

A Record 571

Chapter 571: Redirecting Trouble

As the elder plunged his staff into his own heart, the other Menace Lion Tribe warriors were also chanting the same thing as they pierced their claws into their own hearts, sending blood spilling all over the entire altar they were standing on.

With the staff pierced through his chest, the elder's vitality was rapidly fading as if it were being sucked away by the staff, but his eyes were only glowing brighter and brighter.

As the chanting continued, a layer of dark red light began to emerge over the bloodstained altar, and before long, the layer of light had risen up to form a pillar of dark red light that was over 10,000 feet tall.

An enormous beastly projection appeared within the pillar of light, and it gradually took on a substantial form. It was a mountainous primordial true spirit with nine lion heads growing on its neck.

Its fur was a dark purple color, and the mane around its neck was glowing purple while rippling slightly like a clump of seaweed, resembling a dark purple flame.

A furious look appeared in the true spirit's eyes at the sight of the horrific scenes in the valley, and all nine of its heads let loose a thunderous roar of fury in unison.

In contrast with the relationship between the other Beast Race tribes and the true spirits that they worshiped, the Menace Lion Tribe were true descendants of the true spirit, thereby inheriting its bloodline. As a result, the bond between them was more intimate.

"How dare you!" Jiu Ling roared, following which one of its nine heads abruptly made an inhaling motion, releasing a burst of tremendous suction force.

The blood of the Menace Lion Tribe warriors that was permeating throughout the area converged from all directions before being sucked into its mouth, and at the same time, all of the altars littered throughout the valley suddenly lit up on their own.

The totems engraved upon them began to glow brightly, and a series of lit purple braziers rose up from their centers.

There were specks of faint purple light within these braziers that were drifting out like fireflies before surging into Jiu Ling's mouth alongside the blood of its descendants, and it let loose a low roar as its muscles began to bulge outward.

At the same time, a layer of dark red scales emerged over its body, and the mane around its neck also grew to twice its original length, while its aura began to rapidly approach the mid-High Zenith Stage.

On the riverbed, a hint of surprise appeared on Han Li's face upon sensing this, and he remarked, "It seems like the Menace Lion Tribe shares a different relationship with their true spirit than the other Beast Race tribes.

"It's a little similar to the Ancestral God system of the Black Wind Sea. Through the sustenance of their bloodline and the power of faith imbued within the altar, perhaps this true spirit really will be able to put up a fight against the Gold Devouring Immortal."

"Really?" Jin Tong asked with a skeptical expression.

"Setting aside the bloodline sustenance from the Menace Lion Tribe warriors, no one knows just how much power of faith has accumulated in these totems. It definitely won't be able to defeat the Gold Devouring Immortal, it's just a matter of how much of a fight it can put up," Han Li said.

A hint of intrigue appeared on Jin Tong's face upon hearing this, and she was suddenly struck by the urge to spectate the battle, but there was no time for that.

Han Li gave her a pat on the head as he said, "We have to go."

Jin Tong faltered slightly upon hearing this, then flipped a hand over to produce a Soul Armor Talisman that she applied to her own forehead.

Han Li also swept a sleeve through the air to summon Xiao Bai, which immediately swallowed Jin Tong.

Moments later, a massive wave suddenly erupted out of the river, and a green jade flying carriage emerged before speeding away into the distance as a streak of green light, vanishing out of sight.

Outside the river, the Gold Devouring Immortal could sense that Jin Tong's aura had vanished once again, and as it looked up into the sky, a cold gleam flashed through its eyes as it set off in pursuit of the flying carriage.

However, right at this moment, a vast expanse of purple light suddenly emerged in front of it, and bursts of purple flames surged directly toward it, forming a scorching sea of fire in its path.

The Gold Devouring Immortal turned to discover Jiu Ling's central head with its mouth wide open, releasing a torrent for purple flames.

At the same time, the four heads on its left also had their mouths open to release gusts of white wind that swept the flames into a massive vortex, trapping the Gold Devouring Immortal within. Simultaneously, its remaining four heads were releasing vast waves of purple lightning that were injected into the fiery vortex.

Hundreds of enormous fiery vortexes were conjured up, all of which were connected by the purple lightning to form an extremely powerful suction force, transforming the entire surrounding valley into a restricted area.

Anyone within this area would be made to feel as if their bodies and souls were being restricted by this burst of suction force, rendering them completely unable to get away. All they could do was watch helplessly as the fiery vortexes were drawn closer and closer to them by the purple lightning until they were incinerated into nothingness.

At the same time, the hundreds of griffin-like demon beasts that had appeared in the valley earlier also emerged to surround the sea of purple flames while releasing the same screeching sound as before, sending powerful shockwaves sweeping directly toward the Gold Devouring Immortal.

A serious look finally appeared in the Gold Devouring Immortal's eyes, and it flapped its wings vigorously to release a burst of peculiar energy fluctuations...

Inside the Dark Star Canyon.

The chiefs of the eight holy tribes were seated next to each on the large chairs inside the palace next to the waterfall, while the chiefs of the smaller tribes were seated around them. At the center of the palace was a bonfire that was popping and crackling incessantly.

"Rest assured, everyone, our king has already made a full recovery," Nuo Qinglin declared.

"That is indeed a very good thing, but what I don't understand is why the insect spirit hasn't taken advantage of this opportunity to attack us all this time. Could it be that that human was able to inflict so much harm upon it that it's still yet to recover?" Ze Wushi asked with a perplexed expression.

"That's not very likely. If that human really were that powerful, then he wouldn't have snuck out of our Dark Star Canyon and only left that substitute behind," Yin Mei said with a shake of her head.

"I agree. If he really had the power to do that, then he wouldn't have feared a battle against us while our king was still injured," Nuo Qinglin chimed in with a nod.

"Have we still not been able to track down that human, Chief Nuo?" Yin Shen of the Menace Lion Tribe suddenly asked.

"Even though the insect spirit hasn't attacked us again, our two armies are still locked in a very tense confrontation. Hence, the number of people I can send out to search for him is very limited, and I doubt we'll be able to track him down anytime soon," Nuo Qinglin said.

A hint of displeasure appeared on Yin Shen's face upon hearing this, and he was just about to say something when his expression abruptly stiffened, following which he pulled out a palm-sized white bone badge.

He slit his fingertip open before dripping a drop of blood onto the badge, and a layer of concealed runes and a totem symbol immediately emerged on its surface.

Yin Shen then raised the bone badge to his own forehead with both hands, looking as if he were conducting a prayer.

Moments later, his expression changed drastically as he abruptly sprang to his feet, doing so with such force that the large chair beneath him was completely pulverized.

"What's wrong, Chief Yin Shen?"

Nuo Qinglin knew that something extremely important had to have happened for Yin Shen to display such a strong reaction.

"The insect spirit attacked my Red Spiral Valley..." Yin Shen murmured in a stunned voice, seemingly struggling to come to terms with this information himself. freewebno(v)el

"What? It led the Insect Race army to the Red Spiral Valley?" Ze Wushi asked with a surprised expression.

"No. It traveled to the Red Spiral Valley on its own, killing everyone there with the exception of the women, children, and elderly. Even Master Jiu Ling was..."

Yin Shen's voice trailed off there as a grief-stricken look appeared on his face.

"No wonder the Insect Race army hasn't attacked us since the initial attack..." Yin Mei mused.

"Does that mean that insect spirit currently isn't among the Insect Race army outside the Dark Star Canyon?" Deng Gui suddenly asked as his eyes immediately lit up.

It was clear that he wanted to take advantage of this opportunity to send out the Beast Race army in retaliation and wipe out the Insect Race army once and for all.

Yin Shen turned to Deng Gui with a furious expression upon hearing this, and only after a long while was he able to spit out the words: "I'm afraid my Menace Lion Tribe won't be able to continue playing a part in this battle..."

"Don't make any rash decisions, Chief Yin Shen. The Red Spiral Valley is clearly already beyond saving, so it makes no difference whether you go back or not. Instead, you should stay here and help us vanquish the Insect Race army to avenge your brethren! I'm sure that's what everyone else present is also thinking, right?" Deng Gui declared.

No one in the palace responded, and the atmosphere had become rather awkward.

While it was true that this was what everyone was thinking, no one was willing to directly articulate this thought.

"This is a completely unexpected tragedy, so I can understand Chief Yin Shen's desire to return to the Red Spiral Valley as soon as possible. Don't worry about the battle taking place here, and if you need any help with anything, feel free to speak up, our Calm Dawn Tribe will be sure to assist you in any way that we can," Nuo Qingling said with an earnest expression as he rose to his feet.

Yin Shen's expression eased slightly upon hearing this, and he extended a parting salute toward Nuo Qinglin as he said, "Master Jiu Ling is extremely severely wounded, so he's no longer able to provide protection for our Menace Lion Tribe. We won't be able to contribute much by remaining here anyway, so I'll be returning to the Red Spiral Valley."

"Rest assured, Chief Yin Shen, I'll inform Master Suli and our King of what happened. I'm sure they'll be able to understand," Nuo Qinglin promised.

"You have my thanks, Chief Nuo."

At this point, Yin Shen's heart was no longer here, and he hurriedly expressed his gratitude to Nuo Qinglin before leaving the palace.

Following his departure, all of the tribal chiefs contacted their respective tribes through the use of secret techniques, and they were all very relieved to confirm that their tribes hadn't been attacked by the insect spirit.

Chapter 572: Impending Crisis

"What do you think of this, everyone?" Nuo Qinglin asked as he turned to all of the other chiefs in the palace.

"The Insect Race spent several decades to assemble this elite army consisting of several hundred tribes, yet after a single defeat, the insect spirit abandoned the army to attack the Red Spiral Valley on its own... It just doesn't make sense..." Ulu mused with a perplexed expression.

"Indeed. Not only does it not make sense, it goes against the insect spirit's personality as well," Marlon chimed in.

After some discussion, none of them were able to make heads or tails of the situation. Meanwhile, Nuo Yifan was standing in the palace as well, and a thought had occurred to her.

Back when Senior Li was at the Dark Star Canyon, the insect spirit led the Insect Race army on an excessively aggressive attack, and now that Senior Li has left the Dark Star Canyon, the insect spirit has inexplicably attacked the Menace Lion Tribe... Is there really no correlation between these two events?

She recalled that back when she first met Han Li, there had been a strange golden beetle accompanying him, and its aura had been rather similar to that of the insect spirit. However, it had slain the Gray Toad beings without any hesitation, so she had regarded it as an ally, but thinking back now, she realized that something wasn't quite right.

It was said that some Insect Race tribes liked to engage in cannibalism. With that in mind, could it be that the insect race had attacked the Dark Star Canyon for the sake of Han Li's golden beetle?

A chill immediately ran down Nuo Yifan's spine at this thought. If that were the case, then she was completely to blame for drawing the Insect Race army to the Dark Star Canyon!

Her face instantly turned deathly pale as she lowered her head, not daring to share this theory with everyone.

It wasn't that she was afraid that her father or someone else would be reprimanded for this. Instead, she was worried that revealing something like this would draw ire from the other tribes toward the Calm Dawn Tribe, a consequence that was too much for her to bear.

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Several more months passed by in a flash.

Even though the Gold Devouring Immortal had managed to severely wound True Spirit Jiu Ling of the Menace Lion Tribe, it had also been significantly worn down during that battle, so it was unable to pursue Jin Tong with the same level of intensity as before. Hence, Han Li was able to enjoy a rare period of peace.

However, that was only relative to the dire situation that they had previously been in.

As they ventured deeper and deeper into the primordial land, the environment was becoming more and more complex, and they encountered many primordial beasts that were even more formidable than Han Li and Jin Tong themselves.

Fortunately, at this point, they had begun to develop an understanding of the complex environment of the primordial land, and thanks to his enormous spiritual sense, Han Li was able to pre-emptively avoid these formidable creatures instead of inadvertently encroaching upon their territory.

Even so, they were still unable to avoid being attacked by some primordial beasts, and regardless of whether they posed a threat or not, Han Li was unwilling to engage in battle against them for fear of being slowed down.

Despite this, they were still inevitably slowed down quite a bit by these regular attacks.

One night, Daoist Xie was piloting the flying carriage over a vast plain.

As for Han Li, he was seated inside the cabin of the carriage, gently massaging a black jade slip in his hand.

His brows were tightly furrowed as if he were contemplating something, and he seemed to be quite hesitant.

After some time, he took a deep breath before pressing the jade slip against his own glabella.

The jade slip contained the fourth level of the Spirit Refinement Technique. After obtaining this jade slip, he had cultivated it briefly to resolve the earlier issue of backlash, but he had never fully mastered it, and he was planning to resume his cultivation once he crossed the primordial land and found a safe place to cultivate.

However, in this situation, he was forced to scrap those plans.

In the face of an opponent as formidable as the Gold Devouring Immortal, he had to elevate his own powers as much as possible. It was too difficult to advance in his cultivation base in a short time, but perhaps there was a chance that he would be able to make some progress in the Spirit Refinement Technique, which was also perfect as the Gold Devouring Immortal's soul was its main weakness.

As the jade slip lit up, Han Li gradually entered a state of immersive meditation.

Meanwhile, Jin Tong was sitting on the edge of the flying carriage with her feet dangling over the side, and she was gently swinging them back and forth.

Seeing as Jin Tong would always reappear in a different direction after spending time in Xiao Bai's stomach, the Gold Devouring Immortal had changed its strategy. Whenever Jin Tong's aura disappeared, it would simply stop and wait, then continue its pursuit once Jin Tong re-emerged. Hence, Han Li was no longer making Jin Tong spend as much time in Xiao Bai's stomach as possible. Instead, he only resorted to this in some critical junctures.

As a result, she was able to stay on the outside for longer than before.

At this moment, her face was devoid of its usual smile, and it was as if she had suddenly become a lot more mature and quiet.

It was certainly not a pleasant experience to be on the run from such a formidable enemy for so long.

She looked down at the winding river on the plain below, and it resembled a shimmering white vein on the earth under the moonlight. She suddenly recalled that there was a similarly shimmering white crystal that she was still yet to finish, and she hurriedly summoned it before sinking her teeth into it as a blissful look appeared on her little face.

There were no clouds in the sky, so the moon was made to appear particularly bright.

Han Li was basked in a layer of faint white moonlight, making the lines of his face appear softer and more gentle.

However, at this moment, his body was trembling slightly, and what appeared to be an eye had opened up on his glabella, while numerous translucent threads were flying in and out of the eye, presenting a peculiar sight to behold.

Daoist Xie couldn't help but turn around to take a glance at Han Li upon sensing these strange energy fluctuations, and his brows furrowed ever so slightly with concern.

At this moment, Han Li's spiritual sense fluctuations were rather unstable. It was like a bubble that was constantly expanding and shrinking, and that was indeed what Han Li felt like was happening in his consciousness.

All of the spiritual sense in his consciousness was ebbing and flowing back and forth like the tide, the fluctuations were becoming more and more pronounced, until they transformed into enormous waves.

Some time later, his eyes abruptly sprang open, and he immediately began gasping for air.

Jin Tong was very startled to hear this, and she hurriedly rose to her feet and rushed over to his side before asking, "Are you alright, Uncle?"

Han Li offered no response, merely stowing his black jade slip away with a slightly weary look on his face. He then swallowed a pill and wiped the sweat from his forehead as he replied, "I'm fine. I was just trying to rush a little in my cultivation earlier, and something almost went wrong."

The fourth level of the Spirit Refinement Technique was quite easy to understand, but the more he progressed, the more risk presented itself, and even the slightest lapse in concentration could lead to qi deviation.

"You really scared me just now," Jin Tong said with a relieved expression.

"Is the Gold Devouring Immortal doing anything new?" Han Li asked.

"Not really, it's still just following us like usual. Right now, it should be..."

Jin Tong began to examine what the Gold Devouring Immortal was doing through their spiritual connection as she spoke, and a grim look suddenly appeared on her face.

"Is it close?" Han Li hurriedly asked with an alarmed expression.

"No, but it's suddenly accelerated," Jin Tong replied.

"How many days will it take for it to catch up to us?" Han Li asked.

"I don't think we have days left, Uncle. At this rate, it'll catch up to us in just a few hours," Jin Tong replied with a sullen expression.

"Brother Xie, you take a rest, I'll pilot the flying carriage," Han Li said as he turned to Daoist Xie.

Daoist Xie nodded in response, then flew up Han Li's sleeve as a streak of golden light.

Han Li took a glance at the Immortal Origin Stones embedded into the array on the carriage, and he could tell that they didn't need to be replaced for now, so he focused on piloting the carriage, sending it racing forward at full speed.

"Don't worry, go back into Xiao Bai's stomach for now. After that, I'll change directions a few more times to see if we can buy ourselves some time," Han Li consoled as he turned to Jin Tong.

Jin Tong nodded in response, then pulled out a Soul Armor Talisman, yet right as she was about to press it to her own forehead, her expression abruptly stiffened as she exclaimed, "It's sped up once again! It's burning through its own essential power! Has it gone insane? At this rate, it'll catch up to us in just three hours!"

"Looks like it's run out of patience," Han Li mused with tightly furrowed brows.

All of a sudden, the green jade flying carriage drew to an abrupt halt at his behest.

"Why did you stop, Uncle?" Jin Tong asked with a perplexed expression.

"This isn't going to work. It'll inevitably be able to catch up to us sooner or later," Han Li replied as he cast his gaze into the night sky.

"But Uncle, your Time Dao Runes still haven't fully recovered yet, so we have no chance against it in a battle," Jin Tong exclaimed.

"Who told you we're going to engage it in battle? I'm just switching to a different strategy. Put on the Soul Armor Talisman and go into Xiao Bai's stomach for now," Han Li said as a faint smile appeared on his face.

Jin Tong immediately obliged, doing as she was told, while Han Li summoned Xiao Bai before swallowing her.

After stowing Xiao Bai away, Han Li's brows furrowed slightly as he murmured to himself, "It sure is coming fast..."

The Gold Devouring Immortal had already entered Han Li's spiritual sensory range, so he no longer required any updates on its location from Jin Tong.

Han Li stowed the flying carriage away with a sweep of his sleeve, following which flashes of silver lightning appeared in his eyes as he began making a string of hand seals.

Before long, the arcs of silver lightning around him had swelled to form a silver lightning array, and he abruptly vanished from within the array amid a bright flash of lightning.

Chapter 573: Intense Pursuit

Not long after Han Li vanished from the spot, a loud whooshing sound rang out in the distant sky, following which a speck of golden light appeared before rapidly expanding as it approached.

The ball of golden light was as blinding as a second sun, and none of the living creatures nearby dared to gaze upon it.

The edge of the golden light was as sharp as a blade, and all of the space in its wake was rippling incessantly, as if it were about to be torn apart.

Finally, the ball of golden light drew to a halt where Han Li had been just a moment ago.

As the golden light faded, a massive golden beetle was revealed, and it was none other than the High Zenith Stage Gold Devouring Immortal.

It was clearly a little smaller than before, perhaps because it had burned through some of its essential power, or perhaps because it was still yet to make a full recovery from its battle against Jiu Ling. However, the fury in its eyes was burning brighter than ever.

Not long ago, it had just received word from the Insect Race army that the Beast Race army had suddenly retaliated in full force, led by King Yohu and all of the true spirits, and the Insect Race army had suffered a catastrophic defeat and extremely severe casualties.

What remained of the Insect Race army had already begun a full retreat, and it was inevitable that the Beast Race was going to be claiming a lot of territory in the wake of this battle. The Insect Race had been in prime position to win the war, but the tables had been completely turned.

Even so, the Gold Devouring Beetle still had no intention of returning to the Insect Race.

In other words, the survival of the Insect Race wasn't as important in its eyes as the hunt for the other Gold Devouring Immortal.

After sensing the residual lightning aura in the air, the Gold Devouring Immortal stopped in its tracks and took some time to rest. In its past experience, it was a far better course of action to continue its pursuit once its target reappeared, as opposed to going in the wrong direction and having to double back.

On top of that, it was confident that this type of spatial teleportation technique couldn't be used for long, and eventually, it was going to be able to capture its target.

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At the same time.

A burst of violent spatial fluctuations suddenly erupted forth in the sky above a certain mountain, and countless arcs of lightning sprang out of thin air to form a massive silver lightning array.

Immediately thereafter, Han Li appeared within the array, and after taking a moment to compose himself, he swept a sleeve through the air to summon a beast hide map, which he began inspecting carefully.

Moments later, he stowed the map away, then pulled out another map before closely inspecting it as well.

After inspecting several maps in a row, he began inspecting his surroundings with a contemplative look on his face.

Shortly thereafter, he seemed to have decided on the direction that he wanted to go in, and he summoned his flying carriage once again before setting off as a streak of green light.

Around an hour later, the flying carriage drew to a halt, following which he summoned Xiao Bai amid a flash of white light, and Jin Tong soon came flying out of its mouth.

Her complexion was a little pale, and she looked around to discover that she was currently hovering in the air above a snowy mountain, upon which she hurriedly asked, "Where are we right now, Uncle?"

"This area is no longer on the map given to us by the Beast Race, so we've most likely ventured so deep into the primordial land that we're already very far away from the Beast Race and Insect Race territories," Han Li replied.

After a brief pause, he continued, "My spiritual sense is unable to detect the Gold Devouring Immortal at all now. Can you try and see if you can determine its location?"

Jin Tong immediately closed her eyes and obliged, and some time later, her eyes suddenly sprang open as an elated look appeared on her face.

"It's really far away now! I can still sense it, but the connection between us is far weaker than before."

"That's good to hear, but we can't let our guards down. It doesn't seem like it's planning to give up at all. Xiao Bai, do you recognize this place?" Han Li asked as he turned to the Pixiu.

"I feel like I came here once a very, very long time ago, but I can't remember clearly. The primordial land is enormous, and there are many places with similar terrains. Having said that, if we really have already left the territories of the Beast Race and the Insect Race, then we are indeed already deep in the primordial land," Xiao Bai replied.

"It looks like things will only get more dangerous from here onward, but at this point, turning back is no longer an option, so we can only keep advancing. By my estimates, we should be going in the right direction, so as long as we keep going, we'll eventually reach the Black Mountain Immortal Region.

"Jin Tong, stay out of Xiao Bai's stomach for now and make sure to keep constant tabs on the Gold Devouring Immortal. If it begins burning through its essential power again, notify me right away," Han Li instructed,

"You can count on me, Uncle!" Jin Tong vowed in a confident manner.

Han Li then swept a sleeve through the air to summon Daoist Xie as he said, "I'm going to resume my cultivation of the Spirit Refinement Technique now. In the meantime, I'll have to trouble you to pilot the carriage for me in my stead, Brother Xie."

Daoist Xie naturally had no objections to this, and with that, Han Li made his way into the cabin of the carriage, then swallowed a pill before sitting down with his legs crossed.

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Close to a month passed by in a flash.

At this moment, Han Li was piloting the flying carriage, which was racing over an enormous ancient forest.

All of a sudden, he spotted a series of huge stone buildings peeking through the gaps in the trees down below through his peripheral vision.

Out of curiosity, he brought the flying carriage to a halt, and upon closer inspection, he discovered that there was a massive stone city down below.

The construction style of the city was completely different from anything that he had seen in the immortal region and in the Beast Race settlements. It was constructed from countless giant stone

blocks, upon which were engraved all types of peculiar beastly designs, none of which were identifiable to Han Li.

However, most of these buildings were covered in thick layers of green moss, and many areas had already collapsed. There weren't any spiritual power fluctuations in the area, nor did there seem to be any living beings nearby, and the entire area was eerily quiet.

After inspecting the ancient city for a moment, Han Li decided that it was best to continue onward rather than waste time inspecting these ruins.

However, the white jade pendant hanging from his waist suddenly transformed into Xiao Bai amid a flash of white light, and it said, "Master, there's an extremely valuable treasure under those ruins! I can smell it!"

Jin Tong was sitting at the back of the carriage with a bored expression, but she was immediately intrigued to hear this, and she sprang to her feet as she yelled, "There's a treasure here? Where?"

"The treasure is hidden underground beneath the city, and it's concealed by special restrictions, so I can't determine its exact location, nor exactly what it is. However, the special energy fluctuations that it's releasing indicates that it's definitely no ordinary treasure!" Xiao Bai replied in an excited manner.

"You can't tell what it is just because there are some restrictions in the way? Why are you so useless? Try harder! Is it something of the same caliber as the pill cauldron that I ate before?" Jin Tong asked in an urgent voice.

"Regardless of what it is, we don't have time to go after it. If we trigger the restrictions in the city and end up getting trapped here or delayed until the Gold Devouring Immortal gets here, we won't be able to get away," Han Li said with a grim expression.

Xiao Bai and Jin Tong were both very disappointed to hear this, particularly Xiao Bai.

"Even though we haven't encountered much trouble of late, we still have to be on our guard. We can come back to explore this place another time, but for now, we have to keep going," Han Li continued.

"I finally get a chance to make myself useful, yet it's all in vain. Master, if you let me enter that city, I'll be able to ascertain the exact location of the treasure in an hour at most, and perhaps I can even find a shortcut to the treasure! Can you just let me give it a try?" Xiao Bai implored as it stood on the edge of the flying carriage and looked down at the ancient city below with intense longing in its eyes.

Han Li was a little moved upon hearing this.

There wasn't a single cultivator in the world who didn't love treasures, and it was clear that this had to be an extraordinary treasure, given how desperate Xiao Bai was to obtain it, but this was simply not the time to go treasure-hunting.

Right as he was about to say something, Jin Tong's expression suddenly changed drastically as she yelled, "We have to get out of here, Uncle!"

"What's wrong?" Han Li hurriedly asked.

"That thing's burning through its essential power again, and it's coming after us way faster than before!" Jin Tong replied in an urgent voice.

"Alright, go hide in Xiao Bai's stomach," Han Li immediately instructed without any hesitation.

Jin Tong nodded in response, then put on a Soul Armor Talisman in a well-rehearsed fashion before flying into Xiao Bai's mouth as a golden beetle.

Immediately thereafter, Han Li stowed both Xiao Bai and the flying carriage away, then conjured up another giant lightning array to teleport himself away.

Chapter 574: Nearing the Limits

In the sky above an enormous canyon, long arcs of silver lightning sprang forth amid violent spatial fluctuations, forming a lightning array in mid-air, and Han Li appeared at the center of the array amid a rumbling thunderclap.

He looked around momentarily before summoning his flying carriage, which immediately began racing forward as a green shadow at his behest.

After that, he summoned Daoist Xie and instructed it to pilot the carriage in his stead, then sat down with his legs crossed to continue cultivating the Spirit Refinement Technique.

Countless kilometers away from Han Li, the Gold Devouring Immortal was giving off blinding golden radiance as it flew through the air at an astonishing speed.

Compared with how infuriated it had been in the past, it was now a lot calmer.

Clearly, it had already grown accustomed to its target's strategy of periodically disappearing before reappearing elsewhere, and its strategy in response was just to keep pursuing its target without pause.

Given its cultivation base and the incredible physical constitutions of all Gold Devouring Immortals, it could easily keep this up indefinitely.

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Close to a month later.

As the Gold Devouring Immortal began approaching once again, Han Li had no choice but to flee again using his lightning teleportation array.

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Half a year later, the flying carriage was racing through a boundless sea of gray mist.

The mist was churning like turbulent waves, significantly hampering the speed of the flying carriage.

There were around a dozen gray lizard-like primordial beasts pursuing the carriage, every single one of which was at the Golden Immortal Stage, while one of them was around twice the size of the others and giving off a High Zenith Stage aura.

The lizard-like demon beasts were roaring with excitement as pillars of gray light erupted out of their mouths toward the flying carriage up ahead.

Meanwhile, Han Li was piloting the carriage with a grim look on his face, doing his best to avoid the pillars of gray light, while Jin Tong, Xiao Bai, and Daoist Xie were at the back of the carriage, warding off the pillars of gray light that he wasn't able to evade.

All the while, the Gold Devouring Immortal continued to stalk them from several million kilometers away.

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Two years later.

On the boundless yellow desert, gusts of ferocious wind were howling incessantly, and the landscape was riddled with enormous tornados that stood like pillars between heaven and earth.

There were bursts of yellow light flashing within the tornados, and they were giving off a tremendous rumbling noise that caused the surrounding space to tremble as waves of spatial fluctuations swept outward in all directions.

Occasionally, two of these giant tornados would crash into one another, and countless spatial rifts would instantly appear as a result.

A ball of green light and a ball of golden light were flying through the desert one after another, and both of them were doing their best to avoid the tornados while forging ahead with great difficulty.

The ball of golden light was clearly much faster than the ball of green light in front of it, and the distance between the two was rapidly shrinking.

All of a sudden, arcs of silver lightning erupted out of the ball of green light, instantly forming a silver lightning array, following which the ball of green light vanished amid a rumbling thunderclap.

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Over a decade flew by in a flash.

At this moment, a ball of green light was racing through the sky above a boundless swamp.

The ball of light was green in color, but not a uniform green throughout. Instead, it was an amalgamation of all types of different shades of green.

Despite so many shades of green being mixed together, the ball of light was somehow very nondescript, and it was able to camouflage itself against the surrounding space, making it very difficult to spot.

With the ball of light was the flying carriage that Han Li and the others were on.

The color of the flying carriage was far different from what it had been in the past. Previously, the carriage had looked as if it had been carved out of a single chunk of green jade, yet at this moment, it was a hideous patchy green color, as if something had been smeared over it.

While the flying carriage was looking far more unsightly than before, this patchy green light that it was giving off was able to conceal all of its spiritual power fluctuations, as well as the spiritual power fluctuations emanating from the hexagonal array on the carriage.

This green substance was a type of spirit tree sap that Han Li had obtained by chance while passing through a primordial tribe, and it had spared him a lot of trouble.

At this moment, there was a rather grim look on his face as he piloted the flying carriage, while a pale-faced Jin Tong was sitting beside him, nibbling on a spirit treasure.

Xiao Bai was laying on the ground on his other side, and it was clear that it was also taking some time to recover.

"It's less than 100,000 kilometers away now," Jin Tong suddenly reported.

Han Li took a glance behind the carriage, and a hint of blue light flashed through his eyes, following which he turned back around to face forward again before making a string of hand seals.

Arcs of silver lightning erupted out of his body, forming a lightning array around the flying carriage with countless lightning runes dancing within it.

A rumbling thunderclap rang out as the lightning array lit up, following which the flying carriage vanished in a flash.

Mere moments after the flying carriage disappeared, a ball of golden light shot forth from afar, then drew to a halt where the flying carriage had just disappeared.

The golden light faded to reveal the Gold Devouring Immortal, and it inspected its surroundings momentarily, then continued onward with a cold sneer on its face.

At the same time, a burst of spatial fluctuations erupted in the air above a lush forest countless kilometers away, and a ball of golden lightning appeared before rapidly spreading outward to form a golden lightning array, at the center of which Han Li and the green flying carriage emerged.

Han Li cast an incantation seal into the flying carriage, and it immediately continued onward while releasing the same patchy green light as before.

Even though he had managed to open up some distance on the Gold Devouring Immortal once again, he didn't relax in the slightest. Instead, he seemed to have only grown more concerned.

He had been fleeing from the Gold Devouring Immortal for over a decade up to this point, and during this time, he had encountered countless crises.

Not only had they been attacked by all types of primordial beasts, they were occasionally even targeted by frighteningly powerful primordial true spirits, and that wasn't even to mention all the types that they had stumbled into different perilous regions.

If it weren't for his immense spiritual sense, time law powers, and the large collection of powerful treasures and allies at his disposal, he would've most likely already perished in the primordial land even before the Gold Devouring Immortal caught up to them.

Of course, out of all of this, the Gold Devouring Immortal still remained the most potent threat.

Up to this point, he had pulled out all the stops, including even the Lightning Restraining Wood teleportation array that could facilitate ultra long-distance teleportation, and he had also attempted to lure the Gold Devouring Immortal into some perilous areas in the hope that it would be slowed down.

However, the Gold Devouring Immortal was extremely formidable, and not only were the primordial beasts that it encountered completely unable to pose a threat to it, it was also able to negotiate all of Han Li's traps with ease.

Whenever the situation became truly dire, Han Li would use his lightning teleportation array to get away just in the nick of time.

He possessed the Lightning Bird bloodline in his body, and he also had the Divine Devilbane Lightning of his Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords and the assistance of Daoist Xie, so as long as he didn't run out of Immortal Origin Stones, he would be able to replenish his lightning power reserves indefinitely, but eventually, his resources were going to be exhausted.

Even though Han Li did everything in his power to speed up his own recovery after unleashing his lightning teleportation array, the process of conversion from immortal spiritual power to lightning power was a very time-consuming one, so it was certainly not sustainable.

In particular, the Gold Devouring Immortal seemed to have recently realized the sticky situation that Han Li was in, and it was exerting even more pressure in its pursuit. As a result, Han Li's lightning power reserves were being quickly whittled down, and he was going to run out before too long.

With that in mind, he heaved a faint sigh as he summoned his Mantra Treasured Axis.

Most of the Time Dao Runes on its surface had already recovered, and that was a very encouraging sight.

With these Time Dao Runes recovered, even if the Gold Devouring Immortal were to catch up to them, he had some confidence in his ability to deal with it.

Right at this moment, Jin Tong suddenly stood up as she declared, "I'm ready to go, Uncle."

Daoist Xie immediately took over piloting the carriage from Han Li upon hearing this, while Han Li made his way over to Jin Tong's side before sitting down with his legs crossed.

He then pressed a hand over her glabella while chanting an incantation, and a layer of translucent light emerged over his glabella.

As the incantation continued, the burst of translucent light grew brighter and brighter, and it flowed out of his body before surging into Jin Tong's head through the palm of his hand.

A series of translucent spirit patterns instantly appeared on her forehead, and they were giving off faint spiritual power fluctuations.

The cloud-like patterns that had appeared on Jin Tong's forehead were very similar to the ones imparted by Soul Armor Talismans.

Certain rare materials were required to craft Soul Armor Talismans, thereby making them very expensive, and even with Han Li's enormous wealth, the expenditure was too much for him to maintain over a long period of time. Hence, he began to study the talisman, and he discovered that it worked by converting one's spiritual sense into a substantial form before transforming it into a protective barrier that was infused into the talisman for others to use.

After figuring out the inner workings of the talisman, he immediately attempted to replicate it.

On top of that, he had been cultivating the fourth level of the Spirit Refinement Technique with every spare moment that he had.

It was unclear whether he was truly really suited to cultivating the Spirit Refinement Technique, or whether his latent potential had been brought to the fore by the constant danger that he was in. In any case, he had been making rapid progress in the fourth level of the Spirit Refinement Technique. At this point, he had almost fully mastered it, and his spiritual sense had been enhanced by around twofold.

With his enhanced spiritual sense, Han Li was better equipped to replicate the Soul Armor Talismans, and even though he wasn't able to craft them due to a lack of materials, he was able to reference them to cast a layer of protection over Jin Tong's soul.

Jin Tong opened her eyes, then flew into Xiao Bai's body as a streak of golden light.

Meanwhile, Han Li took over from Daoist Xie again, then immediately changed directions before flying onward.

Once again, the Gold Devouring Immortal found itself unable to detect Jin Tong's presence, and it gave a cold harrumph, but it wasn't concerned at all.

It could sense that its target was already nearing their limits, and they wouldn't be able to run away for much longer.

With that in mind, the golden light radiating from its body grew even brighter as it raced forward at an even faster speed than before.

Chapter 575: Dire Straits

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

In the sky above a primordial desert, a flying carriage was racing along like a bolt of green lightning, only appearing for an instant before vanishing into the distant horizon.

On the flying carriage, Han Li wore a grim expression as he made a rapid string of hand seals.

Daoist Xie and Xiao Bai were situated on either side of him, releasing a burst of yellow light and white light, respectively, into his body.

Han Li's expression didn't betray his emotions, but internally, he was feeling rather frustrated.

Over the past month, the Gold Devouring Immortal had been pursuing them like mad, and somehow, it had managed to speed up significantly, exerting immense pressure upon Han Li.

He was forced to use his lightning teleportation array on many occasions in succession in a short time, and at this point, the lightning power reserves in his body had completely run dry.

At this point, the Gold Devouring Immortal was only several hundred thousand kilometers away. Jin Tong was currently inside Xiao Bai's stomach, so they weren't in any danger for now, but once she came out, the Gold Devouring Immortal would be able to catch up to them in a very short time, and it had already been over an hour since Jin Tong had entered Xiao Bai's stomach.

This meant that it wasn't going to be long before he had to directly face an enemy far more formidable than himself.

Even in this dire situation, Han Li remained calm and collected. At this moment, he was releasing his spiritual sense to constantly keep tabs on his surroundings, and at the same time, his mind was racing as he tried to think of a way out of this predicament.

All of a sudden, something caught his attention, and he looked down in a certain direction.

At this point, the flying carriage had already emerged from the desert, and down below as a vast azure mountain range. The ground and all of the rocks on the mountains were all azure in color, presenting a rather peculiar sight to behold.

Additionally, the world's origin qi here was far more abundant than it was elsewhere.

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

According to past experience, certain powerful beings had to be residing in a place with such abundant spiritual qi. Perhaps there were even some powerful primordial tribes in this mountain range, and that could present an opportunity for him to save himself.

With that in mind, he immediately activated his Spirit Refinement Technique to release his spiritual sense with all his might.

Right at this moment, Xiao Bai suddenly opened its mouth, and Jin Tong flew out from within.

At this moment, her complexion was deathly pale, and her aura was also in a state of disarray, clearly indicating that she had only come out after reaching her absolute limits.

"I can't stay in there any longer, Uncle..." Jin Tong said in a feeble voice.

A hint of sympathy appeared in Han Li's eyes at the sight of her terrible condition, and he summoned a pile of spirit treasures for her as he said, "That's fine. Take a rest, I'll think of a way to save us."

Jin Tong nodded feebly in response, then sat down before picking up a spirit treasure and stuffing it into her own mouth.

Han Li took a deep breath as he continued to pilot the flying carriage forward while scouring his surroundings with his spiritual sense.

Even though the azure mountain range was very abundant in spiritual qi, there were no perilous terrains that could be used to his advantage, nor any signs of settlement from powerful primordial tribes.

As he continued to fly onward, his heart slowly began to sink.

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Several hundred thousand kilometers away, the Gold Devouring Immortal was racing through the air with cold killing intent flashing in its eyes.

The golden light radiating from its body was glowing brighter and brighter, resembling a scorching golden flame, and it sped up even further.

It could clearly sense that the distance between itself and its target was rapidly shrinking.

Right at this moment, a burst of azure light flashed over a mountain face deep in the azure mountain range, and the rock face began to warp, transforming into a giant face that cast its gaze toward the Gold Devouring Immortal.

The Gold Devouring Immortal paid no heed to this. Its only objective was to capture its target, so it merely ignored anything else that didn't actively get in its way.

It continued to accelerate as it flew past the mountain face without pause, and as time passed, it spotted a speck of green light on the distant horizon up ahead.

The ball of green light was flying away from the Gold Devouring Immortal, but at a far slower speed.

The Gold Devouring Immortal's eyes instantly lit up with excitement upon seeing this, and it let loose a piercing screech as it sped up even further.

Just a few seconds later, it appeared directly behind the ball of green light, which contained the flying carriage that Han Li was on.

Han Li and others were all very alarmed and panicked at the sight of the Gold Devouring Immortal, and upon spotting the panicked expressions on their faces, a sense of immense joy welled up in the Gold Devouring Immortal's heart.

It opened its mouth to release a thick pillar of golden light, which appeared behind the flying carriage in a flash before crashing down with tremendous power.

Standing on the carriage, the spiritual light around Han Li's body brightened significantly, as did the green light emanating from the flying carriage, and it moved several kilometers horizontally in the blink of an eye, allowing it to just barely evade the pillar of golden light.

However, the pillar of golden light then suddenly exploded into countless thin rays of golden light, which resembled countless golden flying swords that hurtled directly toward the flying carriage.

A resounding boom rang out as the flying carriage exploded into a ball of radiant green light, following which a streak of azure light shot out from within before fleeing into the distance.

A cold sneer appeared on the Gold Devouring Immortal's face as it lashed out with one of its front limbs, unleashing a massive blade of golden light that was close to 10,000 feet in length.

The blade of light was curved to resemble the blade of a scythe, and there was a layer of rippling golden light over its surface as it swept through the air with tremendous power.

Bursts of immense invisible force were erupting out of the blade, causing the entire space within a radius of several dozen kilometers to compress forcefully toward the streak of azure light from all directions.

The streak of azure light was instantly slowed down significantly as a result.

Right at this moment, a thunderous roar rang out from within the streak of azure light, and a giant furry golden fist abruptly emerged amid a flash of golden light. There were countless golden runes surging around the fist, and it was crashing toward the giant golden blade up above with unstoppable might.

At the same time, a piercing screech rang out as a huge streak of translucent golden light erupted forth, transforming into a golden sword projection that was over 10,000 feet in length before sweeping toward the giant golden blade as well.

The golden sword projection was extremely fast, leaving a trail of afterimages in its wake, yet as soon as it clashed against the giant golden blade, it was instantly sliced into two.

However, the golden light radiating from the giant golden blade also shuddered unsteadily, while its downward momentum was also somewhat arrested.

Right at this moment, the golden fist struck the golden blade with tremendous power.

An earth-shattering boom rang out as a burst of blinding golden light erupted in all directions alongside waves of immense power that eradicated the restrictive force in the surrounding space.

The giant fist was almost sliced into two, and blood immediately came gushing out of the wound, but the golden blade had also been destroyed.

A massive golden ape stumbled unsteadily out of the golden light, and it was panting heavily, while large sections of its fur were stained red with blood.

On one shoulder of the golden ape stood Jin Tong in her beetle form, while standing on his other shoulder were Xiao Bai and Daoist Xie, both of which had rather unsteady auras, indicating that they had been injured when the flying carriage was destroyed.

Furthermore, Daoist Xie's left arm was nowhere to be seen, while Xiao Bai was carrying a massive gash on its back.

Jin Tong cast a vicious gaze toward the Gold Devouring Immortal, but the fear deep in her eyes was very apparent.

The Gold Devouring Immortal paid no heed to Han Li and the others as it focused its gaze solely on Jin Tong, and a hint of greed flashed through its eyes.

In the next instant, it abruptly vanished from the spot.

The giant golden immediately sprang into action upon seeing this, darting away to the side as a massive golden shadow.

However, right at this moment, an even faster streak of golden light emerged before flashing past the golden ape, instantly inflicting a deep wound that began bleeding profusely.

The golden ape flew away into the distance before drawing to a halt, and it was revealed that a massive gash had been sliced into its body from its chest to its lower abdomen, and the wound was so deep that bone was visible through it.

At the same time, one of Jin Tong's front limbs had also been severed, and there was a pained look on her face.

Meanwhile, the streak of golden light drew to a halt not far away, then faded to reveal the Gold Devouring Immortal, which was holding Jin Tong's severed front limb in its mouth.

A burst of golden light flew out to sweep up the limb before sucking it into its mouth, and a blissful look appeared on its face, as if it were savoring the finest delicacy in the world.

The giant golden ape hurriedly pressed a hand over the huge gash that had been sliced into body, and a layer of green light flashed over the palm of its hand, upon which the massive gash quickly sealed, while the bleeding also ceased.

Immediately thereafter, it sprang through the air before taking on Han Li's Azure Luan Bird form amid a flash of azure light, then began flying away as quickly as it could.

At the same time, bursts of golden light emerged from the Azure Luan Bird's body, and the faint projection of a rapidly revolving golden wheel could be seen within the golden light.

All of a sudden, around a dozen identical golden and azure projections emerged from the Azure Luan Bird's body, all of which were also giving off identical auras as they shot forth in different directions, and they were no slower than the Gold Devouring Immortal.

A hint of surprise flashed through the Gold Devouring Immortal's eyes as it sensed the time law aura emanating from the golden wheel, and it lashed out with both of its front limbs in unison.

Violent spatial fluctuations instantly swept through the surrounding area in a radius of several hundred kilometers, and countless bursts of radiant golden light erupted out of thin air, instantly forming a golden spirit domain that encompassed all of the Azure Luan Bird projections, slowing them down significantly.

Chapter 576: Karma

The Gold Devouring Immortal opened its mouth to release a thick pillar of golden light, which flashed through the air like a bolt of lightning, and within it were numerous translucent golden threads that were giving off a terrifying destructive aura.

In the next instant, a resounding boom rang out as the pillar of golden light split apart into around a dozen smaller beams of light, each of which shot forth toward one of the Azure Luan Bird projections.

These beams of light were extremely fast, while the Azure Luan Bird projections had been slowed down significantly, so the former was able to catch up to the latter in an instant.

A string of thunderous explosions rang out as the beams of golden light were detonated in unison, transforming into radiant golden suns that released devastating auras of destruction, creating countless spatial rifts in the surrounding area.

All of the Azure Luan Bird projections were instantly destroyed amid the explosions of golden light, with the exception of a single one.

This was the true Azure Luan Bird, and its feathers were in a state of complete disarray, while the wound stretching from its chest to its lower abdomen had been split open and was once again bleeding profusely.

Jin Tong was standing on the Azure Luan Bird's back, and she was also riddled with injuries, with countless thin cracks lining her entire exoskeleton.

As for Xiao Bai and Daoist Xie, they were nowhere to be seen, but numerous white and golden fragments could be seen littered throughout the nearby space.

The Azure Luan Bird threw up a mouthful of blood, but the defiance in its eyes didn't waver as it summoned its Mantra Treasured Axis once again.

However, before it had a chance to do anything else, several dozen translucent golden threads suddenly appeared directly beneath it, then pierced through its body and emerged from its back before it had a chance to react.

The Azure Luan Bird's entire body instantly stiffened, while the Mantra Treasured Axis also abruptly ceased in its rotation.

Immediately thereafter, the translucent golden threads converged forcefully, slicing the Azure Luan Bird's body into countless pieces, all of which began raining down toward the ground below.

Jin Tong wasn't struck by these translucent threads, but her expression changed drastically upon seeing this, and she immediately fled into the distance as a ball of golden light.

However, before she was able to get very far, the translucent golden threads intertwined with one another to form a huge golden net, trapping her within it.

Immediately thereafter, the Gold Devouring Immortal appeared directly before her, then opened its mouth to release a burst of golden light that encompassed her entire body.

A horrified look appeared on Jin Tong's face as she struggled with all her might, and golden light erupted out of her body, frantically attempting to keep the golden net at bay, but her efforts proved to be completely futile.

A derisive sneer appeared on the Gold Devouring Immortal's face, and it opened its mouth up wide, releasing a burst of golden light that sucked in Jin Tong in a flash.

Trapped within the golden light, Jin Tong's body shrank down rapidly before vanishing into the Gold Devouring Immortal's mouth.

The Gold Devouring Immortal hovered in mid-air with its eyes tightly shut, and the golden spirit domain around it rippled momentarily before vanishing into its body.

Moments later, radiant golden light erupted out of its body, forming waves of golden light that swept forth in all directions alongside its tremendous aura, which was slowly elevating bit by bit.

"I've finally found another one... Someday, I will return to my full power..." the Gold Devouring Immortal murmured to itself, then closed its eyes once again.

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On the edge of a vast forest.

There was a small mountain here that was lined with jagged rocks, and a green jade flying carriage was rapidly approaching from afar before crashing heavily down onto the ground like a shooting star.

The entire mountain shuddered violently as countless rocks came tumbling down, raising an enormous cloud of dust.

On the flying carriage, Han Li gave a muffled groan as he forcibly swallowed the mouthful of blood that had already gushed to the base of his throat.

"Uncle! Are you alright?" Jin Tong exclaimed in a concerned voice.

Han Li waved a hand to indicate that he was fine.

He then released his spiritual sense to scour the surrounding area momentarily, following which his brows furrowed slightly as he asked, "Jin Tong, can you sense where the Gold Devouring Immortal is right now?"

Jin Tong hurriedly closed her eyes to focus on her spiritual connection with the Gold Devouring Immortal upon hearing this, and moments later, she reopened her eyes as a perplexed look appeared on her face.

"For some reason, it's not moving... It's still in the same place that it was originally at, and it doesn't appear to have moved at all."

"It's not chasing after us?" Han Li asked as he swallowed a pill.

"No, but..."

"But what?" Han Li asked as he raised an eyebrow.

"Its spiritual sense and immortal spiritual power are all fluctuating violently in a very abnormal fashion. It's almost as if it's locked in a fierce battle, but that's clearly not the case. Why is that?" Jin Tong mused with a puzzled expression.

After a brief moment of contemplation, Han Li said, "According to your description, I think it must've fallen into some type of powerful illusion."

"Illusion? How did it suddenly fall into an illusion?" Jin Tong exclaimed.

"I don't know, but in any case, this is good news for us. Let's keep going, we can't afford to delay here any longer," Han Li replied.

Jin Tong immediately nodded in response.

The flying carriage lit up once again, yet right as it was about to rise up into the sky, Han Li was suddenly struck by a rush of dizziness, following which a voice rang out within his consciousness.

"I've temporarily trapped that Gold Devouring Immortal for now, but the illusion will only last 20 years. At your current cultivation base, continuing onward will be no different from committing suicide, so I suggest that you turn back and go back to where you came from."

Han Li was very alarmed to hear this voice, and he immediately channeled his Spirit Refinement Technique to protect his own consciousness while asking internally, "Who are you, and why did you help me?"

However, there was no response to his question, and the dizzy sensation clouding his mind also faded.

Han Li's brows furrowed tightly as he released his spiritual sense to scour the surrounding area, but he was unable to find anything amiss.

Jin Tong was rather perplexed by Han Li's strange actions, and she asked, "What's wrong, Uncle?"

Han Li offered no reply as he stood rooted to the spot in a daze, seemingly contemplating something in silence.

Moments later, he heaved a faint sigh and shook his head, and the flying carriage sped away into the distance at his behest.

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There was an enormous peach blossom forest countless kilometers away.

Under an enormous ancient peach blossom tree in the forest was a massive bed chariot, reclined on top of which was a huge white fox. The fox had a shock of golden fur on its glabella, resembling a heavenly eye.

Its eyes were slightly narrowed, making it appear as if it were half-asleep, and its entire body was enshrouded in a faint glow, making it appear as if it were a fox deity.

Not far away from the giant white fox was a gorgeous young girl in a short white dress. There was a slightly seductive quality to her stunning beautiful features, which were currently displaying a concerned expression, and after some hesitation, she asked, "Esteemed patriarch, if you could trap that Gold Devouring Immortal, then why didn't you help him a bit more and kill it altogether?"

"You know that I don't have any fondness for humans, Le'er. If it isn't for the fact that he looked after you in the Spirit Domain Realm, I would've already killed him for encroaching upon the territory of our Spirit Fox Tribe!" The white fox replied with a cold harrumph.

The girl that it had just referred to as Le'er was none other than Liu Le'er, who had spent much of her formative years with Han Li back in the Spirit Domain Realm.

"But esteemed patriarch..."

"That's enough!" the white fox snapped as its eyes abruptly sprang open. "I helped him this time not just to repay him for looking after you in the past, but also to sever the karma between you and him. This matter concerns your future cultivation, and while I do spoil you in other things, this is non-negotiable! If you refuse to accept this outcome, then I'll go and kill him right now to sever the karma at its roots!"

"No, don't do that! I'm sorry, esteemed patriarch," Liu Le'er hurriedly said in an alarmed manner.

A hint of sympathy appeared on the white fox's face upon seeing her panicked reaction, and he sighed, "Killing that Gold Devouring Immortal will incur severe consequences, even for me. I have no idea how that man made an enemy out of that Gold Devouring Immortal, but there's no need to worry.

As long as he knows what's good for him and turns back, it won't be impossible for him to make it back to the nearest immortal region in 20 years."

Liu Le'er wasn't relieved at all to hear this, and the concern in her eyes only grew more pronounced.

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Close to a year passed by in a flash.

During this time, Han Li had continued to venture even deeper into the primordial land without pause.
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However, as they advanced in their journey, the primordial beasts that they encountered became more and more powerful. As a result, they had no choice but to slow down and proceed with caution.

Even so, they had still inadvertently incurred the wrath of extremely formidable primordial beasts on several occasions, thereby forcing them to flee for their lives.

Thankfully, none of these primordial beasts were anywhere near as persistent as the Gold Devouring Immortal, and at the very most, they would only pursue the flying carriage for a few days before giving up.

Half a month ago, Han Li had flown the carriage into a valley in order to escape from a High Zenith Stage primordial beast.

The valley was quite large, and there was a peaceful ancient forest inside.

However, only after entering the valley did Han Li realize that it was littered with primordial beast carcasses.

This was clearly a terrible sign, but before he had a chance to back out of the valley, countless vines converged from all directions to form a massive cage around the flying carriage.

As it turned out, this forest was actually an incredibly powerful tree demon.

In the end, Han Li was only able to escape from that ordeal after drawing upon the Divine Devilbane Lightning in his Azure Bamboo Cloudswarm Sword to conjure up a lightning teleportation array.

Chapter 577: Stuck Between a Rock and a Hard Place

It was a bright and sunny day, and gusts of fierce wind were howling incessantly over a mountain with sparse vegetation, but a thin layer of mist remained lingering in the air despite the ferocity of the wind.

Right at this moment, a streak of green light appeared in the distance, then rapidly approached the mountain before fading to reveal a green jade flying carriage.

Han Li leaped down from the carriage, then inspected his surroundings briefly before making his way over to a large tree that was completely devoid of leaves. He sat down with his back against the tree, then took a pill before closing his eyes to rest.

Jin Tong and Xiao Bai also descended from the flying carriage before arriving by his side.

Both Han Li and Jin Tong appeared to be exhausted, and even Xiao Bai was hanging its head in a lethargic manner as it laid down onto the ground.

Some time later, Han Li exhaled as he opened his eyes, and he was looking a lot more energized than before, but there was still a hint of concern in his eyes.

After a brief hesitation, Jin Tong said, "It's already been over half a year, yet that thing still hasn't moved at all."

"It looks like whoever communicated with me back then had to have been an extremely powerful being. This is a late-High Zenith Stage spirit insect, and even though its spiritual sense is its weakness, it's still an extraordinary feat to trap it in an illusion for so long. It appears the Gold Devouring Immortal really will be trapped in that illusion for 20 years," Han Li mused.

"Is that person really helping us?" Jin Tong asked.

"That's hard to say for now, but given that this is the primordial land, anything is possible," Han Li replied in an ambiguous fashion.

"Even in the Northern Glacial Immortal Region, there was so much treachery going on, I don't think anyone in the primordial land would be so kind as to help us for no reason," Jin Tong sighed.

"I wouldn't say that's entirely accurate," Xiao Bai suddenly interjected. "Many of the immortals of the immortal regions appear to be wise and benevolent on the surface, but behind the scenes, they're constantly engaging in treacherous dealings. In contrast, even though the primordial land is constantly ravaged by conflict, everyone is much more forthcoming here."

"Shut your mouth!" Jin Tong snapped as she slapped Xiao Bai on the top of its head. "Have you forgotten what the Beast Race did to us after we helped them?"

"You can't just focus on a single example! The Beast Race is only a tiny race on the outskirts of the primordial land. In contrast, the major primordial races are far more honorable!" Xiao Bai countered.

Han Li's eyes lit up slightly upon hearing mention of the major primordial races, and Jin Tong just so happened to spot the change in his expression, upon which she hurriedly asked, "Have you thought of something, Uncle?"

"Seeing as that person is able to trap the Gold Devouring Immortal for 20 years and was able to communicate directly into my consciousness without my detection, they have to at least be at the late-High Zenith Stage, and they could even be a Great Encompassment Stage being. I've never met anyone of such a lofty cultivation base, but there's a chance that they could be from one of the major primordial races mentioned by Xiao Bai just now," Han Li replied.

"Does it really matter? As long as they're helping us, who cares if they come from a major primordial race or a smaller one? It would be great if they could trap the Gold Devouring Immortal for 200 years, even 2,000 years!" Jin Tong said.

Han Li was rather amused to hear this, and he jibed, "Why 2,000 years and not for the rest of eternity?"

"If I can spend 2,000 years traveling and eating with you, there's a good chance I'll become even more powerful than that thing. Once that time comes, I'll wait for it to deliver itself to me so I can eat it. That would save me the trouble of having to search for it!" Jin Tong replied in a confident manner.

"Are you sure you're not the one who's going to be eaten?" Han Li asked in an exasperated voice.

"For some reason, ever since I could remember, I've always had an innate urge to devour all of the other Gold Devouring Beetles that I encounter, and this urge became even stronger as that thing was pursuing us," Jin Tong replied with a serious expression.

"Perhaps that's simply a mission that all Gold Devouring Beetles share," Han Li mused in a contemplative fashion.

Jin Tong didn't really understand what that meant, but she didn't ponder it, either, as she asked, "What should we do from here, Uncle? Maybe we should listen to whoever helped us and return to the Northern Glacial Immortal Region."

"That's not an option. I'm definitely already a wanted fugitive in the entire immortal region, so going back would be no different from suicide," Han Li said with a wry smile.

"Then should we keep going forward?" Jin Tong asked.

"After being chased by that Gold Devouring Immortal for so long, we've already completely diverged from the route that we were supposed to take. At our current cultivation bases, if we keep forging ahead blindly, we'll land ourselves in hot water sooner or later. We can't just ignore the advice of someone capable of trapping a late-High Zenith Stage being in an illusion for 20 years," Han Li said.

"Well, what can we do then? Surely you're not planning to just stay here and cultivate!"

"That's exactly what I intend to do!" Han Li declared, much to the astonishment of both Jin Tong and Xiao Bai.

"We're just going to stay here in the middle of nowhere? Is that supposed to be a joke? Besides, we won't be able to make any significant progress in our cultivation in 20 years anyway," Jin Tong said in a concerned manner.

"There are no other feasible options. At this point, we're stuck between a rock and a hard place, and we can't retreat or advance, so we may as well take our chances here. At the very least, I think this is the best way to proceed," Han Li said.

"In that case, I'll place my trust in you, Uncle. You can go into seclusion and focus on your cultivation, I'll make sure you don't get disturbed," Jin Tong vowed as she puffed out her chest in a display of confidence, while Xiao Bai buried its own head under its two front paws, seemingly resigning itself to its fate.

"There's no hurry. We haven't just been traveling aimlessly for the past half a year. During this time, I've been searching for a suitable place to go into seclusion, and I've made my choice, but it's not here," Han Li said with a smile.

"Why not? There aren't any primordial beasts nearby. Isn't this a good place to cultivate in seclusion?" Jin Tong asked with a perplexed expression.

"Do you still remember that ravine that we recently passed by?" Han Li asked.

"I do, it's not far away from the valley where that tree demon was. It was so dark, and even from really far away, it reeked of blood and baleful qi. Surely you're not planning to go into seclusion in there," Jin Tong exclaimed.

"That's right. Here in the primordial land, all of the formidable primordial beasts have their own territories, and generally speaking, they won't encroach upon the territories of others. That tree demon was extremely powerful, and that's why that other primordial beast stopped pursuing us as soon as we entered the tree demon's territory. As long as we stay in its territory, we won't be disturbed by other primordial beasts," Han Li explained.

"That sounds correct, but the tree demon isn't just going to allow us to cultivate on its territory!" Jin Tong countered in a puzzled manner.

"I'm not sure if you noticed, but the tree demon's roots were spread out over the entire valley and even a large area outside the valley, but they didn't extend into that ravine. Do you know why that is?" Han Li asked.

Jin Tong hadn't noticed this at all, and she could only shake her head with an inquisitive expression.

"Water and sunlight are mandatory for the nourishment of all plant life, so plants generally prefer warm and humid environments. That applies even to plant demons. That ravine is extremely dark and completely devoid of sunlight, and that's why the tree demon wasn't willing to extend its roots there," Han Li explained.

"I see," Jin Tong replied with an enlightened expression.

"More importantly, the ravine is extremely abundant in baleful qi, and that's exactly what I need. Alright, we've taken some time to rest, let's set off for that ravine right away," Han Li declared.

With that, the three of them flew onto the flying carriage, which sped away as a streak of green light.

Around half a month later, the flying carriage drew to a halt in the sky above a ravine that was several dozen kilometers in length and several thousand feet wide.

Han Li was standing at the front of the carriage, looking at the ravine down below with a hesitant expression.

While he had already decided that this was going to be where he went into seclusion, there was still a major element of risk associated with this plan.

The primordial land was rife with formidable beasts, and there was no guarantee that there weren't creatures even more powerful than the tree demon lurking in the ravine. Perhaps it wasn't the lack of sunlight that made the tree demon unwilling to spread its roots here. Instead, perhaps, it was weary of some other formidable being inside the ravine.

Han Li shook his head to rid himself of those meddling thoughts. At this point, it was already too late to turn back.

In the next instant, he swooped down into the ravine, and as soon as he entered its depths, he was immediately plunged into darkness.

A nauseating bloody odor permeated throughout the entire ravine alongside an extremely fearsome baleful aura.

Han Li remained completely unfazed as he conjured up an azure light barrier around himself, and only after descending to a depth of close to 10,000 feet did he release his spiritual sense to scour the ravine.

In doing so, he discovered that the ravine was far deeper than he imagined, and not only was it impossible to determine where its bottom laid, Han Li couldn't sense any living beings inside at all.

He continued to descend rapidly along a sheer cliff face of the ravine, and the more he descended the more alarmed he became.

The cliff faces on either side of the ravine were riddled with jagged and uneven rocks, interspersed among which were slightly flatter and more even stone platforms that varied in size.

Littered all over these jagged rocks and stone platforms were piles of skeletons that were burning with fluorescent green flames. There was a huge number of these skeletons, and just like the stone platforms, they also varied drastically in size.

Han Li was rather confused to see this.

Could it be that the baleful qi here was so abundant because this was where the tree demon had been discarding the skeletal remains of its victims?

Chapter 578: Descent

Around 15 minutes later, Han Li descended onto one of the stone platforms protruding out of the cliff face, and he swept a sleeve through the air to scatter the dozens of skeletons on the platform, sending them plunging down deeper into the ravine.

Han Li briefly inspected his surroundings, then swept a sleeve through the air to summon Daoist Xie, Jin Tong, and Xiao Bai amid three streaks of light, two golden and one white.

As soon as Jin Tong appeared, she was immediately struck by a sense of discomfort, and she hurriedly asked, "Where are we, Uncle?"

"There's an extreme abundance of baleful qi here," Daoist Xie remarked with tightly furrowed brows.

"We're already deep within the ravine right now. This amount of baleful qi should still be tolerable for all of you, but if we go any deeper, you run the risk of suffering baleful qi contamination, so I'll leave all of you to stay here for now while I continue my descent," Han Li said.

"Just focus on your cultivation and don't worry about anything else, Uncle," Jin Tong declared with a reassuring nod.

Han Li patted Jin Tong on the head, then turned to Daoist Xie as he said, "brother Xie, as a safety precaution, I'll have to trouble you to set up an array with me."

Daoist Xie nodded in response.

"Master, this feels like such an eerie place... Is it really alright to stay here?" Xiao Bai suddenly asked in a concerned manner.

"Just as the baleful qi in here is unbearable for all of you, I'm sure the same applies to other primordial beasts as well. On top of that, my spiritual sense wasn't able to detect any living beings in here, so there shouldn't be any problems," Han Li replied.

Xiao Bai nodded silently in response.

"Jin Tong, even though that person told us that the Gold Devouring Immortal will be trapped for 20 years, we can't just take their word for it. Make sure to keep constant tabs on the Gold Devouring Immortal, and if it begins moving, notify me right away," Han Li instructed.

"You can count on me, Uncle," Jin Tong replied with a serious look on her little face.

After that, Han Li flipped a hand over to produce an array plate, following which he and Daoist Xie sprang into action, flying over the cliff faces of the ravine to set up an array.

"Back when I was with Qu Ling, I was always the one doing the hunting, but now that I'm back with Uncle, I've suddenly become the one being hunted," Jin Tong suddenly remarked.

"Are you regretting returning to Master's side?" Xiao Bai asked.

Jin Tong slapped it on the head as she smiled and said, "How could I possibly regret it when being with Uncle is so exciting? Besides, Uncle will definitely find a way out of this predicament, I'm sure of it!"

A faint smile appeared on Xiao Bai's face upon hearing this.

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A few minutes later, Han Li parted ways with Daoist Xie and Jin Tong, then continued his descent deeper into the ravine.

As he did so, the gusts of wind were sweeping through the air beside him, picking up specks of fluorescent flames from the nearby skeletons before blowing them in different directions.

These specks of green flames resembled stars in the night sky, except they were far more eerie and unsettling to behold.

The deeper Han Li descended into the ravine, the more perplexed he became.

He had thought that there would be an even distribution of baleful qi throughout the entire ravine, but as it turned out, the deeper he went, the denser the surrounding baleful qi became, and strangely enough, the number of skeletal carcasses on the cliff faces on either side were also becoming fewer and fewer.

After descending for about 30 kilometers, all traces of light ceased to exist, and the baleful qi in the surrounding area was so dense that it felt like a suffocating blanket.

At this point, even Han Li was beginning to feel very uncomfortable, despite the fact that he had previously used baleful qi to open up some of his immortal acupoints.

His brows furrowed slightly as he fought through the discomfort and continued his descent.

As he descended, the surrounding baleful qi only continued to grow denser and denser, and even the protective spiritual light around him wasn't able to completely keep it at bay.

As he neared the 50-kilometer mark, the surrounding baleful qi suddenly began to churn violently, and gusts of howling yin wind swept through the air.

The nearby air temperature also plummeted drastically, and a layer of black ice crystals appeared over the cliff faces, while some sections had been so badly frozen that the rock had cracked and split apart.

Han Li was caught completely off guard, and a thick layer of black ice emerged over his body, while all types of violent and aggressive thoughts forced their way into his mind.

All of a sudden, he found himself seeing red, and he felt as if he had been transported to a battlefield riddled with vast mountains of demon beast carcasses and rivers of blood.

At the same time, a chorus of ghostly howls rang out beside his ears.

Before he had a chance to do anything, countless crimson ghostly hands extended out of the mountains of carcasses and rivers of blood, attempting to tear away his sanity.

Han Li's brows furrowed slightly upon seeing this, but he remained in a state of lucidity.

He was aware of the detrimental effects that baleful qi contamination could have on one's spiritual sense, and he had already channeled his Spirit Refinement Technique to protect his own mind.

He closed his eyes while focusing on channeling the Spirit Refinement Arts, and a cool and refreshing sensation welled up in his mind, while the horrific illusion of the battlefield began to fade.

However, gusts of yin wind were still sweeping incessantly through the area, and while the illusion was fading, it refused to disappear altogether.

Han Li gave a cold harrumph as he channeled his Spirit Refinement Technique several more times, and the illusion was finally completely dispelled.

With that, he gently exhaled, following which the layer of black ice crystals around him was shattered amid a flash of azure light. However, instead of continuing his descent from there, he peered down into the ravine with a wary look in his eyes.

The baleful qi here was far more formidable than he had anticipated, and if any other mid-Golden Immortal cultivator who hadn't cultivated the Spirit Refinement Technique had been in his place, they would've most likely already been driven insane by the illusion from just now.

Gusts of yin wind were howling incessantly down below alongside clouds of churning black mist, and it was clear that he was far from reaching the bottom of the ravine.

On top of that, the boundless baleful qi and yin wind here severely obstructed his spiritual sense, thereby restricting his spiritual sensory range.

He was originally planning to reach the bottom of the ravine to take advantage of the more abundant baleful qi there to assist in his cultivation, but at this point, he had already reached his limits, and descending any further could result in a complete loss of his sanity.

If the same illusion from before were to present itself to him again in an even stronger form, then he wasn't confident that he would be able to overcome it.

Right as he was hesitating about how to proceed, he suddenly raised an eyebrow as a hint of elation appeared in his eyes.

He had discovered that by overcoming the earlier illusion through channeling his Spirit Refinement Technique, he had made some significant progress in his Spirit Refinement Technique, equivalent to the progress that he had made over the past few years of cultivation!

In this environment, his spiritual sense was constantly on the verge of collapse, and it seemed that this was greatly beneficial for the cultivation of the Spirit Refinement Technique.

His original plan was only to take advantage of the baleful qi in this place to open up more immortal acupoints, so this discovery was certainly a pleasant surprise.

It was extremely rare to see such a vast abundance of baleful qi in any place, and this only made him even more curious about what was at the bottom.

Moments later, Han Li decided to continue in his descent.

This time, he was only able to descend a few more kilometers before the effects of baleful qi contamination began to rear their ugly heads again, and he immediately drew to a halt while simultaneously channeling his Spirit Refinement Technique.

The same illusion of the horrific battlefield had surfaced in his mind, and this one was even stronger than the one from before.

Han Li was channeling his Spirit Refinement Technique with all his might to withstand the illusion, and only after close to an entire day had passed did he finally exhale before opening his eyes.

Just as he had anticipated, he had made significant progress in the Spirit Refinement Technique once again.

A hint of elation surfaced in his eyes, and at this rate, it wasn't going to take long before he fully mastered the fourth level of the Spirit Refinement Technique.

After taking a brief rest, he continued his descent.

The more he descended, the more formidable the surrounding baleful qi and yin wind became, and it was as if this ravine were connected directly to the depths of hell.

Just like before, Han Li would periodically stop at certain points, using the yin wind and baleful qi to assist him in his cultivation of the Spirit Refinement Technique, and using this method, he was able to make rapid progress.

Several months later, Han Li had already reached the pinnacle of the fourth level of the cultivation art, he was only one step away from full mastery.

At this moment, he was standing on a giant rock protruding out of the cliff face, looking down into the ravine below.

By his estimates, he had already descended close to 500 kilometers into the ravine, yet he still didn't appear to be close to the bottom.

He briefly inspected his surroundings, and after some contemplation, he began to descend again.

A short while later, he stopped in his tracks with a surprised expression.

At this point, the ravine had become very narrow, and gusts of yin wind were sweeping through the area, stirring up the nearby baleful qi to form a series of vortexes of different sizes.

The baleful qi here was several times more formidable than before, and the gusts of yin wind were also blowing with increased ferocity.

Bursts of violent intent forced their way into Han Li's mind, and even though he was constantly channeling his Spirit Refinement Technique, he was struggling to retain his sanity.

Before he had a chance to do anything else, an incredibly thick pillar of yin wind suddenly erupted out of the ravine down below before sweeping up his entire body.

A burst of extremely formidable baleful qi surged out of the pillar of yin wind, instantly shattering the defenses of the Spirit Refinement Technique in his mind.

Chapter 579: Succumbing to Depravity

A burst of fierce killing intent instantly flooded into Han Li's mind.

His eyes quickly turned bloodshot, while his vision blurred, and he was once again thrust into another illusion.

All around him was a sea of blood with countless demon beast skeletons and carcasses submerged within, and the entire surrounding area was filled with the nauseating stench of blood and gore.

Han Li immediately bit down onto the tip of his own tongue, using the pain to help him recover some of his lucidity. At the same time, he was channeling his Spirit Refinement Technique to protect his own mind as much as possible, but as he swept his gaze over his surroundings, his pupils instantly contracted slightly.

The previous illusions had been able to affect his mind, but they were still tolerable, and he was able to free himself from them by channeling the Spirit Refinement Technique.

However, this illusion was different. He seemed to have fallen completely into it, and it wasn't going to be so easy to break free.

Even though he was doing everything in his power to cling to his sanity, he could feel all of the blood in his entire body churning violently, and a wave of irrepressible fury rose up in his heart with such ferocity that it felt as if it were about to tear his chest apart.

He had experienced something like this before, back when he had been struck by that abrupt onset of Spirit Refinement Technique backlash in the Black Wind Sea. However, that problem should've already been ironed out through his cultivation of the fourth level of the Spirit Refinement Technique, at least on a temporary basis.

Could it be that this illusion was forcibly triggering premature backlash from his Spirit Refinement Technique?

With that in mind, Han Li hurriedly channeled the Spirit Refinement Technique with all his might, and a cool and refreshing sensation coursed through his mind to slowly snuff out the fury in his heart.

After that, he began to ponder how he could break free from this illusion.

Right at this moment, a burst of splashing rang out nearby, and Han Li turned to discover that a demonic wolf carcass that was over 100 feet in length had slowly stood up within the sea of blood not far away.

Two specks of eerie red light appeared in its eye sockets, and it let loose a ferocious roar before pouncing at Han Li, who flicked a finger through the air, releasing a streak of azure light to slice the demonic wolf carcass in half.

Immediately thereafter, two more demon beast carcasses rose to their haunches before launching themselves at Han Li, and they were also promptly slain.

However, before Han Li had a chance to do anything else, more and more carcasses came pouncing at him from all directions, and he was forced to retaliate, striking them down one after another.

Initially, these carcasses weren't all that powerful, but as more and more of them sprang to life, they also became progressively more formidable, and before long, there were even some True Immortal and Golden Immortal Stage demon beast carcasses among their ranks.

At this point, Han Li had already adopted his Giant Mountain Ape form, and he was swinging his enormous golden fists through the sea of blood around him, eradicating all of the surrounding carcasses.

However, there seemed to be no end to these carcasses, and it didn't take long before he was completely surrounded.

Right at this moment, a green tail that was over 1,000 feet in length abruptly emerged from the sea of blood down below, then swept toward him with tremendous force.

Han Li was busy warding off other attacks, so he could only launch a hurried punch at the sweeping tail to release a golden fist projection, and a resounding boom rang out as the fist projection clashed against the giant tail, upon which the former was instantly shattered like an egg.

As for the massive tail, it wasn't even slowed down in the slightest as it crashed straight into Han Li's side, sending him flying like a ragdoll into the throngs of demon beast carcasses in that direction.

The nearby carcasses immediately began roaring with excitement as they piled onto all at once, completely inundating him before tearing at his flesh in a frenzy.

The Giant Mountain Ape was normally renowned for its incredible physical constitution, yet in this moment, its defenses had become extremely frail, and almost in the blink of an eye, most of its flesh had been torn away, revealing the bone underneath.

Han Li was furious, and his arms glowed with radiant golden light as he lashed out in all directions.

A burst of tremendous power erupted out of the golden light, causing the surrounding space to warp and rumble violently.

All of the nearby carcasses were sent flying, while the giant golden ape sprang up to a higher elevation, allowing it temporarily free itself from the encirclement.

Han Li looked down at his own severely ravaged body, and the fury in his eyes gradually faded.

Even though half of his body had gone missing, he didn't feel as if he had suffered any severe injuries, and his body instantly reverted back to normal amid a flash of golden light.

He immediately realized that he had been swept up in the heat of the moment, and as a result, he had forgotten that he was in an illusion.

Of course, the main reason why he had almost fallen prey to the illusion was the mental disturbance that had been caused by the premature onset of Spirit Refinement Technique backlash.

If he were to allow himself to get lost in this illusion, then he would never be able to break free from it.

Before he had a chance to ponder the subject any further, all of the demon beast carcasses came springing up at him once again from down below.

Han Li exhaled as he closed his eyes while channeling his Spirit Refinement Technique with all his might, paying no heed to all of the converging carcasses.

A glimmer of translucent light emerged on his glabella, then quickly expanded and grew brighter until it was as radiant and blinding as the sun.

The group of demon beast carcasses that were charging at the forefront were only around 10 feet away from Han Li at this point, and as soon as the translucent light shone upon them, they immediately began screeching with agony before being reduced to dust in the blink of an eye.

The rest of the demon beast carcasses hurriedly shot back in retreat upon seeing this, flying deep into the sea of blood, not daring to show themselves again.

All of a sudden, not a single carcass could be seen, and all that remained was the sea of blood peacefully rippling around him.

Moments later, Han Li's eyes abruptly sprang open, and there was radiant golden light glowing within them. His gaze quickly roamed over the surrounding area, following which a thick beam of translucent light erupted out of his glabella, forming a giant translucent blade that was over 1,000 feet in length before striking the space directly up ahead.

The crimson space in the path of the translucent blade rippled momentarily, but then instantly returned to normal.

Even though Han Li was unable to tear the space open, he was very much encouraged to see this, and his glabella lit up once again, but right at this moment, the sea of blood down below suddenly began to churn and bubble violently.

Immediately thereafter, a mountainous green carcass slowly began to emerge from the depths.

The carcass belonged to an enormous green rat with an almost entirely decomposed body. There were two balls of green and red flames burning within its eye sockets, presenting a very peculiar sight to behold, and there was a massive green tail that was just as long as the rat itself trailing along behind it.

The giant green rat was giving off an enormous aura that caused the nearby space to tremble and groan incessantly, as if the very space itself were unable to bear the enormity of its aura.

The aura of the green rat was far more formidable than that of the High Zenith Stage Gold Devouring Immortal, and among all of the powerful beings that Han Li had seen, perhaps only Immortal Lord Miro could compare with it.

Despite his alarm, Han Li didn't panic.

Regardless of how formidable this giant green rat was, it was nothing but an illusion.

Upon spotting the tail trailing along behind the rat, he immediately realized that this was the very same tail that had sent him flying earlier.

Right at this moment, the giant rat's eyes lit up, and it pounced at Han Li as an enormous green shadow.

Han Li immediately made a hand seal, and a thick pillar of translucent light shot out of his glabella before striking the green rat directly on the head.

However, the giant rat merely opened its mouth to swallow the pillar of light, and it wasn't slowed down in the slightest as it crashed straight into Han Li like an enormous meteorite.

Han Li's glabella lit up once again, and a huge shield of translucent light was conjured up in front of him.

However, as soon as the translucent shield took shape, it was instantly shattered, following which a burst of tremendous force crashed into Han Li's body, sending him flying for close to 10 kilometers before he was finally able to steady himself.

Before he had a chance to retaliate, a long green shadow shot forth like lightning before piercing straight through his body. The green shadow had come out of the giant rat's mouth and, and it appeared to be the rat's tongue, but there was a layer of green flames burning over it.

Han Li instantly felt a burst of scorching pain flare up in his mind, as if his entire soul were being incinerated, and he couldn't help but give a muffled groan. However, he was able to suppress the pain as he reached out with both hands to grab onto the green tongue, but before he could rip the tongue

into two, it wrapped itself around his hands like a spirit snake, then rapidly wrapped itself around the rest of his body as well.

Immediately thereafter, the green rat opened its mouth to produce a burst of immense suction force that acted upon Han Li, while its tongue was also rapidly retracted.

In the blink of an eye, Han Li was sucked into the giant rat's mouth.

His vision blurred momentarily, following which he found himself in a dark space, surrounded by decomposing chunks of dark purple flesh, which were constantly exuding putrid and nauseating pus.

Bursts of tremendous force were also compressing toward him from all directions, and he remained firmly tied up by the green tongue.

Han Li fought back his disgust as he struggled with all his might, but to no avail, and his heart immediately sank.

However, he then suddenly ceased all struggles and closed his eyes, seemingly resigning himself to his fate.

All of a sudden, bursts of green flames appeared all around him, and they landed upon his body, setting him alight.

The green flames were giving off incredible heat that directly scorched Han Li's soul, and the pain was so unbearable that he couldn't help but give a muffled groan.

Chapter 580: From Crisis to Fortune

Han Li gritted his teeth in agony before abruptly letting loose a thunderous roar, and a shimmering golden nascent soul suddenly emerged from the top of his head.

The nascent soul had a grim look on its face, and it rubbed its hands together, following which a burst of golden light flashed through its eyes before it vanished into Han Li's body again.

In the next instant, Han Li felt a cool and refreshing sensation spreading through his spiritual sense, slightly counteracting the scorching pain that was ravaging his soul.

However, the heat radiating from the green flames was only becoming more and more intense, and it was impossible to alleviate, even as Han Li channeled his Spirit Refinement Technique with all his might.

At this point, Han Li had already conjured up his True Extreme Film to help him withstand the tremendous compressive force that was acting upon him from all directions, but he was still trembling uncontrollably, while cracks and pops were ringing out incessantly from within his body, as if all of his bone were about to be shattered.

Time passed by in an agonizingly slow fashion.

All of a sudden, Han Li shuddered as a twisted look appeared on his face.

The heat in his spiritual sense had risen to a terrifying degree, and he felt as if his entire soul were slowly shrinking amid the unbearable heat.

His consciousness slowly began to blur, as if it were slowly leaving his body, but right at this moment, what appeared to be the sound of something shattering rang out deep within his soul.

A speck of translucent light then abruptly emerged somewhere in his spiritual sense, and it began to release a burst of suction force.

The scorching heat that permeated throughout his spiritual sense seemed to have suddenly found an outlet, and it surged toward the speck of translucent light in a frenzy to form a scorching vortex.

In the span of just a few seconds, all of the scorching heat in Han Li's mind had faded, and the twisted look on his face also disappeared.

Immediately thereafter, a resounding boom rang out from within his soul, and it was rapidly being enhanced and elevated to a whole new level.

Only after around 15 minutes had passed did these changes gradually subside, and everything returned to normal.

Han Li slowly opened his eyes, and he was ecstatic to discover that not only had his consciousness returned to normal, his spiritual sense had become two to three times more powerful than before.

It was as if there were countless glittering and translucent streams flowing through his mind, giving off tremendous spiritual sense fluctuations.

Never had he anticipated that he would achieve full mastery of the fourth level of the Spirit Refinement Technique while on the brink of disaster.

Perhaps the reason why he hadn't been able to reach this step up to this point was because his spiritual sense was too powerful, so he had never been in a situation where his soul had been on the verge of collapse.

In his desperation to attain more power in order to stand a chance against the Gold Devouring Immortal, he had ventured deep into this mysterious ravine, and in an enormous stroke of luck, it had allowed him to achieve full mastery of the fourth level of the Spirit Refinement Technique.

Han Li swept his gaze over his surroundings, following which his glabella began to glow brightly, and bursts of radiant translucent light shot out from within like sharp swords in all directions.

All of a sudden, bursts of blinding translucent light erupted out of the giant green rat's body, following which it exploded violently into streams of green light that flew away in all directions.

Before long, Han Li was revealed, having already reverted back to his human form.

Piercing translucent light was radiating from his body, illuminating the surrounding crimson space.

All of a sudden, he made a hand seal, and the translucent light converged to form an enormous sword that was able to instantly slice the crimson space apart.

Han Li's vision blurred momentarily, and in the next instant, he found himself back in the dark ravine.

He gently exhaled as he inspected his surroundings momentarily, then descended onto a nearby protruding cliff before sitting down with his legs crossed.

With his current drastically enhanced spiritual sense, the surrounding yin wind and baleful qi were no longer able to affect him.

He closed his eyes to carefully experience the enormous spiritual sense in his mind, and he was ecstatic with what he saw.

Moments later, his eyes abruptly sprang open, and a burst of translucent light flashed over his glabella, following which a radiant translucent sword projection shot forth, vanishing into the black mist in a flash before racing up the ravine.

High up in the sky above the ravine, a True Immortal Stage azure eagle was flying past when the translucent sword projection suddenly pierced straight into its head, and it was only able to muster up a cry of shock and agony before the light in its eyes completely faded.

At the same time, its aura also vanished, and its lifeless body tumbled down into the forest that was actually the body of the tree demon.

The vines and branches in the forest immediately awakened, and they converged to ensnare the body of the azure eagle in a cocoon, following which a string of grotesque crunching sounds rang out.

Inside the ravine, a hint of elation flashed through Han Li's eyes.

With his significantly enhanced spiritual sense, his Sword Observation Art had become several times more powerful, making it an even more effective weapon against the Gold Devouring Immortal.

After that, he tested out a few more spiritual attacks, all of which had also become immensely more powerful.

Following his experimentation, he closed his eyes once again, and moments later, several translucent chains shot out of his glabella, then quickly intertwined with one another to form a rectangular cage.

The chains were riddled with barely distinguishable black runes that were giving off a faint black glow, which intertwined with the translucent light emanating from the chains, presenting a rather peculiar sight to behold.

Han Li cast his gaze toward the cage of chains, which was hovering in mid-air, then pointed a finger in its direction, and the cage instantly split back up into several translucent chains before vanishing into thin air.

Deep within the forest outside the ravine was a huge tree that stood at several thousand feet tall. The tree had an extremely dense canopy, and the trunk was as green as jade, as were all of its branches and leaves. Furthermore, there was an enormous face on the trunk of the tree.

At this moment, the eyes of the face were tightly shut, and a snoring sound was coming out of its half-agape mouth, indicating that it seemed to be sleeping.

Right at this moment, several translucent chains emerged beside the tree amid a burst of spatial fluctuations, then vanished into the tree in a flash.

The giant face on the tree instantly opened its eyes as it let loose a roar of alarm and fury, and its thick branches began to flail around violently like arms.

At the same time, an immense High Zenith Stage aura erupted out of its body, and bursts of green light shot out of the tree's trunk in a frenzy before landing in the nearby valley.

Everything that came into contact with this green light was instantly destroyed, and the earth in a radius of several hundred kilometers rumbled and quaked violently, sending huge clouds of dust rising up into the air.

However, in the next instant, the flailing branches of the giant tree suddenly stopped moving, and the expression on its face also abruptly stiffened, but the radiant green light glowing from the tree and its immense aura still remained.

Deep within the giant tree was a green space that was filled with dense green mist, and hovering at the center of the mist was a green soul in the form of a humanoid tree.

However, at this moment, the soul was trapped in a cage formed by translucent chains, and the cage was giving off a layer of translucent light that isolated the green soul from the sea of mist outside.

The green soul was struggling frantically within the cage, taking on all types of different forms to try and break free, but no matter what it tried, its efforts proved to be completely futile.

After briefly trapping the soul for some time, the cage suddenly split back up into several translucent chains that vanished into thin air.

The tree demon was instantly able to move again, and a confused look appeared in its eyes as it scoured its surroundings in a perplexed fashion.

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Deep within the ravine.

The translucent chains appeared beside Han Li in a flash, then immediately vanished into his body.

His complexion was rather pale, but there was a hint of elation on his face.

That cage just now was a secret technique called the Spiritual Sense Cage, which could only be unleashed after mastering the fourth level of the Spirit Refinement Technique. It was capable of trapping enemy souls to temporarily sever the connection between their body and their soul.

While it was true that the tree demon had been caught completely off guard, the fact that this secret technique was able to temporarily seal away the soul of a High Zenith Stage being was still a testament to its immense power.

After taking a brief moment to catch his breath, Han Li's complexion gradually began to recover, and a contemplative look appeared in his eyes.

The secret technique was very powerful, but it was also extremely taxing on his spiritual sense. Even though he had only unleashed it for a very short time, only 30% of his spiritual sense remained, and it was going to take at least a month for him to recover.

However, this was still very much a worthy trade.

After sitting in silence for a moment, Han Li summoned a black jade slip before injecting his spiritual sense into it.

This jade slip contained the fifth level of the Spirit Refinement Technique.

The Spirit Refinement Technique was far more powerful than Han Li had anticipated. Originally, he had been planning to take advantage of the vast abundance of baleful qi here to open up more immortal acupoints, but it seemed like cultivating the Spirit Refinement Technique was actually the better option.

After reading through the entire fifth level of the Spirit Refinement Technique, Han Li's brows furrowed slightly with concern.

The contents of the fifth level were far deeper and more difficult to grasp than the fourth level. Having said that, Han Li had seen countless profound cultivation arts in the past, and no matter how difficult the fifth level was to grasp, it had to be a continuation of the fourth level, so it shouldn't be a problem for him to interpret it as long as he was willing to spend the time.

With that in mind, he injected his spiritual sense into the jade slip once again.