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Book 19: Empyrean God Chapter 8: The Relics of Threelives

Subhuti looked at Ji Ning. He was silent for a few moments, then said slowly, "You are taking a tremendous risk. You are trying to force the Seamless Gate's hand...but to force them to make peace with you...to make the proud, exalted Seamless Gate sue for peace...that is going to be incredibly hard. You should understand what sort of a path you have decided on."

"Your disciple understands." Ning didn't hesitate at all.

This was a path filled with danger and death!

Even though Daofathers wouldn't personally intervene, the Seamless Gate still had other methods at their disposal for dealing with Ning. For example, using human wave tactics! They could hide a Realmwar's worth of Immortals and Fiendgods into an estate-type magic treasure an attack Ning, or produce multiple Empyrean Gods and True Immortals on Lu Dongbin's level and have them surround Ning! Sufficiently high numbers of Immortals and Fiendgods could threaten even Daofathers, to say nothing of Ning.

Ning would be walking on a tightrope! The path forward led to success...but falling off on either side would lead to death!

"Alright," Subhuti said softly. "If you push yourself far enough, sometimes a miracle will happen. The only thing I can do is help you locate appropriate targets amongst the headquarters of the Seamless Gate. Everything else will be up to you."

"Thank you, Master." Ning was overjoyed.

"You have to be as careful as possible," Subhuti instructed. He himself had only learned just now that this disciple of his had made the choice to thrust Yu Wei into the Infinity Hells. Subhuti couldn't help but sigh, yet remained powerless to change things.

"Go." Subhuti nodded, then closed his eyes.

Ning bowed respectfully, then turned and left the Daoist monastery.

After leaving, Ning returned back to his own residence, then entered the Still Room of the Starseizing Manor.

He seated himself atop the netherwater jade bed, then took out the brocade sack and the gourd.

"First, the [Starseizing Hand]."

Instantly, five streaks of light flew out from the brocade sack and swirled around him in the air in a pentagon. They shone brilliantly with dazzling golden light, warm blue light, vigorous azure light, fierce red light, and ponderous yellow light. They contained such deep concentrations of Five Elements essence that one could sense them clearly, even without engaging in training.

Those crystals that were glowing with a watery blue light, for example...the tiny pile of crystals gave off a sensation akin to a vast, endless sea.

Whoooooosh.

Ning shut his eyes as the surrounding Five Elements essences began to surge towards him.

Training in the [Starseizing Hand] and the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] was quite fast; both techniques were techniques that involved training the physical body to become as powerful as magic treasures. Thus, the only requirements were fully understanding how the techniques worked and having enough materials. It was the same as actually forging a treasure.

A day later.

Ning walked out from the Still Room and arrived in the main hall. He immediately saw the giant yellow bear, Redsnow, and the rest of the seven.

“Congratulations.” The giant yellow bear clasped his furry paws together and bowed. “You’ve mastered the Ninth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], and your starseizing hands are now comparable to Protocosmic spirit-treasures. Ji Ning, these two mighty divine abilities alone are enough to allow you to roam the Three Realms without fear.”

“With your arcane art having reached the Ninth Cycle, you are now almost invulnerable. Congratulations,” Redsnow said as well.

“It would be wonderful if I could also become apprenticed to Patriarch Subhuti and learn the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art],” the child-sized Primelight said, shaking his head and sighing. “The Manorlord and elder brother Redsnow have both become apprenticed to Subhuti. Redsnow in particular...he’s absolutely ancient, but he’s shameless enough to force his way into becoming our Manorlord’s ‘junior apprentice-brother’. And he chose to start learning the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] shortly after he joined their school!”

“I want to learn it as well.” The alluring Snow Scorpion looked towards Ning.

“Which Empyrean God wouldn’t?” Ninefangs mumbled to himself, “Back when I was just a minor soldier under the command of the Godking, all I was qualified to do was to listen to him lecture. Even now, I can’t actually learn his techniques.”

Everyone else began to grumble and grouse. As for Ning and Redsnow, they just listened, not daring to say a thing.

In truth, this was something which virtually every single Empyrean God of the Three Realms felt jealous over. The [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] had long been revered as the number one divine ability in the Three Realms for those below the True Immortal level! However, training in this divine ability was simply too insanely expensive, especially for the Ninth Cycle; the price for that was far greater than the price for reaching the Fifth Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand].

Even Daofathers would feel heartache upon paying such a price.

Ning and the seven Empyrean Gods had rendered major merits during the Realmwar without taking any share of the spoils, which was why Daofather Crimsonbright, a True God and Daofather who had been

born from the primordial chaos, had been able to swallow the painful price necessary to provide Ning with that gourd of Immortal pills.

“Look at the sour looks on each of your faces. Enough, enough!” The giant yellow bear hurriedly urged, “Hurry up and have Ji Ning go and break apart the seals which Master left behind. Let’s go see those three treasures.”

“Right! Those three treasures.”

“I wonder what those three treasures are?”

“Manorlord, hurry up and go take a look.”

“Come straight back and tell us right away.”

The eyes of Primelight, Snow Scorpion, and the others all lit up. They no longer grumbled or spoke words of jealousy, and instead urged Ning to go take a look right away.

“I’m quite curious as well. Wait for me here. I’ll come back shortly and inform you all.” Ning immediately left behind the main hall.

Soon, the giant yellow bear and Ji Ning arrived at that spatial corridor, as well as the glowing formation that lay at the end of the corridor.

“Break.” Ning slapped out with a palm, transforming it and making it three hundred meters in size. His palm carried a terrifying aura of power with it; it was like the heavens themselves were smashing downwards. The power of his palms was noticeably greater than it had been before. When Ning’s palm slapped down against the protective formation, a layer of light flowed across its surface as a rune that looked similar to the Starseizing Tattoo appeared on it.

Ning’s Starseizing Tattoo and the rune merged together.

Whoosh! The formation simply disappeared, as though having been blown away by a gust of wind. Ning immediately saw the wooden door in front of him.

He walked forward, immediately pushing it open. Creaaaaak. The door swung open.

“Big bear, let’s go in together.” Ning turned to look at the giant yellow bear.

“No, no. Master’s orders were explicit; only the new Manorlord is allowed to enter.” The giant bear shook his head. “Those treasures aren’t for me anyhow. After you come out, just tell me what they are and let me take a look at them. I’ll be satisfied with that.”

Ning nodded, then stepped inside the room without any further attempts at persuasion. As he entered...his surroundings changed.

“Eh?” Ning was stunned. This was a very ordinary little room. Within the room was a prayer mat, and atop the prayer mat sat a bald, one-armed man who was dressed in fur clothes. He looked towards Ning with a hooded gaze. Ning could immediately recognize this man; it was Daoist Threelives. When Ning had been taught the [Starseizing Hand] divine ability, he had personally seen Daoist Threelives’ appearance.

“You have arrived.” The man spoke.

Ning instantly understood that this was nothing more than part of the spell left behind by his teacher. These words had been spoken by Daoist Threelives long ago.

“For you to enter this place means that you have already mastered the Fifth Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand]. I, Threelives, finally have a successor.” A calm, distant look was in Daoist Threelives’ eyes. “When I was alive, I wasn’t able to find a good successor. For me to find one after I die...it is enough. I don’t have any requests to make of you. I only ask that you treat with kindness those who have decided to continue to protect the Starseizing Estate. I suspect that Redsnow will stay behind, but I am uncertain about the rest. The heart is hard to fathom, after all. When I was alive, they were loyal to me...but after I die, it’s hard to say. As for the guardians...I hope that you will treat them kindly. If there are any Pure Yang treasures within the Treasures Hall which suit them, please give them to them.”

“As for you...I have prepared these three top-grade Protocosmic spirit-treasures for you. I hope that you will survive to make yet another breakthrough, becoming a True God and a Daofather. Let my [Starseizing Hand] truly become renowned throughout the Three Realms.”

“I was able to develop the [Starseizing Hand] due to a series of lucky karmic encounters. Alas, although I am a True God, I was unable to master a Heavenly Dao and become a Daofather. Otherwise, my [Starseizing Hand] would become even more powerful.” Daoist Threelives shook his head. “But of course, that’s nothing more than a bit of empty pride. As for the path you shall take in the future, that will be entirely up to you. Even if you want to dissolve the Starseizing Manor and let everyone go their separate ways, that’s fine. I only ask that you treat the guardians of the Starseizing Manor with kindness.”

“Redsnow, Eastbreak, Primelight, Dragonsong...how many of them are willing to stay behind, I wonder?”

Daoist Threelives then shook his head and chuckled. “Forget it, forget it.”

Whoosh.

His figure disappeared into thin air.

Ning was stunned for a moment...then he hurriedly knelt down and kowtowed heavily. He kowtowed in thanks for Daoist Threelives having shown him such kindness in transmitting the Dao to him. If it hadn’t been for the legacy of Daoist Threelives, Ning probably wouldn’t have been able to become as accomplished as he now was.

“Although many of the Immortals and Fiendgods under your command have left, there were still some who resolutely stood guard over the Starseizing Manor. Don’t worry about the seven of them. I will definitely treat them well,” Ning said solemnly. This was a solemn oath. No one had been around to force the seven of them to wait there patiently for so long. None of them had any idea as to how long they would have to wait, but they had been willing to do so. In truth, Ning himself felt tremendous admiration and respect for those seven Empyrean Gods.

Ning rose to his feet.

He waved his finger. Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh! The lids atop the three boxes in front of the prayer mat all opened.

Within the box on the left was a large amount of beads, each of which emanated an utterly shocking aura.

The second box in the middle contained a small, seemingly-ragged wooden boat that was the size of his palm.

The third box on the right contained a small golden pagoda.

“So you are the new Manorlord of the Starseizing Manor?” A small bald monk dressed in golden robes emerged from the surface of the small golden pagoda. “You’ve finally come. We’ve been trapped here forever. I’ve gotten sick of this place long ago.”

“What’s the rush? Take things slow.” An old man dressed in simple clothes appeared from the small wooden boat. He looked like an old farmer.

“Finally.” A slender, handsome-looking child appeared in the air above the countless beads, seated in the lotus position. His gaze, however, was the fiercest and sharpest of the three.

“Go ahead and introduce yourselves, the three of you,” Ning said with a laugh.

“Old man, you speak first,” the handsome child said.

The simple old man nodded. “This old man is the spirit of this raggedy old boat. This boat is known as the Voidboat. Long ago, when Heaven and Earth were established, a bead of pure energy was formed from the essence of Heaven and Earth. After 84,000 years, this bead gave birth to the boat. It can shatter the Void itself. It moves so fast that in terms of speed, it was ranked as one of the top five treasures of the Primordial Era.”

“The Voidboat is very fast,” the handsome child said calmly. “During the Primordial Era, there were only two Chaos treasures that were suited for high-speed movements. One was in Mother Nuwa’s hands, while the other is in Daoist Three Purities’ hands. In the entire Primordial Era, only those two treasures surpassed the Voidboat. Based on what Threelives’ said, he prepared the Voidboat for you as a life-saving treasure.”

“I am meant for use in fleeing as well.” The small bald monk standing atop the small golden pagoda laughed merrily. “This little pagoda was formed from some unique treasures of the primordial chaos. It is extraordinarily profound and arcane, and was titled by Threelives as the ‘Nine Lives Pagoda’. Once you bind this little tower to yourself, you can tap into the profound energy within the tower to create nine incarnations of yourself. These nine incarnations will all have power equal to your own. They can use fleeing divine abilities to flee at high speed, but when they do, they’ll use up the energy inside of them. Once the energy is all used up, the incarnations will dissipate.”

“Not even True Gods or Daofathers will be able to tell any of the nine incarnations apart from each other. However...you absolutely cannot allow these incarnations to actually fight people. Once they do, then the enemy will realize that the incarnation is not using divine power or Immortal energy and instantly realize that it isn’t ‘real’.”

“The nine incarnations are principally meant to allow you to flee and to distract the enemy, not for you to use them in combat. Their value lies in the fact that if they don’t engage in battle, there’s simply no way to tell which is real and which is not. Not even Mother Nuwa was able to tell them apart.” The bald

little monk said confidently, “Daoist Threelives had been wondering as to whether or not to bring me into the war, but he heard from Nuwa that there would be extremely terrifying figures in this battle, and that the Nine Lives Pagoda wouldn’t be of much use within it. Thus, he left it behind.”

Ning was stunned. So both the Voidboat and the Nine Lives Tower were meant for fleeing?

During the war that destroyed the Primordial World, some of the major powers like Subhuti hid themselves, only occasionally intervening to rescue a few people. Threelives had known that the enemy was incredibly powerful, second only to Pangu. Even the Nine Lives Pagoda would be of limited use...but Threelives had still decided to go and face their foes head-on. He truly was a bold, valiant man.

“And you?” Ning looked towards the handsome child seated atop the beads.

The handsome child looked back at Ning. “Both of them are meant for fleeing. I, however...am meant for killing your foes.”

“He’s the supreme killing treasure,” the old man above the Voidboat agreed.

“He’s quite savage,” the small bald monk nodded.

The handsome child swept the two with a cold glance. Both of them beamed back at him in a rather silly manner. The handsome child then looked back towards Ning. “All three of us are top-grade Protocosmic spirit-treasures, but controlling them is fairly easy. I, however...I’m not something which ordinary Emphyrean Gods or True Immortals can control. I am a supreme killing treasure. If you can’t control me, I urge you to hurry up and relinquish me to Daoist Three Purities and have him give you a more appropriate treasure in exchange.”

“Can’t control?” Ning was startled briefly, then laughed. “You haven’t even told me your name.”

“Bind me first,” the handsome child said coldly. “If you can control me...then I’ll tell you my name.”

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Book 19: Emphyrean God Chapter 9: The Thirty-Six Heavens

“Alright.”

Ji Ning instantly willed the pile of beads to fly into the air. They spread out like a dazzling river of stars, filling the entire room.

“3600 beads,” Ning mused softly to himself, then chuckled. “Bind.”

His Pure Yang energy spread out in 3600 streaks, covering each and one of the beads with his power. He bound them in but an instant, leaving behind his soul imprint upon them. Protocosmic spirit-treasures were the easiest of all treasures to bind; as long as the spirit of the treasure didn’t resist, then even mortals would be able to bind them by dripping a drop of blood onto them, which would create the necessary soul imprint within the spirit-treasure.

Upon binding the beads, Ning instantly could sense everything that was held within the 3600 beads. He instantly sucked in a cold breath. “This restrictive spell...”

It was so profound as to be illegible and incomprehensible. It was vast, profound, arcane, and utterly unfathomable.

“Hmph. I imagine you’ve just discovered the seals?” The handsome child said with cold arrogance, “The primordial chaos is filled with countless stars. Once a star dies, its essence will be crystallized into a crystal core. When Pangu established Heaven and Earth, some of these crystal cores entered Pangu’s World by happenstance. These 3600 crystal cores were nourished by the energy of Pangu’s newly formed world, resulting in them transforming into the stargold beads. Every single stargold bead is a Protocosmic spirit-treasure, and is capable of transforming into almost anything, including swords and sabers. These 3600 beads resonate with each other, forming a perfect whole. They definitely are the most supreme of Protocosmic spirit-treasures.”

“Eventually, Daoist Three Purities acquired me. Daoist Three Purities, after mastering Yin and Yang, began to rove the primordial chaos. Thanks to a stroke of great karmic luck, he ended up discovering a set of nine chaos seals. He could sense that these nine chaos seals were unspeakably profound, and so he decided to erase the many previous seals that he had placed within me, replacing them with the nine chaos seals.”

“As a result, the power of these beads increased dramatically.”

“However, these chaos seals were simply too unfathomable and mysterious.” The handsome child looked towards Ning, then said proudly, “Even in the Primordial Era, there was not a single person who was capable of fully binding and controlling the nine chaos seals.”

“No one at all?” Ning was shocked.

“These are chaos seals! They appeared within the primordial chaos and contain utterly unfathomable mysteries,” the handsome child said confidently. “Back then, Daoist Three Purities had invited Mother Nuwa herself to try to bind them, but even she had been only capable of binding the eighth chaos seal. But of course, Mother Nuwa only spent three years trying; if she spent a few trillion more years, she probably would’ve been able to completely master bind them all.”

Ning was truly stunned now.

Mother Nuwa had been incredibly powerful, but it had taken even her a full three years to master the eighth chaos seal.

It made sense.

Daoist Threelives had placed the treasures in this place prior to the war that destroyed the Primordial Era. Thus, back then Mother Nuwa hadn’t mastered the Heavenly Dao of Primordial Chaos and hadn’t reached Pangu’s level.

“Daoist Three Purities kept me by his side for countless years, but was only able to bind the seventh chaos seal.” The handsome child said confidently, “The chaos seals were immaculately born by the primordial chaos itself. How could mere human power compare to it?”

“The Nine Chaos Seals might be formidable, but during that great war, Mother Nuwa ended up breaking through to reach Pangu’s level.” Ning chuckled, “If Mother Nuwa was to try again, I’d imagine she’d be able to succeed this time.”

“Pangu’s level?” The handsome child was surprised.

“What? Mother Nuwa reached Pangu’s level?” The old man above the wooden ship was shocked as well.

“Simply incredible.” The small bald monk’s face was filled with veneration.

“It’d be wonderful if I ended up in Mother Nuwa’s hands! Only then could I be used to my full potential.” A look of desire was in the handsome child’s eyes.

Ning laughed and ‘berated’ him, “You brat, not even Daoist Three Purities used you, to say nothing of Mother Nuwa.”

“Daoist Three Purities has Chaos treasures.” The handsome child’s voice was filled with some degree of resentment. “Every single Chaos treasure was born from the primordial chaos. They are born with chaos seals within them that are perfectly joined together, and thus they possess tremendous power. Although I have chaos seals within me as well, they were added in later. Naturally, that makes them a bit inferior.”

The small bald monk teased, “The main issue is that you are too hard to bind and control. In the end, not a single one of the major disciples of Daoist Three Purities was willing to use you.”

“That’s because they have no vision.” The handsome child shook his head disdainfully.

Daoist Three Purities was the leader of the Daoist Path. He had many treasures, and was a master at refining pills and forging artifacts. He was thus able to infuse the nine chaos seals he found into the stargold beads, but it had still been extremely hard to do! He had many treasures but only a few disciples. He had given each of his most favored disciples, including Lu Dongbin a chance to acquire the stargold beads, but in the end they had each decided to forgo the beads and had chosen other treasures.

Ning laughed, “Perhaps after one masters all nine of the chaos seals, your power will be simply extraordinary...but even Daoist Three Purities was only able to master seven of the seals. His disciples naturally understood that treasures that suited them would be better choices.”

“But I’m the supreme killing treasure!” The handsome child stared at Ning in an extremely prideful manner. “Do you know? Daoist Three Purities used me as the master blueprint for his creation of the sword-diagram for his Immortal Slaying Swords.”

“Oh?” Ning was surprised.

“The Immortal Slaying Swords’ sword-diagrams were modeled after my nine chaos seals. Daoist Three Purities joined four mighty Chaos swords together, then infused them with seven layers of seals of his own devising. That’s the reason why it has such extraordinary power, and why the Immortal Slaying Swords were reputed to be the number one killing treasure of the Primordial Era. But in terms of the profoundness of the seals? The seven seals which Daoist Three Purities devised simply cannot compare to the nine chaos seals inside me.” The handsome child looked at Ning. “Daoist Three Purities said himself that even though I am ‘only’ a supreme Protocosmic spirit-treasure, anyone capable of mastering and controlling all nine chaos seals would be able to unleash a level of power that was no lower than that of his Immortal Slaying Sword Formation. That’s why I’m the supreme killing treasure!”

“Honestly, he’s the only one who calls himself that.” The old man on the boat snickered.

“More like the meanest killing treasure,” the small bald monk agreed.

“Anyone capable of binding all nine seals would probably be on Pangu’s level. By then, every single casual punch or kick would be comparable to the power of the Immortal Slaying Sword Formation,” Ning laughed.

“You guys...!” The handsome child was frantic with rage.

“Enough, enough. You are pretty formidable.” Ning laughed. “Let me give those nine chaos seals a test first.”

“You have to be able to bind at least one of the chaos seals if you want to be able to control me at all. Otherwise...the only way you’ll be able to use me is as little balls to throw at people. It’d be a complete waste of my status as the supreme killing treasure.” The handsome child said arrogantly, “Very, very few Emphyrean Gods or True Immortals can master even the first chaos seal. Generally speaking, it’s impressive for even Daofathers to be able to master three of the chaos seals. Daoist Three Purities had to spend countless years in order to master seven of them.”

Ning just sat down in the lotus position, completely focusing his heart and mind on binding the chaos seals.

Rumble...

The 3600 stargold beads levitated in the air above Ning, glowing with light as dark golden runes flowed over them, transforming as they did so. No matter how long one stared at them, the divine runes would constantly change and appear different from the ones that came before.

These were the chaos seals!

They would constantly change, never remaining constant and forever transforming. It was like the circular ratio, ‘pi’, of the human world, a number that stretched off into infinity with no pattern. The chaos seals were similarly without any pattern or end. The only way to master them was to master the fundamental essence that lay beneath them. When Daoist Three Purities had found the nine chaos seals, he had been stunned and shocked by them. He had spent a total of 120,000 years in the primordial chaos meditating on them. After sensing that he had gained a basic understanding of them, he had chosen to infuse the nine chaos seals into the 3600 stargold beads.

But alas...he had only been able to completely copy and infuse the nine chaos seals into the beads! As to comprehending and mastering them? He was far from it!

“Simply inconceivable. So the chaos seals are actually this arcane and profound.” Ning’s mind was completely focused on the seals. He felt like an ordinary mortal on Earth who was staring at the vast, seemingly infinite stars of the Milky Way. He wasn’t capable of knowing what was on a single one of those stars...and yet, before him lay the entire Milky Way...

This caused Ning to feel a sense of despair that halted him in his very tracks.

Beautiful. Simply beautiful. Simply stunning.

This was definitely the most profound, the most stunning seal which Ning had ever seen! Not even the mysteries of the Heavenly Daos could even come close to comparing to these nine chaos seals.

“Let me focus on the first chaos seal for now.”

Ning focused all of his efforts into understanding the most basic, the most simple, and most rudimentary chaos seal; the first seal. By now, Ning was applying the full force of his powerful heartforce in analyzing the chaos seals. This was extremely taxing on his heartforce and extremely exhausting. However, thanks to the fact that his heartforce had reached the fourth stage, Ning was able to force his way into completely binding and mastering the first chaos seal in one try.

The first of the nine chaos seals began to wriggle about like a tiny tadpole...then completely disappeared, having fallen under Ning’s control.

Ning opened his eyes. His eyes were filled with strange divine runes which flowed through them.

“No wonder my master, Daoist Threelives, procured this treasure for me.” After mastering the first chaos seal, Ning instantly understood. “The disciples of Daoist Three Purities are most likely all extremely close to the Daofather level. I, however...I’ve only mastered the Grand Dao of the Sword. I haven’t even mastered the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop, to say nothing of the Heavenly Dao of Water.”

Although he was extremely powerful, his power came from his heartforce and his divine abilities. As for the Dao? Ning was very, very far away from being able to comprehend the Heavenly Dao of Water. The likes of Patriarch Lu, Silvermoon, and Redsnow had long ago mastered multiple Grand Daos. They were extremely close to mastering a Heavenly Dao; in fact, some of them had reached the final bottlenecks. Upon breaking through the final bottlenecks, they would become Daofathers! Ning, however, hadn’t even mastered the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop. He was very, very far from their level.

“So the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop was this simple.” Ning could clearly sense that his insights into the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop was rising at a simply monstrous rate.

After having encountered the incomparably profound and exalted chaos seals, he could sense that mastering the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop would become far simpler.

“This treasure is tremendously beneficial to me in comprehending the Dao and in improving my sword-arts. Compared to those seals...my sword-arts are simply too crude.” Ning had already found the right direction for himself.

“Condense.” Ning willed it, and whoosh! The 3600 stargold beads actually began to merge together. Every ten beads joined into one, resulting in a total of 360 larger goldstar beads. Ning, however, felt great pressure when he did this.

“Condense!” Light flashed in Ning’s eyes. He was forced to employ his heartforce. With heartforce guiding his Immortal energy, he was able to cause the 360 goldstar beads to once more merge together to form a total of 36 goldstar beads. Every single goldstar bead emanated an utterly shocking amount of power. By now, controlling them was just as hard as controlling a perfect Heaven Punisher; he had to employ his heartforce in order to succeed.

“What?! You are able to condense me into the Thirty-Six Heavens?” The handsome child levitating next to Ning cried out in shock.

“How can that be?!”

“Just controlling those 3600 beads is incredibly difficult. Only a fraction of the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals of the universe are even able to bind and control them. As for controlling the supreme Thirty-Six Heavens, there are no Empyrean Gods or True Immortals who can do such a thing. This is something which only Daofathers can do!” The small bald monk was shocked as well. He turned to look towards the handsome child. “Were you just bragging in the past and spouting hot air in front of us?”

“It is true that only Daofathers can perfectly bind the beads into forming the Thirty-Six Heavens.” The handsome child repeatedly shook his head. “Daoist Three Purities had his most formidable disciples all give it a try, but none of them were able to succeed. If they were, there’s no way they would’ve been willing to give me up.”

He stared towards Ning in disbelief.

Ning, however, was completely occupied by the sensation of unearthly might that came from the Thirty-Six Heavens.

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Book 19: Empyrean God Chapter 10: Leaving the Mountain

“What a treasure.” Ji Ning stared at the thirty-six hovering stargold beads. After the thousands of beads had condensed into thirty-six, every single bead contained utterly enormous amounts of power. In addition, every single bead contained a heavenly world within it, with each one being comparable in size to the Grand Xia! However, these Thirty-Six Heavens were only capable of persisting for a short period of time.

Only when the 3600 beads were compressed into 36 beads would they transform into the Thirty-Six Heavens. Once Ning withdrew his heartforce and his energy, the Thirty-Six Heavens would once more disperse back into a cluster of thousands of tiny stars.

“The Thirty-Six Heavens. Each one of them is comparable to a major world. Even I you just smashed people with them, they would still possess enormous power. However, controlling them is quite onerous, at least as onerous as commanding a perfect Heaven Punisher.” Ning realized that keeping these beads in the Thirty-Six Heavens form was extremely difficult and tiring. The reason why he could do it was because he had powerful heartforce and a soul heartforce technique. There really weren’t many Empyrean Gods or True Immortals who could do what he did.

“Transform.” Ning willed it, and the Thirty-Six Heavens hovering in the air instantly began to transform in shape, first transforming into thirty-six flying spears, then into thirty-six battle standards, and then into thirty-six hoops.

“Master, these stargold beads can transform into a myriad of things,” the handsome child said.

“Eh?” Ning came to a halt. Glancing at the handsome child, he said with a calm smile, “Am I hearing things? Did you just call me ‘Master’?”

The palm-sized child stood there in midair. He said solemnly, “Master, you were able to bind and control the first of the nine chaos seals. You were even able to condense the 3600 stargold beads into the Thirty-

Six Heavens. I imagine that there are very few Empyrean Gods or True Immortals in the entire Three Realms who can compare to you, Master. To be able to follow you is my good fortune.”

“Whaaaa?” The old man atop the wooden boat stared wide-eyed.

“You were so mean-looking earlier. Now, all of a sudden, you’ve become so meek?” The small bald monk mumbled to himself as well.

“Master is very formidable.” The handsome child swept them with his gaze, then said icily, “You are fortunate to be able to follow him. I will naturally follow him with complete willingness. In the future...I might have some karmic luck of my own as well.”

The handsome child then looked towards Ning, a scorching heat in his gaze. “Long ago, Daoist Three Purities had his most powerful disciples test me out, but not a single one of them was capable of immediately mastering the Thirty-Six Heavens. In fact, Daoist Three Purities once said that this was something which only True Gods and Daofathers would be able to do. But you, Master...you did it!”

This little fellow’s flattery skills were quite extraordinary.

“I have a question,” Ning said. “What is the name of this treasure?”

“The Stargold Beads of the Heavens,” the handsome child said. “When I was first born, before the nine chaos seals were fused into me, I was already capable of transforming into the Thirty-Six Heavens! Although shifting me into that form is very difficult, once one can do so, it’ll be like one can strike against foes with the combined power of thirty-six major worlds! But of course...the amount of power you’ll actually be able to control will be up to your abilities, Master.”

“The Stargold Beads of the Heavens?” Ning nodded. “Is the transformation into the Thirty-Six Heavens the ultimate form? But why is it that I have a strange feeling that it shouldn’t be?”

“Master, you’ve noticed it as well?” The handsome child was surprised.

Ning looked at him.

“Daoist Three Purities and Mother Nuwa discovered it as well,” the handsome child said hurriedly. “The form with the 3600 beads is the first and most ordinary form. The second form has 360 beads, while the third form has the 36 beads that comprise the Thirty-Six Heavens. This should be the ultimate form, but...both Daoist Three Purities and Mother Nuwa had the feeling that there should be way to merge all 3600 beads into one. Upon doing so...they can transform into an actual star, like the Solar Star or the Lunar Star. However, neither Mother Nuwa nor Daoist Three Purities were able to come up with such a way.”

Ning now understood. To combine them all into one? It seems his senses weren’t off. However, if neither Mother Nuwa nor Daoist Three Purities had been able to accomplish it...this would clearly be a very, very difficult path to tread.

As for what would happen when they all fused into one...if it would be able to transform into a star like the Solar Star or Lunar Star...that was just the conjecture of Mother Nuwa and Daoist Three Purities.

“This treasure is extremely hard to control. It’s not very suitable for others, but it’s perfectly suited for me. In all the Three Realms...I am the number one Empyrean God and True Immortal when it comes to

'control'." Ning felt quite delighted with himself. Although his divine abilities were formidable those were only of use in close combat. A straight application of heartforce in combat used it up at an astonishing rate.

Divine archers, for example, would use up all of their heartforce in just ten or so arrows.

Thus, treasures that could be used to attack at long range were very important. This was especially true because his soul heartforce technique, in and of itself, used up very little heartforce.

After binding the three Protocosmic spirit-treasures, Ning walked out of the room and returned to the main hall, where Redsnow and the others were frantic with impatience.

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"Wow."

"Incredible."

Ning only disclosed the existence of the Voidboat and the Stargold Beads of the Heavens. As for the Nine Lives Pagoda, he kept that a secret. The other two items he would use quite often, and so there was no need to hide them. As for the pagoda, however, the more mysterious it was the better.

"I've already acquired the most powerful Pure Yang treasures which Master Threelives left behind," Ning said. "Master left word and instructed me to be kind to the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals who have stayed behind to guard the Starseizing Manor. If you need any treasures, just tell me. All of the Pure Yang treasures are listed within this book."

Ning handed over the book which the giant yellow bear had given him. "All of you, take a look," Ning immediately urged. These Pure Yang treasures were of limited help to him, and none of his family members such as Brightmoon, Autumn Leaf, Uncle White, or Mu Northson were Celestial Immortals. The only Celestial Immortal he was close to was his master, Diancai, but Ning had already prepared an even more suitable treasure for Immortal Diancai.

Immortal Diancai was a newly ascended Celestial Immortal, after all. If he acquired an excessively powerful treasure such as the Eight Fires Qiankun World...that would actually prove to be a calamity for him, not a blessing.

"Let me take a look." Redsnow was the first to peruse the book.

"Me too." Primelight craned his neck over to take a peek.

"Nice treasures."

"The Pure Yang treasures which the Godking left behind are all quite nice." They all praised the Godking's treasures.

Redsnow looked towards Ning. "Ji Ning, Sunblaze and Darkmoon have been with the Godking for a long period of time, and so the Godking gave them suitable treasures long ago. Primelight was the Godking's son, so he goes without saying. As for myself and Snow Scorpion...we were two of his commanders, and so the Godking gifted us with appropriate treasures long ago as well."

“These treasures aren’t particularly important to us, but I believe Dovesnake needs a treasure. So does Ninefangs; back then, he was merely a Void-level Fiendgod. He only made his breakthrough to become an Empyrean God after much time passed.”

Dovesnake and Ninefangs both hesitated...but in the end, both nodded.

Dovesnake chose the Pure Yang treasure, ‘Yin-Yang Twin Poles Disc’. This could only be considered an above-average treasure amongst the many Pure Yang treasures Ning had, but Redsnow and the others all nodded in agreement. Clearly, the Yin-Yang Twin Poles Disc was extremely well-suited to Dovesnake. The ‘best treasure’ for a person wasn’t necessarily the most powerful treasure, it was the most suitable treasure.

Back when Dovesnake had followed the Godking, he hadn’t been particularly favored. This was because Dovesnake was a venomous Godbeast that looked docile but was actually savage. Threelives didn’t really like his personality that much! He preferred those who were open and aboveboard. Even if a subordinate was vicious and crafty, he preferred it when they were obvious about it.

As for Ninefangs, he ended up choosing an extremely powerful top-grade Pure Yang treasure, the Grand Bloodshadow Formation of the Heavens.

Ninefangs’ true form was that of a bat. The Grand Bloodshadow Formation of the Heavens was indeed very well-suited to Ninefangs. However, because this set was one of the best treasures which Ning had, Ninefangs had been extremely hesitant to choose it. Only after Redsnow and the other had encouraged him had he decided upon it. This caused Ninefangs to feel tremendous gratitude to Ning, and it further solidified his loyalty to Ning. After all, although Ning had said that this was on Threelives’ orders, Threelives’ had died long ago. It was completely up to Ning as to whether or not he was willing to hand these items over.

Ning himself honestly didn’t mind. There was no point in him having that many unused Pure Yang treasures by his side. If the Empyrean Gods under his command all had formidable treasures, that would increase the power of his strike force. That was a good thing.

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“Master.” After having handled the above matters, Ning went by himself to meet with Patriarch Subhuti.

“Mm?” Subhuti was seated in the lotus position. He opened his eyes.

Ning said respectfully, “Your disciple is preparing to leave the mountain and to leave the Crescent world.”

“Have you finished your arrangements?” Subhuti asked.

“I’ve finished them.” Ning said respectfully, “Your disciple’s Primaltwin is going to stay with Brightmoon, Uncle White, Little Qing, Bluecliff Xiaoyu, and junior apprentice-brother Northson here at the Crescent world. The Crescent world is, at present, a rare oasis of peace within the Three Realms. I don’t wish for Brightmoon to be in danger, and so I’ll have my Primaltwin stay with her as she roams the Crescent world, allowing her to experience more things and grow up.”

Subhuti nodded. "Right. The army of Immortals that belongs to your Starseizer world...what formation do you plan on using with it? The Heaven Punisher Formation? True God Xingtian has nodded and permitted you to continue using it. I have other formations that you can use, but they are only on par with the Heaven Punisher Formation. Do you want to switch?"

"No need." Ning shook his head. "Your disciple is already quite familiar with the Heaven Punisher. There's one more thing I would ask of you, Master."

"Speak." Subhuti looked at Ning.

"Your disciple is going to act against the Seamless Gate, but first I want to deal with Youngflame Freak and Evergreen," Ning said respectfully.

"Those two? Alright. Once an opportunity arises, I'll notify you." Subhuti nodded. "After you leave the Crescent world, you have to be careful."

"Alright." Ning nodded respectfully, then asked, "Should I have Redsnow stay here?"

"No need. I've already taught him what needs to be taught, and he's already learned what he needs to learn. The rest is up to him," Subhuti said.

Ning nodded. He was going to take the entire Starseizer world with him when he left. The seven Empyrean Gods would also follow his lead; he was the Manorlord, after all.

"Then I'll go summon Redsnow and the others. After we are all gathered, please send us away, Master. Your disciple bids you farewell," Ning said respectfully.

"Go." Subhuti closed his eyes, and Ning respectfully began to walk away.

"You must be careful." Subhuti's voice once more rang out within Ning's mind.

"Yes." Ning was momentarily startled, then assented as he left.

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The black-robed Ning led his daughter Brightmoon, Autumn Leaf, Uncle White, Little Qing, Mu Northson, and Bluecliff Xiaoyu down into the Crescent world, beginning their adventures through it.

"My daughter's left the mountain." Ning, Redsnow, and the others all stood there atop Mount Innerheart, watching from afar.

Whoosh.

A twisted spatial vortex suddenly appeared above the grasslands in front of them, leading to an unknown destination.

"Time to leave," Ning said.

And so, Ning led his seven Empyrean Gods into the spatial vortex, leaving this garden world. What was awaiting Ning on the other side of the spatial vortex?

Naturally, a storm of blood!

The Desolate Era

Book 19: Emyrean God Chapter 11: The Number One Sword Immortal of the Three Realms

“The Grand Xia?”

Ji Ning and the seven Emyrean Gods appeared in midair. They immediately saw the imperial capital of the Grand Xia located directly beneath them.

“Master actually sent me to the imperial capital of the Grand Xia? Eh, might as well go pay a visit to my master, Diancai.” Ning turned and looked towards the seven nearby Emyrean Gods, then said, “I’m going to roam the Three Realms and temper myself in the red dust of the mortal world. Unless something comes up, there’s no need for you seven to always be following me. As I see it, you can go back to the Starseizer world for now. If there’s anything important, I’ll send a mental message to you.”

“That’s not acceptable”

“How can you have no subordinates by your side, Manorlord?”

Instantly, everyone began to argue against him.

“You are the new Manorlord of the Starseizing Manor. You aren’t a rogue cultivator!” Redsnow immediately argued, “If you don’t want all of us to follow you...then how about this? Let’s just have Ninefangs follow you and serve you.”

Ning was startled. He glanced towards Ninefangs.

Ninefangs was the last of the seven to break through to the Emyrean God level; when Daoist Threelives had been alive, he had merely been a Void-level Fiendgod. However, he physically looked the oldest. Upon hearing Redsnow’s words, Ninefangs hurriedly said, “Manorlord, when roaming the Three Realms, there will always be some minor, trifling matters to handle. We can’t let you be forced to personally deal with everything, can we?”

Having just acquired the Grand Bloodshadow Formation of the Heavens, Ninefangs was quite eager to show his gratitude.

“Fine, fine.” Ning nodded.

“Then the rest of us will return to the Starseizer world.” Redsnow and the rest of the six immediately departed, returning to the Starseizer world.

As for Ning, he first paid a visit to the imperial capital of the Grand Xia to visit Immortal Diancai, the Xia Emperor, and his cousin Yuchi Xiyue. Ning had originally planned on having his master Immortal Diancai accompany him, but Immortal Diancai declined. But of course, he didn’t decline the Pure Yang treasures which Ning gifted to him. He chatted with Ning for a long while, giving him some advice.

“Time to go.” Early next morning, the white-robed Ning walked out of his room, followed by the bald elder, Emyrean God Ninefangs. The two of them teleported straight out of the Grand Xia, heading towards a minor world.

The Three Realms had a trillion minor worlds. There were simply too many of them, and every so often old minor worlds would be destroyed and new minor worlds would be born. Thus, only a tiny number of these minor worlds were actually named!

The minor world which Ning and Ninefangs had headed towards, however, did have a name. It's name was 'East Phoenix'.

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"East Phoenix world." Ning stood at the peak of a mountain, the bald elder Ninefangs by his side.

"This is one of the Twenty-Seven Worlds of Fujū." Ning swept it with his gaze, able to see to the very end of the East Phoenix world. "It lives up to its reputation as one of the places where Daofather Fujū once lived. East Phoenix world has countless different landscapes and far more cultivators than ordinary minor worlds. It even has a Celestial Immortal standing guard over it! It seems as though the three disciples of Daofather Fujū are quite cautious."

"The exalted number one Sword Immortal of the Three Realms...he actually perished, his soul lost forever." Ninefangs shook his head and sighed.

Ning nodded slowly, sighing as well.

One of the reasons why Ning was voyaging across the Three Realms was in order to search for a way to allow his heartforce to break through once more. A second reason was to meditate on his sword-arts! If he couldn't find the first, he would spend his time cultivating the second.

Naturally, Ning would pay a visit to the 'Twenty-Seven Worlds of Daofather Fujū'!

Daofather Fujū...

He was born a human and trained as a Ki Refiner. He had become a Daofather of the Great Firmament during the Primordial Era, and became famous due to his sword. He had managed to train his swordforce all the way to the fifth level!

Swordforce was just like heartforce; it could also be divided into five levels.

If one reached the fifth stage of swordforce, one would be considered supreme even amongst True Gods and Daofathers. This Daofather Fujū became publicly acknowledged as the number one Sword Immortal of the Three Realms because, back when the Primordial Era had ended and the Three Realms Era began, he had created a supreme sword-art which had stunned the Three Realms...the [Five Treasures] sword-art. By relying on this sword-art, Daofather Fujū had become the indisputed number one Sword Immortal of the Three Realms.

"According to the legends, Daofather Fujū's sword was indescribably fast," Ning sighed. "So fast that it surpassed the limits of speed established by the Dao of the Heavens. When ordinary True Gods or Daofathers fought against him, they wouldn't even be able to block his sword. In power, he was very close to the leaders of the Daoist Path and the Buddhist Sangha. I imagine that he is on par with my master himself. But alas, such a peerless figure ended up dying within the primordial chaos."

"We don't even know how he died." Ninefangs shook his head as well. There were records of the many events which had occurred after the Primordial Era ended. Primelight, Ninefangs, Snow Scorpion, and

the others had been in seclusion for far too long; it was only after they emerged and began to read these records that they began to learn of these things.

During the Primordial Era, many major powers perished, including even Elder Gods.

During the Three Realms Era, there were naturally major powers who had perished as well!

One of the affairs that had particularly shocked the Three Realms was the death of Daofather Fujū. The only information that was known was that he had died in the primordial chaos. As for how he died or who killed him? Nothing was known. Someone who was publicly acknowledged as the number one Sword Immortal of the Three Realms, a figure who was comparable to Patriarch Subhuti and Old Man Yuan, and was extremely close to the Three Emperors of Mankind, Daoist Three Purities, and Lord Buddha in power...had died, just like that. Many were thoroughly stunned by this news. Subhuti and the others had searched for the reasons behind his death, but they hadn't found anything.

After Fujū died...

The Twenty-Seven Worlds of Fujū became incredibly popular!

This was because when Daofather Fujū had trained in the sword, he would sometimes leave behind some of his sword-arts on the mountains or in underground caves when the mood struck him. These remnants of his sword-arts contained unfathomable power which not even Empyrean Gods or True Immortals would dare touch. When Daofather Fujū had been alive, his disciples would often go to these twenty-seven worlds to analyze the sword-arts he had left behind.

As for the other Empyrean Gods and True Immortals of the Three Realms? They generally wouldn't have a chance to do so. But then, Daofather Fujū died. His disciples were merely Empyrean Gods and True Immortals; they naturally wouldn't dare to keep these twenty-seven worlds for themselves.

Thus...they opened the worlds up to the public!

All Immortals or Fiendgods of the Three Realms could come here to meditate on the remnant sword-arts left behind. The only restriction was that no one was permitted to cause any damage; if anyone did, that person would become the common enemy of countless Immortals and Fiendgods! And in truth, given that the remnants contained the might of the number one Sword Immortal of the Three Realms...how many would be so suicidal as to attempt to destroy them?

Each of the twenty-seven worlds had remnants of his sword-arts left behind on them. Some had more, some had less.

The most exalted world was Sword Immortal world, because it contained the complete set of the [Five Treasures] sword-art within it.

As for the other twenty-six worlds, they just contained some scattered, incomplete remnants.

Thus, after travelling through all of the worlds, the various Empyrean Gods and True Immortals would generally choose to gather upon Sword Immortal world. Very few of them would remain on the other twenty-six worlds. During normal, peaceful times, there would perhaps be more than a thousand of them on Sword Immortal world. Sometimes they would spend a million years or a hundred million years

cultivating on that world! However, since the Three Realms was gripped by a great storm, most of the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals had joined the armies of their respective realms.

There were now very few of them left on Sword Immortal world, to say nothing of the other twenty-six.

“Daofather Fujū was acknowledged by all as the number one Sword Immortal of the Three Realms. I naturally have to go and analyze his sword-arts,” Ning said. “Ninefangs, let us first wander East Phoenix world and the rest of the twenty-six. We’ll save Sword Immortal world for last.”

“Yes,” Ninefangs said respectfully.

“Let’s go,” Ning said.

Whoosh! Whoosh!

Ning and Ninefangs flew through the air, moving towards a giant, towering mountain. Because East Phoenix world was merely a minor world, it had a circumference of just a hundred thousand kilometers; it was actually smaller than Swallow Mountain! It took them only a very short amount of time to fly to their destination.

“Quite a few people here.” Ning glanced downwards. There were mountain peaks below them, and at the base of the mountain peaks sat many Immortal cultivators and Diremonsters. They were in the lotus position, quietly meditating and training.

“However, even the most powerful are merely at the Loose Immortal or Earth Immortal level,” Ninefangs said.

“Normally, Sword Immortal world would have plenty of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals. East Phoenix world would have a good number of Celestial Immortals...but given the current status of the Three Realms, the Celestial Immortals have all been ordered to join their respective armies. Naturally, the strongest remaining figures are at the Loose Immortal level.” Ning swept the mountains below with his gaze. There really were many cultivators seated there.

The vast majority were actually Zifu Disciples and Wanxiang Adepts. They were all seated on prayer mats which had been left behind by the Empyrean God and True Immortal disciples of Daofather Fujū. This was to provide them with organized seating for their meditations. Otherwise, if all of them just haphazardly squeezed together, how could anyone calm down and concentrate?

“Manorlord, I’ll move them away,” Ninefangs said.

“No need. Look; that little Diremonster is planning to give us a seat.” Ning chuckled as he pointed towards a skinny, horned Diremonster who sat in the very first row of seats. The Diremonster stared unblinkingly at the mountain cliffs, but his eyes were bloodshot. Blood was beginning to leak from his mouth; clearly, he was beginning to succumb and go insane.

The sword-arts left here were simply unfathomably profound. They had been left by a Daofather! If you gave up when you couldn’t understand, you would be fine, but if you tried to force your way through...you’d easily go insane.

“Go.” Ning willed it, and whoosh! The Diremonster instantly disappeared into thin air, with Ning then appearing onto that prayer mat. The Immortal cultivators around him were all focused on their

meditations. Although two or three of them noticed Ning appear, they didn't pay too much attention to him. Ning and Ninefangs were both keeping their auras reserved as they wandered the Three Realms. Otherwise, if they were to release their Empyrean God auras, they would've terrified all of the Immortals and Fiendgods present to the point of quivering.

The Desolate Era

Book 19: Empyrean God Chapter 12: Meditating

"I'll meditate here. Ninefangs, you can either meditate as well, or go find some other things to do," Ji Ning sent mentally.

"Understood," Ninefangs said respectfully. He then flew to a distant winehouse. He was going to stand guard in the surrounding area, ready to carry Ning's orders whenever necessary.

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The skinny little Diremonster who had vomited blood stared around blankly. "What...why am I here." The area around him was filled with the waters of a flowing river. This was not the meditation area.

"Wasn't I on Mount Dashcloud? Right...I went too far just now. I almost went crazy. Some expert must've intervened and rescued me." The little monster felt fear for what had almost happened. In Ning's eyes, he was nothing more than a 'little monster', but in truth he was a Primal-level Diremonster. His heart had been filled with hatred, and he had deeply desired to gain insight into a profound sword-art to take revenge. However, he had been too forceful in his attempts to cultivate and so had fallen into madness.

In truth, it was very risky for anyone below the Celestial Immortal level to meditate on the sword-arts of a Daofather. The path of Immortal cultivation, however, was a path filled with many pitfalls. There were many, many stories of those who had developed powerful sword-arts after having gazed upon the sword-arts of a Daofather. It was very common for one to gain sudden insight on Mount Dashcloud, resulting in them establishing a school of their own.

Thus, there were often many weak cultivators who would come here to meditate.

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Ning sat there in the lotus position, staring at the sword-arts that had been left behind upon the mountain walls. The mountain walls were protected by layers of formations, none of which were particularly special; they had most likely been left behind by Daofather Fujū's Empyrean God and True Immortal disciples.

The sword-intent which radiated towards him, however, truly stunned him. He felt as though it was stabbing into his very heart.

"What powerful sword-intent. The scars on the mountain wall that were created by casual blows from his sword-arts...countless years have passed, but they are still this terrifying." Ning stared at the scars carefully. These had been left behind by a supreme Sword Immortal that was on Subhuti's level!

“Eh? That’s odd.” Ning immediately had a strange feeling as he stared at the scars. “There seems to be a fundamental difference between these sword-arts and the other Daofather-created sword-arts I studied at Mount Innerheart.”

“The style is completely different...as though they belong to two completely different schools of thought.” Ning frowned. “But what exactly is different...?”

He was searching for the answer. Ning was now an Empyrean God and a True Immortal. He was a master of the sword, and was extremely talented in this regard. He could immediately sense that something was different. It was a very indistinct, blurry feeling...and Ning wasn’t immediately able to pinpoint what exactly was causing it.

“I have it.” Ning had a sudden thought. He waved his hand, and a stargold bead appeared within it.

Ning had already bound all of the stargold beads. As a Protocosmic spirit-treasure, it could be controlled by Ning to reveal no presence or aura whatsoever. It was like a completely ordinary item right now.

Every single one of the 3600 stargold beads had been infused with the nine chaos seals.

“The chaos seals.” Ning stared at the constantly changing runes that flowed over the surface of the stargold bead. The runes were changing ceaselessly, never repeating in any discernable pattern.

“Right. The sword-arts of Daofather Fujū remind me of the nine chaos seals. They feel very similar.” Ning immediately realized what the difference was.

“The sword-arts created by Daofathers are generally bound by the mysteries of the Dao of the Heavens.”

“But Daofather Fujū’s sword-arts, as well as these nine chaos seals...they seem to have surpassed the Dao of the Heavens,” Ning mused to himself. “The nine chaos seals were discovered by Daoist Three Purities when he roamed the primordial chaos. It makes sense for them to have surpassed the Heavenly Daos, as they sprung forth from the primordial chaos. But Daofather Fujū’s sword-arts have surpassed the Heavenly Daos as well?”

The Dao of the Heavens was the Heavenly Daos of the Three Realms! They were the laws that governed the functioning of the Three Realms. Outside the Three Realms...the Heavenly Daos were without effect.

For example, in the primordial chaos, only the Heavenly Dao of Primordial Chaos would function. The other nine Heavenly Daos were useless!

“According to the stories, Daofather Fujū’s sword was shockingly fast, surpassing the limits of the Dao of the Heavens,” Ning mused. “Perhaps this is the reason why Daofather Fujū’s sword-arts were so terrifying.”

“I need to carefully meditate on this.”

Upon noting the similarities between the nine chaos seals and Daofather Fujū’s sword-arts, Ning immediately began to meditate.

Every so often, he would switch over to meditating on the nine chaos seals. Whenever he reached a roadblock, he would then switch to meditating on his sword-arts. He would compare and contrast the two.

Unexpectedly, Ning began to discover that the previous bottlenecks he had encountered when training in the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop and the Grand Dao of Qiankun were actually easy to break through. Clearly, the insights he had gained into the nine chaos seals and Daofather Fujū's sword-arts were of tremendous benefit towards him in training in other Grand Daos.

Time slowly passed.

Ninefangs had once more come to the distant winehouse to drink wine. The winekeeper had long ago grown accustomed to this bald old man, because he had often come here to drink during the past month...and always chose to drink the extremely venomous 'Five Immortals wine'. Another name for this wine was the 'Five Venoms wine', because it was created through matching and mixing nine different venoms together. It was truly toxic, but it was also incomparably delicious. A Zifu Disciple would die upon having a single sip; one had to at least be a Primal Daoist in order to be able to savor this wine without perishing.

"Here is some of our finest Five Immortals wine. Please enjoy, honored guest." The winekeeper personally delivered the wine and two appetizers to Ninefangs, who leisurely poured himself a cup.

Gurgle. He raised his head and drank the wine. A twin sensation of fire and ice simultaneously flooded his entire body, causing him to feel extremely comfortable. Ninefangs laughed and nodded.

"Eh?" Ninefangs suddenly had a strange feeling. He immediately turned his head to look towards the distant Mount Dashcloud. He gazed towards the white-robed youth that was seated amongst many other figures at the base of Mount Dashcloud.

"Grand Dao?" Ninefangs was surprised. He then hurriedly sent mentally, "Congratulations, Manorlord, for having mastered the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop."

"Aren't you the sensitive one? I was just testing things out, and you immediately sensed it," Ning sent back.

Ning was in an excellent mood. He had always had a high degree of affinity towards the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop. This past month of analyzing the nine chaos seals and the Daofather's sword-arts had been extremely taxing, and his progress had been rather limited...but he actually ended up breaking through all bottlenecks and completely comprehending the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop.

Now, he had mastered two complete Grand Daos. The Grand Dao of the Sword and the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop.

"The sword-arts here on Mount Dashcloud were left behind by casual strikes from Daofather Fujū; they aren't that profound. The next month or two here won't be of much help to me." Ning didn't hold too many hopes towards the rest of the twenty-six worlds either; the most important world was the final one, Sword Immortal world. Still, Ning was going to be very cautious and deliberate in his cultivation. He would first take a look at all of the twenty-six worlds; perhaps they might be of help to him in meditating on the complete [Five Treasures] sword-art.

The second month after Ning's arrival at East Phoenix world.

The Golden Crow hung high in the sky.

A large ship came sailing in through the heavens. There were many soldiers atop the deck of the ship, as well as many beautiful women who were surrounding a youth that was drinking wine merrily. He'd give a pinch here and a caress there, filling the ship with shrieks and giggles.

"Your Highness, Mount Dashcloud is right up ahead," a pale-faced, beardless man said respectfully in a low voice.

"We arrived?" The beautifully dressed youth rose to his feet. The beautiful woman in his arms followed his gaze as he stared at the distant Mount Dashcloud.

"My beauties, be good and have a nice rest. I'm going to go meditate on sword-arts for a while," the youth chortled. The beautiful women all said a few flattering words, causing the youth to feel absolutely tickled. Still...this youth was qualified to act this arrogantly. He was the third prince of the East Phoenix Dynasty of this planet, and the most talented of all the princes. His status was quite special.

"Let's go."

Soon, the prince led his pale-faced attendant and a host of guards to the base of Mount Dashcloud. The weakest of his guards were at the Wanxiang Adept level, with the two commanders being Primal Daoists. As for the prince, he himself was a Primal Daoist as well.

"So many people? So many monsters as well." The prince frowned. "According to what Master told me, the Three Realms is in the midst of a storm...which has resulted in our minor world becoming more peaceful than ever before. Still, there are now almost no Celestial Immortals who come to our world. The most powerful cultivators here are merely on the Loose Immortal or Earth Immortal level. Longxiu, hurry up and shoo away one of the people at the front."

"Your Highness, you must not be rash. Although the strongest figures at Mount Dashcloud are merely Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals, some might have powerful backgrounds," the pale-faced attendant hurriedly cautioned. "In addition, you yourself are merely a Primal Daoist, your Highness, and your two guards are merely Primal Daoists as well. Don't anger those Loose Immortals or Earth Immortals. You might end up suffering because of it."

The prince nodded slowly. "Fair enough." Although he didn't really actually care about those Loose Immortals or Earth Immortals...right now, at least, he wouldn't be able to beat them in a fight.

"Then pick one of the weak ones." The prince swept the people present with his gaze. "There should be some weaklings amongst the twenty-seven prayer mats in front, right?"

"Nobody who can sit in the front would be truly weak. Let me take a look." The attendant hurriedly took a good look. "Twenty-one of the prayer mats in the front are occupied by Loose Immortals or Earth Immortals; they give me a sense of tremendous pressure. The other six give me much less pressure; they should merely be at the Primal Daoist level. Your Highness, which of the six do you think I should pick?"

"Six?"

The prince took a careful look. "Four are monsters. Monsters who have reached the Primal level are generally much more powerful than humans of the same level. That leaves two...that white-robed youth, and that grim-looking man. The grim-looking man has a terrifying, baleful look in his eyes; I imagine his sword-arts must be quite formidable. That white-robed youth looks fairly unremarkable, though. I imagine he's just an ordinary Primal Daoist."

There were differences in power amongst Primal Daoists. Some were monsters who could challenge Void-level experts. The baleful aura around the grim-looking man was definitely proof that he was no ordinary Primal Daoist.

"Let's go with that white-robed kid," the prince said. "Hurry up and shoo him away."

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Book 19: Empyrean God Chapter 13: Sword School

"Your humble servant will go right now." The attendant chortled, then walked forward.

Mount Dashcloud was extremely large, and there were many regions from which one could view all of the remnant sword-scars left behind. The first row only had twenty-seven seats, but there was a distance of more than thirty meters between each seat. This way, everyone could train calmly.

The attendant walked straight towards Ning. "Fellow Dao-" the attendant began to say in a shrill voice, reaching out to pat Ning on the shoulders.

When training, Ning had his heartforce spread out to cover this entire minor world. He was completely focused on his meditations and on the sword-scars left behind by Daofather Fujū. He was mentally deducing and inferring one type of sword-art after another! He had already visualized thousands of different types, more than ten of which were more powerful than the [Three-Foot Sword].

Every so often, he would gain an insight from the visualized sword-arts. This would allow Ning to walk farther and farther along the path of swordforce.

At this moment, Ning was completely focusing on deducing yet another powerful sword-art.

Pat!

Someone patted him on the shoulder.

Ning was instantly startled awake...and all of the effort he had put into analyzing this sword-art went completely to waste.

"My heartforce has covered this entire minor world. If any Empyrean God or True Immortal arrives, I should have found out long ago. Who the hell just disturbed me?" Ning was rather displeased. One of the greatest taboos was disturbing others when they were meditating. Ning immediately turned his head to look towards the pale-faced attendant.

Ning could immediately tell that this person was merely a Primal Daoist.

"Fellow Daoist," the attendant said, pointing at the prayer mat beneath Ning. "My prince wishes to meditate on sword-arts and needs a spot. He's taken a fancy to your spot."

Ning frowned, then looked backwards. He saw the beautifully dressed youth ensconced by many guards. The youth gave Ning a sideways glance, seemingly quite disdainful.

“You should know what to do.” A look of arrogance was in the attendant’s eyes. As he saw it, once this white-robed youth saw that there were three Primal Daoists accompanying the prince, he should be able to guess that the prince had an extraordinary background. Immortal cultivators generally understood the principle of courting fortune and avoiding misfortune.

“Don’t bother me when I’m meditating on the Dao.” Ning gave the attendant a cold glance, then shut his eyes and continued to meditate.

“You...” The attendant pointed at Ning, rendered momentarily speechless.

“Fellow Daoist, don’t make trouble for yourself!” He barked.

Ning completely ignored him. Given his power and his status, these little fellows were as weak as ants in the face of his might. Ning wouldn’t care too much if a few ants bellowed at him; he simply couldn’t be bothered to. In addition, this was Mount Dashcloud, a place for meditating on the sword-arts of a Daofather. Generally, very few would dare to actually attack someone here.

Ning believed that this person would just yell at him a bit, then leave helplessly.

“Your Highness.” The attendant ran back to the prince’s side.

“What’s going on?” The prince was rather irritated.

“That white-robed kid is like a stone. He’s quite tough. He completely ignored me,” the attendant said helplessly.

“He’s courting death.” The prince’s face sank. “Attack. Kick him out of here.”

“No!” The attendant said hurriedly, “This is Mount Dashcloud, a place for meditating on the Daofather’s sword-arts. Any disturbances will interfere with the meditations of countless Immortal cultivators and Diremonsters. All of them will be furious with us. It’s one thing for us to irritate one of them, but we can’t irritate all of them!”

“We’re not going to kill him, we’re just going to kick him out.” The prince said with a frown, “Those who are truly focused on their meditations won’t be startled awake by some fights in the outside world. The ones that will wake up are the ones who aren’t in a true meditative state yet. Also, set up a small formation around him when you attack. That way, you won’t disturb the people around him, right?”

“The three of you, go!” The prince gave the orders.

The attendant and the two commanders shared a glance, then acknowledged the order. “Yes.”

The three of them immediately walked towards Ning.

Rumble...

A crystalline globe of fire appeared before the attendant’s chest. Instantly, a barrier of flames appeared around them, surrounding Ning.

“Fellow Daoist!” The attendant barked loudly, his voice exploding by Ning’s ears like thunder.

Ning opened his eyes. He gave the three a look.

“Hurry up and leave. Give up your seat. Otherwise...don’t blame us for showing no mercy,” the attendant barked. The two nearby commanders became filled with auras of power as well. The Immortal cultivators and Diremonsters who were nearby all halted their meditations, focusing their attention on the area around Ning with curiosity.

“Amusing.”

“It’s quite rare for people to fight at Mount Dashcloud.”

“These three are a bit too brash. If the fellow wants to give up the seat, that’s one thing, but they actually intend to force him from it? Even if they really want to give him a drubbing, they should wait until he leaves Mount Dashcloud. Why rush?” The surrounding Immortal cultivators and Diremonsters all chatted amongst themselves.

It was very common for Immortal cultivators to get into fights over minor matters, but it was rare for something like this to happen at Mount Dashcloud.

Unwilling to give up your seat? Fine. Once you leave Mount Dashcloud, don’t blame me for showing no mercy!

In the face of a threat like this, most weaker cultivators would obediently give up their seats.

“Hurry up and leave.”

“F*ck off!”

The two commanders barked out as well. They both had extraordinary backgrounds; they wouldn’t care about an ordinary Primal Daoist.

“Insolence.” A cold light flashed through Ning’s eyes.

Rumble...an invisible wave surged out, striking against the bodies of the three Primal Daoists. The attendant and the two guard commanders were just about to attack, but they suddenly sensed a wave of unearthly power crash over them. They were knocked backwards, and the commander who had told Ning to ‘f*ck off’ began to scream in agony as soon as he landed on the ground.

“AHH! AHHHHH! M-m-my Zifu...my Zifu...” The commander’s voice was filled with agony and terror.

The other, chubbier commander fell on the ground alongside the attendant. The two of them clambered to their feet, staring at their comrade.

“H-his Zifu was destroyed.”

“Destroyed.”

Both of them were filled with utter terror. The three of them had been knocked flying in a single clash, with one of them having his Zifu destroyed...although they all had extraordinary backgrounds, this was exactly why they had been unwilling to offend any of the Earth Immortals or Loose Immortals. Although

they had extraordinary backgrounds, it would take time for reinforcements to arrive. If they were crippled in the interim, that would be a miserable outcome, and so they had sought out the white-robed kid, who had appeared to be the easiest to bully.

“We just rammed into a steel plate,” the chubbier commander muttered. “A steel plate with nails.”

“Bullshit!” The prince roared. The chubbier commander instantly no longer dared to say a word. In secret, however, he celebrated the fact that it was his comrade who was the one to speak rudely, as was usually the case. This time, his comrade had really suffered for it.

“Your Highness,” the attendant said hurriedly. “This person is very powerful.”

“How dare you cripple my man?” The prince had a terrifying look in his eyes as he stared daggers at the distant Ning.

The worst part of the situation was that more than half of the Immortal cultivators and Diremonsters seated below Mount Dashcloud were watching this event with curiosity. They weren’t like Ning, after all, who could easily go into a months-long meditative state. They were far weaker than him, and the Daofather’s sword-arts were far too profound. They had to stop extremely frequently, after just meditating on the sword-arts for a short period of time.

For so many cultivators to stare at him...the prince felt even more embarrassed and angry, and he shifted all of it towards Ning.

“Fellow Daoist.” The prince strode forward, his attendant and the chubbier commander hurriedly following behind him.

The prince’s voice was clear, but it carried anger in it. “Your actions are quite vicious.”

Ning just shut his eyes again, completely ignoring him. The prince didn’t dare to actually act against Ning himself; he had seen Ning attack earlier. The prince was a mere early-stage Primal Daoist; how could he be a match for Ning?

“My five junior apprentice-brothers!” The prince called out loudly.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

Instantly, five figures descended from the top of Mount Dashcloud. Each of them had powerful auras. They were all at the Loose Immortal level.

“Five Loose Immortals.”

“The five Loose Immortals who stand guard over Mount Dashcloud for the Sword School.”

“This youth actually addresses the five of them as ‘junior apprentice-brother’? Can it be that he is also a member of the Sword School? However...judging from his age, I would’ve thought those five Loose Immortals should be much older than him.”

“Do you really need to ask? If he dares to address the five of them as ‘junior apprentice-brother’, then he must be a true, formal disciple of the Sword School.”

"I recognize him. He's the third prince of the East Phoenix Dynasty. He has been accepted by Celestial Immortal Triscorpion as his disciple."

"So that's the case. Seems like the white-robed man is doomed. He's offended a formal disciple of the Sword School..."

"The white-robed man really doesn't know his limits. He should know that his opponents must have powerful backgrounds, for them to dare act in such a brash manner here at Mount Dashcloud. He should've been more cautious. Look at him now. He's pissed off a major foe."

Instantly, everyone began to discuss this matter.

The five Loose Immortals all landed, the cultivators and monsters around them making way before them. None of them dared to offend the Sword School. The five Loose Immortals all bowed courteously towards the prince.

"Senior apprentice-brother Eastluck."

"Greetings, senior apprentice-brother Eastluck."

These five Loose Immortals had all been alive for more than a hundred thousand years, but they all spoke out with great courtesy. They were disciples of the Sword School, but they were merely outer disciples, not core disciples, which is why they had been sent here to maintain order. Their task was to ensure that the beautiful surroundings of Mount Dashcloud were not damaged...or, to put it another way, they were gate guards. The prince before them, however, was a true disciple!

"So he really is a disciple of the Sword School."

"A formal disciple."

"Look at that gold medallion."

"I heard that the Sword School is actually a very powerful school of the Three Realms. The founder was Daofather Fujū himself!"

Instantly, yet another storm of discussion arose. The Sword School had been founded by Daofather Fujū, and in the past its status had been equivalent to that of Mount Innerheart! However, Daofather Fujū had died. When trees fall, the monkeys that lived in it would scatter. In addition, Daofather Fujū was fairly mediocre in teaching disciples; he hadn't been able to produce a single Daofather. Thus, only three Emphyrean Gods and True Immortals continued to remain within the Sword School. The current Sword School wasn't even as strong as the Starseizing Manor.

But despite that, it was still a school with three Emphyrean Gods and True Immortals, and with many friends spread throughout the Three Realms. Thus, it could be considered one of the top-tier schools of the Three Realms. A formal disciple had a status that was far higher than the status of an ordinary Void-level Earth Immortal.

"This man actually dared to be disrespectful to our Sword School."

"Seize him."

“Seize him!”

The five Loose Immortals flew towards Ning like streaks of light.

Ning opened his eyes again. He gave them a glance.

Boom!

His gaze struck against their bodies as though it had taken solid form. The five of them once more transformed into streaks of light, but this time they flew backwards...and they flew so far away that they could no longer be seen with the naked eye.

Ning turned to look towards the prince.

“No...” The prince was so terrified that he hurriedly stumbled backwards. In his terror, he fell backwards and tumbled to the ground in a sitting position. This was too terrifying. He hadn’t even seen what technique this man had used! It seemed as though the man had merely used his gaze to send those five Loose Immortals flying. The guards behind him were utterly terrified as well. None of them even dared to breathe.

Whoosh. A streak of light flashed, and a bald old man appeared next to Ning. He hurriedly said respectfully, “Manorlord, your subordinate came late.”

Ning laughed calmly. “A minor matter.”

In truth, Ninefangs was utterly enraged right now. He had been taking a sweet nap just now, right next to the winehouse. As he was an Empyrean God, his senses were naturally still spread out to cover the surrounding area. If any slightly powerful figures such as Celestial Immortals came over, he would’ve immediately noticed. But the prince and the others were mere Primal Daoists; Ninefangs simply didn’t pay them any attention at all. It wasn’t until Ning had released his power with that look that Ninefangs had been shocked awake...only to discover that someone had actually come to make trouble for his Manorlord.

“You dare to offend my Manorlord? Are you looking to die?” Ninefangs glared furiously at the prince.

Still seated on the ground, by now the prince understood that this white-robed youth had to have a truly extraordinary background as well.

“I’m a disciple of the Sword School.” The prince hurriedly pulled out a golden insignia, clutching it as if it was his last hope. “I’m a formal disciple of the Sword School. My master is a Celestial Immortal Patriarch. Master is standing guard here at East Phoenix world! My grand-master is Patriarch Daoless!”

“Ninefangs, we’re here to analyze Daofather Fujū’s sword-arts, after all; let’s be courteous about this,” Ning said with a laugh.

The prince instantly felt relieved. He laughed coldly to himself; it seemed as though the man was still afraid of the Sword School. However, on the surface he still didn’t dare to act too arrogantly. No matter how powerful the Sword School was, it wouldn’t be able to rescue him immediately.

“You’ve offended my Manorlord. You-” Ninefangs started to say, but Ning interrupted him. “Don’t even bother. Right...the kid said his master is the Celestial Immortal that is protecting the East Phoenix world. Bring him over here,” Ning said.

“Yes.” Ninefangs nodded, then reached out with his right hand.

Whooooooosh.

His right hand instantly pierced through the heavens as he sent it traveling more than ten thousand kilometers as he made a grabbing motion towards the Celestial Immortal Patriarch who was within the imperial palace of the East Phoenix Dynasty.

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Within the imperial palace. Celestial Immortal Triscorpion was enjoying life right now, drinking some wine as he watched beautiful women dancing in front of him. He was born a monster, but he had entered the Sword School and eventually been assigned by his own master to stand guard over East Phoenix world. The main task he had was to protect Mount Dashcloud.

“What a wonderful life. I really am blessed, for Master to have sent me here. My other fellow disciples are preparing to fight against the Seamless Gate.” Celestial Immortal Triscorpion felt quite delighted with himself. It was his great fortune to be assigned this task. “And my luck really isn’t half-bad. After I came to this East Phoenix world, I actually found a promising young talent. Eastluck’s comprehension abilities really are quite high.”

“I don’t need to take part in the war, and I even found a good disciple. Excellent, excellent.” Celestial Immortal Triscorpion beamed merrily as he stared at the beautiful women before him.

BOOM!

Celestial Immortal Triscorpion turned his head, only to see a massive, pitch-black hand smash through his rooftop and grab him.

“AHHH!!” Triscorpion only had enough time to let out a scream before he was grabbed and pulled away.

The dancing beauties stared blankly at the empty throne, then stared at the massive, gaping hole in the palace ceiling. They could still visualize that massive hand of black light.

“The Patriarch’s been seized.”

“The Patriarch’s been captured.”

All sorts of terrified cries rang out.

“But...”

“Oh my...”

“This is just...”

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All of the Immortal cultivators and Diremonsters at Mount Dashcloud stared blankly, heads raised, at the massive arm that stretched far off into the horizons. How could an arm stretch that long?! What they didn't know was that Ninefangs' true form was that of a bat. If he was to transform back into his true form, it would be more than ten thousand kilometers long. The same was true of Snow Scorpion as well.

If he wanted to, he could stretch his arm out to a length of a hundred thousand kilometers. And if he was to reach the True God or Daofather level...well, Daoist Threelives was capable of smashing a major world with his palms.

Whoosh!

The impossibly long arm was retracted. The bald old man had seized an Immortal by the collar with his right hand, and was holding him as easily as he would a chicken.

"Hey kid. This your master?" Ninefangs pointed at the captured Triscorpion.

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Book 19: Empyrean God Chapter 14: One Year

"M-mas...I...I..." Prince Eastluck's eyes bulged out as he began to stammer.

"Eastluck?" The captured Celestial Immortal Triscorpion instantly understood when he saw the prince. A look of stunned rage appeared in his eyes, then he hurriedly said, "Senior, senior, this junior is only responsible for protecting the East Phoenix world. I did not intend to offend the two of you at all. My master is True Immortal Daoless. Please spare me, seniors."

"Manorlord." Ninefangs looked towards Ji Ning.

"Release him." Ning nodded.

Only then was Triscorpion allowed to land on the ground. He hurriedly rushed two steps forward, then delivered a vicious slap against Prince Eastluck's face as he roared furiously, "Do you think Mount Dashcloud is a place for you to cause trouble? Do you think these two seniors are people you can afford to offend?"

He slapped the prince two more times, then hurriedly turned and smiled ingratiatingly towards Ning and Ninefangs. "Seniors, when you grabbed me just now, I was so terrified that I shattered a message talisman. I'm afraid that my master is going to arrive soon." He had thought that he was in mortal danger, but now it seemed as though these two weren't planning to act viciously towards him.

"Your master?" Ning said.

"This junior's master is True Immortal Daoless," Triscorpion said hurriedly.

Ning nodded slowly. "I've heard of True Immortal Daoless's great fame, but I've never met him. It seems I'll have a chance to meet him today."

Whoosh!

A figure suddenly appeared in the distance...and with it came a loud, clear laugh. "This must be the one who slew Immortals and Fiendgods with his sword as he invincibly dominated the Realmwar...fellow Daoist Darknorth, yes? How can this junior be worthy of you personally dealing with him, fellow Daoist Darknorth? You are giving him far too much face." This laughter echoed throughout the wild mountains.

"Invincibly dominated the Realmwar?" Both Triscorpion and Eastluck were rather dazed. As for the other cultivators, they were simply puzzled, because they had no idea what a 'Realmwar' even was.

Ning glanced towards the newcomer. This was a sloppy-looking youth with a big beard who was flying towards him atop a cloud. His beard was extremely long, but his face looked very young; it made for an odd contrast.

"Everyone says that True Immortal Daoless is uninhibited and unconventional, but in possession of an absolutely merciless tongue. Today, I've seen it for myself. I admit that I am at fault; I gave a minor punishment to your disciple," Ning said with a calm laugh. He had heard long ago that True Immortal Daoless was a man who said whatever he thought, and that sometimes his words would offend others. But in turn, his straightforward, genuine nature made it so that he made some truly good friends. He was a rather famous figure of the Three Realms.

"Hey, hey, hey, that's not what I meant!" True Immortal Daoless flew over, his sleeves fluttering. "For a kid like this to be so brazen and foolish as to offend you? Of course you can kill him if you want! That's completely up to you. What I'm saying is, there's no need for you to dirty your hands. Just say the word and I'll do it for you. Just consider it as me keeping my school clean."

Ning was speechless.

True Immortal Daoless reputedly was uninhibited and sloppy, said what he felt, and was absolutely shameless. It seemed all the stories about him were true. There really weren't many Emyrean Gods or True Immortals who would say such things in front of their own disciples.

"Doomed. I'm doomed."

Prince Eastluck just sat there, completely dazed.

"Invincibly dominated the Realmwar? Is he referring to the 'Realmwars' which Master told me about, the ones where countless millions of Immortals will gather together in a titanic clash? The Realmwars which large numbers of Emyrean Gods and True Immortals are dying in? This...this white-robed...he...he was able to invincibly dominate a Realmwar?" Eastluck was truly dazed now. He couldn't even comprehend what he had done.

"Even Patriarch Daoless is so humble before him. Clearly, he's far more powerful than Patriarch Daoless...and his subordinate...his subordinate was able to stretch his arm out for thousands of kilometers to capture a Celestial Immortal...who is this person?! Why did I have to run into him? Why am I so damned unlucky?"

Prince Eastluck was filled with terror and regret. But alas...if you often walk by the riverside, how can you avoid getting your shoes wet? He had grown accustomed to acting arrogantly, thanks to his status...and today, he really had rammed into a steel plate. No; a plate of divine chaos-steel!

“Finished. I’m finished. I’m dead for sure. Dead for sure.” Prince Eastluck had gotten used to seeing heads rolling within the imperial palace upon an important figure being angered. This person before him had a status that was far, far beyond his own. It would be simplicity itself for the white-robed youth to crush him to death.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

Suddenly, Ji Ning, Ninefangs, and True Immortal Daoless all soared into the skies, departing from East Phoenix world.

Only now did Prince Eastluck regain his senses.

“They...they left?” Eastluck blinked. “I...didn’t die?”

“Master!” Prince Eastluck hurriedly looked towards the nearby Celestial Immortal Triscorpion.

Triscorpion glared daggers at him. “Hmph. If we did as my master Daoless suggested, I would wipe you out right now.”

“Wipe me out?” Prince Eastluck was horrified.

“Fortunately, senior Darknorth interceded on your behalf. He said that you didn’t have any intentions to kill him. That’s the only reason why you’ve survived this,” Triscorpion snapped. “But although you shall be spared the death penalty, that doesn’t mean you’ll go unpunished.”

“It’s true that I didn’t intend to kill him,” Prince Eastluck said hurriedly. “I just wanted to shoo him away. After he crippled my subordinate, I was furious with him and planned to lock him up and punish him.” Prince Eastluck wasn’t an evil person by nature. However, because he had been born into the imperial clan and because of his talent in cultivation, he had been flattered by others all his life and became accustomed to acting in an arrogant, high-handed manner. And after he became a disciple of the Sword School, his status had only risen even further.

Simply put, he had gotten used to bullying others, which is why he had been so stunned and furious when Ning had crippled his subordinate. How long had it been since someone else had bullied him?

After Ning had revealed his true power, Eastluck had instantly been so terrified that he couldn’t stop sweating. Fortunately for him, he hadn’t planned to kill Ning. If he had, how could Ning possibly not have noticed? If that was the case, Ning wouldn’t have interceded on his behalf at all.

“My master, Daoless, had been planning on expelling you from the school, but senior Darknorth instead suggested that you be sent to the mortal world instead. You are to serve as a junior servant in a winehouse for three hundred years. During these three hundred years, you are not to fight back when struck, nor are you to argue when cursed at.” Triscorpion laughed coldly. “If you disobey, then you will immediately be expelled from the Sword School.”

Prince Eastluck finally let out a sigh of relief. He immediately fell to his knees, then kowtowed towards the skies. “Thank you, senior Darknorth!”

It would indeed be difficult for him to serve for three centuries as a servant in a winehouse, and one who could not fight back when struck or argue when cursed at. But if he was to be expelled from the Sword School...in the past, he had offended many with his arrogance. If it wasn’t for his status as a

disciple of the Sword School, he probably would've died without a burial spot long ago. No matter what, he was still a disciple of the Sword School; all he had to do was be tempered within the red dust of the mortal world for three centuries.

"Your disciple swears to obey. May the Dao of the Heavens bear witness." Prince Eastluck instantly swore an oath.

"Go. From this day forth, you are no longer a prince; you were nothing more than an ordinary mortal servant." Celestial Immortal Triscorpion flicked his sleeves. "Come see me in three hundred years."

"Yes, Master." Eastluck immediately left respectfully, then transformed into a streak of light and flew into the skies by himself.

Triscorpion couldn't even be bothered to take a second look at this disciple of his.

He was a Diremonster by birth, and possessed of a strange temperament. In the past, he absolutely doted on Eastluck, but now that Eastluck had caused such a disaster, resulting in him being captured...Triscorpion focused all of his resentment on Eastluck. He no longer felt any positive feelings towards Eastluck at all. If it hadn't been for the fact that Ji Ning and Daoless had come to an agreement on Eastluck's fate, Triscorpion would've expelled that little bastard from the school already.

"Three centuries. Hmph." Triscorpion immediately teleported away and disappeared.

Even after three centuries, when this disciple came back to see him, he wouldn't be in the mood to teach him sincerely. This was because he now detested this disciple of his. This disciple might be talented, which is why Triscorpion had previously favored him, but now...he felt repulsed by him! So what if the kid was talented? How many 'talented' figures would be able to overcome the Celestial Tribulation?

However...no one would've thought that after this arrogant, wayward Prince Eastluck spent three centuries as a servant in the mortal world, he would become modest, low-key, humble, and courteous. He was like a piece of rough jade that had been carved and polished until it shone with brilliance. He would overcome his tribulation and become a Celestial Immortal, then be accepted into the Buddhist Sangha. In fact, during the final Endwar, he would become a general of the Nuwa Alliance who would fight shoulder-to-shoulder with Ji Ning.

Ji Ning himself would never have imagined this happening, of course. He crippled the first guard because he could sense that the guard had planned to kill him. The prince, however, wasn't beyond saving. Thus, he devised a path that he thought would be able to grind away the prince's arrogance and pride. That was the extent of his considerations. By now, Ning's attention was focused towards his sword-arts and his struggle against the Seamless Gate.

He had planned to stay on East Phoenix world and train there for three or four months, but True Immortal Daoless had explained to him that the other twenty-six worlds only had remnants of the [Five Treasures] sword-arts, whereas Sword Immortal world had the complete version. In other words, all of the remnants could be found within Sword Immortal world; there was no point in wasting time on the other worlds.

Ning still felt that the other worlds were worth spending some time on, but he decided that ten days per world was enough.

And so...he began to wander through one minor world after another.

Some worlds had sword-arts left behind on mountain walls. Others had sword-scars left behind on the wild landscape, in the form of rivers and creeks. Still others had sword-scars that carved out valleys and gorges within the forests. These had all been left behind in a casual manner by Daofather Fujū. Stargold beads in hand, and with Empyrean God Ninefangs by his side, Ning walked and meditated his way through all of the minor worlds.

Ning often made progress by comparing the nine chaos seals to the sword-arts. He spent at least three or four days in each world, up to a maximum of two months at most.

After he finished wandering the twenty-sixth world, a full year had passed. Finally, Ning arrived at the last of the Twenty-Seven Worlds of Fujū. The most important world...Sword Immortal world.

Sword Immortal world.

There wasn't a single mortal within this minor world. At the very center of this minor world, there were five mountain peaks, each one taller than the last. The strange thing was, the first peak was a thousand kilometers tall, the second was two thousand kilometers tall...the pattern continued all the way to the fifth, which was five thousand kilometers tall.

For a minor world to have such tall mountains was simply inconceivable! The mountain peaks stabbed high up into the uppermost layer of clouds.

"The Five Treasure Peaks!"

Ning and Ninefangs appeared in the air amidst them. They stared at the five towering mountain peaks. The majestic aura of might and pressure that swept out towards them from the mountain peaks caused Ning to feel startled. Ninefang's face even turned pale for a moment before he was able to steady himself.

"What a powerful aura. I was caught off-guard and felt a bit nauseous just now." Ninefangs said with surprise, "Ordinary Celestial Immortals probably wouldn't be able to endure it."

"How could the mountain peaks that hold the legendary [Five Treasures] sword-art not be extraordinary? The [Five Treasures] sword-art is the number one sword-art of the Three Realms," Ning said with a laugh. "Auras are invisible and formless; whether or not you can endure an aura is up to the strength of your Dao-heart. Ninefangs, although Empyrean Gods don't have to worry about going insane, the Dao-heart is still important. You need to work on yours."

Ninefangs nodded. "Yes, Manorlord."

Of the seven Empyrean Gods under Ning's command, Ninefangs had the weakest foundation. The others had accompanied Daoist Threelives in countless battles during the Primordial Era, after all. Back then, Ninefangs had merely been a Void-level Fiendgod. He only made his breakthrough within the Starseizer world, and he hadn't experienced many actual battles afterwards. Given that he also didn't have a good master to teach him, he was lacking in many areas.

“The number one sword-art of the Three Realms. I heard that it is incomparably marvelous.” Ning had heard many legends of the [Five Treasures] sword-art. Each legend was more fanciful than the last. The more legends he heard, the more curious Ning became.

Whoosh! Whoosh!

Ning and Ninfangs went flying towards the Five Treasure Peaks.

The Desolate Era

Book 19: Empyrean God Chapter 15: Swordforce

Three streaks of light suddenly flew towards the direction of Ji Ning and Ninfangs.

“Eh?” Ning took a careful look, instantly recognizing that one of the three was True Immortal Daoless. He had never seen the other two before.

“Is this fellow Daoist Ji Ning?” A rather ugly-looking man called out.

“I heard long ago from junior apprentice-brother Daoless tha fellow Daoist Ji Ning was going to come here. We’ve been waiting here a long time, but we were unable to find you. My heart was burning with impatience.” A handsome youth smiled merrily as he spoke.

Ning laughed, “I’ve made the three of you wait so long, fellow Daoists. I’m ashamed, quite ashamed.”

“We live right here on Sword Immortal world. We’d still be here even if we weren’t waiting for you,” the youth laughed.

Ning laughed as well. “I’ve already met fellow Daoist Daoless. The muscular fellow must be Empyrean God Hiddenwillow, while this one must be the ‘Sword Immortal of the Outer Heavens’, fellow Daoist Jimin. I’ve long heard of fellow Daoist Jimin’s illustrious reputation. Today, I finally have the chance to meet you.”

After Daofather Fujun had perished, many of his followers had scattered. These days, the Sword School only had three Empyrean Gods and True Immortals left.

They were True Immortal Daoless, Empyrean God Hiddenwillow, and True Immortal Jimin.

True Immortal Jimin had been the first to join the school. Empyrean God Hiddenwillow had come later, while True Immortal Daoless had been the last. True Immortal Jimin possessed truly extraordinary power. There were only two individuals in the Three Realms who had mastered the entire [Five Treasures] sword-art; one was a Daofather, while the other was True Immortal Jimin. After he mastered it, he instantly rose in power to become one of the most supreme of True Immortals, on par with the likes of Lu Dongbin, and so he was reverently titled the ‘Sword Immortal of the Outer Heavens’.

“So this is fellow Daoist Ji Ning?”

“Fellow Daoist Darknorth actually arrived as well.”

“I heard of fellow Daoist Darknorth’s exploits in the Crimsonbright Realmwar. He used his sword to suppress a Daofather golem...”

“Fellow Daoist Ji Ning!”

Suddenly, one voice after another began to ring out as more streaks of light flew towards them.

True Immortal Daoless hurriedly explained, "These are the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals who are at Sword Immortal world to study the [Five Treasures] sword-art. They naturally are on our side as well. Prior to the storm arriving, Sword Immortal world usually saw thousands of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals gathering here, with the occasional Daofather as well. However, now that the storm has arrived, and given that many of the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals of the Three Realms have already visited this place, there are now very few people here. Aside from the three of us and the two of you, fellow Daoist Ji Ning, there are thirty-nine other Empyrean Gods and True Immortals currently present."

These individuals all belonged to the Nuwa Alliance, and they all knew of Ning. Naturally, they held Ning in high esteem. There were very, very few people who could have an impact on a Realmwar the way Ning did, after all. Even the likes of Redsnow had to join forces with the rest of the seven Empyrean Gods in order to possess such tremendous power. Given that Ning was able to match a Daofather golem in might just by commanding a million Immortals...which Empyrean God or True Immortal would dare treat him with discourtesy?

Even supreme Sword Immortals like True Immortal Jimin, who had mastered the [Five Treasures] sword-art, treated Ning with great courtesy.

After chatting for some time, everyone went their separate ways. They were all here to train in sword-arts, after all; this was what truly mattered.

"There are some other fellow Daoists who you haven't met yet; they should still be busy with their meditations," True Immortal Jimin said with a laugh. The three leaders of the Sword School accompanied Ji Ning and Ninefangs as they flew forward on a cloud.

"Right." Ning nodded. "I can already see them."

He was able to see the five towering peaks in the distance. The peaks, the valleys, the distant mountain lakes...there were Empyrean Gods and True Immortals seated in the lotus position throughout the five peaks. All of them were rather casually spread out, and normally none of them would bother each other.

"That one over there is fellow Daoist Jadesky," True Immortal Jimin said as he pointed to the first mountain peak, where a black-robed man was seated atop a giant boulder.

"That one over there is fellow Daoist Icefeather." He pointed to a barely-visible white-robed youth that was seated in the lotus position deep within a mountain cave.

All of them were seated in the lotus position, as unmoving as boulders. It was hard to tell how long they had been there.

"The two of them have given up everything to focus on the [Five Treasures] sword-art," True Immortal Jimin said with a sigh. "The others are at most observing and studying. They'll occasionally gain an insight, but they aren't truly training."

"Given up everything?" Ning was surprised. "Can it be that the [Five Treasures] sword-art really is as terrifying as the legends say?"

The nearby True Immortal Daoless chuckled. "Some legends are exaggerated, but other legends don't go far enough."

"Oh?" Both Ning and Ninefangs listened attentively. The legends regarding the [Five Treasures] sword-art were quite fanciful. Supposedly, not even Daofathers would dare to casually train in it.

"The [Five Treasures] sword-art is indeed incomparably marvelous and mysterious," True Immortal Daoless laughed. "It is completely different from any other sword-art of the Three Realms."

Ning nodded. He had noticed this as well.

Ning's face changed.

True Immortal Daoless said softly, "All the other Daos you have gained insight into...Heavenly Daos, Grand Daos, ordinary Daos...you will slowly begin to forget them. They will completely vanish from your memories."

"The more you train in the [Five Treasures] sword-art, the more of the other Daos you will forget."

Ning nodded slowly. "So that's how it is."

Ning was puzzled. "Training in the [Five Treasures] sword-art will cause your insights into the other Daos to be lost? Is it possible to retrain and regain them after losing them?"

"It's possible, but..." True Immortal shook his head. "When you begin training in the other Daos, you'll begin to gradually lose your insights into the [Five Treasures] sword-arts."

"What?!" Ning was shocked.

"Thus, you have a choice; either train in the various other Daos or only train in the [Five Treasures] sword-art." True Immortal Jimin chuckled. "But of course, if you completely master the entire [Five Treasures] sword-art, it'll be completely memorized as a perfect whole within your mind. You can begin to train in other Daos once more, and by then you will no longer be impacted."

Ning nodded. He had heard these stories before.

But the [Five Treasures] sword-art truly was too powerful. After mastering it, the speed of one's sword would exceed the limitations of the Heavenly Daos themselves! True Immortal Jimin, for example, was one of the most supreme True Immortals of the Three Realms. Once he broke through to become a Daofather, he would immediately become a supreme one thanks to his [Five Treasures] sword-art, even though his other insights were comparatively inferior to those of the other Daofathers.

This was because the speed of his sword would be faster than anything else.

This was the reason why the [Five Treasures] sword-art was so alluring.

"Once you master the entire [Five Treasures] sword-art, you'll be able to enter the cavern-estate in the fifth peak which Master left behind." True Immortal Jimin pointed towards the distant, tallest peak.

"Master died in the primordial chaos, but before he entered it, he gave us certain instructions. He said that if something unexpected happened to him, we were to make the [Five Treasures] sword-art

available to the public. Any Fiendgod Body Refiner who has mastered the [Five Treasures] sword-art can enter his cavern-estate and receive his most important legacy.”

“Oh?” Ning was startled.

“In the countless years that have passed since Master died, unfathomable numbers of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals have come here to meditate. Even True Gods and Daofathers have come here! However, very, very few are willing to give up all their insights into the other Daos and focus solely on the Dao of the Sword! This is especially true for Ki Refiners. Once they lose their insights into the Dao, they’ll be unable to control the Immortal energy within their bodies. They’ll begin to go insane and die from the deviant energies.”

Ning nodded.

“Ki Refiner Daofathers, for example; they are Daofathers because they have mastered a Heavenly Dao. But what if they forgot that Heavenly Dao? Given how utterly enormous the Great Firmament energy in their bodies are, once they forgot their Daos, they would be completely unable to control that energy. It would deviate and possibly even detonate, causing their souls to be shattered and destroyed.”

“Thus, amongst Ki Refiners, only Sword Immortals can train in this sword-art, and they have to at least be at the Pure Yang True Immortal level.”

“As for Fiendgods? It’s true that they can train in it without having to worry about their energy deviating. But the exalted True Gods...most of them have trained for countless years and have extremely deep insights into the Dao. How many of them are willing to give up all of their insights? From the Primordial Era to the modern era, there have been only a total of three True Gods who have truly come here to train in the [Five Treasures] sword-art.”

“However, Fiendgods by nature are weaker when it comes to comprehension abilities. Those three True Gods in particular were not exceptionally talented with regards to the Dao of the Sword. It is hard to force your way into getting insights, and so in the end they all gave up,” True Immortal Jimin said.

In truth, those three True Gods were some of the weakest amongst their peers, which was why they had been willing to discard everything to train in this art! They had thought that if they gained this astonishing sword-art which allowed the speed of their swords to surpass the limits of the Dao of the Heavens, they would instantly become some of the most powerful True Gods alive. But alas, they had no talent in this field, and so it was too difficult for them to succeed.

Take Ji Ning as an example. He was able to advance very rapidly in the Dao of the Sword, but if he trained to train in the Grand Dao of Time? He would most likely progress at an unbearably slow rate.

“The two who truly succeeded in mastering it were both Ki Refiners. I am one of them. The other is Daofather Holyflame. Because both of us are Ki Refiners, neither of us were able to receive Master’s legacy. However, Daofather Holyflame can now be considered the number one Sword Immortal of the Three Realms,” True Immortal Jimin said with a laugh.

Ning nodded.

Daofather Holyflame had grown up in a peculiar way. His mother had been a Celestial Immortal known as Princess Iron Fan, while his father had been an Empyrean God known as the Bull Demon King, one of

the Seven Great Diremonster Saints of the Primordial Era. Daofather Holyflame had been born with tremendous talent in fire, and had thus been known as the 'Red Boy'. Thanks to his incredible talent, he had smoothly sailed through his cultivation to become a Celestial Immortal, and the samadhi truefire he nourished in his body was especially powerful.

In the end, he became apprenticed to the Buddhist Guanyin and had become her follower. 1

Eventually, the Primordial Era ended and the Three Realms were born. He ended up breaking through to become a Pure Yang True Immortal. After Daofather Fujū died, he came to meditate on the [Five Treasures] sword-art, and he was absolutely crazy in his training. Buddhism? His parents? He discarded and forgot about all such things...and he actually managed to succeed in one go! After he mastered the [Five Treasures] sword-art, his power and status instantly skyrocketed. He then spent centuries to painstakingly regain the Grand Daos which he had forgotten.

More than thirty thousand years after he mastered the [Five Treasures] sword-art, he mastered the Heavenly Dao of Fire and became a Daofather. After that, he became known by the exalted title of Daofather Holyflame!

He personally welcomed his mother Iron Fan back home, but he didn't pay much attention to the Bull Demon King. 2

In addition, his sword had become the fastest sword of all the Three Realms! Many Immortals and Fiendgods believed him to be the number one Sword Immortal of the Three Realms. However, Daofather Holyflame's foundation was a bit weak, as he had only mastered a single Heavenly Dao, the Heavenly Dao of Fire! Even his swordforce was merely at the fourth stage, and he had yet to reach the fifth stage. Thus, not everyone agreed that he was the number one Sword Immortal!

Clearly, however, he was one of the most supreme Daofathers around.

Those who were more powerful than him during the Primordial Era now had to treat him with reverence. This was one of the marvels of time. Perhaps, in the future...a young fellow who was currently weak would end up becoming so powerful that Holyflame himself would have to treat him with reverence.

"You now know about all the pros and cons of the [Five Elements] sword-art." True Immortal Jimin looked towards Ning. "It's up to you whether you wish to train in it or not."

Ning nodded.

He had heard these legends long ago; the only difference today made was that he now knew a bit more than he had in the past. In truth, the year he had spent on the other worlds was a testament to Ning's decision! He was going to embark on the path of the Sword Immortal, and that path alone! For the sake of the [Five Treasures] sword-art, Ning had long ago decided to give up his insights into the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop and the other Daos. Right now, the reason he was powerful was because of his heartforce and his divine abilities, such as the [Starseizing Hand] and the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]! He wouldn't forget any of them.

The only things he would forget were his insights into the Dao!

"We won't disturb you any further." True Immortal Jimin and the other two immediately left.

“Ninefangs, I’m going to go take a look at the [Five Treasures] sword-art. If there’s nothing urgent, don’t interrupt me,” Ning said. Ninefangs hurriedly assented.

1. This is a story straight out of Journey to the West. The story of Princess Iron Fan, the Bull Demon King, and Red Boy is one of the more famous encounters that Sun Wukong had to face.

2. In the stories, Red Boy lived with his mother, who was estranged from her husband Bull Demon King because the latter was a terrible playboy and adulterer who cheated on her all the time.

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 19: Emphyrean God Chapter 16: Training in Solitude

The Five Treasure Peaks were ancient beyond belief. A complete version of the number one sword-art of the Three Realms, the [Five Treasures] sword-art, had been left behind on them, giving them an aura of being even more exalted than the Dao of the Heavens.

Solitude.

Stillness.

The aura and presence emanating from the Five Treasure Peaks was enough to ensure that neither birds nor bugs could survive here. The only living creatures here were the forty-plus Emphyrean Gods and True Immortals, but given how vast the Five Treasure Peaks were, the cultivators weren’t particularly eye-catching.

“It really is rare to find such a quiet place.” Ji Ning landed, then stood there upon the wilderness, head raised as he stared at the criss-crossing sword stances that had been left atop the distant mountain cliffs.

“Whew.” Ning’s heart clenched as a series of sword techniques began to flood into his brain. This sword-art was ancient, profound, and beyond the Heavenly Daos themselves.

“Mm.” Ning transformed into a streak of light, charging back downwards. As he landed on the ground, he pointed off into the distance. Instantly, the power of Heaven and Earth began to activate, quickly causing an ordinary thatched cottage to take form. Ning stepped into it, then sat down into the lotus position. He faced the Five Treasure Peaks, then closed his eyes and began to think back to what he had seen.

The sword stances began to replay through his mind as he began to attempt to fathom them.

Ning knew what his advantages were and what his disadvantages were!

He had been tremendously lucky, as he had the chance to learn divine abilities like the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] and the [Starseizing Hand]; these two divine abilities were already enough to allow him to stand at the very peak of power for Emphyrean Gods! But his goal wasn’t to be a powerful Emphyrean God...it was to become a True God and a Daofather! During the final Endwar, one had to have the power of a True God or a Daofather in order to be of use.

In addition, he had to become a supremely powerful True God and Daofather. In fact, he wanted to try to work hard to reach the level of the leaders of the Daoist Path and the Buddhist Sangha...or even the level of Nuwa and Pangu!

But how was he supposed to reach this level?

Ning knew very well that compared to the other major powers, his greatest weakness was that he hadn't trained for very long. This was a tremendous disadvantage. The storm had already begun to press down upon them, and the final, terrifying explosion wouldn't be too far off. He didn't actually have that much time. If he wanted to take things step-by-step, first mastering the various Grand Daos and then slowly work on the Heavenly Dao of Water, then the rest of the Five Elements so as to reach the level of Lord Buddha or Daoist Three Purities...without question, it would take an unfathomable amount of time.

He didn't have enough time.

What could he do?

His only choice was to make a lateral thrust, to make an unconventional gambit!

His greatest talent currently lay in heartforce. The heart was an invisible, formless thing, but it was possible to make great breakthroughs in it. Right now, Ning had already reached the fourth stage in heartforce! If he was to reach the fifth stage, he would instantly be comparable to the most supreme of Daofathers. Long ago, Houyi had reached the fifth stage of heartforce as an Empyrean God and thus became capable of killing True Gods and Daofathers!

Master Subhuti believed that Ning's talent with the sword was even greater than his talent in heartforce. Supposedly, if swordforce reached the fifth stage, it would be no weaker than heartforce of the fifth stage. But how was he to reach such a level?

The best choice was to train in the number one sword-art of the Three Realms, the [Five Treasures] sword-art! The [Five Treasures] sword-art was even capable of allowing the speed of his sword to exceed the limitations of the Heavenly Daos; it would definitely allow him to be the most powerful figure amongst his peers. Even if his peers also mastered fifth stage swordforce, if he mastered the [Five Treasures] sword-art, he would still be far more powerful than them.

"I'll walk these two paths simultaneously. So long as one of them succeeds...I, Ji Ning, will stand at the very peak of the Three Realms!"

Ning knew very well that both paths were extremely difficult paths to walk...but if you wanted to stand at the top, how could you avoid taking a difficult path? Others wouldn't even have the chance to make an attempt like this. Ning had both the chance and the necessarily talent...of course he had to go all-out!

Not just for himself; it was also for his family, for his loved ones. If he didn't have enough power, not only would he be doomed, even Brightmoon and the others would find it hard to survive.

This was the reason why, in times of peace, thousands of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals would come here to cultivate, with each cultivation session often lasting a million years or even longer.

Time passed, one day after the other.

The entire Five Treasure Peaks were completely silent. All of the Empyrean Gods and True Immortals were as silent as deadwood, completely focused on the sword!

"The Dao...is slipping away..."

Ning opened his eyes.

The Dao was vanishing from his mind, one strand at a time. No matter how hard Ning tried to recollect those memories, he was unable to do so. They had truly been lost.

“Continue.” Ning shut his eyes, continuing his meditations.

If he lost his other Daos, he lost them. For the sake of the sword...it would all be worth it.

The [Five Treasures] sword-art was more detailed, but its power was also a bit weaker.

It made sense, truth be told. The nine chaos seals...not even Daoist Three Purities or Mother Nuwa (prior to the destruction of the Primordial Era) had been able to completely master them. The [Five Treasures] sword-art, however, had been created by Daofather Fujū.

Just by comparing them, it was clear which one was superior. However, both transcended the Dao of the Heavens, and so they could be compared to each other.

“Finally...I’ve lost the Grand Dao of the Waterdrop.” Midway through his training, Ning suddenly could sense that his Grand Dao of the Waterdrop was no longer perfect and complete. He paused for a moment...but then he once more began to calmly continue his meditations.

The Dao continued to leak away from him in tiny strands...but his understanding of the [Five Treasures] sword-art grew increasingly refined.

“Five treasures...five treasures...” Ning rose to his feet, walking out of the thatched cottage. He raised his head to stare at the distant first peak, then sighed softly to himself. “It truly is a treasure. Only when you truly begin to train in it will you understand how vast and marvelous it is. I really have no idea how Daofather Fujū could’ve developed such an unfathomably powerful sword-art in the past. How could a major power like him have perished in such a silent, noiseless manner?”

Daofather Fujū’s death was a mystery. He was so formidable...how could he have perished?

Why was it that before he went into the primordial chaos, he intentionally left behind his legacy within the fifth peak? It was as though he knew that there was a chance he would die.

“Did he encounter Outsiders in the primordial chaos who killed him? Or did he encounter a mysterious, dangerous area within the infinite primordial chaos which he had to enter despite the danger?” Ning was unable to come up with the answer, and so he stopped guessing. The primordial chaos was simply too vast and mysterious. The nine chaos seals themselves had come from the primordial chaos.

“Come out.”

A Darknorth sword emerged, appearing in Ning’s hands. He began to execute the sword-art.

He didn’t use any of his Immortal energy or his divine power. He was like an ordinary mortal training with the sword.

Chopping...piercing...slashing...deflecting...these were the most basic of sword stances, but in Ning’s hands they seemed to flow together like water. As Ning continued with his swordplay, a layer of white-

gold light began to appear atop his sword. The dazzling, white-gold halo caused his sword to possess inconceivable might.

It made his sword faster. Sharper. Even space itself began to crackle and tear.

This was the second stage of swordforce...the 'Dazzling Sun' stage.

The first stage of swordforce was known as the 'Silver Moon' stage, because at this stage a layer of silvery-white light would appear atop the sword.

"So, without even realizing it, I've already reached the second stage of swordforce." Ning laughed.

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Mount Innerheart.

Within the Daoist monastery.

Subhuti sat there with his eyes closed. In truth, he was watching over the entire Three Realms. The Three Realms were currently in a state of chaos; as the most accomplished expert of the Three Realms in the art of spacetime, Subhuti would naturally keep an eye on all places.

"Eh?" Subhuti opened his eyes, a trace of a smile within them. "This disciple of mine has actually reached the second stage of swordforce. Mmm...I imagine that he's probably calmed down by now. It's time to let him exchange blows with the Seamless Gate."

Given Subhuti's abilities, he had long ago found some suitable headquarters of the Seamless Gate for Ji Ning to act against.

However...if he always let Ji Ning attack so furiously, Ji Ning would probably die in his fury. Thus, Subhuti wanted to ensure that he was in control of the general tempo of things. He wouldn't let Ji Ning get involved in an excessive slaughter, but he had to allow Ji Ning to reach his goal of forcing the Seamless Gate to bow its head. Thus...Subhuti needed to handle things with precision.

[The Desolate Era](#)

Book 19: Empyrean God Chapter 17: The Five Monarchs

The towering Five Treasures Peaks.

Ji Ning was staring at the sword stances engraved upon the mountainside of the first peak, sensing the sword-intent radiating from it. Suddenly, the space around him turned blurry as an old man in Daoist robes suddenly manifested.

"Master." Ning immediately called out respectfully upon seeing him.

"Work hard to learn the [Five Treasures] sword-art. If you master it, you'll have a greater chance to survive this storm," Subhuti said with a laugh. "Now...prior to this, you said you wish to act against the Seamless Gate, I believe?"

Ning's eyes lit up. He nodded repeatedly. "Yes."

“The Seamless Gate is spread across the Three Realms. Some worlds have more experts, some worlds have fewer.” Subhuti continued, “Realms such as the one Crimsonbright ruled over are comparatively weak. Your homeland, the Grand Xia, for example; prior to the Seamless Gate’s actions, there were almost no Empyrean Gods or True Immortals within it.”

Ning nodded repeatedly. “Master, I want to go to the major worlds of supreme powers. Killing Loose Immortals and Celestial Immortals won’t affect the Seamless Gate that much, unless I kill an absolutely enormous amount of them. I’m going to be launching sneak attacks; there’s not going to be enough time for me to kill that many of them. That’s why I want to primarily focus on Empyrean Gods and True Immortals.”

Only the deaths of Empyrean Gods and True Immortals would cause heartache for the Seamless Gate.

“In the Three Realms...the strongest force on our side is that of the human race,” Subhuti said. “The human race is led by the Three Emperors of Mankind: Sui ren, Fuxi, and Shennong. The three of them are on the same level as the leaders of the Daoist Path and Buddhist Sangha.”

“Second to them are the Five Monarchs. These five Monarchs were all former rulers of the human race. The final one, Xia Yu, completely unified all humans under his rule; only then did they all become true rulers. Ever since then, the Primordial Imperial Clan which rules the human race has been led by the Xia clan.” 1

Ning nodded.

He knew that during the Primordial Era, Xia Yu had tamed the floods with his divine abilities, blessing the lands with kindness and benevolence. Even the Three Emperors acknowledged him and supported him, causing his rule to become even more stable and firm. And of course, Xia Yu himself possessed tremendous power. How could someone be considered a ‘Monarch’ of the human race be weak? Even Ning’s own senior apprentice-brother, Sun Wukong, had acquired the golden staff he used from Xia Yu, who had made it for him. 2”

“Thus, in terms of major worlds...the major worlds which are controlled by the Primordial Imperial Clan are all extremely powerful. The Seamless Gate has stationed many troops in those worlds, and the battles between the experts there are all incredibly savage. If you attack, the Seamless Gate will immediately send their vast armies to tie you down. I recommend that you do not go there,” Subhuti said.

Ning understood. The battlegrounds between the Primordial Imperial Clan and the Seamless Gate were some of the most terrifying places of the entire Three Realms. Both sides had concentrated enormous amounts of power there.

“The realms ruled over by the other four Monarchs, however, are comparatively much weaker. But of course, they are still much stronger than the Crimsonbright Realm,” Subhuti said. “Which of the realms ruled over by the other four Monarchs would you like to go to?”

“Which one? Any one of them works,” Ning said hurriedly. He just wanted to kill the Seamless Gate’s people. The location didn’t really matter.

“One of the major worlds under Monarch Zhuanxu, the Winterherald world, holds Youngflame Freak within it. He has a total of eighteen clones spread throughout the Three Realms, with sixteen of them being within the Winterherald world,” Subhuti said. Although Youngflame Freak’s life-preserving methods were formidable, they were nothing to Subhuti.

Ning’s eyes lit up. “Does the Winterherald world have many Emphyrean Gods and True Immortals within it?”

“Although war has yet to come to the Winterherald world, the Seamless Gate has a total of nine Emphyrean Gods and True Immortals already stationed there,” Subhuti said.

Ning sighed in amazement.

Monarch Zhuanxu was one of the Five Monarchs who had once ruled over the human race. Naturally, he had many powerful human experts following him. He himself was also exceedingly powerful, and in truth, the ‘Kindwater’ 3 clan was a branch of Zhuanxu’s clan. But of course, the Kindwater clan was on a lower level than the Xiamang clan, much like how Monarch Zhuanxu was on a lower level than Monarch Xia Yu.

“Nine Emphyrean Gods and True Immortals...fine. I choose this world.” Ning nodded.

“This is a map of the forces of the Seamless Gate that are spread throughout the entire Zhuanxu Realm.” Subhuti handed over a furled scroll to Ning, then instructed, “But you must not tarry overlong in each battle!”

“Your disciple understands.” Ning nodded.

“Hurry up and look at it, then destroy it,” Subhuti instructed. Ning immediately opened up and began to memorize the contents of the scroll.

The scroll had very detailed notes regarding the disposition of forces of both sides across the thirty-nine major worlds of the Zhuanxu Realm. The locations of the sixteen clones of Youngflame Freak were all marked out as well.

Whoosh. Ning flared the divine power in his hands, reducing the scroll to dust.

“Good.” Subhuti nodded, then disappeared into thin air.

A hint of a killing intent flashed past Ning’s eyes. “The time has finally come.”

“Ninefangs.” Ning’s form blurred momentarily, then he appeared next to Ninefangs, who was napping next to a nearby thatched cottage.

“Manorlord.” Ninefangs hurriedly woke up and rose to his feet.

“Go back to the Starseizer world for now,” Ning instructed, “And carry out the plan as we previously discussed.”

Ninefangs instantly understood what Ning was planning.

“Yes,” Ninefangs said respectfully. He then allowed Ning to pull him directly into the Starseizer world. By now, after Ning had completely mastered and bound the Starseizing Manor, Ning realized that the

Starseizer world was actually hidden within a special region of the Starseizing Manor. Mother Nuwa had actually created the Starseizer world in that region.

He was now completely capable of drawing others straight into the Starseizer world or teleporting people out from it. There was no need to go through the Starseizing Manor first, though of course this was only possible because he had already fully bound it.

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The Zhuanyu Realm. The Winterherald major world.

Winterherald was the world where the great army which Monarch Zhuanyu had once used to unify the human race, the Winterherald Army, was stationed. The various matters of the Winterherald world were all decided upon by the general and the deputy general of the army. Normally, this was quite a peaceful world, but ever since the Seamless Gate had begun to infiltrate it, a large number of minor clashes had begun to erupt, causing the Winterherald world to become rather chaotic.

But of course...

These were all small-scale battles. They were still far away from launching the campaign against this major world, to say nothing of launching a Realmwar. A war against Monarch Zhuanyu, one of the Five Monarchs of the Primordial Imperial Clan, would definitely come towards the very end of the campaign against the three thousand major worlds. The only thing the Seamless Gate was doing right now was tying down his forces, preventing him from being able to easily reinforce the other Daofathers.

“This really is a different place.” Ning stood atop a mountain peak, staring at the vast world. His heartforce had spread out to cover it long ago.

Heartforce, ephemeral and invisible...one had to reach the fourth stage to be able to cover an entire world with it. Most importantly of all, there was almost no way to sense someone else’s heartforce, as it was completely traceless; the only possible way was to possess heartforce on the same level. For example, when Ning had made his breakthrough on the Grand Xia, he had unconsciously spread his heartforce out to cover the entire Grand Xia without Daofather Ink Bamboo or Daofather Crimsonbright noticing it. This was because, although they were born as a True God and a True Fiend of tremendous power, they weren’t particularly strong in heartforce. Neither had reached the fourth level.

Old Man Yuan and some of the supreme major powers, in turn, had only reached the fourth stage of heartforce.

Only Houyi had ever reached the fifth stage.

Of course, the Godking of the Seamless Gate would’ve been able to notice that Ning had spread his heartforce out, but the Godking had been in the Fifth World, not the Grand Xia. He was able to watch the battle and mentally converse with Daofather Ink Bamboo through sending his coresense out through the Void and into the Grand Xia, but coresense alone wouldn’t be able to discover heartforce.

“The Winterherald world is actually very tightly governed and ruled. The Celestial Immortals and Fiendgods are all arranged into armies,” Ning sighed internally. “The Grand Xia only formed Immortal armies when forced to do so, but the army of Monarch Zhuanyu has existed since the Primordial Era. I imagine that their teamwork is far superior as well.”

“Right. First, I’ll go wipe out the sixteen clones of Youngflame Freak.”

“Youngflame Freak truly is a cautious fellow. On the surface, he appears to be accompanying Azurefox in the Crimsonbright Realm, but his other bodies were squirreled away here at the Zhuanyu Realm.” Ning’s body transformed as he used the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], instantly becoming a bit taller. He now had the aura of a Celestial Immortal.

Swoosh.

Ning disappeared into thin air.

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The Winterherald world. The Seamless Gate had three headquarters here, each of which had three Emyrean Gods and True Immortals guarding over them, along with many Immortals and layers of formations. Even if the experts of the Winterherald world assaulted them, they would be able to hold on.

Aside from these three headquarters, there were also 182 bases spread throughout the world. These bases could be withdrawn or abandoned at a moment’s notice, or be used to launch sneak attacks when needed. They were more than enough to create chaos throughout the Winterherald world. To the Winterherald world, however, these bases were like ants that would occasionally give them a bite. But if they were to actually attack those bases...given the Seamless Gate’s intelligence abilities, the bases would be instantly evacuated. And, most importantly of all, those bases were so weak that they weren’t really worth annihilating.

“Hmph. Yeah, yeah. Keep on killing. So many of us died during the Crimsonbright Realmwar, and now you want us to go kill others?” An ugly old man was eating some meat, a cold light in his eyes. “Still, I don’t really mind. Even if I lose another one of my clone, I’ll still have my sixteen clones hiding here safe and sound.”

“The Zhuanyu Realm...I imagine that the war will only come here at the very end. That’s going to be quite some time from now. When it comes, I’ll slink off to a different Realm.”

The two alliances were battling each other, and there was nowhere for the Celestial Immortals to run. He had to have a ‘legal’ status somewhere. The Crimsonbright Realm was very far away from the Zhuanyu Realm. Given that Youngflame Freak had been very low-key in the Grand Xia, there had only been a very low number of Celestial Immortals who had ever seen him. His clones in the Winterherald world were similarly low-key, and the number of Celestial Immortals who encountered him was similarly low.

Only someone who had previously met him in person before would be able to tell that these were his clones! But clearly, Youngflame Freak hadn’t been that unlucky thus far.

He had been hidden for countless years with the false identity of ‘Immortal Bloodfiend’. This was a publicly acknowledged persona, and no one suspected that there was a connection between ‘Immortal Bloodfiend’ and ‘Youngflame Freak’. Now that he had joined the Seamless Gate and had been inserted here, he was quite low-key.

Youngflame Freak was very famous, but only had two clones; one public, one hidden.

Immortal Bloodfiend was almost unknown. He had one public clone and fifteen hidden ones for a total of sixteen.

“This storm is supposedly going to be a very dangerous one, but perhaps I’ll be able to survive yet again. Hmph, of what use is power? Staying alive is what matters. Ji Ning? I can’t be bothered to deal with you. You have already displayed your brilliance and your sharpness...now, let’s see if you’ll be able to survive the storm.” Youngflame Freak munched on his meat and guzzled his wine in a very relaxed manner.

“I’m not going to go too crazy in defending this base. Some of the other bases are much more brash than me; the Winterherald world will go after them first, not me. However, my base isn’t a weak one either; the Seamless Gate will have no grounds to blame me. How pleasant.” When he thought about how the other Immortals and Fiendgods were risking their lives, and how many had died in the Realmwar, Youngflame Freak felt even more self-satisfied at how clever he was!

“Staying alive is what really matt-” Youngflame Freak’s face suddenly changed. “An enemy’s attacking? Wait, that doesn’t make sense. There shouldn’t be any attacks against me.” Youngflame Freak immediately flew out, having no time to worry about anything else.