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Book 10: Entering the Immortal Estate Chapter 19: Pentabolt Vajra, Soldiers of the Mind

“The top-tier techniques, divine abilities, and secrets arts. They are going to be mine, all mine!” Xue Hongyi was rapidly checking one room after another, his eyes filled with an endless frenzy. He came from Snowdragon Mountain, which currently didn’t even have a single Loose Immortal; even if it did occasionally produce a Loose Immortal or Earth Immortal throughout its long history, there was no way those figures could compare to a Celestial Immortal like Immortal Witchriver.

The divine abilities and secret arts left behind by a Celestial Immortal would definitely be extraordinary.

When one’s level of power was very close to another’s, the deciding factor were divine abilities and secret arts. This was especially true for geniuses.

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“This is a chance. A tremendous chance. I have to find it. With powerful secret arts, in this life, I might be able to overcome the Celestial tribulation.” Adept Vastriver was filled with endless desire as well.

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Everyone was searching. Ji Ning, the Whitewater Hound, and Little Qing had separated as well.

“Where is it? Where could it be?” A little azure serpent was slithering forward like a streak of light, occasionally disappearing into thin air and reappearing somewhere else, and at other times moving directly into a room without even pushing the stone door open.

“For me, finding fortunes is as easy as eating rice, but in this Immortal estate, I’ve gotten fewer treasures than even Uncle White.” The Azure Skysnake used her Void Blink technique repeatedly, and even blinked from one end of a hallway to the other to save time, or directly into rooms. She wildly teleported about with abandon, trying to find something.

Whoosh.

Yet another Void Blink. The Azure Skysnake appeared within a new room. “Nothing here eith...” The Azure Skysnake suddenly came to a halt. “Eeee?”

The Azure Skysnake looked about this room in surprise. This was a very ordinary room. It wasn’t very large, and it only held two bookcases and a single table. The bookcase was covered with a few books, while the number of books on the table was even more pitifully low. The total number of books in this entire room was very low.

“That’s all?”

It must be understood that training tomes for Immortal cultivators were extremely massive and complicated; a single set might comprise of dozens of books. For example, when Ji Ning had received the transmission of the [Starseizing Hand] divine ability, it had been directly transferred to his soul, and had taken several months. From this, one could tell how massive the amount of information was.

The Azure Skysnake couldn't help but transform into an azure-robed maiden. She lowered her head to glance at the books, and as she did, her gaze narrowed.

"Master, master, quick, come quick!!!" Little Qing hurriedly shouted through their spirit-link.

"Wha..? Coming!"

Ji Ning, located in another region, spread out his divine sense, searching through the various corridors. Given that he could mentally sense where Little Qing was located, he quickly found a route to her. As he did, he felt extremely surprised. "Little Qing actually ran to this place? This place really is rather unassuming and out of the way. How long would it have taken to find such a tiny little study?"

Swoosh!

Ning immediately transformed into a streak of smoke, rapidly advancing forward and soon arriving outside the room. He pushed the door open.

"What is it?" Upon entering, Ning saw that the room was completely empty. There was nothing there, aside from Little Qing, who stood there.

"I collected it all," Little Qing said excitedly. "I didn't dare leave them here, for fear that others might take them."

"What techniques did you discover? Why are you so careful?" Ning began to grow excited as well.

Little Qing said in a lowered whisper, "Six types of Immortal-ranked Ki Refining techniques, totaling more than three hundred volumes. Three types of divine abilities, totalling more than a hundred volumes. One divine will technique, totaling six volumes. All of them are complete!"

Ning's eyes instantly turned completely round.

Immortal-ranked Ki Refining techniques?

Divine abilities?

A divine will technique?

This...this was truly, truly priceless. Even in the Black-White College, it would number amongst their top-tier materials.

"This room was actually filled with Immortal-ranked Ki Refining techniques, divine abilities, and divine will techniques." Ning quickly understood. "Previously, we only discovered Mortal-ranked and Earth-ranked techniques and what not...I imagine that another room was used to store Heaven-ranked techniques and arts."

Mortal, Earth, Heaven, Immortal – the higher the rank was, the more precious the technique was. Now that he had acquired the Immortal-ranked Ki Refining techniques, divine abilities, and a divine will technique, Ning was no longer too interested in those Heaven-ranked techniques and arts. It'd be nice if he could get them, but it wouldn't matter if he didn't.

"Master, they are all over here." Little Qing waved her hand, and a pile of books instantly appeared in front of her.

Ning was so terrified that he instantly waved his hand, collecting them into his own storage-type magic treasure. He actually began to sweat from fear. "How could you just take them out?!"

"It's better to leave them with you. I'm not a Fiendgod Body Refiner; those divine abilities are useless to me. I already have top-tier Ki Refining techniques of my own as well. Right...later, I'll give that divine will technique a try," Little Qing instructed.

"Right." Ning nodded. He immediately sent his divine sense into his storage treasure, beginning to investigate.

There were only a few hundred tomes present; in total, there were ten complete sets! Six sets of Immortal-ranked Ki Refining techniques! Three sets of divine abilities! One divine will technique!

"These Immortal-ranked Ki Refining techniques are useless to me. The divine abilities?" Ning swept them with his divine sense. "[Heavenly Transformation], [Three Heads, Six Arms], and [Pentabolt Vajra]." This caused Ning to feel delighted.

[Heavenly Transformation] was a commonly seen divine ability, which virtually all larger schools and sects possessed.

[Three Heads, Six Arms] was in the possession of the Black-White College, but it could be considered quite a precious divine ability. Ning had yet to train in it, primarily because he didn't have enough black-white pellets yet. Now, however, he had acquired it, and a complete set at that!

"This ability, [Three Heads, Six Arms]...when executed, it will allow me to grow four more arms that are identical to real arms." Ning was extremely excited. Actually, at the Void level, powerful Fiendgod Body Refiners were capable of transforming a single strand of hair into a clone, and could completely change their physical appearance. It would be extremely easy to even generate eighteen new arms, but that would just be a superficial change; those wouldn't be true arms.

The reason why [Three Heads, Six Arms] was so powerful was because the heads and arms it generated were absolutely real, allowing one's power to truly rise exponentially! Ning could execute the [Starseizing Hand] divine ability with two arms, but once he used the [Three Heads, Six Arms] technique, all six arms would be able to use the [Starseizing Hand]...this was why Ning had always deeply desire to acquire this technique.

"I didn't acquire it at the Black-White College, but I acquired it here." Ning was absolutely overjoyed. "The [Three Heads, Six Arms] technique, when synergized with my [Starseizing Hand]...the power will definitely be exponentially greater."

"[Pentabolt Vajra]?" Ning, with a thought, made a book appear in his hand. It was the first volume of the [Pentabolt Vajra]. He began to flip through it...

The [Pentabolt Vajra] was a divine ability which only a true Fiendgod, or perhaps a Fiendgod Body Refiner who was very close to being a true Fiendgod, was capable of learning.

"Fortunately, I trained in the [Crimsonbright Diagram of the Nine Heavens]." Ning let out a secret sigh of relief. Previously, when he had been at the local Raindragon Guard branch, Ning had discovered that some supreme, top-tier divine abilities had extremely high requirements for Fiendgod Body Refiners.

Some actually stated outright that only someone who trained in the [Crimsonbright Diagram of the Nine Heavens] or someone who was a true Fiendgod could train in them.

That Immortal of the Raindragon Guard had also told Ning...that once he passed the trials of the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains, he would soon come to learn how truly powerful the [Crimsonbright Diagram of the Nine Heavens] was.

The reason the [Crimsonbright Diagram of the Nine Heavens] was so mighty was because it allowed the user to train in some truly top-tier divine abilities, including some which generally only Fiendgods were able to use.

“[Pentabolt Vajra]...to bathe in thunder and lightning and form a vajra-like body. Only after five baptisms by five types of lightning can one be said to have mastered it. But the fifth one actually requires one to be at the Empyrean God level before training in it?” Ning was secretly shocked.

It was the same as the [Starseizing Hand], which was divided into the Six Cycles. The [Pentabolt Vajra] was divided into five levels; the highest level was only trainable by Empyrean Gods. Only at that level could this divine ability be truly perfected to a supreme level.

“This is the simplified version of the legendary divine ability, [Golden Nirmana Body]?” 1 Ning, upon seeing this, nodded in understanding. The very first tome said it plainly; this divine ability’s creator had developed it as a simplified version of the [Golden Nirmana Body], to be left to his descendants.

The [Golden Nirmana Body]...it was a legendary divine ability that was one of the top divine abilities of the entire Three Realms. From the notes in this tome, at least, the [Golden Nirmana Body] was one of the absolute best divine abilities. Ning hypothesized that it should be on the same general level as his own [Starseizing Hand].

“I wonder which major power simplified the [Golden Nirmana Body] into this [Pentabolt Vajra],” Ning mused to himself. “To be able to simplify it...this major power must be incredible.”

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Ning waved his hand, collecting the divine ability book, then took out the divine will technique. There was only one of them, and it was titled [Soldiers of the Mind].

“Soldiers of the Mind?” Ning had just begun to flip through it, but he suddenly frowned, then hurriedly sent through their spirit-link, “Little Qing, hurry up and leave.”

Swoosh. Little Qing instantly disappeared into thin air.

BOOM. The stone door was pushed open, and Xue Hongyi charged in.

“You?!” Xue Hongyi stared in astonishment towards Ning.

“What a coincidence.” Ning glanced at Xue Hongyi, then paid him no attention, immediately flying out from the stone door that had just been opened.

Xue Hongyi frowned as he studied the room. It was completely empty, with nothing within. He hesitated a moment, then shook his head. “Nah...no way...” He then turned and left, continuing the search.

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Each of the rooms within the Dao Repository Palace were hidden quite well. Ning continued to frantically search through them in a seemingly crazed manner. He didn't want others to know that he had already acquired top-tier Ki Refining techniques, divine abilities, and a divine will technique. It must be understood that the Yuchi clan had suffered annihilation, simply because they had been discovered to be in possession of a single divine ability, the [Windwing Evasion].

Thus, it was best not to casually reveal such things.

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"Whew."

Youngflame Nong gave the stone book in front of him a glance. He had already completely refined the core to this Dao Repository Palace, and everything within it was now under his control.

"Eh?" He closed his eyes, sensing everything in the palace. "Nothing? There is actually nothing?"

His senses were telling him that the entire Dao Repository Palace didn't have a single book within it. It was completely empty.

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Another hour passed. Ning and the others had just reunited with Youngflame Nong at the outermost hall.

"We're all here. Did you find any divine abilities or secret arts?" Youngflame Nong laughed as he looked at them.

"Nothing."

"Nothing."

They all shook their heads. Ning, too, shook his head. "Nothing."

"The Rainbowflame Fairy and Adept Vastriver were fairly lucky; they discovered those Heaven-ranked techniques," Xue Hongyi spoke out. "But...there should be Immortal-ranked techniques, divine abilities, and secret arts. We didn't find them anywhere."

"Can it be that those things were too valuable, and so they weren't placed in the Dao Repository Vault, and were instead hidden somewhere else?" Northson said.

"Hm, that's possible," Ning nodded.

1. It is indeed Nirmana, not Nirvana. This bit actually took me nearly half an hour to research and completely comprehend. The actual term in Chinese was '丈六金身', literally 'Zhang Six Golden Body'. Zhang is a term referring to 3.3 meters, so this would literally mean '20 Meter Golden Body'. I did some research, and the phrase 丈六金身 refers to one of the manifestations of Buddha's corporeal/created body. In Buddhism, the Lord Buddha has three bodies (Trikaya); the Dharmakaya (Truth body), the Nirmanakaya (the created/corporeal body), and the Sambhogakaya (I'm not even sure how to translate

this one). Since this 20 Meter Golden Body was basically one of the manifestations of the Nirmanakaya/Nirmana Body, I decided to translate this as Golden Nirmana Body.

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Book 10: Entering the Immortal Estate Chapter 20: The Final Palace

Youngflame Nong gave the group of Wanxiang Adepts a look. He mused to himself, "Perhaps they aren't in the Dao Repository Palace...or perhaps one of them has them. Still, Immortal Witchriver was merely a Diremonster Immortal; his roots weren't that deep. Even if he had some divine abilities or techniques, the Youngflame clan probably has them as well. And they are still very useful to me..."

"Everyone, since we have finished our investigations, then let us head to the final palace," Youngflame Nong said.

"Right."

Ning and the others immediately began to grow nervous.

"Let's go!" Youngflame Nong took out yet another magic treasure, a flying weaver's shuttle. The flying shuttle expanded to thirty meters long and ten meters wide. Ning and the others entered it, which was quite roomy.

Swish! The flying shuttle immediately exited the Dao Repository Palace. As they emerged, the Fiendgod Xiangliu Fang was already waiting for them.

"Young master." Xiangliu Fang transformed into a streak of light, flying towards the shuttle

Youngflame Nong smiled and nodded towards Xiangliu Fang, seeming somewhat relaxed. But then, he turned his head to stare at the final golden Skypillar of light, and the many monstrous Dao-soldiers guarding it. He snorted coldly, "These monstrous Dao-soldiers have blocked me repeatedly. After I bind this Immortal estate, I am definitely going to repay them for their actions!"

"How could the monsters of a puny little Immortal estate possibly withstand the Youngflame clan?" Xiangliu Fang laughed as well, and Youngflame Nong nodded.

Ning and the others were secretly surprised...why was it that Youngflame Nong didn't seem to be the slightest bit worried?

"So many monstrous Dao-soldiers..." Ning mused to himself, "The Seawave Dao-soldiers and the Yaksha Dao-soldiers are all far more powerful than ordinary Loose Immortals; even Xiangliu Fang was dominated. What sort of treasure does this Youngflame Nong have?"

"Senior apprentice-brother, he seems quite confident," Northson said with a smirk.

"Let's watch and see," Ning sent back.

As the flying shuttle continued to fly forward, constantly advancing towards that distant golden Skypillar of light and the Seawave Dao-soldiers and the Yaksha Dao-soldier formations surrounding it. They were now quite close.

"Humans!" A deep voice shook the heavens.

Youngflame Nong just laughed icily, while next to him, Xiangliu Fang spoke out on his behalf. "What is it?"

"Actually, there is no need for you to fight with us, the monstrous races of the Immortal estate world. So long as you are willing to open up a corridor out with your key and let us leave to the world of the Grand Xia Empire, then we are willing to permit you to enter this final palace," the deep voice said. Immortal Duohe and Immortal Witchsui both felt that, given these humans still dared to advance in the face of so many monstrous Dao-soldiers, that they probably felt confident in passing through them. Thus, Immortal Duohe and Immortal Witchsui quickly came to the decision of negotiating with these humans.

"Let you leave? That's not impossible." Youngflame Nong revealed a smile. "But I have a requirement."

"Oh? Speak. What requirement." The deep voice echoed forth once more.

"Simple. Hand over all of your Dao-armors, and I'll let you leave." Youngflame Nong's voice also echoed out in the skies.

"All of our Dao-armors?"

"Impossible."

"Kill this human."

"In his dreams!"

All sorts of ferocious howls rang out.

These Dao-armors had been left behind by Immortal Witchriver, and were the reason why these monsters were so powerful.

"Without the Dao-armors, we would be like a pile of loose sand; we wouldn't even be able to defeat that Fiendgod by your side. In fact, we'd probably be beaten by him instead," the deep voice thundered angrily.

"I can swear an oath to the Dao of the Heavens that if you are willing to hand over all of your Dao-armors, that I will let you leave and will not pursue or kill you," Youngflame Nong said.

The Dao-armors interested Youngflame Nong the most; if he could obtain them easily, then he wouldn't mind letting the wielders of them leave.

"Impossible!" The deep voice bellowed angrily.

"Then don't blame me for this," Youngflame Nong shook his head.

"You are forcing us!" The deep voice snarled.

"Right. So what if I am?" Youngflame Nong snickered.

These powerful monsters were bloodthirsty to begin with. Given how excessive Youngflame Nong had behaved, they were now truly angered.

"Kill."

“Kill.”

“Kill.”

An enormous, sky-filling wave arose, blotting out the heavens and smashing down towards the flying shuttle which Ning and Youngflame Nong were riding. The flying shuttle, however, went directly towards the giant wave with incredible agility.

“This is the moment.” A long time ago, Youngflame Nong had produced a queer-looking disc in his hand, which was a mixture of black and white in color.

“POLARIS STARSHIFTER!”

Youngflame Nong let out an angry roar.

Rumble...

This black and white bi-colored disc floated into the air. A ray of black light enveloped the entire flying shuttle, while a ray of white light shot directly towards part of the distant Yaksha Dao-soldiers.

Whoosh!

Space instantly distorted.

That portion of the distant Yaksha Dao-soldiers instantly disappeared, then appeared in the location where the shuttle had been. As for the flying shuttle, it appeared in the location where those Yaksha Dao-soldiers had been.

“Open.” As soon as the shuttle appeared, a corridor into the palace appeared. Swoosh! The long shuttle flew directly into the tunnel, and then the gate shut behind it.

“This...”

Immortal Duohe and Immortal Witchsui were completely stunned. All of the Dao-soldiers were stunned. Then stared stupidly at the bi-colored black and white disc. As the energies of the disc were used up, it silently, soundlessly shattered.

“They entered?”

“They entered, just like that?” Immortal Duohe and Immortal Witchsui, as well as all the other monsters, had looks of disbelief, anger, and despair in their eyes.

“It shouldn’t have been like this. It shouldn’t have...” Immortal Duohe’s eyes were filled with boundless rage. Raising his head, he let out an earth-rending, pained, agonized roar.

They had lost. Utterly lost.

If this had been an actual battle, teleporting away a small part of their Dao-soldiers would have only been a minor matter. But this wasn’t an actual battle; the enemy, upon teleporting those soldiers away, had immediately been able to enter the final palace.

“After this, the Immortal estate will be bound. After this, all of us will be under his control.” Immortal Witchsui was mumbling to himself.

In this moment, the countless monstrous Dao-soldiers were all howling in anger, grief, and despair...

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Swoosh.

A long shuttle appeared within the hall, with Youngflame Nong, Xiangliu Fang, Ji Ning, and the others within it. They all emerged from within.

“Hahaha.” Youngflame Nong, upon entering, began to laugh joyfully. “We’ve finally arrived at the final palace. Mmm, and it is quite beautiful as well, far more so than those other four palaces.”

Ning and the others were still feeling shocked by what had happened with that bi-colored disc. It had actually caused them to completely swap positions with the distant enemy Dao-soldiers. What treasure was that? Ning, at least, had never even heard of such a treasure.

“It really is much more beautiful. Every single pillar is exquisitely, intricately carved,” Xue Hongyi said quickly.

“The final palace. After binding it, the entire Immortal estate will be under my control, and the trial the clan gave me will have been concluded. I’ll have earned an Immortal estate as well.” Youngflame Nong was quite delighted, but then he let out a sigh. “What a pity, though...after entering this Immortal estate, I lost two of my three most powerful treasures.”

“Treasures are meant to be used. After you master the Immortal estate, you’ll acquire even better treasures, young master,” Xiangliu Fang said.

“I hope so.” Youngflame Nong still felt a bit of pain in his heart. The ‘Lock’ scroll and the Polaris Starshifter disc were two of the most powerful magic treasures he had on him. These were treasures which even many Loose Immortals didn’t have access to; even if one had large amounts of liquefied elemental essence, it would be difficult to purchase them. After all, they were simply too rare. Youngflame Nong had only managed to acquire them after many years of collecting resources. Still, for the sake of solidifying his status as the next Godplume Duke, he had no other choices.

“Acquiring the Immortal estate will mean that I’ll have recouped my costs, and earned a little on top of it. Those monsters...hmp. They should make their preparations for all of their descendants to forever be slaves.” A cold light flashed through Youngflame Nong’s eyes. “And that Xue Hongyi...I need to acquire his Immortal-ranked magic treasure as well.”

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Book 10: Entering the Immortal Estate Chapter 21: Preparing a Celebratory Feast

This impressive group of experts filed in through a corridor, arriving at a massive, towering hall. The hall was lined with seats, and the walls were lined with musical instruments.

“This must have been the place where, when Immortal Witchriver was alive, he would merrymake with his monstrous clansmen,” Youngflame Nong laughed loudly. “These tables, these pillars, and these sculptures...all of them are utterly exquisite and extraordinary.”

Ning and the others all nodded. They could completely imagine how, countless years ago, the Diremonsters would all be seated next to those tables, eating and drinking and making merry.

“And there. That’s the place where Immortal Witchriver must have sat.” Youngflame Nong pointed towards the front of the hall. The front of the hall had the most beautiful, lavish table of all, and decorative screen behind it was also exquisite. To each side of the decorative screens, there were bronze lamps.

“That bronze lamp was the core of this Witchriver Palace,” Youngflame Nong said, pointing towards a Zifu Disciple. “Go next to that bronze lamp.”

“Yes.”

These Zifu Disciples were all Deathsworn. They knew very well that they had been trained, solely for the purpose of obeying their master. If their master was to order them to their deaths, they wouldn’t hesitate at all.

As soon as the Zifu Disciple moved to walk towards the front of the hall...

BOOM!

The entire hall instantly began to change in appearance. Ning and the others watched as the scenery around them transformed into a beautiful peach tree garden. They were surrounded by peach trees, and the floor was covered with petals.

“Careful. It is an illusory formation,” Xiangliu Fang shouted.

“I knew it. This place, the main palace, the Witchriver Palace...there’s no way we’d be able to acquire it so easily.” Youngflame Nong laughed coldly. With Uncle Fang present, he wasn’t nervous at all. This was a formation that had been in storage for countless years, and it didn’t have anyone truly controlling it; at most, this formation would be able to unleash a tenth of its power.

“Assemble into formation.” Ji Ning, Mu Northson, Yu Wei, Adept Vastriver, and Ninelotus all immediately assembled into that five-elements, pentagonal formation. All of them were on their guard.

“This illusory formation is very formidable; even divine sense is unable to see through it,” Adept Vastriver said. “And I have a vague feeling...that this formation is even stronger than the one which had been located in the Vault of Treasures.”

“This formation seems to be gathering Azurewood Godbolts,” Ning said with a frown.

“It seems you understand a bit about formations as well.” Xiangliu Fang, standing next to Youngflame Nong, gave Ning a glance, then said calmly, “This formation activates the power of the Solar Star. Using wood to guide the power, it generates Azurewood Godbolts. Although no one is controlling it, you still can’t underestimate the power of the Azurewood Godbolts. I need some time to break this formation; I wish all of you the best during this time.”

Ning and the rest of the five moved closer to each other, prepared to deal with the Azurewood Godbolts at any moment. They didn’t dare to run about wildly; to do so in this illusory world was to seek death.

“I, I, what should I do?” Xue Hongyi was panicking internally, but on the surface, he continued to grit his teeth and wait.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

Suddenly, three bolts of azure lightning thundered down from up above, smashing directly towards Youngflame Nong.

“Someone is commanding the formation?” Xiangliu Fang was shocked.

“How could someone be commanding it?” The nearby Youngflame Nong was panicked as well.

Whoosh! Xiangliu Fang stretched his large hands out. His hands were like dark clouds capable of covering the skies and smothering the sun; they stretched out to those three bolts of lightning. Boom, boom, boom...the lightning struck against the giant hands, and although the giant hands sank down momentarily, and the skin on the hands split apart as lightning writhed and spat against them, the hands endured.

“Hahaha, young master, don’t worry.” While receiving the lightning bolts, Xiangliu Fang actually began to laugh loudly. “Immortal Witchriver died countless hundreds of millions of years ago; the Witchriver Palace definitely has no living creatures within it. Anything still surviving should be a golem. Generally speaking, golems only possess a simple level of intelligence; at most, they can activate formations. They aren’t able to control them. After all, this sort of large formation is quite complicated. Without Immortal Witchriver passing down the the special technique to control it, there is no way they will be able to do so.

“If my guess is correct, the Witchriver Palace should have a powerful golem within it, and this golem should have a sentient spirit animating it. Thus, this golem is extremely intelligent, and is thus also skilled in controlling formations. Immortal Witchriver must have trusted him so much that he transmitted the formation control method to him,” Xiangliu Fang laughed. “But unfortunately, he is still merely a golem, with no elemental ki within his body; at most, he is capable of unleashing twenty to thirty percent of the power of the formation.”

As Xiangliu Fang was speaking loudly, one bolt of thunder after another continued to come crashing down from the skies. Xiangliu Fang, by himself, received all of these blows.

Ning and the others let out sighs of relief. Xiangliu Fang’s guess was most likely accurate; to truly control a formation required the usage of elemental ki. If the ki was that of an Immortal, then the power of the formation would naturally increase greatly. But golems didn’t have any ki at all; even if they were able to control the formation, they would only be able to, at most, increase its power by a small amount.

“Humans, you are not the Immortal’s heirs. To barge into the Witchriver Palace is a capital offense.” A furious shout rang out from within the illusion of a peach garden.

“A capital offense? Who is going to carry out the penalty, you? If my guess is correct, you are at most comparable to an ordinary Loose Immortal in strength,” Xiangliu Fang laughed coldly. “Your power is far from being a match for mine.”

As soon as his words came out, Xiangliu Fang suddenly let out a savage howl. “BREAK!” Instantly, Xiangliu Fang’s hands swung outward, howling out as the fingers on his large hands all transformed into giant serpents. The ten giant serpents instantly latched onto something in the void and gave it a hard pull. The entire formation immediately seemed to have been ‘stuck’, and the peach blossom formation trembled, grew blurry, and completely vanished.

“How can this be?!” An astonished cry.

With the disappearance of the peach blossom, Ning’s group once more was able to see the giant hall, and the tables within it.

“Not bad, not bad. I managed to survive. Fortunately, that golem was extremely intelligent and knew that it had to kill Youngflame Nong, and so it focused all of its efforts on him. If those lightning bolts had struck amongst the rest of us, although those five of the Black-White College would probably be able to endure it, I would have been in danger.” Xue Hongyi felt as though he had been blessed with tremendous luck.

Last time, when he and Adept Bu You had faced those attacks from the golems, Adept Bu You had died, while he had been lucky and survived. He had then acquired an Immortal-ranked magic treasure, and just now avoided yet another tribulation. He had survived multiple dangerous encounters, and had even acquired an Immortal-ranked treasure. Wasn’t this a tremendous blessing of luck?

“The formation is already broken.” Xiangliu Fang swept the hall with his gaze, then said calmly, “Everyone, no need to be afraid. Immortal Witchriver was only a Celestial Immortal, and his roots were not very deep; it is already quite impressive for him to have produced a golem that is fairly close to a Loose Immortal in power. If that golem doesn’t appear, then fine; if he does, however, I’ll capture him.”

Youngflame Nong laughed and nodded, then instructed, “There are golems lying in wait within the Witchriver Palace. Everyone, don’t run around rashly; if you run into those golems, Uncle Fang won’t be able to save you in time.”

“How could we dare to run about rashly? Are we suicidal?” Xue Hongyi hurriedly responded.

Ning and the others shared a glance. Clearly, an extremely powerful golem was lying in wait within the Witchriver Palace. They were no fools; naturally, they wouldn’t run about wildly within.

Xiangliu Fang and Youngflame Nong moved to the front of the main hall, beginning to bind a bronze lamp.

“Haha, this is the core of the final palace.” Youngflame Nong was utterly delighted. “After binding it, the entire Immortal estate will be under my complete control. The Witchriver Palace definitely has other dangers lurking within; however, there’s no need at all for us to go and take any risks. Once I bind the Immortal estate, the golems will naturally have lost.”

Ning and the others nodded.

“The rest of you, be careful; those golems won’t just watch and wait for me to successfully bind this palace. I imagine they will try to ambush us,” Youngflame Nong said.

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Eighteen savage, fearsome looking Qiongqi Manticore golems were looking at their leader, a black-armored, muscular man. The black-armored man growled, “That person who broke the formation just now, he is most likely a Fiendgod. He was able to make his hands so large, and his fingers transform into giant serpents; only true Fiendgods are capable of such a thing. From the techniques he displayed, I can tell that he is more powerful than me.”

“Commander, what should we do?”

“They are starting to bind the Witchriver Palace.”

The Qiongqi golems were all panicking.

“I estimate he will need two hours to completely bind the Witchriver Palace,” the black-armored man said in a low voice. “We need to come up with a method...and we need to succeed in one try. We need to kill the humans that Fiendgod is protecting. From the conversation between those humans when they first arrived, that human should have already bound the other four palaces. This is the last one.”

“Prepare to obey my orders.” The black-armored man’s cold, dark eyes flashed with a freezing light.

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A group of Zifu Disciples were scattered in the surrounding area. Ji Ning, Ninelotus, Adept Vastriver, Xue Hongyi, and the others were all waiting vigilantly, worried that the golem might suddenly attack.

Youngflame Nong, seated high above at the front of the hall and binding that bronze lamp, seeing how nervous everyone in the hall was, couldn’t help but frown. He barked, “No need to be so nervous. It’s just a few golems. If one comes, Uncle Fang will capture one. They will definitely lose.”

Ji Ning and the others, including Xue Hongyi, silently tightened their lips. Yes, Xiangliu Fang could defeat all comers. But the most powerful of those golems had the combat strength of an ordinary Loose Immortal; if golems of such power were to suddenly attack and catch this group off guard, some of them might die. They were not protected by Xiangliu Fang, after all.

“Attend me.” Youngflame Nong, seeing how Ning and the others remained vigilant, couldn’t help but frown and bark, “Prepare a celebratory banquet.”

Very soon, the two Zifu Disciple maidservants who personally served Youngflame Nong had prepared a banquet of fine wine. Actually, during the two day journey on the warship from Serpentwing Lake of Swallow Mountain to the Immortal estate, they had often drank and enjoyed themselves, and so the fine wine had been prepared long ago. Very soon, the table became filled with wine, spirit-fruit, and delicacies.

Youngflame Nong sat down in the lotus position, laughing loudly as he scooped up a goblet of wine. He only needed to use up a small amount of his attention on binding the bronze lamp. “Everyone, no need to worry. The outer perimeter will be handled by my Zifu Deathsworn; even if golems attack, they’ll be the first ones engaged, giving you enough time to react and fight back.”

“Sit, all of you,” Youngflame Nong called out. Seeing Ning and the others continue to hesitate, he couldn’t help but snap, “I told you all to sit!”

Ning and the others exchanged a glance. They had no choice but to sit down.

“That’s more like it.”

Youngflame Nong laughed, “You’ve all accompanied me into this Witchriver Immortal Estate and engaged repeated dangers with me. You’ve rendered quite a few merits. However, this is the final moment; after I bind this bronze lamp, the task shall be complete. Although a few golems continue to

resist, they aren't much to be worried about. Come, let us toast each other for the treasures we have gained, and for my successful binding of the Witchriver Immortal Estate." After speaking, Youngflame Nong lifted up his bronze wineglass, etched with a tattoo of flames.

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Book 10: Entering the Immortal Estate Chapter 22: Youngflame Nong's True Face

"Let us down this cup together," Xue Hongyi hurriedly called out. He wanted to flatter Youngflame Nong as best as he could, because in his heart, he was still thinking about later leaving the Witchriver Immortal Estate, then fleeing alive with the Immortal-ranked magic item in tow!

"My fellow disciples, we must be vigilant against the outsiders. Let's not drink this wine," Adept Vastriver sent mentally.

"We were useful to him earlier, but now we are useless; who knows what sort of tricks he might play," Northson sent as well.

But Ninelotus said, "I imagine he wouldn't dare to be so heartless and crazed."

While sending mental messages amongst themselves, they all lifted up their cups and drank from it.

"Gulp." The wine entered Ji Ning's mouth, then a surge of elemental ki surrounded the liquid. The liquid was completely vaporized by a streak of fire. Only then did Ning put down his winecup.

"Chun and Ji, the two of you, perform a dance and help us enjoy ourselves." Youngflame Nong was in an extremely fine mood as he gave the orders. Instantly, two of the female Zifu Disciples behind him moved. Previously, their robes were in the shape of maid robes, but the robes now changed. Their sleeves fluttered as the two of them laughed, unveiling their astonishing charisma as the two of them began to dance gracefully in the center of the palace hall.

Strum. Clink. Three other nearby Zifu Disciples who were musicians moved to those ancient musical instruments in the hall, then in a very practiced manner, began to drum and strum. Although countless years had passed, the instruments were completely undamaged, as they were all magical treasures.

One melody rang out after another, while the beautiful courtesans danced. Youngflame Nong was absolutely delighted with himself as he watched and drank, and Ning and the others all accompanied him.

His spirits having grown increasingly high as he drank, Youngflame Nong suddenly glanced sideways at the truly peerless, fairy-like beauty, 'Yu Wei'. In terms of appearance and aura, even he, Youngflame Nong, who had seen reincarnated fairy-like maidens in the capital of the Grand Xia Dynasty, felt her to be astonishing. His throat went a little dry, and his heart began to grow heated. The desire he had held down this entire time was beginning to rise.

Still, he knew quite well that this Rainbowflame Fairy would probably be hard to convince. Thus, he then looked towards Ninelotus, then laughed, "Little Sister Ninelotus, now that I have completed my task, we need to have a good celebration. Little Sister Ninelotus, why don't you perform a dance to us and help us celebrate?"

“Eh?” Ning frowned, his face growing somewhat unsightly. ‘Little Sister’ Ninelotus? This was not a form of address for Youngflame Nong to use. And he wanted Ninelotus to dance? How could Ning not feel angry?

“This Youngflame Nong is going too far,” Little Qing sent through the spirit-link. “Master, this Youngflame Nong holds you in no regard at all; he knows that you and Ninelotus are Dao-Companions, but he still acts in such a way.” Indeed, all of the others present in the hall were stunned.

Ninelotus was astonished as well. She first gave Ning a glance, then said hurriedly, “Young master Youngflame, I have no talent in dance. Compared with the beautiful courtesans you have by your side, I am far inferior; I’d rather not go up and embarrass myself.”

“How can they compare with you, Little Sister Ninelotus?” Youngflame Nong laughed, “What, aren’t you even going to give me, Youngflame Nong, even this tiny bit of face?”

Ninelotus hesitated a moment, then put a smile on her face. “Then I’ll go up and dance to a song.” At the same time, she gave Ning a glance.

Ning just sat there, an ugly look on his face. It was just a dance. With so many fellow disciples present, it wasn’t appropriate for Ning to grow angry.

“Ning, son, be careful,” the Whitewater Hound sent spiritually. “Inviting her to dance as part of the victory celebrations is a small matter. Youngflame Nong clearly knows that you and Ninelotus are Dao-Companions, but when he asked her to dance, he didn’t even look at you or say a single word to you. Clearly, he holds you in no regard at all. Given that, you need to be careful.”

Ning immediately came to his senses. “Don’t worry, Uncle White. I understand,” Ning sent back, and then turned to look at Ninelotus, who was dancing in the middle of the hall, in tune with the melodies.

As Ning watched, he suddenly realized...that Ninelotus was actually a very skilled dancer.

Truth be told, Ning knew far too little about the Dongyan clan and the other major clans. The people which future clan leaders like Ninelotus interacted with were generally some of the more formidable figures of the entire Grand Xia Dynasty, and thus she would learn a bit of this and a bit of that, so as to ensure that her performance in any event was perfect.

“Good, good, good.” Youngflame Nong laughed as he drank his wine, occasionally clapping his hands in praise.

Ninelotus was like a blooming lotus flower, swirling about throughout the hall.

But as she moved closer to Youngflame Nong, Youngflame Nong suddenly swung his arm out. A long, black whip actually swept out, coiling around Ninelotus’ arm, then tugging at her. Ninelotus, caught completely offguard, couldn’t help but be pulled even closer to Youngflame Nong. Still, Ninelotus was a Wanxiang Adept; by activating her elemental ki, she managed to stabilize herself as she was pulled closer to Youngflame Nong.

However, Youngflame Nong intimately grabbed her by the arm; he had originally actually been planning on taking her by the waist. Laughing, he pulled at Ninelotus’ arm, wanting to pull her in while saying, “Little Sister Ninelotus, come, let’s drink a cup of wine together.”

This scene shocked everyone present in the hall.

“What?!” Mu Northson, Yu Wei, and the others were all shocked. As for Xue Hongyi, he just gave Ning a sideways glance, revealing a cold smile as he took a sip of wine.

Ning felt as though his head had gone blank. Earlier, Ninelotus’ dance could have been said to be a performance for everyone, but now...

BANG!

Ning suddenly rose to his feet, smashing his hand hard against the table. This table was technically a Mortal-ranked magic treasure, but it was only used for holding wine and food; it wasn’t meant for combat. In addition, Ning was currently gripped by rage, and even his eyes had begun to turn bloodshot. This slap towards the table was actually even more powerful than the palm blows he would deliver in a life-or-death battle.

The energy wave alone from this palm blow smashed all of the plates into tiny pieces, and the fine wine and meat were utterly transformed into dust. BOOM!!! The entire table actually was split apart. Large amounts of shards went flying everywhere, and some of them actually sliced across the body of a nearby Zifu Disciple, causing blood to instantly fly everywhere.

“Hm?” Youngflame Nong immediately gave him a cold look. “What, I can’t even share a drink of wine with Little Sister Ninelotus?” As he finished speaking, a hint of anger appeared on Youngflame Nong’s face.

Youngflame Nong’s anger would’ve instantly reduced most people to a quivering pile of fear. But Ning’s eyes only reddened further. Ignoring all else, he barked out, “Youngflame Nong!”

“Ji Ning.” Ninelotus realized that Youngflame Nong’s eyes had a hint of a murderous intent in them, and she immediately barked out towards Ning.

Ning looked at Ninelotus, then said coldly, “Ninelotus, there’s no need for you to pay any heed to this young master of the Youngflame clan. Hmph. He’s not even the Godplume Duke yet! When we first followed him into the Immortal estate, he was so mild and humble. But not that we are useless to him, this is how he acts!”

“You are courting death.” Youngflame Nong’s anger was beginning to build. Previously, Ning was a useful assistant, but he was now useless. Geniuses like him...they weren’t much in the eyes of him, Youngflame Nong.

Ning said angrily, “Do you remember our original agreement? You made us promises in the name of your Youngflame clan. What, now that you have the Immortal estate, you are planning to act against us? Are you feeling greedy for the treasures we acquired in the Immortal estate? You endured it then, but are now planning to act against us?”

“Be silent!” Ninelotus cried out.

“Ninelotus.” Ning was utterly infuriated.

“Sit down!” Ninelotus shouted at him, while also sending him a frantic mental message. “Ji Ning, you are too rash. Think about Youngflame Nong’s status. He’s normally in the imperial capital, and when

together with the imperial princes and various young dukelings, they often act in dissolute, wanton ways. I just have to deal with it and drink a few cups of wine with him, and this matter will be at an end. If you let anger cloud your mind, then it will be trouble.”

Ning sent back, “Some things, I can endure, but others, I cannot. Ninelotus...”

“Are you trying to get yourself killed? You want to fight him?!” Ninelotus sent furiously, “Don’t be so immature!”

Ning was stunned.

Immature?

Youngflame Nong was naturally watching the mental argument between Ninelotus and Ning.

“It seems as though this young and famous Ji Ning doesn’t live up to his reputation,” Youngflame Nong sent mentally to the Fiendgod by his side, Xiangliu Fang. “A scene like this has already angered him to the point of insanity. To deal with him would be simplicity itself. For now, however, there’s no rush to deal with him; if I kill him within the Immortal estate, once the news of it is spread out by the Dongyan clan, the other large tribes will all think of me, Youngflame Nong, as a narrow-minded man.”

“Right.” Xiangliu Fang concurred.

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Ninelotus’ words had truly enraged Ning now.

Who was Ninelotus? She was the next leader of the Dongyan clan! There was absolutely no need for her to compromise in such a manner; since there was no need, why did she do so?

“Young master Youngflame, Ji Ning is still young; please pardon him.” Ninelotus smiled towards Youngflame Nong.

Youngflame Nong didn’t continue with his earlier actions. He could tell that if he went just a bit farther, this Ji Ning probably would actually start to a fight to the death against him. He dared to kill Ji Ning, but Ninelotus? Ninelotus was the next leader of the Dongyan clan. If he killed her, he would be in serious trouble.

Ninelotus quickly returned to Ning’s side and sat down. Ning remained seated in the lotus position on his chair. Zifu Disciple servants removed the shattered magic treasure table in front of him, replacing it with a new one.

“Ji Ning.” As soon as Ninelotus returned to her seat, she immediately spoke mentally to Ning. “Calm down.”

“Oh, so you know I’m pissed?” Ning looked towards Ninelotus.

“This really was nothing. This was a small matter. If in the future, you were to see how the young masters of the major clans act when they are together, you’ll understand that this sort of minor flirtation...it really means nothing. Generally speaking, everyone has a bottom line that they won’t cross; to engage in a little playing around is nothing,” Ninelotus sent. “You’ve seen too little, which is why you

were so easily enraged. Look over there; after drinking a cup of wine, Youngflame Nong is no longer harping on this matter.”

“I’ve seen too little?” Ning sent back with a shout, “Bottom line? Ninelotus, you are my Dao-Companion. This so-called ‘a little playing around’ of yours, being embraced by others men, being teased by them, drinking with them...these things have already gone beyond my bottom line. Do you understand?”

“You...how can you act this way?” Ninelotus was furious as well.

“That’s the way I am. Can it be that you didn’t know?” Ning stared at her.

Ninelotus and Ning’s gazes intersected. She could sense the determination and resolve from Ning’s eyes.

“Fine. I won’t be act like this in the future.” Ninelotus lowered her head.

Ning lowered his head as well, beginning to drink. Although Ninelotus had bowed her head to him, Ning still felt as though there were thorns stuck in his heart. Just now, he truly hoped that Ninelotus would directly refuse Youngflame Nong. Even if she didn’t throw the cup of wine into Youngflame Nong’s face, she had to at least turn and immediately leave.

In this recent period of time, the two had already argued twice due to differences in the way they behaved towards others. This time, their fight was due to the fact that they handled matters and conducted themselves in completely different ways.

“Heh. Heh. Heh heh.” Youngflame Nong, seated at the front of the hall, was able to tell that there was some unhappiness between Ji Ning and Ninelotus. He actually laughed...and then his gaze fell towards the nearby Rainbowflame Fairy, Yu Wei. The flames in his heart blazed even hotter. The desire he felt towards Yu Wei was far stronger than the desire he felt towards Ninelotus.

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Book 10: Entering the Immortal Estate Chapter 23: Windwing Evasion

Quite a few thoughts were going through Youngflame Nong’s mind. At the same time, the other members of the Black-White College began to console Ji Ning.

“Junior apprentice-brother, endure it,” Adept Vastriver sent to Ning. “After we leave the Witchriver Immortal Estate, you won’t have to stay here and swallow Youngflame Nong’s attitude.”

“Junior apprentice-brother Ji Ning,” Yu Wei sent, worried, “We aren’t able to beat Youngflame Nong right now. However, truly powerful Immortal cultivators rely on themselves; no matter what how impressive he might be, in the future, Youngflame Nong will only be the Godplume Duke, whereas the real powers behind the Youngflame clan are those old fellows who have lived for countless years. When you train to the Celestial Immortal level in the future, the Youngflame clan will treat you with courtesy, not daring to slacken off in the slightest. What would a Godplume Duke be to you? He’s nothing more than a titular leader.”

Ning gave Yu Wei a look. He had met with the Lord of Cui Manor and Granny Meng, and had watched as a great power had assaulted the Six Paths of Reincarnation! His master, Daoist Threelives, was one of the most incredible figures of the Three Realms...it really was as she had said; personal strength was the truest foundation to power.

If Ning were to also become a major power of the Three Realms, what would a mere Youngflame clan, one of the clans subordinate to the Grand Xia Dynasty's major world, be to him? There were three thousand major worlds!

As long as he was able to reach the Celestial Immortal level, the Youngflame clan would be respectful to him. After all, it was rare for there to be even a single Celestial Immortal for every ten thousand Loose Immortals. Celestial Immortals were true Immortals, who had escaped the binds of the Three Realms and lived carefree lives.

"Senior apprentice-brother," Northson sent to him, "If you aren't happy with senior apprentice-sister Ninelotus, then as I see it, you should just break up. I mean, I'm just saying...it's up to you, and how you really feel. You need to ask yourself if you truly want for senior apprentice-sister Ninelotus to be your Dao-Companion."

Ning gave Northson a glance. "Junior apprentice-brother, no need to say anything further."

In his heart...Ning truly did like Ninelotus. In his past life and in this life, Ning had never been in a romantic relationship. He couldn't quite explain how he felt towards her, but he truly did feel a hazy liking for her. However, these recent arguments had caused Ning to truly feel upset!

"Glugglugglug." Ning held his cup, constantly drinking wine. Although he downed one cup after another, all of the wine continued to be burnt away by flames after it entered his body.

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Ninelotus sat there in the lotus position, staring at the constantly drinking Ning.

"It seems Ji Ning is really angry." Ninelotus felt frustrated as well. "How can Ji Ning act like this. I lowered my head to him, and this wasn't even a big deal to begin with. This sort of thing is too common; I just had to deal with it in a casual, superficial manner. Why does he have to be so angry about it? If he gets angry at this and angry at that...in the future, after I become the leader of the Dongyan clan, am I supposed to follow his every wish and desire?"

"I'll let him calm down and sober up first. He should understand, later."

One had been held up high since childhood, and had been chosen to be the next leader of a major clan.

The other came from a world of peace in his past life, and was a genius who had been born into a backwater clan in this life.

The two of them attracted each other. When they had been in the secluded peach-garden utopia of Serpentwing Lake, there had been no problems, but once they truly began to face worldly affairs together, their disagreements had begun to constantly worsen.

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Ning and Ninelotus were both feeling rather frustrated in their hearts.

Suddenly...

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

A figure carrying a terrifying, tremendous force came charging in. Those Zifu Deathsworn that had been stationed in the outer perimeter instantly blew apart, their bodies being knocked flying and blood spraying everywhere. In the blink of an eye, the entire hall was transformed into an asura's hell, the floor stained with blood and chunks of meat.

"The golem." Youngflame Nong, seated at the front of the hall, was greatly surprised, but then he immediately grew excited and eager.

One golem after another charged in. As for Ji Ning and the others, as they had been assigned to sit down at various locations in the table, they weren't able to assemble into formation.

"That dogshit Youngflame Nong...he said that those Zifu Deathsworn would be able to hold on for a few moments, but in reality, they weren't able to do so at all." Ning's Darknorth swords appeared in his hands as he hurriedly blocked the Qiongqi Manticore golem which was pouncing towards him.

BOOM!

Ning's sword-light flashed out, crashing against the body of the Qiongqi golem and sending it flying away.

"Junior apprentice-brother Ji Ning, protect junior apprentice-brother Mu Northson," Adept Vastriver sent.

"I know, don't worry," Ning said hurriedly.

This hall was simply too large. Ning's group had been divided into two rows that sat on each end of the table. Ninelotus, Vastriver, and Yu Wei were on the side opposite to Ning, and were quite far from each other as well. As for Ning, Northson, and Xue Hongyi, they were on the same side. Right now, six Qiongqi golems were throwing themselves against Ning and the rest of the six Wanxiang Adepts. Even more of the golems were charging towards Youngflame Nong!

It was very easy for Ning to handle a single Qiongqi golem, but clearly it was a bit difficult for Northson; Northson was more talented in controlling golems, not at close combat.

Swoosh. A pair of black wings appeared on Ning's back, and the wings fluttered as he began to execute the Windwing Evasion, howling through the air as he moved next to Northson. His sword-light flashed out, striking against a Primal-level Qiongqi golem and sending it flying.

"Thank you, senior apprentice-brother." Northson was covered with cold sweat, and he hurriedly controlled a giant silver serpent construct, sending it into battle.

"It's nothing." Ning laughed, twin swords in hands, and then lotus petals began to bloom around him, easily blocking those two Qiongqi golems.

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Ning and the others, including Xue Hongyi, were each dealing with a single Qiongqi golem. In truth, these six golems weren't meant to kill them; they were assigned to keep them tied down. The other twelve Qiongqi golems and their black-armored leader simultaneously charged towards Youngflame Nong.

“Hahaha...” Youngflame Nong laughed loudly. “Capture them.”

Xiangliu Fang’s twin hands struck out, and those massive hands seemed to cover the skies as they did so. His fingers transformed into massive serpents, which seemed to coil about as they moved to wrap around the Qiongqi golems. In fact, some of them managed to snare two Qiongqi golems each. All twelve of them were actually seized by his giant hands...but the black-armored man pulled out a longsword from within his leg with his right arm, hacking it directly against Xiangliu Fang’s hands.

BOOM!

The surrounding area was filled with a deafening explosion. Actually, it was quite taxing for Xiangliu Fang to rely on nothing but a pair of hands to capture those twelve Qiongqi golems. The power of this sword attack was even more tremendous. His hands trembled and were knocked aside, allowing the Qiongqi golems to all escape their captor.

“Eh?” Xiangliu Fang was shocked. “This sword of yours...”

CHOP. The black-armored man transformed into a streak of light, charging forwards and slamming the sword down towards Xiangliu Fang once more.

Right at this moment, the other twelve Qiongqi golems howled through the air, flying towards Youngflame Nong. Youngflame Nong frowned, and instantly that enormous Redscale Salamander appeared around him. At the same time, a leaf-like Dao-seal appeared in his hand.

“They are rather irritating.” Youngflame Nong muttered softly, but he felt completely confident; he had Uncle Fang, the Redscale Salamander, and a protective treasure; he was definitely going to win.

“Growl...”

The Redscale Salamander howled with rage as it fought against the Qiongqi golems. But suddenly, a Qiongqi golem reached out to snatch the nearby bronze lamp, then began to run away with it!

“The bronze lamp!” Youngflame Nong was shocked. Now, he understood. These golems weren’t meant to kill him; they knew that they weren’t strong enough to do that. Thus, their real target was the bronze lamp. To bind a treasure, one had to be right next to it and slowly use one’s elemental ki to bind it. If one was a bit too far away, or if someone else took possession of it, then there would be no way for one to fill it with elemental ki. Naturally, then, there would be no way to bind it.

This would result in it taking forever for him to control the Immortal estate. Given how well these golems knew the Witchriver Palace, they could simply play hide-and-seek with him within it. The golems could delay for thousands of years...but he could not.

“Quick, seize the bronze lamp,” Youngflame Nong howled furiously..

Xiangliu Fang immediately let out an astonishing howl as well. His right arm suddenly split apart and flew out from his body. His severed right arm blasted out with a sky-filling black-colored divine power, which rippled forth, then transformed the right arm into a new Xiangliu Fang. As for the original Xiangliu Fang, he grew out a new arm.

In the blink of an eye, two Xiangliu Fang's had appeared within the main hall. However, by the time this splitting process had completed, that Qiongqi golem had already charged out of the main hall; after all, Primal-level Qiongqi golems were indeed as fast as lightning.

One Xiangliu Fang remained in combat against the black-armored man. The other, however, went chasing after the Qiongqi golem that had fled with the bronze lamp. With a swoosh, he charged into the corridor, continuing his pursuit.

"Two Xiangliu Fang's? A clone?" Ning and the others were all shocked.

"The bronze lamp, the bronze lamp! Damn them, damn them!" Youngflame Nong bellowed with rage. But right at this moment, at a distant corridor within the hall, Xiangliu Fang suddenly reappeared, bronze lamp in one hand, sack in the other.

"Haha." Youngflame Nong instantly laughed.

As for the black-armored man, he immediately felt disappointed. He knew that the difference in power between himself and these invading humans was simply too great; thus, he had hoped to catch them offguard and seize the bronze lamp. Unfortunately, this Fiendgod was truly too powerful; the Fiendgod was able to tie him down with one body, then use another one to chase after the Qiongqi golem and bring the bronze lamp back.

"The overall situation has been cast in stone." Youngflame Nong immediately felt completely relaxed, watching the battle going on in the rest of the hall with leisure. But as he did so, his face suddenly changed.

He was looking at Ning and Northson, located far away from him. Ning was wielding two Darknorth swords, and on his back was a pair of black wings; he was effortlessly blocking two Qiongqi golems.

"Wings?" Youngflame Nong carefully watched the way in which Ning moved. At the same time, he sent mentally to Xiangliu Fang, "Uncle Fang, look at Ji Ning."

Xiangliu Fang's two bodies had merged into one again. Fighting at full power once more, Xiangliu Fang stuffed the black-armored man into his sack. Upon hearing Youngflame Nong's words, he immediately turned to look. Upon doing so, his face changed as well.

"Uncle Fang, that's the Windwing Evasion. I'm not mistaken, am I?" Youngflame Nong asked.

Windwing Evasion.

Youngflame Nong himself had never trained in it, but he had watched his clansmen train in it repeatedly. Because of how often he had seen it, and because he had personally read the contents of the [Windwing Evasion] manual, he could see traces of it in the way Ning moved.

"Right. That's the Windwing Evasion. I've trained in it before. Although Ji Ning is using wings to mask it, he is definitely using the Windwing Evasion," Xiangliu Fang sent mentally. "In the past, the descendants of the Yuchi clan also used wings to hide it; Ji Ning is using the same old trick. Although this is a rather clumsy method, unless one has an extremely deep understanding of the Windwing Evasion, there's no way one would be able to tell."

Youngflame Nong sent mentally, "Uncle Fang, how could Ji Ning know the Windwing Evasion?"

“It should be one of the surviving spawns of the Yuchi clan!” Xiangliu Fang sent back.

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Book 10: Entering the Immortal Estate Chapter 24: Enmity Born From Genocide

“Surviving spawns of the Yuchi clan?” Youngflame Nong began to feel a killing intent in his heart. “Not a single member of the Yuchi clan is to be spared, and those members of the Yuchi clan who have trained in the Windwing Evasion are all the more deserving of death. The Windwing Evasion...only my Youngflame clan can have it. It cannot be learned by others!”

The secret arts and divine abilities which were unique to a certain major clan were absolutely forbidden to be taught to others. Any outsiders who learned these techniques would suffer pursuit and assault!

“Uncle Fang, let’s deal with these golems first.” Youngflame Nong had no desire to play around anymore at all. For the first time, he truly had the desire to kill Ji Ning.

Whoosh! Whoosh!

Xiangliu Fang’s two large hands swished through the air, snatching away at the Qiongqi golems with abandon while shouting, “Everyone, stop these Qiongqi golems. Don’t let them escape; if they escape, they’ll cause problems in the future.” While saying this, he continually captured Qiongqi golems and stuffed them into his sack.

Everyone did their best to stop the Qiongqi golems from escaping, allowing Xiangliu Fang to capture them, one by one.

“They really were suicidal.” The black wings on Ning’s back disappeared. He gave a glance to the bloodstained corpses on the ground. Although those Zifu Disciples were all Deathsworn and were able to assemble into formation...the difference between them and golems at the Primal level of power was simply too vast. The first wave of assaults from the Qiongqi Manticore golems had caused virtually all of the Zifu Disciples to be wiped out, leaving behind only ten or so.

“How pitiable. They were Zifu Disciples...but against these golems, they were completely useless. And yet, Youngflame Nong insisted on having them watch the perimeter; clearly, he didn’t give a damn about them dying,” Mu Northson sent with a mental sigh. “Youngflame Nong truly is cold-blooded.”

These Deathsworn had been voluntarily gifted by Northmont Yin and some others. To Youngflame Nong, however, these Deathsworn had been raised by outside clans, and there was no way the Youngflame clan would truly trust them. There was no point to him bringing him back! And yet, he couldn’t just ‘return’ them back to Northmont Yin. Thus, he might as well let them die. If some were lucky enough to survive, then that meant that they had been blessed with good fortune and might be worthy of bringing back to the clan and training.

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The few lucky Zifu Disciple survivors hurriedly began to clean the hall, completely removing all of the corpses and bloodstains and restoring it to a pristine condition.

Youngflame Nong reseated himself at the front of the hall. His gaze cold, he stared directly at Ning, then barked, “Ji Ning!”

Everyone in the hall was stunned.

Northson, Yu Wei, Ninelotus, Adept Vastriver, and Xue Hongyi were all astonished; they could sense that there was a terrifying look in Youngflame Nong's eyes, and the cold, tyrannical way he had just shouted was something they could all sense. Not even earlier, when Ning had shattered the table, had Youngflame Nong been so formal and cold.

"Young master Youngflame." Ning looked towards Youngflame Nong. "What is it? Speak.."

"Youngflame Nong." This time, it was Ninelotus, seated on the other side, who grew angry. "Ji Ning is my Dao-Companion. Earlier, he offended you, but that was just a minor matter. For you to act this way...you are being a bit too narrow-minded."

Although these young masters and princes of major clans often chatted and teased each other, there were some bottom lines that could not be crossed. Ji Ning was her Dao-Companion, after all, and he had also helped Youngflame Nong this time. It was one thing for the two of them to have had a bit of friction earlier, but for Youngflame Nong to act this way now was going too far.

"Ninelotus, you'll understand after hearing what I say," Youngflame Nong said coldly.

"Then I shall listen attentively," Ninelotus said with cold anger as well.

"Ji Ning, I ask you this." Youngflame Nong looked at Ning. "Just now, was the divine ability you displayed the Windwing Evasion?"

Ning was stunned.

Windwing Evasion? How did Youngflame Nong know about the Windwing Evasion? Ning's mother's clan, the Yuchi clan, had been almost completely obliterated; most likely, the only remaining member was Ning's uncle's daughter, and Ning didn't even know if she was still alive. Ning could be somewhat considered a descendant of the Yuchi clan...but the Yuchi clan was extremely secretive about the Windwing Evasion to begin with.

"No need to deny it. You used the Windwing Evasion," Youngflame Nong said with a cold laugh. "Uncle Fang, display it for him."

Whoosh.

Xiangliu Fang suddenly disappeared from Youngflame Nong's side. He seemed to have transformed into a giant Roc, instantly appearing in the center of the main hall. Then, with another movement, he retreated and returned to Youngflame Nong's side.

Ning, seeing this, felt his heart tremble. His other fellow disciples of the Black-White College couldn't tell, but he himself, as a practitioner of the Windwing Evasion, could – Xiangliu Fang truly was using the Windwing Evasion! In addition, it was even more precise and profound than Ning's own usage! But this made sense; after all, Ning was only a Fiendgod Body Refiner; compared to Xiangliu Fang, a true Fiendgod, he was still far inferior.

"They are the culprits!"

"They are the ones who annihilated my clan!"

A thought suddenly entered Ning's mind. "Can it be that it was the Youngflame clan which annihilated my mother's Yuchi clan? Can it be that the grandparents and aunts and uncles who I never met were all slain by the Youngflame clan?"

"Well?" Youngflame Nong looked at Ning. "Is it the same as yours?"

"I do indeed train in the Windwing Evasion." Ning knew that there was no point in lying. Frowning, he said, "But so what if it is?"

Ninelotus, Yu Wei, Adept Vastriver, and Northson all stood there, watching nervously but not rushing to speak.

Youngflame Nong laughed loudly, "The Windwing Evasion technique was originally unique to the Yuchi clan of the Eastisle Commandery of our Grand Xia Dynasty."

Ning, hearing this, felt his heart shake.

"The Yuchi clan had possessed this divine ability for a long, long time; however, they relied on using wing-type magic treasures to hide it. Our Youngflame clan, however, found out about it long ago. After preparing for an extremely long period of time, we annihilated the entire Yuchi clan in one blow...but were unable to find the original manual of the [Windwing Evasion]! Some of the powerful Immortals of my Youngflame clan personally intervene and used a soul-scour technique to collect enough memories from members of the Yuchi clan to completely rebuild the [Windwing Evasion] manual from scratch." Youngflame Nong looked at Ning. "Right now, the [Windwing Evasion] is unique to my Youngflame clan, and it is absolutely forbidden to teach it to others. For you to learn the Windwing Evasion without the permission of my Youngflame clan...this, in and of itself, merits the death penalty for you. What's more, I suspect that you are one of the surviving spawn of the Yuchi clan!"

"SPEAK! Are you a surviving spawn of the Yuchi clan?" Youngflame Nong stared at Ning.

Everyone else now completely understood. So this was what it was all about! Warfare between clans...there was no real right or wrong in inter-clan warfare! Since the Youngflame clan had annihilated the Yuchi clan, and the Yuchi clan's Windwing Evasion technique was now solely possessed by the Youngflame clan...from the Youngflame clan's standpoint, it was true that all descendants of the Yuchi clan had to be annihilated. After all, between the two clans, there was now a grudge that stemmed from clan genocide.

"Ji Ning." Ninelotus sent to Ning, saying frantically, "No matter what, don't admit that you are a descendant of the Yuchi clan. If you admit to it, given that there is hatred that stems from clan genocide between you and the Youngflame clan, the Youngflame clan will definitely not permit you to remain alive. You only need to say that you acquired the original copy of the [Windwing Evasion] manual through happenstance, and that without knowing the full backstory, you learned it. Thus, since you didn't know it was forbidden to learn it, you cannot be blamed. I will have my Dongyan clan engage in negotiation with the Youngflame clan on your behalf, and this matter will quickly come to an end."

Ning looked towards Youngflame Nong and Xiangliu Fang. His heart was filled with boundless rage. The Immortals of the Youngflame clan had soul-scoured the souls of many Yuchi clansmen in order to remake a complete Windwing Evasion.

Upon being soul-scoured, one's soul would generally be dispersed and destroyed.

"Damn. Damn. Damn!" Ning truly wanted to take revenge for his mother's entire clan.

"Are you the surviving spawn of the Yuchi clan?" Youngflame Nong stared at Ning, his murderous intent billowing to the heavens. Previously, during the banquet, he had just been flirting a bit with Ninelotus; he hadn't truly felt any desire to kill Ning. After all, he had to protect the Youngflame clan's face and reputation. However, if Ning truly was a spawn of the Yuchi clan, then even the patriarchs of the Youngflame clan were present, they would still mercilessly kill Ning.

In this moment, he was the representative of the entire Youngflame clan!

"I am not." Ning stared at Youngflame Nong and Xiangliu Fang. He forcibly repressed his anger and said in a low voice, "Youngflame Nong, if you want to kill me, there's no need for you to put on such a show to find an excuse."

"My senior apprentice-brother has already spoken; there is no relationship between himself and the Yuchi clan," Northson said angrily. "Young master Youngflame, we came here to help you; is this how you are going to treat us?"

"Young master Youngflame, since my junior apprentice-brother Ji Ning has said that he is not a descendant of the Yuchi clan, that means he is not. He most likely acquired this divine ability through a fortuitous encounter. He can negotiate with your Youngflame clan and offer some compensatory gifts, then swear an oath to the Dao of the Heavens that he absolutely will not pass this divine ability out to anyone else," Adept Vastriver said.

Yu Wei spoke out as well. "Young master Youngflame, for you to claim at a time like this that junior apprentice-brother Ji Ning is a descendant of the Yuchi clan...once word of this spreads, people will think that it is you, Youngflame Nong, who intentionally sought out an excuse to act against him."

"Youngflame Nong." Ninelotus stared at Youngflame Nong as well. Filled with wrath, she said, "Ji Ning is my Dao-Companion!"

Everyone was standing out, pressuring Youngflame Nong from all sides. But he only laughed.

"Hahaha...don't worry," Youngflame Nong said with a laugh. "Since Ji Ning has accompanied me on this trip through the Immortal estate, I'll give him a chance to live." As he spoke out, he produced a set of black manacles, covered with ancient golden runes. He tossed the manacles directly towards Ning. Clank. They landed on the ground before him.

"These are godlock chains." Youngflame Nong looked towards Ning. "Upon being manacled, you'll be like an ordinary mortal. Even Fiendgods, when locked by these chains, won't be able to resist. Put these chains on and wait for my orders. I can swear an oath as well; so long as you are not a spawn of the Yuchi clan, I absolutely will not kill you, nor harm your power. I will go out and engage in an investigation. If, however, I can verify that you are a spawn of the Yuchi clan, I will kill you. If you are not? I'll release you to your freedom."

Ning furrowed his brows.

Yu Wei spoke out in a high voice, “Young master Youngflame, think about how powerful your Youngflame clan is; is it necessary for you to act in such a petty manner? You can let junior apprentice-brother Ji Ning go free for now, then engage in your investigations; upon verifying the results, you can act against him later. Can it be that in the face of the power of your Youngflame clan, junior apprentice-brother Ji Ning would be able to escape your reach?”

“Ji Ning, do you agree or not?” Youngflame Nong looked at Ning. “I’ve given you your only way out.”

Ning stared at Youngflame Nong. “You want me to chain myself and hand over my life to you? Do you think this is possible?”

Youngflame Nong’s face instantly turned even colder and more sinister.

No matter what, Ning would not voluntarily put the godlock chains around himself. But right at this moment...

“Young master Youngflame!” The nearby Xue Hongyi suddenly laughed coldly as he pointed at Ning. “Don’t listen to his lies. This Ji Ning’s father was known as Ji Yichuan, while his mother was known as Yuchi Snow!”

“You learned the Windwing Evasion, and your mother was Yuchi Snow?” Youngflame Nong instantly revealed a savage look on his face, and his voice became as cold as ice. “So you truly are the spawn of the Yuchi clan! Die! Ji Ning shall die! Anyone who attempts to block the path of the Youngflame clan in doing so will be killed, without reservation!”

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 10: Entering the Immortal Estate Chapter 25: Grand Dao Domain

Everyone close to Ji Ning, such as Mu Northson and Ninelotus, all knew that Ning’s mother was named Yuchi Snow. However, they all wanted to try and buy him some time; at the very least, they wanted to make sure that could leave this major world alive. Later on, the Dongyan clan and the Black-White College could use some methods at their disposal to ensure that Ning could be sent and escape to other lesser worlds, or perhaps even a different major world.

Unfortunately...

Xue Hongyi had thoroughly investigated Ning long ago, and had even purchased a set of intelligence reports regarding Ning from the Heavenly Treasures Mountain. Naturally, he knew who Ning’s parents were.

“Youngflame Nong!” Ninelotus was enraged.

“Hold!” Yu Wei’s forehead suddenly began to glow with white light. Her aura quickly became terrifying as she, too, roared with fury.

Adept Vastriver and Mu Northson all called out in anger as well.

Whoooosh.

Xiangliu Fang only stretched out a single hand, which instantly expanded to a tremendous size. At the same time, his five fingers transformed into five giant serpents, each more than three hundred meters

long. They stretched out towards Ninelotus, Yu Wei, Northson, and Adept Vastriver. Every single serpent emanated a terrifyingly powerful aura, causing the faces of Ninelotus and the others to become unsightly.

“Ninelotus, I won’t kill you.” Youngflame Nong pointed towards Ninelotus. “But those three fellow disciples of yours...Uncle Fang, if they dare interfere, just kill them.”

Although he felt lust towards Yu Wei...women, to Youngflame Nong, were nothing more than playthings. Playthings, in the end, were still playthings; they could be killed at a moment’s notice.

“You...”

“Youngflame Nong...”

Ninelotus, Northson, Yu Wei, and Adept Vastriver all stared towards him with hatred, but they knew exactly how strong Xiangliu Fang was; he was absolutely capable of crushing them. Although they had some protective items on them, those items would at most allow them to stay alive for a short period of time. To completely change the situation...was impossible.

“Senior apprentice-brother, senior apprentice-sister, junior apprentice-brother...Ninelotus.” Ning looked towards Youngflame Nong, seated at the front of the hall, then said calmly, “There’s no need for you to intervene. This is a matter between myself and Youngflame Nong.”

“Ji Ning.” Ninelotus called out frantically towards him.

Ning looked towards Ninelotus. “Don’t worry.”

“YOUNGFLAME NONG!!!” Ninelotus was absolutely livid. “You are provoking my Dongyan clan!”

“If it was the Forefather of the Dongyan clan who said these words to me, then I might truly be forced to reconsider. But you?” Youngflame Nong laughed, then shook his head.

Ninelotus suddenly produced a black lotus petal in her hand, a petal with an aura that inspired terror. The black lotus petal quickly expanded, causing Xiangliu Fang to called out icily, “Are you looking to die!?” His giant python-finger instantly smashed headlong against the black lotus flower, which trembled, then began to crack. This cracked black lotus flower continued to fly straight towards the giant serpent.

BOOM!

The giant serpent quickly froze into a statue of ice, then shattered apart. In fact, Xiangliu Fang’s entire hand became frozen, all the way to his elbow, then began to splinter across. However, Xiangliu Fang’s arm then once more grew out. WHAP. His fingers once more transformed into serpents, striking heavily against Ninelotus and causing her to be knocked flying, vomiting blood from her mouth.

“Not bad. Unfortunately, you were only capable of injuring Uncle Fang.” Youngflame Nong shook his head. “Even I am unable to produce treasures capable of killing Uncle Fang. You?”

Xiangliu Fang was of the ancient Fiendgod ‘Hydraga’ race; his lifeforce was incredibly powerful, and his combat ability was comparable to a peak Loose Immortal’s. To kill Xiangliu Fang? This was an incredibly hard task.

“Xue Hongyi, I’ll give you a chance to render merits for yourself.” Youngflame Nong looked towards Xue Hongyi. “Go and kill Ji Ning.”

“Me? Kill Ji Ning?” Xue Hongyi was stunned.

“Are you going to kill him or not?” Youngflame Nong’s eyes flashed with a cold light.

Xue Hongyi mentally cursed nonstop. He had been flattering Youngflame Nong this entire time, and had even told him that Ning’s mother was named Yuchi Snow. He had done all of this in the hopes of making Youngflame Nong like him...but who would’ve imagined that Youngflame Nong would be this vicious? Youngflame Nong had actually ordered him to go kill Ji Ning...he had no confidence in being able to do so at all!

“Kill, yes, kill.” Xue Hongyi nodded frantically, but in his heart, he thought to himself, “I’m not going to be able to kill Ji Ning, but I should be able to stay alive at least.”

“Ji Ning, prepare to die,” Xue Hongyi called out with anger, then instantly shot out a series of flying needles towards Ning.

Youngflame Nong and Xiangliu Fang stood there at the front of the hall, watching this happen. A look of anticipation was in Youngflame Nong’s eyes. “Xue Hongyi’s strength should be a bit weaker than Ji Ning’s; if Ji Ning really was to go all-out against him, he should be able to kill Xue Hongyi...and after Xue Hongyi dies, his Immortal-ranked magic treasure will be mine.”

“Uncle Fang, after Xue Hongyi dies, you attack and kill Ji Ning,” Youngflame Nong sent. “The Immortal-ranked magic treasure will be mine then.”

“Yes, young master,” Xiangliu Fang said.

.....

Upon hearing Youngflame Nong say, the words, “Ji Ning shall die” and “anyone who attempts to block the path of the Youngflame clan in doing so will be killed,” Ning had already made up his mind to kill Youngflame Nong!

Xiangliu Fang was far too powerful; Ning didn’t feel any confidence in his ability to defeat him, but he had no choice now.

“Die.” Xue Hongyi charged forward.

“First you. Then Youngflame Nong.” Ning wielded his Darknorth swords in his hands. At this point, he couldn’t be bothered to use wings to hide his technique.

Whoooooosh!!!

A series of flying needles filled the skies, shooting towards him.

“KILL!” Ning let out an enraged bellow. In this moment, Ning’s sword-heart was more steadfast and firm than it had ever been before.

He understood now.

In this moment, he had embarked on a brand new path. If he didn't kill Youngflame Nong, then due to being physically located within this Immortal estate, he wouldn't be able to escape. He would die! But if he did kill Youngflame Nong, someone who had the highest chances to become the next Godplume Duke...the Youngflame clan would definitely pursue him with full power. This was a clan that was even more terrifyingly powerful than the Northmont clan of Stillwater!

Two roads lay ahead of him.

One was the road to death.

The other was the road of being pursued by the Youngflame clan.

After having been pressured to this extent...Ning actually became incomparably resolved.

BOOOM!!!

His soul became completely pure and transparent in this moment, more than it ever had been before. Ning suddenly felt as though time itself slowed down. Something that he had been strugglingly this entire time to reach, and yet had never been able to...finally, he truly had reached it, and embarked on a new journey through his Grand Dao. This was...the Grand Dao of the Sword! A vast, awe-inspiring Grand Dao! In this moment, Ning felt as though he had transformed into a sword that was swimming through the entirety of the Grand Dao.

In this moment...Ning had completely reached the Grand Dao Domain level.

Generally speaking, Immortal cultivators who trained in a Dao all had the chance to reach the 'Dao Domain' level, but that was generally only true for an ordinary Dao. The Dao of the Sword, however, was one of the Grand Daos; to reach the Grand Dao Domain was far more difficult than even completely mastering an entire Dao-Path. Although Ning had reached the fifth stance of the [Three-Foot Sword] long ago, if he hadn't been placed under such enormous pressure this time, causing his heart to suddenly and completely comprehend and allow him to pass through the final barriers, it would have remained very difficult for him to reach this new level.

Within his sea of consciousness.

Ning's soul suddenly transformed into a sword, an incomparably dazzling sword. This was the sword-soul, which only a Sword Immortal who had truly reached the Grand Dao Domain level would possess. This was a fundamental change, an evolution of the soul.

Whoosh.

The sword suddenly transformed into Ji Ning's appearance...but the spirit-Ning faintly emanated with the light of a sword.

"What is the purpose of a life lived?"

"All I ask for is to be joyful."

"Kill, kill, kill."

"Exterminate all injustices!"

“Exterminate all those who deserve killing!”

“Only then will I be exultant.”

“As Loose Immortals, there is no path to immortality.”

“Thus...”

“Better to live passionately for a day, than to live a century while stifled.”

“My sword is the joyous sword, the sword of passion, the sword which exterminates all injustices. The name of this sword technique is the [Three-Foot Sword].”

While battling against Xue Hongyi, Ning suddenly began to laugh. Laugh loudly, and with joy. “Kill, kill, kill; exterminate all injustices, and exterminate all those who need killing! Better to live passionately for a day, than to live a century while stifled.” As Ning laughed loudly, the Darknorth swords in his hands suddenly became incomparably brilliant and incomparably awe-inspiring.

Swish!

An unfathomably terrifying sword-aura instantly filled the entire hall. A dazzling streak of sword-light lashed out, tearing through the flying needles as though they were made of rotting wood, then sliced across Xue Hongyi’s body.

“I, I, I...” Xue Hongyi’s eyes were completely round. He had never imagined that he would end up like this. Filled to the brim with terror, even his soul began to crack and shatter under the terrifying sword-aura filling the hall.

And then...his body fell into two parts on the ground.

The sixth stance of the [Three-Foot Sword]...the Grand Dao Domain!

The [Three-Foot Sword], as the highest level sword art of the Black-White College, had six stances that were available to the public. The final three stances, however, were limited to direct, Epochal Transmission for Sword Immortals.

The first stance – Lustrous Sword-Heart

The second stance – Manifold Thistlethorns

The third stance – Sudden Sword-Light

The fourth stance – Sun in the Sky

The fifth stance – Moonlight Hiding the Sword

The sixth stance – Grand Dao Domain.

These sword stances weren’t completely set in stone; for example, the first stance, Lustrous Sword-Heart, was different for each person, depending on how they comprehended it. The [Three-Foot Sword] primarily served as a guide. It guided Sword Immortals towards techniques that suited them best. Every single practitioner of the [Three-Foot Sword] was capable of executing the [Three-Foot Sword] in a way which suited them the most.

In dire straits, Ning's heart had completely merged into the Grand Dao, allowing him to reach the Grand Dao Domain level. The power of this sixth stance he had comprehended was truly incomparably frightening.

"Is this a Grand Dao Domain?" Youngflame Nong watched as a terrifying sword-aura washed over the entire hall, causing even his own soul to shudder. Youngflame Nong's face completely changed from its previous, calm and smug look. He stared at Ji Ning, this young man from a backwater clan, who seemed to have gone berserk and who had just killed Xue Hongyi with one blow. "How old is he? He actually...actually has already reached the Grand Dao Domain level? And in the Dao of the Sword, the most offensive of Daos?!"

Youngflame Nong suddenly felt jealousy in his heart; why couldn't he be this talented? Why did this sort of talent had to fall onto a rustic youth like this one?

"Grand Dao Domain?"

"This Dao of the Sword..."

Yu Wei, Adept Vastriver, and Ninelotus were in a state of shock. The sword-aura that filled the hall...all of them could feel the resoluteness, the sharpness, the indomitableness emanating from it.

The sword was a sharp weapon. The heart of a Sword Immortal...only one whose heart was truly as sharp, resolute, and indomitable as a sword would be capable of truly comprehending the exquisiteness of the Dao of the Sword.

When the sword emerged, there was no room for regret.

When the sword emerged, it could not be blocked.

This was what it meant to be a Sword Immortal!

"KILL!" Ning wielded his twin swords in his hands. His body suddenly increased dramatically as he transformed into a thirty meter tall giant as he simultaneously executed his divine ability, [Star-seizing Hand] as well. In this moment, the sword-light in Ning's hands had reached an awe-inspiringly powerful level. But Xiangliu Fang just let out a furious growl, smashing out with his palm, which swept forward like a dark stormcloud as the giant serpents that were his fingers ravenously bit down.

BOOOOM!

An explosive sound rang out. The flesh on Xiangliu Fang's serpent-hand split open, and fresh blood sprayed everywhere as divine power lashed everywhere.

Ning was sent flying nback as well, blood spewing out from his mouth. In this moment, Ning understood...that although his power had increased dramatically, compared with Xiangliu Fang, who possessed the power of a peak Loose Immortal, the difference in power was simply too great. The opponent was able to defeat him with just one hand.

"Ji Ning."

"Senior apprentice-brother."

Northson, Yu Wei, and Ninelotus all called out in alarm.

While being knocked backwards, Ning's eyes became filled with madness. That black loop, which had been tucked into his bracer the entire time, suddenly appeared in his palm. This was the treasure which Daoist Threelives had personally forged; of Ning's two important life-saving treasures, it was the only one capable of an active attack.

Ning had no other choices left to him.

"GO!" Ning waved his hand, sending the black loop flying out.

The Desolate Era

Book 10: Entering the Immortal Estate Chapter 26: Killing Youngflame Nong

The black loop seemed quite ordinary, but as Xiangliu Fang struck out with his massive, dark, cloud-like hand, with those giant, serpentine fingers...the black loop actually passed straight through it. The giant Fiendgod's hand wasn't harmed at all; it was as though the black loop was composed of a different type of force, as though it was illusory. It passed straight through.

"What's this?" Xiangliu Fang was completely flabbergasted.

"Kill him." Youngflame Nong's eyes were filled with a murderous intent as well, but then...he too stared in amazement at the black loop which had appeared.

A seemingly ordinary black loop, but it caused both Youngflame Nong and Xiangliu Fang to feel nervousness, because they had no idea what sort of a treasure it was.

One of them was an ancient Fiendgod with vast experience. The other was all-but-guaranteed to be the next Godplume Duke, who similarly had seen many things. The two of them had seen countless treasures...but they had never seen a treasure like this before. In fact, they couldn't even tell what it was.

"This black loop easily passed through Xiangliu Fang's massive, Fiendgod hand...and didn't injure it in the slightest?" Mu Northson was completely awestruck as well.

It was like an ordinary person being 'struck' by a ghost; the ghost would pass straight through the person. When Xiangliu Fang and the sphere collided, the sphere shot straight through him. But Xiangliu Fang, as a Fiendgod, had an incredibly powerful level of divine power; if it had been a ghost or something like a ghost, it would have been shattered.

"What queer thing is this?" Ninelotus was amazed as well. She came from the Dongyan clan, but had never heard of such a treasure.

"Eh?" Adept Vastriver had long ago awakened fragments of his former memories, but he felt puzzled as well.

Yu Wei originally had a look of puzzlement, but then she revealed a look of astonishment. "Can this be...how can it..."

.....

The black loop flew into the air directly above Youngflame Nong and Xiangliu Fang, and as it did, it suddenly emanated a soft, hazy glow, causing it to appear dreamlike and illusory.

“Shatter,” Xiangliu Fang howled angrily. A long awl appeared in his hand, filled with a boundless, savage aura, and Xiangliu Fang stabbed the black loop viciously with his awl.

“Protect me.” Youngflame Nong also felt that this black loop was extremely bizarre. He had already taken out that leaf-like Dao-seal earlier, in order to protect against the black-armored golem’s sudden ambush if necessary. He now shattered it right away. Instantly, a hazy golden aura covered him with a tight defensive aura. “This would be able to withstand for a few moments against even a full-strength attack from a Loose Immortal.”

Whoosh.

Xiangliu Fang’s ferocious stab...missed. It was as though the black loop didn’t exist at all; or perhaps, it existed on a completely different plane.

The black loop continued to emanate that hazy light. Suddenly, an invisible, devouring ripple swept out.

“This is...”

Youngflame Nong and Xiangliu Fang’s faces both changed dramatically. They could both sense that invisible devouring force...and it was aimed directly at their souls.

“AHH!! NO—!” Youngflame Nong’s face turned incomparably savage and terrified. He let out a hideous howl...and then, his soul left his body. Twisting and distorting, it was forcibly drawn into that black loop.

Youngflame Nong was a peak Wanxiang Adept, and ever since he was young, he had access to an extremely high level visualization technique; his soul was comparable to a Primal Daoist’s by now, and so naturally it could almost take physical form. Ning and everyone else personally witnessed his twisting, distorting soul howl in anguish as it was drawn into the black loop.

“What sort of treasure is this? How can it absorb my soul? How can...how can...how can this be my end? How could I have died to this Ji Ning? Is my soul about to be destroyed? Ji Ning, Ji Ning, spare me, spare me!” Youngflame Nong’s soul let out a soundless screech, continuing to twist and distort as it was drawn deeper and deeper within.

“I, I...” Xiangliu Fang was struggling in a berserk manner. And yet...his powerful Fiendgod’s soul was still being forcibly ripped out from his Fiendgod body. As a Primal-level Fiendgod who was capable of creating a clone of himself, it was clear that his soul had long ago completely merged with his Fiendgod body, fusing into one. And yet, it was still being forcibly ripped out right now.

It was an enormous soul, and it was letting out earth-shaking bellows that shook the entire hall...but it, too, was being drawn into the black loop.

And so, just like that...

Youngflame Nong and Xiangliu Fang, despite their protective treasures or powerful divine bodies...had their souls forcibly devoured by this terrifying, bizarre treasure.

Crack. The black loop let out a clear sound, like a piece of ice breaking. Instantly, it shattered apart, dissipating and melting in midair, leaving nothing behind at all. Even Youngflame Nong and Xiangliu Fang's souls had completely vanished.

Slump.

Youngflame Nong's body remained standing there for a moment, eyes completely blank, and then his body slumped gently to the ground. The mighty Xiangliu Fang remained standing for a moment as well, but then he too collapsed to the ground, no longer breathing. This ancient Fiendgod, who had been born in the Fiendgod Era, then been enslaved by the Youngflame clan...finally died on this day.

"Youngflame Nong and Xiangliu Fang just...just...just died, like that?" Northson stared with huge eyes. He cleared his throat repeatedly, completely awestruck.

"Dead. This...this..." Adept Vastriver was completely awestruck as well.

Ninelotus and Yu Wei both looked at the two collapsed, lifeless figures as well; one master, the other a servant. They felt as though they were in a dream.

Xiangliu Fang had been so powerful! He was an ancient Fiendgod! As for Youngflame Nong, his background and status were both mighty as well; earlier, when dealing with the monstrous Dao-soldiers, he had taken out the likes of the 'Lock' scroll and the 'Polaris Starshifter' treasure. They had watched him do this and had realized how truly extraordinary the next Godplume Duke truly was, and how many protective items he had. But the end result? They had both died.

Ji Ning, who had been knocked flying backwards and had vomited out blood, revealed a look of astonishment as well. He had never imagined that the black loop would be this powerful.

When he had originally selected the black loop, the giant yellow bear had said to him, "Ji Ning, to tell the truth, I originally didn't want to give you this treasure. However, after you grow more powerful, it will no longer be of much use to you, as by the time you become a Primal, you'll be able to carry around this underwater estate with you. The Wanxiang Adept period...this is the period in an Immortal cultivator's life when he is most susceptible to dying. This treasure was personally forged by my master; although he did so casually, it is more than enough to keep you alive. You can consider it a second life....but it can only protect you once."

"A treasure personally forged by Daoist Threelives...even though he made it in a casual way, it was simplicity itself for it to devour the souls of a Primal Fiendgod and a Wanxiang-level noble of a major clan." Ning couldn't help but sigh in astonishment to himself.

He only knew that this black loop was meant for the sole purpose of drawing in and eradicating souls...but up till now, he had no idea how powerful it was.

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Ning was only amazed for a second. In the next instant, however, he understood that he had embarked on a path of no return.

Actually, ever since Youngflame Nong had determined that Ning was a descendant of the Yuchi clan and moved to kill him, Ning had already embarked on a path of no return. Either he would be killed by

Youngflame Nong, or he would kill Youngflame Nong. These were his only two options! But by killing Youngflame Nong, someone who was virtually guaranteed to be the next Godplume Duke, and whose background was incredibly astonishing...

Youngflame Nong's status within his clan was similar to Ning's former status in the Ji clan of West Prefecture City; Ning had both the Lord Prefect and his own father supporting him. For it to be all but determined that Youngflame Nong would be the next Godplume Duke meant that he definitely had an incredibly powerful figure supporting him as well!

Youngflame Nong had died. If only for emotional reasons alone, that powerful figure would come to seek revenge! Aside from saving face for the Youngflame clan, revenge for Youngflame Nong would also be an important reason!

"Hahaha..." Ning actually began to laugh loudly. With a wave of his hand, he sent out a streak of earthfire, which burnt the corpse of Xue Hongyi to ash. He then collected the magic treasures which Xue Hongyi had left behind. Xue Hongyi had that Immortal-ranked magic treasure; naturally, since Ning was about to flee for his life, he would want to carry as many treasures with him as possible.

Whoosh.

With a single step, Ning moved to Youngflame Nong and the Fiendgod Xiangliu Fang's corpses. A streak of earthfire burned Youngflame Nong's corpses to gray ash, but the earthfire was completely unable to damage Xiangliu Fang's Fiendgod body at all. This caused Ning to frown.

"Come in here." He simply stored the entire Fiendgod body into his storage-type magic treasure. Then, with a wave of his hand, Ning collected the key to the Immortal estate.

Ning quickly began to bind it. The key to the Immortal estate was merely a talisman; binding it was quite simple.

The nearby Northson, Yu Wei, Ninelotus, and Adept Vastriver just watched as Ning burned the corpses of Xue Hongyi and Youngflame Nong, then took away all their magic treasures. All of them were still in a state of shock.

"Senior apprentice-brother, you, you...you killed Youngflame Nong?" Northson's mouth flapped open a few times. He was still speechless.

More than ten or so Zifu Disciples were still alive. They all watched Ning intently, especially those two female Zifu-level maidservants who served Youngflame Nong.

Swish!

Ning's gaze flickered past them. Suddenly, the air was filled with sword-ki, which howled downwards, instantly killing all of the Deathsworn.

"If the Deathsworn remain alive, they would only reveal everything which happened here." Ning knew very well that these Deathsworn were completely loyal to Youngflame Nong. They had watched everything happen; once the Youngflame clan found these Deathsworn, everything would have been exposed.

“Ji Ning.” Ninelotus had a look of panic on her face. Tears actually began to appear. “How could you have killed Youngflame Nong. This...next...this...the Youngflame clan is definitely going to pursue and kill you. There’s no way...no way to stop the Youngflame clan. He was one of the Four Dukelings of the imperial capital of the Grand Xia Dynasty. He was extremely famous...for the sake of their reputation alone, the Youngflame clan would spare no expense in pursuing and killing you.”

Ning looked towards Ninelotus. “I had no choice. I only had two options; to let him kill me, or to kill him! Either he died or I died. What should I have done?”

Ninelotus was so frantic, she began to cry. Previously, she had been trying her best to prevent hatred from developing between Ning and Youngflame Nong, but in the end...the result was even worse than what she had feared. Youngflame Nong, the exalted heir-presumptive to the position of Godplume Duke of the Youngflame clan...had died.

“No need to panic,” Ning said with cold calmness. “I killed Youngflame Nong, but I trust that none of you will voluntarily report me. There’s no way the Youngflame clan would be able to ascertain, within such a short period of time, who the killer was. They will need to spend time to investigate. I’ll immediately send you all out of this Immortal estate. By then, you can return to your own homes, to the Dongyan clan and to the Black-White College of Stillwater City. Nothing which happened here had anything to do with you. I was the killer; the Youngflame clan won’t act against the rest of you. But by the time they’ve fully investigated this matter, I’ll have already arranged an escape plan and executed it.”

“Junior apprentice-brother Ji Ning, you are wrong.” Yu Wei was frantic and restless as well, and she said hurriedly, “According to legends, some extremely powerful figures, such as Celestial Immortals, are completely capable of causing a temporal inversion, resulting in scenes from the past being replayed in the present. From this, they can discover right away that you were the culprit.”

Ning instantly felt his heart clench.

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Book 10: Entering the Immortal Estate Chapter 27: Traveling Alone

“Temporal inversion?” Ning instantly realized that the situation was far more dire than he had thought! He had previously believed that after having killed Youngflame Nong, he would have some time before the Youngflame clan discovered him, which would allow him to arrange for his clan, the Ji clan, to escape. But now, it seemed, time was far too tight.

“Everyone, we have no time. I’ll send you all out now. Go to a safe location. Because of me, all of you have been implicated.” In order to save time, Ning began to converse mentally with them.

“Junior apprentice-brother Ji Ning,” Yu Wei sent hurriedly, “You don’t need to worry about our safety; the Grand Xia Dynasty has its rules, and the Youngflame clan cannot simply do what it wishes. As long as we return to the Black-White College, we will be fine; the Grand Xia Dynasty’s laws state that violence is forbidden within its commandery cities. In addition, we weren’t the ones to kill Youngflame Nong, and so the Youngflame clan would have no excuse to act against us. Right now, you need to worry about yourself.”

“You have two main options right now.”

“The first is to flee. Flee to a place where the Youngflame clan cannot reach you and take revenge, such as other lesser or major worlds. Another option would be to flee straight to the main headquarters of the Raindragon Guard. The Raindragon Guard remains the most powerful military force within the Grand Xia Dynasty; no matter how daring the Youngflame clan is, they wouldn’t dare to act against you while you are with the Raindragon Guard.”

“The second option is to go up against them head-on. Go straight to the imperial capital of the Grand Xia Dynasty; that’s the capital city for the entirety of the Grand Xia Empire, and the most supreme clans and schools of the entire Grand Xia Empire reside there. You can first go to the local Raindragon Guard branch; that place will be absolutely safe. Afterwards, you can participate in the Conclave of Immortal Destiny. Now that you have mastered a Grand Dao Domain, you will definitely be able to perform with brilliant splendor at the Conclave. Given your talent, there will be quite a few powers which will want to draw you into their fold. By then, you can join a power that is opposed to the Youngflame clan.”

“The Youngflame clan is powerful, but if you look at the Grand Xia Dynasty as a whole, you’ll still find a few organizations which are more powerful than them and which hold vast grudges against them. Some of the grudges can be described as ‘mortal enmity’, and there are more than a few; after all, in this vast world which the imperial clan of the Grand Xia Dynasty has unified, it is normal for the largest, most powerful clans, sects, and churches to have their disputes and grudges against each other. For example, the ‘Kindwater’ 1 clan is even more powerful than the Youngflame clan 2, and these two clans have felt mortal enmity towards each other ever since the Fiendgod Era. After countless generations of struggle, both sides have even lost Celestial Immortals. One leader after another has been assassinated by the other side as well. Given that you’ve killed Youngflame Nong, powers like the Kindwater clan would definitely be willing to pull you into their fold. By relying on powerful clans such as them, you can continue to fight against the Youngflame clan.”

“Two options; one to flee, the other to resist. These are the only two ideas I’m able to come up with in such a short period of time,” Yu Wei sent.

Ning had previously been planning on fleeing. He hadn’t expected that Yu Wei would be able to provide yet another clear path for him.

Right!

The Youngflame clan ranked in the top ten clans of the Grand Xia Dynasty...but that meant there were nine other clans on par with them! The more powerful an organization was, the more fights it would get into over resources; this was extremely common.

“As for your clan, the Ji clan,” Yu Wei sent hurriedly, “For now, you can have your clansmen lay low; you can also have some of the elites be sent to Stillwater City or the imperial capital of the Grand Xia Dynasty. Murder and fighting is forbidden in commandery cities; if anyone dares to act in such a way, they will definitely suffer reprisals from the Grand Xia Dynasty.”

“Although the Youngflame clan might be able to arrange for some wanted criminals to go commit suicide attacks...how powerful could these wanted criminals possibly be? These wanted criminals are all completely lawless; the more powerful they are, the less willing they are to do anyone’s bidding, especially those Fiendgods and Loose Immortals. It will be very hard for the Youngflame clan to invite those truly terrifying figures to intervene.”

“The only option is for the Youngflame clan to send its own Loose Immortals out to annihilate your Ji clan. Even if they escape blame by claiming that the Loose Immortal did it of his own free will...that Loose Immortal would definitely die!”

Yu Wei continued, sending mentally, “No matter what, so long as a tribe can save its elites, in the future, it will flourish again. You are the genius which the Ji clan has finally produced after countless years; you need to protect yourself.”

“Thank you, senior apprentice-sister.” Ning had some plans of his own, but upon hearing Yu Wei’s suggestions, he instantly felt as though a bigger picture had been revealed to him, giving him some new ideas as well. And, Ning also had a feeling...as though Yu Wei seemed to have quite a clear understanding of the most powerful, supreme forces of the entire Grand Xia Dynasty.

“Ji Ning,” Ninelotus sent hurriedly, “Come with me. I’ll take you to see the Forefather and have him send you out from this major world of the Grand Xia Dynasty. As for the Ji clan, I’ll come up with a way to protect some of their elites. In the future, when you are more powerful and come back, we can have the Ji clan flourish again.”

“Senior apprentice-brother, are you preparing to flee? I’ll go with you. My master is close to the end of her life; she’s going to enter her final, closed-door meditation. She’s already taught me everything she can. I have nothing holding me back. Going with you and fleeing together is bound to be an exciting life,” Northson sent.

“Junior apprentice-brother Ji Ning, protect yourself; only then will you have a chance to turn the tables in the future.” Adept Vastriver looked towards Ning.

Ning laughed. Then, suddenly...Ning’s gaze fell upon Ninelotus. He sent mentally, “Ninelotus.”

“Yes?” Ninelotus looked at Ning.

“I killed Youngflame Nong. Regardless of whether I choose to flee to another world, or if I choose to join another supreme clan or alliance...I’ll be unable to remain within Stillwater Commandery. I’ll be a homeless wanderer...would you be willing to go with me?” Ning looked towards Ninelotus, eyes filled with hope.

“I, I...” Ninelotus hesitated.

She could imagine the path which Ning would walk down in the future. It would be a path of incomparable danger. Should she accompany him on that wandering path?

She felt an impulsive urge to agree. To wander to the edges of the world with Ning, to share life and death together.

But then she thought of her clan. She was the next leader of the Dongyan clan. She couldn’t possibly just go wandering off with Ning to the ends of the earth endlessly. No one could know how long the wandering would last.

“Ninelotus.” Ning could sense her hesitation. He couldn’t help but feel a bit of pain in his heart.

He knew that this request of his was a bit excessive. Only...in this moment, after having embarked on this path, Ning truly wanted for someone to walk it with him. This arduous Immortal path...if someone

could share it with him and share its burdens with him...Ning truly hoped that someone would be Ninelotus.

"I'm sorry."

Ninelotus' eyes filled with tears as she looked at Ning. "Ji Ning, I suddenly understand now. I simply can't wander the world by your side; I can't share life and death with you. The Forefather's words were right. To be Dao-Companions...that means to be willing to die for someone. Dao-Companions...if Immortals or Buddhas block your path, for the sake of bringing your Dao-Companion back, you would be willing to murder Immortals or annihilate Buddhas. But I can't do it! I truly can't do it. I have my own path to follow and I...I don't want to give up my own path for you."

"I'm sorry. I'm so sorry." Tears were streaming down Ninelotus' face.

"No need to say anything further."

Ning's eyes were glimmering with unshed tears as well. "It's my fault for being too greedy. I'm embarking on a path of certain danger, and I'll definitely be fighting against the Youngflame clan for countless years to come. I went too far in what I asked for. I shouldn't dare to drag you in and implicate you as well."

"From now on...you are you."

"I am me."

"This Immortal path...it's enough for me to walk it alone."

Ning pointed into the distance. Whoosh! Instantly, a watery, rippling pattern appeared, followed by a tunnel. Outside the tunnel was the Skyrove Mountains of the Grand Xia Dynasty's major world. Ning immediately said, "Senior apprentice-sister Yu Wei, senior apprentice-brother Vastriver, junior apprentice-brother Northson, and Ninelotus...you can leave."

"Senior apprentice-brother, I told you that I'm going to go adventuring with you. I have nothing holding me back. What the hell do I have to be afraid of?" Northson spoke with great urgency.

"This is an extremely dangerous path I am embarking on, junior apprentice-brother Northson..."

"Do you think I'm too weak for it?" Northson ground his teeth.

"Right. You are too weak. You can't help me; instead, you'd slow me down." Ning gritted his own teeth as well as he responded.

The nearby Yu Wei spoke out to urge Northson. "Junior apprentice-brother Northson, don't be stubborn; this isn't the time to show your loyalty. Your strength truly is a bit too low."

Northson looked at Ning, his eyes turning slightly red. "Senior apprentice-brother, after my mother died, I no longer had any kinsmen left. After I joined the school, you became the closest person in my life. Long ago, I started to view you as I would an actual, biological brother. It is true that I am a bit weak, and I know that you said those words because you don't want me to be pulled into this. I'm not going to say anything else for now, except..."

“When I go back, I’m going to train hard. And if you die, I’ll definitely take revenge for you.”

Ning’s eyes turned red. He hadn’t imagined...he truly hadn’t imagined that Northson, in his heart, viewed Ning as he would a real brother.

“Hahaha, don’t worry. I won’t die that easily.” Tears in his eyes, Ning laughed loudly, then said, “Stop dawdling. Hurry up and leave.”

Ninelotus felt all the more agony in her heart at this moment.

Even Northson had been willing to throw everything away, but her? She truly wanted to do the same, to throw everything away, to discard her clan, to roam the world by Ning’s side. But...she continued to hesitate. She just couldn’t throw it all away.

“I’m sorry.” Tears fell down Ninelotus’ face. “Stay alive. You have to stay alive.” And then, she turned her head and flew through the corridor to the Skyrove Mountains on the other side.

Northson, Yu Wei, and Adept Vastriver all understood. Dao-Companions, Dao-Companions...what were Dao-Companions? Only those who would never abandon each other, even at their most critical moments, could be considered Dao-Companions. Ninelotus’ departure, and the words she had just spoken...they caused the three to understand that in the future, most likely Ji Ning and Ninelotus would truly embark on completely separate Immortal paths.

“Be careful,” Northson said.

“Stay alive.” Yu Wei looked at Ning.

“You have to stay alive,” Adept Vastriver instructed as well.

And then, the three flew through the corridor, arriving within the Skyrove Mountains. The corridor then shut.

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The Skyrove Mountains.

They had returned to the world of the Grand Xia Dynasty. Ninelotus, Yu Wei, Northson, and Adept Vastriver all turned their heads to stare at the corridor. Through it, they could vaguely make out that solitary, lonely figure within the main hall on the other side.

From today on...Ning was going to have to fight by himself.

Ninelotus stared through the tunnel. No matter how hard she tried, she couldn’t stop her tears from continuing to fall.

The choice she had made today was an incomparably agonizing choice for her.

She wasn’t able to abandon her tribe. She had her own dreams. She simply couldn’t make herself discard everything for Ning’s sake.

Yu Wei, Northson, and Adept Vastriver didn’t say anything. This was because they, too, understood how rare it was for there to be a pair of Dao-Companions who would truly share life and death together, who

would never leave each other, and whose lives would become as one. In fact, many so-called Dao-Companions would actually end up hating each other and becoming enemies; it wasn't uncommon for them to end up fighting over treasures and killing each other.

To truly be together until death parted them...this was far too rare. Ninelotus had too many other things she cared about. She couldn't throw them all away.

Whoosh. The corridor swung shut, and they could no longer see to the other side.

"Let's go." Northson gritted his teeth.

"Let's go."

"I'm going back to my clan."

Ninelotus returned by herself to the Dongyan clan, while Northson, Adept Vastriver, and Yu Wei returned to the Black-White College.

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Within the palace.

"From today onwards, I shall traverse my Immortal path alone. It's for the best, actually. By myself, I'll be much more carefree," Ning said with a laugh.

"Master, you still have us." Little Qing raised her serpentine head and called out to him.

Ning looked towards the Azure Skysnake, then towards Uncle White, who had followed him silently this entire time. He felt a warm feeling in his heart. "Right. I still have you two. Little Qing, Uncle White, let's go. Let's go and meet the monsters of this Immortal estate."

1. The character for 'Kind', Zhuan, is a reference to mythological Emperor Zhuanyu, one of the legendary Five Emperors of prehistoric China
2. The character for 'Flame', Yan, is a reference to mythological Yan Emperor, the Flame Emperor

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Book 10: Entering the Immortal Estate Chapter 28: The Thousand Year Pact

Within the Immortal estate.

The clan commanded by Immortal Witchsui, along with the many Seawave Dao-soldiers commanded by Immortal Duohe, continued to wait on the outside of the fifth palace. Although they were enraged and despairing, they still hoped...hoped that a miracle might occur.

"Monster clans." Suddenly, a voice rang out, and along with it, waves of divine will rolled out, instantly encompassing all of the monstrous Dao-soldiers.

"Eh?" All of the monsters looked over. Even Immortal Witchsui and Immortal Duohe were shocked.

A few hundred kilometers away, there was a fur-clad youth, with a little azure serpent coiled around his arm and a large, snowy white dog by his side. In the air around them hovered ancient, plain, unadorned

wooden sticks. It was the Fuxi Staff Formation; space within a hundred kilometers of that human was completely locked, and there would be no way to teleport inside.

“You?” Immortal Witchsui and Immortal Duohe immediately recognized him. Amongst the group of humans, there was indeed a fur-clad human who had a giant snowy white dog.

“The key to the Immortal estate is now in my hands.” Ning’s voice rang out by the ears of every single monster. His divine sense had spread to a thousand kilometers; naturally, he was able to send his voice to each and every one of them.

“Open.”

Ning held the key to the Immortal estate in his hands. He sent his will forth, and next to him a corridor appeared; it was the corridor to the Skyrove Mountains in the outside world. Actually, just now, Ning had already used the key to leave and go to the Skyrove Mountains, then re-entered, having Little Qing lead him and Uncle White in a teleportation. Little Qing was actually far more powerful now than she had been in the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains; for near-distance blinks, she could bring others along with her. The main thing was that Ning had yet to bind the various branches; if he emerged directly from within the Witchriver Palace, he would have been surrounded by the monsters.

“The key to the Immortal estate.”

“He is holding the key to the Immortal estate in his hands.”

“That’s the outside world, the smell of the outside world.” Immortal Witchsui and Immortal Duohe swept forward with their divine senses, and were even able to extend them into the corridor leading to the outside world. “That’s another world!”

Immortal Witchsui, Immortal Duohe, and the many monsters all stared towards Ning with even more blazingly desirous gazes. Although they were suspicious as to why the other human was no longer holding the key, the truth remained that this man before them was holding it now. They couldn’t be bothered to over-analyze it; they knew that the appearance of this youth represented a desire by this youth to negotiate with them.

Immortal Witchsui and Immortal Duohe were actually considering whether or not they should try to seize the key to the Immortal estate. However, their earlier, repeated failures caused them to no longer dare to act rashly.

“Don’t try anything. I’ve already set up a formation around me, and the corridor is already open; I can leave at any time. In addition, even if you truly were to attack, you wouldn’t be able to kill me,” Ning said. He had that other protective magic treasure, and also the magic treasures which Youngflame Nong had left behind. His words were completely true.

Immortal Witchsui and Immortal Duohe, as well as the other monsters, all calmed down. They no longer dared to make any more gambles.

“What do you want?” Immortal Witchsui asked.

“I offended a powerful a tribe, the Youngflame clan, and the clan is going to come act against me. They might even act against my tribe.” Ning’s divine sense was sending a message to every single monster.

“My tribe is located in a commandery city of the Grand Xia Dynasty, the City of Ten Thousand Swords. I wish for you, the monsters of this Immortal estate world, to go to the City of Ten Thousand Swords and protect my tribe. Protect them for a thousand years; after that period of time, I’ll release you and give you your freedom. As for the key to the Immortal estate? I can just give it to you.”

The key to the Immortal estate wasn’t of much use to Ning. There was no way he could carry the Witchriver Immortal Estate with him; what was he supposed to do with it? In addition, he had the underwater estate, an even finer estate left behind by Daoist Threelives. As for the treasures within the Witchriver Immortal Estate? The Dao Repository and the Treasure Vault had already been looted clean.

“Protect them for a thousand years?” Immortal Witchsui and Immortal Duohe, along with the tens of thousands of monsters, were both amazed and delighted.

Although a thousand years was a fairly long period of time, monsters had extremely long lifespans to begin with. To simply protect a tribe for a thousand years...they would then be able to go to the wider, vast world. They would even receive the key to the Immortal estate. They didn’t even dare to imagine something like this previously. They had been preparing to be fleeced, and had even been willing to hand over part of their Dao-armors as their offer for peace.

But Ning had no desire for the Dao-armors; wearing the Dao-armors, these monsters would be ten times or even tens of times more powerful. That was what he wanted; them to be powerful!

“Your tribe is located in the ‘City of Ten Thousand Swords’ of the Grand Xia Dynasty? Based on what I know, the Grand Xia Dynasty is extremely strict in its prohibition against battles within commandery cities. If anyone dares to fight within one, they will suffer pursuit and apprehension by the Grand Xia Dynasty. This ‘Youngflame’ clan that wishes to act against your tribe, they shouldn’t dare to actually attack your city, should they?” Immortal Duohe asked.

Although they had always been trapped within here, they had passed down records regarding the Grand Xia Dynasty’s world from generation to generation, and so they knew some of the most basic things.

“Correct, they won’t dare to launch an actual attack. However, if they were to send some wanted criminals or some Deathsworn to attack my tribe...” Ning sent to them, “These criminals and Deathsworn would most likely be at the Wanxiang level or the Primal Daoist level. Loose Immortals? The chances of there being one of them should be very, very low. Celestial Immortals? That’s even less likely.”

To enter a commandery city of the Grand Xia Dynasty and launch an attack was a challenge and affront to the entire Dynasty. Anyone who did so would be killed without question.

For the sake of Youngflame Nong, who was already dead...would they really be willing to sacrifice a Loose Immortal, just for the sake of giving vent to their rage and killing a backwater tribe? The chances were quite low. As for sacrificing a Celestial Immortal? That was virtually impossible.

It must be understood that every single Celestial Immortal was considered one of the true foundations for a clan. A single word from a Celestial Immortal could even cause the clan leader to be changed.

If Ning were to become a Celestial Immortal, he would become one of the figures capable of influencing the entire Grand Xia Dynasty; even the entire Youngflame clan would treat him with courtesy. If it had

been a Celestial Immortal who had killed Youngflame Nong, most likely the Youngflame clan would just go negotiate with him, rather than pursue and attack him. Thus, there was no way the Youngflame clan would be so stupid as to send a Celestial Immortal into a commandery city and begin a slaughter.

“We know a little bit about the Grand Xia Empire’s world. It is already incredible for the supreme clans to have even just one or two Celestial Immortals; there is no way they would let them end up as wanted criminals.” Immortal Duohe and Witchsui exchanged a glance, then made up their minds.

“We have decided to agree to your request. For a thousand years, we shall be stationed at that commandery city of the Grand Xia Empire, the ‘City of Ten Thousand Swords’, and protect your clan. Given our power, even if supreme Loose Immortals come, we should be able to easily defeat them. However, if a Celestial Immortal comes, there is nothing we can do.”

“If a Celestial Immortal attacks, I’ll just accept it,” Ning sent. “Monsters, all of you need to now swear an oath to the Dao of the Heavens. I shall do the same.”

“Fine.”

“That’s how it should be done.”

The monsters were indeed afraid that Ning would later go back on his word; it was best if they all swore oaths to the Dao of the Heavens.

Soon, with Ning personally choosing the words to the oaths, both came to an agreement on what to say, then swore the oaths.

Tens of thousands of monsters simultaneously swore an oath to the Dao of the Heavens. Ripples of power from the Dao of the Heavens descended upon them, and through his divine sense, Ning could clearly see every single monster making the oath. These thirty thousand-plus monsters were the elites of this entire Immortal estate world; more than ninety nine percent of the Diremonster Immortal cultivators were present.

Oaths to the Dao of the Heavens were useless against mortals and useless against ordinary monsters, but upon monsters or humans embarking upon the Immortal path, it would have tremendous effect! These monstrous Dao-soldiers were all at the Zifu level at the very least. The thirty thousand-plus monsters, along with two Loose Immortals, all swore their oaths to the Dao of the Heavens, and Ning, in turn, was no longer worried about them going back on their word.

Naturally, he swore an oath as well.

“There is no time to waste,” Ning sent mentally. “That expert from the Youngflame clan might even be a Celestial Immortal, and he will soon reach the Witchriver Immortal Estate. Once he comes, he might annihilate all of you. We need to immediately leave.”

“What?!” Immortal Witchsui, Immortal Duohe, and the others were all shocked.

The two Immortals were quite decisive; in the face of an opportunity that would change the destinies of all the monsters in the Immortal estate world, they immediately ordered the necessary arrangements be made. “Daoist Zhenbao, Daoist Witchaxle, each of you go lead a thousand Dao-soldiers and gather all of our clansmen within the Immortal estate world, then lead them to the City of Ten Thousand Swords.”

“This is a map of the Stillwater Commandery of the Grand Xia Empire. There is a mark here for the City of Ten Thousand Swords.” Ning flew over as well. Given that they had all sworn oaths to the Dao of the Heavens, they were naturally now in the same boat.

“We’ll lead these soldiers to head there right away,” Immortal Witchsui and Immortal Duohe both said. “Everyone, get in.” The two Immortals each produced a giant sack.

Whooooooosh.

Not a single one of the many monstrous Dao-soldiers resisted. All of them allowed themselves to be drawn into the sacks, leaving behind just Immortal Zhenbao, Immortal Witchaxle, and the two thousand Dao-soldiers under their command.

“Let’s go.”

Whoosh. A corridor appeared, leading to the Skyrove Mountains.

Ning, Immortal Witchsui, Immortal Duohe, and Daoist Witchaxle all flew out.

They appeared within the gorge in the Skyrove Mountains. Even the aura and the smell here was different compared to the Immortal estate world; this was an aura of a vast, endless world, the smell of an entire, major world.

“It’s different.”

“It really is different.”

“This is the Grand Xia Dynasty’s world.” Immortal Witchsui, Immortal Duohe, and the others were all stunned and excited.

“This is the key to the Immortal estate.” Ning handed the key directly to Daoist Witchaxle. “I’m giving it to you now. Immediately lead the remaining monsters to quickly depart from the Immortal estate world; if you delay, the situation might change.”

“Right.” Daoist Witchaxle accepted the key, then immediately generated a corridor, returning to the Immortal estate and then shutting the corridor off.

“Let’s go,” Ning said. “The City of Ten Thousand Swords is six hundred thousand kilometers to the north.”

“Let’s go.”

Immortal Duohe, that powerful old fellow, personally executed a teleportation, bringing Immortal Witchsui, Ning, Little Qing, and Uncle White with him in a long-distance teleport.

.....

Whoosh.

Ning realized that the surrounding environment had changed. He took a careful look, then said, “We were slightly off; the City of Ten Thousand Swords is roughly twenty six thousand kilometers to our southeast.”

“Then I’ll just teleport us again.” The shorter the distance, the easier a teleportation was. Immortal Duohe easily teleported them a short distance.

In the middle of the air, surrounded by clouds, at a location just a few hundred kilometers outside the City of Ten Thousand Swords. A spatial ripple appeared, then from within it emerged Immortal Duohe, Immortal Witchsui, and a fur-clad youth, a little azure serpent, and a large, snowy white hound.

“Here we are.” Ning stared towards the distance. His Fiendgod-like eyesight could easily see the distant commandery city, just a few hundred kilometers away. This caused Ning to let out a sigh of relief; previously, when he had been chatting with the monsters in the Immortal estate, he had done so through divine sense, so as to save as much time as possible. He had been worried about taking too much time and unforeseen things happening.

Ning pointed towards the distant commandery city. “That city is the City of Ten Thousand Swords, the city which the monster clans of the Immortal estate must protect for a thousand years.”