

A Record 471

Chapter 471: Battle of Domains

In the distance, the Nightmare Dragon remained completely still as it observed the unfolding scene with gray light flashing incessantly in its eyes.

Right at this moment, a tiny speck of golden light suddenly emerged at the center of the black and white millstone, and it was as minuscule as a firefly, but also very eye-catching.

In the blink of an eye, the speck of golden light began to rapidly expand while spreading outward, and countless golden ripples began to surge throughout the surrounding area, giving off a vast law aura.

The white ice and black lightning were both instantly slowed down significantly upon making contact with this golden light, which continued to expand rapidly, encompassing an area that was over 10 kilometers in size in the blink of an eye to form a massive golden area.

The Nightmare Dragon's expression changed slightly upon seeing this, and it instantly flew back to several dozen kilometers away, just barely avoiding the fate of being encompassed within the golden spirit domain.

However, the white python and the black fish weren't able to react as quickly, and they were also swallowed up in the golden area, with their movements slowing down significantly.

Immediately thereafter, Han Li shot out of the ice and lightning, completely unscathed.

He then raised a hand before flicking a finger through the air, and two extremely thin strands of golden light instantly shot forth, hurtling directly toward the pair of spirit beasts.

Alarmed and horrified expressions instantly appeared on their faces as they tried to take evasive measures, but the effects of Han Li's time law powers meant that they were far too slow.

The two streaks of golden light flashed over their bodies, and both of them were split into two from head to toe in complete silence.

The two halves of their bodies split apart extremely slowly, and they were still moving in the direction that the two of them had attempted to flee in, while the blood that was gushing out of their wounds was also moving just as slowly.

In contrast, the two threads of golden light were extraordinarily fast, and they vanished into thin air in the blink of an eye before reappearing in front of Han Li an instant later.

One of them was wound around a tiny white snake, while the other was wrapped around a miniature black fish.

The two nascent souls were completely immobilized, as if they had been frozen in time.

In a lightning-fast sequence, two Golden Immortal Stage demon beasts had been slain.

The Nightmare Dragon's pupils contracted slightly upon seeing this.

"Let's not waste any more time with these unnecessary probing gestures, Fellow Daoist Qu Ling. Did you really think these two demon beasts would've been able to harm me at all?" Han Li scoffed as he cast his gaze toward the Nightmare Dragon, and at the same time, he swept a sleeve through the air to release a burst of golden light, which swept up the pair of nascent souls.

The two nascent souls then instantly vanished from the spot, while the Nightmare Dragon exclaimed in a stunned voice, "This is impossible! If you had a spirit domain of your own, then there's no way you would've been trapped in mine! Unless..."

"Your suspicions are correct," Han Li confirmed with a faint smile. "I really have to thank you, Fellow Daoist Qu Ling."

Up to this point, Han Li was able to confirm that the spirit domain manifestation method taught to him by the soul fragment was real, and it had allowed him to attain his own spirit domain. This was the first time that he was using it, and it had worked exceptionally well.

"What are you saying?" the Nightmare Dragon asked as a hint of fury flashed through its eyes.

"Qu Ling, you tried to take my life with your spirit domain earlier, so let's have our spirit domains clash and see which one comes out on top!" Han Li declared in a cold voice as he flew through the air, and his enormous golden spirit domain followed him like a golden cloud.

In the distance, Jin Tong had pulled out a small gong, and she was beating it in a haphazard manner as she yelled in encouragement, "You can do it, Han Li! Take down that old witch!"

Meanwhile, Lu Yuqing was hovering in mid-air while observing Han Li from afar with amazement in her eyes.

He's using the laws of time!

In the next instant, a burst of light flashed over her body, and she vanished into the city down below without attracting any attention.

Meanwhile, radiant gray light had emerged over the Nightmare Dragon's entire body, and it was flying back in retreat, not allowing Han Li's golden spirit domain to come into contact with itself.

At the same time, it raised one of its claws, and the gray cloud up above instantly descended to envelop its entire body.

In the blink of an eye, the gray cloud transformed into a gray spirit domain as well, and it began to expand outward, reaching close to 20 kilometers in size in the blink of an eye. Its spirit domain was close to twice the size of Han Li's, and it swallowed up his spirit domain within it.

An alarmed look appeared in Han Li's eyes upon seeing this. During their previous battle, the spirit domain that she had unleashed had been far smaller than this. He had guessed that that wasn't the limit of her spirit domain, but he didn't think that it could be expanded so drastically.

Encompassed within the gray spirit domain, Han Li's brows furrowed slightly as he felt his strength rapidly seeping away, while his immortal spiritual power circulation was also becoming rather sluggish.

He immediately gave a cold harrumph as a golden light barrier appeared over his body. Bursts of time law powers were flowing within the light barrier, alleviating much of the feebleness in his body.

However, in the face of Qu Ling's true spirit domain, even his time law powers were unable to completely ward off the effects of her spirit domain.

While the Nightmare Dragon was flying back in retreat, that gray throne reappeared on the top of its head amid a flash of gray light.

Every single one of the spirit patterns on the gray throne instantly began to radiate dazzling gray light, while the three mirror projections emerged behind it once again.

The first mirror was radiating dazzling golden light, but the other two mirrors were completely dull and devoid of luster.

The Nightmare Dragon pointed a claw at the second mirror before releasing a streak of translucent light, and the second mirror instantly began to glow brightly as well, shooting forth a burst of radiant black light that transformed into a giant black sword before crashing down toward Han Li.

The black sword was giving off a burst of formidable law power fluctuations, the same law power that was able to sow the seed of insanity in the target's heart.

However, as soon as the giant black sword entered Han Li's spirit domain, it was instantly slowed down significantly, and he was able to dodge it with ease.

The Nightmare Dragon's heart sank slightly upon seeing this.

Right at this moment, the golden spirit domain around Han Li suddenly swept back without any warning before vanishing into his body.

Without the protection of his time law powers, a pained look instantly appeared on his face, but he gritted his teeth and withstood it.

The Nightmare Dragon was rather taken aback to see this, but before it had a chance to do anything, Han Li began to chant an urgent incantation, following which his Mantra Treasured Axis appeared behind him before beginning to spin in reverse.

Han Li's entire body instantly lit up with dazzling golden light once again, and he shot forward at an incredible speed, leaving a trail of golden afterimages in his wake.

In the blink of an eye, he had covered over half of the distance between himself and the Nightmare Dragon.

The Nightmare Dragon's expression changed drastically upon seeing this, and it let loose an alarmed roar, but right as it was about to do something, the golden light radiating from Han Li's body brightened even further while spreading outward to form his golden spirit domain again in the blink of an eye.

Before the Nightmare Dragon had a chance to take any evasive measures, it was encompassed within Han Li's spirit domain.

As a result, its speed was drastically diminished, and the distance between itself and Han Li was shrinking even more rapidly.

The Nightmare Dragon's expression changed drastically as it opened its mouth to release a pillar of gray light.

Countless runes could be seen flashing within the pillar of gray light, and it vanished into the third mirror behind the gray throne in a flash.

Traces of white light instantly emerged on the surface of the third mirror, and even though the white light was very bright, it was also completely devoid of vitality, much like the bright gleam that a bleached skeleton would emit while being baked under the sun.

The Nightmare Dragon opened its mouth once again to release a ball of gray blood essence, which swelled drastically to form a cloud of gray mist, within which were nine translucent gray threads that wrapped themselves around the three mirror projections.

The three mirrors shuddered in unison while releasing a burst of suction force that sucked in all of the gray mist in the blink of an eye.

Immediately thereafter, three pillars of light that were gray, black, and white in color, respectively, shot out of the mirrors to form dozens of three-colored dragon projections, every single one of which was comparable in size to the Nightmare Dragon, and they were giving off three types of completely different law power fluctuations.

The dozens of three-colored dragon projections instantly pounced at Han Li at the Nightmare Dragon's behest, forming a profound array as they hurtled toward the oncoming Han Li.

Thanks to their special array, the dragon projections were able to move at an extraordinary speed, and even though they were affected by Han Li's golden spirit domain, they weren't much slower than him.

Han Li's brows furrowed slightly upon seeing this, but he then gave a cold harrumph as he swept a sleeve through their air, and three giant azure swords emerged in front of him.

Each sword was over 1,000 feet in length, and they were radiating dazzling azure light, giving them the appearance of three radiant azure suns.

Incredibly thick arcs of golden lightning emerged over the surfaces of the three giant swords.

Now that Han Li had reached the mid-Golden Immortal Stage, he was able to control three of his Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords at once without much trouble.

With a flick of his finger, three time law threads shot forth, and each of them vanished into one of the Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords in a flash.

The three Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords instantly drew to an abrupt halt in mid-air, while the azure light that they were radiating became several times brighter, and it was interspersed with blinding golden light.

The thick arcs of Divine Devilbane Lightning flashing over the swords also brightened significantly, then transformed into a series of giant lightning runes that revolved around the swords.

The three giant azure swords began to tremble as a burst of sword qi that was several times more formidable than before erupted forth, causing the entire surrounding space to shudder.

In the next instant, the three giant lightning swords released a flurry of lightning sword projections at Han Li's behest, and the sword projections swallowed up all of opposing dragon projections before destroying them in the blink of an eye.

Meanwhile, Han Li only paused for a moment before continuing to fly forward like lightning, spurred on by his Reversal True Axis secret technique.

Before long, he was no more than several thousand feet away from the Nightmare Dragon.

Chapter 472: Slaying the True Spirit

"It's time to put an end to this!" Han Li declared as he began making a rapid string of hand seals, and dazzling golden light erupted out of his body as the Mantra Treasured Axis abruptly began revolving in the right direction again.

Layers upon layers of golden ripples surged out of the axis, instantly permeating throughout the entire surrounding area in a radius of over 10,000 feet, encompassing the Nightmare Dragon within them.

Everything that was swept up within the golden ripples was instantly immobilized, as if they had been frozen in time, and the same applied to the Nightmare Dragon, which was looking on with its mouth wide open in astonishment.

Han Li swept a sleeve through the air, and the three Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords appeared beside the Nightmare Dragon in a flash, then revolved around it like lightning.

The Nightmare Dragon's body was instantly sliced into over 10 pieces, but the pieces of its body didn't separate, nor did any blood emerge.

At the same time, a time law thread emerged out of thin air before piercing into the Nightmare Dragon's head in a flash.

Immediately thereafter, the time law thread re-emerged while wrapped tightly around a miniature gray dragon, and it was none other than Qu Ling's nascent soul.

A burst of golden ripples surged forth from the time law thread, encompassing the gray nascent soul to ensure that it remained bound.

Han Li heaved an internal sigh of relief as he swept a sleeve through the air once again, and his golden spirit domain instantly surged back into his body as a vast expanse of golden light.

The golden ripples around him also flashed momentarily before surging back into the Mantra Treasured Axis, which, in turn, slowly faded away.

Right at this moment, a perplexed look appeared on his face, and his Mantra Treasured Axis reappeared behind him at his behest.

As it turned out, around a dozen more of the Time Dao Runes on his Mantra Treasured Axis had faded, but he had completely failed to notice this earlier.

A hint of surprise flashed through his eyes upon seeing this, and he injected some of his spiritual sense into his Soul Nurturing Burner to inform the soul fragment inside of this situation.

The soul fragment wasn't surprised at all, and it said, "That's only to be expected. You think immortal spiritual power alone would be enough to support an ability as formidable as a spirit domain? Maintaining a spirit domain will require law power expenditure, so it's no surprise that some of your Time Dao Runes have faded."

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

Thankfully, now that he had attained 10 time law threads, it wasn't going to take very long to recover these Time Dao Runes.

With that in mind, he swept a sleeve through the air, and the three Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords immediately flew back to him, following which the time law threads inside also vanished into his body.

The golden light radiating from the Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords instantly faded, and the aura that was emanating from them also diminished significantly.

Han Li was quite intrigued to see this.

His Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords already possessed tremendous power, yet just the injection of a time law thread was enough to enhance their powers significantly. If he could imbue these swords with law powers that were actually suitable for them, who knew just how powerful they could become?

With that in mind, a hint of excitement instantly welled up in his heart.

He took a deep breath to compose himself, then withdrew the three Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords up his sleeve.

Even though he had managed to slay Qu Ling without much trouble using his spirit domain in conjunction with his Mantra Treasured Axis, maintaining his spirit domain and using his Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords had both been quite taxing on his immortal spiritual power.

Even though he had already reached the mid-Golden Immortal Stage, the immortal spiritual power expenditure had still been quite immense, and he was currently looking a little pale.

The good thing about his spirit domain was that it encompassed quite a large area, but its power was still rather limited, while the golden ripples released by the Mantra Treasured Axis covered a far smaller area, but were also significantly more formidable.

With that in mind, he flipped a hand over to produce a crimson pill, yet right after he swallowed it, Qu Ling's nascent soul suddenly began to struggle vigorously as dazzling gray light erupted out of its body.

The time law thread around it was beginning to loosen slightly in the face of its struggles.

It seemed that the gray nascent soul had used some type of ability that had granted it immunity to the effects of Han Li's time law powers.

A cold look appeared on Han Li's face upon seeing this, and he pointed a finger at the gray nascent soul, upon which the time law thread glowed even brighter as it ensnared the gray nascent soul once again.

Right at this moment, the gray nascent soul let loose a piercing shriek, upon which its body swelled rapidly to four or five times its original size.

Han Li's brows furrowed slightly upon seeing this, while the time law thread around the nascent soul dug deep into its body.

Right as he was about to make a hand seal to completely seal the nascent soul, it abruptly exploded into a burst of gray light that vanished into nothingness.

A blurry dragon projection then shot out of the gray light, and it was none other than Qu Ling's soul. The soul was enveloped within a layer of extremely faint silver light, and it was moving at an astonishing speed, vanishing into the distance in the blink of an eye.

Han Li's brows furrowed even further upon seeing this.

He had thought that Qu Ling's nascent soul would be completely immobilized by his time law thread, so it came as quite a surprise to him that it was able to get away.

It seemed that he had underestimated the power of a Golden Immortal Stage nascent soul.

He shook his head as he withdrew his time law thread.

Even if Qu Ling were a true spirit, only her soul remained at this point, so she wouldn't be able to pose any further threat to him.

Right at this moment, the three-colored spirit domain that Qu Ling had unleashed earlier shuddered a few times before rapidly fading away.

The body of the Nightmare Dragon inside instantly fell apart before falling out of the sky.

With another sweep of his sleeve, Han Li sent an azure bowl flying through the air, and it swelled to around an acre in size in the blink of an eye, catching all of the parts of the Nightmare Dragon's carcass without missing even a single one.

After that, the azure bowl flew back to him at his behest, shrinking as it did so, and by the time it fell onto the palm of his hand, it had already reverted back to its original size.

Han Li took a glance into the bowl, and a pleased look appeared on his face as he flipped a hand over to stow it away.

Immediately thereafter, he drew the gray throne that was still hovering in mid-air nearby to himself as well.

After a brief inspection, he stowed the gray throne away too.

Right at this moment, Jin Tong appeared beside him amid a flash of golden light, and the gong that she had been beating earlier was nowhere to be seen.

"How useless can you be, Han Li? You couldn't even stop a nascent soul from self-detonating? What a waste!" Jin Tong grumbled with a displeased look on her face.

"A waste? Why do you say that?" Han Li asked with a perplexed expression.

"Golden Immortal Stage nascent souls are filled with tremendous power, and they're a fantastic food source for me!" Jin Tong grumbled.

Han Li immediately flipped a hand over to produce a white jade box upon hearing this, and the lid of the box flew off on its own to reveal a pair of nascent souls, one black and one white. The two nascent souls belonged to none other than the white python and the black fish that Han Li had slain earlier.

Jin Tong's eyes immediately lit up at the sight of the two nascent souls, and she began staring intently at them.

"I was going to use these two nascent souls for something else, but you can eat them to help your recovery," Han Li said as he offered the jade box to Jin Tong.

The displeasure on Jin Tong's face instantly turned to elation upon hearing this, and she swiped the jade box from Han Li as she said, "Looks like you're not a completely ungrateful bastard! Seeing as you're being so sincere, I suppose I can accept this nascent soul."

She took a deep breath, then opened her mouth to release a burst of golden light, which drew in the pair of nascent souls so that she could munch on them, and a blissful look instantly appeared on her round and childish face.

In her mouth, the two near-indestructible Golden Immortal Stage nascent souls were nothing more than a snack, and Han Li was left feeling a little speechless as he looked on with a hint of doting affection in his eyes.

Right at this moment, bursts of golden light emerged over Jin Tong's body, and they rippled like water before surging toward her arms.

Her pair of semi-transparent arms quickly gained a more substantial form, and shortly thereafter, Jin Tong swallowed the pair of nascent souls, then wiped her mouth with the back of her new hand before letting loose a loud burp.

The golden light that was surging over her body quickly faded, and her arms also made a full recovery.

"Looks like Golden Immortal Stage nascent souls really are a good source of sustenance for you," Han Li remarked. "By the way, you've certainly changed a lot since we were last together."

"Do you not like what I look like now? Speaking of Golden Immortal Stage nascent souls, if I had one more, I would be able to completely recover from my injuries. It's all your fault! We could've had three nascent souls if you were more careful!" Jin Tong said, still feeling a little disgruntled.

"Don't worry. Right now, there are many Golden Immortals gathered in the immortal manor. Even if we don't go to them, they'll most likely end up coming to us," Han Li said as he turned his gaze to a certain direction.

"You're saying there are more of them to come? That's great! With my powers and your spirit domain, none of them will be able to get away from us!" Jin Tong said with a confident grin, baring two rows of gleaming white teeth.

"Setting that aside for now, Jin Tong, there's something that I want to ask you," Han Li said as a serious look suddenly appeared on his face.

Jin Tong was rather taken aback by the sudden shift in Han Li's demeanor, and a slightly anxious look appeared on her face as she asked, "What is it?"

"Back when I first ascended to the Immortal Realm, I was forced back into a lower realm after running into a powerful enemy, and due to their law powers, I lost a lot of my memories. Do you still recall what happened to us in the Immortal Realm prior to that?" Han Li asked.

Even though he had learned some things from Tao Yu and Fang Ban, he still hadn't managed to fully piece together what had happened to him following his ascension, and now that Tao Yu's inkstone had been detonated, he had lost his final lead.

For some reason, Han Li really wanted to recover these memories.

"I don't remember anything from that time, either. My memories of the Immortal Realm start from the battle against that guy called Fang Ban. I was able to slay a spirit pet that he sent after me, then circled back around to try and find you, but you were gone.

"After that, I ran into Qu Ling, and she captured me. She was quite good at nurturing spirit pets, so when I was with her, I always had stuff to eat, and my cultivation base improved rapidly. That's why I decided to stay with her and pretend to have been subdued as a spirit pet," Jin Tong replied.

Chapter 473: Tallying the Spoils

Han Li's brows furrowed slightly upon hearing this.

Even though he had managed to recover Daoist Xie and Jin Tong, he still had no idea what had happened during the 300 years immediately after his ascension. Furthermore, with the way that things were progressing, he became more and more convinced that there were some very complex circumstances involved, and that there was a very good chance he had been swept up in some type of conspiracy.

On top of that, he had made quite a few enemies, some that he was aware of, while others were still in the shadows, and most of these enemies were present in the Infernal Frost Immortal Manor. Fortunately, he had somehow stumbled into a massive opportunity, allowing him to progress all the way to the mid-Golden Immortal Stage.

With his current cultivation base, he now had the power required to protect himself. As for his lost memories, he would just have to find a way to recover them after he left the immortal manor.

"Let's go and hunt down those Golden Immortals you were talking about, Han Li! That battle against that old witch was really taxing on me!" Jin Tong pouted as she tugged on Han Li's sleeve.

"We should indeed be leaving this place. Also, if you encounter an enemy that you can't defeat in the future, then run away. Don't bite off more than you can chew," Han Li cautioned with a serious expression.

"You're so ungrateful! I did all that to save you!" Jin Tong grumbled in a disgruntled manner.

A faint smile appeared on Han Li's face as a burst of azure light appeared over his body, and he was just about to depart when he swept his gaze over his surroundings with slightly furrowed brows.

In the wake of the battle that had just taken place, the entire area aside from the golden palace had been razed to the ground, so everything was laid bare to Han Li, yet Lu Yuqing was nowhere to be seen.

"Jin Tong, did you notice where the woman who was with me went during my battle against Qu Ling?" Han Li asked.

"What woman? Oh right, that woman... She was observing the battle from afar initially, then suddenly unleashed some type of secret technique to vanish into the ground," Jin Tong replied.

"You're saying she ran away?" Han Li asked as his brows furrowed slightly.

"She did. She was with you, so I didn't try to stop her. Otherwise, I could've done so with ease," Jin Tong replied with a wide smile.

Han Li paid no heed to Jin Tong's boastful statement as he stood on the spot in silence, and it was unclear what he was thinking.

Jin Tong pouted slightly with displeasure upon seeing this, and she turned her head away, refusing to look at him any longer, but it didn't take long before she began sneaking glances at him again out of the corner of her eye.

Right at this moment, Han Li rose up into the sky, and blue light flashed in his eyes as he scoured his gaze over the surrounding area.

Moments later, the blue light in his eyes faded, but his brows became even more tightly furrowed.

He had just searched through the entire nearby area, but wasn't able to detect the auras of any other cultivators, nor was there any residual aura left behind by Lu Yuqing.

"Are we going or not? I'm starving!" Jin Tong complained as she planted her hands on her hips.

"I'm looking for her because she has an incomplete map of the immortal manor. I was only able to make it to this place thanks to her map," Han Li explained.

What he didn't mention was that he felt like there was something rather strange about Lu Yuqing. In particular, her demeanor and behavior had become increasingly more peculiar after they left the Light Frost Palace, and it was very abnormal that she had suddenly disappeared without leaving any trace behind.

"If we don't have a map, then we'll just have to look on our own. What's the big deal?" Jin Tong retorted with a nonchalant pout.

"You're right, let's go," Han Li replied with a nod, then flew away into the distance as a streak of azure light, while Jin Tong followed along as a streak of golden light.

The two of them flew for close to an hour before stopping near a semi-collapsed palace.

"Let's rest here for a bit," Han Li said as he took a seat in a side hall that was still relatively intact, then swept a hand through the air to release several dozen streaks of blue light to set up a blue array.

Jin Tong sat down beside Han Li, and the latter exhaled before closing his eyes and channeling his cultivation arts to digest the pill that he had taken earlier.

A layer of gentle azure light appeared over his body, while Jin Tong took a glance at him before also closing her eyes to cultivate.

Close to a day passed by before the azure light over Han Li's body faded, and at this point, he had already completely replenished his immortal spiritual power reserves.

Meanwhile, Jin Tong was still enveloped in a layer of golden light, and the spiritual qi around her was constantly streaming into her mouth.

Han Li took a glance at Jin Tong, then withdrew his gaze before sweeping a sleeve through the air, and two objects appeared before him, namely the gray throne and the azure bowl that contained Qu Ling's remains.

Han Li took a glance at the gray throne, then cast an incantation seal into it, and a layer of gray light instantly emerged over the throne, but it wasn't all that bright.

As he continued to cast more incantation seals into the throne, the gray light that it was emanating gradually became brighter, and the three mirror projections slowly emerged, giving off gray, black, and white light, respectively.

Han Li's eyes lit up slightly upon seeing this. This gray throne was quite a formidable treasure that was superior to all of the immortal treasures in his possession.

What was even more remarkable was that it contained three completely different types of law power, and that was something that he had never seen before.

It was clearly an extremely powerful treasure, but unfortunately, it was Qu Ling's bonded treasure, and it contained an extremely deep-rooted bonded mark that was impossible to remove.

Even if Han Li could forcibly refine the treasure, he would only be able to unleash 50% to 60% of its power at most.

With that in mind, Han Li heaved a faint sigh before stowing the gray throne away, then turned his attention to the azure bowl.

He made a grabbing motion with one hand, and several streaks of light flew out of the bowl before landing in front of him, revealing themselves to be four small pouches of different colors, a white jade belt with hundreds of gemstones of different colors embedded into it, and a black ring.

All of these items had been carried by Qu Ling, and Han Li hadn't had a chance to examine them yet.

First, Han Li picked up the four little pouches, and after a brief examination, his eyes instantly lit up slightly.

As opposed to storage pouches, these were spirit beast pouches, and they were all quite remarkable. Each of them had massive internal space, and they were essentially miniature secret areas.

Furthermore, each space was filled with extremely abundant spiritual qi and had differing climates and environments.

Refining a spirit beast pouch like this was definitely going to cost no less than what it took to refine a powerful Acquired Immortal Treasure.

However, the four pouches were all completely empty, and Han Li presumed that they had been used to house the Golden Immortal Stage spirit beasts that he had already slain.

A hint of elation flashed through his eyes as he stowed the four pouches away.

Even though he still had no use for them for the time being, they were priceless treasures, and at the very least, he should be able to sell them to cultivators or sects that specialized in nurturing spirit beasts for a large quantity of Immortal Origin Stones.

After that, he picked up the white jade belt, and his eyes immediately lit up once again.

The belt was also an object used to store spirit beasts, and every single gem on the belt was an independent space, containing all types of different spirit beasts.

Some spaces only housed a single spirit beast each, while some housed thousands, even tens of thousands.

However, none of these spirit beasts were all that powerful, and True Immortal Stage ones among them were extremely rare, while most of them were below the Grand Ascension Stage.

Aside from that, each space contained a stone plaque that denoted the special characteristics and uses of the spirit beasts being kept inside. As it turned out, not all of them were meant for battle. Instead, there were also some who specialized in exploration and tracking.

At this point, Han Li had accumulated a vast wealth of experience, but even so, his horizons were significantly broadened as he browsed through this vast catalog of spirit beasts.

However, much to Han Li's surprise and dismay, all of the spirit beasts within the jade belt were dead, and there wasn't even a single one alive.

Furthermore, none of the spirit beasts had any visible injuries, and that made their deaths even more bewildering.

After a brief moment of contemplation, Han Li summoned an azure deer carcass from the jade belt.

The spirit beast had blood flowing out of all of its orifices, and Han Li extended a finger forward to send a speck of azure light vanishing into the deer's head.

Moments later, his brows furrowed slightly, and he summoned another carcass, this time of a white ice silkworm, before repeating the process.

A furious look flashed through his eyes as he determined that all of the spirit beasts had perished due to a type of restriction.

Qu Ling had planted an extremely inhumane restriction in all of their bodies, one that would lead to the deaths of all of these spirit beasts should she ever meet her demise.

Han Li shook his head with a forlorn expression before stowing the jade belt away as well.

This jade belt was most likely even more valuable than the four high-grade spirit beast pouches.

Finally, he picked up the black ring before pressing it against his own forehead, and as soon as he injected his spiritual sense into the ring, an astonished look instantly appeared on his face.

With a sweep of his sleeve, a huge pile of items appeared on the ground, almost filling half of the entire hall.

These items were very diverse, containing everything from spirit plants and materials to ore and treasures, and they were radiating lights of all types of different colors to illuminate the entire hall.

Furthermore, almost every single one of these items contained extremely potent spiritual power.

Han Li had found many treasures after entering the immortal manor, but none of them could even begin to compare with Qu Ling's astonishing collection.

However, some of these items clearly belonged to other cultivators, indicating that she had claimed the lives and treasures of many past victims.

All of a sudden, a thought occurred to Han Li, and he flipped a hand over to produce a crimson badge, one that belonged to the True Flame Sect.

There were as many as six or seven identical badges in Qu Ling's collection, telling him that all of the True Flame Sect's cultivators had already been slain by her.

Han Li couldn't help but shake his head and heave another forlorn sigh. He wasn't exactly fond of the True Flame Sect's cultivators, but it was still rather saddening to see these temporary allies meeting their demise.

Han Li casually cast the True Flame Sect badges aside, then continued to examine Qu Ling's collection.

A short while later, his eyes lit up as he made a grabbing motion to draw a nearby green gourd into his grasp.

This was none other than the Profound Heavenly Gourd that Qu Ling had used earlier.

Chapter 474: This is Mine!

Han Li opened his mouth to release a burst of azure light, which vanished into the green gourd, and a layer of green light instantly appeared over its surface.

The green light was filled with countless tiny runes that were flowing like water while spreading outward, giving off an impression of abundant vitality.

A burst of faint law power fluctuations was also emanating from the gentle green light, and a hint of elation appeared in Han Li's eyes.

It seemed that a faint spiritual connection had been formed between himself and the green gourd.

Han Li slashed a fingernail over one of his fingertips, drawing a drop of blood essence that dripped onto the green gourd, but instead of fusing into the gourd, the drop of blood merely slid down its side.

However, not only was Han Li not disappointed to see this, his eyes lit up instead as he nodded to himself, confirming that this was indeed a Profound Heavenly Treasure.

Even though he once possessed the Profound Heavenly Spiritslash Sword, he didn't actually know very much about Profound Heavenly Treasures, and only after arriving in the Immortal Realm did he gradually begin to find some records and scriptures pertaining to Profound Heavenly Treasures.

These treasures were born from heaven and earth, and they were different from normal immortal treasures. One important property of Profound Heavenly Treasures was that they couldn't be refined using blood essence. Instead, they could only be slowly refined over time in one's body using their immortal spiritual power, and this refinement process was going to be a very lengthy one.

In the case of the Profound Heavenly Spiritslash Sword, it had been nurtured in Han Li's body for countless years before he was slowly able to wield it.

Furthermore, if the owner of a Profound Heavenly Treasure were killed, and the treasure fell into the hands of someone else, then that person would be able to wield it right away. In contrast, in a normal immortal treasure, the mark of the previous owner had to be removed first before it could be refined again, and even then, there was a chance that the new owner would never be able to tap into the treasure's full power.

Han Li took a deep breath, then pressed the green gourd against his forehead, and he was only just barely able to force a wisp of his spiritual sense into it, upon which a surprised look instantly appeared on his face.

Inside the gourd was a large space that was filled with green light, which was swirling to form an enormous green vortex.

The space deeper within the gourd was rather blurry and indistinct, but there seemed to be something else in there.

Hovering at the center of the green vortex was none other than Han Li's Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Sword, which Qu Ling had captured earlier, and Han Li was quite relieved to see this.

The Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords were his bonded immortal treasures, and if he were to lose one, then that would spell a lot of trouble.

Instead of immediately recovering his flying sword, he continued to extend his spiritual sense deeper into the internal space of the gourd.

However, his spiritual sense had only just reached the edge of the vortex when it was stopped in its tracks by a burst of invisible force.

Han Li was rather taken aback by this, and he tried to force his way through, but to no avail.

It was clear that this invisible barrier couldn't be bypassed using his spiritual sense alone, and he would have to find some other way to break through it. Perhaps this would only be achievable once he refined the gourd to the point that he was able to truly control it.

Of course, it was naturally the case that the more profound this gourd was, the more it would benefit him.

With that in mind, he withdrew his spiritual sense and wrapped it around the Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Sword before tugging on it, and the sword immediately flew out of the opening of the gourd.

The azure light emanating from the Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Sword had dimmed a little compared with before, and Han Li's brows furrowed slightly upon seeing this.

However, as he inspected the flying sword's internal condition with his spiritual sense, he discovered that the dimming of the light that it was emanating wasn't due to a reduction in the spiritual power that it contained.

Instead, not only had the enormous spiritual power within the flying sword not diminished at all, the previously rather chaotic and erratic spiritual power had become far purer and more condensed.

A hint of surprise and elation appeared in Han Li's eyes, and he certainly wasn't expecting the gourd to have such an effect.

After a brief moment of contemplation, he swept a sleeve through the air to release a burst of azure light that vanished into the green gourd, and a burst of green light emerged from the opening of the gourd to latch onto the flying sword and draw it into the gourd again.

After that, Han Li swept his sleeve through the air once again to summon a miniature three-story pavilion, and it was none other than that immortal treasure that he had found earlier in the Light Frost Palace.

The miniature pagoda was sucked into the green gourd as well, and Han Li was eager to test out the gourd's abilities.

After stowing the gourd away, Han Li turned his attention back to the vast collection of items on the ground, and his brows furrowed slightly in contemplation.

There were far too many things laid out on the ground, and he didn't recognize most of them, so it would take at least a day or two for him to sort through them.

After remaining silent for a while longer, Han Li called out to Mo Guang, who immediately emerged from his shadow.

"Can I help you with something, Fellow Daoist Han? Hold on a second... Your cultivation base has advanced yet again! How is this possible? You are truly an unmatched prodigy, Fellow Daoist!" Mo Guang exclaimed upon sensing Han Li's aura.

It then took a moment to inspect its surroundings, and the surprise on its face became even more pronounced at the sight of Jin Tong and the vast array of items on the ground.

Han Li paid no heed to Mo Guang as he swept his sleeve through the air to summon Daoist Xie.

Mo Guang's expression changed slightly once again upon sensing Daoist Xie's aura, and it suddenly felt like everyone was leaving it behind.

Even though it had already returned to its former cultivation base, it was still only at the mid-True Immortal Stage, while Daoist Xie had become a Golden Immortal Stage immortal puppet, and Jin Tong had also reached the Golden Immortal Stage. On top of that, Han Li had gone even further beyond them, reaching the mid-Golden Immortal Stage!

"I just defeated a Golden Immortal just now, and these are her possessions. There's quite a lot of stuff here, most of which I don't recognize, so I need your help to identify all of this stuff," Han Li said.

"I see. That's not a problem. I may be lacking in cultivation base, but I saw many things during my time with Ma Liang," Mo Guang said with a smile.

Daoist Xie also nodded in response, then sat down beside Han Li.

"Please help me organize these items and record their uses in a jade slip so I can identify them easily in the future," Han Li instructed as he pulled out a pair of blank jade slips before handing them to Mo Guang and Daoist Xie.

Right at this moment, Jin Tong made her way over to Han Li, having awakened from her cultivation, and her eyes were sparkling as she exclaimed, \"Woah, there's so much good stuff here!\"

"Long time no see, Gold Devouring Immortal. With Fellow Daoist Han on your side, I'm sure you'll become a Dao Ancestor and reign supreme over the Immortal Realm someday!" Mo Guang greeted as it cupped its fist in a salute.

"Get away from me, you shady-looking bastard! I can't stand the sight of you!" Jin Tong snapped as her brows furrowed slightly.

The smile on Mo Guang's face instantly stiffened upon hearing this.

"Don't be so rude, Jin Tong. All of us ascended to the Immortal Realm together, and it's very fortunate that we've all been reunited here," Han Li scolded in a stern voice.

Jin Tong took another disdainful glance at Mo Guang, but didn't say anything further, and her attention was instantly drawn back to the vast array of treasures on the ground.

"We've reeled in a massive haul, Jin Tong," Han Li said with a smile.

However, Jin Tong seemed to be completely unable to hear him, and her cheeks bulged as she opened her mouth to release a burst of golden light, sweeping up a set of seven or eight golden flying daggers nearby.

Each dagger was giving off formidable spiritual power fluctuations, clearly indicating that they were spirit treasures of a very high caliber.

The burst of golden light carried the flying daggers into Jin Tong's mouth, and she began to chomp on them with glee, chewing the daggers into pieces before swallowing them.

Both Daoist Xie and Mo Guang were very much taken aback to see this, while Han Li could only give a wry smile.

All of a sudden, a burst of golden light emerged over Jin Tong's body before flowing into her arms to further reinforce them, and her aura was also elevated slightly as a result.

Immediately thereafter, she began looking around once again, and her gaze quickly settled on a heavy silver hammer as she opened her mouth to release another burst of golden light.

The hammer was drawn into her arms, and she cradled it to her chest as she took a bite out of the treasure.

A corner of the hammer was bitten off, and she began humming a blissful tune as she crunched on the piece of hammer like a chunk of crispy radish.

The silver hammer wasn't far off from becoming an immortal treasure, and Han Li raised a hand to stop Jin Tong, but lowered it with a resigned expression in the end.

He then turned to Daoist Xie and Mo Guang and tossed a pair of storage tools at them as he instructed, "Organize everything and stow them away."

The two of them caught the storage tools, then exchanged a glance before quickly commencing their work.

Meanwhile, Han Li swept his gaze over the surrounding area, and something quickly caught his attention. He swept a sleeve through the air in a covert fashion, sneakily drawing a purple saber, a golden net, and a white archway to himself, and he was just about to stow them away when a little hand shot out from beside him like lightning to grab onto the purple saber.

"This is mine!" Jin Tong yelled as she looked up at Han Li.

A wry smile appeared on Han Li's face, and he stowed the golden net and the white archway away as he negotiated, "There are so many other treasures here, and you can eat as many of them as you like, but these three are immortal treasures. Even if you eat them now, you may not be able to digest them, so I'll give them to you next time, alright?"

"You're so stingy!" Jin Tong complained, displaying no intention of releasing the purple saber.

"Alright, then how about this? You give this saber to me, and I promise you that I'll kill a Golden Immortal for you and feed you their nascent soul," Han Li proposed.

This time, Jin Tong didn't even bother to reply as she opened her mouth and bit down toward the purple saber.

Chapter 475: Courting Death

A wry smile appeared on Han Li's face upon seeing this, yet right as Jin Tong's teeth were about to come into contact with the purple saber, she suddenly stopped, then raised her head to grin at Han Li as she asked, "Do your promises count?"

Han Li faltered slightly upon hearing this, then nodded in response. "Of course."

A pleased look appeared on Jin Tong's face upon hearing this, and she let go of the purple saber.

Han Li could only give a resigned shake of his head as he stowed the saber away as well, and he was planning to examine the three immortal treasures in closer detail once he left the immortal manor.

All of a sudden, Han Li noticed something else, and he swept a sleeve through the air, upon which a length of silver spirit bamboo that was several dozen feet in length and giving off astonishing spiritual power fluctuations flew toward him.

The silver bamboo had the same aura as the silver bamboo roots that he had dug out of the medicine garden, and beside it were some other precious spirit plants that looked as if they had all been recently picked.

It seemed that the person who had gotten to the medicine garden ahead of him and taken the Profound Heavenly Treasure had been none other than Qu Ling.

In that case, the Profound Heavenly Treasure on that vine had to have been this green gourd.

Close to half a day passed by in the blink of an eye, and all of the items on the ground were finally sorted.

Much to Han Li's elation, Qu Ling was carrying far more treasures than he had anticipated.

Just the Immortal Origin Stones in her possession alone totaled in excess of 100,000, and that was truly an enormous sum comparable to the entire wealth of many large sects.

Aside from that, there were also many precious materials, ingredients, pills, and scriptures, some of which were identified, while others remained a mystery.

However, most of the low-grade spirit treasures in Qu Ling's collection had been devoured by Jin Tong.

At this point, her aura had already swelled to beyond its former peak, while her arms had also fully recovered, and there was a blissful look on her face.

Even now, Jin Tong was still just as greedy an eater as ever. However, this was a unique mode of cultivation, so while it pained Han Li to have to part with all of those spirit treasures, it was a bittersweet feeling, overall. After all, it was definitely a good thing for him to see Jin Tong attain more power.

"Thank you for your hard work, fellow daoists," Han Li said as he turned to Mo Guang and Daoist Xie.

"Our lives are interconnected, so there's no need to thank me. Feel free to call upon me again if you need me, Fellow Daoist Han," Mo Guang said with a smile as it vanished back into Han Li's shadow.

Han Li raised an eyebrow upon seeing this. Mo Guang was behaving very differently from in the past.

As for Daoist Xie, it merely cupped its fist in a salute toward Han Li in silence, then vanished into his body as a streak of golden light.

Shortly thereafter, Han Li emerged from the hall, and after taking a moment to inspect his surroundings, he suddenly looked down at a blue scroll that he was holding.

This was Qu Ling's Infernal Frost Scenic Painting.

However, at this moment, the artwork was completely dull and devoid of luster, looking as if it were nothing more than a normal painting.

Han Li's brows furrowed slightly as he examined the artwork for a moment longer before stowing it away.

"Let's go," he said to Jin Tong, then swept a sleeve through the air to release a burst of golden light that swept up both of them before flying away.

.....

Somewhere in the Infernal Frost Immortal Manor.

There were three Southern Dawn beings making their way down a bluestone path that was overgrown with weeds in a set of severely ravaged palatial ruins, and all of them were looking quite weary.

"Wyrms 3 really got us good this time! He convinced us to enter this immortal manor, but we've run into far more peril than treasures! If you ask me, I think he coaxed us into coming in here to act as cannon fodder for him!" a short, dark-skinned woman grumbled in a disgruntled voice.

"I agree. You both saw how fast he ran away as we were exploring that palace earlier! He didn't care at all whether we lived or died, and now, he's completely disappeared," a burly man with a pair of bushy eyebrows chimed in.

"There's no point in saying things like now. Thankfully, the three of us weren't split up. I think we should take this as an opportunity to part ways with Wyrms 3 and search for treasures on our own, then leave the immortal manor once time's up," the final member of the trio, a thin elderly man, said as he stroked his own goatee.

The other two Southern Dawn beings nodded in agreement.

Right as they were conversing with one another, a green jade flying carriage suddenly flew past in the sky, then circled around before drawing to a halt above the three of them.

Standing on the flying carriage was a tall and refined-looking middle-aged man, playing with a white jade Pixiu that was giving off a warm and slightly yellow glow. [1]

Standing behind him were two men clad in suits of golden armor, but their wooden expressions and lifeless auras indicated that they were nothing more than a pair of puppets.

The three Southern Dawn beings took a glance at the man on the flying carriage, and a hint of wariness flashed through their eyes, but they were all feeling a bit more reassured upon sensing the man's late-True Immortal Stage cultivation base.

"Greetings, fellow daoists. Have any of you seen the cultivators of the Northern Glacial Immortal Palace?" the middle-aged man asked with a friendly smile on his face.

None of the Southern Dawn beings immediately replied, but they were feeling a little disgruntled.

While it was true that the middle-aged man was speaking in quite a friendly tone, there was a frustrating aura of superiority and condescension that he was exuding despite his lowly cultivation base.

"No," the thin elderly man replied.

None of the people who had entered the Infernal Frost Immortal Manor would be so foolish as to judge one's power based solely on the cultivation base that they were displaying, so the trio decided to adopt a cautious approach.

Most importantly, they didn't recall seeing this man prior to entering the immortal manor, so he had to have altered his own appearance somehow.

"I'll be on my way then," the middle-aged man said, then flew away atop his flying carriage.

As he flew away into the distance, the burly man turned to the elderly man and asked, "What do we think?"

"I wasn't able to notice anything amiss with my spirit eye ability, so he should be a genuine late-True Immortal cultivator," the elderly man mused as he habitually stroked his own goatee.

"If I'm not mistaken, that flying carriage he's using is quite a fine treasure," the dark-skinned woman suddenly said.

A hint of a smile appeared on the faces of both of the two men upon hearing this.

"Setting aside his storage tools, I want that piece of jade that he was holding," the burly man chuckled.

"I'm taking that robe of his," the thin elderly man declared.

Ultimately, the three of them were unable to suppress their greed, and they were planning to use their numbers advantage to hunt down the middle-aged man and take all of his treasures.

The flying carriage continued to fly through the sky at a leisurely pace several dozen kilometers away, and the smile on the middle-aged man's face remained unchanged as he murmured to himself, "Throwing your lives away over a moment of greed... How unfortunate..."

As soon as his voice trailed off, three streaks of light appeared in front of his flying carriage in a flash.

"Could it be that you've recalled the whereabouts of the Immortal Palace's cultivators, fellow daoists? If you could point me in the right direction, I would be extremely grateful," the middle-aged man said with a smile.

For some reason, a sense of foreboding welled up in the elderly man's heart at the sight of the smile on the middle-aged man's face, and he immediately decided that he would abandon his two companions and run away should things go awry.

Meanwhile, the burly man and the dark-skinned woman exchanged a glance, and the two of them quickly summoned a black stone ax and a silver longsword, respectively.

As for the thin elderly man, he summoned a seven-story golden pagoda that released a golden light barrier, which instantly swelled to countless times its original size to encompass himself, his two companions, and the middle-aged man.

"You think something that can't even count as a pseudo-spirit domain can trap me?"

A cold look suddenly appeared on the middle-aged man's face as he tightened his grip around the jade Pixiu in his hand.

The trio of Southern Dawn beings faltered slightly upon seeing this, yet before they had a chance to do anything, a burst of tremendous power suddenly converged toward them from all directions, instantly destroying the light barrier released by the seven-story golden pagoda.

Immediately thereafter, their bodies were completely pulverized by this burst of power.

Their heads remained completely unscathed, but their bodies had already been crushed into mangled masses of flesh, blood, and bones.

All of this had taken place in the blink of an eye!

Three streaks of golden light shot up into the sky as the nascent souls of the three Southern Dawn beings fled in different directions in a blind panic.

The middle-aged man made a casual grabbing motion upon seeing this, and an enormous semi-transparent hand appeared out of thin air, causing the entire space around it to crease and fold as it grabbed onto the trio of nascent souls.

"Please spare us, Senior! It's not worth dirtying your hands putting an end to our pathetic lives!" the nascent soul of the elderly man pleaded.

The middle-aged man ignored their desperate pleas as he cast his gaze toward the trio of nascent souls with a peculiar gleam in his eyes.

After a brief moment of observation, he crushed the three nascent souls into nothingness as he mused to himself, "It looks like they weren't lying, they really don't know where the Immortal Palace cultivators are. Having said that, there's a bit of a pleasant surprise here."

He reached out to make a beckoning motion as he spoke, and three streaks of azure light flew out of the remains of the three Southern Dawn beings. The streaks of light contained their masks, one of a deer, one of a crow, and another of an ape.

The three masks flew into his hand, and he examined them briefly before sweeping a sleeve through the air, upon which a giant wooden shelf that was laden with all types of Transient Guild masks appeared.

If one were to conduct a count, they would discover that there were over 1,000 of these masks in his collection.

1. Pixius are creatures in Chinese mythology that are said to be symbols for wealth, good fortune, and protection. ?

Chapter 476: Undercurrents

"I've collected quite a few, haven't I?" the middle-aged man chuckled to himself, then placed the three new masks onto the wooden shelf before stowing it away with a pleased nod.

After that, he flipped a hand over to produce a hollow golden plate, which he tossed forward, and the plate flew several feet through the air before swelling to the size of a round table, while all types of complex runes lit up on its surface.

Immediately thereafter, an enormous pillar of golden light erupted out the center of the plate, rising directly up into the heavens.

Before long, specks of spiritual light began to converge, and three blurry figures appeared around the golden plate. Their bodies were enveloped in flowing golden light, making it impossible to glean their appearance.

"What is it, Gongshu Jiu? Haven't you gone to search the Infernal Frost Immortal Manor? Why have you suddenly contacted us?" one of the golden figures asked.

"Gan Jiuzhen is also in this immortal manor right now," Gongshu Jiu replied.

The same golden figure stirred slightly upon hearing this, and they asked, "Are you sure it's her? Her identity is extremely mysterious in the Reincarnation Palace, and even the name 'Gan Jiuzhen' may not be her true name. On top of that, she's frequently changing her mask, so how can you be sure that it's her?"

"I have no concrete evidence to prove it, but according to the memories of a few Transient Guild members that I just killed, the way that their leader, Wyrn 3, likes to do things, is quite similar to Gan Jiuzhen's style," Gongshu Jiu replied.

"In that case, please make sure that you capture her alive, Fellow Daoist Gongshu. As I'm sure you're aware, she's harboring many secrets that are worth exploring," one of the other golden figures said with a smile in their voice.

Gongshu Jiu nodded in response, and he was just about to conclude the communication when he suddenly recalled something, and he said, "Oh, I almost forgot. I discovered someone using the Spirit Refinement Technique in the immortal manor earlier, and from the looks of it, they've already cultivated it to at least the third level."

"To think that there are still people willing to risk their lives to cultivate the forbidden technique. There's no need to capture that person alive, just execute them on the spot," the third golden figure declared in a cold voice.

Gongshu Jiu nodded in response, then swept a sleeve through the air, and the golden plate reverted back to its original size before flying back up his sleeve, following which he flew away into the distance atop his flying carriage.

.....

Meanwhile, high up in the sky a vast distance away.

Han Li and Jin Tong were flying through the air when the former suddenly stopped in his tracks before turning toward a certain direction.

"What is it?" Jin Tong asked.

"I just sensed a burst of extremely formidable energy fluctuations erupt into the sky in that direction, but it seems to be gone now," Han Li explained.

"Formidable energy fluctuations? Let's go and take a look!" Jin Tong suggested as a hint of excitement appeared in her eyes.

Han Li was naturally aware of what her intentions were, and he shook his head as he replied, "Let's not go out of our way to find trouble, we'll have plenty of powerful enemies to face."

"How boring," Jin Tong scoffed with a disappointed pout.

Han Li took another glance in that direction with his brows slightly furrowed, then continued to fly away into the distance with Jin Tong.

.....

In a well-preserved cluster of palatial buildings, four cultivators dressed in Vast Flow Palace attire were each using a treasure to collectively attack a restriction around a palace.

Right as they were about to succeed, spiritual light suddenly flashed over the surface of an antiquated mirror hanging directly above the palace gates, and a beam of white light shot out of it to strike the chest of one of the four cultivators, who instantly let loose an agonized howl as a hole was punched through his chest, sending him toppling to the ground.

A resounding thump rang out as the array that the four cultivators had jointly conjured up instantly exploded.

The fair-skinned scholar who was the leader of the group instantly rushed over to the cultivator that had been struck down, then flipped a hand over to summon a golden pill to feed him.

Before long, the bones and flesh in the man's chest began to recover, but he still gasping for breath.

Everyone else was quite relieved to see this, but they were still quite concerned about their current situation.

"It's already been over half a month since we lost contact with the palace master and the others. We have to get out of this place as soon as possible. Perhaps the palace master has already found that place by now," the fair-skinned scholar said with a grim expression.

The other three cultivators hurriedly gave affirmative responses, and after a short rest, they began working on breaking the restriction again.

.....

On a charred hill in the Infernal Frost Immortal Manor, there were wisps of white smoke rising up everywhere.

Several hundred feet below the ground here was an underground palace, inside of which was a large black stone chair. At the moment, the chair was being occupied by none other than the grand elder of the Dawn Fall Sect, Feng Tiandu.

The ground in front of him was littered with giant black rocks, and they seemed to be the remains of the puppets that had previously guarded this place.

Feng Tiandu was inspecting the puppet remains on the ground with a dark expression when all of a sudden, the sound of footsteps rang out from outside the palace.

Moments later, Qi Tianxiao made his way into the palace, and he extended a salute toward Feng Tiandu as he said, "All of our people have already been sent out. There are two teams that we're currently unable to get into contact with, while the rest of them are all still searching for the High Zenith Palace, but to no avail."

"Is there any news about the people from the Immortal Palace and the Vast Flow Palace?" Feng Tiandu asked.

"There has been some news, but it was only gathered yesterday. The Immortal Palace and the Vast Flow Palace have employed a similar strategy to ours, sending out all of their people to search for the High Zenith Palace, but it seems that they haven't had much luck, either," Qi Tianxiao replied.

"There should still be some time before the heavenly cauldron opens. If we can find its location prior to that, we'll be able to set up some measures in advance and seize the initiative," Feng Tiandu said.

"Rest assured, Senior Martial Brother, I'll be sure to keep a close eye on everyone else," Qi Tianxiao said as he cupped his fist in a salute.

.....

On a bleak and desolate red plain stood a pair of tall men dressed in Southern Dawn Race attire. Each of them was holding a golden cane as they sped through the air, and directly behind them were three cultivators who were dressed in Ghost Wail Sect attire, but were actually cultivators of the Ubiquitous Pavilion.

For some reason, no conflict had arisen between the two parties, and instead, it seemed that the trio of Ubiquitous Pavilion cultivators were merely following the pair of Southern Dawn beings.

The two Southern Dawn beings both wore wooden expressions, and they resembled puppets as they flew onward without any communication.

After flying for a few minutes, the five of them spotted a set of ruins that resembled a city in the distance, and they hurriedly accelerated toward it.

.....

In another area of the Infernal Frost Immortal Manor, there was a series of undulating hills, interspersed with valleys of different depths.

There were also lush forests, flowing rivers, fiery valleys filled with miasma... All types of landmarks were present in the area.

Among these landmarks was a small and completely unremarkable-looking valley that wasn't filled with miasma, nor did it have any greenery or rivers running through it.

It was just a little shorter than the valleys on either side of it, and there were currently three people gathered in the valley, discussing something in hushed tones.

All three of them had rather grim looks on their faces, and they were led by none other than Dao Lord Ouyang Kuishan of the Blaze Dragon Dao.

"Fellow Daoist Ouyang, we've already roused the suspicions of the Immortal Palace by leaking the location of the Infernal Frost Immortal Manor's entrance. If we warn Daoist Hu Yan and others in advance this time, surely we'll be accused of betraying the Immortal Palace," one of the other two figures said.

"So what? The Immortal Palace promised us so many things, yet have they followed through on any of them? Right now, we're the laughingstock of the entire Northern Glacial Immortal Region, and we're constantly being restricted by the Immortal Palace in everything that we do. Rather than continue to live such a cowardly and pitiful existence, we may as well at least go out in a meaningful way," Ouyang Kuishan said as a hint of sorrow flashed through his eyes.

"We only betrayed Dao Lord Baili so that we could save the Blaze Dragon Dao, but we should've known better than to expect that Xiao Jinhan would follow through on his promises. We have no one to blame but ourselves for becoming the laughing stock of the entire immortal region," the third figure mused with a wry smile.

"This experience has taught me a valuable lesson: only by attaining sufficient power can one escape the fate of being controlled by others. I think this is an opportunity for us. All of the leading powers of the immortal regions are gathered here right now, so there's no need for us to directly oppose the Immortal Palace.

"All we have to do is muddy the waters so that others can chip away at the Immortal Palace's forces. The more the Immortal Palace is worn down, the less control they'll be able to exert over us," Ouyang Kuishan said.

"You're right. In any case, all we're doing is tipping off Hu Yan and the others, and the Immortal Palace can't find any evidence to prove that we tipped them off."

With the decision made, the three of them pulled out an octagonal copper array plate each, then assembled them together, and the blaze dragon design engraved onto their surface instantly lit up with crimson light.

Deep within the valley, there was a rippling light barrier that was quite blurry and indistinct, making it impossible to clearly see what laid beyond it.

.....

Beneath a blanket of dark clouds in the sky stood a black mountain that was over 10,000 feet tall.

Near the mountain summit was a spacious cliff, and the white-robed Xiao Jinhan was standing on the edge of the cliff with his robes flapping around him, looking into the distance with a complex look in his eyes, and he was accompanied by Deputy Palace Master Xue Ying.

Chapter 477: Disturbance

"According to the latest news from Lu Yue and the others, the Vast Flow Palace cultivators don't appear to have made a move for now. Up to this point, they're still wandering around in search of the High Zenith Palace's true whereabouts. As for the Dawn Fall Sect, we haven't been able to gather any information on them for the moment," Xue Ying informed.

"Whenever a powerful treasure emerges, there will surely be a sign. There's not much time left until the heavenly cauldron is set to open, so it won't be long until some signs begin to appear. Everyone is currently desperately searching for the High Zenith Palace so that they can get there first before these signs emerge and conceal these signs to prevent others from finding the palace," Xiao Jinhan said.

"Lu Yue and the others are already searching as quickly as they can, so I'm sure they'll be able to find it soon," Xue Ying said.

"What about Ouyang Kuishan and the others?" Xiao Jinhan asked as he raised an eyebrow.

"They're searching through the area that we passed through earlier, and the High Zenith Palace most likely isn't there," Xue Ying replied.

"If they remain obedient and don't step out of line for the rest of this trip, then we can loosen my control over them a little and give them a bit more freedom," Xiao Jinhan instructed.

There was an element of finesse when it came to subjugating others, and constantly doing so with an iron fist wasn't the way to go. As the master of the Northern Glacial Immortal Palace, Xiao Jinhan was naturally well aware of this.

"Yes, Palace Master," Xue Ying hurriedly replied.

All of a sudden, a slightly peculiar look appeared on Xiao Jinhan's face, and he said, "You can go now. I want to stay here on my own for a while."

Xue Ying naturally didn't dare to go against his wishes, and she hurriedly took her leave.

She had only just departed from the cliff when a figure that was enshrouded in a cloud of black mist suddenly rose up from the foot of the cliff, then arrived directly in front of Xiao Jinhan.

After extending a respectful bow, the misty figure began to converse with Xiao Jinhan through voice transmission.

At the end of the conversation, the misty figure concluded, "All of the arrangements on our end are already complete, so you can rest assured, Palace Master."

Xiao Jinhan's expression remained unchanged as he nodded in response, then gave a dismissive wave of his hand, gesturing for the misty figure to leave.

The misty figure immediately obliged, flying back down into the valley before vanishing as a cloud of black smoke.

Xiao Jinhan took a glance at the spot where the misty figure had just vanished, and he pursed his lips with a rather distracted look in his eyes.

Right at this moment, Xue Ying suddenly returned once again, and there was a hint of excitement in his eyes.

Xiao Jinhan immediately spotted the excitement in her eyes, and he asked, "Has the High Zenith Palace been found?"

"Ouyang Kuishan says that it's where they are," Xue Ying replied with a nod.

"Let's go," Xiao Jinhan instructed, and the two of them immediately flew away into the distance.

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Close to half a month later.

Han Li was speeding through the sky atop his azure flying boat, while down below was a bleak and desolate red plain that was completely devoid of life.

The only thing that changed in this monotonous environment were the red clouds in the sky, some of which were large, while others were small. Despite the wind blowing over the plain, the clouds remained completely still and unmoved, presenting a rather peculiar sight to behold.

Han Li was seated atop his flying boat, holding a jade slip that was pressed against his forehead.

The jade slip was a map, one that he had drawn based on his memory of Lu Yuqing's map, and it definitely wasn't a perfect replica, but it was the best that he could do.

He was referencing the map while observing the surrounding terrain, trying to ascertain their current location, but even though he had already been searching for the past few days, he was still unable to pinpoint the location of this red plain on the map.

His brows furrowed slightly as he removed the jade slip from his forehead.

"So what if we can't find where we are? It's more exciting if we don't know anything!" Jin Tong yawned as she laid on the deck of the flying boat in a lazy manner.

Han Li paid no heed to her as a contemplative look appeared on his face.

Even though he had reached the mid-Golden Immortal Stage, he didn't know what perils there were lurking in the immortal manor, so he didn't dare to get complacent.

After some contemplation, he stowed the jade slip away, then flipped a hand over to produce a crimson communication array plate, the very same one that had been given to him by Daoist Hu Yan.

Han Li cast a series of incantation seals into the array plate, and the spirit patterns on its surface flashed with crimson light before converging to form a miniature crimson array.

Han Li communicated a message into the array plate, and it continued to flash and revolve, but there was no response.

Han Li's brows furrowed slightly as he stowed the array plate away.

The lack of response could simply be due to the fact that Daoist Hu Yan was in a special environment where the communication array plate couldn't be used, or it could hint at something far more foreboding.

Han Li pondered this matter in silence for a moment, then cast aside this train of thought.

Seeing as he was unable to get into contact with Daoist Hu Yan, then he would just have to act on his own for now. With his current level of power, he should be able to ensure self-preservation under the vast majority of circumstances.

There was still quite some time left until the immortal manor was scheduled to close, and this was the first time that this region had been discovered, so there had to be many rewards still left to be reaped.

With that in mind, Han Li made a hand seal to accelerate his azure flying boat, yet right at this moment, a resounding boom suddenly rang out in the distance, and the entire area within a radius of thousands of kilometers shuddered slightly.

Han Li immediately turned to the direction that the sound had come from, and there in the distance, countless dazzling balls of white light had emerged, flying over the landscape amid a burst of rumbling resembling that of countless thundering horse hooves.

The world's origin qi trembled and churned as streaks of spiritual light surged through the air, raising gusts of ferocious wind that swept over heaven and earth.

A burst of tremendous pressure was coming from that direction, and even Han Li couldn't but feel a little stunned as he swept a sleeve through the air to stop his azure flying boat cold in its tracks.

Right at this moment, the light in the distant sky began to ripple once again, but on this occasion, instead of spreading outward, it was converging toward a certain spot, and in the blink of an eye, all of it had vanished without a trace.

The churning world's origin qi also quickly subsided, and it was as if the phenomenon had never even taken place at all.

At this point, Jin Tong had already sprung to her feet, and she was looking into the distance with wide eyes.

"That was such a massive phenomenon! Could it be that some powerful treasure has emerged? Let's go take a look, Han Li!" Jin Tong urged.

Han Li was rather hesitant as he mused, "It doesn't seem like the emergence of a treasure. The light just now contained a great deal of spatial power, so it seems more like the emergence of a secret area."

"Who cares? If we don't go there now, someone will get there before us!" Jin Tong said in an urgent voice.

After some more hesitation, Han Li nodded in response. "Let's go take a look, but be careful, and also, don't call me by my name in front of others."

"Fine. Let's go, Uncle!" Jin Tong replied with an excited expression.

Han Li was left feeling rather speechless upon hearing this, and he shook his head with a resigned expression before guiding his azure flying boat in that direction.

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Meanwhile, a ball of white light was flying over a crimson hill.

Standing atop the ball of white light were a group of Northern Glacial Immortal Palace cultivators, among which were Xiao Jinhan and Xue Ying.

All of a sudden, Xiao Jinhan's expression changed slightly, and the ball of white light drew to an abrupt halt as he turned to a certain direction.

"What is it, Palace Master?" Xue Ying asked.

"I sensed a disturbance in that direction just now," Xiao Jinhan replied.

"A disturbance?"

Xue Ying faltered slightly upon hearing this. She hadn't detected anything at all.

A layer of white light surfaced over her eyes as she cast her gaze toward that direction, while Xiao Jinhan shook his head as he said, "The disturbance took place too far away from here, so you wouldn't be able to detect it at your cultivation base. On top of that, it's already faded by now."

"Could it be that the High Zenith Palace has finally emerged?" Xue Ying speculated as her eyes lit up.

Everyone else immediately turned to Xiao Jinhan upon hearing this, while Xiao Jinhan himself was standing still on the spot with a hesitant look on his face.

Even though he had sensed the disturbance in the distance, it was too far away for him to detect it clearly.

Right at this moment, a burst of white light appeared on Xiao Jinhan's body, and he raised an eyebrow as he pointed a finger forward, upon which the burst of white light flew out into the open, revealing itself to be a communication array plate.

The array plate released a miniature array, which, in turn, conjured up a projection of Ouyang Kuishan.

"We've found the entrance of the High Zenith Palace, Palace Master!" Ouyang Kuishan declared with an ecstatic expression.

Xiao Jinhan's expression remained unchanged as he asked, "Oh? Where is it? And how did you discover it?"

"Just now, a phenomenon took place at the entrance, and I just so happened to be nearby. This is the location."

Ouyang Kuishan swept a sleeve through the air as he spoke, releasing a burst of light that transformed into a map, upon which an azure speck of light was pulsing incessantly.

Xiao Jinhan took a glance at the map to find that the location of the purported entrance matched the direction where the disturbance had just arisen.

"Alright, make sure to keep the entrance guarded, I'm coming right now," Xiao Jinhan instructed.

"The phenomenon has already subsided, but it caused a massive commotion just now, so please get here as quickly as possible. Otherwise, if other people get here first, we may not be able to keep them at bay," Ouyang Kuishan urged.

Xiao Jinhan's expression darkened a little as he replied, "I'll get there as soon as I can."

With that, he concluded the communication, and the projection of Ouyang Kuishan instantly vanished, while Xiao Jinhan remained on the spot with his brows slightly furrowed, seemingly contemplating something.

Chapter 478: Entrance of the Palace

After some time, Xue Ying couldn't help but interject, "Isn't the location that Ouyang Kuishan just pointed out in the same direction where the disturbance just arose? Surely that has to mean the information is reliable."

"There's no hurry. If that really is the entrance of the High Zenith Palace, then it'll surely be protected by restrictions and guards, so even if others manage to get there before us, they won't be able to enter the palace anytime soon," Xiao Jinhan replied with a shake of his head.

"Are you saying that Ouyang Kuishan is lying to us? Surely not! If he had the courage to lie to us, then he wouldn't have betrayed Baili Yan," Xue Ying said as a hint of derision flashed through her eyes.

"Ouyang Kuishan is not to be fully trusted, and it's always better to be safe than sorry," Xiao Jinhan said as he pointed a finger at the array plate, upon which the same communication array was conjured up again.

The array flashed a few times, following which a projection of Lu Yue emerged.

"Greetings, Palace Master. Do you have some instructions for me?" Lu Yue asked with a respectful salute.

"Where are you right now? Did you sense anything just now?" Xiao Jinhan asked.

"I am currently situated in the southeast relative to the location where we split up, and I didn't sense anything just now," Lu Yue replied.

"I see. Keep searching that area, and report back to me immediately if you discover anything," Xiao Jinhan instructed.

Lu Yue nodded in response, and the communication was concluded.

Xiao Jinhan made a hand seal, and he was just about to contact someone else when a burst of black light suddenly appeared on his body.

His expression instantly changed slightly as he swept a sleeve through the air, and a black array plate appeared in his grasp, emanating rings of black light.

An indistinct black figure was standing in the black light, and it was the same person that he had spoken to atop the cliff last time.

"Palace Master Xiao, the entrance of the High Zenith Palace has already emerged. Feng Tiandu has already discovered it and is heading there right now. Everything has already been set up according to our plan," the black figure declared.

A hint of elation flashed through Xiao Jinhan's eyes upon hearing this, but he remained level-headed as he asked, "Where is the entrance?"

The black figure swept a sleeve through the air to release a burst of black light that conjured up a map, and there was a marked location on the map that was virtually identical to the location indicated by Ouyang Kuishan earlier.

"Alright, I'm coming right now," Xiao Jinhan immediately said, and the communication was concluded.

"Let's go!" Xiao Jinhan instructed as the ball of white light continued onward, and Xue Ying also cast an incantation seal into the ball of white light to accelerate it even further.

The Immortal Palace cultivators flew onward for a while before a burst of blue light suddenly appeared to their right, and it was rapidly approaching them, reaching them in the blink of an eye.

Xue Ying's brows furrowed slightly as the ball of white light drew to a halt at her behest, and she was just about to yell out at the approaching burst of blue light, but Xiao Jinhan gestured for her to remain silent.

The blue light up ahead faded, revealing a group of Vast Flow Palace cultivators, led by none other than Grand Palace Master Luo Qinghai.

"What a coincidence, Palace Master Xiao. You look like you're in quite a hurry. May I ask where you're going?" Luo Qinghai asked as he cupped his fist toward Xiao Jinhan and the others in a salute.

"How can I help you, Grand Palace Master Luo?" Xiao Jinhan asked in an indifferent voice.

"I discovered a set of ruins up ahead, but there's a restriction inside that's proving to be quite difficult to break. We've already been trying for several days to no avail, and we presume that there must be a precious treasure inside. Would you like to come and have a look with us, Palace Master Xiao?" Luo Qinghai asked with a smile.

"Where are these ruins?" Xiao Jinhan asked.

"Not far up ahead, only about half a day away from here," Luo Qinghai replied as he pointed in the direction that he came from.

Xiao Jinhan cast his gaze toward that direction to find that it was precisely the direction where the entrance of the High Zenith Palace was situated.

"From my observations, it seems like there's an ancient tomb under the restriction. I don't know who's buried there, but it's definitely a very important person," Luo Qinghai said as he pulled out a blue jade talisman.

The jade talisman released a burst of bright blue light at his behest, which transformed into a mirror of water that depicted a vast wilderness filled with howling wind and swirling sand.

There was also a massive yellow ovular light barrier in the image, and it was rather murky and indistinct, concealing what was underneath.

Only the outlines of a giant tomb could be made out through the light barrier, and it resembled a giant beast that was resting on the ground.

"Looks like you stumbled upon quite a stroke of fortune, Grand Palace Master Luo, but wouldn't you have much preferred for your Vast Flow Palace to have claimed this place alone? Why are you inviting me?" Xiao Jinhan asked.

"I just told you. The restriction outside the tomb is extremely formidable, and all of us have been attacking it non-stop for several consecutive days without being able to make much progress at all. If we're delayed any further, other powers will most likely begin to arrive on the scene.

"That's why I'm inviting you to come and help us break the restriction, and we'll split the treasures inside evenly between our two sects. What do you say?" Luo Qinghai asked as a serious look appeared on his face.

"If this is a restriction that even you can't open, then it's most likely beyond me as well," Xiao Jinhan refused with a shake of his head.

"Don't worry about that, Palace Master Xiao. Even though we haven't been able to break the restriction, I've managed to find a way to do so, but it requires six Golden Immortals working together at once, and that's why I'm inviting you to come along," Luo Qinghai replied with a smile.

Xiao Jinhan contemplated the offer momentarily, then turned to Xue Ying as he said, "Your Vast Flow Palace already has five Golden Immortals, so you only need one more. Xue Ying, take everyone else and make a trip to the ruins with Grand Palace Master Luo."

Xue Ying's expression changed slightly upon hearing this, and she hurriedly said to Xiao Jinhan through voice transmission, "But Palace Master, what if this is a trap..."

"Don't worry, I know what I'm doing," Xiao Jinhan interjected, and Xue Ying fell silent upon hearing this.

"Deputy Palace Xue Ying will also suffice for the task," Luo Qinghai said. "Time is of the essence, so let's set off right away, Deputy Palace Master Xue."

Immediately thereafter, he swept a sleeve through the air, releasing a burst of blue light that swept up all of the Vast Flow Palace cultivators before flying away into the distance.

"I'll be going then, Palace Master," Xue Ying said to Xiao Jinhan, then flipped a hand over to produce a bird-shaped flying boat for all of the Immortal Palace cultivators to pile onto.

"Make sure to help Grand Palace Master Luo to the best of your abilities," Xiao Jinhan instructed, making sure to place extra emphasis on the word "help".

Xue Ying nodded in response, then made a hand seal, and the flying boat immediately departed, vanishing into the distance in the blink of an eye.

Xiao Jinhan looked on as the two groups departed into the distance, and only after all of them had completely vanished out of sight did he continue onward as a streak of white light.

Several days later, a streak of white light arrived from afar, then faded to reveal Xiao Jinhan in the sky above a giant canyon.

His hands were clasped behind his back, and his robes were flapping audibly in the wind as he inspected his surroundings.

The location that had been pointed out by both Ouyang Kuishan and the shadowy figure wasn't very far away from this place.

Some time later, his eyes suddenly lit up, and he shot forth like lightning, flying toward a certain direction in the canyon in complete silence.

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At the foot of the canyon was a giant rectangular stone wall that was white in color and several thousand feet in size. Its surface was extremely smooth, and it seemed to be an enormous gate.

There was a piece of scenery engraved onto the stone wall from left to right, and it was extremely vibrant and lifelike.

Behind the stone wall was a thick white light barrier that was flashing incessantly, and there were many people gathered in front of the stone wall, split up into four different factions.

The largest group consisted of the Dawn Fall Sect's cultivators, with almost all of the Dawn Fall Sect cultivators who had entered the immortal manor present. All they were missing were a couple of True Immortal cultivators, who had presumably perished elsewhere in the immortal manor. Where Stories Blossom: N∞velBjn.

Not far away from the Dawn Fall Sect's cultivators stood a group of Southern Dawn beings, but out of their four Golden Immortals, only the elderly man and the elderly woman were present, while the other two were absent.

As for their True Immortal cultivator, only about half of them were present, and it was unclear whether the other half had already perished or were still on their way.

The group with the second-least number of people was Ouyang Kuishan and the other two Blaze Dragon Dao Dao Lords, while the final group only consisted of two people, namely a man and a woman.

If Han Li were present, he would've immediately been able to identify them as Daoist Hu Yan and Yun Ni.

Right at this moment, a figure emerged in the sky amid a flash of golden light.

The new arrival didn't say anything, and there was no aura escaping from his body at all, but everyone was struck by a sense of pressure in his presence.

It was none other than Xiao Jinhan.

His arrival was met with varying degrees of dismay from everyone, with the exceptions of Ouyang Kuishan's trio, who immediately approached him with elated expressions.

"We pay our respects to the esteemed palace master!"

"Good job. The three of you will be rewarded once we leave the immortal manor," Xiao Jinhan said.

"Thank you, Palace Master!" Ouyang Kuishan's trio replied in unison.

Xiao Jinhan's gaze then swept over the Southern Dawn beings and the duo of Daoist Hu Yan and Yun Ni, and his brows furrowed ever so slightly.

"These people were most likely nearby as well, and they arrived not long after the phenomenon here subsided," Ouyang Kuishan hurriedly explained via voice transmissions at the sight of Xiao Jinhan's expression.

Xiao Jinhan gave a slight nod and offered no response.

"Welcome, Palace Master Xiao. I wasn't expecting you to get here so soon. Why are you here on your own? Where are the other fellow daoists from the Immortal Palace?" Feng Tiandu asked.

Chapter 479: Observing from the Shadows

"Everyone else is busy with other things. That's none of your concern, Fellow Daoist Feng," Xiao Jinhan replied in an indifferent voice.

"I don't mean to pry. It's just that you're normally always surrounded by your subordinates, so it's rather strange to see you alone," Feng Tiandu said.

"To be honest, I prefer being on my own. Sometimes, when there are less burdens and hindrances around, it makes it easier to do what needs to be done without any unnecessary qualms. Wouldn't you agree, Fellow Daoist Feng?" Xiao Jinhan asked.

"I'm not as much of a free spirit as yourself, Fellow Daoist Xiao. I still think having more people around makes things easier," Feng Tiandu replied with a smile.

"It does appear as if you have a numbers advantage over everyone else. Have you already decided to claim this High Zenith Palace as a territory of your Dawn Fall Sect, Fellow Daoist Feng?" Xiao Jinhan asked as he raised an eyebrow.

"Of course not, Palace Master Xiao. No one has any right to claim ownership over the High Zenith Palace, and anyone can come and go from the palace as they please. In particular, now that you're here, I feel much more at ease," Feng Tiandu replied with a shake of his head.

A faint smile appeared on Xiao Jinhan's face as he took a glance at the people behind Feng Tiandu, then suddenly turned to the white stone wall before raising a hand.

A streak of white light flew out of the palm of his hand, transforming into a translucent arrow that struck the light barrier with a loud crack.

The arrow was instantly shattered, while the light barrier only flashed momentarily before immediately returning to normal.

"What a sturdy restriction," Xiao Jinhan exclaimed as a grim look flashed through his eyes.

"The Dawn Fall Sect cultivators have already tried to break this restriction through their collective power just now, but they were unable to make any progress, so it looks like breaking this restriction definitely won't be an easy task," Ouyang Kuishan informed through voice transmission.

Xiao Jinhan gave a slight nod upon hearing this.

"Having said that, there's no need to be overly concerned, Palace Master," Ouyang Kuishan continued. "The white light barrier over this stone wall was previously twice as thick as it is now, but for some reason, it's constantly been getting thinner over time. I'm sure this trend will continue to hold true, and perhaps the restriction will eventually even disappear altogether. When that time comes, we should be able to bypass it with ease."

"Oh? Is that true?" Xiao Jinhan asked as his expression changed slightly.

"I wouldn't dare to lie to you, Palace Master. If you don't believe me, just take some time to observe the restriction and see for yourself," Ouyang Kuishan hurriedly replied.

Xiao Jinhan took a long glance at Ouyang Kuishan upon hearing this, and the latter hurriedly lowered his head and averted his gaze. With no better course of action to pursue for now, Xiao Jinhan made his way over to a large rock off to the side, then sat down onto it and closed his eyes to rest.

Feng Tiandu took a brief glance at Xiao Jinhan before also looking away, while the rest of the Dawn Fall Sect cultivators behind him exchanged a few glances before sitting down with their legs crossed.

Everyone else present quickly followed suit as well, and a tense silence descended upon the entire scene.

Time slowly passed by, and before long, it had already been close to an hour.

Xiao Jinhan inspected the white light barrier briefly to find that it had indeed become a little thinner than before.

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Meanwhile, in a discreet cave far away from the valley, Han Li and Jin Tong were standing next to each other in a completely still manner.

They had used some type of secret technique to completely conceal their auras, so even if someone were to sweep their spiritual sense over them, it would appear as if they weren't there.

Through a gap between a pair of large rocks, Han Li was observing everyone in the distance with blue light flashing in his eyes.

He had been quite close to the stone wall when the phenomenon had taken place, so he had actually only gotten here a little later than Ouyang Kuishan and the others.

However, as soon as he spotted Ouyang Kuishan's trio, he immediately concealed himself and Jin Tong using a secret technique.

There are more and more people arriving on the scene... Judging from what they said earlier, this place is the entrance of a so-called High Zenith Palace. What is this place, and why is it garnering so much attention from the likes of even Xiao Jinhan and Feng Tiandu? Could it be...

Additionally, Daoist Hu Yan and Yun Ni were also present, and that was quite a relief for him.

Daoist Hu Yan was somewhere between a friend and a teacher for him, and Han Li had been quite concerned for him this entire time, so it was definitely a good thing to see him here safe and sound.

Jin Tong was standing beside him with a bored look on her face, and she suddenly tossed something into her mouth before chomping down onto it. The sound that was produced wasn't very loud, but it gave Han Li quite a fright, and he hurriedly cautioned through voice transmission, "Be quiet! We'll be in trouble if those people discover us."

Thankfully, the secret technique being used by Han Li concealed both sound and auras, and were quite far away from Xiao Jinhan and the others. Additionally, everyone's attention was focused on the stone wall, so no one noticed Han Li and Jin Tong in the distance.

"Hiding here is so boring, Uncle! How much longer do we have to keep hiding?" Jin Tong complained through voice transmission with a displeased pout.

"Be patient," Han Li replied.

"Are those people your enemies?" Jin Tong asked as her brows furrowed slightly.

"Some of them are," Han Li replied in an ambiguous fashion.

"Which ones?" Jin Tong asked as she prepared to rush out to face them.

Han Li hurriedly grabbed onto Jin Tong's arm as he urged, "Wait! There are too many of them and only two of us, so we'll be at a disadvantage in a direct battle. On top of that, it's clear that all of them are plotting against each other as well, so perhaps they'll start fighting even before the restriction is broken."

"You're right!" Jin Tong exclaimed as a hint of excitement surfaced in her eyes. "If they don't start fighting among themselves, then we'll wait until they split up and hunt them down one after another. Aren't I smart?"

"You're a genius, Jin Tong," Han Li praised as he patted Jin Tong on the head.

"Fine. In that case, I'll wait for a bit longer," Jin Tong said as she sat down and rested her head on her folded arms.

Han Li heaved an internal sigh of relief as he continued his observation.

Several hours passed by in the blink of an eye, and Jin Tong had already fallen asleep.

At this point, all that remained of the light barrier over the stone wall was a thin layer, and no one else arrived during this time.

Furthermore, everyone, including Xiao Jinhan and Feng Tiandu, had already risen to their feet, and they were staring intently at the white stone wall.

The light barrier on the stone wall was still slowly becoming thinner and thinner, and everyone was already channeling their immortal spiritual power with tense looks on their faces, bracing themselves to strike as soon as the light barrier reached its most fragile state.

At the same time, they were also making sure to keep tabs on one another.

"The restriction has already become very thin, Senior Martial Brother. If all of us attack it at once, we should be able to break through it. Should we strike now?" Qi Tianxiao asked through voice transmission.

"Let's wait a bit longer until the restriction is reduced to its weakest state. After all, we also have Xiao Jinhan to worry about on top of this restriction," Feng Tiandu replied.

"You're right, Senior Martial Brother," Qi Tianxiao said with a nod.

In the distant cave, Han Li was also staring intently at the stone wall with blue light flashing in his eyes.

Right at this moment, the white light barrier, which had become as thin as a sheet of paper, suddenly flashed momentarily, and countless thin strands of white light appeared over its surface as it abruptly began to thicken again.

Everyone's expressions instantly changed drastically upon seeing this, and they all lashed out in unison.

With a sweep of his sleeve, Xiao Jinhan released a streak of piercing white light, which contained what appeared to be a sharp spike.

It was an immortal treasure that had white lightning flashing over its surface, releasing a burst of loud crackling and thunderous rumbling as it pierced viciously toward the white light barrier.

Ouyang Kuishan's trio also sprang into action, with each of them summoning a golden flying sword, on the hilt of which was a beastly head that seemed to belong to a dragon, but was also somewhat different.

On one side of the sword's blade was engraved a piece of scenery, while on the other side was etched a vast starry sky.

The three flying swords were arranged in a triangular formation, and they gave off dazzling swordlight as they swept toward the white light barrier.

At the same time, the two elderly Golden Immortals of the Southern Dawn Race pointed their golden canes forward, and radiant golden light erupted out of their canes, transforming into a pair of golden dragons in a flash.

Both dragons were glowing radiantly, looking as if they had been forged out of pure gold, and they were giving off a peerlessly sharp aura as they swooped toward the white light barrier.

Daoist Hu Yan and Yun Ni also summoned immortal treasures of their own, namely a crimson flying sword and a blue flying wheel. They didn't appear to be immortal treasures of a particularly high caliber, but they were also sent flying toward the light barrier with ferocious power.

However, out of all of the people present, the collective assault unleashed by the Dawn Fall Sect's cultivators was the most formidable one.

At this moment, all of the Dawn Fall Sect cultivators were gathered around in a loose circle, but there was a method to the way in which they were arranged, and it seemed that they had formed an array.

All of them began to glow with radiant black light, which converged to form a series of thick beams of black light that connected together before surging into Feng Tiandu's body.

As a result, Feng Tiandu swelled noticeably in size, and his skin bulged as a countless thick green veins emerged over his body, wriggling and writhing like worms.

The aura that he was exuding instantly swelled drastically to completely exceed that of everyone else present, and even Xiao Jinhan's expression changed slightly upon sensing this.

Immediately thereafter, he took a deep breath as he began to chant a rapid incantation, and his body took on a drastic change, becoming withered and yellow and reverting back into what resembled a dried corpse in the blink of an eye.

A string of loud clangs rang out from within his body, following which a series of thick black chains numbering in the dozens shot out of his robes, swaying from side to side around him like a mass of tentacles.

Every single chain was riddled with countless tiny black runes, which were flashing incessantly and giving off tremendous law power fluctuations.

Han Li's pupils contracted slightly as he witnessed this from afar.

Even though they were situated quite far away from one another, he could clearly sense that the aura being emitted by the black chains summoned by Feng Tiandu was identical to that of the two Origin Separation Law Chains in his possession.

With that in mind, Han Li immediately realized who Feng Tiandu was.

Chapter 480: Caught Off Guard

In front of the white stone wall.

Feng Tiandu closed his eyes while making a hand seal, and all of the chains in the air around him shuddered in unison, then shot forth through the air as countless black lines, hurtling toward the white light barrier like rain.

A string of loud thumps instantly rang out in rapid succession as specks of black light emerged over the surface of the white light barrier, causing it to ripple incessantly.

At this point, all of the other cultivators present had also sprung into action, launching attacks of their own at the light barrier.

With so many True Immortals and Golden Immortals joining forces at once, the resulting assault was just as ferocious as it was spectacular to behold, and the white light barrier twisted and warped violently as countless runes surged out of its surface.

All of a sudden, an earth-shattering boom rang out, and the entire canyon suddenly began to tremble and sway violently.

Countless large cracks appeared over the ground and the mountain faces, intertwining with one another like a system of cobwebs.

In the face of so many formidable attacks, the light barrier was struggling to hold itself together, and a series of cracks had begun to appear on its surface.

This was naturally a very encouraging sight for everyone, and they all redoubled their efforts for one final push.

Finally, all of the runes on the surface of the white light barrier exploded, immediately followed by the light barrier itself, and the white stone face beneath it was finally exposed.

Feng Tiandu's eyes sprang open, and a hint of elation appeared on his face.

He made a hand seal while chanting a quiet incantation, and all of the black chains around him instantly vanished back into his body, immediately following which he took a large stride forward, yet right as he was about to say something, an unexpected turn of events abruptly unfolded.

Qi Tianxiao and three other Golden Immortals near him lashed out in unison, raising their arms at the same time without any warning.

A chorus of loud clangs rang out as bright golden light emerged within the sleeves of the four Golden Immortals, and four golden chains with countless runes surging all over them shot forth in unison before wrapping themselves around Feng Tiandu's limbs.

Each chain was radiating bright golden light that was filled with golden runes, and they were also releasing formidable restrictive law powers.

Feng Tiandu's expression changed drastically as a layer of black light abruptly appeared over his body, instantly forming a protective black light barrier.

Almost in the exact same instant that the black light barrier took shape, the four golden chains arrived and wound themselves around the light barrier.

As soon as the two made contact with one another, the golden runes on the surface of the chains instantly lit up in unison, and they were able to slice through the black light barrier with ease like hot knives through butter before tying up Feng Tiandu like lightning.

Arcs of golden lightning erupted out of the four chains to strike Feng Tiandu, causing plumes of white smoke to rise up from his body.

Feng Tiandu let loose a muffled groan, and the black light barrier around him was instantly shattered, much to the elation of the four Dawn Fall Sect Golden Immortals, who began chanting a collective incantation, upon which the four golden chains intertwined to form a square golden cage with Feng Tiandu trapped in the center.

A burst of incredibly formidable restrictive force surged out of the golden cage, causing the nearby air to ripple violently, and even the surrounding world's origin qi had fallen completely still.

All of this had taken place in the blink of an eye, and everyone was caught completely off guard, looking on with dazed expressions, even temporarily forgetting about the white stone wall.

Han Li was also rather taken aback as he looked on from afar.

Looking at the four golden chains, he was immediately reminded of the eight chains that Ouyang Kuishan and the other dao lords had used against Baili Yan all those years ago.

Even though there were only four of these chains on this occasion, they were several times thicker than the eight chains from last time, and the aura emanating from this golden cage was also more formidable than that one.

"What is the meaning of this?" Feng Tiandu roared as he struggled with all his might, and a layer of black light appeared over his body, only to be instantly suppressed by the enormous restrictive powers of the golden cage, rendering his tremendous cultivation base completely useless.

"My apologies, Senior Martial Brother, but you've brought this entirely upon yourself, so you can't blame anyone else. Our master passed the position of sect master down to me, yet you've shown me no respect at all, forcibly taking over ownership of the sect and claiming all of its resources.

"You've gone too far, and it's time that someone stopped you," Qi Tianxiao declared in a cold voice while making a hand seal, and more thick arcs of golden lightning emerged over the golden cage before transforming into seven thick golden nails.

Each nail was around a foot in length with countless golden lightning runes on their surface, and they were giving off astonishing lightning law power fluctuations as they pierced viciously into Feng Tiandu's glabella, chest, lower abdomen, and other vital regions.

Feng Tiandu gave another muffled groan as blood began to trickle down from the corner of his lips.

Arcs of golden lightning surged out of the seven golden nails before rapidly flowing over Feng Tiandu's body while crackling incessantly.

A series of gashes instantly appeared over his skin, and blood came pouring out of those gashes as his aura diminished significantly.

Feng Tiandu's eyes narrowed slightly as he gave an enraged harrumph, and his hands balled up into tight fists as began to chant a rapid incantation.

A burst of black light instantly emerged over his body, and his entire body turned black, while strings of black runes surged out of the spots on his body that had been impaled by the golden nails.

At the same time, a burst of rustling rang out within his body, and the seven chains shuddered before slowly pulling back, as if they were being forced out by something.

Qi Tianxiao's expression changed slightly upon seeing this, yet before he had a chance to do anything, around a dozen black chains shot out of Feng Tiandu's body before wrapping themselves around the surrounding golden cage.

Inky-black light emerged from the black chains, quickly staining the golden cage black, while the golden chains around Feng Tiandu began to rapidly dim while also displaying signs of loosening.

Qi Tianxiao was greatly alarmed to see this, and he hurriedly attempted to bolster the golden chains, but to no avail.

In the blink of an eye, half of the golden cage had already been stained black.

Right at this moment, a white figure emerged behind Feng Tiandu without any warning, and it was none other than Xiao Jinhan.

With a flick of his wrist, a white shadow flew out of his sleeve, piercing directly toward Feng Tiandu's throat like lightning. It was a translucent longsword that was giving off tremendous glacial qi, and Qi

Tianxiao and the others merely continued with what they were doing, displaying no reaction to Xiao Jinhan's sudden intervention.

Feng Tiandu's pupils contracted slightly as he opened his mouth to release a streak of yellow light, which revealed itself to be a shield in the shape of a yellow turtle shell. The shield was riddled with profound patterns, and judging from the formidable earth law power fluctuations that it was giving off, this was clearly a powerful immortal treasure.

The yellow shield instantly swelled to several times its original size as it positioned itself in front of him, and the white longsword struck the yellow shield with a resounding clang.

The latter was forced back from the force of the clash, but it was ultimately able to keep the longsword at bay.

"Qi Tianxiao! How dare you collude with Xiao Jinhan!" Feng Tiandu roared in a furious voice.

In the distant cave, Han Li continued to look on in silence, but a cold look had appeared in his eyes as he gazed upon Xiao Jinhan.

It was clear that he had employed the same tactics that he had used to bring down the Blaze Dragon Dao to sow dissension among the Dawn Fall Sect's cultivators as well.

If Feng Tiandu were to also be eliminated, then the Vast Flow Palace would be the only one that remained of the Northern Glacial Immortal Region's three premier sects. It would be completely powerless to oppose the Northern Glacial Immortal Palace on its own, and before long, the entire immortal region would fall under the Immortal Palace's control.

Jin Tong had been roused from her nap by the commotion, and she rushed over to Han Li's side as she clapped her hands together with an excited expression and yelled, "They really have begun fighting! You were right, Uncle! Do we strike now?"

"Let's wait for a bit longer. The best is still yet to come," Han Li said.

In the distance, the expressions of the Southern Dawn beings changed slightly at the sight of the scene unfolding before them, as was the case with Daoist Hu Yan and Yun Ni.

However, before they could do anything, Ouyang Kuishan's trio abruptly appeared before them, standing in their way.

Ouyang Kuishan cast his gaze toward the Southern Dawn beings and Daoist Hu Yan's duo as he declared in a threatening tone, "This has nothing to do with any of you, fellow daoists, so please do not intervene."

Daoist Hu Yan and the others exchanged a few glances upon hearing this, and they decided to oblige.

Xiao Jinhan was rather relieved to see this out of the corner of his eye, and he made a hand seal, upon which a burst of white mist with countless runes dancing within it erupted out of his white longsword before enveloping the yellow shield in a flash.

Bright yellow light flashed from the yellow shield, and it was just about to release something, only for a burst of law power fluctuations to surge out of the cloud of white mist to slow down the release of the yellow light.

Immediately thereafter, a millstone-sized chunk of white ice emerged, presenting quite a spectacular sight to behold.

The yellow shield was completely encased within the block of ice, and all of the law power fluctuations it was releasing had been sealed away.

The block of ice then fell to the ground with a loud crack, while Han Li looked on from afar with a hint of admiration in his eyes.

To think that his laws of ice have been cultivated to such a degree that they're capable of even freezing other law powers! As expected of the master of the Northern Glacial Immortal Palace!