

Carefree 301

Chapter 301: Two Swords

4th Year of Yong An, Da Chu.

Loading Island, Golden Court Lake.

A noble and virtuous character is capable of great things!

Originally, the island was unnamed, however, once it was occupied by Xu Ting to load goods, it was named as such. Such a name reflected his ambitions.

At that moment, a few big ships were slowly approaching the pier.

A group of refugee families disembarked orderly, while the soldiers, evidently experienced, maintained a basic formation at the sides.

The terrain of the island was rather flat, there was a flat piece of land after a short distance away from the pier. On top of it, furrows were already ploughed and there were a few farmsteads.

The farmsteads and furrows were neatly built and evoked the beauty of a well-planned land.

"Sir!"

At that moment, a few scholarly looking men came forward.

"Hmm... doing well! How's the situation now?"

These men were all outstanding scholars in the family, they were literate and knew how to calculate. With them, they formed the backbone of the clan.

Xu Ting looked at the farmlands and took a deep breath, "This is what I call foundation!"

"We seek your approval in enforcing the Baojia neighbourhood administrative system here. Five families would form one unit, with one leader. Duties would also be clearly allocated. If anyone tried to escape, the whole unit would be implicated. We can currently form hundred of such units and reclaim 3,000 acres of land. Each family has to send out one fit man to join the troop and they would both work on the farm and undergo military training. As the people have both land and sufficient supplies of goods, they are contented and would rarely try to escape..." one of the scholars reported.

"Very good!"

Xu Ting nodded his head, "This time, I have conquered the pirates of 13 Chain Wall. There are 3,000 of them to be deported here, will there be any issue?"

As the place was under military jurisdiction, it was easier to organise and collect information. Hence, after a few moments, the scholar replied with conviction, "The wooden houses are all built, they are just waiting for people to move in. Also, we can reclaim 5000 acres of farmland on the flatlands and at least 800 acres of terraced fields on the hills. When the paddies are harvested, we will be able to feed thousands of fit men!"

This scholar was also a member of the Xu family, as he spoke, his eyes were filled with fervour.

In actual fact, the fit men were elite troops to be!

It was remarkable for them to be able to deploy thousands of troops and even attack other prefectures through the waterway.

Xu Ting was very pleased upon hearing such news.

In all honesty, it was a way for the troops to be stationed there. During peacetime, they worked as farmers, while during wartime, they fought as soldiers. Under military jurisdiction, they did not have to rely on unreasonable borrowing terms from magnates. Even with half the tax rates, it was a good policy and managed to greatly increase the authorities' reserves.

Furthermore, since paddies were harvested there, the yield was plentiful and it was sufficient to feed even more mouths.

As such, he had the capital to rise to power.

"The 13 Chain Wall was the last resistance alliance of the pirates. After this war, there would no more pirates of such scale in Golden Court Lake. Even if small groups of pirates were to appear, we can eradicate them sporadically..."

As Xu Ting entered the conference room, he continued, "Since I trust all of you all, I will say this directly. The world is in an ailing and chaos state right now, wicked ministers are in governance and military occupied towns are appearing everywhere. Our clan does not seek power or riches, we just want to be content with our lives, but to achieve this, we must have strength."

"This Loading Island is our clan's last base. When the situation is not in our favour, we can retreat here. With the protection of the undercurrents and reefs, we would be safe for at least a while here!"

"To rapidly expand the island's strength, there will be no issue even if there aren't any more pirates. We can go to each district and recruit their refugees, they don't even have to be from our prefecture!"

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Through eradicating the pirates and having control of the troops, the entire island was already under Xu Ting's control, thus, he was not shy to share some classified secrets.

However, the real core and ambition would never be mentioned.

"Brilliant, Sir!"

However, with just those rationale, the crowd was overwhelmed with emotions.

After all, everyone could see how tumultuous the world was in. Since Loading Island was under the protection of natural hazards surrounding it and also had fertile lands, once it could be self-sufficient, people would be contented.

"Nowadays..., Wang Qiao's eagerness is growing even stronger. He even began scheming who would be his ministers, he simply could not be bothered to hide his plans to usurp.... The world is in chaos,

however, with this base and troop, it doesn't mean that there's no hope for my clan to further progress!" Xu Ting thought.

Xu Ting gazed into the distance as his heart burnt with fiery.

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"The uprising of people dao has been progressing quickly..., especially within the different nations, there seems to be a presence of demons..." Fang Yuan thought as he looked attentively at Loading Island from the water.

"In Da Qi and Da Liang, either the princes are fighting for the throne, or they have manipulating ministers in the country. Furthermore, the emperors are all not in good health. How could this be a coincidence? Hehe... the demons are truly easily predictable, just that with how much effort they are putting in, it is just for the good of others' causes!"

With the current situation, he could guess that there were already demons wreaking havoc within the high positions of each country, and these demons wanted the people dao's fate energy to diminish.

However, the heavens had made a fool of them!

These three countries were originally not favoured by the heavenly fate and were bound to decline and descent into chaos. It was a survival of the fittest!

When the demons interfered, it had the opposite effect of speeding up the process. Even the demons' higher beings and saints who predicted the heavenly secrets were muddled and had their skandhas messed up. The heaven made a total fool out of the demons and utterly misdirected them to such an extreme extent!

"I guess the heavenly trend in this realm is more powerful than what I have imagined..."

Fang Yuan's face became solemn as he turned his head away from Loading Island. He then arrived at a cave under the waters.

The horned dragon shook his tail and took on the magical clone of a human. He sat cross-legged and had two swords, one green and the other purple, floating in front of him. Both swords had a dazzling shine and were intimidating looking, evidently different from normal swords.

"Go!"

The moment he pointed his fingers, two surges of magical powers appeared and simultaneously turned into flames as it started to crazily form the two swords.

"These spiritual swords were no small matter! Previously, as it was limited by karma, it was close to being formed!"

At that moment, under the flames of magic, both swords floated unsteadily and continued to dazzle brightly. Sharp noises could be heard from the sword and it was as though the swords were giving their last-ditch of effort in resisting.

"Hehe... the last struggle at the point of death!"

As Fang Yuan laughed, powerful magic surged, and along with karma, it finally removed the remaining few traces of imprints in the spiritual swords completely.

"Swoosh!"

The two swords lost all its radiance and revealed a modest looking body. On top of the swords, there were many primitive patterns.

"Good swords! Indeed, they are such great swords, however, they aren't as simple as other rare treasures. In fact, it seems as though there's a faint sense of fate energy converging on it. It looks like it has to go through a round of killer tribulations..."

No matter how good a rare treasure was, as long as it could not be kept in the actualised dream world, it was not really valuable for Fang Yuan as he could only use it for a while in his current realm.

Of course, if Xuan Zhen Sect was to find out, they would be enraged.

"After such a long period of investigation, Xuan Zhen Sect should know my background by now? Also, I'm sure they would be back for their spiritual swords..."

Fang Yuan sneered as he made up his mind.

With a wave of his hands, the two swords landed on his hands.

After the swords lost its radiance, the inscriptions on the sword could be seen clearly. There were ancient characters on it. One was named Purple Suo and the other was named Green Qiu.

"Both men and swords have killer tribulations..., the reason why Xuan Zhen Sect forged these two swords was to use it in numerous battles to kill numerous people in order to pass its own tribulation..."

Naturally, Fang Yuan could easily guess the origins of the two swords. Suddenly, he had an idea. His hand beamed with magic and the Purple Suo sword changed its appearance. The Purple Suo sword became a primitive longsword in a scabbard, it was 40 inches long and had an indistinct purple glow. It was evident that the longsword was an extremely sharp and powerful weapon.

"Demons were their opponents, while their counterparts were their enemies..., does Xuan Zhen Sect really still want to support Xu family?" he thought.

Fang Yuan suddenly came over to the waters near Loading Island and disguised himself under the appearance of a normal young man. A layer of mist appeared as Fang Yuan instantaneously turned invisible, crossed the guards surrounding the island and reached the depths of the island.

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"Eat more... my birds!"

Inside the dense forest, the daoist priest who fought along Xu Ting was seen feeding his white birds. A tinge of desolation appeared on his face.

Although he was a daoist priest, he had no official sect and did not have any legitimate ancestry. His name was Kong Luo. During a rare encounter with a wandering daoist priest when he was young, he got accepted into his master's sect as a disciple.

Except, such a descent still meant that he had no official inheritance of skills nor denomination. He only possessed the Quelling Bait Technique and the unique ability to raise white birds.

Such lone practitioners often had little or no disciples to pass down their skills and such techniques would become extinct a few generations later.

However, if a rare encounter were to be chance upon, his sect could still rise and be ranked amongst the sects.

Kong Luo spent half of his life wandering with his master before finally settling down at Golden Lake Prefecture. Before his master passed away, by pure coincidence, his master managed to get hold of some heavenly secrets and instructed him to seek refuge with the Xu family. By doing so, he could hone his skills under the protection of fate energy and then further look for opportunities to bring glory to his sect.

At that moment, inside Kong Luo's heart, he was in deep thoughts.

"It's great to practice inside here! With the support of Xu family, my Quelling Bait Technique has already finessed to 2nd Grade. Even master could not go beyond that grade... Nowadays, Xu Ting's fate energy has been prospering. Furthermore, since he is training his group of elite troops, his ambitions must not be small. If I can support him and gain some of his fate energy, my dao powers will greatly improve!"

"There are so many uniquely talented people in this world, my limited skills are actually nothing much..."

Originally, he was heavily favoured and utilised by Xu Ting. However, as time past, Xuan Zhen Sect began investing more and more in Xu family, especially with their own daoist priests, and hence, Kong Luo was edged out and became dispensable.

As Kong Luo felt that his position was threatened, a despondent and worried look appeared on his face naturally.

"Hiss!"

Suddenly, a scent of blood filled the air and noises could be heard from the bushes. A black-coloured giant snake leapt out. Its eyes were filled with savagery and it pounced towards Kong Luo.

"What? Such a big snake? What a monstrous fiend!"

Kong Luo was terrified. The island was cleared before, hence, it should not have any beasts still living in it. Why was there still such a huge snake?

Kong Luo jumped away immediately and summoned a talisman, "Haste!"

"Puff!"

Sparks flashed as the black snake flinched for a moment before it immediately struck its tail at Kong Luo. Kong Luo was knocked back and began vomiting blood.

"Quick, call somebody!"

The white bird on his shoulder flew towards the village while it made ailing shrills.

Kong Luo did not hesitate even for a moment and fled for his life.

"Am I going to die? No! I still have to revive my sect!"

As he thought of his master's last will, Kong Luo mustered all his remaining strength and scrambled down the hill.

As the hill was not far from the village and since the area was under military jurisdiction, a group of soldiers quickly ran over.

"Save me!"

As Kong Luo saw the soldiers approaching, he immediately used his last breath to shout out loud.

Chapter 302: Acquisition

"I'm so dead!"

The scent of blood filled the air and the snake almost got a taste of Kong Luo's neck.

In a state of panic, Kong Luo tripped and fell.

"Don't you dare hurt him, you fiend!"

The group of people who came over ran towards Kong Luo at the speed of light and quickly formed up with their knives, ready to annihilate the snake.

As a fight was about to emerge, it made Kong Luo felt relieved. "Are these... Xu Ting's bodyguards? I'm saved!"

He took a good look at these people and noticed that Xu Ting was leading them; he felt like he was in luck.

Knowing that Xu Ting's side was filled with skilful people, Kong Luo knew his life was saved.

"Swoosh!"

Sparks flew as blades hit the snake's scales.

Kong Luo scrambled to Xu Ting's side; he finally managed to stand up and looked at the black snake.

The snake was extremely thick and was about 10 yards long. It had fierce serpentine eyes, shiny scales and a flicking forked tongue that was waiting to devour a human.

"Such a humongous black snake, no, black python! What a monstrous fiend!"

Xu Ting's eyes shined brightly. As he saw the big python, he immediately hollered, "We must kill it, else it would harm our troops and farms!"

"Yes, Sir!"

As the two men fighting could not defeat the snake, a few more martial arts experts amongst his numerous skilled subordinates leapt out with their weapons.

Not only that, a few accompanying daoist priests began chanting curses and the fighters were imbued with magical powers. Their strength and vital elemental energy were greatly boosted.

"Black Tiger Claw!"

"Elemental Splitting Palm!"

"Kill it!"

Swords flung as gale like punches were thrown.

Blood spewed out from the black python as numerous attacks landed on it at the same time.

"Thud!"

Amongst the numerous attacks, an arrow flashed past and accurately hit the fatal spot on the python's heart.

"Hhiii...iisss..."

After a few struggles, the python finally succumbed and collapsed.

"Sir, great archery skills!"

After the people around began congratulating, Kong Luo then realised that Xu Ting was wielding a large purple bow. The bowstring was still vibrating when Kong Luo realised it.

"Eh..."

Xu Ting moved closer to the black python but chose to not go too close.

Although the black python's heart was shot and its body was severed into many pieces, due to its humongous body, its vitality was still strong even if it seemed like it could not fight back.

"This snake looks not bad. Pythons are not poisonous and we can use it to stew soup for our people..."

As Xu Ting looked at the snake's carcass, he seemed to have thought of something and smiled.

"Yes, Sir!"

The soldiers replied excitedly. "The soup stewed from this snake's meat along with some meat from an old hen and a few eggs would be so nourishing..."

A few people went up to the snake and began prepping it.

"Eh? There's something in the snake's tail!"

As a warrior was cutting open the snake's skin, he saw a purple glow in the corner of his eyes. Out of curiosity, he sliced open the snake's tail and acquired a sword.

"Sir..., there's a sword hidden in the snake's tail!"

Being quick-witted, he immediately carried the sword with both hands, knelted in front of Xu Ting and presented the sword to him, "Looks like this is what the heaven is granting you, Sir! Your life is fated to build a military!"

In this realm, heavenly visions would appear before heroes.

The acquiring of a sword from a black python was indeed a strange and wonderful occurrence.

The sword would be put to great use in the future, it could fight thousands of soldiers!

"Oh?"

Xu Ting was both surprised and delighted.

It was because such a happening was very auspicious and also the fact that the man had a way with his words.

By building a military, he could either be the ruler who unites countries or be the minister who supports; there were lots of leeway for him.

However, if the warrior had talked about how it was pure fate, Xu Ting would have killed him instead.

Hence, he received the sword cheerily, "Not bad, really not bad!"

Many of the surrounding people felt jealous of his praises but could only hide their feelings and proceeded to celebrate.

"Congratulations, Sir, for acquiring the sword!"

"Swish!"

Xu Ting had practised swordsmanship before. As he casually swung the sword, a cool purple glow appeared.

The 40-inch long blade was clear as snow and could clearly reflect his face on it. There was also a tinge of purple that Xu Ting liked. He then ordered someone to duel with him, only to hear a "clang" as the opponent's sword broke in half. The sword was indeed extremely sharp.

"Haha... what a good sword!"

Xu Ting was ecstatic. He observed the sword and noticed the ancient inscription of "Purple Suo" on it.

The more he looked at it, the more he liked it. Immediately, he equipped the sword on his waist.

"In the past, there was a king who killed a water dragon and then ruled the world, now... from how I had acquired this sword, could this be a sign from the heavens too?"

Xu Ting pondered. Regardless, he was not going to bestow this sword to anyone else and was determined to keep the sword for his own good use.

"We will hold a feast tonight!"

As he gave out his instruction with glee, he naturally did not notice a certain daoist priest's panic-stricken look.

"No one's caring about me..."

As Kong Luo saw the big group left, he felt gloomy as he dusted the dirt off his body.

Compared to the countless martial arts experts and other powerful daoist priests, Kong Luo knew he was no match for them and could only take a backseat.

But as he thought of another daoist priest's expression just now, he felt odd. "Why did daoist Qing Xuan have such a furtive look on his face? He seems to know the origins of that sword? But such treasures from such beasts were meant to be powerful in the first place!"

As he watched the crowd rush to attend the feast, he could only think of how powerless he was.

"This time around, I can at least take a backseat at the feast, but what about next year or the year after? As the newcomers laugh, who could hear the old-timer weep..."

His interest waned and he felt as though he did not want to appear at the feast to further embarrass himself.

At that moment, as he looked at the trail of blood from the black python, he suddenly had an idea.

"From daoist Qing Xuan's gaze, this snake must not be normal. Such a beast would not have appeared for no reason..."

He proceeded to walk in the opposite direction and arrived at the hill where he was feeding his birds. He then began searching carefully.

Sure enough, the moment he prised open the bushes, he saw a pathway the snake must have taken. After following it, he reached a cave that had a faint stench.

"Nothing ventured, nothing gained! I will take the risk!"

Kong Luo bravely entered the cave only to realise the cave was clean and had no signs of snakeskin left behind.

Except, at the end of the cave, there was a green light emitted from a small sword.

On the cave walls, there was a chant for a formula inscribed on it. The inscription was not long as there were only a few hundred words, but however, they were beautifully expressed. Upon seeing such, Kong Luo was shocked.

There was no time to waste for Kong Luo to wonder about why no one had ever discovered this place. He immediately began to recite it by heart.

"This is a powerful magical formula, and the spiritual treasure too... they are really gifts from the heavens! The revival of my sect is truly pure fate of the heavens..."

He immediately kept the spiritual sword according to the magical formula and felt stronger at once.

The spiritual sword was a treasure for killing. Thus, his magical techniques did not improve, but obviously, his lethality was vastly superior to before. With this, he could have the confidence and strength to fight alongside other daoists in front of Xu Ting.

"Hmm... that Daoist Qing Xuan..."

Before he strode out the cave, he waved his arms and a green sword essence appeared. The cave walls were scratched beyond recognition at once.

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"Very well..."

After Kong Luo left the cave, Fang Yuan appeared outside the cave and watched his back view leaving. Fang Yuan was satisfied and thought to himself. "He does seem decisive, looks like he has the potential!"

The two swords had some fate energy converging on it, or to put it in another way, it contained parts of the turning point for Xuan Zhen Sect. Hence, Fang Yuan could not keep them for long, else it would be detrimental to his fate energy. Not only would Xuan Zhen Sect chase after him, some of the swords' tribulations might even pass over to him.

By gifting the swords, it reflected Fang Yuan's intelligence.

Firstly, these two swords had already been cultivated. By gifting it away, the favour would be returned to him in the future.

Also, it was the perfect plan to give the swords to Xu Ting and a daoist priest from the same clan.

With how invested Xuan Zhen Sect was in Xu family, would they dare to demand the return of the Purple Suo sword from Xu Ting?

Since Kong Luo was also part of Xu family, and the fact that he was now under the protection of the spiritual sword, Xuan Zhen Sect would not dare to start a conflict with him.

After doing these things, Xu Ting felt energised.

He opened his spiritual eyes and saw karma slowly descending from the skies. He could not contain his joy as he knew he reached a key point.

This time, he managed to seize a decent amount of Xuan Zhen Sect's fate energy karma.

"Not only are there people dao karma, there's also heavenly karma! I shall use it to increase my cultivation!"

Fang Yuan made up his mind.

On top of his head, streaks of golden essence gathered and formed the shape of seven shiny golden flowers.

Whereas, the green balls of energy, through mysterious ways, turned in to the realm's energy and swarmed into the actualised dream world.

In the 8 Gates Sword Array, the fire and water swords shined brightly, while on the east gate, lightning struck and the Thunder Sword formed more than half as it emitted electrifying illuminations.

The 3 swords' luminance rushed to skies and the power of the 3 talents could be vaguely seen.

"More than half of the Sundering Thunder Sword has been formed?"

Fang Yuan looked at his stats board:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Race: Horned Dragon

Essence: 36

Spirit: 36

Magic: 45

Profession: ???

Cultivation: ???

Technique: [9 Steps of Dragon Transformation Formula (7th Transformation)], [Weather Controlling Technique (Grade 1)], [Natural Magical Strength (Grade 3)], [8 Gates Sword Array (3rd Sword) (55%)]

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

"The further I progress in the 8 Gates Sword Array, the harder it is to form the swords. However, its might is even more unimaginable..."

A look of joy appeared on Fang Yuan's face as he thought, "Hmm..., by helping Xu family this time, it was simply an early investment. The karma I received wasn't a lot too... Only during chaos where Xu family rises to power is when I will truly gain the most from!"

At that moment, as Xu family still did not officially reign an area, its influence was naturally not as great.

However, once the world entered a state of chaos and undergone big changes, even if Xu Ting were to become a just a duke, he could still influence millions of commoners. Hence, the karma Fang Yuan would receive from it would be exceedingly bountiful.

Fang Yuan was eagerly anticipating for it to happen.

"Nevertheless... even with my strength now, I am still a formidable force to be reckoned with...Seems like some issues in the past can be settled already too..." he pondered as he looked towards the direction of Qi Lake.

Chapter 303: Evolution

Imperial palace, Qi Country.

After the death of the late emperor, the Third Prince emerged from intense rivalry and was succeeding the throne in the wake.

Inside the palace, there was a hint of bloodiness and officials of all ranks shivered in uneasiness. This was especially so for those who were originally from Taihe Hall, as the hall's servants and maids, alongside their in-charge, Senior Eunuch Su, were put to death. Thus, rumours were rife.

"No matter what... I have finally won this time!"

Originally the Third Prince, he now ascended the throne and became the Emperor of Qi. Donned in his royal crown with his hand wielding a pearl ornament, he looked at his officials worshipping below. Though he appeared calm on the outside, he was extremely perturbed on the inside.

"Majority of the guards of the imperial palace and the troops of the imperial city have already submitted to me, the situation should be stable for me now. Since the Seventh Prince and those loyal to him seems unwilling and grudging, I better severely punish them! Hmm, since they did not show up during this ceremony, it would be the best excuse to do so!" he thought.

Unfilial acts and disloyalty were sins he could not tolerate.

The new emperor took a glimpse of the late emperor in his dragon casket. Its ashen face and ghastly stiff palm sent a chill down the emperor's face. Immediately, he turned around and prayed silently.

"Father..., I knew you have always favoured the Seventh Prince, but since I succeeded the throne, I will definitely lead Da Qi to power and riches. I will also unite the three countries in this unprecedented rulership! Also, the imperial astronomer told me just now that the north star, Polaris, shined extremely brightly. This is a sign that I am going to be a great emperor!"

"Our Majesty!"

At that moment, all the officials kowtowed nine times and completed the ceremony.

"Ah, rise!"

As the Emperor of Qi strutted, he suddenly asked, "Where is the Seventh Prince and the Ninth Prince? Our father passed away and they dare not arrive yet? It pains my heart!"

"Your Majesty, the Seventh Prince was punished to reflect in isolation while the Ninth Prince is still on his journey, he is currently near the borders now." a senior minister reported.

"Hehe.... such great excuses, are they questioning my abilities?"

The Emperor of Qi gave a sardonic smile and immediately ordered, "These two treacherous princes violated the virtue of filial piety, even though I could not bear to hurt our relationship as brothers, I have no other choice now. Immediately send the guards to bring these two over to the wake! I will have to question them thoroughly!"

As an elder brother, he could not order violence against his younger brothers, but however, as long as he could arrest and enact soft detention on them, he could have his ways with them.

A few imperial guards heeded the orders and dashed out only to stop suddenly.

"Bang!"

Under the loud noises, the ground tremored and violent bawls could be heard. Not far from the gates, fires could be seen and black smoke rose into the air, bringing a sense of inauspiciousness.

"What's happening?"

As the commotion was so huge, it could even be heard from Jinluan Hall. The Qi Emperor's expression changed at once.

An imperial guard immediately reported, "Your Majesty, the Seventh Prince and Ninth Prince are leading a troop in and they claim that they want to eradicate the emperor's disloyal followers! The eastern gate has already surrendered and they are storming towards the imperial palace now!"

"What?"

The Emperor of Qi felt ill at once and almost vomited blood.

Naturally, there were elite troops and royal guards garrisoned around Qi Country's imperial capital.

The late emperor favoured the Seventh Prince and the Ninth Prince heavily and assigned them to numerous posts, hence they managed to attract many henchmen under them.

The Third Prince's power was honestly much weaker than theirs. It was unexpected for him to succeed the throne and the reason why he could was due to the fact that he bribed the late emperor's loyal follower. It was truly a very risky move.

He did not expect the other two princes to be so resolute and decisive that they dared to lead troops to revolt, and not to mention, influence the guards at the eastern gates to surrender their defences and side with them.

"The Seventh Prince decrees, this military advance will not harm the innocent!"

"The Ninth Prince decrees, however, those who did bad deeds and committed offences will be prosecuted by military law!"

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The troop marched over with almost no resistance and surrounded the imperial palace.

The Emperor of Qi's face turned pale. He forced himself up the palace walls and saw the sea of troops below. His legs turned soft and he immediately ordered, "Traitors! Zhang Jin, kill them all for me!"

At that moment, the imperial guard could only reluctantly obey his commands to protect the imperial palace.

However, the Emperor of Qi was still deeply unsettled.

He knew that even if he were to win today, a revolt that occurred immediately once he ascended the throne would severely impact his prestige and might. Furthermore, his followers had already become anxious and terrified; they were bound to not last for long.

"All to listen up, the reason for this uprising is to seek justice for the mysterious death of our late emperor. As his sons and ministers, we have to seek justice!"

A deafening sound could be heard, it was as though spells were used.

All the officials could not help but keep quiet. The actions of the two princes were no different to accusing the Third Prince of poisoning the late emperor and distorting the imperial edict.

"I succeeded the throne justly and honourably. The imperial edict left by the late emperor before his death serves as evidence! How dare they besmirch me!" the Emperor of Qi hollered with extreme wrath.

"If you don't surrender in half an hour, we will not hesitate to storm in!"

However, the two princes outside had reached their point of no return. Even if the imperial edict was real, it had to be denounced as fake. Hence, after a few shouts, they immediately commanded their troops to attack.

"Charge!"

"Launch the catapult!"

"Prepare the scaling ladder!"

In an instant, the magnificent imperial palace became a bloody battlefield.

Blood spewed as smoke rose.

Fear spread through the commoners in the imperial capital as they quickly shut their doors. Even though the imperial capital of Qi Country was an ancient city with thousands of years of history, it ultimately could not withstand the destruction of war.

The defences of the imperial palace were penetrated through within half a day and the troops swarmed it.

The Third Prince was dishevelled, he had a longsword wielded while his robe was stained with blood. At that moment, he was searching through each palace hall in panic, "Beauties..., my beauties, quick, leave with me! I am still the emperor, even if we escape out of the capital, I can still gather all my loyal ministers to fight back!"

As he barged into one of the palaces, he scared away many of the servants. However, inside the hall, the melodious sound of a guqin[1] surrounded the entire hall.

The person playing the guqin was an absolutely gorgeous lady. She was donned in a concubine's dress and appeared elegantly prim and proper.

"Qing'er, quick, leave with me!"

The Third Prince's eyes filled with lust; he used to love listening to Qing'er play the guqin as he casually relaxed.

However, ever since he began crafting his big plans, he never heard the melodious guqin music again.

"Why should I leave?"

Qing'er smiled gently.

"Eh?"

The Third Prince was startled and he felt as though she had totally changed.

"Sun Xingyu, I've played with you for so long, I'm already bored of you, time to change to another prince to play with..." Qing'er said calmly.

"What? You want to side with the Seventh Prince and Ninth Prince? You sl*t!"

The Third Prince was enraged upon grasping what she meant.

"I want to kill you!"

With bloodshot eyes, he charged forward with his sword.

"Boring!"

Qing'er yawned. Suddenly, a black shadow appeared and bit off the Third Prince's hand.

"Ahh...demon!"

The black shadow was actually a horrifying looking gigantic rat with eyes as large as copper coins and it emitted a green glow.

"Indeed, it's my fellow demon!"

Qing'er sighed faintly, "After scheming for ten plus years, the plan has finally succeeded. Even though you are the emperor, you have no power and the current situation is against you! How much fate energy would you have left by now? Just die in peace...., don't worry, your brothers will join you soon!"

Although she spoke calmly and expressionlessly, the Third Prince was horror-stricken, "How dare you demons try to ruin the Da Qi Country!"

As long as either the Seventh Prince or the Ninth Prince succeeded the throne, the throne would still be in the hands of the Sun's. But now, the Emperor of Qi had smelled a rat and knew a grand conspiracy was underway.

"Hehe..., after today, the news of the two princes revolting and causing the death of the emperor would spread throughout the world..."

Qing'er seemed to enjoy such a situation and even as the noise of the battlefield outside got closer, she placidly expressed, "After the event unfolds, Da Qi's sovereignty would drop and be severely undermined, war will erupt and who knows how many more people will be killed! The more deaths there would be, the happier I am!"

"De...demon!"

The Emperor of Qi was incensed and the rat demon sank its teeth into his throat.

"Bang!"

Lightning and thunder struck the skies and the giant rat let out a loud shriek. Its body turned black while Qing'er's face turned pale and even retched up a mouthful of blood.

"He was clearly on his deathbed, how could he still have such fate energy protecting him? People dao's fate energy is truly remarkable! Looks like this reflects their uprising..."

Her face turned solemn, she then stood up and toppled the oil lamp.

Fire engulfed the entire palace hall in an instance as black smoke billowed.

In one night, the news of the two princes revolting and attacking the imperial palace causing the death of Da Qi's new emperor spread throughout the world. Immediately, war broke out and the entire Qi Country descended into chaos.

Similar to its situation was its neighbouring country, Da Liang.

Yutong Prefecture.

Alongside the din of battle, huge amounts of troops entered the city and started killing mercilessly.

After besieging the city for months, they suffered great losses as they were unable to successfully breakthrough, hence, they finally vented their anger through slaughtering.

Outside the city, a ferocious looking general was surveying the scene in the city, his aide then respectfully congratulated, "Congratulations, General Huo, for annihilating this rebel town!"

"Send my command, massacre the entire city!"

General Huo gave a wry smile and immediately commanded, "Anyway, this city is the hub of the Wu rebels. Its commoners greatly benefitted from them and hence, they might not be loyal! It will be better for us to wipe them out!"

With his commands, the troops were roused. However, the officials at his side remained silent.

General Huo was talented in leading troops and wars, however, he was vicious and bloodthirsty.

He was sent to annihilate the rebels and their town, and with this success, it was a great achievement under his belt. However, it seemed like the way he did things was a bit overboard.

Of course, since he had the support to back his behaviour, no one dared to do anything about him.

Few brave and just souls dared to confront him just for the lives of commoners.

At that moment, Huo Qing's eyes turned blood red. As he listened to the unending screams coming from the city, he almost could not suppress his true form and thought, "Us demons would not only ruin the three countries' fate energy, we will not let any heroes emerge from the human race. The military governor of this town was an all-rounder and was also home to dragon energy which I have finally destroyed..."

[1] The guqin is a Chinese musical instrument.

Chapter 304: Right Timing

Da Chu.

"Congratulations, minister, for your promotion to Prince of Chu!"

Inside the minister's manor, many of his henchmen gathered as joy and laughter filled the air.

While Qi Country and Liang Country were in chaos, Wang Qiao had no leisure to care about the neighbouring countries. He finally seized the rare opportunity to force the emperor to grant him the title of Prince with perpetual title heritability[1].

Furthermore, by using "Chu" as his prince title, it obviously reflected his rapacious ambitions.

However, Wang Qiao had no fears.

"The garrison guards of the imperial capital are already within my command and these 200,000 troops are extremely skilful elites, no one would be able to defeat them! Furthermore, even the provincial military commanders and imperial guards have pledged their loyalty to me and there's no one left that can compete with me!" He thought as he squinted his eyes.

He knew that even if military occupied towns were to rise in revolt against him, by having the largest lands and the most elite large troops, he would be able to wipe each of them out.

"How many troops have risen in revolt currently?"

Wang Qiao asked suddenly as he sat up straight with a strong demeanour.

"There are three military occupied towns that have sent their troops. Liyang Prefecture's military governor Zhu Tong, Xinan Prefecture's military governor Li Chun and Wujiang Prefecture's military governor Wang Yujun have risen in revolt and started attacking other prefectures under the accusation that you were planning to overthrow the emperor. Based on my humble opinion, that was merely an excuse for them to expand their strength. These governors are all smart men! They knew if they did not seize the opportunity to rise to power now, when we rise to power, they would have no more chance!"

His adjutant immediately answered.

Wang Qiao clapped his hands and announced, "I will immediately report these three governors' plans to the emperor and an imperial decree will be issued immediately. This will list out their crimes clearly and we can then send troops to suppress them!"

At that moment, since he had not forced the emperor to abdicate and hand the throne over to him yet, he knew he still required the emperor for his plans to succeed.

"Brilliant, Prince!"

His audiences were all impressed.

"Haha... instead of being afraid, I am happy that they are rising up! The power distribution in the imperial capital is very complicated. Since I don't have much wealth nor land to reward you all, if you all defeat these three prefectures, you all will be promoted to nobility, with perpetual title heritability!" Wang Qiao laughed.

Usually, it was hard to gather loyal followers for usurps that did not undergo mass killings as the power distribution in the country were complicated and there were insufficient resources to reward them.

However, since the three military governors revolted, it gave him an excuse to do so.

Once the audiences heard it, especially the military officials, their eyes lit up as though it was on fire.

With Wang Qiao's speech, it undoubtedly promised the reward of nobility and at the same time, hinted that once the military occupied towns were suppressed, he would immediately force the emperor to relinquish his throne.

Only the emperor could grant titles of nobility with perpetual title heritability and such a hint was already very obvious.

"Reporting!"

Just as the atmosphere was warm, an anxious-looking imperial guard suddenly rushed over. "Prince, a disaster is imminent!"

"Tell me about it!"

A feeling of uneasiness immediately overwhelmed Wang Qiao and made him stood up. He then asked, "What exactly happened?"

"The emperor has suddenly fallen very ill after dinner..., the imperial physician does not dare to prescribe medication!"

"What?"

Wang Qiao's face turned unpleasant at once.

Even though he has already decided to have him dead once he ascended the throne, he still needed his name and authority as the Emperor of Chu, especially at the moment where he was about to send the troops to suppress the rebels. How could he be on his deathbed?

"Prince..."

At that moment, another horse rushed over, "The emperor... has passed away!"

Wang Qiao's face turned pale at once, he suddenly opened his mouth and blood spewed everywhere.

"Prince!!!"

...

5th Year of Yong An. News of Wang Qiao becoming the Prince of Chu and the death of the young emperor spread like wildfire across the world. There were now 7 troops that had rose in revolt.

After Da Qi and Da Liang, Da Chu has descended into chaos too.

Loading Island, Golden Court Lake.

Twenty large ships were berthed neatly at the pier. Thousands of soldiers remained silent as they gathered to watch the ceremony.

Once Xu Ting heard the news about the death of the emperor, he gathered the troop to commemorate the late emperor and held a rally to pledge loyalty before going to war.

"This Wang Qiao! How ferocious! He murdered the emperor to usurp the throne, what an unpardonable sin! Even though I am not a genius, I still have a 40-inch long sword and thousands of soldiers! I will punish this traitor and fight with him to death! To seek revenge for the late emperor!"

As Xu Ting stood high above on the platform and raised the Purple Suo sword, his voice could be heard clearly.

"Punish the traitor!"

"Punish the traitor!"

The crowds' yells were deafening and could be heard from afar.

"Send down my command! We will deploy at once!"

As Xu Ting gave his commands, the warships steered out of the pier towards the prefectures near Golden Court Lake.

These prefectures were not ruled by military governors; they were still under the governance of the imperial court. Even if there were any power-hungry ambitionists, they dared not openly raise their troops.

However, now that they had such a cause, that might no longer be the case.

Hence, Xu Ting decisively deployed at once so as to grab hold of the surrounding prefectures near Golden Court Lake and increase his power while the rest were still scrambling.

While the rest had no plans, he had plans, warships and an elite troop. Xu Ting was very confident.

On the shore, daoist Qing Xuan looked at the scene peacefully. His eyes glistened and thought, "The truculence and aggressiveness of the troops are like an inferno..., Xu Ting's fate energy changes thrice in a day, it is about to prosper and the heavenly trend is starting!"

In reality, the heavenly trend was merely a seed.

Without the right timing, the right conditions and the right people as soil and rain for the seed, the heavenly trend would not sprout and grow. Instead, it would brew disaster.

But however, at that moment, the three factors were all right; success was imminent!

"The original magistrate of Golden Lake Prefecture relinquished his position due to his illness. Hence, once Xu Ren took over the position, he garnered the support of all the districts. After ten plus years of gradual influence, things are falling into places and he can now support Xu Ting in his war! With their combined powers, the nearby prefectures will be of no match, and after seizing the entire Golden Court Lake, they would have their foundation to gather sufficient people dao fate energy to succeed. However, my sect is not gaining much from it, many opportunities have been snatched..., d*mn demons!"

When he thought of Xu Ting's Purple Suo sword, his expression turned even gloomier.

The sword was an auspicious sign. Of course, Xu Ting sent people to spread the news to bolster his strength.

The sword was like a treasure that signified the heavenly trends. For daoist Qing Xuan to ask for it back from Xu Ting was like courting death.

"Also, that Kong Luo was merely an unknown lone practitioner that was not very good. Now, since he had gotten the Green Qiu sword, his power has tremendously improved and he even defeated many of my sect's people. Xu Ting greatly favours him now and they even deployed together..."

Xu Ting could not be touched and neither could Kong Luo.

Xu Ting would be a fool to allow his compatriot to be killed for the sword. Thankfully, Qing Xuan could still benefit from the fate energy gained. However, if he were to anger the dragon energy, he would really be totally dead.

As Qing Xuan mumbled to himself, he felt as though there was a giant invisible net that was enveloping Xuan Zhen Sect.

Originally, it was still possible to gift these two swords as a form of investment.

But now, they had spent too much effort helping others with no benefit for themselves gained. Even the head of the sect became worried and despondent after hearing the rumours.

"The uprising of the humans is a heavenly trend and this Xu Ting has dragon energy within him... but now, with the steps Xuan Zhen Sect have taken, it seems like we have made the wrong moves..."

As Qing Xuan thought of how the heavenly trend was hard to predict, he was awe-inspired.

With the uprising of humans, killer tribulations became rife. As such, many were left dead in the process. Although Xuan Zhen Sect had treasures to suppress fate energy, there were usually no tribulations happening, but as for killer tribulations, how much effect these treasures would still have was really an unknown.

...

Dragon Palace, Golden Court Lake.

Fang Yuan sat opposite Golden Court Dragon God and in front of them was a chessboard. A water screen appeared out of nothing, and the scene of numerous warships departing was depicted.

"Your magical powers are truly an eye-opener!"

As Fang Yuan noticed Xu Ting's prospering fate energy, the Purple Suo sword on his waist and Kong Luo, he could not contain his smile.

"The Golden Court Lake is under my jurisdiction, hence, the water reflective technique could be used. If they leave Golden Court Lake or if his fate energy were to further increase, this technique of mine would be unable monitor them from afar."

The Dragon God smiled and straightforwardly placed a piece on the chessboard, "You are very observant and have planned well from the start. The way you handled the two swords was especially creative, I am very impressed."

Since the Dragon God was very mighty and resourceful, he easily knew about the two swords.

Furthermore, Fang Yuan and the Dragon God were truly on the same side. Compared to those people dao cultivators, especially those who aimed to monopolise fate energy, the Dragon God did not have a favourable impression of them.

With the Dragon God's intelligence, he could easily guess that once Xuan Zhen Sect rose in power, they would go around destroying temples and force these deities to submit to them and have contractual agreements to be their servants.

Even as people dao deities, dragons were haughty as it was part of their natural temperament.

As for his dragon descendant going against Xuan Zhen Sect, the Dragon God was glad to see such.

"With Xu Ting's fate energy, there would be no problem uniting the Golden Court Lake's nearby prefectures under his rule. These prefectures have numerous resources and its people are settled peacefully, it is truly a great place..."

Fang Yuan placed a chess piece in response and started to mention another area, "After Wang Qiao usurps, it will still take some time for him to quell the rebel towns. If Xu Ting wants to grow further, he has to go along An River and conquer those prefectures all the way up to Qi Lake. Only then would he occupy half the country and be considered extremely powerful."

There were many river systems in the Water Realm.

In Chu Country, Qi Lake, An River and Golden Court Lake were connected and those prefectures near it made up half the country! That made up one-sixth of the human population!

"The An River Dragon God's original form was a poisonous water dragon who loves blood sacrifices. He would definitely not sit back and allow the uprising of humans..., not sure if you are interested in the position of An River Dragon God?"

"The position of An River Dragon God?"

The Golden Court Dragon God thought for a moment and suddenly smiled, "With your extravagance, what requests do you have?"

"I was born in Qi Lake, how about Qi Lake?"

Fang Yuan was not shy as he laid out his conditions directly, "We will help out one another and fight against the sects, it is also for us demons to obtain a lifeline against this heavenly trend!"

"A lifeline?"

The Golden Court Dragon God was puzzled.

"The uprising of the humans is a heavenly trend, however, all races are equal. Even if us demons are downfalling, it does not mean that we should be extinct. Even if the land was meant for the people dao, does it mean that there is absolutely no space for us demons?"

Fang Yuan smiled as he explained; the Dragon God was moved at once.

"That makes sense!"

The Dragon God stood up and looked into the water screen. Large troops attacked and plundered, gathering large amounts of fate energy. This made Fang Yuan's intentions harder to be comprehended by the Dragon God, the Dragon God could not help but to sigh. "We have always given in to the heavens and the people, and are always misunderstood by the demons. But now, we are in the same boat. This is all I can do and I will let history be the judge! I will not think too much now and after a thousand years, I will see what history has to say!"

[1] Perpetual title heritability allows the title to be passed down to future generation without downgrading of rank.

Chapter 305: The Return

"Kill!"

Xu Ting's army was unstoppable and consecutively took down both the Seventh Dawn and the Thousand Scarlet Prefectures.

Originally, prefectures and district towns were not allowed to have a large number of troops and only have a few thousand soldiers at most. As such, there was not much resistance against Xu Ting who had plotted for a very long time and had the backing of the pirates and his private soldiers.

Of course, the scenario would be drastically different if it were to drag on for half a year where the big, influential families would have the time to build their own army.

As of now, Xu Ting seized the opportunity and managed to successively take over the towns.

By the 8th month, he had already conscripted 2,000 new soldiers. His originally five thousand-strong troops were rumoured to have 10,000 soldiers now. News had spread to all places that the soldiers had surrounded the Lanze Prefecture City.

The sight of soldiers clad in armour was frightening to behold.

Xu Ting stood on the high ground. With a beckon, around 10 soldiers with loud voices came forward. "Listen well, Wang Qiao is a tyrant. It is my general's calling to take him down. If you surrender immediately, you will not lose your riches and honour. If not, we will destroy everything and it will be too late to regret your decision by then!"

"How audacious!"

A person who looked like an official appeared on the wall. He was clad in magistrate's clothing and scolded them immediately. "Xu Ting, you are just a candidate who had just become a patrol officer, and yet, you call yourself a general. You even attack your fellow countrymen. If this is not a traitorous act, then what is a traitorous act? I, a palace graduate [1] favoured by the imperial court, will defend against you and not let you prevail!"

There was a slight disturbance within the ranks, especially amongst the new soldiers when the magistrate scolded Xu Ting. However, nothing else happened.

Xu Ting could not help but laugh coldly.

He knew that the elites among his troops were his own private soldiers and pirates. Their strength was absolute. There would be no problem even if his own troops were to revolt against him.

Furthermore, in the name of seeking revenge for the young emperor, the soldiers were still dignified regardless of the position of the person who was scolding them.

It would have been dangerous if his troops were made up of normal soldiers and if they did not have a cause to fight.

'However...this magistrate is up to no good as well. On the surface, he appears to be loyal and devoted. However, I have received information that he secretly wanted to set up a regime and had started to amass his troops to stamp out the dissidents...'

His face took on a cold expression. He waved his hand. "Attack! Take note of this magistrate. Once we have broken into the city, kill his entire family!"

"Understood!"

His army was composed of pirates who were not afraid of anything. They had no qualms about attacking the city and started to push their weapons forward.

When a few catapults were lined up before the city, the magistrate on the wall turned deathly pale and had to be assisted down from the wall.

"Kill!""Kill!""Kill!"

The troops shouted in unison. The attack on the city could take place at any moment.

"If we really attack head-on, even if there are not many soldiers within the prefecture city, the citizens can still be mobilized against me, which put me at a disadvantage! Is the preparation within the city ready?"

Xu Ting asked after he tested out the defense of the city.

"My lord, it has been arranged!"

Kong Luo was dressed in green robes and appeared elegant. There were faint traces of sword essence on his body. "Huang and Zhang Families have agreed to open up the gates once night falls!"

"Good!"

Xu Ting was very pleased.

The people within the prefecture city were not made of metal and as such, could be bribed.

Otherwise, in ancient times, without the use of proper equipment to besiege the city, it would take many years to breach the defenses of the city even when the supply of food runs out.

"Hmm, you shall lead the army this time. I will provide assistance!"

Of course, things were different due to the existence of divine techniques.

Xu Ting ordered after he moved.

"Understood!"

Kong Luo agreed after he opened his spiritual eye and realized that Xu Ting was not going to experience any tribulations this time based on his fate energy.

Xu Ting was amongst the troops now and his fate energy was closely linked to the generals. If there were any changes, the changes would show themselves. Everything was smooth-sailing as of now.

'Damn!'

As the soldiers praised Xu Ting, a few people from the Xuan Zhen Sect were unhappy as they thought to themselves, 'Instigating these two families were originally our sect's effort, why do we need to split the spoils of war?'

However, who would dare to go against the general's order?

Even if they were to vomit blood, they could only nod their head in agreement.

...

Night fell. Huang and Zhang Families each sent out 200 soldiers, coordinated with the outside effort and betrayed the Lanze Prefecture city. The city's defense fell, the magistrate committed suicide by hanging himself and his who family was executed.

Furthermore, those officials who resisted were executed regardless of their backgrounds. The whole prefecture was shaken by the executions and the people quickly surrendered.

At this moment, many influential families realized that military might was the most important amidst the chaos. It was not time to talk about relationships, feelings, families and the likes with a shining knife dangling above their heads, threatening their lives.

In the 9th month, the magistrate of the Luosong Prefecture, the last remaining prefecture around the Golden Court Lake, brought a few hundred officials to surrender after realizing that the tables had turned.

Xu Ting was pleased. After reporting to Xu Ren, he was appointed as a prefecture magistrate. However, he planted a few trusted aides within the troops everywhere he went.

Till now, from the demise of the young emperor to the declaration of the crusade, he managed to turn the 4 prefectures into military-occupied towns of the Chu Country. The speed at which the operation was carried out was enough to cause onlookers to be dumbfounded.

At this moment, the greatest battle of Chu Country was happening between the allied forces of 10 military-occupied towns and the Chu imperial guards under the command of Wang Qiao. This gave Xu Ting the opportunity to expand his military might.

10th month, 5th year of Yong An.

Xu Ren appointed himself as the 'Glorious Grandmaster' and set up multiple appointments such as registrar and officials to handle the affairs of the prefectures. He also appointed Xu Ting as the Guerrilla Warfare General who was in charge of military affairs.

The officials originated from the feudal states and the system evolved from the ideas of the scholar-officials. They were feudal lords that once possessed acres of land, private soldiers, control the law and are able to impose taxes. They later became members of the emperor's inner ministerial circle and were split into different categories such as Zhong Daifu, Grand Daifu and Jian Daifu [2]. There was no fixed number of officials. They had no fixed duties and were amongst the most distinguished in Chu Country.

It was evident that Xu Ren chose this position as he regarded it to be important. Furthermore, it was civil service post which helped him paved a way for Xu Ting.

"Auspicious energy, gather like clouds!"

On the day the prefectures were set up, almost all the realm energy practitioners came forward to witness the new regime.

"At this moment, the Glorious Grandmaster controls 5 prefectures. Even though he kept the system of prefecture magistrates and district magistrates, it is actually the minor officials who handle the affairs, effectively making the magistrates mere figureheads. The treatment of the magistrates remains the same. This is indeed a stroke of genius!"

Kong Luo could not help but sigh.

The positions of prefecture magistrates and district magistrates were used to recruit the surrendered enemies.

The influential families surrendered against their wills as they were not firm or they had no other options. As such, they could not be given such a heavy responsibility at the start. Of course, they could not be brushed aside as that would breed hostility.

At this moment, they were regarded as if they were clay buddhas, where their salaries and treatment remained unchanged to show the sincerity while the actual tasks were handled by capable minor officials who lacked the qualification and backgrounds. Due to the integrated system, they were able to cut back on the resources needed.

In the future, when those officials who surrendered were accustomed to the system, the minor officials could be relocated to new areas where they could be quickly promoted.

As Xu Ting alone had the authority over the army, the 5 prefectures were united which was difficult to achieve for a new regime.

"Throughout history, there is always a system to handle matters...It is not strange for the 5 prefectures to operate normally!"

Kong Luo felt a surge of karma which brought along spiritual energy with it. He could not help but feel as though he was floating and exclaimed, "General Xu is vying for the heaven's fate energy and gathered the fate energies of 2 million soldiers and civilians in the 5 prefectures. Even if I were only able to obtain just a bit of the fate energy, I would be able to benefit greatly from it!"

With the help of the Dao Magical Formula, it would not be difficult for his Breathing Technique, which was currently in the 3rd tier, to break through to the 4th tier in a short amount of time.

According to tradition, those who had reached the 4th tier would be given the title of 'Venerable' and would possess the qualifications to set up Dao orthodoxy as well as a small sect.

It might even be possible for him to make use fate energy as a mean to perfect 5 or 6 levels of Dao Foundation!

"This is an opportunity for my sect to rise. No one, not even Xuan Zhen Sect, can get in my way!"

Kong Luo muttered as his eyes flashed a steely green.

...

"Golden Lake, Thousand Scarlet, Luosong, Seventh Dawn and the Lanze Prefectures...have a population of 500,000 households and 2,000,000 civilians and soldiers. If they were properly integrated, the Xu family's father and son would be able to properly manage 50,000 soldiers without a problem..."

Fang Yuan transformed into a horned dragon and ceaselessly advanced in a stream of water.

At this moment, he naturally felt the benefits of being a horned dragon. The most direct benefit was that the horned dragon was continuously growing as he grew from 38 inches originally to over 3 yards long. A golden-green light flickered on his body and he was increasingly awe-inspiring.

"Crash!"

He pushed through everything in his way as not one water dweller dared to offend him. When he revealed a small portion of his dragon's might, many spirits pledged their allegiance to him and hundreds of fishes followed him. His fame was unmatched.

Even though he was just a young horned dragon, he was still a dragon and as such, he was naturally different from the other water spirits!

"Xu Ting is very smart. After taking over the 5 prefectures, he immediately reorganized his troops and aggressively develop the navy as he prepares to make use of the An River to bring the battle to Qi Lake. If he does not grasp this opportunity to expand his army and wait for Wang Qiao and the allied forces to finish their battle, things will be different..."

Once he entered An River, Fang Yuan immediately felt at ease as a large amount of spiritual energy in the water surge forth.

"This An River Dragon God failed to understand the right timing...as a demon race, he went against a greater power and had already lost half the battle. Although he had the right conditions, I come here with the Xu Family's dragon energy. He was unlucky, for I have met my benefactor."

In order to reach Qi Lake, Xu Ting had to dispatch his troops through the waterways and as such, the Golden Lake Navy would have to enter An River.

If the Dragon God opposed it, he would be fighting against the heavenly trend and would be killed.

One would be able to receive a lot of help when the fate energy is on his side. If the fate energy was not on his side, not even the hero would be able to save himself.

Now that power was on his side, he should make full use of the opportunity.

"Ah.....where do you come from?"

A few guards poked their heads out. Upon seeing Fang Yuan, they did not dare to offend him and quickly bowed. "Please enter the dragon palace to visit the Dragon God!"

"Haha.....I will not pay the An River Dragon God a visit. Help me convey to him the message to not oppose Heaven's will. If not, it will be too late when all hell breaks loose!"

Fang Yuan would be foolish if he were to battle the Dragon God and give his life up for Xu Ting. He immediately transformed into a streak of golden light and escaped far away.

After travelling for many days, the Dragon God was no longer able to catch him. A big lake filled with spiritual energy appeared before his eyes.

"Qi Lake, I am back!!"

Fang Yuan dove in, his heart filled with emotions.

[1] Successful candidate in the highest imperial civil service examination.

[2] Different ranking of officials in the imperial court.

Chapter 306: Rescue

In the 150-mile radius of Qi Lake, mist covered the vast surface of the lake.

Fang Yuan hid his dragon might and transformed into a carp. As he swam, he felt overwhelmed with emotions.

The Carp Transformation Technique was a must know for dragons, akin to an innate ability. If dragon gods were met with trouble, they would usually transform into a carp.

At that moment, Fang Yuan transformed into a black carp and swam around as if he was on a rampage.

"Speaking of which..., I am still under the Qi Lake Water God's warrant for arrest, but who could ever imagine a carp would have transformed into a dragon in merely ten years?"

The Qi Lake Water God, called Bai Guan, was a python that cultivated into a Water God through the imperial order. He could make waves and form rain. His aides included two powerful demon kings, an alligator snapping turtle and a water buffalo.

Nevertheless, since he could not transform into a dragon, he could not be called a Dragon God and was merely a Water God.

"For a python to transform into a dragon, it must undergo huge tribulations!"

As Fang Yuan thought of that, he gave a wry smile at once, "With the heavenly trend, humans are rising up and demons are not favoured. The number of tribulations the Water God must pass to transform into a dragon is huge and it would be impossible for him to do so!"

He could not transform into a dragon without overcoming heavenly tribulations and thus would remain a snake demon!

If only he did not possess the heavenly imperial order nor had the help of his demon kings, Fang Yuan could have settled him by himself.

"Hmm... and that Li Luan, if Xu Ting's power grows further, she would definitely not let off her father's killer!"

Once he thought of Qi Lake Water God, he could not help but to thought of Li Luan.

Li Luan was the previous Water God's daughter. In order to seek revenge, she stole An River Dragon God's pearl. It was an extremely daring move and reflected how resolute she was.

However, once she met Xu Ting, she fell in love with him. Not only did she gift away the Dragon Pearl, she sent herself in. It truly made Fang Yuan felt how the heavens made a fool of demons.

It was like how the Golden Court Dragon God got too close to the people dao for too long and relied on their beliefs for its own fate energy. Hence, he naturally got affected too.

This was why Fang Yuan chose not to get too close to people.

"I wonder how are those spirits at Lotus Pond are doing..."

Fang Yuan thought of his old haunt and rushed towards to Lotus Pond.

Vivid memories of the reserved Gui Zhong, the cute Luo Zhu and the unlucky crocodile appeared on his mind.

When he arrived near Lotus Pond, he realised something was amiss.

Many water dwellers have fled and groups of water guardians seemed to be searching for something.

"Eh? This seems weird!"

Fang Yuan was shocked as he saw that, "Could it be that another powerful demon has appeared in Lotus Pond? Is it being hunted down by the Water God? If not, what are they doing?"

When he was a black carp, he lived there. It was a remote spot in Qi Lake that did not have much spiritual energy nor powerful spirits. Fang Yuan could not think of why there was such a huge commotion.

Unless, they realised he was arriving and intentionally wanted to capture him. However, that was absurd and baseless.

"Hey! That black fish there! The Water God is trying to capture someone, you better leave quickly!"

One of the water guardians immediately hollered when it saw Fang Yuan approaching and its fierce aura spread across.

"Capturing someone? Who are you all capturing?"

Fang Yuan smiled, and slightly made use of his ability to satiate his curiosity.

"Of course it's that scallop who stole the deity position! The Water God has ordered, whichever water guardian captures that lady and presents the deity position would be promoted to general..."

The water guardian was ferocious looking and wielded a giant steel fork, but spoke uninhibitedly.

After it told Fang Yuan everything it knew, it then suddenly scratched its head, "Why did I tell you so much... wait a minute, you look very familiar!"

"Oh, you don't recognise me?"

Fang Yuan laughed.

The black carp he was currently transformed as was noticeably different from his original transformation; it had shinier scales and a dragon beard.

"I recognise you now, you are the Water God's wanted criminal! You are even more wanted than that shell lady!"

The water guardian suddenly recognised him and was elated, "After I catch you, the Water God would definitely promote me to a deity!"

It was overwhelmed with greed and without thinking of why such a black carp would suddenly appear there, it charged forward with its fork.

"Looks like it's a transformed water dweller too, its spiritual awareness... is worrying!"

Fang Yuan thought for a moment, the surrounding lake water immediately froze into ice and trapped the water guardian in it.

"Those who don't want to die, scram!"

With his spiritual will, it was as though a hurricane swept across with a tinge of dragon might.

Against the dragon's might, many of the water dwellers fled in terror.

"That scallop, could it be Luo Zhu?"

An unusual premonition appeared in Fang Yuan's mind and made him sped up.

...

Further inside the lake, there were many water guardians making its rounds. They were holding a magical equipment that looked like a bright pearl.

Leading it was a crab general. His whole body was golden in colour and he had four limbs. He was donned in metal armour and looked ferocious and strong.

"The Water God has instructed that we cannot let the shell lady escape or else we would be punished! We have already sealed off the entire Lotus Pond, she cannot run away! Search for her carefully!"

"Yes, Sir!"

Under the possibility of heavy rewards or heavy punishments, the water guardians were flustered and began searching more carefully.

As their search areas shrunk, suddenly, a dazzling red glow effused from a pearl which was spotted.

"It must be here!"

The water guardian who spotted it was overjoyed. The lakebed tremored as silt flew everywhere. Under the strong currents, a giant shell could be discerned.

"Bam!"

The shell was the size of a house. However, when the water guardian attempted to smash it, he let out a blood-curdling scream as his bones got smashed instead.

"Pew! Pew!"

The giant shell started expelling water currents in an attempt to escape, as though it was an undefeatable fortress rushing forward.

However, the crab general had chased after it for a long time, he already knew the shell lady's tricks. With a wave for his arm, a group of water spiders appeared and sprayed colorful nettings over her.

The nettings intertwined to form a huge net enveloping the entire shell.

"Pull!"

"Pull!"

The huge group began tugging and pulling the net.

With this huge strength, it finally stopped the giant shell from escaping as the water currents could not carry itself further.

"Go!"

The crab general waved its arm yet again and the group started to smash the shell repeatedly.

"How long would this take?"

At that moment, the shell opened slightly, a silhouette of an anxious-looking young lady carrying a pearl could be seen.

The crab general gave an irritated roar as he swung numerous large hammers on to the shell.

"Bam! Bam!"

The sound echoed like the muffled noise of thunder.

A crack appeared on the shell and the face of the shell lady inside turned pale at once. She raised her pearl and squealed, "Stop!"

Immediately, a divine light appeared and swept away the water dwellers, however, it got blocked by the light from the crab general's body.

"Hehe..., you and I are both Qi Lake's deities. We are both under the jurisdiction of my master, Qi Lake Water God, how dare you think you have a technique that I do not know of?"

The crab general laughed out loud, "Follow me back obediently and who knows the Water God might even pardon your crimes!"

"Dream on!"

The young lady bawled out, "Grandpa Gui Zhong died because he obeyed you all!"

"Stubborn fool!"

The crab general snorted, although she was right and he indeed intended to do so, he was still slightly disgruntled being called out.

He immediately raised his hammer and gave yet another powerful smash.

"Bam!"

The lake tremored again as cracks spread across the shell.

"Haha... foolish girl, let's see where can you run to?"

The crab general gave a wicked grin as she saw the young lady gave a panic-stricken look.

However, just as he raised his hammer again, he felt a sudden change in the surrounding currents.

The originally calm lake bottom turned into a vortex as a whirlpool that kept sucking in the crustacean army appeared.

"This is... demonic magic? Who is saving this girl?"

The crab general's heart turned stone cold as he stared at the vortex.

Sure enough, in the eye of the vortex, there was a black fish swimming leisurely.

"Carp spirit? This seems very familiar!"

The crab general paused for a moment before he immediately questioned, "Aren't you the carp who stole the Water God's treasure?"

At the same time, the shell lady trapped in the lake exclaimed, "Brother Fang Yuan?"

"It is Luo Zhu!"

As expected, Fang Yuan was the one who came over.

Fang Yuan was surprised as he saw the shell and its shell lady had grown a lot.

"To cultivate till this level, it must be due to what I taught her, but then, what is with the divine light?"

Although Fang Yuan was bewildered, he did not begin recounting past events.

This was because the crab general's hammer was approaching his head.

"Haha... such is fate, I can't believe this black carp just walked into the trap willingly!"

The crab general's four arms began smashing in a flurry.

"He is merely a water general?"

Fang Yuan was disappointed at such, "I still thought it would be a demon king..."

He swung its tail and, "Bam!"

Under the loud noise, two hammers flew out.

"Ah... you!"

At that moment, the crab general then realised the black carp in front of him was different, its strange energy made him thought of running away.

Unfortunately, Fang Yuan's actions were much faster than his. Just as he was about to turn around, a fiery red sword essence pierced through his head and he burst into flames.

Flaming!

Under the flames, the initially golden crab cooked through and turned red.

"Oh, this crab looks delicious!"

Fang Yuan did not bother about the cooked crab general anymore and went to the shell. He summoned the sword essence and cut the colourful net into pieces as Luo Zhu appeared from inside.

"It's been so long since I met you, you have grown so much!"

As he gazed at Luo Zhu, he smiled and lightly knocked her head like he used to.

Luo Zhu was stunned from the events, tears welled up in the corner of her eyes and turned into pearls as they fell, "You... are really big brother, sobs..., grandpa Gui Zhong has passed away..."

"What exactly happened? Also, why did you become a water deity?"

As Fang Yuan looked at the divine light on her body, he was astonished, he looked at the surrounding and added, "This is not where we should be talking, let's go!"

He then grabbed a slightly golden talisman from the crab's cooked body.

"Yea, I will listen to you!"

Luo Zhu nodded obediently and gave unconditional trust to Fang Yuan.

Chapter 307: Entrust

The lotus leaves swept away and the blue waves splashed.

Under a fragrant aroma, a small boat floated on the lake. Fang Yuan and Luo Zhu sat facing each other and in front of them was a brewing pot of tea.

"This spot is protected by my abilities. The Qi Lake Water God would not be able to discover us here. It has been ten plus years since we met, how have you been?"

Fang Yuan raised his teacup and smiled.

Although Bai Guan was the Qi Lake Water God, he could not meticulously search through every big and small detail in the 150-mile radius of Qi Lake.

Hence, all the powerful demons had abilities to conceal themselves and unless they were really nearby him, it was extremely hard for them to be detected.

"Umm..."

Luo Zhu's eyes welled with tears and began narrating, "After big brother left, many fierce water dwellers came over to Lotus Pond. After searching through many times with no results, they left and never came back... I followed your techniques and cultivated. My pearl gradually became rounder and fuller, while my body grew too. Most of the past ten years were very carefree and worriless for me, except a few months ago where grandpa Gui Zhong suddenly appeared in my dreams. He told me that the Water God was after his life and he was going to die soon, he also said since he and I were fated, he entrusted me with the deity position... Ever since then, those fierce water dwellers appeared..."

After hearing her, Fang Yuan was speechless, "That old green-haired tortoise? Nevermind, I will take a look myself! Don't move nor resist!"

As Fang Yuan spoke, he placed his finger on the area between her eyebrows.

Luo Zhu was dressed in a thin silk gown and radiated with the purity of a deity, her beauty was indescribable.

Facing Fang Yuan, she opened up herself to him.

After all, demons were simple-minded, the two of them had such a strong relationship before and hence, it was natural for her to open up to Fang Yuan.

"Hmm..., crystal clear, strong foundation, the magic is pure...."

Since she was cooperative, Fang Yuan could easily and clearly view such.

Fang Yuan nodded as he viewed, he then shifted his gaze to an imperial order talisman in Luo Zhu's sea of consciousness.

The talisman shined in a mixture of green and red light, and there was a tinge of heavenly energy from it. It was noticeably unique. Furthermore, the imperial order Fang Yuan just obtained from the crab general and the other imperial orders he had seen before paled in comparison; this talisman was vastly superior.

"This deity position seems like it was not formed from people dao's beliefs, it seems to be formed from pure heavenly energy..."

There were huge differences between a people dao deity and a natural heavenly deity. The latter could easily adjust the spiritual energy in its divine territory and its might could not be compared to the formers'.

"No wonder I felt this old green-haired tortoise was hiding something, I can't believe he was secretly accumulating for his deity position..."

Fang Yuan sensed a bit and detected the imperial order deity's territory, "Hmm..., its Lotus Pond and a nearby estuary..., hehe, this essentially means that part of the Qi Lake Water God's area of power has been cut off! Of course there was animosity! That old tortoise was timid and chose to play safe, who knows, he might even have coveted the Water God's position and got discovered and hence, put to death!"

Then why did he appear in Luo Zhu's dreams and gave her the deity position?

This was because she was the most powerful in Lotus Pond, hence, after the old tortoise, there was no other choice than her since she was the most qualified to inherit the deity position.

"Of course..., he seems to have some plans!" Fang Yuan thought.

Since he saw the imperial order was so close to being cultivated, Fang Yuan gathered his spiritual will and instructed, "Sister Luo Zhu, I want to help you to cultivate your deity position. Remember not to resist no matter what happens in your sea of consciousness, understood?"

"Yea! Just do it Big Brother!"

As Luo Zhu heard how dignified Fang Yuan instructed, she nodded her head solemnly.

"Hah!"

Fang pointed his fingers and three swords emerged with red, blue and green glows, surrounding the imperial order.

Even as the swords glowed, their sword radiance was well kept and there were no signs of sword essence dissipating. It showed that the swords were controlled powerfully.

For a dream master, it was like an innate ability to have such fine controls in the sea of consciousness.

The three swords displayed the power of their three talents, and sealed off the imperial order at once.

Seeing such, Fang Yuan finally stopped holding his breath and laughed, "Old tortoise! You have hidden really deeply! Just that... a small trace of your spiritual will was left behind in the deity position! To steal my sister's body, you have to pass through me first!"

The imperial order vibrated slightly, however, it did not move.

Fang Yuan then gave a mirthless smile and pointed his finger. A delicate 3 Talents Sword Array appeared immediately and isolated it.

Surges of sword essence emerged in the array and pierced towards the imperial order.

"Fang Yuan!"

The imperial order suddenly moved. Under Luo Zhu's screams of terror, it dazzled brightly and a green-robed elder appeared. It was that green-haired tortoise demon, Gui Zhong.

Gui Zhong was visibly distraught as he looked towards Fang Yuan and asked, "Why do you want to be so ruthless?"

"It is not that I am stone-hearted, it is because you are immoral!"

Fang Yuan scorned, "Originally, I could not be bothered about you cultivating your deity position, but since you planted your elemental clone right before your death, and wanted to replace her soul with yours, I will not let you off for harming my sister!"

"Swoosh!"

The fire and water swords converged as thunder sparked in the middle, it was a force that could not even be resisted by the imperial order's power.

Gui Zhong's body has long died and his elemental clone has already largely disappeared. At that moment, it was just a shadow. No matter how well it had hidden itself, it was not very powerful even if it was discovered.

Suddenly, the shadow dissipated, its face turned aggressive and said, "Ahh..., unless you really want to fight till one of us perishes? This is that lass' sea of consciousness, if I detonate the imperial order, she would die and her soul would be gone forever, unable to reincarnate! This is my bad, as long as you let me off this time, I swear I will immediately leave her body and look for another one, how about that?"

"How about no! You want to self-detonate? Why don't you try it? I'm sure only you would die!"

Dream masters were the most competent in manipulating the sea of consciousness, when Fang Yuan used his 3 Talents Sword Array, it was all for this. He grinned and said, "I will accept the gift you have sent on behalf of sister Luo Zhu! Go!"

"Swish!"

Lightning flashed.

Although Gui Zhong wanted to detonate the deity position and perish together, suddenly, lightning struck this old tortoise's forehead as Luo Zhu let out a scream.

He was stunned. He then exploded and turned into streaks of black vapour.

"I will just help you completely cultivate this!" Fang Yuan thought as the 3 Talents Sword Array shined mysteriously and slashed the imperial order.

The imperial order totally dissipated and turned into large amounts of golden red runes. Each of them contained heavenly axioms, encompassing some kind of natural power.

"Ah..., in actual fact, all roads lead to Rome, in the end, we are all learning about the rules along the way!"

Fang Yuan pondered, he then waved his hands and the streaks of black vapour originally from Gui Zhong surrounded his hand, as fragmented pieces of memories appeared.

"Big brother.., what are you doing..., I... I'm scared, it felt like I almost died just now!"

After completing, little Luo Zhu's voice could then be heard.

"Don't worry, come out now and accept your deity position!"

Fang Yuan smiled and dispelled the sword array. As he saw Luo Zhu's Yin spirit, he reached out his hand and dispersed the runes on her body.

"Woong!"

A divine light flashed and immediately, many magical inscriptions appeared on Luo Zhu's body. They were divine techniques granted by the heavens, it could harness the spiritual energy of Lotus Pond and the estuary.

"I... think I just suddenly gained knowledge of many things!"

Luo Zhu paused for a moment. The divine light on her body grew stronger.

"Yea, familiarise yourself with it!"

Seeing such, Fang Yuan exited her sea of consciousness. He saw the Luo Zhu in front of him had aged a few years but did not bother her as her eyes were shut and she was deep in thoughts. The streaks of black vapour on his hand dissipated, signifying that Gui Zhong's last remaining imprints in this realm had totally disappeared.

"This Gui Zhong... I can't believe that there were traces of true dragon blood in him, he was really secretive!"

As he thought of the scenes during cultivation, he mused, "This demon has carefully and profoundly schemed to be a true heavenly deity for a long time and he almost succeeded... Just that the timing was not right and he was found out by the Qi Lake Water God. Hence, he was ultimately met with inexorable tribulations."

Fang Yuan was not very interested in his background, just that he had greatly benefited from a deeper understanding of god dao.

"The real heavenly imperial order was formed by rules, its unique power was sourced from the heavens and earth, hence, there are so many different types of deities!"

"Whereas, for people dao deities, although they made use of the beliefs of people, it was not exactly the same as a heavenly deity. However, they can also ascend to a heavenly deity, as long as they do good deeds and accumulate heavenly karma!"

"When Gui Zhong was cultivating his deity position, he had already used up most of his fate energy, hence, not only was the timing not right, he was met with tribulations and ultimately died..."

"Pitter patter!"

Suddenly, mist appeared on the surface of the lake as moments later, dense raindrops splashed on to the surface of the lake.

"Thank you, big brother, for helping me to cultivate my deity position and removing the hidden danger!"

Luo Zhu opened her eyes and thanked with radiance.

She just realised how dangerous it was just now.

If not for Fang Yuan, the moment she finally cultivated her deity position, Gui Zhong would have snatched her soul and all her efforts would have gone down the drain.

"Now that you have your heavenly deity position, you automatically mastered how to control the weather! This is your fate!"

Fang Yuan was very gratified seeing how she now had her own abilities, "Just remember, in the future, as long as you do more good deeds, do your duties dutifully and don't go against the heavenly trend, there would be no harms nor tribulations!"

"Just that... Qi Lake Water God would definitely not do nothing about this deity position of mine!"

After cultivating her deity position, Luo Zhu understood many things, hence her expression turned slightly sorrow.

The Lotus Pond and the estuary were all part of Qi Lake, which were under the jurisdiction of the Water God. The Water God would definitely not be happy about part of his authority being carved out!

Furthermore, Fang Yuan knew how Luo Zhu was different from that crab general.

The deities under the Water God had the relationship akin to ministers and emperors, it was just a relationship of authority, and hence, these deities were easily commanded and controlled.

Whereas, Luo Zhu's deity position was accumulated from the heavens, it was akin to a military governor having its own rule. Which emperor would allow such?

Hence, the two parties would definitely fight with each other!

"Hehe..., don't worry, I will definitely help you with this matter. After all, this Water God is a nemesis of mine!"

Fang Yuan laughed and then looked above his head.

He saw green and golden streaks gathering and turning into flowers. They rippled as they bloomed auspiciously, revealing its extraordinariness.

Xu family's dragon energy was prospering. The family had occupied five prefectures and their troop was 200 million large. Naturally, the karma gained from it was extraordinary.

Such great progress meant that it was the time for revenge!

Chapter 308: Tribulation

"Name: Fang Yuan

Race: Horned Dragon

Essence: 36

Spirit: 36

Magic: 50

Profession: ???

Cultivation: ???

Technique: [9 Steps of Dragon Transformation Formula (7th Transformation)], [Weather Controlling Technique (Grade 1)], [Natural Magical Strength (Grade 3)], [8 Gates Sword Array (4th Sword) (1%)]

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

"After this round of harvest, I have fully formed the three swords. Since the thunder sword has been completed, I can now use the 3 Talents Sword Array!"

In the actualised dream world, the thunder sword flashed with lightning, it had a dignified and vicious might.

Also, soon enough, the fourth sword was slowly formed. It was pale green in colour, signifying the ultimate haste.

"The fourth sword, the Modest Wind Sword?"

Fang Yuan mumbled to himself solemnly.

As a dream master at the Illusionary Divine stage, every three tiers was a huge stage. If the fourth sword was formed, not only could he harness the power of wind, thunder, water and fire to cast the 4 Emblems Sword Array, each magical soldier would have its own sword spirit! Once the magical soldier got their spirituality, their power would be way stronger than before! Not only would it not require control and could attack enemies on its own, it could even become like the Fiery Dragon Child!

"At the 4th Tier of Illusionary Divine, it would allow one to actualise spiritual properties in objects!"

"At the 7th Tier of Illusionary Divine, it would allow one to actualise a race of beasts and a spiritual land. Its power could even defeat that of True Elementals and True Divines!"

"I am already at the 3rd Tier of Illusionary Divine and it's only a small distance away from the 4th Tier of Illusionary Divine..."

Fang Yuan's eyes gleamed, "But of course, before that, I have to settle the foreign evil forces that tainted my dream elemental force..."

If he did not settle the matter and ascended the tier, he would fall into a ploy!

"Let's go!"

He stopped thinking and took a look at Luo Zhu who was beside him, "Let's visit that Qi Lake Water God, Bai Guan!"

The moment he spoke, a loud, thunderous noise suddenly erupted.

Grey clouds loomed while lightning and thunder struck, all the water dwellers in Qi Lake were alarmed. One after another, they floated up to the surface of the lake to look at the unusual scene.

"Hmm..., why does this scene looks so familiar to the one that happened ten plus years ago?"

Luo Zhu was unbelievably shocked, "A dragon transformation tribulation?"

"It is... the tribulation to transform into a dragon!"

Fang Yuan was puzzled. He then looked at the spiritual energy swarming into Qi Lake and sighed, "It's Qi Lake Water God... he is about to undergo a tribulation. I can't believe we are involved in his people tribulation! Is this a taste of his own medicine?"

There was no doubt that the Water God Bai Guan's fate energy has dropped to its lowest point.

Just as Fang Yuan made up his mind to look for trouble with him, he had brought about his own Heavenly Tribulations for his dragon transformation.

As Fang Yuan had experienced it before, Fang Yuan knew how horrifying it was. Although the Qi Lake Water God had the help of his deity position, even if he made it out alive, he would be seriously injured.

Furthermore, with Fang Yuan in his people tribulation, the Water God would definitely not be able to survive it!

"Unknowingly, I've become the heavenly trend's pawn!" Fang Yuan thought.

He sighed as his fear of this unpredictable heavenly trend grew.

...

On one area of the lake's surface.

In the mackerel sky, indistinct flashes of purple lightning appeared.

Below it, the concentration of spiritual energy that swarmed in was so dense that it looked like a physical entity. The white smog formed shrouded the centre and in it, only a shadow of a gigantic snake could be discerned. One of its scale and one of its eyes could be vaguely seen and it had a majestic and divine aura.

"Brother buffalo, what do you think are the chances of brother Bai Guan passing the tribulations this time?"

On the side, two demons kept a distance from the white smog as they only dared to view from far.

The Heavenly Tribulation was no joke, if they were to help him pass the tribulation, they would definitely be counterattacked!

If they helped, the tribulations would become even more dangerous and in the end, they would all suffer from baleful consequences! Even though they were birds of a feather and were very close, it was not to this extent!

"Brother Bai Guan's power is extraordinary! He used his secret techniques to forcefully delay the tribulations till now. He has already fully cultivated his Water God imperial order. With the spiritual energy from the 150-mile radius of Qi Lake, there should be a 60% chance!"

What the water buffalo said made the alligator snapping turtle pause for a moment before he gestured, "60%?"

The alligator snapping turtle was in disbelief, "The Qi Lake Water God is one of the rare deities amongst us demons! He would have at least a 90% chance of passing the tribulations!"

"That was last time! With the heavenly trend now? I doubt so!"

The water buffalo then continued, "Us demons are downfalling while the humans are rising! The saints in my race have either died or experienced a severe reduction in their cultivation. Now that a demon is at his tribulation stage, it would definitely suffer from the wrath and envy of the heavens!"

This realm's Heavenly Tribulation was a way for the heavenly trend to maintain balance.

As the demons were meant to downfall, these few years, the tribulations the demons underwent were more and more brutal. Out of ten, only one could survive!

Anyway, Heavenly Tribulations could not be delayed easily.

It was already a feat for Bai Guan to forcefully delay it till now.

"If brother Bai Guan becomes a dragon, he will lose all his snake characteristics and be able to control the weather. Furthermore, since he is a deity, even if demons are downfalling, he can still protect our Qi Lake at the very least..." the alligator snapping turtle muttered.

As the heavenly trend brought about the rise of humans, the demons reacted differently. There were some who resisted, some who gave up and some who escaped faraway to preserve their elemental energy. However, for the few of them, they just wanted to be a ruler of their area, Qi Lake.

"Hmm... those d*amn humans, if I see any of them, I will eat them up!"

The water buffalo snorted out white fumes as his eyes turned blood red in anger.

"Hehe..., that's right, nevermind about the land near Qi Lake, the waters belong to us water dwellers, don't the humans dare try to occupy it!"

The alligator snapping turtle further added, "Let's not talk about others, now that brother Bai Guan has ten thousands of soldiers and tens of generals, no matter what ships the humans bring over, we will topple them over!"

"As long as brother Bai Guan passes this tribulation, carefree days are ahead of us!"

The water buffalo clenched his teeth.

Suddenly, lightning flashed and thunder roared. The mighty thunder demonstrated its power to determine life or death and even the two demons were extremely frightened.

The Heavenly Tribulation had started!

"Kaboom!"

Numerous lightning and thunder merged together, forming a beam of purple light striking down.

The white smog dispersed at once and within it, a large red-eyed snake appeared.

He roared to the skies, its scales were burnt and blood was oozing out from it.

"Unbelievable! This is only the first thunderbolt, and its power is so strong?"

The water buffalo and alligator snapping turtle's expression changed at once, "Is this a heavenly punishment? By using secret techniques to change the timing of the Heavenly Tribulations, he is indeed being punished for it!"

"Boom! Boom! Boom!"

The Heavenly Tribulation was merciless as it continued without any delay.

At that instance, three purple thunderbolts struck one after another.

"Ahh... as the Qi Lake Water God, help me, heavenly energy!"

Bai Guan hollered, a divine light appeared and shrouded its body, alongside the white smog, forming a layer of defence. However, it only lasted for a fleeting moment before it got destroyed.

After the three thunderbolts, Bai Guan was severely injured, his body turned black from the burns and his wounds were ripped. However, his might became stronger and there was a lump on his head and lower abdomen.

"Ah..., brother Bai Guan!"

The water buffalo and alligator snapping turtle were elated at such. "It was amazing how he could persevere on under such circumstances! He must be transforming into a dragon now!"

"Swish!"

Suddenly, at that moment, a giant shell appeared from far, inside it was a young lady, "Hehe..., I play a part in the jurisdiction of Qi Lake too! Scram!"

She looked pure and holy, with a command of hers, part of the lake's spiritual energy dispersed immediately.

"Ahh..., it's that old tortoise demon's b*stard!"

"How dare you!"

The water buffalo and alligator snapping turtle immediately charged at her without hesitation.

Not only did the Heavenly Tribulation consisted of thunder, people tribulation was part of it too!

In this realm, no matter how horrible a powerful demon's reputation was, they always had one or two friends on their side who served as protectors!

"You are just a shell lady who obtained the deity position by luck, how dare you disrupt the Water God ascending? Die!"

The water buffalo roared, he then summoned his black cloud and stepped on it.

"Boom!"

It was as though the sky had crashed and fell! A black hoof suddenly appeared in mid-air, compressing the air around it. It made Luo Zhu felt like she could not escape.

Even though Luo Zhu has already become a deity, she still seemed tender and inexperienced facing such a powerful demon.

However, Luo Zhu smiled, there was no hint of fear in her face, "Stupid buffalo, you have fallen into my trap!"

"Swish! Swoosh! Slash!"

Just as she finished saying that, three sword radiance flew out from the giant shell. The three sword radiance had the properties of water, fire and thunder. It charged towards the water buffalo in mid-air and the beam of light formed a triangular shape. It was an array that trapped the water buffalo in it.

In the beam of light, three magical soldiers appeared and displayed its prowess.

The water, fire and thunder sword essence charged to full after a short while, and the water buffalo's shrieks of terror could be heard from within.

The 8 Gates Sword Array of a dream soldier master finally displayed its cruel side in this realm.

"Bang!"

A gigantic corpse of the water buffalo fell from mid-air and blood splattered everywhere.

After the 3 Talents Sword Array has been formed, no matter how powerful a demon would be, once it was trapped in it, it would be killed immediately!

"Aaahh!"

After witnessing the death of the water buffalo, the alligator snapping turtle ran away as fast as he could immediately.

"You want to run? It's too late!"

Fang Yuan guffawed as he wielded the thunder sword and behind him, the silhouette of a horned dragon appeared. Under the divine light, he leapt towards the alligator snapping turtle and captured him."

"Ahh... you are a dragon? Why do you want to kill me?" the alligator snapping turtle asked.

He was terrified by the dragon's might and its demonic strength dropped at once.

"You don't need to know!"

Although those three demons have met Fang Yuan before, the Fang Yuan then was merely a black carp. Who would have linked it together with the Fang Yuan now?

"Have a taste of my sword!"

Fang Yuan was furious at his enemy. With a move of his right hand, a thunder sword essence struck the alligator snapping turtles back heavily.

"Kaboom!"

With a flash of lightning, numerous burnt marks appeared on his shell. The alligator snapping turtle still clenched its teeth and tried to escape.

Since the alligator snapping turtle had some dragon bloodline in him too, he naturally knew how powerful such a dragon was. Furthermore, the dragon was even equipped with the thunder sword!

The alligator snapping turtle had strong defences, his shell was extremely tough from years of cultivation, it could even survive attacks from humans' magical weapons.

However, under the thunder sword, his shell cracked apart and blood oozed out.

"Good! This thunder sword enacts punishments for the heavens and is the nemesis of all evil demons!"

Seeing such, Fang Yuan was ecstatic.

Chapter 309: Dragon God

Most of the demons in this realm were extremely afraid of tribulations by lightning.

Since Fang Yuan had the thunder sword, it was the number one weapon in punishing them. Hence, demons retreated in fear!

"Your turtle shell is not bad, I will gladly keep it!"

Fang Yuan was confident, with a few strikes of the thunder sword, it destroyed all the alligator snapping turtle's demonic magic and magical equipment.

Turtles were tenacious by nature and the alligator snapping turtle kept trying to escape. To Fang Yuan's surprise, the wounds on the turtle's body were being healed by his own vital elemental energy. Fang Yuan was slightly envious as he exclaimed, "What a regenerating body! Such a body could quickly restore wounds, but what if the damage you received in an instant is more than the limit?"

"3 Talents Sword Array! Go!"

Compared to the water buffalo demon, the alligator snapping turtle's speed was way too slow. It was like a living target for Fang Yuan.

Fang Yuan was done fooling around. He immediately cast his three divine swords and formed the 3 Talents Sword Array.

"Kaboom!"

"Swoosh!"

In the array, flashing thunder, searing flames and frosty ice turned into sword essence and launched at the alligator snapping turtle continuously.

The astonishing sword radiance was like a tempest. Nearing the end, it condensed into a single point and a loud boom could be heard.

"Back!"

The three divine sword turned into a stream of light and was kept inside Fang Yuan's cuff.

Water from the surrounding filled back the originally exposed lake bed and blood dispersed. There was only a turtle shell left behind, although it had numerous wounds on it, it still remained intact.

"Not bad indeed..."

Fang Yuan smiled slightly and kept the turtle shell.

Luo Zhu was stunned at such a scene, she was left speechless. She was shocked at Fang Yuan's ease in annihilating these two powerful demons. With such power, he must have many enemies!

"Kaboom!"

At that moment, accompanied with suffocating pressure, the last thunderbolt finally struck.

The snake was severely wounded by then.

However, he was no longer a snake.

He had a jade horn on its head and two small claws below his abdomen. While his dragon tail was still unadorned and plain, his body was filled with the characteristics of a dragon. It was evident he had become a white-coloured water dragon!

"The Water God is indeed powerful! He even managed to skip the young dragon period and transformed into a water dragon immediately!"

As Fang Yuan came over to the side and took a look, he was in awe. He knew Bai Guan's current position was higher than his since he was only a horned dragon.

At that moment, the water dragon roared. He had used up all the tricks in his sleeve and he could only exhaust all his remaining effort to face the lightning tribulations with his body.

"Kaboom!"

Lightning struck and water splashed everywhere.

The dark clouds dispersed and the warm and sunny sunlight appeared.

After the lightning tribulations, what was left behind was a white-coloured water dragon that was nearly cut in half.

Fang Yuan and Luo Zhu went forward and looked into the water dragon's frightened eyes.

"The two of you..."

The water dragon was severely injured, he had used up all his accumulated fate energy and was at his weakest point.

The water dragon almost did not have enough energy to speak, he finally muttered slowly, "...This is unfair...! To transform into a dragon, I had spent so long plotting and it had cost me so much..."

Such a thought caused pearl-like tears to emerge from the dragon's eyes.

"Big brother..."

As Luo Zhu was inexperienced and naive, she was slightly moved by the scene.

"Haha..., don't be deceived by him. Qi Lake Water God, if you still want to live, then hand over the Qi Lake imperial order and your Water Dragon Pearl as vouch!"

Fang Yuan chuckled.

"Never!"

The water dragon's eyes filled with rage and enmity at once, "The Water God position might be discussable, but my life, the Dragon Pearl? Impossible! If I give you my Dragon Pearl, wouldn't I be under your manipulation forever?"

The water dragon hurled his tail and sent menacing waves across the lake. He was trying to escape by creating confusion.

"Even though he is on his last breath, he is still the Qi Lake Water God. Inside his area, he will recover by a small amount with every second delayed!"

Fang Yuan transformed into a horned dragon and plunged into the waters, "Be still!"

Fang Yuan's Weather Controlling Technique and Water Controlling Technique did not lose to the water dragon's.

"Ah..., I'll fight you!"

The water dragon snorted, he gave up his original plan of escaping through the waters and charged towards Fang Yuan viciously.

"Hehe!"

Fang Yuan gave a wry smile and he suddenly opened his mouth. A beam of lightning appeared and struck the water dragon's body as the thunder sword travelled through the beam and pierced the water dragon in an instance.

"Boom!"

Sparks flew, scales and blood splattered everywhere.

Seizing the opportunity, Fang Yuan used his horn and lunged towards the water dragon's wound caused by the lightning tribulations.

The water dragon let out a scream and grabbed Fang Yuan with his claws.

"Haha..., you think I don't have claws?"

Fang Yuan laughed, the water and fire sword essences appeared at his abdomen and formed the shape of sharp claws, "Water-Fire Dual Sword Array, charge!"

"Glub! Glub!"

Bubbles and blood rose to the surface of the lake and dyed half of the lake's surface into a golden red colour.

Luo Zhu was stunned at such a scene, but she could not interfere.

"Hruuuuuu, hruuuuuuu!"

The sunny skies abruptly turned into a sea of dark clouds. Gale winds raged and a storm erupted at once!

"When dragons emerge, the waters are calm; when dragons die, the heavens and earth weep!"

For no reason, Luo Zhu suddenly thought of that sentence and blurted it out loud.

Under the turbulent waves, the severed water dragon was washed ashore. Streams of golden red blood flowed continuously, revealing the pale colour of his flesh.

Bai Guan was literally almost bled dry.

"Nooo!"

Bai Guan's face was ashen as he stammered, "As Qi Lake Water God, I have led ten thousands of water dwellers, why have I fallen into such depths of despair!"

"Although you have never gone against the heavens, you have forsaken your morals for your own benefits!"

The horned dragon emerged from the waters and transformed into a young man donned in a robe. He sighed and continued, "When you killed the previous Water God, have you not thought about how he was so close to transforming into a dragon? Although he was a green snake, his ancestors were true dragons and he was naturally protected by fate energy. After you killed him, you opened a can of worms for yourself. The loss of the Dragon Pearl and the tribulation this time both resulted from that!"

Bai Guan was stunned at what Fang Yuan said. After a long while, he finally said, "Not bad! Indeed!"

He looked at Fang Yuan curiously, "No one else knew about the green dragon's Dragon Pearl, were you that black carp?"

"That's right, I am!"

"Haha... I guess karma always finds a way!"

Bai Guan laughed, with a shiver of his body, his breath stopped at once. A Yin spirit appeared with a divine light and escaped at the speed of light.

"At such a moment, you still do not understand the order of nature..."

Fang Yuan shook his head and sighed, he then pointed his finger.

A thunder sword essence emerged and caught up the escaping light immediately. Before it could say anything, it was annihilated into pieces.

"If you obediently handed over the imperial order, I might have even gifted you some true aura for you to reincarnate. But since you tried to deceive me with words and then seize the opportunity to escape with your elemental clone to stage a comeback next time, I did not hesitate to annihilate you!"

As long as such heavenly deities had a small amount of elemental clone left, there would be a chance for them to make a comeback.

For example, the Golden Court Dragon God also lost its dragon body in a tribulation, however, since many commoners believed in him and he received lots of offerings from them, he formed his golden body. The golden body was comparable to the dragon body and hence, it was a silver lining for him.

After Bai Guan's elemental clone dissipated, an imperial order was left behind. It was made of pure gold and had a slight green glow from within. The runes were even hundred times more profound and mysterious than that of Luo Zhu's.

At that moment, the imperial order turned into a beam of light and went to Fang Yuan's hands.

"Eh?"

Fang Yuan kept it and pondered, "Since the past, the Water God position of such great rivers and great lakes had to be dragons. This was because dragons had the innate ability to control weather and were heavenly deities!"

"Thus, even if I gave the imperial order to Luo Zhu, with her cultivation and karma now, it might even harm her! Whereas, for me, it is suitable!"

He originally had some qualms about people dao's deities.

But now, he had a deeper understanding and his mindset had changed, especially towards the Qi Lake Water God's deity position, where it was formed from the natural order of the heavens and earth, which was very beneficial for a dream master's cultivation.

Furthermore, he was just at the horned dragon transformation. If things were to go awry, he could quickly escape.

"I will try being a Dragon God then!"

The golden green imperial order exploded and turned into an abundance of runes which seeped into Fang Yuan's body.

"Kaboom!"

Suddenly, a mighty aura descended as the winds and rain got stronger.

Fang Yuan solemnly emerged from the divine light, he was shiny and ripples of water shrouded his entire body. It could be discerned that he was linked to the entire Qi Lake's spiritual energy.

Luo Zhu was astonished at such a scene.

Last time, as Bai Guan was a white snake, it was still possible for her to harness Lotus Pond's spiritual energy.

But now, as Fang Yuan was a horned dragon, he was a Dragon God, and hence, she could not possibly resist his power.

On the lake, lots of fishes appeared to pay respects and worship him.

"I, Lotus Pond Water God, Luo Zhu, pay my respects to Dragon God!"

Seeing the dignified Fang Yuan, Luo Zhu immediately composed herself and greeted him.

"I now grant you the title of Lotus Pond Water God. You are now my aide!" Fang Yuan announced placidly.

Luo Zhu paused for a moment and felt the uneasy imperial order in her body had calmed down at once. She was elated, "Thank you, Dragon God!"

As Bai Guan was a water snake, even when he became a heavenly deity, he could only be called a Water God.

However, as Fang Yuan was a dragon, he was immediately called a Dragon God. His status had rose immediately.

"Follow me to the Dragon Palace!"

Fang Yuan turned into a horned dragon and swam to the Dragon Palace.

"Great to meet you, Dragon God!"

The demons were afraid of those who were powerful.

When all the water dwellers saw Fang Yuan's divine light and his might as a true dragon, they immediately paid their respects to him.

"I will retreat for three years, any matters in Qi Lake would be handled by the tortoise guard and Luo Zhu. Unless as a last resort, do not disturb me!"

Inside the crystal-like Dragon Palace, Fang Yuan immediately designated a tortoise guard and passed down the command.

"Yes, Dragon God, I will obey your commands!"

None of the water dwellers dared to disobey him.

"Ok, all of you may leave now, I am sealing the Dragon Palace!"

Fang Yuan waved his arms coolly.

After Bai Guan obtained the imperial order, it took him ten plus years to forcefully cultivate it. As a Dragon God, Fang Yuan still required three years as Qi Lake was still considerably large.

Chapter 310: Three Years

Time flew by in the Dragon Palace.

Three years passed in a blink of an eye.

In the palace hall, Fang Yuan sat on his throne and gradually opened his eyes, "I have finally fully cultivated the imperial order!"

The Qi Lake Water Dragon was a heavenly deity with control over the spiritual energy of the entire 150-mile radius of Qi Lake, a manifestation of its abilities.

Each and every rune and inscription on the imperial order were all sacred texts! It contained arcane and unpredictable powers, and were reflections of the laws that governed the realm.

By wielding knowledge of such laws, one could then possess great abilities and be able to harness the spiritual energy of the entire Qi Lake.

"Although it is just a position and not my own power, it is already very beneficial for my understanding of the laws."

Fang Yuan suddenly thought of the powers the royals held in Da Qian Empire.

Prominent Divine dream masters were naturally of no match to True Elemental spiritual knights and True Divine martial artists. However, if he had the blessing of the heavens in this realm as a dragon, he would be able to fight them.

In actual fact, this was also one of the uses of the imperial order in a larger extent.

Going against such kind of blessings was like opposing the realm it came from and its laws. With Da Qian Empire's natural source, even the Prominent Divine dream masters had to be fearful of such blessings.

"Perhaps..., the purpose of dream masters exploring other realms was not only to search for the source! It was to occupy and control a realm powerful enough to fight with Da Qian?"

Fang Yuan closed his eyes, the situation of the entire Qi Lake appeared in his mind.

However, there were a few spots covered in mist. It meant that those areas were under the protection of powerful forces or arrays, and were most likely occupied by powerful demons. Thus, they appeared as eye-catching as fireflies in the night skies.

"I guess being able to understand the big picture from a look is part of my power as a heavenly deity?"

Fang Yuan flicked his fingers.

"Woonnggg!"

A force spread across the entire Dragon Palace and lit up the place. The seals used to seal the palace disappeared at once too.

Drums and bells rang as the doors opened to receive the worship of the commoners.

"Sir!"

The tortoise guard and Luo Zhu immediately rushed over and paid respects to Fang Yuan.

"Tortoise guard, bring over the shells ladies and the water dwellers' elite troops to fill the Dragon Palace! As the Dragon God, I will meet my people later! It has to be very dignified!"

Fang Yuan instructed in a majestic and imposing way while holding a jade ornament.

"Yes, Sir!"

The tortoise guard immediately proceeded to do what he was told.

"What's the situation now? What about the spirits?"

Fang Yuan turned and looked at Luo Zhu.

"After you killed the three demons, other spirits were naturally fearful of you! They have already prepared celebratory gifts for you as a sign of allegiance!"

Luo Zhu answered respectfully.

In reality, the moment Fang Yuan obtained the divine position, all these were expected.

Whereas, Luo Zhu did not pay close attention to the matters regarding the humans.

"Xu family's fate energy and mine are intertwined. In the past three years, I could still sense that they were growing well. They have been strengthening their territory till now, and I guess it's time for war..." Fang Yuan thought as his eyes sparkled.

It was the right timing for Xu Ting's troops to be dispatched.

He then calmly ordered, "After this homage, I will be hosting a feast for the officials and the powerful demons! Invite them over!"

"Yes, Sir!"

As the Qi Lake Water God, Fang Yuan's words were all mandates. Hence, they were all immediately obeyed and properly carried out.

As the lake housed numerous kinds of spirits, it made him realise a certain difference. "Oh..., even as the water dwellers in Qi Lake reproduce, there are very few demons. There are only around 20,000 demons, and more than half of them are my army..."

As Fang Yuan realised this, he understood something.

Beasts were beasts and demons were demons, they were two different things!

In this realm, although there were many different species of animals, plants and even water dwellers, those who could become spiritually aware and cultivate into demons were the extreme few.

Unless both parents were powerful demons, their offsprings would be born as beasts and had to slowly learn, even if they were to have an innate disposition to be demons.

Due to their restricted population size, their foundation would not be as strong and thus, their position as rulers would naturally decline.

This was the heavenly trend and could not be changed!

Whereas for humans, just in one prefecture, there would be tens of thousands of them! Although most were stupid, they could be trained with basic combatant skills, and with a large enough foundation, the potential for cultivation would grow too.

Hence, humans were the rulers of all; They could grasp the heavenly fate energy and were favoured by the heavenly trend!

"Greetings, Dragon God! May you enjoy boundless longevity!"

At that moment, a group of servants and guards arrived and stood at attention.

Large numbers of water dwellers then came forward and worshipped the new Dragon God. They were slightly uneasy at the sight of the Dragon God.

The two previous Water God's of Qi Lake were both snake demons but this time, it was finally a dragon.

Also, the way the Dragon God killed the three demons made them fearful of him.

"As long as you all do not commit any offences under my rule, you all will enjoy a peaceful and happy life!"

Fang Yuan smiled, "Come, follow me to review the troops!"

Outside the Dragon Palace, 8,000 soldiers gathered. They had a hint of demonic energy and yet had some divine light too.

They were amassed by Bai Guan and his predecessor and maintained by the tortoise guard. With the 8,000 of them, it was beneficial for Fang Yuan.

As they felt the new Dragon God's might and divine light, the crustacean army did not hesitate to worship, "Greetings, Sir! I pledge my life to you!"

The tidy formation represented a strong force in the lake. Such a display made other powerful spirits' expressions change at once.

"All of you will be rewarded for your loyalty and protection of the Dragon Palace! Enjoy the feast!"

Fang Yuan appeared elated as he gave his instructions. He then gathered the officers to enter the Dragon Palace to enjoy the feast.

The melodious drums echoed around the palace.

During the feast, numerous servants joyously presented the delicacies and as they caroused, words of respect could be heard continuously.

Fang Yuan sat on his dragon throne with a golden cup in his hands while he smiled looking at the scene.

It was a lively celebration!

This was the Dragon God's enjoyment!

...

At Da Chu, although Wang Qiao had ascended the throne, none of the military occupied towns recognised him as the emperor, and hence, the regnal dating system of the previous emperor continued. It was now the 8th year of Yong An.

Inside Golden Lake Prefecture.

Xu Ting was just in his early twenties, but he already had a strong and vigorous appearance. He had also married his wife, who was a lady from a noble family. She was cultured and refined, a perfect match for him.

Furthermore, they had a son and a daughter.

Compared to his wife, Li Luan was still a titleless maid, which also caused gossip to spread.

Xu Ting also had a moustache. He looked towards Li Luan and thought for a while but then stopped immediately.

The world was in chaos and there was no time for such relationships!

Xu Ting walked into the room and paid respects to Xu Ren, "Father!"

"Oh, my son has come over, have a seat!"

Xu Ren was very satisfied with this son of his.

"I have followed your orders and finished organizing the troops. They are currently separated into 10 battalions and each battalion has 3,000 soldiers. There are also 20,000 marines and one hundred warships!"

The five prefectures near Golden Court Lakes produced plenty of goods and were not prone to natural disasters. Thus, with slight organisation, their strength easily took shape.

"Hmm, in this three years, we have managed to train the troops and form close relationships with the officials. Now, our officers are already well trained and would be able to hold their own ground."

Xu Ren stroked his beard delightfully, "With such a large troop, we can win a war! Xu He, what do you think?"

A middle-aged man walked forward, he was an officer appointed by Xu Ren to be in charge of commerce. In actual fact, he was the leader of their spies. He paid respects to Xu Ren and Xu Ting, and then reported, "Sir! General! The fake king Wang Qiao was ambushed and killed at Luolong Hillside, and his army of 10,000 men has fallen apart!"

"What?"

The news was earth-shattering, Xu Ting immediately stood up in shock at first, but the expression on his face turned into joy immediately, "Wang Qiao is dead? Heaven is really helping our family!"

Although the battle was very fierce, Wang Qiao still had an advantage as he had control of the imperial court and the imperial guards. In the past three years, he had already annihilated five military occupied towns. But now, just as he was about to fully succeed, he was met with a sudden death.

With his death, the imperial court had no leader, and with the opposition from the royalties of the original emperor, Wang Qiao's followers were bound to be completely purged.

The five remaining military occupied towns also suffered severe losses to their strength as many of their soldiers were heavily injured or dead. It was a total mess for them to recuperate, occupy more territories and attack the capital at the same time.

If this was not the perfect opportunity, then when would it be?!

"I can't believe it, Wang Qiao just died like that..."

As Xu Ting's biggest enemy and obstruction just died, it made him slightly worried, "Who was the one who planned it?"

Wang Qiao was so close to completing his grand plans but died suddenly. After Xu Ting's initial joy, he felt a chill down his spine as he sensed there was something sinister.

"Although the five military occupied towns proclaimed allegiance to each other, but in reality, the one in charge was still Xinfeng army's military governor, Baili Xuandu!"

"Xinfeng army, Baili Xuandu!"

As Xu Ting uttered his name, he knew he was his biggest foe.

"If I was Baili Xuandu, I would have immediately charged to the capital and forced the imperial court to hand me the title of the emperor!"

Xu Ting took a few steps, his eyes radiating with sharpness.

"That's a good guess, my son!"

Xu Ren sighed as he passed an intelligence report to Xu Ting.

After Xu Ting read through it, he realised Xinfeng army's movements were indeed as he predicted. Furthermore, they had received the backing of two other military occupied towns. It was an urgent matter, Xu Ting said, "This is not good, if our family still wants to rise to power, we have to use two methods! Firstly, I will quickly lead the troops along An River to Qi Lake and conquer all the prefectures along the way, thus, occupying half the country! Also, we have to send spies to the capitals to influence or divide them, as long as Baili Xuandu does not easily conquer the capital!"

"That's right!"

Xu Ren said, "Since you have the will, just do it! Three days later, we will dispatch the troop!"

"Yes, father!"

Xu Ting replied, and his voice was like a warcry.

Inside Golden Court Lake, a shadow emerged to gaze at the spiritual energy ashore and he sighed, "After three years, is it finally happening?"

The shadow was Golden Court Dragon God, he appeared puzzled and thought, "How did Wang Qiao just die like that? Demons must have interfered!"