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#### Book 13: Tristar Crescent Abode Chapter 14: Going Into the World

Ji Ning stood outside the entrance of his Immortal estate.

“Uncle White. Little Qing.” Ning sent a mental message to the two, and they soon arrived.

These two had previously been elsewhere at the Divinities Palace, discussing the Dao with the other disciples of Mount Innerheart.

“Master, why have you summoned us? We were in the middle of this great discussion about the Dao,” Little Qing said unhappily. The Whitewater Hound just looked at Ning, waiting for him to speak.

“I am going to go down into the world and roam about this estate-world,” Ning said. “It will be anywhere from a year to ten years before I return.”

“Whaaa?! Go down into the world?!” Little Qing said with great excitement, “Great, great! Although Mount Innerheart is nice enough, and I have the chance to listen to the Old Patriarch discuss the Dao here and have many divine abilities and secret arts to peruse...it is way too relaxed and boring here.”

Ning shook his head. “I’m going down into the world on official business. You and Uncle White need to seize every moment of this incredible chance you have to study here at Mount Innerheart. After all, we are going to go back to the Grand Xia in the future...and I don’t know when we will return. A chance to study here is something that most people can’t even dream of.”

After they went back to the world of the Grand Xia, it would not be easy for them to come back here. It wasn’t up to them; it was up to the Old Patriarch. Without his permission, no one could locate this estate-world.

“Oh.” Little Qing nodded in understanding.

“Ning, child, be careful as you roam the world. This estate-world is not one whit inferior to the world of the Grand Xia, and experts are as common as the clouds within it. I imagine there are quite a few Celestial Immortals as well,” Uncle White instructed.

“Don’t worry.” Ning nodded.

“Master, why are you going down into the world? What’s this official business all about? Oh, if it’s really important, then don’t worry about telling me.” Although this was what Little Qing said aloud, her eyes were sparkling. Clearly, she was quite intrigued.

Ning laughed. “This is a test which Master gave me. I need to go down into the world, accept a disciple, and kill some people.”

“Accept disciples? Kill people?” Little Qing and Uncle White both grew intrigued.

“These two jade bottles each have a total of 750,000 kilograms of liquefied elemental essence.” Ning waved his hand, and two jade-green bottles appeared. “Uncle White, Little Qing, the two of you have reached the peak Primal level in recent years as well. However, from the peak Primal level to the Void

level requires a long period of time. Although the techniques you use are the techniques from Mount Innerheart, you will still probably need a few decades before succeeding. With this essence, the two of you will be able to reach the early Void stage and also stabilize your foundation.”

The Whitewater Hound hesitated momentarily. Little Qing, however, immediately accepted her bottle with glee. “Thanks, Master! Master, you are the best. I’ve been hankering to reach the Void-level and become an Earth Immortal.”

“Take it, Uncle White,” Ning said.

Here at Mount Innerheart, there was no way to acquire more liquefied elemental essence. Otherwise, given his current level of power, it wouldn’t be too hard to sell some treasures and procure some. In the future, his true body, Uncle White, and Little Qing would all rise to the late Void level.

As for the peak Void level?

Ning was in no rush because he often heard Patriarch Subhuti expound on the Dao and had learned that every Celestial Tribulation was tailored to the specific person. The more monstrous a genius, the more ridiculously powerful a Celestial Tribulation would be. For someone like him, an expert who had divine abilities such as the [Starseizing Hand] and who was blessed by luck, the power of his divine tribulation would be similarly astonishing!

He had to make ample preparations!

He had to raise his level of comprehension. The [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], [Houyi’s Archery], and the [Starseizing Hand]; they all had to reach the highest level of power possible prior to the Celestial Immortal level. He had to prepare enough magic treasures and curios as well. His Dao-heart also needed to be stronger...in short, in the face of the Celestial Tribulation, no matter how many preparations he made, it wouldn’t be too much. No one wanted to be defeated by it, after all!

Upon being defeated, one would naturally perish. Even if one managed to luck out and become a Loose Immortal, under the eternal, remorseless trials of the Three Calamities and Nine Tribulations, death would be the only result.

The Celestial Tribulation...

This was a true tribulation that would determine one’s destiny! The greatest tribulation there was on the Immortal path! Those who succeeded would soar into the heavens and truly escape the binds of the Three Realms. They would be carefree and unbound, no longer subject to the Three Calamities and Nine Tribulations. But those who failed...they were finished.

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On the mountain paths of Mount Innerheart.

The Whitewater Hound and Little Qing sent off Ning together. Ning didn’t bid his fellow disciples farewell; after all, this was just a trial, and a short one at that. To his fellow disciples who had lived for countless years, this was indeed a very brief trip.

“No need to send me any further,” Ning said with a smile. He then transformed into a streak of light and flew out of the giant, levitating Mount Innerheart. He flew downwards towards the vast, endless world.

“Ning, my son, be careful.”

“Master, be careful.” The Whitewater Hound and Little Qing watched as Ning flew away. They watched until he disappeared.

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Ning stared downwards towards the countless cities that dotted the vast world. Prior to him leaving Mount Innerheart, Little Qing had gone to a good friend she had made, an ordinary disciple of Mount Innerheart who was a Void-level Diremonster, and acquired a fairly detailed map of the entire Crescent world!

“The Crescent world is as large as the world of the Grand Xia. Above an endless sea, there are three enormous continents. These three continents are all slightly smaller than the continent of the Grand Xia, but combined they are comparable to it.” Ning pondered to himself. “Mm. To the Star continent!”

The Crescent world had a total of three continents. The Cloud continent, the Flame continent, and the Star continent.

The one which was below the airborne Mount Innerheart was known as the Cloud continent. The Cloud continent was the continent with the best governance, whereas the Flame continent and the Star continent were in states of utter chaos. They had many small kingdoms, as well as many Diremonsters, clans and sects that caused a state of turmoil to be maintained.

“Great sinners can be found amidst great chaos. Perhaps I might also find an individual of great karmic merit who has escaped notice,” Ning mused to himself.

Whoosh!

Space rippled around him, and Ning then disappeared from midair.

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The Crescent world. The Star continent.

A flying shuttle was flying through the skies at high speed. Within the shuttle were a group of cultivators, with the leader being a man and two women. The other six were all servants and guards.

“Our Qi Empire has been abandoned to those monsters. Why won’t they let us be?!” A violet-robed woman spoke out, her eyes filled with rage. “When we hide in mountain wilds, the Diremonsters still find us and chase us. Our imperial clan of the Qi Empire is now extremely puny; we aren’t a threat to them at all. Why won’t they let us be?!”

“Little sister.” A black-robed maiden next to her shook her head. “The monster king who has taken over our Qi Empire has given the order to completely exterminate our imperial clan of Qi. None are to be spared. The countless monsters under that monster king’s command are naturally going to chase us and kill us. Only by killing us will they have rendered merits and be rewarded by the monster king.”

“So are we just going to keep running and running?” The violet-robed maiden gritted her teeth. “I’ve had enough of this life of fleeing. I started fleeing when I was a child, and it has now been several

decades. I've been running away this entire time. I have had enough. Enough! Let's go all out against these demons. Big brother, second sister, let's fight them!"

"Shut your mouth."

The tall, muscular man who was on his feet growled softly, "Our imperial clan has existed for tens of thousands of years; now, only the three of us still remain. Even our uncle ended up dying when he fought against those demons to try and protect us. We are alive because of the sacrifices of countless subordinates. We absolutely cannot just throw our lives away."

"Then what should we do? That monster king is so powerful; how are we supposed to escape him? And where can we run to?" The violet-robed woman said with rage.

The tall man growled, "By now, there's no other choices for us. The only choice is...to go to the Viledragon River!"

Instantly, everyone fell silent.

The two younger sisters who were behind him as well as all of the servants fell silent. Their eyes were filled with amazement.

Viledragon River?

The Star continent was vast and boundless. There was no way these three imperial scions and their servants could fly out from the Star continent. Within the Star continent, however, Viledragon River was one of the most famous and largest rivers of all!

Viledragon River cut through a large half of the entire Star continent. It was incomparably wide; even at the narrowest points, it was at least eight hundred kilometers across, and up to a thousand or more at its thickest. As far as its length...given that it cut through most of the Star continent and was a sinuous, undulating river, one could imagine how unfathomably long it was!

According to legend, after a primordial Viledragon was killed, its body was transformed into this river. But of course, this was too extravagant a legend and there was no way to verify its authenticity. Still...Viledragon River truly was bizarre. Anyone who moved within a thousand kilometers of it would become completely unable to fly, and also become unable to use evasive techniques based off the Five Elements. Supposedly, even Celestial Immortal Patriarchs who neared this Viledragon River would also be unable to fly or use evasive techniques.

From this, one could see how bizarre Viledragon River was!

In addition, Viledragon River also had some dangerous zones inside of it which even Immortal cultivators did not dare to charge into.

"There's no way to fly within Viledragon River, and no way to use evasive techniques. It will be very hard for the monsters to catch us within it," the tall man growled. "I trust that they will also be nervous, and won't dare to chase us all the way into Viledragon River.

"But...that's Viledragon River," the black-robed maiden said hurriedly.

“We’re trying to find a way to stay alive in an impossibly lethal situation. It doesn’t matter how dangerous Viledragon River is! In addition, Viledragon River is enormous, and it cuts through more than half of the Star continent. Actually, most of it is quite safe; only a few parts of it are dangerous. If we are lucky, we can find a safe island and start life anew there. We can build up our power on the island, and in the future, we can slaughter that monster king and take back the Qi Empire,” the tall man said.

“Second sister, little sister...we have no other paths to take.”

The two girls gritted their teeth and nodded.

“Life or death...it comes down to this toss of the dice,” the black-robed woman said.

“Right. Let’s do it.” The violet-robed maiden gritted her teeth as well.

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Rumble...

Viledragon River. The waters of the river frothed and bubbled with unnatural turbidity.

“Viledragon River.”

“Big brother, up ahead is Viledragon river.”

“Here we are.”

The man, two women, and six guards quickly arrived at the banks of Viledragon River. They stared at the turbid waters. They could already sense the invisible, nameless ripples of power emanating from the entire Viledragon River. They couldn’t help but feel terrified; Viledragon River was simply too famous.

“Hey, big brother, second sister, hurry and look over there.” The violet-robed maiden pointed at the distant, wide Viledragon River. Aboard the river, a wooden boat was slowly sailing forward. Atop the wooden ship was a fur-clad youth who was holding and playing a bamboo flute.

Everyone present was an Immortal cultivator; given their perfect vision, they were able to see this person clearly.

“This youth actually dares to sit on a boat on Viledragon River and leisurely play the flute?” The black-robed woman was extremely startled as well.

“If he is an Immortal cultivator...no matter how powerful he is, he should still be extremely cautious right now.” The tall man frowned. “Can he be an ordinary mortal?”

Although Viledragon River was reputed to be dangerous, that was only in some parts of it. There were often some stupidly brave mortals who would try to show off their valor and sail on a ship atop Viledragon River. And indeed, there were some mortals who were lucky enough to be able to sail on Viledragon River for months, then come back to tell the tale.

“Big brother, that youth is coming over here!” The violet-robed maiden called out in alarm.

The fur-clad youth’s ship, which had previously been following the currents of the river, suddenly turned. The oars on the boat began to strike against the water, kicking up waves of white froth as it moved closer.

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Ning used his hands to steer the boat, beaming as he stared at the individuals on the distant shore. His divine sense had covered this region long ago, and he saw that amongst the crowd, there was a female servant who was emanating a golden light detectable only by his divine sense. The golden light of karmic virtue was at least nine hundred meters long and was utterly astonishing.

“How very lucky I am! I found a person of great karmic virtue quite quickly.” Ning felt incomparably delighted.

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#### **Book 13: Tristar Crescent Abode Chapter 15: The Survivors of the Qi Empire**

After having descended onto the Star continent, Ning had sailed down the Viledragon River, continuously sweeping his surrounding region with divine sense. He had already searched for nearly half a month, but he hadn't found a single person of great karmic virtue or great karmic sin. Today, he had been leisurely relaxing on his boat while playing his bamboo flute...but he had actually run into a person of great karmic virtue.

Whoosh. The oars of the boat continued to sweep forward, sending the boat towards the shore. Ning walked out of his boat and onto the shore.

As the distant group of imperial Qi clansmen walked over, they saw Ning disembark through a very ordinary method. They couldn't help but feel even more convinced that he was an ordinary mortal. The weakest in their group was at least a Zifu Disciple; why would they view an ordinary mortal with any care? And yet...this mortal was walking straight towards them.

“Big brother, he's actually walking towards us,” the black-robed princess sent mentally.

“A puny little mortal...if we were back in our imperial palace, he would've been killed long ago for trying to stand in our way.” The violet-robed princess had a hint of darkness in her eyes. After having fled for so many years, her heart had become filled with hate and darkness.

“Don't cause unnecessary trouble.” Their leader, the tall youth, just spread out his majestic aura. He was the most powerful figure in this squad of theirs, a Wanxiang Adept.

An invisible aura of power came crashing downwards. Any mortal faced with this aura of a Wanxiang Adept would instantly quiver and become utterly terrified.

“Let's go.” After having released his aura, the imperial prince led his two younger sisters and his guards towards Viledragon River. They couldn't be bothered to act against a mortal as they were fleeing.

“Haha...” Suddenly, loud laughter rang out.

The imperial prince, the two princesses, and the guards all turned to stare in astonishment. That fur-clad youth who they had assumed to be a mortal was standing there, laughing. The fleeing imperial prince of Qi naturally understood right away that this backwater youth was clearly not a mortal. A mortal would have been quivering supinely on the ground by now.

Rumble...

An invisible aura of might and power swept out from Ning like an enormous tidal wave, smashing towards the imperial Qi group.

All of their faces changed. This backwater youth...he was no mortal. He was someone whose power vastly outstripped theirs.

“My name is Shi Feng. These are my family retainers. Dare I ask who you are, senior?” The tall imperial prince immediately spoke out with great respect. At the same time, he produced a tiny bead of water on his finger. He pretended to scratch his eyes, but in reality he pressed that bead of water onto them.

Rumble...

The imperial prince lifted his head to take a look. He saw the ripples of power emanating from the backwater youth, then immediately sent mentally to his two little sister, “Ruyu, Ruhui, judging from the ripples this backwater youth is emanating, he should be at the peak Primal level...and he doesn’t seem to have any ill intentions. We absolutely cannot make an enemy out of him. Each time we use up one of our protective treasures, that is one less that we will never get back.”

“Understood, big brother,” the black-robed princess sent mentally.

“He’s just a Primal Daoist. If our imperial father were here...how could a Primal Daoist like him possibly behave so arrogantly in front of us?” The violet-robed princess felt relaxed; she no longer felt afraid. They were of the imperial clan, after all; although their nation had collapsed, they had quite a few treasures on them. They had remained alive for several decades despite being continuously pursued; this was proof of their ability to stay alive.

Clearly, they were confident in being able to escape from a single Primal Daoist by using up some treasures.

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“I am Darknorth. For us to meet here today is destiny.” After releasing his aura, Ning then said, “Come aboard my boat and drink a few cups of wine?”

Ning could tell that these individuals had moved towards Viledragon River with the intent of sailing atop it.

However....

Viledragon River was extremely famous, and of these nine only a single was at the Wanxiang Adept level. The other eight were all merely Zifu Disciples. Why was it that they dared to come to Viledragon River?

Others might fear Viledragon River, but Ning was Patriarch Subhuti’s disciple. He often chatted with his fellow disciples, and had learned about some of the secrets of this Crescent world. Naturally, he had no fear of Viledragon River.

“Since senior Darknorth has invited us, we shall naturally comply.” The imperial prince immediately accepted the offer. They were going sailing to begin with; with a peak Primal Daoist by their side, they might have a helper.

Whoosh. Ning waved his finger, and instantly the wooden boat expanded in size, expanding to a three hundred meter long ship. The nine figures immediately boarded the large ship.

Atop the deck of the ship appeared chairs, tables, fine wine, and spirit-fruit.

“Sit.” Ning sat down at the host’s position. The imperial prince and the two princesses all sat down, while the other guards remained standing.

“Shi Feng.” Ning’s gaze fell upon the female maidservant whose body was covered by the golden light of karmic virtue. The golden light surrounding her appeared incomparably majestic and vast; it was at least nine hundred meters long. That was as long as some of Earth’s rivers were wide; from this, one could imagine how utterly astonishing this young woman’s karmic light of virtue was.

“She is your maidservant?” Ning pointed at the maidservant standing behind the seated violet-robed princess.

The imperial prince smiled. “Indeed.”

“What is her name? What is her history? Tell me of her,” Ning said. As Ning saw it...it wouldn’t be too hard for him to take this maiden away from these people. However, this was his first time taking on a disciple! Ning naturally wanted to get an idea as to what sort of personality this maiden had. Her golden light of karmic virtue might be a result of her actions in her previous life; it was hard to say what she was like in this life.

If she had a negative personality, Ning would rather go find another person with karmic virtue.

“Her name is Qi Xiaoyu 1; she came from a backwater place,” the imperial prince said with a laugh. “An elder of my family saw that she was talented, and so took her on as a disciple when she was very young and taught her cultivation. The elder doted on her fiercely; although she is a servant in name, in reality she can be described as my junior apprentice-sister.”

“Qi Xiaoyu?” Ning raised an eyebrow, then turned to look at her. Her appearance was quite pretty; although she was inferior to Yu Wei, she was still quite a beauty. In addition, there was a resolved look in her eyes; clearly, her Dao-heart was excellent as well.

“Qi Xiaoyu, come here and sit.” Ning waved his hand, and another table filled with fine wine and spirit-fruit appeared next to him.

Qi Xiaoyu stood there, hesitating slightly as she looked towards the imperial prince and the two princesses.

The imperial prince instructed, “Senior Darknorth has already given you instructions; why don’t you go to him?”

“Alright.” Qi Xiaoyu immediately walked obediently towards the table, but she didn’t touch the wine or the spirit-fruit.

Ning looked towards Qi Xiaoyu. He could sense that this maiden had an invisible sort of magnetism that caused one to naturally gravitate towards her and want to befriend her. “Is this what it is like to be blessed with tremendous karmic virtue? This is my first time seeing her, but I can’t help but feel kindly inclined towards her.”



“Xiaoyu,” Ning spoke out.

“Senior Darknorth,” Qi Xiaoyu replied with great respect.

“Tell me about your life, from youth til now,” Ning said.

Qi Xiaoyu looked towards the imperial prince and the two princesses. In truth, this request of Ning’s was rather excessive. Still, the imperial clansmen didn’t wish to offend Ning. This was one of the benefits of being powerful; as long as Ning didn’t go way too far, the imperial prince and princesses wouldn’t quibble too much.

The imperial prince nodded gently.

Qi Xiaoyu immediately said, “Senior, when I was young, I lived in a tribe with a few tens of thousands of individuals known as the Bluecliff tribe. The chief of the Bluecliff tribe was my great-grandfather. When I was young, I was without a worry in the world. I was very happy...”

As she spoke, a look of happiness appeared on Qi Xiaoyu’s face.

“However, my tribe suffered an attack from Diremonsters. Our tribesmen were all forced to flee in defeat. My family all died, and as I was fleeing, I encountered Master...”

Ning listened quietly. At his current level, Ning could clearly sense the changes in Qi Xiaoyu’s soul! If she lied, Ning would immediately be able to tell.

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As Ning was revealing his power, forcibly inviting the imperial Qi clansmen onto the ship, then asking Qi Xiaoyu about her history...

In the skies more than ten thousand kilometers away, there was a giant black ship. The giant black ship had twelve black-armored figures aboard it.

The giant black ship had a single flag atop its mast; the flag had the diagram of a pair of flaming wings.

Local monsters and Immortal cultivators would immediately be able to tell...that this was the legendary Flamewing Guard, which many powers were in absolute dread of.

“Captain, the survivors of the imperial Qi clan really know how to flee. It has been so many years, but they still haven’t been wiped out yet. Our Flamewing Guard have been chasing them for this entire time.” A skinny man with scales on his face let out a sigh as he spoke.

“They are indeed skilled at flight. For the Qi Empire to be able to take over a territory of a million kilometers over the course of just a few tens of thousands of years, and for them to have been able to kill so many Diremonsters at the Earth Immortal or Loose Immortal level...how many treasures must they have? In addition, given how rapid their rise to power was, there are many who believe that the founding emperor of the Qi Empire had acquired an enormous treasure trove. Regardless of whether or not that is true, these fleeing survivors most assuredly have many treasures on them. We’ve chased after and attacked them so many times, but they’ve always been able to flee.” A massively muscular black-armored man replied.

Next to him was an alluring woman who had a plume on her head. She laughed beautifully. "Captain...no matter what, more and more of the surviving imperial Qi clansmen have been killed by us during the pursuit. The last time we attacked them, we killed the final Primal Daoist the imperial Qi clansmen had. The only three survivors of the imperial Qi clan are the crown prince and those two princesses."

"They don't even have Primal Daoists with them; they are going to die soon."

"If we can kill the crown prince and the two princesses, we will have rendered a great merit."

Although the survivors of the imperial Qi clan were very weak...they represented the last remnants of their clan. Many of the treasures of the Qi Empire, and perhaps even the Dao-Repository of the Qi Empire, were undoubtedly being carried by the crown prince.

"Eh?" Suddenly, the massively muscular black-armored man was startled. He waved his hand, and a fireseed appeared within it. The fireseed was trembling.

"We are within ten thousand kilometers of the survivors of the imperial Qi clan!" The black-armored man revealed a look of delight.

"Hahaha, this time we are going to catch them all."

"We've rendered incredible merits."

"They don't even have a single Primal Daoist with them. Wanxiang Adepts? Killing them is as easy as chopping lettuce!"

The soldiers of the Flamewing Guard were all extremely excited.

There had long been rumors that the reason why the Qi Empire had risen to power so quickly was because they had acquired an enormous treasure trove. As a result, even the Flamewing King had grown envious, and he had led his Diremonster army to annihilate the entire Qi Empire! He had seized all of the important treasure troves of the Qi Empire. As for the surviving imperial clansmen, the Flamewing King couldn't be bothered to kill them personally; he simply ordered his subordinates to handle it.

"If we were to kill these survivors, we can just offer the most precious treasures to the King. As for the other treasures..." The twelve soldiers of the Flamewing Guard looked at each other and smiled. Their eyes flashed with greed and viciousness. Their monstrous king was savage, and his soldiers were also quite savage as well.

1. Xiaoyu means Little Rain.

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### **Book 13: Tristar Crescent Abode Chapter 16: Flamewing Guard**

The waves of the vast Viledragon River crashed down like the stampede of ten thousand stallions.

Aboard the giant ship. After chatting for a period of time, Ning felt as though his mind had been settled. The little lass named Qi Xiaoyu had very little experience; she was as pure as a sheet of white paper. In addition, she was clearly quite respectful towards the young man and the two sisters; she continuously watched for the young man's signals before acting.

“Based on what she said, she’s only trained for twenty years. Those blessed by great karmic virtue are indeed talented. And...she isn’t a bad person.” Ning nodded lightly.

He didn’t require that his disciples be perfect; however, they couldn’t be evildoers. Given his current level of enlightenment, it was very simple for him to judge and assess a mere Zifu Disciple.

“I like Xiaoyu very much,” Ning said. “Since Xiaoyu’s former master has already perished...I wonder, Shi Feng, if you would be willing to give her up and let her become my disciple.”

The waves of the vast Viledragon River continued to crash down resoundingly...but within the ship, things had fallen silent.

Qi Xiaoyu was completely speechless. She hurriedly shook her head repeatedly as she looked towards the crown prince.

The crown prince and the princesses had changed looks on their faces.

“This Darknorth really thinks too highly of himself,” the violet-robed princess sent angrily. “He actually wants to take Xiaoyu as his disciple. Xiaoyu is blessed by karmic virtue; she can provide karmic luck to our entire imperial clan. How can we give her away to a random Primal Daoist?! Hmph, even if an Earth Immortal or Loose Immortal wants to take away Xiaoyu, we still shouldn’t agree hastily, to say nothing of this Darknorth!”

“Big brother,” the black-robed princess sent mentally as well, “What should we do? We definitely can’t let Xiaoyu just be taken away, but this Darknorth wishes to take her as a disciple...what should we do?”

The crown prince was frowning. The roots of their imperial clan were very deep, and in the past, they had Primal Daoists of their own! A simple sweep of divine sense had allowed them to know that ‘Qi Xiaoyu’ had an utterly astonishing level of karmic virtue. Thus, they had done everything they could to take Qi Xiaoyu into their fold, and had even bestowed her with the imperial surname of ‘Qi’. They had shown her incomparable favor, causing her to feel incomparably grateful.

“Xiaoyu is an important chess piece. This Darknorth is just a Primal Daoist...we absolutely cannot give her to him,” the crown prince sent mentally.

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As the crown prince and the princesses were conversing mentally, Qi Xiaoyu said hurriedly, “Senior Darknorth, I received great benevolence from Master and cannot betray...”

Ning said, “So long as you are willing to allow Xiaoyu to be my disciple, then I will repay you with magic treasures.” As he spoke, he suddenly produced ten Heaven-ranked flying swords that emanated watery ripples of power. The strength of these ripples caused everyone present to feel a sense of pressure.

“Ten high-grade Heaven-ranked flying swords. What do you say?” Ning asked.

“It seems this seemingly rustic Daoist Darknorth is actually quite wealthy,” the violet-robed princess sent mentally.

“Heaven-ranked magic treasures are very important to Primal Daoists. It isn’t easy for one of them to produce ten. It seems he truly does want to take Xiaoyu as his disciple. Unfortunately for him, as far our

imperial Qi clan is concerned, ten high-grade Heaven-ranked flying swords are nothing,” the crown prince sent back.

Although the three feigned looks of amazement, in their hearts they remained quite calm.

Seeing this, Ning frowned slightly. “How about a hundred high-grade Heaven-ranked flying swords?”

Instantly, a dense cluster of a hundred Heaven-ranked flying swords appeared in the air above the ship. The ripples emanating from each Heaven-ranked flying sword were enough to cause the Wanxiang Adept and eight Zifu Disciples present to feel an enormous sense of pressure.

“This, this...”

Qi Xiaoyu was completely stunned. A hundred high-grade Heaven-ranked flying swords? To take her on as disciple, this man was willing to take out this many magic treasures? Although she wasn't willing to betray the clan, the actions of this 'senior' Darknorth who looked like a youth still caused her to feel a hint of delight. For this senior Darknorth to be willing to offer such a high price was testament to how much he valued her.

“A hundred!” The crown prince and the princesses felt desire now. Although they had quite a few treasures on them, over the course of decades of pursuit after the destruction of their country, with so many of their experts having perished and their treasures having been taken...the total number of treasures they had was now limited.

A hundred high-grade Heaven-ranked flying swords was worth five hundred thousand kilograms of liquefied elemental essence!

“This Primal Daoist has actually taken out this many Heaven-ranked flying swords.” The violet-robed princess's eyes were blazing. “Big brother...”

“The three of you!” Ning controlled the hundred Heaven-ranked flying swords which hovered above them as he frowned and barked, “This is enough. Don't go too far!”

The crown prince naturally wanted these items. But he knew quite well that these hundred Heaven-ranked flying swords would be of almost no use to them in their flight. Even if they went to a city and traded it for some elemental essence, what good would that be? They already had some protective, fleeing items; if they bought a few more copies, that wouldn't make a huge difference.

“Senior Darknorth,” the crown prince said respectfully, “For you to give up a hundred high-grade Heaven-ranked flying swords in exchange for having Xiaoyu follow you as her disciple is of course acceptable. However...it isn't that we aren't willing, it is that after Xiaoyu became a Zifu Disciple, she swore an oath to the Dao of the Heavens to be loyal to my clan. For you to force her to leave would be to cause her to violate her oath. She will immediately perish.”

Ning frowned. “The oaths a servant swears to the Dao of the Heavens...but the master can generally gift the servants to others.”

It was extremely common for major clans to give away Deathsworn, for example. Thus, when servants swore an oath to the Dao of the Heavens, they would generally say that they would follow the clan leader's orders in all things.

“That is true. However, that requires the clan leader of my Stone clan to agree. I cannot agree in his stead,” the crown prince said.

Ning’s face instantly sank. As it did, the hearts of the crown prince and the others all clenched.

Ning waved his hand. The hundred high-grade Heaven-ranked flying swords in the sky all vanished, and he gave the crown prince a cold look. “You are lying.”

“Lying?” The crown prince was flabbergasted. “I didn’t lie...”

“You say that you are Shi Feng? That was a lie! You said that you are unable to permit Xiaoyu to be my disciple and that you need the clan leader to agree; this, too, was a lie!” Ning said coldly.

The crown prince was startled. The two princesses were shocked as well. Indeed, the crown prince’s name was not Shi Feng; rather, it was Qi Rufeng! His surname was ‘Qi’.

The only members of the imperial Qi clan left were the three of them; thus, the crown prince Qi Rufeng was the leader of the clan. As long as he agreed, he could give Qi Xiaoyu to Ning.

“I didn’t lie.” The crown prince wanted to keep up his false front.

“Would you dare swear an oath to the Dao of the Heavens stating that you didn’t lie? So long as you dare to swear this oath, I will gift you with those hundred high-grade Heaven-ranked flying swords and leave on the spot.” Ning’s face sank even further.

Qi Rufeng and his two sisters both felt pressure now.

“Since Darknorth won’t accept a soft refusal, let’s give him a hard one. Ten years ago, back when the old servants were alive, he would’ve been killed long ago by now.” The violet-robed princess sent an angry mental message to the other two.

Right at this moment...

“Eh?” Ning suddenly turned his head.

“Huh?” The crown prince and the others turned their head as well.

A group of figures had appeared on the distant shores of the Viledragon River. There were a total of twelve figures, all dressed in black armor and staring in their direction. On their bracers were emblazoned the logo of a flaming wing.

These twelve warriors stared in their direction. Their captain, the massively muscular black-armored man, was holding a flamewing bug in his hands, a cold smile on his face. He pointed towards the distance. “The survivors of the Qi Empire are over there. Do it!”

“Kill.”

“Kill!”

All of them emanated incomparably savage auras. The twelve soldiers instantly transformed their shape. One became an enormous horned rhino, another into a three-tailed fox, a third into a coiling serpent, a fourth into a white-furred bear...but they all shared a single commonality. All of them wore black armor.

With the giant horned rhino at the center, the other soldiers spread out, filling and cycling their elemental ki through their Dao-armor and joining together into a whole.

Rumble...

An enormous venomous bug that had fiery wings suddenly appeared in the skies.

.....

“The Flamewing Guard.” The faces of the crown prince and the others changed dramatically. They had suffered miserably for the past few decades under the pursuit of the Flamewing Guard; the Flamewing Guard was their nightmare, a nightmare they had never been able to escape. The Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals of their clan had all perished; even all of their Primal Daoists had perished.

They were the only ones left. How could they resist the Flamewing Guard?

Although this was just a small squad of the Guard, the imperial clansmen knew quite well that each squad of the Flamewing Guard was led by a Primal Diremonster as well as eleven Wanxiang Diremonsters who were capable of joining together into a Dao-soldier formation. After they assumed the formation...even peak Primal Daoists would probably find it hard to do anything to these Diremonsters.

“What should we do?” The black-robed woman frantically sent mentally.

“There’s no way to use evasive techniques here on the Viledragon River, and there’s no way to fly. We have to rely on the ship.” The crown prince was panicking as well.

“Have this Darknorth go block them. He is a peak Primal Daoist; he can definitely buy us some time,” the violet-robed princess sent mentally.

Right at this moment, the enormous bug with flaming wing charged straight into the Viledragon River. It flew through the river, moving as fast as lightning. It was about to arrive.

“Hurry up and die!” An enraged bellow rang out from the enormous flamewing bug.

“This is my ship.” Ning stood on the prow of the ship, staring at the enormous flamewing bug that was flying towards him. “Hurry up and beat it.”

The crown prince and the others instantly felt overjoyed.

“Wonderful. This Darknorth has actively gone out to engage it.”

“Let him help us block them.”

“Ideally, this Darknorth and the Flamewing Guard will kill each other. We can then acquire all of Darknorth’s treasures.”

.....

The Flamewing Guard were famous for their savagery. Local cultivators and monsters would’ve fled long ago in the face of their arrival. They didn’t expect that today, they would run into someone who didn’t

fear them at all. Behind them stood the fearsome Flamewing King! What they didn't realize...was that behind Ning stood Patriarch Subhuti.

"Since you dare to try and stop the Flamewing Guard, you can die with them!" The green eyes of the enormous flamewing were filled with viciousness as it let out a shrill, enraged screech.

Whoosh. The flamewing bug soared towards the boat, and a blurry green fog appeared around it, causing the crown prince's group to be filled with terror. They hurriedly retreated, setting down a formation in the surrounding area to defend. The hideous insectoid head of the massive flamewing bug shot outwards through the mist, attacking Ning atop the board of the ship.

Ning shook his head. "You truly are seeking death!"

**BOOM!!!!**

Aboard the ship, the formerly ordinary-looking Ji Ning suddenly exploded forth with a terrifyingly powerful presence. The world itself seemed to instantly grow silent, and even the powerful, turbid waves of the Viledragon River went still. In fact, the waves and even sea spray suddenly froze mid-motion. The enormous flamewing bug was paralyzed in its attacking posture as well.

The imperial Qi clansmen who were hiding behind their formation were all frozen as well. Some had frozen looks of astonishment on their faces, others had mouths open, while still others were mid-step. They were all frozen.

The entire world had turned still.

The wind had stopped. The water had stopped. The people had stopped. The monsters had stopped. Everything had stopped.

That vast, terrifying presence caused everyone present to feel terrified. The crown prince and the others couldn't even change their facial expressions...but shock and terror could be seen in their eyes.

In this region, only Ning alone was the same as he had been before. He stood there atop the prow of his ship, staring at the giant flamewing bug before him. He shook his head and sighed. "It was you who sought death. You have no one else to blame."

### [The Desolate Era](#)

#### **Book 13: Tristar Crescent Abode Chapter 17: Forced**

The twelve Diremonsters that had formed into the massive Dao-soldier formation of a giant flamewing bug were all filled with terror.

This formation was formed by a Primal Diremonster leading eleven Wanxiang Diremonsters. Through the Dao-soldier formation, they were extremely powerful when fighting together, and only foes who at least had the power of a Loose Immortals or Earth Immortals were able to do anything to them. They had held this fur-clad youth atop the ship's prow in no regard...but now, just standing there without moving at all, the fur-clad youth had unleashed such an aura of majestic power that they were completely frozen!

"Where did this expert come from?!"

“How...how can he be so terrifying?! What level of insight into the Dao has he reached?!”

The monsters were completely stunned. They had held the fur-clad youth in no regard and wanted to just dispose of him...but now they realized they had stomped down on a giant steel plate that was harder than any they had ever seen.

Boom! Boom! Boom! One streak of light after another appeared in the skies. They instantly pierced through the enormous flamewing bug and the twelve Diremonsters within it. The Primal Diremonster, the Wanxiang Diremonsters...they all instantly perished.

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Ning stood at the prow of his ship, looking at the twelve dead Diremonsters. He couldn't help but shake his head and chuckle.

Killing these twelve Diremonsters was as easy as waving his hand. They had actually dared to assault him without even saying a few words to him; naturally, Ning had shown no mercy in dealing with them.

As for why Ning was laughing...

It was because he was thinking back to the ancient Fiendgod he had met back in the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains. “When I had encountered that ancient Fiendgod, the Dao Domain the Fiendgod unleashed was enough to freeze everything, causing me to be unable to move...and now, I just used the exact same sort of technique to kill a squad that was far more powerful than I was back then, led by that Primal Diremonster.”

Dao Domains...through one's mastery and insights into a Dao, one could use the power of the natural world to form a Domain that solely belonged to one's self!

Dao Domains, Dao-Realms, Grand Dao Domains...although they had differing levels of power, in truth, they were all variations on Dao Domains. They shared the same principles.

Ning's Rainwater Sword Domain was also a sort of Dao Domain.

At a higher level, after one mastered a complete Dao-Path, one's mastery over the energy of the natural world would become even stronger; this was what was known as a Dao-Realm.

But of course, that only referred to lesser Daos!

There were also Grand Dao Domains. They belonged to Grand Daos, and were actually even more powerful than Dao-Realms. And beyond them were the Grand Dao-Realms! After one completely mastered an entire Grand Dao, one would be able to summon an even more terrifying amount of natural energy than Ning was currently able to. In the face of this sort of power, even Loose Immortals or Earth Immortals would probably be paralyzed.

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Dao Domains were linked to one's insight into the Dao. The higher one's level of insights, the more natural energy of Heaven and Earth one could activate. As one's insights into a Grand Dao increased, the power of the Grand Dao Domain would similarly increase, until finally it reached the Grand Dao-Realm level.



Ning's level of insight into the Dao of the Sword was already at Immortal Northwalker's level! This level of insight was even superior to the level which that ancient Fiendgod of the Gaol Mountains had possessed. Thus, just by using his Dao Domain, he had been able to completely suppress those twelve Diremonsters who had been in a Dao-soldier formation, to the point of making it completely impossible for them to fight back.

.....

Everything was back to normal now. The waves of the Viledragon River continued to crash forward, and the large ship continued to sail forward.

The survivors of the Qi Empire, standing atop the deck of the ship, stared towards Ning in utter terror and unease.

"The survivors of the Qi Empire?" Ning sat down relaxedly, then said slowly, "Are you still trying to hide it, given the situation? Are you still going to try and tell me that your name is Shi Feng?"

The crown prince Qi Rufeng exchanged glances with the two princesses. The guards behind them looked towards Ning with fear in their gazes as well. The look in Qi Xiaoyu's eyes was especially complicated. This Daoist Darknorth wanted to take her on as his disciple, and the power he had just displayed was truly inconceivable.

"Big brother, what should we do? When the Flamewing Guard attacked, they revealed our true identities. This Darknorth knows that we are of the imperial Qi clan," the black-robed woman sent mentally.

"Word of the destruction of our Qi Empire has long since spread. This Darknorth must know very well by now that we are the lucky survivors of the imperial clan. He might act to seize our treasures," the violet-robed princess sent frantically. "We need to seize the advantage and use up our magic treasures to kill him."

"Idiocy. Although the remnant treasures of the Qi Empire are in my hands, I have no confidence in being able to deal with this Darknorth." Crown Prince Qi Rufeng sent back with anger, "Just by relying on his Dao Domain, he was able to summon enough energy from the Heavens and the Earth to cause a squad of the Flamewing Guard to be completely unable to move. His insights into the Dao are superior to those of even supreme Earth Immortals and Loose Immortals. Although judging from the ripples of power emanating from him, he should still be a peak Primal Daoist, his power is definitely at the Earth Immortal or Loose Immortal level. And given that he was able to so easily bring out a hundred high-grade Heaven-ranked flying swords, he certainly has powerful treasures of his own. I imagine that he has the power of a supreme Loose Immortal or Earth Immortal."

His nation had once spanned a million kilometers. The final survivors, including the crown prince of the nation, naturally had quite a few formidable treasures of their own.

"Then what should we do?" The violet-robed princess was panicking now.

"We only have two Greater Teleportation Dao-seals; at most, two of us can escape," the crown prince said. "This Daoist Darknorth hasn't moved to attack us yet; we can still negotiate with him."

"Right. Let's negotiate," the violet-robed princess said hurriedly.

“We have no other choices,” the black-robed princess sent as well.

.....

Ning watched as the crown prince and the two princesses stealthily sent mental messages to each other. Previously, when they had first boarded the ship, they had felt mentally superior to Ning; they had believed him to merely be a Primal Daoist, and that by relying on their imperial treasures they could deal with him. Now, however, they didn’t even think about fighting back against him.

“Senior.” Crown Prince Qi Rufeng said respectfully, “I imagine that since you have heard what the Flamewing Guard said, you already know the truth. It is true. We are indeed of the imperial Qi clan.”

News of the destruction of the Qi Empire was extremely wide-spread. Virtually all of the at least somewhat powerful cultivators in the surrounding million kilometers knew about this matter. However, although Ning had arrived at the Star continent half a month ago, he actually didn’t know about this matter at all.

Ning calmly sipped his wine as he listened.

Qi Rufeng continued nervously, “Ever since our Qi Empire was destroyed by the Flamewing King, the imperial Qi clan has been fleeing. The Flamewing Guard has never let up on their pursuit of us...and so we had to be cautious. I was forced to report a false name, ‘Shi Feng’, to you. My true name is Qi Rufeng! A prince of the Qi Empire!”

“Prince?” Ning gently murmured this word, but continued to look at Qi Rufeng.

Qi Rufeng hurriedly continued, “This is my little sister, Qi Ruyu. This is another little sister, Qi Ruhui.”

Ning glanced sideways at the two; the black-robed princess was Qi Ruyu, while the violet-robed princess was Qi Ruhui.

“Wise. You didn’t continue to lie.” Ning just sat there. “If you continue to lie...I probably will no longer have the patience to talk to you. I’d just kill you and take away the treasures of your imperial Qi clan.”

The crown prince and the princesses felt their hearts tremble as they heard this.

Ning said calmly, “I wish to take Qi Xiaoyu as my disciple. I imagine that all you need to do is nod and agree to it. Do not lie to me. If you lie...I will know.”

The difference in power between the two was simply too vast. In addition, Ning’s soul was extraordinarily powerful; this was why Ning was so confident. If the crown prince’s soul was a bit stronger, however, then Ning would no longer be so sure of himself.

“It is true. So long as I agree, I can indeed give Qi Xiaoyu to you, senior,” the crown prince said respectfully.

“Then why haven’t you done so?” Ning snapped softly.

The crown prince, Qi Rufeng, just shook his head.

“You want those hundred high-grade Heaven-ranked flying swords?” Ning looked at him, then said calmly, “I can give them to you. However...don’t go too far. Taking your life would be as easy as turning over my hand.”

“I don’t want flying swords.” Crown Prince Qi Rufeng looked at Ning. “I want you, senior, to protect our imperial clan for a hundred years! If you agree to protect us for a hundred years, then I will immediately allow Qi Xiaoyu to take you on as master, and...after a hundred years, I definitely won’t hinder you in any way. If you want to leave then, you can!”

Ning’s face sank, and a cold light flashed through his eyes. “You are courting death!”

“Hahaha...”

Qi Rufeng actually began to laugh, laugh in a mad manner. “Courting death? Right, I am indeed courting death. Senior, you have no idea how pitiful the lives of myself and my two little sisters have been. Ever since the Qi Empire was annihilated many decades ago, we have been under constant pursuit. Every day, we are filled with terror and unease. One clansman after another has perished, one elder relative after another has died, and one sibling after another has perished. Many imperial Qi clansmen had fled with us...but now, only three of us remain. I’m the only surviving male of our entire imperial Qi clan.”

“Hahaha, it’s enough. I’ve had enough! My little sister here is already unable to endure the stress; she wanted to fight those Flamewing Guards to the death. Although Ruyu has never said it aloud...I know that she is tired as well.”

“And in truth, I am even more tired!”

Qi Rufeng stared at Ning, tears in his eyes. “I’m the final male survivor. The three of us are the only survivors of the entire imperial clan, and I am the most powerful of our group, a Wanxiang Adept. All of the burdens are on my shoulders. Where shall we go? How shall we rebuild our empire? How shall we take revenge? All of these burdens are crushing me down. I’ve had enough. Enough! You can say that I’m courting death or that I’m crazy. Whatever! I’ve given you my terms. If you protect us for a century, then I will give my servant, Qi Xiaoyu, to serve you as your disciple, senior.”

“Qi Xiaoyu is a person of tremendous karmic virtue, and more than nine hundred meters of golden light surrounds her. When the elders of our clan discovered her, they were absolutely delighted and believed that she would be able to provide luck to our entire imperial clan.”

“I will not so easily let Qi Xiaoyu go...”

“Either protect us for a century, or kill us and let us reunite with our mother, our father, and our many relatives.”

Qi Rufeng’s eyes were filled with tears, but his voice was filled with absolute determination.

He was staking it all. He was throwing their lives into this wager. He was tired...he didn’t want to continue to flee in terror like this. He could tell how powerful Ning was; with Ning as their guardian and protector, they would have a much better chance at surviving.

“Big brother.” The black-robed princess’s face was streaked with tears as well.

“Big brother, don’t beg him. Let’s just end it all here.” The violet-robed princess gritted her teeth, madness in her eyes.

Ning frowned. This was trouble. He hadn’t expected that the survivors of the imperial Qi clan felt such despair, that they had nowhere to go. He had thought that a simple threat would have been enough...but they were now staking everything against him!

A hundred years?

No chance. Ning had only spent thirty years on Mount Innerheart, and he had agreed to reunite with Yu Wei back in the world of the Grand Xia as soon as possible. How could he possibly extend their reunion by a century?

### [The Desolate Era](#)

#### **Book 13: Tristar Crescent Abode Chapter 18: Treasure Trove**

The violet-robed princess glared at Ji Ning. Gritting her teeth, she said, “If we die, Xiaoyu dies as well. When the master dies, the servants shall not live either!”

Ning instantly felt a loathing for this violet-robed princess, Qi Ruhui. However, Ning knew that since the imperial Qi clan had known all along that Qi Xiaoyu was a figure with great karmic virtue, that they definitely would firmly fasten her to the sides of the imperial clan. Once the imperial clan perished, Qi Xiaoyu would probably truly die as well.

Ning shut his eyes.

The ship became completely silent. Everyone stared at Ning, waiting for his response.

The crown prince, Qi Rufeng, waited with nervousness and anticipation. “Given how powerful this senior Darknorth is...a hundred years shouldn’t be anything to him.” How could he imagine that Ning had only lived for a few decades?

Utter stillness!

The crown prince and the princesses were all extremely nervous. Qi Xiaoyu felt restless and uneasy as well.

Ning suddenly opened his eyes and looked towards the crown prince, Qi Rufeng. “I agree...to protect you for a year or to kill the Flamewing King. Once I complete either of these two conditions, I will take Qi Xiaoyu away.”

“This is my response to you. If you agree, than you shall release Qi Xiaoyu to me to be my disciple. If you refuse, then I’ll kill you and take away your imperial treasures.”

“Do you agree or do you refuse?” Ning stared at Qi Rufeng.

“Senior, it’s just a hundred...” The crown prince, Qi Rufeng, couldn’t help but begin to argue.

“You only need to tell me...if you agree or refuse?” Ning repeated coldly.

The crown prince and the two princesses exchanged glances. There were no other options now! If this Daoist Darknorth was to protect them for a year...within this year, they might have a chance for a game-changer to occur.

"Fine." Qi Rufeng gritted his teeth.

Ning nodded lightly. This was as he had expected. If he didn't give them any benefit at all, then they probably really would rather die. If he gave them at least a little bit...their desire to live would take the upper hand! And in truth, Ning wasn't planning to actually waste a full year; he would rather just go and kill that Flamewing King!

After killing the Flamewing King, his promise would have been completed.

"Then why haven't you given Qi Xiaoyu her freedom?" Ning looked at the crown prince.

The crown prince couldn't help but mumble, "Please swear an oath to the Dao of the Heavens to attest to your promise, senior, so as to put us all at ease."

Ning's face sank, and a true killing intent burst forth from him. "It seems you really do wish to die!"

An oath to the Dao of the Heavens was simply too powerful and restrictive; thus, Immortal cultivators definitely would not casually swear any such oath.

The crown prince and the princesses could all tell that Ning had truly lost all patience. Terrified, the crown prince hurriedly said, "We, we are willing to believe in your promise, senior."

"Qi Xiaoyu, from this day forth, you shall obey the instructions of senior Darknorth. There is no longer any connection between you and the imperial Qi clan," Qi Rufeng said.

Instantly, the ripples of the Dao of the Heavens descended within her subconscious mind. Clearly, the oath which Qi Xiaoyu had sworn in the past to the Dao of the Heavens had been fulfilled.

Qi Xiaoyu fell to her knees. "Xiaoyu shall never forget the benevolence you have shown me, your Imperial Highness."

Ning, standing to one side, just sighed to himself. Qi Xiaoyu truly was quite faithful. However...based on what she had told him regarding her experiences, Ning had already discovered quite a few suspicious indicators. The tribe which Qi Xiaoyu had belonged to as a child had tens of thousands of tribesmen; a tribe like this would rarely be attacked by Diremonsters!

Xiantian-level Diremonsters wouldn't be able to do it, while higher-level cultivating Diremonsters wouldn't be willing to cause sin to gather around them. And yet...the large tribe in which Qi Xiaoyu had lived in as a child was attacked and destroyed. Even all of her family had been slain...and then she just so happened to run into an expert of the imperial Qi clan.

How could things be so coincidental? The imperial Qi clan was in the middle of fleeing for their own lives as well; how could such a coincidence happen?

"Perhaps the destruction of the tribe which Qi Xiaoyu lived in as a child had something to do with the imperial Qi clan," Ning mused silently to himself.

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Qi Xiaoyu knelt down towards Ning as well. "His Imperial Highness has instructed Xiaoyu to follow you in the future and listen to your commands."

Ning looked at Qi Xiaoyu, then said, "Remember this. From this day forth, you have regained your freedom. You are neither a servant nor a slave; do not act like one." Ning continued, "I have never before taken on a disciple; if you take me as your master, then you shall naturally become the senior disciple under my tutelage. This is an important matter for you, but also an important matter for me. I have no wish to force this upon you; if you are willing, then you may bow to me as my disciple. If you are unwilling, then I will send you off to some other places with Immortal cultivation sects; I trust that they will fight over the chance to recruit you."

Ning had his own pride. There was no way he would force his very first disciple to accept him as master. Given how large the Crescent world was, he could simply go and find another person of great karmic virtue.

In truth, Qi Xiaoyu was extremely intelligent. She could tell...that the crown prince actually treated her rather indifferently. The second princess was a bit better, while the youngest princess actually loathed her. The only person in the entire imperial Qi clan who had treated her with sincerity was her master...but her master had been killed by the pursuing Flamewing Guard long ago.

As for this Darknorth who stood before her...Qi Xiaoyu could tell how much this 'senior Darknorth' valued her. He had immediately taken out a hundred Heaven-ranked flying swords for her, and now he had promised to protect the imperial Qi clan. This was as good as becoming enemies with the Flamewing Guard.

All of this was for the sake of taking her on as his disciple. And if she didn't accept him as her master, he was still going to have to carry out his promise to protect the imperial Qi clan for a year. From this, she could tell...he truly cared very much about her own will and her own choice.

"Your disciple greets you, Master." The young maiden immediately fell down to her knees and kowtowed.

Ning felt a surge of joy in his heart. He couldn't help but laugh, then nodded his head and said, "Good. From this day forth, you are the senior disciple of myself, Darknorth Daoist Ji Ning. I don't have any requirements for my disciples, aside from one; not to be traitorous!"

"Your disciple understands," Qi Xiaoyu said respectfully.

"Come with me." Ning immediately walked towards a cabin on the second level of the ship. As he walked, he instructed, "Qi Rufeng, you can take your people into your cabins to rest. Aboard my ship, I shall naturally see to your protection. You have nothing to worry about."

Qi Xiaoyu obediently followed Ning to the second level.

As Ning was accepting his first disciple. Within a city that was hundreds of thousands of kilometers away. Within an enormous palace.

This palace was simply so vast that not even sunlight could penetrate into its depths. Within a dark, secluded courtyard, a tall, thin, red-skinned man dressed in black robes was frowning pensively in thought.

“Third brother.” Suddenly, a voice rang out. A similarly tall and skinny man, this one dressed in azure armor and with eyes like an incomparably savage hawk, came walking in.

“Seventh brother.” The black-robed man nodded lightly. “You came.”

“As the Flamewing King, you are living a carefree life of ease. Why have you summoned so many of us brothers?” The hawk-eyed, azure-armored man asked.

“Naturally, there is something good I want to share,” the Flamewing King said. “Seventh brother, you are the first to arrive, so I’ll let you know in advance. Do you know why I spent so much effort to annihilate the Qi Empire all those years back?”

The azure-armored, hawk-eyed man said, puzzled, “The destruction of the Qi Empire...didn’t you say that you felt your territory was too small, and that you wanted to take over a large area? Was that not the real reason? Can it be that it is as the legends claimed, that the Qi Emperor had a treasure trove? Hahaha...I don’t believe in such things. As far as we are concerned, not even the treasures left behind by Celestial Immortals can be considered a ‘treasure trove’.”

“There is indeed a treasure trove,” the Flamewing King said seriously.

“Oh?” The hawk-eyed man was startled.

“It was only because I learned of the imperial Qi clan’s huge treasure trove that I acted against them,” the Flamewing King said. “Through torture and soul-scouring and all other methods available to me, I learned from the elder members of the imperial Qi clan...that the founding emperor of the Qi Empire had indeed encountered a treasure trove. However, he was too weak and so was only able to acquire a very small portion of the treasure trove, including some cultivation methods, divine abilities, and secret arts. But just by relying on this small portion, the Qi clan was able to rapidly rise to power, establish an empire, and then expand to the point where a few tens of thousands of years later, they had taken over a million kilometers of land.”

The hawk-eyed man was quite startled to hear this.

“Over the past few tens of thousands of years, the imperial Qi clan has repeatedly ventured forth to the location of the treasure trove, but they were unable to make any progress,” the Flamewing King said. “After I discovered the location of this treasure trove, I ventured there twice. The first time, I came back with nothing to show for my efforts. The second time, I made more ample preparations and forced my way deeper in...but I ended up being trapped within the place for more than twenty years. I nearly died there, and just barely managed to escape from it a short while ago!”

“What?!” The hawk-eyed man was completely shocked. He knew exactly how powerful this Flamewing King was. Of the major powers of the Star continent, the ‘Twelve Monster Kings of the Eastern Flows’ were extremely well-known. Each of them had unearthly amounts of power and extremely large territories. The Flamewing King was one of the ‘Twelve Monster Kings of the Eastern Flows’ and was extremely powerful. Otherwise, how could he have annihilated the Qi Empire?

“The place where this treasure trove is located is incomparably dangerous.” The Flamewing King shook his head. “The treasures within the outermost perimeter of the trove have all been picked clean by the founding emperor of the Qi Empire...but those treasures aren’t worth our attention anyhow. Deeper within are even more powerful treasures, and the ripples of those treasures...cause even my heart to tremble.”

“Cause your heart to tremble?” The hawk-eyed man was intrigued as well.

“This treasure trove is incomparably mysterious, and I’ve always wanted to discover what it contains. But I’m unable to find out on my own; that’s why I’ve asked all of our brothers to join forces with me. With us twelve kings combining our powers...I trust that we have a chance to go deeper into the treasure trove region,” the Flamewing King said.

The hawk-eyed man nodded lightly as well.

Right as the two monster kings were chatting...a figure suddenly appeared in the distance, outside the courtyard. “Your Majesty, your subordinate has a report regarding the Flamewing Guard.”

“Oh?” The Flamewing King glanced outside, then nodded. “Come in.”

A tall, skinny old man with an extremely long neck and a furry face walked in. He glanced at the hawk-eyed man before speaking.

“Speak. There’s nothing you need to hide from my seventh brother,” the Flamewing King said.

“Understood.” The long-necked elder said respectfully, “Your Majesty, you instructed us to pursue and kill the survivors of the imperial Qi clan. Only three of them remain, with the strongest being a Wanxiang Adept. However, just now, one of our ten-plus Flamewing Guard squads who were chasing after them was completely wiped out. Their jade life-tablets have all shattered. They died roughly six hundred thousand kilometers away from us...”

“Oh?” The Flamewing King frowned. That didn’t make sense. This area was under the command of himself, the Flamewing King. All the monsters obeyed his orders, and the human cultivators had been shooed away by him long ago. Logically speaking...there should be no one in this region who would dare act against his Flamewing Guard.

“My guess is that the survivors of the imperial Qi clan...” The long-necked elder was about to venture a guess, but the Flamewing King interrupted him. With a frown, the Flamewing King barked, “Arrange for three companies of Flamewing Guards to head there and investigate. Can it be that the survivors of the imperial Qi clan have hidden secrets that even I am unaware of?”

“Yes,” the long-necked elder said with respect, immediately accepting the order

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Soon, three companies of Flamewing Guards that were led by three Loose Immortal monsters teleported away from the royal capital of the Qi Empire and moved to investigate this affair.

### [The Desolate Era](#)

### **Book 13: Tristar Crescent Abode Chapter 19: Great Sinners**



Viledragon River. A large boat was sailing through it with the currents.

Within a cabin on the large boat. The crown prince, Qi Rufeng, was currently alongside his two little sisters.

“By this point...all we can do is trust this senior Darknorth,” Qi Rufeng sent mentally.

“Hmph.” The violet-robed princess, Qi Ruhui, had a look of dissatisfaction in her eyes. “Although Xiaoyu was just one of our servants, she was surrounded by the light of great karmic virtue. Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals of major clans would fight for the chance of taking her on as a disciple. We actually let this Darknorth acquire her so easily; he didn’t even have to swear an oath to the Dao of the Heavens! He took advantage of how downtrodden we are; back when our imperial clan was flourishing, we would’ve annihilated him for daring to toy with us in such a manner!”

“Little sister,” the black-robed princess sent mentally, “That was then, this is now. We are now extremely weak, and senior Darknorth had even offered a hundred high-grade Heaven-ranked flying swords for her. This means that he isn’t an unreasonable person. He hasn’t abandoned us after taking her own as his disciple, and is continuing to hold fast to his promise to protect us. Given how weak we are right now, we should celebrate the fact that we’ve found someone who keeps his promises.”

“Little sister, remember this: You are no longer a princess like you were before,” Qi Rufeng mentally barked at her.

The youngest princess had been a child living in the palace back when the attack came; she had been spoiled absolutely rotten. Before the elders had a chance to teach and train her as she grew up, the entire nation had been destroyed. They had been fleeing this entire time, and nobody had a chance to teach her and see to her upbringing. Growing up in a state of constant flight, the hatred and grievances in her heart had grown increasingly strong. In fact, because the elders of the clan took good care of Xiaoyu, she herself felt jealousy and dislike for Xiaoyu.

However, since Qi Xiaoyu was a person of great karmic virtue, the clan had ordered long ago that she could not be assaulted or killed. Otherwise...the princess probably would’ve arranged for Qi Xiaoyu’s death long ago.

Thud. Thud. Thud. Suddenly, footsteps rang out on the stairs outside.

The crown prince and the two princesses looked out through the window towards the deck. They saw a white-robed maiden walking down from the second floor. The white-robed maiden was clearly different from other people, and a series of ripples could be sensed coming from the magic robes she wore.

“Qi Xiaoyu?”

The crown prince and princesses were greatly shocked.

Qi Xiaoyu, who had previously been in servant clothes, now looked completely different. Her robes were clearly extraordinary, and she had a silver bracelet around her arm. Her pure white arms were a perfect match for the bracelet, which made her skin look even paler. She now had a jade hairpin affixed in her hair which gave off mysterious, powerful ripples. As the saying goes, clothes make the man; Qi Xiaoyu was already a person of great karmic virtue who naturally made others feel positively towards her, and

as an Immortal cultivator, her skin and her figure were superb. Beauty, poise, a wondrous aura...and now that she had changed clothes, she appeared even more dazzling than the two princesses.

“Those robes, that bracelet...they should be extremely rare top-grade Mortal-ranked magic treasures. As for the jade hairpin...even I can’t tell what it is!” Qi Rufeng said.

“Darknorth truly is an extraordinary figure. Although Mortal-ranked magic treasures aren’t that precious, top-grade Mortal-ranked magic treasures...they are still very rare.” The black-robed princess sighed in amazement. “In addition, judging from the way in which senior Darknorth took out a hundred high-grade Heaven-ranked magic treasures earlier, he probably would’ve given her even better treasures, were it not for the fact that she is still weak and can only use Mortal-ranked treasures. That jade hairpin...it should also be a top-grade Mortal-ranked treasure.”

The violet-robed princess disagreed. “It’s just a bunch of Mortal-ranked items.”

Qi Xiaoyu walked down the stairs, then knocked on the door to the cabin.

“Open the door,” the crown prince immediately instructed. One of the guards behind him immediately walked forward to push open the cabin door.

Qi Xiaoyu walked in, then immediately said, “Your Highness, Master wishes you to go to him.”

“In the future, there’s no need to refer to me as ‘your Highness’. You are now the exalted disciple of senior Darknorth; you can just refer to me by my name,” Crown Prince Qi Rufeng said.

But young princess Qi Ruhui said, “Xiaoyu, what sort of magic treasure is that hairpin? Neither my big brother nor my second sister can recognize it.”

“Master said that this is a protective treasure that can only be used once. Once the elemental ki within it is unleashed, it can withstand the attacks of even a supreme Loose Immortal for a space of ten breaths,” Qi Xiaoyu replied obediently.

“What?!” Everyone in the cabin was astonished. Block a supreme Loose Immortal’s attacks for the space of ten breaths? This was definitely a supremely valuable protective item.

In truth, this was just one of the many magic items left behind by Immortal Juhua. Ning felt that it was actually rather embarrassing for him to give out Mortal-ranked magic treasures to his first disciple; after all, she too was now a member of Mount Innerheart. Thus, he gave her this protective item.

“To block a supreme Loose Immortal...” The violet-robed princess gritted her teeth. She couldn’t help but feel jealous. “This shitty slave...she sure has some good luck.”

Because they had been fleeing for so long, they had often used this sort of protective, anti-attack magic treasure. Over the course of tens of years, they had used them all up!

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Qi Rufeng hurriedly emerged from his cabin, climbing up the stairs to the second floor to go see Ji Ning.

“Greetings to you, senior Darknorth,” Qi Rufeng said respectfully.

“Qi Rufeng, I have questions for you.” Ning sat there, pointing towards a chair. “You can sit as well.”

“Alright.” Qi Rufeng immediately sat down obediently as directed. He was a person who knew when to advance and when to retreat. There was an enormous gap in power right now; he was completely unable to fight back against someone like Ning. Ning had given him a promise, and he had the feeling that this senior Darknorth was a decent person. If he had encountered a vicious, barbaric person, that sort of person would undoubtedly have had many ways to force him to hand over Qi Xiaoyu.

“I ask you this. Why is it that you have fled for so many years from the Flamewing King without successfully escaping?” Ning asked, puzzled, “Given how large this Star continent is, if you run a few million kilometers away, it will be easier for the Flamewing King to find a needle in the sea than to find you. And yet...you’ve been fleeing in such a haggard fashion for decades, and remain under pursuit.”

Qi Rufeng shook his head and sighed. “This Flamewing King was originally a venomous pest of a type known as the ‘flamewing bug’ who cultivated the Dao. After he led his Diremonster army to suddenly attack my Qi Empire, the Flamewing King personally covered the entire imperial citadel with flamewing venom. The venom filled every single palace, and it instantly merged into the body of every single person it touched. There’s no way to separate it from the bodies it has touched, and in fact it even has corrupted our souls. Even Earth Immortals or Loose Immortals are unable to get rid of this poison.”

“Oh?” Ning was surprised. Flamewing bugs? He had never heard of this sort of venomous bug back in the Grand Xia world.

“This flamewing venom doesn’t actually harm the body or the soul.” Qi Rufeng shook his head, then said bitterly, “But no matter how far away we move away, the flamewing bugs can still sense the location of the flamewing venom. Even if we flee to the Cloud continent or the Flame continent, the flamewing bugs can still sense us. The Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals under the Flamewing King’s command can engage in teleportation and go to the Cloud continent and Flame continent...and so no matter where we flee to, we are unable to escape pursuit.”

Ning now understood. What a nasty poison! He still remembered how in his youth, when he was adventuring in Eastmount Marsh, he had been attacked and pursued by Ironwood Zhan. It was precisely because Ning had been touched by that ‘iceflower liquid’ that Ironwood Zhan was able to continue the chase, even though Ning had fled very far away.

However, by comparison this flamewing venom was even more formidable...and it was the Flamewing King who had personally used it. It was able to stain even the soul. Within this Crescent world, no matter where the clan fled to, the countless flamewing bugs under the king’s command would still be able to sense their direction.

“The majority of our imperial clan was killed on the spot, and the rest fled in every direction,” Qi Rufeng said. “Back then, Loose Immortals numbered amongst the fleeing survivors. However, no matter where we fled to, they continued to chase us. Thus, we chose to continue to flee about the former territory of our Qi Empire; after all, this was the place we originally controlled, and so we were quite familiar with it. In addition, the imperial clan had built up many secret bases...”

“After having fled for so long, we three are the only survivors.”

Qi Rufeng’s words were filled with grief and powerlessness.

Ning now understood it all.

The main problem was that the flamewing venom was hard to eradicate; thus, this crown prince and the princesses were constantly pursued. This sort of venom that stained even the soul...not even Ning was able to help get rid of it.

"I ask you this," Ning said. "How great a sinner is this Flamewing King? Is he surrounded by bloody sin light?"

"The Flamewing King is one of the Twelve Monster Kings of the Eastern Flows. He is famous for his savagery; naturally, the amount of sins he has committed towers to the skies. As far as the bloody aura of sin...from what I hear, all twelve of them are wreathed in tremendous amounts of bloody sin light. Anyone who uses divine sense to look at them will see a towering, tidal-wave of bloody sin light swirling around them. Even Earth Immortals and Loose Immortals will feel terrified upon seeing them," Qi Rufeng said.

Ning felt a sense of jubilation in his heart. A towering tidal-wave of bloody sin light? A huge sinner?

The trial to acquire the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] was to kill ten great sinners and to accept a disciple. He had now accepted a disciple, and his next objective was to kill ten great sinners. Perhaps he would be able to fulfill the criteria by dealing with these twelve monster kings.

"You heard this personally, yes? You aren't just making this up?" Ning asked.

"Perhaps the stories are exaggerated, but they shouldn't be too exaggerated. The savagery of the Twelve Monster Kings of the Eastern Flows is known throughout the Star continent. In fact, even those in the Cloud continent and the Flame continent know about their reputation. Even supreme powers with Celestial Immortal Patriarchs are unwilling to go all out against these twelve monster kings," Qi Rufeng said. "Although my imperial Qi clan had originally fled to the Cloud continent, we were unfamiliar with the place and the people there. The fame of the Twelve Monster Kings of the Eastern Flows was simply too great; no one was willing to help us, and so in the end, we were chased all the way back home. At least here within the former territory of our Qi Empire, we are able to struggle and fight for a period of time."

Ning felt startled. Even powers with Celestial Immortal Patriarchs were unwilling to fight with them?

"How strong are these twelve monster kings?" Ning asked. "How strong is the Flamewing King?"

"All twelve of them are incomparably savage and ferocious; the reason why they were willing to swear brotherhood was because they all had similar temperaments. Every one of them is incredibly powerful...but of course, some are stronger and some are weaker. The Flamewing King's power is average for the twelve; he has nearly a hundred Earth Immortals or Loose Immortals under his command. Given his power, killing ordinary Earth Immortals or Loose Immortals is as easy as killing a chicken," Qi Rufeng said.

"The strongest of the twelve, their number one figure, is the Goldfur Barking. I've heard that the Goldfur Barking has previously fought a Celestial Immortal Patriarch, who was unable to do anything to him. In the end, it was the Celestial Immortal who retreated. You tell me; is he powerful or not? When these twelve monster kings join forces, advancing and retreating in unison...they are one of the absolute hegemonies of the entire Eastern Flows region. Although our Qi Empire previously spanned a million

kilometers, we've never dared to encroach on their territory. Who would've thought that the Flamewing King would annihilate our empire?"

Ning was secretly startled. Even a Celestial Immortal had been unable to do anything, and had voluntarily retreated?

He had thought that he would be able to get his quota of ten great sinners from these twelve monster kings...but now, it seemed, things wouldn't be so easy!

"Easy is boring. Hard is interesting. I spent more than thirty years training at Mount Innerheart; I have yet to truly fight with anyone. The Twelve Monster Kings of the Eastern Flows...a perfect foe!" Ning could feel his blood beginning to pump excitedly through his veins, and his desire to do battle was growing...

### [The Desolate Era](#)

#### **Book 13: Tristar Crescent Abode Chapter 20: The Slaughter on Viledragon River**

Ji Ning stood there by himself on the prow of the ship, staring at the raging waves. He was in an excellent mood.

He had already found his disciple, and the Twelve Monster Kings of the Eastern Flows would probably fulfill his quota of ten great sinners to kill. The only problem was...these monster kings were quite hard to deal with.

"Eh?" Ning suddenly stared towards the distant horizon. Atop the distant shore, a vague group of figures could be seen drawing closer and closer to them. They were moving at an extremely fast speed, and Ning could visibly make out the emblem of a flamewing on their Dao-armors.

"Flamewing Guards?" Ning laughed in surprise. "There's actually a few hundred of them."

Crown Prince Qi Rufeng and the others with him within the cabin stared outwards through the window towards the Viledragon River. They were seeking for a place to hide.

"Is that..." The crown prince's face changed dramatically.

"Hundreds of Flamewing Guards?!" The violet-robed Qi Ruhui's face instantly turned ashen. Twelve Flamewing Guards had already terrified them, but now hundreds more had come...even Loose Immortals would perish in a situation like this!

"Disastrous!" The crown prince's face was ashen. He frantically sent mentally, "It must be due to the fact that all twelve of those Flamewing Guards died, without a single one escaping. That's why they sent so many over this time."

In the past, during the flight of the imperial Qi clan, the Flamewing Guard had always held the upper hand. It was the imperial Qi clan which had continued to flee; the Flamewing Guard had never before had a situation where all their troops died in an encounter.

In addition, the crown prince, Qi Rufeng, was only recently the leader of their squad; in the past, they had Primal Daoists with them, and it was the clan elders who made the decisions. But now the Primal Daoists were all dead...and the decision-maker was Qi Rufeng!

Qi Rufeng was inexperienced. He had never before encountered a situation where all the chasing Flamewing Guard forces had been wiped out. He had no idea that the extermination of an entire squad would result in such a terrifying consequence.

“A total of three companies...each one led by a Loose Immortal or Earth Immortal, eleven Primal Diremonsters, and over a hundred Wanxiang Diremonsters.” The black-robed princess sent solemnly, “With so many Flamewing Guards in one place...even supreme Loose Immortals will most likely perish.”

“Why haven’t we fled?” The violet-robed princess sent frantically, “That Darknorth is merely a Primal Daoist. Even if he has a high level of comprehension of the Dao and can fight those at a higher level, he would at most be comparable to supreme Loose Immortals. In the face of this many Flamewing Guards, which number three Earth Immortal or Loose Immortal monsters amongst their ranks, there’s no way he can hold on.”

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Just as Ning was smiling...and the imperial Qi clan was utterly terrified...

The hundreds of distant Flamewing guards joined together into a grand Dao-soldier formation. The three companies were all led by Loose Immortals, who led their Primal Diremonsters and Wanxiang Diremonsters on the distant shore to join form into a a trio of three thousand meter tall flamewing bugs.

Blazing wings, and the body of a centipede.

The enormous three-headed flamewing bugs were filled with unearthly, savage power. Their auras alone caused the surrounding waves to instantly be crushed downwards and flattened.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The three massive flamewing bugs all flew into the river, running across the waves as they threw themselves towards Ning’s ship.

Ning stood at the prow of the ship. He barked, “Hurry up and leave, and you can keep your lives.”

“So you are the one protecting the imperial Qi clan.” One of the three massive flamewing bugs spoke out in a growling voice. “Human, this is the territory of our Flamewing King. How dare you act so wildly here?”

“Don’t waste words with him. Kill him.”

“Kill the human.”

Monsters and humans were enemies in virtually every part of the Three Realms. After all, these two races were the two most powerful races in the current Three Realms.

Ning shook his head gently. Three Loose Immortal monsters? They were most likely only on par with that Loose Immortal, Floatcloud, who had tried to assassinate him. Even all those years ago, he had been able to deal with Immortal Floatcloud. Now that his Primaltwin was a full level of power greater than it had been in the past, and now that his insights into the Dao of the Sword were unfathomably greater than before...killing these Loose Immortals would indeed be as easy as killing a chicken.

Accompanied by three massive waves, the three enormous flamewing bugs charged forward, seeking to attack Ning en-masse and annihilate him at one go.

Ning remained very calm. To deal with hundreds of Flamewing Guards, just by relying on his Dao Domain wouldn't be enough; he had to actually fight! But of course, it would still be very easy for him.

"Quick."

"Let's go."

"If we dawdle, we won't be able to escape."

The imperial Qi clan didn't dare to hesitate at all. If they did, they would probably die here. As they saw it, no matter how high a level of comprehension Ning had, he was still just a Primal Daoist. In the face of three Loose Immortal monsters and hundreds of Flamewing Guards...it would be incredible if he was even able to block them.

"Let's go."

The crown prince, Qi Rufeng, waved his hand and a long shuttle once more appeared by the side of the large ship. Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh! The crown prince, the princesses, and the five servants all entered the shuttle.

"Go!" The violet-robed woman waved her hand, and instantly, a series of green bamboo strips flew out and descended from the skies, plunging into the roiling waves.

Swoosh!

The shuttle cruised through the waves, moving as fast as lightning. As for those green bamboo strips, there were hundreds of them, and they all stabbed downwards, completely surrounding the region where Ning and the three giant flamewing bugs were located. The bamboo strips even had bamboo leaves attached to them. The bamboo leaves floated about, causing the entire region to transform into nothingness. Even the surrounding waves had completely disappeared.

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"Little sister, you, you...!" Crown Prince Qi Rufeng, within the fleeing shuttle, was completely shocked.

The violet-robed princess turned her head to stare at the now-massive bamboo strips. She smirked disdainfully, "What is it? That Daoist Darknorth is merely a Primal Daoist; it'd be impressive if he even had the power of a supreme Loose Immortal. And even if he did, he still most likely isn't a match for those Flamewing Guards. Since that was the case, we have to use him as best as we can and make him offer up his strength in service to our imperial clan. It can be said that this is the price he must pay for taking Xiaoyu away as his disciple."

"You...are...AN IDIOT." Qi Rufeng was speechless with rage. "Given how powerful this Daoist Darknorth is, if he has a school or a master behind him, how are we supposed to deal with them?!"

"So what if he does? Who will learn of this?" The violet-robed princess remained disdainful.

The black-robed princess disagreed frantically. "Little sister, given this Daoist Darknorth's powerful, he probably has a Celestial Immortal Patriarch behind him. Celestial Immortals are able to investigate the past. When they find out..."

"Don't worry. So what if they do find out? Even if this Daoist Darknorth has a Celestial Immortal Patriarch backing him, there's no way that Celestial Immortal will find us. All that Celestial Immortal will know is that Daoist Darknorth was killed by the Flamewing Guard. Perhaps this might cause his school to go act against the Flamewing King!" A look of savagery was in the violet-robed princess's eyes. "Hmph. Hmph. Perhaps the Flamewing King will be killed as a result. Everything would be worth it!"

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Ning waved his hand, collecting his ship. Qi Xiaoyu, aboard the ship, was also collected into the Immortal estate he carried with him at all times.

"Hmph." Ning glanced at the fleeing imperial Qi clan. He watched as the treasures the youngest princess threw out, those bamboo slips, sank into the sea and formed a formation. He naturally understood what the plot was; to trap him here along with the Flamewing Guard. Otherwise...if so much as a single one of the three massive flamewing bugs moved to attack them, they would be in big trouble!

Now that they were all trapped in the formation, all three would undoubtedly join forces to attack him, Ji Ning. Only afterwards would they move to break the formation. This was a scheme to force Ning to fight with full power. And if Ning's level of power truly was what the imperial Qi clan believed it to be, then most likely the end result truly would be as the princess predicted; he would be able to buy them some time, then die.

Unfortunately...their guess was wrong!

Ning's school was indeed powerful, far more so than they could imagine. Ning's master was Patriarch Subhuti, the creator of this entire world! And Ning's own level of power was far greater than they imagined as well!

"Kill him, then break the formation."

"Kill him."

The three massive flamewing bugs didn't panic at all. They had complete confidence in their ability to first kill this human, then break the formation. It would at most take them a bit of extra time, which didn't matter; those imperial Qi clansmen were all stained by flamewing venom, and they'd be able to find and catch them later.

"Die." Ning had an ugly look on his face. He was protecting them, but they had put a knife in his back. How could he not be enraged?

The enraged Ning no longer wished to waste any time; he was going to make the imperial Qi clan pay for what they did.

**BANG! BANG! BANG!**

Ning stood there atop the water, Darknorth swords in his hands. He chopped out three times in a row with his sword-light!



Three streaks of blindingly bright sword-light transformed into three enormous black dragons. The power of the black dragons was utterly unearthly, and they smashed towards the three massive flamewings with utterly catastrophic power.

“What?!”

“How can this be?!”

“NO!”

The Loose Immortal monsters, Primal Diremonsters, and Wanxiang Diremonsters within the three flamewing bugs were all stupefied. They were truly scared silly.

The three black dragons each flew to a different target. They had the shape of black dragons, but they were in reality streaks of incomparably terrifying sword-light. They chopped through the titanic flamewing bugs as easily as chopping through rotting wood. BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! The hundreds of monsters, including the Loose Immortal monsters, all perished!

Their souls were annihilated!

The enraged Ning’s sword-blows were so powerful that they destroyed flesh and soul alike. In fact, even the Dao-armors worn by the Wanxiang Diremonsters were ground into dust, and quite a few of their magic treasures were shattered as well.

“BREAK!” Ning launched yet another streak of sword-light.

The surrounding formation was a one-use formation. It contained elemental ki and was primarily meant to trap foes. However, Ning couldn’t be bothered to actually disrupt the formation; he just broke straight through it with a streak of howling sword-light, causing the bamboo talismans to instantly shatter.

Swoosh! Ning moved forward in pursuit.

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Within the shuttle which was escaping at lightning speed, the violet-robed princess had a look of madness in her eyes. “Hmph. Hmph. Perhaps the Flamewing King will be killed as a result. Everything would be worth it! Hahaha, I’m too clever. Earlier, I just wanted to make this Darknorth’s death useful, to buy us some time. But now, it seems as though I, Qi Ruhui, just played a marvelous card.”

“Yes. Quite the marvelous card.” A cold voice rang out.

The crown prince and princesses suddenly shook. They turned their heads to look.

On the other end of the shuttle stood a fur-clad youth.

Ning looked at the three imperial Qi clansmen.

“How can this be...”

They were completely stupefied. They had escaped just moments ago and had said just a few words to each other. Almost no time had passed at all. They had no idea...that Ning would be able to kill hundreds

of Flamewing Guards with a single exchange, then break through the formation and chase after them. Naturally, this had taken very little time.

“Senior Darknorth.” Qi Rufeng immediately rose to his feet.

Boom.

Ning’s gaze turned towards the violet-robed princess. Instantly, a streak of sword-light flew out...and the violet-robed princess was instantly ground into dust which flew everywhere. At Ning’s level...just the slightest bit of power was enough to shatter someone’s soul.

### The Desolate Era

#### **Book 13: Tristar Crescent Abode Chapter 21: Bluecliff Xiaoyu**

The crown prince, the second princess, and the servants aboard the shuttle all had ashen looks on their faces. They could all tell that this time, Darknorth was truly enraged!

They were all Immortal cultivators; naturally, they were no fools. They knew that the little princess had plotted against this senior Darknorth just now. Senior Darknorth had clearly gone to help them fight against the Flamewing Guard, but the little princess had stabbed him in the back...an action like this would be viewed with contempt by mortals and cultivators alike!

“Senior Darknorth...”

“Darknor...”

The crown princess and the second princess hurriedly spoke out, utterly terrified. This was completely not their fault. The little princess had acted completely of her own accord; they didn’t instruct her to carry out those actions at all! As for her death, the crown prince and the second princess felt a hint of regret but not too much pain. This was because far too many of their siblings had died on this journey, and all of their elders had perished as well. They were used to this sort of loss...and on an emotional level, the crown prince and the second princess were much closer.

Whoosh. Ning willed it, and a white-robed maiden appeared next to him. It was Qi Xiaoyu.

“Master,” Qi Xiaoyu said hurriedly, “I saw the little princess...” Halfway through her words, she realized that she was within the flying shuttle. Seeing the situation, she couldn’t help but grow confused.

“Disciple, watch carefully,” Ning said coldly.

“Yes,” Qi Xiaoyu said.

“Senior Darknorth, what happened just now was completely the actions of Ruhui; she wanted to use you to delay the Flamewing Guard,” Qi Rufeng said hurriedly.

“It was our little sister who carried out that action. Her alone,” the black-robed princess said hurriedly as well.

Qi Xiaoyu just watched silently. When the Flamewing Guard had arrived, her master had gone to fight them while the imperial Qi clan had fled...and while fleeing, the little princess had thrown out a formation to trap them. Qi Xiaoyu had seen all of these things with perfect clarity. In addition, after

having accompanied the imperial Qi clan for so long, Qi Xiaoyu knew very well how vicious and cruel the little princess was. Thus, by now she more or less knew what had happened!

Ning looked at the crown prince and the second princess. He said coldly, "I heard it all. There was talk of having the Celestial Immortal Patriarch behind me go take revenge upon the Flamewing King on my behalf and kill him? Hmph...I don't like to kill, but some people deserve killing!"

The crown prince and the second princess trembled.

"If the two of you were behind her actions, then you two shall both die as well. If you did not...I won't go so far as to implicate the two of you." Ning's gaze turned to the black-robed princess. He immediately used the [Soulcharmer Art] divine ability. Although this Black-White College art wasn't that strong, Ning's soul was far too powerful! The black-robed princess's gaze instantly turned dull.

"Speak. Did you have anything to do with the little princess' plot against me?" Ning asked calmly.

The black-robed princess spoke in a dull voice without any inflection at all. "It had nothing to do with me. Ruhui acted of her own volition. Although her action may have caused senior Darknorth to fight for a bit longer, it also created yet another powerful foe for our imperial Qi clan. If the school behind senior Darknorth came for vengeance, our imperial Qi clan would most likely be in even more dire straits. Ruhui was far too shortsighted..."

"...what just happened?" The black-robed princess regained her clarity of mind. She stared around in astonishment...and slowly, the memories of what had happened just now when she had been hypnotized came rushing back to her. She couldn't help but look towards Ning in terror.

The crown prince's face instantly turned even more ashen.

"You." Ning looked towards the crown prince.

The crown prince gritted his teeth. "I definitely didn't have the intention to harm you, senior." Just as these words came out, Qi Rufeng's gaze also turned dull.

He, too, dully spoke out the truth. This truly did not have nothing to do with him.

The nearby Qi Xiaoyu let out a sigh of relief. She actually felt good-will towards the crown princess and the second princess.

"I ask you," Ning suddenly said, "Did your imperial Qi clan arrange for the destruction of Qi Xiaoyu's tribe?"

The black-robed princess's face instantly changed. Qi Xiaoyu's body trembled as well, and a look of terror and unease appeared in her eyes.

The crown prince responded in a wooden, robotic manner, "For the sake of ensuring Qi Xiaoyu's total devotion to our imperial clan, we had to make it so that she had no one else to rely on. Otherwise, in her heart, her tribe would still be occupy the most important position. Thus, the elders of the clan forced three Xiantian Diremonsters to attack the tribe. As for the two Xiantian experts of that tribe, our clan elders plotted against them and ensured that they naturally wouldn't be able to fight back, causing the entire tribe to be broken apart."

“Qi Xiaoyu’s family members all died, giving her no one else to rely on. At that moment, our elder stepped in to protect her; naturally, she felt gratitude and affection for the elder’s actions. Everything happened as we planned, and Qi Xiaoyu became incomparably devoted and loyal to our imperial Qi clan. In addition, after Qi Xiaoyu became a member of our imperial Qi clan, our luck took a noticeable turn for the better. The number of times we were attacked dropped, and the number of elders who died in each attack also lessened...”

“No...no...” Qi Xiaoyu’s face was covered with tears. She repeatedly shook her head.

Ning sighed mentally to himself. In truth, the main reason he had used the [Soulcharmer Art] was to ask about this matter. Given Ning’s keen senses, he naturally noticed quite a few oddities regarding the destruction of Xiaoyu’s tribe. It was extremely rare for this sort of large-scale tribe to suffer an attack from Diremonsters.

“As I thought.” Ning nodded to himself. Qi Xiaoyu felt extremely deep gratitude towards the imperial Qi clan. Ning was afraid that this might cause problems in the future, and so he wanted to clarify this matter right away.

“You were plotting against me all along. All along...” Qi Xiaoyu looked at the crown prince, her face completely pale. “My master? Was she plotting against me as well?”

“Aunt-master Everlotus was opposed to our scheme. She wanted to go to your tribe and take you on as her disciple in a voluntary manner. However, our imperial Qi clan was in a state of flight; all of our actions had to be for the sake of the imperial Qi clan’s best interests.” The crown prince, Qi Rufeng, continued to speak in a monotone voice. “She felt sorry for you, and so when she took you on as disciple, taught you, and doted on you, it was out of love. In fact, some of the other princes and princesses felt jealousy for this.”

Qi Xiaoyu felt her heart unclench slightly. The person she felt the most gratitude for in the entire imperial Qi clan was her master, Everlotus. Everlotus had taken care of her like she was her own daughter. She had loved her and cherished her. Qi Xiaoyu had been able to sense how much love Everlotus had felt for her, and ever since she was young, her master had taught her. Thus, although she didn’t have many memories regarding life in the Bluecliff tribe and although she only had blurry memories of her parents, she felt an extremely deep affection for her master, Everlotus. After all, they had been together for the longest period of time.

Qi Xiaoyu was fairly accurate in sensing if others were kind or malicious towards her, if they cared about her or hated her. She had always felt as though her master, Everlotus, had truly loved her. This was why she felt such gratitude for the imperial Qi clan. In fact, when the now-deceased leader of the imperial Qi clan had asked her to swear an oath to the Dao of the Heavens, she hadn’t hesitated at all.

“What just happened?” Crown Prince Qi Rufeng came back to his senses. He quickly regained his memories, and his face immediately changed. He stared towards Ning in terror, then looked towards Qi Xiaoyu.

“Master Everlotus...I can understand why you did what you did. I don’t blame you. I don’t blame you...” Tears streaked down Qi Xiaoyu’s face. She stared at the black-robed princess and the crown prince. Gritting her teeth, she said, “Your imperial Qi clan destroyed my tribe and home and killed my family.

But Master Everlotus's benevolence towards me was as weighty as a mountain. From this day forth, I, Qi Xiaoyu, will no longer have any connection to your Qi clan. From this day forth, my name shall be Bluecliff Xiaoyu!"

"Master." Bluecliff Xiaoyu turned to look towards Ning, tears in her eyes. "Thank you, master, for enlightening me and not letting me continue to remain deceived. I wish to be by myself for a time."

"Go." Ning nodded, then willed Qi Xiaoyu to be teleported into his Immortal estate with a swish.

Ning's gaze turned towards the crown prince and the princess. Both of them felt helpless; when they had been hypnotized, they had thought it was just over the little princess' plot, but who would've thought that this senior Darknorth would actually uncover the matter of the destruction of the Bluecliff tribe? Still...by now, they had no options left. All they could do was beg for their lives.

"Since you had no intention to harm me, I naturally won't act against you. I will still hold to my promise," Ning said. "However...before I do so, come with me to a place."

As he spoke, Ning waved his hand, causing the imperial Qi clansmen and the flying shuttle to all be drawn into his Immortal estate. And then, Ning strode forward across the waves of Viledragon River, quickly departing from this place.

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A short period of time later.

The peak of a tall mountain, surrounded by clouds. A ripple in space could be seen above it, then a fur-clad youth appeared out of nowhere and descended.

"This place works." The fur-clad youth nodded, then waved his hand. An Immortal estate appeared.

Within the Immortal estate. As Ning entered, the crown prince and the second princess both immediately paid their respects. The crown prince said, "Senior, where are we?"

"You can exit the estate now, but you had best not go too far. If you do, I won't be able to keep you alive," Ning said calmly. "This place is more than ten million kilometers from our previous location; I trust that the Flamewing King will need some time before chasing you here. Take a rest and prepare for the next battle."

"The next battle?" The two were startled.

"I killed hundreds of Flamewing guards, including three Loose Immortal monsters. Do you think that the Flamewing King is just going to shrug that off?" Ning said calmly.

The two shook their heads. Impossible. The Eastern Flows region was the territory of the twelve monster kings; given that this senior Darknorth had killed hundreds of Flamewing Guards, how could the Flamewing King not be enraged? It must be understood that the Flamewing Guards were the most devoted servants of the Flamewing King. Given that so many of them had perished, the Flamewing King would probably personally attack next time.

"The Flamewing King is coming in person." Both the crown prince and the second princess felt restless and uneasy. "And yet this senior Darknorth still intends to fight?"

“How powerful is he? Can it be that my earlier investigations were in error? He is more than just a peak Primal Daoist?”

Their hearts were in a state of panic. Still, given how quickly Ning had chased after him, he must have disposed of all of those Flamewing Guards...which meant that things probably truly were as Ning said. He had killed hundreds of Flamewing Guards.

“In such a short period of time, he killed hundreds of Flamewing Guards, broke the formation, then caught up to us. How powerful is this Ji Ning? Is it truly possible that he can fight the Flamewing King?” The crown prince and the princess both felt as though their thoughts were in a jumble.

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Ning couldn't be bothered to pay them any heed. He entered a private room within the Immortal estate. A ripple in space appeared within it and Ning stepped into the ripple, entering his underwater estate.

“I can't underestimate the Flamewing King's power. In fact, I might have to deal with the other monster kings as well. Before doing so...I need to increase my power a bit,” Ning mused to himself. “My true body, when using [Three Heads, Six Arms], needs a total of six Immortal swords. Three of them are my Darknorth swords, and the other three would ideally be Immortal-ranked.”

He had an exquisitely top-grade Thousandbull Sword, as well as a low-grade Immortal-ranked flying sword that the Grand Xia Emperor had bestowed upon him previously. Just now, when killing those three Loose Immortal monsters, he had further acquired two more low-grade Immortal-ranked magic treasures, one of which was a flying sword.

“My true body needs to break through to the early Void stage as soon as possible. Only then can I better unleash the power of my Immortal-ranked magic treasures,” Ning mused to himself. Those two low-grade Immortal-ranked flying swords were comparable to the Darknorth swords in power...what Ning really cared about was the Thousandbull Sword! That sword had close to the power of a Pure Yang treasure!

Ning immediately entered the Still Room within his underwater estate, then began to absorb liquefied elemental essence...

### [The Desolate Era](#)

#### **Book 13: Tristar Crescent Abode Chapter 22: The Twelve Monster Kings of the Eastern Flows**

Roughly ten million kilometers away, in the imperial capital of the former Qi Empire. Within the imperial palace.

Within a lavishly decorated palace hall. Beautiful female attendants carried in platters of exquisite food and Immortal nectar, delivering them to the twelve tables, including the main table at the front of the hall.

“Come, drink.”

“Big brother, I toast you.”

“Ninth brother, it has been a thousand years since we met. Come, come, come; let us brothers have another cup together!”

Carefree laughter rang out. High-pitched, low-pitched, screeching...every single voice carried a dominating aura.

The monsters in the form of female attendants all felt their hearts tremble. They acted with the utmost caution, terrified of offending one of the monster kings. They knew that the twelve gathered here in this hall today were the Twelve Monster Kings of the Eastern Flows; the likes of them could not risk offending any of these twelve. If they accidentally irritated one of the monster kings, the results would be disastrous.

One of the maidservants had, due to her nervousness, splattered some of the wine from her platter atop the Jadetoad King, one of the twelve monster kings. The Jadetoad King had rolled his eyes, opened his mouth, and devoured the maidservant into his belly.

In the center of the hall, there were beautiful human maidens and monsters who were engaging in dance. Naturally, there were also musicians who were beating the drums and playing the flute.

"Alright, all of you can leave for now."

After a long time, the Flamewing King, seated in the host position at the front of the palace, ordered the servants to depart.

"Yes, your Majesty." The many servants, dancers, and musicians all immediately withdrew, leaving behind only the twelve monster kings within the hall.

"Third, you invited all of us brothers here today. Whatever important matter this is regarding, hurry up and speak." An extremely muscular monster king whose entire body was covered with golden fur and who had the head of a grizzly bear spoke out in a booming voice. This was the leader of the twelve monster kings, the Goldfur Barking.

"Big brother." The tall, skinny, black-robed Flamewing King laughed, "Haha, I invited all of you here to take part in a joyous affair. Seventh brother came earlier, and so I've told him already. If you don't believe me, you can ask him."

The other monster kings all looked over to the azure-armored, hawk-eyed Skysoar King, who nodded. "This is indeed regarding a joyous affair."

"Oh?" The other monster kings all looked back towards the Flamewing King with curiosity. Although they were friends due to their similar temperaments, they were famous for their savagery. If they found anything good, they would usually keep it for themselves. Why would one of them now be willing to share with the rest of the brothers?

The Flamewing King, seeing their looks, smiled. He waved his hand and a black leather scroll flew out and unfurled in the air before them. On the leather scroll there was a complicated map, as well as a diagram.

"What is this?" The other monster kings were puzzled.

"The map to a treasure trove!" The Flamewing King said.

"Treasure trove?"

“A map to a treasure trove?”

“Are you joking? A ‘treasure trove’? To the likes of us, even the treasures of a Celestial Immortal are nothing. The treasures of a True Immortal or an Empyrean God might barely qualified as a ‘trove’.”

All of the monster kings spoke out. They were the Twelve Monster Kings of the Eastern Flows, who even Celestial Immortal Patriarchs were unwilling to offend. For them to acknowledge a collection of treasures as a ‘treasure trove’ was extremely hard.

The Skysoar King spoke out, “My fellow brothers, third brother hasn’t deceived you. The place marked by this map as having treasures can indeed...be described as a major treasure trove.”

“Oh?”

“A major treasure trove?” The other monster kings all began to ponder. For even their seventh brother, the Skysoar King, to acknowledge this place as being a treasure trove meant that there really might be something to this.

“Third brother, can it be that this has something to do with the Qi Empire?” The short, chubby, green-skinned Jadetoad King growled out.

The Flamewing King, seated at the head of the hall, nodded. “This does indeed have something to do with the Qi Empire. When I acted against them and destroyed them, it was because I heard some news regarding this treasure trove. I suddenly attacked without giving them any notice and seized a group of important figures of the imperial Qi clan. Then, I used soulscouring and other methods to learn more about the treasure trove, then acquired this treasure map from the imperial Qi clan as well.”

“Since you already have the treasure map, you can go by yourself, third brother.”

“I refuse to believe you are truly so generous, third brother.”

“Haha, third brother, what are you plotting? Speak up and be honest. Everyone here knows what type of person you are.”

All of them were renowned for their savagery; they knew what sort of individuals the other monster kings were.

The Flamewing King chortled. The nearby Skysoar King said, “Third brother did indeed go twice. The first time he went, he came back with nothing to show for it; he wasn’t able to go deep inside at all. The second time, he made more ample preparations and forced his way inside...but was trapped within the region for twenty years, just barely surviving and coming back. He just escaped a short while ago.”

“What? Trapped for twenty years?”

“Third brother, you couldn’t even use a Greater Teleportation Dao-talisman to flee?”

“It was that dangerous?”

The monster kings were all astonished. The Flamewing King immediately said, “Listen to me describe in detail. This treasure trove region...”



The Flamewing King spoke nonstop regarding what he had experienced. He knew quite well that by relying on his own power, there was no way he would be able to make it any deeper; he had to have the rest of the twelve join him if he wanted to have any chances of success.

As the Flamewing King spoke, looks of astonishment and seriousness gradually began to appear on the faces of the other monster kings. This place was indeed both dangerous and terrifying...the Flamewing King's descriptions alone indicated how mysterious and frightening this place was. Most likely, even Celestial Immortals who ventured there would perish.

"Only if the twelve of us join forces do we have any chance," the Flamewing King said.

"What in the world is within this treasure trove?"

"I feel quite eager to find out."

All of them felt tremendous desire towards this treasure trove.

The founding emperor of the Qi Empire had already scoured the outer perimeter of this treasure trove, and he had acquired Ki Refining Techniques, divine abilities, and secret arts from it. These techniques were all truly top-tier techniques; otherwise, the Qi Empire wouldn't have been able to expand so rapidly. Given that the outer perimeter already possessed such incredible treasures...what did the depths of the trove hold?!

"We have to plan this out carefully," the top-ranked Goldfur Barking said solemnly. "We cannot be rash."

"Yes, we must make ample preparations."

"An extraordinary place."

Just as the monster kings were discussing and planning, a long-necked elder appeared at the entrance to the hall.

"Majesty, Majesty!" The long-necked elder called out repeatedly.

"Enter." The Flamewing King frowned.

The long-necked elder entered, then immediately said with respect, "Your Majesty, the three companies of Flamewing Guards led by those three Loose Immortals which we sent out...they all died. None of them escaped to make it back."

"They all died?" The Flamewing King suddenly jumped to his feet.

"Right. All of them." The long-necked elder nodded repeatedly, worry in his eyes.

The Flamewing King's face changed. Hundreds of Flamewing Guards, led by three Loose Immortals...how powerful was the enemy, to be able to wipe them out so cleanly and let none survive?

"What's wrong, third?"

"Third brother, what happened?"

The other monster kings began to query him. The Flamewing King responded solemnly, "To tell the truth, brothers...there are still a few survivors of the Qi Empire who are running around. However, the strongest of the imperial Qi clansmen is a mere Wanxiang Adept. One of my squads of Flamewing Guards found and attacked them, but the squad was wiped out. I felt this was strange, and so I sent three full companies to attack, but all of them were killed as well. None of them survived."

"Three full companies? Hundreds of Flamewing Guards in a Dao-soldier formation...they would be able to wipe out even a supreme Loose Immortal."

"To kill hundreds of Flamewing Guards without letting even one escape...that is quite difficult."

"This is an extraordinary foe."

The monster kings knew each other's forces quite well; they knew how strong the Flamewing King's forces were.

"Hahaha, why worry about this matter? It is quite rare for all of us to be gathered in one place; let us pay a visit together, then, and see what the survivors of the imperial Qi clan have up their sleeves." The Goldfur Bearing let out a loud laugh. "When all of us join forces...there truly are few in the entire Star continent who are a match for us."

The supreme powers of the Star continent only held Celestial Immortal Patriarchs amongst their ranks. When the twelve joined forces, they truly did have nothing to fear from Celestial Immortals.

"Let us go together."

"Third brother, let's go take a look and see who has dared to antagonize the Twelve Monster Kings of the Eastern Flows."

"Wiping out the Flamewing Guard...they gave you no face at all, third brother. Giving you no face is the same as giving all of us brothers no face."

"Let's go take a look together."

The Flamewing King immediately roared with laughter. "Hahaha, fine! With so many brothers here...it doesn't matter who is protecting the imperial Qi clan. That person will die!"

"Let's no waste time. We've already eaten and drunk our fill; let us go out and fight!"

"Let's go out and fight!"

The Twelve Monster Kings of the Eastern Flows were decisive in their actions. They immediately led thousands of monsters in an awe-inspiring wave from the imperial capital of the former Qi Empire.

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At the top of a mountain peak. Ning was seated next to a cliff. He was holding a gourd of wine in his hand, drinking in a leisurely manner while staring at the clouds and the sea. He had just consumed six hundred thousand kilograms of liquefied elemental essence, causing his true body to break through as a Ki Refiner from the peak Primal level to the early Void level! He would now be able to more perfectly control his Immortal-ranked magic treasures.

“My true body can use the Thousandbull Sword, the Darknorth swords, and other magic treasures. My Primaltwin will use the [Heavenraker] sword formation.” Ning nodded to himself. His power had reached the maximum level it could reach for now.

“Flamewing King, I killed hundreds of your Flamewing Guards...I imagine that you will personally come seek me out, right?”

Ning was waiting eagerly. Given that he was protecting the imperial Qi clan, the Flamewing King would definitely be lured over here!

“Ten major sinners. First I will kill the Flamewing King, and then I’ll go deal with the others one by one,” Ning murmured to himself. Given his current level of power, when his true body and his Primaltwin fought together, it shouldn’t be too hard for him to kill a monster king.

As Ning was drinking and waiting leisurely by the cliffside, suddenly...

“Eh?” Ning suddenly stared into the distance. An enormous cloud was soaring towards his direction, and atop the cloud there was a dense cluster of countless figures. There were many monsters there, and in front of the countless monsters were twelve mighty figures whose auras filled the heavens, causing Ning’s face to change.

“Twelve?” Ning’s face couldn’t help but blanch as he stared at the twelve figures standing in front of the countless monsters atop the massive cloud.

Such powerful auras...these were definitely no ordinary Loose Immortals. The formless ripples of might caused even Ning to feel surprised. In addition, these twelve figures stood shoulder-to-shoulder in front of the countless monsters; clearly, there were no differences in rank here.

“Are you the Twelve Monster Kings of the Eastern Flows?” Ning called out loudly, his voice echoing and filling the heavens.

“Little child, who are you? Is it your master who is protecting the imperial Qi clan?” The tall, thin, black-robed Flamewing King called out back, “Hurry up and have your master come out. We twelve brothers would like to see exactly who it is that has the audacity to annihilate hundreds of my Flamewing Guards with one breath.”

Ning cursed to himself with resignation. “All I wanted to do was fight against a single Flamewing King. Why the hell have all twelve shown up?! The Twelve Monster Kings of the Eastern Flows all come from their own separate territories; why have they all gathered here today?”

### [The Desolate Era](#)

#### **Book 13: Tristar Crescent Abode Chapter 23: Towering Amounts of Sin**

The voices of both Ji Ning and the Flamewing King were very loud.

“Are you the Twelve Monster Kings of the Eastern Flows?”

“...hurry up and have your master come out...”

Both voices echoed in the heavens, causing the surviving imperial Qi clansmen to feel shocked. They hurriedly moved to the entrance of the Immortal estate.

Crown Prince Qi Rufeng, Second Princess Qi Ruyi, Ning's disciple Bluecliff Xiaoyu, and the imperial Qi servants all stared outwards past the gates of the Immortal estate. They saw Ning standing at the side of a cliff, wine-gourd in hand. Far away from him in the skies, there was a massive horde of countless monsters atop a cloud.

"Is that the Flamewing King?" Qi Rufeng's face changed. He would never be able to forget that figure; that was his eternal nightmare.

But right now, the Flamewing King was just one of the twelve leading figures. "The Goldfur Barking, the Snowfox King...there's no doubting it. They are identical to the images of the Twelve Monster Kings of the Eastern Flows which the imperial Qi clan recorded down." Qi Rufeng's face was ashen. "All twelve of them have arrived."

"They all arrived? Even though hundreds of Flamewing Guards were killed, why would all twelve of them come?!" The black-robed princess felt despair as well.

Although the two had Greater Teleportation Dao-seals, once they used them up, they would be gone. In addition, given the power of these monster kings, the monster kings could immediately teleport after them as well.

If the Flamewing King wanted to chase after them, he would definitely be able to. The reason why they had been able to flee and survive for so long was because the Flamewing King didn't care too much about them; after acquiring the treasure map, the Flamewing King's full attention was on the treasure trove. He had only sent a few of his Flamewing Guards to deal with the imperial Qi clansmen.

"The Twelve Monster Kings of the Eastern Flows?" Upon hearing these words, Bluecliff Xiaoyu's face changed as well. "Those twelve are the twelve monster kings?"

Xiaoyu stared at the twelve distant figures that commanded the countless monsters. Even at this great distance, the infinitely powerful aura emanated by the twelve caused her heart to tremble. She grew worried. "Master...I just took you on as my master. Don't die. Don't die!"

Now that she had severed all ties with the imperial Qi clan, she no longer had any friends or family in the world. Ning was her master, and thus the closest person she had left. She could tell that Ning viewed her kindly.

"I don't want Master to die. I don't want..." Xiaoyu was panicking inside. If her master died...she would be all alone.

Qi Rufeng's face was ashen. He shook his head in despair. "It's finished."

The black-robed princess shook her head as well. "All twelve of the monster kings have arrived. Even during our Qi Empire's most powerful era, they would have been able to wipe us out immediately. There is no way this senior Darknorth can withstand them. No way at all."

The Twelve Monster Kings of the Eastern Flows were legends! Legends known throughout the Star continent, the Cloud continent, the Flame continent...

In short, within the Crescent world, these twelve monster kings were extremely famous. Most likely only Celestial Immortals would be able to flee and survive from them when they joined forces!

“Given the abilities these twelve monster kings have...even if senior Darknoth uses a Greater Teleportation Dao-seal, he still probably wouldn’t be able to teleport away before being attacked,” Qi Rufeng said as he trembled with despair.

Using Dao-seals took time. At the Celestial Immortal level, multiple techniques could be used in the blink of an eye.

Behind Ning, the imperial Qi clan was in a state of terrified despair, while Bluecliff Xiaoyu was praying ardently for his survival.

Ning stood there at the cliff. He quickly pondered as to how he should deal with these twelve monster kings while spreading out his divine sense in a wave to test them. And as he did...

“What fine fellows!” Ning was instantly shocked. The region with the twelve monster kings was completely filled with limitless amounts of bloody light. The bloody sin light surged and swelled like the waves of the sea, and the twisting waves of bloody sin light even formed illusions of ghosts who had died wrongful deaths.

“Wait. They aren’t all like that.” Ning took a careful look. “Eleven of these twelve monster kings are surrounded by hundreds of meters of bloody sin light. But...that monster king with the head of a golden-furred grizzly bear actually is only wreathed by a bit of corrosive black light?”

Indeed. The only one of the twelve not wrapped by the bloody aura of sin was actually the most famous of the twelve, the Goldfur Barking. This caused Ning to feel extremely startled...and also even more wary. For this Goldfur Barking to set up an alliance of twelve monster kings and be acknowledged as the most powerful amongst them, but possess the lowest amount of sin...one had to be wary of him.

“Twelve Monster Kings of the Eastern Flows,” Ning called out loudly, “Per Master’s orders, I am here protecting the imperial Qi clan. If you are wise, you shall immediately retreat. Otherwise, when Master returns, all of you shall perish!”

“Who is your master, exactly? Give us his name!” The Flamewing King barked from far away.

“He dares be so arrogant? The master of this Primal Daoist must be a powerful figure.”

“With all of us brothers present, we wouldn’t feel fear if even Celestial Immortals came.”

The monster kings silently sent mental messages to each other, trying to guess at who Ning’s master was. They paid no attention to Ning himself; given their power, they could naturally tell that Ning was merely at the Primal Daoist level! A mere Primal Daoist...although they noticed through their divine sense sweep that his soul was fairly powerful, he was still merely a Primal Daoist!

As they saw it, there was no way a Primal Daoist could kill hundreds of Flamewing Guards without letting a single one escape!

“Brothers, watch from the sides for now,” the Flamewing King said.

“Don’t worry, third brother. If a Celestial Immortal Patriarch comes, we will intervene.”

“Third brother, go and capture those imperial Qi clansmen.”

The other monster kings all spoke out in support. A minor matter like capturing the imperial Qi clan wasn't something which required all twelve of the monster kings to join forces in carrying out.

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"Little child, hurry up and beat it," the Flameking King barked flatly. At the same time, he waved his arm, and with a whoosh, a massive fiery palm suddenly appeared above the mount peak. This massive fiery palm clawed towards the Immortal estate below it, terrifying the imperial Qi clansmen and Xiaoyu into fleeing into the estate.

"Come in." Ning willed it, and the Immortal estate instantly returned to his side.

"You dare interfere in my matters?" The Flamewing King was instantly enraged, and the massive fiery palm in the sky slammed towards Ning instead. "Since your master has not arrived, I shall take your life first and calm myself down a bit."

"You monster!" Ning pretended to be enraged. His body instantly transformed and became three hundred meters in size, and he also executed the [Three Heads, Six Arms]. In his arms were the three Darknorth swords and three Heaven-ranked flying swords.

"I'll chop you down!" Ning's swords were like silken light as they chopped down wildly towards the massive fiery palm. The level of swordplay Ning was currently displaying was merely on the level he had displayed back during the Conclave, comparable to a supreme Loose Immortal.

Boom boom boom...with a series of massive exploding sounds, the massive fiery palm was completely destroyed, but part of the mountain peak was torn apart as well. The three-headed, six-armed Ning appeared to be quite angry as he said, "You monster, you actually dare to try to pick on me, your grandpa? If Master was here, you'd already be dead!"

"Ahahaha..."

"This human Primal Daoist is quite arrogant in the face of death."

"This human is pretty powerful. He's a Fiendgod Body Refiner, and was able to use [Heavenly Transformation] and [Three Heads, Six Arms]; he is indeed able to give Loose Immortals a fight. His swordplay is also at the level of a supreme Loose Immortal...he does indeed have a supreme Loose Immortal's combat potential."

"Right. Although he is a Primal Daoist, he does indeed have the power of a supreme Loose Immortal."

"Third brother, if you want to annihilate a supreme Loose Immortal at such a great distance just by controlling the natural elemental energy of the world...you'd need to do some more training first," another monster king teased.

Indeed. If the Flamewing King was to use magic treasures, it would naturally be very easy for him to kill a supreme Loose Immortal. But to annihilate a supreme Loose Immortal just by using a fiery palm formed from the natural elemental energy of the world? He was indeed not even close to being at that level yet.

"Hmph." The Flamewing King's face sank as he flew forward. Six fiery-red scimitars suddenly appeared before him, each one carrying a powerful presence; clearly, all of them were Immortal-ranked magic treasures.

“Die, brat.” The Flamewing King was using his true power now.

“You monster!” Ning let out a roar, then moved forward like a giant Roc, flying at high speed towards the Flamewing King and seeking to engage him in close combat.

“This human is pretty powerful. His agility technique would be exceptional even amongst Loose Immortal monsters,” the Skysoar King evaluated.

“He does indeed have some potential. When he reaches the late Void level, he’ll probably be comparable to us.”

“Unfortunately, he’s going to die now.”

“Still, we need to be careful. His master might suddenly appear.”

The monster kings chatted amongst themselves lazily as they watched the battle.

The six scimitars of the Flamewing King formed into an enormous fiery serpent in mid-air. The fiery-red serpent was filled with unearthly savagery as it pounced towards the three-headed, six-armed Ning, who also flew forward to meet it.

Swish swish swish. The swords in Ning’s hands suddenly changed!

Previously, he was wielding three Darknorth swords and three Heaven-ranked flying swords. But suddenly, he put away his three Heaven-ranked flying swords and pulled out the Thousandbull Sword and two Immortal-ranked flying swords!

Riiiiip! The giant serpent of fire flashed like lightning, pouncing towards Ning. But what welcomed it was a terrifying sword blow!

Ning’s sword-light had transformed into a divine black dragon. The terrifying divine black dragon sword-light chopped through it like rotting wood, instantly breaking it apart and knocking the six scimitars aside.

“What?!” The Flamewing King was instantly shocked.

“Die.” Ning, who had previously appeared ‘enraged’, now let a hint of a killing intent flash through his eyes. With a swoosh, he reached the Flamewing King’s body.

Six streaks of sword-light simultaneously transformed into six divine black dragons, filling the world with their power.

“Quick, go save third brother!” The face of the Goldfur Barking instantly changed.

“Not good!” The Skysoar King’s face changed as well.

“How can this...”

“His power...”

“This human...”

The monster kings had been watching from far away, ready to ward off a Celestial Immortal. None of them had expected that this clearly puny Primal Daoist would suddenly explode forth with such power! Ning's aura increased explosively, and the power of his swordplay reached an extremely profound level as well.

Swish swish swish...the black dragon sword-light slashed forth with irresistible power.

"No..."

Engaged in close quarters, the Flamewing King had no chance to flee at all. In but an instant, Ning's six streaks of sword-light completely surrounded the Flamewing King and killed him!

The surrounding area turned silent. The entire world seemed to freeze. The many monsters watching from far away were still in a state of amazement...but looks of seriousness appeared on the faces of the monster kings.

Ning stood there in midair. Waving his hand, he collected the magic treasures of the Flamewing King, a smile on his face. "I'm ashamed to say that I played a little trick on you just now. There was nothing I could do; the twelve of you are simply far too famous, and given that you have dominated the Star continent for so many years, I imagine you definitely have a formation which is extremely well-suited to the twelve of you. That's why I had to kill one of you first."