

Desolate 471

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 16: The Nihilum Zone Chapter 6: Wandering

“A place like this actually exists? Not even the Dao of the Heavens is present...then, this means that all of the mysteries and intricacies of the Dao are useless here.” Ning waved his hand, instantly producing a Darknorth sword. He immediately waved the sword out. Swish! Sword-light flashed...but nothing else happened. It must be understood that at Ning’s current level, any casual sword blow was capable of summoning the power and majesty of Heaven and Earth; for example, the ninth stance of the [Three-Foot Sword] could transform the sword into a divine black dragon!

But right now...no matter how Ning swung his sword and no matter what sword-arts he used, the only thing that accompanied his sword was a flash of sword-light...and the flash came from light reflecting off the Darknorth sword!

“It doesn’t matter how deep my insights into the Dao are?”

“What the hell sort of a place is this?” Ning was mystified...but then he had a thought. “Can this be the legendary...Primordial Ruinworld?”

Ning had heard of the Primordial Ruinworld when he had been at Mount Innerheart. It was the most dangerous place that he knew of, a place that existed within the Void that was beyond the Three Realms.

According to the legends...

After Pangu’s World shattered, the Three Realms were born...but the ‘skeleton’ of Pangu’s World remained. These remnants were known as the Primordial Ruinworld! The Primordial Ruinworld was not a complete world; it was a shattered world, making it even more terrifying. Space and time were in a state of chaos here, and dangers abounded.

Even True Gods and Daofathers risked death by coming here.

“Wait, that’s not right.” Ning shook his head. “The Primordial Ruinworld should be akin to a collection of shattered worlds; why is it that I’m within a region that is surrounded by voidwinds, as though I was within a completely empty area?”

“Senior bear, Rahu Bow,” Ning suddenly called out.

Whoosh! A black-robed youth appeared next to him; it was the Rahu Bow.

“Senior bear?” Ning called out again.

“It’s dangerous in the outside world; I cannot emerge.” The giant yellow bear’s voice rang out within Ning’s mind.

“Dangerous? Aren’t you the spirit of the underwater estate?” Ning was puzzled.

The black-robed youth said, surprised, "Master, don't you know? Senior bear, through cultivation as the spirit of the underwater estate, has long since transcended being a mere treasure. He is now a true, living being."

"What?!" Ning was stunned.

"You damned bow...I haven't even told him yet, and you went and blurted it out," the giant yellow bear sent mentally.

Ning called out in surprise, "Senior bear, you...you've already..." Ning had naturally heard that treasure-spirits could cultivate, and that spirits of Protocosmic spirit-treasures could even become Immortals, completely escaping the confines of their treasure-body and existing on their own!

"I wasn't in a rush to tell you, but I didn't expect this Rahu Bow to blurt it out. Yes...Master treated me with tremendous kindness. In the Three Realms, there have always been Protocosmic spirit-treasures who have trained to become Celestial Immortals; in fact, some have even become Daofathers! After forging me, Master taught me cultivation methods suitable for treasure-spirits. Over the passage of countless years, I've naturally been slowly training in these methods. I've long ago become a true, living creature. However...my level of cultivation isn't high enough, and I cannot yet completely escape the Starseizing Manor," the giant yellow bear said.

"Ah?!" Ning was speechless. Suddenly, he thought back to the first time he had met with Patriarch Subhuti. Patriarch Subhuti had said something, back then: "Go back to the Starseizing Manor. You cannot break away from the Starseizing Manor for now." Back then, Ning had been confused by what the Daofather had meant by these words, and had also been puzzled by why the giant yellow bear was able to shed tears.

So this was the reason behind it all!

"The outside world is dangerous and can cause tremendous damage to me. I cannot go out," the giant yellow bear sent mentally. "Ji Ning, you have the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] protecting you, while the Rahu Bow has not cultivated and thus has nothing to worry about."

"Senior bear, Rahu Bow...do you know where we are?" Ning asked.

Both of these figures had existed since the Primordial Era.

"Where we are...?" The giant bear was puzzled.

"I don't know either..." The Rahu Bow was similarly puzzled.

Ning suddenly remembered that when Pangu's World had been destroyed, one had been sealed away within the Crescent world while the other had hidden within the world of the Grand Xia. Most likely, they knew very little about the outside worlds.

"I've heard that the skeletal remnants of the shattered Primordial World, also known as the Primordial Ruinworld, still exist. Within that place, space and time are in a state of chaos. In some places, not even the Dao of the Heavens exist, and even True Gods or Daofathers who go there might perish," Ning said. "The Dao of the Heavens does not exist in this place, so my guess is that this is the Primordial Ruinworld."

However...the only thing around me is an endless void. I can even sense a voidwind, but there are no continents whatsoever. So what do you two think? Where are we?"

"Who told you that the Primordial Ruinworld consists of the skeletal remnants of Pangu's World?" The Rahu Bow asked.

"Isn't this public knowledge?" Ning asked.

Ning did indeed know that the destruction of Pangu's World involved many secrets...but aside from the skeletal remnants of Pangu's World, what else could the Primordial Ruinworld be?

"What the public knows is wrong!" The black-robed youth was disdainful.

"It is indeed wrong," the giant yellow bear sent mentally. "In fact, even I'm not too sure about the true truth behind the birth of the Primordial Ruinworld."

"Eh?" Ning was startled. "Senior bear, what do you know?"

"Ask your master in the future," the giant yellow bear said. "The Rahu Bow and I are merely treasures, and Rahu's master, Qi, was merely an Empyrean God. Although the master I followed was more powerful, Master hid me away long before he went to participate in the final battle, and so I know very little. Your master's status is even higher than my master's; he definitely knows far more than me."

Ning nodded lightly.

"However...I can tell you with certainty that the Primordial Ruinworld isn't as simple a matter as you have described it to be. If it truly was merely the remnants of Pangu's World, how could it be such a terrifying place? You need to understand that Pangu's World was an extremely normal world, whereas the Primordial Ruinworld you have described is far too terrifying. Not even the Dao of the Heavens exists within it...it truly is bizarre!" The giant yellow bear continued, "As for this place where you are right now...I've given it some thought, and I believe that it should be the region where the Void meets the Primordial Ruinworld...the Nihilum Zone!"

"Nihilum Zone?" Ning's eyes instantly lit up.

He naturally knew about nihilum zones.

A major world was like an island that existed within the vast, infinite Void! At the borders where the Void met the island, stormy voidwaves would emerge and crash against the world. This region would commonly be referred to as a nihilum zone. However, because major worlds were 'tiny', the voidwaves around them would be very weak, and so the nihilum zones around the likes of the Grand Xia world were quite safe. For people like Ning, at least, they were like tiny little ripples.

"Right. Everyone says that the Primordial Ruinworld is comparable to Pangu's World in size; it is infinitely vaster than ordinary major worlds," Ning immediately said. "Then the place where the Primordial Ruinworld meets with the Void will naturally have far more powerful voidstorms."

"Right!"

“This should indeed be the Nihilum Zone outside the Primordial Ruinworld,” Ning said. “Only a place as mysterious as the Primordial Ruinworld can possibly result in a place where even the Dao of the Heavens cannot be sensed.”

“Ji Ning, no matter what, you absolutely must not enter the Primordial Ruinworld. The Primordial Ruinworld probably still has remnants of dangerous power within it,” the giant yellow bear sent hurriedly. “A huge number of True Gods and Daofathers died in the past within this place; even if it’s no longer as dangerous as it was before, for someone like you to enter might result in instant disintegration.”

“Right, right, right. Don’t go in!” The Rahu Bow hurriedly agreed.

“Of course not. After all, according to the legends...not even True Gods or Daofathers are willing to recklessly enter the Primordial Ruinworld.” Ning nodded.

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An hour later.

Boom...

The voidwaves were growing increasingly powerful, sending Ning flipping more than ten thousand kilometers away before he was able to come to a halt.

“...That’s way too much power. The harder I press forward, the more powerful the waves become.” Ning felt helpless. “How am I supposed to get out of here?”

“You are so stupid.” The black-robed youth stood next to him, completely ignoring the voidwaves. He roared with laughter, “The voidwaves will naturally weaken once they grow close to a major world...but the farther away they are, the more savage they become, until they reach a certain limit! If this Primordial Ruinworld is comparable to Pangu’s World in size, then most likely only a True God or Daofather will be able to force their way out of the Nihilum Zone. Not even Empyrean Gods or True Immortals will be able to accomplish it. Given your power...there’s no way you can possibly force your way out past the waves.”

“Then am I supposed to just go along with the waves?” Ning asked.

“If you go with the waves, you’ll end up in the Primordial Ruinworld. That’s death,” the Rahu Bow said.

“Then what should I do?” Ning was helpless.

He couldn’t force his way against the waves, but if he went along with them into the Primordial Ruinworld, that would be suicide.

“What else can you do? Try your best to stay alive,” the Rahu Bow said. “Just slowly train within this Nihilum Zone. The power of the Solar Star and Lunar Star cover this place; you can continue to train in divine power.”

“That’s my only choice, I suppose.” Ning couldn’t come up with any ideas, no matter what he did.

So...he might as well as just wander.

He'd slowly drift about on the voidwaves. As long as he didn't go too close to the Primordial Ruinworld, it didn't matter where he went.

He would train on his journey.

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As Ning was drifting about within the Nihilum Zone outside the Primordial Ruinworld. Within the Youngflame clan's tower.

Whoosh! A streak of light flew into the tower; it was the horned, golden-robed man.

"Ancestor."

"Master."

Everyone called out to him.

"I've already sent Windraiser to the mini-Netherworld." The Youngflame Ancestor nodded, then said, "The Ten Yama-Kings of Hell of the mini-Netherworld gave me face, but Windraiser's sin was simply too deep; he's currently being tormented and tortured within the endless depths of Hell. After his torture ends and his sin has dissipated, he'll be reborn into your Youngflame clan. However...that will be more than eight million years from now."

Celestial Immortals Infatuation, Sunfish, and the others all nodded.

Tremendous sinners who entered the Netherworld would indeed suffer mightily; there was nothing that could be done about this.

"Ji Ning and Windraiser both suffered the descent of karmic sinflames." The Youngflame Ancestor's face turned grim and sinister. "Now that more than seven days has passed...he is either dead or alive. Come up with a way to have some of our people go investigate Ji Ning's school, the Black-White College. If he is dead, his life-tablet within the Black-White College will shatter. Investigate in detail; we absolutely must find out if his life-tablet is intact or not."

"Alright." Each of them assented.

"I'll make the arrangements," Celestial Immortal Arcanum said. He carried out the most miscellaneous tasks amongst their group; after all, he was the weakest of the Celestial Immortals.

"Fine. Arcanum, you can handle it. Remember, you have to investigate this in detail; you have to verify whether or not his life-tablet is intact. You can't just listen to some wild rumors or speculations." The Youngflame Ancestor's eyes narrowed. "Until I know for sure that he is dead...I will find it hard to rest at ease."

All six of them had solemn looks on their faces.

If Ning didn't die, they would feel uneasy.

After all...it was incredibly difficult for a Celestial Immortal to be born, but they had lost two of them to Ji Ning! In addition, if Ning truly had managed to survive...that calamitous fiend would most likely cause the Youngflame clan to continue to suffer terrifying losses in the future.

The Desolate Era

Book 16: The Nihilum Zone Chapter 7: Half A Year Later

As the Youngflame clan was planning to send people to Stillwater City and come up with a way to verify Ning's status...the Xia Emperor, within the imperial capital of the Grand Xia, was planning to send out his subordinate, Skyfox.

"Skyfox, pay a visit to the Black-White College. I need to know if Ji Ning is alive or not."

"Yes, Master," Skyfox said, accepting the order immediately.

The Xia Emperor cared deeply about whether or not Ning was alive. He had decided long ago that Ning had to be a Daofather's disciple. Could it be that such a peerless figure had truly perished? Emotionally speaking, the Xia Emperor truly couldn't believe this...but after hearing the report from Youngflame Freak, he had immediately dispatched his Godslayer Guards to deal with the escaped Fiendgods, then began to use his Mirror of Omniscience to watch what was happening within the Oldjade mountain range. He had personally watched the descent of the karmic sinflames through the Mirror of Omniscience!

"He's trained for less than a century, after all. Although he is a genius the likes of which the entire major world rarely sees...in the face of the descent of karmic sinflames, he has less than a ten percent chance of surviving." The Xia Emperor had watched Ning battle with the Youngflame clan through his Mirror of Omniscience. He wanted to be friends with Ning, while the Youngflame clan was his subordinate tribe...it truly wasn't appropriate for him to intervene, and so all he could do was help neither side.

Stillwater City. The Black-White College.

A white-robed, white-haired man was flying towards Immortal Diancai's residence.

"What? You want to know if Ji Ning is alive or not?" Immortal Diancai glanced at Immortal Skyfox, utter confusion on his face. "Fellow Daoist Skyfox, why would you ask such a thing?"

"Eh?" Immortal Diancai turned his head to glance outwards. As the master of this place, he had naturally set up a series of simple formations around his mountain. When the white-robed, white-haired Whitewater Hound arrived, Immortal Diancai noticed right away. Frowning, he murmured to himself, "The Whitewater Hound came as well?"

"Whitewater Hound?" Immortal Skyfox smiled. "Since Ji Ning's spirit-beast is here...it's best for you to ask the Whitewater Hound about Ji Ning, fellow Daoist Diancai. He will definitely know more than I do."

"Brother White." Immortal Diancai immediately called out to him.

Although Uncle White wasn't a formal disciple of the Black-White College, he was the spirit-beast of a formal disciple and was also a Void-level Earth Immortal. His status within the Black-White College was now far higher than it had been, and he was allowed to go to almost anywhere he pleased.

"Immortal Diancai." Uncle White walked over. Upon seeing the seated Skyfox, he immediately said, "My respects to you, Immortal Skyfox."

"Sit," Immortal Diancai immediately urged.

Uncle White sat down. Immortal Diancai immediately asked him, "Fellow Daoist Skyfox came to my place to ask about whether our Ji Ning is alive or not. What has happened to him?"

Uncle White couldn't help but look towards Skyfox.

Skyfox said, "I have come on orders from the Xia Emperor to investigate this matter."

"The Xia Emperor sent out the Godslayer Guards; he must know exactly what happened within the Oldjade mountain range. Is there really a need for me to spell everything out?" Uncle White had a rather ugly look on his face; he felt that given that the Xia Emperor had sent out the Godslayer Guards, he should've been able to rescue Ning...but he had not.

"The Xia Emperor only sent out the Godslayer Guards after receiving a report from the Youngflame clan that many Fiendgods had escaped into the world," Skyfox immediately said. "At first, he didn't know about what had happened with Ji Ning. Only when the Godslayer Guards returned to make their report did he learn that Ji Ning was present as well...and so the Xia Emperor went to query the Youngflame clan, at which point he learned what had happened. However, by then it was far too late!"

Uncle White didn't say anything.

"What are you talking about?!" Immortal Diancai asked.

"My son Ning has an extremely deep feud with the Youngflame clan," Uncle White said plainly. "The Youngflame clan wasn't willing to let things rest either, and so Ning charged straight into the Youngflame clan's headquarters. They weren't able to do anything to him, but they played a dirty trick which caused him to kill more than ten billion ordinary mortals. Karmic sinflames instantly descended upon him."

"He accidentally killed ten billion mortals, causing the descent of karmic sinflames?" Immortal Diancai's face immediately changed.

He viewed Ji Ning as he might one of his own children. Upon hearing that Ning had accidentally killed ten billion mortals and caused the descent of karmic sinflames, he was instantly stupefied.

"Then where is he now?" Immortal Diancai asked.

"My son Ning was instantly assaulted and burned by karmic sinflames, but the Youngflame clan still wouldn't let it rest. They used some sort of teleportation technique to send him far beyond the world of the Grand Xia," Uncle White said, his face ashen.

"How long ago did the karmic sinflames begin to wreath themselves around him?" Immortal Diancai asked.

"Seven days ago," Uncle White said. "More than seven days have passed, but I can sense that he is still alive. He's survived the karmic sinflames."

Immortal Diancai let out a sigh of relief.

Karmic sinflames!

They were utterly terrifying. Even he, Ning's master, wouldn't dare claim that he would definitely be able to withstand them. He felt both worried for and proud of his disciple.

"Congratulations, felicitations! He overcame the karmic sinflames tribulations." The nearby Skyfox laughed, but his heart was still filled with utter amazement. And not just him...even the Xia Emperor had felt that Ji Ning was extremely unlikely to have survived the karmic sinflames.

"He should have finished with the karmic sinflames tribulations roughly three or four hours ago." Uncle White continued in a low voice, "He naturally has a Greater Teleportation Dao-seal with him...he would've teleported back long ago, unless he was trapped within some sort of unescapable danger zone. Since he hasn't come back...he's clearly trapped in a place where even a Greater Teleportation Dao-seal does not work."

Immortal Diancai's face turned ugly again.

Skyfox nodded gently. "That makes sense. The Youngflame clan has an extremely terrifying clan-protecting treasure, a Protocosmic spirit-treasure that is known as the Worldhold Pagoda. The Worldhold Pagoda has the power to tear open space and teleport people through it. Given how much they hate Ji Ning, they definitely must have sent him into the infinite Void that lies beyond the Three Realms. They absolutely wouldn't have sent him somewhere where he could simply use a Greater Teleportation Dao-seal to escape and return."

"Then what should we do?" Immortal Diancai immediately asked.

"There's nothing we can do. Some of the danger zones within the Void are so deadly that not even True Immortals or Empyrean Gods can escape from them." Skyfox shook his head. "Diancai, although you've become a Celestial Immortal...you are unable to help Ji Ning in this matter. In addition, no one knows where he is right now."

"The Youngflame clan..." A look of boundless rage was within Immortal Diancai's eyes.

Immortal Diancai knew very well about the feud between Ji Ning and the Youngflame clan.

After all...in the past, Patriarch Arcanum of the Youngflame clan had actually gone to the Black-White College to try and force them to hand him over.

"Also...the Youngflame clan is extremely wary of Ji Ning," Skyfox said. "Two of the Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan died by his hand this time. Most likely, they are going to do everything they can to investigate as to whether or not he was able to survive the karmic sinflames. Thus...they will definitely come to the Black-White College to investigate."

"He killed two Celestial Immortals?" Immortal Diancai was surprised.

"Yes, that is why the Youngflame clan is wary of him," Skyfox said. "This disciple of yours truly is formidable."

Immortal Diancai quickly calmed down. Nodding, he said, "Understood. Don't worry...the Youngflame clan can forget about learning any information regarding Ji Ning's status from our Black-White College. Also...fellow Daoist Skyfox, I hope that your side will not leak out any information regarding his status either."

“Don’t worry. When I return, I will make my report to the Xia Emperor, and him alone. The Xia Emperor wouldn’t act to leak this news to the Youngflame clan,” Skyfox said.

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That very day, Immortal Diancai issued an order: The Starfire Palace, where all the life-tablets of the disciples of the Black-White College were located, was to be completely sealed and locked down! Nobody was permitted to go anywhere near it! Not even the Loose Immortals of the Black-White College dared to go there now. Immortal Diancai was now a Celestial Immortal; naturally, that meant he had the highest rank and authority within the Black-White College.

In addition, the sealing of a palace that contained life-tablets was a minor matter. No one opposed it.

“Sealed?”

“Completely sealed? Why has the Black-White College suddenly and completely sealed away the Starfire Palace? Can it be that Ji Ning truly has perished?” Celestial Immortals Arcanum, Deadwood, and the others were all puzzled upon hearing this news.

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Time flowed onwards.

Immortal Diancai personally stood guard over the Starfire Palace.

“Disciple, it has been more than three months...” Immortal Diancai stared at the table in front of him, covered with life-tablets. One of the life-tablets represented Ji Ning. This life-tablet remained unbroken; clearly, Ji Ning remained alive despite being trapped in a distant danger zone.

At first, Immortal Diancai, Uncle White, Mu Northson, and the others all waited hopefully for his return. However, as more and more time passed, they gradually understood that it truly was hard to say when he would return, or if he would return at all. All they could do...was quietly hope.

Within the Nihilum Zone.

Ning was continuing to drift about within the infinite, dark Void. He didn’t dare to allow himself to be swept towards the Primordial Ruinworld by the currents of voidwaves.

His wandering days were filled with boredom.

This was because he could not sense the Grand Dao of the Sword, the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop, or any other Daos. There was no way for him to cultivate in the Dao at all; all he could do was occasionally train in the [Crimsonbright Diagram of the Nine Heavens]. However, there was a limit to how much divine power he could absorb each day and a limit to how much time he could spend in training in it. He couldn’t perpetually train...and so for more than 90% of the time each day, Ning did just one thing:

Train in archery!

Swoosh!

The Rahu Bow was pulled tight. Ning stared at the distant, impending voidwave, his heartforce completely merged into the bow and the arrow. Twang! The arrow shot out through the void.

Whoosh!

The arrow moved with lightning speed as it traversed more than a million kilometers, striking hard against the distant voidwave. In the face of the power of the voidwave, however, the arrow was sent flying straight backwards towards Ning's direction. When shooting an arrow against the flow of the voidwaves, the arrows would return. But if he shot towards any other direction...

Although these arrows were Immortal-ranked magic treasures which could be controlled through elemental ki, they flew too fast and too far; there was no way Ning would be able to recover them. And so, the only option for him was to shoot straight towards an impending voidwave.

Day after day. Every single day, he trained in archery.

Slowly, Ning began to get a better handle on the intricacies behind how [Houyi's Archery] utilized divine power, especially now that he had all but reached the peak of the 'iceheart' level. With such powerful heartforce filling each arrow, the power of each arrow was now greater than his close combat abilities!

Heartforce...

It was indeed a type of extremely powerful force. It was the reason why the divine archers of the Three Realms were so terrifying.

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Ning had spent roughly half a year drifting about within the Nirvana Zone. He had no idea exactly how far he had flown.

"Eh? What's that?" Ning could vaguely make out something in the distance. Because the Nirvana Zone was filled with voidwaves and voidstorms, he normally couldn't see anything else at all.

"[Torch Dragon's Eye]."

Ning's two eyes instantly began to blaze with torch-fire. He stared far into the distance. Instantly, his sight range began to increase rapidly, allowing him to see a few dim strands of light that had appeared far away within the darkness. Before using this divine ability, Ning was only able to see to a few thousand kilometers, but after using it...all the light of the surrounding area began to gather within his corneas.

"That is...a continent!!!!" Ning's face changed slightly.

That continent was actually tens of millions of kilometers away from Ning. However, because of how utterly vast it was, Ning was still able to just barely make it out with eyes. For example, although the Moon was located very far away from Earth, ordinary mortals on Earth could still see it from afar. Similarly, due to how enormous that continent was, Ning was still able to make it out within the darkness of the void.

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 16: The Nihilum Zone Chapter 8: First Contact

“Can that be part of the Primordial Ruinworld?” Ji Ning instantly thought of this possibility. After all, the Primordial Ruinworld wasn’t a perfect sphere or cube; it had peaks and valleys. It would make sense if he was able to see part of it bulging out.

“No matter what, I shouldn’t go near it.”

“The Primordial Ruinworld is incomparably dangerous. Not even True Gods or Daofathers dare to rashly charge into it. It’s best if I stay far away.” Ning knew his own limits; although he had the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] protecting him, he still didn’t dare to act rashly.

Whoosh!

Ning immediately began to move away from that land, pulling away from it.

Although he was quite curious about the Primordial Ruinworld, Ning knew very well...that curiosity killed the cat!

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Millions of kilometers away from Ning, within the distant darkness of the Void. A mysterious base was located here, one which was completely invisible to the naked eye.

Within the base.

There were numerous tall, muscular, black-scaled warriors with curved, blood-red horns who were seated on thrones. A total of eighteen thrones were hovering in the air. They each sat there silently, their golden eyes focused upon an image within an enormous mirror that hung within the air. The image displayed within the mirror was of Ji Ning, who was flying forward on his own. Ning had just used the [Torch Dragon’s Eye] and had begun to fly farther away, seeking to pull away from the continent.

“The alien has begun to flee.”

“Can it be that the alien has discovered us investigating him?”

“Shouldn’t have; we’ve never seen this alien before. He doesn’t come from our neighboring ‘Quchang’ world, nor does he come from the Heptagod world.” The eighteen mighty warriors chatted calmly with each other in the Fiendgod tongue as they sat there atop their thrones.

“This part of the Void is the dominion of our world, the Snaphorn world. Even if our neighbors from the Quchang world or the Heptagod world were to send scouts over...they wouldn’t send them flying towards us in such an overt fashion. In addition...he looks very peculiar. His skin actually looks quite soft and tender, and his body is quite tiny.”

“Can it be a scout that has been sent from an unknown world?”

They were all chatting amongst themselves.

Suddenly, the voice of the highest ranked warrior, the black-caped warrior who was seated at the very end of the eighteen thrones, rang out. “Without question, this newly arrived invader is someone we have never encountered before. He doesn’t belong to any of the neighboring worlds. As to where he comes from...if we capture him, we will know.”

“Lord Protector, I trust you yourself also saw that this alien is capable of surviving within the voidwinds. In addition, he is enduring the voidwinds through his own physical power, without relying on any outside support. Although his skin seems soft and although he is small...none of us have bodies that can compare to his,” a warrior said.

“But we have our wisdom.” The highest ranked black-caped warrior said, “Balo, go and lead a pack of your children to test this alien’s abilities. If you can capture him alive, do so; if you cannot, get a full sense of his strengths and weaknesses. This alien is wandering within the part of the Void under our control; the other bases are undoubtedly watching us. Don’t let them laugh at us.”

“Right.”

The tall warrior named Balo rose to his feet, then immediately walked out of the palace.

Every single one of the massive warriors were more than three thousand meters in size. They were like moving mountains, and in their eyes, Ning was like a tiny little dot. However...they knew quite well that their neighbors in the Quchang world and the Heptagod world were not easy to deal with, and that any alien capable of having traversing such a great distance through the Void was most likely not easy to deal with either.

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Within the silent, dark void. Ning was continuously flying forward, pulling farther and farther away from that land. He had already moved more than a million kilometers away from it, but he had no idea at all...that just six thousand kilometers away from him, an enormous, invisible spaceship was drawing close to him, a vessel that couldn’t even be seen with divine sense.

This enormous ship was more than a hundred kilometers long. Within it, the blood-red horned, black-scaled warrior ‘Balo’ was seated atop his throne. Below him was a group of similar black-scaled warriors, some of which even had enormous scaly wings. However, these warriors all had blood-red eyes, not golden ones. They all just stood there silently.

“My children,” Balo said.

“Master.” The ten mighty warriors standing below him all acknowledged his call in unison. They looked very similar to Balo, but they had a pair of wings which he did not, while lacking his curved horn.

“Go and capture this alien alive. If you cannot...then retreat and return. Remember...don’t kill him!” Balo rubbed his jaw. “He most likely carries many secrets with him. We have to take him alive. Only then can we discover his secrets.”

“Yes.” The ten blood-eyed warriors all assented respectfully.

“Also...the next voidstorm is still twelve sectors away from us. You have to return before the voidstorm arrives,” Balo instructed. These minions of his wouldn’t dare to try and withstand the voidstorms of this place; they were tens of millions of kilometers away from their land, and the voidstorms here were still quite powerful.

The doors of the ship opened.

The ten blood-eyed warriors immediately flew out from the cabin, almost all of them at least three thousand meters tall. Even the shortest was twenty-four hundred meters tall.

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“Eh?” Ning, who had been flying through the void, suddenly turned his head. The torch-light blazed within his eyes. When the door to the spaceship opened, it was revealed. One after the other, the tall, muscular, black-armored warriors with giant wings and blood-red eyes came flying out of the ship at an utterly astonishing speed.

“There are living creatures here?” Ning was startled.

In the past half year, he had never encountered any other living creatures within the Nihilum Zone. And now, a large ship had suddenly appeared, as well as ten seemingly mighty figures that looked like Fiendgods.

“There shouldn’t be any living creatures within the Nihilum Zone. Then...” Ning’s heart clenched. “These living creatures must’ve entered the Void through the Primordial Ruinworld.”

The Primordial Ruinworld was extremely large; it was possible that there were some creatures which lived close to its margins. Because they lived at the borders, they were able to enter the infinite Void...but the terrifying voidwaves were simply too powerful. Based on what the Rahu Bow and the giant yellow bear had deduced, most likely only True Gods or Daofathers would be able to fly about within the Nihilum Zone.

“Alien!”

The ten enormous figures flew out, and as they did they sent out their divine sense as well.

“The Fiendgod tongue?” Ning immediately realized noticed this. Although the Fiendgod tongue was complex and hard to learn, Ning had mastered it long ago.

“Can it be that you do not understand us?” The ten massive figures stared at Ning. The large ship was drawing closer as well; it was now only a thousand kilometers away from Ning.

Ning didn’t respond. He just looked back at them.

“Since he doesn’t understand...then let’s just go ahead and capture him first.” Instantly, one of the massive, blood-eyed warriors manifested a giant whip within his hands. He flew straight towards Ning.

“Stay your hands!” Only now did Ning send out his own divine sense, speaking in the Fiendgod tongue.

The massive, blood-eyed warrior instantly came to a halt, a hint of amusement in his blood-red eyes. “So you can understand after all, alien.”

“I merely do not wish to fight you,” Ning said.

“Then why have you trespassed into the space that belongs to our Snaophorn world?” The blood-eyed warrior instantly asked. The other nine blood-eyed warriors simply watched silently. Their assignment was to capture this alien...it was best to first test him and see what his strengths were, and so they were quite willing to spend some time chatting with this alien.

The more they spoke, the more they would learn about him.

"I trespassed by accident," Ning said. "I do not wish to be enemies with you."

"Trespassed by accident? If that's the case, come with us and go see our master," the blood-eyed warrior said.

"There's no way I will leave with you." Ning shook his head.

Was this a joke? There was no way Ning would dare to casually barge into the Primordial Ruinworld. That was a place filled with dangers that could wipe out True Gods or Daofathers.

"If that's the case...we'll have to take you back by force." The ten blood-eyed warriors simultaneously made their move. Five of them were more than three thousand meters tall, while the other five were around twenty-four hundred meters tall. The shorter, weaker-looking warriors simultaneously opened their mouths, emitting a soundless roar.

Rumble...

An invisible ripple spread out, instantly washing over Ning's entire body. Ning didn't even have a clue as to how he was supposed to resist this sort of attack.

"Is this some sort of hypnotic ability?" When the ripple reached him, Ning instantly understood. However, he was a Fiendgod as well; his divine soul and the flesh of his divine body had been completely fused together into an incomparably stable whole. In addition, Ning's Dao-heart had withstood even the karmic sinflames; how could this sort of hypnotic ability possibly control him?

"We're unable to control him. His spirit is extremely powerful."

"Take him by force."

The five shorter warriors all sent out mental messages.

"Fine."

The five taller warriors all produced long whips in their hands, each whip more than nine thousand meters long.

Crack! Crack! Crack! Crack! Crack!

Their whips cracked out, lashing through the void towards Ning.

A Darknorth sword appeared in Ning's hand. He didn't even use the [Starseizing Hand] as he used the sword to block the attacking whips.

Bang bang bang bang bang! A series of concussive sounds; Ning simultaneously blocked all five whips.

"These warriors look like Fiendgods. In terms of strength...they are a bit weaker than me when I'm not using any divine abilities." Ning nodded to himself. "They should be considered just barely equivalent to Void-level Fiendgods."

Swoosh!

Ning made his move. The divine power within his body began to activate in accordance with the method contained within the [Obscuring Wind of the Nine Heavens]. Although he was unable to borrow any of the power of Heaven and Earth to aid him, his physical speed was already quite fast. In addition, the Darknorth sword in Ning's hand instantly expanded to become more than nine hundred meters long. Given how large his foes were, if his sword wasn't long enough, it would be quite hard for him to injure his foes.

Ning instantly flashed past the bodies of the five warriors.

Five streaks of sword-light flashed!

The heads of all five of the three thousand meter tall warriors went flying.

"What tough bodies. They seem to be even tougher than Void-level Fiendgods who haven't trained in any divine abilities." Ning could sense that his Darknorth swords met with quite a bit of resistance as it chopped through their heads. Although he didn't have the power of the natural world to aid him, in terms of his sword techniques, he was at a vastly higher level than his foes. After all, the Dao of the Sword...was all about how to actually use and apply the sword.

"Eh?"

Ning realized, to his amazement, that green blood was pouring out from the necks of the five giant blood-eyed warriors. Their mouths were twitching...and then they simply floated away through the void, their bodies devoid of any auras.

"Dead?" Ning was completely puzzled. "Seems like they aren't Fiendgods." Generally speaking, humans and monsters would die when their heads were severed, but killing Fiendgods required much more effort.

.....

The horned warrior within the distant spaceship chuckled when he saw this. "Blaze, my children."

.....

Instantly, the five shorter blood-eyed warriors in front of Ning all bellowed, "Damn you, alien!" Their bodies began to glow with blurry green light. Their auras began to explosively increase in power, and within their hands appeared slender silver chains. Twirling the chains, they moved to encircle Ning.

"Their auras seem to have grown more powerful? Can it be that they are going all out?" Ning mused to himself.

Clang!

The chains collided with Ning's sword.

From this first collision...Ning was knocked flying backwards.

"Without using any divine abilities...I'm actually physically weaker than them." Ning immediately used the [Obscuring Wind of the Nine Heavens] to fly past the five blood-eyed warriors, moving away from them. At the same time, five enormous streaks of sword-light flashed past their necks. In terms of

sword-arts...Ning was simply at too high a level. With his utterly astonishing speed, they truly were completely unable to stop him.

These five blood-eyed warriors also collapsed, their bodies beginning to float about within the Void, devoid of all life.

.....

The horned warrior, Balo, nodded lightly to himself from his position within the spaceship. "His strength is Earth-level, but his speed is astonishing; it can be considered Heaven-level. He uses the sword, and his sword-arts are at an extremely high level; they, too, should be considered Heaven-level. Of course...I can't exclude the possibility that he has some ability to increase his power dramatically. He's no cannon fodder; he's definitely an elite. I wonder which world actually sent him out to explore all by his lonesome? Still...fortunately, he's not TOO powerful. If he was truly powerful, he would've been able to annihilate all ten of them in a single blow. Mmm...time to go back to the base. I lost ten of my minions this time; I need to raise a new crop!"

Rumble...

The spaceship immediately turned invisible, once more flying back to the base at high speed.

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 16: The Nihilum Zone Chapter 9: Human!

Within the starbase.

Seventeen horned, scaled warriors stared at the mirror and the images within it. They watched as Ji Ning slaughtered his ten opponents.

"Lord Protector."

Balo suddenly appeared within the midair mirror. He looked through it, then said, "Lord Protector, I've finished my tests. This alien's speed and sword-arts are all Heaven-level, while his power is Earth-level. In addition, he has yet to display any particularly astonishing abilities to increase his power."

"Good." The horned, black-caped warrior within the starbase said, "Balo, your mission is over."

"Everyone." The horned, black-caped warrior swept the room with his gaze. "I plan to send a report regarding this alien to the Palace of Elders. Any objections?"

"No objections."

"None."

They all spoke out.

"Good." The horned, black-caped warrior nodded lightly.

.....

On a continent of the Primordial Ruinworld. Within the world known as the Snaophorn world.

Within an enormous structure that was more than thirty thousand meters high. A series of thrones hovered in the air within it in the shape of an arc. A total of nine thrones were present here.

One after another, horned, gold-caped, gold-eyed warriors with scales began to appear. Their auras were incomparably powerful. After all nine appeared, an enormous mirror appeared in the air above them, and images began to display within the mirror.

“Venerable Elders, I am Protector Qiwa of Area 1292 of the Third Void Sector.” The horned, black-caped warrior spoke with great respect through the mirror. “We have discovered an alien who has entered the Third Void Sector of our Saphorn world. Just now, we’ve made first contact with him.”

Whoosh.

Instantly, the images of Balo sending his ten subordinates to fight against Ji Ning appeared within the mirror as well. In fact, even the conversation between Ning and the blood-eyed warriors was replayed in its entirety.

“We judge him to have power close to the Heaven-level. He may also have some other hidden abilities,” the horned, black-caped warrior said with great respect.

“Oh, an alien?”

“It’s been quite some time since we’ve seen an alien from beyond the Quchang world or the Heptagod world.”

“Interesting. He actually has two arms and two legs? And his body is so tiny...”

“Tan skin...black eyes...”

The nine Elders watched with amusement.

They had incomparably exalted statuses; most matters wouldn’t be considered important enough to be directly reported to them. However...an alien invader was one of the most important matters possible. The appearance of even a single invader required a report to be made to the Palace of Elders. After all, once a single alien appeared...it meant that a planetary war might soon erupt.

“An alien which we have never seen before. He flies at a fairly ordinary speed...but he’s still able to advance against the voidwaves. This means his body must be quite powerful, at least. Or perhaps he might have a special method to block the voidstorms?” An Elder smiled. “I recommend that we sent out a commando squad from the Third Void Sector to capture the alien. After that, we will dissect and analyze him. An alien that we’ve never met before, and which is able to block the voidwaves despite being so small...he’s worthy of analysis.”

“I recommend...that we completely mobilize the Third Void Sector. We absolutely must ensure that he cannot escape.”

“Complete mobilization? That will use up too much of our strength. This alien isn’t able to fly that fast; the warriors that we send out can easily catch up to him. There’s no need whatsoever for us to completely mobilize the Third Void Sector.”

“But this is a completely unknown alien; we can’t let him escape.”

“Can it be that you think the commando squads of the Third Void Sector are unable to deal with him?”

The Elders debated back and forth.

But right at this moment...

Rumble...

A terrifying presence descended.

The nine mighty Elders all raised their heads to look, only to see an enormous figure appear in the skies. This figure consisted of an enormous golden eye...and this illusory golden eye alone was already more than thirty thousand meters wide.

“Queen Mother.” The nine Elders all rose to their feet, saluting respectfully.

The enormous golden eye stared intently at the image of Ning, a look of excitement and anger appearing within it. A rumbling voice boomed forth...

“Right...there’s no mistaking it! That’s a human! A HUMAN!!!”

“Human?” The nine Elders were completely puzzled.

“Queen Mother, what’s a human?”

“He’s a human?”

They were all completely baffled.

“The powerful humans...the terrifying humans...” The golden eye stared intently at Ning as the voice continued to echo forth within the entire Palace of Elders. “They are the masters of the Three Realms. They are the culprits who pursued us and killed us...the common enemy of our Saphorn world, the Heptagod world, the Quchang world, and countless other worlds.”

“The masters of the ‘Three Realms’?”

“Where are these ‘Three Realms’?”

“The common enemy of countless worlds?”

The Elders grew more and more confused.

The golden eye stared carefully at Ning, continuing to speak. “Long, long, long ago, there was a great war...a war which truly tore apart even chaos itself, a war which shattered the Void. The final end to that great war resulted in the formation of this shattered, chaotic land. As for the beautiful, stable, all-encompassing Three Realms...they were taken over by another force, a powerful force! As for us, the defeated...our only choice was to come here and live with this unstable, shattered, Infinite Land.”

“What?”

“Our Infinite Land...is a land of the defeated?”

“How, how can this be?”

“Our Saphorn world is already incomparably powerful, but the Infinite Land has even more powerful presences within it. It even has many ‘Sacred Ancients’ within it; how could it be a land of the defeated?”

The nine Elders couldn’t believe it. They didn’t want to believe it. They had always felt themselves to be extremely powerful, while the combined powers of the Infinite Land were even more powerful...but they were actually still inferior to this so-called ‘Three Realms’?

“Sacred Ancients are known as ‘Daofathers’ or ‘True Gods’ in the Three Realms!” The golden eye continued to speak. “The Three Realms have many True Gods and Daofathers...in fact, they even have powers that are above True Gods and Daofathers...especially that legendary figure known as Nuwa. She was truly too terrifying...even Sacred Ancients were instantly slain before her.”

“What?!” The nine Elders were completely stunned.

Sacred Ancients? Instantly slain?

Nuwa?

Who was this Nuwa?

The nine Elders firmly engraved the name ‘Nuwa’ into their memories.

“There are some extremely powerful Daofathers in the Three Realms who are capable of annihilating our Saphorn world with but the wave of a hand. When they part their lips, flames will emerge that can engulf the space of the void, causing even space itself to be set alight. When they brandish their swords....they can cause multiple Sacred Ancients to flee without recourse.” A faraway look was in pupil of the golden eye as it continued to speak slowly.

The nine Elders all knew very well that their Queen Mother was the founder and builder of their world, a figure who had existed ever since the days of the most ancient of wars.

What the Queen Mother spoke of, she most likely had personally witnessed.

Too terrifying...

This ‘Three Realms’ was far too terrifying!

“In addition, the Three Realms have many other races within them. The most powerful of those races, however, are the humans. The humans are the masters of the Three Realms,” the golden eye said.

“Supposedly, it was Nuwa who created humans, and she doted dearly upon them. In addition...humans have a terrifying rate of growth as well as procreation. They gave birth to many powerful individuals, including many of their ‘Daofathers’. Humans are the most powerful, have the most potential, and are publicly acknowledged as the masters of the Three Realms.”

“And this little invader...he is human!”

The golden eye stared death towards Ning.

“Human?”

The nine Elders stared at Ning as well. Previously, they had looked down upon him as they might look down upon a bug. They felt themselves to be wise and powerful; they hadn't held this puny little figure in any regard. But now, from what they had just learned...they realized that this puny little fellow, less than a tenth of a percent of their size...was actually one of terrifying masters of the Three Realms, a common enemy to the entire Infinite Land...a human!

"So this is a 'human'?"

The nine Elders couldn't help but feel a sense of both dread and respect, because the race behind this alien invader was simply too terrifying.

"However...there is no need to worry about a little fellow like him," the Queen Mother's voice rang out. "This is the Infinite Land, not the Three Realms. Those so-called Heavenly Daos of Metal, Wood, Water, Fire, Earth, and the others...they are useless here. Only the most supreme of Daos, the Heavenly Dao of Primordial Chaos, is present here. The Dao of Primordial Chaos is the most exalted of Daos. Both the Infinite Land and the Three Realms were born from the primordial chaos...and anything born from the primordial chaos is subject to the Dao of Primordial Chaos. However...anyone capable of understanding the Dao of Primordial Chaos, even just a tiny part of it, would be considered one of the most supreme figures of the Three Realms. This little fellow shouldn't be that strong."

"Right." The nine Elders all nodded.

The Dao of Primordial Chaos...

They had heard of it before. It was the most exalted of Daos, the most powerful of Daos! If one could summon the limitless power of the Dao of Primordial Chaos, even the killing of Daofathers would be accomplished with ease.

"Hear and obey," the Queen Mother's voice rang out, having grown deeper. "Fully activate the entire Third Void Sector. This human absolutely must not escape."

"Send out all of the commando squads of the Third Void Sector to capture this human."

"Send out the entire First Army of our border armies. This human must be captured!"

"Yes."

"Yes."

"Yes."

The nine Elders all assented with respect.

.....

"The Queen Mother commands the alien to be captured. We shall fully mobilize." A horned, violet-caped warrior let out a bellow.

"For the Queen Mother!" The dense cluster of a thousand-plus black-caped warriors all called out in unison.

.....

“The Queen Mother commands that our First Army fully mobilize at once to capture this alien.” A horned warrior with an extremely powerful aura let out a roar. This horned warrior wore a golden cape which was covered with black tattoos at the base.

“For the Queen Mother!”

The group of horned, violet-caped warriors below him all called out with respect and ardor.

They immediately began to summon their squads and units. Soon, the most powerful army of the border armies, the First Army, flew out from the Infinite Land. They boarded their enormous spaceships and flew into the Void, towards the direction of Ji Ning.

.....

Within the darkness of the void.

Three powerful minds were communicating with each other, one of which was the Queen Mother who had just given the order.

“Elder sister, why have you awoken us?”

“It isn’t time for us to wake up yet.” The two other minds each released their own queries.

However, the mind of the Queen Mother said: “In the space around our Saphorn world, a human has appeared.”

“A human?”

“What? A human?”

The two other terrifying minds instantly trembled. They would never be able to forget that terrifying war. The tremendous power of the human race had been completely engraved into their minds. Even though countless eras had passed since then...they could never forget. That had been a true nightmare. That terrifying entity had countless experts, and the humans were the most powerful of them. Those utterly enormous, so-called ‘formations’...those blazing infernos that had been birthed from the Solar Star...those staves, those trees, those swords, those weapons...they had exterminated countless individuals that the three of them had venerated. They all felt tremendously grateful for having been able to survive that great war.

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 16: The Nihilum Zone Chapter 10: Grand Space Formation

“This human is still very weak, and I’ve already sent out the entire First Army of the border armies after him. Within the First Army, there are at least a few ‘Firstborn’. I’ll be able to see everything they experience and will be able to more closely inspect this human who has arrived,” the Queen Mother’s mind sent.

“Your actions are correct, elder sister.”

“Keep a close eye on this human.”

The Snaphorn world, in truth, was ruled over by these three Queen Mothers. They were the founders of this world; naturally, they vastly outstripped Ji Ning in power. However, they were wary of the humans which Ning represented, and so they didn't dare to be the slightest bit arrogant.

These three Queen Mothers had, long ago, given birth to a group of children.

Their children had continued to give birth to children of their own...

And so, one generation after another, this continued...

The original source for all of the citizens of the Snaphorn world was this trio of Queen Mothers! Those who had been born from the Queen Mothers were known as the 'Firstborn', and they had the greatest potential. The children of the Firstborn were the Secondborn, and their potential was second only to that of the Firstborn. The children of the Secondborn were the Thirdborn, and so on and so forth.

For example, of the nine Elders in the Palace of Elders, eight were Firstborn while one was Thirdborn!

The Queen Mothers who had given birth to the Firstborn were able to know everything they experienced.

.....

Within a beautiful world of flowers.

Perhaps fate was indeed meddling in subtle ways, for just as Ji Ning encountered this new danger, the day of Yu Wei's Celestial Tribulation had begun.

"Disciple, you were very powerful in your past life, and in this life you accepted me as your master...which means that this Celestial Tribulation will be incomparably shocking in power. I'm not able to help you too much in dealing with this tribulation. All I can do is help guard you from outsiders. As for the tribulation itself...it'll be up to you." Lu Dongbin, his Immortal sword on his back, looked towards the black-robed Yu Wei.

"Your disciple understands," Yu Wei said respectfully.

"Go, then." Lu Dongbin nodded lightly.

Yu Wei immediately flew to the peak of a distant island mountain. As for Lu Dongbin, he continued to watch from his current location atop the peak of a nearby mountain. Lu Dongbin was in complete control of this minor world; it was his personal, secret abode. He had even set down layers of formations, ensuring that even True Gods or Daofathers who wished to barge in would have to spend a significant amount of effort.

The wind tribulation, the fire tribulation, the thunder tribulation, the demonheart tribulation...the four great tribulations of the Celestial Tribulation.

Yu Wei was indeed extremely powerful. She had been very powerful in her past life, and with Patriarch Lu's guidance in this life, she had reached an extremely high level of insight into the Dao. She was thus able to smoothly sail through the wind tribulation and the fire tribulation.

“Not good.” The distant Lu Dongbin frowned slightly as he looked towards her. “Although the wind tribulation and the fire tribulation have both ended...both were clearly more formidable than the ones which most of the disciples under my command experienced. In fact...they were close in power to the wind tribulation and the fire tribulation which I myself experienced so long ago.”

Lu Dongbin had been Emperor Eastflower in a past life; after he had reincarnated and become Patriarch Lu, his tribulation had definitely not been a simple one!

Although he was a Ki Refiner, in the face of the thunder tribulation of his Celestial Tribulation...he inconceivably encountered nine nine-sets of thunder tribulation! However, Lu Dongbin had the benefit of a solid foundation provided by his past life. How could the soul of Emperor Eastflower be so easily dealt with? In addition, his master was a superb one, one of the truly supreme figures of the entire Three Realms. Thus...despite being a Ki Refiner, he had managed to force his way through the nine nine-sets of thunder tribulation.

By now, he had already reached the absolute peak of power possible for a Pure Yang True Immortal. He was publicly acclaimed within the Three Realms as the True Immortal with the highest chance of becoming a Daofather, and in fact he had already stepped halfway into the realm of becoming a Daofather.

“Judging from that wind tribulation and that fire tribulation...my disciple’s thunder tribulation probably won’t stop at six nine-sets.” Lu Dongbin frowned. “Her experiences in her past life were ordinary, and I’m the only master she’s taken on in this life. Normally speaking, most Ki Refiner disciples of Daofathers will only experience six nine-sets. Why in the world is her Celestial Tribulation this deadly?”

Lu Dongbin had always felt that this disciple of his had been hiding something. However, although he had even sought out Judge Cui and read her past life’s history within the Book of Life and Death, he had still been unable to uncover anything.

Still...his subconscious continued to tell him that something wasn’t quite right.

The power of a Celestial Tribulation was determined by the cosmos themselves; naturally, there had to be a reason behind all of this!

“In an hour, the thunder tribulation shall arrive.” Lu Dongbin no longer dwelled on the question, just watching quietly.

.....

The Nihilum Zone, beyond the Primordial Ruinworld. Ning was currently flying forward at high speed, continuing to pull away from that distant land. That earlier, sudden attack had caused him to feel that something was wrong...especially when those foes had claimed to be from the Snaphorn world and that this space region belonged to their Snaphorn world.

Ning instantly understood that these creatures must have come from the Primordial Ruinworld...and that he had been discovered.

Flee!

Flee at top speed!

The Primordial Ruinworld was a place which not even True Gods or Daofathers would dare trespass. Ning naturally wasn't willing to interact with the Primordial Ruinworld in any way.

Rumble...

Suddenly, layers of light began to appear within the formerly dark emptiness of the Void. It was a golden light. The Third Void Sector of the Nihilum Zone had nearly ten thousand bases within it which were connected to each other like nodes! Every single node was a critical point within an utterly enormous formation...and in an instant, an enormous net that spanned tens of millions of kilometers was instantly formed.

"But, but..." Ning was stunned by the sight before him.

His eyes were already blazing with torch-light. He had immediately used the [Torch Dragon's Eye] and hurriedly scanned his surroundings, but no matter where he looked, he saw the golden light seemingly stretch off to infinity. If he looked carefully enough, he could see countless patterns and ripples within the golden web, while the nodes were particularly eye-catching and brilliant.

"A grand sealing formation that covers many tens of millions of kilometers?" Ning mumbled to himself, "This is crazy. The entire Stillwater Commandery is only a few million kilometers in size."

A region of many tens of millions of kilometers in size was comparable to a hundred ordinary commanderies of the Grand Xia world.

An utterly enormous formation like this truly was astonishing.

"It seems the power of this Snaphorn world is far beyond what the likes of myself can handle. What should I do? What should I do?" Ning instantly began to consider his next options. Although he was shocked by this enormous formation, Ning wasn't an inexperienced bumpkin; for example, in the Crescent world, Patriarch Subhuti had secretly set up many enormous formations, some of which were able to cover an entire continent, which was equivalent to a third of the world of the Grand Xia. Those formations were far larger than the grand sealing formation before him.

And the Celestial Court!

The formations of the Celestial Court covered the entirety of the region they controlled.

There were many formations within the Three Realms that were far, far larger than this grand sealing formation! However...generally speaking, only Daofathers were capable of setting up those titanic formations! Most likely, not even Pure Yang True Immortals would be able to set them up, unless they were Pure Yang True Immortals who were extremely skilled in the art of formations, or supreme True Immortals like Lu Dongbin.

In addition, this enormous space formation was merely one of the defensive formations of this Snaphorn world; it probably didn't represent the complete, full power of the Snaphorn world.

Still...its appearance was enough to cause Ning unease.

An individual capable of establishing this sort of enormous formation definitely wasn't someone which the likes of Ning, who hadn't even undergone the Celestial Tribulation yet, could overcome.

“And...aren’t the Heavenly Daos gone from this place? How, then, can formations be used?” Ning guessed, puzzled, “It seems I truly do know far, far too little about the Primordial Ruinworld.”

Indeed, Ning truly knew too little.

Of the ten Heavenly Daos, Primordial Chaos was the most supreme. Life and Destruction were matched, while Yin and Yang were also matched; these four were preceded only by Primordial Chaos. As for the Five Elements of Metal, Wood, Water, Fire, and Earth, they served as the foundation for the entirety of the Three Realms...but they were on the third tier. Ning had an extremely deep level of insight into the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop, which was why he could vaguely sense the existence of the Heavenly Dao of Water, but here within the Nihilum Zone, he was completely unable to sense it...and so he had believed that the Heavenly Daos did not exist here!

In reality, however, only nine of the Heavenly Daos were missing from the Nihilum Zone of the Primordial Ruinworld. The Heavenly Dao of Primordial Chaos continued to exist; any place which was born from the primordial chaos was a place where the Heavenly Dao of Primordial Chaos would exist.

“No matter what...I need to give it a try.”

Swoosh!

Although Ning knew that it was unlikely that he would be able to break through this terrifying formation, he couldn’t just give up and wait for death. He didn’t want to be captured by the Snaphorn world.

The part of the net of light closest to Ning was merely a few million kilometers away. After using the [Obscuring Wind of the Nine Heavens], Ning’s movement speed was extremely fast; it was a flying technique, after all, and once one used it to fly, one could rely on momentum and thusly limit the amount of divine power that was consumed. It wasn’t like the [Starseizing Hand] or other divine abilities which consumed an enormous amount of divine power.

“Here I am.” Ning stared at the distant net of light, now only a few tens of thousands of kilometers away. The Rahu Bow appeared within his hands. He immediately nocked it, pulled it to a nearly full circle, circulated his divine power, then utilized [Houyi’s Archery].

“Go!”

Light flashed around him, quickly passing through him to the bow, then condensing within the arrow.

At the same time...Ning filled all of his heartforce, now nearly at the peak of the ‘iceheart’ level, into the arrow.

Twang!

A brilliant, fiery red streak of light pierced through the heavens.

As the arrow flew forward, the light around it grew more and more dazzling, and its power grew greater and greater. In the end, it seemed to have transformed into an enormous, fiery red comet. Generally speaking, thanks to [Houyi’s Archery], the farther the arrow flew, the more powerful it would become, until it reached peak power. Within the Three Realms, the usage of this technique would be even more incredible, because as the arrow flew it would constantly draw in the power of the natural world! Right now, since it was unable to do so, its power wasn’t increasing at too ridiculous a rate.

Still...the power of this arrow had still surpassed that of Ning's close combat ability.

BOOM!

The fiery red comet struck against the net of light...and the net of light just rippled slightly, then turned calm once more. As for Ning's arrow, it had been knocked flying away.

"As I thought, I failed." Ning wasn't surprised at all. If he truly was able to pierce this terrifying sealing formation that was tens of millions of kilometers in size through using just a single arrow...only then would he be surprised! However...he truly didn't wish to accept this!

"What should I do?"

"All space within this region has been completely locked. There's no way for me to flee." Ning felt frantic inside. "The Youngflame clan really was quite vicious in sending me here."

The Primordial Ruinworld's Nihilum Zone was indeed an awe-inspiringly famous danger zone. Not even many Empyrean Gods or True Immortals would be able to escape from it, much less the likes of Ji Ning.

As for the even more deadly Primordial Ruinworld...naturally, the Youngflame clan would've liked to send him to that place, but alas, even the Protocosmic spirit-treasure, the Worldhold Pagoda, was only able to tear open the fabric of space to send Ning into the Nihilum Zone. It was unable to send him to the Primordial Ruinworld.

"Eh?" Ning suddenly turned his head to look.

From far away, within the distant void of space, an enormous ship had suddenly appeared. This titanic ship was ten thousand kilometers long; it was like one of the continents of Earth! Earlier, it had been completely invisible, but now it had materialized out of nowhere. The entrance to the ship opened, and a series of massive, towering, blood-red horned, golden-eyed, black-caped warriors came flying out. The many warriors all radiated utterly astonishing auras.

"So the army of the Snaphorn world of the Primordial Ruinworld have arrived." Ning's pupils contracted.

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 16: The Nihilum Zone Chapter 11: A Crisis of Divine Power

"Wait." When Ji Ning saw the steady stream of black-caped warriors pour out from the distant ship, he couldn't help but feel surprised. "The warriors I fought previously had scales, wings, and blood-red eyes. But now, we have some black-caped warriors in front of me...all of which have four arms, golden eyes, and blood-red horns. They look completely different from the earlier enemies; even their auras are far more powerful."

If the ten foes Ning had previously slaughtered were adorable little kittens, then these black-caped warriors standing before him were like truly savage tigers!

"A total of over a thousand black-caped warriors." After counting more than a thousand warriors flying out from the distant ship, Ning saw how, after a long moment passed, yet another warrior emerged from the ship. This one was dressed in a violet cape, but in all other respects, he looked identical to the black-caped warriors, save for the fact that there was an enormous difference in their auras of power.

“What a terrifying force.” Ning suddenly felt as though it was hard to breathe.

The violet-caped warrior took just a single step forward. His body blurred, then suddenly appeared before the thousand-plus black-caped warriors. This speed caused Ning’s eyes to twitch; even when he used his [Obscuring Wind of the Nine Heavens] divine ability, he still wasn’t as fast as this person.

The invisible aura the person emanated caused Ning to feel even more pressure. “He’s definitely more powerful than any Celestial Immortal I’ve faced to date.”

“Commander.”

The thousand-plus black-caped warriors all looked towards their leader with eagerness.

The violet-caped warrior, however, gave Ning a curious glance. “An alien who looks like this and who is so small...I’ve never seen or even heard of someone like him.”

“What should I do? What should I do? What’s my next course of action?” Ning was feeling extraordinarily nervous right now. The entire region of many tens of kilometers was encompassed by this grand formation; there was nowhere for him to flee, and the army squad which the Snaphorn world had just sent out was terrifyingly strong.

“The voidwaves are being completely blocked out by the Third Void Sector’s defenses; no need to worry, everyone.” The violet-caped warrior smiled. “Release your children and capture this alien.”

“Yes!”

“Yes!”

“Yes!”

Instantly, a series of deafening roars rang out, shaking the region of space. At the same time, the thousand-plus black-caped warriors simultaneously opened their mouths. Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

Ten small spheres flew out from each of their mouths, producing a total of more than ten thousand small spheres. These small spheres instantly expanded in size when they entered the space of the Void, and they quickly transformed into a series of scaled, winged, blood-eyed warriors of enormous size.

“They vomited them out?” Ning was completely flabbergasted.

“Children, capture this alien,” the violet-caped warrior ordered.

“Yes!”

The ten thousand-plus blood-eyed warriors all assented in unison...and then half of them, the shorter and smaller ones, all opened their own mouths and emitted soundless roars, causing an invisible ripple of power to instantly sweep towards Ning. Ning knew what was coming this time; he knew that these smaller blood-eyed warriors were skilled in hypnotism. Last time, he had only faced five of them, but this time more than five thousand of them were simultaneously using the technique.

The formless ripples couldn’t be avoided; all he could do was take them head-on!

Clang! Clang! Clang!

Ning could feel booms ring out from within his soul!

However...with his heartforce at nearly the peak of the iceheart stage, Ning was still able to survive.

“What a powerful soul.” The violet-caped warrior nodded lightly.

“This alien really does have a bit of talent.”

“Yes. Although our children are merely fairly weak cannon fodder meant to be used up during a battle...in large numbers, they are still quite dangerous. I wonder where this alien came from? He’s quite strong.”

The black-caped warriors were stealthily chatting amongst themselves.

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Since hypnotism had failed...the ten thousand-plus blood-eyed warriors pulled out their weapons, then all charged forward, filling the Void with their massive bodies.

These could be considered as having power that was just barely comparable to Void-level Fiendgods, but they didn’t have Fiendgod-like indestructible bodies. If he used all his abilities, such as the [Starseizing Hand] or [Three Heads, Six Arms], Ning could wipe them all out in a very short period of time! After all, they didn’t have regenerating bodies; killing them would be very easy, very simple. However...Ning didn’t dare to recklessly waste his divine power.

The [Starseizing Hand] used up a vicious amount of divine power; once his divine power was exhausted, he would no longer be able to even fight back.

“I’ll have to rely on swordplay.”

Ning’s two hands each held a Darknorth sword. He made the swords expand to nine hundred meters.

Swoosh!

He used the [Obscuring Wind of the Nine Heavens], instantly charging into the very center of that mass of blood-eyed warriors. Ning didn’t use any additional divine abilities after that, relying solely on his sword-arts. Slash, slash, slash! Sword-light flashed everywhere.

Ning’s sword-arts were unfathomably profound, far beyond what these blood-eyed warriors were capable of. The pair of nine hundred meter long Darknorth swords slashed through the air, chopping past the heads of the blood-eyed warriors, sometimes completely bisecting them in half!

All of the blood-eyed warriors died, unable to heal from their wounds, regardless of where the injuries were, head or waist.

“Eh? His sword-arts truly are profound.” The violet-caped warrior was surprised by what he saw.

Ning was born to be a Sword Immortal. Even though he could no longer sense the Dao of the Sword or summon the natural energy of the world...his sword-arts remained unfathomable.

“Blaze, my children,” the violet-caped warrior called out.

“Roaaaaaar!”

“Die!”

“Alien!”

The horde of blood-eyed warriors bellowed as their bodies began to glow with a blurry green light. Instantly, their speed and their strength rose dramatically. They began to assault Ning en masse.

Ning remained very calm. He didn't use any divine abilities; instead, he relied on his sword-arts to continue to slaughter these blood-eyed warriors. In fact, he even used his own body as a weapon, using it to block the enemy axes and whips head-on. Due to having trained in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], Ning was able to actually conserve power by using his own body to take on blows as he fought within the mass of blood-eyed warriors!

Ning wasn't worried about them being able to injure him in the slightest.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Ning was occasionally sent flying here by an axe or flying there by a whip...

But each time he was sent 'flying', his sword-light would flash past in a graceful manner...and many enemy heads would go flying as well.

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Within the infinite darkness of the Void, three powerful minds were communicating with each other.

“This human's body is rather strong.”

“Right. It's like one of those 'magic treasures' those humans use.”

“This human is probably at the Celestial Immortal level of power at most...but his body is this powerful...he most likely must have trained in an earth-shatteringly powerful protective divine ability those humans have.”

“Ideally, we shall capture him alive, so that we can analyze his body. If we can gain some insights into some of the profound mysteries behind his divine ability, then use them to make us sisters grow more physically powerful, that would be wonderful.”

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By relying on the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] and his sword-arts, Ning was able to wipe out all of the blood-eyed warriors in the time needed to boil a kettle of tea. However, Ning didn't feel excited at all...because he saw the amusement on the faces of the distant black-caped warriors, and the calmness of the violet-caped warrior. He understood from this that to the Snaphorn world, the forces he had just killed most likely represented very little.

In truth...

They really did represent almost nothing. They were cannon fodder; in fact, they weren't even viewed as true members of the same race to which the horned warriors belonged! To produce a true member of the race required an extremely high price to be paid! Producing this sort of cannon fodder, however, was much easier and much cheaper. However, there was a limit to how many of them each horned warrior could control; some would have to perish before they could give birth to more.

“He was able to kill more than ten thousand of our children; he does have a bit of talent.” The violet-caped warrior said, “Hellsong, go and test his abilities.”

“Yes.”

A black-caped warrior nodded, then manifested four shortswords in his four hands.

Ning’s heart clenched.

They had just seen him kill more than ten thousand of those blood-eyed warriors...but still chose to send a single black-caped warrior to fight?

“Hmph.” The black-caped warrior suddenly moved, transforming into a blur as he pounced towards Ning.

“So fast!” Ning was somewhat caught off-guard. Those earlier red-eyed warriors had been far slower than him, but this black-caped warrior was so fast that he was only slightly slower than Ning when using the [Obscuring Wind of the Nine Heavens]. He could already be considered as being on Ning’s general level; he was slightly slower, but it wouldn’t make much of a difference.

Four icy shortswords came plunging towards him.

Ning’s Darknorth swords struck outwards as well.

Clang clang clang!

Consecutive collisions could be heard. Ning’s advantage lay in the profoundness of his sword-arts, while the enemy’s advantage was having four arms.

However, from that clash...

Ning was sent flying back!

“What great power.” Ning’s face changed, then his body blurred, transforming into his three-headed, six-armed form.

“Three heads and six arms? So is this your true form?” The black-caped warrior was quite surprised, but he then snickered, “Interesting.” He charged forth once more.

Ning now had six divine swords in his six arms. His sword-arts were profound, but he remained unwilling to use the [Starseizing Hand]. The [Starseizing Hand] simply used up far too much divine power, and the strength of this Snaophorn world was immeasurable. It was better to make himself appear weak; if he immediately revealed his trump cards, they would probably prepare even more powerful trump cards to deal with him.

Slash! Ning’s sword-light sliced through the black-caped warrior’s body. The black-caped warrior retreated at high speed, but a gaping wound was still cut through his chest. Green blood spewed outwards, but in the blink of an eye the wound was healed.

“Healed?” Ning was surprised. “So they really are two separate races. Those cannon foddors were completely unable to heal, but the black-caped warriors are capable of self-regeneration.”

Once someone became capable of self-regeneration, killing them would be much harder.

“Eh?” The violet-caped warrior saw what had just happened. “Hellsong’s unit, engage.”

Instantly, nine more black-caped warriors went flying forward.

“Hellsong, can’t you get it done?”

“You can’t even capture a single alien, and you even got injured.”

The nine other black-caped warriors all spoke teasingly, but they showed no mercy in their movements at all. They soon formed a complete circle around Ning, attacking him en masse and giving him nowhere to flee at all.

Boom...

Ning’s body suddenly increased explosively in size, expanding to three thousand meters.

Three thousand meters was Ning’s limit in using the Heavenly Transformation technique.

“What?” Prior to this, those ten black-caped warriors were surrounding and assaulting a tiny little dot, but that tiny little dot had suddenly and explosively increased in size to become comparable to them; this caused them to feel completely flabbergasted.

“So this is how tall you actually are...I imagine this is your true form, right?” Hellsong sighed in amazement, “Three heads, six arms, and as tall as us...this alien is quite strong.”

Ning, however, just felt misery; the more divine abilities he used, the faster his divine power would be used up.

However...while using Heavenly Transformation, his speed and strength would both increase tremendously!

“Every single one of these black-caped warriors are comparable to Celestial Immortal Goldclock or Deadwood; if any more come, I’ll be forced to use the [Starseizing Hand]. Once I use it...my end will come shortly thereafter.” Ning was frantic now; every bit of divine power that he used up was irreplaceable, at least in the short term. However...he still had no idea as to how he was supposed to flee from this place.

He could neither ascend to Heaven nor descend to Hell; there was nowhere to flee!

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 16: The Nihilum Zone Chapter 12: No Way Out

After using the Heavenly Transformations technique and [Three Heads, Six Arms], Ji Ning’s power had increased substantially. He was able to just barely fend off those ten black-caped warriors, but maintaining this state resulted in his divine power being continuously depleted.

“He’s actually still able to hold on?” This caused the distant, violet-caped warrior to frown. He immediately ordered, “The entire squad, go and capture this alien!”

“Yes!”

Accompanied by a series of roars, a total of ninety massive black-caped warriors flew towards Ji Ning's direction. This caused Ning's face to instantly change. "They really are giving me no chance at all. A hundred Celestial Immortals...how am I supposed to withstand them?" Although all of these foes focused on close combat, meaning that only a number of them were able to engage with him at any given moment, they clearly had some sort of mysterious combination formation technique; the more warriors that joined, the more powerful each black-caped warrior grew.

"Senior bear, what should I do?" Ning asked frantically, "Are there any options? If I hide in the underwater estate, can I survive this tribulation?"

"It's useless." The giant yellow bear was both frantic and helpless. "If you hide inside the underwater estate, it will end up being exposed as well...although Loose Immortals and Celestial Immortals are unable to forcibly bind me, some truly powerful figures are still capable of it. I'm only a Protocosmic spirit-treasure, after all; the master of this so-called Snaphorn world has to be at least at the level of a Pure Yang True Immortal."

Ning felt misery in his heart.

Indeed.

Given that they were able to send out a squad of soldiers like this, as well as set up an enormous space formation that spanned tens of millions of kilometers...it would be bizarre if the Snaphorn world's strongest experts were not at the Pure Yang True Immortal level! Anyone who reached that level could forcibly bind the Starseizing Manor.

"If I hide, I die...but if I don't hide, I still die!" Ning had no idea as to what he should do.

"All you can do is hope and pray that your master, Patriarch Subhuti, can find you," the giant yellow bear said. "Your master possesses the [Dream of the Three Realms]...but this place is outside the Three Realms. In fact, many of the Heavenly Daos don't exist here; only the Heavenly Dao of Primordial Chaos holds sway here. Your master might not be able to sense things here."

Ning was stunned.

His only hope was his master, Patriarch Subhuti! The Patriarch's power was utterly unearthly; at a time like this, only he might be capable of rescuing Ning. But...the giant yellow bear was right. This was the Nihilum Zone of the Primordial Ruinworld; even though Patriarch Subhuti was extremely powerful, if he was unable to find Ning, what could he do?

"Can it be that I, Ji Ning, am going to die here?" Ning felt an unwillingness to accept this within his heart. "Senior apprentice-sister took on Patriarch Lu as her master...and we agreed that we would meet again! Father, mother...I haven't even had a chance to see if their reincarnations are living happily or not. And Earth...I haven't gone back to Earth to take a look..."

He didn't want to accept this.

He truly didn't!

"If I had known this would happen, I would've left my Primaltwin at Swallow Mountain." Ning was filled with unbearable regret for having brought his Primaltwin with him as he fought the Youngflame clan. He

had felt that as long as he had the underwater estate and Greater Teleportation Dao-seals, he would be able to escape without issues. Who would've imagined that the descent of karmic sinflames rendered him incapable of escaping, resulting in him being sent into this danger zone?

"Can it be that my life truly is going to end here?"

The ninety black-caped warriors joined the ten earlier black-caped warriors into a formation. Instantly, their auras grew even more powerful as they continued to assault Ning.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

After just a few exchanges, the previously indestructible Ning suddenly blew apart! In fact, some of his flesh and blood transformed into dust from the blows of the enemy swords and sabers.

"What just happened?" The hundred attacking black-caped warriors were all amazed.

The distant commander shouted, "The Queen Mother commands you! Even if the alien is transformed into bits of mushmeat, you need to collect every single piece of flesh and blood; you can't spare even a single bit of dust. He won't die easily!"

"Yes."

Instantly, the group of black-caped warriors became filled with eagerness. The Queen Mother had personally given them an order! They felt incomparably honored. They sent their minds sweeping forth through space. They wouldn't let even a hint of dust escape their senses.

"Damn."

Whoosh.

Far away, a human rematerialized; it was Ning, his eyes bloodshot. His [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] wasn't something these Celestial Immortals could breach; just now, he had voluntarily caused his divine body to detonate while focusing all of his divine power within a single piece of flesh. Through the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], he had then transformed that piece of flesh into a speck of dust.

Alas...it seemed as though the enemy knew what abilities he had available. They didn't want to give him any chance at all.

"He really didn't die."

"He was blown up into tiny bits but didn't die?"

"When our cores are broken, we'll die...but he was blown into tiny bits and remained alive? This is too terrifying." The black-caped warriors quietly sent messages to each other; clearly, they were all quite stunned. Whether it was Ning's unbreakable body or the fact that he stayed alive even after being blown apart...they were truly stunned and uneasy.

What a terrifying race this was!

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"Senior apprentice-sister, your junior apprentice-brother was unable to live up to his promise!"

“Father, mother...”

“Master...”

One image after another flashed through Ning’s mind.

That senior apprentice-sister of his, who had kept everything hidden with her heart for so long, but who had eventually become his Dao-companion within the Conclave of Immortal Destiny, under the watchful gazes of countless people.

That seemingly cold but actually warm-hearted master of his, Immortal Diancai.

His teacher, Subhuti, who gazed down upon the Three Realms from his lofty, exalted position.

And his ordinary parents...they had done everything for him, and had chosen to forget about revenge, so that their son might have a better chance of living a good life...

His junior apprentice-brother...his sister, Autumn Leaf...Uncle White...Little Qing...

“Farewell!”

In dying here, not even reincarnation would be possible.

“Farewell, my loved ones.” Ning stared at the hundred black-caped warriors charging towards him, as well as the even more numerous foes in the distance. His eyes actually turned calm, a calmness that transcended both blazing rage and freezing coldness. It was a sort of absolute calmness...a perfect mastery of the self.

In this instant...Ning’s heartforce was actually able to leap from the peak of the ‘iceheart’ level all the way to the third level, the ‘ruler’ level. Even amongst the divine archers of the Three Realms, he would now be considered an absolute top-tier expert.

But alas, heartforce was invisible and formless; it wasn’t able to help out Ning at this moment.

“You want me to die?” Ning said softly, “Then I’ll make you all die!” These were words from his homeland; the foes before him were completely unable to understand it.

The six divine swords suddenly vanished.

“His swords vanished?”

“What’s going on?”

The hundred black-caped warriors charging towards Ning all halted. They could tell that Ning was skilled in using the sword, but despite being such a powerful swordsman, he had...actually put away his swords?

Was he giving himself up for capture?

BOOM!

Ning’s fingers formed sword-fingers. They suddenly expanded to be more than nine hundred meters long as the full power of the Fourth Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand] exploded forth. Ning’s power

instantly rose to an utterly terrifying level; he was actually able to knock an enemy shuttle aside, then with a slashing sound, pierce straight into the chest of a black-caped warrior. With a simple flick of his sword-fingers, the warrior was cut in half.

“What?” The distant violet-caped warrior’s face completely changed. “How did his power increase this much?!”

Whoosh!

Crunch!

Slash!

Ning ignored all enemy assaults; his body, protected by the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], was completely capable of withstanding any assaults. The only attacks he needed to defend against were the ones that were meant to bind him! In the Three Realms, there were some powerful magic treasures that had powerful binding forces that were hard to defend against, but these warriors of the Saphorn world were only skilled in close combat; thus, the only tools they had for binding an opponent were simple ones like chains or whips. Ning was less than two meters tall; he was able to dodge with incomparable nimbleness through the many massive black-caped warriors, making it hard for them capture him.

The black-caped warriors seemed strong, but their bodies were still unable to withstand Ning’s sword! Thus, they were easily chopped apart in close combat.

“...He died?” Ning was suddenly startled.

Through cutting, chopping, decapitating, or other strikes, he was able to neutralize twenty-five of the black-caped warriors within a short period of time. However, they all healed quite quickly...but the twenty-sixth actually lost its entire aura. It had completely, truly died.

Ning instantly thought back to what had just happened. “Right. That green sphere.”

All of the black-caped warriors had a green sphere within their bodies. Ning had originally thought that the green spheres were nothing more than organs. They were very small; the warriors were three thousand meters tall, while the green sphere was merely three meters long. He hadn’t damaged the green sphere in killing the first twenty-five warriors, but he had in the last one.

Boom!

Slash!

The black-caped warriors watched as the tiny little Ji Ning’s sword-fingers suddenly expanded to become a thousand meters long. The sword-fingers tore through their bodies, plunging through their chest to snatch at and claw apart their cores. One black-caped warrior after another began to fall, and a large amount of baleful auras began to flood towards Ning, swirling into him.

“Careful, he’s discovered our cores!”

“He knows about the cores!”

“His fingers are extremely terrifying, far more so than his swords.”

“Our weapons are completely unable to block him.”

“His body is completely unbreakable.”

“He’s too tiny; there’s no way we can use our chains to capture him.” The black-caped warriors were actually on the losing side now.

The Celestial Immortals of the Three Realms could’ve joined forces and used various binding techniques to capture Ning from far away...but these aliens were only skilled in close combat! Although they had battle formations that could be used to kill him, the Queen Mother had commanded that they capture this person alive. Thus, they didn’t dare unleash their most powerful killing techniques for fear of killing him.

“Hmph.” The distant violet-caped warrior’s face sank when he saw this. He could tell that there were only two methods for dealing with this tiny little alien.

The first method was to use formation-based killing techniques, like the ones they used in their planetary wars, to forcibly crush the foe. However, if they did that, they might accidentally kill this alien, which would be a violation of the Queen Mother’s command. The Queen Mother’s decree was very important; in comparison, even the destruction of their entire army meant nothing.

The second method was to fight him personally, or perhaps with several supporters! To overcome him with absolute strength, then capture him.

“Out of the way.” The violet-caped warrior transformed into a violet streak of light.

“He’s coming.” This entire time, Ning had kept part of his attention on the violet-caped warrior, who was the person who truly caused Ning to feel threatened. Now that the violet-caped warrior was charging forward at full speed, Ning’s heart instantly clenched. This speed was even faster than the speed which he had displayed earlier; it was absolutely superior to Ning when using the [Obscuring Wind of the Nine Heavens].

“Is this my final battle before I die?” Ning didn’t feel any fear; his gaze was incomparably calm as he stared at the violet-caped warrior. “If I die...I’ll drag you down into death with me!”

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 16: The Nihilum Zone Chapter 13: Our World

As the violet-caped warrior attacked, the many black-caped warriors that had been assaulting Ji Ning all retreated. They were all filled with utter confidence in their commander.

Whoosh!

A silvery-white whip lashed out, more than thirty thousand meters long. It was like a giant, silvery-white serpent that was coiling with elegance and poise as it swept towards Ning. Ning’s sword-fingers struck out like swords, blocking the whip head-on. WHAP! A clear ringing sound rang out. Ning could sense a strange energy be transmitted into his body, including into his organs. Fortunately, the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] refined the entire body, resulting in no weaknesses at all. However, Ning was still knocked flying backwards by several kilometers.

“His speed vastly outstrips mine, and the power of his whip is on a level higher than even me using the [Starseizing Hand] at full power. His whip is used in a way that gives me no way to dodge; it seems he is at an even higher level with his whip than I am with sword-arts. His power, without any question, is at the utmost peak of power possible for a Celestial Immortal,” Ning mused to himself.

Hard to deal with!

The black-caped warriors were merely at the level of Celestial Immortals Deadwood or Goldclock, but this violet-caped warrior was far more powerful than even Celestial Immortal Infatuation! Even the [Starseizing Hand], Ning’s proudest technique, was insufficient in the face of this foe. As for speed and sword-arts, Ning was clearly inferior in these regards as well.

Fortunately, only close combat was possible within the Nihilum Zone, which was why his [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] was able to be used to maximum effect. Within the Three Realms, Celestial Immortals on the level of this violet-caped warrior would probably be very close to Pure Yang True Immortals in power...their magic artifacts and formations alone would be enough to make Ning feel hopeless. However, in this place, only close combat was possible; thus, he still had a hint of a chance.

Clang! Clang! Clang! Ning used both the [Three Heads, Six Arms] and the [Starseizing Hand] simultaneously. As for the violet-caped warrior, his four arms clutched four silver whips which struck out long long serpents, wildly assaulting Ning.

Ning’s six arms strove mightily to defend.

In fact, every so often he would borrow the force of the collision to flee and dodge. Ning had been continuously searching for a way out, for a chance to counter-attack.

“I’m being completely suppressed by him. There’s no way for me to even go close to him. What should I do?” Ning was frantically pondering what to do. The foe’s long silver whip was rendering him incapable of drawing within fifteen thousand meters of the man, much less wound him.

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“He clearly is using some sort of technique that allows him to increase his strength dramatically.” The violet-caped warrior, by contrast, was much more relaxed; he was in complete control of this fight. “Only his arms are capable of releasing such power; his legs and kicks are far weaker. I trust that there is a price to this ability; he shouldn’t be able to maintain it for too long.”

All things came at a cost.

For a human that was less than two meters tall to become the size of a three thousand meter Fiendgod came at a cost, and so too did having three heads and six arms. The cost of using the [Starseizing Hand] was even higher.

Crack! Crack! Crack!

The four long silver whips danced out like dragons, wildly lashing out at Ning again and again. Ning had to completely focus on defending them at all times. If he failed a single time...the whips would probably entangle him and completely bind him.

If the whips attacked quickly, Ning had to block quickly as well.

His six arms strove to defend as best they could. The more times they blocked, however, the more times he had to use the [Starseizing Hand], which meant the more divine power would be used up.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

His divine power was frantically depleting. Even though he had reached the sixteenth stage of the [Crimsonbright Diagram of the Nine Heavens], the Fourth Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand] used up so much divine power than in just a short period of time, more than half of Ning's divine power had been used up. He hadn't used up nearly as much in the earlier fight, despite it lasting much longer.

"Less than a third."

"Less than a sixth."

He was faced with the whip-strikes which came from every direction. Ning seemed to have become trapped within a net of whip-strikes; he was unable to dodge, and his only option was to block, resulting in his divine power depleting further and further.

When his divine power was completely used up...Ning would be completely subdued and captured.

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Within the underwater estate. Within an undefined, void-like region.

The giant yellow bear was here. Next to him were seven figures, including a child with a necklace, a bald elder, a beautiful woman...

The seven figures all emanated incomparably powerful auras, and amongst them was the red-haired Fiendgod which Ning had previously battled.

"Big bear, the young master is in a crisis in the outside world. Are we supposed to just wait here and watch?" The beautiful woman, dressed in black leather armor, spoke out with a frown. Her eyebrows were snow-white, while her eyes looked just like a viper's.

"I watched as this little kid, Ji Ning, grew up step by step. Do you think I care about him less than you lot do?" The giant yellow bear said angrily, "I'm under instructions from Master to find a successor for him. Ji Ning is the best successor yet; I wouldn't dare be careless!"

"But you are letting him remain trapped in a dire situation!" The black-armored, beautiful woman said angrily.

"Do you seven think that you can protect him?" The giant yellow bear asked angrily. "Do you know who he has run afoul of this time? Foes from the Sraphorn world of the Primordial Ruinworld. The Primordial Ruinworld! They are one of remnant forces left behind from that ancient war! Anyone capable of controlling an entire world has most likely survived from that war, and anyone capable of surviving that war...even if they are weak, they can't be too weak. They might be at the level of a Daofather or a True God! Even if you all go out to rescue him, do you really think you can block a Daofather or a True God?"

The black-armored woman turned silent.

“Snow Scorpion.” The red-haired Fiendgod spoke out, “The big bear is right. Even if we intervene, we might not be able to overcome this Snaphorn world.”

“Big bear, you idiot...why didn't you notify us when Ji Ning was faced with the descent of karmic sinflames?” The black-armored woman couldn't help but berate him.

“Am I supposed to have you intervene whenever he encounters danger?” The giant yellow bear said angrily, “Per Master's orders, until he becomes an Empyrean God, he can't be truly considered Master's disciple. No matter what sort of trials he has to endure, they can only be considered tests for him...and if he fails and dies, he has no one to blame but his lack of skills or his bad luck. Although we all like him and view him as having tremendous potential and a very good chance of becoming an Empyrean God...how was I supposed to know that the Youngflame clan had an ability like this, to teleport him straight into the Nihilum Zone of the Primordial Ruinworld? I thought that even if things did turn dangerous, we'd still be able to rescue him, which is why I let him face dangers as needed to temper him...but how can everything in life go as expected?! Ugh!”

“Let's take Ji Ning into the underwater estate and hide him within our world. Even if the enemy binds the underwater estate, it'll only be an elementary binding; they probably won't be able to find our world,” the beautiful woman, Snow Scorpion, said.

“They might not find it...but it's also possible that they might find it.” The bald elder suddenly spoke out in a hoarse voice.

The underwater estate did indeed have many secrets.

Immortal Juhua had always felt that there were secrets present within it. Ning had also felt that there were parts of the underwater estate that were not under his control...but he wasn't able to find those parts!

But just because Ning wasn't able to find them...didn't mean that the master of the Snaphorn world wouldn't be able to find out!

The red-haired man said in a gravelly voice, “No matter what...if Ji Ning dies, the Starseizing Manor will fall into the hands of the master of the Snaphorn world. If the master of the Snaphorn world is at the level of a True God or Daofather, he will definitely be able to find our world through the Starseizing Manor...at which point, our only option will be to fight with him. If the Snaphorn world's master is not yet at the True God or Daofather level, then he won't be able to defeat the formation which protects our world.”

“Since, no matter what, we will still have to end up fighting with the master of the Snaphorn world...we might as well rescue Ji Ning and bring him into our world. Although the Godking did indeed say that his disciple could only enter our world after becoming an Empyrean God, we are left with no other options.”

“Right.” The giant yellow bear nodded. “Since we can't escape...we are indeed left with no other options. Make your preparations. Once we bring Ji Ning into our world, we'll need to be ready for the Snaphorn world's attack. I hope their master is weak; ideally, he won't even be able to find our world.”

“Right.”

“Let’s prepare.”

The seven figures all had solemn looks on their faces.

The child, who had remained silent this entire time, suddenly spoke out: “Long ago, Father instructed us to leave him and stay out of that war. We’ve been waiting long enough...and so let’s have a good fight with the Snaphorn world.”

“Let’s have a good fight.”

“Let’s fight!”

Everyone present had flames of war within their eyes.

.....

Within the emptiness of the Nihilum Zone. Enormous ships that were ten thousand kilometers long moved like streaks of light, advancing at high speed. The giant spaceships were tightly clustered together...and there seemed to be no end of them. Within the center of those giant ships, there was a golden warship.

Within the golden warship.

Everyone present was standing at solemn attention. Leading them was a horned warrior with a golden cape with black trimmings, and behind him were eight hundred violet-caped warriors. These were the most valiant, most capable commanders of the First Army who often engaged in wars against other worlds.

In front of them hovered an utterly enormous mirror. The images within the mirror were images of the commando squad of the Third Void Sector doing battle against Ji Ning.

“Benair is actually joining the fight in person.” The golden-caped warrior snorted angrily, “How despicable. Since he’s joining the fight in person...doesn’t that mean our First Army has made this trip for nothing?”

“This alien is quite tenacious and strong; he might be able to stay alive until we get there.”

“This is on the orders of the Queen Mother. It should be us, the First Army, who captures this alien.”

The almighty First Army...how could it possibly hold a small squad of the Third Void Sector in any regard?

“Quick, quick, quick!”

The general couldn’t help but urge them to move faster. “It has to be us that captures this alien!” It was rare for the Queen Mother to give an order; they naturally had to work hard to show their talents.

.....

Within the void of the underwater estate.

“Ji Ning’s divine power has almost been completely used up. Once it is used up, he’ll fall into enemy hands. Red-hair, you personally intervene and wipe them all out, then return to our world and prepare to deal with the master of the Snaphorn world,” the giant yellow bear said.

“Alright.”

“Agreed.”

They all nodded in concurrence.

They all knew very well that falling into dire straits would truly temper one’s Dao-heart. However...they had no idea that Ning’s heartforce had already advanced from the second level, ‘iceheart’, into the third level, ‘ruler’.

.....

Within the empty space of the Nihilum Zone. A tight cluster of black-caped warriors watched from not too far away as their commander, the violet-caped warrior, was completely dominating this alien.

“I’m almost done. I have less than a tenth of my divine power now.” Ning didn’t want to accept this. He truly didn’t. But...the serpentine whips were striking out against him from every direction.

Was he truly out of options?

The Desolate Era

Book 16: The Nihilum Zone Chapter 14: Heartforce Manifests

“Hmph.” The violet-caped commander could sense the alien growing frantic; he could sense that this was, perhaps, the last throes of his enemy’s resistance. “It seems...he can no longer hold on.”

“Die!”

Ning suddenly let out an enraged roar.

He no longer held back at all on his divine power. Instead, he wildly poured it all into his arms at full force! The Void-level elemental ki in his body, through a secret art, was also immediately pushed into his arms. In this moment, Ning had only a single thought in his mind...no matter the cost, he was going to unleash his power to the maximum possible level.

Actually...even going all-out like this only resulted in a 30% increase in power.

“BREAK!”

Ning’s six arms struck out as six streaks of sword-light.

Ning’s calm eyes glowed with light, the light that came in the final instants of one’s life as it all blazed away. Ning’s heart and soul was completely poured into his swords.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!

Simultaneous explosions rang out.

Ning’s six sword-fingers stabbed out, four of them striking against the four silver whips. With explosive sounds, the silver whips...were actually knocked flying backwards. Ning’s fingers, however, continued to stab forward!

“What?!” The violet-caped commander’s eyes turned completely round. “How can this be?”

“Impossible!”

The many black-caped warriors watching from far away were amazed at this sight. They could all sense that Ning was inches away from death. Previously, he had been completely suppressed...so how was it that right now, at the very end, he was actually able to unleash power that surpassed the power of their commander, knocking his weapon away?

.....

“What...how can this be?” Within the void-like region within the underwater estate, the giant yellow bear, who had been watching the battle outside this entire time, was completely surprised.

The giant yellow bear was most likely the person with the deepest understanding of Ning’s power.

He knew exactly what Ning was capable of. What Ning had displayed earlier represented his utmost limit of power; even if Ning went all out, he would at most be able to increase his power by 20% or 30%; he would still be considerably weaker than that violet-caped commander. How was it, then, that he had suddenly knocked the silver whip away?

“How can this be?”

“It doesn’t make sense.”

“It...shouldn’t have happened.” The giant yellow bear couldn’t understand it. “This isn’t the Three Realms. There’s no way to sense the Dao here, so even if he suddenly gained a new insight into the Dao, it wouldn’t help him increase his power in any way. In addition, he is currently in a battle, and he’s used up an enormous amount of divine power. There’s no way he could’ve broken into the seventeenth level of the [Crimsonbright Diagram of the Nine Heavens] so soon...he just made it to the sixteenth level a short while ago.”

A breakthrough in his divine body? Impossible.

A breakthrough in the Dao? It wouldn’t make any difference.

The [Starseizing Hand] was already at the Fourth Cycle!

“How can this be?” The giant yellow bear didn’t understand.

.....

Not too far away, inside the golden warship of the First Army which was ensconced within those countless warships. The commanders of the First Army were staring at the images within the levitating mirror.

“Eh?!”

“Odd.”

“What just happened? What ability did this alien just use?”

None of them understood it.

The golden-caped general, however, just laughed loudly. "Wonderful. The longer he can delay, the better; we're almost there! Haha...it seems that in the end, it will still be us who captures this alien."

.....

The experts of the Snaophorn world couldn't understand it. Not even the giant yellow bear understood it. Nobody could think of a reason why this had just happened.

But within the deep, dark reaches of the Void...

Three minds were communicating with each other.

"Second sister...what just happened?"

"Elder sister, what happened?"

The three Queen Mothers had given birth to many children; their children were the Firstborn! More than half of the commanders of the First Army were Firstborn; the three Queen Mothers could see and sense everything the Firstborn could see and sense! Thus, they too saw everything which had just happened.

The commander of the commando squad from the Third Void Sector, Benair, was the child of the second Queen Mother of the three Queen Mothers. When Benair fought with Ning, it was as though the second Queen Mother had personally fought against Ning.

"That was..."

"Heartforce?"

"Yes, heartforce! It was heartforce!" The second Queen Mother's powerful mind suddenly began to tremble with excitement. "This human's attack just now was actually filled with heartforce!"

"What? Heartforce?!"

"Heartforce?! He's actually in control of heartforce?!"

The first and third Queen Mothers were both excited as well.

"Yes. There's no mistaking it; in fact, just now I completely focused a strand of my mind upon my child Benair." The second Queen Mother said excitedly, "They just clashed again. There's no mistaking it; this human's attacks contain heartforce within them. His control over his heartforce isn't perfect; it's clearly quite rough. However, I can still sense the powerful, mysterious, profound heartforce at work."

"This is our chance!" The second Queen Mother was incomparably excited. "This human is able to focus his heartforce and knows how to apply it! That means he understands a heartforce technique! This is a truly supreme form of power; we can discover and distill the method for producing and applying heartforce from this human!"

"Right. Now we can gain a heartforce technique!"

"Yes, this is our chance!"

The other two Queen Mothers were incomparably excited as well.

They had experienced and survived that calamitous war; as survivors, they knew quite well that 'heartforce' was one of the truly supreme forms of power. Upon mastering heartforce, one could truly embark upon a path that would lead to them becoming the most supreme of existences within the primordial chaos! A path that led to surpassing even True Gods and Daofathers!

"This is our chance, but we cannot be rash." The first Queen Mother's mind warned the other two minds, "Heartforce techniques are supreme techniques that are absolutely not taught to outsiders, even within the Three Realms. This human youth must have an extraordinary background, which is why he was able to learn a technique like this. Perhaps there is a self-destruction mechanism hidden within his soul."

"Actually...the simplest method is to hypnotize him, but he is one of those 'Fiendgod Body Refiner' humans; his soul and his body are completely merged together and extremely stable. In addition, he's also a practitioner of heartforce; his mind must be very powerful. To hypnotize him...I imagine it will be quite difficult."

"We have to try."

Heartforce was far too alluring to them!

Heartforce...

It was an invisible, formless sort of power. It wasn't like divine power, elemental ki, or natural energy; those could be seen with the naked eye. Heartforce, however, was incredibly powerful, and it was extremely hard to reach a basic level of skill in it. Back on Mount Innerheart, Ning had already been at a very high level of insight into the Dao, but he still had to train archery painstakingly for three years before finally reaching a basic level of skill.

However, heartforce truly was formidable. That mighty divinity of the Primordial Era, Houyi, had relied the power of his heartforce to become the number one divine archer of the Three Realms, and even Daofathers and True Gods had fallen to his hand.

Even Ning himself was surprised; his sword-finger had actually become so powerful as to suppress the whip of this violet-caped commander?

"Is this...heartforce?" Others might have to guess at it, but Ning himself knew very well that his incredibly berserk attack just now had been launched without any extraneous thoughts. All of his power had been fully merged into that blow...and his heartforce had unconsciously leaked into it as well.

How should heartforce be applied? This was a mystery.

The Three Realms had a set of extremely detailed instructions for applying heartforce through archery; this was the creation of the mighty divinity Houyi! It was precisely because mighty Houyi had systemized the method of using heartforce in archery that the Three Realms had so quickly developed a crop of terrifyingly powerful divine archers...but there were no systemized tools for teaching one how to apply heartforce into other weapons.

How to apply heartforce to the sword?

To the saber?

To the spear?

To the staff?

If heartforce was applied to these weapons, would they increase in power dramatically? Since it worked for archery, it logically should work for these weapons...but mighty Houyi was the foremost expert of heartforce within the Three Realms, and his greatest talent was archery. He had thus created a systemized method for applying it to archery...but as for other weapons? Perhaps some other major powers had discovered ways of applying heartforce to those weapons, but those ways were crude ways, not systemized ways which others could use.

"I actually managed to apply heartforce through my fingers when I used sword-arts?" Ning was completely amazed.

The power of an ordinary arrow was quite ordinary...but when heartforce was applied to it, it would instantly turn into a nightmare for foes! The power of the arrow would instantly rise to a terrifying level.

"However...just now, I was only able to truly apply a very tiny amount of heartforce." Ning knew this for certain because he had used up only a very small amount of his heartforce; the rest of his heartforce remained untouched! As someone who had reached the third level of heartforce, 'ruler', Ning's heartforce was tremendously powerful. Even just a tiny amount of it was enough to cause the power of his sword-arts to rise to a level where he could actually now suppress this foe.

"Alien, you actually still have more tricks up your sleeve? I want to see how powerful you actually are!" The violet-caped commander let out a loud shout, then lashed out with a whip once more. As for the mind of the second Queen Mother, it had completely descended onto the commander by now.

"Go." Ning stretched out a single hand as well. His fingers flicked out!

His heartforce once more rode with his fingers, just as it had last time. Ning could sense that a small part of his heartforce had indeed become one with his fingers!

Bang! Ning's fingers, now many hundreds of meters long, collided with that whip!

The whip was once more knocked flying back.

"Right. That's the feeling." Ning was beginning to vaguely make out the basics to it. However, he was still far, far away from being able to apply it as intricately as when he applied it to archery. All Ning could do was ponder the method of applying heartforce to archery, then try and come up with a similar way to strengthen his sword-fingers.

"Eh?" Ning suddenly realized that the distant, violet-caped commander had actually come to a halt.

Rumble...

A powerful ripple spread out. Ning took a look...and saw, far away in the void, one enormous spaceship after another coming flying towards him. There seemed to be no end to the densely clustered spaceships.

"...How many ships just arrived?" Ning was completely shocked.

The entrances to the ships all opened, and countless horned warriors came flooding out from them. Amongst these countless warriors were many black-caped warriors as well!

Ning swept them with his gaze. The number of ordinary horned warriors...they had to at least number in the millions. In addition, at the front of the many ships was a golden warship, from which one violet-caped warrior after another came flying out. At the very end, a gold-caped person came walking out, his aura so powerful and terrifying as to cause Ning to feel despair.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Suddenly, a series of thoughts descended upon the region.

The three Queen Mothers had sent out hundreds of thought-rays to the many violet-caped warriors, as well as the general.

“Don’t be in a hurry to attack.” The Queen Mother’s voice echoed within the general’s mind.

“Yes, Queen Mother,” the general replied mentally.

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“Big bear, what’s going on outside? Can it be that the young master’s divine power hasn’t been used up yet? I think we should make our move now. Let’s not waste any time.” Within the underwater estate, the black-haired beauty, ‘Snow Scorpion’, spoke out.

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 16: The Nihilum Zone Chapter 15: Yu Wei’s Tribulation

Red-hair, Snow Scorpion, and the others all looked towards the giant yellow bear. Only the big bear was able to clearly sense the outside world and what was going happening there.

“Don’t be impatient.” The big bear shook his head. “A powerful army has been dispatched from the Snaphorn world, but the strange thing is...this powerful army hasn’t acted against Ji Ning yet. In fact...even the violet-caped warrior that had been previously fighting against Ning has stopped fighting as fiercely as he had before. Ji Ning definitely doesn’t have much divine power left; if they fight for just a bit longer, his divine power will have been completely used up, but they actually halted. How odd.”

“Halted?”

The seven mighty warriors left behind by Daoist Threelives were all puzzled.

“In addition...there’s something else odd. Ji Ning’s power had clearly reached a limit...but just now, when he used the [Starseizing Hand], his power actually increased yet again. He was able to knock aside the foe’s weapon...and I don’t understand why, no matter how hard I try,” the giant yellow bear said.

“How can one’s power increase in the Nihilum Zone?” The seven began to ponder.

They were different from the giant yellow bear; the bear was, after all, just the spirit of a magic treasure. Only after the destruction of Pangu’s Primordial World had the giant yellow bear slowly trained to the level of becoming a true living creature. By comparison, he wasn’t that experienced...but the other

seven had been quite famous long ago in Pangu's World. This fame came through their performances in many battles; they had much greater experience and knew far more things.

"Can it be..." The seven suddenly all thought of the same possibility.

.....

Ning stared at the distant, awe-inspiring army of millions of horned warriors. He had a feeling...that even the most ordinary of warriors in that army was far more powerful than the red-eyed warriors he had previously battled. Most likely, all of them were comparable to Loose Immortals who had lived for a million years. They could be compared to the weakest of Celestial Immortals; Ning would be able to kill each of them with ease.

But no matter how ordinary they were in terms of strength...a million of them was an utterly terrifying prospect!

"So many warriors...if they have some sort of combination-formation technique, even Empyrean Gods or True Immortals would probably feel despair and choose to flee," Ning mused to himself. "And this is just part of the total strength of the Snaphorn world of the Primordial Ruinworld. The Primordial Ruinworld...it truly is the most terrifying place of all."

Ning was actually quite calm now.

The enemy held all the cards in their hands. They were simply too powerful...and more than eight hundred violet-caped warriors had suddenly appeared just now! If they were all comparable in strength to the first violet-caped warrior, that meant they were equivalent to a force of eight hundred supreme Celestial Immortals. And there was that gold-caped bastard...a person which caused Ning to feel completely powerless and unable to fight back when he looked at him.

"However...although I have no way of fighting back, I can still kill myself," Ning mused to himself. "I definitely won't let them do anything to me."

"Alien."

The general smiled as he moved forward, but even when his black, scale-covered face was smiling, it still looked absolutely savage. "This space belongs to our Snaphorn world. Why have you come to our place?"

"I was wandering through the infinite Void and entered this place by accident," Ning said. At the same time, he seized this chance to absorb more power from the Solar Star and the Lunar Star, converting it into divine power. He had used up far too much divine power earlier. "I truly do not wish to be enemies with you. I would like to ask you to please let me leave; I will be endlessly grateful if you do."

"Let you leave? That's not impossible," the general suddenly said.

"Oh?" Ning looked at his foes. He knew, however, that the cost of activating such an enormous space formation that was tens of millions of kilometers in size was definitely an enormous one. And now, they had sent over so many Snaphorn warriors as well? There was no way they'd let him leave so easily.

"I have a request. If you accept, then I promise to let you leave," the general said.

“Might I ask what this request is?” Ning asked.

“As long as you allow us to inspect your soul,” the general said, “And let us know your true intentions...if you are not a foe to our Snaphorn world, we shall immediately let you leave.”

“Inspect my soul? Soulsourcing?” Ning’s face changed.

He immediately understood what they were plotting.

He was a Fiendgod Body Refiner; his divine soul and his divine body were completely merged together, making his soul extremely stable, far more stable than the souls of many Celestial Immortals! In addition, his heartforce had reached the ‘ruler’ level...

It must be understood that it was difficult for Pure Yang True Immortals to forcibly soulsource even an ordinary Celestial Immortal. Someone like Ning, who had such powerful heartforce, was rare even amongst True Immortals and Empyrean Gods. To forcibly soulsource him was incredibly difficult. Even if a Daofather was to attempt it, Ning would still probably be able to instantly react and commit suicide by shattering his own soul!

So they wanted him to allow them to soulsource him without resisting?

“Not a chance.” Ning shook his head in refusal.

“Don’t be in such a hurry to refuse.” The golden-caped general continued to smile.

Ning, however, knew the truth. Given that his foes had sent out so many warriors and activated such an enormous space formation, they definitely were looking for something important. If he didn’t fight back, they could use some sort of technique to dominate and control his soul, resulting in him becoming a slave. That would truly be a life worse than death. After all, the promises these people were making...weren’t worth a single copper. This place was outside the Three Realms; there were no such things as oaths to the Dao of the Heavens.

“No need to say anything further.” Ning laughed coldly. “If push comes to shove, I’ll die. Soulsource me? In your dreams!”

“Alas.” The gold-caped general let out a sigh.

Whoosh...

Silently and soundless, hundreds of mind-strands simultaneously flew out from the gold-caped general and the hundreds of violet-caped warriors, all assaulting Ning!

Rumble...

Instantly, a sensation of utter exhaustion began to overwhelm Ning.

Tired.

So tired.

He felt like he was a mortal on Earth again, sick and tired and exhausted. He felt a desire to immediately shut his eyes...a sensation that he had never felt in this life after he had embarked onto the path of Immortal cultivation.

“I...am the only ruler of myself.”

The power of heartforce filled his entire body.

Under the command of his heartforce, his soul began to resist fiercely; although he felt extremely tired, he still maintained his clarity of mind.

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“Alas...”

“We failed.”

“This human’s heartforce is quite strong. Although the mind-strands we attached to the Firstborn represent just part of our full power...even when we joined forces, we were still unable to hypnotize him.”

“It is simply too hard to hypnotize someone with such powerful heartforce.”

The three Queen Mothers were mentally conferring with each other.

They didn’t care about whether Ji Ning died or not; what they cared the most about was his heartforce technique. Even the set of archery-based heartforce taught by [Houyi’s Archery] was of use to them; although they didn’t use bows, this would at least still let them touch upon the nature of heartforce and let them more thoroughly understand it.

As for Ji Ning? If they could soulscour him, they could just kill him afterwards! There was no way they would let Ji Ning go back; if he did manage to return to the Three Realms and informed the most supreme figures of the Three Realms learn that the Snaphorn world had acquired a heartforce technique, those figures would probably personally come pay a visit.

They had been lucky enough to survive that ancient, calamitous war; they knew exactly how powerful the Three Realms were. It must be understood that the entire Primordial Ruinworld had been defeated! A single Snaphorn world would probably be effortlessly annihilated by the supreme powers of the Three Realms. Thus, if they could obtain the heartforce, there was no way they would let Ji Ning live and return to the Three Realms.

“No other options.”

“All we can do is have our Firstborn fight with this human. When they fight, we’ll use our mind-strands to watch closely. His current control over his heartforce is quite weak; we can fully and clearly sense his heartforce ripples. When we personally fight with him time and time again, watching his heartforce be applied hundreds or thousands of times over...I trust that eventually, we’ll discover some of the secrets of heartforce and be able to develop a heartforce technique of our own.”

“This clumsy method is the only one left to us.”

The three Queen Mothers made their decision.

Truly powerful experts generally always had this sort of clumsy method available to them; to first watch, then to hypothesize and draw insights from what they saw. For example, after other major powers personally saw the mighty divine ability [Wings of the Garuda] many times, they were able to develop a similar flying divine ability. Perhaps it was a bit weaker than the [Wings of the Garuda], but it was still able to emulate part of its power.

This was what the three Queen Mothers had settled upon!

.....

“No need to capture the alien. Let him feel that there is a chance of surviving. The Firstborn among you...you can go and fight against him one-on-one. When his energy is almost depleted, let him rest. After he finishes resting, continue the attacks. Maintain this battle for as long as possible; if it takes many years, all the better.” The Queen Mother’s order came to them.

This caused the general and the many violet-caped Firstborn to feel puzzled and confused.

They were clearly capable of capturing him. Why didn’t they?

And they were supposed to fight him one-on-one?

However, they didn’t dare violate the orders of the Queen Mother. In fact, there was no way they could; their loyalty to the Queen Mothers sprang from their very blood. If the Queen Mother ordered it, they wouldn’t even hesitate to commit suicide.

“Tonto, you go,” the general instructed.

“Alright.” Instantly, a violet-caped warrior flew out to attack Ning.

Ning’s divine power had only recovered to 10% of maximum. He had been maintaining a careful watch this entire time on that distant, awe-inspiring army. Upon seeing a violet-caped warrior charge towards him, he naturally went forth to fight.

.....

Ning was being trapped and assaulted by the Saphorn world’s army in the Nihilum Zone. As their commanders went forth to fight him one-on-one, beginning a long, drawn-out battle within the infinite void of space...in the distant Three Realms, his Dao-companion, Yu Wei, had reached the most dangerous moment of her cultivation.

This was a beautiful world of flowers, but the skies above it had become filled with a vortex of lightning and clouds.

“Screeech!”

Yu Wei stood there, head raised, staring towards the skies. Around her swirled a series of white phoenixes and fiery red phoenixes. A total of ninety-nine phoenixes were surrounding her, wildly resisting the crashing bolts of thunder coming from up above. With this collision, almost all of the phoenixes were blasted apart, leaving behind a single white phoenix by her side.

The thunder in the skies finally came to a complete halt.

The supreme Sword Immortal, Patriarch Lu, nodded as he watched from his position atop the nearby mountain peak. "Seven nine-sets of thunder tribulation; essentially what I thought it would be. My disciple is a Ki Refiner...even for a reincarnated Immortal, to encounter seven nine-sets of thunder tribulation is a bit much. It seems my disciple has indeed been hiding a few things."

"The demonheart tribulation is beginning."

"I'm afraid that for my disciple, the most dangerous tribulation is this demonheart tribulation," Patriarch Lu mused to himself.

Yu Wei, in her past life, had been a true asura demon; she had been extremely powerful, and in her past life she had been comparable to Immortal Northwalker. In this life, under the guidance of Patriarch Lu, she had reached an even higher level of insight into the Dao; after executing a forbidden technique, she had been able to overcome the seven nine-sets of thunder tribulation.

But the demonheart tribulation was strange and unfathomable.

"In her past life, due to her tragedies, she transformed into an asura demon," Patriarch Lu mused to himself. "And in her heart, she is hiding a major secret that she won't tell anyone, not even me. The deeper one hides secrets within the heart...the more terrifying the demonheart tribulation shall be. In her past life, she failed her Celestial Tribulation; I wonder how she will do in this one."

Time passed, one day after the other.

Six days. Seven days. Eight days...

Fifteen days. Sixteen days...

Yu Wei still just sat there. Her demonheart tribulation persisted for an extraordinarily long period of time...