

Disciples 401

Chapter 401: Pincered

The sudden appearance of the Other Tribesmen caught the cultivators in the Nether Sect's camp off-guard.

About half of the 1,000 cultivators stayed on top of the towering city wall to stop the enemies from getting a foothold in the city. At the same time, they activated the mini Formations on the city wall to attack the Other Tribesmen who were trying to invade the city from the air.

The soldiers on land fortified the walls and the gates while reinforcing, resupplying, and healing the cultivators on the wall.

When the battle between the cultivators was almost over, it was time for the mortals to take charge of the battlefield. The people on the frontlines in the wars between nations were usually cultivators unless there was no other choice. This was the foundation of Great Yan's empire. This was also one of the most basic ways of fighting in the cultivation world.

When he saw the cultivators dropping above, Shen Liangshou was awestruck. For a moment, he was rendered speechless. He mustered up his courage and asked, "Old mister, I wonder if I may ask you a question?"

"What is it?" Lu Zhou had been stroking his beard as he observed the battle above them.

After the garrisons of Liang Province's city were defeated by the Nether Sect, they could only rely on themselves to repel the Other Tribesmen. However, this should be within Si Wuya's calculations. Why did they appear so flustered and powerless? Was this deliberate?

"Are you from the Luo Sect, old mister?" Shen Liangshou finally asked.

"Why would you say that?"

"Of the Three Sects, the Luo Sect is the one skilled in archery. There are many elite archers in that sect. The Luo Sect's Patriarch is a peerless archer as well. He once killed a high-ranked beast with a single arrow in Heaven Moat Forest," Shen Liangshou said respectfully. Fear still lingered in his heart from the arrow shot that he had endured.

"There are countless elite archers under the heavens. The Luo Sect isn't worth mentioning," Lu Zhou replied apathetically.

"..." For a time, Shen Liangshou was rendered speechless. He felt that Lu Zhou's arrogance was on another level, he even thought the Luo Sect was too insignificant to mention. Naturally, he did not dare show his feelings. Instead, he asked, "Old mister, why don't you shoot at the Other Tribesmen from the skies?"

Shen Liangshou was a Five-leaf elite, after all... And yet, he could not block Lu Zhou's arrow. In his opinion, if Lu Zhou used all his strength and attacked the leader of the Other Tribes, it would do a lot to change the tide of the battle. He might be involved in many shady dealings, but he did not want the Other Tribesmen to set foot on Great Yan's lands.

Lu Zhou continued to observe the battle on the city wall. He did not answer the question immediately. If he acted, he would surely expose himself. At that time, how was he going to capture Yu Zhenghai or Si Wuya? As usual, he was not in a rush to act. Finally, he replied, "With the Nether Sect's strength, it should be sufficient to deal with these Other Tribesmen."

"..." Shen Liangshou dared not say anything else.

Little Yuan'er hugged Lu Zhou's arm. Most of her nervousness was gone by now. She was now curious. She said, "Master, I'd like to have a look."

Lu Zhou had the same thought. "Let's go."

The two of them hurried toward the city wall.

Shen Liangshou started. He looked to his left and right. The camp was deserted. He hastily shouted, "Wait for me!" Currently, the safest place was being by the old man's side.

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In no time at all, the three of them were at the base of the city wall. They did not notice it from a distance, but the walls were extremely tall now that they were standing so close to it. They could not see the top of the wall from this spot.

If the elites with their avatars were not flying in the air, it was almost impossible for them to witness the interesting battle from within the city.

"Old mister, me, me... Don't forget about me..." Shen Liangshou said anxiously.

Lu Zhou waved his arm. The three of them flew toward the top of the city wall.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

The loud sounds of the battle reached their ears.

When the three of them landed on the top of the city wall, they were dumbstruck by what they saw.

Two avatars, one about 50-foot tall and the other was 70-foot tall, were fighting against the Other Tribesmen valiantly on the fields beyond the city wall.

The Vermillion Bird Hall's First Seat, Yang Tan, swiftly increased the size of his avatar and repelled dozens of Rouli tribesmen.

The Rouli tribesmen reeled and spat out mouthfuls of blood as they reeled from the impact.

Even so, there were more Rou Li and Lou Lan tribesmen on the ground. The Lou Lan tribesmen were doing their best to cast spells as long as they could. Beams of purple energy shrouded the Rouli tribesmen in the air.

The battle was too chaotic.

Everyone was so preoccupied that nobody took notice of Lu Zhou and the others.

The three of them stood at a vacant corner and looked down at the battle from their high vantage point.

Shen Liangshou gulped and said, "Even Yang Yan, one of the Nether Sect's Four Great Protectors, is this powerful... Just how powerful are the other protectors?"

"You're familiar with the Nether Sect?" Lu Zhou glanced at Shen Liangshou.

Shen Liangshou seemed to have forgotten that Lu Zhou was the one who had shot him. He said with a smile, "Everyone knows the Sect Master of the Nether Sect Master is the Evil Sky Pavilion's first disciple."

At this moment, Lu Zhou noticed that the Rouli tribesmen who reeled from the impact moments ago had risen back to their feet. They were ganging up on Yang Yan.

"Rouli tribesmen are nimble and quick on their feet. They didn't cultivate any of the Buddhist, Confucian, or Daoist methods. They worship the wild wolves and never act on their own... Their avatars are in the shapes of wolves as well. They have a tremendous self-healing ability and are incredibly resilient," Shen Liangshou said, "However, the barbarians are barbarians, after all. It's not without reason that Great Yan is capable of intimidating the 12 nations."

Lu Zhou stroked his beard and said, "You seem very confident in Great Yan."

Shen Liangshou sighed. "My confidence lies with Emperor Yong Shou. As for Yong Qing... forget it."

"There are words even the person on top of the whitelist doesn't dare to utter?"

"Old mister... the blacklist and whitelist don't rank people based on their cultivation bases. My ranking on the whitelist is nothing but a joke," Shen Liangshou said. When he spoke, it could be seen that he thought being on the blacklist had more prestige.

The first on the whitelist was merely a Five-leaf cultivator.

Swoosh!

At this moment, many Rouli tribesmen rose into the air.

A unique avatar sprung up from the ground.

"Master, what's that?!" Little Yuan'er pointed at a huge wolf avatar in the distance.

"The wolf king avatar. Judging from its appearance, this should be a Six-leaf wolf king avatar," Shen Liangshou replied with a dark expression.

At this moment, the wolf king avatar launched itself into the air. It stepped on its Golden Lotus, on which six leaves were spinning and blooming.

Little Yuan'er asked curiously, "Why aren't their avatars in the form of humans? That's strange... They have Golden Lotuses as well."

Lu Zhou said slowly, "Cultivation is built upon the cultivation methods and sutras left behind by the predecessors. The sutras contain the cultivation concepts of various sects. The concepts serve as guides

for the mind and will. For instance, if I want to shape my energy into a saber, it will be a saber..." He raised his right hand, and an energy saber materialized in his hand.

"If I want to turn it into a sword, it will be a sword..." The energy saber morphed into an energy sword. Then, it transformed into various shapes before Lu Zhou finally clenched his fist to disperse the energy.

"It's the same with avatars... However, it's difficult to change the shapes of avatars after they're formed. Usually, its form is fixed in the early stages of cultivation. When the Confucian, Buddhist, and Daoist Sects fought for dominance, human cultivation reached a sort of golden era... 30,000 years have passed since then, and cultivation methods have branched out into numerous categories. The three different branches gave rise to three types of avatars. The Other Tribesmen who're influenced by Great Yan would cultivate the cultivation methods of Great Yan and obtain a humanoid avatar. On the other hand, those that are not influenced by Great Yan followed their own ancestral beliefs. The Rouli tribesmen worship the wolf king, therefore, they possess wolf king avatars."

"Oh." Little Yuan'er nodded.

"Ding! Instructed Little Yuan'er. Reward: 200 merit points."

Shen Liangshou cupped his fists and said, "I'm enlightened."

Little Yuan'er continued to ask, "Master, are there really 10,000 Other Tribes?"

Lu Zhou was not too familiar with this topic. He could only give a general answer.

However, to his surprise, Sheng Liangshou answered with a smile, "Indeed, there are 10,000 Other Tribes recorded in the books... Liang province's city alone has tribesmen from all over Great Yan who speak different languages, let alone Rongxi and Rongbei. Throughout the years, they have been assimilated through wars. As time went by, it gradually led to the current state."

"As amazing as Great Yan?"

"I won't go so far as to say that," Shen Liangshou replied.

Little Yuan'er pointed at the wolf king avatar in the air and said, "Why does the wolf king avatar have a Golden Lotus as well? That is, if they hadn't learned Great Yan's cultivation methods in secret..."

"Uh..." Shen Liangshou was stumped by the question. He had never considered this before.

"Master... why is that so?"

'Little Yuan'er's asking too many questions today.'

Lu Zhou's expression was calm. Fortunately, the skin on his wizened face was sufficiently thick. Nobody could read his thoughts. However, he found it strange as well. Even with Ji Tiandao's rich experience, he found no answer in his memories.

If it were the theory of the cultivation methods of the Confucian, Buddhist, and Daoist sects, thoughts supported the spirit and will, and the will determines the appearance of the avatar... If the Other Tribesmen did not understand these theories, why did they manifest Golden Lotuses as well? Who could explain this?

Lu Zhou stroked his beard before he finally said, "Perhaps... It's just like how humans and animals need food for sustenance. They're fundamentally the same."

Little Yuan'er scratched her head to show that she did not understand this.

At this moment, the Six-leaf wolf king avatar lunged at Yang Yan's Six-leaf avatar.

Boom!

Energy flowed turbulently in the air, and a strong gust of wind blew violently.

Anyone who was too close to the fight was swept off their feet by the wind...

"Protector Yang, I'll help you!" Yu Hong shot toward Yang Yan with his Four-leaf avatar in tow.

It was now a two-against-one battle.

The Rouli elite fought more valiantly as the battle dragged on. There were several hundred Lou Lan tribesmen behind him. They supported him with witchcraft spells.

"What a pain!" When Little Yuan'er saw the spells, she stomped her feet. She wanted to charge into the battlefield and slaughter the witchcraft cultivators.

Lu Zhou said, "There's no need to worry about minor witchcraft cultivators."

Without a grand shaman like Mo Li and Ba Ma, these supporting spells would not be able to turn the tides of the battle. Moreover, this was outside Liang Province's city. There was no huge Formation. Witchcraft was not very powerful here.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The Rouli elite launched three attacks in quick succession. His wolf king avatar split into three. Two of them pounced at Yang Yan while the other pounced at Yu Hong.

Yang Yan retreated hastily. He moved his avatar toward the city wall.

Yu Hong was only a Four-leaf cultivator. Having been hit by that heavy blow, he reeled. Halfway in the air, he recalled his avatar.

"That Rouli elite is powerful!" Little Yuan'er was shocked. Her urge to charge into the battlefield was instantly quelled. She quickly hugged her master's arm.

"The wolf king avatar has great explosive power and has amazing offenses... Yang Yan must've spent too much of his energy before this battle. If this were a fair battle, Yang Yan would never lose," Lu Zhou said.

"Oh."

The problem was, there was no fairness in the world.

The archers on the city wall nocked their energy arrows and shot volleys after volleys arrow at the flying Other Tribesmen.

At this moment, a cultivator flew toward the city wall and announced loudly, "This is bad... the Fourth Prince is launching a counterattack from the south!"

Yang Yan hovered in midair. The city wall was too vast. He could not even see who had made the announcement, let alone Lu Zhou and the others who were standing on the crowded city wall.

Yang Yan said, "Liu Bing has colluded with the Other Tribesmen. Notify Mister Seventh of this!"

"Understood!"

The Nether Sect was instantly put in a precarious situation. They were pincered.

At the moment, they could rely on the city wall and the protection of the Formation. There was no rush for now. However, if this dragged on, the Nether Sect would surely fall into a disadvantageous position.

'What's Si Wuya playing at?'

Chapter 402: Yu Zhenghai Could Turn The Tides

The cultivators who were perched on the branches gazed at the wolf king.

Someone cursed, "The Other Tribesmen are insufferable bullies! They're despicable! Although the Nether Sect's on the Fiend Path, they know enough to oppose the Other Tribes at least. What's the Fourth Prince, Liu Bing, thinking by colluding with the Other Tribes?"

"Why aren't they activating the Formation?"

"They can't. The Nether Sect easily conquered this city because the Formations have been nullified... If the six great generals of the Fourth Prince are here, the Nether Sect will be in trouble."

They continued their discussion. The strongest among them was only in the Brahman Sea Eight Meridians realm. They could not be of any help at all. At most, they could help clean up the small fries when the battle was nearing its end.

Yang Yan hovered in the air. He frowned as he looked at the Rouli elites in front of him.

Meanwhile, Yu Hong was not at as high an altitude as he was before. A loud explosion reverberated in the air as he flew back and crashed on the city wall.

The city wall was damaged. However, since it was ridiculously thick, it did not crumble.

Yu Hong fell to the ground. He supported his weight with one hand as he spat out a mouthful of blood.

The Nether Sect had suffered considerable losses. Their opponents were in no better shape as well. Both sides were in a similar state.

Yang Yan said loudly, "Ha Luo, the people of Rouli have always been subservient to Great Yan. Are you trying to rebel?" His thunderous voice resonated through the city wall and the city.

The Rouli elite, Ha Luo, was also hovering in the air in the distance. He crossed his arms and said disdainfully, "To quote the words of your own people, 'The times have changed...'"

"Do you really think Great Yan is weak?" Yang Yan asked. If Great Yan was truly weak, the Nether Sect would have long conquered it. Would they have waited for the Other Tribes to make a move?

“... Liu Bing has promised us three of Liang Province’s ten cities if we help him take down the Nether Sect,” Ha Luo replied. In other words, could the Nether Sect make a better offer? There were no such things as eternal enemies in the world. Benefit was all that mattered. Ha Luo’s words were loaded. If the Nether Sect could offer four cities or more, the Other Tribesmen would turn against Liu Bing without hesitation.

When he heard this, Lu Zhou was slightly taken aback. Liu Bing had been at the borders for many years. Why would he resort to such a humiliating act? The people who lived at the borders were the ones who truly understood how difficult it was to gain every inch of land. Every bit of Great Yan’s territory was paid for by the blood of the valiant warriors. How could they give them away this easily?

“Alas, you’re up against the Nether Sect.” Yang Yan’s soundwave was imposing.

“Yang Yan, we’ve fought for three days and three nights, all the way from the barren plains in the west to Liang Province’s city. You’re skilled, I’ll give you that... If you know what’s good for you, you’ll obediently surrender.” Ha Luo’s soundwave rolled out.

A number of Lou Lan cultivators rose into the air and gathered. They were all cultivators. They did not have any mortals in their troops. There were easily more than 2,000 of them.

On the Nether Sect’s side, there were only more than 1,000 cultivators.

The people of Rouli and Lou Lan had the upper hand in terms of numbers.

Boom!

Rumble!

The sound of colliding avatars reached them from high above the eastern skies.

Every cultivator turned to look. It was too far away. They could only see a brief flash of golden light.

“Catching a turtle in a jar?” Shen Liangshou wondered. “Or maybe, a diversion?”

“What do you mean?” Little Yuan’er did not understand Shen Liangshou’s words.

“Si Wuya isn’t dumb. There’s a chance that Yang Yan is only a bait. When the time comes, the Nether Sect will sound a full retreat. The wolf won’t leave the city easily once it’s inside,” Shen Liangshou said.

Lu Zhou looked at Shen Liangshou. His analysis seemed to make sense. He immediately held Little Yuan’er’s hand and said, “Let’s go.” It was better to be safe than sorry.

The Other Tribesmen launched another wave of attack. Some of their men flew up to the city wall.

This time, Yang Yan said decisively, “Retreat.”

Lu Zhou, Little Yuan’er, and Shen Liangshou leaped off the city wall and flew toward the center of the city at a low altitude.

The situation was too chaotic. There were cultivators everywhere.

“Master, what about the commoners?” Little Yuan’er asked.

Shen Liangshou shook his head and said, "There's no need to worry. On the first night of the Nether Sect's attack... most of the civilians were already evacuated. This isn't some prehistoric era. The evacuation was done quickly."

"No wonder we didn't see many people when we arrived." Little Yuan'er was hit with a sudden realization.

The three of them flew side by side as they observed the situation in the city.

Although most of the civilians had been evacuated, there were still many cultivators and mortals inside the city. They were looting the residences and establishments while all hell broke loose around them. Shen Liangshou was one of these people. There was never a shortage of such individuals regardless of the era.

"Look toward the east." Shen Liangshou pointed east.

The cultivators who were watching the show from atop the branches had stopped to witness a shocking scene.

Two avatars, both 70 to 80 feet tall, flew side by side. Behind them, a handful of avatars followed closely.

"The Nether Sect's remaining Great Protectors! There's a huge flying chariot as well!"

"This is bad! The Nether Sect's retreating!"

The cultivators leaped off the branches and began heading east.

Lu Zhou decided to land as he looked at the three Great Protectors flying south. They were soon reunited with Yang Yan before they disappeared.

Lu Zhou frowned slightly. 'As expected, that rascal is drawing the enemy in!'

When an army of more than 1,000 men chose to retreat on such short notice, they were clearly planning something.

They looked at the western city wall.

The people of Rouli and Lou Lan had entered the city. They were flying slowly in a square formation made out of roughly 2,000 men. They flew at such a speed because they were wary of traps in the city. The witchcraft cultivators flew at the forefront. They kept unleashing purple radiant circles as they looked out for any Formations in the vicinity.

"Let's go."

The battle was now between Liu Bing and the Other Tribes.

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"In here." Lu Zhou pointed at one of the buildings in the city.

The three of them entered the building. The moment they went in, they heard the sounds of a fierce battle breaking out in the south.

The Expansive Heavenly Energy had been unleashed.

“Didn’t the Nether Sect retreat to the south? Why is there a battle now?” Shen Liangshou went to the southern side of the building and gazed out the window. He could not help but widen his eyes. “Great Yan’s army?!”

A lady in embroidered clothes wielded a pink umbrella as she engaged the Nether Sect in a fierce battle.

“Sister Jingyi?” Little Yuan’er recognized the lady.

“Li Jingyi?” Lu Zhou looked out as well.

That Seven-leaf female avatar, those shocking moves, there was no doubting it was Li Jingyi.

‘Wasn’t Wei Zhuoyan defeated in Yi Province? Why is he here in Liang Province?’

Lu Zhou remembered Jiang Aijian. ‘That fellow. Is he Si Wuya’s bane?’

The tides of the battle turned again.

“Li Jingyi’s not a match for the Four Great Protectors on her own. The Divine Capital must’ve sent Eight-leaf elites... It’s over... The Nether Sect is done for!” Shen Liangshou said.

The Other Tribesmen, Liu Bing, and Li Jingyi. The Nether Sect was pressured on three fronts.

On the other hand, the Four Great Protectors hovered in the air.

Shen Liangshou’s heart raced when he saw this, it seemed like a checkmate to him. Would the greatest Fiend Sect under the heavens be crushed at the battle in Liang Province?

“I wouldn’t be so sure about that.” Lu Zhou shook his head.

“You don’t think so, old mister?”

“If Yu Zhenghai is here... He could turn the tides,” Lu Zhou said.

Shen Liangshou’s eyes widened.

Lu Zhou, Little Yuan’er, and Shen Liangshou looked at the Nether Sect’s flying chariot at the same time. Was Yu Zhenghai onboard the flying chariot?

Chapter 403: Checkmate

Shen Liangshou was in no mood to think about those matters. His mind was currently focused on finding a way out of here. The most powerful forces were gathered in Liang Province. It seemed coincidental and premeditated at the same time.

Liang Province City was suddenly silent. The avatars vanished. The surging of Primal Qi and energy died down as well.

Lu Zhou looked at the sky above Liang Province’s city through the window.

Nearly 1,000 Nether Sect cultivators surrounded the huge flying chariot. They positioned themselves back-to-back in three directions.

The square formation to the west was formed by 2,000 men from Lou Lan and Rouli. The people of Lou Lan wore long, flamboyant robes with bright feathers on their heads. The people of Rouli seemed more capable and experienced. There were shades of red, blue, and green gleaming in their eyes. When they saw Liu Bing's troops, the Other Tribesmen retracted their avatars and witchcraft spells. They shifted their square formation. The people of Rouli were now in front.

To the north were the current Fourth Prince of Great Yan, Liu Bing, and his six great generals. Apart from his troops below, there were no less than 2,000 cultivators in the air. Liu Bing sat atop a red war chariot. His sharp eyes were fixed on the Nether Sect's huge chariot.

To the east was Li Jingyi. There was a small flying chariot behind her that was covered by a veil. Since the rider could repel the Nether Sect's Four Great Protectors, the rider was certainly not Wei Zhuoyan. It had to be one of the eight chiefs of the Imperial guard sent by the palace. However, without seeing the person's face, it was difficult to be completely sure.

The troops of the three forces surrounded the Nether Sect's flying chariot.

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Shen Liangshou lowered his voice and said, "The Nether Sect can only flee south... Alas, that's where most of the Formation traps are."

"You don't wish to see the Nether Sect captured?" Lu Zhou looked at Shen Liangshou.

Shen Liangshou shook his head and said, "I don't."

"However, if Yu Zhenghai isn't here right now, this is a checkmate." Lu Zhou looked at the flying chariot in the air with his hands on his back.

Little Yuan'er snorted and said, "How shameless of them to win by numbers."

Shen Liangshou began to view Little Yuan'er in a different light after her little outburst. 'This little girl seemed fierce back then, but now, she looks kind of cute.'

Lu Zhou said, "Remember, there's nothing such as fairness in the cultivation world."

"I know, master." Little Yuan'er nodded obediently.

...

In the sky.

The Fourth Prince, Liu Bing, was the one to break the long silence.

Liu Bing stood on his war chariot. He cupped his fists at Li Jingyi and said, "I wonder which Imperial guard chief who came to help up in such a timely manner?"

"The Divine Capital's Guardian of the West, Xiang Lie, offers his greetings, Your Fourth Highness." The voice was deep and powerful. It sounded slightly weathered as well.

Everyone said that the Divine Capital was a den for crouching tigers and hidden dragons. It was true. There was even a rumor that half of the Eight-leaf experts in the world were in the Divine Capital.

However, this had yet to be verified. As time went by, the people understood that regardless of the profundity of their cultivation base, they had to keep a low profile in the Divine Capital.

"I see. It's Uncle Xiang. I've been rude." Liu Bing said as he cupped his hands together.

The Other Tribesmen were slightly shocked. Great Yan was more powerful than the 10,000 tribes for a reason. Their respect for experts alone was something the other tribes could learn from.

Ha Luo laughed loudly and said, "It's been a while, Your Fourth Highness."

Liu Bing snorted. As old adversaries, he knew Ha Luo very well. He said, "Ha Luo, I'll put our past grudges aside for now. At the moment, it's more important to deal with the Nether Sect."

"That won't do." Ha Luo raised a hand and wagged his index finger. "Isn't that tantamount to me allowing you to attack me after you've dealt with your internal dispute?"

"Impudent!" Xiang Lie bellowed from behind Li Jingyi. His voice thundered and rolled toward Ha Luo.

Among the huge square formation, the witchcraft cultivators' robes shone with a purple light. They resonated with each other.

Whizz!

They negated the soundwave.

Even so, a frightened expression appeared on Ha Luo's face. He was clearly shaken by the soundwave. He asked, "Your Fourth Highness, is this what your hospitality looks like?"

"Uncle Xiang's temper has always been this way... You're from Rouli, and the witchcraft cultivators from Lou Lan are behind you. We're only taking what we need from each other, you and I," Liu Bing replied.

Ha Luo said in a deep voice, "The Nether Sect's Yu Zhenghai once charged into Lou Lan alone and killed up to 10,000 cultivators. He used his strength to mistreat my people. I will avenge my kinsmen, and I won't rest until I've succeeded! I'll take you up on your offer today, my adversary."

Lu Zhou shook his head when he heard this. Since Yu Zhenghai left the Evil Sky Pavilion, his actions had always been controversial. If Lou Lan was not subservient to Great Yan, it would be a big deal to kill the Other Tribesmen in Lou Lan. However, Lou Lan had paid its tithes and even offered its own princesses since it pledged its allegiance to Great Yan. Yu Zhenghai's actions had put great strain on the relationship between Great Yan and Lou Lan.

Shen Liangshou said skeptically, "Although Sect Master Yu is the Evil Sky Pavilion's first disciple, he's not someone who acts without rhyme or reason. He won't attack the people of Lou Lan for no reason."

"Not someone who acts without rhyme and reason?" Lu Zhou asked, raising an eyebrow.

"If he's not charismatic, he wouldn't be able to stay the master of a sect with hundreds of thousands of members or gain the unswerving loyalty of the Four Great Protectors," Shen Liangshou said.

Managing one's subordinates was an art.

Lu Zhou nodded. In this regard, his host, Ji Tiandao, was not as accomplished as his own disciple, Yu Zhenghai.

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In the sky.

A voice dripping with contempt rang from the Nether Sect's flying chariot. "Isn't it too early to say talk about taking down the Nether Sect?"

The Azure Dragon Hall's First Seat, Hua Chongyang, walked out in his long robes. He looked around before finally resting his gaze on the flying chariot behind Li Jingyi. The only person the Four Great Protectors were wary about was Xiang Lie.

Liu Bing said, "Hua Chongyang... All these years, you've wreaked havoc all around Great Yan. The Imperial family has always viewed this as a quarrel of the cultivation world and turned a blind eye to it... However, this doesn't mean that you can do whatever you like! How dare you covet the Imperial family's authority?!"

"The powerful rules and the mediocre serves. This has always been the way of the world... Have the people ever enjoyed a good day in their lives since Liu Gu ascended the throne?" Hua Chongyang asked.

Those who covet the throne had always argued in the people's favor.

Liu Bing laughed and said, "Hua Chongyang... You're not fit to talk to me yet. Tell your sect master to show himself..."

"Who do you think you are? You think you're worthy of meeting our sect master just because you want to?"

Liu Bing said, "It's useless to try to win with words. You don't have a choice."

The cultivators on three sides advanced slightly. They were now 100 meters away from the Nether Sect.

The atmosphere was tense. A great battle could break out at any moment.

Hua Chongyang calmly said, "You might not be a match for the Nether Sect if we get serious about this battle. Xiang Lie... are you brave enough to withstand a blade strike from my sect master?" He projected his voice to the flying chariot behind Li Jingyi.

Onboard the flying chariot, Xiang Lie frowned. His hands on the chair's armrest clenched into fists. His knuckles whitened, and he shook slightly. He said nothing.

Hua Chongyang continued, "Liu Bing, would the six generals behind you dare to fight Bai Yuqing and me?"

Hua Chongyang and Bai Yuqing were both Seven-leaf cultivators. They were more than enough to deal with the six generals. Among the six, there were four Five-leaves, one Seven-leaf, and one Six-leaf cultivators. In theory, Hua Chongyang and Bai Yuqing had the upper hand.

"Ha Luo, you've pursued Yang Yan for so long. Do you really think that Yang Yan and Di Qing can't take you down?" Hua Chongyang asked. It had to be said, he was adept at handling the situation. When he

compared their strength in this manner, the Nether Sect did appear to have the upper hand. So what if they were going up against three forces? If they were to fight in earnest, the outcome was not set in stone.

“You can save your psychological warfare. Yu Zhenghai, if you’re man enough, come out and fight me now!”

Boom!

Xiang Lie slammed his palms on the armrests, and he flew into the air. He looked down at the Nether Sect’s flying chariot with his hands on his back. His body was wrapped in layers of energy. Various shining, golden glyphs and talisman seals appeared around him.

When Shen Liangshou saw this, he said in a hushed voice, “Xiang Lie is from the Celestial Masters Sect.”

The Celestial Masters Sect was skilled in Daoist talismans. As the name suggested, they imposed Daoist seals on talisman seals. The Celestial Masters Sect was a major sect that developed the Daoist and talisman seals to a great height.

“Come out, Yu Zhenghai!” Xiang Lie looked down from the skies.

Chapter 404: Si Wuya’s Weakness

Xiang Lie’s temper was similar to Duanmu Sheng’s temper. They both had a quick and fiery temper. He did not seem to care if the people around him could withstand the impact from the soundwaves he sent out with his Primal Qi. He did as he liked.

The warriors above and below him had to cover their ears in fear and trepidation.

Everyone’s attention was focused on the flying chariot. They were all waiting for a reply. Most of them were rather certain that Yu Zhenghai was not present at all. If he were here, surely he would not have submitted himself to being surrounded on multiple sides?

Hua Chongyang was about to reply when a soft and melodious voice rang from Liu Bing’s war chariot. “Uncle Xiang.”

Xiang Lie frowned. He looked at Liu Bing’s war chariot.

Everyone’s gaze shifted from Xiang Lie to the war chariot. Clearly, the voice belonged to a lady. They saw a beautiful lady with charming features.

“Yong Ning?”

A graceful and delicate lady stepped into the air from the war chariot. She wore red clothes and had pearls on her hair. Her eyes twinkled like the stars in the skies. This was Great Yan’s Princess Yong Ning, Liu Wenjun.

...

In a hidden building.

When Little Yuan’er saw Princess Yong Ning, she giggled and said, “Master, Sister Yong Ning is pretty.”

Lu Zhou waved his hand. A weak energy barrier appeared around them. He thought it was better to be cautious. After all, their voices could alert the elites to their presence.

...

Princess Yong Ning curtsied at Xiang Lie.

However, her gesture frightened Xiang Lie. Although he was older than her and was respected by her, he did not dare to allow the princess to bow at him. He was merely a subject of the empire after all. He raised a palm, and a surge of energy held Princess Yong Ning in place. He said, "I do not deserve this good fortune, princess."

Princess Yong Ning smiled faintly. She seemed to bask in the glory of spring as she said, "Uncle Xiang, didn't you go to Yi Province?"

"I was just passing by." It was clearly an excuse.

Liang Province was to the north of Yi Province. It was not a place that he would pass by.

"So, it's Princess Yong Ning..." The Rouli chief, Ha Luo, bowed at Yong Ning. He placed his right hand on his left shoulder as he smiled.

At this moment, Liu Bing said, "Yong Ning, this is not the time for casual conversations."

Princess Yong Ning asked, "Are we really going to fight?"

Xiang Lie frowned and said, "Yong Ning, if you're planning to plead for the Nether Sect, you'd better forget it... Please step aside. Nobody would be able to look after you when the battle starts."

Liu Bing looked at Yong Ning and said, "Do you know why my father allowed me to bring you here?"

How could Yong Ning not know? However, she was neither annoyed nor angry. She only calmly smiled as she said, "Don't mind me..." Her words seemed to be directed at Liu Bing and the people in the flying chariot.

"Bring her down!" Liu Bing waved his hand. Two of the generals brought Yong Ning back to the war chariot.

The moment Liu Bing's voice faded, Hua Chongyang made the first move. An avatar that was 80 to 90 feet tall appeared. "Bai Yuqing, fight alongside me."

"Roger!" Bai Yuqing did not unleash his avatar. The two of them charged at Liu Bing at lightning speed.

The flying chariot retreated. The six generals' expressions darkened as they went up to meet them.

The two sides were immediately engaged in a fierce battle. Energies from both sides collided.

The soldiers below retreated.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The loud collision between the avatars rang in everyone's ears. The battle was a dazzling sight.

Ha Luo summoned his wolf king avatar again. He sneered as he looked at the flying chariot.

“Ha Luo, I’m your opponent...” Yang Yan and Di Qing leaped from the flying chariot and charged toward the square formation of the Other Tribesmen.

At this moment, the Four Great Protectors had left the flying chariot.

The cultivators around the Nether Sect’s flying chariot gathered and circulated their Primal Qi. They cast a huge barrier that enveloped the chariot.

Xiang Lie laughed. “Such is the will of the heavens. Not even your four subordinates have the chance to protect you! Yu Zhenghai... Die!” He raised a hand and struck with his palm! A huge talisman seal flew toward the flying chariot.

Boom!

The talisman seal landed on the flying chariot and vanished.

“Hm?” Xiang Lie frowned. He looked at the Formation veins on the flying chariot and exclaimed in shock, “The Formation veins of the Celestial Masters Sect?”

Meanwhile, Yang Yan and Di Qing were engaged with the Other Tribesmen in an intense battle. It felt as though the entire Liang Province’s city was occupied by avatars.

The cultivators inside the city looked up at the eye-catching battle in the sky.

The Four Great Protectors somehow managed to stand their own ground against the two forces. However, how would the remaining men around the flying chariot defend against the attacks of the Eight-leaf elite, Xiang Lie?

It was exceptionally quiet in the flying chariot. The Nether Sect disciples defended the flying chariot with unflagging effort. They believed in the person onboard the flying chariot even if it cost them their lives.

Xiang Lie said, “Yu Zhenghai, I’ve underestimated you. Are you planning to cower in there your entire life?”

There was no reply.

...

Inside the building.

Lu Zhou did not pay attention to the Four Great Protectors’ battles. Instead, his attention was completely focused on the flying chariot. He was also wondering if Yu Zhenghai was onboard the flying chariot. Yu Zhenghai was the only person who could turn the tides of the battle.

...

Xiang Lie laughed. He raised his palm again and struck at the flying chariot. A huge offensive Daoist talisman seal shone with dazzling brilliance.

Boom!

The flying chariot swayed.

Creak! Creak! Creak!

The Formation veins were beginning to crack.

“This is bad. Sect master... I’m coming!” The Azure Dragon Hall’s Second Seat, Yu Hong, leaped onto the chariot.

Meanwhile, Hua Chongyang and Bai Yuqing had the upper hand in their battle. Hua Chongyang glanced at the flying chariot and said, “Bai Yuqing, reinforce the flying chariot. I’ll handle this!”

“Roger!” Bai Yuqing circulated his Expansive Heavenly Energy. From his position in the air, he charged toward Xiang Lie.

Hua Chongyang immediately felt the pressure on him rise as he fought against six opponents. Six avatars surrounded him like a game of Go.

The thunderous clashing sounds showed no signs of stopping.

For a battle such as this, the opponents no longer had the leisure to mind the buildings on the ground. Most of the city was now reduced to rubble.

Bai Yuqing came at Xiang Lie from the side.

Xiang Lie sneered and said, “A Seven-leaf cultivator is just a Seven-leaf cultivator, after all...” He joined his palms together and made hand signs. Dozens of talismans shot toward Bai Yuqing.

Bai Yuqing looked shocked as he activated his Expansive Heavenly Energy!

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!

There was a difference in their realms, after all. Bai Yuqing reeled back and spat out a mouthful of fresh blood.

“Kill the Nether Sect’s Four Great Protectors! Yu Zhenghai is not onboard the flying chariot!” Xiang Lie was confident. He knew Yu Zhenghai very well. If Yu Zhenghai were here, he would have already joined the battle. Yu Zhenghai would not hide in the flying chariot.

Xiang Lie’s voice resounded across the battlefield.

Ha Luo sneered. His wolf king avatar grew larger. “Yang Yan, Di Qing... Do you really think that Six-leaf cultivators can lead an army?”

Whizz!

The Golden Lotus under the wolf king avatar’s paws enlarged as well. There was a cracking sound from one edge of the Golden Lotus... a leaf sprouted. Before long, seven leaves spun around the Golden Lotus.

Ha Luo looked domineering as he stood among the people in the square formation.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Yang Yan and Di Qing were immediately sent flying back by the wolf king. The instant their avatars vanished, they spat out a mouthful of blood.

It was clear that Hua Chongyang would not be able to hold it any longer as well.

Xiang Lie nodded in satisfaction before he dove toward the flying chariot.

Boom!

The Formation veins cracked further.

Boom!

The Formation veins shattered.

The more than 1,000 cultivators of the Nether Sect fell from Xiang Lie's two sweeping attacks.

Xiang Lie landed on the flying chariot. His Primal Qi surged. It traveled from his dantian's sea of Qi to the soles of his feet before it flowed throughout the flying chariot. With this, he took control of the Nether Sect's flying chariot!

"As expected, it's empty," Xiang Lie said smugly as he was about to turn to face Hua Chongyang.

Suddenly...

Whoosh!

A figure struck Xiang Lie's back at lightning speed.

As an accomplished cultivator, Xiang Lie had sensed the threat at his back. He quickly activated his protective energy.

"Too late."

Boom!

Xiang Lie stumbled forward. A strange power easily breached his protective energy.

Puh!

He spat out a mouthful of blood.

"Uncle Xiang!" Liu Bing who was hovering above his war chariot cried out. He looked horrified when he witnessed this scene. His eyes immediately found the other person in the chariot

It was... not Yu Zhenghai. Instead, it was the Evil Sky Pavilion's seventh disciple, Si Wuya.

Si Wuya retracted his palm. Several talismans burst into flames in his hands and scattered in the air.

Yu Hong leaped onto the flying chariot while enduring the pain in his body and maintaining the flying chariot's altitude.

"Mister Seventh! You did it!"

Si Wuya walked forward slowly with a calm expression on his face. He walked to the helm of the flying chariot and looked down at Xiang Lie. He said loudly, "You're unlucky. I've been studying the Celestial Masters Sect's mantra for a long time. I didn't expect to be able to use it on you."

The things in the world were either complementary or antagonistic. An Eight-leaf cultivator was not without weaknesses.

Si Wuya had been studying the Celestial Masters Sect's mantras cautiously and conscientiously when he was trying to break his master's mantra some time ago. Apart from that, his Eldest Senior Brother even went through the trouble of procuring a lot of talismans for him to help him break the mantra. He had used all the talismans in one go during his attack. However, this one attack was more than enough.

Boom!

Xiang Lie crashed onto the ground.

Si Wuya knew that Xiang Lie was not dead. However, he was satisfied with gravely injuring Xiang Lie.

Yang Yan, Di Qing, and Bai Yuqing returned, injured.

Hua Chongyang was the only one left fending off his opponents.

Si Wuya looked at Liu Bing and said, "Liu Bing... From the moment you set foot onto Liang Province City, you've lost."

"Hm?"

"Xiang Lie is a minor accident. However, has it ever crossed your mind that the Formations in Liang Province's city's Formation are actually untouched?" Si Wuya's words caused Liu Bing's warriors to exchange glances among themselves.

"You did this on purpose?" Liu Bing's brows were tightly knitted together.

"You can say that... Also, these Other Tribesmen, from the beginning until the end, they're nothing but uncivilized animals to me." Si Wuya's words grated on their ears.

When Ha Luo heard this, he was infuriated. His wolf king avatar was activated again.

Perhaps, they were also angered by Si Wuya's words. The 2,000 witchcraft cultivators in the square formation looked at the skies in unison and released thick purple smoke from their bodies.

The wolf king avatar absorbed the purple smoke and grew larger.

Ha Luo said loudly, "Do you really think you've foreseen everything?"

Bai Yuqing hastily went up to Si Wuya's side and said, "Mister Seventh, I request you to retreat. The plan has succeeded. If we retreat now, Ha Luo will surely turn on Liu Bing!"

Yang Yan and Di Qing bowed as well.

Si Wuya knew that Ha Luo had been holding back. All these years, he and Yu Zhenghai were the only ones who knew how much they understood the Other Tribes.

Retreat?

Act according to plan?

Liu Bing made a grabbing motion. Princess Yong Ning was held up in the air. He had no choice! "Si Wuya, are you bold enough to run away? I won't let you reap the benefits from our battle here."

"Yong Ning?!" Si Wuya frowned.

The three Great Protectors bowed again. "Mister Seventh, please act according to the plan!"

Si Wuya looked at Princess Yong Ning who was being held up in the air.

Yong Ning's expression was calm. She did not panic or struggle. She was even smiling warmly as she looked at Si Wuya on the flying chariot. A hint of satisfaction could be seen in her smile. This was enough for her. She raised her right hand slightly, and an energy sword materialized in her hand.

"Please carry on with your plan..." With a decisive and forceful thrust, Yong Ning stabbed her own chest.

When one was uncertain, it would be easy to fall into a dilemma. When all hell broke loose, the options that were available would seem ridiculously difficult to pick.

The movements of the energy sword were reflected in Si Wuya's eyes. He felt as though something had tugged on his heartstrings. With a tap of his feet, he shot toward Yong Ning like a fired arrow.

"A couple with a bitter fate... The Evil Sky Pavilion's Mister Seventh, this is all both of you will amount to." Within the moving Grand Witchcraft Formation, Ha Luo had forcibly raised his wolf king avatar to the Eight-leaf stage.

The Eight-leaf wolf king flew toward Si Wuya.

"Mister Seventh!" Every fiber in Yong Ning's body told her that she had to remain calm. She wanted to remain calm, but when she saw Si Wuya flying to her, she could not control her expression. and she wanted herself to remain calm as well. "Why?"

Si Wuya had always regarded himself as a cold-blooded man who would never be shaken by anything. However, the moment the energy sword sank into Yong Ning's body, he felt as if his own heart was stabbed.

Blood sprayed everywhere. Her garment was dyed red.

Si Wuya launched countless palm seals in a frenzy. He repelled Liu Bing's war chariot and caught Liu Ning! Unfortunately, the wolf king avatar swiped its claws and leaving gashes on his back.

Boom!

Si Wuya's clothes on his upper body were shredded. He held Princess Yong Ning tightly and fell toward the buildings in the distance like a kite with a severed thread.

Ha Luo was extremely delighted by this. He laughed uproariously. "It seems like I'll be the big winner today!"

He waved his arm. The square formation dissolved. The witchcraft cultivators could not maintain the Eight-leaf avatar for too long. The outcome was set. All that was left was to clean things up. The witchcraft cultivators dove toward the Nether Sect disciples on the ground.

Hua Chongyang could not hold them back. Eventually, he was sent flying by the six generals.

Was everything over?

...

Amidst the rubble...

Si Wuya supported Princess Yong Ning with one arm. For a time, he was speechless. A dark expression could be seen on his face.

He maintained this position for a long time until he no longer could and spat out a mouthful of blood, unable to suppress the surging blood essence in his body.

He had to let go of her as he supported his own weight with both hands on the ground.

Just when Yong Ning was about to fall, Si Wuya willed himself to rise and catch Yong Ning. He looked up at the battlefield.

Did the plan fail, all because of his own recklessness?

The more than 1,000 disciples of the Nether Sect were instantly surrounded by Liu Bing's troops and the people of Lou Lan and Rouli.

Yong Ning opened her eyes slightly. She raised her right hand that was stained with blood and grabbed Si Wuya's arm. She asked weakly, "Why?"

Si Wuya shook his head. His face was pale. He did not know the answer nor did he want an answer... All he knew was, at this moment, it felt as though a huge boulder was weighing down on his heart. His face remained as emotionless and cold as ever like a robot.

Bam!

The huge chariot in the skies broke at this moment.

"Run, now!"

"I can't..." Si Wuya shook his head. He sounded helpless. Without the flying chariot, how was she supposed to escape? At this moment, he felt as though he had let everyone down. The Four Great Protectors, his brethren in the Nether Sect, and Yong Ning who was willing to die for him...

Si Wuya prided himself on being able to handle various situations that were thrown at him. However, at this moment, he was lost.

Yong Ning's blood stained his arm. He could not seem to focus to think of a countermeasure.

He was not only suffering, but he was annoyed to no end as well. He forced himself to remain calm.

'What should I do? Am I going to sit here and look on as everyone else dies before my eyes?'

Creak! Creak! Creak!

An old but energetic figure appeared next to Si Wuya at this moment.

Si Wuya frowned and slowly looked up. He shuddered involuntarily. His eyes were filled with incredulity.

The old man looked indifferent. He was stroking his beard with one hand while the other was resting on his back. A little girl and a nervous middle-aged man stood next to him.

The world seemed to have fallen silent at this moment.

After some time, Si Wuya finally spoke with a trembling voice, "Ma... master?!"

Lu Zhou shook his head. He said, "Rascal..."

"I... This disciple..." Si Wuya could not string his words together. He seemed to have lost his vocal cords.

Chapter 405: The Peacock Spreading its Plume

When Shen Liangshou saw Si Wuya, he felt extremely nervous. After all, this was one of the most legendary personas of the Evil Sky Pavilion. The mere thought of being able to greet him at such close range was something wonderful and exciting. However, what did Si Wuya mean by 'master'? He was baffled. He turned to look at the old man standing next to him...

The Four Great Protectors clashed violently with their opponents. Energy seals sailed in the sky. The sounds of the battle made it difficult for one to remain calm.

Lu Zhou lowered his gaze and look at the scene in front of him. He asked, "Is this your choice?"

Si Wuya pushed and nudged Princess Yong Ning toward Little Yuan'er. "Little Junior Sister."

Little Yuan'er supported Yong Ning and went to stand at the side.

Si Wuya was bare-chested. He wiped the blood off the edge of his lips. He kowtowed at Lu Zhou respectfully. "Master, please help me."

Shen Liangshou. "... He stumbled backward, his eyes wide. He stumbled back again, putting some distance between him and the others. He looked at Lu Zhou again. 'Yes, that bearing, that air...'

The old man whom Shen Liangshou worshipped and respected was right there before his eyes. This was the Evil Sky Pavilion's Patriarch, the first name on the blacklist. The master of the nine disciples. Ji Tiandao.

Thud!

Shen Liangshou fell limply on his buttocks.

Little Yuan'er turned to look at him. She asked, "What are you doing?"

"No-nothing... It's nothing." Shen Luangshou wanted to cry. He suddenly remembered Little Yuan'er had ordered him to kneel before her master in Shen Villa back. Who knew she was not lying?

Meanwhile, Lu Zhou was not concerned about Shen Liangshou's feelings. Moreover, even if Shen Liangshou knew from the beginning, it would not change the outcome. He said to Si Wuya, "What does this have to do with me?"

Lu Zhou's expression remained apathetic as always. 'You're the ones who brought this upon yourselves... Now, that you're in this state, you expect me to clean up after you?'

...

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The Nether Sect's huge chariot crashed to the ground under the attacks of the wolf king avatar. It destroyed numerous buildings in the process.

One leaf detached from the wolf king avatar. However, it still possessed the might of a Seven-leaf avatar.

The Four Great Protectors had retreated since they were injured. Moreover, the casualties on the Nether Sect's side was not trivial.

Liu Bing did not move. His six generals hovered in the air and did not continue to attack. The changes on the battlefield were as such. They could never let down their guard against any enemy, even more so when they were facing the Other Tribesmen.

However, Ha Luo would not let such a rare opportunity slip past his fingers. "Your Fourth Highness, what are you standing there for? Can you really rest in peace when the Nether Sect's Four Great Protectors remain?"

Liu Bing's brows were knitted together. He looked at Ha Luo who seemed to be beside himself with joy. He could foresee that Ha Luo would bare his fangs at him after the Nether Sect was dealt with. However, he had no choice but to order for his men to continue their assault on the Four Great Protectors. "Li Jingyi, you're Wei Zhuoyan's subordinate. General Xiang is injured. Shouldn't you stop them?"

Li Jingyi who was hovering in the air with the paper umbrella seemed stunned. From the beginning up until now, she had yet to make a single move. She had been hiding in the corner where the others would not notice. However, she was still found by Liu Bing.

...

Three avatars flew toward Si Wuya.

Meanwhile, several palm seals rained down on them as wide-area attacks.

Fuh!

Several palm prints flew out horizontally.

The buildings around them crumbled.

The sun's rays fell on Si Wuya, Lu Zhou, Little Yuan'er, and Shen Liangshou.

At this moment, many pairs of eyes were looking at them...

Liu Bing turned to look.

Li Jingyi turned to look.

The Four Great Protectors were stunned.

Why did that old man look familiar?

Ha Luo and Xiang Lie, who was struggling to get up from the rubble, were looking as well.

“Who’s that?”

Liu Bing felt his breath quickened. His heart felt as though it was going to jump out of his chest. ‘Why is he here?!’

Xiang Lie had been living deep in the Divine Capital for a long time. He had never seen Ji Tiandao before. He merely regarded the old man before Si Wuya with a puzzled expression. ‘Who is this old man? Why is Si Wuya kneeling before him?’

Li Jingyi appeared unperturbed. She seemed to have expected this all along.

“Regardless, just kill them all.” Ha Luo waved his hand.

The people of Lou Lan and Rouli below him charged toward Si Wuya in a frenzy like a pack of wild wolves.

Lu Zhou glanced at them. It was rather impossible for him to extricate and dissociate himself from this situation at this moment.

Si Wuya said again, “If you’re willing to make a move, master, I will return to the Evil Sky Pavilion and accept any kind of punishment you mete out!”

Bam!

Si Wuya’s forehead touched the ground.

Lu Zhou stroked his beard and looked at Si Wuya as he said, “I hope that you won’t disappoint me.” He flipped his hand. The Peacock Plume materialized in his hand.

The faint starlight gave the Peacock Plume a dazzling radiance.

“Go.” Lu Zhou tossed the Peacock Plume out, and it flew toward Si Wuya.

Si Wuya was overjoyed. He pushed away from the ground and grabbed the Peacock Plume before he flew into the air.

“What’s that in his hand?” Ha Luo was puzzled. All he saw was Si Wuya tossing the Peacock Plume in his hand into the air.

The Peacock Plume spun swiftly and buzzed. Then, it split into two, forming the shape of a fan. Golden glittering energy wrapped around the Peacock Plume...

Fuh!

The two sections of the Peacock Plume attached themselves to Si Wuya's back.

Lu Zhou looked up slightly. He nodded. "The peacock spreads its plume."

"This is bad! Get back!" Ha Luo cried out immediately.

They felt that the Primal Qi in their surroundings were being sucked away by the Peacock Plume. The Primal Qi was absorbed by the Peacock Plume and formed the wings of the peacock. This was the Peacock Plume's characteristic. It was as beautiful as a peacock with its plume spread out, brilliant and dazzling. Yet, while one was captivated by this shocking display, it had already claimed one's life.

Si Wuya advanced in the air. He remained expressionless as he flapped his huge wings. With every beat of his wings, countless energy needles shot out.

Bam! Bam! Bam!

The people from Rouli and Lou Lan were startled by Si Wuya's sudden move. When they wanted to turn around and run away, it was already too late. The energy needles that dotted the skies shot toward them like a tempest. The attack rained down on them with the force of a tidal wave and pierced their chests.

The people of Rouli fell to the ground...

"Ding! Killed a target. Reward: 10 merit points."

"Ding! Killed a target. Reward: 10 merit points."

Lu Zhou was not surprised to hear the notifications. Although it was a meager number, it was better than nothing.

The people of Lou Lan were witchcraft cultivators to begin with. They had weak defenses. At this moment, the needles that stuck out from their bodies made them look like porcupines.

"Mister Seventh?" Hua Chongyang was invigorated.

"The peacock's spread plume... It's been a long time since I last saw it..." Bai Yuqing wiped away the blood from the edge of his lips as he exclaimed excitedly.

"I remember the last time this was used was during the battle on Pingdu Mountain. Mister Seventh and the sect master joined hands to lay down the foundations for the Nether Sect... I didn't expect to see this again after all these years..."

The other three Great Protectors gazed at the horizons.

Si Wuya's huge wings were dazzling. He swept through the Other Tribesmen and Liu Bing's troops mercilessly.

"Retreat!"

"Fall back!"

Liu Bing barked hastily. He had no time to explain the situation to his subordinates. Even his six generals were flustered by this development. They kept falling backward.

Ha Luo seemed incredulous. His eyes widened. His rage and hatred were completely ignited. His eyes were bloodshot. "You will die today!"

Ha Luo howled at the skies. His wolf king avatar stepped on his Seven-leaf Golden Lotus and dove from a higher spot.

Fuh!

He charged toward Si Wuya like a comet.

Si Wuya pulled his wings toward himself. He shielded himself with his wings.

Boom!

Si Wuya reeled back. As he did so, he spread his wings and flapped.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Needles shot toward the wolf king avatar.

Ha Luo moved at lightning speed as he charged toward his target with the avatar.

"A Six-leaf is a Six-leaf, after all!" Ha Luo plunged into his wolf king avatar and became one with it.

The avatar seemed to be covered in a translucent, shining golden network of veins.

Bam! Bam! Bam!

Ha Luo repelled the energy needles.

The six generals flew up to the war chariot.

"Your Highness, this is a great chance to take down the Nether Sect and the Other Tribes in one go!" the grand general said with a bow.

Smack!

Liu Bing slapped him.

The grand general was puzzled and flustered by this gesture.

Liu Bing gulped before he said, "Look for an opening... and run..."

Run? Why would they run when they had the upper hand? The other generals were taken aback. No matter from which angle one looked at it, they were clearly going to benefit from this situation.

Meanwhile, Ha Luo dove toward Si Wuya with his wolf king avatar again.

Si Wuya frowned. He pulled his wings together and retreated swiftly.

"Mister Seventh!" Hua Chongyang, Bai Yuqing, Yang Yan, and Di Qing exclaimed in shock.

Whoosh!

On the flattened patch of rubble, a faint purple energy arrow shot out. The energy arrow was as thick as a tree trunk. The supersized energy arrow that looked like a heavenly pillar sailed through the air. Its size made a hard-to-miss sight.

Everyone's attention was attracted by this.

The meteor-like energy arrow sailed from the right to the left before it hit the wolf king's forehead.

Bam!

The arrow landed true.

The wolf king avatar shattered immediately.

Ha Luo who was hovering in the air immediately doubled over. He clutched his chest as he looked past Si Wuya incredulously. He saw an old man who was standing level with the buildings.

Lu Zhou stroked his beard as he recalled the bow. The bow spun in the air and reverted to Unnamed. Then, it shot into his sleeve and disappeared.

It seemed like the terrifying arrow had been shot by the old man. As Ha Luo looked at the old man, blood trickled out from the edges of his lips, eyes, nostrils, and ears.

Drip!

His blood fell to the ground. The sunlight shone on the droplets... The blood of an Other Tribesman...

Splat!

It fell to the ground...

"I will never allow my disciple to be bullied by the likes of you."

Chapter 406: Abandon Wisdom

It was him. He was not mistaken. Liu Bing found it difficult to breathe at this moment, it was as though something was lodged in his windpipe, and he could not get it out no matter how he tried. He gulped repeatedly. So what if he was a prince? If he had lightning speed, he would escape without any hesitation. However, after witnessing that arrow shot, he pushed that thought out of his mind. Was he so naive to think that he would be able to escape?

The skies were clear, and there was a warm, gentle breeze.

Ha Luo, with one hand on his chest, could no longer maintain flight and dropped to the ground with a loud boom.

"Ding! Killed a target. Reward: 1,500 merit points."

Lu Zhou stepped into the air as though he was on land and flew higher into the sky. He was Ji Tiandao, the great villain who defeated countless enemies in the past.

Shen Liangshou was kneeling on the ground as he watched Lu Zhou excitedly. Lu Zhou was his idol! Who cared about being the first on the whitelist, Xiang Lie, the prince, or the others? All of them dimmed in comparison to Lu Zhou.

Hua Chongyang, Bai Yuqing, Yang Yan, and Di Qing felt as though they were boosted with energy at this moment. They could barely contain their excitement as they faced their sect master's master. They bowed in unison. "Greetings, old senior."

Li Jingyi retracted her paper umbrella. She carried it in her arms as she bowed. "Greetings, old senior."

The Azure Dragon Hall's Second Seat, Yu Hong, looked at the sky with a pained expression. He felt awkward. Similar to Shen Liangshou, he did not know how to put his feelings into words when he recalled his past actions. He supported himself and rose to his feet.

The remaining 700 to 800 Nether Sect disciples were filled with emotions as they bowed and said in unison, "Greetings, old senior." Their voices were loud and friendly, filled with reverence. This old man was their sect master's master, after all. They could be regarded as the disciples of his disciple.

Si Wuya spread his wings. He looked at Ha Luo's corpse with a stunned expression. After confirming that Ha Luo was truly dead, he was even more shocked. Since when was his master skilled in archery?

Lu Zhou hovered in the air and surveyed his surroundings. His gaze finally fell on the Other Tribesmen who were currently trembling in fear. He said curtly, "Kill them."

Si Wuya bowed and said, "Understood."

This time, nobody dared to Si Wuya. With such a powerful existence supporting him, who would dare to oppose him?

The remaining hundreds of men from Rouli and the witchcraft cultivators wanted to escape through the air. However, even their chief, Ha Luo, was killed by a single arrow. They no longer had the courage to escape.

Under Lu Zhou's protection, Si Wuya dove as his peacock plume spread. A pair of huge and shining golden eyes swept past the bodies and chests of the people of Rouli.

Although the people of Rouli were known for defensive skills, they were instantly cut into halves by the heaven-grade weapon.

The Nether Sect disciples were filled with satisfaction as they watched this. Earlier, they had been overwhelmed by the group of witchcraft cultivators and men from Rouli. How could they not feel angry and annoyed?

The witchcraft cultivators had no way of escaping from Si Wuya's onslaught of attacks. They were killed one after another. There were fewer and fewer Other Tribesmen in the area. They were now like a platter of loose sand. They had no means of resisting such an expert. Even if there was a Six-leaf elite among them, they would probably still find it difficult to stand up to Si Wuya who was in a frenzy...

Si Wuya He activated his avatar. The Six-leaf Golden Lotus swept through the crowds with huge golden wings. The two rows of buildings along Liang Province City were sliced into halves.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Lu Zhou kept an eye on his merit points on the system dashboard before he finally closed it. Although each target was only worth ten points, he earned quite a lot of points since there were so many Other Tribesmen. Then, he slowly turned around and looked at Liu Bing. "Liu Bing."

"Huh?"

"You colluded with the Other Tribesmen. Aren't you worried that Emperor Yong Qing will have your head for this?" Lu Zhou asked.

"Uh... well..." Liu Bing found it difficult to string words together. He was so anxious he felt like crying.

At this moment, four of the six generals who stood in front turned to face Lu Zhou at the same time.

"Old senior... W.. we would like to beg for forgiveness on His Highness' behalf!" The four of them respectfully stepped forward.

Lu Zhou's eyes shifted to the four generals. "Beg for forgiveness?"

"Old senior... His Highness had been at the borders for many years. Even if he had no contributions, his efforts must have meant something," a general who stood on the left said.

"His Highness has always worked diligently... The citizens are filled without nothing but praise for His Highness."

"His Highness carries the will of the Emperor. There are many things that are beyond his control."

The four of them stepped forward again.

Liu Bing frowned. 'What are they doing?'

"Generals?"

The general on the far left did not turn around. With a low voice, he said, "Your Highness, please forgive us for our insubordination."

The four of them bowed at Lu Zhou. As soon as they bowed, they quickly leaped toward Lu Zhou.

"In the name of the Emperor!"

Whizz!

Four avatars appeared, and energies began to collide.

The buzz of the resonance was extremely deafening.

"Master!"

"Old senior!"

The others exclaimed in shock.

The shining golden avatars were formed from semi-transparent energies. The four avatars gathered, putting their lives on the line together...

With barely a moment to spare, Lu Zhou shattered an Impeccable Card. A shining Golden Buddha Body appeared, shielding him.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!

Four deafening explosions rang in the air, as the four avatars collided with the Golden Buddha Body before shattering.

The generals were sent flying back, spitting out a mouthful of blood.

When Liu Bing regained his senses, he shouted, "Are you out of your minds?! What do you think you're doing?"

The two remaining generals stopped Liu Bing. "They're men of His Majesty to begin with! Please stay your anger, Your Highness!"

These words immediately brought Liu Bing back to his senses. The four generals were the men of the Emperor, to begin with. He only trusted these two generals by his side. All the others whom he trusted had long died on the battlefield at the border in the distant west. These four men were merely obeying his father, the Emperor. That aside, the thing that shocked him most was how Lu Zhou remained unharmed even with the four generals' surprise attack. Lu Zhou was truly too powerful! These four had disregarded their lives to attack Lu Zhou. Their attacks might be even stronger than the joint attacks from Hua Chongyang, Bai Yuqing, Yang Yan, and Di Qing. Even then, they could not do anything to the 100-foot Golden Buddha Body! It was too f*cking tough!

Ten seconds passed by in a blink of an eye.

Lu Zhou frowned slightly. There was a trace of indignance in his expression. If he was honest, he did not know how he should go about killing these people. His only option was to use a Peak Trial Card, however... it would be a waste to use it in this situation. Using Deadly Strike Cards was a waste as well. If he left it up to Hua Chongyang and the others, he would not be rewarded with merit points. This was a difficult situation for him.

Everyone had no idea that the greatest villain of all time was currently thinking of the best way to earn merit points instead of defending against the attacks.

Rumble!

Among the rubble, a figure suddenly pushed the debris away and looked up.

Xiang Lie stomped his feet on the ground. A tremor rippled out to about 100 meters away. Like a cannonball, he attacked from below. He joined his palms and raised his hands. His left index finger and right index finger were pointed up. There was a talisman held between his two fingers with the words 'Abandon Wisdom' on it. 'Abandon Wisdom' meant one should empty one's mind of all ideas, distracting thoughts, flashy elements, and strike with all of one's strength.

Xiang Lie's eyes gleamed. A trail of blood could be seen at the side of his lips.

Lu Zhou looked down. He flipped his palm and pushed downward. A blue lotus appeared under his feet as a blue light shone from between his fingers...

Originating from nothing and everything at the same time. Living in samsara and learning from it.

“Abandon Wisdom!” A huge palm seal shot down, The words ‘Abandon Wisdom’ shone.

“Impossible...” Xiang Lie was almost upon Lu Zhou when his fingers were pressed down by the huge ‘Abandon Wisdom’ palm seal. He was defenseless as tofu.

Boom!

The Celestial Masters Sect’s Abandon Wisdom palm seal struck the ground with a loud boom.

The deep pit in the shape of a palm shocked the others.

Chapter 407: Destroying The Heavenly Energy with Bare Hands

After Si Wuya swept through the Other Tribesmen, he flipped in midair and saw his master’s two consecutive skills.

The first skill was the Golden Buddha Body, and the second was Abandon Wisdom.

Si Wuya suddenly recalled when he had been gathering information in the past, his men had claimed they saw a 100-foot Golden Buddha Body at the holy land in Runan. At that time, he did not believe them. After all, only the finest of high monks could cultivate their Golden Buddha Bodies until it was 100 feet tall. However, after witnessing this, he realized they were telling the truth. As he hovered in the air, he regarded Lu Zhou with a complicated expression on his face. He was not certain if he had made the right choice. However, since it had come to this, he could only press on even if there was a chance he was repeating his past mistakes.

Shen Liangshou sat limply on the ground. He stared at Lu Zhou up in the sky and began to clap. The sound of his applause was abrupt and lonely, but it pulled everyone back to their senses.

The Nether Sect disciples inhaled deeply.

Li Jingyi took several steps backward.

The others looked at the palm-shaped pit and had difficulty calming themselves down.

Xiang Lie was a disciple of the Celestial Masters Sect. He had established a name for himself in the cultivation world early on. He was very knowledgeable in the Celestial Masters Sect’s mantras and talismans. He was one of the few outstanding cultivators of his sect and a first-rate elite in the cultivation world. Abandon Wisdom was also the trump card that he was famous for. Perhaps, even at the moment of his death, he did not expect that he would be killed by his own technique.

At this moment, only the palm-shaped pit could be seen. No one could see Xiang Lie, and they did not know what the situation was like in the pit. After a while, they discovered there were no signs of life coming from the pit.

When Lu Zhou heard the notification of the 1,500 merit points reward, he stroked his beard and nodded. He turned around slowly and coldly regarded the four generals who had launched a surprise attack.

The four generals' blood essences boiled. Their eyes were filled with shock and awe. After being repelled by the Golden Buddha Body, they were all slightly injured.

Lu Zhou gauged the Heavenly Writing's extraordinary in him... He had used one-third of it with that arrow to kill Ha Luo, the Six-leaf expert from Rouli. Casting Abandon Wisdom used up another one-third of the power. Indeed, the might and effects of the skills launched in close-range and from afar were different. Although the extraordinary power was handy, it was unfortunate that its frequency of use was limited. 'It'd be great if I can maintain this power for a longer period.'

Lu Zhou deliberated over how he should deal with the four generals. 'Should I roar and deal with them with a soundwave?' Well, if he had no options left, he would have to use the Deadly Strike Cards.

Lu Zhou kept looking at the generals indifferently.

The four generals did not even dare to move a single muscle.

"Mad! Everyone has gone mad!" Liu Bing suddenly laughed. His eyes seemed to be wet from how hard he was laughing. After spending many years at the borders, nothing seemed as hilarious as what happened today.

Everyone was baffled by Liu Bing's abrupt behavior. However, they could understand him slightly, after giving it some thought. As a prince who spent years at the borders, his effort alone was a great service, if nothing else... He had kept the Other Tribes at bay and endured many hardships. It would have been perfectly reasonable for his father to regard him with the highest importance. However, his father sent these four generals to him to control his every move. How could he not find this hilarious? His might that he gained from years at the borders had made him resistant to crying. He could only laugh.

"Your Highness!" Liu Bing's two subordinates positioned themselves before him.

The four generals glanced at Liu Bing...

"We... had no choice," one of them said.

"We were ordered to do this. Even if we die, we have to try."

Indeed, men who experienced the battlefield were different from ordinary cultivators. They were not easily swayed... and they would not give up until they achieved their objectives.

"Even Xiang Lie couldn't withstand my attack... What makes you think that you're fit to be my opponents?" Lu Zhou asked tonelessly.

"..." The four generals' expressions turned sour as they looked at each other.

At this moment, Si Wuya spread his arms. The wings on his back disappeared. The two parts of the Peacock Plume merged again and returned to his hand. He climbed higher into the sky before he said, "Do you have a deathwish? If so, I can make your wish come true."

"..." The four generals glanced at Si Wuya. They felt their hopes slipping away even faster than before. Si Wuya was much more powerful than they had imagined. Si Wuya was only at the Six-leaf stage. How did Si Wuya defeat Xiang Lie earlier?

The Four Great Protectors were injured to varying degrees. It was not likely for them to engage in another battle unless they were to stake their lives on it. Si Wuya was the only one who could still fight. The four generals knew well that stubbornly putting up a fight would only spell their doom. Unfortunately, there was no turning back. The instant they launched the surprise attacks against Lu Zhou, they could no longer turn back.

"I won't accept this..." They had seen Lu Zhou unleash several shocking moves consecutively with their own eyes. Just how much Primal Qi could this old man have left? It was clear the general had spoken with great difficulty. His voice was hoarse, and it was filled with disbelief and reluctance to admit defeat. Even if there were no hope, he would still have to try even if it cost him his life.

Lu Zhou shook his head. 'Oh, Yong Qing. What did you do to make them so zealously loyal to you?'

The four generals were clearly ready to forfeit their lives for some cause. One could see how determined and stubborn they were by the way they viewed death like an old friend. Alas, it was all for naught.

Whizz!

A Six-leaf avatar appeared in midair and charged toward Lu Zhou.

Since they were injured, they would only stand a chance if they went at Lu Zhou with all their might and disregard their lives.

At this moment, Liu Bing suddenly stopped laughing. He said decisively as he pointed at the four generals, "I do not wish to become an enemy of the Evil Sky Pavilion... Take them down!" Perhaps, something had changed in him for him to come to such a decision.

The two generals were slightly taken aback. They shook their heads helplessly before replying in deep voices, "Understood!"

They were the only trusted subordinates that Liu Bing had left. Under his command, the two of them shot toward the four generals.

At the same time, Si Wuya tossed his Peacock Plume out... The plume spun rapidly while shooting out energy needles.

The four generals instantly launched countless palm seals and energy blasts into the air... The attacks sailed across the skies.

"This is bad... Fall back!" Hua Chongyang's expression was grim.

"What's wrong?" Bai Yuqing pressed his chest.

"Primal Fiend Potion!"

When they heard the words 'Primal Fiend Potion', the expressions of the Four Great Protectors changed drastically. They did not waste time and swiftly retreated with the Nether Sect disciples.

Primal Qi surged and rolled above Liang Province's city.

The effect of the Primal Fiend Potion was to forcibly absorb the Primal Qi of the world while exhausting one's own potential... This way, a vacuum of Primal Qi would appear, creating a Primal Qi storm. Only strong cultivators could withstand such a storm.

Previously, Ye Tianxin had mistakenly thought Lu Zhou had taken such a potion to maintain his peak condition.

Everyone was shocked when they saw the vials of Primal Fiend Potions in the four generals' hands. This potion was banned in Great Yan. And yet, Emperor Yong Qing's subordinates, the four generals, clearly possessed this potion. What was the meaning of this? They had no time to ponder over this as they retreated as far as they could.

The Primal Qi in the air roiled.

Although the Four Great Protectors were heavily wounded, it was not a problem for them to fend off the residual impact of this storm.

Little Yuan'er looked at the skies in shock as well. "Master?"

Shen Liangshou crawled backward. Now that he had lost his cultivation base, he could only depend on this little girl. He had a pleading look in his eyes which said, 'Please go and display your wondrous might.'

...

In the skies.

Lu Zhou was slightly surprised to see the four generals drawing power from their dantians's seas of Qi. His cultivation base was only at the peak of the Divine Court realm. He could withstand the storm, but if they were to attack, he would have no choice but to use his item cards.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

At this moment, Si Wuya engaged one of the generals in a fierce battle. His Peacock Plume supported him from above. With a heaven-grade weapon, he had no trouble holding down an injured Six-leaf cultivator.

Liu Bing's subordinates held down the other two generals.

Where was the other one?

Swoosh!

Above!

A person wrapped in golden energy suddenly shot up into the air before diving down and charging toward Lu Zhou.

Lu Zhou raised one hand. Unnamed materialized in his hand before transforming into a shield. Energy swirled around it.

Boom!

An explosion of Primal Qi slammed against the shield.

The general said coldly, "You've grown weak!" He could sense the old man before him was extremely weak like the ants on the ground. He was confident he could kill the old man with a single punch. "You have no Primal Qi left!"

Whizz!

The general's avatar appeared.

At the same time, a blue lotus appeared under Lu Zhou's feet again. He seemed to emit a blue light that outlined his silhouette. With a flip of his hand, the shield morphed into a sword.

The black runes on Unnamed swirled as they appeared. Lu Zhou slashed Unnamed out horizontally!

Bam!

"Ahh..."

The avatar was cut.

Lu Zhou's expression was calm. He extended an arm. His palm shone with a clear, blue radiance. The light formed a faintly discernible hand seal as he grabbed the general's neck like a northern goshawk catching a chick.

The general's avatar was forcibly shattered by this wizened and big hand.

"... capture hand seal!"

Chapter 408: Old but Still Vigorous

The Primal Qi storm came to an abrupt stop at the peak of its height.

Primal Fiend Potion?

So long as the general's dantian's sea of Qi was destroyed, no potion would be of help. All Lu Zhou had to do was to destroy the avatar.

Lu Zhou's eyes seemed like they were burning blue as he looked at the general in front of him.

The general's eyes were filled with fear. He discovered belatedly that the old man before him was like a demon king who had crawled out from a bottomless abyss. It seemed like his misconception that the old was weak had numbed his thoughts and judgment. Those deep and knowing eyes seemed capable of seeing through everything.

Lu Zhou's hand clamped tightly around the general's neck like a gold band. This was the best move to use; the Zen Sect's capture hand seal. Since his opponent had consumed the Primal Fiend Potion, it was not advisable to have a battle of attrition. The only way was to defeat his opponent with one move!

"The Expansive Heavenly Energy?" Lu Zhou said slowly and clearly, "I'll destroy your Heavenly Energy with my bare hands!"

He clenched his fingers that were shining brightly.

Crack!

The general's head lolled to the side after Lu Zhou snapped his neck.

Lu Zhou let go, and the general fell on the solid ground with a loud bang.

"Ding! Killed a target. Reward: 1,500 merit points."

The light blue energy on Lu Zhou's body vanished. He had used up all his extraordinary power.

The Nether Sect's Four Great Protectors were filled with emotions when they witnessed this scene. They saw no signs of deterioration in Lu Zhou's cultivation base that came with the approaching great limit. Lu Zhou was just as majestic as he had always been! He was old but still vigorous!

Lu Zhou placed his hands on his back as he watched the ongoing battles in his surroundings.

Liu Bing's subordinates fought more valiantly. After all, they were not injured when they started the fight.

Si Wuya, on the other hand, seemed to be having a progressively difficult time since he was wounded by the wolf king avatar earlier.

Lu Zhou had already used up his extraordinary power. If he wanted to help, he could only use the item cards. However, he might not have to.

Bam! Bam! Bam!

Si Wuya reeled back. His Peacock Plume dropped down and formed huge wings on his back again. He flapped them.

The two generals who consumed the Primal Fiend Potion were as vigorous as ever.

"Li Jingyi," Lu Zhou said.

Li Jingyi was startled into jumping. She bowed from afar and said, "Old senior..."

"Do you like to watch the show?" Lu Zhou stared at Li Jingyi.

Li Jingyi shuddered slightly. She said, "Let me explain, old senior... I only followed Xiang Lie here to keep an eye on him. If Xiang Lie had fought earlier, the Four Great Protectors would've been dead by now..."

Lu Zhou stroked his beard and nodded. He looked at Li Jingyi from a distance and said, "Is this what Jiang Aijian told you to do?"

Li Jingyi smiled sheepishly and merely nodded.

"There's no need for you to do anything against characters of this level, old senior!" She raised the paper umbrella in her hand. She leaped at lightning speed into the battlefield as her paper umbrella spun. A huge umbrella-shaped energy shot down from the paper umbrella.

"Penglai Sect. Green Bird." Lu Zhou discovered something immediately. The umbrella in Li Jingyi's hand was called Green Bird.

As the umbrella spun, energy blades shot into the surroundings.

“Nothing escapes your eyes, old senior...” Li Jingyi dropped lower. She summoned her Seven-leaf avatar again. Her Seven-leaf avatar that was nearly 90-foot tall worked well with her weapon, Green Bird. They launched a barrage of attacks into the surroundings!

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The three generals were sent flying as they spat out mouthfuls of blood.

“Thank you for your assistance.” Si Wuya rose higher. He shot numerous energy needles from the wings on his back. The needles shot toward their dantians’ seas of Qi.

Bam! Bam! Bam!

The three generals’ avatars shattered.

At the same time, Green Bird multiplied into eight umbrellas. Then, another round of attacks that seemed to blot out the skies rained down on the three generals.

Si Wuya continued to attack as well.

“Ding! Killed a target. Reward: 1,500 merit points.”

Boom!

The three of them crashed down on the ruins of Liang Province’s city. Even with the help of the Primal Fiend Potion, they could not defeat their mighty opponents.

Everything was quiet.

The brewing Primal Qi storm above Liang Province’s city vanished without a trace as Primal Qi began to flow back in the air.

Li Jingyi retracted her paper umbrella. She bowed slightly toward the prince and Si Wuya before walking away.

Lu Zhou looked at the ruins on the ground. Everything was broken and chaotic. He shook his head. There had been three of them, but Si Wuya merely managed to take one out. If Li Jingyi had not joined in the battle, it would have been difficult to say who would have won. In any case, he found this outcome acceptable.

Liu Bing, however, did not feel too good... In fact, he looked slightly murderous.

Si Wuya retracted his Peacock Plume and descended to the ground.

Little Yuan’er looked up with a smile and said, “Seventh Senior Brother, she’s alive... Fortunately, I was here to protect her. Otherwise, she would’ve died!”

Si Wuya nodded awkwardly. “Thank you, Little Junior Sister.”

She meant well, but why did it sound like she was cursing?

Si Wuya carried Liu Wenjun and shook his head slightly.

Meanwhile, Lu Zhou walked forward in the sky as he stroked his beard and looked at Liu Bing.

After his seemingly insane outburst, Liu Bing had calmed down. His expression was apathetic.

Lu Zhou looked at Liu Bing and said, "You're not suited for the Divine Capital... The border is where your calling is at."

Liu Bing was slightly taken aback. When he looked up, Lu Zhou was already descending to the ground.

Liu Bing considered Lu Zhou's words before he shook his head and sighed. Was he after fame and reputation by staying at the borders for all these years? He had only returned to the Divine Capital one time, and he had nearly lost himself. He even colluded with the Other Tribes... He was this close to becoming an infamous character who would be cursed at for 10,000 years. He was so close to becoming a sinner who would even use his own younger sister! Before he knew it, he had turned into the kind of person he despised the most. His opponent was never Great Yan or Great Yan's citizens.

The general on Liu Bing's right was frightened. He asked tentatively, "Your Highness... Should we report back to the Divine Capital?"

Report back? Why would they go back? To meet that merciless person who would use his own son? Hilarious! "No."

"In that case, where should we go? We vow to follow Your Highness to the ends of the world and beyond!" The two generals knelt in the air.

"I want to go to the borders..." Liu Bing did not refer to himself with the royal pronoun.

"The borders?"

"I'd like to retrace my steps..." Liu Bing said gently as he nodded. He wanted to return to where the blood of his brethren was spilled and where their bones lay in eternal slumber. "If you're unwilling, you're free to go wherever you want..."

"We vow to follow Your Highness to the end of our lives!" The two of them did not rise to their feet and continued kneeling.

Liu Bing flew downward and said, "Write back to say that the Fourth Prince, Liu Bing, has died during the battle in Liang Province."

Meanwhile, Shen Liangshou shook his head when he saw Liu Bing leaving. "Come to think of it, Liu Bing is quite the hero. Alas, the Divine Capital isn't suitable for him. There's hardly any freedom there. If he's not careful, he would be consigned to eternal damnation."

Little Yuan'er rolled her eyes and said, "Coming from you?"

"Uh..." Shen Liangshou felt embarrassed and offered no more of his opinions.

Si Wuya did not have the mind to think about Liu Bing. He was keeping a close eye on Liu Wenjun's condition.

Lu Zhou landed slowly. He stood before Si Wuya with one hand on his back. He silently extended the other hand toward Si Wuya.

Si Wuya knew what Lu Zhou meant. He brought out the Si Wuya Peacock Plume with a gentle wave of his hand and brought it to his master's palm.

Lu Zhou knew that Si Wuya was a man with many plans. This weapon was too powerful in his hands.

At this moment, the members of the Nether Sect ran toward them from afar. Their feet stirred up clouds of dust. In just a moment, the Four Great Protectors showed up in their sight.

Chapter 409: Intimidation

Hua Chongyang, Bai Yuqing, Yang Yan, and Di Qing looked slightly battered. The Nether Sect disciples followed closely behind them, afraid to breathe loudly.

Shen Liangshou rose to his feet with great difficulty when he saw the Four Great Protectors.

Li Jingyi seemed as light as a feather as she landed on the ground in the distance.

Little Yuan'er hopped over. She said with a smile, "Hello."

'This little girl is too biased. Why is she so gentle when the other party is a beautiful lady?'

"Hello." Li Jingyi smiled.

Si Wuya glanced at Li Jingyi and said, "If Wei Zhuoyan is still alive and knows that you're Jiang Aijian's source, I wonder what he would think."

Li Jingyi was slightly taken aback. Based on Si Wuya's words, he clearly knew the current Wei Zhuoyan was a fake. Moreover, he knew about her friendship with Jiang Aijian. In the end, she only said, "You have a unique sense of humor, Mister Seventh."

Lu Zhou stroked his beard and said, "Wei Zhuoyan is still in Liang Province?"

"Technically, His Fourth Highness had lost in the battle of Liang Province City... The City of Mo is protected by a defensive Formation to begin with. Now, it's completely unguarded. I reckon the Nether Sect will conquer the ten cities of Liang Province in no time. General Wei's men have been made into mere figureheads. Hence... the Divine Capital sent Xiang Lie to deal with this matter personally," Li Jingyi said as she glanced at the Four Great Protectors at the side.

Lu Zhou glanced at everyone present before he called out, "Hua Chongyang..."

Hua Chongyang's heart skipped a beat. He hastily bowed and replied, "Old senior."

"Where's Yu Zhenghai now?"

"The sect master has ordered us to protect Mister Seventh. We... we don't know where he is right now," Hua Chongyang answered honestly.

Lu Zhou flicked his sleeve and cursed, "That disloyal rascal!"

"..."

The Four Great Protectors could be considered great individuals who followed their sect master for many years. They were in charge of hundreds of thousands of members and held high positions in the

sect. Throughout their years of service, they had never seen anyone curse at their sect master in such a manner. However, they were not offended when the old senior expressed his disapproval of their master. In fact, they found it justified.

“Does he think he can conquer the Divine Capital just because he has learned a thing or two from me?” Lu Zhou said with a hint of disdain.

The Four Great Protectors appeared to be put in a tight spot by Lu Zhou’s words. They did not dare to speak.

“He overestimates himself.” Lu Zhou waved his arm. He beckoned Little Yuan’er over and said, “Let’s return to the Evil Sky Pavilion.”

“Mhm.” Little Yuan’er nodded.

Si Wuya carried Liu Wenjun and was about to rise to his feet when the Four Great Protectors fell to one knee. “Mister Seventh!”

Shortly after, the Nether Sect disciples fell to their knees.

It was a majestic sight to behold.

Si Wuya said, “Tell my Eldest Senior Brother... this is my fault. If there’s a chance in the future, I’ll make it up to him.”

Hua Chongyang lowered his head and mustered up his courage before he said, “Mister Seventh, I’ve guaranteed your safety to the sect master!”

Si Wuya shook his head and said, “I’ve decided to return to the Evil Sky Pavilion...”

“But... without you, Mister Seventh, how’s the Nether Sect supposed to survive?” Hua Chongyang seemed slightly agitated.

No one could deny Si Wuya’s contribution to the Nether Sect and the heights it had reached. Throughout these months, Si Wuya had drafted a detailed plan by leveraging his information network and made the Nether Sect into the greatest Fiend Sect with hundreds of thousands of disciples. It was now powerful enough to stand up against the Divine Capital. It could be said that Si Wuya was the second greatest person in the Nether Sect.

“Impudent!” Lu Zhou said, his voice was loud and domineering. Although his cultivation base was only in the Divine Court realm cultivation base, the soundwave and his Primal Qi made the others tremble in fear.

The Four Great Protectors were at loss over what to do.

Little Yuan’er pointed at the Four Great Protectors. “One, two, three, four... You’re so stupid! My master will take anyone he wants with him. Do you think he has to report to you? Keep this up and see if I don’t smash your heads to bits!”

The Four Great Protectors. “...”

Shen Liangshou. “...”

Little Yuan'er's words were fierce and arrogant, but she had a point.

At this time, Shen Liangshou, naturally, knew Little Yuan'er was the ninth disciple of the Evil Sky Pavilion'. Bolstered by this knowledge, he chimed in, "Miss Ninth has a point. Do you think you can stop the old mister from taking anyone with him? D.. d... do you think Mister Seventh has a say in this matter?"

The four of them could not refute Shen Liangshou's words.

Lu Zhou looked at them indifferently and said, "If you wish to forfeit your lives, I'll grant you your wish." He raised a hand. A weak puff of Primal Qi swirled on his palm.

Hua Chongyang shuddered in fright. He hastily rose to his feet, turned around, and left.

"I've made a mistake!"

"I'll be taking my leave!"

The others did not put up a resistance as well. They quickly ran after Hua Chongyang, looking battered and exhausted. Clouds of dust stirred in their wakes, and they vanished from the ruins in just a blink of an eye.

At this moment, Bi An's stocky body appeared in midair. It landed slowly.

Shen Liangshou was startled into jumping. He backed away at once. He thought that the old senior was threatening to strike Hua Chongyang. Who knew the old senior was just summoning his mount?

Bi An landed next to Lu Zhou, and he leaped onto its back.

"O-old senior!" Shen Liangshou cried out immediately.

"Hm?"

"It's nothing... nothing important... I... was my performance alright?" Shen Liangshou looked at Lu Zhou expectantly like a kid waiting to be praised.

"Aren't you angry that I destroyed your cultivation base?" Lu Zhou asked.

"No, not at all... I deserve it. Besides, I have a sable magnolia..." He stopped talking abruptly. He hastily added, "I don't have a sable magnolia!"

Lu Zhou looked at Shen Liangshou and said, "The heavens aren't merciful. Creation is merely a lifeless offering to it... The humbler you are, the more you will learn. You should earnestly think about the things that you should and shouldn't do."

After Lu Zhou finished speaking, Bi An rose into the air. Little Yuan'er and Si Wuya flew behind him.

Shen Liangshou remained where he stood, stunned. He remembered various incidents regarding the Evil Sky Pavilion. Compared to the Evil Sky Pavilion, what was he doing? After a moment of silence, he bowed in the direction where Lu Zhou had flown off. Then, he shuddered before he ran into the distance.

...

Meanwhile, inside the Melilot Graveyard.

Yu Shangrong sighed and opened his palms. He circulated his Primal Qi and adjusted his dantian's sea of Qi. After adjusting his breath and meditating, the chaotic flow of his Primal Qi calmed down.

Yu Shangrong slowly opened his eyes... He looked at the ray of light shining into the Melilot Graveyard from the ceiling in satisfaction. The feeling of being able to live another day was wonderful... It was just like when he was enjoying the sunset on the mountain the other day. After a good night's rest, the sun would still rise on the second day.

It was cold on Brackish Mountain... However, for a cultivator, they could keep the cold at bay. He wanted to see if the sun was up outside... Alas, the state of his body left him with no choice other than to stay in the Melilot Graveyard.

Yu Shangrong raised a palm and looked at it. Everything was in order.

"Open." A miniature avatar materialized on his palm. The avatar had the same appearance as Yu Shangrong. It was like a small golden person without the Golden Lotus! Golden radiance rose upward from its feet in circles. Then, the circles dropped.

Yu Shangrong was as experienced in sprouting leaves as any other cultivator. He knew how leaves were sprouted. However, he was unaware that he had stepped foot on the path to the Nine-leaf stage... What he intended to do was to form the Golden Lotus again. After severing the Golden Lotus, all he had to do was to form it again. Hence, he circulated all his Primal Qi and condensed it into a golden radiance. He pushed it down on his avatar.

The energy gathered under the avatar's feet. Based on his past experience, this amount of energy should have been enough to form a Golden Lotus. However, no matter how hard he tried to circulate his Primal Qi, he could not form a Golden Lotus. The rings of energy flowed down the avatar's feet and dissipated as though they were poured into the ocean.

"Reopen." Yu Shangrong's voice was determined and forceful.

With that command, beams of golden radiance appeared.

Whizz! Whizz! Whizz!

Something resonated loudly in the air.

A faint smile appeared on Yu Shangrong's face. There it was... A leaf!

Chapter 410: Glorious Days are Gone, Begin Again

Yu Shangrong suddenly felt his heart race. He held his breath as he studied the Golden Lotus under his feet. Sprouting leaves all over again sounded simple, but it could also be the most difficult thing to achieve. It was due to his rich experience that he did not meet with obstacles like most novices did. The difficult part for him was doing all these things while he was still injured from severing his Golden Lotus. Moreover, this was his first time having to form a Golden Lotus again. Which came first, the Golden

Lotus or the leaves? Without roots, how could there be leaves? To put it more aptly, which came first, the chicken or the egg?

Whizz!

His avatar shook, and the sound of resonance grew louder as well. The leaf began to take shape, and in just a while, the entire leaf had sprouted. He had successfully formed his first leaf again. In other words, his cultivation base was now in the One-leaf Nascent Divinity Tribulation realm again. He did not have to judge the height and might of his avatar. He could sense that it was a true One-leaf avatar.

His Golden Lotus continued shaking, and the radiant circles continued to move downward. According to his own speculation, the Golden Lotus should be forming any time now. Unfortunately, when he felt that his Primal Qi was almost depleted, he had yet to see the Golden Lotus. Maintaining the appearance of an avatar expended a great amount of Primal Qi. Moreover, he was injured.

‘Hm?’ Yu Shangrong raised a palm. He extended his arm before himself and stared at the avatar.

The radiant circles had disappeared, and the sole leaf spun around the avatar. There was no Golden Lotus! This was a novel experience for Yu Shangrong. He was an Eight-leaf elite who could arrogantly look down on everyone, his name, the Sword Devil, incited fear in the listener’s heart. And still, he found it hard to accept what he was seeing. “An avatar without a Golden Lotus.”

He clenched his fist, and the avatar disappeared.

Yu Shangrong’s eyes gleamed. He closed his eyes and sat with his legs crossed before he began to absorb Primal Qi again. He kept this up for a day and a night.

When he sensed that some of his Primal Qi had been replenished, and his mental state had improved, he summoned his avatar again. There was still no Golden Lotus under the avatar’s feet. Only one leaf could be seen.

Yu Shangrong amassed all his Primal Qi and gathered it below his avatar’s feet and attempted again. He wanted to form a new Golden Lotus. He kept attempting in this manner. When his Primal Qi was about to run out...

Boom!

His avatar dispersed.

The spot where he sat suddenly caved in.

Yu Shangrong fell, plunging into darkness. He could not see anything at all. A cold blast of wind blew against him, and his face turned pale from the cold. Even so, he remained calm. He quickly found his footing and stopped falling in midair.

With a strike of his palm, a shining golden palm seal shot out and illuminated his surroundings.

“Melilot?” Yu Shangrong saw a huge path of melilot below him.

Whizz!

He was distracted by this sight when a net-like cover suddenly sealed the opening above him.

Click.

Yu Shangrong frowned slightly as he flew upward.

Bam!

He struck the net-like cover with a palm seal.

The cover did not move.

He launched another palm seal.

Bam!

It remained unmoved.

Bam! Bam! Bam!

After three more consecutive strikes, the cover still showed no signs of moving.

“Millennium frost iron?” Yu Shangrong shook his head, looking slightly displeased.

“Longevity Sword!” He gently summoned his sword that was lying on the ground above him.

‘No way.’ It seemed like his ability to remotely control an object had been greatly weakened.

He flew up to the cover and touched the cover. His palm shone with golden radiance.

The golden radiance illuminated the cover, and he could see Formation veins inscribed on it...

“A weakening Formation vein?” Yu Shangrong shook his head again. It was skillfully and brilliantly designed. The people of the Noblemen Country survived thanks to these items.

The things that he deemed weak were too insignificant to mention. However, this cover had exceeded his expectations.

Yu Shangrong sighed softly. Based on the situation, it seemed like he would need a higher cultivation base to summon the Longevity Sword to him. It was not something he could do at the moment.

He descended slowly. He launched another shining golden palm seal to take a good look at his surroundings.

This seemed to be a trap. It resembled a shelter as well.

After observing it for some time, Yu Shangrong closed his eyes and sat down with his legs crossed. Since he had made up his mind to begin again, he should not bite off more than he could chew...

One-leaf was still a leaf. He could do without a Golden Lotus for now.

...

The Evil Sky Pavilion.

After a day and night’s worth of flying, Lu Zhou, Si Wuya, and Little Yuan’er finally arrived on Golden Court Mountain’s Evil Sky Pavilion. They landed in the pavilion.

“Who’s that?”

“Another newcomer!”

“Learn from your past mistake, will you? It must be Mister First since the old senior brought him back with such fanfare,” Pan Zhong said as he crossed his arms.

“Is Mister First so gentle? Maybe it’s Mister Seventh?” Zhou Jifeng shook his head.

“There’s something you don’t know. I heard Mister Seventh is extremely clever. His information network is spread throughout Great Yan. If he’s unwilling... nobody can get a hold of him,” Pan Zhong said confidently.

“You’ve got a point... Moreover, none of the nine Evil Sky Pavilion disciples can be judged based on their appearances.”

Both of them seemed to have come to an agreement. Then, they walked toward Lu Zhou and the others after exchanging a look.

“Greetings, Pavilion Master! Greetings, Miss Ninth...” Pan Zhong and Zhou Jifeng were already familiar with the procedure. There was no need to greet Mister First. He was nothing but a traitor! At the very least, they could not greet him in front of the pavilion master.

“Did anything happen in the Evil Sky Pavilion these past few days?” Lu Zhou asked as he stroked his beard.

Pan Zhong answered honestly, “In reply to your question, Pavilion Master... nothing eventful happened in the Evil Sky Pavilion. Mister Third oversaw day-to-day operations, and everything went smoothly. The sects of the Noble Path, on the other hand, are spreading lies about the Evil Sky Pavilion everywhere.”

“Lies?”

“It’s the same news about Mister Second being dead, and the withering of the plants and trees on Golden Court Mountain. They’re saying... saying...” Pan Zhong stammered.

“You can speak freely,” Lu Zhou said.

“They’re saying your great limit is just around the corner...” Pan Zhong did as he was told and revealed what he had heard.

Lu Zhou nodded. That much was expected. Sometimes, he wondered how many times those on the Noble Path needed to be crushed before they would realize the folly of their ways?

‘Great limit? Do I look like I’m going to die so soon?’ It was meaningless to ponder about such matters at the moment.

Lu Zhou looked at Si Wuya, who remained silent, and Princess Yong Ning who was in his arms. He said, “Yuan’er, bring the princess to the south pavilion to rest.”

“Yes, master.” Little Yuan’er cupped her fists.

“As for you...” Lu Zhou’s gaze fell on Si Wuya. “Repent in the Cave of Reflection for seven days.”

Si Wuya's expression remained unchanged. He merely cupped his fists and said, "Thank you, master."

Although Si Wuya's attitude to Lu Zhou was respectful, Lu Zhou could sense the lack of sincerity. However, he did not say anything and returned to the eastern pavilion. He had come up with seven days for the sentence because he wanted to replenish the Heavenly Writing scrolls' extraordinary power during that time. Without the extraordinary power as his backup, he could not help but feel that something was missing.

After Lu Zhou left, Pan Zhong and Zhou Jifeng respectfully bowed at Si Wuya and said in unison, "Greetings, Mister First."

Si Wuya only looked at them before he made his way to the Cave of Reflection.

The two of them hurried after him.

"Mister First, shall I fetch you a coat?"

"Mister First... You look more handsome than I'd imagined..."