

Carefree 261

Chapter 261: Breakthrough

"Is this... what's left behind of a dead dragon? A Dragon Pearl?"

After obtaining the Dragon Pearl, the green dragon, and even the palace started to disintegrate.

Outside, as the three demons witnessed the scene unfolding, their eyeballs were bulging.

"Little black fish, you won't be able to handle it! Give it to me!"

"I'm not stupid!"

As he looked at the other treasures around, he felt a sense of pity. Regardless, he rushed to the centre of the palace where he had come from through the array.

"Oh no, does this black fish understand how to manipulate arrays?"

As Bai Guan exclaimed, a huge white python emerged from behind, hissing loudly.

"Crumble!"

Finally, the array could not hold on any longer as it shattered.

"Don't think of leaving!"

The three demons started to chase after Fang Yuan.

"I'm sorry, but it's too late!"

With a smile, he disappeared among the glow.

"Rumble!"

In the next moment, an astonishing surge of energy swept across the entire palace, turning everything into rubble.

"Ahh! That d*rn'd black fish!"

Bai Guan shrieked. "Don't let me catch you, otherwise I will make you regret being born!!!"

Behind him, the water buffalo and alligator snapping turtle looked at each other.

Being the more powerful demons of Qi Lake, it was a disgrace for them to be outsmarted by a small fish.

Needless to say, it was a huge loss.

Everywhere was glittering.

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In the secret mansion within the trench.

Fang Yuan fired a water arrow and destroyed the restriction, heaving a sigh of relief. "Phew!"

If he were a little late, he would be captured by the three demons and had to give up on this world.

Only until now he could finally examine the Dragon Pearl in peace.

The golden pearl was only as big as a thumb. There was a mild golden glow coming from within and it gave off the vibe of a dragon.

If not for the fact that Fang Yuan was from another world and had strong magical energy, he might not even be able to take it away.

"In this Dragon Pearl, it contains dragon element. In other words, the essence of a dragon. Because all of the element is within the pearl, the pearl is extremely strong. If I were to swallow it, I'm afraid I won't be able to digest it..."

As he looked at the pearl, he still swallowed it without holding back.

"Whatever, I'll just take it as though I'm swallowing a rock. After all, I don't have pockets to store things, right?"

There was a benefit for swallowing the pearl. The vibe of the dragon was now isolated in his stomach and could no longer be tracked. If there was a need to, Fang Yuan could also release it to scare other predators.

Fang Yuan felt satisfied. "I'm afraid I'll have to wait till I'm at least at the 6th Transformation before I can digest it. However, it should still be able to activate the dragon properties I have in me, right?"

Clumsily, he swam out of the trench, aimed at a certain direction and swam quickly.

He had to swim quickly!

He now had the treasure map and even the pearl! Since he had taken the pearl in front of the three demons, they would surely hunt him down.

Could the entire Qi Lake be hunting for a black carp now?

"I cannot stay in Qi Lake anymore. The only way is to run..."

Qi Lake stretched across 500 miles, but it was not a standalone lake. On the contrary, it was connected to a lot of other rivers and streams.

Without hesitation, Fang Yuan chose the closest An River and swam towards it.

No matter how powerful the Water God might be, he could only exert his power within Qi Lake. If Fang Yuan were to escape the lake, the three demons could do nothing.

"It's a pity that I'll have to leave the Lotus Flowers!"

As thoughts ran through his mind, he continued to rush along his way.

At the size of 3 feet and 3 inches, there were many other black carps like him. Many carps were caught just because they looked like him.

"I'm about to reach there!"

As soon as Fang Yuan realised that a search was going on in Qi Lake, he paid more attention to concealing himself. As he looked in a certain direction, there was a look of joy on his face.

He was not far from the river mouth of An River.

Underwater, Fang Yuan could feel a current of water, bringing with it sand and nutrients from an unknown water source.

As soon as he reaches An River, he could go to other lakes and from then on would be a free fish.

With the flick of his tail, he increased his speed.

He knew that the longer he took, the higher the chances of him being caught by the three demons. Based on his current level of cultivation, he might not even be able to escape from them once spotted.

"Whooo!"

Underwater, the strong current was like a thousand hands as it pushed Fang Yuan outwards.

The good thing was that he was strong enough to swim against it. Against the current, Fang Yuan continued to swim towards An River.

"The crucial thing about a carp leaping through the Dragon's Gate is the part about leaping! I will need energy and courage!"

Suddenly, Fang Yuan realised something.

At that moment, it was as though he was right beneath the Dragon's Gate, ready to leap!

"Haha... You cannot run!"

At this moment, a glow appeared.

"Destroy!"

With the flick of a tail, Fang Yuan saw the water guardian in front of him.

He opened his mouth wide and gave a joyful expression. "The God has ordered us to guard the exits. Who would know that you would fall for it! Haha... It is only fair that you end up in my hands. Let's see how I'm going to deal with you!"

The water guardian had a high level of cultivation. As he swung his spear, a wave appeared on the surface of the lake.

"This time... you cannot run!"

Looking at the black carp, he was overjoyed. He stretched his hand over.

"Water arrow!"

"Water spear!"

Fang Yuan executed his techniques in quick succession. However, their cultivation levels were too different and the water guardian was cunning as well. He wore a spiritual armour and therefore, Fang Yuan's attacks were not effective.

Ha Haer grabbed the water in front of him. At that moment, Fang Yuan could feel as though the water had stopped, trapping him in something like a cage.

"We need to end this quick. Otherwise, if the other water guardians or demons arrive, I would be in real trouble..."

"Destroy!"

With the flick of his tail, an enormous force exploded, destroying the water cage. Free, he continued to rush towards An River.

"Eh? You're quite good!"

Ha Haer revealed his true form, a toad. As he opened his mouth, he aimed it at Fang Yuan.

"Whooo!"

The water underneath started to swirl on Fang Yuan as the water was sucked into Ha Haer's mouth. Fang Yuan felt an immense pressure.

"Hmph, you could have survived, but you chose death... Kill!"

A murderous look flashed across Fang Yuan's eyes. Suddenly, he stopped resisting and rushed straight towards Ha Haer's mouth.

Seeing this, Ha Haer did not close his mouth. Instead, he started to swallow in more water.

"Now!"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered as he opened his mouth as well.

"Roar! Roar!"

In the next moment, a loud roar was heard.

The roar sounded ancient and powerful, as though people would fear it just by hearing it.

As soon as the roar was heard, there was the vibe of a dragon in the vicinity.

It was as though time had stopped.

Ha Haer was a water dweller. Against the vibe of a dragon, he could not resist as he stumbled onto the ground.

"Die!"

Swimming towards him, Fang Yuan fired multiple arrows at Ha Haer's weak points.

"Pu!"

As soon as a water arrow dissipated, another one would be coming at him. Because it was continuous, it appeared like a white streak.

"You..."

There was blood at the throat of Ha Haer. With a face of unwillingness, he fell to the ground, crushing a seashell in his hands.

"Rumble!"

In the next moment, there was a black flash and the vibe of anger all aiming at Fang Yuan.

"Pu!"

His body was flung out, and some of his scales dropped.

"A one-time use talisman?"

Looking at the breathless Ha Haer and the powdery substance on his hands, he looked away and continued rushing towards An River.

"Pu!"

A 3 feet fish leapt out of the surface of the water and over the obstacle which Ha Haer had built, landing into a foreign river.

"Phew..."

Although his body appeared hammered, Fang Yuan heaved a sigh of relief as soon as he entered the waters of An River.

The thought of being chased and killed soon disappeared in his mind as he came to terms with the fact that he had escaped out of Qi Lake.

However, he had a price to pay..."

"Is that strike from the demon king?"

Looking at his own body, he was stunned.

The feeling of power, much stronger than he was, was felt as the water guardian attacked him.

"This is not alright. If it goes on, I think I will die..."

Fang Yuan was expressionless. Suddenly, he felt his stats window shaking.

On the original Black Carp (99 Years), he became blurred and turned into (100 Years)!

"The time of breakthrough has arrived, what a time..."

For fishes, it would be extremely strenuous for them to heal their injuries or leap over the Dragon's Gate.

Needless to say, Fang Yuan was now severely injured and had consumed more than half of his elemental energy. This made in untimely for a breakthrough.

"To heal and breakthrough at the same time? I have it... the Dragon Stinging Technique!"

The good thing was that Fang Yuan was not the average fish. He had learnt a specific technique for use in such a situation from the Golden Dragon God's study.

"I need to heal my injury, and I need to achieve my breakthrough as well... Since I cannot provide elemental energy now, I can retrieve energy from my body!"

Fang Yuan executed the technique in silence.

A miracle happened.

The black carp was originally 3 feet long, but now, it was shrinking and finally, it became 1 foot long.

Of course, the injury also reduced in size and disappeared.

"The Dragon Stinging Technique would allow me to shrink in size, heal my injury and gather my elemental energy. Of course, there are side effects as well... In the following few days, I would be at my weakest and therefore, I would remain the size I once was like the other black carps..."

Chapter 262: Marketplace

It was extremely dangerous for a carp to leap through the Dragon's Gate even though it was not related to transforming into a dragon.

It was especially dangerous for Fang Yuan as he was already seriously injured. Hence, Fang Yuan had no choice but to use the Dragon Stinging Technique to preserve his life after breaking through.

It was called the Dragon Stinging Technique as it granted the user a second chance at life. It preserved the life force and energy of the user, and in an instant, it used up all his elemental energy, turning him into a foot long black carp.

On the upside, all his injuries were reduced by more than half.

"Because I am too heavily injured this time, I will need to maintain the Dragon Stinging Technique for quite a long period of time. Once it finally ends, I can smoothly breakthrough to the 4th transformation..."

He appeared greyish, as if his stats window got sealed up, and murmured to himself under his gills.

Any other demon would likely be dead if they experienced this right after breaking through. Even if they were lucky enough to escape death, they would be left in a state where they would lose all hope, went crazy, or transformed into all sorts of different creatures.

It was thanks to his vast knowledge and his high stats that he managed to survive the ordeal and keep his sanity.

"Even though I managed to tide through this dangerous ordeal.... This prolonged state of weakness would be the death of me!"

When Fang Yuan saw a crocodile swim past, he flicked his tail and quickly swam away from it.

If this was before he was weakened, the crocodile would have been eaten up by him, but he really could not afford to fight it now.

It would have been all for naught if he survived taunting the Water God, killed Ha Haer, jumped through the dragon gates, only to be killed by a normal crocodile.

The current of An River was very fast and was vastly different from the calm lake of Qi. Luckily Fang Yuan managed to adapt quickly.

Additionally, there were certain advantages to maintaining the Dragon Stinging Technique.

The water god filed an arrest warrant for a 3-foot black carp that had enormous strength and possessed the abilities to manipulate water. This was completely different from his current state. The Dragon Stinging Technique would allow him to be unnoticed by even the powerful demons, there would be no threat to his identity being revealed.

"Mmm, I should use this chance to gain my footing in the An River. After that, I can follow the river to its source and seek out the Golden Court Lake!"

Fang Yuan was prepared to stay on the run.

At least he knew how the Golden Court Lake was connected to the An River. When comparing size, the Golden Court Lake was much bigger than the Qi Lake, it could be considered as an inland ocean!

Of course, it was a vast distance away, it was as if he was travelling from the northern lands to the southern skies!

"I should take a few days to recover before going on my way again."

Fang Yuan looked at his surroundings, he immediately flicked his tailed and hid in a bush of seaweed.

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Half a month later.

"The effects of the Dragon Stinger Technique will be wearing off soon. I should take advantage of my current state and be on my way!"

There were of hidden dangers all around him. In addition, there were constant patrols by the water spirits. Fang Yuan had heard that the Qi Lake Water God had issued an arrest warrant for a 3-foot black carp and sought help from the demon of An River. He felt uneasy and decided to leave his current hiding spot for somewhere even further.

Based on his current appearance and his abilities to conceal his spiritual aura, he would not raise any suspicion even if he was swept by a spiritual will.

"Just keep swimming, just keep swimming.... F*CK, the swimming speed of a normal carp is just too slow!!!"

Fang Yuan was absolutely exhausted when he finally reached the main tributary of the An River. It was a huge plane of slow-moving water.

"Mmm, there is someone."

The river was very broad. There was bait being thrown into the river from both shores, it was apparent that someone was fishing.

"Could it be..... Have I finally met the humans of this world? I almost thought this world was only dominated by spirits and demons!"

Fang Yuan felt really playful, he weaved between the fish hooks and would sometimes stop to eat the fish bait before playfully tugging on the fish hooks.

"Mmm, I am full now, I should continue on my journey."

He burped and was prepared to leave. All of a sudden, he was startled.

A 10 foot long carp was in the middle of foraging for food when he saw Fang Yuan and charged towards Fang Yuan.

"If this was before, I would have killed you with a single water arrow!"

Fang Yuan cried out, before escaping.

In his weakened state, he was merely a normal black carp, with average swimming speed. He was almost caught a few times by the carp, before finally taking cover in the seaweeds.

He was met by dangers after dangers. He saw a hidden current up ahead and was very happy "F*ck you!"

He focused and shot across the hidden current as soon as he saw a break in its flow. The carp who was following right behind him was caught in the current and swept to god knows where.

"An idiot like you wanted to eat me?! Go eat yourself ass*ole!"

Whilst in the middle of his celebration, a huge net was cast in his direction.

"Mmm?"

Before Fang Yuan could react, he was caught in the net and pulled out of the water.

Hua la!!

Only him, some seaweed, some crustacean were left in the net after the water was drained.

"Is this a fishing boat?"

Fang Yuan heart sank "I celebrated too soon"

"Ahh... such a bad haul again!"

A well-built fisherman pulled the net onto the deck, threw the seaweed away, and picked up Fang Yuan "This carp is all we have, we can either sell it or cook some fish stew...."

Fang Yuan was not unlike any other ordinary fish, he flopped for a while, before foaming at the mouth. There was really nothing he could do.

After all, not only was he a third of his original size, he was literally a fish out of the water. It was likened to a dragon trashing in the shallows or a tiger in the open savanna.

Hua La!

He was thrown into a basket of fishes. The fisherman hauled a few more nets and threw all the bigger fishes into the basket with him. They were transferred into a water-filled basin.

"Hmm... It looks like fishes in this basin are for sale, he would not kill us for now. What luck?"

Fang Yuan was deep in thought "I am going to get eaten either way, be it roasted or steamed, such a depressing situation to be in...."

He looked at the other fishes around him and glared at them "What are you looking at? SCRAM!"

"I am going to be eaten... I am going to be eaten....."

There was a green fish with a slight bit of spiritual awareness, but that was about it. He looked slightly retarded and was swimming in circles furiously.

"Mmm?"

This basin was rather small, it only contained Fang Yuan, the green fish and 2 other spotted fishes with no spiritual awareness.

The last fish was an interesting one.

"Hey you, where are you from?"

Fang Yuan wrestled through the crowd and said hi to a fish of his type.

In front of him, was another carp. The carp was much shorter than Fang Yuan, he was only about half a foot, did not have much meat. He looked beautiful, had scales of a golden and reddish hue and long flowing whiskers. The carp looked similar to Fang Yuan when he was still of the 3rd transformation. The carp was either gifted with such good looks, or he had cultivated.

"...."

The Golden Red Carp looked at Fang Yuan and blew bubbles innocently.

"F*ck! Don't you dare play dumb with me.... Hey hey, we are caught and are about to be made into soup, if you have any tricks, this is the time to use it!"

Fang Yuan rammed into the carp.

The golden red carp merely stared at him, motionless.

"Could he really be a retard?"

Fang Yuan was out of options when he knew that this method could not work.

Not long after, the boat docked. With a jerk, the basin was lifted and brought into the pier.

"Fishes for sale!"

"Fishes for sale!"

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The pier was not very big, but there was still high human traffic and was quite crowded.

Fisherman filled the sides of the pier, selling fish.

"Ladies and gentleman, come take a look at my fishes! Freshly caught and still full of life!"

Although the fisherman spoke slightly differently, Fang Yuan could still make out what he was saying.

The fisherman picked up the green fish. The green fish was flopping about furiously. If it was himself, he would have feigned death to prevent himself from being sold and cooked.

"My love, you must be tired after your long journey. These fishes look good, how about I buy one for you to regain some strength?"

A couple walked to the stall.

Fang Yuan evaluated the couple. The man was in his early 20s, wore a green shirt and had a piece of jade hung around his waist, it was of good quality too. His pupils were of a deep black, he could feel the authority of an officer from his eyes. Following behind was a student, beside him was a sweet looking lady. She had difficulties moving and had a small belly and looked to be pregnant.

"My love! My love, this fisherman's fishes are the best!"

The fisherman saw the young man, and his eye sparkled "Look at how fresh these fishes are! Especially this golden red carp, that's a rare catch! A stew made with him would be very nutritious for the lady! "

"Oh, let me take a look!"

The officer wearing green shirt stopped and looked at the fishes.

Fang Yuan looked on coldly, but he caught the gaze of the fisherman. The fisherman was eyeing the jade piece on the officer and looked at the lady with a perverted gaze.

"They are indeed good, I have read somewhere that golden red carps possessed spiritual energy and would be great for my lady!"

He looked at his wife "My dear... What do you think?"

"Me?"

She hung her head low, she did not want her husband to spend so much on her and could not make a decision. She looked at the carp and was shocked "It...It seems to be crying!"

"Mmm?"

The officer saw it too "Wow, it is spiritually aware!"

"How could we kill something that was spiritually aware? My dear, how about we buy it and set it free?"

She looked at her husband, her eyes were filled with a loving gaze "Let's take it as we are earning good karma for me and our children."

"Al... Alright!"

He would not have normally agreed to that, but the officer was feeling generous "We are getting this carp!"

"I really could not tell, he was the acting type!"

He looked at the teary eyes golden red carp and was speechless, "You really are good, but I not really not thick-skinned enough!"

"That would be one silver, it is a golden carp after all!"

The fisherman was all smiles and decided to rip the couple off.

"That is very expensive, but for the sake of my wife and children, I will take it!"

The officer took out the money and paid him.

After paying, he pointed to fang yuan and the green fish, "Release the golden carp, but give me these 2 fishes, stew one, and steam one!"

"F*CK!!!!"

Chapter 263: Transformation

After he was bought, Fang Yuan managed to obtain the identity of the couple from the information he gathered along the way.

The green-robed official's surname was Xu and his name was Ren. He was a scholar of the Qinghe District and was a child prodigy. At the age of 12, he was chosen for and passed the imperial examinations to become an official. After being selected to become an official, he took a few servants with him and took up the position. The lady, Wan'er, was his wife and was 5 months pregnant.

The rides in the carriages of the ancient times were bumpy and were not suitable for a pregnant lady. Furthermore, the drainage system of this realm was developed. As such, Xu Ren chose to take the boat.

At the quay, he rented a small boat and travelled downstream in it.

As for Fang Yuan and the other 2 fishes, they were naturally brought to the kitchen.

It was noteworthy to mention that the golden carp was still there. It seemed that Xu Ren was either going to find another location to release it or consume it. Afterall, it could be considered a semi-spiritual object which would bring about benefits to the unborn child.

The sky outside grew dark and the kitchen started to become busy. The reddish-gold fish looked at Fang Yuan and the other fish with an expression of ridicule.

"Die die die..."

The big green fish was scared senseless and could only repeat these few words.

"Really...When I rely on the mountain, the mountain topples and when I rely on the water, the water dries up [1]. In the end, I still have to rely on myself!"

Fang Yuan silently concentrated and was motionless.

The effects of his Dragon Stinging Formula were almost gone. As such, he was able to remain fearless in the face of death. Otherwise, if he was able to overcome his predicament just by crying, there was an 80% chance that he would do so even if he said that he was unwilling.

"A dragon can change its size, is able to soar or hide. When it is big, it is able to swallow clouds and blow out fog. When it is small, it is able to stay hidden. It is able to soar between universes and hide within the great waves..."

This Dragon Stinging Formula was a miraculous technique of the dragon race and was necessary to save his life.

Fang Yuan silently chanted the formula and felt threads of elemental energy moving rapidly within a dried up area within his body.

"It does not just take one step for a carp to transform into a dragon. Instead, it is the stimulation of the dragon properties within the body and creating an opportunity to transform into a dragon!"

Fang Yuan's eyes lit up with understanding as he thought of the content of the Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Formula.

"How? Are we doing it?"

At this moment, a man's lofty voice was heard.

"That young master of the rich family is loaded. Did you see the amount of money he had when he was buying the fish? There must be dozens of silver taels. Furthermore, the jade hanging from his waist is no common grade item!"

This voice sounded very familiar. Fang Yuan realized that it was the fisherman from before.

At the moment, the person who was doing odd jobs and the person tending to the fire started to gather. There was a total of 6 or 7 people, which caused Fang Yuan to sigh.

Xu Ren was blind to choose a black boat!

Those who lived in the mountains lived off the mountains while those who lived in the sea lived off the seas. While these fishermen led difficult lives, they were skilful for their livelihood. When they were halfway through the journey, they halted the boat and asked the official if he would like to eat homemade noodles or wonton noodles.

They were villagers of the mountains by day and pirates by night.

This fisherman had no time for civilities as well.

"Wait a minute, I feel that this lady's background is not so simple. I am afraid that she might have connections!"

"Old Jia, you are always afraid to die. Don't forget the previous time, we killed a 7th-grade official and toss his seal into the waters, who would be able to find it?"

"Bai Lilang, don't think that I do not know what you are thinking. You incite all of us as you have taken a liking for the lady?"

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The group of professional pirates discussed passionately. In the end, Bai Lilang's proposition was favoured as those greedy pirates hooted.

"Let's do it! We do not see this type of fat goats[2] often!"

"Steal his gold and seize his wife!"

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"Guys, I do not want the gold and silver this time around. I only want his beautiful wife and I hope that you guys would not fight over her with me..."

The fisherman who captured Fang Yuan, Bai Lilang, cupped his hands, his face full of smiles.

"Since you have said so, we shall let you have the lady. The amount of gold and silver the fat goat has on his body is enough as compensation...haha...we can go to the brothel and find a few that are on par with the lady!"

"I want his jade!"

"Good, then it is decided. We should not drag this on any longer. We should strike now and drink the fish soup when we return to celebrate!"

Bai Lilang spoke in exultation.

It was hard to blame him as he had a plan. The boat was now in the centre of the river which was a prime danger area. Even if the information leaked out, what could the couple do?

"My master and his wife are waiting to eat the fish. What are you all standing around for?"

At this time, a servant walked into the kitchen, he was babbling when he witnessed the scene, which caused him to be stumped and confused.

"Pffft!"

In that instant, Bai Lilang lunged forward, drew out a dagger and stabbed him viciously.

The servant's eyes were glazed as he toppled over.

"Eat fish? Haha...go and drink soup in hell!"

Bai Lilang laughed out loud as he licked the blood from the corner of his mouth. He instructed the other pirates and they rushed out of the kitchen. Faint, indistinct cries echoed within the silent kitchen.

"Haha...this is retribution!"

Fang Yuan looked at the reddish-gold carp who was starting to panic and rejoiced. "That pirate do not care if you have spiritual energy. You are definitely becoming a soup for them!"

The reddish-gold carp glared at him but did not speak.

"Die, die, die!"

At the side, the green fish turned in circles, causing Fang Yuan to become dizzy.

"This is boring!"

In his heart, he shook his head. A shiny black sheen appeared on his body.

In the black light, Fang Yuan's body became elongated. His whiskers disappeared as he transformed into a 3 feet long black snake.

At this time, his stat window appeared and displayed his new stats:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Race: [Black Snake (10 years)]

Essence: 18

Spirit: 18

Magic: 18

Profession: ???

Cultivation: ???

Technique: [Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Formula (4th Transformation)], [Water Controlling Technique (Grade 3)]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

Fang Yuan silently remembered and adapted to his new body.

"Crash!"

He deftly turned his body and slithered out of the basin onto the ground.

"The 4th transformation in the Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Formula is known as the Black Snake Transformation. The dragon properties are stimulated and one is no longer limited to just the water!"

A flesh of a simple creature born in the water would turn into rock once it reached the shore.

However, after reaching the Black Snake Transformation, the situation was different.

Black was the colour of the water element [3], the black snake was also a water snake. As such, it was able to swim in the water and slither on land. If a common carp was able to reach this cultivation level, his path of Dao would have broadened.

"Die, die, die..."

The green fish was scared senseless after witnessing the transformation of the black fish into a black snake. It looked as if it was almost scared to death when it saw Fang Yuan spit out the seed[4].

Even the golden carp was dazed, its big eyes revealing its shock and fear.

"Stimulating the properties of a dragon, transforming into a black snake, other than the Water Controlling Technique, there must be other...however, I need to find this out myself!"

Fang Yuan lazily crawled beside the basin, lifted the big green fish and tossed it out of the window.

"Splash!"

The river was outside the window. With a dull thud, the green fish was tossed into the water and swam away speedily.

Onboard the boat, indistinct cries could be heard. Amidst the massacre, there was no one to notice the empty kitchen and the direction in which a fish escaped in.

"Good, he escaped. Time for me to escape as well!"

Fang Yuan spoke loudly on purpose and started to climb towards the door.

"My fellow dao cultivator, wait!"

Indeed, the reddish-gold carp could stand it no longer and speak on its own accord.

Her voice was soft and silky. It was a girl...no, female.

"It seems like you know how to speak..."

Fang Yuan did not leave and instead, lay down beside the basin and gazed on. "I am starting to think that you are a mute!"

"..."

The reddish-gold carp was speechless. However, Fang Yuan predicted that she had already made up her mind.

"I did what I did previously as I had my difficulties. I am carrying a huge burden...please forgive me and save me!"

The reddish-gold carp started to beg.

She was well aware of the situation. If it was still the young lady Wan'er deciding, she had a big chance of surviving. If it was Xu Ren making the decision, there was a 50% chance she might be cooked. Now, it was the group of pirates making the decision. There was no way she could survive. As such, she could not care less and sought help from the mysterious black snake.

"You did not reveal your name even as you seek help. No sincerity!"

Fang Yuan spat out the seed.

"I am...Li Luan..."

"What did you do? Why did you end up here?"

Fang Yuan probed but the carp refused to reply.

"Nevermind.....I will help you since we are both water dwellers!"

Fang Yuan lifted the reddish-gold carp and prepared to toss her out of the window.

Afterall, he had regained half his stats. Although he looked like a black snake that was just 1 metre long, he was able to take on a Wu Zong in a fight.

"Wait!"

The reddish-gold carp continued to speak. "I...I am a criminal in the An River. I am afraid I cannot reveal myself in the river! Furthermore...I am in debt to the couple..."

"That is your debt...Xu Ren wanted to boil me!"

Fang Yuan rolled his eyes.

The reddish-gold carp roughly understood Fang Yuan's character and spoke immediately. "If you were to help me, I am willing to give you some benefits!"

"Make yourself clear first!"

At this moment, the shouting onboard had started to die out. It was obvious that the situation was critical.

Li Luan had no choice and could only reveal what she had in mind. "I know of a water mansion with 20 pearls, 30 pieces of beautiful jade, and a bottle of spiritual pills which is greatly beneficial to our types!"

"Hehe...you are no ordinary carp to know about all these!"

Fang Yuan laughed coldly but pursue the matter no further. Instead, he turned into a streak of black lightning as he headed towards the deck.

"Although I do not owe Xu Ren a favour, I have a grudge against Bai Lilang and I must have my revenge!"

On the floor, there was bloodstain everywhere as the maids and servants lay in the pool of blood. In the master bedroom, shelves were toppled and voices could be heard.

"You...how dare you, I am an official of the imperial court!"

Xu Ren's voice could be heard. There was also cries of shock from the lady.

"Hehe! So what if you are an official. It is not like I have not killed an official before..."

Bai Lilang laughed nastily. He yearned for the beautiful lady and could not wait to kill Xu Ren and seize his wife.

[1] The author means that Fang Yuan had no one to rely upon as they were unreliable.

[2] fat goat is used to refer to those who are extremely rich.

[3] Traditionally, the 5 elements are assigned a colour each and the water element was assigned the colour black.

[4] seed of a hyacinth plant

Chapter 264: The Route by Land

Xu Ren wielded a long sword and protected his wife. Looking at the approaching robbers, sweat started to drip from his forehead.

He had little training in martial arts but could not be considered as a martial artist. Although his chances were slim against the robbers, he had no other choice but to protect his wife with all his life.

"Thud! Thud!"

Unknowingly, the two robbers behind fell to the ground, unconscious.

Shock, one of the robbers went forward and tried to feel for their breaths. "Boss, their dead!"

"Hisss!"

As a hissing sound was heard, another one of them fell to the ground after a black flash.

"Snake! There's a snake!"

The murderer slithered on the ground and all of them could see it clearly.

"Isn't it just a snake?"

Bai Lilang was the bravest. Unknowingly, he was fearful at the beginning but now, he was full of courage. "Look at me kill it!"

With that, he struck his knife.

"Clang!"

As the blade of the knife sliced across the scales of the snake, sparks were formed as the blade was deflected away.

"How is this possible?"

Bai Lilang was shocked.

"Demon... Demon!"

The fishermen around all screamed and escaped in all directions.

"Whoosh! Whoosh!"

This time, the black snake arched its body and shot out at the fishermen one by one.

As blood spurted everywhere, wounds opened up in every fishermen's chest. All of them fell to the ground.

"Ghost..... Ah!!! Ghost!"

Bai Lilang was utterly shocked. He legs turned to jelly and he started to pee in his pants.

"This body is indeed useful!"

After testing out his new body, Fang Yuan was satisfied with it. After all, it was much stronger than the black carp. Seeing Bai Lilang getting on his knees to beg him, he snickered. "It's alright if you harm others, but how dare you harm me? You should go to hell!"

With that, he slithered forward and ended Bai Lilang life.

"Ah... Is this snake the one that saved us?"

Wan'er had not recovered from her previous shock. As she got to her feet, she was in disbelief as she looked at the black snake, with its scales glistening under the candlelight.

"It's me!"

Fang Yuan spoke in the human language as soon as he opened his mouth.

"Demon... Demon!"

Wan'er turned pale and almost fainted.

"Wan'er, don't be afraid. There are good people and bad people. Since this snake saved our lives, it must be a good demon!"

Xu Ren tidied his robes before bowing to the snake. "I am Xu Ren. Thank you for saving our lives! We are grateful for your help and will repay your kindness..."

"Forget it!"

The snake looked down. A black smoke rose from the snake's head, revealing Fang Yuan's Yin Spirit.

"I am Fang Yuan. It is only a little fate that I am here to rescue you. However, I have something that I need you to do!"

"As long as it is legal and moral, I will do it!"

Seeing Fang Yuan reveal his Yin Spirit, Xu Ren was even more certain that he was a powerful demon and started to sound more respectful.

"Mm, it's nothing much. The Golden Red Carp needs to make use of your human karma to protect it for its journey ahead!"

Fang Yuan came straight to the point.

In reality, he was considering for himself.

After all, the three demons from Qi Lake were chasing after him. Although he had already changed his appearance, it was still troublesome for him to journey through the river. Therefore, he had thought of journey together with the humans to conceal himself and have a smooth journey ahead.

No matter how creative the demons were, they would never be able to think of such a method of transport.

Xu Ren wanted to go to Golden Lake Prefecture and it was on the shore of the Golden Court Lake, so it was along the way.

"For protection? I only know little martial arts and have little human karma..."

Xu Ren was confused and felt as though he was about to get in a lot of trouble.

However, he knew he could not bear the consequences if they were to get into a fight.

"If I say you're qualified, it means you are!"

Fang Yuan snickered. "Unless... you are an ungrateful brat?"

As he was a demon, he realised his demonic vibes. Xu Ren's hand went numb as his sword fell to the ground.

'He has the upper hand now, so I should obey him... Who would've thought that I have just left danger but now, I'm back to danger...'

Xu Ren sighed in his mind and bowed respectfully. "Why would I dare to disobey?"

"Haha, very well!"

Fang Yuan's Yin Spirit returned as he slithered up the bed. "Bring the boat alongside and settle the minor stuff... Also, bring the Golden Red Carp to me!"

"Yes, sir!"

Xu Ren promptly obeyed. As he walked into the rooms, he saw his subordinates lying in pools of blood and felt sorrowful.

His wife was in shock after seeing all the dead bodies and was on the verge of a miscarriage. After consoling her for a long while, she finally calmed down.

Not long after, Xu Ren indeed shifted Li Luan to the bedroom and dismissed himself. As for how to alongside the boat and inform the officials, he had to figure it out on his own.

...

After the corpses were shifted out, the rooms became much more spacious.

Xu Ren and her wife didn't dare to fall asleep. They had let out their room as a form of respect to the black snake.

As water lapped on the hull of the boat, there was a dim candlelight in one of the rooms.

"Why are you still hiding?"

Fang Yuan released his Yin spirit and stared at the bowl with Li Luan in it.

The Golden Red Carp had no other choice and started to close its eyes.

In a bright flash, a beautiful lady which resembled a deity appeared in the room.

Around her, there were streaks of water which made her look magical and immortal.

"You Yin Spirit... is injured! If it was daytime, I'm afraid you can't even release your Yin Spirit!"

Seeing this, Fang Yuan shook his head.

The cultivation of one's Yin Spirit was, in essence, creating something from nothing. The more real it appears, the higher the cultivation.

Take for instance the young man Fang Yuan was now. He had flesh and blood and appeared like a real person.

Comparatively, the lady's Yin Spirit was extremely flickering and people would think that she was a ghost.

However, Fang Yuan could tell that her Yin Spirit was as such due to her injury and not the lack of cultivation.

"I cannot maintain my spirit long, I'll apologise for that first!"

Li Luan bowed and her face was flushed. As she apologised, she transformed into a fog and returned to her physical body.

"Mmm. Who did you anger?"

Seeing her, Fang Yuan became interested and casually asked.

"... It's the An River Dragon God!"

Li Luan replied honestly and sighed.

After all, the demon before her was extremely smart and could roughly guess her predicament even if she tried to hide. Therefore, it was useless to hide and the fact that she was wanted throughout the entire river was something that she could not hide for long.

"Good! I like your style!"

Fang Yuan smiled. After all, he only angered a few demons and upcoming Water God but was already in such a state.

This lass had much more personality to anger a Dragon God!

To be called a dragon god, he had to have a dragon body and an imperial order. Even the powerful demons in Qi Lake would not dare to make him angry.

"How did you piss him off?"

There was a hint of curiosity in his eyes.

"This is a secret and I cannot say it!"

Li Luan was adamant. "It's no use... in fact, if you know about it, it will bring you trouble!"

What do you intend to do not?"

Fang Yuan could tell that regardless of how powerful Li Luan was previously, she was helpless now. Her Yin Spirit was but a flickering figure which was unable to seduce any mortals.

"Since you have already made the arrangements, why ask me?"

Li Luan countered and replied. "To travel by the methods of humans to reach another region is indeed a good idea!"

"Hey, did you ask me before joining me on my journey? Be careful, I might just throw you overboard!"

Fang Yuan rolled his eyes.

"Didn't you tell Xu Ren that I wanted to ride on their human karma to avoid trouble?"

Li Luan gave a pitiful look.

Seeing Fang Yuan's expressionless face, she could only surrender. "What do you want? I know of a few places with treasure and a few recordings of the classics and some techniques..."

'This lass is not simple... What a pity she's not experienced enough and would easily be taken advantage of...'

Fang Yuan gave a look of submission. "Alright! I'll help you today, and we'll slowly discuss my rewards later!"

Although he was not a person who would risk it all, after all, he would not really die in this realm. Therefore, it was only logical to take the biggest risks to reap the biggest rewards.

...

Xu Ren seemed smart. After a short while of figuring things out, he finally learnt how to control the ship and brought it safely alongside.

Following which, he quickly found some farmers and tasked them to report to the district court.

It was a big thing for a ship to have so many corpses. In a short moment, many constables arrived on the ship.

If it was a normal businessman on the ship, he would be pinned a murderer.

However, with his name and his status, the treatment he received was different. He quickly reported that Bai Lilang and company were the murderers, and spent some money to do a proper burial for his subordinates. Everything was smooth-going and three days later, they had slipped off and were on their way again.

To Fang Yuan and Li Luan, all these didn't matter.

In fact, being far from underwater meant that they could avoid a lot of stalking, which was a good thing to them.

"This district town is rather lively..."

In a carriage, there was a fish tank. In it, a Golden Red Carp swam about freely, and it was a weird sight to behold.

What was more intriguing was the fact that there was a dull sound coming from beside Xu Ren. A snake head popped out from his collar as the snake peeked around with curiosity.

"Benefactor, you're right! The people managing this district are doing a good job!"

Xu Ren was pale.

Anyone who had a poisonous and deadly killer snake slithering around their bodies would not look lively.

This was Fang Yuan's way of controlling him.

Otherwise, Fang Yuan would be afraid that he might go back on his words and hire monks or Daoists to deal with him.

Humans would have the instinct to survive. If Xu Ren were to anger Fang Yuan, he might be killed on the way there. Therefore, he had to obey.

It seemed that Fang Yuan's method was working.

Xu Ren put in his best effort and did not dare to do anything else out of the ordinary.

After all, he wouldn't want to risk his own life!

"There are quite a number of temples and monasteries along the way... It seems that demons and ghosts rule this realm..."

Seeing this, Fang Yuan shook his head.

Chapter 265: Prediction

With the help of the educated Xu Ren, Fang Yuan started to understand the people of this realm.

Based on Xu Ren's description, they were in a country called 'Da Chu'. North of Da Chu were countries like 'Da Qi', 'Da Liang' and others, and these three countries were coexisting together while having tension at the same time.

Since history, Da Chu had been here for 10 centuries and had slowly become weaker over the years. With their geographical disadvantage, it was getting harder and harder for the Imperial Court to exert their control over the country.

Of course, to those who were aware of the situation, they would know that Da Chu still had about 10 over years to go. However, there were still a few unavoidable small conflicts within the country.

"The Golden Lake Prefecture is on the shore of the Golden Court Lake. People do live here, but there are two big threats. Firstly, there were pirates. Secondly, demons would create chaos here. Out of these two, demons had posed the bigger problem!"

Xu Ren looked at Fang Yuan and let out a long sigh.

He had felt depressed for long and had no one to confide to. However, after spending so many days together, he spilt the beans.

"Oh? Why is that so?"

Fang Yuan became interested and probed further.

It seemed that the place was filled with spiritual energy. With that, demons and spirits would be attracted there, especially so since the waterways were extremely connected. If it were the Water Gods or Dragon Gods which came, it would be alright as they were already being prayed to in temples. Powerful demons would have their temples and offerings would be considered as a protection fee. Therefore, these demons and spirits would not easily attack humans.

However, for the rest of them, they were cruel in nature and only wanted to eat humans. They were not given any offerings and had to survive like insects, which meant that they could do anything they wanted.

Further probing from Fang Yuan made him realise that a demon as powerful as him would be worthy of a temple and offerings, and this made him speechless.

The power and influence of demons in this world was unbelievable.

After explaining further, he appeared sorrowful.

"If I was the official for this place, I would clear the evil demon, spirits and pirates and maintain peace in the area!"

As he spoke, Xu Ren slowly became affected by Fang Yuan. His face flushed as he exclaimed. "Eh... What did the people do to deserve the demon's pestering? When can we restore peace?"

"Husband!"

Wan'er tugged at Xu Ren's sleeves. As he became alert, he realised that two demons were blocking their way with a cunning look on their faces.

"Haha... I'll settle them!"

Fang Yuan released his Yin Spirit and revealed a normal looking man in black. With a smile, he waved his hands. "My friend and I do not feed on blood. However, in this world, it is the survival of the fittest. If the people Dao want to move up, they should not depend on demons, but strengthen themselves! The world will still revolve and the people Dao will have to adapt! If they can understand this, they will develop!"

"Survival of the fittest? The world will still revolve, and the people will have to adapt?"

Xu Ren's eyes glittered as though he had understood something. Suddenly, he got up, tidied his robes and bowed towards Fang Yuan, full of sincerity. "Benefactor, you are a genius! Although the books have not recorded anything like this before, it seems like something I can resonate with! We have to adapt to develop... Although I was still at lost at what I should do with regards to the Golden Lake Prefecture, I am clear of what I need to do now."

"Bloop! Bloop!"

In the fish tank, the Golden Red Carp spoke as bubbles floated up. "Brother, what you said is true. However, why are you helping the humans? Are you trying to be one of them? Although Xu Ren might understand it, I don't think he can put these words into action!"

"What nonsense are you spouting?"

Fang Yuan rolled his eyes. His Yin Spirit was in the form of a human and he only spoke what he thought was logical. However, the Golden Red Carp could even talk about him trying to be one of them, making him speechless.

"You should know that the dragon energy in humans is different from the dragon properties in us demons. Furthermore, I am only a weak demon. How would I dare to think of such absurd things? Am I not afraid of tribulations from the heavens?"

With the existence of the imperial order, people and demons in this realm believed in fate.

However, to Fang Yuan, it was all bullsh*t.

What was fate? It would be a mere experience for the physical body!

Even demons would be able to cultivate and become a water dragon. Naturally, they would be strengthened by the violet energy and therefore, they would not care about fate.

As for the practice among humans to provide offerings in temples, he couldn't care less about it.

After all, this practice would get them involved too much and would make them rely too much on the demons and in turn, they would be easily controlled by the demons and therefore had to consider many things. Instead, there would be much more freedom to cultivating as a demon.

"Everyone would have the ability to decide their own futures!"

As he silently sighed, he closed his eyes and continued his cultivation.

In the past few days, he had also ordered Xu Ren to go to the riverbank and retrieve the treasures which Li Luan had described the location of. Indeed, there were gold ingots, silver ingots, jade and a few spiritual pills. With those, Fang Yuan swallowed them and continued his cultivation.

As he closed his eyes, a golden pearl vibrated in his stomach and released a warm glow.

Ever since he had attempted to leap the Dragon's Gate and obtaining a hint of dragon property, he became ever more connected with the Dragon Pearl. Although he still could not absorb it, he could harness its glow to slowly change his own snake body.

'A rope can cut a tree and drops of water can cut through a rock with time. If I use my dragon property to try digesting the Dragon Pearl every day, I'm sure I will benefit from it and it will surely give me an advantage in transforming into a dragon in the future!'

In the Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Formula, there would be a huge breakthrough required after every 3 transformations.

From a carp to a snake, it was called Carp Leaping over the Dragon's Gate. After success, he would gain some dragon properties and would no longer be restricted to the water.

At the 6 transformations, from the giant venomous snake transformation to the horned dragon transformation, it was another huge breakthrough, called Dragon Transformation Stage. There would be tribulation from the heavens at this stage!

Fang Yuan guessed that the tribulations were a form of returning the favour! After all, after taking in spiritual energy for cultivation, they have to be some form of retribution.

"Cultivation can be split into internal cultivation and external cultivation. With the Dragon Pearl, I should be able to fulfil the internal cultivation of the Dragon Transformation Stage... However, there is still a tribulation that awaits!"

Fang Yuan was lost in his thoughts. "Based on the rules of reality which governs this realm, with karma, one would be able to reduce the intensity of the tribulation... of course, it would only reduce the intensity but not remove it completely. It is still up to the individual to survive the tribulation..."

Suddenly, he opened his eyes as though he had thought of something. "Heavenly karma can be used to reduce the intensity of the tribulations. People karma, on the other hand, can be used to reduce the intensity of people tribulations... Previously, the Water God of Qi Lake had inadequate powers. Although he had enough heavenly karma and was able to delay the day of the heavenly tribulation, he did not have sufficient people karma. With the powerful people tribulation and the fact that his body was weak, he could only go down... However, since he had enough heavenly karma, he would be given a chance to try again... Wait a minute, I seemed to have become the people tribulation of the Water God, as I have taken his backup Dragon Pearl with me... This Water God is really unlucky!"

"However... People! Do they refer to humans as people or demons as people?"

Fang Yuan was stunned.

This was the question as to who would rule the world and how the world would revolve. If understood, he would benefit from it.

Initially, the power and influence of demons would make them the people of the realm.

However, the Water God of Qi Lake had offered protection to many fishes and creatures living in the lake and even distributed his wealth before undergoing his tribulation. If demons were the people, then he should have quite a lot of people karma instead.

"Therefore... there is only one explanation. The god had identified the people wrongly?"

Fang Yuan was utterly shocked. "Although the demons are powerful, humans would be the last ones standing?"

It was unclear, to begin with. As he slowly understood everything, he realised the truth of the world.

Even a strong demon like the Water God of the Qi Lake couldn't break through. This was because it was too early for him to know.

With the demons having everything their way, how would the other species dare to fight against them?

However, since Fang Yuan was from another realm, he had a different point of view and could instantly see through the confusion.

"The demons would fall and the humans would prosper; this would be the trend in this world!"

"The fact that everybody's Yin Spirit was in the form of a human was an explanation for the trend of the world, and not for convenience and standardization sake!"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered.

"Rumble!"

At this time, there was an explosion heard. Normal people would be shocked but Fang Yuan felt fear.

"Eh? Something's not right?"

Xu Ren pulled the curtains. Sunlight filled the carriage and a gentle breeze caressed his face. "Why would there be a lightning strike out of nowhere?"

He was a mortal, and so was his wife. Both of them shivered in fear.

As for Li Luan, she froze in the fish tank as though she could feel the power from the heavens.

"To detect something even before it happened..."

Fang Yuan acted as though he was shocked, but smiled inside. "It seems that my prediction is correct... There must be a few unique people in this realm who are able to see this fact. Some of them would create trouble while others would remain in hiding, waiting for the perfect opportunity to gather all the tribulations and make use of it to form the Killer Tribulation!"

This was Fang Yuan's chance.

Even though he had the realm evidence and had come from another world, he was still a demon. If he were to do something out of the ordinary, he had to make sure that it was 10 times more extreme than the usual! A 100 times!

With the Killer Tribulation in place, everyone's fate would be intertwined and it was his time to perform.

"It seems that... I'll still have to support the people!"

Fang Yuan snickered, but this time, he looked at Xu Ren with a different expression.

Fang Yuan originally wanted to make use of him and abandon him after he had reached the Golden Court Lake. However, it seems that he would have to continue to use him even after reaching the Golden Court Lake.

"Just now... what happened?"

Li Luan hid in the fish tank and curled up into a ball.

As the thunder roared, she could feel the power of the heaven tribulation.

In front of a powerful thunder like that, even the strongest version of her would crumble into powder!

"Did someone anger the heavens? If that is so, why are the tribulations not happening?"

After a long while, nothing happened in the vicinity. Li Luan mustered her strength and composed herself as she looked at Fang Yuan with a weird expression.

This demon was extremely powerful and could even transform from a carp to a snake. This was something never heard of.

Furthermore, after spending many days with him, Li Luan could feel that the power and energy within him was not something a simple poisonous snake could harness. These were signs of an increase in dragon properties.

The speed at which he was gaining his dragon properties was shocking.

It was possible for someone to believe that Fang Yuan was the one who angered the heavens.

However, the snake was upright and looking upwards into the sky with a shock expression, but was unharmed. With that, Li Luan became confused.

Chapter 266: River God

The Golden Lake Prefecture laid on the boundary of the Golden Court Lake. In the prefecture, there were 10,000 families and 55,000 people living here.

Although there were no majestic mountains and little farms, they relied on the Golden Court Lake to survive. They were living the average life; although not well-to-do, they were not poor as well.

In the prefecture, there were 5 districts and these districts were famous for their rice and silk.

Of course, the people here liked to pray and give offerings as well. Many different types of spirits would roam about and eat humans. The humans could live off harvesting different resources from the Golden Court Lake. As long as they were willing to work hard, they would be rewarded and their family would be able to survive. As for the unlucky 0.1% who would end up in the demon's stomach, they could only blame it on their bad luck.

Comparatively, the people living here had quite a high quality of life. Therefore, more and more people would shift here.

Scholars would exclaim that 'the harsh government is fiercer than the demons around'!

Regardless, after 10 over years, nothing had changed.

Xu Ren was tasked to one of the five districts here; to be the district minister of Black Lake District.

In the hierarchy of Da Chu Country, in every district, there would be a district leader, a person who was in control of a 100-mile radius of the district. The district leader would be a 7th Grade official. Additionally, there would be an 8th Grade official assigned as the district minister. In reality, the district minister was only a backup and was only required to learn from the district leader and do nothing else.

In the district town, there would be a district lieutenant, main assistant and the Six Division Ministers. All of them would have their own roles to play. It was similar to an enlarged sparrow; all of its organs have their own roles to play for the sparrow to survive, and this was similar in the prefecture governing system, and even the Imperial Court.

As Xu Ren arrived at Black Lake District, he first paid his greetings to the district leader before taking over from the previous district minister. Afterwards, he consulted his colleagues on an auspicious day for him to formally take up the appointment. All of the minute stuff made everything much more complicated.

Even Wan'er had to carry her unborn baby around and help out.

However, all of these were none of Fang Yuan and Li Luan's business.

Looking at how they were right now, they would instead scare people off.

In the backyard of the Xu Family Mansion, in a small pond, Fang Yuan laid within some seaweed and lazily looked up.

As nightfall drew closer, the front yard was brightly lighted up, and there were the sounds of a bamboo flute. It was Xu Ren inviting his colleagues to spend the night in his house.

"The fate energy of the people Dao is indeed interesting!"

Fang Yuan mustered up his demonic strength, opened his spiritual eye and noticed the changes happening in the front yard.

In his view, there was a bright glow shooting straight up into the sky, as though it was a warning for others not to get too close.

"This is especially so for Xu Ren. Previously, I've not felt much from him. However, after he became district minister, his fate energy has increased exponentially... Of course, I can still kill him if I want to, but the tribulations that would follow would be worrying..."

"When humans of the people Dao gather, they would strengthen their fate energy. However, this is because the people are gathered around him and is temporary. They are different from us. If our fate energy were to be increased, it would be buried deep in our bones. As long as we are alive, our fate energy would remain!"

In the pond, a Golden Red Carp poked her head out as Li Luan's voice was heard.

"That's true!"

Fang Yuan knew the difference between humans and demons and nodded his head.

"Li Luan, are you deciding to stay here?"

He looked at the Golden Red Carp and asked curiously.

"Hmm... There's an auspicious aura in this mansion and is suitable for me to rest and recuperate here!"

Li Luan sounded determined. However, in reality, she wanted to take advantage of the protection that came with Xu Ren's strong fate energy.

Fang Yuan already knew her intentions but did not expose her. As he smiled, he slithered out of the mansion.

It was nightfall. With his black body and enormous strength, he moved like the wind and was undetectable.

Using this chance, he explored the district town. The first impression he had was that there were too many people around, and the second impression was that there were too many temples! Too many of them!

There were Water God temples, General Temples, Lake God Temples and many more, confusing him.

Taking a closer look, he realised that there were many types of demons. Although there were righteous gods who only offered protection, the majority were evil demons often feasting on blood offerings.

"It has reached such a stage where the demons use fear to rule over their followers!"

Fang Yuan sighed. "Even the officials can't handle the demons. They can only resort to allowing them to stay and rewarding them in exchange for peace. This is pitiful..."

Of course, karma was real and for everything that the demons had done today, they would have to pay back another day.

These demons and gods were now enjoying the offerings from humans. However, in the event of a Killer Tribulation, they might not even dare to step out and admit their doings.

However, it was reasonable considering that this was the prevailing trend in the area.

At least, Fang Yuan could guess that since many people were using their people Dao karma to reduce the intensity of their tribulations, their tribulations would be much easier. This would make the good gods stronger and they might be able to change the demons in the future.

Regardless of how evil-looking a god might appear, as long as the god had enough followers, the impression of him would change and become more acceptable to the public.

This was the idea of using followers to become acceptable and approved by the public.

"The god dao could be approved at the prefecture level. Most of the time, the district leader would send the letter of approval and the prefecture would usually approve it... Xu Ren, did you mention about building a temple to worship me? How about 'Black Dragon General's Temple'?"

As his thoughts ran wild, he leapt into a small river.

"Splash!"

As soon as he entered the water, he felt extremely comfortable.

Although he had transformed into a snake, he still retained many qualities of a carp. This was akin to giving a fish its water.

"Great!"

Fang Yuan slowly executed his techniques and could feel a huge amount of water-type spiritual energy rushing towards him at an unbelievable speed. He was overjoyed. "It seems that I have developed a lot after leaping through the Dragon's Gate! With such a speed of absorbing spiritual energy and the fact that the Dragon Pearl is within me, I don't have to feed on others every day!"

To complete the Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Formula, he would require a lot of resources.

Previously, Fang Yuan had no choice but to kill and eat fishes to absorb their elemental energy.

With his newly-acquired dragon properties, he could now absorb the spiritual energy from nature. With the assistance of the Dragon Pearl, there was no need for him to kill and eat fishes at the rate which he was doing previously.

'Does this mean I have completed the elementary stages of absorbing energy from blood and flesh?'

A weird thought popped up in Fang Yuan's head. "From now onwards, I would disguise myself. Although I am now different from the rest, our innate ability is to be a thief! To steal from the heavens! To steal from the Dao!"

Regardless of how improved his methods of absorbing energy were, he still could not run away from the fact that he was stealing energy from something else, be it animals or the air.

In the teaching of Dao, there were 5 types of thieves. Anyone who could realise these five would have a smooth sailing future!!!

Beneath the water, he was extremely fast. Like a black arrow, he quickly darted through the river and arrived at a larger river. Following the flow of current, he reached the Golden Court Lake.

"Rumble!"

The moment he entered the lake, Fang Yuan could feel the concentrated spiritual energy rushing towards him, making him intoxicated.

"Very good! Such a normal lake can have such concentrated spiritual energy! If I am able to find a spiritual underwater mountain range, I could build a mansion there!"

Fang Yuan's cultivation had changed from eating other smaller creatures to absorbing elemental energy from nature.

Therefore, he no longer chose the place with fishes as his cultivation point. Rather, he now preferred places with concentrated spiritual energy.

"Even though I have already understood this realm and the trend of it, without power, how can I follow the trend?"

He swam around before settling down and concealing his spiritual aura. After searching for a few underwater spiritual mountain ranges, he was speechless. "The better spiritual mountain ranges are

already taken up by a few stronger spirits. Why would they leave the good ones lying around untouched?"

It was possible to snatch, but he had to consider the consequences carefully.

After all, he was a visitor and if he were to anger them, they might surround him and attack him together.

"Fortunately, I have already reached the black snake transformation. If I was still in the body of a black carp, I would be high profile and everyone in this lake might just come after me the next day!"

Thinking about it, Fang Yuan held back, turned around and headed back for Black Lake District Town.

"Greetings, benefactor!"

Xu Ren had just ended his dinner and smelled of alcohol.

However, just by seeing Fang Yuan in black, he quickly sobered up, bowed and appeared humble.

"The Golden Court Lake seems good, and I feel like staying here for long!"

As soon as Fang Yuan opened his mouth, Xu Ren felt relieved. He was afraid that this snake might pester his family for his entire life.

"However... you owe me a temple. How do you intend to resolve this?"

Fang Yuan asked.

"This... after going through the relevant authorities, I still need some time. It is especially hard to find a good plot of land these days!"

There was a look of uneasiness on Xu Ren's face, but he had spoken the truth.

He had to go through the district leader for this, submit an official application to the prefecture and therefore, the process would already take up a few days.

Of course, most importantly, getting a plot of land was not the issue.

There were already many temples and demons in the city. How would there be space for one more?

"Haha... This is easy. Let me ask you. Are there any cruel gods and demons around that like to feed on humans? If so, how about capturing them to boost your profile?"

Fang Yuan laughed.

"If that is so, thank you, benefactor!"

As Xu Ren heard Fang Yuan, there was a look of joy on his face.

...

Half a month later, in Heizi River.

"Water God requires sacrifice from a young boy and a young girl. Quickly send them over!"

By the side of the river, a sorcerer was mumbling. Her face was painted as she shouted at the villagers, threatening them.

"Didn't we give our offerings twice this year already..."

"Eh, it's greedy and we have no choice..."

"What a pity, Yang Wa and Yu Wa..."

...

As the villagers sighed, they wanted to resist but didn't have the courage to.

Even their leader could only sigh.

"The time is up!"

As the sorcerer looked at them, her face was gleaming. With the thought that she would be able to trick the villagers of more money throughout the year, she quickly put in more effort in convincing them.

"Please deliver your offerings to the river!"

"Wait up!"

At this point in time, there was a voice heard.

A few constables opened up a path. Xu Ren wore an official's robes and appeared majestic. With a sense of justice, he continued. "Don't move!"

"It's the district minister! Greetings, district minister!"

The village leader quickly greeted him.

Although the district minister was only an assistant to the district leader, he was still an 8th Grade official of the Imperial Court. The village leader was in no position to disrespect him.

As he greeted Xu Ren, the rest followed suit.

"It's the district minister?"

The sorcerer let out a cackle. "The Water God in Heizi River is approved by the Imperial Court as well. Are you stopping the Water God from enjoying his offerings? If he becomes infuriated, it's none of my business!"

"It's not that!"

Seeing such a demon, a hint of anger flashed in Xu Ren's eyes. Quickly, his expression changed to a gentle one, and he smiled. "The young boy and girl are too skinny and are imperfect. Sorcerer, please enter the river and tell the Water God that I'll search for a better sacrifice for him to enjoy!"

With this, he continued to prompt her. "Come on, please enter the river!"

Chapter 267: Evil Dragon

"Yes, Sir!"

The constables following Xu Ren were rewarded heavily by him. With a ferocious stance, they went up, grabbed the sorcerer and tossed her into the water.

The sorcerer struggled but alas, she was only a skinny only woman being thrown into a deep river. After a few shrieks, she sank into the water and was no longer seen.

"This..."

The people who were giving their offerings were shocked.

Although they had seen unreasonable tortures by the officials before, most of these tortures were only executed on the weak and poor people. None of them would dare to go against a god.

But now, did the newly appointed district minister just sacrificed the sorcerer to the Water God?

Within seconds, the timid ones among them started to feel the jitters.

"Oh? The sorcerer is not back. Could she have forgotten about us? How about someone go down and take a look?"

After saving the two children from becoming sacrifices, Xu Ren smirked.

No one dared to look at him in the eye.

"Bloop! Bloop!"

At this moment, the calm water began to bubble.

A black shadow emerged and bubbles floated up, together with blood and a few drapes of cloth. It was a horrific scene to behold.

"Wa! Wa!"

A child's cry was heard, and it was ear piercing.

"It's the Water God! The Water God is enraged!"

The villagers were panicking. Some of them looked at Xu Ren with hatred.

'Hmph! If not for my low rank, I would've wiped out all of such evil offering practices!'

Xu Ren was composed and his thoughts were clear.

Since he had brought people with him to interrupt the offering practice, he would have been prepared.

At this point in time, at the opposite side of the river, a black shadow flashed as Fang Yuan leapt into the water.

He was extremely quick and went straight to the River God. At that moment, he could see how the River God looked like.

It was about 10 feet long, completely black with a flat head and 4 legs. It was an andrias, a variation of a salamander.

"Wa! Wa!"

The andrias had eaten the sorcerer and wanted to send a wave of water to flood the people ashore. As soon as it saw Fang Yuan, it was stunned and let out a crying sound of a baby.

"It's horrible!"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered. "Water spear technique!"

"Whoosh!"

His control over water was delicate and powerful now, and the water spear that he conjured was a sky blue and was much more hardy than before.

"Wa! Wa!"

The andrias knew that the water spear was powerful. With a shriek, many white pearls were spat out of its mouth.

As the pearl glittered, the imagery of the spirits of a young boy and girl appeared. However, the two children had bloodshot eyes, sharp teeth and claws and were protecting the andrias.

"Are these servant spirits?"

Fang Yuan was stunned.

There was a saying from a long time ago which goes 'Being a servant for the Tiger'. This saying meant that the powerful spirits would eat people and capture their souls, turning them into their own servants.

This was the case for the andrias.

Furthermore, seeing all the pearls in front of him, the number of killings the andrias had done was shocking.

Seeing this, Fang Yuan was shocked. "Demon, you've sinned. Even if the heavens would let you off, I wouldn't!"

In reality, after understanding that the trend of the realm was the downfall of the demons and the uprising of the humans, all of Fang Yuan's actions were pro-humans. Since the andrias had killed numerous humans, its fate energy would be weakened and it would surely meet its downfall. Therefore, there would not be further complications after killing this andrias, and there was no need to worry about any backing that it might have.

This was taking actions according to heaven's will, which would make things simpler. If one were to go against heaven's will, it would not be just doubly hard, but one would have to be prepared to face tribulations from the heavens as well.

"Shake!"

As he mustered his demonic strength, a ripple emerged from the tip of the water spear.

The spirits of the young boy and girl were stunned and froze at their spots.

"Ah!"

As the spirits were destroyed, the water spear continued on and struck on the body of the andrias, penetrating through. It continuously shrieked in pain, and its Yin Spirit emerged. "You cannot kill me! I am the official Heizi River God, appointed by the Imperial Court!"

"Go f*ck yourself!"

Fang Yuan's Yin spirit emerged and struck its claw out, crushing the andrias's Yin Spirit within his hands.

"Bloop! Bloop!"

As soon as the Yin Spirit was dead, the andrias lost its breath and started to sink down.

The many spirits among the pearls floated around. If left untouched, they would become a group of water spirits and would trouble people.

"Sigh..."

Fang Yuan released a water current and collected all the pearls together.

"It seems that these pearls are made from the bones of people. In every pearl, there is a sealed spirit in it. It must have used a demonic fire to smelt these pearls and transform them into powerful servant spirits..."

As he thought about the techniques he had browsed through before, he released his spiritual will and fiddled with the bone pearls.

"Crackle!"

After an explosion, the demonic energy of the andrias was wiped off the bone pearls, and the spirits in the 49 pearls were released.

"Contain!"

Although the technique was different, Fang Yuan could still attempt the general technique of containing spirits. Quickly, he pointed his finger at the many spirits.

"Wa! Wa!"

Most of the powerful spirits were unwilling to be contained, but alas, they were too weak to fight back. Since all of them had marks from the first time they were smelted into the pearls, they did not have the strength to resist. Soon, all of them were contained in their pearls, and the pearls were strung together to form a lace.

"Although this is cruel, it will be rather useful..."

Fang Yuan shook his head, sighed and looked into the water.

He could see a few red runes glowing, and it was as though they formed a talisman.

"The Imperial Order? And the many years of cultivation of the andrias?"

Thinking about it, he did not directly take the Imperial Order over. Instead, he used his technique on it and the talisman hardened, forming a block of jade which landed in his hands.

"It doesn't seem powerful... Could it be due to the fact that it is only a title of Da Chu Country?"

Comparing it to the Water God of the Qi Lake, Fang Yuan could tell the difference. "A real god has to be appointed by the heavens as well for it to be authentic! If it was like this Water God, it is only a fake and can only be appointed by the heavens based on its luck. If the andrias could harness all the spiritual energy in Heizi River today, I would not be able to defeat it so easily..."

"However, since the trend of the realm is towards the people dao, it would be extremely easy to gain the appointment from the heavens if I were to protect humans!"

This was the trend of the realm.

To allow a few righteous gods to become strong and powerful so that they could support the human Dao!

One would have to experience it for oneself in order to know the slow but influential power of the heavens!

It would be all these accumulative events that would lead to the trend actualising.

"In the next 10 years, there would be many heroes and Energy Souls among the humans! Also, the demons would experience internal conflicts among themselves and will go down... This is fate!"

Fang Yuan's thoughts ran wild. If he could go with the flow of the trend, he would benefit from it.

Of course, firstly, he had to occupy the andrias's underwater mansion.

The underwater mansion was a huge cave with a few strong currents of water outside to protect it.

"Hmm... It is a rather good mountain range and the spiritual energy is rather concentrated here. It is a good place for me to stay for a while! The only thing about this place is that the protective currents are a little weak. I'll improve the protection of this place later!"

A black snake was a water snake, and therefore, it was extremely versatile underwater.

After examining the place, Fang Yuan decided to clear the corpse and bones from the mansion before returning to the surface of the river.

"Benefactor?"

Xu Ren had already chased the villagers away and instructed for the constables to stand guard from afar. He was waiting all by himself by the riverbank.

Seeing Fang Yuan emerging from the river, he gave off an anxious look. "How's the Water God?"

"I've killed it! It has sinned too much and deserved it!"

Fang Yuan continued. "I'll prepare to stay here for the time being. Continue on with the plan and have me take over this Water God!"

"Mmm, I know what to do!"

Xu Ren nodded his head.

He had no objections to removing an evil god and replacing it with Fang Yuan.

At least, Fang Yuan would not demand offerings. This point was enough to convince him that Fang Yuan was better than then andrias. Even if people were to question his actions, he could explain himself.

To Fang Yuan, it was beneficial for him to make use of the officials to cover up for the fact that he wanted to snatch the underwater mansion for himself.

"When you return, know your duties. Take good care of the carp in the backyard pond... She owes me something. If I return and she is no longer there, I can only go after you for what she had owed me..."

Fang Yuan laughed and ignored the pale Xu Ren. Turning around, he leapt into the water and disappeared in a splash.

...

In the Golden Court Lake.

Beneath the lake, there was a Dragon Palace.

The dragon palace was extremely big like a giant's country. On the jade square in the centre of the palace, there was a black water dragon!

The water dragon had a horn, 4 limbs and 3 claws on each limb. Its eyes were bloodshot and it had the vibes of a dragon. It was not just a black water dragon, but an evil dragon!

It was the Golden Court Dragon God! A powerful demon from the heavens! The king of demons! Even the An River Dragon God or the Water God of Qi Lake would have to pay their respects to him.

"Greetings, Dragon God!"

Outside the dragon palace, there was a flash and a tortoise guard escorted a demon in.

The demon stood on its legs and was hairy, with golden fiery eyes and a ferocious look. However, as soon as it saw the evil dragon, it paid its respects.

"Mmm, it's you, monkey!"

The black water dragon opened his eyes, and the monkey demon could feel an immense pressure on him. "What are you here for, Monkey God?"

"Hehe... I am only here because the An River Dragon God had tasked me to send a letter of a wanted fugitive!"

The monkey demon plucked a strand of its hair and blew it, and an image appeared in mid-air. The image of a beautiful lady appeared. If Fang Yuan was here, he would have found her extremely familiar.

"The An River Dragon God must capture this lady!"

The monkey demon chuckled.

"Mm, I will inform those under me about it..."

The black water dragon flicked his claws as though he was asking the monkey to be dismissed.

"Dragon God!"

The monkey demon refused to be dismissed. "I have something else to say!"

"Please carry on!"

"The demons on land feel that you are a little overboard to allow humans to fish in the Golden Court Lake! Although the humans give you plenty of offerings for many years to come, do you feel anything different in recent years?"

The monkey demons appeared solemn. "The scarcity of resources and energy from the heavens have led to conflicts among us demons... but instead, the humans are thriving and if this continues, I'm afraid..."

"Hmm, I understand!"

However, the Golden Court Dragon God shook his head, as though he felt that the monkey demon was worrying too much.

After the monkey demon had left, he sighed. "Nobody would know the heaven's intentions..."

Chapter 268: Secret Technique

"Long Live the Heizi River God!"

"Please bless us, the compassionate Heizi River God..."

...

Unknowingly, 3 years had passed by in a flash.

At the riverbank of Heizi River, there was a small altar with incense, fruits, flowers, pig's head and goat's head as offerings. After the practice was complete, they would throw it into the river.

After Xu Ren had changed the way of offerings from live offerings to the three basic forms, the Water God surprisingly did not attack humans. Instead, its requests became lesser and lesser, and the villagers felt thankful.

At the same time, the reputation of Xu Ren slowly improved and he was now known for being compassionate.

Under the river, within a spiritual cave in the underwater mountain ridge.

A huge snake appeared to be in hibernation and there were flames floating around it, glittering as the flames flickered, which made the snake look immortal.

"Hmm?"

Fang Yuan woke up and was astonished. "Did I just hibernate for an entire year?"

Looking at his own body, he was shocked to find out that he had grown from 3 feet to 6 feet long. His scales were now glistening and he looked menacing:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Race: Black Snake

Essence: 21

Spirit: 21

Magic: 21

Profession: ???

Cultivation: ???

Technique: [Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Technique (4th Transformation)], [Water Controlling Technique (Grade 3)]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

"With the spiritual energy around and the assistance from the Dragon Pearl, my cultivation has indeed shot up. I believe that it's not long before I will become a python!"

A python was a giant snake!

From the Black Snake Transformation to the Python Transformation, it was not hard.

However, since a python would be huge, there would be differences. For instance, a snake would prefer cold while a python would prefer warm and would be naturally strong. If his transformation would be successful, the limitations of a snake would be removed as well.

"And all of these as well..."

Fang Yuan fidgeted and noticed the small flames surrounding him.

Although he remained quiet in his hibernation, after all, he was the Water God of the underwater mansion. The offerings in Heizi River would go to him.

Furthermore, he did not kill or harm anybody, which earned him gratitude from the villagers. With their sincere offerings, Fang Yuan was humoured.

"Hmm, this colourful glow is from the incense. It is best if I don't touch it!"

Fang Yuan opened his spiritual eye and examined before telling them apart. "The outermost layer of golden glow is my people Dao karma, which will allow me to reduce the intensity of people tribulations..."

Thinking about it, he opened his mouth and stretched out his tongue.

The colourful glow did not move. Instead, the outer golden glow was pulled towards him by an invisible force and it condensed into a small golden flower which landed in front of him.

"Go!"

As his spiritual will shook, an unknown world was revealed. As a tremor was felt, the flower of people Dao karma was transferred into his actualised dream world.

"It is indeed possible!"

Seeing this, there was excitement in his eyes.

The rules of reality which governed this realm were too strict and different from his own realm, and there was not much energy he could muster from his actualised dream world.

However, the flower of karma was from the heavens and had no physical shape and content. Therefore, it could be transferred into the actualised dream world for him to take away.

"However... I don't know what the flower could be used for in my own world?"

Fang Yuan sighed. "Based on the rules of reality which governs this realm, with karma comes fortune and good fate. I could just walk out and find a magical weapon lying on the floor, and I can even use it to reduce the intensity of tribulations... However, does the Da Qian world recognise karma from this realm?"

In a thought, he felt that everything did not make sense.

"I should quickly use it up!"

As his spiritual will shook, the golden flower exploded and dissipated within the actualised dream world.

After a golden flash, there seemed to be no changes in the actualised dream world.

"It doesn't seem that useful..."

Fang Yuan was speechless. As he slowly experienced it for himself, he could finally detect it. "It feels as though my actualised dream world is now more responsive? Also... it seems that it is more connected with this realm. If I use up more people Dao karma, I might be able to use my 8 Gates Sword Array here!"

"Could the effect of the people Dao karma allow me to integrate into this world?"

He made a wild guess in his mind. "To test if this is true, I will need to obtain more people Dao karma. In this realm, I'm sure I'm able to!"

He waited until nightfall before leaving and arriving at the Black Lake District government office.

"I can sense the official's energy becoming stronger... It feels much more concentrated here!"

Fang Yuan quickly commented before swiftly entering the government office. The fate energy in the government office was too weak to restrict him.

In the study at the back of the government office.

Xu Ren now had a moustache and appeared more mature, He was reading some books late at night and he frowned, as though he was troubled.

"Sir! Your wife has cooked some bird's nest porridge. Please enjoy and rest early!"

Outside, a beautiful servant served the porridge, which filled the room with its fragrance.

"It's hard on you, Sir!"

Xu Ren was pleased with his wife. After all, she was respectful and even gave birth to a son for him. He took a spoon and started to eat the porridge. "I have just taken over the district government office and will be quite busy, unlike before. Please return and send my regards to my wife, and remind her to rest! Don't wait for me!"

The previous Black Lake district leader had reached the end of his 3-year tenure and had already risen up the ranks to be part of the prefecture. Therefore, Xu Ren had taken up his appointment.

After all, it was only normal for people to be promoted and move a step up.

Of course, this was also due to Xu Ren's hard work.

However, only after taking over the district and control the 100-mile radius land did he realise the difficulty of it.

"There are two main threats in Black Lake District. Firstly, it would be the evil gods and secondly, pirates. As the in-charge of this district, I need to get rid of these in order to live up to my appointment!"

After finishing the porridge, he dismissed the servant and started to reminisce about his younger days and started to clench his fist.

"The pirates are hiding on the Golden Court Lake and their movements are mysterious. They would come together and strike at the same place before retreating back into the lake. Therefore, they are extremely hard to find and I suspect that they have a powerful backing. The previous district leader could only send his soldiers to protect the district's people, but he was unable to wipe out the pirates completely!"

"As for the threat from evil gods, it is harder to deal with. Even I myself can only try my best to support the righteous gods for them to go against the evil gods..."

At this point, he glanced at the pond at the backyard and there was a mysterious look in his eyes.

He had previously made use of the black snake to get rid of the previous threat from the Heizi River Water God. From then, there were no troubles for the next three years and there was no need for live sacrifices, which was an example which he hoped to emulate.

The golden red carp in his mansion had slowly recovered and could finally be put to use.

Previously, he was a little anxious about the fact that there was a demon living in his backyard.

However, in the past 3 years, the golden red carp did not do anything to threaten them. Instead, it had helped them in the dark and helped them resolve many issues, slowly gaining the family's trust, to the extent that they would trust the golden red carp more than Fang Yuan.

"District leader, an old friend is here to visit!"

With a golden flash, a beautiful lady appeared in his study. It was Li Luan.

"Lady Li, an old friend? Who is it?"

Xu Ren was shocked. It must be somebody powerful for Li Luan to release her Yin Spirit.

"It's me!"

As a black fog spread into the room, a young man in black robes entered.

"It's indeed you, my friend!"

Li Luan took a bow. "It has been 3 years, and I congratulate you for your improvement in cultivation!"

"It's benefactor!"

Xu Ren stood up and bowed.

"How can I compare to you, Lady Li? After all, you are cultivating in the government's office! After 3 years of cultivation, I have reached a bottleneck and I have to come here!"

Fang Yuan sat down and looked at Xu Ren. "Sir Xu, would your ambitions 3 years ago count today?"

"Of course!"

Xu Ren knew that Fang Yuan wouldn't visit him without a purpose. As soon as he heard him, he promptly agreed.

"Alright! If that is so, I will help you in accomplishing something good for the country!"

Fang Yuan looked down.

"If that is so, I'll send in a letter of approval to recommend you as the god of the district town!"

Xu Ren was overjoyed as he exclaimed.

"Keke... We can discuss this later!"

With a flash, Fang Yuan disappeared. Li Luan quickly followed him.

Within seconds, only Xu Ren was left behind in the study, and all that had happened felt like a dream.

...

"What are you intending to do?"

In a garden at the back of the government office, Fang Yuan sat next to a pond as his tail flicked around on the surface of the water.

A golden red carp swam towards him, Li Luan's voice was heard.

"What do I want to do?"

Fang Yuan laughed as he looked in another direction. It was as though he could see through walls as his eyes were fixed in the master bedroom.

In the bedroom, Wan'er looked like a housewife as she coaxed her son to sleep.

The child was only 3 years old and was extremely cute. However, it appeared different from a normal human.

It had fate energy of normal levels, but it felt as though it might explode any time, which gave Fang Yuan a sense of familiarity. With the Dragon Pearl in his body, he could detect that the child was not normal, as though he would be the cause of a people tribulation

"You are asking me what I am intending to do. However, I want to ask you. Xu Ren is a normal human. Previously, you can still lie about staying here to recuperate. What excuse do you have now?"

Looking at Li Luan, he continued. "I didn't think that you would have detected the trend in this realm as well and even invested in it... Let me think. What did you do to the child? Hmm... I've received news that the An River Dragon God is looking for a demon fugitive, and it seems that that demon had stolen a treasure from his dragon palace. Could it be the water dragon's Dragon Pearl?"

"You..."

There was a look of shock on Li Luan's face.

Never would she have thought that her discreet actions would be discovered by Fang Yuan so easily.

Fang Yuan chuckled inside.

He had a Dragon Pearl of his own and was of higher quality than the water dragon's Dragon Pearl, which made it extremely easy for him to detect.

"However, the water dragon's Dragon Pearl is a treasure for a demon's cultivation. What use does it have on a human?"

Looking at Li Luan, Fang Yuan interrogated her.

Seeing this, Li Luan could only take in a deep breath and reveal everything. "That day, I was heavily injured. Therefore, I had to make use of the protection from the Xu Family. However, after seeing the birth of their child and detecting that he was special, I decided to do it!"

"That water dragon's Dragon Pearl is not something that the An River Dragon God would require to survive. Instead, it was a treasure passed on by the previous generations of dragon gods. It is filled with karma and fate energy, and not much dragon properties in it. Through my secret technique, I have planted it into Xu Ting's heart and covered it up..."

Chapter 269: Clear Wind

"You're really ambitious!"

Fang Yuan rubbed his hands together. "This treasure would be able to contain his fate energy. When Xu Ting grows up and becomes accomplished, you want a share of his fate energy and karma? To increase your cultivation?"

"That's right! I must take revenge!"

Li Luan had a determined look on her face, and her Yin Spirit emerged. "Please help me, brother. After all of this is over, I am willing to be your slave to repay your kindness!"

"Forget it..."

Fang Yuan waved his sleeves. "Don't look for me for such a troublesome thing! However, since we have similar goals, we can work together!"

This lady's enemy must be at the same level of the An River Dragon God and Fang Yuan did not want to find trouble for himself.

However, he had to admit that the execution of his plan would be much smoother with her help.

"Of course..."

Li Luan stood up, confused.

The water dragon's Dragon Pearl is an extremely valuable treasure!

Although she had already declared that the pearl had minimal dragon properties in it and that it could not assist Fang Yuan in transforming from a python to a dragon, it could contain fate energy and the benefits were immense.

At the moment where Fang Yuan had exposed her, she had already made plans for the worse. However, she could not believe it that Fang Yuan had no greed.

However, it was also a good thing that she did not have to fight with her benefactor.

As she heaved a sigh of relief, she continued. "Brother, please swear to the heavens as proof!"

In this realm, the heavens were almighty. Although there might be no response at the moment of swearing, all of it would be accumulated in the tribulation to come and even the Dragon God would have to consider twice before swearing.

"I swear to the heavens that I have no greed over the water dragon's Dragon Pearl. If I break my promise, the heavens can deal with me in any way they like!"

Fang Yuan rolled his eyes and looked at Li Luan. "Is this enough for you to keep your thunder pill?"

"I'm sorry!"

Li Luan blushed and quickly kept the thunder pill before apologising once more. "I am too cautious..."

"Alright, now can you explain to me where are you from?"

Fang Yuan stared at the golden red carp.

"I am... the daughter of the Water God of Qi Lake!"

Li Luan clenched her teeth but finally revealed her identity.

"What?"

Fang Yuan was in shock at the coincidence in the world. "Alright, you don't have to say anything more..."

He could guess this lady's predicament.

Her father had died and she had sworn to take revenge for him. Therefore, she had infiltrated the palace to steal the treasures.

As for how a water dragon could give birth to a carp? A water dragon was flirtatious in nature and there was no explanation needed.

However, no matter how good her plan was, she was unlucky. Although the water dragon's Dragon Pearl was a treasure in itself, it was unable to help her transform into a dragon. Following, she was then chased by soldiers and was fortunate enough to be rescued by the Xu Family. After seeing the birth of Xu Ting, only then did she think of harnessing his fate energy for her own cultivation.

"I believe this lady is unaware of my identity..."

Fang Yuan looked at Li Luan. "Could she have suspected anything after seeing my black carp body? That should be a small issue. Against the demons in Qi Lake, we are natural allies!"

...

"Eh? This is..."

At the East of Black Lake District, there was a Dao temple called Clear Wind.

The owner of Clear Wind Temple was rumoured to be a powerful person who worked hard to destroy evil demons and earned a reputation for himself. He was nicknamed 'The Godly Sword of the Sun and Moon'. As he aged, he retired here. He was spot-on in fortune telling and deciphering dreams, which gave him a good business.

Of course, Venerable Clear Wind had good progress in his cultivation in recent years and no longer got himself involved in the happenings around. He had left the work of managing the temple to his few direct disciples while he would cultivate in peace by himself.

"Master!"

At this point in time, within Clear Wind Temple, a young Daoist came to the backyard and was shocked.

His master had unknowingly started to meditate in isolation. As his master looked out towards the district, his face was solemn.

"Is this Tong Ming? You should have mastered your Energy Viewing Technique, so come take a look!"

Venerable Clear Wind was around 80 years old but appeared like a middle-aged man. His face was full of vitality and his black sideburns stretched downwards, giving him the appearance of a respectable Daoist

As he looked towards the government office, his eyes glittered.

"Yes, Master!"

Tong Ming opened his spiritual eye and executed his Energy Viewing Technique towards the government's office. "A red streak of energy is originating from the office like the glow of a fire... The

district leader has plenty of people Dao fate energy! Also, there is a colourful scroll within the red streak of energy. This is the scholarly energy! Sir Xu is a scholar and will be able to ensure peace in the district! It is good fortune for the people!"

"Eh?"

After looking for a while longer, his expression changed. "There seems to be a faint black glow coming from the back of the government office. This is the energy of aggressive soldiers. Could the district leader intend to use his soldiers?"

"And then?"

Venerable Clear Wind's expression remained unchanged and continued asking.

"I'm useless and this is all I can see..."

Daoist Tong Ming was sweating profusely.

"You have already mastered half of the Energy Viewing Technique since you were able to see all that you had described...."

Venerable Clear Wind sighed. "Amidst the energy of the aggressive soldiers, there is the energy of demons! I'm afraid that demons now control the government office and have already disguised themselves to get close to his family members..."

"Demons?"

Daoist Tong Ming shuddered and did not know what to do. "What should we do?"

"Exterminate it, of course!"

Venerable Clear Wind revealed a murderous look. "Bring my sword to me!"

"Yes, Master!"

Daoist Tong Ming returned to the temple and within seconds, he had retrieved a sword out.

The sword appeared normal and Venerable Clear Wind started to recite his sword formula and exert strength on the handle of the sword.

"Whoosh!"

With the roar of a dragon, a peak of three feet erupted from the ground.

As he glanced at the peak, Daoist Tong Ming started to feel his eyes hurting and could look no more.

He knew that his master had used this magical sword to kill countless demons. With all the spiritual energy in it, it could already become the sword's spirit! Normal people would not be able to wield it and handle that much energy.

Only his master would be able to recite his sword formula and use it at will. Humans and demons alike would be no match for this sword.

"When can I ever get the moon... Oh, Sun Moon Sword, I never thought that I would have to use you again..."

Venerable Clear Wind's face was composed, but his mind was filled with many thoughts:

'It is the only fate for the uprising of humans. We cultivate the authentic way and we are pure humans. Our grandmasters were fortunate to have the opportunity to allow us to enter the realm and help the people Dao...'

'I have disguised myself as a vigilante for over 30 years before realising that something impending would happen, and Black Lake District was one of these places which would be happening. Therefore, I have decided to live in seclusion here and take in a few disciples...'

'Who would've guessed that demons would be involved in this tribulation! Do you demons really think you can share a piece of our fate energy and karma and develop your own Dragon Court? Hehe...'

Although they were after the same thing, he could not allow this to happen.

Even though whatever the demons were doing might be beneficial to the people Dao, only humans should do it. If demons were to accomplish it, they would have a hope of survival! They would also take a share of our karma.

Taking away one's fortune was akin to killing one's parents.

Taking away one's karma and fate energy would reconcile the demons and humans forever!

'Regardless of how the demon knew the trend of the realm or the fact that it might be coincidence, I cannot let it happen and cannot let them have our fate energy!'

Venerable Clear Wind had a cold look on his face.

...

Black Water General's Temple.

The Black Water General was similar to the previous Heizi River God and would frequently demand live sacrifice and would sometimes even go up ashore to feed on humans.

The moon was high up in the night sky.

Suddenly, there was an explosion coming from the temple and the ground shook.

"What happened?"

The awoken temple master draped on his robes and quickly entered the temple. He was left dumbfounded.

"Bang!"

In a loud crash, there was a crack on the neck of the statue of the Black Water General and soon, it broke apart and rolled onto the floor, spinning. Many offerings were smashed.

"General... general!"

Although it was just a statue, it meant that there was an impending disaster for the temple.

"Rumble!"

Suddenly, another loud sound was heard. As the ground exploded, a black fog emerged. Within the black fog, there was a small creature which stretched out its 4 legs. It attempted to run towards the river.

"Don't think about escaping!"

Behind, there was another black glow. A huge black snake appeared and it swiftly blocked the creature's path.

With the second glow, the temple master could no longer take it and fainted.

"Aw! Aw!"

As the giant turtle's path was blocked, it stopped and stretched its head out. With a menacing roar, it shouted. "We are both demons! Why are you troubling me?"

"Just shut up!"

Fang Yuan was too lazy to continue the conversation. With the flick of his tail, several water spears flew out.

"Chi! Chi!"

Not just that, the water spears froze in mid-air, forming icicles and making it stronger.

Ice, made from water but colder than water!

After transforming into a black snake, Fang Yuan's Water Controlling Technique had improved once more and he even learnt to form ice on his own without any master's guidance. As he executed it, the temperature in the surroundings dipped.

"Bang!"

In front of the old turtle, the ground cracked and a wall made of soil emerged.

However, within seconds, the entire soil wall started to freeze up and crumbled in the next instant. The following icicles struck through the shell and into the turtle's flesh.

"Whoosh!"

The old turtle quickly retracted its 4 limbs and head into its shell. As the icicles struck it, it slowly stretched its limbs and head out once more but this time, blood was oozing out.

"Impressive ice-type technique!"

Another flash appeared and Li Luan's Yin Spirit appeared. She appeared shocked. "The chill in the icicles froze any chance of survival for the old tortoise. It is just right, and the control over the chill is impressive!"

"This old turtle is also weak and you have already researched on him. He had few followers, therefore, there would be fewer implications if we were to kill him..."

Fang Yuan slithered up and struck his tail into the shell.

"Chi! Chi!"

Red streaks of light emerged from the shell and crept up Fang Yuan's scales.

After a while, the flesh of the old turtle disappeared, leaving a shell behind.

Although Fang Yuan was over the phase of eating normal flesh and meat, the demon's flesh was still filled with essence in it. After swallowing the turtle's flesh, he grew a little longer and his scales had a dull red pattern now.

Chapter 270: Imperial Sword

As the bright moon shone, the river gushed downstream.

After the death of the old turtle, its essence was being absorbed by Fang Yuan and all that was left was a turtle shell and a faint glow around it.

"Do you mind?"

Fang Yuan casually glanced at Li Luan. "Do you have the interest to join god dao? If that is so, by all means, take over him. After all, it wouldn't be hard to be appointed by the human dao..."

However, it all boiled down to her own luck if she could be given a title by the heavens as well.

"Talking about following god dao, you have already controlled Heizi River for three years. Why are there no improvements in your cultivation?"

Li Luan bit her lip and smiled. "We have different goals so there's no meaning in this conversation!"

"That's true..."

Fang Yuan nodded his head but was secretly shocked.

He knew that if he were to benefit from Xu Ting by taking in his karma, he might get himself involved in the impending tribulation. This was why he chose to live in seclusion and only took control over the spiritual mountain range underwater.

Since Li Luan was clueless about the impending tribulation, her actions of trying to make use of Xu Ting to help the people Dao was only reasonable.

'There could be a possibility that this woman might be involved in the impending tribulation!'

Fang Yuan examined Li Luan.

Based on his definition of 'involved', he meant that she would be the epicentre of the tribulation.

After all, his actions were already affected by her...

"The moon..."

Li Luan looked up and commented softly.

At that moment, Fang Yuan's Yin Spirit became tensed up.

Under the moonlight, he could feel a sense of danger.

"Quickly retreat!"

Within seconds, he quickly arched his back and leapt into the river as quick as lightning.

Within seconds, he could see a shimmer in his eyes.

The silhouette of a sword landed under the moonlight.

This sword was glittering as though it was as bright as the moon. It struck down with a murderous vibe.

The sword hesitated for a moment as it detected Fang Yuan escaping the vicinity. In a split second, it decided to change its target and went for Li Luan instead.

"This is a flying sword technique! A flying sword controlled by someone!"

The flying sword became a streak of light as it struck down and suddenly, Fang Yuan recalled a sentence from a poem - 'As beautiful as the moon, the enchantress takes her leave!'

"If I don't help her, she'll be dead!"

His spiritual will shook as 3 ice pillars emerged from the ground, shielding her.

"Whoosh!"

The sword essence exploded, destroying the 3 pillars of ice and shattering it.

It was this extra split second which gave Li Luan the opportunity to use her lifeline.

"Thunder Pill, explode!!!"

A green streak of electricity ruptured and struck onto the sword essence.

"A thunder-type technique indeed!"

As the power of the thunder pill was revealed, Fang Yuan could feel his scales standing on its ends.

The God of Thunder was considered one of the strongest gods. Therefore, thunder-type techniques were one of the more powerful techniques.

Although this thunder was not a tribulation, the destruction that it had caused was only a little lesser than a natural tribulation!

"Clang!"

After a clang, the sword essence disintegrated, revealing an ancient-looking sword. It was three feet long and there was a string of cherries on the handle, drifting through the wind.

"Ah... thunder technique!"

A spiritual will emerged from the sword. Within seconds, the flying sword turned around and flew off quickly, shaking in the wind.

"Brother, are you alright?"

Fang Yuan slithered back ashore and checked on her.

"Thanks for your assistance! Otherwise, I wouldn't even have the chance to activate the thunder pill!"

Li Luan held her chest, worried.

She had the feeling of coming back from the dead!

If her Yin Spirit was killed, she would have ended up as a vegetable even though she still had her physical body.

"This person is powerful! He should be a warrior among the people!"

Fang Yuan glanced at Li Luan. "Have you not realised anything after staying at the Xu Family? I'm surprised that you haven't been killed!"

Li Luan rolled her eyes. "I was panicky throughout my stay in their mansion and have kept my demonic energy for the past three years. Do you think I'm like you? You don't even conceal yourself when walking out in the streets! It must be your actions and negligence which attracted this highly skilled warrior!"

Fang Yuan was taken aback.

His intention in killing the evil gods was to let Xu Ren submit an official appeal to the prefecture to get rid of the evil gods.

Although the officials could not absorb and harness spiritual energy around them, they could gather the fate energy of the people Dao which would be troublesome for Fang Yuan.

However, the officials from the prefecture could render the fate energy of the evil gods useless.

Never would he have thought that such an ordinary action taken by Xu Ren would attract so much attention.

"Forget it... I want to see who this powerful human is!"

Fang Yuan revealed a courageous look. "I'm going to look for that human! Do you want to follow me?"

"This... I wouldn't dare to disobey!"

Li Luan clenched her teeth. Looking at the direction which the sword flew towards, there was a vengeful look on her face.

After all, she was a demon! It was already rare that she, as a demon, did not take advantage of the humans! How could she allow another human to take advantage of her?

...

Within Clear Wind Temple.

Venerable Clear Wind crossed his legs and sat on a platform. As he recited his mantra, his body remained still.

Beside him, there were a few loyal disciples protecting him.

"Buzz!"

A streak of sword-reflected light entered from outside and landed in front of Venerable Clear Wind.

On the sword, a small Yin Spirit emerged. It had the looks of Venerable Clear Wind and hurriedly, it leapt into Venerable Clear Wind's physical body.

"Buzz! Buzz!"

In a glow, the physical body of Venerable Clear Wind stood up. As he opened his eyes, his face became flushed and he hastily spat out a mouthful of blood.

"Master?!"

The surrounding disciples were in a shock.

They knew that their master's flying sword technique would require his Yin Spirit to possess the sword and this would allow the sword to be able to fly 10 over miles and strike whenever and wherever he wanted!

Since the Yin Spirit would have the protection of the spiritual sword, it was extremely safe.

However, it seemed that their attempt at assassination had failed and even the Yin Spirit had experienced backlash!

"Cough! Cough! The two demons are extremely powerful! Quickly bring me my Heavenly King Revival Pill!"

Venerable Clear Wind spat out a few more mouthfuls of fresh blood and his face was extremely pale. He was struggling to instruct his fellow disciples.

One of his disciples had already prepared the spiritual pills and served them to Venerable Clear Wind. After a while, he seemed to have recovered a little. "Tong Feng, Tong Huo, quickly set up the array... A strong enemy is coming!"

Looking at the disciples he had in the temple, running away would not be a good choice as they would surely be hunted down. By then, all of them would die.

The only thing he could do was to take advantage of their geographical location and defend with all their lives.

"Yes, Master!"

Two of his disciples quickly rushed around the temple. Within minutes, there was a stream of air circulating around the temple, protecting it. Above the temple, there was a layer of fog rising up, concealing the entire temple.

After a short while, two streaks of fog landed next to the temple. It was Fang Yuan and Li Luan.

"They're feeling guilty! This only goes to show that they were the ones who attacked us!"

Fang Yuan glanced at Li Luan.

Li Luan blushed. She was still doubting his tracking abilities but now, she was proven otherwise.

"We should be fighting now right? Hold on, we have to announce our arrival..."

Fang Yuan slowly slithered forward and shouted with a commanding voice. "Listen up you brats! Since you dare to attack us, you must be prepared for our revenge. I'll give you all how long it takes for an incense to completely burn for all of you to come out and surrender. If not, I shall burn this temple and leave nothing behind!"

"How dare you!"

They could no longer hold it in. A voice travelled from inside the temple. "You evil demons live among us humans and are even forcing the district leader to take your orders! We're helping the heavens by killing the both of you!"

'You must be powerful to have the guts to rebut... You can even convince me that your ambush on us is reasonable! Seriously?'

Fang Yuan rolled his eyes and prepared to break the array.

"Master... That demon is preparing to enter the array!"

Within the array, a few disciples were extremely nervous.

"Relax! How would such a stupid animal understand the philosophies of the array?"

Venerable Clear Wind appeared contented. "It would take an extremely powerful demon to break this array using brute force... what is this!!!!"

He was originally composed but now, his hands were shivering.

His eyes were wide opened and his mouth was gaping as he was trying to comprehend what was happening before him.

In front of him, the black snake had entered the array. It was slithering to the east, followed by the west. It was looking for all the weak points in the array and using its own technique to destroy them.

"Rumble!"

As the array was destroyed, what was left behind was Venerable Clear Wind and his few disciples.

"How is this possible? This is a secret array passed down to us by our ancestors!"

Venerable Clear Wind was dumbfounded. He wielded his sword and walked up. "Demon, how did you break this array?"

'Eh... I'm not going to waste my time talking to you!'

Fang Yuan kept mum and observed Venerable Clear Wind's fate energy.

Because of Venerable Clear Wind's cultivation, he was able to conceal his own fate energy. However, Fang Yuan's cultivation was stronger and therefore, he could still see through Venerable Clear Wind's concealment.

"His martial arts are rather good. Of course, the interesting part is the additional energy surrounding him, which is the fate energy passed down to him from his ancestors... Furthermore, looking at the situation, it seems that he has gained protection from the heavens... It's a pity that he is too stubborn... We are all helping the people Dao, so why does he want to fight with me?"

Looking at the cold look in Venerable Clear Wind's eyes, Fang Yuan knew that he was a stubborn person. Therefore, he quickly came to a decision. "I'll kill him! Who cares if he has the protection of the heavens? I couldn't possibly let him kill me if he wanted to, right? As for going against the trend of the world, there will surely be some tribulations afterwards. Even if I cannot use my karma to reduce the intensity of the tribulations, I must still kill him today!"

He transformed into a sharp arrow and flung himself forward.

"Watch out for my sword!"

Although Venerable Clear Wind's Yin Spirit was injured and was unable to wield his sword, his true self could still do it. With his first strike, he could perfectly defend his physical body at the same time.

"What a good strike!"

Fang Yuan flicked his tail, avoided the sword and struck on the blade of the sword.

"Ah!"

Venerable Clear Wind retreated. There was fear in his voice.

How could a snake know martial arts?