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Book 8: Raindragon Guard Chapter 12: Entrance

Ning felt a ripple pass through the area around him. When he had been teleported from Serpentwing Lake to the underwater estate, it had been a similar feeling.

“Eh?” Everything before him suddenly grew clear. Mu Northson was standing next to him, and other Immortal cultivators were around them as well. “We made it?” Northson stared, wide-eyed, at the surrounding area. “That really was fast.”

Ning carefully weighed the surroundings as well. They were currently in a teleportation array that was three hundred meters tall; clearly, it was a size smaller than the one by the Crimson Dragon Mountains. Off in the distance...there were wild marshes, mountains, lakes, and wilderness all about them, as far as the eye could see.

“Two million kilometers in the blink of an eye.” Ning had known what was going to happen, but after experiencing it for himself, he couldn’t help but sigh in amazement. “I heard that some Immortals can instantly teleport a million kilometers. I wonder how long it will be before I have that ability.”

“All of you, come out.” “Hurry up.” Two ancient voices rang out, and two plainly dressed elders outside the teleportation array waved towards them. Only now did the Immortal practitioners walk out from the teleportation array.

“All of you, listen closely,” one of the white-haired, slightly-pudgy elders barked. “These are the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains. As far as you should be concerned, the only safe spot in the entirety of the wild marshes is this spot, right here! There are always Raindragon Guards stationed here, and a grand formation has been laid down which no one dares to trespass through.”

Ning and Northson all looked over carefully. They, too, had discovered that this teleportation formation was built atop a mountain peak, which was ringed with Immortal cavern estates. Most likely, quite a few people were stationed here.

“There are a few other things to remind you of,” the fat elder said. “The first is that for three months, you are not permitted to come here. If you come here to avoid danger, you will have failed.”

“The second is that while you are adventuring in the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains, you must be extremely careful; do not stay in any single place for too long, such as for a month or longer. You must know that there are far more monsters here in the wild marshes than there are humans, and they are far more familiar with the Gaol Mountains than you are. If you stay in one place for too long...you will make it easy for the monsters to join forces against you and attack you en-masse. However, staying in one place to rest for a day or two every so often is fine.”

Ning and the others were listening carefully. This was all potentially life-saving advice.

“The third is that although the monsters of the wild marshes are dangerous, the natural environment of the Gaol Mountains is even more dangerous. Some places might be filled with shattered space...if you aren’t careful, you might exit our world, at which point, given your current level of power, you will all die.”

“The fourth is that due to environmental issues, getting one’s bearings is quite difficult in the Gaol Mountains region. Don’t just rely on your senses to judge directions! You need to judge the directions in accordance with the movement of the sun, the moon, and the stars in the skies. Otherwise, if you simply rely on your own senses...you will never be able to return, and will forever be spinning in circles within the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains.”

“Alright. The four most important points have already been provided to you. Go. I hope that in three months time, I’ll be able to see you all return,” the fat elder said.

Finally, the skinny elder spoke out as well. “If you discover that it is too dangerous and that you are unable to handle it, you’d best head back in a hurry. Although you will have failed, you will have at least preserved your life.”

“Go, go.” The fat elder waved his hand. “Go,” the skinny elder said as well. Ning and the rest of the Immortal disciples all stared towards those hazy outlines of Immortal cavern estates ringing the mountain. They could all sense the surge of powerful energy surrounding this entire mountain peak. This was the power of that formation.

And then...swish! Swish! One streak of light after another flew out from the peak at high speed, flying towards the outside. Some moved alone, while others moved in pairs or triplets.

“Senior apprentice-brother Ji Ning, where shall we go?” Northson asked. “Every direction is the same,” Ning said. Sweeping the area with his gaze, he pointed towards the North. “There are many mountains over there. Let’s go over there.”

“Alright.” Northson nodded. Whoosh! A dragon-headed ship suddenly appeared before them, and Ning and Northson boarded the ship. This dragon-headed ship was only thirty meters long; clearly, it was sized appropriately for roaming the wild marshes. If they made it too large...it would just make it easier for monsters to find them.

Soon, the hundred Immortal cultivators had all spread out in each direction. The two elders responsible for guarding the formation had very complicated looks in their eyes. The skinny one sighed, “I really envy them. I can sense the vitality and energy just oozing from them. Clearly, all of them are very young. Youth is a form of wealth, you know; they have plenty of time to go fight, to struggle, and to go farther along their Immortal paths. As for us...we won’t have these opportunities.”

“But at least we’ve lived a few hundred years,” the fat elder laughed. The skinny elder stared into the distance. “I wonder how many of this batch will make it back alive.”

“If half can make it back, that’ll be pretty good,” the fat elder said. “However...this group knew exactly how dangerous things would be, and they still elected to go adventure. If they can become Raindragon Guards...they’ll be able to benefit from the vast Dao repositories and magic treasures which the Guard possesses, and their Immortal paths will become more surefooted ones. The particularly outstanding ones will even have the chance to go to the imperial capital of the Grand Xia Dynasty, where they will be trained at our Raindragon Guard’s headquarters!”

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The dragon-headed boat flew through the clouds in the sky. "These high clouds are actually the safest places, here within the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains." Northson was standing at the helm of the ship.

Ning nodded. "However, we still need to be careful. Once we discover any spatial ripples, we need to immediately avoid them." "I know," Northson said. "The warship is flying quite slowly, actually."

"Alright." Ning nodded. "Look." Northson stared down through the thin clouds below at a large mountain. This mountain was particularly majestic in a queer way; it pierced straight through the clouds. In addition, one could see with the naked eye countless monsters atop the mountain. Some were monsters that were in human form. They appeared to be moving about in a manner reminiscent of an army.

"Senior apprentice-brother Ji Ning, there must be Wanxiang-level monsters in that great mountain," Northson said.

"Based on what I know...Wanxiang-level monsters are extremely common in the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains, and Zifu-level monsters can be seen everywhere. As for Primal monsters...they are quite rare," Ning said. "Some monsters have taken over a mountain and have proclaimed themselves the local king, while others travel by themselves. Those who have taken over a mountain are all extremely strong."

Northson nodded.

"It's quite hard to run into one of the Wanxiang-level monsters who are wandering about by themselves," Ning said reflectively. "So, our target should be the monsters who have crowned themselves 'kings' of a mountain. But from far away, we aren't able to tell exactly how strong those 'king' monsters are. If we are unlucky, we might run into a Primal monster."

"Then what should we do?" Northson asked. Ning had come up with an idea long ago. However, he looked at Northson. "Junior apprentice-brother Northson, do you have any ideas?"

"I do have a few," Northson said with a frown. "The first is to follow other Immortal practitioners about and let them be the ones to investigate. When the battle begins...after verifying that the target is a Wanxiang monster, we'll attack."

"Not bad." Ning nodded in praise. Northson continued, "The second method is to search for a mountain with monsters that don't seem too strong. Nine out of ten, that mountain would be the territory of a Wanxiang monster."

"And the third idea?" Ning prompted. Northson's eyes lit up. "As Master said, the hearts of men are difficult to fathom. Since that's the case, I imagine that there will be cases where Immortal cultivators will attack other cultivators. Generally speaking, this would involve several of them joining forces. If several of them join forces against us...I refuse to believe that not a single one of them will have acquired the corpse or the head of a Wanxiang monster. We can set up a trap...so if anyone comes to ambush us, we'll counter-ambush and kill them."

"However, all three plans have their own flaws. I'm not confident in any of them." Northson was quite irritated. "Still, we have three months. That should be enough."

Ning laughed. "Your methods are good, but I have an even simpler one." Northson looked expectantly towards Ning. "What method?"

"Search for a seemingly ordinary-looking mountain of monsters," Ning said with a laugh. Northson stared. "Isn't that my idea?"

"After we find an ordinary mountain...I'll sweep it with my divine sense!" Ning laughed. "If the opponent can sense my sweep, then it will most likely be a Primal monster. If they aren't able to...then they will be Wanxiang monsters. Even if we are so unlucky as to run into one of the incomparably rare Primal monsters, we can immediately use our evasive techniques to instantly flee."

Northson said, startled, "Divine sense? Senior apprentice-brother, your soul has truly reached the divine sense level?" Ning nodded. "You really..." Northson was shocked. "When you joined and defeated senior apprentice-brother Bloodshadow and the others, you demonstrated the ability to use multiple sword arts. Many of our senior fellow disciples suspected that your soul must be extremely powerful, perhaps at the divine sense level. Even more of them suspected that you were actually a reincarnated Immortal. So you actually have reached the divine sense level? In the past three years, you've never mentioned it!"

"You never asked," Ning grinned.

"Then are you a reincarnated Immortal as well?" Northson's eyes were shining. "I heard that as reincarnated Immortals grow older, they will gradually reawaken their memories."

Ning shook his head. "No clue. I haven't awakened any Immortal memories, at least." What a joke. Ning's memories of his past life were perfectly clear; he wasn't an Immortal at all.

"Oh." Northson nodded, then said excitedly, "This is wonderful. Joining the Raindragon Guards poses a great test to others, but for you, senior apprentice-brother, it's far too simple. We can use your divine sense to run a test from far away...and after verifying things, can immediately act. If we are so unlucky as to run into a Primal monster, we can immediately flee with evasion techniques. This really is simple."

Ning laughed. "If even someone with a divine sense is unable to join the Raindragon Guard, that'd be quite bizarre, wouldn't it?"

"Badass," Northson grinned widely. "Then I, your junior apprentice-brother, shall benefit from your strength, senior apprentice-brother."

"Junior apprentice-brother, no need to be so polite." Ning turned his gaze downwards, beginning to search for mountains with monsters.

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Just one hour later. Ning and Northston were standing within a desolate area, staring towards a towering mountain before them. Given Ning's visual acuity, he was able to see that there were some monstrous figures within this mountain.

"This one. Let me search it," Ning said. "Alright." Northson had already taken out a Dao-seal.

Although the two of them were both capable of simple evasion techniques, and were able to move multiple kilometers away with a single movement, with the aid of a Dao-seal, they would be able to

move a thousand kilometers away. Ning knew that even a Primal monster would find it hard to search a thousand kilometers with divine sense.

“Whoosh!” With but a thought, Ning instantly sent a surge of power divine sense forward, enveloping this entire mountain.

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Book 8: Raindragon Guard Chapter 13: Two Humans Battle Three Monsters

Ji Ning’s powerful divine sense thoroughly investigated the entirety of the mountain, inside and out. “Senior apprentice-brother Ji Ning, what’s the situation?” Mu Northson asked.

Ning cracked a smile, then looked at Northson. “Junior apprentice-brother Northson, need you ask? This mountain really does have quite a few monsters within it. Based on the aura of these monsters, there should be a single Wanxiang monster and around ten or so Zifu monsters. There are also some Xiantian monsters that can transform into human form, as well as a crowd of lesser monsters.”

“Just one?” Northson chewed on his lips. “That’s it? There’s two of us though.”

“Thus, your idea was the right one. We first find a seemingly-ordinary mountain of monsters, with the expectation that the monsters within won’t be too powerful,” Ning laughed. “A mountain like this, the two of us can flatten when we charge in. However, this is the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains. Let’s be a bit cautious.”

“I’ll listen to you in all things, senior apprentice-brother,” Northson nodded. “Let’s go. Let’s sneak up the mountain.” Ning pointed upwards.

Northson said, worried, “There should be formations, right?”

“Although there are formations on these monster mountains, with my divine sense spread out, I can see everything.” Ning had quite some experience in analyzing formations, after all, while his Uncle White was a Godbeast Whitewater Hound which was legendary for its intelligence and which was a master of formations. Ning would often chat with Uncle White; naturally, he would gain some pointers from him. Occasionally, Ning’s own thoughts would cause Uncle White to gain certain insights as well.

“Let’s go.” Swoosh! Swoosh! The two stealthily slipped upwards through the wild grass, moving closer and closer to the mountain at high speed.

A black-faced, muscular fellow was seated in the lotus position atop a jade bed, looking quite like an Immortal practitioner. The black-faced fellow suddenly opened his eyes, and a baleful aura shot out from his eyes, but then was quickly retracted.

He stared towards the stone door in the distance. With but a thought, he made the stone door rumble open. Immediately, a small figure charged in from outside. It was a skinny underling, who knelt down and said, “Congratulations, Majesty, for having finished your meditations!”

“Mm.” The large, black-faced man let out a grunt. “Go. Have the Madame come, and arrange for a table of food to be prepared.”

“Yes.” The skinny little figure respectfully departed at high speed.

The black-faced man left his jade bed, walking leisurely out of the hall of his cavern estate and moving outside the stone door. Standing outside, he seemed to be able to see all sorts of sights in the vast marshes outside, and a killing desire filled his eyes. "Humans often come in batches to attack these wild marshes of our the Gaol Mountains. the Gaol Mountains's marshes belong to us monsters. If a human comes, we will kill him. Mm...it's been quite a long time since humans have come to my place."

The wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains were simply too vast. There were quite a few human Immortal cultivators who came to this place, but they were all spread out extremely sparsely throughout the wild marshes. A monster would only occasionally run into a human Immortal cultivator.

"Thirty years ago, that human monster offered me quite the amount of liquefied elemental essence and magic treasures, which I traded for liquefied elemental essence as well. It allowed me to shave two centuries off of my training, while my power increased greatly." The black-faced man was quite eager. "I wonder when I'll met yet another foolish human."

Those who dared to crown themselves kings of a mountain in the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains naturally laid down many traps around their nest, making it so that any humans who arrived would be unable to leave!

"Your Majesty!" Suddenly, a soft voice rang out. The black-faced man turned to look. A seductive, green-clothed, devilish woman entered, carrying a jade platter with a beautifully carved beasthead goblet of wine, as well as a perfectly made bottle of wine.

"Madame." The black-faced man smiled. "Your Majesty, you've been training for many months now. You've worked very hard. This is the wine which I personally brewed, the 'Immortal Moonspirit wine'."

The green-clothed, devilish woman walked over while speaking. Monsters, after becoming Xiantian lifeforms, would gain intelligence equivalent to a human's. This green-clothed, alluring woman was a Zifu monster, while the black-faced man was a Wanxiang monster.

Training took up quite a time...and these monsters knew how to enjoy themselves. They, too, need companions. Although in this part of the world, the monsters were tremendously powerful, it was still the Grand Xia Dynasty which had truly unified the world, a dynasty of humans. Many of the major powers amongst the monsters had official positions within the Grand Xia Dynasty. This was actually the reason why monsters continued to exist.

However, although the high-level individuals were on fairly good terms with each other, generally speaking, human Immortal cultivators and monsters fought quite fiercely against each other.

A sumptuous feast of delicacies had been prepared, including meat, fruit, and wine. The black-faced man picked up a piece of meat and began to chew it, then frowned and barked towards the outside, "Go, go to rear mountains and to the place where we are raising humans. Catch a tender one and send it over. This meat is tasteless. Human flesh is much better."

"Yes." The monster outside immediately replied in a high-pitched voice.

"Those humans eat the flesh of us monsters, and in fact, some major power even created a 'spirit-beast seal' and other things to forcibly enslave us." The black-faced man let out a cold snort. "We monsters

naturally can eat humans as well, and in fact, we should enslave them as well! Since there's a spirit-beast seal, why can't there be a 'human-slave seal'?"

The alluring, green-clothed poured a goblet of wine for her king. "Your Majesty, I heard that beyond the greater worlds, there is are major powers amongst the monsters, capable of dominating the Three Realms, who are indeed capable of creating a method for enslaving humans. But unfortunately...in our greater world, the world is formally ruled over by the Grand Xia Dynasty. How can they possibly permit a technique allowing monsters to enslave humans be spread out?"

"Madame, is there truly a method by which monsters can enslave humans?" The black-faced man stared at the alluring, green-clothed woman.

"That's just a legend." The alluring woman shook her head. "How would I, a minor Zifu-level monster, know about such things?"

The black-faced man let out a cold snort. "After I become a monster Immortal one day, I will definitely...not good!" The black-faced man suddenly rose to his feet, staring outside the stone door.

"Your Majesty?" The alluring woman was shocked. The look on the black-faced man's face had changed, and he slapped the table, which with a shudder disintegrated into white dust. He roared with fury, "Since you dare come, why haven't you shown yourself?"

"Your Majesty, we caught a delectable human child for you." A terrified voice rang out from afar. And then..."AHHH!" A miserable scream, and then the terrified voice was cut off.

The alluring woman in the cavern estate knew that something was amiss. Terrified and restless, she said, "Your Majesty, what is going on? What is happening? Has a human Immortal cultivator come? Don't we have layers of formations and restrictive spells here? How could the human cultivators made it all the way here?"

The black-faced man just stared fixedly towards the outside. "They are formations experts," he said, gritting his teeth. What he didn't realize was that...

Ning had actually gone around quite a few of his formations while avoiding activating the others. Ning had thus gone straight through, not setting off any alarms at all. In the end, Ning had been forced to break through the bewildering formation which was always active and protecting the caverns; this was why the black-faced man was suddenly shocked into wakefulness.

"Don't cry, don't cry. In a short while, Big Brother will help you slaughter that monster." Three human figures walked over. Walking in front was a fur-clad human youth, while behind was a white-robed youth who was holding the hand of and comforting a toddler who was dressed in just leaves.

"Waa, waaaaaa." The toddler sobbed, tears still cascading down. Just now, the monster had instantly been chopped into minciment, which had utterly terrified the toddler.

Northson, enraged, pointed straight at the black-faced man. "Monster, the day of your death has come."

"Hahaha, it's been quite some time since I encountered any human Immortal cultivators. You dared to come to my place? Today shall be the day of your deaths." The black-faced man suddenly produced two massive black scimitars, then let out an angry howl. "DIE!"

Bang! Above the hall, one bright star after another, and within this sea of stars, there was even a brilliant moon.

“Kill!” The black-faced man’s face was savage. As for Northson, he howled in anger, “Senior apprentice-brother Ning, hand this monster to me.”

Northson was comparatively immature in terms of personality. Upon learning that this child was about to be eaten by this old monster...his belly had instantly become filled with rage.

“Alright.” Ning nodded, standing to one side, but prepared to attack at any moment.

While Northson howled in rage, the skies above him also became filled with stars. Amidst the sea of stars, both a brilliant moon and a blazing sun appeared. The sun and the moon hung in the skies...this caused the face of the Wanxiang monster to change. Only extremely talented humans with significant backgrounds were capable of manifesting such a Manifestation.

“Die.” Northson gnashed his teeth. Swish! Swoosh! Two black lights began to gather in Northson’s hands. He opened them, and the two rays of black light shot out, forming two massive water-snakes within the air.

The two Manifestations struggled against each other, but the Wanxiang monster’s was clearly struggling.

“Bang!” “Bang!” The two giant water-snakes directly clashed in the air with the two giant black scimitars which the black-faced man had unleashed. The power of the collision was so great that even the nearby woman’s face changed dramatically. Instantly, she transformed into a white-furred fox, wanting to flee. However, a cold light flashed through Northson’s eyes, and one of the water-snakes swept out with its tail, smashing directly against the fleeing white-furred fox’s body. Crunch. The white-furred fox spirit was crushed into meat paste.

Ning stood there watching. He nodded to himself. “My junior apprentice-brother has the upper hand. He lives up to his reputation as a genius of the Dao of Constructs who entered the Black-White College at age fourteen. Formidable.”

He had joined the Black-White College at age fourteen, and had been completely absorbed in his meditations in the Black-White Diagram. If it hadn’t been for Ning eclipsing everyone else, Northson would have been a dazzling, eye-catching genius. Only, because he walked the Dao of Constructs, many of his senior fellow disciples weren’t able to truly comprehend what a monstrous genius Northson truly was.

“Halt!” The black-faced man immediately bellowed. He had the sense that things were not right at all. In the past, he had once killed a human Wanxiang Adept. How was this seemingly soft, weak, white-robed youth so strong? In addition, the fur-clad youth standing behind the white-robed youth seemed to be even more dangerous.

“Too late to feel regret!” Northson snapped coldly.

“Why haven’t they arrived yet? Why haven’t they arrived?” The black-faced man struggled to endure. Although his power would increase dramatically once he transformed into his real form, if he truly did that, this would truly become a battle to the death. What he needed to do, right now, was to delay.

"I shattered the talisman earlier. My Third Brother and Fifth Brother are located the closest; with their movement techniques, they should have arrived by now." But suddenly, a hint of joy appeared on the face of the black-faced man.

He could sense something. Although the formations he had set around the mountain hadn't been able to detect these two humans, they had detected the arrival of his two good brothers.

"Just you wait. My Third Brother and Fifth Brother will suddenly ambush you, and with me joining forces...the two of you will definitely die," the black-faced man mused to himself. At the same time, he continued to furiously struggle to resist the attacks.

At this moment, Ning, standing behind Northson, had a changed expression on his face. With a cold snort, he said, "Old monster, so you actually have reinforcements coming."

The black-faced man's heart instantly clenched. How had this Immortal cultivator found out? Could it be that this Immortal cultivator had also set down a formation in the area, and so had discovered his allies coming?

No longer considering anything else, he immediately roared loudly, "Third Brother, Fifth Brother, attack together and kill these two Immortal cultivators!"

Northson also let out a wild howl. "Two more coming? Wonderful! We were complaining about there not being enough Wanxiang monsters!"

Ning looked towards the stone door outside the cavern estate, a faint sword-light flashing through his eyes.

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Book 8: Raindragon Guard Chapter 14: The [Lesser Thousand Swords Formation] Reveals Its Might

Two figures, transformed into streaks of light, were making haste towards the cavern estate of this monster mountain. One of the two figures was a hawk-nosed, golden-robed man, while the other was a dark, skinny youth. These were monster kings of two nearby monster mountains. The wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains were incomparably dangerous, and even monsters had to form alliances to help each other.

In this surrounding area, a total of eighteen Wanxiang monsters had formed an alliance; if one encountered any danger, they would immediately shatter their runic talismans, and the other seventeen would all immediately be aware of it and would come at maximum speed!

The eighteen Wanxiang monsters had all sworn an oath to the Dao of the Heavens. It was precisely because the eighteen of them had formed a mutual defensive alliance that in this region, it was extremely rare for a monster to be killed.

"Big Brother shattered his runic talisman. I wonder if he encountered one of those lone wanderer freaks, or an Immortal cultivator!"

"The two of us are stronger than Big Brother. When we join forces...regardless of whether its wandering monsters or Immortal cultivators, they will all die!"

The two old monsters were chatting mentally to each other. The original ranking of the eighteen monsters was based on age and seniority, not strength. Their Big Brother was a Blacktusk Elephant who had been training for a very long time.

“Third Brother, Fifth Brother, attack together and kill these two Immortal cultivators!” Suddenly, a loud roar rang out from within the distant cavern estate.

“We’ve been discovered!” The two Wanxiang monsters exchanged glances. They had wanted to launch sneak attacks, but they no longer had the chance now. “Kill!” They transformed into streaks of light, charging directly towards the door of the cavern estate.

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Within the cavern estate, Mu Northson was exerting his strength to deal with the black-faced man, while Ji Ning was holding onto the child’s hands, looking at the expression of amazement on the child’s face. He said consolingly, “Don’t worry. Just stay next to me and don’t run around.”

Bang! Bang! Three streaks of light suddenly shot in from outside; it was a sharp knife and two sharp awls. They were all incredibly sharp and had a shocking aura.

“Hmph.” Ning, seeing the situation, applied his will. Whoosh! A dense cluster of 729 flying swords suddenly appeared next to Ning. At the very core of those swords was a sword formation that was noticeably more powerful; these were the ‘Nine Yang Sword Formation’ swords and 36 high-grade Mortal-ranked water-attribute flying swords.

As for the other eight major sword formations, four were formed from the 324 water-attribute flying swords, while the other four were formed from fire-attribute flying swords.

Water and fire looped amongst each other, and in the center were the ‘Nine Yang Swords’!

“[Lesser Thousand Swords Formation], level nine!” Ning’s powerful divine will completely filled these 729 flying swords, and they transformed into fire and water, competing against each other and reinforcing each other. The water was Yin in nature, while the fire was Yang in nature; given Ning’s accomplishments in the art of formations, he clearly now found it much easier to control the swords. Operating this sort of exquisite, pure sword formation was actually quite comfortable for Ning.

“Seven hundred flying swords, all of which are high-grade or top-grade,” Ning sighed mentally. “In addition, half are fire, while the other half are water; controlling them is an utter joy.”

Controlling so many flying swords placed an incomparably shocking amount of pressure on the soul. Ning, however, was able to withstand it easily.

“Crackle crackle crackle.”

The flying swords rose and fell in an undulating pattern, all of them emitting a hazy white light on their surfaces. In front of Ning’s chest, an even more brilliant, moving flying sword formed of white light had begun to form! This white flying sword was as pure as jade, and it was covered with a lustrous layer of light that made it seem incomparably lovely. The entire flying sword emanated this layer of light, as though it were the treasure of an Immortal.

This was the sword-light of the ninth level of the [Lesser Thousand Swords Formation]! Now that Ning was using such high-quality Mortal-ranked swords, and had such a powerful soul to control them with....it could be said that Ning had already reached the theoretical limit of power a person at the Zifu Disciple level could reach when using the [Lesser Thousand Swords Formation]. Such power already vastly outstripped even using the likes of divine abilities such as [Heavenly Transformation] or the [Luminous Eye of the Heart]..

“Go!” Ning smiled. This white, jade-like flying sword shot out, streaking out in an arc and flowing forward like water. Rumble...those three streaks of light were trapped and blocked by this flowing stream of water.

“As I thought, the fur-clad youth really is more powerful.” The black-faced man currently battling against Northson felt shock in his heart. “He’s actually able to simultaneously block the combination attack of two of my brothers by himself.”

Thud! Thud! The hawk-nosed, golden-robed man and the dark, skinny youth both landed within the estate, and their gazes towards Ning were filled with caution as well.

“Third Brother, Fifth Brother!” The black-faced man hurriedly sent mentally, “The two of you, deal with the fur-clad one. Leave the smaller one to me. Use all your strength and kill him.”

“Alright, Big Brother.”

“Done.”

These two newly arrived Wanxiang monsters realized that if they were to maintain human form and control magic treasures from afar, they probably wouldn’t be able to suppress this fur-clad youth.

“Human Immortal cultivator, accept death!” The two monsters roared with rage, and then began to transform. The hawk-nosed, golden-robed man instantly transformed into a divinely handsome and golden-feathered winged eagle! As for the other, the black, skinny youth, he instantly transformed into a four-legged weirdbeast with coal-black skin and two curved yellow horns on its head.

“Die!” The black-faced man also transformed into mist, then resolidified into a long-trunked elephant with enormous black tusks.

The three monsters were now all in their true forms! In addition, the power of the magic treasures they were using to attack Ning and Northson had suddenly increased dramatically!

“Junior apprentice-brother Northson,” Ning sent. “Will you be able to hold?” Northson sent back confidently, “Don’t worry. I haven’t even started using my abilities.”

Ning laughed. “Excellent.” Right at this moment, the gold-feathered eagle charged forth with a howl, its pitch-black claws ripping through the air and suddenly expanding tenfold in size to the point where the air itself seemed to emit an ear-piercing screech. Ripples in the air that could be seen with the visible eye appeared; the power of this claw definitely surpassed that of the earlier magic treasure it had used.

Monsters and humans were different; monsters had bodies which were innately powerful and possessed innate abilities. For example, some monsters had the innate ability to control water; and even if they didn’t train in a Fiendgod Body Refining Technique, they would still possess enormous strength! Some of them might even be able to temper parts of their body into magic treasures, such as their

horns, their claws, or their tails. This would result in their very body becoming an intrinsic magic treasure, and thus possess astonishing power when used.

“Rumble...” The entire cavern estate was beginning to shake. The four-legged weirdbeast had lowered its head, and its hooves thundered across the ground as it charged towards Ning. The two curved yellow horns on its head suddenly expanded in size and became even sharper than before, and its hoofsteps became incomparably weighty, causing the entire cavern estate to begin to shake and collapse. When these two monsters used all their power, they were truly shocking.

“Hmph.” Ning shook his head. “Die.”

The white sword formed from the ninth level of the [Lesser Thousand Swords Formation] instantly slashed through the air. In midair, an enormous millstone of fire and water suddenly appeared. Within the center of this millstone of fire and water, a wild tempest of incomparable, astonishing power suddenly formed! The white flying sword was in the center of this millstone of fire and water, and it, too, dissolved into the tempest.

Fast! This was the Ning’s [Tripartite Millstone Sword], the power of which was only inferior to the second stance of the [Three-Foot Sword]. It could also be referred to as the ‘Waterflame Millstone Sword’. Although it was named after the slowly-grinding millstone, it was supremely fast.

Wherever the sword light flashed past...fire and water howled as well, and the millstone itself transformed into a blur! “Not good.” The golden-feathered eagle sensed tremendous danger, but it still sent its sharp claws over in a savage blow.

Whoosh! It was too fast. The flashing light of the millstone sword easily dodged past the claw, then slashed past the body of the golden-feathered eagle. The feathers of the golden-feathered eagle were incomparably tough, as unyielding as a magic treasure...but they weren’t able to defend against this attack in the slightest. They were immediately broken through, and then the light of the Waterflame Lotus Sword turned, sweeping directly towards the impending, charging weirdbeast monster.

“Third Brother!” The four-legged weirdbeast monster was instantly scared silly. His third brother had actually been killed in a single exchange. Everyone in the region knew how powerful the eagle talons of his third brother were. Ordinary hawks used their claws to snatch snakes; from this, one can imagine how fast hawk claws could strike. And yet, the eagle talons of a Wanxiang monster, an intrinsic magic treasure, still hadn’t been able to block and snatch that sword light.

He had never even heard of swordplay on this level. But this was what a Sword Immortal was! It must be understood that when Ning first joined the Black-White College, he had been able to shock everyone just by using the first stance of the [Three-Foot Sword]. Now, he had been able to use the [Lesser Five Elements Sword] manual to develop this Waterflame Millstone Sword, a technique which vastly surpassed the first stance of the [Three-Foot Sword] in power. What’s more, the technique was executed through a sword-light that was manifested by the ninth level of the [Lesser Thousand Swords Formation]. Its speed and power...how could a Wanxiang monster possibly defeat it?

“Flee.” The four-legged weirdbeast monster instantly slammed the ground with its hooves, causing the entire cavern estate to tremble. It turned its body, immediately ramming into the nearby stone wall, intending to charge through.

Rumble! The stone wall was instantly shattered, but the light of the millstone sword followed as fast as the wind, continuing to chase after it and not intending to halt before it perished. The four-legged weirdbeast tried to dodge, and it even shot out one of the sharp curved horns on its head, sending it directly towards the sword light.

The sword light flashed!

Rumble...the four-legged weirdbeast's body continued to charge out of the cavern estate through sheer momentum...but soon, it fell apart into two pieces, slamming against the rocks outside the cave and causing them to shatter and knock the nearby trees down. However, its bisected body collapsed as well. Blood continued to ooze from its mouth, but moments later, it breathed its last.

"Die." Northson, seeing that his senior apprentice-brother had shown off his power, let out an angry roar as well. The two black water-snakes suddenly criss-crossed, connecting to each other at the tail and instantly forming an enormous black circle which wildly wrapped itself around the black-tusked elephant monster, which was frantically attempting to flee. As the black circle looped around it, it then tightened...crunch!

The upper half of the body of the entire black-tusked elephant was instantly crushed into meat paste, and it died a miserable death.

As for the golden-feathered eagle that lay on the ground, it had died long ago. And so, just like that, three Wanxiang monsters had perished.

Ning waved his hand, collecting the corpses of the golden-feathered eagle and the four-legged weirdbeast. As for Northson, he collected the black-tusked elephant's corpse as well.

"It's about to collapse." Northson charged outside. As for Ning, he had already led the child outside the cave, which was covered with a spiderweb of cracks. With a rumbling sound, it collapsed in on itself.

"Haha, we instantly acquired three corpses of monsters. All we need to do is wait three months, and we'll be Raindragon Guards." Northson was extremely excited.

"Right." Ning nodded gently. The power unleashed by his 720 Mortal-ranked flying swords through the [Lesser Thousand Swords Formation] had caused Ning to feel delighted as well.

"Hey kid." Northson looked towards the young child. "Why are you here on this mountain?" The child stared blankly. Just now, these two people had effortlessly killed those three monsters, who had appeared to be so incomparably terrifying and savage that his heart trembled from fear! It was simply inconceivable that they had died.

Upon hearing Northson ask him where he came from, the child stared blankly for a moment, but then his tears began to roll down. He pointed into the distance. "There."

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Book 8: Raindragon Guard Chapter 15: Azure Skysnake

Mu Northson turned to look towards the direction which the child was pointing at, while Ning went to hug the child. "Let's go. I know where it is!" His divine sense covered the entire monster mountain. How could Ning not know?

Swoosh! Swoosh! The two transformed into streaks of light, vaulting through the mountain. The many monsters within the mountain had all been utterly terrified and had gone into hiding. Ning's group quickly arrived within a deep gorge within the mountain.

"Ah?!" Northson stared downwards, and what he saw made his face changed. Ning stared down silently as well. Below the gorge, there was an extremely deep crevice that was roughly three hundred meters long. Within the crevice were humans, their bodies covered just by tree leaves and bark. All of them were either children or youths; there wasn't a single old person there. They lived there in the deep crevice, numb to life. Above the crevice, there was a net made from steel which completely covered and sealed the crevice.

"They are being...raised here?" Northson's body began to tremble slightly. Grinding his teeth, he said, "These monsters truly deserve to die. They deserve to die!"

Swoosh! Northson leapt downwards. There were some lesser monsters standing guard within the deep crevice; they didn't know that their king had already perished.

"Who goes there! This is Elephant-King Mountain!" A tall, horned monster with a trident in its hands roared angrily, while the group of lesser monsters behind him howled in support.

"Hmph!" Northson let out an enraged snort. The area around him instantly transformed into the darkness of the night. The night sky was filled with dazzling stars, and the sun and the moon hung there amongst them. From within the dazzling sun, a giant hand suddenly stretched out, seizing the suddenly-terrified monsters who were trying to flee, pale-faced. Trapped by that giant hand of golden light, the monsters all felt their hearts shudder.

"Why are they here?" Northson thundered. As for Ning, he just stood to one side, quietly.

"Mighty Immortal, are you referring to these human slaves?" The horned monster, captured by the hand of golden light, hurriedly explained, "These human slaves were brought here long, long ago by his Majesty, who found them elsewhere and decided to raise them here. The big ones birth little ones, and when the little ones grow up, they can birth more! His Majesty delights in eating human flesh, and so the younger, tender ones are for his Majesty to eat. As for some of the older slaves, their meat isn't as delicious, and so we'll be given some of it to taste."

Even Ning's face turned ashen as he heard this.

"You deserve death!" Northson let out a thunderous roar, and his Manifested hand clenched. Instantly, those monsters, howling in agony, were crushed into meat sludge. Even that horned monster who had transformed back into his original form was crushed into mincemeat by that Manifested hand.

"Clank!" The Manifested hand then clawed downwards, ripping apart those locked steel chains. With a explosive sound, the many chains were instantly shattered into small pieces, and then were tossed to one side.

The many humans who were living within that deep crevice were trembling. They all moved closer to each other, staring upwards in terror.

“They’ve been raised as animals for too long; their slave-mentality has been deeply imprinted upon them.” Ning shook his head and let out a soft sigh, then lowered his head to look at the child next to him. “Only the smaller, younger children might be able to recover.”

“Senior apprentice-brother.” Northson looked at Ning. “Let’s help them out, okay?”

Ning nodded. “Of course we’ll help them. To us, it’s just a little bit of extra effort, but to them...it means the changing of their destinies.”

“Right.” Northson nodded, then said with frustration, “But we must stay within the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains for three months. We can’t be taking care of them for this entire time. What should we do?”

“If we encounter any danger, we can’t look after them as well as ourselves. Let’s deliver them straight to the Raindragon Guard,” Ning said. “That is the only safe place within the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains. As for whether or not the Raindragon Guard will accept them...let’s discuss that if it comes to that. Even if the Raindragon Guard aren’t willing to take care of them, we can give these humans some food and let them survive for three months.”

“That’s something,” Northson nodded. Rumble! The giant hand of golden light pressed downwards, and instantly a deep passageway appeared at the margins of the crevice, leading from it to the outside world.

“From now on, you are no longer slaves!” Northson stared at the humans within the corral as he called out to them in a loud voice.

These humans had always lived together, and so they had naturally managed to teach each other and pass down the human language. Naturally, they understood. However, their simple minds made it so that they remained rather uneasy. They stared, frightened, towards the two youths standing in the distance; one a fur-clad youth, while the other was a white-robed youth.

Still...even after the passage of many years, they would never be able to forget this life-altering moment. They would never be able to forget these two youths.

“Junior apprentice-brother Northson, let them board the warship,” Ning said. “Right.” Northson nodded, then waved his hand. Instantly, the Azure Dragon in the sky quickly transformed into a dragon-headed warship which landed on the ground.

Ning barked out, “All aboard the ship!” At the same time, he used his divine sense to invisibly influence them. Although Ning had not learned the [Soulcharmer Art], he had still viewed the abridged version of the technique and had learned some of the most basic, elementary secrets of it. By using his powerful soul to emit the slightest hint of a soul-ripple, he was able to nudge these numb slaves to all shuffle towards the warship.

“Mommy.” The child next to Ning ran straight towards his mother.

“Let’s go.” Ning raised his head, staring towards the sky. “There are other Wanxiang monsters coming.”

“Good.” Northson, however, was filled with a surging killing intent. But Ning shook his head. “Don’t push it. We attacked that elephant monster, and two more Wanxiang monsters suddenly popped up out of

nowhere. And now, four more Wanxiang monsters are attacking...if this continues, who knows how many Wanxiang monsters will arrive. I imagine that these monsters must have formed an alliance long ago, and they might even have Primal monsters supporting them.”

Northson instantly came to his senses. “Senior apprentice-brother, your words are correct.” He nodded his head. “We already have enough Wanxiang monster corpses. There really is no need to kill any more.”

Swoosh! The dragon-headed warship quickly soared into the skies, flying into the distance.

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Right at this moment, an incomparably beautiful woman, along with two men and a second woman, arrived in sequence outside the demolished ruins of the cave estate. “I can no longer sense the auras of big brother, third brother, and fifth brother,” the beautiful woman said with a frown.

“Ninth Sister, can it be that that big brother and the others have already died?”

“We already came quite fast. They’ve only fought for a short period of time. The three of them were all Wanxiang monsters.” The other Wanxiang monsters didn’t dare believe it.

The beautiful woman shook her head. “Look at the bloodstains. Look at the auras left behind. Big brother and the other two are probably already dead.” But suddenly, she lifted her head. A streak of light was soaring into the skies, rapidly charging into the clouds. That streak of light was a dragon-headed warship.

“A warship.”

“The warship of an Immortal cultivator.”

“It must be the one which killed big brother and the others. Ninth Sister, let’s attack and get revenge for big brother and the others.” The other monsters immediately began to clamor out. Eighteen of them had joined into an alliance...but in terms of power, their ninth sister, the peacock monster, was the most powerful of them all.

The beautiful woman remained silent for a moment, then said, “If they were able to kill big brother and the other two in such a short period of time, even if we charged over to gain revenge, most likely more than half of us would die. But if we were to wait for the other monsters to come...they will have fled long ago. Let’s go. We can only blame big brother and the others for having terrible luck.”

The other monsters were only calling out in bravado anyhow. Upon hearing the words of the peacock monster, they all nodded quite quickly.

“Let’s go.”

“Let’s go.”

They all transformed into streaks of light, departing from Elephant King Mountain.

Three of the eighteen Wanxiang monsters had died; this made the peacock monster and the other monsters feel as though their forces were not strong enough. Thus, they decided that they were going

to ally with some of the other nearby Wanxiang monsters as well. In fact, they even began to wonder if they should try to recruit some of the solitary wanderer Wanxiang monsters as well.

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Within a deep mountain cave in the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains.

“Slither, slither...” A small azure serpent was swimming about in a pool of water within the cave. The water of this pool emanated an azure light and a freezing aura, and there was a block of ice emerging from the center of the pool. If an Immortal cultivator saw it...they would instantly recognize this piece of ice as being a piece of ‘ancient glacial ice’. It would only be formed in places where the elemental energy was extremely, extremely cold.

“How truly comfortable. The wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains really are wonderful. This dangerous, mysterious place is filled with many treasures, but I can easily slip past all of them using my Void Blink.” The little azure snake wriggled about in delight, frantically absorbing the energy from this freezing pool. “Compared to before, my homeland of Swallow Mountain is an utter wasteland. There’s almost no treasures there at all.”

“Wheeeeeee. Wonderful, wonderful!” The little azure snake was incomparably delighted. “It seems as though the masters were correct in having me come here to the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains.” The little azure snake’s little head swung to wrap around the piece of ancient glacial ice. Pulses of cold energy flowed into its body. “My power is rising incredibly quickly. When I first arrived at the Gaol Mountains, I was just at the peak Zifu level. Now, three short years later, I’ve risen to the middle Wanxiang level.”

“However, I’m still much weaker than the Patriarch. How long will it be before I, too, will become a monster Immortal? By then, I’ll be able to take up a large reach of land for myself as well and style myself the Immortal master of the region.” When the little azure snake thought about the Patriarch, its eyes couldn’t help but be filled with envy.

“No.” The little azure snake’s eyes suddenly radiated a cold light. “After leaving the Gaol Mountains, I need to make a trip back to Swallow Mountain to take care of some things. In particular, that Ironwood Zhan who pursued and attacked me...I was in such a miserable state back then. I must kill him and annihilate the entire Ironwood clan!” When it thought about its hated foe, Ironwood Zhan, the little azure snake also thought about someone else.

It was the very young human youth, the one who always dressed in fur clothes. That fearless, yet monstrously talented youth who always addressed it as ‘little snakey-snake’.

“Alas. I only know that you are of the Ji clan. I don’t even know your name.” The little azure snake muttered to itself, “You and I fought multiple times, and it was only as a result of those fights that I comprehended the ‘Void Blink’ technique. However, back then, I wasn’t able to save you. Don’t worry. When the time comes, I’ll take revenge on behalf of you as well. I’ll annihilate that Ironwood Zhan.”

“If you are still alive...given your talent, you must be very powerful by now.” The little azure snake began to mumble to itself again. “But definitely not as powerful as me. I have the Void Blink technique and have gained many marvelous legacies.”

Right at this moment...a hundred kilometers outside the cave...

There were two Immortal cultivators, moving like streaks of light, who had stealthily landed on the mountain.

“You aren’t mistaken, are you?” One of them, a gray-robed Immortal cultivator, said in a low voice.

“Absolutely not. When I tortured those Zifu monsters, they definitely wouldn’t have dared to lie to me. They all said that in recent days, a lone wanderer has appeared in this region; an Azure Skysnake monster which had even fought multiple times against their king,” the white-robed Immortal cultivator said.

The gray-robed Immortal cultivator nodded. “After we kill this Azure Skysnake, we’ll have enough Wanxiang monster corpses. Supposedly, this Azure Skysnake isn’t that powerful, but we need to beware of its innate ability. Don’t let it use the Void Blink technique to escape.”

“Naturally.” The white-robed Immortal cultivator nodded.

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Book 8: Raindragon Guard Chapter 16: The Azure Skysnake and Ji Ning

Within the icy pool inside the cave. The small azure snake was ceaselessly absorbing the frigid energy of the icy pool, using it to nourish the ‘demon-ice’ in its body. Suddenly, its eyes flickered. It transformed into mist, and then reformed into an azure-robed maiden by the side of the pool. Red lips, ivory teeth, and dark eyes.

“They actually dare come to my place?” The azure-robed maiden muttered, “All I wanted to do was spend some extra time nourishing the demon-ice in my body, and yet they still come to cause trouble. Still, I’m not strong yet. It’s not good for me to fight.” The azure-robed maiden transformed into mist once more, and a small azure serpent appeared in midair. With a flicker, it disappeared into thin air.

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The white-robed cultivator and gray-robed cultivator were currently advancing stealthily through the cave, searching for any traces of the snake. Suddenly, they saw an azure light flash in the distance. An azure serpent in midair was roaring with anger, “You two human cultivators dare come to my place? You are dead meat!”

The voice echoed and thundered. Rumble...the azure serpent flashed in midair, then disappeared.

“That was the Azure Skysnake monster! It found us.” The two Immortal cultivators were instantly shocked. And then, the white-robed cultivator sent mentally, “This Azure Skysnake seems to be quite angry; it’s probably going to attack us. Let’s respond to its plots with one of our own; let’s quietly set down a space-sealing formation in the area! Once it draws near, we will immediately activate the formation, causing it to be unable to flee through Void Blink. Only then will we attack and kill it.”

“Alright. Be careful and make sure you set it up stealthily. Don’t let it discover you,” the gray-robed cultivator sent back.

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Thousands of kilometers away.

“Hahaha, I told those two that they were dead meat, so those two buffoons will definitely plan to fight me there. I’m an Azure Skysnake...my life is quite precious. Why would I fight head on against you two?” The Azure Skysnake continued to blink forward, disappearing once again.

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Ji Ning and Mu Northson were currently mounted on their dragon-headed warship, carrying the many humans towards the place in the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains where the Raindragon Guard were stationed.

Tens of thousands of kilometers away from Ning’s location. Another ship was present here, with two on this ship as well; one female, the other male. The man was tall, strong, and handsome; it was Eastriver Cloudsoar. The woman was also as beautiful as a flower; her name was Eastriver Snowite.

“Big Brother, it’s not too hard to kill Wanxiang monsters. With the two of us working together, in but a single day, we’ve already killed two of them,” Eastriver Snowite said happily.

“Killing two monsters isn’t that big a deal. The two of us were lucky; the first monster mountain we chose had two Wanxiang monsters present, and that’s exactly the number we needed to kill. By the time the other Wanxiang monsters arrived, we used the Lesser Teleportation Dao-seals to flee.” Eastriver Cloudsoar shook his head. “The more important requirement the Raindragon Guard gave us was to survive in the Gaol Mountains’s wild marshes for three months...three full months! These marshes are full of danger everywhere. Surviving will be much harder than killing one or two Wanxiang monsters.”

Eastriver Snowite said, “Big Brother, didn’t you say that the closer we are to the Raindragon Guard, the safer it will be? The monsters stay far away from that place...although we won’t be able to enter, we can just find a place close to the encampment and stay for three months.”

“Right. Still, we need to be careful,” Cloudsoar said. “This place isn’t like the clan...”

“I know,” Snowite responded.

Right at this moment, another warship flew over from far away. “Eh?” Eastriver Cloudsoar and Eastriver Snowite both turned to look.

“Haha, so it is fellow Daoist Cloudsoar, of the Eastriver clan.” Laughter rang out from the distant warship. Atop the warship was a white-robed man with a graceful bearing. The Eastriver siblings immediately recognized him...this was one of the hundred testees, Northriver Zhou.

“Fellow Daoist Northriver,” Eastriver Cloudsoar called back.

“It’s quite rare and fortunate that I would be able to encounter you two siblings here, fellow Daoist Cloudsoar. Would you be willing to board this construct-ship of mine and share some wine?” Northriver Zhou laughed.

“Yes!” Eastriver Snowite revealed a smile. But Cloudsoar shook his head. “No. No need.” This caused Snowite to look towards her older brother curiously, but Cloudsoar just gave her a glance. Snowite didn’t argue.

“If that’s the case, then I won’t force things.” Northriver Zhou was quite straightforward. With a laugh, he said, “I’ll leave, then.”

But just as his words came out...Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh! Five streaks of light suddenly flew out towards every direction, moving lightning-fast. These five streaks of light...were five Wanxiang Adepts, all of them amongst the testees for joining the Raindragon Guard. The bodies of the five Wanxiang Adepts all emanated a blurry gray light, and the body of Northriver Zhou, still standing atop that warship, also shone with that light.

Six of them in total! The gray lights were all connected, surrounding this region. “A spacelock formation!” The faces of Eastriver Cloudsoar and Eastriver Snowite completely changed.

“You...you...” Cloudsoar’s face was ashen as he stared at the six surrounding Immortal cultivators. “Dong One of Snowdragon Mountain, Xu Manquan of the Thousand Rivers Sect, Northriver Zhou of the Skysplitter Sword Sect...you actually prepared a spacelock formation.”

Lesser Teleportation Dao-seals were only useful against Zifu Disciples and ordinary Wanxiang Adepts. The majority of powerful Wanxiang Adepts would carry a spacelock formation with them. Once they set it down...there would be no way to teleport within the region with locked space.

“Four peak Wanxiang Adepts, two late Wanxiang Adepts.” Cloudsoar and Snowite exchanged a glance, despair in their eyes.

“Kill them.” A cold look flashed through Northriver Zhou’s eyes.

“Kill!”

Cloudsoar and Snowite went berserk as well.

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“I, Eastriver Cloudsoar, will definitely get revenge! Definitely!!!” A desolate, fierce, hate-filled cry rang out from far away. Eastriver Cloudsoar, who had charged outside of the spacelock formation, his body covered in blood and missing an arm, immediately used his Lesser Teleportation Dao-seal and disappeared. As for his little sister, she was already dead.

After all, these two siblings weren’t faced against Wanxiang monsters who didn’t have any legacies or treasures; they faced human Wanxiang elites who were also from famous tribes and clans!

Four peak Wanxiang Adepts, two late Wanxiang Adepts. Upon joining forces, they were absolutely able to crush the two of them.

“That Eastriver Cloudsoar managed to escape.” Northriver Zhou shook his head. “He should consider himself lucky.” The other five flew back to the warship, while Zhou picked up the magic storage belt of the slain Snowite, beginning to look through it.

“How is it?” The others asked. “Not bad. There’s the corpse of a Wanxiang monster here.” Northriver Zhou handed the magic storage belt to someone next to him, letting them all look through it. Although the six of them had joined forces to support each other in killing others, and although they had sworn an oath to the Dao of the Heavens, they all still wanted to look through the spoils of war.

Northriver Zhou laughed. "Three months. It'll definitely be quite easy for us to find six Wanxiang monster corpses."

"Right.." The golden-robed Dong One smiled and nodded. "Those Immortal cultivators who slew Wanxiang monsters will most likely all return to move close to the Raindragon Guards. As long as we patrol this area...we'll definitely run into more. Any we run into, we kill!"

"We'll keep doing this, then." All of them were filled with eagerness. Upon killing cultivators, not only would they acquire Wanxiang monster corpses, they would also be able to obtain the magic treasures of those cultivators. This was far more profitable than just killing monsters.

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"I, Eastriver Cloudswear, swear that I will definitely kill them." Cloudsoar appeared in midair, covered in blood. His eyes were filled with hate. "Northriver Zhou. Xu Manquan. Dong One..." Cloudsoar gritted his name as he recited the names, one after the other, as though he was storing them deep into his memory.

"Little sister...little sister." Cloudsoar's tears began to fall. He had known all along that the path of Immortals was an incomparably dangerous one, but who would have thought that on his very first true adventure, his little sister would die? This caused Cloudsoar, who had been excited and eager, to become filled with boundless pain and hate.

He knew that Wanxiang Adepts often killed each other, and that the seniors of their clans wouldn't generally intervene. Only if, say, a Primal Daoist had acted against a Wanxiang Adept, which would be a case of a senior bullying a junior, would the seniors of the sect intervene. So long as the fights were amongst those of the same generation...if you died, you could only blame yourself for being weak!

But of course, if the person who died was a junior who was particularly beloved by a powerful figure, such as the sole disciple of someone...then the powerful figure might go berserk and ignore protocol to gain revenge for that junior.

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Ning and Northson road atop the warship, constantly advancing towards the Raindragon Guard's encampment.

"Senior apprentice-brother Ji Ning." Northson stared at those terrified, restless humans, then said softly, "They are still terrified and uneasy. Even now...they are still afraid of us. Only the children have a bit more courage."

"They've been enslaved for too long." Ning shook his head. "Slavery has rooted itself within them. To change that will be very, very hard. The children have some hope."

Northson looked at the first child they had saved. Smiling, he walked over to them. Next to the child was a grimy-looking woman. Terrified, she immediately pulled her son away, but her son was fearless. He just looked at Northson.

"Kid, what's your name?" Northson said. "My name is Ironboy!" The child raised his head and said, "What are your names, Immortals?"

Northson laughed. "My name is Mu Northson. Over there is my senior apprentice-brother, Ji Ning."

"Mu Northson. Ji Ning..." The child gently murmured the names, as though memorizing them.

Ning laughed and walked over as well. "This Ironboy is quite clever."

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As Ning and Northson were chatting with the kid, a distant ship was beginning to draw close to theirs.

"Look. That dragon-headed warship." Northriver Zhou pointed towards the distance. "If memory serves, that dragon-headed warship belongs to one of the hundred, that Black-White College disciple, Mu Northson; it's the construct-warship he displayed. Most likely, Mu Northson and his senior apprentice-brother are on that ship."

"The Black-White College?"

"Every member of the Black-White College is a peerless genius. They aren't easy to deal with."

"Should we attack?"

These people began to hesitate. But the golden-robed Dong One said, "No need to worry. I understand this Ji Ning quite well. He should only be twenty years old! Although his talent is astonishing, he's trained for too short a period of time. You should all be aware that his [Crimsonbright Diagram of the Nine Heavens] is only at the ninth stage. He's a bit dangerous in close combat, but as long as we can stay away from him, we don't need to fear him at all. As for that Mu Northson, since he follows this Ji Ning's lead, his strength probably isn't that great either."

"The two of them are headed back...they probably have the corpses of two Wanxiang monster."

"Disciples of the Black-White College. Killing them is worth more than killing quite a few Wanxiang Adepts. In addition, one of them is a middle-stage Wanxiang Adept, while the other is a Fiendgod Body Refiner who can just barely be considered an early-stage Wanxiang Adept. Us? Four of us are peak Wanxiang Adepts, while the other two are late-stage, and we can join together in a six-man formation attack."

"Given that we're plotting against them while they aren't against us, we have excellent chances."

Soon, the six came to a unified agreement. "Let's go. Let's kill these two 'peerless geniuses' of the Black-White College!" Northriver Zhou's eyes flashed with a savage light.

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Book 8: Raindragon Guard Chapter 17: Waylaying the Disciples of the Black-White College

A youth with loose, unbound hair said in a low voice, "We are definitely going to kill them, but don't forget...earlier, when the six of us joined forces against those two siblings of the Eastriver clan...the final result was that Eastriver Cloudsoar escaped! These two are of the Black-White College. Although one is a middle-stage Wanxiang Adept and the other can be considered an early-stage Fiendgod Wanxiang Adept, they certainly are carrying many protective magic treasures. If we aren't careful...the two of them might end up escaping in the end. The final result would be, not only would they remain alive, we would have created enemies for ourselves.

“Senior apprentice-brother Jihe’s words are correct.” The golden-robed Dong One nodded. “There exists some enmity between Ji Ning and my Snowdragon Mountain, and I am quite familiar with him. He is a truly monstrous talent, and his training speed is astonishing. If he were to escape, we would definitely gain a powerful foe.”

Although they were considering the matter, in reality, none of these six Wanxiang Adepts were truly afraid of creating enemies. Since they had decided to embark on the path of cultivation, then they would strive to do anything necessary to become Immortals!

“We need to carefully consider how to go about this,” said the only woman of the group. “If we are going to attack, we must instantly use the most vicious attacks we have and kill them before they have a chance to react.”

“My suggestion is...”

The six cultivators chatted amongst themselves. If the enemy was a Wanxiang monster, this would be very simple, but the enemy were disciples of the Black-White College. Even though they were just a middle-stage Wanxiang Adept and the equivalent of an early-stage Wanxiang Adept, they didn’t dare to be the slightest bit overconfident. The disciples of the Black-White College couldn’t be judged in accordance with normal logic. If these two were both peak Wanxiang Adepts, the six of them probably wouldn’t choose to attack at all.

“We have higher foundations than them, and we are working together. I refuse to believe we won’t be able to kill them.” This was what the six cultivators all believed, and the reason why they decided to act.

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Ning didn’t notice any of this at all. He continued to chat with his junior apprentice-brother about the disciples. But right at this moment...

“Eh?” Ning turned to look. He stared past the railing, to a distant warship flying over from afar. “This warship...this seems to be the construct-warship which that Northriver Zhou of the Skysplitter Sword Sect used, when the hundred of us dispersed in different directions.

Immortal cultivators had astonishingly good memories. Ning had clearly memorized all of the names of the hundred, when they had reported them to the Immortal.

“Senior apprentice-brother, that’s the warship of Northriver Zhou of the Skysplitter Sword Sect,” Northson said softly as well. “Right.” Ning nodded, staring into the distance. That ship was drawing closer and closer to them...why?

“Hahaha...” An elegant, refined-looking white-robed man was standing at the helm of the warship, staring towards them. Laughing, the man said, “I didn’t expect that I’d encounter the two disciples of the Black-White College here. Northriver Zhou pays his respects.”

“It is quite a coincidence,” Ning said with a laugh. “It seems, fellow Daoist Northriver, that you’ve already acquired a Wanxiang monster corpse.” If another treated him with courtesy and a smile, unless there was enmity or grievances between Ning and that person, Ning wouldn’t treat them with a cold face either.

“It was luck,” Northriver Zhou said warmly. “It’s quite lucky for us to encounter each other here. Why don’t you come aboard my vessel, and we can drink some wine together?”

“Drink some wine together?” Ning had a sudden thought. If it was just a matter of chatting and drinking, that was one thing. But inviting them aboard his warship...Ning began to grow nervous. After all, that was someone else’s territory. With but a thought, he instantly filled the area with his powerful divine sense. He saw with perfect clarity the insides of that warship. Ning was instantly shocked. There were five figures hidden within the warship.

“Everyone, be alert. Once this Ji Ning and Mu Northson board the ship, we’ll immediately activate the grand formation. We need to kill them right away.”

“Right. As time goes on, the situation might change. We have to make it fast.”

“As soon as they board the ship, they’ll be dead.”

All of them were stealthily chatting amongst themselves. This was a construct-ship that was filled with restrictive spells to begin with, and so those in the outside world couldn’t hear the conversations going on within at all. Only Ning, capable of a divine sense, was able to discover everything.

“They are going to waylay and kill us!” This instantly came to Ning’s mind. “I didn’t imagine that we’d encounter this as soon as we arrived at the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains.”

“Senior apprentice-brother, shall we go?” Northson looked towards Ning. He was rather thin-skinned; he found it hard to refuse someone who had invited him over in such a friendly manner.

“Junior apprentice-brother,” Ning hurriedly sent mentally, “Be careful and don’t reveal anything, but...that warship has five other Wanxiang Adepts hidden within it. All of them are amongst the testees for joining the Raindragon Guard. Adding in Northriver Zhou, there are six in total. Four are peak Wanxiang Adepts, while two are late Wanxiang Adepts.”

“What?” It was a good thing that Ning had warned him; although on the surface, Northson pretended to remain calm, in his heart, he was shocked. He sent back, “Senior apprentice-brother, six Immortal cultivators? Why haven’t the other five shown themselves? Can it be that they are...”

“Right. They are going to rob and kill us,” Ning replied. Northson was enraged. “They actually dare to try to pull that on us? Let’s counter-kill them.”

“Careful,” Ning sent back. “Don’t underestimate them. They aren’t like those Wanxiang monsters; they are from top-tier clans and tribes as well, and their techniques will definitely be extraordinary. And, with six of them joining forces...if we aren’t careful, we might perish.”

Ning was quite confident about himself, actually; he was a Fiendgod Body Refiner, and his life force was incredibly strong. In addition, with his ultimate secret weapon, the divine ability [Starseizing Hand]...yes, Ning felt quite confident. However, Northson was still just a middle Wanxiang Adept. In terms of elemental ki, he was far inferior to the others. In addition, Northson was just eighteen, and in a true, chaotic battle, Ning wouldn’t necessarily be able to take care of this junior apprentice-brother of his. If his junior apprentice-brother died here, Ning would never be able to forgive himself.

“Understood.” Northson immediately increased his own level of caution as well. “Stay next to me,” Ning sent to him. “Don’t make any sudden movements. Wait for my commands.”

“Alright,” Northson acknowledged.

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While the two fellow disciples decided through their private mental messages as to what they would do, opposite them, Northriver Zhou continued to smile at them and wait for their response. At the same time, he even said, “I’ve always been quite filled with admiration towards the many students of the Black-White College. It is my good fortune to be able to meet you two fellow Daoists today.”

“I’m ashamed to say this,” Ning said apologetically, “But we’re busy. We won’t go over for now. After we all complete the test to join the Raindragon Guard, we’ll drink together.”

“Oh.” Northriver Zhou cursed in his heart, but on the surface, he put on an ‘understanding’ look. “I understand. Then let us wait to meet with each other after we join the Raindragon guard.” But at the same time, he sent mentally, “Attack!”

The five cultivators within the ship, upon hearing this, exchanged glances and nodded. They all immediately rushed outside. Only...

Ji Ning was even faster than them!

Ning had noticed through his divine sense that the five Immortal cultivators within the ship had looked at each other and nodded, and were moving to charge outside. He immediately willed his 720 Mortal-ranked flying swords to appear in midair. “Junior apprentice-brother, attack.”

At that moment, two giant black water-snakes appeared around Northson. The bodies of the black water-snakes constantly flickered in an illusory manner, and began to form into sharp spike sthats were covered by many runic seals. The auras of the water-snakes immediately began to grow savage and brutal.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

Five figures moved lightning-fast, charging outside of the ship, their bodies already flashing with that blurry gray light. The spacelock formation was already beginning to take shape. This was a formation which used six Immortal cultivators as the formation-base, and the area covered by the six cultivators would be the area locked in by the formation. But of course, there was a maximum size of just a hundred kilometers or so.

“What’s going on?” Northriver Zhou, Dong One, and the others discovered to their astonishment that Ji Ning and Mu Northson had actually acted even before they did.

“Kill them.”

“They found us out.”

“Don’t hold anything back.”

Northriver Zhou's group reacted right away as well, and they immediately unleashed their most powerful attacks. The six of them shared their elemental ki through the formation, and their power burst forth.

"Massive Ice Prison." The golden-robed Dong One pointed towards the distance. Whoosh! A white, freezing aura that was visible to the naked eye swept towards Ning. Ning and Northson were both standing in the air above the dragon-headed warship, which was now completely closed off to the outside world. Clearly, Ning and Northson didn't wish to cause any disasters to befall these slaves. Actually, if it wasn't for these slaves, Ning and Northson could've just fled through using Lesser Teleportation Dao-seals.

Still...the slaves were just one reason. The second was because both of them had just departed from their schools, and they had proud hearts; why would they flee without even fighting? Thus, the two didn't even discuss fleeing. In their minds was a single word – Fight!

"It's dire-ice! This Dong One of Snowdragon Mountain actually was cultivating demon-ice in his body." Ning was startled. The inner Zifu of a practitioner was an incomparably mysterious place. It could nourish dire-ice, or earthfire, or demonwind...these were all extremely terrifying natural elemental powers, and after being nourished in the body, they would be able to unleash extremely great might.

However, to nourish dire-ice, one would first need to find a secret location where naturally-occurring dire-ice was, and then absorb it into the body. One could only hope for but not count on encountering such a valuable location. The power of this dire-ice, however, was absolutely not lower than a divine ability's.

"Grand Windmill Formation!" The black-clothed Xu Manquan pointed towards the distant Ning and Northson. Instantly, nine windmills suddenly appeared and began to spin at high speed in the air, transforming into tornado windmills which crushed the air itself as it smashed towards the two.

"Anatta Sword!" Their leader, Northriver Zhou, made nine flying swords appear before him. They simultaneously struck out, and as they did, nine rivers of sword light appeared, sweeping towards Ning and Northson.

"Nirvana Extinction!" Jihe crossed his hands together, and out of nowhere, a gray energy aura appeared which swept towards Ning and Northson.

"Die." Adept Nongsan let out a cold laugh, then waved his hand. The horsetail whisk in his hands immediately transformed into three thousand white strands, filling the skies as they swept forward.

"Haaaa!" The only woman, Meng Liuqing, crushed a Dao-seal and let out a cold roar. Bang! Countless rays of lightning appeared in midair, striking downwards towards Ning and Northson.

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In an instant, the six Wanxiang Adepts had simultaneously used the most vicious techniques available to them. They weren't itinerant cultivators with no secret arts at their disposals; they were mighty Daoists who had some truly ancient, mysterious techniques.

"Waterflame Lotus!"

“[Three-Foot Sword] – Manifold Thistlethorns!”

An utterly beautiful, enormous blooming lotus flower spread open, with Ning and Northson completely surrounded by it. Ning was holding the Darknorth swords in his hands, just in case, but at the same time, he used the ninth level of the [Lesser Thousand Swords Formation] to execute Ning’s most powerful sword technique – the second stance of the [Three-Foot Sword].

“Serpents Swallow the Skies.” Northson’s two hands moved, and the giant, savage black water-snakes that had latched onto each other’s tails suddenly transformed into an enormous black circle. Carrying an inexhaustible, terrifying devouring power, it swept forward.

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Book 8: Raindragon Guard Chapter 18: Sweeping Through All Opposition

The bolts of lightning struck down at astonishing speed, instantly colliding with the gigantic Waterflame Lotus surrounding Ning and Northson. The petals of the Waterflame Lotus were blooming in layers, and after breaking through three layers of petals, the lightning dissipated, completely unable to harm Ning or Northson at all.

“It actually broke through three layers.” Ning was secretly shocked. In the past three years, Ning had made the most accomplishments in the Dao of Rainwater and the Dao of the Inferno. Every so often, he would go meditate before the Black-White Diagram...and he was now capable of instantly creating and maintaining six layers of petals. If the enemy’s attacks were twice as powerful, they would’ve broken through.

Although Ning was surprised, he saw that the first attacks arriving from far away were those nine tornado windmills.

“Manifold Thistlethorns!” The jade-white sword of light flew out at a seemingly slow speed, as though it was being bound by countless things, which it was just barely able to break through, one layer at a time.

Wherever the jade-white sword of light flew past...the aura it brought with it was enough to cause the faces of Northriver Zhou, Jihe, Dong One, and the other Wanxiang Adepts to change, once they sensed it.

“Who the hell was it that claimed Ji Ning is only skilled in close combat?!” Northriver Zhou and the others were all cursing in their hearts.

The impending sword-light immediately chopped apart the impending dire-ice. Next, it collided against the nine tornado windmills that were flying through the air. Rumble...the nine tornado windmills had aroused an endless tempest, and the nine had immediately formed into a formation which jointly resisted that single jade-white sword of light, but the sword was simply too fast. They could clearly sense it and see it, but it’s speed vastly surpassed that of any of the windmills.

A few seconds after a thunderous collision, the nine windmills were all knocked flying away, but the jade-white sword-light had also grown incomparably dim. “Crunch.” In front of the three thousand white strands of the horsetail whisk, the jade-white sword light completely vanished.

“Formidable. He was actually able to first break through Dong One’s ‘dire-ice’, then break the ‘Grand Windmill Formation’ of myself, Xu Manquan.”

“If he’s so powerful when controlling sword-light...we absolutely cannot let him get into close range!”

Northriver Zhou and the others were all shocked. What they didn’t realize was that Ning felt shocked as well. “My [Lesser Thousand Swords Formation] is already essentially as powerful as an attack at the Zifu level can be, and it executed the second stance of the [Three-Foot Sword]. And yet, it was only just barely able to defeat two of their attacks? It appears that my power base is too weak; Xu Manquan and Dong One are both peak Wanxiang Adepts, after all.”

Of the two, one had used dire-ice, something comparable to a divine ability; the other had used a grand formation. And both were at the peak Wanxiang Adept level! Despite that, both of their attacks had been defeated by Ning, a single person. Actually, Ning’s performance was already quite monstrous.

“Serpents Swallow the Skies!”

“Anatta Sword!”

The two black serpents with linked heads and tails had formed into an enormous circle, and they swept towards those nine streaks of sword-light. As for the nine rivers of sword-light controlled by Northriver Zhou, they swept forward like nine mighty floods, wildly attacking that water-snake circle.

For the moment, the battle was actually at a stalemate.

“These two of the Black-White College truly are powerful. They are so much weaker than us in terms of their base of power, but they are able to resist our attacks nonetheless.” Dong One sent hurriedly with a shout, “Everyone, work together and annihilate them.”

“Kill.”

“Kill!”

Meng Liuqing, Nongsan, and the others used their full strength, not daring to be the slightest bit negligent.

“Eh?” Ning suddenly realized that the gray energy flooding towards him actually was capable of somewhat affecting the soul. Although he didn’t care about it, due to the power of his soul, his junior apprentice-brother would be affected by it. Indeed, the nearby Northson had a frown on his face, and the power of the black serpent constructs which he was controlling had begun to drop. Clearly, his mental equilibrium had been affected.

“Die, then.” Ning’s eyes suddenly exploded with a terrifying killing intent. His divine soul was seated in the lotus position deep within his sea of consciousness. In front of his chest, an azure runic seal suddenly formed; the Soulshaker Seal! His powerful divine sense poured out through the Soulshaker Seal and spread out, thundering out like the waves of the sea in multiple layered waves, surging rapidly towards every direction.

It completely avoided the nearby Northson, crushing down towards everyone else. The rolling waves of powerful divine sense instantly crashed against the six Wanxiang Adepts surrounding them. It was as though mighty, savage waves which had been building up power for a long time had suddenly crashed against the shore.

BOOM!!!

The powerful divine sense instantly exploded with inconceivable concussive power.

“What is...” The Wanxiang Adept of Snowdragon Mountain, Dong One, only felt a terrifying collusive power smash towards him. He was instantly terrified, but then...his mind went blank.

“This...”

“I...”

These mighty Wanxiang Adepts, in the face of Ning’s [Soulshaker Art], were instantly stunned and dazed.

Actually, the [Soulshaker Art] was only a technique capable of shaking the opponent’s soul and affecting their power. Generally speaking, it wouldn’t cause others to fall into this dazed, stunned state. The chief reason it did right now was because Ning’s divine soul had already the ‘divine sense’ level. It was comparable to a Primal Daoist using the technique; naturally, it caused them all to enter a stupor. The six of them even began to slowly sink down from the skies.

“Kill!” Ning willed it, and instantly, the jade-white sword of light of the [Lesser Thousand Swords Formation] appeared once more, sweeping towards the enemies. “Junior apprentice-brother, hurry and attack,” Ning sent.

“Understood.” Northson realized that the six Wanxiang Adepts had entered a dazed, stunned state as well.

The first person to be struck by the jade-white sword light was the leader, Northriver Zhou. “BANG!” Northriver Zhou’s body suddenly unleashed a barrier of sword-ki. This sword-ki was incomparably resilient, and it was able to withstand Ning’s jade-white sword attack.

“Protective sword-ki?” Ning was startled. “It must be a protective item which the elders of his school provide him with.”

In the instant that he was struck, Northriver Zhou came to his senses, and a look of terror appeared on his face.

“Kill! Kill! Kill!” The jade-white sword-light of the [Lesser Thousand Swords Formation] chopped three times in a row against that protective sword-ki. Northriver Zhou, who had just come to his senses and didn’t have the chance to begin controlling his magic treasures, was thus bisected by Ning’s sword chop.

Crack, crack, crack...Northson’s black serpent-circle immediately crushed down around the one named ‘Jihe’. This Jihe actually didn’t have a protective item on him.

By now, the other four Wanxiang Adepts came to their senses. They were still late stage Wanxiang Adepts and peak Wanxiang nAdepts, after all; their souls were extremely strong, and their Dao-hearts resilient. Even for Primal Daoists who used the [Soulshaker Art], to be able to send them into a stupor for a moment was already impressive.

“Not good. Jihe and Northriver Zhou are already dead.”

“Quick, flee.”

“They know a powerful divine will technique.”

The four lucky survivors, being Dong One, Meng Liuqing, Nongsan, and Xu Manquan, were all terrified and immediately fled. Two of them had died in an instant; this extinguished any thoughts they had of fighting back. They now understand that one of these two disciples of the Black-White College was in possession of an extremely powerful divine will technique. Still, they were also incomparably puzzled; although divine will techniques were rare, they weren't invincible. Only someone with an extremely strong divine soul would be powerful when using a divine will technique, and clearly, these two had only trained for a short period of time. How could they be so powerful?”

“Flee?” Ning let out a cold laugh. BANG! His mighty divine will once more spread out in every direction, like the crushing waves of the sea. Although all of the four fleeing individuals were prepared this time, they were still dazed by the powerful divine will, and their speed lessened.

“Junior apprentice-brother, kill them.” Ning, his Darknorth swords in his hands, charged straight towards Dong One of Snowdragon Mountain. At the same time, he controlled his sword-light of the [Lesser Thousand Swords Formation] to attack that Xu Manquan.

“Understood.” Northson's black serpent circle instantly broke apart, transforming back into two giant water-snakes which attacked Nongsan and Meng Liuqing.

“[Soulshaker Art]!”

Ning used the [Soulshaker Art] yet again, and ripples of endless, ceaseless waves of energy swept towards those four Wanxiang Adepts.

“Snowdragon Mountain, eh? Die!” The Darknorth swords in Ning's hands sliced out as two streaks of light, bisecting Dong One. “BANG!” Dong One's body emanated a black energy which formed in protective layers, protecting him like a cocoon.

“Bang!” Ning launched yet another attack, but still wasn't able to break through. Dong One gritted his teeth, still under assault by the clashing waves of Ning's divine will. He gritted his teeth so hard that blood came out from them, and his eyes were bloodshot and crazed. He felt like a person who was drowning in a lake of waves of divine will. However, his powerful Dao-heart caused him to want to remain alive.

“Ignite!” Dong One, just barely managing to remain conscious, executed the Blood Evasion technique. Whoosh! A dazzling, bloody scarlet light suddenly appeared in the skies, and then he disappeared into the distance.

“Swish.” Xu Manquan, pursued by the sword-light of Ning's [Lesser Thousand Swords Formation], had barely managed to remain conscious as well, but he hadn't been able to flee. He was killed by the sword-light.

“One escaped.” Ning shook his head, collecting the corpses that were falling down from the skies. Ning turned to look. Northson was flying towards him. Northson said resignedly, “Senior apprentice-brother, I let that Meng Liuqing get away. However, I did kill that Nongsan.”

“Out of six, we killed four.” Ning laughed. “Not bad.”

“What do you mean, ‘not bad’? We did extremely well!” Northson stared at Ning in astonishment. “Senior apprentice-brother, what technique did you use just now? I saw them enter a dazed state. It should’ve been a divine will technique, right? Our Black-White College only has three divine will techniques; the [Soulshaker Art], the [Soulcharmer Art], and the [Soulslayer Art]. Which one did you use?”

“The [Soulshaker Art], of course.” Ning didn’t try to hide it. “Formidable,” Northson said, “Formidable. Senior apprentice-brother, your soul is at the divine sense level! The power of your [Soulshaker Art] is astonishing; you were able to make them completely unable to fight back. Actually, they were quite powerful; they were all roughly on par with me.” Northson sighed in amazement. “I really haven’t trained long enough.”

“Let’s see what they left behind,” Ning said. “Alright.” Northson was filled with eagerness as well.

The two first flew back to the dragon-headed warship. The slaves aboard the dragon-headed warship were all quite terrified; they had no idea what had just happened outside.

Ning and Northson paid them no heed. Instead, they began to hurriedly bind the storage-type magic treasures. Although the four they had killed were Wanxiang Adepts, their storage-type magic treasures weren’t all Earth-ranked. Three were Mortal-ranked, while only one was Earth-ranked. It actually didn’t make a huge difference if the storage-type treasures were Earth-ranked or not; thus, not many Immortal cultivators would actively go about upgrading them.

A few moments later...

“Senior apprentice-brother, whose magic treasure was this? It has so much liquefied elemental essence; this bottle has to have at least 250 kilograms!” Northson was instantly overjoyed upon discovering this.

Ning, upon hearing this, was delighted as well. 250 kilograms? So much! Ning quickly understood. “Most likely, after training to the peak of the Wanxiang Adept level, he was preparing to use it to break through to become a Primal Daoist. To break through to the Primal Daoist level would require tremendous amounts of liquefied elemental essence. 250 kilograms is just a rounding error.”

“Makes sense.” Northson nodded.

But Ning was quite eager; they had discovered 250 kilograms of liquefied elemental essence in the storage-type magic treasure of just a single Wanxiang Adept. Perhaps, as a result of this encounter, Ning would be able to breakthrough to become a Wanxiang Adept himself!

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Book 8: Raindragon Guard Chapter 19: Breakthrough, Wanxiang Adept

Ji Ning and Mu Northson continued to bind the storage treasures to see what items the four Wanxiang Adepts they had killed had left behind. Immortal cultivators would often carry their most important treasures with them! This was because it would be safest when they were holding onto them personally. And, of course, if they were to die, the treasures would become of no value to them. Thus, cultivators generally carried their treasures with them.

“We’ve bound them all.” Northson let out a long sigh. “All of them were quite ‘fat’,” Ning said with a laugh. “Killing a single cultivator really is far more rewarding than killing a Wanxiang monster.” Although

Wanxiang monsters also relied on formations and alliances to occasionally killed cultivators, they would generally trade those magic treasures of the slain cultivators for liquefied elemental essence and some particular items they needed. Thus, when Ning's group had killed those three Wanxiang monsters, they hadn't acquired that much from them.

"Northriver Zhou, Xu Manquan, Nongsan, Jihe." Northson sighed. "Most of them had formation-type treasures. Those nine Earth-ranked flying swords of Northriver Zhou...I imagine those are all Earth-ranked high-grade flying swords."

"Right." Ning nodded. "These were all fairly formidable figures amongst Wanxiang Adepts. Their magic treasures are extraordinary." The Adept Xu Li who Ning had killed in the past had carried quite ordinary Earth-ranked magic treasures. He was merely a low-level figure amongst Wanxiang Adepts; by contrast, Northriver Zhou and the others were top-level figures.

"In total, 33 Earth-ranked magic treasures. No need to count the Mortal-ranked ones. These treasures are most likely worth around 1000 or 1500 kilograms of liquefied elemental essence." Northson was quite excited. "They also have Dao-seals like these Lesser Teleportation Dao-seals, and some formations, spirit-pills...and liquefied elemental essence! These four Wanxiang Adepts have, in total, 900 kilograms of it! Senior apprentice-brother, you are still at the peak Zifu level; the liquefied elemental essence will be yours. With them, I imagine you will be able to smash through to the early Wanxiang stage at one blow. By then, your power will increase dramatically."

Ning said, "No rush. Junior apprentice-brother, you need to increase your power as well." But Northson shook his head, then said resignedly, "Even if you gave me all 900 kilograms, it's hard to say whether or not I'd be able to break through to the late Wanxiang stage."

Ning was startled, but after thinking over it, he nodded slightly. Indeed, it would be hard to say. When Immortal cultivators rose in power to a completely new stage, the amount of elemental ki they would have to absorb would also increase tenfold, or perhaps even tens of times. Although it might only take 500 kilograms to go from the early Zifu stage to the early Wanxiang stage, from the early Wanxiang stage, it might take tens of thousands of kilograms to reach the early Primal Daoist stage!

The early Primal Daoist stage, in turn, would probably need hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of kilograms in order to reach the early Earth Immortal stage!

Tens of thousands vs hundreds of thousands? How incredible was this? Even major schools or sects would at most be willing to squander a bit of liquefied elemental essence on powerful Zifu-stage disciples. Once they reached the Wanxiang Adept or Primal Daoist stages...one had to simply train slowly. Even some truly supreme, monstrous geniuses would at most be given a bit of help by their clans. It would be incredible for the clans to be willing to part with a few tens of thousands of kilograms. Hundreds of thousands of kilograms? Not even Immortals would be able to bring out that much!

"Senior apprentice-brother, hurry up and make your breakthrough," Northson urged. "Once you break through to the early Wanxiang stage, the rate at which you are able to absorb elemental ki will explosively increase by tens of times. By then, a single year's worth of training would probably be equivalent to using hundreds of kilograms of liquefied elemental essence."

“Fine, then.” Ning nodded. “I’ll accept the liquefied elemental essence, but you take the magic treasures, junior apprentice-brother.” Northson said, delighted, “Fine, fine, fine. I won’t refuse.”

The two made a simple division; the various magic treasures would go to Northson, while the liquefied elemental essence went to Ning. As for the Dao-seals, spirit-pills, and other items, the two divided them equally.

Although it seemed as though Northson was at a bit of advantage in terms of value, these were the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains, after all; if he was to trade for liquefied elemental essence, he would first have to go back to the Crimson Dragon Mountains. Thus...comparatively speaking, Ning was a bit better off. Ning understood this, and he quietly memorized this event.

“Up ahead is the place where the Raindragon Guard is stationed.” Ning walked to the helm of the warship, staring through the sparse clouds to the distant lands below. “After we deliver these slaves to them, we’ll find a place where I can quietly absorb this liquefied elemental essence.”

“Alright.” Northson nodded.

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The Raindragon Guard encampment within the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains. This was a towering mountain, and there were estates erected throughout it. Quite a few Raindragon Guards were present here.

The dragon-headed warship hovered there in midair, slowly drawing closer to the mountain peak.

“Hurry and depart.” A black-robed elder stood there in midair, appearing in front of the dragon-headed warship. He said furiously, “The two of you have come here to participate in the trial to join the Raindragon Guard. You are forbidden from entering. After you enter this encampment, you will have failed the test.”

Ning and Northson immediately saluted with respect. They could sense that this black-robed elder’s aura...seemed quite similar to the aura the Primal Daoists of the Black-White College possessed.

“Ji Ning [Mu Northson] greets you, senior,” the two said respectfully.

“No point in being respectful. Hurry up and depart.” The black-robed elder waved his arm.

Ning persisted in saying, “Senior, we haven’t come here to enter the encampment. We’ve come because earlier, when we two brothers went to deal with Wanxiang monsters atop a monster mountain, we discovered a group of pitiable humans who were being raised as livestock. Thus, we delivered them here in the hopes that the Raindragon Guard will take pity on and care of them.”

The black-robed elder was startled. A look of rage appeared on his face. “These monsters...they never learn the error of their ways.” He looked towards Ning and Northson with a slightly kinder look in his eyes now. “Bring these slaves out. Release them and let me look at them.”

“Yes,” Ning and Northson said respectfully. Instantly, they opened the doors to the warship, and the group of slaves that had been eating and drinking within the warm cabins stared outwards in terror.

The look on the black-robed elder's face grew even uglier to behold, upon seeing those human slaves clad in leaves and in bark, who had terrified looks in their eyes. He let out a soft sigh. "There is no hope for most of these slaves. Some of the children, perhaps. These humans who were treated as meat by the monsters...their lives are incomparably terrible, generation after generation. Now that they have escaped their tribulations, the Raindragon Guard will naturally take care of them. Hand them over to me. The two of you shall continue within the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains. After three months time, you may return."

"Yes." Ning and Northson were both overjoyed. Previously, they were afraid that the Raindragon Guard wouldn't take care of them, but now, it seemed, the Raindragon Guard was quite benevolent towards these human slaves who had been reared as livestock by the monsters.

A short time later. The black-robed Primal Daoist elder had led away all the human slaves. The child who Ning and Northson was the most familiar with, the one called 'Ironboy', had stared at the two of them the entire time, as though wanting to completely memorize their faces.

"I wonder what will happen to him in the future," Northson said softly, a complicated look in his eyes. "Everyone has their own destiny," Ning said. "Let's go."

"Alright." Northson nodded.

The two disciples once more boarded the dragon-headed warship, quickly departing the encampment region and beginning to once more head deep into the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains.

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Half a day later. It was already night.

Ning and Northson had chosen a desolate mountain with no monsters present. Ning's divine sense had inspected the entire mountain, but hadn't found any monsters at all. Thus, they entered a cave which was deep within the mountain.

Within the cave, there was a flowing underground river. The two set up a grand alarm formation, and Northson also arranged for some constructs to stand guard alongside himself.

"Senior apprentice-brother, focus on your training. Leave everything here to me. I won't even let an ant crawl in," Northson chortled. Ning laughed. "Sorry for the trouble, junior apprentice-brother."

Then, no longer thinking about anything else, Ning immediately sat down into the lotus position atop a flat rock he had chopped apart with his Darknorth sword. A jade bottle appeared next to him. Within this jade bottle was the liquefied elemental essence of all four Wanxiang Adepts; a total of 900 kilograms of it.

"Whew!" Ning opened his mouth, and the liquefied elemental essence began to flow out, directly entering Ning's mouth.

Within Ning's Zifu Violet Palace region. The liquefied elemental essence began to frantically transform. His entire Zifu Sea was swiveling slightly, because at the very base of the Zifu Sea large amount of pure elemental ki was flowing out from the Watersource. The Zifu Sea...it continuously expanded in each direction, taking up more and more of the space in this region.

50 kilograms. 150 kilograms. 250 kilograms. 300 kilograms!

Ning continued to absorb more and more.

“Eh? Previously, in the Black-White College, I absorbed 405 kilograms. Afterwards, I spent three years in training. Those three years should be roughly equivalent to fifty or a hundred kilograms as well. In other words, my body should’ve had nearly 500 kilograms.” Ning pondered to himself. “And now, I’ve absorbed 300 more, but I still haven’t reached my limit.”

“Let’s wait and see. I want to see exactly how much my Zifu Lake can expand to.” Ning didn’t hesitate at all, continuing to ceaselessly absorb liquefied elemental essence. The Zifu Sea within his body was constantly expanding, taking up more of the space of the void. The entire Zifu Violet Palace region was growing sturdier and sturdier as well.

350 kilograms. 400 kilograms. 450 kilograms...

“Master’s previous guess was that I would roughly need to absorb around 800 to 850 kilograms or so, but I’ve already...wow, a thousand kilograms.” Ning’s former Zifu Sea had held roughly 500 kilograms worth of liquefied elemental essence, but now he had absorbed 500 more. And yet, Ning still didn’t feel as though he had reached his limit.

“Come. Continue.”

Slowly, the rate at which his Zifu Sea expanded began to slow down, as though it was beginning to reach its limits. The surrounding void had begun to generate a shocking resistive power, preventing the Zifu Sea from expanding much more.

Rumble...

The entire Violet Palace was beginning to tremble. The Zifu Lake was no longer able to expand by another inch. The entire Violet Palace region was now incomparably sturdy.

Ning understood that his Zifu Sea had finally reached its limits. Factoring in his previous accumulated energy and this time’s absorption...he had actually taken in the equivalent of 1250 kilograms of liquefied elemental essence!

“No matter what, my peak Zifu stage is definitely at a true peak now,” Ning mused silently to himself. “I can now break through to the early Wanxiang stage.” Actually, he could’ve broken through three years ago, but his base wasn’t stable and solid enough. Ning was a person of great ambition; naturally, he had insisted on waiting until today.

Ning began to mentally recite the words from the [Flowing Watersource] describing the process of breaking through to the Wanxiang Adept stage.

With but a thought...his entire Zifu Sea began to change...

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 8: Raindragon Guard Chapter 20: Manifestation

Within Ji Ning’s Zifu Violet Palace. The boundless sea of elemental ki was vast and endless. With but a thought from Ning, the surface of the entire sea of elemental ki began to sink downwards.

Deep within the sea of elemental ki. A large amount of elemental ki essence was quickly, continuously condensing. One enormous star after another was constantly being born.

After an indeterminate period of time.

Rumble...the surface of the sea of elemental ki had already sank downwards considerably. Suddenly, it began to roil, and one enormous star after another slowly rose up from above it, breaking through the surface and floating upwards. Countless giant, tightly packed stars emerged from the surface of the sea, flying higher and higher into the void, each of them gleaming with faint light.

Rising. Rising. Finally, the countless stars came to a halt, high in the vast, infinite 'sky'. In this moment, true darkness came to the Zifu. Those countless, brilliant stars hung there in the night sky, and beneath the night sky was the vast, endless sea.

This was the very first Manifestation after one broke through to the Wanxiang level – a sea of stars in the sky.

Rumble...the sea of elemental ki continued to sink downwards. In the center of the sea, where a countless amount of elemental ki essence had condensed, an even more astonishingly large 'star' was being formed. After another indeterminate period of time, this unfathomably larger 'star' slowly began to rise upwards as well. Eventually, it broke through the waves and slowly floated into the sky.

This rose in a manner which was different from the countless stars which had just soared upwards. In this moment, it was as though the only thing which existed in the night sky was this incomparably vast 'star'. It emanated a soft, gentle light which illuminated the entire night sky, and which shone down on the entire sea of elemental ki. In this moment, it was the most brilliant part of the entire Zifu region.

This was evidence of a breakthrough to the second Manifestation of the Wanxiang level – the bright moon ascending from the sea!

Finally, this enormous, brilliant moon came to a halt, high in the sky. In this moment, there was a sea of stars in the sky, along with a luminous moon.

Rumble...the sea of elemental ki continued to sink. If the sea of elemental ki had been too small, perhaps even the creation of a sea of thousands of stars would be impossible. If even that was impossible...then that symbolized that there was no hope for a breakthrough to the Wanxiang level. Since the likes of Adept Mu Xiao and Adept Xu Li trained in what could only be considered decent techniques, when they made their breakthroughs, they were only able to reach this second Manifestation.

But Ning's sea of elemental ki was now incomparably vast. Although it had continuously sank downwards for a long period of time, less than 30% of the sea had been drained.

In this moment...an even more incomparably enormous 'star' was forming, deep in the bottom of the sea. Even before being truly born, this 'star' was already beginning to emit an astonishing, blinding brilliance, to the point where even the entire sea of elemental ki was beginning to glow. Finally, it too began to rise, and this titanic 'star' rose upwards.

Finally, it broke through the surface of the water. In that instant, the scorching, blazing light of this star instantly spread out, covering the entirety of the Zifu with its light. The Zifu space instantly transformed from night into day.

This great sun slowly, unhurriedly rose into the heights of the sky. This was proof that one had broken through to the third Manifestation of the Wanxiang level – the dawn sun rising from the east!

The sea of stars, the bright moon rising from the sea, the dawn sun rising from the east...the appearance of these three Manifestations symbolized that this breakthrough to the Wanxiang level had been a perfect one.

When the sun flew to the highest part of the entire region, it became surrounded by stars. It was located directly opposite to the nearby moon. One Yang, the other Yin. Because it had flown so high, the light of the sun was no longer as scorchingly powerful as it had been before. The bright moon, the blazing sun; one cool, the other blazing. Two different types of light filled the sea below.

“Condense!” Ning willed it. The entire sea of elemental ki, which had only sunk by less than half, began to frantically sink at an even faster rate. As it did, spots of light began to float up from the sea of elemental ki. These countless spots of light broke through the surface and floated upwards...and as the sea of elemental ki continued to sink, more and more spots of light emerged. They were so densely packed and numerous as to be countless; there were hundreds, no, thousands more spots of light than there were stars in the sky. They all flew up into the sky.

These spots of light flew towards the stars, the moon, and the sun, then merged into them. The moon, the sun, and the countless stars began to increase in size. And, as they absorbed those spots of light, the moon, the sun, and the stars also began to evolve.

By the time the sea of elemental ki had sank down to 10% of its original size, everything finally came to a halt. The moon, sun, and stars in the sky had increased by a full size.

“Success.” Ning finally relaxed. The stars in the sky began to slowly move about. At first, they moved about in a very slow, sluggish manner. Soon, however, they began to move in a very natural, easy way, and they began to revolve around the two larger stellar bodies, the sun and the moon. The movement of the countless stars was natural and innate. These stars and the sun and the moon were naturally linked with the countless true stellar bodies in the outside world, and thus they began to move in this manner.

Within the deep cave.

Northson turned his head to look at Ning. Ning still sat there in the lotus position, but he had stopped absorbing liquefied elemental essence. “Senior apprentice-brother should have made his breakthrough.”

Right at this moment, suddenly, a large amount of natural elemental ki from the surrounding area began to wildly surge towards Ning at an incomparably shocking speed. Moments later, this elemental ki ripple came to a halt. Ning opened his eyes. Laughing loudly, he rose to his feet.

“Congratulations, senior apprentice-brother. You have stepped into the Wanxiang level,” Northson said in delight.

“I made some tests just now. Indeed, it is as you said, junior apprentice-brother; upon breaking through to the Wanxiang level, the stars within the Zifu in my body truly do resonate with the countless real stars of the outside world. Once I begin to absorb the elemental ki of the outside world, the rate at which that happens has increased by many tens of times.” Ning laughed, but at the same time, he sighed in his heart.

If one wanted to create liquefied elemental essence, it would be far more difficult. If one wanted to do that, then one would need to do what Immortal Firedragon had done; set down a grand formation, then spend a long period of time converting the elemental ki of the natural world and distill it into liquefied elemental essence!

Thus, liquefied elemental essence was naturally, incomparably precious. Wanxiang Adepts and Primal Daoists would rather spend a bit of extra time in training than use it; extremely few were able to wantonly use vast amounts of liquefied elemental essence to rise in power quickly.

“Senior apprentice-brother, you broke through to the Wanxiang level; you should be lacking in suitable Earth-ranked magic treasures.” Northson laughed. “Earlier, we acquired a set of flying swords from that Northriver Zhou. It should suit you very well. This set of flying swords shall be your junior apprentice-brother’s gift to you for making your breakthrough, senior apprentice-brother.”

Ning was startled. “No, I can’t!”

Northriver Zhou’s set of flying swords? Indeed, it really was a set of nine Earth-ranked flying swords, and they were quite good as well, most likely high-grade Earth-ranked swords. Although the current core of his [Lesser Thousand Swords Formation], the ‘Nine Yang Sword Formation’, was comprised of top-grade Mortal-ranked swords, for a Wanxiang Adept...they were still vastly inferior to a set of nine quality Earth-ranked flying swords. The comparative price of these items testified to this as well.

Top-grade Mortal-ranked flying swords would generally go for a hundred taels of liquefied elemental essence, which was to say, around five kilograms. This set of Earth-ranked flying swords of Northriver Zhou, however, would probably see each sword going for nearly fifty kilograms. Since the nine came in a set, most likely if sold as a set, a price of five hundred kilograms or so could be fetched.

“Senior apprentice-brother. These flying swords are useless to me.” Northson shook his head. “This is my congratulatory gift...can it be that you are going to refuse, senior apprentice-brother?”

Ning looked at Northson, then smiled. “Fine, then. I’ll accept this set of flying swords.” The two were fellow disciples, and they were engaged in a life-and-death adventure together. Ning wasn’t going to be wishy-washy about it; only, he firmly engraved this moment into his heart.

Time slowly passed. In the blink of an eye, it had been half a month.

The clouds drifted forward in the sky. A dragon-headed warship was leisurely advancing. Up ahead, a spatial distortion could be seen, as well as cracks and tears in space. Beyond those cracks was a gray, blurry void. Although Ning and Northson had seen these things many times now, they still felt their hearts beat in fear.

The dragon-headed warship naturally stayed far, far away from these things. If they were accidentally trapped within these spatial distortions...Ning understood that given their current level of power, they would definitely die.

“This set of flying swords truly is sharp and dominating. It has an extremely strong murderous intent about it.” Ning stood at the helm of the ship. He stretched his right hand out, and around his right hand were nine finger-sized flying swords. These nine flying swords swirled around Ning’s right hand, constantly spinning...and occasionally spitting out sword-light. Ning was still familiarizing himself with this set of nine Earth-ranked flying swords.

Because he didn’t know the name of these swords, Ning described them as the ‘Northriver Sword Formation’. Both because it had belonged to Northriver Zhou, and also to constantly remind himself to be wary of other Immortal cultivators.

“Senior apprentice-brother, look.” Northson pointed towards the distance. Ning took a careful look. In the foggy distance, a warship was currently flying towards them. Upon seeing the shape of the warship, Ning immediately said, “This is one of the hundred who took part in the Raindragon Guard trial. This is the ship of the peak Wanxiang Adept named ‘Formless’.”

“Formless?” Northson turned to look as well. “It’s not going to be like when we met Northriver Zhou and the others, is it? There aren’t other Wanxiang Adepts hiding on his ship, are there?”

“Let me take a look.” Ning willed his divine sense to sweep forward, thoroughly surrounding the distant warship. Ning thoroughly investigate all the activities going on inside that ship. After doing so, Ning relaxed. “It’s not bad. Including Adept Formless, there are only two individuals...eh?” Ning’s face suddenly changed.

In that distant warship. The white-robed ‘Daoist Eastdawn’ and the gray-robed ‘Daoist Formless’ were also staring towards Ning’s distant dragon-headed warship.

“That dragon-headed warship should belong to that disciple of the Black-White College, Mu Northson,” the gray-robed Daoist Formless said.

“Judging from how leisurely they are acting, and how slow they are flying...I imagine they must have acquired the corpse of a Wanxiang monster long ago,” Daoist Eastdawn said.

“They are members of the Black-White College, after all.” Daoist Formless frowned, then shook his head. “It’s unfortunate. When we first entered the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains, our luck wasn’t bad. We even killed a Wanxiang monster! But afterwards, ever since we acted against that Azure Skysnake, our luck has taken a turn for the worse. We failed numerous times. Three days ago, we were played for idiots by that Azure Skysnake, and the two of us nearly died there.”

Adept Eastdawn gritted his teeth. “The first time, we let her escape. The second time, after she discovered us, she actually played us for fools and let us fall into a trap. If we run into her again, I’ll definitely kill her.”

“Azure Skysnake?” Ning had a sudden thought. In the past, shortly after he had left the protection of his parents, he had gone adventuring in a region within ten thousand kilometers of West Prefecture City. He had battled numerous times with an Azure Skysnake.

After Ning had killed Ironwood Zhan, he had been unable to discover the corpse of the Azure Skysnake. Back then, he had suspected that it must have suddenly comprehended the 'Void Blink' technique and fled.

"Azure Skysnakes are still quite rare. In addition, due to their innate gifts, they generally grow quite quickly," Ning mused to himself. "I wonder if the Azure Skysnake they met...is the same one I met in the Swallow Mountain region."

"Junior apprentice-brother, let's move towards them," Ning said.

"Move towards them?" Northson looked towards Ning, who nodded. Northson no longer asked anything, instead moving the dragon-headed warship closer.

Ning stared into the distance. He wanted to learn more information about this Azure Skysnake from these two men. Since he had nothing to do during the next two-plus months in the wild marshes, he might as well go investigate and see if this Azure Skysnake was the same one he knew.

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 8: Raindragon Guard Chapter 21: Meeting Again After Many Years

"Fellow Daoist Mu Northson." Adept Formless, on the other warship, clasped his hands, then said with a laugh, "Oh, fellow Daoist Ji Ning is here as well. For us to be able to meet here in the wild marshes is truly a karmic sign. After we return to the Raindragon Guard encampment, we must have a good reunion."

"Naturally! Fellow Daoist Formless, fellow Daoist Eastdawn," Ning said, clasping his hands, "Judging from how relaxed you see, I imagine that you must have already acquired enough Wanxiang monster corpses."

"Relaxed?" The two Wanxiang Adepts on the warship opposite from them stared at each other. Daoist Eastdawn couldn't help but laugh bitterly. "Fellow Daoist Ji Ning, what makes you feel we are relaxed? Just a short while ago, we nearly died. We are just taking a short rest, and then we'll go hunting for Wanxiang monsters again. After all, the time limit is three months; we have a bit of time."

"Oh, you haven't collected enough either?" Ning was 'surprised'. "Either?" Daoist Eastdawn was truly surprised. "Can it be that the two you have yet to collect enough either?"

Although Northson was puzzled by why Ning had said this, he nodded and said in support, "Right, not yet." Ning sighed. "Actually, this time, we nearly killed an Azure Skysnake. Only, that Azure Skysnake was too slippery; she managed to escape."

"Azure Skysnake? You also encountered an Azure Skysnake?" Daoist Eastdawn was shocked. Ning instantly looked towards him, 'puzzled'.

Daoist Eastdawn said hurriedly, "We met her as well, a total of two times. This Azure Skysnake truly is sly and slippery; to kill her won't be easy."

"Where did you meet her?" Ning asked. Daoist Eastdawn didn't try to hide anything. "The first time was in the north, roughly two hundred thousand kilometers from here. Three days ago, we met her again, roughly a hundred thousand kilometers northeast of here, at the 'Mount Demonlotus' region.

Ning shook his head and sighed. "We really are linked by karmic. We both encountered the Azure Skysnake. However, I don't know if it was the same one. Well. We two brothers need to continue to search for Wanxiang monsters, so we won't dally. Once we return to the encampment, we can meet again."

"Alright." Daoist Formless and Daoist Eastdawn clasped their hands in salute. Soon, the two warships separated.

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Daoist Formless, aboard his ship, laughed. "That was such a coincidence. They encountered the Azure Skysnake as well."

"I was actually worried that there might be other Wanxiang Adepts hiding within that dragon-headed warship, preparing for an ambush," Daoist Eastdawn said. "But now, it seems, disciples of the Black-White College really are different. They are quite proud, and they won't stoop to doing such things."

"Right. It's the Black-White College, after all," Daoist Formless agreed, nodding. They actually had been vigilant this entire time. However, chatting about the Azure Skysnake didn't impact them at all; naturally, they didn't mind discussing it.

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Aboard the dragon-headed warship. "We're going to the Mount Demonlotus region?" Northson looked towards Ning, puzzled. "Senior apprentice-brother, why are we going to Mount Demonlotus?"

"In my homeland, I once battled numerous times against a Xiantian-level Azure Skysnake monster. After having fought so many times, we actually ended up with something of a friendship." Ning sighed. "Only, afterwards, it most likely left the Swallow Mountain region, heading to unknown places. Now that I heard of an Azure Skysnake appearing here...I want to go and see if it's the one I knew."

"Oh." Northson now understood. "Azure Skysnakes are Godbeasts, and very rare Godbeasts at that. Given how rare they are, it just might be the same one you met in your homeland."

"It also might not be," Ning said. "But since we have nothing to do, we might as well go there to take a look." Northson nodded. "Alright." He immediately controlled the dragon-headed warship to fly towards the north, then pursed his lips and said, "Come, senior apprentice-brother. Tell me the story about you and that Azure Skysnake."

"Very well, I'll tell you about it." Ning began to slowly narrate that tale from many years ago.

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Mount Demonlotus. This was a mountain that took up tens of kilometers of the surrounding region, and was shaped like a blooming lotus flower. Supposedly, this peak was a very mysterious one...no one who entered was able to leave. The monsters of this region, at least, did not dare to enter Mount Demonlotus at all.

The Mount Demonlotus region took up an enormous amount of space. Because the natural elemental aura of this location was exceptionally dense and nourishing, it attracted quite a few monsters, who took up residence in the various mountain peaks of the region.

This was a place of many monsters, much elemental energy, and many treasures! Naturally, the Azure Skysnake had prepared to make this place her home as well.

In a desolate part of the Mount Demonlotus region, one enormous formation-flag after another began to appear in multiple places, covering a region of over a hundred kilometers.

“Not good!” A small azure snake hung there in midair, staring about. Its tail flashed, and it transformed into a streak of light, wanting to flee.

“Azure Skysnake! Even now, you want to try and flee?” This voice boomed like thunder. From far away, in front of one of the formation flags, a ten-meter tall, azure-skinned man had appeared. This muscular man’s eyes glowed with a dark green light, and he had a heaven-shaking aura around him.

“Azure Skysnake, surrender and allow yourself to be captured.”

“Stop struggling.”

“If you resist, you will die an even more miserable death.”

One voice after another rang out. In each of the formation flag locations, figures began to appear, all of them with monstrous auras that filled the heavens. There was an alluring, white-furred woman, a shockingly savage black monster, a tall, skinny, evil-looking man...more than ten Wanxiang monsters had appeared.

The little azure snake swept the surrounding area with her gaze, and then her body blurred before transforming into a ruby-lipped, ivory-toothed, azure-robed maiden. Worry on her face, she hurriedly said, “You should be King Dragonwhale.”

“I am indeed.” The ten-meter tall, azure-skinned man’s voice rumbled like thunder. This monster, Dragonwhale, was extremely famous in the Mount Demonlotus region. This was a monster who trained as a Fiendgod Body Refiner, and who even had a divine ability. There were dozens of Wanxiang monsters who served him. Not even human Immortal cultivators would be so foolish as to try and act against this Dragonwhale.

“I don’t know how a humble monster like myself offended you, your Majesty, for you to come deal with me in such an awe-inspiring manner,” the azure-robed maiden said, panicked.

“Just yesterday, you killed my lifelong friend.” The Dragonwhale monster’s eyes glowed with a shockingly powerful light. The azure-robed maiden was stunned.

“Right. That Zifu-level panther-headed monster was my lifelong friend.” The Dragonwhale monster’s eyes were filled with a savage, killing intent. “The two of us knew each other back when we were both ordinary little monsters. It has been countless years...I didn’t expect he’d fall to your hands.”

“I, I...” the azure-robed maiden said, panicked, “I didn’t...”

“Stop dissembling,” the Dragonwhale said coldly. “You killed my lifelong friend. I will definitely let you know what it means to be in such agony that you would wish to die. Everyone...capture her alive. I will use ki-sealing chains to bind her, then viciously torture her for ten or a hundred years. Only in this way can I give vent to my hatred.”

“Very well.”

“Big Brother, don’t worry at all.”

“Leave it to us.”

The ten-plus Wanxiang monsters began to surround her.

“You want to kill me? In your dreams!” That azure-robed maiden, a look of panic still on her face, suddenly roared in rage. With a swoosh, she transformed into a small azure snake once more, then immediately fled at high speed.

“Fleeing?” The Dragonwhale watched emotionlessly. The ten-plus Wanxiang monsters surrounded her, moving towards her in an enveloping manner.

“This Dragonwhale really is insidious. It actually set up a spacelock formation in this region, making me unable to Void Blink.” The little azure serpent cursed to itself. “It seems this time, I’m really in danger. The wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains truly are a dangerous place; my senior fellow disciples spoke the truth.”

Although she had apprenticed herself to a monster Immortal, that monster Immortal accepted many monsters; virtually no monsters would be refused. Although she, an Azure Skysnake, was viewed with comparative importance, if she were to be attacked or killed in the outside world while adventuring, no one would help make an appearance on her behalf. Amongst monsters...life was far more savage and ruthless than life was amongst humans.

“This Azure Skysnake really is slippery.”

“Although she cannot Void Blink, her speed is still astonishingly fast.”

“Dire-ice! She actually was nourishing dire-ice. Everyone, be careful.”

The small azure snake, while fleeing, would immediately belch forth a blast of dire-ice when any Wanxiang monsters moved to gang up on her! Dire-ice, for Wanxiang Daoists, was not at all inferior to divine abilities; they were extremely powerful supportive techniques. Against weaker opponents, this dire-ice was capable of freezing them to death.

Even against strong opponents, the incomparable cold of ‘dire-ice’ would cause them to be affected by the chilling cold. Their speed would be dramatically lessened, and their power would fall as well.

“It won’t be able to continue emitting dire-ice for much longer. Soon, there will be none left in her body.” The Dragonwhale watched from far away. As the saying goes, spectators view things with the greatest clarity. “All you need to do is continue to shrink the zone in which she can flee towards. That will guarantee that she will die.”

“What should I do. What should I do. What should I do!” The Azure Skysnake, suffering the combined attacks of so many, had to rely on the dire-ice to impact them and slow them down, as well as her own innate nimbleness and speed to escape them time and time again. However, clearly, under the combined attacks of more than ten monsters, the region in which she could flee about was rapidly shrinking. If this continued...she would definitely be captured alive.

“Bang!” The little azure snake’s tail flickered as fast as lightning, striking against the sharp claws of an enormous white fox. The two were both knocked backwards by the collision. The little azure snake’s tail flickered once again, sending her into a solitary arc and fleeing in another direction.

“Still running?” The giant white fox’s slanted eyes were filled with ridicule. “You won’t be able to escape.”

“Bang!” “Boom!” “Wham!”

The Azure Skysnake was forced to exchange multiple blows with these monsters. As a Godbeast, the Azure Skysnake had incredible tools at her disposal, and in a one-on-one fight, she would be able to withstand them. However, the enemies comprised more than ten Wanxiang monsters, several of which were stronger than her. And there was also that Dragonwhale monster who had yet to join in; he vastly outstripped her in strength.

“It seems as though this time, I really am going to die.” The Azure Skysnake had this sudden thought spring to her mind; today, perhaps, she really wouldn’t be able to escape. She looked at the distant Dragonwhale, who was still staring at her coldly. She gritted her teeth. “I’d rather die than allow myself to be taken alive. Even if I die, I’ll pull a few of them down with me to pad my grave.”

“Kill.”

The Azure Skysnake went berserk.

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In the clouds above the Mount Demonlotus region. A dragon-headed warship was slowly advancing. Ning had already spent roughly half a month in this region, but he had yet to locate the Azure Skysnake.

“Given how large the Mount Demonlotus region is, it is simply too hard to find an Azure Skysnake. In addition, it might have left this region long ago,” Northson said. Ning nodded. “Perhaps it really has.”

“Eh?” Suddenly, Ning frowned and stared downwards. “A ripple.” Northson sensed it as well. When Wanxiang monsters battled against each other, the elemental ki ripples they created were extremely strong. Ning was able to vaguely sense it.

“Let’s go take a look,” Ning said. “Alright.” Northson immediately commanded the warship to quickly draw closer. As they moved closer, the ripples grew more and more intense.

“Right there.” Northson pointed downward, through the faint fog. Through it, they could see that a massive battle was going on in the wilderness, with the auras of that battle surging towards the skies.

Ning glanced downwards. “They should be Wanxiang-level monsters. I’ll take a look.”

With but a thought, Ning sent his divine sense to cover the region, sweeping towards the battle going on in that desolate wilderness.