surrounded by a flock of strange yellow birds.

These birds were around 40 to 50 feet in length with green fleshy lumps on their heads and extremely sharp beaks and talons.

Individually, they weren't particularly powerful, but there were hundreds of them, and they were as fast as lightning.

The Southern Dawn beings were far more powerful than these birds, but they were still trapped here, unable to make any progress.

.....

At this point, everyone had already been in the Infernal Frost Immortal Manor for quite some time, and many people had already reaped significant rewards or fallen to their demise.

In the Boundless Sand Sea, the azure flying boat continued to race through the air, while Han Li stood at the bow of the boat, scouring his surroundings with his Brightsight Spirit Eyes.

Lu Yuqing was standing beside him, holding the jade slip that contained the map of the area.

Their unhealthy red complexions had already faded, and it was clear that they had already found a water spirit area that had allowed them to alleviate their fire poisoning.

Even though they would be slowly poisoned again after leaving the water spirit area, as long as they planned out a good route that would allow them to make regular stops at water spirit areas along the way, there shouldn't be any problems.

Hence, the fire poison that the Boundless Sand Sea was extremely notorious for didn't actually pose much of a threat to them.

At this point, the two of them had already ventured quite deep into the Boundless Sand Sea, and they weren't far away from the pathway leading to the other region.

All of a sudden, Han Li's attention was drawn to his right, where there seemed to be another oasis on the distant horizon.

#### Chapter 449: Relentless Mirages

Lu Yuqing had also noticed the oasis up ahead, and she said, "This is already the 83rd mirage, Brother Han. From this point, we have to begin traveling in the northeastern direction."

Han Li immediately summoned his Mantra Treasured Axis upon hearing this, the Eye of Truth appeared at the center of the axis at his behest.

Faint golden light was radiating from the eye as it cast its gaze forward, and immediately thereafter, the azure flying boat changed directions slightly, flying in the northeastern direction of the oasis.

Even though Han Li had changed directions, the oasis still appeared directly up ahead, and it began to expand on the horizon as the flying boat continued onward.

Han Li made no attempt to try and avoid the oasis, instead flying the spirit boat straight into it.

The surrounding scene suddenly changed as the barren and desolate desert gave way to a lush oasis that was filled with dense greenery and lakes.

The air had also become very moist, while the heat completely faded, and it was as if they had arrived in a cool and refreshing world, one that was in stark contrast with the environment that they had just been in.

However, the surrounding oasis was constantly spinning, making one feel very dizzy and disoriented.

Han Li's expression remained calm and collected, and it seemed that he was already accustomed to this. He continued to make a string of hand seals as he inspected his surroundings through his Eye of Truth, while Lu Yuqing had already closed her eyes and sat down with her legs crossed, channeling her cultivation arts to protect her mind.

The azure flying boat continued onward in a very stable fashion, completely unaffected by the changes in the surrounding environment.

After flying for around 15 minutes, the surrounding oasis suddenly fell away layer upon layer like a series of popped bubbles, and the environment reverted back to that of the parched desert.

Han Li displayed no reaction to this whatsoever, and he continued to look straight ahead while guiding the azure flying boat onward.

"I didn't think that these mirages would be so unavoidable. Thank heavens you're here, Brother Han. Otherwise, even if I had the map and knew the correct route, it would've been impossible for me to get to the destination," Lu Yuqing said with a smile as she slowly opened her eyes.

Han Li merely gave a faint smile upon hearing this.

"We're already not far away from that passageway, but according to what I've heard, the passageway is guarded by a Golden Immortal Stage demon beast, so it won't be easy to bypass," Lu Yuqing continued.

"Do you know what type of demon beast it is?" Han Li asked as he raised an eyebrow.

"No. All I've heard is that it's quite formidable, and that it's already been guarding that passageway for countless years," Lu Yuqing replied with a shake of her head.

"I see. In that case, I suppose we'll just have to adapt according to the situation," Han Li said with a contemplative nod.

Han Li's calm and confident demeanor instilled within Lu Yuqing a great deal of reassurance.

Close to a day passed by in the blink of an eye, and they encountered several more mirages during that time, all of which were smoothly negotiated by Han Li using his Eye of Truth.

According to Lu Yuqing's map, the passageway wasn't very far up ahead.

At this moment, the flying boat was still flying onward, but Han Li's brows had become slightly furrowed.

He was no longer concerned about the mirages in the Boundless Sand Sea, and the only thing that was weighing on his mind was the demon beast that was guarding the passageway.

If the demon beast really had already been guarding the passageway for countless years as Lu Yuqing proclaimed, then who knew if it had managed to develop some special abilities during that time?

Right at this moment, another oasis appeared up ahead, and Han Li hurriedly rid himself of his train of thought so he could focus on the task at hand.

Lu Yuqing examined her map momentarily, then said, "This is the final mirage before the entrance of the passageway. There's no need to change directions, just fly straight ahead."

Han Li nodded in response, and he summoned his Eye of Truth once again as the azure flying boat continued directly forward.



Right as it was about to fly into the oasis up ahead, four more oases suddenly appeared consecutively up ahead.

The five oases formed a pentagon, with each one resonating with one another, and all of them began to glow bright in unison, transforming into an enormous ball of green light in the blink of an eye.

Han Li and Lu Yuqing were both quite taken aback to see this, but at this point, it was already too late to try and stop the flying boat.

The azure flying boat vanished into the ball of green light in a flash, and the surrounding desert vanished once again.

However, on this occasion, instead of appearing in an oasis, Han Li and Lu Yuqing found themselves in a chaotic space with countless glowing green shadows flashing, pulsing, and intertwining with one another, presenting a very disorienting sight to behold.

At the same time, bursts of formidable illusory force surged forth from all directions, and the illusion here was countless times more potent than the oases that they had previously encountered.

"How could this be?" Lu Yuqing exclaimed with a stunned expression.

As soon as her voice trailed off, a burst of formidable illusory power descended upon her, and her eyes instantly became dazed and glazed over as she stood completely rooted to the spot, seemingly having already fallen under the control of the illusion here.

The same type of illusory power was surging toward Han Li as well, and he was naturally far better equipped to handle it than Lu Yuqing, but even so, he was still struck by a rush of dizziness.

He took a deep breath as he hurriedly channeled his Spirit Refinement Technique, and a cool and refreshing sensation instantly surged through his mind to erase the fog of dizziness.

Right at this moment, Lu Yuqing suddenly began flailing her arms and legs erratically through the air as a hint of insanity appeared in her eyes.

Immediately thereafter, she turned to Han Li with fierce killing intent in her eyes, and a silver longsword appeared in her grasp amid a flash of silver light.

The sword was radiating extremely bright and pure silver swordlight in the form of countless threads of silver light, and it was pierced directly at Han Li at an astonishing speed.

Even before the sword arrived, a burst of extremely formidable sword intent had already descended upon Han Li, making him feel as if there were countless red-hot needles piercing into his soul.

Even with his formidable spiritual sense, he still couldn't help but give a muffled groan, and he couldn't help but feel stunned by this unexpected turn of events.

On the way here, he had never seen Lu Yuqing use a sword before, so it was a huge surprise to him that her mastery of the sword was already so advanced that she could already harm the souls of her opponents with her sword intent alone.

However, her sword intent was still nowhere near powerful enough to inflict any substantial damage upon him, and he immediately flicked his fingers through the air, releasing five streaks of azure sword qi that intercepted the oncoming silver longsword before threatening to tear it apart.

However, to his surprise, the silver longsword suddenly sprang up like an agile fish, even though it had already left Lu Yuqing's grasp, and it was able to struggle free from the five opposing streaks of sword qi.

At the same time, radiant azure light erupted out of Lu Yuqing's body as she abruptly vanished from the spot.

Han Li faltered slightly upon seeing this, and in the next instant, five identical Lu Yuqings appeared all around him, every single one of which was giving off formidable sword qi.

The silver longswords being wielded by the five Lu Yuqings lit up once again before being thrust directly at him, with each one aimed at one of his vital regions.

A film of starlight appeared over Han Li's body to keep the five silver longswords at bay, and at the same time, Han Li swept his gaze across the five Lu Yuqings through his Eye of Truth, upon which a look of realization instantly appeared on his face.

Immediately thereafter, he opened his mouth to release a thick arc of golden lightning, which hurtled toward one of the Lu Yuqings on his right at an incredible speed.

That Lu Yuqing instantly slashed her sword through the air, conjuring up a dense silver sword barrier around her entire body.

The arc of golden lightning struck the sword barrier, and a burst of loud crackling instantly rang out as close to half of the lightning was eradicated by the countless opposing sword projections.

However, the silver sword barrier was also trembling unsteadily, and it didn't take long before it completely exploded, while the silver longsword in Lu Yuqing's hand was also shattered into countless silver pieces.

What little remained of the arc of golden lightning struck Lu Yuqing with tremendous force, and she was instantly sent flying through the air like a ragdoll before crashing into the side of the flying boat, upon which the other four Lu Yuqings around Han Li vanished without a trace.

The only remaining Lu Yuqing gave a muffled groan before springing to her feet. The killing intent in her eyes hadn't abated in the slightest, yet before she had a chance to do anything, a thick translucent chain emerged out of thin air around her, then wound itself around her body like lightning.

The chain was glowing faintly, and it had a rather insubstantial form.

It was a chain formed by Han L's spiritual sense, and even though it had rendered Lu Yuqing completely immobilized, the insane look on her face remained, and she continued to struggle with all her might.

Han Li quickly began to chant an incantation while flicking a finger through the air, releasing several incantation seals in rapid succession, all of which vanished into Lu Yuqing's body one after another.

Countless runes instantly emerged from Lu Yuqing's body, then transformed into several translucent rings that constricted around her.

The protective azure light around her body instantly melted away like snow under the scorching sun, and she slumped to the ground in an unconscious state.

Han Li gave a pleased nod upon seeing this.

This was a secret technique that he had invented by emulating the restrictive law powers within the Seven Bright Star Rings, and evidently, it had worked quite well.

After successfully subduing Lu Yuqing, a perplexed look appeared on his face.

The silver longsword that she had been using earlier was extremely mediocre. In fact, it couldn't even be considered to be a spirit treasure, and if it weren't for that, perhaps he would still be struggling to restrain her.

The power that she had just displayed had been far more formidable than what she had revealed prior to this point, and Han Li couldn't help but wonder if she had been hiding her true power this entire time.

He took a long look at the unconscious Lu Yuqing, then quickly withdrew his gaze.

At this moment, he was still in quite a perilous situation himself, so he didn't have time to ponder the true nature of Lu Yuqing's powers.

With that in mind, the True Extreme Film around him faded, and he sat down with his legs crossed as he peered into the surrounding chaotic space.

This was quite a formidable illusion, but he could tell that fundamentally, it was no different from the oasis illusions that they had encountered prior to this.

With the experience that he had accumulated in breaking through those illusions, he was confident that he could break out of this one as well.

With that in mind, he immediately began to chant an incantation, and all of the immortal spiritual power was channeled into the Mantra Treasured Axis in front of him.

The axis immediately began to radiate dazzling golden light, and in particular, the Eye of Truth at its center had become extremely bright and translucent.

#### Chapter 450: A Step Behind

Han Li took a deep breath, then swept a sleeve toward the Eye of Truth, releasing a burst of golden light that vanished into the Eye of Truth in a flash.

The Eye of Truth instantly lit up even further, following which countless threads of golden light shot out from within.

These threads of golden light were extraordinarily fast, instantly spreading throughout the entire surrounding illusory space.

Han Li closed his eyes while making a rapid string of hand seals, and the Eye of Truth instantly began to flash, while the threads of golden light also began to tremble, inspecting everything within the illusory space like countless sensitive feelers.

Close to an hour passed by in the blink of an eye, and this entire time, Han Li remained seated with his legs crossed in a completely still manner.

Right at this moment, a faint thud suddenly rang out somewhere within the illusory space, and a burst of golden light suddenly erupted out of the one of the threads of golden light.

The space near that thread of light shuddered as ripples surged through the surrounding area, and Han Li's eyes instantly sprang open as he turned to that direction while flicking his fingers rapidly through the air.

At the same time, an enormous burst of spiritual sense surged out of his glabella, and a burst of silver light flashed near that patch of rippling space, following which eight or nine spiritual sense chains emerged there in unison.

All of the spiritual sense chains had sharp tips that pierced into the rippling space, and a burst of dazzling green light instantly erupted out of that area, then twisted and warped erratically before forming an extremely faint rift.

Han Li's eyes instantly lit up upon seeing this, and the flying boat beneath him sped up drastically at his behest, transforming into a blurry green shadow that vanished into the rift in the blink of an eye.

The illusory space around Han Li instantly vanished, and the flying boat reappeared in the Boundless Sand Sea before continuing onward without pause.

Only then did he heave an internal sigh of relief.

That illusion had been far more formidable than the previous ones, and even he had almost fallen prey to it.

Meanwhile, Lu Yuqing has also returned to a sound frame of mind, and she was no longer struggling as she laid completely still on the ground, seemingly having fallen unconscious.

Han Li turned his gaze to her with a hesitant look on his face.

After a brief moment of contemplation, he seemed to have arrived at a decision, and he released an incantation seal, upon which the spiritual sense chain around Lu Yuqing slowly faded away.

At the same time, the translucent rings of light around her also vanished, following which Han Li flicked a finger through the air to send a streak of azure light flying into her glabella.

She immediately gave a muffled groan, and her long eyelashes fluttered slightly as she slowly opened her eyes. She was still looking a little disoriented, but at the very least, the deranged look in her eyes had faded.

After taking a moment to collect herself, her expression abruptly changed drastically as she hurriedly sat up before looking around with a panicked expression.

Only after realizing that she was safe on Han Li's flying boat did her expression ease slightly, but there was still a hint of lingering fear in her eyes as she said, "It looks like you've already managed to get through that illusion, Brother Han. I didn't think that the final mirage would be so formidable."

Han Li had been observing Lu Yuqing's expression this entire time, and he remained silent as his brows furrowed slightly.

Lu Yuqing had naturally noticed the changes in his expression, and she asked, "What is it, Brother Han?"

Han Li shook his head as he replied, "Nothing. How are you feeling right now?"

Lu Yuqing faltered slightly upon hearing this, then pressed her hand over her own abdomen as a hint of pain and surprise appeared in her eyes.

"How did I sustain these injuries?"

"Back in the mirage, you fell prey to the illusion and suddenly attacked me, so I had no choice but to subdue you by force, and I was a little too forceful in the heat of the moment," Han Li explained.

Lu Yuqing faltered slightly upon hearing this, following which an apologetic look appeared on her face as she said, "I'm sorry for always being a hindrance to you, Brother Han."

Han Li waved a dismissive hand in response, then cast his gaze forward as he said, "Now that we've bypassed the final mirage, the passageway should be just up ahead. Let's take a short break before we continue onward."

He swept a sleeve through the air to cast an incantation seal as he spoke, and the azure light radiating from the flying boat instantly rippled slightly as it drew to a halt.

Lu Yuqing nodded in response, then sat back down with her legs crossed before taking a pill.

A layer of bright azure light quickly appeared around her, forming an azure light barrier that encompassed her entire body.

A hint of befuddlement flashed through Han Li's eyes upon seeing this.

It didn't seem like Lu Yuqing was putting on an act, so could it be that she had already completely forgotten what had happened in that final mirage?

After a brief moment of contemplation, Han Li shook his head to rid himself of that train of thought, but at the same time, he made a mental note to be on his guard.

With a sweep of his sleeve, numerous streaks of blue light were released, each of which contained an array flag that landed somewhere near the flying boat.

The array flags were radiating bright blue light, forming a thick blue light barrier that encompassed the entire azure flying boat.

After setting up the array, Han Li flipped a hand over to produce a crimson pill.

The pill was enshrouded in a layer of dense crimson light, and it was giving off astonishing spiritual power fluctuations. This was none other than one of the Vast Heaven Pills that had been given to him by Wyrn 3.

In order to break that final mirage, he had expended a great deal of immortal spiritual power, and he was going to have to face a Golden Immortal Stage demon beast up ahead, so he had to replenish his own immortal spiritual power reserves as quickly as possible.



After taking the pill, Han Li sat down with his legs crossed, then channeled his cultivation arts to digest the pill, and a layer of red light quickly appeared over his face.

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In the sky above a black desert in the Infernal Frost Immortal Manor, a green jade flying carriage was hurtling through the air.

This place was none other than the Black Rock Desert that Han Li and Lu Yuqing had just passed through, and there was a tall man standing on the flying carriage, holding a white disk treasure with a speck of red light flashing upon its surface.

All of a sudden, the man raised his head and cast his gaze forward as he mused in a cold voice, "I knew there was a Spirit Refinement Technique practitioner nearby! You're not getting away from me!"

Immediately thereafter, the four wheels of the flying carriage transformed into four miniature azure tornadoes at his behest, and the speed of the flying carriage was instantly enhanced by severalfold as it shot through the air at an incredible pace.

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An hour passed by in the blink of an eye.

On the azure flying carriage, Han Li opened his eyes, having already completely replenished his immortal spiritual power reserves.

A short while later, the azure light around Lu Yuqing also faded, and she appeared to have recovered from her injuries as well.

"Let's go," Han Li declared, then swept a sleeve through the air to withdraw the array around the flying boat before continuing onward.

Both of them remained silent, and before long, they had already been flying for close to three hours.

This was supposed to be the deepest part of the Boundless Sand Sea, but the scorching heat in the air was gradually diminishing, and a slightly chilly aura had emerged in its stead.

All of a sudden, Han Li's pupils contracted slightly as he swept a sleeve through the air, and the azure flying boat instantly drew to a halt.

As it turned out, another oasis had appeared up ahead.

This oasis appeared to be around 40 to 50 kilometers in radius, and it was covered in lush greenery.

At the center of the oasis was a crescent-shaped lake, the surface of which was glowing radiantly. Even though it was a bright and sunny day, the lake was still extremely eye-catching, resembling a radiant moon that had fallen upon the Boundless Sand Sea.

Unlike the oases that had come before it, this one was not a mirage.

At the center of the crescent-shaped lake was a rapidly revolving black vortex that was several dozen feet in size.

Bursts of spatial fluctuations were emanating out of the black vortex, and there was a faint speck of white light deep within it, seemingly leading to another world.

All of the water in the lake around the vortex had been stirred up and was splashing audibly.

"That's the spatial passageway!" Lu Yuqing exclaimed in an ecstatic voice.

However, Han Li wasn't looking at the black vortex. Instead, his gaze was focused on a small forest beside the lake, and his expression suddenly changed slightly as he swept a sleeve through the air to stow the azure flying boat away, then descended toward the oasis down below.

Lu Yuqing faltered slightly upon seeing this, then immediately followed along out of habit.

As they drew closer to the oasis, a surprised look suddenly appeared on Lu Yuqing's face as she stopped in her tracks.

As it turned out, there was a demon beast that was over 100 feet in size laying in the forest down below.

The greenery in the forest was quite dense, and the demon beast had been concealed within the undergrowth, so Lu Yuqing had failed to spot it prior to this.

The beast resembled a giant ox, and it had an extremely intimidating physique, with bands of bulging muscles beneath a layer of azure jade-like fur.

However, as opposed to hooves, it had four sets of sharp talons that were giving off a cold gleam.

Even in death, the beast was still giving off a very formidable aura, so it had to have been an extremely powerful being.

However, it had been decapitated, and its huge head was laying on the ground not far away. There was a single black horn on its head, and there was a horrified look in its eyes, as if it had witnessed something extremely terrifying right before it met its demise.

"It looks like someone already got here before us... That makes sense. All of the major powers who entered the immortal manor on this occasion are aware that there's a passageway leading to another region deep in this Boundless Sand Sea. They may not have a map of this place, but given their powers, it's certainly not impossible for them to find this place before us," Lu Yuqing mused.

Han Li nodded in response, and a grim look appeared on his face as his gaze fell upon the wound on the demon beast's neck.

The cross-section of the wound was very smooth and even, indicating that the beast had been decapitated by a single blow.

Furthermore, no signs of battle could be seen in the nearby oasis, indicating that it had been slain by a single attack before it even had a chance to retaliate.

Only an extremely formidable cultivator could've dealt with a Golden Immortal Stage demon beast so easily.

Han Li landed beside the body of the huge demon beast, then brushed a hand over the wound on its neck, picking up some of its blood before taking a sniff, upon which his eyes immediately lit up.

Lu Yuqing was rather taken aback by Han Li's strange gesture, and she couldn't help but ask, "Is there something wrong, Brother Han?"

"No," Han Li replied with a shake of his head, while a burst of azure light flashed over his hand to remove the blood there. "In any case, now that the beast has already been killed, we won't have to go through the effort of trying to get past it. Let's go."

Lu Yuqing naturally had no objections to this, and the two of them flew over to the black vortex before peering inside.

"There doesn't seem to be any danger," Han Li concluded after a brief assessment, and with that, the two of them flew into the black passageway.