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Book 17: Celestial Immortal Chapter 11: Shooting A True Immortal

The imperial capital of the Grand Xia. Within a palace hall inside the Skylight Palace that glowed with a dull red light.

The black-robed Xia Emperor was seated atop his throne. Beneath him were a trio of generals, armored in dazzling golden armor. Their auras were incredibly powerful, no weaker than the aura of the Xia Emperor himself; clearly, they were Empyrean Gods or True Immortals! All three of them sat with backs straight, filled with an aura of desolation and slaughter. For the Primordial Imperial Clan...it was quite simple for them to be able to summon and command Empyrean Gods and True Immortals as they would ordinary soldiers.

Whooooosh.

Many images were projected in midair; these were the battles images that were being transmitted from many locations. The Xia Emperor had incredible control over the world of the Grand Xia. Once there were any ripples at the Celestial Immortal level, he would immediately find out.

“Young master Xiamang, it seems this Seamless Gate really holds our Primordial Imperial Clan in high regard; they’ve sent two thousand forces to launch a simple probing attack. There are far too many places with battles...there’s no way for you to find them all, one by one.” One of the three, an old man with a fiery red beard, let out a loud laugh. Flames appeared to be blazing within his eyes as well.

“I don’t have enough Pure Yang treasures to keep an eye on two thousand different battles at once,” the black-robed Xia Emperor said with a smile. There were only a few hundred images in midair; this was his limit with regards to how many places he could keep watch on at once.

One of the hundreds of images, however...was of the battle at Stillwater City!

After all, Stillwater City had an incredibly powerful figure, Celestial Immortal Unity, and the monstrously talented Ji Ning, who had an awe-inspiring backer!

“What formation are those eighteen Celestial Immortals setting up? A Turtle-Snake Formation?”

“Celestial Immortal Unity is in danger!”

All of them instantly noticed what was happening in this battle. After all, part of those two thousand battles were merely play-fights, while most of the rest were probing attacks; only a very small number were assassination attempts. The assassination attempts naturally drew their attention.

“Hmph.” The Xia Emperor’s face sank, but he continued to watch. He gave no orders for now.

The images showed how Celestial Immortal Unity had become trapped within the Turtle-Snake Formation. Suddenly...the faces of the Xia Emperor and his three golden-armored generals all changed, because they saw a youth use a divine ability to charge forward through the skies.

“Ji Ning?” The Xia Emperor frowned. “Is he crazy?”

“Is this person the ‘Ji Ning’ you’ve been paying attention to, young master xiamang?”

“He’s a bit too unwise, isn’t he?”

The three generals all shook their heads slightly...but suddenly, their facial expressions stiffened.

Within the images, Ji Ning’s sword-fingers suddenly expanded to become three thousand meters long. They lashed through the skies like an enormous divine sword, chopping down upon the Turtle-Snake Formation. The tough and incomparably tenacious Turtle-Snake Formation was actually completely shattered by this terrifying sword-finger attack. Caught completely off guard, six of the eighteen Celestial Immortals perished.

“What?!” The Xia Emperor jumped to his feet, a look of amazement in his eyes.

“Impossible.” The three generals had stood up as well. They all stared unblinkingly at the images.

Within the images, Ji Ning had just used [Three Heads, Six Arms] and was chasing after and massacring the fleeing Celestial Immortals. The Xia Emperor, in front of these three generals, didn’t feel any need to maintain his normal aura of dignified majesty. He said incredulously, “What’s going on? I don’t know if Ji Ning’s Primaltwin has undergone the tribulation yet, but his true body definitely has not.”

“If his true body had succeeded in overcoming the Empyrean Tribulation, he would be an Empyrean God by now. His divine abilities, spells, and other abilities would all be far stronger than they are now.”

“He clearly has not yet overcome his tribulation to become an Empyrean God!”

“But if he isn’t an Empyrean God...how could he be this powerful? Is it really possible for a Void-level Fiendgod to be this powerful?” Countless thoughts were rummaging through the Xia Emperor’s mind.

As for the three generals, they were no less stunned than the Xia Emperor was. The most muscular general actually began to frown. “A Void-level Fiendgod...even if he learned some of the most supreme divine abilities of the Three Realms, allowing him to become close to a Pure Yang True Immortal in power...he should only be roughly equivalent to Celestial Immortal Unity. How could he be this much more powerful than Celestial Immortal Unity? The level of power he’s displayed has completely transcended the gap between the Void-level and Empyrean Gods.”

“What a monster.” The Xia Emperor stared at Ning, stared at him as though he was looking at the most precious treasure that existed in the world. A look of actual greed was in his eyes.

“Congratulations, young master Xiamang.”

The three generals simultaneously spoke these words.

The black-robed Xia Emperor chortled as well.

Indeed, this was something worth celebrating!

He was born a member of the Primordial Imperial Clan...and the greatest strength of the clan was that they were extremely unified. The reason why the Imperial Clan able to become the imperial clan of the Primordial Era was precisely because they had a large number of True Gods and Daofathers within their

ranks....but clearly, these True Gods and Daofathers couldn't have all been born into the Imperial Clan. Why, then, did all of them support the Primordial Imperial Clan?

It was precisely because the Primordial Imperial Clan had provided them with nonstop support prior to them becoming truly powerful. Given that the Primordial Imperial Clan had been so benevolent towards them...how could the True Gods and Daofathers not wish to pay back their kindnesses?

It must be understood that the more powerful one was, the more one cared about one's Dao-heart, and the less willing one would become to feel indebted.

If someone had treated you with great kindness, but you refused to repay it...you would feel discomfort. This would impact your Dao-heart; in fact, in extremely dire cases, it could even cause you to go down a path of madness! Naturally, there was a very small number of True Gods or Daofathers who walked an extremely vile path; no matter how well you treated them, they would still kill you without blinking, which wouldn't impact their Dao-heart at all. However, these people were quite rare, after all.

"Ji Ning?" The Xia Emperor's eyes were shining. He now viewed Ning as a monster who would truly be of benefit to him...and one who hadn't even undergone his tribulation!

He had the feeling...

That so long as Ji Ning didn't die, it wouldn't be hard for him to become an Empyrean God or True Immortal. In fact, he might even become one of the most supreme Empyrean Gods or True Immortals! To be able to make someone like this one of his closest allies...the Xia Emperor felt that this was utterly wonderful! And of course, if by some great stroke of luck Ji Ning became a True God or a Daofather, the Xia Emperor would bow down to thank Heaven and Earth.

Why was the Xia Emperor's status so special? It was because, aside from the fact that his master was a Daofather, his lifelong friend, his brother...was Daofather Raindragon!

In the end, a master was just a teacher; he might provide some guidance to the Xia Emperor and behave benevolently towards him, but if the Xia Emperor truly ran into trouble, Daofather Crimsonbright might or might not actually intervene to help him. In fact, even if Daofather Crimsonbright were to watch the Xia Emperor die, it wouldn't impact his Dao-heart; after all, the Daofather had many disciples. In addition, it was his disciples who owed him, not the other way around.

Daofather Raindragon, however, was another story. Daofather Raindragon was one of the Xia Emperor's lifelong friends, his brother; this was a far closer relationship!

Now, the Xia Emperor was going to do everything he could to help Ji Ning and ensure that Ji Ning would remember how kindly the Xia Emperor had treated him. In the future, if the Xia Emperor encountered a crisis and asked Ji Ning to help...how could Ji Ning possibly just sit back and watch with his hands clasped behind his back?

"What a monster. From the Primordial Era to the present day, this is the greatest monster I've ever seen." The black-robed Xia Emperor stared at the image of Ji Ning. Although the Primordial Era had given birth to some true monsters as well, the Xia Emperor hadn't personally met them...but right here and now, a real, living, breathing monster was standing right in front of him.

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Outside Stillwater City.

True Immortal Gaudy had a handsome face. He was famous for being a relaxed, graceful man...but his face was twisted right now. This was because he had just saw that little girl Violetgrass, who he had watched grow up, be killed before his very eyes! As soon as he had sensed Violetgrass shattering her talisman, he had immediately used Greater Teleportation to come to this place. He had mastered the Grand Dao of Qiankun long ago, and so he no longer needed to use Dao-talismans to perform Greater Teleportation.

However, since he had come here from another major world, he wasn't able to perfectly sense where Violetgrass was; he was only able to get a general idea of where she was located.

His Greater Teleportation had taken him outside Stillwater City. By relying on his attunement to Qiankun and Space, he instantly found Violetgrass and understood that she was in danger. He immediately broke apart the grand sealing formation, but because he wasn't able to make it right away, he hurriedly sent a mental message to call for a halt. Alas...the youth hadn't hesitated at all. He had used all six arms of his [Three Heads, Six Arms] technique to launch sword-fingers attacks at Violetgrass and slay her.

"Little sister Violetgrass..." True Immortal Gaudy's control over Qiankun was so great that it was as though he personally watched it happen. It was as though he personally watched Violetgrass be transformed into dust.

"No..."

True Immortal Gaudy's eyes instantly turned completely bloodshot, and his face began to twist.

"All of you will DIE!" True Immortal Gaudy went completely berserk. An enormous grand seal that was black and white suddenly appeared. This grand seal was primarily black, while the sides of it were white. The grand black-white seal appeared out of nowhere, instantly transforming to be the size of a mountain as it smashed downwards. Although the local protective formations were strong, True Immortal Gaudy had mastered the Grand Dao of Qiankun and was skilled in formations. In addition, he was simply too strong, far more so than his foes.

BOOM!

The grand seal completely smashed through the protective formations.

On the other side.

"Ji Ning, be careful!"

"An enemy has arrived!"

"He's broken the sealing formation; it should be an Empyrean God or a True Immortal." Immortal Diancai, Yu Wei, and Unity all sent frantic mental messages.

"Hurry up and leave!" Ning immediately understood; he had previously controlled the formation as well, after all. Right as he killed Violetgrass, Ning manifested a black greatbow in front of him. Stretching his hand out, Ning grabbed the black greatbow with one hand. Within his other hand, an arrow appeared, instantly blazing with flames as it did.

In midair, Ning immediately nocked the arrow, drew the Rahu Bow, then filled it with his divine power. All of his power was cycled through it to converge onto the arrow, with Ning's heartforce included into the mix. The method of applying heartforce through [Houyi's Archery] was even superior to Ning's own self-developed methods; with Ning's current level heartforce, he could only sustain seven arrows at most.

"Go!"

TWANG!

Instantly, the world itself seemed to shake. A dazzling red light instantly tore through the skies, and as it did so it continuously drew in the surrounding natural energy of the world. This was the power of [Houyi's Archery]; it was a terrifying archery skill that could ravenously draw in the might of Heaven and Earth.

Although both [Houyi's Archery] and the [Starseizing Hand] were ranked as the top ten divine abilities to be created after Pangu established the universe...in raw power, [Houyi's Archery] surpassed the [Starseizing Hand]!

Rumble...

The giant black-white seal came crashing down, smashing through everything.

The fiery arrow shot through the skies like a blazing meteor.

BOOM!!!

The two collided. The area around them completely blew apart! The earth below was suddenly caved in; clearly, this was caused by the shockwave of the collision!

"Eh?" Immortal Gaudy's face changed slightly. Very, very few people in the Three Realms used [Houyi's Archery]. For example, although there were a number of people under Patriarch Subhuti who did train in it, their primary skills lay in other areas; they normally wouldn't use [Houyi's Archery]. Thus, there were very, very few people who were able to truly able to get a taste for how formidable [Houyi's Archery] was. Even Ji Ning had to first reach the third stage of heartforce and perfect his control over it before he was able to unleash [Houyi's Archery] to this level of power.

The collision with the arrow caused the giant black-white seal to instantly grow slower.

Twang! Ning once more nocked his arrow, drew his bow, and sent off a shot that blazed through the skies. Once more, this was a full-strength attack. Ning's heartforce was depleting at a terrifying pace, but he didn't dare allow the enemy's attack to draw near him. After all, this was an actual True Immortal. There were very few True Immortals who were merely at the 'base' level of power for a True Immortal; most were far more powerful.

Yet another blazing comet shot through the skies.

True Immortal Gaudy once more sent his giant black-white seal to crash downwards onto that arrow.

Twang! Twang! Twang! Twang! Twang!

Five more consecutive bowshots rang out, the power of the arrows preventing even the utterly enraged True Immortal Gaudy from immediately catching and slaughtering Ji Ning and his friends.

“Let’s see how many more arrows you have!” True Immortal Gaudy had a terrifying look in his eyes. He knew that divine archers were generally only able to launch a very low number of full-power shots. And indeed, after the seventh arrow shot out, there was a pause. Now...there was nothing to block the infuriated True Immortal Gaudy.

The giant black-white seal once more began to crush through the opposing formations, smashing towards Ning and the others.

“Go!”

The whole reason why Ning had unleashed those seven shots was to buy time to allow Immortal Diancai, Yu Wei, and Celestial Immortal Unity to escape. However...when they attempted to use a Greater Teleportation, they realized that this region had been completely dimensionally severed from the surrounding world. There was no way to use any sort of teleportation here at all.

“None of you will be able to escape. All of you will die.” True Immortal Gaudy was filled with a towering killing intent. His giant black-white seal once more came smashing downwards through the skies.

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Book 17: Celestial Immortal Chapter 12: The Xia Emperor’s Attitude

“Senior Redsnow, this Pure Yang True Immortal is a master of the Grand Dao of Qiankun; I’d like to ask the seven of you to help out!” Ji Ning’s Primaltwin was frantically asking for succor. After learning that Ning was in danger, Redsnow and the rest of the seven had already left their world and come to the underwater estate. In truth, they hadn’t expected that Ning would need to use up their promise so soon.

In truth, when Ning had shot out seven arrows earlier, he had also used his Void-level energy to activate a Greater Teleportation Dao-seal; the amount of time he had bought himself was more than enough to activate it, but alas the teleport had failed.

There were many Grand Daos in the world...but who would’ve thought that he would just so happen to encounter a foe who had mastered the Grand Dao of Qiankun? In the face of someone like this, not even Greater Teleportation would be possible.

“Junior apprentice-brother.” Yu Wei looked towards Ning, worry on her face. Immortal Diancai and Celestial Immortal Unity were panicking as well, but there was nothing they could do.

“Die.” True Immortal Gaudy had a savage look on his face, and his eyes were filled with murder.

But right at this moment...

“Ji Ning, your savior just arrived.” The giant yellow bear’s voice suddenly echoed within Ning’s mind.

Rumble...

In the air between Ji Ning and True Immortal Gaudy, a black tunnel suddenly appeared out of nowhere. The black tunnel tore straight through space, allowing a man in black imperial robes to step out of it.

“The Xia Emperor?”

“His Imperial Majesty?”

Immortal Diancai, Yu Wei, and Celestial Immortal Unity all revealed looks of excitement and delight.

The man who had stepped out of the black tunnel was indeed the black-robed Xia Emperor. As the Xia Emperor walked out, he pointed with a single finger. A golden streak of light flew out, transforming into a golden dragon that knocked the giant black-white seal flying. He then gave the demonically enraged True Immortal Gaudy a cold glance. “Gaudy, you actually dare to come to my Grand Xia to cause trouble?”

Ning let out a sigh of relief.

“Sorry for bothering the seven of you just now.” Within the underwater estate, the black-robed Ning was saluting respectfully.

The nearby giant yellow bear chortled. “Since the Xia Emperor has come out, there’s no need to trouble the seven of you to intervene.”

“...Does this count as us fulfilling our promise?” The beautiful Empyrean God Snow Scorpion asked teasingly.

“No, of course not!” Ning said frantically.

Seeing the look on Ning’s face, the seven Empyrean Gods roared with laughter.

“Ahaha...”

“Relax, we’re not going to quibble with you!”

Still...Empyrean God Redsnow quickly turned solemn. “However, Ji Ning, I have to warn you; previously, while you were in the Primordial Ruinworld region, your master, Patriarch Subhuti, didn’t have to worry too much about personally intervening on your behalf. But now that we are back in the Three Realms...in the face of such a powerful foe, even Patriarch Subhuti might have misgivings. In fact, even if he does intervene, he might not be able to rescue you.”

“I understand.” Ning nodded. He naturally understood that in the face of this storm, even his master was treading on thin ice.

“In addition...your master can’t have the [Dream of the Three Realms] active at all times. Even if you are in danger, he might not know about it,” Redsnow added.

Ning nodded.

It was true.

His master hadn’t given Ning a talisman; even if Ning was in a dangerous situation, there was no way for him to notify his master.

“We promised to help you once...but it really will be only once,” Empyrean God Redsnow said. “Your master, in turn...well, distant waters cannot be used to put out a nearby fire. Just look; you’ve only been

back for a short while, but you've already encountered such a dangerous situation. You should understand, now...how careful you truly must be in the face of this storm."

Ning nodded. "Since I was able to survive and return even after being covered by karmic sinflames...the Seamless Gate is undoubtedly paying very close attention to me. They have long ago decided that I am a major foe for them. In the face of this storm...to tell the truth, I came to understand something. Since there's no longer any way for me to hide my sharpness, then I might as well reveal myself. I'll make it so that more experts notice me and feel that I am worthy of their help!"

"Although the Seamless Gate is brash, they remain hidden in the darkness; this means that they still have worries of their own. There are many experts on the side of my master as well." Ning laughed, "As long as enough of us work together, there's nothing for us to worry about."

"You're finally using your head." Redsnow said with a laugh, "If you have enough helpers, then you won't even need the seven of us to assist you; you'll still be able to survive this storm."

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Outside the underwater estate.

Once the black-robed Xia Emperor appeared, True Immortal Gaudy grew even angrier. "Xiamang, are you going to stop me? Are you going to become my enemy?"

"By the looks of it, you joined the Seamless Gate long ago. Since we are in different camps...we already are enemies." The black-robed Xia Emperor said calmly, "As I see it...you need to f*ck off right now. Get the f*ck out of my Grand Xia." Although he held an absolute advantage in terms of power, the Xia Emperor knew that this foe was a master of the Grand Dao of Qiankun who possessed many powerful escaping techniques.

True Immortal Gaudy took a deep breath. He didn't want to make an enemy out of the Xia Emperor; after all, the Xia Emperor was an astonishing figure with tremendously powerful backers. The Xia Emperor possessed multiple powerful Protocosmic spirit-treasures and was extremely famous. Just now, he, Gaudy, had clearly severed this region from the surrounding dimension...but the Xia Emperor had forcibly torn through space and come through anyways. This was an ability that was similar to the power of the Worldhold Pagoda. To be able to ignore a spatial severing and forcibly tear a path to this place...clearly, the Xia Emperor had just used one of his Protocosmic spirit-treasures, the 'Brightheart Lamp of One Thought'.

"All I want to do is kill that you." True Immortal Gaudy said coldly, "I can spare the other three!"

The Xia Emperor gave him a glance. "Get the f*ck out of my Grand Xia...IMMEDIATELY."

Was this a joke? The whole reason he had come here was to protect Ji Ning.

"You...!" True Immortal Gaudy was furious. "Xiamang, today, I'm going to see for myself how powerful the descendants of the Primordial Imperial Clan like you are!" Instantly, a series of golden chains appeared around him. A total of nine golden chains appeared in total. One end of the chains seemed to sink off into the void of space, while the other wildly swept towards the Xia Emperor in a frenzied assault.

This was his true battle technique, a quiet, stealthy, insidious assault.

As for that giant black-white seal? It was faster to use the seal in attacking, and it was also more overbearing and dominating. He had wanted to just use it to smash open the protective formation and instantly crush Ning's group.

"You dare put on a show in front of me with techniques like this?" The black-robed Xia Emperor let out a cold laugh. An enormous snow-white lotus appeared beneath his feet, blooming in every direction. It completely took over the surrounding area, blocking the nine insidious golden chains.

"Annihilate." The Xia Emperor called this word out softly.

Last time, he had only unleashed a single golden stream of light. This time, three golden streams of light emerged, tearing through space and transforming into three golden roving dragons. These three golden dragons each had different auras; one of them seemed proud and brash, the second seemed sinister and cold, while the third seemed kind and gentle, as though it wasn't a threat to anyone.

These three golden auras, each bearing a different aura, caused the distant True Immortal Gaudy to reveal a look of rage on his face.

"From life to death, all dreams vanish...everything is nothing but a garish, gaudy show!"

True Immortal Gaudy coldly barked out these words. Instantly, those nine golden chains around him began to weave about and dance. Space itself began to tremble and ripple like water.

Hiss....

The three golden dragons now noticeably found it much harder to fly after entering that region.

"Hmph." The distant black-robed Xia Emperor's face turned grim. He waved his hand, and a small clock appeared. As soon as this little black clock appeared...

Doooooong!

A crisp sound rang out.

BOOM!

True Immortal Gaudy immediately vomited out a mouthful of fresh blood. Gritting his teeth, he said, "Excellent. Excellent. Excellent! Xiamang, since you are determined to protect this kid, then from this day forward, we shall be irreconcilable enemies!"

"Just you?" The Xia Emperor smirked in a very disdainful manner.

"Wait and see. This brat will die. He definitely will die!" Savage madness was in True Immortal Gaudy's eyes.

Whoosh.

True Immortal Gaudy immediately used a fleeing technique. It was simply too hard to block someone who had mastered the Grand Dao of Qiankun from fleeing.

Even the Xia Emperor was only able to stand there and watch as he fled.

“Thank you, your Imperial Majesty.” Celestial Immortal Unity, Immortal Diancai, Yu Wei, and Ji Ning both flew over and hurriedly expressed thanks.

The Xia Emperor turned. He glanced at Ning and the other three, then said with a smile, “Good to see you are unharmed. Just now, I was watching the battle here through a magic treasure. When I saw Gaudy appear, I had a bad feeling. I was planning to Greater Teleport here, but who would’ve thought that he’d actually dimensionally sever this region off from the surrounding world? There was no way to teleport in at all! I had to forcibly tear a tunnel through space to come here. Fortunately, I made it in time. If I was just slightly slower...”

Ning and the others Ning now understood why the Xia Emperor had only managed to make it here at the last moment. Things had gotten to the point where Ning had already asked the seven Empyrean Gods to help out!

Thankfully...he hadn’t had to waste that promise.

“Ji Ning, you have to be careful,” the Xia Emperor said. “Although I don’t why True Immortal Gaudy wanted to kill you that badly, I imagine that one of those Celestial Immortals you killed had a very close relationship with him. That’s why True Immortal Gaudy, normally so graceful and refined, went so berserk. If a Pure Yang True Immortal who has mastered the Grand Dao of Qiankun wishes to kill you...it’s going to be quite dangerous.”

“I understand,” Ning said solemnly.

“However...the storm is about to hit. Compared to the storm, this level of danger is nothing.” The Xia Emperor continued, “The incoming tempest is growing increasingly terrifying. Here is my talisman; if you encounter any danger, just shatter it. As long as it isn’t a True God or a Daofather, I’m confident in being able to save you.”

The Xia Emperor, in terms of power, was slightly weaker than Lu Dongbin...but he had plenty of protective treasures, and so he would be able to stay alive even in the face of an assault by a True God or Daofather for a period of time.

“Thank you, your Imperial Majesty.” Ning immediately accepted the talisman.

“Make your preparations.” The Xia Emperor raised his head to look at the sky. “After this probing period...I imagine the war that is going to sweep the entire Grand Xia shall finally begin. If you choose to remain here, you won’t be able to avoid it.” After finishing his words, the Xia Emperor took a single step forward, disappearing with a void blink.

Ning looked at the talisman in his hand, revealing a slight smile.

As he had thought.

Although his earlier battle against nine Youngflame clan Celestial Immortals had been fairly impressive, in the eyes of the likes of the Xia Emperor or Daofather Crimsonbright, he was still nothing more than a fairly excellent genius of the Three Realms. This time, however, Ning had truly showed his fierceness. Even in the Primordial Era, he would be considered a true monster amongst the Void-level elites. Although this would cause his enemies to be more wary of him, it also made the Xia Emperor and Daofather Crimsonbright care more about him as well.

And now, he had the Xia Emperor's talisman in his hands, as well as the Xia Emperor's promise: "If you encounter any danger, just shatter it. As long as it isn't a True God or a Daofather, I'm confident in being able to save you." This had clearly spelled out the Xia Emperor's attitude towards him. It must be understood that not even Patriarch Subhuti had ever said something like this to Ning!

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The Fifth World.

Within a towering palace. The Gatemaster of the Seamless Gate, the Hallmaster of Bloodcloud Hall, and the Cavemaster of the Myriad Demons Cave were all present.

"AZUREFOX!"

An enraged bellow could be heard as True Immortal Gaudy charged in.

"Gaudy." The azure-robed woman looked at him.

"Azurefox, why didn't you intervene?! Just a moment...just one extra moment! That's all I needed to save little sister Violetgrass!" True Immortal Gaudy was utterly enraged.

The azure-robed woman just shook her head. "Violetgrass shattered the talismans that you and I gave her. You've mastered the Grand Dao of Qiankun, but I have not. Even if I did go, I would've been slower than you!"

True Immortal Gaudy paused. Right. In his rage, he had forgotten this.

"I'm going to kill that brat." A terrifying red light was glowing from True Immortal Gaudy's eyes as he said with rage, "I want him dead!"

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Book 17: Celestial Immortal Chapter 13: Paying Respects To The Godking

"Ji Ning killed Violetgrass. I, too, want him dead." The azure-robed woman said calmly from atop her throne, "I'll arrange for you to have the chance you need to move against him. By relying on your mastery of Qiankun, I'm sure you'll be able to kill Ji Ning."

"Did you really think I'm as stupid as you seem to believe?" True Immortal Gaudy gave the azure-robed woman cold look. "The Xia Emperor moved to protect this brat; in fact, he even chose to ignore my threats. He clearly has made up his mind to protect the brat. This time, you sent many teams to attack many places throughout the entire world of the Grand Xia. Although the Xia Emperor has True Immortals and Celestial Immortals under his command, he had many places to worry about, and so he wasn't able to summon too much of his power to deal with me. But if I were to make another move...his forces wouldn't have to worry about defending his various commanderies. They'd probably join forces to trap me, then kill me!"

The Seamless Gate knew all along that the Xia Emperor had other Empyrean Gods or True Immortals by his side!

The Primordial Imperial Clan alone had sent three of them to follow the Xia Emperor. This was one of the reasons why the Xia Emperor's word was absolute law in the Grand Xia! The likes of Kindwater clan

had Empyrean Gods in their ranks, and as a major clan that existed back in the Primordial Era, they too had True Gods or Daofathers backing them! And yet, they still did not dare to struggle with the Xia Emperor for supremacy. This was why!

Even the Youngflame clan had one of the major clans of the Primordial Era behind them. However, the Ancestor of the Youngflame clan, 'Youngflame Freak', had fled from his own clan and refused to recognize the connection between his clan and that primordial clan.

The supreme clans of the world of the Grand Xia truly were not easy to deal with. If those countless clans joined together, not even the Xia Emperor would dare to try and suppress them all by force. He had to provide order for and benefits to everybody, sharing the world with them.

As for the Xiamang clan of the Xia Emperor...technically speaking, it was the most powerful clan in the entire world of the Grand Xia! They would be more than capable of annihilating a single True Immortal Gaudy.

"How can you possibly take revenge without taking on some risk?" The azure-robed woman said, "Can it be that you are giving up on vengeance for Violetgrass?"

A cold light flashed through True Immortal Gaudy's eyes. Of course he wanted to kill Ji Ning!

However...everyone capable of becoming a Pure Yang True Immortal was an extraordinary figure. None of them were fools.

"Violetgrass followed you this entire time. You are in control of the full power of the Seamless Gate. It would be much easier for you to kill Ji Ning than it would be for me," True Immortal Gaudy said coldly. "If you really do provide a good opportunity for me to act, I won't mind taking it. But I absolutely have no intentions of trading my life for that brat's."

After speaking, True Immortal Gaudy turned and left.

The only figures left within the towering hall were the azure-robed woman and the two other leaders. They all raised their heads, continuing to look at the battle images being transmitted in.

"The Xia Emperor really has begun to send out his forces," the azure-robed woman laughed.

"He naturally isn't going to just watch as you kill his people," the skinny elder said.

Time continued to pass.

The probing attacks of the two thousand teams were carried out lightning-fast. They began this night, and they quickly concluded as well.

The next day. The Golden Crow once more rose into the sky. It was as though nothing had happened.

However, in reality, the previous night the Seamless Gate had lost a total of sixty-nine Celestial Immortals and hundreds of Loose Immortals. The world of the Grand Xia had lost a total of seventy-three Celestial Immortals and dozens of Loose Immortals.

On a superficial level, the losses were equal. And in truth, this type of initial probing attack would always result in the attacker sustaining some casualties.

However, the biggest mistake the Seamless Gate made this time...occurred with Ji Ning! They had completely underestimated Ning's strength, causing them to lose eighteen supreme Celestial Immortals. This loss alone, in all honesty, was worse than all their other losses combined. After all, there was quite a large difference between an ordinary Celestial Immortal and a supreme Celestial Immortal.

But of course...neither the Xia Emperor nor the Seamless Gate were too concerned about their losses from this exchange.

This was just a probe, after all, an initial clash. Both sides suffered only some superficial losses; neither had sustained an actual injury. Their most powerful forces hadn't even moved! Only when the real war began would they begin to battle against each other. When that happened...Celestial Immortals would be put through a meat grinder, and even True Immortals and Empyrean Gods would fall if they were not cautious. This was, after all, the most powerful world under the command of Daofather Crimsonbright!

Within that towering palace in the Fifth World.

The leaders of the Seamless Gate, the Myriad Demons Cave, and Bloodcloud Hall had gathered here once more. After finalizing orders to their subordinates, they turned to the main topic of this meeting...Ji Ning.

"As I see it, Ji Ning has to die." The man in the fiery red robes spoke in a booming voice. "He's already a source of trouble for us. Once he overcomes his tribulation and becomes an Empyrean God...he won't just be a source of trouble. He might cause our entire campaign against the Grand Xia to fail."

The skinny elder sighed. "This person truly is too monstrous a genius, so monstrous that even I'm a bit frightened by him."

"I agree that we need to kill him," the azure-robed woman said. "This Ji Ning is protected by the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]; killing him won't be that easy. Our only choice is to first suppress and capture him, then come up with a way to kill him. But while we move to suppress him...I'm worried that his Daofather master will act."

"Daofather?"

The faces of the other two leaders changed.

True Gods, Daofathers...the true rulers of the Three Realms. In addition, someone who could teach the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] was definitely one of the most supreme of Daofathers. The mere thought of such a figure caused them to shudder.

"If we send Empyrean Gods and True Immortals to kill him, but they end up being killed by the Daofather when he saves Ji Ning...we'd end up having 'lost both the wife and the soldiers' 1, the worst of both worlds." The azure-robed woman sighed. "This is the most critical moment in our campaign against the Grand Xia. It's not wise for us to act on too large a scale."

"Azurefox, what do you think we should do?"

The other two both looked at her.

In terms of status, the three were equal. However, generally speaking the ones in charge of the Seamless Gate were more intelligent, which is why the Gatemaster was the one chosen for the

subjugation of the major worlds, with the other two acting in a supporting role. If there were any internal squabbles, a report would be made to the higher-ups!

"I think...we should report to this to the Godking!" The azure-robed woman said solemnly.

"The Godking?" The other two hesitated.

The red-robed man said with hesitating, "To bother the Godking for something like this...? To ask the Godking for help?"

"Although we can kill Ji Ning if we are willing to pay a high price...the paying of that price would have an impact on our ability to conduct the war against the Grand Xia." The azure-robed woman said, "Our only choice is to report this to the Godking."

"Mm."

"Fine."

The other two didn't oppose this proposal. In truth, Azurefox could've made the report on her own; she was just letting them know as a form of respect. That way, the three would work together in greater harmony; the Myriad Demons Cave and the Bloodcloud Hall were extremely powerful as well, after all.

.....

Within a silent room.

The azure-robed woman let a stick of incense. Instantly, the fragrance of the incense filled the entire room. The azure-robed woman slowly closed her eyes, sinking into a deep slumber.

Within a dream.

Azurefox appeared within a vast, dark region. At the center of this region, a massive throne that was more than thirty thousand meters long hovered in the air.

"Godking," Azurefox called out reverently.

Instantly, a towering figure suddenly appeared atop the massive, levitating throne. This figure was dressed in black robes, but his eyes were like a mist that was able to commune with one's very soul. He stared downwards at Azurefox, and she couldn't help but shudder.

"What is it?" The figure atop the massive throne lightly tapped the armrest with a finger. A booming sound instantly rang out, reverberating throughout the dark region.

"Godking, your subordinate is on the verge of launching the attack against the Grand Xia. However, a new variable has appeared within the Grand Xia world..." Azurefox explained respectfully, "This variable will have a major impact. If your subordinate was to use the power of the Seamless Gate against it...it might negatively impact our mission of subjugating the Grand Xia. Thus, I've come to ask you, Godking, to decide for us."

"Variable?" The titanic figure once more tapped the armrest.

"It's Ji Ning," Azurefox said respectfully.

“Him?” The towering figure hesitated momentarily. “He just killed eighteen of your Celestial Immortals. Mmm...from what happened in that battle, it can be said that this Ji Ning truly is quite a monster. He’s actually become so powerful despite being at the Void-level. There’s no way he could’ve accomplished this just through divine abilities. His sword-fingers...he hasn’t even mastered the Grand Dao of the Sword...which means he must have mastered some sort of supremely powerful energy. Swordforce? From the looks of that battle, he’s only reached the first stage of swordforce. It must be some other type of invisible power...heartforce? Taiji-force? Infiniforce? Spaceforce?”

The towering figure pondered for a moment. “Your warning is a good one. I hadn’t noticed that such a monster had appeared within the Grand Xia. By the looks of it...he has at least a 50% chance of overcoming his tribulation and becoming an Empyrean God! If he becomes an Empyrean God, he’ll immediately become one of the most supreme of Empyrean Gods. In fact, if he’s given a little time, he’ll be able to reach Lu Dongbin’s level. He is indeed a potential source of trouble.”

The supreme powers of the Three Realms had a tacit understanding; if you didn’t intervene, then I won’t either.

This was an unspoken agreement.

Both sides were preparing...preparing to unleash everything at the critical moment of the war, to fully suppress and crush their foes! Prior to this, at most the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals would battle against each other. The True Gods and the Daofathers would not casually intervene. Thus...a supremely powerful Empyrean God could have an enormous impact. In addition, such an Empyrean God would have a good chance of making yet another breakthrough to become a True God!

“However...this Ji Ning’s master is that old bastard, Subhuti. He’s not easy to deal with,” the towering figure said.

“Patriarch Subhuti?” Azurefox cried out in shock. Good heavens...

Patriarch Subhuti?!

Although she knew that Ji Ning had to have a very powerful Daofather behind him, given that he had been taught the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]...she had never imagined that it would be that old freak Subhuti.

“Not even I can tell exactly how powerful that old fellow is. During that war that shattered Pangu’s World, he intervened to save some people, but he didn’t truly participate. Still...he definitely is one of the absolute most powerful Daofathers of the Three Realms. And...he has multiple Daofathers amongst his disciples!” The towering figure once more gently tapped at the armrest. Dong! Dong! Dong! Slow, deep thudding sounds echoed throughout the dark region.

Azurefox couldn’t breathe.

Multiple Daofathers?

She knew some secrets, such as the fact that the mysterious ‘senior disciple’ under Patriarch Subhuti’s command was definitely on the level of a True God or Daofather. As for the others, she didn’t know about them. But from what the Godking was saying...Patriarch Subhuti actually had more than one

Daofather under him! Still...even though she had learned this, she wouldn't dare to let this information slip. She was completely devoted to the Godking, while the Godking was all-knowing...

If she dared to betray him in any way at all, the Godking would know right away! For example, that battle against Ji Ning; with but a thought, the Godking immediately had become aware of what had happened during it.

"Still...that old fellow stands on the side of Nuwa!" The towering figure's misty gaze seemed to be as deep and vast as the infinite Void. "So we might as well take this chance to kill one of his disciples and test his reaction."

Azurefox listened attentively.

"Activate chess piece...Yu Wei." The towering figure said, "Have Yu Wei lead Ji Ning in a Greater Teleport to come straight to the Fifth World. The Fifth World is one of our major bases, and I'll personally station myself within it. In the Fifth World...even if Subhuti comes in person, there will be nothing he can do."

"Yu Wei?" Azurefox was startled.

They had quite a few chess pieces positioned within the world of the Grand Xia. Prior to this, Yu Wei hadn't been an important one, but after taking Patriarch Lu as her master and becoming a Celestial Immortal, she had immediately become their most important piece. Logically speaking, she could've been used to great effect in the future...but they were now going to use her against Ji Ning. Clearly, in the eyes of the Godking...trading Yu Wei for Ji Ning's life was worth it!

"Yes," Azurefox said respectfully. She then vanished into thin air.

Within the darkness, only the massive levitating throne and the towering figure atop it were left. His left hand continued to gently tap against the armrest of the throne. "Subhuti...I haven't actually fought you yet...I'm really rather looking forward to it..."

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 17: Celestial Immortal Chapter 14: A Successful Plot

The Fifth World. Within a quiet room, filled with the fragrance of incense. The azure-robed woman opened her eyes, awakening.

"The Godking is actually willing to use up the 'Yu Wei' chess piece." Azurefox mentally sighed to herself. She immediately tried to reach out, only to frown: "Eh? Yu Wei isn't sleeping yet?"

The various chess pieces had all been given an order that unless they were in the middle of a life-and-death situation, they had to sleep at least once every three days.

Only when they were asleep could these chess pieces be stealthily contacted! This form of communication was extremely mysterious; not even True Gods or Daofathers were able to detect it. There was a chance for every other form of communication to be detected, and upon being detected, the chess pieces would no longer be able to continue to hide themselves.

"Not sleeping..."

Azurefox pondered for a moment. "No rush. She has to sleep once within these three days. Heh...I imagine that there is no way Ji Ning will be able to defend against a plot by his Dao-companion. If he's teleported straight to the Fifth World, he's dead. And hrm..."

Azurefox's eyes suddenly lit up! "Before Ji Ning dies...there's a use for him." Azurefox laughed. "Maybe we can use him to ensure that the Youngflame clan irrevocably throws their support to the Seamless Gate."

.....

That very night.

Within the territory controlled by the Youngflame clan. Patriarch Arcanum was meeting with a golden-robed envoy at the peak of a tall, nameless mountain.

"Greetings to you, Envoy." Celestial Immortal Arcanum was extremely courteous.

"Give this to your Ancestor." The golden-robed envoy handed over a scroll.

"This is...?" Arcanum was puzzled.

"This scroll contains a scryer recording within it. Once your Ancestor views it, he'll understand." The golden-robed envoy laughed. "Our Seamless Gate is doing this to help your Youngflame clan. Don't end up being wiped out without even knowing what's going on."

After speaking, the golden-robed envoy immediately disappeared through teleportation.

Arcanum held the scroll, a frown on his face. After humming for a moment, he immediately opened it to take a look first. The unfurled scroll revealed an image; it was indeed a scryer recording. Arcanum filled it with his Immortal energy, and the images instantly began to move. It was the scene of the eighteen Celestial Immortals battling Celestial Immortal Unity, as well as the scene of them being slain by Ji Ning.

"Is that...Celestial Immortal Violetgrass?" Arcanum immediately recognized Violetgrass, whom he had spoken with before a few times.

"Those eighteen Celestial Immortals are so powerful. They were actually able to suppress Unity. Unity is going to die."

"What?!"

Upon seeing Ji Ning strike, Arcanum was instantly, completely stunned.

Good heavens...

But...but...

Ji Ning was far more powerful than he had been during their last battle at the Oldjade mountain range. Most likely, if all of the Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan were to join forces, they still wouldn't be able to withstand Ji Ning again. Arcanum knew exactly how deep the feud was between his clan and Ji Ning. Terrified, he immediately teleported back in a hurry.

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Within the Worldhold Pagoda.

“What is it?” The Youngflame Ancestor emerged from an illusory space, two other Celestial Immortals following him.

“Ancestor.” The other four Celestial Immortals within the Worldhold Pagoda were incomparably respectful to him.

The seven Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan were all gathered together here!

“Ancestor, the Seamless Gate sent this to us. Take a look.” Arcanum handed over the scroll, a serious look on his face.

“The Seamless Gate never comes to our Youngflame clan with good news.” The Youngflame Ancestor, Immortal Venomfreak, let out a cold laugh. He immediately unfurled the scroll, then let out a chuckle. “Oh, a scryer recording. Let me see what they are up to now.”

He filled it with his Immortal energy, and instantly the scenes of that battle began to replay.

Eighteen Celestial Immortals struck out in unison, suppressing Unity. Ji Ning attacked, True Immortal Gaudy appeared, the Xia Emperor appeared and defeated Gaudy...everything was included!

At first, Immortal Venomfreak just watched with a half-smirk on his face, but his face quickly began to change, becoming increasingly ugly to behold.

“So things really have come to this.”

Immortal Venomfreak’s pupils contracted slightly, his face turning as cold as ice.

The other six Celestial Immortals present all looked towards Immortal Venomfreak, awaiting his orders.

“I had thought that the Xia Emperor would only stand behind Ji Ning after he overcame his tribulation to become an Empyrean God. I didn’t imagine...that even before becoming an Empyrean God, he would become such a monster. If I was the Xia Emperor, I would stand behind Ji Ning as well.” Immortal Venomfreak had a dark look on his face.

“Ancestor, what should we do?”

“If Ji Ning comes...we can’t stop him.”

“Ancestor.”

They all looked towards their Ancestor, waiting for his orders.

The Ancestor was someone who had roamed the world back in the era of Pangu’s World, after all. Even many Empyrean Gods and True Immortals felt he was a pain to deal with.

“Ji Ning won’t launch a war against the Youngflame clan in the immediate future.” Immortal Venomfreak continued, “That’s because he was hurt from our last clash. He knows very well that I have many clones, and that if he isn’t able to wipe them all out, I’ll continue to harass him, becoming a nightmare for his clan.” Immortal Venomfreak’s eyes flashed with a savage light.

He was a sinister, insidious figure; he always had been.

“So we’re just going to ignore this?” Patriarch Deadwood frowned.

“You stupid blockhead,” Immortal Venomfreak snapped, “Didn’t you see how astonishingly fast Ji Ning grows in power? He’s already so powerful at the Void-level! I roamed the primordial world and have seen many things...but I’ve never seen a monster like him before! In the Primordial Era, only some of the most legendary of monsters might be comparable to him. A monster like him...if he continues to grow like this, he’ll definitely be given incredible power within the Crimsonbright League. In the end, in the future, even I might be unable to escape his reach...and once I die, the annihilation of the Youngflame clan will be set in stone. We won’t even have a chance to fight back.”

Celestial Immortal Infatuation and the others all nodded.

“Let me think about this. Let me think.” Immortal Venomfreak’s eyes narrowed. “I really didn’t expect it to come to this.”

He was a very cautious man. It was precisely because he was cautious, insidious, and crafty that he had been able to survive for so long despite having offended so many.

The other six Celestial Immortals all waited quietly.

“Make the arrangements right away for all the mortals of our Youngflame clan to be moved into the world within the Worldhold Pagoda.” Suddenly, Immortal Venomfreak began to give orders. “Trees die when uprooted, but people can survive. If push comes to shove...we flee!”

His greatest strength had always been fleeing!

“Evacuate all of them?” The six Celestial Immortals were amazed.

“All of them.” Immortal Venomfreak immediately ordered, “You have to be fast, as fast as possible. I want you to complete this within the time needed to boil a kettle of tea. If you don’t have enough time...it’s fine if you end up missing or discarding some of the mortals.”

“Alright.” The six Celestial Immortals all assented hurriedly.

The Worldhold Pagoda was a Protocosmic spirit-treasure with an entire world within it. Although it wasn’t as vast as the major world within Ning’s Starseizing Manor, it wasn’t small either. It would be easy to contain thirty billion people within it.

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The Celestial Immortals gave the orders, and the Loose Immortals handled things personally.

Although all those who had lived in the Oldjade mountain range had been wiped out, after Ji Ning had been exiled to the Nihilum Zone, the Youngflame clan had moved billions of more clansmen back to Oldjade.

The Loose Immortals moved with incredible speed. The Youngflame clan had nearly a thousand Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals under their command, and they all moved in unison. Within the time needed to boil a kettle of tea, they really did evacuate all of the clansmen from their three headquarters, moving them into the Worldhold Pagoda.

The seven Celestial Immortals of the Worldhold Pagoda stared at the vast land outside.

This was their fiefdom. They had fought for this land, had bled for it.

“Let’s go. We’ll have greater fiefs in the future, and our Youngflame clan will only grow stronger.” Immortal Venomfreak flew out of the tower. Waving his hand, he collected the Worldhold Pagoda, then disappeared into thin air.

.....

That very night.

The imperial capital of the Grand Xia. The Skylight Palace.

“Your Imperial Majesty, Immortal Venomfreak asks for an audience,” a white-faced elder said respectfully.

The Xia Emperor lifted an eyebrow, a pensive look in his eyes. He then said, “Let him come.”

“Yes.” The white-faced elder immediately departed.

“He came quite quickly...it seems the Seamless Gate is once more trying to seduce him.” The Xia Emperor mused to himself, “When used correctly, Youngflame Freak is a sharp weapon as well. However...when you harm others, you harm yourself as well. He goes berserk too easily.” The Xia Emperor knew very well that madness was bred into the bones of Immortal Venomfreak; this was why the Xia Emperor had used his clan and fiefs to tie Immortal Venomfreak down, giving Venomfreak something to care about and thus a way to use him!

And how, by the look of it...

“Although Immortal Venomfreak is useful...he can’t compare to Ji Ning.” The Xia Emperor shook his head. “It seems I’m about to lose one of my sharp weapons.”

An ugly, horned individual walked in from outside.

“Your Imperial Majesty.” The horned man was unusually respectful.

“Venomfreak.” The Xia Emperor smiled.

The horned man said respectfully, “The Seamless Gate has been asking me to join them this entire time, but I never have. Just now, they sent me a scroll with a scribe recording within it, a recording of Ji Ning battling and slaying eighteen Celestial Immortals. After seeing it...I understand that Ji Ning is now extremely powerful. I want to resolve my differences with him, with the two of us swearing oaths to the Dao of the Heavens. Can we do this?”

“Resolve your differences?” The Xia Emperor shook his head. “When Ji Ning was weak, he still wanted to fight against you. Now that he is stronger than you...how could he possibly be willing to accept peace?”

“Your Imperial Majesty...are you going to stand with him?” The horned man said in a low voice.

“If you go to kill him, I won’t stop you. If he goes to kill you, I won’t stop him either,” the Xia Emperor said.

The horned man laughed coldly. "How could I possibly go kill him? Your Imperial Majesty...it seems you've already made your choice. I already suspected it before I came here...but I was holding on to a final strand of hope!"

"Venomfreak, you are very intelligent...but I urge you not to join the Seamless Gate. If you join the Seamless Gate...you will have made an enemy out of not just myself and Daofather Crimsonbright, but also my entire Primordial Imperial Clan and many other True Gods and Daofathers." The Xia Emperor continued, "You can leave now. I hope that you will be able to survive this great storm."

"I'm untalented in other respects, but I'm skilled in survival." The horned man chuckled. "By not killing me, your Imperial Majesty, you let me preserve an extra clone."

And then, chuckling, he departed.

The Xia Emperor watched him leave. This clone of Youngflame Freak definitely wasn't even carrying a slightly decent treasure on him; he had come prepared to die. The only reason he had come here today was to lay all his cards out on the table...but alas, the Xia Emperor stood immovably by the side of Ji Ning. The Xia Emperor couldn't even be bothered to try to lie to him about this, because he knew that Immortal Venomfreak was so sly and crafty that there was no way to deceive him.

"The Seamless Gate...they truly are seamless in their actions. There is no seam they won't penetrate through." The Xia Emperor shook his head. "Just like that, they deprived me of one of my sharp weapons."

.....

Quietly, without any sound or noise, the Youngflame clan vanished from the world of the Grand Xia.

The Fifth World.

Within a towering palace.

"Immortal Venomfreak. I've long heard of your illustrious name." An azure-robed woman was seated on her throne within the palace.

"Gatemaster of the Seamless Gate...the countless marquises within the world of the Great Xia who hear your name all tremble." The horned man smiled. Although the Xia Emperor had urged him against this, he knew that to survive this storm, one had to be on a team. If he didn't have one...then he would probably become a target for both sides.

Since that was the case...he might as well join the other side right now, and even assume a position of importance!

"Go get some rest, Immortal Venomfreak. When the time comes for our battle against the Grand Xia, you will have ample opportunity to display your might," the azure-robed woman laughed.

"Then I'll await your orders, Gatemaster." The horned man rose to his feet, then smiled and departed.

The azure-robed woman smiled as well.

She had just acquired a ferocious general!

“Hm.” The azure-robed woman mentally reached out for a moment. “Yu Wei...has finally fallen asleep.” She immediately headed towards her private room, planning to meet Yu Wei in her dreams.

The Desolate Era

Book 17: Celestial Immortal Chapter 15: Let's Have A Baby

Within a private room.

The azure-robed woman lit a stick of incense. She was in a superb mood due to Youngflame Freak throwing his support to her side, and so it took a while for her to completely fall asleep.

.....

Within her dreams.

This was a wide, vast prairie. A black-robed maiden materialized out of nowhere within it.

“Eh? Why have...” Yu Wei’s face changed. She immediately understood that she had been guided to this place. As she swept it with her gaze, she saw the distant azure-robed woman walking towards her.

“My respectful greetings to you, Envoy,” Yu Wei immediately said respectfully.

“Yu Wei, long time no see.” The azure-robed woman smiled. “Your last mission was completed perfectly. We have another mission for you now.”

Yu Wei’s heart clenched.

Her last mission...had been the capture of Celestial Immortal Hunchmont. However, it hadn’t been for her to carry out the actual capturing; all she had to do was help out a bit to make it happen! That had been quite a simple mission; Yu Wei had done only a few things, and there was no chance of her status being revealed.

“Please instruct me, Envoy,” Yu Wei said respectfully.

“The mission is related to your Dao-companion, Ji Ning.” The azure-robed woman carefully scrutinized Yu Wei for her reaction.

Yu Wei’s heart clenched yet again, but she didn’t ask anything.

“The Godking commands,” the azure-robed woman said, “For you to bring Ji Ning straight to the Fifth World through Greater Teleportation.”

“I’ve never been to the Fifth World before,” Yu Wei said hurriedly.

“The Godking has long ago informed you all of the locations of the three thousand major worlds. There’s no need for you to teleport to a specific location; any place within the Fifth World will do,” the azure-robed woman said. “This will be very simple for you.”

Yu Wei was silent.

She could do this, of course; the Godking had given her this order, precisely because it would be very easy for her to accomplish.

But...

She wasn't willing to do it!

Even if she had to die, she wouldn't do it!

"What are you going to do?" Yu Wei asked.

"That isn't for you to worry about," the azure-robed woman snapped. "Does the Godking need to explain his orders to you?"

"I can't do it." Yu Wei shook her head. Her voice was soft, but it was very resolute.

"Why can't you do it? You are Ji Ning's Dao-companion; he trusts you absolutely. All you have to do is say to him, 'I'm going to take you somewhere; once you get there, you'll understand.' A very simple phrase; Ji Ning won't suspect a thing. Lead him in a Greater Teleportation and go to the Fifth World...and your mission will be completed," the azure-robed woman said.

Yu Wei immediately said, "I've become apprenticed to Patriarch Lu. In the future, I'll have a chance to infiltrate the very core of the Daoist Path. If I take Ji Ning to the Fifth World, I'll be exposed!"

"Once you are exposed, you won't have to hide any longer. You can openly and honorably serve the Godking." The azure-robed woman's gaze turned cold. "You've said a few too many things today. On account of the fact that the target is your Dao-companion, I'll pardon your impudence this once, but I will not pardon it a second time."

Yu Wei gritted her teeth.

"He is my Dao-companion." Yu Wei looked at the azure-robed woman.

"I know." The azure-robed woman looked back at her.

"He's the most important person in the world to me." Yu Wei looked at her steadily. "More important than even my own life."

The azure-robed woman's gaze turned solemn. Frowning, she said, "Are you going to refuse?"

Yu Wei immediately knelt down, prostrating herself and pressing her forehead down to the ground with the utmost sincerity. "The Godking gave me a new life, and I am absolutely devoted to the Godking. He can ask me to destroy the Black-White College, to kill anyone in the entire world of the Grand Xia, and I won't hesitate. But Ji Ning is my Dao-companion. I won't harm him, not even if I have to die!"

"You actually dare to disobey the commands of the Godking?" The azure-robed woman was stunned.

"You...you'll be sent into the Infinity Hells, never to be reborn again!"

Yu Wei just knelt there, not saying another word.

The azure-robed woman stared at Yu Wei. "You should know what will happen if you disobey the Godking. I'll give you one last chance..."

"Even if you ask me a hundred times, a thousand times...my answer remains the same." Yu Wei just knelt there.

“Then...wait to be brought into the Infinity Hells.” The azure-robed woman waved her arm, then disappeared into thin air.

.....

Night.

Ji Ning and Yu Wei were sleeping together on their bed. Although Immortals had no need for slumber, it felt nice to sleep every so often, and it could release a bit of the stress one felt. Even the most powerful of Immortals would occasionally take a nap, and in fact some Immortals were so relaxed that they might sleep for ten thousand years each time.

Suddenly, Yu Wei’s eyelids twitched slightly. She slowly opened her eyes.

“It’s finally come.”

Pain was in Yu Wei’s eyes.

She had been terrified of this day coming. She had thought that, upon becoming Patriarch Lu’s disciple, that she had become more useful and that the Godking wouldn’t order her to expose herself, allowing her to be together with Ning for a longer period of time. But now, the Godking’s order had come, after she had only spent half a year together with Ning.

Yu Wei gently pressed her head against Ning’s chest, feeling the warmth coming from Ning’s body.

“What is it?” Ning woke up as well. He reached out to put his arm around Yu Wei; he could sense that she seemed to be feeling quite weak and soft right now.

“Nothing. I had a bad dream,” Yu Wei said softly.

Ning nodded gently.

He knew that Yu Wei had a tragic life in her past life, while in this life her parents had died when she was young. She had most likely dreamt of something unpleasant.

“It was just a dream. Life is just going to get better and better for us.” Ning held Yu Wei in his arms.

“Right. Better and better.” Yu Wei smiled.

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“Senior apprentice-sister, you seem to be in quite a good mood. You’ve been smiling all day long.” Ning released his Darknorth swords. His slaughter of those Celestial Immortals had finally caused his three Darknorth swords to have absorbed enough baleful auras to become low-grade Pure Yang treasures.

Yu Wei put down her platter of spirit-fruit and smiled. “I’m with you, and there’s no one to bother us. We’re living in a lover’s paradise right now; why can’t I smile?”

Ning smiled as well.

Right.

A lover’s paradise.

The only two people within this estate were himself and Yu Wei. Immortal Diancai was quite discrete; he didn't come bother them unless there was something important. This was a world that belonged to just the two of them; to refer to it as a 'lover's paradise' wasn't too far off the mark.

"Haha, it would be wonderful if we can always live such a relaxed, happy life. My most cherished dream is of living a peaceful, calm life with my loved ones until the end of time." A hint of nostalgia appeared in Ning's eyes. "My father and my mother have both left me. But...I still have you, senior apprentice-sister."

"Right." Yu Wei nodded gently. In her heart, however, she silently said to herself: "Junior apprentice-brother, these might be our final days together. I want to leave you with the most perfect of memories. I'm going to smile, to laugh, to be happy."

.....

Within a dark region.

There was a towering, thirty thousand meter throne, and a massive black-robed figure seated upon it. He was gently tapping on his left armrest with his left arm.

Below him was Yu Wei, kneeling. Next to her was the azure-robed woman.

"You've disappointed me deeply." The Godking's voice echoed within the entire region of darkness.

Yu Wei didn't dare to say a single word in her own defense.

"However...I know that you feel very deep emotions towards this Ji Ning." The Godking sighed. "This word, 'love'...there have been countless who have been driven mad by it, even amongst Immortals and Fiends. I can forgive you this time, and I will no longer give you any missions pertaining to Ji Ning...but if you ever disobey me again, then you shall go burn for all eternity within the Infinity Hells."

"Thank you, Godking." Yu Wei revealed an excited look on her face, while the nearby azure-robed woman revealed a look of astonishment.

Yu Wei had never imagined that she was going to survive this disaster. After all, it was simplicity itself for the Godking to slay her. The Godking had imprinted her soul with his seal during her past life; with but a single thought, he could tear her soul out and cast it into the Infinity Hells. The Infinity Hells was an illusory place of damnation which the Godking had constructed; souls cast into it would suffer endless torment which would never come to an end. In fact...with but a single thought, the Godking could shatter her soul and kill her.

And yet, she felt tremendous gratitude towards the Godking. It was the Godking who had bestowed new life upon her.

"Go then." The Godking waved his hand, and Yu Wei vanished.

"Godking." The azure-robed woman could no longer stay silent. She had followed the Godking for far too long; this was completely different from how the Godking usually did things.

“Even if we don’t give her any missions related to Ji Ning, we can still use her to unknowingly send him on the road to hell,” the Godking said. “In addition...this chess piece, Yu Wei, remains very useful to us. I’ll pardon her impudence, this once.”

The azure-robed woman’s eyes gleamed. “The Godking is wise.”

.....

Within a private room.

Yu Wei opened her eyes, unable to disguise the excitement within them.

“Junior apprentice-brother, junior apprentice-brother.” Yu Wei immediately charged out of the still room, running towards the wide courtyard outside. Within the courtyard, Ning was training with his Darknorth swords. He wanted to master the Dao of the Sword as quickly as possible! He could sense that he was on the path to full master of the Dao; although his mastery of swordforce had only increased his combat power by a small amount, he was now gaining insight into the Dao of the Sword at a much faster pace.

“Eh?” Ning turned around, then laughed, “Senior apprentice-sister, I’m still training. Is there something you need?”

“Nothing.” Yu Wei sat down, just staring at him.

She quickly recovered from her state of excitement. She also quickly understood that even though she didn’t have to act against Ning, she would still have to carry out other missions against other people. In fact, due to her connection against Patriarch Lu, she would now be sent to deal with even more powerful figures. In short...sooner or later, she would still be revealed.

The day that she was revealed would be the day when she would be forced to leave Ji Ning...and in fact, might be the day of her death.

“That day will come, no matter what...?” After this latest experience, Yu Wei became even more reluctant to part with him.

That very night.

Ning and Yu Wei were together in bed, sharing a pillow.

“Junior apprentice-brother.” Yu Wei was in Ning’s arms.

“Mm?” Ning looked at her.

“Let’s have a baby,” Yu Wei said suddenly.

“Have a baby? Why? The Three Realms are in a state of chaos; how can we possibly take care of a baby right now?” Ning was startled. He was a Fiendgod, while Yu Wei was a Celestial Immortal; it was very difficult for Immortals and Fiendgods to conceive, but much easier for them to prevent conception. All they had to do was use their elemental energy or their divine power to prevent it.

Yu Wei looked at him. “I want one. The Three Realms are in a state of chaos, as you said. This way, even if one of us ends up dying, we’ll at least have a child together.”

“How can you say such things?” Ning said.

“If you die, do you plan to leave me alone in this world?” Yu Wei asked. “You’ve experienced so many dangerous events lately; I’m honestly terrified right now. If you were gone...I wouldn’t be able to stay alive.”

When Ning thought of how he had been exiled to the Nihilum Zone, his heart turned soft. He nodded. “Fine. If you want a baby, we’ll have a baby. But I’m a Fiendgod, while you are a Celestial Immortal; it’s going to be very hard for us to conceive.”

“We still have to give it a try,” Yu Wei said earnestly.

“Theeen...here I come!” Ning chortled, then gently pulled Yu Wei’s gauzy clothes off of her.

It was a dark, dreamy night. Ning felt as though he was intoxicated by bliss...

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Whether it was due to sheer luck or whether it was because someone was looking out for them...on the third month of their attempts, Yu Wei, a Celestial Immortal, became pregnant by Ji Ning, a Fiendgod.

After becoming pregnant, Yu Wei spent every day just sitting there, stroking her belly, beaming as she watched Ning train with the sword. In truth, there was no swelling whatsoever in Yu Wei’s belly at this point in time, but she still liked to stroke her belly...because she was caressing the child of herself and Ji Ning.

Ning completely immersed himself within swordplay, but whenever he paused, he would turn to beam merrily at Yu Wei.

Every time he did, he would feel very warm, very happy.

It had been so long...

Ever since his parents had passed on...it had been so long since he had felt such warmth. This was an intoxicating warmth, one which filled him with vigor! In the future, after his child was born, the two of them would play with the baby together. Those days would be even more blissful, right?

“Eh?” Ning suddenly ceased his training.

“What is it?” Yu Wei, who had been eating some spirit-fruit, couldn’t help but pause and query him.

“My Primaltwin has perfected its mastery over heartforce.” An excited look was in Ning’s eyes.

“Then...are you going to have your Primaltwin attempt the Celestial Tribulation?” Yu Wei was stunned.

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 17: Celestial Immortal Chapter 16: The Enraged Celestial Immortal Blackheaven

Ji Ning nodded lightly. “It should be time to undergo the tribulation. However, prior to doing so...I want to make a trip back to Swallow Mountain. You can think of this as a way to calm myself prior to the tribulation. Honestly, as I see it...in my Celestial Tribulation, I expect the wind tribulation, fire tribulation,

and thunder tribulations to be comparatively easy to deal with, while the demonheart tribulation will be the toughest.”

He had karmic sinflames covering him, after all; the demonheart tribulation would probably be truly terrifying.

“Alright.” Yu Wei was somewhat worried as well.

“Give Master a head’s up. We’re going back to Swallow Mountain today,” Ning said.

“Whatever you say,” Yu Wei said with a smile.

That very day, Ning and Yu Wei returned to Swallow Mountain.

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Swallow Mountain. Serpentwing Lake. Brightheart Island.

“Ah!? Master, you...you are actually having a baby with Rainbowflame? And you didn’t tell me?! You didn’t tell me something as important as this?! You’re breaking my heart! Wowowow!” Little Qing stared at Yu Wei’s belly, utterly excited. “Master, let your child be my disciple, alright?”

“You? Based on what? Don’t even think about leading that poor child astray.” The nearby Uncle White chortled merrily while seated. He was actually the happiest one of them all.

An heir!

Ji Ning had an heir!

If my big brother and my sister-in-law were still alive...I can’t even imagine how happy they would be right now.

“Senior apprentice-brother, I insist on being godfather to your child.” Mu Northson was similarly unable to disguise his joy and eagerness.

“Fine. However, as his godfather, you need to prepare some quality gifts. As a grandmaster of constructs...you absolutely have to bring out some particularly nice things.” Ning laughed. Giving his junior apprentice-brother something to care about was a wonderful thing.

“Stop just chatting. Quick, all of you, sit.”

The door swung open, and Autumn Leaf walked in carrying a platter of sumptuous foods.

Everyone was gathered here together, eating, drinking, and joking around.

Ning’s heart grew increasingly calm, increasingly peaceful.

For some inexplicable reason, he wanted to come back before his Celestial Tribulation. Aside from meeting with these familiar faces...he wanted to see Serpentwing Lake.

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A boat was drifting about on the surface of Serpentwing Lake. Ji Ning lay within it, sleeping by himself.

Mist gathered in the area around him.

Eventually, Ning sat up. He stretched out with his hand, gently gliding it through the water beneath the boat. He said softly, "Father, Mother...when you were alive, you had always hoped that my name would be known throughout the world. And now...your child has accomplished it! In fact, your child's name is now known even in other major worlds. And now, in a few days, your child shall undergo the Celestial Tribulation."

"Your child swears this...I will definitely become a True God and a Daofather. I'll stand at the very peak of the Three Realms...and at that point in time, I'll see you again. I'll tell you all of these things in person. As for this tribulation...it's be nothing more a small wave before the great storm to come."

It was as though Ji Ning was engaging in idle banter with his family members. He just glided his hand through the water as he spoke. His voice, however, contained a decisiveness and an ambition that would cause the faces of those who heard it to change.

.....

A beautiful gorge, with many palaces built within it, as well as many flowers, trees, and other forms of vegetation. It was as beautiful as paradise.

Two supremely lovely Immortal maidens who were even more astonishingly beautiful than Yu Wei were walking through it, shoulder-by-shoulder.

One of them was dressed in green, while the other was dressed in gray.

The peerless fairy maiden dressed in gray sackcloth clothes was walking barefoot. The gray clothes covering her were completely unable to disguise her beauty; in fact, they gave her a spiritual aura that it seem as though she transcended the mortal world. Countles male Immortals and Fiends would go mad just looking at her. She was the leader of the Seven Female Immortals of the Hundred Tombs Mountain, 'Fairy Deadgrass'.

The Hundred Tombs Mountain, a place within the Heaven Realm where spiritual energy gathered in abundance. In the Primordial Era, it used to be a place where many of the most powerful deceased Fiendgods would be buried, which was why it was known as the 'Hundred Tombs Mountain'. However, because so many powerful Fiendgods had been buried there, the place had become even more mysterious. Many flowers and trees had grown in that place, many of which possessed spiritual qualities. In fact, some of them spontaneously trained in cultivation!

It was incredibly difficult for flowers and plants to train in cultivation; since they all came from the Hundred Tombs Mountain, they were naturally an extremely unified group.

After they were able to take human form, they all appeared as women.

The Hundred Tombs Mountain had many Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals, as well as six Celestial Immortals and one Pure Yang True Immortal.

Of those maidens...Fairy Deadgrass was the Pure Yang True Immortal! She was originally a blade of grass that looked dry and withered, but that blade of grass was incredibly marvelous; no other flowers or types of vegetation were able to survive at all within a very large region around her. After taking human

form as an Earth Immortal, she had been to effortlessly overcome her Celestial Tribulation, becoming the number one Celestial Immortal of the Hundred Tombs Mountain. She was extremely reserved, and the more one interacted with her, the more intoxicated one would feel. In fact, even the Celestial Emperor of the Three Realms had been smitten by her. He had wanted to sneak in to court her, but who would've thought that upon entering the Hundred Tombs Mountain, the Celestial Emperor would have been physically kicked out, a single word echoing throughout the entire Heaven Realm:

“SCRAM!”

The Celestial Emperor had slunk away in disgrace.

After that, many in the Three Realms began to hypothesize that Fairy Deadgrass had to have a True God or Daofather behind her. However...given that Fairy Deadgrass was arguably one of the most peerless beauties of the entire Three Realms, it wasn't strange for her to have attracted the attention of a True God or a Daofather.

“Elder sister.” The green-robed fairy maiden's eyes glistened with tears. “Little sister Violetgrass died such a miserable death. She was just a little girl, but that ‘Ji Ning’ showed her no mercy at all. My husband went all-out to defend her, and even sent a mental message ordering him to stop...but Ji Ning still killed little sister Violetgrass. Elder sister...you have to take revenge for her!”

A cold light flashed through the eyes of Fairy Deadgrass. She said calmly, “We Seven Female Immortals of the Hundred Tombs Mountain...we aren't killed so easily. Who is this Ji Ning, and where does he come from? Your husband, True Immortal Gaudy, is quite powerful; could it be that even he was unable to kill him?”

“This Ji Ning is merely a Void-level Fiendgod; he hasn't even overcome his tribulation,” the green-robed woman said. “However, he is extremely powerful; although he is merely a Void-level Fiendgod, he was able to block my husband for a period of time.”

“He blocked Gaudy?” Fairy Deadgrass was startled.

There was a tremendous difference in power between Celestial Immortals and True Immortals. To block a True Immortal...only the rarest and most monstrously talented Celestial Immortals of the Three Realms were capable of such a thing.

“According to what my husband said, although he wanted to kill Ji Ning very much, Ji Ning's power has indeed reached the threshold of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals,” the green-robed woman said. “In addition, the Xia Emperor of the Grand Xia insisted on protecting Ji Ning. And...a True God or Daofather master stands behind Ji Ning! Right; I forgot to tell you this, but this Ji Ning has trained in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] as well.”

Fairy Deadgrass' body stiffened.

“Understood.” Fairy Deadgrass stood there pensively.

The green-robed fairy maiden stood next to her, waiting impatiently.

She knew very well that her elder sister was capable of many things; naturally, she was hoping that her elder sister would help out.

“Elder sister?” The green-robed fairy maiden called out softly.

“The Seven Female Immortals of the Hundred Tombs Mountain...Violetgrass was the youngest, and she had always followed you. I only met her a few times after she overcame her tribulation to become a Celestial Immortal. Although there isn’t much of a relationship between us...no matter what, she came from our Hundred Tombs Mountain. If memory serves, after she left you, she went to follow Azurefox, right?” Fairy Deadgrass said.

“Right.” The green-robed woman nodded.

“I’ll go meet Azurefox tomorrow,” Fairy Deadgrass said calmly.

There were many female Immortals in the Hundred Tombs Mountain, including a large group of Earth Immortals and Loose Immortals. Due to the Three Calamities and Nine Tribulations, most found it hard to live for more than a million years. Thus, the earliest ones who were born, such as Fairy Deadgrass, didn’t have much of a connection to the latecomers; they only had close connections to the others who were also born early on. Violetgrass was one of the latecomers; she had first followed many powerful figures, but had actually been lucky enough to become a Celestial Immortal. If it weren’t for that, Fairy Deadgrass probably wouldn’t even remember who she was.

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The Fifth World.

Within that towering palace, the Gatemaster of the Seamless Gate, ‘Azurefox’, was accompanying her guest, Fairy Deadgrass.

“Little sister Deadgrass, I’ve already told you the full details to this story.” Gatemaster Azurefox shook her head. “To tell you the truth...our Seamless Gate wants to kill Ji Ning more badly than any of you do. If he doesn’t die, then he will become a dangerous variable that will impact our plans to subjugate the Grand Xia. He already has the power to impact the situation right now, much less in the future when he grows more powerful. Thus, the earlier we kill him, the better. However, I haven’t been able to find a good opportunity to do this. After all, he’s very tough to kill, with the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] protecting him. And once we fail in killing him...the Immortals that we send to deal with him might end up being killed by the figure standing behind him.”

Fairy Deadgrass frowned.

She was an incredibly proud figure...but there was no way she would blindly rush into danger.

“Azurefox.”

An enraged bellow rang out, and a long-haired man came storming in with a terrifying look in his eyes.

“Blackheaven.” Gatemaster Azurefox and Fairy Deadgrass both watched him enter. He was one of the marvels amongst the countless Celestial Immortals of the Three Realms, Celestial Immortal Blackheaven. From the Primordial Era to the current era, no one had ever been able to determine for sure exactly how powerful Celestial Immortal Blackheaven was. However, what they did find out suggested that he was most likely just as powerful as a supreme Celestial Immortal.

Still...when he engaged in fights, he often used many strange, heterodox techniques that caused even Empyrean Gods and True Immortals problems! For example, when True Immortal Gaudy had gone to kill Ji Ning, Ji Ning had been able to use his archery to block him. Celestial Immortal Blackheaven, however...he would've been able to rely on his heterodox techniques to escape. Thus, the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals of the Three Realms treated him as they would an equal.

"Violetgrass DIED?! You, the 'exalted Gatemaster of the Seamless Gate'...why the hell didn't you help take care of her? Do you remember the words you told me, back then?!" Celestial Immortal Blackheaven was livid. He would never forget that little girl who had just started to take human form, and who had followed him around addressing him as 'old geezer'. He had always beamed merrily towards that little girl.

"I was unable to do anything. I couldn't make it in time." Gatemaster Azurefox shook her head.

"Damn." A cold light flashed through Blackheaven's eyes. "The Godking has three hundred Seamless Gates under his command. If you can't even protect one of your maids, do you really think you are worthy of being one of the Gatemasters?"

"Blackheaven, you go too far!" A dark, cold light flashed through Azurefox's eyes as well, and her azure hair began to float upwards.

"I go too far? You're the one who went too far by letting Violetgrass die. I taught her step-by-step, helping her establish her foundation, so that she could quickly become a Celestial Immortal, and a supreme one at that! I never imagined that...damn. You letting her take on missions was one thing, but you actually let her take on such a terrifyingly dangerous mission?" Blackheaven was truly enraged.

"That stupid kid...she didn't break the talisman I gave her." A hint of tears could be seen in Blackheaven's eyes, but the tears quickly vanished.

Celestial Immortal Blackheaven felt such regret.

He had roamed the Three Realms for his entire life, living in a carefree manner from the Primordial Era to the present day. He rarely came to truly care for someone, but he ended up treating that silly little girl who thought herself to be supremely clever as one of his own children. Who would've thought that they would've ended up being parted by death so soon?

In truth, when Violetgrass had been at the verge of death, she had thought of Celestial Immortal Blackheaven.

Long ago, Blackheaven had pounded his own chest and boasted proudly, "If there's anything you need, come find me! I'll give you three promises to accomplish three tasks for you. No matter how major the task is, I'll be able to accomplish it."

"Keep bragging, old geezer. You are just a Celestial Immortal, and you claim to be able to accomplish anything, no matter how major?"

Blackheaven had just smiled, not taking her seriously.

But he had forgotten...that when Violetgrass was in a truly dangerous situation, such as when she had seen how powerful Ji Ning was, how would she possibly dare to break the talisman he had given her?

She was afraid; afraid that Blackheaven would've thrown his life away as well. Thus, the two talismans she had shattered belonged to True Immortals.

"Hmph." Gatemaster Azurefox's gaze flashed past Celestial Immortal Blackheaven. She let out an angry snort, then said, "I made a mistake. I wasn't able to protect Violetgrass. This time...I'm not going to quibble with you over this." Gatemaster Azurefox was one of the most loyal followers of the Godking, and so she knew very well that of the powers on her side, Celestial Immortal Blackheaven, a mere Celestial Immortal, was behaving in a far too relaxed and unrestricted manner. This relaxed manner caused Gatemaster Azurefox to feel as though something was off. This was why she swallowed her anger, unwilling to truly make an enemy out of Blackheaven right now.

The Desolate Era

Book 17: Celestial Immortal Chapter 17: Ji Ning Requests An Audience

In all honesty, Gatemaster Azurefox couldn't be blamed for this matter. All the members of the Seamless Gate were risking their lives in their ventures; when the time came, even the Gatemaster herself would go into battle! This battle against Celestial Immortal Unity wasn't that dangerous a mission either; Violetgrass had only died due to bad luck. The Three Realms were being rocked by a storm; who would dare say for certain that one person would definitely survive?

However, Gatemaster Azurefox could tell that Celestial Immortal Blackheaven was truly enraged, and so she didn't bother to explain.

In addition...

Blackheaven was on their side. Logically speaking, as a Celestial Immortal, he should be forced to obey the orders that came from his superiors. Only major powers, those linked to major powers like Fairy Deadgrass, and the most supreme of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals were able to left alone to their own devices without being assigned any missions. Blackheaven, however, was also left alone and unburdened. This was truly quite strange, and this caused many of their Celestial Immortals to address him reverently as 'Exalted Immortal Blackheaven'. This also caused Gatemaster Azurefox to feel some nervousness. For an inexplicable reason, she felt as though if she were to truly go fight against Blackheaven, the results would be...poor.

"Blackheaven, don't blame Azurefox. She had no idea that Ji Ning was this much of a monster." The nearby Fairy Deadgrass sighed. "When I learned that Violetgrass had died, I immediately rushed over here. I imagine that you, too, came here for the purpose of getting vengeance for her, Blackheaven. Azurefox, as the Gatemaster of her Seamless Gate, wants to kill Ji Ning more than any of us. We all share a common goal, to kill Ji Ning."

"Ji Ning...of course we have to kill him," Blackheaven growled.

"Even if only for the sake of our subjugation of the Grand Xia alone, Ji Ning must die." Gatemaster Azurefox hurriedly agreed.

"How to kill him?" Blackheaven asked, "If he could be easily killed, Gaudy would've killed him long ago. He's currently within the world of the Grand Xia. That's the territory of the Xia Emperor. Both of you know exactly how deep the Xia Emperor's roots are..."

In truth, they didn't care as much about the Daofather behind Ji Ning. If they were truly worried, they wouldn't even dare to say the word 'kill'. The reason why they weren't afraid was because the Three Realms were now divided into two major opposing camps. These two camps had come to a common agreement; the major powers were not to casually intervene, because if they did, the other side would probably release even more and even more powerful major powers.

"The Xia Emperor's roots go deep. If we don't go all out against him...there's no way we'll have a chance to kill Ji Ning," Gatemaster Azurefox said. "The price of doing that, however, is too great. The best plan of action right now is to have the marquises of the Grand Xia assault the Xia Emperor first."

This was what the Seamless Gate usually did.

They would recruit some of the marquises, then use them to assault the other marquises. A full frontal assault...if the Seamless Gate truly had enough of an advantage to carry out such an assault, why would they have worked so furtively all these years? They would've forcibly swept through and conquered the Three Realms long ago. However...clearly, the Seamless Gate wasn't that powerful yet.

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Celestial Immortal Blackheaven, Gatemaster Azurefox, and Fairy Deadgrass couldn't come up with any ideas for acting against Ning.

Just as Blackheaven was about to turn and leave with a belly full of fire...

"Eh?" Gatemaster Azurefox suddenly rose to her feet.

Puzzled, Blackheaven gave her a glance.

Fairy Deadgrass was puzzled as well.

"Our chance just came." Azurefox revealed a smile as she looked towards Fairy Deadgrass and Blackheaven. "Our chance to kill Ji Ning just came."

"What?"

"What's the chance?" Fairy Deadgrass was puzzled, while Blackheaven immediately went to the point.

Azurefox smiled. "I just received word that Ji Ning is about to undergo his tribulation. It should be his Primaltwin that is going to undergo the Celestial Tribulation."

"Tribulation?" Fairy Deadgrass and Celestial Immortal Blackheaven were both surprised...and then both revealed looks of delight.

"This is indeed a wonderful opportunity." Fairy Deadgrass laughed as well. "Once his tribulation begins, especially when the final demonheart tribulation begins...since a Primaltwin shares the same memories and thoughts with the true body, the true body will also be trapped in the demonheart world. Ji Ning will be at his weakest; he won't be able to fight back at all."

"Right. He'll be unable to fight back, and the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] will be useless against the demonheart tribulation." Blackheaven revealed a look of delight.

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The azure-robed woman felt quite excited for this stroke of luck.

It was incredibly hard to subjugate a major world. One had to remove multiple impediments, and Ji Ning had become one such impediment that she had to resolve.

That very day, True Immortal Gaudy, Fairy Deadgrass, Celestial Immortal Blackheaven, Immortal Venomfreak, and the three leaders of the Seamless Gate, the Myriad Demons Cave, and Bloodcloud Hall gathered together for a meeting.

“We’ll primarily be relying on you this time, Exalted Immortals.” Immortal Venomfreak had a very humble attitude, and his ingratiating smile caused his ugly face to look even more savage. “If there’s anything you need me, Venomfreak, to carry out, just tell me. I’m prepared to give my life up over there if needed.”

“Life?”

The others all chuckled. Immortal Venomfreak’s ‘life’ was spent cheaply; he had already died countless times! There was no value in killing his clones.

“I’ll bring six of my aberrations as well. I’ve been nurturing them since the Primordial Era, and they are amongst the most powerful of my children.” Immortal Venomfreak had a delighted look on his face, and the other Immortals present all nodded and smiled. Immortal Venomfreak had many clones spread throughout the universe, and was quite famous within the Three Realms for his abilities in cultivating venomous bug-aberrations. All of them were thick and muscular, and could be used in many ways.

“When we go to the Grand Xia, we are all risking our lives,” Fairy Deadgrass said. “I’m only going to have one of my incarnations to go.”

“Right. I’ll send an incarnation as well, and it’ll carry some of my powerful magic treasures. It should have a tenth of my full power,” True Immortal Gaudy said.

Celestial Immortal Blackheaven let out a cold snort.

However...even though he wanted to take revenge for Violetgrass more than anyone else, he too was merely going to send a clone over. This was because his specialties lay in his varied, heterodox skills; it didn’t make too much of a difference whether he sent his true body or if he sent his clone. However, when True Immortal Gaudy and Fairy Deadgrass sent over their incarnations, those incarnations would most likely only have at most a tenth of their full power, no matter how powerful those clones were.

Their incarnations and clones were created through Celestial Immortal techniques; if they died, it wouldn’t impact their strength that much. Their true bodies, however, could not die; they would truly perish if their true bodies were slain.

Immortal Venomfreak was different. In truth, he didn’t even really have a ‘true body’; he had many clones, each of which could be considered his ‘true body’. Thus, one had to wipe out all of his clones before he would die; otherwise, if so much as a single clone survived, he would be able to quickly recover.

“Our Seamless Gate shall send the clones of two Empyrean Gods as well,” the azure-robed woman said.

“Our Bloodcloud Hall will send out a team of Hellsworn,” the skinny elder said with a smile.

"I will provide a construct to that team of Hellsworn," the fire-robed man said.

The addition of these three organizations had caused the power of this team to increase significantly.

"Now...the only question is, where is Ji Ning undergoing his tribulation," Blackheaven mused softly.

"If he ends up running to the Daofather master behind him, there will be nothing we can do. Otherwise...even if though Xia Emperor is protecting him, during the tribulation itself Ji Ning will be helpless. We only need a short period of time to kill him when we attack." Azurefox said confidently, "Celestial Immortal Blackheaven's 'Yin-Yang Arcane Ki Bottle' will be able to kill Ji Ning effortlessly."

Blackheaven nodded. "I'll bring the Yin-Yang Arcane Ki Bottle, of course."

The others couldn't help but give Blackheaven a glance.

Blackheaven really did have far too many treasures.

Some were Protocosmic spirit-treasures, while others were rather unique treasures with extraordinary powers. Once, Blackheaven had set up a trap that caused an Empyrean God of the Celestial Court to accidentally become ensnared within the Yin-Yang Arcane Ki Bottle. He had nearly died within that battle, and in the end had only survived because their respective major powers had negotiated, resulting in that Empyrean God being released.

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Night.

The imperial capital of the Grand Xia. The Skylight Palace.

"Imperial Majesty, Ji Ning requests an audience," the white-faced elder said respectfully.

"Ji Ning? Let him enter." The black-robed Xia Emperor, seated in the lotus position atop his jade bed, opened his eyes.

Soon, a youth entered the room.

"Imperial Majesty." Ning saluted respectfully.

"Ji Ning, why have you come to speak to me in the middle of the night?" The Xia Emperor laughed.

Ji Ning said, "To be honest, there's something I would ask of you, your Imperial Majesty."

"Oh?" The Xia Emperor listened.

"Nine days from now, I'm preparing to have my Primaltwin undergo the Celestial Tribulation," Ning said. "However...I imagine that the Seamless Gate has had their sights set on me for quite some time now, and they seem to have perfect knowledge regarding the location of every Void-level individual's tribulation. I believe that no matter how careful I am, they will still be able to find out where my tribulation is. During the tribulation, when the demonheart tribulation begins, even my true body will be unable to fight back. I will be at my weakest at this period of time, and the Seamless Gate definitely won't give up that opportunity. Thus...I've come to ask you to help, your Imperial Majesty."

The Xia Emperor laughed. "Haha, don't worry about this. Undergoing the Celestial Tribulation is an important matter; I'll naturally protect you with all my might."

In truth, Ning felt rather resigned. Unless his master, Patriarch Subhuti, actively reached out to him, there was no way for Ning to contact him, much less return to the world of the Crescent. If that wasn't the case, he would've returned to the Crescent world for his tribulation, which would've been much safer. After all, the other major powers were unable to even locate the Crescent world.

The Starseizing world left behind by Daoist Threelives was also very safe, but until he was acknowledged as the true heir, he wouldn't be able to enter at all.

And so, in the end, he had come to ask the Xia Emperor for help.

One of the reasons why Ji Ning had revealed his sharpness last time was for this.

"However...it probably won't be enough for me to guard you during your tribulation." The Xia Emperor frowned. "When you undergo your tribulation, you will be completely defenseless. Although the Seamless Gate won't be strong enough to defeat me...they still might be capable of some other tricks, such as tearing through space to arrive at your tribulation area, resisting my forces for a short period of time, then killing you."

Ning nodded.

There were figures within the Three Realms capable of killing him. For example, magic treasures that contained and was able to unleash extremely powerful truefire or truewater would be capable of completely annihilating him. However...under normal circumstances, he would be able to fight back; he wouldn't be so foolish as to allow himself to be trapped within those treasures.

"How about this...I'll take you to the 'seat of awakening' 1 of my master," the Xia Emperor said with a laugh. "You definitely won't encounter any problems while undergoing your tribulation at my master's place."

Ning was both surprised and delighted.

The Xia Emperor's master? Daofather Crimsonbright?

If he could receive protection from a Daofather, his tribulation would become far safer. Having a powerful backer really did make a difference! As for his own master, Patriarch Subhuti...sheesh. He was the ultimate arbiter of whether or not his disciples would even be allowed to return to the Crescent world. By contrast, Daofather Crimsonbright had openly taken control over dozens of major worlds and countless minor worlds.

However, it was precisely because of how secretive he was that Patriarch Subhuti had become known as the most mysterious Daofather of the Three Realms.

"But, but...would the Daofather permit me to enter?" Ning hesitated slightly.

"Let me report this matter to my master, first. If his place won't work, then I'll take you to my big brother's place," the Xia Emperor laughed.

Big brother?

Ji Ning instantly thought of the Xia Emperor's lifelong friend...Daofather Raindragon! Yet another Daofather!

A seat of awakening, aka Bodhimanda, is the place where a Buddhist or a Daoist gains enlightenment.

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 17: Celestial Immortal Chapter 18: Demonheart

"Thank you, your Imperial Majesty." Ji Ning was utterly delighted.

The Xia Emperor nodded. "The Celestial Tribulation is the greatest, most dangerous tribulation any Immortal cultivator will face on his path. One cannot be overconfident in dealing with it. Since you have karmic sinflames around you, your demonheart tribulation will definitely be quite extraordinary..."

Ning nodded.

Right.

Demonheart...

Last time, when the karmic sinflames had unleashed three rounds of tribulations upon him, Ning had realized how terrifying his demonheart tribulation would be. In truth...he didn't know for certain if he would be able to withstand it this time.

"Then I'll leave now, your Imperial Majesty," Ning said.

"Go. I'll decide upon your tribulation area within the next two days," the Xia Emperor said.

Ning immediately left.

This trip had been worth it. The Xia Emperor's promise of assistance...if a Daofather truly was going to protect him, then he would have no outside factors to worry about during his Celestial Tribulation.

.....

"Damn."

The day after Ning had gone to speak to the Xia Emperor. The azure-robed woman had previously been seating calmly in the lotus position atop her jade bed. Now, her face changed. She immediately barked, "Hurry up and invite True Immortal Gaudy, True Immortal Deadgrass, Celestial Immortal Blackheaven, Celestial Immortal Venomfreak, Empyrean God Threesuns, and Empyrean God Beastleave. Also invite the leaders of the Myriad Demons Cave and Bloodcloud Hall."

"Alright." The maid outside immediately acknowledged the order.

A short while later, everyone had arrived within the palace.

Empyrean God Azurefox, Empyrean God Threesuns, and Empyrean God Beastleave were of the Seamless Gate. True Immortal Gaudy and True Immortal Deadgrass were both Pure Yang True Immortals, while Celestial Immortal Blackheaven was equivalent to them in status. Immortal Venomfreak had the lowest status of the group.

Empyrean Gods and True Immortals were major figures of the Three Realms, after all, and when they took on masters, their masters were usually Daofathers. In fact, within the Three Realms, almost all Empyrean Gods or True Immortals had a Daofather or True God supporting them. Thus, even though Ji Ning might have a Daofather master, they wouldn't really care that much; the only thing causing them some nervousness was the fact that Ji Ning had trained in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art].

"The situation has changed." After everyone arrived, the azure-robed woman spoke out in a solemn voice.

"What happened?" They all looked at her.

They knew that she must have invited them all over to discuss matters pertaining to Ji Ning. The faces of Blackheaven and Venomfreak instantly changed; of the people present, these two cared about this matter the most.

The azure-robed woman said solemnly, "I just received word that the location of Ji Ning's tribulation has been set."

"Where?" Blackheaven immediately asked.

"He asked the Xia Emperor to protect him. The Xia Emperor, wanting to be cautious, didn't summon his own forces. Instead, he reported this to Daofather Crimsonbright, asking for Ji Ning to be allowed to undergo his tribulation at Daofather Crimsonbright's seat of awakening. Daofather Crimsonbright has already given the nod and agreed," the azure-robed woman said.

This news was actually top-secret. The Xia Emperor hadn't even told his subordinates about it, and very few people by the side of Daofather Crimsonbright knew about it. The Seamless Gate, however, had found out right away. The accuracy and lethality of their intelligence...it was the best in the Three Realms! It had reached an utterly terrifying level.

However, the people present didn't have any desire to ponder about such matters. All of them knew exactly how formidable the Seamless Gate's intelligence network was.

"Daofather Crimsonbright?"

"If it's at his seat of awakening, then we have no chance at all."

"Are we going to have to invite a major power?"

They all began to worry.

Forget about their incarnations and their clones; even if they sent their true bodies in to violate a Daofather's seat of awakening...Daofather Crimsonbright would probably wipe them all out in an instant.

"There's no way our superiors will start a war against Daofather Crimsonbright for Ji Ning's sake." The azure-robed woman shook her head. "Once a battle starts, the other Daofathers and True Gods will jump in as well...the end result might be a massive, chaotic war amongst True Gods and Daofathers. We can't possibly afford to pay such a price."

"Right." They all nodded.

If a huge storm erupted due to personal grudges between True Gods and Daofathers, that was one thing. But if as a result of their report, a huge storm erupted that claimed the lives of two or three of their Daofathers...they wouldn't be able to bear that sort of responsibility.

"Then what should we do?" Blackheaven frowned and barked.

Everyone was silent.

However, the horned figure that had been silent up till now suddenly laughed. "I have an idea."

"Oh?" All of them looked over to him.

Immortal Venomfreak laughed, "Exalted Immortals, all of you should know that when Ji Ning battled against my Youngflame clan, he was punished with karmic sinflames."

"Yes."

"Right."

All of their eyes lit up; they were all intelligent people, and only one word was all it took for them to sense what Immortal Venomfreak was saying.

"Due to the karmic sinflames, when he undergoes his Celestial Tribulation, the power of the wind, fire, and thunder tribulations will increase significantly, but those aren't that important...what really matters is his demonheart tribulation. That's when the tribulation shall become the most astonishing and the most terrifying." Immortal Venomfreak laughed. "I already know exactly what sort of a person this Ji Ning is; he cares deeply about filial piety and loyalty to his loved ones and friends. He's willing to die for his loved ones, and he's also willing to die for his brothers."

"Right." The nearby fire-robed man nodded. "To save his junior apprentice-brother, this Ji Ning once launched a major battle within one of the bases of our Myriad Demons Cave, not worrying about offending us at all."

"His devotion to his friends is worthy of our admiration; although I, Venomfreak, would never act like him, I still admire him very much." Immortal Venomfreak chortled. "The greatest strength of a person like him is that his devotion can make his Dao-heart incredibly, terrifyingly strong. But at the same time, his devotion is also his weak spot; once it crumbles, then his Dao-heart will also crumble."

"Now, since Ji Ning overcame karmic sinflames, it's not very likely that we will be able to make the devotion he feels for his loved ones crumble. However...it's possible for us to fill his heart with boundless rage and hate!"

"Kill those who he cares about!"

"Kill that 'Uncle White', who he treats as he would a father or a mother! Kill that obedient little spirit-beast of his, that Azure Skysnake!"

"Kill that Autumn Leaf, who he loves as he would a sister."

"His Dao-companion, Yu Wei."

"His junior apprentice-brother, Mu Northson."

“Kill them all! Ji Ning will definitely be enraged, and he’ll definitely turn berserk and go mad!” Immortal Venomfreak’s smile began even more brilliant. “Although sometimes madness can increase one’s power...during the demonheart tribulation, going berserk is one of the greatest taboos. There are very, very few berserk demons who are capable of overcoming their Celestial Tribulation, unless they truly have pure Dao-hearts and truly are born demons. However, Ji Ning is not a demon by nature; there’s no way he can have a pure, demonic Dao-heart.”

“Good idea.” The azure-robed woman nodded. “However, Yu Wei cannot be killed.”

“Cannot kill Yu Wei?” Immortal Venomfreak nodded. “Although killing the others would also enrage him...Yu Wei is his Dao-companion. Killing her will have the greatest impact on Ji Ning.”

“No. Yu Wei is Lu Dongbin’s disciple. Our target right now is Ji Ning; I don’t want to pull Lu Dongbin into the mix.” The azure-robed woman swept them with her gaze. “You should all know that if Lu Dongbin gets involved...then our branch of the Seamless Gate probably wouldn’t be able to survive.”

Everyone turned solemn.

The Godking had a total of three hundred Seamless Gates under his command. Although their particular branch was strong, Lu Dongbin himself was incredibly powerful, and his friends spanned the Three Realms. He was only friendly terms with more than ten True Gods and Daofathers. One of them treated Lu Dongbin like a son...and that one was one of the most supremely powerful leaders of the Daoist Path. If Lu Dongbin got into the mix...it could indeed cause a tremendous storm. Even if he just called his friends, such as the Eight Immortals of the High Caves, that would be enough to wipe out their Seamless Gate.

“Fine. We won’t touch Yu Wei.”

“Don’t touch her.”

Everyone agreed.

Immortal Venomfreak secretly smirked. These people only dared to go after the easy targets. It seemed as though in the Seamless Gate...only the most powerful of figures would dare cause trouble for the likes of Lu Dongbin. These Empyrean Gods and True Immortals present today, at least, didn’t have the courage to go up against him.

“Haha, killing the others is enough. That Uncle White, that Autumn Leaf...they are family to Ji Ning.” Immortal Venomfreak laughed. “Gatemaster, when shall we move?”

“There’s no time to waste. Let’s make some quick preparations, then make our move tomorrow morning and assault Serpentwing Lake.” The azure-robed woman added, “If Ji Ning is at Serpentwing Lake as well, then let’s kill him as well. If we can’t kill him, killing those targets will satisfy our objectives.”

“Right.”

They all nodded.

Time flowed on. Soon, the day ended...and the next day arrived.

The Desolate Era

Book 17: Celestial Immortal Chapter 19: On Brighthouse Island

It was at the cusp of summer, with spring coming to an end. The morning was rather cool.

Swallow Mountain, Serpentwing Lake, Brighthouse Island. Ji Ning walked out of his room by himself, with Yu Wei still asleep. At the Celestial Immortal level, one usually did not need to rise early or engage in an austere lifestyle. What really mattered was understanding the Dao. Once one reached a sufficiently high level in the Dao, such as mastering of a Grand Dao, then ki would manifest within the chest, causing one to immediately become a Pure Yang True Immortal.

However, the mastery of a Grand Dao was simply far too difficult. Many Celestial Immortals were trapped in front of the final bottleneck before mastery, unable to take that last step no matter how they tried.

Thus, Yu Wei's life was quite relaxed; she wouldn't even get out of bed until the Golden Crow had risen high into the sky.

Whoosh. Whoosh. Whoosh.. As Ning walked towards the waters of the lake, he could make out the rustling sound of the waves of Serpentwing Lake striking against the shore. Even when there was no wind, this massive lake would have three-foot tall waves, and so the sound of the waves striking against the shore was heard quite often.

Ning held a Darknorth sword in his hand, resting it over a shoulder as he strode past many buildings.

"Young master."

"Young master."

Many of the servants and maids of Brighthouse Island called out to him as he walked past.

Ning quickly arrived at the island's shore.

Snick. Snick. Not too far away, there was a gray-haired old man who was holding a giant pair of shears with both hands, trimming away at the flowers and vegetation. Brighthouse Island was kept in pristine condition, like a true paradise, and the efforts of these gardeners were a crucial part. Clearly, this old gardener was completely absorbed in his trimming, as he didn't even notice that the master of the Brighthouse Island, Ji Ning, had arrived.

Ning gave the old gardener a glance. He chuckled, then began to train with his sword.

Sword-light began to flash.

Ning's sword-arts had become even more pure. They didn't seem very dazzling, but they seemed to carry a thoroughly penetrating power to them. Anyone who watched would feel as though the tip of the sword was always aimed straight at their eyes. This sort of sharpness, this sort of penetrative power...ordinary Immortal cultivators who saw it would only feel that it was strange. Only when Celestial Immortals saw it would they understand how truly formidable it was.

Slowly...

The Golden Crow rose into the skies. The temperature began to rise. It was no longer cool, and as the rays of the Golden Crow shone down, they brought warmth to the world.

By now, the old gardener had noticed Ning. However, he didn't dare to disturb him; he just sat down to one side, watching with curiosity. As he watched...he slowly began to feel drowsy, due to how warm and comfortable it was. Bit by bit, he drifted off into sleep.

A short while later.

A tall, willowy, white-robed woman walked over; it was Yu Wei.

She normally always dressed in black clothes, but ever since she became pregnant, she would often change into new outfits.

"Let's watch your daddy train with the sword." Yu Wei waved her arm, and a crystalline, jade-like table and chair appeared out of nowhere. With a second wave, she caused some Immortal nectars and spirit-fruit to appear. As she sat down, she noticed the old gardener snoozing off in the distance. She couldn't help but smile, then turned her head to watch Ning train with the sword.

The waters of the lake washed up against the shore repeatedly. The warm morning sun shone down upon them. The old gardener snoozed contentedly, while her Dao-companion trained with the sword.

Yu Wei stroked her stomach. What a beautiful scene!

"You woke up."

Ning came to a halt and walked over to her.

"You are about to go for your Celestial Tribulation. Of course I had to come watch you train," Yu Wei laughed. "How do you feel?"

"Superb." Ning smiled. "My heart feels very peaceful, and my insights into the Dao of the Sword continue to rise. To be honest...I can sense that I am very close to the final bottleneck in the Dao of the Sword. In perhaps another half year or year, I'll be able to reach that bottleneck."

It wasn't too hard to reach the bottleneck. Breaking through it to gain full mastery of the Dao of the Sword, however, was incredibly hard. Still...Ning had once experienced the [Thousand Year Dream], which his master, Patriarch Subhuti, had provided to him so as to help him get a taste in advance of what it would be like to have full mastery of the Dao of the Sword. Given that he also was in control of a hint of a swordforce...he felt confident that it would be much easier for him to break through this bottleneck than it was for ordinary Celestial Immortals.

However, even though it might be easier, not even Ning knew how long it would be before he would actually make the breakthrough.

Only when he mastered the Dao of the Sword would he have his true body undergo its tribulation. If he succeeded and became an Empyrean God...then his life would have truly changed!

But all of it was dependent upon him mastering the Dao of the Sword.

“Why don’t you train for a bit longer? First reach the bottleneck, then have your Primaltwin undergo the tribulation,” Yu Wei said.

“My Primaltwin is in control of heartforce; it’s more than strong enough by now. Even if I do improve slightly in the Dao of the Sword, it won’t be of that much help to me,” Ning said. Their words were naturally sealed off from the surrounding area, preventing anyone else on the island from listening in.

Ning’s words were correct.

With his full mastery over his third level heartforce...his natural level of power was already that of a supreme Celestial Immortal’s.

Even if a mere Primal Daoist was somehow so monstrously talented as to be able to take perfect control over the third stage of heartforce, that Primal Daoist’s power would also rise to that of a supreme Celestial Immortal’s. Heartforce was an extremely mysterious form of power; generally speaking, only Empyrean Gods and True Immortals could slowly begin to grasp it, while a number of True Gods and Daofathers had some degree of skill in it.

It was far too rare, however, for anyone at the Void-level to have gained insights into it. As for Primal Daoists doing the same, this had never before happened!

Ning’s Primaltwin was now in perfect control of his third-stage heartforce; its power had similarly skyrocketed to the supreme Celestial Immortal level. For a Ki Refiner...this sort of power was absolutely enough to overcome the thunder tribulation, while the wind tribulation and fire tribulation were even less dangerous. Only the most unfathomable tribulation, the demonheart tribulation, remained a threat.

Insights into the Dao of the Sword wouldn’t be of much help to fighting the demonheart tribulation.

“And...my subconscious is whispering to me that the next few days are the best period of time for undergoing my tribulation,” Ning said.

“Oh?” Yu Wei nodded.

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Just as Ning and Yu Wei, this loving pair of Dao-companions, were chatting together...

In the skies above a location deep within the southern seas of the Grand Xia, a spatial rift suddenly appeared. An awe-inspiring group flew into the world, each member of the group possessing powerful auras. The leaders were True Immortal Gaudy, Fairy Deadgrass, Empyrean God Beastleave, and Empyrean God Threesuns.

Although these were merely their incarnations or clones, in possession of just a tenth of their full power, they were still definitely at the Empyrean God or True Immortal level of power. They were significantly more powerful than Ji Ning, who could be considered to have just barely reached the minimum threshold of that level of power.

Celestial Immortal Blackheaven and Immortal Venomfreak were also present, and behind them were a group of black-robed figures. Every single black-robed figure had an astonishing aura that was filled with savagery and brutality. The first time Immortal Venomfreak had seen this group, he couldn’t help but feel nervousness. “The Hellsworn of Bloodcloud Hall...they are legendary Deathsworn who came forth

from the Infinity Hells. What are these 'Infinity Hells'? The eighteen hells of the Netherworld shouldn't be able to produce terrifying figures."

Immortal Venomfreak had just recently joined, after all; there were many secrets which he did not know, and he didn't dare to ask too many questions either.

"We've arrived at the Grand Xia." True Immortal Gaudy said, "Venomfreak, you weren't confident in being able to teleport from the Fifth World to Serpentwing Lake, but now that we are at the Grand Xia, it shouldn't be a problem, yes?"

"Yes, it will be easy. Forget about Serpentwing Lake; I can teleport us straight to Brightheart Island." Immortal Venomfreak smiled, confidence in his eyes. "For the sake of killing Ji Ning, I gained a thorough understanding of Brightheart Island of Serpentwing Lake; I know its layout intimately."

"Good." True Immortal Gaudy nodded. "Then use a Greater Teleport."

A blood-red pearl appeared in the skies.

Whoosh.

Immortal Venomfreak waved his hand again. None of them resisted as they were drawn into that blood-red pearl. This pearl was merely a Heaven-ranked magic treasure that contained a holding space within it; the likes of True Immortal Gaudy and the others could easily destroy it from the inside and emerge as needed. In addition, they could see what was going on in the outside world, so they weren't worry about Immortal Venomfreak playing any tricks on them. And...if he really did, the Seamless Gate would never spare him. The Seamless Gate was able to keep track of everything they were doing, after all.

"Let's go." Pearl in hand, Immortal Venomfreak immediately used a Greater Teleport.

Whoosh.

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Serpentwing Lake. Brightheart Island.

This place was as beautiful and paradise-like as ever. Many servants and maids had already risen from bed and started on a few simple tasks.

Ning and Yu Wei were seated together, drinking some warm wine.

"Come here and feel it. Can you feel the movement?" Yu Wei placed Ning's hand on her stomach.

Ning carefully pressed his palm down, sensing the pulses coming from her belly. The pulses were very minute, very fine.

These little pulsing movements caused Ning to feel a very strange, unique feeling in his heart. This feeling was a powerful, protective urge, the urge an eagle might feel to protect its chicks. Ning was filled with a desire to ensure that nothing would happen to this little soul.

Yu Wei looked at Ning, looked at the expressions on his face.

Rumble...

This was a soundless, formless spatial ripple...but this ripple, the ripple of Greater Teleportation, caused more shock and alarm to Ning and Yu Wei than the collapse of the ground below them.

“Not good. That’s Greater Teleportation!” Ning immediately turned around. “I can’t let them harm senior apprentice-sister.”

When Ning had sensed the pulses, he had immediately understood that even if he had to die, he would ensure the safety of the two of them.

“Senior bear, senior Redsnow, something bad has just happened.” As Ning turned, he immediately called out to the seven Empyrean Gods. As he did...he instantly saw the ugly, horned man who had just appeared far away.

“Youngflame Freak?” Ning instantly recognized this man, the Ancestor of the Youngflame clan.

The horned man grinned savagely, and his hoarse, ear-piercing voice that sounded like a jagged knife sawing through a table instantly rang out throughout Brighthouse Island. “Ji Ning. What a coincidence!” His power, filled with a Celestial Immortal’s energy, echoed throughout the island.

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

A large number of people suddenly appeared next to Youngflame Freak. The leaders of the group caused Ning’s eyelids to twitch. He instantly recognized True Immortal Gaudy; if it hadn’t been for the Xia Emperor, he probably would’ve been forced to ask senior Redsnow and the others to intervene. And this time...Gaudy wasn’t alone. Next to him were three figures whose auras were no weaker than his!

“Four Empyrean Gods or True Immortals?” Ning felt tremendous shock. “Even if I immediately asked the Xia Emperor for assistance, if he doesn’t bring enough people, it will probably be very hard for him to stop them.”

“Senior Redsnow!” Ning frantically called out to them.

The seven Empyrean Gods had been located within the Starseizing world; they only began to emerge once the giant yellow bear notified them, which naturally needed a bit of time.

“What a perfect opportunity. Kill Ji Ning.”

Fifty-five figures had emerged within the skies. Celestial Immortal Blackheaven immediately let out a furious roar, while the eyes of the four leaders became filled with murderous intents. The wave of murderous intents swept down towards Ning, causing him to feel a greater sense of danger than he had ever felt before. He had the feeling that if he tried to fight back by himself, he would probably die in a single clash!

“I’M...TRYING...TO SLEEP!!!!” An utterly enraged roar suddenly rang out.

The old gardener who had dozed off nearby suddenly rose to his feet, a frown on his face. He actually coughed twice as he stared at the fifty-five figures in midair. “That damned duck that squawked just now had a horrible-sounding voice! Do you guys want to die?!”

Everyone was stunned.

Ji Ning and Yu Wei stared in shock at the old gardener. Only an instant had passed, but the old gardener had actually slowly risen to his feet, coughed twice, then said a few things. It was as though time was passing at completely different speeds for them and the old gardener.

As for the fifty-five figures in midair, they were even more stunned and amazed.

This was because they suddenly realized something...

“Why can’t we move?!”

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 17: Celestial Immortal Chapter 20: The Four Ancestors of the River Source

True Immortal Gaudy, Fairy Deadgrass, and the others with them in the air were frozen like sculptures. They couldn’t even blink, and the Empyrean God energy or Pure Yang energy in their bodies had been completely frozen, unable to be activated in the slightest. This sort of feeling, of absolute paralysis, caused Gaudy and the others to feel amazement in their hearts.

“A Daofather.”

“It must be a Daofather.”

“But, but...there’s actually a Daofather on Ji Ning’s Brightheart Island?”

None of them had imagined that their assault would result in them kicking into a steel plate like this! Their Greater Teleport had been quite a lucky one; they had teleport straight to Brightheart Island, and because Brightheart Island wasn’t that large, they had arrived very close to Ji Ning! And in fact, even if their teleportation was a bit off, the formations of Serpentwing Lake would not have been able to resist the likes of True Immortal Gaudy, who had completely mastered the Grand Dao of Qiankun.

But now they realized...they weren’t lucky at all. In fact, their luck was terrible to the extreme!

“Senior.” Both Ji Ning and Yu Wei hurriedly called out respectfully to the man.

“Mm.” The old gardener still hold those gardening shears in his hands as he lazily sauntered over. Upon hearing both Ning and Yu Wei addressing him respectfully as ‘senior’, he nodded. “Good, you know how to be respectful to the elderly.”

Ning and Yu Wei instantly felt speechless.

An exalted Daofather...had first pretended to be a gardener, and now was putting on airs as an old man. He had completely destroyed the image which Ji Ning had of Daofathers in his mind.

“You brats that are hanging up there in the air.” The old gardener raised his head, looking at the fifty-five figures frozen in midair. He immediately said, “You woke this old man up with your yammering. Anything you want to say before you die?”

As soon as he said these words, True Immortal Gaudy and the others in midair suddenly felt as though their mouths could now move.

“We offended you by accident, senior,” True Immortal Gaudy said respectfully.

“Senior, please let us leave,” Fairy Deadgrass said a very soft voice.

The forces of the Seamless Gate were all behaving in an extremely humble manner. However, they had quickly recovered from their initial shock. If this was a Daofather, he probably wouldn't casually act in a way which might start a war. The Daofathers on both sides were still holding back for now; perhaps this Daofather they had run into might mock them for a bit, but let them live.

As far as they were concerned, the death of an incarnation or a clone wasn't too big a deal; what really mattered was the important treasures they were carrying. In fact, they had multiple top-grade Pure Yang treasures with them! This was the reason why their incarnations and clones were capable of unleashing such tremendous power. Celestial Immortal Blackheaven had been so enraged that his clone had even brought a Protocosmic spirit-treasure!

“It seems we've passed through this latest crisis.” Ning and Yu Wei both let out secret sighs of relief. However...Ning knew very well that the Seamless Gate was so powerful that not even his master, Patriarch Subhuti, would casually act against their minor figures. This Daofather who apparently loved to play games probably wouldn't act too recklessly either.

“Ji Ning, kid,” the old gardener suddenly called out.

“Senior,” Ning hurriedly said.

“Tell me, should I kill these people?” The old gardener smiled merrily at Ning. “If you say I should, then I'll kill them. If you say I shouldn't, I'll release them. How's that?”

Ning was stunned.

The fifty-five members of the Seamless Gate in midair were stunned as well.

“It is your prerogative to decide whether or not to kill them, senior,” Ning immediately said. He wouldn't be so truly presumptuous as to instruct a Daofather in what should be done! If this Daofather was merely jesting with him but didn't actually want to start a battle, and if Ning said the wrong thing...it would be terrible.

“It seems you still feel a bit suspicious.” The old gardener sighed. “If this old man felt the urge, I'd even kill Lu Dongbin, the precious little darling of the Daoist leader, to say nothing of these people!”

Ning was shocked.

In this instant...the faces of True Immortal Gaudy, Fairy Deadgrass, Celestial Immortal Blackheaven, Emyrean God Threesuns, Emyrean God Beastleave, and Immortal Venomfreak, all still hovering in midair, changed.

“Old Man Yuan?”

“Old Man Yuan?”

They all realized who this person was.

“Senior, are you Old Man Yuan?” True Immortal Gaudy spoke out. In the Three Realms, the only person who referred to himself as ‘this old man’ and who would dare to kill even Lu Dongbin was the low-key, mysterious Old Man Yuan.

“That I am.” The old gardener chortled merrily as he looked at them. “Now...are there any questions in your heart as to whether or not I would dare kill you?”

The forces of the Seamless Gate were stricken with terror. They were no longer able to remain calm, but in their hearts they were cursing. Exalted Old Man Yuan, if you want to kill us, just kill us. Why are you saying so much to us? It seemed as though the legends regarding this man were true; Old Man Yuan really was a crazy old man.

“Old Man Yuan?” Ning revealed a look of surprise as well.

In turn, Yu Wei had learned of some of the Daofathers of the Three Realms from Lu Dongbin.

Although Ning hadn’t gone out of his way to investigate all the True Gods and Daofathers of the Three Realms during his time at Mount Innerheart, the disciples of the Mount Innerheart League would often chit-chat about some of the most supreme True Gods and Daofathers when they were bored. This person, Old Man Yuan, was often mentioned.

Old Man Yuan was also one of the True Gods who had been born from the primordial chaos. However, his comprehension abilities were far superior to Daoist Threelives, and his status was far higher as well. He had long ago mastered a Heavenly Dao and become a Daofather of the Great Firmament! After doing so, his power had reached an utterly ridiculous level. He belonged to neither the Daoist Path, nor to the Buddhist Sangha. He had become a power unto himself, and he himself possessed power overwhelming. He was truly one of the most supreme Daofathers of the Three Realms, and he had two other Daofathers under his tutelage! In addition to that...he had three lifelong friends who were also three incredibly powerful Daofathers.

The four of them were referred to within the Three Realms as the ‘Four Ancestors of the River Source’ 1. The Four Ancestors of the River Source were extremely close friends; they always attacked and retreated in unison. All four of them were incredibly powerful Daofathers, and if one also factored in their various disciples and friends...they would be considered an incredibly powerful force of the Three Realms.

As for Old Man Yuan...he was the most powerful member of the Four Ancestors of the River Source. He was their leader!

How powerful was he, exactly?

No one knew for certain. Some said that Old Man Yuan was, logically speaking, weaker than the two leaders of the Buddhist Sangha and the Daoist Path. Others said that Old Man Yuan should be comparable to those two leaders. In short...this was a crazy, yet terrifyingly powerful old man.

“Damn...” True Immortal Gaudy and the others felt misery in their hearts.

The Three Realms were currently divided into two major alliances.

The likes of Patriarch Subhuti had long ago chosen an alliance...but the Four Ancestors of the River Source had remained neutral. In the end, nobody would be able to avoid getting drawn into the war between these two alliances, but for now, before battle had truly begun...both sides were actively courting the Four Ancestors of the River Source. They had to; the four were simply too powerful. These were not four ordinary Daofathers; all four of them had been born as True Gods of Primordial Chaos, and stood at the very top of power amongst Daofathers. Old Man Yuan, in particular, was one of the utmost supreme major powers of the Three Realms.

If Subhuti dared to kill these fifty-five, the major powers behind the Seamless Gate would probably strike back; they were enemies, after all.

But if Old Man Yuan was the one to kill them...the major powers behind the Seamless Gate definitely wouldn't intervene. They had been working so hard to have the Four Ancestors of the River Source join them; how would they dare to offend this old man now?

"Now you should realize that I wasn't joking with you, right?" The old gardener beamed merrily as he looked at Ning. "This old man is going to ask you again; should I kill them? If you say yes, then I'll kill them."

Ning no longer hesitated at all. He nodded. "You should."

"Nice." The old gardener nodded with satisfaction. "That's more like it."

"Senior!"

The paralyzed members of the Seamless Gate, still hanging up high in the sky, were filled with terror.

"Begone." The old gardener casually tossed out his giant gardening shears, sending it flying upwards. This was clearly a pair of ordinary gardening shears; it would probably break apart if one tried to use it to cut an ordinary rock. And yet, it now went flying towards the midair bodies of the True Immortals and Empyrean Gods. Even the clones of such figures would have bodies that were incredibly tough.

Snick!

It was like cutting through paper. The body of an Empyrean God was bisected...and then his auras vanished. He was deadlier than dead.

Snick! Snick! Snick!

True Immortal Gaudy, Fairy Deadgrass, and Immortal Venomfreak were utterly terrified. They repeatedly called out 'senior!', but snick, snick, snick...they were still cut to death by the gardening shears. In the blink of an eye, all fifty-five members of the Seamless Gate had been slain. Although the metal shears had moved quite slowly, no major powers had appeared to intervene.

Ning's eyes lit up as he watched.

Wonderful!

Those bastards had actually attacked Ning's home; it was wonderful to see them killed.

“Oho, although those little minions of the Seamless Gate only sent their clones and incarnations over, they brought a few nice things with them. Three top-grade Pure Yang treasures, and a Protocosmic spirit-treasure.” The old gardener waved his hand, and the items left behind by the deceased members of the Seamless Gate flew forward to levitate in the air before Ji Ning and Yu Wei. “They don’t suit this old man. You take them.”

Ning blinked.

Yu Wei was stunned as well.

Them?

What in the...

After apprenticing himself to Patriarch Subhuti, Ning had been forced to painstakingly adventure through the Crescent world. Thanks to tremendous luck and hard work, he had acquired a single Protocosmic spirit-treasure, the Rahu Bow...and the bowstring had been broken, at that! This Old Man Yuan was even generous than his own master!

“What, aren’t you willing to accept them?” Old Man Yuan stared.

“I am, I am, I am!” Ning was so frightened, he repeated himself three times. “How would this junior dare to refuse the gift of a senior?” He immediately waved his hand, accepting the treasures.

“That’s more like it. If you are going to do something, just do it; don’t hem and haw and dawdle about like a girl,” Old Man Yuan said with a laugh. “I’ve already spent several months living here at your Brightheart Island.”

Several months?

Ning was puzzled. This gardener had been here for far longer.

“I’ve just been possessing this old gardener,” Old Man Yuan said with a merry chuckle. “I spent months here before you came back to Brightheart Island, you brat. Mm...I’ve watched you train with the sword several times now. Your sword-arts aren’t bad, but your control over heartforce is even better.”

Watched him several times?

Aside from this time...Ning couldn’t recall a time when the old gardener had been nearby. Oh, right; given Old Man Yuan’s power, he would be easily able to watch Ning train with the sword, even from a tremendous distance.

“Buuuut...” Old Man Yuan said, puzzled, “Why is it that you seem to be so stupid?”

“Stupid?” Ning was puzzled. This was the first time that anyone had called him stupid!

“You completely focus your heartforce into your sword-fingers. Why haven’t you considered applying it to your legs or the rest of your body? That way, when you use your evasive divine abilities, your speed would increase dramatically, right? In the fact of those so-called ‘True Immortals’ and ‘Empyrean Gods’, your escaping speed would improve dramatically; you would no longer be forced to just stand there like an idiot and take them head on,” Old Man Yuan said.

Ning shook his head. "It isn't that easy to apply heartforce. It took me eighteen years of painstaking training before I was able to apply it to my sword-fingers."

"The reason it isn't easy is because you don't have a good teacher. Your teacher doesn't know a damn thing about heartforce." Old Man Yuan chortled. "What do you think of my power?"

"Your power is incredible, of course, senior!" Ning said hurriedly.

"Then hurry up and kowtow to me as your master!" Old Man Yuan puffed his chest up.