

A Sword 571

Chapter 571: Let Me Hold Onto You

Wanting to know who emerged victorious, everyone turned their attention to the Sword Domain as it shattered.

Ye Guan's heart tightened. He felt somewhat nervous. Even though he was confident in Qingqiu's abilities, her opponent was Clan Leader Jing.

That woman was even more terrifying than the Evil Dao.

Under everyone's gaze... Qingqiu slowly walked out from the sea of sword lights.

Ye Guan heaved a sigh of relief.

Qingqiu smiled at all of them. "Have we killed them all?"

Qin Guan nodded. Almost everyone from the Past Clan had been killed except for the few who had managed to escape. It was a decisive victory.

Qingqiu turned to Ye Guan. "Let's have a chat."

Ye Guan nodded. "Okay."

As the two walked away from the rest, Qin Guan just silently glanced at them.

Having walked for quite a while already, Ye Guan was about to say something when Qingqiu suddenly coughed and blood started to flow from the corner of her lips.

Ye Guan's expression drastically darkened. "Aunt..."

Qingqiu smiled faintly. "I won't die."

"I..." Ye Guan trailed off, his voice trembling.

He thought that Qingqiu had won the battle against Clan Leader Jing, but that didn't seem to be the case.

Qingqiu held onto Ye Guan's arm. "Let me hold onto you for a moment."

Ye Guan went completely numb. He could tell that she was very weak.

She's this injured? Is the leader of the Past Clan that terrifying?

Hesitantly, he asked, "Aunt, Clan Leader Jing..."

Qingqiu sighed. "She's very strong. I wasn't a match for her at all."

Ye Guan was at a loss for words.

Pretending to look a little nervous, she added, "You don't think that I'm weak, do you?"

"Why would I think of you that way? Don't say things like that, Aunt. I..."

"I'm just kidding."

Ye Guan nodded with a heavy heart. First, it was the Evil Dao, and now, there was the white-robed lady. He was really starting to feel the pressure.

Qingqiu glanced at him. "Now that the matter in the Time River has been resolved, the next thing you need to do is take over it. It looks like you don't have to handle these matters on your own, though, so what are your plans?"

"I need to become stronger."

"Let me introduce you to a place."

"Where?"

"The Divine Academy."

"The Divine Academy?"

"Yes."

"I've never heard of it."

"It's in the Old Era."

"From billions of years ago?"

"Yes. The Divine Academy was founded by the First God, who was from the Temple of the Gods. During his era, the dawn of the universe, chaos reigned and many beings did not yet understand how to cultivate. He established the academy specifically to teach all beings the path of cultivation. That's why it also became known as the origin of the Dao and civilization."

"This Divine Academy and the Temple of the Gods..."

"Yes, they are related, but the Gods from the Temple of the Gods cannot interfere with them because it is quite special. Even now, the Gods who are still around dare not provoke them."

"Does Aunt want me to study at this Academy?"

Qingqiu nodded. "With your current strength and resources, it's better to study at home than outside. After all, you are surrounded by top-tier experts. However, that place is different. Back then, the First God created three Daos—the Human Dao, the Heavenly Dao, and the Divine Dao, which all surpassed the Great Dao itself. No, more accurately, they transcend the Great Dao itself. Back when the Great Dao was in the Divine Academy, it was just a mediocre existence."

Ye Guan asked, "He created three Daos on his own?"

"Yes," Qingqiu replied with a smile.

"Aunt, I heard from the Great Daoist Brush Master that the Great Dao was also created by the First God..."

"The Great Dao was indeed created by him, and this Great Dao was also a form of order. It was fine at the beginning, but after the fall of the First God, the Temple of the Gods plunged into chaos. With no one to restrain the Great Dao, she started to develop her own thoughts, which is only natural. Be it humans, gods, or even the Great Dao itself, we all have our own desires."

"Is there anyone in the Divine Academy who can control the Great Dao?"

Qingqiu chuckled and ruffled his hair gently. "Remember, don't place your hopes on others. Once you start relying on someone, you'll have to keep relying on them in the future. Moreover, relying on yourself is always better than relying on others, understand?"

Ye Guan nodded. "I understand."

Qingqiu grinned. "Head to the Divine Academy with your sister in three days."

"Big Sis also wants to go?"

"Yes."

"Alright."

"When you get there, you should take a look at their divine records. Many of those records were left behind by the First God himself. They not only describe some historical events back then but also contain records of other civilizations. It will be helpful for your cultivation."

"Okay," Ye Guan replied. Then, as if remembering something, he asked, "Aunt, what about the leader of the Past Clan?"

Qingqiu blinked. "She left."

Ye Guan was puzzled. "She just left like that?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"She's probably busy."

Ye Guan's expression froze.

Qingqiu laughed. "You only have three days left. Make sure you say your goodbyes."

Ye Guan slightly nodded before he turned to leave. As she watched him leave, she wiped the blood from the corner of her lips before shaking her head with a smile.

At that moment, three women—Ye Qingqing and her two companions—slowly walked out from behind her.

The four Destinies had gathered.

Ye Qingqing coldly gazed at Ye Guan, who was already quite a distance away. "That woman is playing dirty tricks. Should we continue keeping her around?"

Qingqiu smiled. "The little lad needs a little bit more pressure. We can pave the way for him, but he has to walk it himself. Otherwise, he won't be able to bear the weight of the universe in the future."

Ye Qingqing said, "I don't understand why you want him to bear the weight of this universe. Why do we care?"

Qingqiu chuckled lightly, "If there had been order in our era, Brother would not have died at the hands of the Heavenly Dao..."

Ye Qingqing's expression instantly turned cold. The other two Destinies' faces also soured.

Strength was often forged under pressure. During good times when people were well-fed, how many would actually risk their lives to rebel? If there had been order in the world back then, the invincible Destiny would not have been created.

"I want to go to the Divine Academy as well," Ye Qingqing suddenly said.

Slaughter added, "Me too. Let's go take a look."

White Skirt Destiny blinked. "If all of you are going, then I'm going too."

...

When Ye Guan walked up to Qin Guan, she smiled and asked, "What did your aunt tell you?"

"She wants me and Big Sis to go to the Divine Academy."

The Divine Academy?

Qin Guan frowned.

Upon seeing her reaction, he asked, "Mother, do you know anything about the Divine Academy?"

"A little. The Old Era is our next target."

"Our next target?"

"Yes. Since that place has numerous ties to the Temple of the Gods, we're targeting them next. However, for now, we need to proceed slowly because we've just wiped out the Past Sect. I need to consolidate the entire Time River and All Worlds."

"That's true."

Now that the Guanxuan Universe had taken down the Past Clan, they needed to take over the entire Time River. Conquering a kingdom was difficult, but governing it was even harder.

Qin Guan grinned. "When you go to the Divine Academy, you can also help see how things are over there. Once I've dealt with matters here, I'll bring my people over."

"Okay."

Since they were going to establish a new order, the first step they had to take was naturally to unify the universe.

Qin Guan chuckled. "Go and see Little Jia and the others."

Ye Guan nodded.

After he left, Qin Guan remained silent for a while. She then called, "An You."

A figure dressed in black appeared behind her.

"Head over to the Old Era as well," Qin Guan calmly ordered.

An You bowed in respect before leaving.

...

Meanwhile, Ye Guan and Nalan Jia took a stroll among the stars.

Along the way, Nalan Jia stayed silent.

Feeling guilty, Ye Guan reached out and held her hand. Ever since they got married, they had spent more time apart than together.

"Little Jia, how about going to the Divine Academy with me?"

"Really?" Nalan Jia asked.

"Yes."

Nalan Jia looked at him for a few moments before smiling. "No, it's okay."

"I'm serious."

"I know."

Ye Guan was about to say something when Nalan Jia inched closer to him and whispered something in his ear. Right after, his eyes widened.

Chapter 572: Sister's Protection

Ye Guan swept Nalan Jia into his arms, twirling her around as he burst out laughing.

Nalan Jia's cheeks turned pink, which made her look bashful yet beautiful.

After a moment, Ye Guan set her down. With his eyes sparkling, he asked, "Is this from last time?"

Nalan Jia shot him a shy glare, her cheeks flushing even more.

Ye Guan chuckled and pulled her close.

Nalan Jia nestled against him, whispering softly, "With the Past Clan gone, there's much to do here. I have to stay and assist Mother."

Ye Guan nodded in understanding. "Mm."

Qin Guan certainly needed their help right now.

In the vast Time River, countless unknown worlds awaited exploration. Qin Guan intended to integrate all of them into the Guanyuan Universe.

Opposition?

Within the eons of time, no force dared challenge the Guanyuan Universe.

After a tender night with Nalan Jia, Ye Guan went into the True Universe the next day.

He was here for Cishu, but Cirou and Cijing were present as well.

"Heading to the Divine Academy?" Cirou asked.

Ye Guan nodded. "Yes."

"To the Old Era?"

Another nod from Ye Guan.

"The Old Era..."

If any force could pose a threat to the Guanyuan Universe, it would be the Temple of the Gods and the Old Era.

Ye Guan reassured her with a smile. "Don't worry. I'm going to the Old Era to learn about them."

The First God—a figure revered even by the Great Daoist Brush Master—had to be an extraordinary being. Ye Guan aimed to learn more about him while also becoming stronger.

Cirou just nodded silently in reply.

"Big Sister..." Cishu trailed off.

Ye Guan grasped her hand and offered a reassuring smile. "Don't worry. She'll be fine."

Holding onto his hand, Cishu softly whispered, "I'm not trying to pressure you. I'm just really worried about her..."

"I get it." After glancing at the trio, Ye Guan added, "Don't worry about Sister Zhen. I'll handle it. Trust me."

After a brief pause, he broached another topic. "Regarding the relationship between the True Universe and the Guanyuan Universe..."

"Don't worry about those matters," Cirou gently interjected. "Your mother and I will handle them."

Surprised, Ye Guan looked at her. "My mother?"

An awkward smile graced Cirou's lips.

Ye Guan held Cirou's hand and grinned. "Ours."

He had to take this seriously. If he didn't, Qin Guan definitely would. He couldn't afford to be careless.

Observing his earnest expression, Cirou nodded slightly.

Afterward, Ye Guan turned to Cijing.

Cijing simply raised an eyebrow at him. "What are you looking at?"

He stood up and hugged her, then Cirou and Cishu. "I'm off."

Ye Guan then decisively turned away and left. He showed no signs of hesitation.

The immense pressure on him left no time for romance. He had the Evil Dao and the Clan Leader of the Past Clan to worry about.

Romance? Love? He couldn't afford to think about those right now. All he wanted was to boost his strength.

Seeing Ye Guan's resolute departure, Cijing furrowed her brows. She wanted to say something but found herself speechless.

"He's grown up," Cirou softly murmured.

Cijing didn't say anything, but she agreed.

"I want to go to the Tribulation Realm to see Big Sister," Cirou suddenly said.

Cishu immediately grabbed her hand and shook her head. The Tribulation Realm was where Evil Dao was at. Considering their current strength, they were no match for her.

When Cirou sighed softly, Cishu explained, "The Past Clan is gone and there is no other power in the Time River that can contend with the Guanyuan Universe. There is much work to be done, and the Guanyuan Universe needs our help."

Cirou nodded in understanding. Just as Cishu was about to continue, her brows suddenly furrowed. At the same time, she clutched her stomach.

Concerned, Cirou asked, "What's wrong?"

"This baby is being naughty." Cishu smiled. Gently caressing her belly, she chuckled. "It's almost time."

"Is it a boy or a girl?" Cijing asked.

"You should bear a child too," Cirou teased.

"You looking to die?!" Cijing shouted and lunged at Cirou, feigning anger.

...

In the Time River, Ye Guan and Ye An journeyed together toward the Old Era.

On the way, Ye Guan took out the storage ring that Qin Guan had given him as a gift, which he hadn't gotten the chance to examine yet. What he saw inside made his heart skip a beat.

A hundred strands of Ancestral Origin were stashed away in the ring.

That was simply unbelievable.

Is Mother really this wealthy?

Ye Guan was somewhat taken aback.

These are strands of Ancestral Origin! Where did Mother get so many of them?

At that moment, Ye An glanced at Ye Guan's storage ring but said nothing.

Ye Guan hesitated for a moment, then took out another storage ring and handed it to her. "Sister."

Inside the ring were fifty strands of Ancestral Origin. They had agreed to share good things.

Ye An didn't hesitate to accept it. Although it pained Ye Guan a bit, it was alright. After all, she was his sister—a very loyal one at that.

After taking the ring, she glanced at Ye Guan. "From now on, Big Sis will always have your back."

Ye Guan nodded. Thinking he was essentially paying for protection, he couldn't help but shake his head and smile.

The siblings continued on their way.

...

Realm of the Gods.

Bishop Yuan had an extremely grim expression.

Besides him, the other major bishops and elders were also in the hall. All the core figures of the Temple of the Gods were there.

Everyone currently had somewhat unsightly expressions. After all, the Guanyuan Universe had issued them an ultimatum: surrender or die.

When had the Temple of the Gods ever suffered such humiliation?

However, upon learning that the Past Clan had been destroyed by the Guanyuan Universe, the Temple of the Gods dared not offer any resistance.

What else could they do?

Bishop Yuan was especially gloomy. He truly was at a loss now.

Surrender definitely not an option.

Would the gods even allow them to surrender?

Although the Temple of the Gods had lost to the Past Clan in the past, they had never submitted.

If they didn't surrender, they would have to confront the Guanxuan Universe head-on. There was no way they'd win, though.

The Guanxuan Universe's attitude was also very resolute, leaving no room for negotiation.

While Bishop Yuan pondered their situation, an elder suddenly walked into the temple. The elder respectfully saluted Bishop Yuan and then excitedly said, "Bishop, an oracle has come."

The participants of the meeting suddenly stood up. After millions of years without an oracle, one suddenly appeared?

Bishop Yuan exited the hall, and everyone followed right behind him. Once they were outside, a golden light descended from the sky, to which they immediately knelt.

Bishop Yuan, who was in front of them all, also slowly knelt on the ground. Feeling extremely excited, his face was filled up with emotions.

An oracle! It has been millions of years since one had appeared! Now, when the Temple of the Gods is facing a great calamity, one has been sent to us. This means that the gods haven't forgotten us. On the contrary, we've never left their minds!

After a while, a golden plaque burst out of the golden light and slowly flew toward him. He respectfully accepted the golden plaque, the contents of which stunned him.

The other bishops stared at him, their eyes full of curiosity.

After a moment, Bishop Yuan stood up and announced, "The Temple of the Gods is to leave the Realm of the Gods and evacuate to the Old Era."

The gods were abandoning the Realm of the Gods. Although Bishop Yuan was puzzled, he had no choice but to comply.

He had thought that perhaps the gods would appear and lead them into battle against the Guanyuan Universe. He certainly didn't expect them to ask their followers to abandon this realm and head to the Old Era.

Did the gods also not want to go to war with the Guanyuan Universe?

As Bishop Yuan mulled over his thoughts, a flicker of concern flashed in his eyes. Acting swiftly, he issued commands to evacuate the Realm of the Gods with the utmost urgency.

Recognizing the impossibility of evacuating everyone, they prioritized getting the core members of the Temple of the Gods and a few exceptional talents out. Regrettably, the ordinary citizens were now nothing but mere burdens to their departure plans.

Soon, a divine path materialized within the realm, allowing them to leave.

A few days later, Bishop Yuan stood before the Temple of the Gods and observed the faithful believers kneeling in the distance. Their pleas for salvation echoed in vain.

As the Temple of the Gods left, hordes of believers flocked to the scene, desperate to join the movement. Unfortunately, time was not on their side; the Guanyuan Universe allowed no delay.

Looking toward the distant expanse of space, Bishop Yuan spotted Qin Guan. Without further hesitation, he entered the divine path, which then slowly disappeared. The believers cried in despair as they were abandoned and sacrificed by the gods.

Moments later, Qin Guan arrived at the Temple of the Gods with a group of powerful beings. With serene determination, she ordered the removal of the five towering god statues.

As she turned to leave, she suddenly stopped at the doorway. “Erect a statue of my son here.”

Chapter 573: Fake Mortal Physique

In the Time River, Ye Guan and Ye An traversed with their swords. Journeying against time became increasingly arduous, requiring their combined effort to persevere.

Aware that they were already quite near the Old Era, Ye Guan couldn't help but anticipate what awaited them in this ancient time. Aunt Qingqiu had instructed him to visit it to learn, and he held a keen interest in it himself.

After several days of struggle, even with their joint effort, they found themselves severely taxed. However, that only further fueled their determination. Another day passed, and they began to feel as if they were wading through a swamp. Every step was laborious.

Ye Guan's expression turned grave when he discovered the time energy in this place. Even with his current strength as a Great Destiny Sovereign, he found it challenging to resist it. Being stronger than a typical Great Destiny Sovereign only made resisting even more challenging.

He glanced at Ye An, who was beside him, finding her face pale. She was struggling just as much as he was. Recomposing himself, he gazed into the distance, where a stone door was waiting for them. They were almost at their destination.

Taking a deep breath, Ye Guan pressed onward. After yet another day, the time energy began attempting to crush him so hard that he felt as if he were trapped under a mountain.

At this moment, Ye Guan stopped. He noticed his fleshly body starting to crack. When he turned to Ye An, he saw that she had stopped as well, her eyes reflecting the gravity of the situation.

They exchanged a glance, and in the next moment—

Boom!

Boom!

Two blood-red lights shot into the sky, the power of their bloodlines surging forth. Activating their Mad Demon Bloodline, they unleashed terrifying auras that swept through the surroundings, causing the fabric of spacetime to boil.

They pressed onward, taking one step after another toward the door.

Once they were mere meters away from it, a black cloud suddenly materialized above them. Within it, countless bolts of black lightning crackled, descending with terrifying force.

Sensing the impending danger, Ye Guan and Ye An's expressions darkened.

Why would there be a tribulation now?

"Time Tribulation!" Ye An suddenly exclaimed.

"Time Tribulation?" Ye Guan asked.

"It's a tribulation governed by the Time Master. I've heard of it before but never seen it myself."

Ye Guan glanced at the dense black clouds, then replied, "We need to work together."

However, his sister only shook her head in response.

Ye Guan blinked. "Are you planning to face it alone, Sister?"

Ye An glanced at Ye Guan, then lightly stomped on the ground with her right foot. "Time Master, come forth."

Boom!

Just a bit of distance away from them, the fabric of spacetime trembled slightly, and a figure slowly emerged from it.

The Time Master bowed respectfully to the two. "Greetings, Miss Ye and... Young Master Ye."

Ye An stared at him. "Did you cause this tribulation?"

The Time Master hurriedly shook his head. "No, no, this is not my doing."

"What?"

"Even if I had the courage of ten thousand men, I wouldn't dare trouble you two. This tribulation was set by several gods from the Temple of the Gods. Its purpose is to prevent Time Reversers from entering the Old Era."

Ye Guan's brows furrowed. "Set by the Temple of the Gods?"

"Yes."

After looking up at the black clouds, Ye Guan asked, "Why aren't they letting Time Reversers go to the Old Era?"

"I don't know."

"Can you break this tribulation?"

The Time Master smiled bitterly. "No. However, this tribulation is very special. It contains extremely pure energy. Absorbing it should be greatly beneficial to you."

Upon hearing that, Ye Guan called Ao Qianqian, who slowly emerged from within him in response.

Ye Guan glanced at the black clouds above them, then smiled at her. "Want to give it a try?"

She nodded. "Sure."

As she answered, a bolt of lightning struck down.

Ao Qianqian jerked, transformed into a giant dragon, and soared into the sky.

Boom!

The fierce collision shattered the lightning. Immediately after, Ao Qianqian rushed into the thunder-infested area.

The scene made Ye Guan smile. Ao Qianqian's physical strength had increased again. Since she could just share her physical defense and strength with him, he no longer had to cultivate his own physique.

Ao Qianqian could also borrow his bloodline power, but since it was too overbearing, she couldn't control it yet. Their combined strength would have become even more formidable.

Upon entering the thunder-infested area, she began to devour the thunder tribulation inside without hesitation.

After about half an hour of continuous consumption, the black clouds finally disappeared, and Ao Qianqian reappeared in front of Ye Guan. She was now emanating extremely powerful energy.

"I'll go digest this energy," she said, then entered the little pagoda.

Ye Guan looked at the Time Master, who was standing in front of him. "Which side are you on?"

The Time Master hurriedly said, "The Guanyuan Universe, of course."

Considering the Past Clan had been destroyed and the Temple of the Gods had been forced to leave, the current Guanyuan Universe was proving to be invincible.

Ye Guan glanced at the distant stone door. "Have you ever been to the Old Era?"

"Never, actually."

"Why not?"

The Time Master smiled. "My duty is to guard the Time River."

"Who assigned you that duty?"

After a moment of hesitation, the Time Master answered, "I'll be honest. I also used to be a part of the Temple of the Gods and share the same origin as the Great Dao. However, I am only responsible for guarding the Time River and nothing else."

"I see," Ye Guan said, then turned to Ye An, who was beside him. "Let's go, Big Sis."

Ye An nodded. The two then walked away.

The Time Master breathed a sigh of relief and quickly left.

Soon, Ye Guan and Ye An reached the stone door. The door was thousands of meters high, and inside it was a vortex.

Ye Guan and Ye An glanced at each other, then transformed into a stream of light and disappeared into the stone door.

After a while, Ye Guan slowly opened his eyes, finding himself in a spacetime tunnel.

Ye An, who was beside him, suddenly pointed to the spacetime walls around them. "Look."

Ye Guan turned to where she was pointing, finding flickering images on the spacetime walls. They looked like snapshots of the history of the Old Era.

"The Old Era must have had an extremely brilliant civilization," he said as he looked at the end in the distance.

The era of the First God.

According to the Great Daoist Brush Master, the First God could certainly be called a god.

Ye Guan knew the personality of the Great Daoist Brush Master. Although he admired only a few people, he respected the First God.

The Divine Dao Civilization.

"Sister, let's pick up the pace," he urged.

Still on his sword, he soared and disappeared into the distance. Ye An followed suit.

After some time, the two finally passed through the spacetime tunnel and reached an unknown starry sky. As they entered, a terrifying divine consciousness locked onto them. Immediately after, a black-robed elder appeared in front of them.

The black-robed elder glanced at them. "From the Time River?"

Ye Guan nodded.

"Why have you come here?"

"To enter the Divine Academy."

The elder pointed to the side, where a towering stone pillar a thousand meters high could be seen.

As if to answer Ye Guan's confusion, he explained, "Just a test."

Ye Guan hesitated for a moment, then walked up to the pillar and placed his right hand on the palm print on the stone pillar. As soon as his hand touched it...

Boom!

Brilliant light instantly erupted from the stone pillar and pierced deep into the starry sky. Right after, the pillar shattered.

The scene made a hint of shock flash in the eyes of the black-robed elder.

Curious, Ye Guan asked, "What is this?"

Ignoring him, the black-robed elder turned to Ye An. "You too."

He took out another testing pillar. Ye An walked up to it and placed her hand on it.

Just as before, a white light suddenly rose from the testing pillar and pierced into the depths of the starry sky, followed immediately by the pillar shattering.

Upon witnessing the sight, the black-robed elder's expression turned extremely solemn.

Puzzled, Ye Guan asked, "Elder?"

With a deep voice, the elder replied, "You have passed."

Ye Guan nodded. He wasn't really surprised. With their current strength, they would be considered talented no matter where they went.

"Follow me," the elder instructed.

He then turned and walked into the distance. Ye Guan and Ye An followed him.

On the way, the black-robed elder said, "Inside the Divine Academy, you'll find the Outer Courtyard, the Inner Courtyard, and the Divine Courtyard. The Outer and Inner Courtyards are where ordinary disciples stay, while the Divine Courtyard is where special geniuses and personnel stay. You two can enter the Divine Courtyard."

"What about our talents? How do they fare?" Ye Guan asked.

Glancing at him, the elder answered, "Excellent."

Ye Guan frowned slightly. "We're not the best?"

The black-robed elder calmly said, "Young man, there will always be people better than you. In the Divine Academy, at least three have talents more terrifying than yours."

Out of curiosity, Ye Guan prodded, "What talents?"

"One of them is the Chosen One. The other has a Mortal Physique."

Ye Guan's eyes widened. "A Mortal Physique?"

"Yes."

After a moment of hesitation, he asked, "Could it be fake?"

Chapter 574: A Familiar Presence

The Mortal Physique.

Aware that only he and Plain Skirt Destiny had the Mortal Bloodline, Ye Guan spoke with certainty. However, his physique hadn't yet fully become a Mortal Physique. Hence, the revelation of someone having a Mortal Physique within the Divine Academy seemed absurd.

Was it a scam?

Upon hearing his skepticism, the black-robed elder cast a glance his way. "Young man, in this world, there will always be people better than you. Having spent many years in this academy, I've encountered countless prodigies, far exceeding what you might comprehend. Many newcomers like yourself initially believe that they are unparalleled geniuses in the universe. However, it doesn't take long for reality to set in."

Ye Guan merely smiled. He had never assumed that he was the most talented individual in the entire universe. Rather, he simply harbored doubts about this purported Mortal Physique. However, he chose not to voice his suspicions.

Before long, the elder led Ye Guan and Ye An to a vast sea. Tens of thousands of temples stood in front of them.

"The individuals within this Divine Academy are far from ordinary. They possess exceptional talents and are backed by formidable, mysterious forces," the elder said. "It would be wise for you to keep a low profile, young man."

Ye Guan nodded. "I know. However, I have backers of my own."

"Interestingly, someone has already once echoed your sentiments," the elder sarcastically replied. Before Ye Guan could respond, he announced, "We're here."

Upon entering one of the temples, Ye Guan was greeted by a grandeur that left him in awe. However, what caught his attention the most was the lone, faceless statue inside.

Perplexed, he inquired, "Elder, what is that?"

"The First God once proclaimed that the true god in one's heart should be themselves, not anyone else. Hence, he used this faceless statue to represent himself."

Ye Guan was rendered speechless.

The First God is remarkable!

The elder produced two wooden plaques from the altar and handed them to Ye Guan and Ye An. "These are your Divine Academy student badges. They will serve as your identification here. While attendance at the biweekly divine classes is optional, the Abyss Expedition that happens once each month is mandatory."

Ye Guan was intrigued. "Abyss Expedition?"

"The realm of sin where evil wrongdoers live. As students of this academy, it is your duty to purge these sinners. Rewards await those who succeed."

"What rewards?"

"When you exit the temple, you'll find a hall with some fundamental divine texts to your right. You can go take a look."

"Alright."

The elder continued his explanation. "Every year, we hold a major competition with many exceptional rewards. Since it serves as an assessment, participation is mandatory. Those who perform poorly will be expelled from the academy."

Right after, he turned and left.

Ye Guan looked at Ye An, finding her staring at the faceless statue. "Big Sis?"

"Do you truly believe in gods?" Ye An whispered.

"I'm not sure," he confessed. When Ye An turned to him, he softly continued, "The universe is vast. Boundless, even."

"True."

"I'm going to read some books. Are you coming?"

"I'm going to cultivate."

"Do you need the little pagoda?"

Ye An shook her head. "No."

She then turned and departed.

Smiling, Ye Guan shook his head and noted his sister's cold demeanor.

He glanced once more at the faceless statue before exiting the temple. Upon entering another hall, the scenery suddenly shifted, and he found himself amid an endless starry expanse.

It was tranquil.

Ye Guan looked around, noticing numerous divine texts floating all over the place.

Stretching out his hand, the nearest text floated into his grasp. When he opened the scroll, a burst of divine light entered his mind and flooded him with information.

Cultivators didn't read books like ordinary folks, page by page.

After a while, Ye Guan slowly opened his eyes. The text he had just read recounted the journey of a cultivator traversing the other galaxies.

He learned that outsiders called this place the 'Old Era,' while the natives referred to it as the Divine Realm.

The Divine Realm was vast, consisting of two major continents: the Divine Continent and the Sin Continent, which the black-robed elder had mentioned earlier.

Upon seeing the Sin Continent, Ye Guan sought out several texts to learn more about it.

After half an hour, he finally gained an understanding of it. It turned out that the Sin Continent and the Divine Academy were once under the jurisdiction of the Divine Temple.

During the era of the First God, only he was recognized as a god. However, after his fall, powerful figures within the temple began proclaiming themselves as gods as well. As a result, the Divine Temple came to be known as the Temple of the Gods.

Internal strife then arose when the devout followers of the First God opposed the pseudo-gods. Eventually, the two factions ended up clashing against each other.

By the time the great battle was over, only seven gods remained. One went to the Sin Continent, while five remained in the Temple of the Gods. The last one stayed in the Divine Academy, which the First God had established.

The last god was Shengu, the current dean. Unlike the others, Shengu had never claimed that he was a god or allowed anyone to refer to the five gods as such.

From the past to the present, the Divine Academy only recognized the First God as the one true god.

Ye Guan slowly opened his eyes again. Reading a couple more books had given him a rough understanding of this place.

Following the departure of the First God, the Temple of the Gods fell into chaos. Even now, surviving figures from that era harbored deep-seated conflicts. The Divine Academy and the Sin Continent had immense enmity for each other.

It was quite chaotic.

Ye Guan shook his head and smiled. He then resumed reading.

He was interested in the power struggle among the gods. After all, his mother, Qin Guan, would eventually unify the entire universe.

In the following days, Ye Guan immersed himself in studying daily in the hall. Gradually, he gained a comprehensive understanding of the history of the Divine Realm and the rules governing the Divine Academy.

Within the academy were the Outer, Inner, and Divine Courtyards. Each admitted exceptionally talented individuals. However, compared to the Divine Courtyard, the first two were significantly inferior. The criteria for admission into the Divine Courtyard were extremely stringent.

In the Divine Realm, geniuses were categorized into eight ranks: Extraordinary Aptitude, Genius, Absolute Genius, Unparalleled Genius, Great Dao Bearer, Anomaly, Chosen One, and Variable.

To gain entry into the Divine Academy, one had to at least be a Great Dao Bearer, which meant having the protection of Great Dao Destiny. A Great Dao Bearer not only had immunity to misfortune but also had the blessings of the Great Dao. It was tantamount to defying fate itself.

Those above the Great Dao Bearer were even more exceptional. They would appear monstrous to ordinary talents.

Ye Guan finally understood why the elder had told him to keep a low profile. Even though he was a genius, he would at most have the rank of a Chosen One. Above his rank were the Variables, who had transcended the Dao.

He couldn't help but be intrigued by these so-called Variable geniuses. Since the Divine Academy seemed to have some, he eagerly anticipated the opportunity to meet them someday.

Refocusing on his objective, Ye Guan went back to reading. Although he could absorb knowledge directly from books, the sheer volume of information required him to spend several days engrossed in study. Although he wanted to bring these books into the pagoda to read, he refrained from doing so. These divine texts could only be read within the academy and could not be taken away. Furthermore, he did not want to reveal the little pagoda here. After all, it was a divine artifact that defied conventional understanding.

One day, Ye An suddenly entered the room. She walked up to Ye Guan and, with determination, said, "We're heading to the Sin Continent."

"A mission?" Ye Guan asked.

His sister nodded.

Setting aside the books in his hand, he said, "Let's go."

The siblings departed from the hall.

While journeying to the Sin Continent, Ye Guan asked, "Sis, have you encountered any other geniuses within the Divine Academy?"

Ye An simply shook her head in response.

Surprised, Ye Guan pressed further. "Not even one?"

"Geniuses within the Divine Academy aren't bound by restrictions. Besides the monthly trials in the Sin Continent, they rarely make appearances."

"I see."

Just like him, they, too, were engrossed with their own tasks. It was rare for outsiders to see them.

"This place is not to be underestimated. We need to exercise caution," Ye An suddenly warned.

Sensing the gravity in her tone, Ye Guan turned to her.

She continued, "There are powerful individuals within the academy, and certain areas pose significant risks."

"Understood," he responded.

Ye An glanced at him before adding, "The academy's Sword Dao Department is rumored to have been established by the First God himself. It's said that he even left behind a Sword Dao manual. You might want to explore it."

Intrigued, Ye Guan inquired, "Did the First God practice swordsmanship?"

"I'm not sure, but individuals of such caliber likely possess knowledge across various disciplines."

"That makes sense."

Interrupting their conversation, the little pagoda whispered, "Hmm... That's a familiar aura..."

Chapter 575: Seeking Guidance!

"A familiar aura?" Ye Guan's eyebrows furrowed at Little Pagoda's words. "What do you mean about that, Master Pagoda? What aura?"

Little Pagoda explained, "It lasted for only a brief moment, but that aura was definitely familiar."

Ye Guan scanned his surroundings with his divine sense but found nothing amiss.

"Strange," Ye Guann murmured.

Noticing Ye Guan's confusion, Ye An inquired, "What's wrong?"

"Master Pagoda mentioned sensing a familiar presence," Ye Guan replied, puzzled. Could there be acquaintances nearby? Shaking off the thought, Ye Guan said, "Let's just move on."

With that, the siblings vanished into the distance.

Meanwhile, a man and a woman were strolling leisurely together somewhere.

"I felt a strange connection with those two earlier," the man confessed, perplexed.

His companion, Qing'er, merely shrugged. "You must've been mistaken."

"No, it felt too familiar," the man insisted.

"Maybe he was your long-lost son?" Qing'er teased.

However, Qing'er's comment caught the man off guard, and he chuckled. "Qing'er, you're teasing me again."

Smiling, Qing'er said nothing as they continued on their journey.

...

Meanwhile, Ye Guan and Ye An traversed a dark, starry region and soon arrived at a desolate plain, the Sin Continent. An evil aura enveloped them, prompting Ye Guan to scan their surroundings.

"Let's investigate," Ye Guan suggested, and they disappeared into the distance.

Soon, they found themselves at a mountain range where a fierce battle was underway between a group of individuals and a colossal demonic beast.

Two males and a female cultivator were fighting the colossal demonic beast, and one of the males was a swordsman.

Ye Guan was astonished to find that all of them were Imperial Sovereigns. Ye Guan's gaze was transfixed on the swordsman; the man was holding a sword similar to the Great Sword Sovereign's colossal sword. The man's swordsmanship screamed "domineering," and his sword seemed capable of destroying an entire world with just a swing.

His fighting style was the most ferocious among his group, and he faced the colossal demonic beast without any fear.

Meanwhile, the remaining male was a Physique Cultivator. He was emanating a blazing heat as he stood at the forefront; he was constantly annoying the beast, attracting its attention.

Meanwhile, the woman was a Divine Mage. Her hands moved nonstop, weaving inscrutable spells that she hurled nonstop at the colossal demonic beast.

A Divine Mage! Divine Mages were regarded highly in the Divine Realm because of their ability to harness divine power. They could craft divine runes capable of boosting one's abilities. It was said that having a Divine Mage companion could elevate one's combat prowess far beyond peers of the same level.

Ye Guan was intrigued by Divine Mages. Ye Guan noted the woman's prowess, which surpassed even the swordsman in their group. The colossal demonic beast appeared wary of her spells, and it always attempted to avoid her attacks.

Their teamwork was so impeccable that even though the colossal demonic beast was vastly more powerful than them, they managed to suppress it completely.

Ye Guan asked, "Big Sis, is that demonic beast their mission objection?"

Ye An nodded.

Glancing at the group, Ye Guan asked, "What about ours?"

He hadn't bothered to ask earlier, assuming that their mission would be trivial.

However, the colossal demonic beast that the group was fighting made Ye Guan feel that their mission objective was anything but trivial. After all, those three were from the Divine Academy, and they were just disciples of the Inner Courtyard.

Would Inner Courtyard disciples really have such a tough mission?

Ye An calmly replied, "I haven't checked."

Ye Guan stared deeply at Ye An.

"Something wrong?" Ye An asked.

Shaking his head, Ye Guan replied, "No, nothing."

Ye An opened her palm, revealing two scrolls.

Ye Guan fell silent upon seeing the text written inside.

[Slay a Heavenly Rank Sin Beast.]

Every single demonic beast on the Sin Continent was collectively referred to as Sin Beasts, as they were all deemed sinful beings. The Divine Academy had coined the term and had been enforcing it since it was made.

Ye Guan fell silent. It was a challenging mission.

The Imperial-rank Sin Beast before them was already extremely powerful, so one could only imagine just how terrifying a Heavenly-rank Sin Beast was going to be.

Ye Guan asked, "What if we fail the mission?"

"We have two choices," Ye An replied, "One, you can pay with money; it's not that much. A strand of Ancestral Origin is enough. The second choice is getting demoted to an Inner Courtyard disciple."

Before Ye Guan could respond, rumbling noises echoed in the distance. Ye Guan and Ye An turned to see a fireball hitting the colossal demonic beast. Engulfed in flames, the creature eventually succumbed to the relentless assault of the three.

Victory!

They smiled in a triumphant manner while standing before the collapsed beast.

The carcass of an Imperial-rank Sin Beast was a treasure trove, but the Divine Academy students didn't take it with them. In addition to not taking away the carcass, they also rewarded those who had guided them here.

Just then, the Physique Cultivator in the group turned to Ye Guan and Ye An.

"Are you two from the Divine Academy as well?" asked the Physique Cultivator with a grin. His deafening voice echoed like a bell.

"That's right," said Ye Guan with a chuckle. He and Ye An then approached the trio.

The Physique Cultivator scrutinized the pair briefly before inquiring, "Are you both from the Inner courtyard?"

Ye Guan answered, "Actually, we're from the Divine Courtyard."

The Divine Courtyard?

The revelation left the trio momentarily dumbfounded. The female Divine Mage's brow furrowed slightly as she inspected Ye Guan and Ye An.

"The Divine Courtyard?" The Physique Cultivator repeated, clearly taken aback.

The mention of the Divine Courtyard always sparked intense curiosity among those from both the Inner and Outer Courtyards. Apparently, students from the Divine Courtyard were exceptionally gifted and were like legendary dragons, rarely seen outside their caves.

Thus, the trio's surprise was understandable.

"Indeed, we are from the Divine Courtyard," affirmed Ye Guan.

The Physique Cultivator hesitated for a while before asking, "Do you have your student badges?"

Ye Guan extended his palm, revealing his badge.

The Physique Cultivator grabbed the badge and inspected it. Then, his surprise morphed into excitement as he exclaimed, "So you really are from the Divine Courtyard! Haha... I never thought I'd encounter students from there. They say you're all prodigies. Brother, care to showcase your talent?"

Ye Guan was silent.

The Physique Cultivator chuckled awkwardly. "Just kidding."

Returning Ye Guan's badge, the Physique Cultivator introduced himself. "My name is Yun Zang, and I'm a Physique Cultivator."

"Ye Guan," Ye Guan answered.

"Are you here for a mission, too?" Yun Zang inquired.

Ye Guan nodded in affirmation.

Before Yun Zang could continue, the swordsman chimed in, "I've heard of the Divine Courtyard students' extraordinary prowess. Would you honor me with a spar?"

It was a challenge.

Ye Guan regarded the swordsman with a smile. "Is that really necessary?"

The swordsman's expression turned slightly sour. "Are you underestimating me, Young Master Ye?"

Ye Guan's brow furrowed. Before he could respond, Yun Zang chimed in, "Brother Gu Chen, I don't think there's any need for that."

"It is rumored that Divine Courtyard students are exceptionally talented; I want to see their prowess for myself," Gu Chen remarked. When Gu Chen first arrived at the Divine Academy, his goal was to get admitted to the Divine Courtyard.

However, the school only admitted him as an Inner Courtyard Disciple, and he had always been bitter about it, which became the reason for his disdain toward Divine Courtyard students.

Were the students of the Divine Courtyard truly extraordinary?

Yun Zang's expression darkened at Gu Chen's remark, and he decided to go silent. At this point, any further persuasion would only offend Gu Chen.

Ye Guan looked at Gu Chen and asked, "Are you sure you want to fight?"

"I am sure about it." Gu Chen stared back with determination in his eyes.

Ye Guan nodded slightly. "Shall we start, then?"

Gu Chen opened his palm, and a sword appeared in his hand. "Let's—"

Ye Guan unsheathed his sword, unleashing ten Heavenrends with a hundred stacks each in just one sword move!

Gu Chen's pupils constricted, and he instinctively raised his sword to block the blow.

Boom!

Gu Chen flew hundreds of meters away in the proverbial blink of an eye. When he came to a halt, his fleshy body disintegrated, leaving only his soul. Before he could do anything, a sword appeared just a few inches away from his glabella.

The spar ended in Gu Chen's defeat.

Gu Chen looked at Ye Guan with disbelief evident in his eyes. The lady beside him was similarly astonished. She knew Gu Chen's true strength, and he rarely found a match among Imperial Sovereigns.

However, he was defeated with just one sword move?

Yun Zang was equally astounded. He looked at Ye Guan and praised, "Brother Ye truly lives up to the reputation of being a Divine Courtyard student. Your strength... it's terrifying."

Ye Guan smiled. "Brother Yun is pretty strong as well.."

Yun Zang shook his head with a wry smile. "I'm too far behind compared to Brother Ye."

Ye Guan chuckled and said, "Brother Yun, my sister and I still have tasks at hand. Let's talk another day. Farewell."

With that, he and Ye An turned around and left.

As Ye Guan and his sister departed into the distance, Yun Zang couldn't help but sigh once again. "What a terrifying sword..."

He also had some doubts about Ye Guan's strength, as he was pretty confident in his abilities. How come he couldn't enter the Divine Courtyard despite his strength?

However, Ye Guan's display of strength had convinced him that his standing was just right. Yun Zang turned to Gu Chen beside him.

Gu Chen was silent, and his face was as dark as the bottom of a pot.

The female Divine Mage said, "Restore your fleshy body; we're leaving."

Gu Chen was silent for a while before eventually sitting down to restore his fleshy body.

Half an hour later, Gu Chen left the Sin Continent and found themselves in a starry region. However, they encountered two individuals while they were leaving—one man and one woman.

The man was dressed in a white robe with cloud patterns, and he exuded elegance from top to bottom. Meanwhile, the woman was wearing a plain skirt, exuding simplicity from top to bottom.

Yun Zang was the leader of the group, and he hesitated briefly before asking, "Are you two from the Divine Academy as well?"

The majority of the Sin Continent's visitors were mostly Divine Academy students, as the Sin Continent was a dangerous place that most people dared not tread.

The man nodded slightly. "Yes."

Yun Zang smiled. "Are you from the Inner or Outer courtyard?"

"We're from the Divine Courtyard."

The Divine Courtyard?

Yun Zang and the others were stunned. They're from the Divine Courtyard, too?

Gu Chen stepped forward and stared alternatingly between the two. "I've heard that those from the Divine Courtyard are extraordinary students. I am but a humble individual, and I've come forward to seek guidance."

Gu Chen opened his palm, revealing a sword.

Rumble!

A powerful sword intent erupted from him, enveloping the two Divine Courtyard students. Gu Chen still wasn't convinced that everyone from the Divine Courtyard was an extraordinary talent!

Chapter 576: Lady of Sin

A challenge?

Gu Chen's words caught the man in white off guard. The lady in the plain skirt cast a brief, silent glance at Gu Chen, but she didn't say anything.

Seeing their silence, Gu Chen's expression soured. "Do you look down on us Inner Courtyard disciples? Come here, then, draw your swords..."

Before Gu Chen could finish his sentence, a sword was already a few inches away from his glabella. Gu Chen's expression stiffened. Yun Zang and the female Divine Mage stood dumbfounded. They didn't see the man drawing his sword.

The man in white cast a nonchalant glance at Gu Chen. Then, he opened his palm, and his sword returned to his grasp. He didn't even say anything as he proceeded to walk away with the lady in the plain skirt.

Rooted to the spot, Gu Chen's expression was grim. At the very least, he managed to see Ye Guan's sword in action. However, he actually failed to see the man in white's movements. He had been completely outmatched. Had he always been this weak? Gu Chen began questioning the meaning of his existence.

Yun Zang and the female Divine Mage wore uneasy expressions as they reeled in shock over the might of the Divine Courtyard students.

Were they really that powerful? It seemed like every student from the Divine Courtyard was the epitome of overpowered.

Yun Zang let out a bitter sigh, and a sense of helplessness and despair filled his heart. It felt as though they were plummeting into an abyss of futility. Was this the reality of the Divine Courtyard?

He finally understood why they couldn't measure up to the standards of the Divine Courtyard. They were like babies when compared to the students of the Divine Courtyard, who were like adults.

Yun Zang glanced at Gu Chen, who was in a daze. "Let's go."

Drawing a deep breath, Gu Chen declared, "I'll strive to surpass them!"

Yun Zang nodded in encouragement. "You can do it."

Gu Chen glared at Yun Zang and asked, "Are you doubting me?"

Yun Zang patted Gu Chen's shoulder in consolation, and his voice was tinged with ruefulness as he said, "Sometimes, effort alone isn't enough."

Yun Zang then disappeared into the distance along with the female Divine Mage.

Left all alone, Gu Chen's expression became increasingly darker.

...

Sin Continent...

Ye Guan and Ye An ventured into the mountain ranges of the Sin Continent. Rather than just hunting demonic beasts, the two explored the Sin Continent as well. Ye Guan himself was rather intrigued by the Sin Continent.

The Divine Academy had portrayed the continent as crawling with evil, but Ye Guan doubted it. He wanted to know more about the continent by himself. After all, real-life experience was always better than just hearing about a place through stories.

Ye An noticed what Ye Guan was trying to do and asked, "Are you not here to hunt down beasts?"

They had encountered quite a few powerful demonic beasts so far, but Ye Guan had always chosen to take detours rather than fight them. Moreover, he even made Little Pagoda conceal their presence.

"The Sin Continent has a god, but the Divine Academy claims that it's an evil god." Ye Guan looked up at the horizon and muttered, "The history behind that time period surely isn't as simple as it seems."

Glancing at Ye Guan, Ye An asked, "Are you interested in that part of history?"

Ye Guan chuckled. "Yes."

Ye An calmly responded, "I think It's best to ask the Great Daoist Brush Master."

Ye Guan shook his head with a smile. "I feel like the Great Daoist Brush Master is also hiding something from us."

Although he and the Great Daoist Brush Master were working together, he knew that the Great Daoist Brush Master had his own agenda. Of course, this was perfectly normal, and Ye Guan expected the Great Daoist Brush Master to have his own ulterior motives.

Just then, Ye An turned toward the distance and saw an ancient city in the distance.

After a moment of thought, Ye Guan suggested, "Big Sis, we should go on a disguise!"

Ye Guan whipped out two black robes and handed one to Ye An.

The siblings wore black robes as they approached the distant ancient city. The city had withstood the cruel passage of time, and its age was visible on its walls that had faded to white as well as the faint, barely visible inscriptions on its walls.

Ye Guan looked around upon entering the city. The city appeared desolate. There were people on the streets, but they were few and far between.

The passersby cast wary looks at Ye Guan and Ye An as they strolled the streets.

Soon, they arrived at the city's temple. The statue of a faceless god was standing within the temple. Ye Guan furrowed his brows as he stared at the faceless statue; he didn't expect that the people here were actually worshipping a faceless god, too.

The faceless statue actually appeared similar to the First God. Upon realizing that, Ye Guan assumed that the Sin Continent revered the First God as its god.

Just then, an elderly man clad in a black robe emerged from the temple. The elderly man was using a cane, and his back was slightly hunched.

The elderly man cast a suspicious gaze at Ye Guan and his sister. "Why aren't you bowing?"

Ye Guan stared at the elderly man and smiled. "The First God once said that everyone's god should be themselves. If my god is myself, why bow to myself?"

The elderly man was briefly taken aback. He sized up Ye Guan and his sister before asking, "Who are you?"

However, Ye Guan didn't answer. He turned and left with Ye An.

The elderly man stared at the retreating pair with furrowed brows, seemingly lost in thought.

After leaving the temple, Ye An said, "I'll go train in your tiny pagoda. Call me when there's a fight."

Ye An didn't wait for Ye Guan's reply and directly entered the world inside the tiny pagoda.

Ye Guan shook his head with a wry smile. His elder sister was clearly not interested in that particular period of time. Just as Ye Guan was about to leave the ancient city, the sky abruptly split open, revealing a group of people.

They were a group of men and women numbering about twenty. All of them were clad in the divine robes of the Divine Academy. Clearly, they were students of the Divine Academy!

"Prepare for battle!" A voice boomed through the city. Soon, a group of black-robed experts rushed out to confront the students of the Divine Academy.

A red-haired man at the helm of the students grinned and roared, "Everyone! Let's have a good fight and rack up some credits for ourselves!"

The students charged at the black-robed figures. The black-robed figures were strong, but they were no match for the students of the Divine Academy. A dozen of them were slain in just a few moments.

The remaining Divine Academy students rushed into the city, leaving death in their wake. Every single kill was marked by a severed head flying into the sky; the students grew even more excited with each life they claimed.

Soon, the city was filled with heart-wrenching screams.

Ye Guan observed the spectacle in a dark corner. He was clad in black robes, and he could be easily mistaken to be in cahoots with the black-robed individuals. The city was in chaos, and the citizens were trying to put up a fight as well.

Meanwhile, the students massacred the powerless citizens—the powerless Sin Citizens.

Ye Guan's heart felt heavy at the grueling sight.

Just then, three figures emerged from a nearby house—a man, a lady, and a little girl. The little girl's face was pale, and her wide eyes were filled with fear.

A cold light made a beeline for the three. The man's expression twisted in horror, and he instinctively pulled the lady and the little girl behind him. Before he could do anything, however, the cold light severed his head, and blood splattered in all directions.

The little girl went hysterical, crying out for her father, but the lady pulled her behind her, hiding the gruesome sight from the little girl.

A Divine Academy student walked up to the lady and the little girl. His saber, which was dripping in blood, still looked thirsty for blood. The student's lips curled up into a malicious smirk as he stared at the little girl. Moments later, his figure blurred as he charged at the little girl and her mother.

The lady was horrified. She pulled out a shield and attempted to defend herself.

Unfortunately, it was to no avail, and the lady was blasted away upon impact

"Mommy!" the little girl screamed.

Meanwhile, the Divine Academy student made a beeline for the little girl rather than for the lady.

Ye Guan made a move just then, unleashing a powerful wave of spiritual energy that sent the student flying away.

The student eventually came to a halt; he glared at Ye Guan and said, "So it's another Sin Citizen..."

Ye Guan ignored the student and approached the lady and the little girl. Ye Guan immediately noticed the lady's weak and labored breathing.

The lady hurriedly placed the little girl's hand in Ye Guan's hand, and her figure trembled as she muttered, "Senior..."

Ye Guan hesitated briefly before saying, "She's going to be fine."

The lady smiled, seemingly relieved upon hearing Ye Guan's words. However, she soon became pallid upon seeing her husband's lifeless body, and her eyes glazed over in despair.

The little girl clung to her mother as tears streamed down her face.

Swoosh!

The Divine Academy student transformed into a streak of light, flying toward Ye Guan.

Ye Guan's brows furrowed. He was about to make a move when a spear light flew toward them from a distance. The spear light moved at breakneck speeds, shattering the cold streak of light.

Clang!

The Divine Academy student was impaled by the long spear, and he was pinned to a wall hundreds of meters away.

It was an instant kill!

Ye Guan turned and saw a lady walking over toward them.

The lady—wearing a form-fitting black dress and her long hair cascading down her shoulders—appeared to be in her twenties. She had exquisite facial features, which would have been perfect if it weren't for her cold demeanor and the heavy aura of death billowing out from her.

A droplet of what looked like crimson cinnabar was on her glabella. The lady was undeniably beautiful, and she exuded an aura of elegance and danger at the same time.

A nearby Divine Academy student was stupefied upon seeing the lady, and he exclaimed in terror, "The Lady of Sin! You...!"

Swoosh!

The student couldn't continue his sentence as the lady delivered a powerful punch to his head.

Bang!

The student's head exploded into a bloody mist, creating a gruesome sight.

"The Lady of Sin is here! Retreat!" someone roared. The Divine Academy students wasted no time and retreated into the distant horizon. However, the sky split open once again, and a group of mysterious figures in red robes emerged from the rift to chase after the fleeing students.

The Lady of Sin didn't chase after the students. Instead, she turned around and saw Ye Guan standing in front of her.

The Lady of Sin merely stared at Ye Guan.

Ye Guan stared calmly at the Lady of Sin, but alarm bells were already ringing inside his head.

Just then, the little girl sobbed and said, "Sister Sin... He... he saved me..."

The Lady of Sin stared at Ye Guan and said, "You did not flee in the face of danger. You are indeed a true man. From now on, you shall follow me!"

Chapter 577: Who Would Dare Kill Him under Her Watch?

The Lady of Sin turned around and gripped her spear tightly before hurling it to the distant horizon

Swoosh!

The spear streaked through the air, piercing the head of a Divine Academy student thousands of meters away, killing him instantly.

The Lady of Sin opened her palm, and the spear turned into a burst of light, flying back into her hand.

Ye Guan glanced at the Lady of Sin in front of him, feeling somewhat shocked. She was terrifyingly strong.

The students of the Divine Academy were powerful, and they were all above the Great Destiny Sovereign Realm. However, they were like lambs for slaughter before the Lady of Sin; they couldn't resist her at all.

Just then, a young man in black robes appeared in front of the Lady of Sin, and his expression was somewhat grim as he said, "Boss, they got away."

The Lady of Sin remained expressionless as she asked, "How many people died here?"

"Over ten thousand casualties," the young man answered with a stiff face.

The Lady of Sin's gaze became cold, and she emitted a cold aura that made everyone feel a shiver down their spine.

Moments later, the Lady of Sin turned to Ye Guan and the crying little girl.

"You two, come with me."

She walked up to the little girl and grabbed her hand before turning around to leave.

Ye Guan hesitated briefly before following her.

Soon, Ye Guan found herself outside the ancient city. Just as they left the city, dozens of people descended before them and bowed respectfully toward the Lady of Sin, saying, "Boss!"

Ye Guan swept his gaze across the cultivators. Each of them emitted an incredibly strong aura, and they were no weaker than the students of the Divine Academy.

The Lady of Sin stared at them and said, "Let's go."

With that, they flew toward the distant horizon.

Half an hour later, Ye Guan found himself in another city. The city was much larger than the ancient city earlier, and its walls towered thousands of meters high. Strong warriors clad in armor stood on the city walls, and they emitted both a fierce killing intent as well as an aura as boundless as the ocean.

The guards on the walls bowed respectfully toward the Lady of Sin.

As the Lady of Sin led everyone into the city, Ye Guan noted that everyone would bow respectfully toward the Lady of Sin upon seeing her. The respect in their eyes was genuine, and everyone respected the Lady of Sin, regardless of status.

Ye Guan couldn't help but cast a curious gaze at the Lady of Sin next to him.

The Lady of Sin led everyone to an academy. Ye Guan noticed that the academy was somewhat similar to the Divine Academy; they both worshiped the same god, but this academy was called the First God Academy.

Despite having the same faith, they were like water fire. Ye Guan couldn't help but feel bewildered at the animosity between both sides. Ye Guan was truly eager to read the divine records of the First God Academy.

As they walked deeper and deeper into the academy, the people behind the Lady of Sin diminished until only the young man in black robes was following her alongside Ye Guan and the little girl.

The Lady of Sin led Ye Guan and the little girl in front of a hall.

"Wait here," the Lady of Sin said before entering the hall.

Ye Guan looked around and noticed a few hidden powerful auras within the academy.

The Lady of Sin soon walked out of the hall. She approached Ye Guan and the little girl. Then, she opened her palm, revealing two wooden plaques. "From now on, both of you are Outer Courtyard students."

Ye Guas was silent. How did he end up becoming a student of the First God Academy?

The Lady of Sin looked at Ye Guan and asked, "Do you not want to join the First God Academy?"

Ye Guan pondered briefly before saying, "No, I want to join."

Then, he accepted the wooden plaque and put it away. Both the First God Academy and the Divine Academy would soon be conquered by Qin Guan, anyway, so it didn't really matter even if Ye Guan was a student on both sides.

The Guanxuan Universe's goal was to unify the entire vast expanse, after all.

Ye Guan didn't really care about the feud between the two academies. He was just about how it started; he had no plans of getting involved.

The Lady of Sin nodded slightly and looked at the little girl. "Come with me."

Then, she led the little girl away.

Ye Guan looked around and walked to the right until he found himself standing before a tall building.

Ye Guan walked into the building and realized that the entire building seemed to have been concealing a world of its own. There were countless ancient books inside the building, and they were filled with densely packed ancient texts.

Ye Guan opened his palm, and an ancient book flew into his hand.

Ye Guan frowned deeply as he read the texts within the book.

As expected, the recorded history here was completely different from the recorded history of the Divine Academy. The recorded history of the First God Academy alleged that the Divine Academy was the true traitor!

The Divine Academy had betrayed the First God!

Ye Guan found it suspicious.

The two sides were accusing each other of betraying the First God.

Just then, the Lady of Sin walked into the building. Ye Guan set aside his thoughts and turned to look at her.

The Lady of Sin stared at Ye Guan and asked, "You're interested in books?"

Ye Guan nodded.

The Lady of Sin glanced at the ancient book in Ye Guan's hand. "Reading the books here is pointless."

Ye Guan was puzzled.

"The truth isn't written in books," said the Lady of Sin. "Come with me."

The Lady of Sin then turned around and left.

Ye Guan shook his head with a smile and put down the ancient book in his hand before turning around to leave.

Ye Guan soon found himself in a starry sky under the Lady of Sin's lead. More than twenty people were waiting for them in the starry sky.

Ye Guan swept his gaze across them and saw that each of them had a small wooden plaque on their left chest; the wooden plaque depicted the emblem of the Outer Courtyard, which meant that these people were Outer Courtyard students.

The students bowed respectfully toward the Lady of Sin.

"Let's go," said the Lady of Sin. She soared toward the distant starry expanse, and everyone followed closely behind her. Ye Guan grew even more curious as he followed the Lady of Sin.

In no time, the Lady of Sin led the group into a starry abyss. It seemed bottomless at first glance and was nestled within the vast starry sky. The Lady of Sin turned to Ye Guan and the rest. "Go in and come back alive."

Ye Guan hesitated briefly before asking, "A trial?"

Nodding, the Lady of Sin said, "To become a member of the First God Academy, you must go through this trial."

Ye Guan fell silent, pondering over her words.

The Lady of Sin noticed his thoughtful look and asked, "Any questions?"

With a shake of his head, Ye Guan replied, "None."

"Go in, then," the Lady of Sin urged.

The Outer Courtyard disciples leaped into the abyss without hesitation, transforming into streaks of light that vanished into its depths. Ye Guan followed suit, disappearing in a flash of light.

The Lady of Sin remained silent as she observed the disciples' descent into the abyss. Just then, a young man in black robes materialized beside her, and his voice grave as he said, "Boss, I can't gauge his strength."

"He's concealing it," the Lady of Sin replied calmly.

The young man in the black robes frowned and asked, "Why would he do that?"

The Lady of Sin did not reply and merely stared into the abyss.

Swoosh!

A figure emerged from the abyss—Ye Guan.

The young man in black robes was astonished by Ye Guan's swift return. The Lady of Sin held the record for emerging out of the starry abyss the fastest. However, Ye Guan had easily shattered her record in a fraction of her original time.

That's some terrifying power, the young man thought to himself.

Ye Guan walked up to the Lady of Sin and asked, "Did I pass?"

The Lady of Sin stared deeply at Ye Guan and nodded. "Yes."

Ye Guan nodded in acknowledgement. He was about to say something when a surge of formidable energy erupted from the abyss.

The Lady of Sin's expression changed drastically. "Alert the elders!"

At that, she transformed into a streak of light and darted into the abyss. Ye Guan hesitated momentarily before chasing after her. Meanwhile, the young man in black robes turned toward the First God Academy and swiftly departed.

Soon, Ye Guan found himself diving into the depths of the abyss alongside the Lady of Sin. Ye Guan could sense an overwhelming aura emanating from the abyss' depths; the aura was akin to an unstoppable tsunami.

Ye Guan hadn't ventured to the bottom of the abyss but emerged after taking down a few demonic beasts. Ye Guan's brows knitted deeply.

The Lady of Sin was staring intently at the abyss' depths with a mixture of disbelief and determination on her face.

"The aura of a god-general..." the Lady of Sin murmured.

Ye Guan was perplexed. Before he could ask any questions, however, the Lady of Sin's voice boomed through the abyss. "Everyone, retreat!"

The Outer Courtyard disciples retreated swiftly, but a colossal black hand emerged from the abyss; the hand was brimming with the terrifying energy of resentment and death.

The Lady of Sin's eyes narrowed. She stepped forward and unleashed a powerful thrust with her spear, forcefully repelling the colossal hand.

Boom!

With a resounding boom, the spear forcibly repelled the colossal hand. The next moment, however, a furious roar erupted from the abyss' depths, and it was followed by a terrifying surge of energy that swept toward Ye Guan and the Lady of Sin.

Ye Guan's expression turned grave in the face of such an overwhelming attack.

At the critical juncture, a glint of determination flashed in the Lady of Sin's eyes. She lunged forward and thrust downward with her spear.

The spear transformed into a dazzling beam of light, flooding the abyss with its brilliance. Darkness transformed into a blinding daylight that was strangely awe-inspiring and unsettling at the same time.

Kaboom!

A thunderous boom reverberated as the spear shattered the oncoming wave of formidable energy. However, it did not stop there and continued its descent, piercing the depths of the abyss.

The spear soon vanished from sight, leaving behind an eerie silence in the abyss.

The Lady of Sin furrowed her brows in concern, realizing that she had lost connection with her spear.

Her spear was no more!

Sensing the imminent danger, Ye Guan hurriedly said, "Miss, let's retreat!"

Ye Guan turned around to leave; the presence up ahead was just too unsettling for him to stay here. Unfortunately, a sudden drastic change occurred just as they were about to escape. A painting appeared above them, attracting their attention.

Before Ye Guan and the Lady of Sin could react, the painting emitted a blinding flash of light, which engulfed them both in an instant. When the dazzling light vanished, Ye Guan and the Lady of Sin could no longer be seen.

...

A man in white and a lady in a plain skirt were staring at the starry abyss, and they saw Ye Guan as well as the Lady of Sin at the bottom of the abyss.

The man in white furrowed his brows in confusion. "Qing'er, how come that young man feels so familiar to me?"

The lady in a plain skirt calmly asked, "Is that so?"

"He's giving off a familiar air, but I can't quite understand it..." the man in white asked, "What do you think? Do you have any clues as to why I find him familiar?"

The lady in a plain skirt shook her head gently and said, "No, I'm afraid not."

The man in white smiled lightly and set the matter aside.

The lady in a plain skirt smiled slightly as she stared at the man in white next to her.

The man hesitated briefly before voicing his concern. "Are they going to die?"

The lady in a plain skirt glanced at the bottom of the abyss before responding confidently, "They are not going to die."

The man in white was surprised by the certainty in her voice and asked, "Are you really sure about that?"

"Yes." The lady in a plain skirt nodded in response. "Let's move on. We have more pressing matters to handle."

The lady in a plain skirt believed that a bit of adversity wouldn't harm Ye Guan. In addition, who would dare to kill Ye Guan under her watch?

No one!

The man in white nodded before turning around to leave.

Plain-Skirt Destiny stared at the bottom of the abyss. A pair of eyes seemed to be watching her from the bottom of the abyss. Then, a cold and disdainful voice reverberated. "How dare you insects pry into the affairs of a god-general? Leave your lives behind!"

A terrifying aura surged from the abyss.

Chapter 578: Big Sister, It's Time To Get Things Done

Plain-Skirt Destiny furrowed her brows. The next moment, she waved her sleeve, and the aura shattered into nothingness along with the pair of eyes in the abyss. A few moments later, a heart-wrenching scream echoed from the abyss.

Plain-Skirt Destiny then extended her right hand, reaching out into space.

Boom!

A spacetime rift manifested at the tip of her hand, and a tall man clad in armor was dragged out of the spacetime rift. Plain-Skirt Destiny flipped her right hand, and the man was forced on his knees with a loud boom. The man couldn't move at all.

He looked up at Plain-Skirt Destiny, and his eyes were filled with fear as he stammered, "Y-y-you..."

Plain-Skirt Destiny stared contemptuously at the man and said, "Kneel."

With that, she turned around and walked away with the man in white.

After an unknown period of time, Ye Guan finally opened his eyes. He sat up quickly and found himself among the clouds. A towering gate made out of white jade was situated not too far away from him.

The Lady of Sin was standing nearby as well and was staring at the towering gate, seemingly lost in thought.

Ye Guan walked up to her and asked, "Where are we?"

The Lady of Sin stared at Ye Guan and replied, "We're in the First God World."

Ye Guan frowned, looking a little puzzled as he asked, "First God World?"

The Lady of Sin nodded and explained, "The Divine Painting brought us here; the Divine Painting is one of the three great treasures of the Divine Temple during the First God's era. I had no idea that the First God World is actually inside the painting."

Ye Guan's curiosity was piqued. "First God World? Is it related to the First God?"

"Of course," the Lady of Sin explained, "The First God made it himself, and the First God World is also known as the Divine Temple. However, the First God World vanished without a trace after the conflict within the Temple of the Gods."

Ye Guan turned to look at the white-jade gate. He could vaguely see a few palaces and buildings beyond the gate. "So, we were dragged into the world that exists only in the Divine Painting?"

"Yes." The Lady of Sin nodded and said, "Yes, it turned out that there was a god-general at the bottom of the abyss. The starry abyss we were in is called the Trial Abyss, so I didn't expect that there would be a god-general residing at the bottom of it."

"Are god-generals powerful figures from the First God's era?" Ye Guan asked. The Lady of Sin was right; the ancient books contained little to no useful information, which was why he knew very little about the First God's era. On the contrary, the Lady of Sin seemed knowledgeable about it.

The Lady of Sin nodded and explained, "During the First God's era, there were a total of three hundred and sixty god-generals. Naturally, they were extremely powerful. Unfortunately, the inner conflict within the Temple of the Gods forced them to choose sides. The majority of them died while others simply disappeared—"

"Lady of Sin..." Ye Guan chimed in.

The Lady of Sin stared at Ye Guan and said, "My name is Ah Jia."

"Lady Ah Jia, what exactly happened during the Great War of the Gods?"

Instead of replying, Ah Jia walked away.

Ye Guan followed closely behind her.

After a while, Ah Jia calmly said, "There was a group of people who wanted to change the order and become the new Gods, but there was another group of people who didn't want to change the order at the time. They wanted to keep upholding the order that the First God had established and wait for his return."

"His return?"

"They firmly believed in the First God's return."

Ye Guan was silent. The First God is exceedingly powerful to the extent that I doubt whether he can truly die or not. I actually think that he's immortal.

However, the First God had chosen to self-destruct. If someone as strong as him wanted to greet death, it was unlikely for them to come back to life.

Ah Jia added, "The others believed that the First God would never return, so they wanted to become the new Gods. Hence, both sides started fighting each other. In the end, many new Gods appeared in the vast expanse."

Ye Guan realized that those who wanted to change the First God's order had ended up emerging victorious.

"Those supporting the First God were either killed, suppressed, or exiled. At that time, there were many, many Gods. Of course, they were self-proclaimed quasi-gods. However, they didn't remain united for long.

"Another war erupted within the Temple of the Gods..."

"Did the Sin Continent's God keep on supporting the First God's order even after the latter's self-destruction?" Ye Guan asked.

Ah Jia nodded.

Ye Guan frowned. "If that's the case, how did it earn the name 'Sin Continent?'"

"Well, history is written by the victors, isn't it?"

"Ah, I get it now."

"I thought you were from the Divine Academy, but it seems that you're not so simple."

"I'm from the outside world."

"From the Time River?"

"You know about the Time River?"

"From what I know, it is extremely difficult—almost impossible for people from the Time River to come here."

"It was okay."

Ah Jia took a good look at Ye Guan.

"Lady Ah Jia, have you all been waiting for the First God to return?" Ye Guan asked.

Ah Jia nodded. "Yes."

"Do you really believe that he's going to come back?"

"That's not important. What's important is that we have faith."

Faith! Ye Guan finally understood what was going on. They were currently at a disadvantage; how else could they persevere without faith?

Perhaps the return of the First God was the only remaining ray of hope in their hearts.

Ah Jia and Ye Guan chatted until they arrived before a grand hall. The grand hall was magnificent and was adorned with jewels. A faceless statue stood before the grand hall, and it was the statue of the Faceless God!

Ah Jia stared at the statue and said, "I've never met the First God, but I've met his Divine Servant. His Divine Servant is extremely powerful, and he has always believed in the First God..."

"Divine Servant?" Ye Guan asked.

"Those people in the Temple of the Gods who had proclaimed themselves to be Gods were disciples of the First God. They are known as Divine Servants. It was only after the First God's disappearance did they start calling themselves Gods.

"When the Sin Continent's Divine Servant was defeated in battle, he was exiled to the Sin Continent and was labeled as a rebel. Of course, it's not strange. The world has always been like that. The victors become kings, while the defeated become villains."

Victory was justice...

Ah Jia and Ye Guan's expressions suddenly changed. The painting on both sides of the grand hall's entrance transformed into two beams of golden light that shot toward them.

Ye Guan swiftly drew his sword while Ah Jia brandished her spear.

Boom!

The two were blasted a few kilometers away.

When Ye Guan stopped, he looked down at his right arm and saw that countless cracks had appeared all over his skin. Surprised, he looked into the distance and saw two burly figures clad in golden armor standing at the entrance of the temple.

The two burly figures each wielded a colossal axe and were emitting a terrifying aura.

Ah Jia's face fell. "God-generals!"

One of the god-generals said, "You are approaching a sacred place. Outsiders are prohibited from entering this place. Leave at once."

Ye Guan was a bit surprised by the god-generals' human-like demeanor and manner.

Ah Jia put her hands together, and a myriad of light orbs rushed out of her body.

The two god-generals were taken aback.

One of them frowned and said, "A Divine Disciple..."

Ah Jia bowed slightly and explained, "God-generals, my companion and I have mistakenly entered the Divine Painting. We kindly ask that you escort us out."

The god-general on the left shook his head and said, "The Divine Painting is not under our jurisdiction. Our duty is to guard the Divine Temple. You two must leave immediately. Do not stay here."

Ye Guan glanced at the Divine Temple, but it was shrouded in a mysterious power that did not allow him to take a peek inside.

Ah Jia used Profound Sound Transmission to speak to Ye Guan. "Let's fight our way in."

Ye Guan was shocked, and he looked at Ah Jia.

Ah Jia calmly explained, "There must be divine treasures inside. Otherwise, there would have been no reason for them to protect this place. There might even be some artifacts that the First God had left behind."

Ye Guan was hesitant. "They seem rather polite."

If the god-generals had been arrogant and rude to him, Ye Guan wouldn't have any reservations about fighting his way into the Divine Temple.

However, the god-generals were so courteous to him that he felt bad about fighting them. He had always believed in reciprocating kindness. If someone showed him respect, he would show them even more respect in return.

Ah Jia glanced at him and said, "There are divine treasures, but that's not all. There are also strands of Ancestral Origin, and the legendary Ancestral Vein might even be in there."

Ye Guan's curiosity was piqued. "Ancestral Vein? What is that?"

"It refers to a spiritual vein that can produce strands of Ancestral Origin. An Ancestral Vein is practically extinct, but here... Have you not noticed yet that the spiritual energy here is quite unusual?"

Ye Guan took a moment to examine his surroundings. Soon, he was stunned. Indeed, he could indeed sense the unique fluctuations of Ancestral Origin amidst the spiritual energy. It wasn't that pure, but it was undeniably present.

Is there really an Ancestral Vein here?

Ye Guan looked at the Divine Temple and contemplated in silence.

"Are we going to fight our way in or not?" Ah Jia asked once more. She was too weak to fight the two god-generals by herself, but they stood a chance with Ye Guan's help.

After a moment of silence, Ye Guan shook his head and said, "I refuse."

Ah Jia asked, "Why?"

"I'm a man of principle," Ye Guan replied.

Ah Jia stared deeply at Ye Guan before saying, "There might be more than one Ancestral Vein here. Otherwise, the spiritual energy here wouldn't contain a trace of Ancestral Origin.

"There's also the high possibility that there are divine treasures here—divine treasures that the First God had left behind... Are you sure you don't want to go for it?"

Ye Guan shook his head again.

Ah Jia frowned at the sight. Is he really going to stick by his principles despite the possible rewards?

Ye Guan opened his palm just then, and the tiny pagoda appeared in his hands.

"Big Sister, it's time to get things done."

Little Pagoda had no idea what to say.

Chapter 579: First God

'Time to get things done.'

As soon as Ye An heard those words, she appeared beside Ye Guan.

She then looked at him, her gaze full of disdain. "You chose to summon me because I have no principles, didn't you?"

Ye Guan smiled sheepishly. "Big Sis, you told me to call you when it was time for a fight."

Ye An blandly looked at him, then turned to Ah Jia. "Is this one of your girlfriends?"

Ah Jia's brows furrowed.

"Don't jump to conclusions, Big Sis. She's not," Ye Guan hurriedly replied.

Ye An nodded slightly. "It's okay. You already have dozens of wives. One more won't hurt."

Ye Guan was speechless.

Dozens of wives? Ah Jia could not help but give him a strange look. Is he a stud?

His older sister was taking her revenge on him.

Oh well. I'll just have to take this loss.

Intuition told him that he would not gain anything from fighting his sister.

Seeing that he was conceding, Ye An stopped provoking him. Instead, she turned to the two god-generals. "How should we attack?"

"With full force," Ah Jia replied.

Ye An nodded. As she stepped forward, a spear appeared in her hand. Her figure shook for a moment as she charged toward the god-generals standing on the left.

Almost at the same time, Ah Jia disappeared as well.

Both were using spears.

Seeing the two ladies attacking, the two god-generals did not hesitate to make a move as well.

Ye Guan's expression changed immediately. The two god-generals were even stronger than he thought!

At that moment, as if thinking of something, his figure flashed, and he flew toward the great hall.

The faces of the god-generals changed instantly.

Damn it! That bastard actually wants to steal from us!

The two were about to turn back and stop him when Ye An and Ah Jia blocked them.

Ye Guan soon entered the great hall. It was very spacious but only had a faceless statue inside. The sight made him frown.

At that moment, he suddenly turned around. Standing in front of him was a white-haired old man staring coldly at him. Dressed in a wide, long robe, he had both his hands hidden in his sleeves.

Ye Guan's guard immediately went up. He didn't notice when the old man appeared.

The old man opened his palm and gently clenched it. In an instant, the spacetime around Ye Guan distorted and billions of stars appeared around him.

Although taken by surprise, Ye Guan dared not to be careless. He lightly tapped his thumb.

Schwing! Boom!

The Xuanyuan Sword flew out and ripped apart the spacetime in front of him. Immediately after, the Xuanyuan Divine Sword flew toward the old man. However, when it was just inches away from him, he suddenly charged forward.

Boom!

The attack knocked the Xuanyuan Sword away.

Ye Guan's eyes narrowed. At that moment, he felt as if mountains were pressing down on him, making it hard for him to breathe. In response, his body turned illusory. Thousands of swords then instantly rushed out from him.

Buzz!

A burst of sword light fiercely surged out from the hall, cutting through the air.

Bang!

Ye Guan and the old man were both sent flying backward. Ye Guan crashed on the statue, causing it to shatter. He was about to make another move when he realized that the old man was looking at something behind him, his face filled with shock.

Ye Guan frowned and slowly turned around. When he saw what it was, surprise enveloped his expression.

A golden phantom was floating in front of him.

Amid his confusion, the old man slowly knelt on the ground. With a trembling voice, he said, "Supreme God..."

Supreme God?

Ye Guan was stunned.

Is this the First God?

The two god-generals outside the hall suddenly stopped as well. They rushed into the hall and, upon seeing the golden phantom, immediately knelt and said, "Supreme God."

Ye An and Ah Jia followed them inside. When Ah Jia saw the golden phantom, her expression immediately changed.

Ye Guan just stared at the phantom in silence. Although it was right in front of him, he couldn't detect its aura at all. It was absurd.

The phantom slowly raised its head and walked toward the entrance of the grand hall. It then looked at the sky.

The old man, now prostrating with his head on the floor, trembling uncontrollably. The two god-generals were no different.

After a while, the phantom looked at Ye Guan with a slight smile. "So it's you."

Ye Guan was puzzled. "Me?"

The figure nodded.

Ye Guan was still confused. "What do you mean, Senior?"

It laughed but did not say anything in response.

"Senior, are you the Supreme God?" Ah Jia suddenly asked.

The phantom smiled at her. "I like it more when you guys address me as 'First God.'"

Ah Jia was shaken to her core. She was about to kneel but was stopped by a gentle force. That same force also lifted the old man and two god-generals.

The First God slightly shook his head. "There's no need for these formalities."

"Supreme God, you've finally returned," The old man excitedly exclaimed.

However, the First God shook his head. He looked at Ye Guan for a little while before he opened his palm, sending a golden imprint slowly floating toward him.

The old man and the two god-generals were filled with disbelief. Ah Jia was shocked as well.

"Senior, what is this?" Ye Guan asked.

Smiling, the First God answered, "That's the Divine Imprint."

"What is it for?"

Ah Jia quickly walked to his side. With a trembling voice, she said, "That's one of the three great treasures of the First God's era. The Temple of the Gods must obey anyone who has the Divine Imprint. In other words, the First God himself has approved you as his inheritor."

Inheritor?

Ye Guan froze.

She continued, "The true purpose of the civil war between the Gods was to seize that Divine Imprint. After all, aside from being a precious treasure, it also gives its owner the ability to command all the strong individuals of the Divine Temple."

Ye Guan didn't know what to say.

Did I just become an inheritor again? I haven't even fully inherited my family's businesses yet, and now I'm inheriting someone else's? No way!

If he inherited this, he would have countless consequences to face. He might even end up being hunted down again. He quickly shook his head and was about to refuse but realized that an outright refusal might be too impolite. Hence, he took the Divine Imprint and ran over to Ye An instead.

Passing it to her, he said, "Big Sis, you take it instead."

Everyone was speechless.

Ye An just stared at him.

"Hurry, take it."

Ye An shook her head. "I don't want it."

Ah Jia, the old man, and the two god-generals were completely bewildered.

Are you two seriously fooling around right now? That's the Divine Imprint, the most precious treasure in the First God's era! It's a symbol of supreme authority, yet you two don't want it?

Ye Guan became a little anxious. "Big Sis, this is good stuff."

"Are you trying to pick a fight?" Ye An coldly questioned.

Ye Guan froze.

At that moment, Ah Jia ran to his side.

"That is the Divine Imprint," she reminded.

Ye Guan sighed softly. While outsiders might see the Divine Imprint as a valuable treasure, he knew that it would not be easy to handle. Although he was not afraid of the consequences, he had just started enjoying a few peaceful days. He really did not want to get involved in any more exhausting messes now. He just wanted to quietly focus on his cultivation.

Unable to bear his unwillingness, the old man said, "Young man, that is the Divine Imprint. The Divine Imprint!"

Ye Guan handed the mark to the old man. "Here, you can have it."

The old man froze. He was starting to get annoyed. If they were not in the First God's presence, he would have already acted.

Suddenly, the First God chuckled. "You really don't want it?"

"Why do you even want to give this to me?" Ye Guan asked.

"Aren't you trying to establish a new order?"

Ye Guan frowned.

The First God continued, "Within the Divine Imprint are all of the treasures of the Divine Temple, including nine Ancestral Veins that can continuously produce strands of Ancestral Origin. I've also stored in it a few other divine objects that I have collected back then."

Ye Guan was rendered speechless.

The First God laughed. "If you want to change the world, why are you being so timid?"

Staring at him, Ye Guan said, "Thank you for your guidance, Senior."

Putting the Divine Imprint away, he then asked, "Do you know about the current state of the Temple?"

"I do."

"Many of those who once followed you have betrayed you."

The First God only smiled, which puzzled Ye Guan a little.

"Don't you have any thoughts on this matter?"

"That is something for you to handle now," the First God nonchalantly replied.

When Ye Guan's face darkened, the First God chuckled.

"Come with me," he said.

The First God then turned around. Before Ye Guan could react, he was pulled into an unknown expanse of the starry sky. Ye An and the others were dragged with him too.

After spending quite some time staring into the distance, the First God softly said, "Everyone has evil thoughts, ambitions, and desires. Once you've done something for a long, long time, you start to become bored and lonely. Hence, you'll try to do things you haven't done before."

"Is that caused by your evil beliefs?" Ye Guan wondered.

"You can say that."

"I heard from the Great Daoist Brush Master that you wanted to experience divinity..."

"The Great Daoist Brush Master is still around?"

"Yes. Do you know him too?"

"A little."

"What era is he from exactly?"

"Didn't he tell you?"

"No."

"Then let him tell you himself."

Ye Guan was speechless.

"Do you know what kind of people are the most terrifying?" First God suddenly asked.

His gaze pierced through the countless galaxies. At the farthest end of the starry sky, he saw a woman in a plain skirt.

Answering his own question, he said, "A person who can suppress ninety percent of their divinity with ten percent of their humanity..."

Humans who possessed full humanity and Gods who possessed full divinity were not terrifying. However, a person who could suppress ninety percent of their divinity using ten percent of their humanity...

The First God once possessed full humanity and full divinity. However, when he tried to use his humanity to suppress his divinity, he failed. Now, he had found out that someone had managed to achieve what he couldn't.

Hence, he concluded that for as long as one was strong enough, even divinity and humanity would become their slaves...

Chapter 580: I'll Give You Face

As he watched the distant figure, who was wearing a plain skirt, a faint smile appeared on the First God's face. There was a hint of regret in his smile, but it also showed contentment.

He had once believed that it was possible to not be controlled by divinity if one could use their humanity to suppress it. He regretted not being able to achieve it himself, but he found contentment in knowing he was right.

Ye Guan looked in the direction that the First God was looking at, but he could not see anything.

The First God retracted his gaze and he turned back to Ye Guan. With a smile, he said, "The vast expanse is now in your hands."

Right after, he started to fade.

"Senior, what about those who betrayed you? Aren't you going to do anything about them?" Ye Guan quickly asked.

The First God shook his head.

"But why?"

"It's only normal for everyone to have their own desires and greed. I can't expect everyone to be a good person. Do you get what I mean?"

Ye Guan didn't know what to say.

The First God continued, "This world is divided into yin and yang. Where there are good people, naturally, there will also be bad people. If you want to change the world, you have to rely on your own efforts. Do you understand?"

Ye Guan laughed bitterly. Of course, he understood. Now that he had inherited the Divine Imprint, he was undoubtedly going to face all of the consequences that came with it. The gods definitely would not respect him just because he had this Divine Imprint.

So what if they are not willing to submit? I'll just have to get them to submit either way!

Ye Guan sighed. Although he had just fought his way out of the Time River, he now had to continue working. He was feeling rather exhausted!

The First God chuckled. "Since you want to establish a new order, there are some things that you have to do eventually."

Ye Guan nodded. "Do you have any suggestions?"

The First God thought about it for a moment. He then said, "Never forget your original intentions."

Original intentions...

Ye Guan was rendered speechless. It was such a simple phrase, but it was hard to adhere to it. It was easy for one to lose themselves, which was why few people could consistently stick to their original beliefs.

"Senior, are you... truly gone?"

The First God grinned, choosing not to answer the question. He had already faded nearly into nothingness.

Confusion enveloped Ye Guan's expression. The First God completely disappeared not long after.

Has the First God really vanished?

Ye An slowly walked to Ye Guan's side and pointed at the Divine Imprint. He quickly offered it to her.

Glaring at him, Ye An said, "I don't want it."

"What do you want, then?"

"You know what I want."

Ye Guan's face immediately darkened. His older sister only wanted benefits but not the duties that came with it. How ridiculous!

Ah Jia turned to the old man and the two god-generals. "He is now the inheritor of the First God. Are you willing to submit to him?"

Ye Guan immediately looked at them too. These three people were incredibly powerful, especially the old man, who was even stronger than the two god-generals. It would be great if he could gain their loyalty.

The old man simply remained silent.

Meanwhile, the two god-generals looked at each other, then slowly knelt and said, "We are willing to follow you."

They had stayed here all this time waiting for the First God. Now that he had chosen Ye Guan as his heir, they naturally wished to follow him.

Ye Guan then looked at the old man. After a few moments of silence, the old man shook his head. "Forgive my bluntness, but you have no chance of winning."

Ye Guan smiled. "The First God chose to believe in me. Why don't you?"

"Do you know how powerful those self-proclaimed gods are?"

"No."

"You are indeed extraordinary to reach this level at such a young age. Even in the First God's era, it is rare to come across such a talent. However, you really cannot win if you fight against them."

"I have people backing me."

"Really?"

"Yes."

"It's useless. You know nothing about the strength of those gods."

"Well then, take care, Senior."

Refusing to beg, he then took Ye An's hand and turned to leave.

"Wait!" the old man exclaimed.

Ye Guan turned back around.

"If you want people to help, shouldn't you be offering some benefits?" the old man hesitantly said, stunning everyone in the area.

Benefits?

Ye Guan blinked. "You... Aren't you doing this for your own faith?"

"Even with faith, one still needs to eat!" the old man replied.

Ye Guan fell silent, realizing his oversight. He looked at the two god-generals beside him and, after thinking for a moment, inquired, "Senior, what do you want?"

"When I followed the First God, I received a hundred strands of Ancestral Origin every year."

A hundred?!

Ye Guan's expression immediately changed.

The old man quickly added, "Since you have the Ancestral Veins now, and each of them produces tens of thousands of them every month..."

Tens of thousands?!

Blankly, Ye Guan asked, "Wait, really?"

The old man laughed bitterly. "Do you think I would joke about that?"

Ye Guan nodded slightly and said, "Alright. I will give you two hundred strands of Ancestral Origin every year."

The old man bowed respectfully. "Thank you, Supreme God."

Beyond everyone's awareness, when he opened the negotiations, he had actually already decided to follow the young man. After all, the young man already possessed so much strength at such a young age, a feat that could not be achieved with talent alone. Hence, he likely had an extremely powerful force or an extremely formidable person supporting him.

The First God's attitude toward him also factored into his decision. When the First God saw the young man, he immediately said, "So it's you."

Those words could only mean that the First God already saw the young man as the founder of the new order. That also had to be the reason he had given his Divine Imprint to him, not just because he hoped that the young man would establish a new order.

That made a huge difference. Even without the First God's Divine Imprint, this young man would still be the one to establish the new order.

Therefore, the old man had decisively chosen to follow him. Still, he wanted some benefits from doing so. He could not afford to rely entirely on the future. The benefits that were presented right in front of him now had to be secured. That way, in case the young man did not have a powerful backing, he would be ready to bail.

Ye Guan looked at the two god-generals. "You will each receive a hundred strands of Ancestral Origin per year."

The two god-generals bowed deeply in gratitude.

"Thank you," they said.

He then looked at Ah Jia, who remained silent for a while before saying, "I'm willing to follow you."

She wanted to change the Sin Continent, and the only way to do that was to follow the person before her—the sole inheritor of the First God's authority. If he was willing to stand on the Sin Continent's side, it would significantly help their cause.

Didn't you say we were sinners? Didn't you say we were the ones who betrayed the Supreme God? Now, the Supreme God's inheritor is standing on our side!

For the sake of the Sin Continent, her only option was to follow Ye Guan. If she did not, they would never have a chance of redeeming themselves. After all, the First God had completely disappeared.

Ye Guan nodded slightly before turning to Ye An, whose brows furrowed and whose hands balled into fists.

"Big Sis, what's mine is yours," Ye Guan quickly said. "As long as there is anything you want, I will give it to you."

Ah Jia shook her head and smiled.

Ye An unclenched her hands. "I don't need your Ancestral Veins. I'm mainly worried that you'll squander them. Just leave them with me for safekeeping for now. When you're older, I'll give them back to you."

Ye Guan and everyone else were at a loss for words.

In the end, he gave her two Ancestral Veins. He wanted to give her four, but she only wanted two, which he found somewhat surprising.

After a few moments, everyone left the hall.

Once out, Ye Guan looked at the sky, then turned to the old man. "How should I address you, Senior?"

"My name is Mu Yuan."

Ye Guan nodded. "Senior Mu Yuan, we are currently inside the Divine Picture. How do we get out?"

"The Divine Picture has a spirit. Since you are the Supreme God's inheritor, you should be able to subdue it. Give it a try."

Ye Guan looked at his surroundings. "Spirit of the Divine Picture, come out and talk to us."

There was no response.

When he frowned at Mu Yuan, the old man said, "Give it a beating."

Ye Guan tapped on his thumb, and the Xuanyuan Sword immediately soared to the sky. The sky was torn open, but the rift was instantly repaired.

His expression darkened. "Senior, you really can't control this Divine Picture?"

Mu Yuan laughed bitterly. "No. During the First God's era, the four great treasures only obeyed the First God's commands. They would not listen to anyone else."

Seemingly coming to a realization, Ye Guan opened his palm, and the Divine Imprint appeared. He had not yet subdued this precious treasure.

"How can I make the Divine Imprint recognize me as its master?"

Mu Yuan shook his head. "I don't know."

"Are you being serious?"

"Those divine treasures have only ever been used by the Supreme God. Although we have seen them before, we have never used them."

"You should have a spirit too. Come out and have a chat?"

The Divine Imprint trembled slightly and transformed into a woman with golden hair. She was wearing a pale-white dress.

The spirit of the Divine Imprint coldly stared at Ye Guan.

Just as Ye Guan was about to say something, she suddenly said, "You're too weak. I don't want to follow you."

Ye An suddenly stepped forward and slapped her. Caught off guard, the spirit of the Divine Imprint was sent flying, rendering everyone speechless.

Looking coldly at her, Ye An said, "I'll give you face if that's what you want."