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Book 11: Primaltwin Chapter 30: A Loose Immortal Dies

Rumble...

The thirty-six Loose Immortals of the Kindwater clan, in the form of the giant black serpent, launched a twelfth attack against the Bloodcoil Heavenlock Formation. It was already beginning to shudder, and the color of the golden heart was beginning to change. Beginning to grow dim, as the cracks and scars on its surface multiplied.

“Break, break, break!”

Immortal Floatcloud was in a berserk state, his white hair flying about. His three flying swords clashed hard against Ning’s Lotusflower Swordland.

Crackle...

Layers of lotus petals continuously defended, one layer after the other.

The [Lesser Thousand Swords Formation]-formed golden flying sword was as fast as lightning. By comparison, the speed of the flying swords of Immortal Floatcloud was much lower; they were once more struck, then sent back.

“It’s over.”

Immortal Floatcloud suddenly gave up. His three flying swords no longer attacked. He just stood there, staring blankly at the black-robed Ji Ning, who stood there within the Lotusflower Swordland.

In the face of the Lotusflower Swordland...Immortal Floatcloud felt as though he was facing a turtle that had retreated into its shell. There was no way to break it at all! Or, at least, he wasn’t going to be able to do it in a short period of time. In addition, he could sense that his Bloodcoil Heavenlock Formation was at the breaking point. He felt despair. He gave up. He understood that this time...he had failed.

Immortal Floatcloud looked at Ning, his face incomparably calm and peaceful. He sent mentally, “Ji Ning, tell me, what...what technique is this?”

The black-robed Ning, seeing that the opponent had actually stopped attacking, realized that the opponent had given up. Towards the bald elder in front of him, Ning actually didn’t feel any hatred; instead, he felt pity. This was because Ning could tell...that this person was a Deathsworn!

“This is my Lotusflower Swordland.”

“Every single lotus petal was formed from my elemental ki and the sword-light.”

“The region covered by my lotus flowers becomes my world.”

“This is a world with the Dao of the Sword, the Dao of Rainwater, the Dao of Space, and the Dao of the Inferno. This is the most powerful technique which I have developed.” The black-robed Ning spoke mentally to his foe. In this moment...Ning understood that the man had chosen death.

Immortal Floatcloud looked at Ning, envy in his eyes. “The Dao of the Sword? The Dao of Space? The Dao of Rainwater? The Dao of the Inferno? So many Daos...and two of them are Grand Daos. You’ve actually been able to join them together perfectly and create a technique of your own. At only thirty years of age, you are already so talented...I’ve never before met a genius like you in my life. I can’t even imagine what your future shall be like. I...am whole-heartedly convinced that my defeat was deserved.”

Ning, however, knew exactly how much effort he had put into the creation of this technique.

He had often gone to the Stellar Hall to meditate on the Dao.

He had often gone to the Still Room to quietly ponder.

He had repeatedly, tirelessly tested time and time again.

The spirit of the underwater estate had guided him as well...and all of these things had helped to inspire him, allowing him to develop this protective technique, this technique that was completely focused on defense.

“Kill me. Let me die by your hands.” A dreamy look was in Immortal Floatcloud’s eyes. In the moment before his death, his subconscious was telling him...that this peerless genius in front of him, Ji Ning, would have an astonishing future. In fact, he even had the vague feeling that an incomparably massive storm was about to arise...and that the peerless genius before him would become one of the most dazzling figures to emerge from the storm.

“As you desire.” The black-robed Ning nodded.

Swish!

A golden sword-light flew out.

Immortal Floatcloud didn’t block at all. He allowed it to slash directly through his body, piercing into the golden-lotus Primal within his body. The golden lotus, upon being pierced through, began to collapse.

Although Ning hadn’t destroyed Immortal Floatcloud’s soul, because of the oath he had sworn to the Dao of the Heavens, Immortal Floatcloud knew that his soul was about to be shattered regardless. He knew this...because he could sense the ripples from the impending descent of the Dao of the Heavens.

“Patriarch Arcanum...”

“In this moment, my subconscious is telling me that an enormous tempest is about to descend...one dazzling, eye-catching figure after another is going to arise from the storm, and this Ji Ning is going to be one of them. Our Youngflame clan is going to have a calamity befall us because of this...”

“Patriarch Arcanum, it is one thing for you to have doomed me...but how terrifying of an enemy have you made for our Youngflame clan?”

“In the future, you will regret it.”

“You will regret it.”

“You are the criminal, the sinner of our Youngflame clan. The sinner! But none of this has anything to do with me any longer...I, whose soul is about to shatter, no longer have any connection to anything, to anything at all...”

Immortal Floatcloud closed his eyes. His body completely dissipated into nothingness, revealing an already battered and disintegrating golden-lotus Primal. Under the descent of the ripples of the Dao of the Heavens, the golden lotus was completely annihilated, quickly and completely vaporizing.

The more powerful a cultivator was, the more faith they would place in what their subconscious told them.

Immortal Floatcloud, in the moment before his death, could also sense that in the future, a terrifying storm was about to arise...and that even the likes of the Youngflame clan, which had existed from the earliest days of the Fiendgod Era until now, would be shaken and perhaps be thrown down by the storm...

BOOM!

As the sword-light of the [Lesser Thousand Swords Formation] pierced through the golden-lotus Primal and as Immortal Floatcloud transformed into nothingness, a massive explosion could suddenly be heard. The Bloodcoil Heavenlock Formation blew apart, and a giant black serpent coiled in the air above it, staring down at Ji Ning, who was being protected by a titanic, swiveling lotus flower.

One lotus petal swept around and picked up the flying swords, storage treasures, and other relics left behind by the deceased Immortal Floatcloud. This petal then drifted over to the black-robed Ji Ning.

The black-robed Ning waved his hand, collecting it all.

The entire manor was completely silent.

The terrified servants...the stunned Golden Imperials...Skyfarmer Songspear...Kindwater Xiaolou...Fairy Wavecolor...Xiao Lang...and even the thirty-six Loose Immortals, who had dropped their formation...all of them stared at the black-robed Ning, protected by the defensive layers of the enormous Lotusflower Swordland.

They had just witnessed...

A Wanxiang Adept's Primaltwin execute a mighty Loose Immortal.

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Book 11: Primaltwin Chapter 31: Fame From the Battle

Kindwater Xiaolou, Skyfarmer Songspear, and the others were unable to even breathe. They were all in a state of shock.

“Xiaolou, whose this friend of yours?” The leader of the thirty-six Loose Immortals, a burly and muscular bearded man, spoke out.

“Uncle Fan, he is Ji Ning. I invited him here...but who would've thought that he'd suffer an attack from a Loose Immortal Deathsworn?” Xiaolou said.

“Ji Ning?” The bearded, burly ‘Uncle Fan’ immediately realized who Ning was, as did the group of Loose Immortals behind him. The death of Youngflame Nong wasn’t something everyone knew, but most of these Loose Immortals who were permanently stationed at Cloudwater Manor knew about this matter. They thus immediately guessed that it had been the Youngflame clan who had sent out the Loose Immortal Deathsworn. Instantly, these Immortals of the Kindwater clan began to feel a sense of delighted schadenfreude; the Kindwater clan had been mortal enemies with the Youngflame clan for countless eons now.

“My young friend Ji Ning.” Kindwater Sanfan looked at the black-robed Ning, then said with a loud laugh, “You truly are formidable. If my guess is correct, this Loose Immortal should have been Immortal Floatcloud. He’s a Loose Immortal who has lived for a hundred thousand years, but he actually died in your hands...and your Primaltwin should be at the peak Primal level, correct?”

“For a peak Primal to be able to kill a supreme Loose Immortal...you clearly are a level lower in terms of elemental ki, and you’ve only trained for thirty years, but...formidable, formidable.”

“That lotus technique truly broadened my horizons as well, and that sword formation technique was also quite impressive.”

The group of Loose Immortals of the Kindwater clan all laughed and praised Ning.

The reason why they praised him was not just because Ning truly had surprised them; more importantly, there was a huge grudge between Ning and the Youngflame clan! Since the Kindwater clan was mortal enemies against the Youngflame clan, they took a true liking towards Ning. The more impressive he was, the more of a threat he would be to the Youngflame clan, and the more they would like him.

“You praise me too much.” The black-robed Ning shook his head. “The only reason I won was because your combined powers, seniors, was far too strong. You caused the Bloodcoil Heavenlock Formation to nearly break down. Immortal Floatcloud knew that he had no more time left, and so he voluntarily gave up. Only thus could I kill him.”

In terms of power, Ning’s Primaltwin was actually only on par with Immortal Floatcloud. If they had been in a simple one-on-one fight, it would be hard to say who would be the winner.

But this was no simple battle; it was an assassination attempt! An assassination attempt in the Cloudwater Manor of the imperial capital of the Grand Xia! It had to be resolved quickly. As a Deathsworn, Immortal Floatcloud had already been forced to the brink from the very beginning. If he wasn’t able to kill Ning in a short moment, then he would have no choice but to welcome death in his despair.

Swoosh. Swoosh. The Whitewater Hound and Little Qing charged over to the black-robed Ning. Previously, the two had been seated alongside the Golden Imperials, drinking and eating with them. When Ning suffered the attack, not even the Golden Imperials had been able to protect him in time, much less the two of them.

The two had been frantic and nervous, and had been driven nearly to the point of insanity. They didn’t even dare to send soul messages, for fear that Ning would be distracted by them; after all, this was a life-and-death battle. If Ning was distracted and something untoward happened as a result, then it truly would be too late for regrets.

Fortunately! Fortunately, Ning had survived.

“You killed him, that’s all that matters.” Kindwater Sanfan shook his head, then laughed, “Your Primaltwin is at the peak Primal level; it is a full tier lower than Immortal Floatcloud in power. But in the end, Immortal Floatcloud wasn’t able to do anything to you. There’s nothing he can say about his loss, and your victory was a clean and fair one.”

Right at this moment, a powerful aura suddenly spread out from the air above them. This caused all the people present, including the Loose Immortals, Ning, Xiaolou, Songspear, and the others to all raise their heads to look. From the opened ceiling above them, a group of figures flew downwards, with the leader dressed in black armor and the rest dressed in silver armor. These were the Imperial Guards of the Grand Xia!

The leader, a black-armored youth, chortled, appearing to be quite relaxed and at ease. The silver-armored warriors behind him also seemed quite relaxed.

“Xiaolou, what’s going on in your Cloudwater Manor?” The black-armored youth laughed. “Just now, when the watchers of the Imperial Guard headquarters were scanning the entire imperial capital, they realized that thirty-six Loose Immortals had appeared in the air above Cloudwater Manor, and that they had all formed into the Kindwater Godsnake and flew into this building. Something happen?”

The Imperial Guards watched over the entire imperial capital, including the streets, the arenas, and the many Immortal estates. Once powerful ripples of battle were felt, the Imperial Guard would immediately hurry over.

However, places like the Heavenly Treasures Mountain or Cloudwater Manor would often have some gambling duels and battles; these locations had all applied for permission for these events from the Grand Xia Dynasty. That was why they were permitted to hold battles, ‘with conditions’. The so-called ‘battles with conditions’ were almost all gambling battles and duels.

Assassinations, however, were still absolutely forbidden.

When the Imperial Guard had first noticed the powerful ripples coming from Cloudwater Manor, they had thought that it was a fairly powerful betting duel going on. Only after seeing the thirty-six Loose Immortals form into the Kindwater Godsnake did they realize that something was wrong! Still, with so many experts protecting Cloudwater Manor, the Imperial Guard didn’t panic; one of the deputy commanders just grabbed a few people and casually sauntered over.

“It was an assassination,” Xiaolou laughed. “The Loose Immortal Deathsworn assassin should have been Immortal Floatcloud of the Youngflame clan. Brother Hong, although I say that it was Immortal Floatcloud, that’s just a guess.”

“Immortal Floatcloud of the Youngflame clan? Who was he assassinating?” The black-armored youth, Xiamang Hong, exclaimed in surprise.

Xiaolou pointed at Ning. “Look. Him right there.”

Xiamang Hong looked towards Ning with curiosity. “Him?” Xiamang Hong said, “The Youngflame clan sent a Deathsworn to assassinate you, but you remain alive?”

Ning was speechless. This man was excessively impolitic in his words; he actually said to the assassination target, 'you remain alive'?! How was Ning even supposed to respond to that?

"Ji Ning, let me make the introductions," Xiaolou said. "This is Deputy Commander Xiamang Hong of the Imperial Guard, and a good friend of mine."

Ning instantly understood. Xiamang Hong? So he was of the imperial clan of the Grand Xia. Most likely, he was viewed with some degree of importance by the imperial clan; otherwise, Kindwater Xiaolou wouldn't be so courteous to him.

"Brother Hong, this Ji Ning is a good friend of mine; when Immortal Floatcloud tried to assassinate him, he used the Bloodcoil Heavenlock Formation to seal the region off from outsiders, causing the many Immortals of my Cloudwater Manor to be unable to save Ji Ning in time. Fortunately, Ji Ning had a Primaltwin, and his Primaltwin should have been at the Primal Daoist level...and yet, he was able to actually kill Immortal Floatcloud. You tell me; is he amazing or not?" Xiaolou said.

"He's that amazing?" Xiamang Hong's eyes lit up. "Ji Ning? I know about you. You are the little Wanxiang Adept fellow who killed Youngflame Nong, right? I didn't expect that you'd actually have a Primaltwin. If my memory serves, you've only trained for thirty years...and in thirty short years, you produced a Primaltwin that was able to kill Immortal Floatcloud, who was a full tier higher in power? Impressive, impressive. I, Xiamang Hong, deeply admire people of ability. I imagine that after this assassination attempt, you are a bit unsettled; in a few days, I'll send someone to invite you over. I'll put on a feast, and we can chat a bit. You have to give me this face, right?"

"I naturally will accept Commander Xiamang's invitation," the black-robed Ning said.

"Brother Ji Ning, you truly did scare me silly this time," Xiaolou said, looking at Ning. "It was a series of frightening events; even I thought that you would find it hard to overcome this tribulation."

"Brother Ji Ning's power is truly formidable. In this Conclave of Immortal Destiny, I am certain that brother Ji Ning will shine quite brightly," Skyfarmer Songspear nodded in praise as well. For Ning to be able to use his true body to survive the attack from the Whitebone Immortal Slaying Needle was enough for Skysong to feel certain that Ning's true body was incredibly powerful as well.

"I quite admire brother Ji Ning as well," Fairy Wavecolor said with a laugh while looking towards the nearby Xiao Lang. "But just now, someone was provoking brother Ji Ning repeatedly, insisting on sparring with him and looking down on him...and saying that if brother Ji Ning went to the Conclave, he would just lose face...and advising Ji Ning to go back home and train for three more centuries..."

"The person who said that is quite incredible as well."

Xiao Lang's face instantly began to alternate between purple and pale.

It was true that earlier, he had provoked Ning repeatedly, and had even spoken disdainfully about Ning afterwards. When he had defeated Fairy Wavecolor, he had indeed felt quite smug, and in his arrogance had said quite a few unpleasant things. Now, looking back...it did all seem quite laughable.

"Look down on Ji Ning? Told him to not to go lose face in the Conclave of Immortal Destiny, and to go home and train for three more centuries instead?" Xiamang Hong could tell what was going on, but he put on an act as he asked with 'curiosity', "Who in the world said that?"

“Who else could it be? None other than the distinguished, elegant, and suave young master, Adept Xiao Lang,” Fairy Wavecolor said, pointing at Xiao Lang.

Earlier, Xiao Lang had given her no face at all. Women...held grudges.

“Xiao Lang? It was you who looked down upon Ji Ning?” Xiamang Mang clearly was playing his role to perfection as he looked at Xiao Lang.

Xiao Lang gritted his teeth, his face pale. “Hmph.” He let out an angry snort, then turned and left, pushing open the main door and walking out from the corridor.

“He left?” Xiamang Hong shook his head. “Booring.”

Kindwater Xiaolou was still looking at Ning. “Brother Ji Ning, you suffered an assassination attempt at my Cloudwater Manor, and we weren’t even able to help save you; the Cloudwater Manor was remiss...”

“The Cloudwater Manor is not to blame. This feud is one that I caused myself,” Ning said.

“Since our Kindwater clan has established Cloudwater Manor, we absolutely have to protect our guests who come here. There is nothing more to be said about this; it was our Kindwater clan who did not do what we were supposed to. Here is a treasure I recently acquired; I saw that you, brother Ji Ning, are exceptionally formidable in lotus techniques, and this treasure might help bring you some more insight.” Xiaolou suddenly produced a very slender bottle in his hand, topped by a lotus flower.

“This lotus bottle has been infused with some of the essence of the arcane secrets of the lotus within it; I’ll give it to you in recompense,” Xiaolou said, handing it over to Ning. “Brother Ji Ning, no need to refuse; if you refuse, I truly won’t know what to do.”

Ning hesitated a moment, then accepted it.

Ning was able to tell at a single glance that this lotus bottle was extraordinary; the bottle itself wasn’t too impressive of a treasure, but the lotus flower on top of it was covered with many runes. It was indeed worth analyzing. It might indeed help inspire Ning to further perfect his Lotusflower Swordland.

After chatting for a few more moments, Ning made his farewells. He had just suffered an assassination attempt, after all; there was no way this banquet could continue.

Before Cloudwater Manor.

Kindwater Xiaolou and Skyfarmer Songspear watched as Ning flew out within that giant warship, which sent out waves of energy as it departed. They were silent for a moment.

“Xiamang Hong led a group of Imperial Guard over and learned about this event. I imagine that soon, the entire Imperial Guard will know about it...and as a result, the entire imperial capital will know about it.” Xiaolou sighed. “Word of this battle is going to quickly spread over the entire imperial capital. Ji Ning has now truly become famous.”

Previously, when Ning had purchased the peacock plumes, others thought that he had simply been lucky. But this time, however, Ning had proven his power in battle; only now would others truly esteem him.

“It is true. He’s only trained for thirty years, but has already produced a Primaltwin, and one which can kill a supreme Loose Immortal at that. A genius like him is quite rare, even in the imperial capital. The Youngflame clan has actually attracted an enemy like him...I imagine that in a few thousand years or a few tens of thousands of years, Ji Ning will be able to give the Youngflame clan quite a few good battles,” Songspear said with a laugh.

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Book 11: Primaltwin Chapter 32: A Silent Prayer

Nightfall. A cold wind was howling through the air. Within the Youngflame clan’s estate.

The current clan leader of the Youngflame Clan, the Godplume Duke, was currently seated in his study. He had no desire to keep reading through the book he was holding. There was just a single thought in his mind; had the assassination of Ji Ning succeeded?

Tonight, Kindwater Xiaolou had invited Ji Ning to a banquet. Immortal Floatcloud was going to take the chance to assassinate Ji Ning. Naturally, the Godplume Duke knew of this plan. He was waiting for the results.

Crack!

The Godplume Duke suddenly turned to look at the life-tablet placed at the edges of his table. This was the life-tablet of Immortal Floatcloud, and at this moment, it had shattered.

“Floatcloud died. It seems the assassination attempt was made. However, I don’t know if it was a success or not.” The Godplume Duke took a deep breath. Regardless of whether it had succeeded or not, Floatcloud would perish. If he succeeded, then he would go reincarnate; if he failed, his soul would be shattered.

Time slowly passed...

The Godplume Duke continued to quietly wait for news to arrive.

A long time later.

“Clan leader.” An azure-robed servant charged in, then immediately whispered, “We have word.”

“Speak,” the Godplume Duke said calmly.

“Immortal Floatcloud attempted to assassinate Ji Ning in Cloudwater Manor, and he even used the Bloodcoil Heavenlock Formation, engaging in a one-on-one fight with Ji Ning within it. But Ji Ning suddenly produced a Primaltwin and killed Immortal Floatcloud,” the azure-robed servant said.

The Godplume Duke had an ugly look on his face. He hesitated for a moment, then said with a frown, “You said Ji Ning’s Primaltwin killed Immortal Floatcloud? But his true body is only at the Wanxiang level; can it be that his Primaltwin has already trained to the Void-level and become an Earth Immortal?”

“His Primaltwin should be at the Primal level,” the azure-robed servant said. “There shouldn’t be any mistake about this.”

The Godplume Duke sat there quietly pondering, and the azure-robed servant didn't dare to make another sound.

After pondering for quite some time, the Godplume Duke said coldly, "Immortal Floatcloud was a Loose Immortal of my Youngflame clan; how dare he act in such an audacious way? Without receiving permission from my Youngflame clan, he actually dared to go attempt to assassinate Ji Ning on his own accord! This is a violation of the laws of the clan. Inform the outside world that Immortal Floatcloud violated the laws of the clan and has been expelled from the Youngflame clan, and is no longer a member of the clan. Also – blot out his name from the Youngflame clan registrar."

"Yes," the azure-robed servant said respectfully.

"Go now." The Godplume Duke waved his hand, and the azure-robed servant hurriedly retreated. As for the Godplume Duke himself, he sat there quietly for a long moment. This wasn't the news he had wanted; in fact, it was the worst news possible. Ji Ning had actually been able to rely on his own power to kill Immortal Floatcloud. Then killing Ji Ning...was truly going to be difficult.

"He's trained for thirty years, but is already so formidable; he needs to be killed. But in the imperial capital...killing him will be as hard as ascending to heaven. I imagine that we'll have to wait for him to leave the city before our Youngflame clan will be able to use all of the methods available to us to deal with him. But who knows how long we will have to wait before Ji Ning will leave?" The Godplume Duke quietly pondered this issue. "I can only hope that his true body will be killed in the Conclave of Immortal Destiny by other supreme geniuses! His true body has far more potential than his Primaltwin does; so long as it dies, then his threat will be greatly lessened."

Although the Primaltwin was currently more powerful than Ning's true body, without question, the true body had more potential and a much more solid foundation.

"It's time to pay a visit Patriarch Arcanum." In truth, the Godplume Duke felt some resentment as well. This was all because Patriarch Arcanum had doted on Youngflame Nong too much; otherwise, how could all of this nonsense have occurred?

"Once news of this battle spreads, the various major powers of the imperial capital will most likely all learn about Ji Ning. My Youngflame clan will have truly lost face." The Godplume Duke shook his head. Then, by himself, he boarded his Immortal carriage and departed from the imperial capital to go pay his respects to Patriarch Arcanum.

After the Imperial Guards under the command of Xiamang Hong returned to their headquarters, the news that Ning's Primaltwin had killed a Loose Immortal quickly spread throughout the entire headquarters. The Imperial Guard was the most important military which guarded the imperial capital; all of the various major clans had disciples within it, and so this news quickly spread to all of the major clans as well.

Now they all understood that it wasn't that Ji Ning didn't know his own limits; rather, it was that he did indeed have enough ability to back up his actions.

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Stillwater Commander. The Black-White College.

Amongst the powers that paid the most attention to Ning, the one which cared the most was the Black-White College. Within the Headmaster's Hall of the Black-White College.

"Apprentice-nephew headmaster, why have you asked us to all gather here?"

"Senior apprentice-brother, for what reason have you asked us to hurry here so late at night?"

The first generation Immortals and the second generation Primal Daoists who were gathered within the hall all spoke out to ask questions.

"Don't be impatient. Listen to me read this intelligence report."

Daoist Jadesea, the Headmaster, was holding a copy of an intelligence report sent from the Heavenly Treasures Mountain. He read aloud, "Tonight, in the Kindwater clan's Cloudwater Manor located in the imperial capital of the Grand Xia, Kindwater Xiaolou hosted a banquet for Ji Ning. Ji Ning attended with a troop of Golden Imperials. Halfway through the banquet, Immortal Floatcloud suddenly appeared. He first used a Whitebone Immortal Slaying Needle to ambush Ji Ning, who was heavily injured but managed to stay alive. Immortal Floatcloud then utilized the Bloodcoil Heavenlock Formation to seal off the surrounding area, then engaged in a one-on-one fight with Ji Ning. Ji Ning's Primaltwin suddenly emerged. His Primaltwin had already reached the peak Primal level. By using a sword formation technique involving hundreds of Heaven-ranked flying swords, he executed Immortal Floatcloud."

The hall was completely silent.

Everyone was speechless for a moment...and then, a storm of commotion.

"Apprentice-nephew headmaster, are you sure about what you read?"

"Do you speak the truth?"

"Ji Ning's Primaltwin killed Immortal Floatcloud?"

None of them could believe it. Many of them had actually been present when Ning had joined the school. That little fellow who had only been a Zifu Disciple...after just ten or so years, he had killed a Loose Immortal? Was this a joke?

"This is a report from the Heavenly Treasures Mountain. How could they lie about something like this?" Daoist Jadesea looked at his fellow disciples.

"Wonderful, wonderful." Immortal Fivecraze called out, "This is absolutely wonderful. Spread the news. Let all of the disciples of our Black-White College learn of this matter!"

Some would celebrate, some would mourn. News of Ning's battle spread throughout the entire imperial capital, and it also spread to the ears of certain people located in many other commandery cities. Some celebrated, some sighed in amazement, some felt jealousy, and some felt disdain.

Highwater Commander. The Dongyan Mountains.

Late night. Within a mountain peak inside the Dongyan Mountains.

Ninelotus was seated by herself at the edges of a cliff. The cold night wind felt as sharp as knives of ice, but Ninelotus allowed the wind to blow against her as she continued to sit there silently. Ever since she

and Ning had parted ways at the Witchriver Immortal Estate, Ninelotus had begun to enjoy sitting by herself in this quiet place at night, a time of absolute stillness. She would just watch quietly until the sun rose.

“Little Yun.” Suddenly, a voice rang out. Ninelotus turned to look. A very beautiful woman walked over; it was her mother.

Ninelotus’ mother looked at her daughter, feeling quite pained for her. Ninelotus and her were extremely close. When Ninelotus had returned from the Witchriver Immortal Estate, she had been truly heartbroken, but had no one to talk to about it. Her mother had consoled her, and eventually, Ninelotus had told her mother about the pain in her heart. Only then did her mother realize that her daughter had very nearly chosen to completely walk the same path with Ji Ning.

“Little Yun, are you still not over it?” The mother sat down as well, looking at her daughter.

“I’ve been over it for quite some time,” Ninelotus said, gently shaking her head. “I just continue to feel ashamed.”

“If you feel ashamed, how can you say you are over it?” Her mother shook her head. “No need to be ashamed. This Ji Ning, he isn’t worth you feeling ashamed over. He just came from a backwater clan; how good could his upbringing have possibly been? The two of you belong in completely separate worlds. There’s no way the two of you could’ve been together. No way at all.”

“Enough,” Ninelotus said softly.

“You are going to command the entire Dongyan clan, and the Forefather of the Dongyan clan has full faith in you. You need to stir yourself up. You might not be able to forget about him now, but in a few centuries or millennia, you’ll realize that he was actually just a very ordinary passerby in your life. Nothing more than a bumpkin. Forget about him,” Ninelotus’ mother said.

Before Ninelotus was born, her mother and her father had decent lives in the Dongyan clan, but were quite ordinary figures. However, after Ninelotus was born, she was loved and doted upon by the Dongyan clan’s Forefather, who trained her and assigned her to be the next clan leader. Thus, Ninelotus’ father and mother saw their statuses skyrocket, and they now had a very great deal of power within the Dongyan clan.

“He isn’t a bumpkin.” Ninelotus stared at her mother. “He is my former Dao-companion, and a true genius!”

“And what good is a genius? He might just end up being killed by the Youngflame clan,” her mother said angrily.

“Enough!” Ninelotus was growing angry as well.

Her mother forced down her anger. Ninelotus was the next clan leader, after all, and so normally she and her husband would listen to Ninelotus. But with regards to Ji Ning...the mother had always nursed a belly full of anger. How exalted a status did her daughter have? How could she possibly be together with someone who came from a backwater tribe? That was an absolute travesty.

“Mistress, mistress!” Suddenly, a female servant flew in on a flying sword, landing on the mountain peak.

“Mm?” Ninelotus looked at her servant.

“The Heavenly Treasures Mountain sent an intelligence report. It has to do with young master Ji Ning,” the female servant said.

Ninelotus waved her hand, and the intelligence report scroll immediately flew towards her. By her side, her mother said unhappily, “You said you are over it, but you continue to pay attention to his intelligence reports?”

“Does being over it mean that I can no longer pay attention to news regarding him?” Ninelotus gave her mother a glance, then unfurled the scroll to read it. A look of shock and amazement appeared on her face.

“Let me take a look. What’s this all about? Was he killed by the Youngflame clan?” Her mother snatched it over to take a read. And as she did...she was so shocked that she jumped to her feet.

“Ki-ki-killed Immortal Floatcloud of the Youngflame clan?” She was astonished. “He’s only trained for thirty years, right? How could, how, how could...”

“I told you. He is a genius.” Ninelotus said softly, “Mother, go home. Let me be by myself for a while.”

Her mother was truly stunned by this news as well. She simply couldn’t comprehend it. How could this young fellow from a backwater tribe, who was even younger than her own daughter, have actually killed a supreme Loose Immortal?

Stunned, she left obediently. The maidservant left as well.

Ninelotus sat there by herself, silent.

“As long as you are doing well, I can be at ease. Ji Ning...stay alive.” Ninelotus could only pray silently in her heart. When she had chosen the path of becoming the next leader of the Dongyan clan, she had decided to follow this path to its completion. As for Ji Ning? All she could do was silently pray for him in her heart.

This was because, after their parting at the Witchriver Immortal Estate...

“You shall be you, and I shall be me...”

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 11: Primaltwin Chapter 33: From Whence Came, To Where Go

It was a late, cold winter night. The temperature was bone-chillingly low.

But Princess Xiyue, of King Yan’s Estate, was filled with burning rage. She angrily slammed her hand against the table. “The Youngflame clan is truly damnable. They actually dare to attempt an assassination within the imperial capital. Damnable, damnable, absolutely damnable!”

“Cousin, although the Youngflame clan sent a Loose Immortal Deathsworn, that person ended up dying in my hands,” Ji Ning said. “Don’t be so angry, cousin.”

“How can I not be angry?” Princess Xiyue looked towards Ning. “I’m still covered in cold sweat. Fortunately, you are strong and were able to block both the Whitebone Immortal Slaying Needles as well as Immortal Floatcloud. If not...little brother, aside from Grandpa, you are my own family.”

If her one and only little brother would have died...Princess Xiyue didn’t even know what she would’ve done.

“The Youngflame clan is utterly damnable,” Princess Xiyue said, so angry that she was shaking.

“Their strategy this time of sending out a Loose Immortal Deathsworn failed. I imagine that for now, they won’t have any other tricks up their sleeves; so long as I stay within the imperial capital, the Youngflame clan shouldn’t be able to do anything to me,” Ning hurriedly consoled his cousin.

Princess Xiyue took a deep breath, then nodded. “Right. There is nothing else they can do to you. I imagine that a year later though, during the Conclave of Immortal Destiny, they will use the rules of the Conclave to act against you.”

“Against others who are at the peak Wanxiang level...although I don’t dare say that I am unequalled in the world, I should be able to keep myself alive.” Ning’s eyes suddenly lit up. “Cousin, my Primaltwin just finished binding the storage treasure which the deceased Immortal Floatcloud left behind.”

“Oh?” Yuchi Xiyue’s eyes lit up as well. “Let’s see what sort of treasure Immortal Floatcloud left behind. However...since he dared to attempt to assassinate you, and also carried a Whitebone Immortal Slaying Needle and a Bloodcoil Heavenlock Formation with him, I imagine that he no longer had many other treasures on him.”

“Let me take a close look.” Ning nodded. He immediately began to have his Primaltwin, located within the underwater estate, to carefully investigate each treasure. Suddenly, Ning revealed a look of astonishment.

“What is it?” Yuchi Xiyue asked hurriedly.

“The other treasures are as I expected, but I found a scroll.” Ning waved his hand, and a golden scroll suddenly appeared within it, emanating ripples of power that were ancient and strange.

“This scroll...?” Yuchi Xiyue looked at it, also curious. Ning unfurled the scroll. Atop the golden scroll, there was just a single, simple line of characters. They stated:

“From whence come, to where go. Xiamang Xun.”

Every single stroke was simple and plain, but an aura of majesty exploded forth from them. Both Ning and Xiyue felt their hearts tremble; they felt as if they were facing the heavens themselves. Even Ning, when facing that ancient Fiendgod in the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains, hadn’t felt such terror.

Whoosh. Ning hurriedly closed the scroll, and only then did the terrifying majesty completely disappear.

“What in the world is this?” Xiyue was absolutely amazed.

“I don’t know either.” Ning shook his head.

“Just a single line of characters; from whence come, to where go. And a single, simple signature inscription – Xiamang Xun. Who exactly is Xiamang Xun? Can it be that he is an ancient member of the imperial Xiamang clan?” Xiyue was completely puzzled. “Why haven’t I ever heard of this name before?”

Ning said with a frown, “The person who wrote the line of words should be named Xiamang Xun...and judging from the majestic power from those words, he should be an incredibly powerful figure.”

“I’ll go ask Grandpa,” Xiyue immediately said. “Wait a moment for me.”

“Right now? So late at night?” Ning was amazed.

“It’s fine. My grandfather is a Celestial Immortal; do you think there is a big difference between day and night for him? And he lives by himself; he doesn’t even let maidservants move close to him. It’s fine for me to find him late at night. And I’m in quite an uneasy mood as well; I feel as though this scroll is quite extraordinary. Wait a moment; I’ll be back shortly.” Xiyue hurriedly departed.

In just the amount of time needed to boil a kettle of tea.

Xiyue once more flew back gracefully, her face filled with excitement.

“Cousin, what’d he say?” Ning was quite curious as well as to exactly what this scroll is.

“Do you know who Xiamang Xun is?” Xiyue had a secretive look on her face.

“Who?” Ning asked. He had never heard of this name before.

“He is his Imperial Majesty, the Emperor of our Grand Xia Dynasty!” Xiyue whispered to him, “He’s also the founder of the Grand Xia Dynasty, and the sovereign of this major world.”

“His Imperial Majesty, the Emperor?” Ning was awestruck. The Grand Xia Emperor stood far above them. He was the sovereign of this entire major world, and his power filled the skies. In fact, it was said that the Grand Xia Emperor could even sit down and speak to the Celestial Emperor as equals. One was the Emperor of a major world of the mortal realms; the other was the Emperor of the Deva realms.

This was how things had been since the Fiendgod Era.

The Grand Xia Emperor had never been anyone else. He rarely showed himself; after all, this ancient dynasty which he had founded and which had existed for countless millions of years had long ago stabilized. It had its own laws, and most matters could be handled by his senior officials.

He was powerful. After all, he had single-handedly established an enormous dynasty and unified the world, after the end of the Fiendgod Era.

He was mysterious. Over the course of countless years, he had almost never shown himself.

He was exalted. No one in the Grand Xia Dynasty dared to go against his decrees.

As the sovereign of this major world, who had stood at its very peak from the Fiendgod Era until now, a figure who the vast majority of Earth Immortals and Loose Immortals couldn’t even approach...very few people even knew his name.

“Right. His Imperial Majesty, the Emperor. This is his name.” Xiyue was extremely excited. “Xiamang Xun...that’s the name of his Imperial Majesty.”

“Xiamang Xun, his Imperial Majesty...the Emperor...” Ning’s heart was suddenly filled with fright and nervousness.

In his subconscious...he suddenly felt as though a pair of eyes was staring directly at him.

Previously, when he hadn’t known this was the name of the Emperor, Ning hadn’t felt anything. But now that he knew...he felt in his subconscious as though a pair of eyes had suddenly turned towards him.

“Do you know what this scroll is?” Xiyue didn’t sense anything amiss at all. All she felt was excitement and energy. “A dharmic decree of reincarnation! This is a dharmic decree that was personally penned by the Grand Xia Emperor. If you possess this decree, once you perish, the dharmic decree will escort and accompany your soul into the Netherworld Kingdom. When the Yama-Kings of the Ten Halls see this dharmic decree, they will naturally give some face to our Grand Xia Emperor. The line of ‘from whence come, to whence go’ is an instruction; it means that the bearer is to reborn back into the major world and the clan from whence he last lived in.”

Ning was enlightened.

The Yama-Kings of the Ten Halls. The Lord of Cui Palace. All of them had exalted statuses in the Netherworld Kingdom. For them, letting a few Immortals return to their own major world and clans was nothing more than a minor matter. It could also be viewed as helping to build up ties between themselves and the major power who wrote the dharmic decree.

“Right. My grandfather said that you are not to rashly tell others of the name of his Imperial Majesty,” Xiyue said hurriedly. “According to what my grandfather said, if you say his Imperial Majesty’s name aloud, his Imperial Majesty will sense it. However, since we are within King Yan’s Estate, his Imperial Majesty won’t mind too much.”

“Understood. I won’t tell others,” Ning immediately said. In his heart, however, he felt shocked. So just now, when he felt in his subconscious as though a pair of eyes were paying attention to him...it had probably been his Imperial Majesty, the Emperor.

Time flowed on. News of Ning’s Primaltwin’s slaying of Immortal Floatcloud spread, and Ning’s fame grew greater and greater. In the imperial capital, almost everyone believed that Ning had an exceedingly high level of insight into the Dao; far higher, at least, than Immortal Floatcloud possessed. Otherwise, how could he have so fought him, despite Immortal Floatcloud being at a higher tier of power?

.....

Stillwater Commandery. Within a private training room in the Black-White College.

The Sloppy Daoist, the number one figure amongst the third generation disciples, was seated in the lotus position. He was only wearing pants, his upper body unclad. The skin on his upper body was actually covered with runes that looked like the shell of a tortoise, and series of ancient-feeling ripples of power poured out from him.

Whoosh.

Suddenly, within the private training room, the illusion of an incomparably enormous Turtle-Snake appeared. This Turtle-Snake filled nearly the entire training room, and the Sloppy Daoist stood on the illusory Turtle-Snake's back. The entire Turtle-Snake began to move, and both the turtle head and the serpent head emitted growling roars.

A layer of turtle shell began to appear on the Sloppy Daoist's entire body as he sat there, but his eyes were like the eyes of a snake, capable of filling the hearts of viewers with terror. His aura was incredibly ancient and powerful.

"Eh?" The Sloppy Daoist suddenly frowned. In his subconscious, he could feel something calling to him. It was...

"The Conclave of Immortal Destiny?" The Sloppy Daoist mumbled to himself, "What's going on? Why is it that when I'm training in the Black Tortoise 1 divine ability, my subconscious is foretelling that this upcoming Conclave is going to be quite important. It seems as though it is a major chance for me."

The powerful call was so strong that the Sloppy Daoist was almost unable to suppress it.

The Sloppy Daoist knew very well that this sort of subconscious feeling didn't need to be doubted; if he could sense that it was going to be a major stroke of luck for him, then he had to go.

"I don't like fighting and struggling with others. I just want to quietly relax and train. But...I didn't expect that in the end, I still have to go to this Conclave of Immortal Destiny." The Sloppy Daoist nodded lightly. "What shall be, shall be. Those things that are meant to be mine will be; for those things that aren't meant to be mine, there's no need to force it. I'll go give this Conclave a try and test out these geniuses of our major world."

"I've just reached the second Cycle of my Black Tortoise divine ability. I was planning to break through to the Primal level, but it now seems that I shouldn't be in a hurry. After this Conclave of Immortal Destiny is concluded, I'll make my breakthrough." The Sloppy Daoist no longer considered this matter, and began to train once more.

The enormous phantom of a Turtle-Snake once more filled the entire training room.

The Sloppy Daoist was like an ancient, primordial Fiendgod. He sat there quietly, meditating.

.....

In the great Darknorth Sea, there was an Immortal island known as Goldcrow Island. The master of this island was referred to as Immortal Goldcrow; he was a truly mighty Void-level Earth Immortal. Although he had only reached the Void level a century ago, he had been famous for a long period of time. He had the lineage of the Golden Crow, and so although he was merely a Void-level Earth Immortal, he was close to Celestial Immortals in power.

In the Darknorth Sea, there were countless powers who wanted to befriend him, but Immortal Goldcrow was solitary and did as he pleased. As someone with the lineage of the Golden Crows, and as a man with a strange temper who was quite bloodthirsty, there were very few powers who dared to antagonize him.

Within Goldcrow Island.

A golden-robed Immortal Goldcrow was seated at the front of a grand palace, expounding on the Dao. Before him were six young men and women who were listening reverently. These were the six major disciples of Immortal Goldcrow.

During a pause in the expounding of the Dao, the eldest of the six disciples, a human, spoke out and asked, "Master, I heard that the Grand Xia Dynasty is about to hold the Conclave of Immortal Destiny. Your disciple wishes to go; may I?"

"You, with your level of power, plan to go to the Conclave of Immortal Destiny? Do you want to die?" Immortal Goldcrow responded calmly, but as soon as his words came out, his face suddenly changed.

1. This term 'Xuanwu' literally translates as 'Black Warrior', but is also supposed to be, in Chinese mythology, either the name of the Black Tortoise/Turtle-Snake of the Four Beasts, or the Immortal whose pet is the Black Tortoise.

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 11: Primaltwin Chapter 34: A Gathering of Heroes

Immortal Goldcrow could sense a powerful beckoning coming from his subconscious, from deep in his soul.

"Why do I suddenly have such a powerful premonition?" Immortal Goldcrow was stunned; as an Immortal cultivator, he placed a great deal of faith in his subconscious premonitions. "It seems as though this Conclave of Immortal Destiny will be very important to me...as though it is calling for me to attend..."

"Master, your disciple isn't that bad. If I truly am unable to win it, then I will immediately give up and admit defeat." The senior disciple, unhappy, hurriedly added, "This Conclave of Immortal Destiny will see countless geniuses from this major world gather together. A chance like this will probably only come once in a lifetime."

Immortal Goldcrow, whose mind had been wandering, quickly returned to his senses. "Enough!" Immortal Goldcrow snapped with a frown, still seated at the front of the hall. "That little bit of talent you possess; you think that's 'not bad'? You have always stayed in a distant island and your experiences are very shallow. You've only heard of the Conclave; you have no idea how formidable the geniuses participating in the Conclave truly are. This is a report from the Heavenly Treasures Mountain regarding the previous Conclave; go ahead and read it." As he spoke, he produced a book in his hand, then tossed it out. His senior disciple hurriedly caught it.

"To enter the Conclave without having at least a bit of ability...you won't even have a chance to admit defeat." Immortal Goldcrow rose to his feet. Whoosh. He transformed into a rainbow, disappearing from their sight.

"Eldest apprentice-brother, you angered Master."

"Eldest apprentice-brother, let me take a look at this book as well. How formidable are the participants of the Conclave?" The other junior apprentice-brothers and junior apprentice-sisters all crowded around as well. As for Immortal Goldcrow, he had already arrived within his own Immortal estate.

This Immortal estate could not be carried away, but it had tremendous power.

No one else was inside the estate.

Immortal Goldcrow quickly entered a pavilion, within which sat a black-robed man. The black-robed man and Immortal Goldcrow appeared nearly identical; only, Immortal Goldcrow had a stronger and more bloodthirsty aura.

“It seems as though the reason I had that premonition is because my true body is still at the peak Wanxiang level.” The black-robed man rose to his feet. “Although I have already had a stroke of great fortune, from my subconscious premonition...it seems as though this Conclave is going to be an extremely important one. I might be able to truly soar into the heavens at this Conclave.”

“If I, Bu Yi, wish to become a Celestial Immortal, it seems that my chance will come through this Conclave of Immortal Destiny.” The black-robed man continued to mutter to himself.

He had been the son of a fisherman. In his youth, he accompanied his father out to sea to catch fish, but because of a great storm, the waves had caused the ship to capsize. He had passed out, and by the time he had woken up, he had found out to his astonishment that he had entered an estate in the bottom of the sea.

This was an estate left behind by a powerful predecessor, and was filled with many cultivation techniques, arts, divine abilities, and even some supreme visualization techniques, along with magic treasures and curious items. There had even been an amount of liquefied elemental essence which had accumulated over the course of years within the estate, forming a giant pond with at least five million kilograms. Amongst the various precious treasures, he had also discovered a Golden Crow’s egg. His youthful self had settled down in the estate, focusing on his training.

Most likely, he had been a cultivator in his past life as well; his soul was innately powerful to begin with, and with the aid of the supreme visualization techniques, when his true body had reached the Wanxiang level, he had split his soul, using the created half to possess the Golden Crow’s egg. Afterwards, the egg had hatched, and the Golden Crow had been born.

This Golden Crow had an extremely pure lineage; only after training to the Void level had he been able to transform into human shape.

Over the course of many long years, Bu Yi had wandered the great Darknorth Sea, experiencing many life-and-death dangers. Thanks to the Golden Crow Primaltwin body he had acquired thanks to his great stroke of fortune as a youth, he had managed to overcome those dangerous situations and profit from them. After his Primaltwin had experienced the Three Calamities and Nine Tribulations, he had decided to break through to become a Void-level Earth Immortal. He had more than two hundred years before the next calamity descended; for Bu Yi, this was more than enough time.

“Although my Primaltwin’s body is that of a Golden Crow and is extremely powerful...” the black-robed Bu Yi shook his head. “But the body is a possessed one. I’m a human, whereas Golden Crows are monsters. Although I possessed the egg...I was at most able to complete a 70% or 80% fusion with it. Training to the Void level is most likely my limit. To overcome the tribulation and become a Celestial Immortal? There’s no hope at all!”

Possessing a Golden Crow’s egg was a stroke of tremendous fortune. When he had been very weak and young, he hadn’t hesitated at all to make this choice.

However, a Primaltwin acquired through possession wouldn't be sufficiently well fused together, and becoming a Celestial Immortal was difficult to begin with. Even creatures such as a Golden Crow Godbird with exceedingly pure Golden Crow lineages would find it hard to overcome the Celestial Tribulation. He, whose soul and body had only fused 70% or 80%, had almost no chance of overcoming it at all. He knew this quite well.

"I can sense that this Conclave of Immortal Destiny is a chance for me."

"I, Bu Yi, have roamed and dominated the Darknorth Seas. It has always been my Primaltwin, 'Immortal Goldcrow', who was famous. This time...my true body shall reveal its own brilliance as well at this Conclave of Immortal Destiny." The black-robed Bu Yi felt tremendous eagerness.

Three days later.

Immortal Goldcrow gave instructions to his disciples to train hard, stating that he was going out for some wandering...and then quietly left, heading towards the imperial capital.

.....

A small ship was flying through the misty clouds, atop which was a black-robed man seated in the lotus position, a sharp, saber-hacking aura emanating from him.

"Eh?" The black-robed man suddenly opened his eyes. Previously, his eyes had been closed as he was meditating, but the Conclave of Immortal Destiny had suddenly come to his mind, and as it did, his subconscious began to whisper to him.

"After bidding Master farewell, I began to rove through the various major worlds to adventure and train. This world of the Grand Xia Dynasty is already my ninth major world. I completely have no interest in this so-called 'Conclave of Immortal Destiny'; after all, I apprenticed myself to Master long ago. But why is it that I suddenly have a feeling...as though I should go participate? It seems as though if I don't go, I'll miss something or will lose something." The black-robed man was mystified.

However, he didn't doubt the premonitions of his subconscious.

"If that's the case...then I might as well make a trip to the imperial capital of the Grand Xia and participate in the Conclave of Immortal Destiny. I want to see how formidable the geniuses of this major world are." The black-robed man willed it, and the air around the small ship began to shimmer. It then disappeared completely; he had used a void teleportation technique to head directly towards the imperial capital.

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An ordinary tavern within a commandery city of the Grand Xia. A dirty-looking maiden was completely drunk, and there was even some straw in her hair. She continued to call out loudly, "More wine, quick, more wine!"

"Miss, you've used up all your money already," the tavern waiter hurriedly said.

The dirty-looking maiden opened her eyes. "Used up?"

“Listen up, all of you. I’ll let you guys hit or kick me as you please; I definitely won’t fight back at all. Buuut, you have to help me pay some money for wine. You don’t need to pay too much; just a gourd’s worth of wine is enough. Just let me fill up my gourd,” the dirty-looking maiden called out.

“Beat you as I please?” Instantly, a newcomer was intrigued.

“Heh, yet another poor bastard is going to fall for it.”

“That gourd just won’t fill up no matter how you try.”

Some of the regulars were secretly muttering to each other. The guest who had wanted to give her a kick for fun felt that something was off and immediately stopped himself.

The dirty maiden, holding that gourd of wine, looked around herself. No one had come to hit her.

“I’ll let you hit or kick me as you please. I definitely won’t fight back,” the dirty maiden called out.

“...ugh. It seems I need to switch places again. I can’t swindle too much in a little place like this anyhow. Why don’t I go to a larger place...say, the imperial capital, the largest city of them all?”

The maiden was suddenly stunned.

Her blurry, drunken eyes suddenly grew clear.

“The Conclave of Immortal Destiny?”

She could feel a powerful call from it.

Originally, in accordance with the way she trained her Dao, she shouldn’t have participated in the Conclave at all. But her subconscious premonition couldn’t be wrong.

“As soon as I had the idea to go to the imperial capital, I immediately felt a strong premonition regarding the Conclave of Immortal Destiny...it seems as though I truly will have to go attend. Perhaps this Conclave of Immortal Destiny will be of help to me in overcoming the tribulation and becoming a Celestial Immortal. I’ve reincarnated nine times now...if I fail again, then I truly will have no more hope for the future.”

Whoosh. The drunken woman suddenly disappeared from within the tavern. As for the ordinary mortals within the tavern, they didn’t notice anything at all. It was as though this maiden had never appeared in their midst before at all.

.....

The truly formidable figures who had secluded themselves throughout the vast Grand Xia Empire, including some truly peerless monsters who had originally disdained from attending the Conclave, all felt a call from their subconscious. All of them changed their minds, hastening towards the imperial capital.

The imperial capital. King Yan’s Estate. Ji Ning’s Immortal estate. There was a lake in front of it, and atop the lake, there was a small ship. Ning was lying down in the middle of the ship, allowing it to drift where it pleased.

Perhaps because he had grown into a habit of drifting on a boat at Serpentwing Lake, when Ning lay down in a boat and let it drift where it please, his soul felt exceptionally calm and empty. It was even often of benefit to him in pondering secret arts.

“Young master Ji Ning.” A maidservant, standing at the side of the lake, called out.

A handsome, slender fur-clad youth suddenly stood up from within the distant wooden boat. With a single step, he disappeared from the boat and reappeared on the shore.

“Young master Ji Ning,” the maidservant said respectfully, “A group of people are at the royal estate and wish to meet you.”

“Meet me? Who are they?” Ning asked.

“They say...that they are your fellow disciples from your school, or something like that,” the maidservant said.

Ning’s eyes lit up. He immediately transformed into a gust of wind, howling through the air as he disappeared.

King Yan’s Estate’s front gate. A gust of wind blew past, and Ning appeared at the entrance.

“Senior apprentice-brother Ji Ning!” A white-robed youth ran over excitedly.

“Junior apprentice-brother Northson.” Ning, upon seeing his junior apprentice-brother, felt extraordinarily happy as well. The two of them clutched each other in a bear hug before letting go.

Ning had long ago begun to view Northson as he would a true little brother.

“Senior apprentice-brother, you truly are amazing. You actually produced a Primaltwin and even killed Immortal Floatcloud.” Northson was extraordinarily excited. “When I was in the Black-White College, I heard the news and was absolutely tickled. Hahaha, you killed Youngflame Nong and that Fiendgod, and then you caused even a Deathsworn sent out by the Youngflame clan to perish. Hehehe, I wonder how infuriated the Youngflame clan is right now?!”

“Hopefully, they’ll die from their anger,” Ning said. And then he looked at the other three in front of him. “Senior apprentice-brother Vastriver, senior apprentice-sister Yu Wei, and eldest apprentice-brother...why have you all come?”

The figures in front of him were the Sloppy Daoist, Yu Wei, Vastriver, and Northson.

Yu Wei laughed, “Both myself and our eldest apprentice-brother are participating in this Conclave. Senior apprentice-brother Vastriver and junior apprentice-brother Northson are here to watch. I imagine that once the Conclave truly begins, quite a few other disciples of the Black-White College will come to watch as well. After all, actual participants are quite few in number, but quite a few spectators will be present.”

“Eldest apprentice-brother, you are attending as well?” Ning was surprised. When he had chatted with Yu Wei and the others about the Conclave, it seemed as though the only member of the Black-White College to attend would be Yu Wei. The others wouldn’t participate, and the leader of the third generation disciples, the Sloppy Daoist, wasn’t planning to attend either.

“What should happen, will happen,” the Sloppy Daoist said with a laugh.

“This time, our Black-White College will have a total of three participants in the Conclave of Immortal Destiny. Senior apprentice-sister Yu Wei, senior apprentice-brother Ji Ning, and eldest apprentice-brother. Our Black-White College is definitely going to be famous!” Northson was filled with anticipation.

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Book 11: Primaltwin Chapter 35: The End Days for Snowdragon Mountain

Yuchi Xiyue was also aware that Ji Ning’s fellow disciples had arrived, and she arranged a special banquet for them, inviting the disciples of the Black-White College to attend.

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On this very day. In the distant Stillwater Commandery. A giant warship, covered with flowery golden tattoos, was howling through the air, sending out waves of energy in its wake. Aboard the warship there was a large, tightly clustered group of Golden Imperials. Upon the deck, there were also nine black-armored Captains of the Imperial Guard, each of whom emanated unfathomably mighty auras.

“Snowdragon Mountain is up ahead,” a black-uniformed man said with a laugh.

“Sorry to trouble you, fellow Daoist Skyfall,” one of the nine Golden Imperial captains said.

“This is a small matter. It is the good fortune of myself, Northmont Skyfall, to be able to assist King Yan in handling this matter.” Skyfall spoke in a flattering manner, but in his heart, he sighed to himself. “Oh, Snowdragon Mountain...how could you be so foolish as to offend King Yan? Even though in the past King Yan was in dire straits, he still wasn’t someone which your puny little Snowdragon Mountain sect could afford to offend. This time, King Yan has sent nine full squads of Golden Imperials over. It seems as though he truly harbors hatred for Snowdragon Mountain. I wonder what exactly Snowdragon Mountain did to him in the past.”

Yuchi Snow, Yuchi Mount; their deaths were caused principally by Dong Seven!

Ning and Xiyue naturally hated the man deeply. King Yan knew how his granddaughter felt, and so immediately ordered nine squads of Golden Imperials to head towards Stillwater Commandery. He instructed them to first notify Stillwater Commandery’s Northmont clan of the following: “In the past, when our royal excellency was wandering the world, a feud arose between himself and Snowdragon Mountain. Today, we have come to annihilate Snowdragon Mountain; we’d like to ask the Northmont clan to permit this.”

The Northmont clan’s response: Annihilate Snowdragon Mountain? A little clan which didn’t even have a single Loose Immortal or Earth Immortal? The Northmont clan naturally wouldn’t care about this matter. In addition, given how diplomatic King Yan was by first sending people to notify them, the Northmont clan immediately arranged for Northmont Skyfall to personally lead the way, bringing these Golden Imperials directly towards Snowdragon Mountain.

“Here we are.” Skyfall pointed towards the area below them. Past the clouds, one could vaguely make out a long, winding mountain range, amongst which were three particularly imposing and tall mountain peaks that vastly surpassed the other three mountains.

“Snowdragon Mountain?” The nine Imperial Guard captains looked down at the base, all nodding slightly.

“First capture Dong Seven, then annihilate Snowdragon Mountain,” one of the captains said.

BOOM!

The warship immediately flew downwards, carrying boundless might and power as it soared directly towards the area above Snowdragon Mountain’s headquarters. This instantly caused a huge shock within Snowdragon Mountain; who would actually dare to have their warship halt directly above the school? This was too arrogant.

“I wonder which fellow Daoist has arrived at Snowdragon Mountain?” Boom! Boom! Boom! Three figures soared into the skies; they were the three Primal Daoists of Snowdragon Mountain. Daoist Snowplume, Daoist Coldsun, and Daoist Blackdragon.

Upon flying upwards, their gazes were immediately drawn to the eye-catching, golden-armored soldiers. The terrifying majesty and aura of power emanating from the soldiers caused their hearts to quail.

However, upon seeing the black-uniformed Northmont Skyfall, Daoist Blackdragon hurriedly said, “Senior Skyfall, why have you come to our Snowdragon Mountain? If there’s anything you need, just summon us; we will simply go to you. There’s no need for you to personally make a trip.”

“Senior Skyfall, might I ask why you have come to Snowdragon Mountain? If there is anything you need, just tell us; we will definitely strive to accomplish it,” Daoist Coldsun said hurriedly as well.

All three Primal Daoists were extremely courteous.

“Gentlemen?” Skyfall just looked at the nine Imperial Guard captains; all nine of them were Loose Immortals.

“Found him.” The eyes of one of the captains lit up.

Whoosh!

He took a single step, then disappeared from his original location, reappearing inside the Snowdragon Mountain headquarters. In the blink of an eye, he suddenly flew back with a white-robed youth in tow. The white-robed youth’s face was ashen. His entire body was shaking in abject terror.

“Dong Seven!” Daoist Coldsun called out in shock.

“Grandpa, Grandpa!” The white-robed youth was utterly terrified. He hurriedly called out, “My Zifu has been destroyed, my Zifu has been destroyed!”

Daoist Coldsun’s face instantly changed. A hint of rage was now visible, but he forced it down and said angrily, “Senior Skyfall, what’s this all about? Why have you led people here to apprehend disciples of Snowdragon Mountain? If Snowdragon Mountain has offended you in some way, just tell us; those who deserve to be punished will be. Snowdragon Mountain will definitely give you a satisfactory response.”

“These aren’t my men.” Northmont Skyfall shook his head. “You really have no vision, have you? You aren’t even able to recognize the most formidable soldiers of the imperial capital of the Grand Xia, the Golden Imperials!”

“Golden Imperials?” Daoists Coldsun, Blackdragon, and Snowplume were all shocked. Imperial Guards? Even in Stillwater Commandery, Snowdragon Mountain was a fairly ordinary sect, located in a fairly distant location, without even a single Loose Immortal or Earth Immortal to their name. Naturally, they knew very little about the distant imperial capital. Although Daoist Blackdragon would occasionally make a visit to the imperial capital, he had never even seen an Imperial Guard, much less the elite ‘Golden Imperials’ of the Guard. When they saw the golden armor worn by the soldiers, they had taken them to be soldiers of the Northmont clan of Stillwater!

“Generals,” Daoist Blackdragon said hurriedly, “If Snowdragon Mountain has acted offensively in some manner, please tell us.”

Daoist Coldsun and Daoist Snowplume were terrified and restless as well.

“We have come on orders to apprehend Dong Seven and wipe out Snowdragon Mountain,” one of the captains said coldly.

“Apprehend Dong Seven? Wipe out Snowdragon Mountain?”

Daoist Blackdragon and the other two felt as though thunderbolts had suddenly come crashing down out of the clear sky. Both were stupefied.

Wipe out their school?

Good, good heavens!

Their school was one which had existed for a very long time. Everything had been perfectly fine; why had the Golden Imperials suddenly come to wipe them out?

“Coldsun!” Daoist Blackdragon, upon seeing the captured Dong Seven, instantly understood what this was about. He stared at the nearby Daoist Coldsun, then roared furiously, “It is all your fault. You coddled Dong Seven! Dong Seven has harmed countless people in the outside world; even in our own school, he’s harmed quite a few of our female disciples. But you’ve always protected him! Dong Seven must have offended a powerful figure at some point, causing our Snowdragon Mountain to now face complete annihilation.”

Daoist Coldsun’s face was completely ashen now as well.

Daoist Snowplume begged, “Everyone, you can punish Dong Seven as you please. You can even have Snowdragon Mountain do whatever you wish us to do. Just, please give us a way out.”

“Everyone.” The captain who had apprehended Dong Seven spoke out emotionlessly. “Let’s do it.”

With this order given, the squads of Golden Imperials immediately began to fly out of the warship.

“FORMATION! PROTECT THE MOUNTAIN!” Daoist Blackdragon let out an earsplitting bellow, and his voice rang out in the ears of every single disciple.

“SEALS!”

“SNOWDRAGON SKYSOAR FORMATION!”

Every single formation and restrictive spell which the previous generations experts of Snowdragon Mountain had every created were instantly activated. One seal after another instantly appeared, hovering in the air. Clouds and mist appeared. One snowy white dragon after another began to appear as well, flying and weaving amidst the skies above the mountains. When a school unleashed all of its stored powers at once, even a Loose Immortal would find it difficult to break through the school.

Rumble....

One divine golden dragon after another began to appear in the skies. There were a total of eight divine golden dragons, each of which was coiled and nearly ten thousand kilometers long, and emanated a majestic presence.

It was true that ordinary Loose Immortals would find it difficult to break through Snowdragon Mountain’s headquarters...but a squad of Golden Imperials consisted of a Loose Immortal commanding forty nine Primal Daoists, all of whom were dressed in Dao-armor, and who joined together to form into a divine dragon! Their might was at the very least comparable to ten ordinary Loose Immortals!

And here...there were nine squads!

Rumble...

The golden dragons coiled and writhed in the sky. A simple thwack from one of the tails caused all of the seals to explode and crack, bursting as if they were soap bubbles.

The captain who had captured Dong Seven just watched from above. As for the other eight squads, they had all transformed into golden dragons and were launching attacks at the below Snowdragon Mountain. With absolute superiority in raw power...they smashed through every single grand sealing formation. As for the so-called bewildering formations? Every single divine dragon was ten thousand kilometers in length; a single trembling movement from them caused entire formations to break apart.

“This, this...” Daoist Coldsun had led his own disciples to form into an enormous Snowdragon. But, upon seeing the might and power of the divine golden dragons, he was so terrified he didn’t even dare to go block.

He was a Primal Daoist, leading a group of Wanxiang Adepts and Zifu Disciples in forming a Snowdragon...and he was supposed to fight against a divine dragon formed by a Loose Immortal leading forty nine Primal Daoists? They were on completely separate levels. The difference in power was just too great.

“Oh, Dong Seven...who the hell did you offend...” Daoist Coldsun felt both fury and despair.

“It’s finished.” Daoist Snowplume led his disciples to block, but at the very first exchange, more than half of his disciples perished and the Snowdragon was completely shattered. A look of despair appeared on Daoist Snowplume’s face. “Snowdragon Mountain is finished. Damn us...damn us for not being strict in carrying out the laws of the sect. Our disciples have caused harm everywhere, and in the end...they finally offended a powerful figure.”

BOOM.

Daoist Snowplume instantly blew apart, causing an enormous storm of elemental ki. He had chosen self-detonation; this way, at least his soul would be able to reincarnate.

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Daoist Snowplume self-detonated. Daoist Coldsun was killed. Daoist Blackdragon was killed.

Every single mountain peak that belonged to Snowdragon Mountain was overturned. Under the majestic power of these eight divine dragons that were ten thousand kilometers in length, some parts were crushed down to form a lakebed, while other parts were flattened into plains. In short...not a single true mountain could now be seen.

"This...this..." Dong Seven was completely stunned.

"Fellow Daoist Skyfall, sorry for the trouble. We'll head straight back to the imperial capital now."

"This was a small matter. Snowdragon Mountain offended King Yan; they invited annihilation upon themselves. They cannot blame anyone but themselves."

"Then we'll leave now."

"Please do. I won't send you off."

The group of Golden Imperials immediately led Dong Seven aboard their warship, then departed. As for Northmont Skyfall, he stared at the former Snowdragon Mountains, which had now been smashed into lakes and plains. He couldn't help but shake his head. "A small sect like this...they weren't strict in their rules, and their disciples harmed many. The karmic luck of the school would naturally continue to drop, until finally, one day, annihilation arrived. How utterly laughable...even the imperial clan of the Grand Xia erected the Raindragon Guard and sent them out to apprehend and execute sinners for the sake of improving their luck, but a small sect like this actually acted with such wild abandon."

Whoosh. Northmont Skyfall disappeared into thin air, teleporting away.

The imperial capital of the Grand Xia. King Yan's Estate.

The snow was drifting downwards right now as a group of Golden Imperials entered King Yan's Estate.

"Brothers, go get some rest, but keep an eye on that Dong Seven. I'm going to go report to the Princess right now," a captain said, then immediately went to go see her.

Within a wide, spacious hall. A banquet had been prepared here. Ning and Xiyue were currently accompanying Northson and the others, watching the snow while eating and chatting together.

"Reporting to the Princess," the captain said respectfully as he appeared, "We've caught him."

Ning and Xiyue both looked at the captain, and as they did, both were breathless. Upon hearing the words, "We've caught him", both of them couldn't help but rise to their feet.

"Everyone, Ji Ning and I have something to attend to. We'll return shortly," Yuchi Xiyue said immediately.

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 11: Primaltwin Chapter 36: The Grand Xia Emperor

A dark, gloomy room. There were many instruments of punishment located in this room. In the center, there was a punishment rack, atop which was bound a terrified, pathetic-looking white-robed youth.

“This, this...” Dong Seven stared at the punishment instruments, face utterly ashen.

“Who is it? Who exactly did I offend?” Dong Seven was absolutely horrified. “They actually annihilated Snowdragon Mountain.” His previous arrogant demeanor had completely vanished, leaving behind nothing but terror.

The soldiers in the corner of the room just watched quietly. Suddenly...

Rumble...the stone door swung open, and a woman walked in alongside a fur-clad youth. This caused Dong Seven to feel even more uneasy. He didn't recognize these two at all.

“Princess.” The soldier on guard called out with respect.

“You can leave,” Yuchi Xiyue instructed.

“Yes.” The soldier immediately departed, and the stone door once more swung shut.

Yuchi Xiyue and Ji Ning both stared at the terrified, pathetic man bound atop the rack. These two cousins had long ago repeatedly reviewed the intelligence reports regarding Dong Seven. His appearance had been deeply engraved in both their hearts.

“Dong Seven!” Ning's eyes flashed with coldness.

“It was you. It was you. It was you who destroyed my family, who killed my father and caused my mother to die of depression as well.” Xiyue's eyes instantly turned red. She picked up a large ladle, filled with a bubbling, hot silver liquid, then flicked it towards Dong Seven.

Crackle...

The blazing silver liquid splattered on Dong Seven's body. Dong Seven instantly emitted a miserable wail, and his neck stretched out as his agonized cries rang out. His face was as white as paper.

After he somewhat came back to his senses, he pitifully cried out, “Mercy, mercy!”

Ning's eyes were red as well. Everything...everything had been a result of this wayward, hedonistic wastrel. This detestable person, this vile little creature who he, Ji Ning, now only looked down upon! But this detestable little creature had caused Ning's parents as well as his cousin's parents to all die early on. A feud of familicide...he could not live under the same skies with this man!

“It hurts, it hurts! Mercy!” Dong Qi screamed miserably.

“Hurts?” Ning picked up a blazing branding iron-type magic treasure and walked over. “That was just the start. Dong Seven, don't be in such a rush. Slowly enjoy this.”

“No, no, no no no—!” Dong Seven felt his own heart quiver. He began to scream miserably once more...but protective formations covered this punishment room, and no one outside could hear him at all.

Ning heated up this branding iron-type magic treasure, filling it with his elemental ki. Instantly, a crackling sound could be heard as he pressed it down against the tattered body of Dong Seven. Smoke and steam arose. After he moved the branding iron away, he saw that Dong Seven’s skin now had the diagram of a flame branded into it, a brand which quietly activated the power of the natural world.

“AHHH!! It hurts, it hurts!” Dong Seven’s entire body was quivering. That brand diagram seemed to be causing his entire body to burn, and this sensation of being burned to death repeatedly nearly caused him to mentally collapse.

The nearby Xiyue said coldly, “Don’t worry. These are all instruments of punishment used by the imperial clan of the Grand Xia. You’ve only tasted two types so far. I won’t let you die that easily. I’ve prepared many fine spirit-pills. I’ll heal you repeatedly and let you taste the more than ten thousand types of corporal punishment the Grand Xia Dynasty has to offer. I’ll let you learn what pain is, what regret is!”

Dong Seven, upon hearing this, nearly broke down. Ten thousand types of punishment? The first two had already nearly driven him to insanity.

“How the hell did I offend you two? What the hell did I do? You must have the wrong person!” Dong Seven was almost crying now.

Rumble...the stone door was once more pushed open. From outside padded in a large, snowy white hound. The stone door then shut once more.

“Do you still recognize me?” Savagery was in the eyes of the Whitewater Hound as he stared at Dong Seven.

“Whitewater Hound?” Dong Seven was stunned. Deep in his memories, a scene from decades ago began to replay. A scene with a tall, muscular man and a loving couple; the wife was pregnant and truly beautiful, with a rare and noble aura. Her pregnancy just added a strange mystique to her charm...and Dong Seven had been incredibly aroused.

And so, he had ordered Yu Dong and Shui Yi to make their moves.

“You remember now?” Ning said coldly. “That couple back then...they were my mother and father.”

“The one that was killed by your group back then was my father.” Xiyue began to grow even more crazed. Her father had absolutely doted on her when she was a child. His wide, mountain-like shoulders...his loud laughter...his repeated appearances in her dreams...

He was her most beloved father...and she had been her kind and gentle man...

Ning and Xiyue both stared at Dong Seven.

Dong Seven felt coldness in the bottom of his heart.

“It was you who killed Shui Yi and Yu Dong?” Dong Seven said quaveringly.

“Right.” Ning nodded. “And now, it is time for you. The principal instigator.”

“My cousin was far too gentle; he simply used the Heartburner Art to torment those two.” Xiyue was gnashing her teeth. “Those two died, so that’s that...but as for you, the main culprit? I’m going to let you taste all of the ten thousand-plus punishments the Grand Xia has to offer. When the time comes for you to die, I will absorb your soul into the Furnace of Despair. I am going to torture your soul, every day and every night, for thousands of years...”

Dong Seven’s gaze grew numb as he listened.

Ning looked at his nearby cousin. Although he felt tremendous hatred as well, and also wanted to torture and shatter this man’s soul...compared to his cousin, he was far off.

“Cousin, it’s enough for you to torment his soul for ten days and ten nights,” Ning sent mentally, his eyes red. “There’s no need for you to steep your soul in hatred for thousands of years for the sake of this piece of trash.”

Torturing Dong Seven for thousands of years would also mean that Yuchi Xiyue would be steeped in hatred for thousands of years. Torturing others was a form of tormenting one’s self as well.

“The seeds of my hatred are deep. Little brother, don’t worry about me.” Xiyue’s gaze had become twisted from madness.

As Ning had grown up, he had been taught by his parents for more than ten years, then taught by Immortal Diancai as well. He also had his good friend, Mu Northson; thus, Ning’s inner heart had never become twisted.

As for Xiyue, however...after her parents had died, she had lived by herself and suffered tremendously. She didn’t wish to think back to her days of suffering, but even after being brought back by her maternal grandfather to the imperial capital of the Grand Xia, she remained quite solitary. Only in front of her cousin would her heart feel slightly warm.

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Dong Seven died an agonizing death.

After having been tortured for three months and perishing, his soul was indeed drawn into the ‘Furnace of Despair’ and tormented for more than another month. In the end...it had been King Yan who intervened. Although Princess Xiyue kept the Furnace of Despair on her own person at all times, and although there was no way an ordinary person could kill a soul that was located with a magic treasure...King Yan could. He destroyed Dong Seven’s soul.

“Ji Ning, spend more time with Xiyue. She’s given vent to her hatred for nearly half a year now; she should be about done. If she continues like this, then she will completely lose herself to madness. Spend more time with her; this will help her slowly begin to walk out from the grips of hate.” King Yan personally chatted with Ning on this, and Ning naturally memorized these words.

Deep autumn.

In the deepest reaches of the skies above the imperial capital, there was a hazy gray void. Whoosh...the dim gray void suddenly parted, revealing an enormous corridor which was filled with a hazy golden light.

A large number of black soldiers flew out in columns, and behind them there was a group of black-armored warriors that were riding on celestial horses. Behind the riders, there was an enormous coiling black dragon whose incomparably powerful aura filled the skies. It was pulling an enormous Immortal carriage that emanated golden light. There were golden lamps hanging from the Immortal carriage, and seated atop it was a black-robed man.

This black-robed man had a plain, unassuming face. His eyes, however, seemed to hold thunder within them. Wherever his gaze passed, the world itself seemed about ready to split apart.

His might and prestige caused the surrounding soldiers to feel absolute submission in their trembling hearts.

Behind this Immortal carriage, there was a group of black-armored soldiers who were seated obediently within a warship. This warship was three hundred meters long, but it was much smaller than the Immortal carriage. It must be understood that the black dragon was more than thirty kilometers long...and the Immortal carriage was roughly the same size as the black dragon.

Whoosh.

The Emperor was out and about, with 999 guards escorting him.

This squad flew downwards, flying directly towards the Skylight Palace. Amidst the clouds at the highest point of the Skylight Palace, a large group of Immortal maidens and soldiers were already waiting. They all fell to their knees. Each of them were at least at the Primal Daoist level...but for them to be able to serve the Grand Xia Emperor was their fortune.

“We bow to you, your Imperial Majesty.” A muscular, two-headed Fiendgod was the first to immediately kneel down and call out the words.

Instantly, the other Immortal maidens and soldiers all knelt down as well. “We bow to you, your Imperial Majesty.”

The black dragon pulled the Immortal carriage downwards. The many black-armored soldiers that were escorting the carriage all quickly separated, moving to stand in different positions.

“Mm.” The black-robed man left the Immortal carriage. With but two steps, he arrived at the nearby imperial throne, then sat down. He looked downwards at them from his position on high, then instructed, “Send an order out to have King Qi come.”

“Yes.” The twin-headed Fiendgod immediately obeyed the order.

The black-robed man continued to sit there on the throne. He swept his gaze forward, seeming to stare through the layers of clouds and be able to inspect everything within the imperial capital.

He sat there on high. This was the Emperor of this major world...the one who had truly, absolutely unified it!

However, he had set his sights on the Three Realms long ago. He rarely came back to spend time in this major world of the Grand Xia.

“A few decades ago, the Netherworld Kingdom of the Three Realms suffered an attack. The Six Paths of Reincarnation were collapsed and destroyed...and then the attackers suddenly vanished without a trace.” The black-robed Emperor mused softly to himself, “The Netherworld...that is where the souls of the Three Realms reside. How important it is! The defenses there are very tight. The Yama-Kings of the Ten Halls and the Lord of Cui Palace are all Pure Yang True Immortals, and each of them are formidable.”

“Kshitigarbha 1, of the Buddhist schools, stands guard there as well. The Netherworld has some other ancient fellows there as well...it is a place of tremendous power, but upon suffering a sneak attack, it wasn't able to fight back at all. In a very short period of time, the Six Paths of Reincarnation were destroyed...and they haven't even been able to find out who caused it or where the attackers came from. Even someone like Master was unable to find out.”

“These forces which lie in the shadows...they are terrifying powerful. And their very first attack was against the Six Paths of Reincarnation.”

“It seems...the Three Realms are about to fall into a state of chaos.” The black-robed Emperor had a look of deep worry within his eyes.

When a tribulation came for the Three Realms as a whole, it would be incredibly terrifying. In the unfathomably ancient past, after Pangu established the world, the first era had been the Primordial era. Afterwards, the Primordial World had been shattered; only then had the three thousand major worlds and the trillions of smaller worlds been created. From this, one could tell how terrifying that storm had been.

“Every single major cataclysm will give birth to some truly supreme heroic figures.” The black-robed Emperor stared downwards towards the imperial capital of the Grand Xia. As the saying went, heroes were born in the midst of chaos. All of the powerful figures of the Three Realms had been born over the course of the truly major tribulations of the past.

“This will be the first Conclave of Immortal Destiny after the destruction of the Six Paths of Reincarnation. Then...most likely, some of those heroic figures that are going to emerge in this era will first appear in this Conclave of Immortal Destiny,” the black-robed Emperor mused to himself...

1. This is the bodhisattva who swore that he would only become a Buddha after emptying out all the hells of their sinners through enlightening mankind.

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 12: Immortal Destiny Chapter 1: The Emperor's Decree

“My imperial Xiamang clan is the successor to and has the bloodline of the imperial 'Xia clan' of the Primordial World of Pangu. We long ago unified this major world and have cultivated it for countless years. I then apprenticed myself to Master, who once said...in terms of strength of karmic luck, the major world of the Grand Xia Dynasty ranks as number one amongst the tens of major worlds under his control. With so much karmic luck present here, the upcoming tremors that are going to give birth to some peerless heroes will very likely give birth to them right here, in the world of the Grand Xia!” The black-robed Emperor was pondering this matter.

“Master is someone who mastered a Heavenly Dao. Even in the Three Realms, he is one of the most absolutely supreme of major powers...but even he is worried about the major storm that is going to sweep the Three Realms...if I am careless, the imperial clan of the Grand Xia might be wiped out.”

He knew very well that his master was one of the truly supreme powers of the Three Realms, with tens of major worlds that completely obeyed his orders. The Grand Xia’s world was just one of them.

As for the Celestial Emperor?

The Celestial Emperor was nothing more than a person who was in charge of administrating and managing some of the rules of the Three Realms. In terms of power and authority, the Celestial Emperor wasn’t that much higher than the Grand Xia Emperor, much less his master. Only individuals on the level of his master were hegemony who truly governed the destiny of the Three Realms. In the past, when there had been some disturbances in the Three Realms, quite a few Celestial Emperors had been appointed. Who would be the Celestial Emperor? This was something that would be decided by the supreme experts on his master’s level.

“If even someone like Master is worried, then his disciples, such as myself, have a very high chance of falling. I must be absolutely cautious, as careful as I can.”

The black-robed Emperor had lived from the era of the Primordial World until this era; in the past, he had led his tribe from the Primordial World and relocated to this world, later known as the world of the ‘Grand Xia Dynasty’. He had battled against the local Fiendgods and the other tribes before finally unifying the world. He wasn’t an easy person to deal with!

He knew exactly what needed to do in order to survive a major cataclysm.

“I need to befriend even more experts of the Three Realms. It would be ideal if some of them were willing to put themselves under my command. My luck would improve significantly if they did.”

“During this Conclave of Immortal Destiny, I imagine that future experts of the Three Realms will be born.”

The black-robed Emperor’s eyes were hooded.

Suddenly...from afar, a figure appeared atop the clouds. This man was dressed in long yellow robes that were embroidered with the image of a Raindragon. His face was round, with soft lines, but his eyes were like the stars themselves. He...was King Qi! A Celestial Immortal!

“I bow before you, your Imperial Majesty,” King Qi said, bowing respectfully.

“King Qi, have any major matters occurred during this period of time when I was gone?” The black-robed Emperor asked. Normally, it was the Emperor’s clansmen and senior officials who managed the major affairs of the empire; only the truly major matters would be reported to the Emperor.

“Your Imperial Majesty, you already know that King Yan has become a Celestial Immortal. As for other matters...nothing major has occurred. Everything in the Grand Xia Dynasty is rather peaceful,” King Qi said respectfully. The death of Youngflame Nong? Forget about the next Godplume Duke; even if the current Godplume Duke died, it would be a petty, minor matter that was not worth mentioning to the Emperor.

But of course, if a Celestial Immortal like Patriarch Arcanum perished, it would be worth reporting.

“Mm.” The black-robed Emperor nodded. “There are a few months left before the Conclave of Immortal Destiny. Have you heard any unusual news regarding this Conclave?”

“The Conclave?” King Qi was startled.

The Conclave of Immortal Destiny was carried out every three centuries. For short-lived Immortal cultivators, this was something that happened only once in a lifetime, but for someone as exalted as the Grand Xia Emperor...the Emperor had lived for so incomparably long that for him, the tricentennial Conclave was quite an ordinary, regular event. He might spend ten thousand years in a single closed-door meditation session; he normally wouldn't pay any attention to the Conclave. It would be his subordinates, the Celestial Immortals, who would spend a bit of time on it.

For Celestial Immortals to officiate over it was already putting it on a very high pedestal.

“If I must point out something unusual regarding this Conclave of Immortal Destiny...” King Qi pondered for a moment as he thought about an intelligence report that had been delivered to him by the Heavenly Treasures Mountain, then said, “I suppose there is something. In past Conclaves, some of the truly proud and peerless geniuses would disdain from attending...but all of the extremely famous peerless geniuses are attending this time. In terms of quality, the competitors in this Conclave should be exceptionally high.”

Peerless geniuses wouldn't necessarily take part in the Conclave of Immortal Destiny. Because of their own personality, characters, and training techniques, quite a few would not attend. For example, the Sloppy Daoist had originally not been planning to attend at all.

“Oh?” The black-robed Emperor nodded lightly. Indeed; the signs were all there. Luck, the invisible intrinsic, was beginning to gather.

This Conclave of Immortal Destiny was going to be one of the places where karmic luck would gather. Those peerless geniuses would innately be drawn to attend, because the most outstanding of them would gain the blessing of even more luck, allowing their future potential to be limitless.

“I shall personally host this Conclave of Immortal Destiny,” the black-robed Emperor said.

“Persona—” King Qi said, astonished, “The Conclave happens every three centuries; it isn't that important. Your Imperial Majesty, you are going to personally host it?”

The black-robed Emperor nodded. “Yes. I shall personally host it, and I am going to increase the rewards for this Conclave a hundredfold as well.”

“A hundredfold?” King Qi's heart shook. In the past, only the top three competitors of the Conclave would be bestowed an Immortal-ranked magic treasure. Then this time...?

“Spread my command to the various marquises and the major schools and sects of the world,” the black-robed Emperor said calmly. “Tell them that I am paying close attention to this Conclave, and that I will personally officiate over it. Have the various marquises, schools, and sects all arrange for their most supremely talented disciples to attend this Conclave.”

“Command?” King Qi was even more speechless. The question of participation was generally a matter of personal choice.

“King Qi, you should know about the major upheavals that occurred in the Netherworld Kingdom a few decades ago, yes?” The black-robed Emperor looked at King Qi.

“I do. Of course I know about the collapse of the Six Paths of Reincarnation. But what does this have to do with the Conclave of Immortal Destiny...?” King Qi had some vague premonitions, but because his vision was limited to this major world, he didn’t truly understand. In his heart, however, he understood that most likely it was the prior upheavals in the Netherworld Kingdom which caused the Emperor to pay such attention to this Conclave.

If that was the case, then he definitely could not be negligent.

“I’ll send your commands right away,” King Qi immediately said.

“Good. Arrange for the opening ceremony of the Conclave to be on the sixteenth of the first lunar month,” the black-robed Emperor ordered.

“Yes,” King Qi acknowledged.

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Soon, the news that his Imperial Majesty the Grand Xia Emperor was going to personally host this Conclave of Immortal Destiny and was ordering the various marquises, schools, and sects to arrange for their most elite of disciples to participate quickly spread from the imperial capital to the entirety of this major world. The countless marquises of this vast world, as well as the major powers located in the boundless seas, all received the Emperor’s commands!

“The Emperor is going to personally officiate?”

“The last time the Emperor officiated a Conclave of Immortal Destiny was back when the revolting Dong’e clan and the other clans were annihilated. That was already countless years ago...and the only time that he officiated before that was the during the very first Conclave. Why is the Emperor going to host the Conclave of Immortal Destiny this time?”

All of the marquises, major schools, and major sects were all uneasy. They weren’t worried about the deaths of their Wanxiang Disciples; even if all of them perished, that would simply mean that there would be a gap at a certain level of experts for a few centuries, after which new geniuses would have arisen.

What they were worried about was what the Emperor was planning. This was the Emperor who controlled the destiny of this entire major world! He was going to personally officiate, and had send commands to them...the hidden meaning behind this was extraordinary.

“Patriarch, it was the Emperor who officiated over the very first Conclave of Immortal Destiny; he also officiated the Conclave that occurred after the revolting Dong’e clan was wiped out. This will be only the third time the Emperor is personally hosting the Conclave...there must be a reason behind it.”

“Enough. Don’t trouble yourself about it. How can someone like you possibly comprehend the thoughts of someone as exalted as his Imperial Majesty? Even if he ordered all of the younger geniuses in our clan

to go die, we would still obey. Arrange for the top three Wanxiang Disciples of the younger generation in our clan to go attend this Conclave of Immortal Destiny. As for the others...let them do as they please.”

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“Summon the three Sacred Childs. They are to prepare to join the Conclave of Immortal Destiny.”

“Yes, Sacred Master.”

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“The five highest ranked disciples of our school, Heaven’s Equal, are all required to participate in the Conclave of Immortal Destiny. As for the others, they can do as they please.”

“Yes, Supreme One.”

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Not a single one of the many powerful forces of the world of the Grand Xia dared to disobey. Those who received the orders were all at least on the level of the Northmont clan of Stillwater. As for the likes of the Black-White College? They weren’t even qualified to receive these orders.

Another winter had arrived. The sun shone down on the accumulated snow, making it gleam brightly.

Ji Ning, Yuchi Xiyue, Yu Wei, Mu Northson, Adept Vastriver, and the Sloppy Daoist were all together, drinking Immortal nectar, eating seafood, and chatting casually.

“The order has already come down from within the imperial citadel,” Xiyue said with a laugh. “The date of this Conclave has been set down as the sixteenth of the first lunar month. A little more than a month remains now.”

Every single Conclave was hosted during the first lunar month.

“I was wandering the imperial capital the other day, and when I was eating, I heard people next to me chatting. They said that three of the nine top-ranked disciples of their school had arrived, and that various other figures from other schools had arrived as well. It seems as though very many geniuses are participating this time.” Northson, holding a beasthead goblet of wine, spoke quite excitedly.

“From the intelligence reports I purchased from the Heavenly Treasures Mountain, I can see that one batch after another of geniuses are gathering here at the imperial capital,” Yu Wei said solemnly.

Xiyue said with a laugh, “It seems as though you don’t know enough of the inner details; in reality, it will be his Imperial Majesty, the Emperor himself, who will personally officiate over this Conclave of Immortal Destiny. The various schools, sects, and marquises are all naturally sending their most talented geniuses over, in the hopes of ingratiating themselves with his Imperial Majesty.”

“His Imperial Majesty is personally officiating?” Ning, Yu Wei, and the Sloppy Daoist were all surprised.

“Actually, all of the marquises know about this matter, and I imagine some of the peerless geniuses of the various schools know as well. However, they don’t dare to casually discuss this with others,” Xiyue said. “I’m letting you know now, but don’t let others know.”

“Of course.”

Ning and the others were still in a state of shock. The Grand Xia Emperor? The person who unified this entire major world? Someone who stood at the true peak of this land?

Ning and the others couldn't help but feel even more eager now.

As time flowed out, more and more geniuses arrived at the imperial capital of the Grand Xia. In fact, there were some people who originally hadn't planned to come, but decided to hurry over specifically because they heard that a truly staggering number of geniuses was attending this Conclave.

Time passed in the blink of an eye...and it was now the sixteenth day of the first lunar month.

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 12: Immortal Destiny Chapter 2: The World-Guarding Formation

The day was just beginning. The Wanxiang Adepts who were scattered in residences throughout the imperial capital, as well as the 3600 marquises and their entourages, were all floating towards the imperial citadel.

“So many people.” Ji Ning, Yu Wei, and the Sloppy Daoist were currently flying together shoulder-to-shoulder on a cloud towards the imperial capital.

“Junior apprentice-brother, where are the others?” The Sloppy Daoist seemed to have just woken up. He asked, puzzled, “Why haven't junior apprentice-brother Vastriver and the others shown up?”

Ning laughed, “Junior apprentice-brother Northson and senior apprentice-brother Vastriver have gone to go join with the main delegation from Stillwater Commandery. His Imperial Majesty is personally officiating over this Conclave, and delegations have come from all 3600 commanderies to pay their respects to his Imperial Majesty. They have to be alongside the Stillwater delegation; otherwise, they won't even be able to enter the imperial citadel.”

“Oh.” The Sloppy Daoist nodded, now understanding. “I thought anyone who wanted to go watch could just go in and watch.”

“Senior apprentice-brother, all you ever do is train. You should at least read some of the intelligence reports,” Yu Wei said helplessly. “How can just anyone come and watch the Conclave of Immortal Destiny? Do you think the imperial citadel is just a place anyone can enter?”

“Well, I'm always in closed-door training, so...” the Sloppy Daoist scratched his head, grinning.

Ning explained, “There are three types of people who are entering the imperial citadel today. The first type consists of Wanxiang Adepts like us; because we are going to risk our lives in battle, we can just go in directly. The second type consists of the delegations that are led by the various marquises who are going to go pay their respects to his Imperial Majesty. The third type consists of the likes of Celestial Immortals, such as King Yan, who can take Princess Xiyue directly into the citadel. As for others? There might be some exceptional, powerful figures who can enter the citadel, but I wouldn't know anything about that.”

The Sloppy Daoist nodded in understanding.

Right at this moment, as they were speaking, Ning's group had flown through the clouds and arrived at a large street. In the distance, they could see those four massive Fiendgods that were thirty thousand meters tall who were guarding the gates to the imperial citadel.

Whoooooosh. One squad after another of Immortal cultivators flew past, either in groups of two or three, or in giant delegations. All of them were flying towards the imperial citadel.

However, the gates to the imperial citadel remained shut.

Soon, Ning's group arrived as well, and they landed.

"So many people." The Sloppy Daoist looked around at his surroundings. A vast, tightly packed cluster of more than a hundred thousand individuals had already gathered outside the imperial citadel. Some were here to participate in the Conclave, but most were here to spectate. A steady, unbroken stream of Immortal cultivators continued to descend from the heavens.

"We might as well wait patiently. When the nine gongs ring out, the citadel gates will open," Ning said.

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They waited for nearly two hours. The Golden Crow had already risen high into the sky, and the light of the sun shone down upon the entire imperial capital.

CLANG! CLANG! CLANG! CLANG!

Nine consecutive gongs rang out. The sound was melodious, seeming to come down from the Nine Heavens, causing the million-plus individuals who had gathered outside the imperial citadel to all quiet down.

RUUUMBLE!

The tall gates of the imperial citadel suddenly swung open. The four massive Fiendgods stared down at the million-plus humans. One of them, a fire-spewing, fire-skinned Fiendgod, spoke out: "Wanxiang Adepts who wish to participate in the Conclave of Immortal Destiny, you can now enter the imperial capital. If you enter, then you must participate in the Conclave; there will be no chance to change your mind. You may now enter!"

Instantly, with a series of whooshes, a vast locust swarm of figures all began to fly towards the imperial citadel's gates, blocking out the skies as they did so.

"How many people is this?!" The Sloppy Daoist's eyes were completely round.

"Normally, each Conclave of Immortal Destiny will generally have twenty or thirty thousand competitors," Ning said with a laugh. "In this Conclave...since his Imperial Majesty is personally hosting it, this Conclave is extraordinarily special, and I estimate that there should be roughly a hundred thousand or so." Much of this information had come to Ning via his cousin.

"On average, each commandery has sent thirty individuals?" The Sloppy Daoist pondered on this. "It seems as though 99% of the formidable elites of the world have all come."

"This Conclave of Immortal Destiny is different from normal ones," Yu Wei said.

As they flew into the imperial capital, they saw a wide, spacious thoroughfare.

“Those who shall participate in the Conclave of Immortal Destiny, follow me!” A deep, booming voice shook the heavens. Up ahead, a squad of Imperial Guards had appeared in midair, and they were guiding the way.

They followed the wide thoroughfare and quickly arrived at an incomparably vast plaza. This plaza was so large that one couldn't see to the end of it with the naked eye alone. It was paved with pitch-black stones, and the pavestones were all covered with incomparably complicated runes. The runes covered the entire plaza, causing it to emanate a terrifying, heart-freezing aura.

“Those who shall participate in the Conclave are all to wait in this region,” the Imperial Guards up ahead instructed.

Almost none of these geniuses and talents from around the world had ever been in the imperial capital. They were all rather awestruck, and they behaved obediently, all moving towards the designated region.

Whoosh!

The Imperial Guards quickly split apart, forming a perimeter that completely surrounded the region. They stood there with blank faces, not moving at all. These Imperial Guards also knew that today, his Imperial Majesty, the Emperor, was going to be personally hosting the Conclave of Immortal Destiny. It was rare for Imperial Guards like them to encounter his Imperial Majesty; how could they not be extremely earnest and serious today?

“I imagine that this plaza is at least ten thousand kilometers wide.” The chubby Sloppy Daoist lowered his heads, inspecting the runes. “And it contains an extremely terrifying formation, one that vastly surpasses any I have ever sensed.”

“Right.” Yu Wei had a solemn look on her face as well as she carefully inspected the plaza.

The voice of the giant yellow bear rang out in Ning's mind. “It seems as though the roots of this Grand Xia Dynasty of yours are actually quite deep. Based on what I can tell from the runic formations covering this plaza...it should be a single formation-diagram! This formation-diagram was formed from the linkage of more than three Pure Yang magic treasures, and more than a thousand Immortal-ranked magic treasures. With but a thought, the Grand Xia Emperor could probably activate this titanic formation, formed from all those treasures. A formation formed from so many treasures...it should be a vast formation designed to safeguard his headquarters, and also to safeguard this entire major world of yours. Formidable, formidable. Incredible! I imagine that even most Pure Yang True Immortals are unable to lay such a grand formation; the person who laid out this world-guarding formation is absolutely one of the truly top powers of the Three Realms, most likely on par with Master himself!”

“What?!” Ning was shocked. Comparable with Daoist Threelives? A formation which even most Pure Yang True Immortals would not be able to establish? A world-guarding formation? Meant to protect this entire major world?

What Ning didn't know...was that the guess of the spirit of the underwater estate was absolutely correct. Although this ancient world-guarding formation hadn't been established by the master of the Grand Xia Emperor, and had instead been set up by another major power who was equivalent to him in

power...it was indeed meant to protect this entire major world, and the headquarters of the Grand Xia Dynasty.

“If the Emperor of your Grand Xia is a Pure Yang True Immortal...with a formation like this at his back, there are extremely few figures in the entirety of the Three Realms who can do anything to him at all. The major powers who are capable of acting against him, upon seeing the world-guarding formation, would probably give face to the major power who set up the formation and stay their hands.” The giant yellow bear said. “Formidable, formidable! The background of your Grand Xia Emperor is truly exceptional. He lives up to his reputation as someone capable of controlling an entire major world.”

The spirit of the underwater estate was tremendously experienced; at a single glance, he could tell how extraordinary the Grand Xia Emperor’s background was.

“Then would his Imperial Majesty be able to discover your presence?” Ning asked.

“Don’t worry at all. Even the supreme major power who set up this formation would at most notice something unique about the underwater estate, but they can forget about trying to spy inside it. This is, after all, the treasure which Master poured all of his efforts into as his legacy.” The giant yellow bear was extremely confident.

Ning nodded.

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Rumble! Rumble! Rumble!

Ning and all of the other Wanxiang Adept participants of the Conclave all turned to look. One delegation after another, in absolute perfect formation, came flying over. They came over methodically, clearly understanding quite a bit about the rules of propriety. By contrast, Ning and the other geniuses had all flown in like a horde of locusts.

“3600 commanderies, and the four seas...” Ning could immediately tell that all of these delegations were split up by commanderies. The delegations all flew in, then settled down onto the plaza.

“Stillwater Commandery.” Yu Wei pointed towards the distance. Ning and the Sloppy Daoist both looked over.

The Stillwater delegation was led by a tall, skinny, black-robed man. His aura was heroic and majestic, and his bearing was extraordinary as well. It was the Marquis of Stillwater. Behind him was a group of Northmont clansmen. Amongst them, Ning noticed Northmont Baiwei, who was obediently following within the crowd. Behind them were ten-plus individuals from the Black-White College, as well as representatives from the Dragonhunter clan, the Bluewood clan, and the other major clans of Stillwater Commandery. The entire Stillwater delegation consisted of at least hundreds of individuals.

The delegations from the 3600 commanderies and the four seas all landed in perfect unison.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

One figure after another now began to soar in through the skies.

“Cousin.” Ning could see that the figures who were flying through the skies included King Yan, who had led Xiyue directly into the skies and through the clouds.

“Is that junior apprentice-sister Ninelotus?!” The Sloppy Daoist called out in surprise.

Ning saw her as well.

Ninelotus was currently flying through the skies alongside a blue-robed man. Ning had heard his cousin speak of this as well...only Celestial Immortals were allowed to fly directly into the main hall of the Skylight Palace and go see the Grand Xia Emperor. The others actually wouldn't even have a chance to see him at all. Celestial Immortals were permitted to bring two followers with them, and so the blue-robed man should be a Celestial Immortal.

As Ning lifted his head, Ninelotus looked downwards with a searching gaze as well. Suddenly, their gazes intersected.

A familiar yet strange feeling resonated between their hearts.

Both of them couldn't help but look away.

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The highest point of the main hall of the Skylight Palace.

The Grand Xia Emperor, dressed in black robes, was seated on high atop his throne. The individuals below him were divided into two columns, all standing. Those standing closest to the Grand Xia Emperor were naturally the Celestial Immortals and Kings of the Xiamang clan, while those towards the rear consisted of the Celestial Immortals from other parts of the Grand Xia Empire. Although technically speaking, there had been no order for the Celestial Immortals to all attend as well, many of them were quite keen and sharp; they, too, sensed that there was something strange with the fact that the Grand Xia Emperor was going to personally officiate over this Conclave, and so quite a few of them had hurried over as well.

At a glance, one could see nearly a thousand Celestial Immortals who stood there before the Emperor.

“We bow in respect to you, your Imperial Majesty.”

King Qi led the first respectful salute. Instantly, all the other Celestial Immortals bowed as well. As for the followers who had accompanied the Celestial Immortals, they all fell to their knees.

In this moment...

Every single individual present on the vast plaza located far below the Skylight Palace, be it the hundred thousand-plus geniuses who were participating in the Conclave or the million-plus members of the delegations from the 3600 commanderies and four seas...they all knelt down in unison, kowtowing and pressing their foreheads against the ground. In unison, they called out:

“WE BOW IN RESPECT TO YOU, YOUR IMPERIAL MAJESTY!”

The sound echoed like thunder, shaking the entire world.

“ARISE!” The voice of the Grand Xia Emperor shook the world as well.

The Desolate Era

Book 12: Immortal Destiny Chapter 3: The Brightmoon Diagram of the Mountains and Rivers

The black-robed Emperor, seated at the highest point of the main hall of the Skylight Palace, spoke out. "King Qi."

"Your Imperial Majesty," King Qi immediately acknowledged.

"Announce the rules for this Conclave," the black-robed Emperor instructed.

"Yes."

King Qi immediately flew out of the main hall. He stood atop a cloud, staring downwards as his voice echoed out within the heavens. "This Conclave of Immortal Destiny has a total of 109,362 participants!"

His voice rang out clearly, echoing in skies. More than nine thousand kilometers below him, the Wanxiang Adepts of the Grand Xia Empire as well as other major worlds all listened carefully.

"More than 109,000?" Ning's eyebrows twitched. Although he could clearly calculate the number of people present through a simple sweep of his divine sense...this was the imperial citadel, and the Grand Xia Empire was seated directly above them. No one dared to wildly spread out their divine sense to investigate the place.

The voice above them continued to speak. "Wanxiang Adepts, each of you shall receive a talisman. All of you shall enter the magic treasure which his Imperial Majesty shall use; the Brightmoon Diagram of the Mountains and Rivers! This painting is capable of holding the cosmos, of holding qian and kun; it forms an independent world of its own. Within the Brightmoon Diagram of the Mountains and Rivers, you can battle each other and seize each other's talismans without any restrictions. If you feel that you are not strong enough, you can discard your talisman, which will cause you to immediately be teleported out from the Diagram. Although this will represent defeat, you will at least be able to stay alive."

"Those who choose to give up..."

"Those who are killed..."

"Your talismans will be taken away by the victor of your battle. The length of time you are to remain within the Diagram is at most one year; after a year, the eighty competitors with the most talismans will have passed the trial of the Diagram. If, however, before the year is up...if, for example, after three months, only eighty of you are still alive...then the trial of the Diagram will be stopped early, and the eighty lucky survivors will have passed."

"If after a year has passed and eighty victors are selected, but other Wanxiang Adepts remain alive within the Brightmoon Diagram of the Mountains and Rivers, then the remaining survivors will be put together in one place and engage in a final battle. You shall fight until only sixteen of you remain. Those sixteen will receive chances as well."

"In other words, the trial of the Brightmoon Diagram of the Mountain and Seas will have at least eighty victors, and at most ninety six."

"Remember – within the Diagram, you are forbidden from using any Dao-seals, golems, or strange treasures! This trial is meant to test your personal ability. All of your actions within the Diagram shall be

under the gaze of his Imperial Majesty, as well as the gazes of the Celestial Immortals present. You absolutely cannot act improperly; those who disobey shall be slain without exception!”

Slain without exception!

These final three words caused the hearts of all of the competitors to quiver.

“At least eighty? At most ninety six?” Ning, Yu Wei, and the Sloppy Daoist exchanged glances. They all could sense how bloody the upcoming battles would be.

This was absolutely insane.

All of these hundred thousand-plus individuals were peerless geniuses who were at least at Holyfire’s level! A hundred thousand-plus peerless geniuses, many of whom would most likely have a high chance of becoming Earth Immortals or Loose Immortals...but because of the Conclave of Immortal Destiny, they had to engage in a bloody battle against each other. Although it was said that one could give up, in the heat of a battle, it was very likely that many would end up perishing.

“At most ninety six...and the world has 3600 commanderies, as well as four vast seas. On average, there will only be a single victor for every few dozen commanderies.” The Sloppy Daoist let out a sigh. “This is crazy.”

“I wonder if the three of us will be able to overcome this trial.” Yu Wei’s gaze was much more solemn now as well.

Ning, too, felt the pressure.

In the past, the Conclave had generally not been this bloody; in the past, there were usually only twenty or thirty thousand Wanxiang Adepts, all of whom would go through several rounds of selection, resulting in the top hundred, then top fifty, then slowly a top ten and top three.

But this time, more than a hundred thousand of them were going to be sent directly into the Brightmoon Diagram of the Mountains and Rivers, with this competition intended to produce between eighty to ninety six victors.

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The main hall of the Skylight Palace.

King Qi walked back, bowing respectfully. “Reporting to your Imperial Majesty: The proclamation has been made.”

“Mm.” The black-robed Emperor nodded lightly. His gaze pierced past the blocking hall and clouds, landing upon the bodies of the hundred thousand-plus youths. He wanted to watch...watch and see which of them would rise up to become truly powerful figures within this upcoming storm for the Three Realms.

“There are more than a hundred who are surrounded by the golden light of karmic virtue.” The black-robed Emperor reflected silently on this. “The more karmic merits one has rendered, the better one’s luck shall be. But it is also possible for those who have ordinary karmic merits to be tremendously lucky as well, and sometimes even astonishingly so.”

Karmic luck and karmic virtue weren't identical. If one had a high level of karmic virtue, then one would naturally be blessed with additional luck. But, for example, if one apprenticed one's self to a major power of the Three Realms, one would also be blessed by karmic luck. If one's parents were major powers of the Three Realm, one would similarly be blessed.

Or perhaps, because of a tremendous stroke of fortune, one would suddenly have the blessing of luck.

One could tell at a glance if a person had high or low karmic virtue, but luck...this was unfathomable and invisible.

Whoosh. The black-robed Emperor suddenly produced a wrapped diagram in his hand. He unfurled the diagram, and atop it, one could vaguely make out a painting of a bright moon, hanging over a mountain and a river.

The eyes of the Celestial Immortals all lit up. The Brightmoon Diagram of the Mountains and Rivers...

This was a Pure Yang magic treasure. It was a tremendously intriguing artifact for them...but at the same time, these Celestial Immortals were all pondering nonstop. Today, the Grand Xia Emperor had barely said anything to these Celestial Immortals before immediately beginning the initial selection tournament for the Conclave of Immortal Destiny. From this, they could tell how much importance this Conclave held for the Grand Xia Emperor. In fact, the very fact of him taking out the Diagram and using it as the place for the competition was proof of how seriously he took this.

Rumble...

Ning and the others all raised their heads, looking towards the skies. The delegations from the 3600 commanderies and the four seas all raised their heads to stare as well.

In the air above them, an utterly enormous painting, at least ten thousand kilometers long, had suddenly appeared. It blocked out the skies, and one could even vaguely make out the world within the diagram.

Swish! Swish! Swish! Swish! Swish! Swish!

Ning, Yu Wei, the Sloppy Daoist, and the rest of the 109,362 individuals, who had all been just standing there, were suddenly and involuntarily pulled into the skies. All of them were sucked inwards as the surface of the vast painting began to undulate. When each of them touched the painting, their bodies also began to undulate; it was as though they were drops of rainwater that had landed on a lake.

In just the blink of an eye, all of them had completely disappeared.

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The main hall of the Skylight Palace. The black-robed Emperor finally revealed a smile as he said calmly, "This trial within the Brightmoon Diagram of the Mountains and Rivers shall most likely go on for a year. Everyone, watch at your leisure. Prepare the banquet!"

Instantly, a large number of maids immediately moved over. They placed down long tables, then delivered pitchers of Immortal nectar and platters of Immortal fruit.

All of the Celestial Immortals sat down in the lotus position. As for the followers that had come alongside them, they sat down in the lotus position to the side of and slightly behind the Celestial Immortals.

“You can watch everything which is going on within the Diagram.” The black-robed Emperor pointed towards the clouds outside the main hall. The vast, ten thousand kilometer long diagram hung there amidst the clouds. The world within the diagram was clearly visible; within it, there were mountains, rivers, a bright moon, and more than a hundred thousand Wanxiang Adepts who were scattered in different areas.

“Dongyan, tell me, why do you think his Imperial Majesty cares so much about this Conclave of Immortal Destiny?” A scabby-looking old man seated next to the Dongyan Forefather spoke out. “He’s personally hosting it, and even commanded people to participate. Although so many of us Celestial Immortals have arrived, he is still mostly paying attention to the Conclave. Can it be that this Conclave is very special? Does it involve the reincarnation of someone exceptionally powerful? As I recall, a few decades back, the Netherworld Kingdom suffered a sudden attack, and the Six Paths of Reincarnation collapsed, right? Can this have something to do with it?”

“How am I supposed to know? However, the collapse of the Six Paths of Reincarnation is an absolutely world-changing event. The mysteries behind its collapse must definitely be quite shocking. We should just stay in our own major world and not go running around wildly; otherwise, something might happen and we might even fall. In addition, although the Six Paths of Reincarnation collapsed, the venerable Daofather has re-established the cycle of reincarnation for us and several dozen other major worlds. We have the protection of the venerable Daofather; there’s no need for us to panic,” the Dongyan Forefather sent back.

The scabby-looking old man nodded as well.

While the Dongyan Forefather and Patriarch Riverbridge were discussing their worries regarding the impending storm, Ninelotus, seated behind the Dongyan Forefather, was carefully watching the ten thousand kilometer long painting.

The painting was truly enormous, so much so that the individual figures within it could be seen clearly.

“Where is Ji Ning?” Ninelotus couldn’t help but search for him.

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“Where is Ji Ning?” Yuchi Xiyue was seated behind King Yan in the lotus position. She, too, was carefully staring at the enormous painting. “Little brother, you have to be careful. Be careful!”

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“Where is Master?”

In the plaza below the painting, amidst the delegation led by the Marquis of Stillwater, Mu Northson was standing next to a large, snowy white hound and an azure-robed maiden. Ning had gone out to battle, but spirit-beasts were forbidden from participating. Thus, Uncle White and Little Qing had to stay with Northson for now as they watched the battle.

“Don’t worry. Senior apprentice-brother is a truly monstrous genius; back in the Witchriver Immortal Estate, he was in such dire straits, but in the end he was still able to kill Youngflame Nong and that Fiendgod. He absolutely will not easily die or easily give up.” Northson’s eyes were shining as he stared at the skies above him, and at the massive, illusory world that had appeared there.

This illusory world was an image of the situation within the Brightmoon Diagram of the Mountains and Rivers. One could clearly see every single figure located within the mountains, the rivers, the grasslands, and the forests of the world.

The Whitewater Hound, Little Qing, and Northson quickly scanned the massive painting with their gaze, flashing past one figure after another.

“Look.” Uncle White suddenly spoke out as he stared at one location. Northson and Little Qing followed Uncle White’s gaze, looking over as well. Indeed; within one particular corner of that world, there was a fur-clad youth within a mountain gorge.

“Senior apprentice-brother.” Northson’s eyes lit up.

“Master.” Little Qing watched with excitement as well.

The nearby Immortal Fivecraze quickly discovered Ning as well. His eyes were also filled with excitement.

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The people of this plaza, filled with delegations from the 3600 commanderies and four seas, were all staring upwards, trying to find the people they cared about within the painting. They quickly were able to find them, and they began to watch eagerly, quietly praying for the people they cared about to end up as one of the final 96 survivors.

Within the world of the Diagram.

Ning had suddenly felt the world change as soon as he touched the diagram. He had suddenly appeared within a mountain gorge.

“A gorge?” The Darknorth swords instantly appeared in Ning’s hands. He carefully scanned his surroundings, so cautious that he didn’t even use divine sense. This was because, upon using divine sense, the enemy would locate him as soon as he found them. A solid majority of the participants of this Conclave all possessed divine sense, after all.

Swoosh. Suddenly, a light flashed past Ning’s eyes, and a green talisman appeared before him.

“Each of you shall have a talisman. If you no longer wish to fight and wish to give up, you only need to throw the talisman away, and I will immediately throw you out of the Brightmoon Diagram of the Mountains and Rivers.” The voice of the Grand Xia Emperor rang out in the minds of the hundred thousand-plus individuals.

Ning immediately reached out to grasp the talisman.