

A Record 451

Chapter 451: Palace

Han Li felt his vision blur for a moment, and in the next instant, he was already in a completely new environment.

After taking a brief moment to gather his bearings, he inspected his surroundings to find that the terrain was quite flat, and he was situated in a red and barren area that was completely devoid of vegetation and living creatures.

Lu Yuqing was situated not far away from him, and at this moment, she was also gradually returning to her senses.

A whirlwind swept past not far in front of them, raising a cloud of red dust into the air, and there was a primordial aura permeating throughout the entire area.

Han Li slowly swept his gaze over his surroundings, and his brows suddenly furrowed slightly.

Just now, he had attempted to release his spiritual sense to scout the surrounding area, but he discovered that there was a type of restrictive force around his body that wasn't impeding his movements at all, but rendered him completely unable to release his spiritual sense out of his body at all.

"Just how big is this Infernal Frost Immortal Manor? And why are there so many strange things in this place?" Han Li couldn't help but sigh in a slightly exasperated voice.

In contrast, Lu Yuqing wasn't very surprised by this, and she smiled as she said, "When I was a child, I once read an ancient scripture from my father's study. According to that scripture, the Northern Glacial Immortal Realm was formerly known as the Infernal Frost Immortal Region, but for some unknown reason, its name was later changed.

"If this Infernal Frost Immortal Manor has something to do with the former name of the immortal region, then it's no wonder that it's such a massive and complex place."

Han Li was just about to respond when his expression suddenly stiffened slightly, and he was suddenly rooted to the spot with his mouth slightly agape.

Lu Yuqing was quite startled to see this, and she hurriedly asked, "Are you alright, Brother Han?"

Han Li was silent for a moment longer, then replied in an ambiguous manner, "I'm fine, I just suddenly recalled some things..."

Lu Yuqing wasn't entirely convinced, but she didn't ask any further questions.

Han Li's gaze drifted over the surrounding area before settling on a certain direction deep within this barren land, and his brows furrowed ever so slightly.

What had actually cut him off earlier wasn't any thought that had suddenly popped into his mind. Instead, it was his Mantra Treasured Axis.

For some reason, as soon as he cast his gaze toward that direction, the Time Dao Runes on his Mantra Treasured Axis would begin to flash, as if it could sense the presence of time law powers there.

"Which way should we go next, Brother Han? It looks like our spiritual sense isn't going to help us here," Lu Yuqing said.

Han Li hesitated momentarily, then pointed in the direction that his Mantra Treasured Axis was responding to as he replied, "Let's go in this direction first."

"Sure," Lu Yuqing replied with a nod.

Thus, Han Li swept a sleeve through the air to summon that azure spirit boat, and after both he and Lu Yuqing had flown onto the flying boat, it sped away as a streak of azure light.

As they flew through the air, the sound of the howling wind instantly grew louder, and Han Li stood atop the flying boat as he continued to scour the barren land down below.

Looking down from above, he discovered that the terrain here wasn't as flat and level as it had first appeared. Instead, some hills could be seen down below, but they were far too small to be considered anywhere near mountains.

The further they went, the more complex the terrain down below became. Aside from those small hills, a series of plains and ravines of different sizes and depths had also begun to appear on the landscape. The ravines seemed to have been carved out by flowing water, but any bodies of water here had long since run dry.

After flying for a few minutes, Han Li suddenly raised an eyebrow as he spotted a set of ruins that appeared to have once been a city on the distant horizon, and the flying boat instantly accelerated in that direction at his behest.

Upon reaching the edge of the set of ruins, the azure flying boat descended in front of a moat that was over 100 feet wide.

However, the moat was also completely dry, and the parched and fractured earth at the bottom of the moat indicated that it had also been dry for a very long time.

Han Li and Lu Yuqing cast their eyes forward to find that the city wall across from the moat was still relatively intact, but it had clearly been severely ravaged by all types of weapons, and it was quite remarkable that it was still standing.

The two of them made their way toward the city over a nearby stone bridge, and upon reaching the center of the bridge, Han Li suddenly spotted a piece of bone jutting out of the bottom of the dried moat down below.

It appeared to be the curved horn of some type of demon beast, and it was roughly as thick as a grown man's arm.

Han Li stopped in his tracks as he swept a sleeve through the air to release a burst of azure light, which instantly raised that entire section of the ground down below to reveal a complete skeleton.

A hint of surprise instantly appeared on Lu Yuqing's face as she caught sight of the full skeleton, and Han Li was also quite taken aback by what he was seeing.

The skeleton was very strange in appearance, and it was impossible to identify what type of demon beast it had once belonged to. However, one thing that was certain was that it had definitely belonged to an enormous creature that wasn't inferior in size to the Giant Mountain Ape.

The piece of bone that Han Li had presumed was a horn was actually just a section of one of the creature's teeth.

"Do you recognize this beast, Brother Han?" Lu Yuqing asked with a puzzled expression.

"No aura of the beast remains at all, and I can't identify it based on its skeleton alone," Han Li replied with a shake of his head.

While it was true that he didn't know what this beast was, it occurred to him that the skeleton looked as if it could belong to one of the beasts that he had seen on that mural in the hall near the spirit medicine garden from before.

Given that the mural depicted a battle, Han Li couldn't help but wonder if the battle depicted on the mural had taken place at this very place.

However, as soon as this possibility occurred to him, he immediately realized that this couldn't be true. The battle depicted on the mural had been one of a massive scale, and if it had truly taken place here, then this city would've definitely been completely razed to the ground.

After crossing the stone bridge, Han Li and Lu Yuqing arrived at the city gates to find a large plaque hanging overhead, bearing the words "Moon Lake City".

After passing through the city gate, a disturbance suddenly arose in Han Li's heart, and he couldn't help but stop in his tracks again.

The dozen or so active Time Dao Runes on the Mantra Treasured Axis in his body were flashing incessantly, and they were reacting even more urgently than before.

Han L's brows furrowed slightly as he cast his gaze into the city to find that it had already been reduced to complete ruins. There were collapsed buildings everywhere, and some demon beast and human remains could be seen protruding out of the piles of rubble, but they were nothing more than bones.

Han Li and Lu Yuqing made their way down the main road deeper into the city, and it was more of the same, with more rubble and collapsed buildings littering the landscape. Only as they reached the core area of the city did they spot a golden palace that was over 1,000 feet tall in the distance.

Compared with all of the other buildings that they had seen on the way here, this golden palace was exceptionally well preserved, with only some cracks on its walls and a slightly collapsed roof.

Aside from that, the palace was glowing with dazzling golden radiance, as if there were a golden membrane over its surface that was reflecting the light of the sun.

Han Li was just about to approach the palace when he felt a burst of heat flash through his storage bracelet.

His brows furrowed slightly as he stopped in his tracks once again, then flipped a hand over to produce a glowing green jade box.

A faint crack rang out as he opened the jade box to reveal a gray eyeball inside. The eyeball looked as if it had been carved out of stone, and waves of faint gray light were constantly emanating from it.

"What's this?" Lu Yuqing asked with an intrigued expression.

"It's the eye of a Primordial Fei Beast," Han Li replied in a concise manner.

Lu Yuqing could tell that Han Li didn't want to elaborate on the matter, so she didn't ask any further questions.

Han Li examined the eye of the Primordial Fei Beast for a moment to find that all that it was doing was releasing faint waves of gray light. He was unable to tell what was happening, so he could only hold it in the palm of his hand as he continued to approach the golden palace.

Upon reaching around 1,000 feet away from the golden palace, Han Li's eyes suddenly narrowed slightly as he grabbed onto Lu Yuqing's arm, then dragged her behind a collapsed wall for cover.

As it turned out, there was a silver-robed woman standing at the foot of the gate of the golden palace. She was making a hand seal with one hand and holding a damaged Drigug in the other while casting a series of incantation seals toward the palace gates. [1]

Lu Yuqing took a glance at the silver-robed woman over the collapsed wall, then exclaimed, "Why is she here?"

Han Li hurriedly raised a finger to his own lips to make a silencing gesture.

Even though there was a spiritual sense restriction here, the silver-robed woman was clearly a very formidable Golden Immortal cultivator, and they could be overheard if they weren't careful.

The woman was none other than Qiu Ling, and the Drigug that she was holding was riddled with antiquated runes.

Rays of golden light were emanating from its surface, and they were connected to a peculiar circular design on the gates of the golden palace, seemingly undoing the restriction on the gates.

Han Li could sense clear time law fluctuations emanating from both the Drigug in Qu Ling's hand and the golden palace gates, and his brows were tightly furrowed as he carefully peered over the collapsed wall.

Only then did he notice that there was a strange figure next to her.

Even though it was resting on its haunches, the creature was still standing at 70 to 80 feet tall, and at first glance, it resembled a yellow wall. Only upon closer inspection would one be able to notice the peculiar spirit patterns all over its body.

The creature had its back facing Han Li, so he wasn't able to see what it looked like, but it reminded him very much of the Primordial Fei Beast that he had slain all those years ago.

This creature was far smaller in stature than that Primordial Fei Beast, but the outline of its body, the coloration of its skin, and those peculiar spirit patterns were all virtually identical to that of the Primordial Fei Beast.

A perplexed look appeared on Han Li's face, and he took a glance down at the eyeball that he was holding.

Right at this moment, the faint white light that was emanating from the eye suddenly brightened significantly, resembling a beacon that had suddenly lit up in the night.

The strange creature that was resting on its haunches next to Qu Ling instantly sprang to its feet, then turned around to reveal a hideous face with a flat nose, a massive mouth, and a huge single eye situated at the center of its head.

Sure enough, this was just a miniature Primordial Fei Beast!

The Primordial Fei Beast let loose a thunderous roar as a thick pillar of white light shot out of its eye, hurtling directly toward Han Li and Lu Yuqing.

An alarmed look appeared on Han Li's face as he grabbed onto Lu Yuqing's wrist, then sprang up into the air to evade the pillar of white light before descending onto the main path leading to the golden palace.

As a result, the two of them were completely exposed.

1. A Drigug or Kartika is a Buddhist knife used for ceremonial purposes. ?

Chapter 452: Trapped

Qu Ling instantly spun around in the wake of the commotion, and a slightly surprised look appeared on her face as she spotted Han Li and Lu Yuqing.

However, in the next instant, her gaze fell upon the gray eyeball in Han Li's hand, and a furious look immediately appeared on her face.

Qu Ling turned around fully to face Han Li, and there were daggers shooting out of her eyes as she said in a furious voice, "So you're the one who killed my other Primordial Fei Beast! I would've been done here a lot sooner if it wasn't for you!"

Han Li's mouth was suddenly feeling a little parched. At this point, it had become apparent that the Primordial Fei Beast that he had slain all those years ago just so happened to have belonged to Qu Ling, and it seemed that it had been quite important to her as well.

His mind was racing, and he hurriedly said to Lu Yuqing through voice transmission, "We have to split up and run!"

Immediately thereafter, he turned and fled into the distance.

Lu Yuqing faltered slightly upon hearing this, seemingly still a little dazed and confused, but she then immediately reacted as well, flying away in another direction as a streak of azure light.

"You're not getting away!" Qu Ling harrumphed coldly as she raised a hand and pointed a finger at Han Li from afar.

A streak of white light instantly shot out of her sleeve, revealing itself to be a white rope that was giving off astonishing spiritual power fluctuations interspersed with faint law fluctuations.

It was an immortal treasure, and it set off in pursuit of Han Li as a thin streak of white light.

At the same time, she turned to the little Primordial Fei Beast beside her and instructed, "Go and kill that woman."

The Primordial Fei Beast took a resentful glance at Han Li, but it clearly didn't dare to go against Qu Ling's orders, and it stomped a foot down onto the ground, propelling itself toward Lu Yuqing as a yellow shadow.

As Han Li was flying through the air, he could sense the white rope hurtling toward him from behind at an astonishing speed, and in the blink of an eye, it was only several kilometers away from him.

He hurriedly conjured up a pair of golden wings on his back, then began flapping them rapidly to accelerate further in his escape.

A cold smile appeared on Qu Ling's face as she made a hand seal before pointing a finger forward, and the white rope instantly accelerated as well, transforming into a blurry white shadow that caught up to Han Li in an instant, then split up into five or six identical projections that pounced at Han Li from both the left and the right.

Han Li was quite alarmed to see this, and arcs of golden lightning surfaced over his Thunderstorm Wings amid a rumbling thunderclap, allowing him to just barely evade the rope projections right before they closed in around him.

In the next instant, he reappeared close to 10 kilometers away amid a flash of lightning, but there was a very grim look on his face.

As it turned out, the spatial restrictions here were even more severe than the ones in the Light Frost Region, and that was why he wasn't able to get any further away with his lightning movement technique.

All of a sudden, Qu Ling's voice rang out from directly behind Han Li.

"Cease your futile resistance!"

Han Li was extremely alarmed to hear this, and he didn't even have time to turn around to examine the situation as he hurriedly summoned his Mantra Treasured Axis, which instantly began to spin in reverse.

At the same time, a flash of golden lightning erupted out of his Thunderstorm Wings once again, and he vanished for a second time amid a rumbling thunderclap, this time completing the sequence of actions several times faster than before.

Only after reappearing close to 10 kilometers away amid a flash of golden lightning did Han Li dare to turn around, and he discovered Qu Ling standing on the spot where he had just been a moment ago with a surprised look on her face.

"It looks like you've got some unexpected tricks up your sleeve, but that's not going to save you!" Qu Ling harrumphed coldly, and dazzling silver light surged out of her body before forming a pair of indistinct silver wings.

The silver wings spread open, and Qu Ling instantly vanished from the spot.

Han Li's expression changed slightly upon seeing this, and he hurriedly unleashed his Reversal True Axis ability in conjunction with his lightning movement technique once again, allowing him to vanish from the spot amid a flash of golden lightning yet again.

His lightning movement technique was greatly enhanced thanks to his Reversal True Axis, and he had only just vanished from the spot when Qu Ling appeared up above, then reached out with one hand, and five streaks of gray light shot out of her fingertips.

However, in the instant that the five streaks of gray light descended, Han Li had already disappeared, so she had failed to strike her target.

Qu Ling's expression remained unchanged as she turned to a certain direction, where Han Li stumbled out of thin air amid a flash of golden lightning.

A cold sneer appeared on her face as she flapped her silver wings, vanishing from the spot once again in a wraith-like fashion, this time picking up even more speed than before.

A grim look appeared on Han Li's face as he continued to flee using his lightning movement technique, and thus, a chase ensued, with a streak of silver light pursuing a streak of golden light through the air.

The streak of silver light was only getting faster as time passed, and it was moving in a completely silent and wraith-like fashion, leaving a trail of silver afterimages in its wake.

However, the streak of golden light was able to keep up with its pace, and it was also getting faster and faster, just barely eluding the streak of silver light every single time.

The thunderclaps ringing out from Han Li's lightning movement technique were ringing out more and more frequently, until it became one continuous rumbling sound with no gaps in between.

As the chase continued, for some reason, the two returned to the golden palace.

All of a sudden, Qu Ling emerged out of thin air amid a flash of silver light, and her brows were slightly furrowed.

Close to 10 kilometers away, Han Li also reappeared amid a flash of golden lightning, and he was panting slightly as he stared intently at Qu Ling.

Qu Ling didn't continue to come after him, so he didn't continue to run.

His immortal spiritual power was able to support both his Reversal True Axis and lightning movement technique at once, but moving at such a high speed was extremely taxing on his body and mind, so he was eager for some respite.

"I didn't think a mere True Immortal like yourself would be able to elude me for so long. It looks like I'll have to get a little serious," Qu Ling harrumphed coldly as she vanished from the spot once again amid a flash of silver lightning.

Han Li's brows furrowed slightly upon seeing this, and he immediately sped away as an arc of golden lightning.

However, right at this moment, the space around him abruptly shuddered, and a vast expanse of gray light emerged, forming a gray area that instantly encompassed everything within a radius of over 10,000 feet.

Streaks of gray light were surging throughout this area, and there were countless gray shadows everywhere. Even though this area only had a radius of just over 10,000 feet, it seemed to be a completely independent realm that was extremely far away from the outside world.

An arc of golden lightning appeared on the edge of the gray area, and it was like a fish that had been caught in a net, unable to break free despite its desperate struggles.

As a result, Han Li was forced to reappear with a grim look on his face.

It was clear that this was a domain ability.

On that Transient Guild mission to kill Ping Yaozi, Han Li had witnessed Gu Jie's avatar unleash a domain ability, but that was only a pseudo-domain, and it couldn't even begin to compare with this gray domain.

At this moment, he felt as if he had fallen into a vast gray swamp, and bursts of spatial power interspersed with law powers were converging toward him from all directions, rendering him virtually completely immobilized.

The countless gray shadows within the domain resembled countless ghosts that were pouncing at him from all directions, and they were the source of the bursts of restrictive law powers.

Even before the gray shadows arrived, Han Li was struck by a sense of feebleness, and his immortal spiritual power circulation had also become a little sluggish.

What kind of law power is this?

Han Li was greatly alarmed as he let loose a low roar, and his Mantra Treasured Axis appeared.

The time law thread on the axis was glowing radiantly, and it was releasing bursts of time law powers that enveloped his entire body.

Even though only a small portion of the Time Dao Runes on the Mantra Treasured Axis were active, and the time law powers they were releasing was rather sparse, the laws of time were still one of the three paramount laws, and the sensation of feebleness in his body was significantly alleviated.

Han Li immediately took advantage of this opportunity to make a hand seal, and a giant azure sword instantly appeared in front of him.

The sword was giving off dazzling azure light, and there were thick arcs of lightning surging all over its surface. It was giving off an astonishingly formidable aura, and it was lashed through the four times in different directions like lightning.

Four massive sword projections appeared before striking the surrounding gray shadows, and all of them were eradicated in an instant, but even more gray shadows continued to converge toward Han Li from all directions.

Han Li took a deep breath to muster up his resolve, then lashed out with his Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Sword at his surroundings over and over again, keeping all of the gray shadows at bay.

At the center of the gray domain stood Qu Ling with her hands clasped behind her back, and at this moment, she was staring at Han Li with a combination of shock and elation on her face.

"He's a cultivator of the laws of time, and he's already manifested a law thread! Even the heavens are on my side!" Qu Ling chortled with glee, but a contemplative look then appeared on her face, and it seemed that she was rather conflicted about something.

However, a determined look then quickly surfaced in her eyes, and she began chanting an incantation while sweeping her sleeves through the air, and a gray throne appeared behind her amid a flash of gray light.

This throne appeared no different from the thrones of mortal emperors, except it was gray in color instead of golden, and there was a gray dragon wrapped around each of the armrests. In contrast with normal dragons, these two dragons were extremely sinister and menacing in appearance, and the entire gray throne was giving off a burst of vast law fluctuations.

Qu Ling sat down onto the throne, and her aura was elevated once again as a layer of silver light emerged over her face to obscure her facial features, and it was as if she had instantly transformed into a cold and regal queen.

She then raised a hand before setting it down onto the head of one of the gray dragons on the armrest, and the dragon instantly opened its mouth to release a ball of dense gray light with countless gray runes flashing within it.

The ball of light was giving off terrifying law power fluctuations, and it fused into the gray domain in a flash, upon which the size and number of gray shadows in the domain instantly increased drastically.

As a result, the pressure on Han Li also became severely heightened, and his expression darkened even further as he channeled all of his immortal spiritual power into his Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords, causing it to glow even more brightly as it swept toward the surrounding gray shadows.

At the same time, four treasures appeared above his head in succession, namely a miniature gray mountain, a silver bell, a black tusk sword, and a large black flag.

Chapter 453: Betrayal

The four treasures that Han Li had just summoned were the very same immortal treasures that he had obtained after killing Tao Yu and his two guards.

Immediately thereafter, he opened his mouth to release four balls of azure light into the four immortal treasures, and the Integrated Five Extremes Mountain swelled rapidly in size while releasing dazzling gray light.

Countless balls of gray light the size of water vats flew out of the mountain one after another toward the surrounding gray shadows, while the silver bell was also glowing radiantly with silver light while chiming loudly to send silver soundwaves surging through the air in all directions.

At the same time, the tusk sword and the black flag were also releasing formidable streaks of tusk-shaped sword qi and waves of black light, respectively.

Out of these four immortal treasures, none of them had been refined much by Han Li with the exception of the Integrated Five Extremes Mountains, but their combined power was still extremely formidable, and coupled with the Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Sword, they were able to keep the surrounding gray shadows at bay again.

However, right at this moment, Han Li felt a shadow suddenly loom over him, following which a giant gray dragon claw emerged out of thin air amid a burst of spatial fluctuations.

The dragon claw was formed by gray mist, yet it was extremely imposing and appeared to have a substantial form. It seemed to possess boundless power, reaching straight through the sword qi released by the tusk sword before grabbing toward Han Li's chest with unstoppable might.

Han Li remained completely unfazed as Daoist Xie abruptly appeared in front of him in its humanoid puppet form amid a flash of golden lightning, and it reached out with both hands to release thick arcs of lightning, which converged in the blink of an eye to form a giant golden lightning ax.

The ax was swung viciously through the air, and it clashed against the gray dragon claw with an earth-shattering boom.

Daoist Xie shuddered as it took a step back, but the gray dragon claw was also repelled and faded away into the surrounding gray space.

Qu Ling raised an eyebrow upon seeing this, clearly not expecting Han Li to have a Golden Immortal Stage puppet on his side, but a cold sneer then appeared on her face as she laid a hand onto the other gray dragon on her armrest.

Her gray throne began to glow radiantly once again as three gray mirrors slowly emerged from behind it. On the surface of each mirror was inscribed an ancient character for "decay", "insanity", and "death".

The entire gray spirit domain began to ripple once again as all of the surrounding gray shadows surged violently, while the gray light within the domain rapidly became denser.

Han Li's heart jolted slightly upon seeing this, yet before he had a chance to do anything, the gray throne abruptly shuddered, and the dense gray light that it was releasing quickly faded, while the unrest within the gray domain also subsided.

Qu Ling was rather taken aback by this, and she quickly noticed that for some reason, threads of white light that were crackling incessantly had appeared within the gray light being released by her throne.

She immediately stopped what she was doing upon seeing this, then opened her mouth to release a burst of silver light that enveloped the entire throne.

Only then was the throne slowly stabilized, and the hints of white light within the gray light gradually began to fade away.

Qu Ling's expression eased slightly upon seeing this, but she continued to cast a string of incantation seals into the gray throne. At the same time, she swept her other sleeve through the air, releasing two streaks of light, one azure and one golden, and they transformed into a giant azure silkworm and a huge golden beetle, respectively.

"Go and capture that man, but take care not to hurt him as he's going to be very useful to me," Qu Ling instructed.

The giant azure silkworm immediately heeded her call, flying through the air toward Han Li, while the golden beetle remained still on the spot.

Qu Ling's expression darkened slightly upon seeing this, and she instructed in a cold voice, "You go as well!"

"Alright..." the golden replied in a lazy voice, then began to fly toward Han Li at a leisurely pace.

Qu Ling gave a cold harrumph upon seeing this, then turned her attention back to her gray throne and began releasing incantation seals with greater urgency.

Meanwhile, Han Li was busy keeping the surrounding gray shadows at bay with his five immortal treasures while searching for a way out.

Daoist Xie had already returned to his body. This was a trump card that he didn't dare to use all the time, and he had to save it for unforeseen dangers like the situation that had just transpired.

At this moment, hsi face was rather pale, and his breathing was also a little labored.

Enshrouded within Qu Ling's spirit domain, he was unable to draw upon any of the world's origin qi from the outside world, and that severely hampered his powers and his immortal spiritual power recovery.

Furthermore, using five immortal treasures at once was extremely taxing, and he didn't have much immortal spiritual power left.

Not only that, but bursts of restrictive law powers continued to surge toward him incessantly from the surrounding spirit domain, and the time law powers around him were struggling to keep them at bay.

I have to find a way out soon!

Han Li's mind was racing as he scoured his surroundings with his Brightsight Spirit Eyes, and all of a sudden, his gaze fell upon a certain point in the spirit domain.

Immediately thereafter, dazzling azure light erupted out of his body as he abruptly flew toward the edge of the domain while making a rapid string of hand seals.

Meanwhile, his Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords also began to glow radiantly like a blinding azure sun, and the golden lightning that it was releasing had also brightened significantly.

Han Li pointed a finger at the sword from afar, and it instantly circled around in the air before transforming into a giant azure dragon that was over 1,000 feet in size.

Every single one of the dragon's scales was flashing with formidable sword qi, and thick arcs of golden lightning were surging over its entire body, while its aura had also been significantly elevated compared with back when it was in its sword form.

The giant azure dragon pounced forward with formidable power, releasing countless streaks of peerlessly sharp sword qi that vanquished all of the gray shadows in its path.

Han Li was flying close behind the giant azure dragon, while the other four immortal treasures had also returned to his side, orbiting around him to shield him from the surrounding gray shadows.

It didn't take long before he reached the edge of the gray spirit domain, but right at this moment, the huge azure silkworm appeared in front of him in a flash before opening its cavernous mouth to release countless silken threads, which intertwined with one another in mid-air to form a massive azure net that descended upon him.

Han Li's expression instantly changed slightly upon seeing this, but his mobility was severely restricted within the spirit domain, rendering him unable to take evasive measures.

The azure net didn't appear to be all that remarkable, but it was giving off bursts of special law fluctuations, and if he were to be ensnared in it, it was most likely going to be very difficult for him to break free.

In this dire situation, Han Li pointed a finger at the large black flag beside him, and it instantly swelled drastically in size while releasing a vast expanse of black light that surged toward the oncoming azure net.

A dull thud rang out as the black flag was ensnared by the azure net, and the latter instantly reverted back into countless azure silken threads that spun rapidly around the black flag, forming an azure cocoon in the blink of an eye.

The black flag was instantly immobilized within the cocoon, yet Han Li displayed no intention of trying to free it from the cocoon as he abruptly changed directions, flying around the azure cocoon before continuing onward.

The giant azure silkworm was just about to release another flurry of silken threads upon seeing this when the golden beetle suddenly appeared beside it.

Han Li instantly stopped cold in his tracks as he stared blankly at the golden beetle.

The golden beetle also looked back at Han Li with a bright gleam in its beady little eyes.

The azure silkworm was ecstatic to see that Han Li had suddenly drawn to a halt, and it opened its cavernous mouth to release another flurry of azure silken threads, which instantly formed another azure net that swooped down upon Han Li.

Han Li immediately snapped back to his senses upon seeing this, withdrawing his gaze from the golden beetle as he pointed a finger at the black tusk sword.

A vast expanse of black swordlight surged out of the tusk sword, instantly forming a sea of sword qi that was around an acre in size to oppose the descending azure net.

The giant azure silkworm screeched in derision as it opened its mouth once again, releasing a gust of fierce azure wind this time.

The gust of wind was filled with azure blades of wind that swept rapidly through the air, hurtling toward Han Li from another direction to prevent him from getting away.

All of a sudden, a burst of bright golden light erupted out of the golden beetle's body, then converged entirely onto its two front legs.

Two streaks of translucent light that were each several hundred feet in length instantly appeared on those two front legs, and they were giving off a peerlessly sharp aura.

With a wave of its two front legs, the golden beetle released the two streaks of translucent light, but instead of attacking Han Li, it was targeting the giant azure silkworm beside it.

The azure silkworm was greatly alarmed by this, and it hurriedly attempted to fly back in retreat, but the two streaks of translucent light had been unleashed from very close proximity and were far too fast for it to evade.

Two dull thuds rang out, and green blood splattered in all directions as the giant silkworm's body was sliced into three pieces by the two streaks of translucent light.

As a result, the descending azure net and the gust of fierce azure wind instantly dissipated in unison.

A hint of elation flashed through Han Li's eyes upon seeing this, and there was also a hint of nostalgia, as if he had been reunited with an old friend.

The azure silkworm screeched frantically, and the three sections of its body all began to radiate dazzling azure light as they continued to flee into the distance.

At the same time, they assembled themselves back together, and the flesh around the gashes was squirming incessantly while slowly fusing as one again.

The golden beetle immediately lashed out once again upon seeing this, releasing a flurry of streaks of translucent light at once this time.

In the face of these streaks of translucent light, the azure silkworm's body was as fragile as tofu, and it was instantly shredded into countless pieces.

At the same time, the golden beetle flew through the air as a streak of golden light, passing through the shredded remains of the azure silkworm before emerging on the other side in a flash.

Held in its mouth none other than the azure silkworm's nascent, which appeared as if it had been carved out of green jade and was radiating dazzling azure light.

Immediately thereafter, the golden beetle opened its mouth before devouring the nascent soul whole.

After that, it still didn't seem to be completely satisfied, and a burst of golden light surged out of its mouth to draw in the scattered remains of the giant azure silkworm for its consumption.

All of this had taken place in the span of just a few seconds.

Chapter 454: Assistance

Following the demise of the azure silkworm, the cocoon around the black flag also fell apart, and it immediately flew back to Han Li as a black shadow.

However, before Han Li even had a chance to catch his breath, a thunderous roar of fury abruptly rang out from deep within the spirit domain.

"How dare you betray me!"

A streak of silver light shot rapidly through the air, then faded to reveal Qu Ling with an incensed look on her face.

As soon as she arrived on the scene, she immediately flipped a hand over to produce a red badge, which she closed her fingers around forcefully, and the badge was instantly crushed into pieces.

A pained look appeared in the golden beetle's eyes as it threw up a small mouthful of golden blood, but aside from that, it remained largely unaffected.

Qu Ling faltered slightly upon seeing this, while the golden beetle flew over to Han Li's side as it scoffed, "Did you really think that you could control me with a mere spirit subjugation badge? How naive are you!"

Qu Ling looked back and forth between Han Li and the golden beetle for a moment, then said in a cold voice, "So you must be the former owner of this Gold Devouring Immortal."

Indeed, the golden beetle was none other than Jin Tong, the Gold Devouring Immortal that Han Li had lost during his first foray into the Immortal Realm.

"I'll keep her occupied, you find a way to get out of here!" Jin Tong said to Han Li, and its body swelled drastically in size amid a flash of golden light as it pounced at Qu Ling.

Han Li took a glance at Jin Tong with mixed emotions in his eyes, then turned and continued to fly straight ahead.

"You're not getting away!" Qu Ling yelled as she pointed a finger at Jin Tong, releasing a streak of white light that contained the white rope immortal treasure from before.

The white rope vanished into thin air in a flash, then abruptly re-emerged an instant later right next to Jin Tong before tying it up in the blink of an eye.

Jin Tong was instantly stopped cold in its tracks, but instead of immediately dealing with Jin Tong, Qu Ling began to make a hand seal, and all of the gray shadows within the spirit domain quickly transformed into balls of gray flames.

All of a sudden, the entire spirit domain had been transformed into a sea of gray fire.

A vicious gleam then flashed through Qu Ling's eyes, and a vast expanse of gray flames surged toward Han Li at her behest.

Han Li's expression changed slightly upon seeing this, yet before he had a chance to do anything, numerous streaks of bright golden light suddenly flashed past him from the side, tearing straight through the nearby gray flames.

Immediately thereafter, Jin Tong appeared in front of him, clutching the remnants of a torn white rope in its mouth.

"You thought this little string would be enough to keep me tied up?" Jin Tong scoffed as it chewed on the white rope a few times before swallowing it.

In the face of its peerlessly sharp mandibles, that immortal treasure may as well have been made out of tofu.

Qu Ling's pupils contracted slightly upon seeing this.

Meanwhile, Jin Tong's aura was fluctuating drastically in a very strange and unstable display.

The fury in Qu Ling's eyes became even more pronounced as veins began to bulge on her forehead.

At this point, it had already become apparent to her that Jin Tong had been hiding its true power this entire time.

Han Li took a long glance at Jin Tong, then adopted his Giant Golden Mountain Ape form, transforming into a giant golden ape in the blink of an eye before flying onward.

He had discovered that while this spirit domain severely restricted one's cultivation base, the impact that it had on one's physical prowess was actually quite minimal.

In his Giant Mountain Ape form, Han Li's entire body was brimming with primal power, and he was able to advance through the air far more quickly, reaching the edge of the spirit domain in the blink of an eye.

Qu Ling's expression changed slightly upon seeing this, and she hurriedly pointed a finger forward.

A streak of light shot out of her fingertip before vanishing into the edge of the spirit domain as fast as lightning.

The gray light on the edge of the spirit domain instantly began to flash erratically, following which a gray cloud emerged, giving off formidable law power fluctuations.

In the blink of an eye, the entire spirit domain had transformed into an independent space.

A dull thump rang out as Han Li crashed straight into the gray cloud, only to be repelled as if he had run into a giant sponge.

His expression darkened slightly upon seeing this, and he immediately opened his mouth to release a burst of azure light that vanished into the body of the giant azure dragon.

The azure dragon let loose a long draconic roar, and it reverted back into a giant azure sword.

Han Li grabbed onto the hilt of the sword with both hands, then swung it viciously into the gray cloud, causing it to ripple and tremble violently, but it remained resilient.

"You're a fool if you think you can escape from my spirit domain!" Qu Ling chuckled coldly upon seeing this, and she quickly made a hand seal, upon which the gray flames within the spirit domain instantly converged toward Han Li and Jin Tong.

As a result, the gray flames around them instantly became several times denser, turning from gray to black.

A burst of law powers that were several times more formidable than before surged out of the black flames before sweeping toward Han Li, instantly shattering the time law powers around him to swallow up his entire body.

Han Li's expression instantly changed drastically as his golden fur quickly began to lose its luster, and his enormous ape body was also rapidly becoming depleted and wizened. At the same time, his immortal spiritual power circulation was slowed down drastically, and a sense of feebleness spread through his entire body.

Not only that, but a multitude of illusions had surfaced in his mind, and a burst of violent destructive intent welled up in his heart, as if he were being plagued by inner demons.

Han Li was quite alarmed by this, and he frantically tried to channel his cultivation arts and his time law powers to suppress the wild urges that were welling up in his heart, but it was a completely futile task.

Hints of red light were appearing in his eyes, and they were rapidly spreading, slowly filling the entirety of his eyes.

A hint of urgency flashed through Jin Tong's eyes upon seeing this, and it was just about to do something when the black flames around it transformed into a series of fiery black dragons that swept toward it from all directions.

In the next instant, Qu Ling appeared directly in front of it in a flash, blocking its path as she sneered, "Do you want to go save your former owner? Keep dreaming! You're in my spirit domain right now, so you have to do as I say!"

Jin Tong gave a cold harrumph as bright golden light erupted out of its body, and streaks of sword qi surged forth in all directions, instantly shredding all of the surrounding fiery black dragons.

Not only that, but the streaks of golden sword qi began to swirl to form a golden vortex, releasing a burst of tremendous suction force that devoured much of the nearby black flames.

Immediately thereafter, Jin Tong pounced directly at Qu Ling, and two huge streaks of translucent light, both of which were around 1,000 feet in length, were sent hurtling toward Qu Ling from either side, slicing through all of the black flames in their path with ease.

"Which is it? Are you going to face me or are you going to save your former master?" Qu Ling chuckled as she made a rapid string of hand seals, and bursts of black flames converged from all directions to form two lines of black light in a flash.

Bursts of tremendous law power fluctuations surged out of the two black lines, and they flew through the air at Qu Ling's behest to clash against the two oncoming streaks of translucent light.

A pair of dull thumps rang out as the black lines and the streaks of translucent light dissipated in unison.

"If he can't even deal with something like this, then he's not worthy of being my master. All I can do to help him is keep you occupied so you can't attack him directly. If he still can't escape from this spirit domain, then he's far too weak and simply deserves to die," Jin Tong said in an indifferent voice as it

swept its pair of front legs through the air once again, sending two more streaks of translucent light hurtling toward Qu Ling.

Qu Ling harrumphed coldly as she raised her arms, and bursts of black flames shot forth to oppose the streaks of translucent light.

Meanwhile, the red coloration in Han Li's eyes was becoming more and more pronounced, and his eyes were about to turn completely red.

Right at this moment, the Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords in his body abruptly shuddered, following which thick arcs of golden lightning erupted out of his body amid a deafening thunderclap that resembled the roar of a scorned primordial beast.

In the blink of an eye, Han Li's entire body was completely encompassed within a sea of golden lightning, and an aura of righteousness erupted out of the Divine Devilbane Lightning before surging into his mind.

The insanity that clouded his mind instantly faded, while much of the red coloration in his eyes also receded.

He immediately pounced on this opportunity as he summoned his Mantra Treasured Axis once again.

Perhaps it was due to the fact that it was situated in the spirit domain, but on this occasion, the Mantra Treasured Axis didn't release the same golden ripples as it always had in the past.

Bursts of time law powers surged out of the axis to envelop Han Li's entire body, acting as another barrier against the invasive law powers in the spirit domain.

At the same time, he channeled his Spirit Refinement Technique with all his might, and a cool and refreshing sensation instantly welled up in his mind.

The insanity and feebleness that had plagued his mind and body quickly receded, and his immortal spiritual power circulation also returned to normal.

A hint of incredulity appeared in Qu Ling's eyes upon seeing this, and she exclaimed, "How could this be..."

She then gave a cold harrumph before pointing a finger at Han Li, and a burst of black flames was instantly sent flying his way, transforming into a black arrow mid-flight.

However, the black arrow wasn't able to get very far before it crashed into a streak of translucent light, upon which both exploded violently.

"You want to switch opponents all of a sudden? I think you should stick with me," Jin Tong chortled as it positioned itself directly in front of Qu Ling.

Meanwhile, Han Li paid no heed to the battle taking place in the distance as he cast his gaze toward the gray cloud up ahead, and a fierce look flashed through his eyes as he opened his mouth to release three bursts of azure light, which surged into the silver bell, the tusk sword, and the black flag around him.

The three immortal treasures instantly shuddered in unison, and the light radiating from them brightened by severalfold, to the point that it was impossible to look directly at them.

"Go!" Han Li yelled, and the three immortal treasures shot forth as three streaks of dazzling light before striking the gray cloud with tremendous force.

As soon as the three immortal treasures came into contact with the gray cloud, they immediately exploded into three balls of light, one silver and two black.

The gray cloud also shuddered violently, as did the entire spirit domain, while a large section of the surrounding black flames were swept away.

Chapter 455: A Little Girl

Han Li's brows furrowed slightly upon seeing this.

The detonation of three immortal treasures at once had worn down the gray cloud significantly, but it still wasn't entirely wiped out.

Qu Ling was furious as she observed the unfolding situation from afar, but she was unable to free herself from her battle against Jin Tong, so she could only watch as Han Li continued to chip away at her spirit domain.

Right at this moment, Han Li swept a sleeve through the air to summon that black inkstone immortal treasure that he had obtained from Tao Yu.

He tossed the black inkstone forward while making a hand seal, and a burst of piercing black light interspersed with formidable law power fluctuations instantly surged out of the inkstone.

The law powers imbued within this inkstone were far superior to that of the three previous immortal treasures, and even though Han Li hadn't been able to completely refine the treasure, he still had sufficient control over it to trigger its self-detonation.

An alarmed look appeared on Qu Ling's face as she sensed the formidable aura emanating from the black inkstone, and she immediately opened her mouth to release a burst of silver liquid, which fused into the black flames around her in a flash.

The surrounding black flames instantly swelled to exert more pressure on Jin Tong, and at the same time, Qu Ling swept a sleeve through the air to summon a green gourd amid a flash of green light.

An indescribably enormous aura instantly erupted forth as soon as the gourd emerged, and Han Li was quite stunned upon sensing this aura, but continued with what he was doing without pause.

The black light radiating from the inkstone became brighter and brighter, and it was beginning to flash erratically.

Right at this moment, he opened his mouth to expel a mouthful of blood, which vanished into the black inkstone in a flash, and the inkstone hurtled directly toward the gray cloud while glowing like a radiant black sun.

Qu Ling gave a cold harrumph upon seeing this, and she pointed a finger at the green gourd, which released a burst of green light that swept toward the black inkstone at an incredible speed.

Unfortunately, she was too late.

In the instant that the burst of green light reached the black inkstone, the latter exploded violently into an eruption of black light and countless black runes. A terrifying aura surged through the area before fading away an instant later, and the gray cloud was worn down even further, trembling violently as a series of cracks appeared within it.

However, this spirit domain was truly extremely resilient, and it was still just barely able to hold itself together.

An urgent look appeared on Han Li's face upon seeing this, and he opened his mouth to expel another mouthful of blood, this time into his Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Sword.

The sword instantly began to glow radiantly as it swept viciously toward the gray cloud, while Qu Ling responded by making a hand seal, and the burst of green light released by the green gourd circled around to wrap itself around the Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Sword.

"Look out! That gourd of hers is a Profound Heavenly Treasure that can capture immortal treasures by force!" Jin Tong warned through voice transmission.

Han Li's expression changed slightly upon hearing this, but it was too late for him to do anything.

As soon as the burst of green light wrapped itself around the Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Sword, the latter was instantly stopped cold in its tracks, and Han Li's spiritual connection with it was also severed.

A cold sneer appeared on Qu Ling's face as she made another hand seal, and the green light wrapped around the Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Sword instantly brightened even further, while the giant sword shrank down rapidly before flying toward her.

Han Li fought the instinctive urge to recover his flying sword as he swept a sleeve through the air, and yet another giant azure sword emerged before him amid a flash of azure light.

Thick arcs of golden lightning erupted out of its blade, and the aura that it was giving off was no less formidable than that of the previous sword.

A stunned look appeared on Qu Ling's face upon seeing this.

There was a cooldown period that had to pass before she could use the green gourd to unleash another burst of green light, so there was nothing that she could do.

Right at this moment, Han Li swept his other sleeve through the air to summon his Heavy Water True Axis, which instantly began revolving rapidly, sending bursts of tremendous force erupting in all directions and causing the surrounding space to tremble violently.

Immediately thereafter, he cast a pair of incantation seals into the two treasures, and the light radiating from them brightened significantly as they swooped toward the gray cloud up ahead in unison.

At the same time, Daoist Xie shot out of Han Li's body in its giant crab form amid a flash of golden lightning.

Bright golden lightning was surging over its entire body, and it swept its pair of massive pincers through the air to strike the gray cloud like a pair of peerlessly sharp giant blades.

The gray cloud was already on its last legs, and an earth-shattering boom rang out as a huge hole was finally blasted through it.

After unleashing that attack, the golden light on Daoist Xie's body rapidly dimmed, indicating that it had already used up all of its Immortal Origin Stones.

It flew back into Han Li's body as a streak of golden light, while Han Li channeled his Reversal True Axis ability, sweeping up his giant azure sword and Heavy Water True Axis before flying through the hole in the gray cloud.

He was flying extremely fast, and he just so happened to be traveling downward, so he was unable to arrest his momentum and crashed straight into the ground, creating a massive crater beneath himself.

He immediately rose to his feet and took a quick glance at his surroundings before preparing to flee.

Even though he had escaped from the spirit domain, his immortal spiritual power were already completely depleted, so he was unfit for further battle.

Right at this moment, his Mantra Treasured Axis suddenly emerged on its own, and as soon as it appeared, it began to revolve rapidly while releasing dazzling golden light, as was the case with the time law thread on the axis.

The golden gate up ahead also began to glow radiantly, and both the axis and the gate also began buzzing audibly, as if they were resonating with one another.

All of a sudden, the time law thread on the Mantra Treasured Axis shot through the air before vanishing into the golden gate in a flash.

A golden ring design instantly appeared on the golden gate, and a burst of dazzling golden light flew out from within before encompassing Han Li's entire body.

Han Li immediately felt a burst of immense yet gentle force descend upon him, rendering him largely immobilized.

He was naturally quite startled by this, and he raised his head with great difficulty to cast his gaze toward the gate of the golden palace, upon which he was surprised to discover that Lu Yuqing was standing beside the gate.

She was being pursued by that young Primordial Fei Beast earlier, but she had somehow returned to this place.

There was a stunned look on her face as well, and she was also looking back at Han Li with her mouth slightly agape.

Right at this moment, a burst of rumbling rang out from the gray spirit domain up above, and a streak of golden light flew out from within before transforming into Jin Tong.

At this moment, its body was riddled with gashes, and there was a weary look in its golden eyes.

Not far away, Qu Ling also appeared amid a flash of silver light.

She had already taken in the situation that was unfolding down below, and a furious look appeared on her face as she swept a sleeve through the air, upon which the gray throne reappeared before immediately fusing into the gray spirit domain above her.

The gray spirit domain instantly began to shrink rapidly as if it were collapsing in on itself, shrinking to only several hundred feet in size in the blink of an eye, and its color had also become extremely dark.

A burst of tremendous power erupted out of the spirit domain, causing the nearby air to tremble and quiver, while gusts of ferocious wind were sent sweeping in all directions.

At the same time, an enormous gray dragon head projection appeared within the spirit domain. It had an extremely menacing appearance and was riddled with sharp spikes, but its eyes were completely indifferent and emotionless.

Right as Han Li's gaze fell upon the gray dragon head, it was also looking directly at him, and an indescribable sense of foreboding instantly welled up in his heart.

Right at this moment, the gray dragon head opened its mouth, and three bursts of light of different colors appeared within its maw, namely gray, black, and white.

Each burst of light contained tremendous law powers that were completely different from one another, yet were able to coexist in perfect harmony.

The gray dragon head let loose an earth-shattering roar, following which a thick pillar of three-colored light erupted forth, hurtling directly toward Han Li at an incredible speed.

At this moment, Han Li was completely immobilized, so he could only look on helplessly as the pillar of three-colored light approached him at lightning speed.

In this dire situation, a streak of golden light suddenly flashed through the air before him, and a little girl appeared in front of him without any warning.

The little girl was none other than Jin Tong, and it appeared that it had managed to attain a human form during the time that it had been separated from Han Li. The little girl appeared to be around eight or nine years of age, and her head of golden hair and porcelain-like features gave her a very adorable appearance.

At this moment, she was wearing a suit of intricate golden armor, and there was a golden gleam in her bright black pupils, but two lines of golden blood were trickling down from the corners of her lips, and her aura had become significantly weaker than before.

The little girl wore a grim expression as she raised her delicate arms, which instantly took on a golden coloration, as if they had been forged out of gold.

She then gritted her teeth as she swept her little hands through the air, and her arms instantly exploded, transforming into two thick streaks of translucent light that were each over 10,000 feet in length.

There were countless golden runes flashing over the two streaks of translucent light, and they fused as one in a flash to form a thin line.

A burst of overwhelmingly formidable law power fluctuations surged out of the thin thread, causing the nearby space to quake violently as it swept toward the pillar of three-colored light.

"Jin Tong!" Han Li called out as a series of mixed emotions surfaced in his eyes.

Right at this moment, a burst of dull rumbling suddenly rang out from the gate of the golden palace, and it opened up ever so slightly as a peculiar aura emerged from within.

The golden light around Han Li's body instantly brightened before dragging him through the gate of the palace in a flash.

Chapter 456: Small City

Han Li felt as if he had been plunged into a cloud of gray mist, and all of a sudden, the ground gave away beneath his feet, causing him to stumble forward involuntarily, only to land back on a solid surface an instant later.

He felt as if he had passed through some type of smoky illusion, and before he knew it, he was in another space.

He massaged his slightly sore temples as his blurry vision slowly recovered, and only then was able to see the moss-covered ground beneath his feet.

He quickly looked around to find that he was the one here, and that none of Jin Tong, Lu Yuqing, or Qu Ling had managed to follow him in here. His brows furrowed slightly as he heaved a faint sigh.

Never had he imagined that he would reunite with Jin Tong under these circumstances. Even though there hadn't been many words exchanged between them, Jin Tong had swooped in to save his life without any regard for its own safety, and that was very touching to Han Li.

After all, ever since he had come to the True Immortal, he had never had a genuine connection with anyone and was constantly having to watch his back. The last person that had felt true affection and concern for him had been Liu Le'er back in the Spirit Domain Realm.

Of course, the fact that he had always regarded Jin Tong as half a child of his also had something to do with this.

It was during the time they had been separated, Jin Tong had become significantly more powerful than before, allowing it to oppose a late-Golden Immortal cultivator for such a long time. However, Han Li knew that it was definitely no match for Qu Ling, considering her exceptional mastery over law powers, as well as her array of formidable treasures, including that peculiar Profound Heavenly Gourd.

At the moment, all he could do was pray that Jin Tong could somehow find safety, even if it meant having to temporarily submit to Qu Ling. Judging from what he had seen earlier, it seemed that Qu Ling had taken Jin Tong under her wing as a spirit pet.

If something were to happen to Jin Tong, then once he reached the Golden Immortal Stage, he would be sure to go after Qu Ling and make her pay the price.

As for Lu Yuqing, at some point, he had developed the impression that something was rather strange about her, but he couldn't put his finger on exactly what it was.

Having said that, she was only an acquaintance of his, and they had entered the Infernal Frost Immortal Manor as collaborative partners, so he didn't feel any obligation to her. While it was true that she had run into Qu Ling because she was with him, she was the one who had chosen to follow him in the first place, so she had to accept the risks that came with such a decision.

Now that he had been sucked into the place somehow, she would just have to deal with Qu Ling's wrath on her own.

Han Li cast these thoughts aside as he swept his gaze over the surrounding area.

In doing so, he discovered that he was standing in an old courtyard, surrounded by dilapidated walls and collapsed buildings that were overgrown with moss and weeds.

However, as he cast his gaze toward the rear section of the courtyard, a hint of befuddlement appeared in his eyes.

Hovering in the air above the upper right corner of a building in that direction was a roof tile, which was frozen in the process of blowing up into pieces. It was as if it were being held in place by some type of invisible form, and the moment of its destruction had been forever immortalized.

Han Li activated his Brightsight Spirit Eyes while also releasing his spiritual sense to examine the roof tile, and a few moments later, he sprang up into the air before landing on the roof of the building.

There, he reached out to pluck a piece of the hovering roof tile out of mid-air, while the rest of the roof tile fragments remained in their original positions, completely unaffected.

Han Li was rather bewildered and intrigued by this, and he cast his gaze out of the courtyard to find more sets of ruins in all directions, spreading as far as the eyes could see.

Among these collapsed buildings, similar peculiar scenes as this hovering roof tile could be seen everywhere. All of those destroyed buildings and pavilions had been shattered into countless pieces, but not even a single fragment had fallen onto the ground. It was as if time had stopped in the instant that they were destroyed, leaving them trapped in their perpetual purgatory.

After a brief moment of contemplation, Han Li slowly closed his eyes before releasing his vast spiritual sense over the surrounding area.

In contrast with that barren red area from before, his spiritual sense wasn't restricted at all here.

However, only a few moments had passed before his eyes suddenly sprang open, and the blue light in his pupils faded as a peculiar look appeared on his face.

It seemed that by examining his surroundings, he had only become more perplexed.

As it turned out, this area was far smaller than he had anticipated. He had only just released his spiritual sense slightly, and it had already filled this entire space, which only had a radius of several dozen kilometers.

The entire space was surrounded in all directions by spatial walls, but theoretically speaking, the fact that he was able to enter this place meant that it wasn't completely isolated from the outside world.

At the very least, there had to be some fragile spots in the space here, and if he could track down those spots, then he would be able to break through the spatial walls to return to the outside world if such a need ever arose.

However, through his spiritual sense examination, he wasn't able to identify any weak points in the space here for him to target.

After taking a moment to contemplate how to proceed, Han Li made a hand seal, and his Mantra Treasured Axis appeared behind him amid a flash of golden light.

Following the emergence of the axis, the dozen or so active Time Dao Runes on its surface lit up one after another, and the Eye of Truth at its center began to scour the surrounding area while releasing a beam of golden light.

Han Li was unable to find any way out using his spiritual sense, so he had no choice but to turn to his Eye of Truth.

He flew up into the air, then turned his gaze to the center of the courtyard that he had first appeared in through the perspective of the Eye of Truth, but even under the scrutiny of the beam of golden light, the courtyard didn't display any abnormalities.

Han Li's gaze slowly roamed over the ground to the stone table in the courtyard, then to the walls, the dead trees, and the buildings, but he wasn't able to find anything worthy of note.

However, as the gaze of the Eye of Truth fell upon that room with the hovering roof tile above it, a burst of golden light suddenly erupted out of the roof of the building, following which it was quickly restored to its original state, as if it had been rebuilt anew.

Han Li was very surprised to see this.

Could it be that this building contains time law powers?

Before he had a chance to approach the building for a closer examination, the projection of the repaired building began to flash and waver in an unstable fashion.

Han Li withdrew his Mantra Treasured Axis as he descended in front of the building, and he took some time to examine the outside of the building before entering it and conducting a thorough search, but he wasn't able to find anything that contained time law powers.

How strange... Could it be that the time law powers here are too sparse to be detectable? Surely that's not the case...

After some contemplation, he summoned his Mantra Treasured Axis once again, then rose up into the air and left this courtyard to fly toward the other areas in this space.

Looking down from above, he could see that even though all of the buildings here were quite dilapidated, the general layout was quite orderly and well-structured. The layout of this place was very similar to that of the average mortal city, and Han Li began to do some exploring.

He started from the eastern side of the city and slowly made his way westward, making sure to examine all of the buildings that seemed to have been frozen in time along the way. Whenever he gazed upon them through his Eye of Truth, those buildings would present projections of back when they were whole, but those projections were also quite blurry and unstable.

It was as if faint time law fluctuations permeated throughout this entire city, but only to a very faint degree that was completely undetectable.

It took Han Li only less than half a day to explore the entire city, but he wasn't able to discover anything.

As night approached, the sun began to set.

In the southern part of the city, there stood a nine-story black wooden pagoda in a garden that was overrun with weeds. The pagoda had many scorch marks on its surface, and it was tilted severely to one side, looking as if it could collapse at any moment.

Han Li was standing on the black roof tiles atop the pagoda's roof with one hand resting on the tip of the pagoda as he cast his gaze toward the setting sun in the distance.

Standing beside him was the yellow-robed Daoist Xie with a neutral expression on its face.

"Can you see anything special about the layout of this city, Brother Xie?" Han Li asked.

"Not at all. At the very least, on the surface, it seems to only be following the standard protocol in the way normal cities are constructed. As for whether there are some special hidden mechanisms, it's impossible to tell just by looking," Daoist Xie replied with a shake of its head.

Han Li was silent for a moment upon hearing this, then asked, "In that case, can I trouble you to examine this place to see if there are any hidden mechanisms or arrays?"

Daoist Xie nodded in response, then vanished from the top of the wooden pagoda in a flash.

As the light of the dying sun gradually faded, Han Li abruptly shot through the air as a streak of azure light.

However, a resounding thump rang out in the air just a moment later, and Han Li was repelled back through the air like a cannonball, having just crashed into an invisible barrier.

However, as soon as he landed on the ground, a burst of azure light instantly emerged over his body as he shot straight toward another direction.

Several days passed by in a flash.

In this ruined city was a private garden, within which was a lush forest. The forest was littered with numerous strange rocks, each of which was as tall as a grown man. These rocks were quite dark in coloration, and they were covered in layers of slick moss.

Two figures were making their way side by side toward the center of the forest down a winding path.

"There are quite a few restrictions and secret chambers in the city, but barely any of them are worthy of further examination. This is the only place that I feel is worthy of note. At the very least, the array here stands out from the rest," Daoist Xie said while leading the way.

"In that case, there's probably a good chance that this is the exit of this secret area," Han Li replied as a hopeful look appeared in his eyes.

Chapter 457: Concerns

Daoist Xie made his way down the small path until it arrived at a strange rock that resembled a hunched-over old ape, where it drew to a halt and said, "Come and take a look at what this is, Fellow Daoist Han."

Han Li's brows furrowed slightly as he hurried over to the strange rock, then wiped a hand over it before conducting a careful examination.

A hesitant look appeared on his face as he asked, "Could this be... a Primordial Form Rock?"

"That's exactly right," Daoist Xie replied with a nod.

"No wonder I wasn't able to detect any array fluctuations when I was examining this place with my spiritual sense. Having said that, I didn't think that the Primordial Form Rock's concealment effect would be this potent," Han Li mused with a contemplative expression.

"These Primordial Form Rocks alone wouldn't have been enough to keep you from detecting this array, Fellow Daoist Han," Daoist Xie said.

"Are you saying there's something else here?" Han Li asked with an intrigued expression.

Daoist Xie offered no reply as it led Han Li deeper into the dense forest, and the two of them arrived in an open and spacious area.

Upon entering this area, Han Li discovered that the ground was entirely charred black, and the shrubs that used to grow here had been scorched into ashes, revealing a millstone-sized stone platform.

The surface of the platform had also been scorched black, and as a result, all of the engravings on its surface had become unrecognizable.

Han Li swept a sleeve through the air to release a gentle breeze that brushed away the dirt and soot on the stone platform to reveal what was underneath, but that only seemed to present more questions than answers for him.

"What is this thing?"

There were nine strange flower-petal-like designs engraved onto the stone platform, and they were assembled together to form what appeared to be a massive flower.

There were also many special and complex runes within the flower petals, and Daoist Xie explained, "If I'm not mistaken, this appears to be an extremely advanced dream concealment restriction that can work in conjunction with Primordial Form Rocks to completely conceal the auras of many treasures and arrays."

"If you're familiar with this type of restriction, then I'm sure you must have a way of unraveling it, right?" Han Li asked as he raised an eyebrow.

Instead of providing a direct answer to Han Li's question, Daoist Xie said, "Please take a look at the center of this restriction, Fellow Daoist Han."

Han Li did as he was instructed, but there didn't appear to be anything there, and his brows furrowed slightly in befuddlement as he turned to Daoist Xie.

"That is where the stamen of the flower is supposed to be, but for some reason, it's already been completely destroyed," Daoist Xie explained.

Han Li conducted a closer examination upon hearing this, and only then did he discover that there were indeed some signs of damage there.

"That shouldn't be an issue, right? We should be able to adapt accordingly to unravel the restriction. Could it be that there's some other problem?" Han Li asked.

"Have you heard of the concept of limitless dreams, Fellow Daoist Han? Dream concealment restrictions of this nature are extremely diverse and varied. Even if the slightest alteration is made to such a restriction, the way to unravel it will become completely different. Even though I'm familiar with this type of restriction, I have no idea how to unravel it in its current state," Daoist Xie explained with a shake of its head.

"In that case, we'll just have to resort to brute force and destroy this restriction," Han Li concluded after some contemplation.

"Well, about that... You can give that a try, Fellow Daoist Han," Daoist Xie said.

Han Li could tell from the peculiar look on Daoist Xie's face that this wasn't going to be a simple matter, but he still decided to make an attempt as he adopted his Giant Mountain Ape form amid a flash of golden light.

The profound acupoints on his body then lit up as he let loose a low roar before raising a massive fist and slamming it heavily down onto the stone platform.

The entire stone platform shuddered violently as ferocious shockwaves erupted through the air in all directions, razing everything within a radius of several thousand feet to the ground before gradually subsiding.

At the same time, a burst of golden light also appeared on the inscriptions on the stone platform, and a series of vine-like golden liens spread over the stone platform before extending into the forest like a cobweb.

In his Giant Mountain Ape form, Han Li had a much clearer view of his surroundings thanks to his enormous stature, and he could see similar golden lines spreading over the entire secret area, presenting a spectacular sight to behold.

"By my estimates, one would have to be at least at the Golden Immortal Stage for them to have a chance at breaking this restriction by force. Even an all-out attack from me in my current state won't be enough to get the job done," Daoist Xie said.

"Even if that were possible, we most won't be able to do it. This restriction is connected to this entire secret area, so if we were to destroy it by force, the entire secret area would most likely collapse, and that would be catastrophic for us," Han Li said as he quickly reverted back to his human form.

"That's right," Daoist Xie replied with a nod.

Han Li's brows were tightly furrowed as he walked a lap around the stone platform, and a thought suddenly occurred to him as he summoned his Mantra Treasured Axis.

The Eye of Truth at the center of the axis slowly opened, then cast its gaze toward the stone platform, releasing a beam of golden light out of its pupil.

As the beam of golden light shone down upon the stone platform, all of the remaining char and soot on its surface instantly receded, restoring it to a pristine state.

A burst of murky light also appeared at the center of the restriction, and a series of lines began to gradually emerge, forming an extremely complex stamen design.

Right as Han Li was about to take a closer look, the projection of the stamen suddenly began to vibrate rapidly in an extremely unstable manner.

Han Li was struck by a rush of dizziness from the jarring sight, and he had no choice but to avert his gaze and withdraw his Mantra Treasured Axis.

"Did you see anything?" Daoist Xie asked.

"This secret area is truly a very strange place. Many of the ordinary-looking things here are imbued with time law powers, but only to an extremely faint degree. Whenever I try to examine them with my Eye of

Truth, all I end up seeing is a jumbled blur, and this stone platform is no exception," Han Li replied with a wry smile.

"Your Mantra Treasured Axis isn't in its peak condition right now. Perhaps once it recovers all of its Time Dao Runes, you'll be able to see the restriction more clearly," Daoist Xie suggested.

"I've already considered that, but the problem is that it would take too much time to wait for the Mantra Treasured Axis to return to the peak of its powers. The Infernal Frost Immortal Manor is only open for a limited time, and once the exit closes, who knows when the immortal manor will be open again?"

Han Li's top priority at the moment was to find a way to get out of this place. Of course, if he did manage to find a way out, then he would also be open to the idea of staying here for some time. After all, he didn't know what had happened outside during the few days that he had been trapped in this place, but he presumed that Qu Ling wouldn't waste much time waiting for him.

"You have a near-limitless lifespan, so why concern yourself with such matters? The world's origin qi here is no less abundant than anywhere else in the Northern Glacial Immortal Region, so you could easily just cultivate here and wait for the next time the immortal manor is opened," Daoist Xie said.

Han Li fell into deep thought upon hearing this.

Having made an enemy out of the Northern Glacial Immortal Palace, he was not in a very good situation. Furthermore, he was now being targeted by Qu Ling as well, and there was also a chance that Feng Tiandu would come after him eventually, so for him, the Northern Glacial Immortal Region was fraught with peril.

In comparison, it was indeed safer to stay in this secret area.

However, Han Li's concerns still lingered as he said, "That may be true, but there's no telling what could happen in this secret area once the Infernal Frost Immortal Manor closes. If things take a turn for the worse, we may end up in an even worse situation than having to face Qu Ling again."

What he didn't mention was that if he were to be trapped in this secret area, even for hundreds of thousands of years, perhaps nothing would happen to him, but drastic changes would be taking place in the outside world. At the moment, Jin Tong was in direct peril of being struck down by Qu Ling, and there were many more people important to Han Li than Qu Ling could potentially go after.

"In any case, we won't be able to leave this place right away, so I suggest you give it some time so that your Mantra Treasured Axis can recover. Perhaps it won't take too long before you'll be able to get a clearer look at this restriction," Daoist Xie said.

"I suppose that's all we can do for now," Han Li replied with a nod.

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Several more days passed by in the blink of an eye.

A giant plaza with a radius of several thousand feet had appeared at the center of the ruined city.

The central area of the plaza was paved with white stone slabs, while the edges were covered in newly unearthed reddish-brown mud that was interspersed with many fragments of broken tiles, rocks, and wooden frames.

It was clear that the plaza had only been recently constructed, and it was riddled with a series of extremely deep rifts that were connected together to form a very complex array.

The array was called the Great Universe Star Gathering Array, and it had been included at the end of the second half of the Great Universe Origin Arts. It was an array that could assist one in cultivating the Great Universe Origin Arts, and it was far superior to the Star Gathering Array that Han Li had used in the past. Even the new and improved Star Gathering Array that Han Li had personally modified couldn't hold a candle to this array.

The Great Universe Star Gathering Array had a total of 81 star points distributed evenly around the array, and each star point could fit a Starheaven Stone, which could help a cultivator absorb starpower at a faster rate.

By Han Li's estimates, if he had access to this array from the very beginning, then the time it would've taken him to get to this point in the Great Universe Origin Arts would've been reduced by at least half. However, he would also require a sufficient number of Starheaven Stones, and the pain he would've had to endure would've also been at least twice as excruciating.

Chapter 458: 500 Years

Night fell, and countless stars appeared in the pitch black sky up above.

Han Li was seated at the center of the white stone plaza with his legs crossed, looking up at the sky, and his eyes were like a pair of mirrors that could reflect the starlight shining down from above.

It would take a year for each of the Time Dao Runes on the Mantra Treasured Axis to recover, so a full recovery was going to take a very long time.

Seeing as he was unable to find any alternative ways out of this predicament, he had no choice but to bide his time, and during this time, he was planning to continue his cultivation of the Great Universe Origin Arts. In doing so, he would be able to open more profound acupoints, which should assist him in a breakthrough to the Golden Immortal Stage.

With a casual toss, a burst of blue light flew out of his hand, then split up into several dozen streaks of light, each of which fell into the one of the 81 star points around the array with unerring accuracy.

As soon as these Starheaven Stones fell into place, they immediately began to radiate dazzling starlight that illuminated the entire plaza.

At the same time, Han Li opened his mouth to release his Seven Bright Star Rings, and they circled around in the air before spreading out across the night sky.

These Seven Bright Star Rings weren't a part of the array, but they were also quite beneficial when it came to gathering starpower, so Han Li naturally wasn't going to neglect them.

He began to make a hand seal while chanting an incantation, and the entire array began to glow with radiant starlight, which gradually expanded to encompass the entire plaza bit by bit.

Han Li continued to look up at the night sky, and he felt as if the distance between himself and the night sky were rapidly shrinking. The stars that had appeared incredibly tiny to him in the past were becoming larger and larger, and they were also glowing brighter and brighter.

Every single star resembled a miniature sun that was blinding to behold, and if an outside observer were present, they would be stunned to discover that the black pupils in Han Li's eyes had disappeared, and the entirety of his eyes were filled with radiant white starlight.

All of a sudden, a resounding boom rang out, and a vast expanse of starlight converged in the sky, forming over 100 pillars of white light that shone down onto the entire secret area from the night sky above.

The seven pillars of light passing down through the Seven Bright Star Rings appeared particularly thick and substantial.

The plaza that the Great Universe Star Gathering Array was situated on trembled violently as each of the Starheaven Stones released a pillar of white light that hurtled directly toward Han Li at the center of the array.

The 81 pillars of starlight collectively struck Han Li with a resounding boom, and a muffled groan immediately escaped his lips, which a string of cracks and pops rang out incessantly from all of the joints in his body.

His 18 profound acupoints also lit up in unison, immediately following which each of them formed a miniature vortex that sucked in the vast expanse of starlight converging toward him.

The enormous influx of starpower instantly struck Han Li with a bloated sensation in his profound acupoints, as if he had already had a hearty meal, yet was being forced to eat more, and it was not a good feeling.

A pained look flashed through his eyes as he gritted his teeth tightly, enduring the pain as his profound acupoints continued to devour starlight.

Right at this moment, the array beneath him suddenly shuddered violently, and a spatial vortex emerged under him. A burst of suction force instantly surged out of the vortex, sucking in the white starlight all over the entire plaza and drawing it toward Han Li.

All of the pillars of white light shining down from the heavens were sucked in by the vortex, causing them to veer off their original trajectories and descend toward Han Li instead.

Just a moment ago, the Great Universe Star Gathering Array resembled a vast sea formed by over 100 cascading waterfalls, while Han Li was like a small raft drifting over the sea in relative safety and comfort, but the situation was completely different now.

With all of the pillars of starlight shining down upon him at once, the influx of starpower was countless times more immense than before, and a burst of unbearably tremendous force crashed down upon him, causing him to bend forward involuntarily, to the point that he was almost flattened against the ground.

Strands of translucent starlight were piercing into every single one of his pores, and his robes were instantly soaked with blood.

However, the blood would only flow for an instant before it was evaporated into nothingness by the starlight.

Han Li's teeth were gritted tightly as a guttural snarl rang out deep within his throat. His hands were pressed firmly into knees, and veins were bulging on his arms as he struggled to push himself back into an upright posture.

His skin had already become completely translucent thanks to the starlight flowing into his body, and even through his robe, one could see all of his bones and meridians.

Right at this moment, Han Li suddenly swept a sleeve through the air to release a streak of light, which instantly transformed into a massive screen that positioned itself above his head.

The screen was a transparent black color with a series of glittering and translucent blue beads embedded onto its surface, giving it the appearance of a miniature night sky. This was the very same screen that he had taken from the palace in which the Great Universe Origin Arts had been hidden.

With all of the pillars of starlight shining down upon it, the blue beads on the screen began to radiate dazzling starlight, projecting a miniature starry sky.

At the same time, the entire screen became more and more transparent until it transformed into a black veil-like light barrier that encompassed Han Li's entire body.

The light barrier was rippling incessantly under the vast volume of starlight shining down upon it, but it was able to afford Han Li some protection and alleviate some of the pressure weighing down upon him.

As a result, he was able to catch his breath, and he made a hand seal as he closed his eyes to focus entirely on the absorption of starpower.

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The days passed by one after another in a blur.

At night, Han Li would draw starpower into his body from the night sky, while during the day, he would continue to cultivate the Great Universe Origin Arts using the Starheaven Stones, and he did this without pause every single day.

During the first few years, Han Li would recover an additional Time Dao Rune every single year, following which he would take a break from his cultivation and travel to that garden to examine the dream concealment restriction on the stone platform, but he was unable to make any progress.

After that, he knew that the Infernal Frost Immortal Manor had to have already closed a long time ago, but nothing had changed in this secret realm. This instilled within him a sense of reassurance, allowing him to focus fully on his cultivation, and it didn't take long before he opened his 19th profound acupoint.

His cultivation of the Great Universe Origin Arts wasn't exactly all smooth sailing from there, but there were no major obstacles, either, and he slowly became immersed in the process, forgetting the passage of time.

500 years flew by in the blink of an eye.

On this night, pillars of starlight were shining down from the heavens as usual, illuminating the entire ruined city with their resplendent white radiance.

Han Li was seated with his legs crossed at the center of the plaza, completely enveloped by starlight, and his entire body looked as translucent as if it had been carved out of jade.

His long hair trailed down his back, and it had already turned from its former black color to a glittering and translucent silver color.

At this moment, there were strands of starlight gathering at a certain point on his back, and a brand new profound acupoint was taking shape.

With that, the 36th profound acupoint was formed, and his cultivation of the Great Universe Origin Arts was complete!

A faint crack rang out as the black screen that had been hanging above Han Li this entire time suddenly disintegrated. At the same time, the pillars of starlight shining down from above also slowly dimmed before fading away altogether.

With that, the entire secret area was also plunged into darkness.

Han Li slowly opened his eyes as he rose to his feet, and his entire body was encompassed within his True Extreme Film, which was looking denser and more resilient than ever.

He raised a hand before gently clenching his fist, and a burst of light appeared in the palm of his hand, seemingly containing some type of peculiar power.

He knew that this was a sign that the starpower in his body still hadn't completely stabilized in the wake of a newly formed profound acupoint, and that his body would soon return to normal.

Despite his latest breakthrough, Han Li couldn't help but heave a forlorn sigh.

He had anticipated that it would definitely take a very long time to complete his cultivation of the Great Universe Origin Arts, but he wasn't expecting it to take this long.

All of a sudden, he raised his head to look up at the night sky, then took a step back before throwing a punch up at the heavens.

A burst of extremely formidable force was instantly released, forming a gust of white astral wind that was visible even to the naked eye as it erupted directly upward.

A resounding boom rang out, and it was as if the entire night sky were about to be torn apart by this burst of tremendous force. This was immediately followed by a loud whooshing sound as the surrounding air surged into the area vacuum left in the wake of the force released by Han Li's fist.

The gust of white wind surged upward for several thousand feet, and only after that did it begin to gradually dissipate.

A pleased look appeared on Han Li's face upon seeing this, and he slowly withdrew his fist.

Even though that hadn't been an all-out punch, the power unleashed was already not inferior to that of a full-force blow from back when he had only cultivated half of the Great Universe Origin Arts.

By his estimates, if he were to return to that stone platform now, he would perhaps be able to destroy it even without progressing to the Golden Immortal Stage, but if he were to do that, then this entire secret area would most likely be destroyed along with the stone platform.

The blue light radiating from Han Li's body slowly faded, and his True Extreme Film also disappeared at his behest.

At this point, he had already reached the pinnacle of the True Immortal, so the only thing that was keeping him from reaching the Golden Immortal Stage was that 36th immortal acupoint.

However, seeing as he had already attained 36 profound acupoints, opening this final immortal acupoint wasn't going to be a difficult task, so the only concern currently on his mind was the final one of the three decays, acupoint decay.

This was an unavoidable tribulation that he would have to transcend in order to reach the Golden Immortal Stage. It was said that cultivating profound acupoints and mastering law powers would help one endure this decay, but he had never witnessed or experienced this process, so he was still feeling a little uneasy.

Han Li took a deep breath, then looked up at the moon in the sky.

He wasn't planning to continue cultivating tonight, and he sprang up into the air before landing on the rooftop of a half-collapsed building.

From there, he looked up at the moon once again, and a hint of mixed emotions flashed through his eyes as he laid down onto the rooftop, then closed his eyes to rest.

Chapter 459: The Third Decay

At around noon, three days later.

Han Li reappeared on the white stone plaza, looking completely reinvigorated.

His immortal spiritual power and his spiritual sense had both been fully restored, and he swept his gaze across his surroundings, then raised a sleeve to release a bolt of golden lightning, which transformed into Daoist Xie not far away.

Daoist Xie took a glance at Han Li, and a faint smile appeared on its face as it said, "I can see that your cultivation base has advanced even further. Congratulations, Fellow Daoist Han."

"I did manage to make some progress, but we've already been in here for several centuries, and I can't help but wonder how things are going outside. Today, I'm going to make another attempt to reach the Golden Immortal Stage to see if we can leave this place a little sooner. This space may be an isolated

one, but there are still many risks involved when it comes to forcing a realm open, so I'll have to trouble you to keep a lookout for me, Brother Xie," Han Li said with a smile.

"Rest assured, just go ahead and do what you need to do," Daoist Xie replied with a nod.

As soon as its voice trailed off, a flash of golden lightning surged over its body, and it vanished into thin air.

Han Li sat down with his legs crossed upon seeing this, then swept a sleeve through the air to release a streak of azure light, which contained three or four white jade vials and an intricate jade box.

With another sweep of his sleeve, the stopper of one of the jade vials flew off on its own, and a longan-sized golden pill flew out from within before landing on the palm of his hand.

This was none other than the Myriad Axis Pill, the pill capable of assisting even late-True Immortal cultivators in advancing their cultivation base.

Han Li picked up the pill before promptly devouring it, and it immediately disintegrated into a surge of warmth that flowed through his meridians, but compared with the intense influx of heat and pressure from the first Myriad Axis Pill that he had taken, the effects had become far milder.

One reason for this was because he had already taken so many of these pills that he had developed some tolerance to them, and the other reason was that his physical body had become significantly enhanced after his attainment of full mastery over the Great Universe Origin Arts.

His brows furrowed slightly as he made a beckoning motion, and two more Myriad Axis Pill flew out of the vial, both of which he swallowed at once.

Only after that did he close his eyes and begin to cultivate.

As he began to chant an incantation, a layer of gentle golden light surfaced to envelop his entire body, and over 10 years flew by in the blink of an eye.

Throughout the 500 years that Han Li had spent cultivating the Great Universe Origin Arts and this latest passage of over a decade, the entire secret area remained completely unchanged from back when Han Li first entered this place.

The sun rose and set every day, and there were different weather conditions on display, but there was never any passage of seasons, and even the slick moss that was extremely prevalent throughout the entire secret area maintained its dark green hue perpetually.

At the edge of the city, Daoist Xie was standing on the rooftop of a three-story azure bamboo pavilion. Its yellow robes were flapping audibly around it, but it stood completely still like a statue as its gaze remained fixed firmly on the center of the city.

Right at this moment, it suddenly murmured to itself, "It's finally here..."

As soon as its voice trailed off, a resounding boom rang out from the center of the city, and the entire secret area shuddered violently as a pillar of golden light erupted into the heavens.

Layers of dark clouds converged from all directions above the white stone plaza, and it didn't take long before a vortex of dark clouds with a diameter of several dozen kilometers had taken shape.

Lightning was constantly flashing within the vortex, letting loose bursts of dull rumbling, as if there were countless ferocious beasts trapped within the clouds.

At this moment, Han Li was seated within the pillar of golden light. His robes had already been torn to shreds, and his chiseled yet proportionate muscles were basked in golden radiance, while his long hair was standing up in a completely vertical fashion.

All of the 35 immortal acupoints that had opened up on his body were glowing radiantly, while a golden vortex was taking shape within the 36th immortal acupoint at the center of his chest, looking as if it were going to be completely opened up at any moment.

Right at this moment, Han Li's eyes abruptly sprang open as he let loose an earth-shattering roar, and the golden light within the swirling vortex brightened even further as wisps of the world's origin qi that were visible even to the naked eye rapidly converged toward the immortal acupoint.

The sound of howling wind rang out as the world's origin qi gushed into the immortal acupoint, but it resembled a boundless abyss that was impossible to fill, and it was displaying no signs of getting any fuller at all.

Han Li wore a solemn expression as he continued to make a rapid string of hand seals, carefully guiding the direction of flow of the world's origin qi while also moderating the rate at which the immortal acupoint was absorbing the world's origin qi to ensure that it wouldn't burst of an excessive influx.

Only after around two hours had passed did the rate of influx of the world's origin qi gradually slow down, while the light radiating from the immortal acupoint was only becoming brighter and brighter, gradually approaching a state of stability.

At this point, Han Li was already sweating profusely, but he didn't dare to let down his guard in the slightest, and he was constantly preparing for something to go wrong.

All of a sudden, a rumbling boom rang out in the sky, and the lightning that had been suppressed within the dark clouds was finally released.

A black pillar of lightning that was as straight as a spear pierced through the clouds before crashing down directly upon Han Li's head.

Han Li immediately threw a punch upward in response, and a starlight fist projection erupted upward to oppose the pillar of lightning.

Seven punches were thrown in succession, and seven starlight fist projections, each of which was several dozen feet in size, flew up toward the pillar of lightning. Halos of starry radiance surged out of the fist projections, connecting together to form a resplendent screen of silver light.

The pillar of black lightning crashed straight into the silver light barrier with an earth-shattering boom, and the latter shuddered violently before a huge hole was blasted straight through its center by the pillar of black lightning.

At the same time, an even louder burst of rumbling rang out from within the dark cloud vortex in the sky, and a pillar of black lightning that was twice as thick as the previous one came crashing down, as if the heavens had been provoked and were determined to make Han Li feel their wrath.

Daoist Xie's expression changed slightly as it witnessed this from afar, and it instantly vanished from the spot amid a flash of golden lightning.

In the next instant, it reappeared within the space between Han Li and the pillar of lightning, and golden lightning erupted out of its entire body as it raised an arm toward the descending pillar of lightning.

A layer of golden lightning emerged from its arm, and its hand abruptly transformed into a giant golden crab pincer that clamped down forcefully upon the pillar of black lightning.

An earth-shattering thunderclap rang out as the pillar of golden lightning was snapped into two before exploding violently, but the point at which the pillar of lightning was severed transformed into a spherical lightning cage that trapped Daoist Xie within it in the blink of an eye.

Daoist Xie let loose a cry of alarm upon seeing this, and it hurriedly reached out to make a grabbing motion, but it was already too late.

A burst of black light emerged around the spherical lightning cage, and arcs of black lightning as thick as a grown man's arm shot out in all directions, causing the surrounding space to crackle and shudder.

One of these flailing arcs of lightning struck Han Li's back like a black whip, instantly raising a trail of black sparks and leaving a large section of his back charred black.

His brows instantly furrowed slightly as he hurriedly turned his gaze toward his own chest, only to find that a hair-thin strands of black light had suddenly appeared in the immortal acupoint that was taking shape there, and it quickly began to spread like a cobweb, staining the majority of the immortal acupoint black.

Han Li's pupils contracted drastically upon seeing this.

Even though he had never experienced it before, this appeared to be the acupoint decay of the three decays.

Han Li had already anticipated that this would happen, but now that it was truly happening, he still couldn't help but feel a little panicked.

Throughout the ages, there had been countless prodigious cultivators who had overcome all types of obstacles and hardships to successfully oppose the heavens and reach the True Immortal Stage. After that, they spent countless years grinding away, finally rising up above the other countless True Immortals to reach the pinnacle of the True Immortal Stage.

However, right as they were about to leave the True Immortal Stage behind altogether, they would be blighted by the curse of the acupoint decay, and all of their countless years of arduous cultivation could be for nought.

It was said that unlike the other two decays, the onset of acupoint decay was extremely fast and uncontrollable, like a spreading wildfire. Once one immortal acupoint fell into decay, all of the immortal acupoints that the cultivator had painstakingly nurtured would also suffer the same fate.

Once all of one's immortal acupoints fell into decay, one's immortal body would also wither away, and all of their immortal spiritual power would dissipate. In the end, they would be reduced to a mere mortal. In fact, they would be in an even worse situation than a mortal as they wouldn't even have the chance to begin cultivating anew.

The entirety of Han Li's attention was drawn to that acupoint, and he couldn't help but feel a little uneasy, fearing that all of his other acupoints could be infected one after another before decaying as well.

This was a very strange sensation that could only be experienced and not described.

It would be like if someone painstakingly nurtured a lotus flower, only for someone to drip a drop of lethal poison onto the flower right as it was about to bloom. The poison would quickly spread over the entire flower, then down its stem and across its leaves, leading to a rapid decay.

Right as Han Li was about to use his time law powers to counteract the decay, he noticed that something wasn't quite right.

As it turned out, the contaminated acupoint maintained a half-black, half-white coloration, and the decay didn't spread rapidly as all of the ancient records claimed it would.

What's going on here?

Chapter 460: Nascent Soul Cleansing

Why is it progressing differently from what I've read?

Han Li didn't know whether he should be concerned or elated by this turn of events.

Only upon closer inspection did he discover that there were hints of white light opposing the spreading black strands in the acupoint, forming what appeared to be a white umbrella that kept the black strands at bay.

This is... starpower!

This immortal acupoint just so happened to overlap with one of the 36 profound acupoints that he had previously opened, and to his surprise, the starpower within the profound acupoint was able to counteract the spread of acupoint decay.

Han Li was quite relieved to see this, and it seemed that he wouldn't have to resort to any extreme measures for now. With that in mind, he decided to continue observing the progression of the acupoint decay.

If the average True Immortal cultivator were to witness this, they would most likely be so envious and enraged that they would drop dead on the spot! How could there possibly be someone dealing with acupoint decay in such a leisurely fashion?!

At this moment, the black strands and the starpower in the acupoint were clashing like a pair of opposing armies, with neither side able to get the better of the other, and it seemed that they were evenly matched.

However, Han Li noticed that with each clash that took place, the black strands were always able to claim a minute advantage. This wasn't necessarily because they were more formidable than the starpower that opposed them. Instead, it was because even profound acupoints were still just that: acupoints.

While it was able to drastically enhance the immortal acupoint's ability to oppose the effects of acupoint decay, thereby significantly slowing down its onset, it wasn't able to fundamentally prevent the progression of acupoint decay.

In other words, the starpower within the profound acupoint could buy a cultivator precious time in the face of acupoint decay, but if the cultivator couldn't find a way to truly counteract acupoint decay, then they would still inevitably suffer the same terrible fate that had befallen countless True Immortals before them.

After observing the acupoint for a moment longer, Han Li made a hand seal, and his Mantra Treasured Axis instantly appeared at his behest.

All 360 of the Time Dao Runes on the axis had already been restored at this point, and they were giving off formidable time law power fluctuations. At the same time, a beam of golden light shot out of the Eye of Truth at the center of the axis, shining down upon that immortal acupoint.

As soon as the golden light shone down onto the immortal acupoint, it immediately transformed into a series of golden threads of light that were visible to the naked eye, and they became entangled with the black strands before slowly pulling them out like uprooting carrots from the soil.

As soon as these two powers came into contact with one another, Han Li immediately felt as if the skin there were being tugged on, and the intense, tearing pain made him draw an involuntary sharp breath.

An indescribable sense of agony was instantly transmitted from that immortal acupoint into his consciousness, and he hurriedly made a hand seal before pointing a finger at the Mantra Treasured Axis,

upon which it began to revolve rapidly, while the golden light radiating from its Time Dao Runes grew even brighter.

At the same time, a translucent golden light suddenly shot out of the Eye of Truth.

This golden thread was none other than the time law thread that he had painstakingly manifested, and it was imbued with incredibly pure time law powers.

The time law thread shot through the air like an arrow, piercing into that immortal acupoint of Han Li's in a flash.

As soon as the golden thread pierced into the immortal acupoint, a layer of golden light instantly emerged to encompass the entire acupoint.

As soon as the black strands within the immortal acupoint came into contact with this golden light, the former instantly began to melt away like snow under the scorching sun, and it didn't take long before they were completely cleansed.

All of this had taken place in the span of just a few seconds, and after the black strands completely receded, the surrounding world's origin qi began to surge into the immortal acupoints once again.

In the face of one of the three paramount laws, the acupoint decay that had struck fear into the hearts of countless late-True Immortal cultivators had been dispelled with ease.

Han Li heaved an internal sigh of relief upon seeing this, and he closed his eyes as he continued to cultivate.

A few minutes later, the 36th immortal acupoint was finally completely opened.

A resounding boom rang out within Han Li's body as all 36 of his immortal acupoints lit up in unison, forming a beam of blinding golden light that erupted upward from his body before piercing straight into the dark clouds up above.

A rare look of surprise appeared on Daoist Xie's face as it witnessed this from above.

"How could this be? How did he manage to stave off the acupoint decay so quickly? Is the combination of a Profound Immortal Physique and time law powers really this potent at counteracting acupoint decay?"

Of course, this was naturally a good thing, and it returned to the rooftop of the azure bamboo pavilion on the edge of the city.

Meanwhile, rumbling thunderclaps rang out incessantly as the dark clouds in the sky gradually faded. However, instead of a clear, blue sky, what was revealed was a vast pool of golden lightning. The lightning inside had been liquefied and was shimmering radiantly.

Han Li took a glance up at the pool of lightning, then reached out to make a grabbing motion, and the intricate jade box that had been placed in front of him this entire time instantly flew into his grasp.

With a casual sweep of his sleeve, the talismans adhered to the box were removed, and the lid flew off on its own.

After the lid was removed, a peculiar medicinal aroma instantly wafted out of the jade box. Inside the jade box was a longan-sized golden pill, and it was none other than the Golden Soul Pill that Han Li had refined in the past.

Han Li plucked the pill out of the box between two of his fingers, then brought it up to his eyes for a closer examination before swallowing it.

As the pill slid down his throat, a burst of gentle golden light instantly appeared over his chest and abdomen, basking his face in a golden glow.

A burst of peculiar energy emerged within his chest and abdomen, but instead of descending into his dantian, it rose straight up into his consciousness to fuse as one with his soul.

The first thing that Han Li felt was a sharp pain in his head, immediately following which he became unprecedentedly sensitive and conscious. In that instant, he felt as if all of his senses had been elevated to a whole new level.

The world before him was still the same world, but it also seemed to be completely different.

He was now able to see the flow of spiritual power in the air, he was able to hear the sound of dust particles colliding around him, and he was able to feel even the faintest gust of wind, as if all of his pores had been completely opened up.

Even without having to use his spiritual sense, he was able to detect everything in every single corner of this secret area. He was able to sense all of the changes taking place around him, and even the faint pulsing of the core in Daoist Xie's body had become clearly audible to him.

Right at this moment, his ears twitched slightly, and he felt as if he could hear something beneath the stone platform in that abandoned garden.

Right as he was about to focus on the sound and listen more carefully, this brief period of heightened sensitivity passed, and his senses returned to normal, while his soul became denser and more resilient.

Han Li immediately reined in his attention and began to focus. He knew that the final obstacle standing in the path of his progression to the Golden Immortal Stage had arrived.

After taking a deep breath, he tapped the top of his own head, and his nascent soul instantly flew out from within, enveloped within a layer of golden light.

Upon emerging from his body, his nascent soul flew around him for a moment before rising up into the air, flying headfirst into the pool of golden lightning up above.

As had been established, the nascent souls of Golden Immortals were far more formidable than that of True Immortals, and the reason for this was that during a Golden Immortal Stage breakthrough, a pool of heavenly lightning would emerge in the heavens. As long as a True Immortal Stage nascent soul could withstand the baptism by lightning, then it would be elevated to a whole new level.

As soon as Han Li's nascent soul entered the pool of lightning, the entire pool instantly began to churn violently, much like a pot of hot oil that had just had a drop of water splashed into it.

The liquefied golden lightning within the pool began to crash into Han Li's nascent soul in waves, while the nascent soul made a hand seal before sitting down within the pool with its legs crossed.

It remained completely still even as the pool of golden lightning churned violently around it, allowing the liquefied golden lightning to strike its body relentlessly.

Dense arcs of golden lightning appeared around the nascent soul like a golden robe, clashing against the golden light radiating from its body.

Meanwhile, Han Li's physical body remained seated in its original posture, but his brows were tightly furrowed in agony.

At this moment, his entire consciousness was churning just as violently as the pool of golden lightning.

Arcs of blinding golden lightning were flashing and intertwining incessantly, filling virtually the entirety of his consciousness, and each flash of lightning was like a whip that struck his soul.

He was able to clearly feel the torment that his nascent soul was having to endure within the pool of lightning, and this agony on a spiritual level was even more excruciating to endure than any form of physical pain.

Han Li didn't know much about what was involved in a breakthrough to the Golden Immortal Stage, and he was planning to enquire Daoist Hu Yan about the subject following the conclusion of this immortal manor adventure, but never did he think that he would be attempting a breakthrough in this random secret area.

For a True Immortal, opening the 36 immortal acupoints only took them halfway to reaching the Golden Immortal Stage, and the other half of the breakthrough hinged on the outcome of this nascent soul refinement process.

The outcome of the nascent soul refinement process was something that was dependent on both the resilience of the nascent soul and the will of the heavens.

Upon entering the lightning pool, the nascent soul would've essentially entered a lightning prison, and it was entirely up to the heavens when the lightning pool would fade. In some cases, the refinement process would end in just half a day, while others could be subjected to this torment for days on end.

The longer this process dragged on, the more significantly the nascent soul would be enhanced, but at the same time, the probability of the nascent soul being destroyed in the process would also steadily rise.

For those with unstable nascent souls, sending their nascent souls into the lightning pool would be no different from committing suicide. There was no chance that a frail nascent soul would be able to endure this refinement process, and its destruction would be inevitable.

However, Han Li certainly didn't fall into that camp. His nascent soul was far more resilient than that of the average True Immortal to begin with, and he had cultivated the Spirit Refinement Technique to the fourth level, making his nascent soul more stable and resilient than that of many Golden Immortals. Furthermore, having just consumed that Golden Soul Pill, he was almost excessively well-equipped to endure this refinement process.

The only question left was how long this refinement process was going to last.

Daoist Xie was observing all of this from afar with a calm look on its face, and it was unclear what it was thinking.