

Disciples 421

Chapter 421: One Step at a Time

Zhu Honggong left the room with his master's mathematical problem in his hand.

When Zhu Honggong said that he managed to obtain information from Si Wuya, Lu Zhou was skeptical. Si Wuya would never let slip any information to Zhu Honggong if he did not wish to. Rongxi and Rongbei were huge. How was he supposed to look for the memory crystal?

Lu Zhou returned to the hall and sat cross-legged on a rush cushion. He went through Ji Tiandao's memories again in a bid to find something related to the memory crystal. Unfortunately, his effort was fruitless.

"What was sealed in it? Is it Ji Tiandao's secret of attempting the Nine-leaf stage? Or is it something else?"

When Lu Zhou had free time, he recalled what he knew about the lost memories. Firstly, it was about Ji Tiandao's system, which could be inferred from the seamless connection he experienced with the merit points system when he first transmigrated here. Secondly, it was about the memories of the Heavenly Writing Scrolls. This was hinted by the Empress Dowager's use of the Heavenly Writing scrolls to treat her illness. Thirdly, it was about Ji Tiandao's intention to kill Yu Shangrong. This was told by Yu Shangrong himself at Cloud Shine Nunnery. Fourthly, it was about Ji Tiandao's memories before his death.

The final point might be up for debate. After all, it was possible for a person to lose the ability to think on the brink of death, resulting in loss of memories. Perhaps, Ji Tiandao had also become senile, which was just as likely.

If Lu Zhou wanted to locate the memory crystal, he would have to discipline Si Wuya well. When he thought about this, he shook his head.

After a while, Lu Zhou cleared his mind of distracting thoughts and lifted the final Open Heavenly Writing scroll...

"Combine."

"Ding! Combined into a new Open Heavenly Writing Scroll. Will you meditate on it?"

"Meditate." With just a thought from Lu Zhou, the fourth completed Open Heavenly Writing Scroll dissolved into specks of starlight and entered his body. A faint blue light entered his mind. He instantly felt refreshed in his mind, Extraordinary Eight Meridians, sensory organs.

Lu Zhou was puzzled. The sensation of meditating on this Open Heavenly Writing Scroll was different from what he experienced when he meditated on the previous three scrolls. He clearly felt that his body's Extraordinary Eight Meridians and functions were better.

He called up the system dashboard and took a look at it.

Remaining life: 12,754 days.

'It increased by 3,000 days?' It was equivalent to the number days of provided by ten Reversal Cards.

'This is a good reward.'

This was Lu Zhou's first time obtaining life via an avenue aside from an item card. It also provided him with a valuable clue. Even individuals whose great limit was approaching could prolong their lives. In other words, it was possible to overcome the 1,000-year limit.

Lu Zhou closed the system dashboard and began meditating on the new Open Heavenly Writing Scroll.

Based on his previous experiences, he would obtain a new Heavenly Writing power with every Open Heavenly Writing scroll. He looked forward to the power he would obtain this time.

...

Zhu Honggong ran to the back of the mountain smugly with the writing paper in his hand. It did not take him long to arrive at the Cave of Reflection. "Seventh Senior Brother!"

Si Wuya was resting his spirits with his eyes closed as he sat with his back straight in the cave. He did not even bother to ponder on the questions his master left him with. He asked, "What is it?"

"This is from master." Zhu Honggong entered the cave and passed the fine writing paper to Si Wuya.

Si Wuya received it and scanned the words written on it.

"There is a pen of ringed pheasants and rabbits. There are 350 heads and 940 feet. How many ringed pheasants and rabbits are there?"

Zhu Honggong scratched his head and asked, "Seventh Senior Brother, what does it say?"

Si Wuya ignored him. His attention had already been captured by this question. He quickly became absorbed in the question, and his mind quickly went to work.

Zhu Honggong saw that Si Wuya was lost in thought and did not dare to disturb him. Hence, he waited quietly at the side. What seemed like hours passed, and he dozed off. When he finally opened his eyes, it was already dark.

Si Wuya regained his senses as well at this moment. "Eighth Junior Brother... Eighth Junior Brother?"

"Here, I'm here..." Zhu Honggong stretched as he yawned.

"You should go back and rest. I'll give you the answer in the morning."

"Oh." Zhu Honggong nodded before he left the Cave of Reflection. When he was outside, he turned back to have a look. 'Seventh Senior Brother must've lost his mind. It's just a stupid question. Why is he so worked up about it?'

...

Early the next morning.

Lu Zhou opened his eyes slowly. He felt rejuvenated and a sense of comfort that he could not find the words for.

Perhaps, it was due to the new Open Heavenly Writing scroll, Lu Zhou had a slight physical transformation as well. He looked at his own silver mane. There were more dark strands now. If he compared his current appearance to when he had just transmigrated, the change was extremely huge. However, compared to yesterday, not much had changed.

“Ding! Instructed Si Wuya. Reward: 200 merit points.”

‘Hm? It worked?’ Lu Zhou rose to his feet and walked to the table. He picked up his brush again and wrote.

The sound of paper rustling rang in the air.

When he finished writing, he called for someone to summon Zhu Honggong over.

“Greetings, master,” Zhu Honggong said enthusiastically.

“Come in.”

Zhu Honggong walked into the room. He saw his master placing the brush on the table. Then, he chuckled and said, “Master, Seventh Senior Brother couldn’t solve your riddle even when he worked throughout the day. I saw dark circles around his eyes when I left him!”

Lu Zhou was slightly taken aback. From what he gathered from Ji Tiandao’s memories, the mathematical level in this world was not advanced at all. The people here would not know how to solve this question like people in the modern world. However, such a riddle should not pose a great difficulty to Si Wuya. Why did he have trouble solving it?

“Take the paper on the table to him.”

“Yes, master.”

“The answer to the previous question and a new question are on the paper.”

“Understood.” Zhu Honggong left the eastern pavilion with the answer and new question in hand. He arrived at the Cave of Reflection after a while. When he entered the Cave of Reflection, he saw Si Wuya who did not seem to be in good spirits nodding to himself.

“This is an intriguing question indeed!” Si Wuya said.

“Greetings, Seventh Senior Brother.” Zhu Honggong greeted Si Wuya.

Si Wuya turned around and grabbed Zhu Honggong as he asked, “Did Master truly come up with this question?”

“Of course. I saw him writing it down with my own eyes!” Zhu Honggong said confidently.

Si Wuya was slightly shocked. He was puzzled as well. “Master doesn’t strike me as the intellectual type...”

Zhu Honggong coughed drily.

Si Wuya realized what he had just said. He quickly added, "Fortunately, I managed to solve the riddle overnight."

"That's amazing, Seventh Senior Brother!" Zhu Honggong gave him a thumbs up.

"It's nothing." If Si Wuya was honest, he was not completely satisfied with his own solution to the problem. After all, the problem seemed simple enough, and yet, it took him an entire night to solve the problem. He had thought even the dumbest the method, to literally round up the animals and count them, would have been faster.

"This is from master." Zhu Honggong handed Si Wuya a fine piece of paper.

Si Wuya had been feeling slightly dispirited before this. However, when he saw there was a new problem to be solved, he instantly became invigorated. He read the first words aloud, "120 rabbits and 230 ringed pheasants."

Si Wuya was shocked. "Master knows the answer as well?" He had gotten the same answer as well. Although he managed to solve it, he was not happy at all.

Zhu Honggong said like it was a matter of course, "Master came up with the question. It's only natural that he knows the answer to it."

Si Wuya read further down the paper. "There is currently an unknown number of objects. If counted in threes, two will be left. If counted in fives, three will be left. If counted in sevens, two will be left. How many objects are there?"

Si Wuya frowned deeply after he read the question. This riddle was on par with the previous one.

Chapter 422: Fear of Being Dominated

After Si Wuya read the problem, his exhaustion was swept away. He felt invigorated. It was not difficult for young people to stay up all night, let alone a young cultivator. However, his cultivation base had been sealed so he felt the strain of working through the night. After a night, there were clearly dark circles around his eyes. However, when he read the new question, he felt as though he was injected with an energy booster and immediately began to work on the problem. He would not bother with it if it were someone else. However, his master had come up with this problem. He felt extremely motivated.

Zhu Honggong was speechless when he saw Si Wuya's reactions. He mused inwardly, 'This is bad. Seventh Senior Brother is obsessed. What is he going to do after he solves this question?' After a while, he waved his hand, trying to catch Si Wuya's attention. "Seventh Senior Brother?"

However, Si Wuya behaved as though Zhu Honggong was invisible.

Zhu Honggong sighed softly before he carried his jiggly belly and left the Cave of Reflection with his hands on his back. He felt great being given the opportunity to walk like a boss. As soon as he emerged from the Cave of Reflection, he saw Pan Zhong and Zhou Jifeng walking toward him.

"Greetings, Mister Eighth," both of them said in unison.

Zhu Honggon immediately put on air. He cleared his throat and sternly asked, "What is it?"

“Nothing much. We’re just here to have a look. I heard that Mister Seventh has been working on a question the entire night. We’re interested to see it for ourselves,” Pan Zhong replied.

“If you have free time, you should cultivate.” Zhu Honggong rolled his eyes at them before he tossed the paper he brought with him to Pan Zhong and Zhou Jifeng.

“Thank you, Mister Eighth.”

It did not take long before the question spread in the Evil Sky Pavilion. The people lacked entertainment on the mountain. Aside from cultivating, their time was spent on meals, the toilet, and sleeping. Indeed, they needed some fun. When they were suddenly given such a question, everyone began to earnestly study it.

...

Lu Zhou had been meditating on the Heavenly Writing Scrolls in his room. He was unaware that his casual question had attracted so much attention.

It was early in the morning, the sky had not even brightened, when Lu Zhou heard two notifications.

“Ding! Instructed Si Wuya. Reward: 200 merit points.”

“Ding! Instructed Si Wuya. Reward: 200 merit points.”

Lu Zhou was surprised to receive two notifications. He was intrigued. ‘Looks like I’ll have to come up with more questions to instruct this rascal. I’ll show him that there’s always something or someone greater.’

At this moment, Zhu Honggong’s voice rang from outside. “Greetings, master.”

“Come in.”

After spending time with Lu Zhou again, Zhu Honggong no longer behaved stiffly in front of Lu Zhou. He appeared more relaxed. When he entered the room, he saw Lu Zhou sitting cross-legged. He bowed and said, “Master, Seventh Senior Brother has solved the problem you gave him yesterday. His answer is the same as yours.”

Lu Zhou’s expression remained unchanged. That question was just like an appetizer, after all. He was surprised to be awarded with merit points.

“What about the second question?” Lu Zhou asked.

“I think Seventh Senior Brother has solved it. I’m sure it was difficult for him though, seeing how he scratches his head can work it out,” Zhu Honggong replied.

“Take that paper on the table and give it to him.”

“Yes, master.”

...

Zhu Honggong brought the answer to the second question and the third question to the Cave of Reflection. “Seventh Senior Brother, here’s the answer and the third question...”

Si Wuya immediately took the paper from Zhu Honggong. Then, he said with a sigh after comparing the answer with his own, "Interesting, truly interesting."

Zhu Honggong looked at the stone table inside the Cave of Reflection. He was surprised to see there were two holes. "Seventh Senior Brother, you did that?"

"I couldn't help myself," Si Wuya said, his eyes still fixed on the paper's contents.

"Seventh Senior Brother, you should stop working on these questions. It's boring."

"Get out." Si Wuya's voice sounded cold.

"Huh?" Zhu Honggong was taken aback. "I'll take my leave then."

After Zhu Honggong left, Si Wuya calmed down and mumbled to himself, "23, 128... 233... I've only calculated one?! I've never seen master's way of solving the question... My horizons have been widened"

The solution written on the paper not only contained the answer, but it contained hypothetical variables as well.

For an intelligent person like Si Wuya, any inspiration to the solution of a problem was akin to anointing his head with the purest oil. How could he not feel shocked when he saw the content of the paper?

As for the third question, Si Wuya was stunned for a very long time after reading it. It was only now that he realized the first two questions were only appetizers.

On the third paper, there was a triangle, a circle, and symbols that Si Wuya did not recognize. He did not understand them.

It was only natural since the question was advanced geometry and algebra. Even Lu Zhou had a headache when he encountered these questions before he transmigrated, let alone Si Wuya who has never been exposed to such things in his life

This was the fear of being dominated that countless students experienced.

...

"Ding! Instructed Si Wuya. Reward: 200 merit points."

When he heard the third notification, Lu Zhou nodded in satisfaction.

'Even I'm troubled by that question, let alone you.'

The third question involved advanced algebra and geometry. For a world that lacked mathematical concepts, any ordinary man would feel like he was reading the Heavenly Writing when he saw this.

Si Wuya was not an ordinary man. Surely, given time, he would be able to understand this.

After a moment, Lu Zhou closed his eyes and continued meditating on the Heavenly Writing scroll.

...

In the afternoon.

The others in the Evil Sky Pavilion had given up on finding a solution to the question. The lack of solution after such a long time was an excruciating experience.

...

At dusk.

Si Wuya stared blankly at the question on the table. It was as if he had turned stupid.

This was a normal reaction when someone encountered a difficult situation. One's confidence would definitely suffer a blow, and it would lead one to self-doubt. Si Wuya was no exception to this. He was unaware the others had long given up on solving the problem.

The third day, the fourth day, and the fifth day passed.

Si Wuya was still studying the question on the paper. The more he studied it, the more he realized how complex it was.

...

Lu Zhou's meditation of the Heaven Writing scroll went smoothly. He had already replenished the Heavenly Writing's extraordinary power earlier on.

He still did not know what the fourth Heavenly Writing's power was.

Since he had been meditating, he was certain the prices of the item cards must have gone up as well.

As expected, when he tapped on the item column, he found that all the cards' prices had increased by 500 points or more.

He was still cursing at the system inwardly when a voice rang from outside. "Master, Seventh Senior Brother would like to meet you."

Lu Zhou's expression did not change when he heard these words. After all, he did not think it was possible for that rascal to solve this problem. "Why?"

"Seventh Senior Brother would like to ask for your opinion on the solution to the question."

"He's asking for someone else's opinion?"

Zhu Honggong could discern the annoyance in his master's tone. He hastily said, "I'll convey your message to him immediately."

After Zhu Honggong left, Lu Zhou looked out the window. He was sure that he could handle Si Wuya.

...

Throughout the next few days.

Lu Zhou took the incremental approach. He slowly raised the difficulty of his questions. He did not expect Si Wuya to actually solve them. He wanted Si Wuya to understand the meaning behind the questions. There was no end to learning. The more he understood mathematics, the more he would understand the mysteries within.

...

Inside the Cave of Reflection, Si Wuya was behaving in a manner that Lu Zhou had expected him to. As he gained a deeper understanding of the questions, he realized that they were much more complicated than he had expected.

His appearance had changed drastically. He was so tormented by the question that he seemed like a lunatic with disheveled hair as he focused on the question.

"I can't bear to see Mister Seventh becoming like this!" Pan Zhong merely glanced at Si Wuya before he turned around to leave.

"Those questions are demented. They make my hair stand on end."

"Hah, you can't even understand them."

Just when Pan Zhong and Zhou Jifeng were about to leave the area, a female cultivator came running toward them.

Pan Zhong asked with a frown, "What's the matter?"

"Princess Yong Ning's condition has worsened. Someone has gone to report this to the pavilion master! I'm here to inform Mister Seventh," the female cultivator hastily said.

At this moment, Si Wuya, who had ignored the disturbances outside so far, appeared at the mouth of the Cave of Reflection. A hint of weariness could be seen on his face as he frowned and asked, "What happened to Yong Ning?"

Chapter 423: The Old Age Pavilion Isn't Only Adept In Boot-Licking

No matter how cold or heartless Si Wuya was, he could stay idle if Yong Ning was dying. After all, she had been a great help to him. Even if he was without affection for her, he was undoubtedly indebted to her.

Si Wuya furrowed his brows as he listened to the female cultivator describing Yong Ning's condition. After a moment of silence, he said, "Let me out."

Pan Zhong and Zhou Jifeng were taken aback. They were not bold enough to release Si Wuya from the Cave of Reflection. They could only look at him helplessly.

"Mister Seventh, it's not that I don't want to let you out... it's..."

"Let me out," Si Wuya repeated himself.

"..."

Based on Si Wuya's expression, Pan Zhong and Zhou Jifeng knew he was determined to leave the cave. The problem was, even if they had the courage of ten lions, they would never release him.

Si Wuya did not have his cultivation base and weapon. It was only natural that he was unable to disregard the barrier like Yu Shangrong did.

The atmosphere had grown unbearably tense when a stiff and loud voice rang in the air. "Release him."

Si Wuya and Zhou Jifeng looked over and saw Duanmu Sheng hovering above the Cave of Reflection with his Overlord Spear in hand.

"Yes, Mister Third." Pan Zhong bowed.

Shortly after, Si Wuya emerged from the Cave of Reflection. He looked up Duanmu Sheng. What shocked Si Wuya was that Duanmu Sheng seemed to have a much stronger presence than before. His cultivation base was improving quickly.

"Thank you, Third Senior Brother," Si Wuya said.

Duanmu Sheng shook his head and said, "Forgive me for saying this, but what good would come out of poring over that mess of a question? If you have the time, you should be studying the cultivation theory of severing one's Golden Lotus. If you can contribute to the Evil Sky Pavilion, the others will, naturally, respect you. You wouldn't be where you are right now, powerless to save the woman you love."

Si Wuya. "... He was rendered speechless for a moment. He wanted to retort, but he dismissed that idea when he recalled his Third Senior Brother's fiery temper. In the end, he only said, "I'll remember your advice, Third Senior Brother."

"Go and pay your last respect then." Duanmu Sheng left through the air after he finished speaking.

Last respect?

Si Wuya's heart sank. He knew what those words meant, but he did not dare to dwell on it. He hastened toward the southern pavilion.

Pan Zhong, Zhou Jifeng, and the others followed closely behind him.

Soon after, Si Wuya soon reached the southern pavilion.

When Little Yuan'er saw Si Wuya approaching, she went up to meet him. "Seventh Senior Brother, Big Sister Yong Ning is dying!"

"..." Zhao Yue pulled Little Yuan'er to the side and said, "Don't be too anxious, the three elders are here."

Zhu Honggong looked at Little Yuan'er and said, "Little Junior Sister, watch your words."

The others did not dare to recklessly speak up.

Si Wuya looked at the closed doors. He was about to enter when the door opened with a creak.

Hua Wudao walked out.

Hua Yuexing walked up to him and asked, "What's the situation?"

Hua Wudao sighed and shook his head. "She has been stabbed by an energy blade, and it destroyed her internal organs. We should make preparations for her funeral."

Upon hearing these words, everyone present there shook their heads and sighed.

Si Wuya did not grow agitated, contrary to everyone's expectations. He remained calm as he recalled the scene where Yong Ning had tried to commit suicide with an energy blade during the battle in Liang Province's city.

Yong Ning was smart. She knew that Liu Bing or Xiang Lie would have used her as a hostage. She had willingly stepped forward to stall Xiang Lie so Si Wuya would have time to think of a countermeasure. It was due to this that Si Wuya successfully snuck up on Xiang Lie. She had chosen to end her life so she would not be a burden to Si Wuya.

Sometimes, Si Wuya felt that she was foolish to a fault. She could have enjoyed a peaceful life in the palace if she chose to. Why did she insist on getting involved in the affairs of the world?

Creak!

The door opened again.

This time, Pan Litian walked out. He did not look optimistic as well. He raised the wine gourd in his hand and took a great swig from it.

Zhao Yue walked up to him and asked, "Elder Pan, what's her condition like?" Zhao Yue was Yong Ning's elder sister, after all. She could not help but worry.

Pan Litian shook his head and sighed. "I've used half of my Primal Qi, and yet, I couldn't heal her internal injuries. Judging from the angle of the injury, I think she planned it beforehand."

She did not want to die immediately, but she did not want to be rescued either. Was she so willing to endure the pain for an extended time just to have a last look at this world?

"Old Pan, please don't scare us. Is there nothing else you can do?" Pan Zhong asked.

"Do I look like a liar?" Pan Litian asked.

Little Yuan'er pulled on the edge of Si Wuya's clothes and said in a hushed voice, "Seventh Senior Brother, let's beg master for help. I'm sure he's able to save he can Sister Yong Ning."

Pan Litian had a keen hearing. He looked at Little Yuan'er and said, "Even an Eight-leaf Buddhist elite can't save her now, let alone the pavilion master."

"What makes you say that?" Leng Luo, who had just exited the room, asked. Without waiting for a reply from Pan Litian, he continued to say, "Well, in any case, Elder Pan and Elder Hua have a point."

Everyone looked at Leng Luo. This was the person who was at the top of the blacklist three centuries ago. Naturally, his words bore weight.

Leng Luo continued to say, "This little girl's energy blade is slightly unique. I think it was poisoned, and the toxin corroded her internal organs. It's difficult to detect, and it'd be difficult to treat once the poison sets in. There are three Buddhist healing techniques, the Merciful Ark of Salvation, the Bright Mirror, and the Buddha's Shine. None of them can heal this little girl."

Si Wuya walked up to Leng Luo and asked, "Is there no other way?"

Leng Luo shook his head. "You're the Evil Sky Pavilion's seventh disciple and are smarter than most. A smart person should be able to understand our words. If you don't believe us, you can go in and take a look."

Leng Luo stepped aside.

Who would have doubts when the three elders of the Old Age Pavilion were so certain?

The others shook their heads helplessly.

The Evil Sky Pavilion disciples had a good impression of Yong Ning. They could not remain unfeeling as they watched Yong Ning die.

Si Wuya's eyelid twitched.

Little Yuan'er said again, "Well, I'm sure master has a way. Come! Let's beg master for help."

When Hua Wudao saw how insistent Little Yuan'er was, he nodded. "Let's request the pavilion master to come over. Although the chances are slim, we still have to try."

"You have a point."

"The pavilion master is skilled in the Merciful Ark of Salvation. Even if he can't save her, he should be able to stabilize her condition for a while."

Pan Litian said, "Do you think the pavilion master has so much free time? We'd better not disturb him."

After all, why would the pavilion master, in his old age, waste his Primal Qi to save a young lady whom he barely knew? There was a chance he would have to drain his life by healing Yong Ning. Every bit of Primal Qi was very precious to someone whose great limit was approaching.

The others were engrossed in their discussions when a stern and thunderously loud voice rang from behind.

"What's all this commotion about? How unbecoming!"

The others turned to look and saw Lu Zhou walking over with his hands on his back. His expression was calm.

"Greetings, Pavilion Master!"

"Greetings, master!"

Everyone fell silent after they greeted Lu Zhou.

Lu Zhou stood in front of everyone and scanned their expression. He frowned slightly when he saw Si Wuya was present as well. "The southern pavilion is an important place. Traitors should not set foot here."

Si Wuya kneeled in fear and trepidation as he pleaded, "I beg you to save her, master. I'm willing to accept any punishment you mete out."

Chapter 424: Revealing A Secret

When Si Wuya fell to his knees, everyone remained silent. They knew they could intervene even if they wanted to. They could only watch like bystanders.

Duanmu Sheng walked over and fell to one knee before he said, "Master, I'm the one who released him. He's indebted to Princess Yong Ning. I didn't think much about it. All I wanted was to give him a chance to say goodbye."

Lu Zhou stroked his beard and nodded as he swept his gaze across everyone. He was inwardly shocked when he saw how exhausted Si Wuya looked. He did not expect a mathematical question would torment Si Wuya to this extent. Based on this, he could see how tenacious Si Wuya was. After a moment, Lu Zhou looked at the three elders of the Old Age Pavilion and asked, "What's her condition?"

Hua Wudao, Leng Luo, and Pan Litian gave their diagnoses to Lu Zhou.

After getting a grasp of the current situation, Lu Zhou was certain he knew what was happening. Currently, he had two Critical Heal Cards and two Strengthened Critical Heal Cards. It should not be a problem if he wanted to save her. However, he would not easily save her. He asked, "Are you begging me?"

Si Wuya prostrated himself and said, "I beg that you help her, master. Even if there's only a slim chance, please save her life."

"Give me one reason why I should save her," Lu Zhou said.

"..."

Lu Zhou's words stunned Si Wuya and the others.

'Considering that I'm your master, I think I've fulfilled all my moral obligations by helping you survive that mess in Liang Province. Moreover, you're a traitor, and yet, you dare to treat me in such a manner... If I don't preserve my own dignity, I'd be too ashamed to show myself in public.'

Si Wuya was not stupid. Naturally, he understood his master's words. How could he say his master should help Yong Ning because he was his master? Was that not akin to slapping his own face? It... It seemed like there was no reason for his master to save Yong Ning nor was his master obligated to save her. After thinking about it, he finally said, "What are your conditions, master?"

Lu Zhou did not answer Si Wuya's question directly. Instead, he walked to the room.

The others made way for him.

"It's too early for that. All three elders have said that she's beyond help. If that's the case, it'll be meaningless for you to beg me." When he finished speaking, he opened the door and entered the room.

Si Wuya rose to his feet immediately and respectfully followed Lu Zhou into the room.

The others waited outside.

After walking past the screen inside the room, Lu Zhou and Si Wuya saw Princess Yong Ning lying on the bed with her eyes closed. She looked frail, and her lips had cracked from dryness.

Si Wuya frowned when he saw this. His thoughts were complicated and difficult to put into words.

Lu Zhou stroked his beard and lightly shook his head. "What does this little girl see in you? Why is she willing to go to such lengths?"

"..." As he looked at Yong Ning lying on the bed, unconscious, Si Wuya felt that it was getting increasingly hard to breathe. It felt as though a heavy weight was pressing down on his chest. He kept recalling scenes from the past. They had watched the moon and snow together, finished each other's poems, discussed events of the past and present... Perhaps, it was due to his lack of experience when he was growing up, he was a blank slate and rather obtuse when it came to women. However, when realization dawned on him, it was already too late.

Things never turned out the way one expected them to.

One could rarely act according to one's wish inside the palace. Si Wuya did not think he was romantically invested in Yong Ning. However, when he recalled how Yong Ning had disregarded everything, including her own life, for him, he could not act as though he was unaware. His master was right. What did he do to deserve someone giving up their life for him?

Lu Zhou walked up to the bed and checked Yong Ning's pulse. In just a moment, he completed his examination. Indeed, it was as the three elders had said. The energy blade had damaged her internal organs. According to his initial judgment, if the injury had been dealt by an ordinary energy blade, all she needed was to rest and recuperate. However, it seemed like her energy blade had corrosive properties as well, resulting in her current condition. Her injury and the poison had taken a toll on her.

Lu Zhou straightened his back and stroked his beard as he said, "She can still be saved."

Si Wuya was ecstatic. He was about to kneel and plead again when Lu Zhou asked, "Do you really have no idea where the memory crystal is?"

"Rongxi or Rongbei... Since the day I returned to the Evil Sky Pavilion, every word I have spoken is the truth. If there's any lie, I will be struck by lightning," Si Wuya said.

After all, Ji Tiandao was the one who sealed the memory crystal. It was indeed improbable for the others to know where it was.

"Your plan for the battle at Liang Province was meticulous. If Yu Zhenghai was there, the Nether Sect would've won... I'm curious why Yu Zhenghai wasn't there?" Lu Zhou asked.

"According to the original plan, Eldest Senior Brother was supposed to show up. Then... I thought of the variables and decided to take precautionary measures. Xiang Lie can be considered one of the greatest variables. So long as nothing happens to Eldest Senior Brother, the Nether Sect will win sooner or later," Si Wuya said.

"Do you think that Yu Zhenghai has the means to take down the Divine Capital?" Lu Zhou asked.

"There's no need to take down the Divine Capital..."

"Are you that confident?"

Si Wuya was slightly taken aback. However, he said, "Liu Gu is an incompetent ruler. It's only fitting for us to march against him."

"Incompetent ruler?" Lu Zhou had never concerned himself with the palace. Back then, when he came acquainted with Emperor Yong Shou, he found Emperor Yong Shou to be capable enough even if he was not the best emperor. Why did Liu Gu turn out to be an incompetent ruler?

"After Liu Gu ascended the throne, he never attended any of the court sessions and never cared to govern the empire. He has been researching the secrets of life and the Nine-leaf stage all this while... He's the true mastermind behind the disappearance of the Fairfolks," Si Wuya said.

Lu Zhou frowned.

Si Wuya continued to say, "There are records stating that riding on Cheng Huang can allow one to live to 2,000 years old. To search for Cheng Huang, Liu Gu massacred the people of Fish Dragon Village and drowned the village in blood. After that, he fished the corpses from the bottom of the river for a decade in search of Cheng Huang. To find the secret of the Nine-leaf stage, he went as far as laying down Ten Terminal Formations in many cities and experimented on cultivators alive, killing them in the process... He was the one who ordered the Black Knights to attack Upper Prime City... Leng Luo was with the Black Knight once, and he can verify this. Also, the 30,000 floating corpses of civilians in Nine Tune River..."

"That's enough." Lu Zhou interjected. He knew what Si Wuya was trying to say. Si Wuya was trying to emphasize how cruel, brutal, and incompetent Liu Gu was. He could tell as much from the battle at the Obedient Villa the other day. There was no need to convince him further. Liu Gu was not affected in the least by the death of the Second Prince, Liu Huan. It was clear how cruel and heartless Liu Gu was.

"Are you trying to be the great hero who brings about a great change in the world?" Lu Zhou asked.

"I don't have such grand ambitions. That's what Eldest Senior Brother has in mind... I merely wish to understand one thing," Si Wuya said.

"And what is that?" Lu Zhou looked at Si Wuya indifferently.

Si Wuya looked up and said at a moderate speed, "I want to know why the Great Yan's Imperial family remains in power for so long. Also, I want to know the secrets of the Great Yan's Imperial family as well!"

Lu Zhou frowned again. He thought Si Wuya would mention Yu Zhenghai somewhere in his answer, or perhaps, something about the memory crystal. He did not expect Si Wuya to be focused on the Imperial family. Was that the reason why Si Wuya entered the palace as a grand tutor? Why would Si Wuya have such strange thoughts?

Si Wuya seemed to know Lu Zhou would be baffled by this as he said, "The Eight-leaf stage and Ten Terminal Formations... aren't enough!" He paused before saying, "If you don't believe me, I can have someone from the Darknet deliver the core information here."

Lu Zhou said, "Even if you find your answer, what then?"

At this moment, Yong Ning suddenly launched into a coughing fit.

Upon seeing this, Si Wuya kowtowed and urgently said, "Please save her, master!"

Chapter 425: Yong Ning Must Die?

Lu Zhou stroked his beard and said, "I'm the only one under the heavens who can save her." He raised a palm. A Critical Heal Card appeared in his palm. He turned his palm down, and a tidal wave of power entered Yong Ning's body like willow strands. A Critical Heal Card had a 30% healing effect.

"Merciful Ark of Salvation." Si Wuya observed this scene, slightly shocked. However, when he recalled his master had summoned a 100-foot Golden Buddha Body in Liang Province's city, he felt it was natural that his master was skilled in this healing method as well. At this moment, he recalled his Eldest Senior Brother's words from some time ago. At that time, he was skeptical and uncertain. However, at this moment, he was growing increasingly certain that his master might have found a way to overcome the great limit. Otherwise, how could his master, whose great limit is near, be able to unleash Abandon Wisdom with one hand and defeat Xiang Lie with a single strike? How could his master kill Kong Xuan with a single slash on Runan's holy altar? As he looked at the power that continued to heal Yong Ning, his eyes were brimming with shock.

After a moment, Lu Zhou retracted his palm when he was done with the treatment. According to his calculations, this card should be enough to preserve her life. All she had to do was to rest and recuperate.

Yong Ning coughed, still unconscious. Blood began to trickle from the edge of her lips.

"Hm?" Lu Zhou found this strange. He stooped and checked her pulse again. He sent some Primal Qi into Yong Ning's internal organs.

...

Meanwhile, the others waited outside the room in the southern pavilion.

Zhao Yue was pacing restlessly.

"Fifth Senior Sister, you should stop and rest. It won't do if you overexert yourself," Zhu Honggong said.

"Shut up," Zhao Yue snapped.

"Shutting up now."

At this moment, the quiet Hua Yuexing said, "I remember seeing Princess Yong Ning inside the palace before. She has a good temper and is a humble person who loves peace. Why would she be used as someone else's pawn?" She shook her head and sighed.

Hua Wudao said, "It's impossible for a person to be free from such things within the palace walls. You've stayed there for a year. Weren't you nearly dragged into Mo Li's fight as well?"

"You're right, Elder Hua."

"All I can say is that the heavens are cruel to her..." Hua Wudao sighed.

"Is there nothing else we can do?"

"The outcome is too bleak... Once the poison permeates her internal organs, it's not something that can be overcome with a profound cultivation base alone," Hua Wudao said.

At this moment, Pan Litian, who had been drinking by the side, said, "Perhaps, a cultivator with godly healing skills could keep her alive for some time."

Leng Luo glanced at Pan Litian and said, "Old Pan, it's rare that I find myself agreeing with you."

When the three elders of the Old Age Pavilion were so certain, the others definitely did not doubt them.

It seemed like Yong Ning was destined to die? It was a hard pill to swallow.

Little Yuan'er looked at the three of them and said contemptuously, "Sister Yong Ning is pretty. She won't die, I'm sure of it."

The three elders did not argue with the little girl.

'If looks determine one's life, I would've been invincible when I was young.'

"Can't master do something?" Zhao Yue found it difficult to accept the reality.

"Healing and killing are two completely different acts... just like this brick!" Hua Wudao raised a hand. A brick nearby flew into his palm. He wrapped his energy around it.

Bam!

The brick exploded into pieces.

Hua Wudao kept them afloat with his energy and drew them toward his palm.

This display fascinated his audience.

This was a great test of a cultivator's control over his own power.

Hua Wudao pieced the pieces together into the shape of a brick, displaying his precise control.

The others seemed to understand what Hua Wudao was trying to say. Once the brick was shattered, even if a cultivator had a profound cultivation base, it was virtually impossible to restore the brick to its original form.

A brick was a crude example. Even with precise control, he could only maintain its shape.

Hua Wudao suddenly clenched his hand.

Crack!

The pieces of the brick fell to the ground.

"Do you understand now?"

"Understood. Thank you for the lesson," Zhao Yue said.

Leng Luo and Pan Litian did not even watch Hua Wudao showing off. They were looking at the door, instead.

After the explanations given by the three elders, the others seemed defeated. Their heads hung low, and they seemed dispirited.

...

Lu Zhou injected some of his Primal Qi into Yong Ning's body again. He was sure the Critical Heal Card he used moments ago had healed 30% of her injuries. However, the strange thing was the energy scattered in her body again and began to eat away at the healed organs. What a peculiar energy.

'No way... I bragged about my own abilities earlier. Is it turning back to bite me now?'

Lu Zhou remembered his Strengthened Critical Heal Cards. Would the energy spread and corrode Yong Ning's organs if they were not treated in one go? This meant the Strengthened Critical Heal Card would be useless as well. Where was he supposed to look for a Critical Heal Card with a 100% heal rate? He was frustrated.

"Master?" Si Wuya called out in confusion when he saw his master lost in thoughts.

This pulled Lu Zhou back to the present. He stroked his beard and said, "Stay outside."

"Yes, master." Si Wuya turned around and obediently left the room.

Lu Zhou flipped his palm. Yong Ning sat up straight.

Lu Zhou's cultivation base was only in the Divine Court realm. He used all of his Primal Qi to suppress her injuries and tried to think of a way. After a while, he sent his Primal Qi into her body again through his palm. His Primal Qi flowed into her meridian vessels like a stream of water.

With the supply of Primal Qi, Yong Ning seemed to feel better.

Lu Zhou increased the flow of Primal Qi. At this moment, he suddenly felt the unique power in Yong Ning's internal organs rushing toward his Primal Qi. It was as though it was blocking his Primal Qi from entering her body.

"The power of a talisman seal? The Celestial Masters Sect?" Lu Zhou murmured. He tapped her with his finger. The battle in Liang Province's city had been too chaotic. He did not even see how Yong Ning used her energy blade. He did not expect Yong Ning to use the Celestial Masters Sect's talisman seal. He would be hard-pressed to deal with a talisman seal with his Divine Court realm cultivation base. Moreover, he had almost depleted his supply of Primal Qi.

Just when he was about to remove his palm, the power of the talisman seal ate away at his Primal Qi in the opposite direction of her meridian vessels.

Lu Zhou instinctively circulated the Heavenly Writing scroll's power. The golden radiance immediately turned blue as it swirled in his palm.

This time, unfamiliar scripts appeared in Lu Zhou's mind.

Visiting many places without having to move, and reaping many benefits in return.

This was the power of incorporeal existence.

“A Heavenly Writing power?” Lu Zhou instinctively moved his palm. He merely wanted to fight the power of the talisman seal. Hence, he did not use much of his extraordinary power. He merely used one-tenth of his full capacity.

Blue lotuses appeared in his palms. The blue lotuses shone brilliantly. His palm brimmed with life. The power of the talisman seal was instantly crushed by the blue lotuses.

Shortly after, the blue lotuses sunk into Yong Ning’s body before they suddenly expanded.

The blue lotuses grew. One meter, two meters, three meters... ten meters... They radiated into the surroundings. It seemed as though they had taken root in the southern pavilion before spreading out.

Swoosh!

At this moment, some of the withered plants in pots around the southern pavilion’s hall began to sprout leaves and flowers, surprising everyone.

“What happened?”

“Look at the potted plants!”

Chapter 426: Suspicions

The people at the southern pavilion fell silent.

The younger disciples had less experience and merely found this fresh and exciting. They thought that anyone with a profound cultivation base could achieve this.

On the contrary, the three elders of the Old Age Pavilion looked at the growing plants that sprouted leaves and flowers in confusion and awe.

The Buddhist Merciful Ark of Salvation, the Bright Mirror, the Buddha’s Shine, or the Daoist Forgetful Maintenance could not have made a plant grow leaves and flowers this quickly. The plants were growing too fast. It was as though they were witnessing a blooming Queen of the Night cactus.

At this moment, everyone turned to look at the room where Yong Ning was staying in. They felt a gentle life force washed over them like a tidal wave. It was as refreshing as a spring breeze.

This was especially true for Si Wuya who had just recently stepped out of the Cave of Reflection. He had been exhausted, but now he felt his exhaustion being washed away by this lethargic unique power. He frowned, still in shock. He had suspected, on several occasions, that his master had already overcome the great limit. Whether it was from his master’s actions or the information he obtained after his return to the Evil Sky Pavilion, all of the signs showed that it was highly possible that his master had overcome the great limit. The truth was so close that he could almost touch it. Yet, nobody was bold enough to admit it. This was because admitting such things usually meant they were refuting the truth.

Si Wuya was in a dilemma. He was in a complicated cycle of self-doubt.

The spring breeze-like power subsided.

Everyone looked at the thriving plants in the pots.

The flowers faced the sun that showed off their vibrant colors.

Everyone had a fleeting feeling as though spring had arrived early.

“Did anyone see a faint blue lotus leaf floating out of the room before vanishing?” Pan Zhong rubbed his eyes as he tried to confirm what he saw as he asked with a trembling voice.

“I thought that I was seeing things. Now that you mention it, there really was a blue lotus leaf?” Zhou Jifeng chimed in.

“It felt really nice. I feel like I’ve just woken up from a dream. I’m flying, I’m flying, somebody pinch me! Oww... I didn’t mean literally!”

“Keep this up, and I’ll smash your mouths!” Little Yuan’er glared at them.

Pan Zhong and Zhou Jifeng fell silent immediately.

Everyone continued looking at the door that was tightly shut.

...

Everything inside the room returned to normal as well.

Lu Zhou’s Divine Court realm’s Primal Qi was completely depleted. However, he merely used a quarter of the Heavenly Writing’s extraordinary power.

He noticed that Yong Ning looked much better now. Her cheeks now had a healthy tinge of color to them.

“It worked?” Even if the talisman seal’s power was destroyed, she should not have recovered so soon. Lu Zhou looked at his own palms. He saw everything that happened just now. A huge, light blue lotus appeared. It enlarged before it vanished.

“The fourth Heavenly Writing power? Healing?”

Lu Zhou laid Yong Ning down and examined her pulse again. He confirmed that the talisman seal power inside her was gone. The corroding poison was purged as well.

She... was healed? Lu Zhou had trouble believing this. He stood up slowly. After making sure that there was no major problem, he walked out of the room with his hands on his back.

When the door opened, Lu Zhou saw the variety of expressions on everyone’s faces. He saw confusion and shock in their eyes.

‘Why do they look like this? Have they gone bonkers because of my mathematical questions?’ He entertained these thoughts in his mind but did not say them out loud. He crossed the threshold with his hands on his back as he said, “She’ll recover after resting.” Then, he walked out of the southern pavilion.

Something stirred inside of Si Wuya when he heard that. He ran into the room.

The others were still stunned.

The three elders of the Old Age Pavilion had been convinced that it was impossible for Yong Ning to be saved. Her life could only be prolonged, at most. What did the pavilion master mean when he said that she would recover after resting? Did it not mean she was healed and only needed to recuperate?

After Lu Zhou left, all of them swarmed into the room.

Si Wuya was the first to reach the bed. He ran like the wind and stood beside Yong Ning. When he saw the healthy color of her complexion, joy welled up in his heart. He stooped to check her pulse. His fingers had just found her pulse when he remembered that his cultivation base was sealed, and he could not examine her.

"Allow me." Pan Litian tossed his Wine Gourd Bottle to Pan Zhong and walked over. He rolled up his sleeves and examined her Qi. His Primal Qi entered Yong Ning.

The others looked at Pan Litian as they waited for the results of his examination.

Pan Litian's expression gradually changed to one of confusion. He frowned before his eyes suddenly widened. Awe and shock brimmed in his eyes. 'How? Impossible!'

"Old Pan, how's she?" Pan Zhong walked up to him and asked.

"Impossible... impossible... how can this be?" Pan Litian mumbled incessantly.

Everyone shook their heads. What did he mean by it was not possible?

Leng Luo stepped forward. He raised his palm and extended his Qi as well. His Primal Qi descended. His movements were much more fluid than Pan Litian. However, halfway through his examination, it could be seen he was clearly slower. Yet, with the silver mask on his face, nobody could see his expression. He took a step backward and hoarsely said, "That's strange."

Hua Wudao could no longer restrain himself. He examined her as well.

There was no doubting the standing of the three elders in the Evil Sky Pavilion. Their words bore weight.

The others looked at the three elders and waited for an answer.

"Elders, how is she?"

Just when Hua Wudao was about to reply, Pan Litian rose to his feet and stretched before he said, "Well... Something came up..." He hurried out of the room, covering 300 feet in a single stride. He vanished in just a blink of an eye.

The others were baffled. Was this how an elder should behave? How shameless!

Leng Luo shook his head. He placed his hands on his back and walked out of the room. He had always been eccentric and seldom associated himself with the group.

The others did not dare stop him. They merely looked as Leng Luo walked out of the room without a word. He soon vanished as well.

They could only turn to look at Hua Wudao. Learning from their collective mistake, they stood in a row and blocked the way just when Hua Wudao was turning to leave.

“Elder Hua, how’s she?”

Hua Wudao coughed a few times. He had an unnatural expression on his wizened face as he said, “She’s alright now.”

Upon hearing this, Si Wuya felt a sense of relief coursing through his body.

“Elder Hua, didn’t you say it’s impossible to save her?” Zhu Honggong asked.

“Did I?”

“Didn’t you?”

“I don’t think so.” Hua Wudao emboldened himself and walked out of the room.

This time, nobody stopped him.

After the three elders have left, the others rolled their eyes.

“Told you master can do it!” Little Yuan’er said.

Zhao Yue nodded and said, “That’s enough. Let’s give her some peace and quiet.”

The others left the room.

...

Meanwhile.

Lu Zhou did not return to the eastern pavilion. He went into the forest behind the mountain. He found a withered tree and remembered his latest experience. He raised his palm...

The scripts of the Heavenly Writing’s power surfaced in his mind again.

Visiting many places without having to move, reaping many benefits as a result.

A miniature Blue Lotus emerged from his palm and glowed with faint blue light.

Lu Zhou deliberately suppressed the burst of extraordinary power. He made it surge out slowly before he pushed his palm forward.

A Blue Lotus shot out from his palm and landed on the withered tree. Then, the withered tree visibly came to life. It sprouted leaves and grew. Perhaps, it was due to him only using a small amount of extraordinary power, the tree had only grown slightly before stopping.

This confirmed Lu Zhou’s thoughts.

Chapter 427: Secret of the Potion

In other words, the fourth Heavenly Writing power was like a healing technique. However, it was much more effective and rejuvenating compared to ordinary healing techniques.

Lu Zhou nodded in satisfaction after confirming his guess.

'Well, then, are there any more Heaven Writing powers?' Lu Zhou thought to himself as he returned to the eastern pavilion to look at the old parchment drawing.

When he finally saw the old parchment drawing, he was shocked to find nine provinces shown on the map.

Yi Province in the southwest, Qing and Yang Provinces in the east, Ji and Yan Provinces in the north, Yong Province in the northwest, Liang Province in the west, and Yu and Jing Provinces in the central area. The map of Great Yan's nine provinces now laid before him.

'Uh... Is this a hint that the next Open Heavenly Writing Scroll is scattered across the nine provinces?'

The area the nine provinces covered were vast. If Lu Zhou did not have a good flying chariot or a mount like Bi An, it would have been much easier to ascend the heavens than to traverse the nine provinces.

Lu Zhou would not encounter much of a problem if he stuck to the human settlements. However, it would be exceptionally dangerous once he set foot in uninhabited areas such as the forest and the desert. Even with Yu Shangrong's cultivation base, it took him a long time to reach Wuxian Mountain on his sword.

The other parts of the parchment were still blank.

However, judging by the layout of the land, Lu Zhou could tell that Rongxi was to the west while Rongbei was to the north. Those were the lands of the Other Tribes.

The old parchment drawing hovered in front of Lu Zhou as he continued to study it. It was much larger than he had expected. The table could barely support it. He could not help but frown when he saw that there were still many blank parts. "What are these places?" Even Ji Tiandao had only gone as far as Rongxi and Rongbei. Most of the time, he was in Great Yan. Ji Tiandao did not know much about places beyond Rongxi and Rongbei.

After a while, Lu Zhou lowered the old parchment drawing and no longer looked at it. He recalled Si Wuya's words and muttered to himself, "That man is temperamental and cannot be trusted."

"Is anyone outside?"

Swoosh!

A figure appeared outside of the eastern pavilion.

"Your orders, master?" It was Little Yuan'er.

"Send a letter to Mingshi Yin. Have him investigate the Darknet," Lu Zhou said.

"Oh... but how are we supposed to find members of the Darknet?" Little Yuan'er asked as she scratched her head.

"The Cave of Reflection."

"Understood!" Little Yuan'er turned around and left.

...

Meanwhile, in front of the Scholar Cave in Duanlin Branch.

Many Duanlin Branch disciples were bowing at the cave's entrance. They said in unison in a thunderously loud voice, "Congratulations on coming out of your secluded cultivation, Patriarch!"

Whizz!

The stone door slid open, and an old man with white hair emerged from the Scholar Cave. He did not seem energetic. In fact, he looked downright exhausted. However, his gaze was sharp. Nobody doubted his status and glory. This old man was none other than the old Patriarch of the Duanlin Branch, Chang Yan. "I know about Chang Jian."

At this moment, the first disciple, Shao Jinhan, stepped forward and gloomily said, "Patriarch, the Evil Sky Pavilion is too much! The Sword Devil, Yu Shangrong, crossed the heavenly moat and killed the sect master. Apart from that, the Celestial Masters Sect's Grand Elder, Hengqu Branch's Grand Elder, the Good Fortune Temple's abbot, and many others were also killed by Yu Shangrong... So long as the Evil Sky Pavilion isn't destroyed, we'll never have peace in the cultivation world. We had no choice but to implore you to come out of your secluded cultivation, Patriarch!"

Chang Yan looked at the others and asked, "The Evil Sky Pavilion? Old Villain Ji isn't dead yet?"

Shao Jinhan recounted everything that happened recently to Chang Yan. He made sure to mention the rumors of Yu Shangrong being heavily injured by Zhang Yuanshan and the withering of plants across half of Golden Court Mountain.

Upon hearing Shao Jinhan's words, Chang Yan frowned slightly as he said, "Old Villain Ji's great limit is near. How is he maintaining his peak cultivation base?"

"In reply to your question, Patriarch, Old Villain Ji has absorbed the Golden Court Mountain's barrier to maintain his strength. Currently, the barrier is gone. The seven major sects of the Noble Path have formed a Fiend Extermination Alliance. So long as we make ample preparation, we stand a good chance of taking down the Golden Court Mountain," Shao Jinhan said.

Chang Yan shook his head and said, "I heard that the ten great sects laid siege on Golden Court Mountain twice and failed."

"Patriarch, they had miscalculated during their first two attempts. This time, the Noble Path's Alliance took their time preparing... This is a good opportunity for us to try and gain a firmer footing in the cultivation world!" Shao Jinhan said. When he saw the patriarch seemed unmoved, he added, "Otherwise, are we supposed to let the sect master's death go unavenged?"

The latter part of Shao Jinhan's words was similar to Chang Yan's thoughts. A life for a life. This had been the way of the world since time immemorial.

Chang Yan could disregard the happenings in the past. However, the cultivation world had its own rules to function. It was the survival of the fittest as it always had been. However... What could he do?

Chang Yan sighed softly and said, "My cultivation base has already deteriorated to the Two-leaf Nascent Divinity realm. The disciples of the Evil Sky Pavilion are highly talented. How are we supposed to stand up to them?"

“Patriarch, if you would look at this.” Shao Jinhan gestured with his hand.

Two disciples carried something between them from the back of the crowd. It was covered by a red cloth.

Shao Jinhan removed the cover. Vials of liquid were presented to the patriarch.

“What are these?” Chang Yan frowned.

“Primal Fiend Potions.”

“...” Chang Yan was the only one who was shocked. The others seemed calm.

Primal Fiend Potion was a banned substance in the cultivation world. Consuming this potion would boost one’s cultivation base to its peak, but the consequences were dire as well. Those with weak minds would be bewitched by the potion and lose all sense of reason before they turn mad and go on a frenzied killing spree. When the potion wore off, the user would experience extreme exhaustion. There was also the possibility of the user’s cultivation base declining greatly. The side effects were too great to ignore.

Chang Yan regarded the Primal Fiend Potions with a complicated gaze. He said in a deep voice, “How dare you?!” Was this not clearly asking him to give up his life?

Shao Jinhan fell to his knees immediately.

The other members prostrated themselves on the ground.

“Patriarch, we have no other choice! I’m willing to accept any kind of punishment! For all your disciples in the branch, please think about it!” Shao Jinhan knocked his head thrice on the ground. Three loud thuds rang in the air.

The others kowtowed as well.

The sight of hundreds of disciples kowtowing in unison was rather impressive.

Loud thuds rang in the air.

Chang Yan’s wizened face twitched. His thoughts were complicated. Indeed, his great limit was fast approaching. By right, he should spend the rest of his days in the Scholar Cave while tending to his own health until the day came where he would be buried with a grand ritual. He would then return to dust and be free from the shackles of this life. However, he could not be at peace with Chang Jian’s death.

Chang Yan understood Shao Jinhan’s meaning. Everybody would die. His great limit was nearing, after all. Why not use this opportunity to grant them a blessing before his death? In truth, when he learned of Chang Jian’s death, this thought had crossed his mind as well. However, he did not have the energy to make a decision. He found himself in a dilemma as he looked at his kneeling and kowtowing disciples. He finally said in a deep voice that resounded in the area, “That’s enough.”

Everyone stopped moving immediately.

Chang Yan waved his hand. A vial flew into his hand as he said, "I'll consider this proposal... but..." He paused before continuing to say, "We must be careful in exterminating the Evil Sky Pavilion. After all, the Duanlin Branch is no match for the major sects."

Shao Jinhan was overjoyed. He said, "Don't worry, Patriarch. The Fiend Extermination Alliance has already formulated a plan that would ensure our success. All we have to do is cooperate with them. When the time comes, you might not even need the Primal Fiend Potion, Patriarch."

Chang Yan glanced at Shao Jinhan. Without saying another word, he waved his sleeve and returned to the cave.

"Take care, Patriarch!"

Chapter 428: Tear Apart

Chang Yan returned to the cave.

The Duanlin Branch disciples rose to their feet.

As the first disciple, Shao Jinhan was now in charge of overseeing the management of the branch. While the elders remained in secluded cultivation, he had no choice but to shoulder the responsibility.

"Eldest Senior Brother, should we inform the patriarch about the theory of severing the Golden Lotus?" someone asked.

Shao Jinhan shook his head and said, "Even if we were to tell him about it, we should only do so after the Evil Sky Pavilion is dealt with... The patriarch's great limit is near, severing his Golden Lotus would only expedite his death. Having survived until now, the Duanlin Branch has to take drastic measures."

The core disciples who stood in front of Shao Jinhan nodded.

Shao Jinhan continued to say, "Also, none of the Duanlin Branch disciples are allowed to sever their Golden Lotuses. This is our chance to see if we can establish ourselves in the cultivation world."

...

At night.

All was quiet in the Evil Sky Pavilion.

Below the northern pavilion, on a rock on the cliff face halfway up the mountain, the three elders were staring at the moon.

"I don't understand how the pavilion master managed that... The energy blade contained a talisman curse. Even an elite from the Celestial Masters Sect would have a hard time nullifying the curse," Pan Litian said as he leaned against a rock.

Hua Wudao said, "If you don't understand it, Elder Pan, how could I understand it? I've repeatedly examined Princess Yong Ning's Extraordinary Eight Meridians. Her damaged meridian vessels seem magically healed."

The two of them looked at Leng Luo who wore a silver mask.

Leng Luo looked at the moon as he stood with his hands on his back and said, "I'm not as old as the pavilion master, but I think that I'm knowledgeable enough. Yet, I've never seen such a unique healing method before."

"Old Leng, didn't you survive after self-destructing with heavy injuries back then?" Pan Litian asked.

Leng Luo glanced at him.

Pan Litian no longer tried to joke with Leng Luo. He said, "How much of his strength do you think the pavilion master is keeping from us?"

Hua Wudao shook his head. "On the surface, the pavilion master's cultivation base is only at the Dao-transforming Stage of the Divine Court realm. However, I think he's still at the peak of the Eight-leaf stage."

"Indeed, the pavilion master's strength is unfathomable... However, I can't help but think that the pavilion master is already at the Nine-leaf stage," Pan Litian said with a chuckle.

Leng Luo and Hua Wudao looked at Pan Litian in unison. In fact, both of them had this thought for a long time now. However, they were confused. Why would the pavilion master go so far to pretend he was only in the Divine Court realm instead of dealing with all the forces who opposed the Evil Sky Pavilion? He allowed these forces to grow, and now, these forces had formed the Fiend Extermination Alliance.

"Nine-leaf... That's rather impossible. Moreover, since the pavilion master shared the method of severing the Golden Lotus, it means he's also seeking ways to attain the Nine-leaf stage."

"You have a point... However, how would you explain what happened with Princess Yong Ning?" Pan Litian asked.

Leng Luo glanced at Pan Litian before he pushed away from the ground swiftly. He flew to the Evil Sky Pavilion with his hands on his back, leaving these words in his wake. "Even if I know the reason, I wouldn't tell you."

"Elder Hua, what about you?" Pan Litian looked at Hua Wudao amiably. "Don't worry. Although I'm older than you, you're the only one I can comfortably talk to in the Evil Sky Pavilion."

Hua Wudao was slightly taken aback. Why did this sound like a threat? He rose to his feet immediately and said, "I have something to attend to. Hua Yuexing is trying to attain the Three-leaf stage recently. I should watch over her."

"Old Hua... Don't tell me this is a folly of your youth?" Pan Litian laughed.

Hua Wudao appeared embarrassed. He activated the Eight Trigrams circle under his feet and left with blinding speed.

Pan Litian was alone now. He lay on the rock and looked at the bright moon. As though in a daze, he muttered to himself, "... If only I were 200 years younger..." He had barely finished speaking when he heard a sound from below.

Rustle!

Pan Litian's ears twitched. He smacked the rock with a palm.

Bam!

He spun upward and allowed gravity to run its course. He said sternly, "Who dares trespass upon this land?" Then, he launched a hand seal toward the forest nearby.

Bam!

The hand seal sailed into the forest and vanished from sight.

The rustling noise stopped.

"What an incredible speed!" Pan Litian dove and flew above the treetops. He vanished from sight. Although he had yet to completely recover his cultivation base and was heavily injured from the battle with Ba Ma, it did not mean cultivators could easily escape under his nose.

Rustle!

"Found you!" Pan Litian tossed his gourd bottle out. He dove toward the foot of the mountain at lightning speed. However, when he arrived at the foot of the mountain, he stopped giving chase. He was an experienced man after all.

"Trying to lure the tiger off the mountain? Fat chance of that happening!" After Pan Litian finished speaking, he did not hesitate and turn around to leave.

At this moment, a voice rang in the air. "Why don't we have a chat, senior?"

"Hm?" Pan Litian frowned. He turned around to look at the dark forest. "Who are you?"

"I'm Feng Liu of the Zhencang Branch." Feng Liu emerged from behind a tree.

"Feng Liu?" Pan Litian had never heard of this minor character. He racked his memories and confirmed he really did not know nor heard of this person. He scoffed and said, "This is Golden Court Mountain, the territory of the Evil Sky Pavilion. I advise you to leave as quickly as you can. If you're caught by the Evil Sect Pavilion disciples, I won't be responsible for whatever fate befalls you."

Feng Liu bowed and said, "My master, Zhencang Branch's Master, Feng Qinghe, has met you several times, old senior."

"You're Feng Qinghe's disciple?"

"I am."

Zhencang Branch was once one of the ten great sects. During the Clarity Sect's golden days, they, naturally, had good relations with the branch.

Pan Litian descended on the ground. He studied Feng Liu for a brief moment before he asked, "What business do you have with me?"

Feng Liu was about to start a lengthy speech when Pan Litian said in a deep voice, "Make it short. My time is precious."

Feng Liu was slightly taken aback. He was prepared to make a speech about the Noble Path's principles and talk about the Clarity Sect's destruction by Yu Zhenghai's hands. Yu Zhenghai was the Evil Sky Pavilion's disciple. Pan Litian was living with his enemies, after all. He really did not expect that Pan Litian did not give him a chance at all. When he regained his composure, he said, "Old senior, the Noble Path's Fiend Extermination Alliance has been formed... The Evil Sky Pavilion will be destroyed sooner or later..."

Swoosh!

Pan Litian suddenly tossed his gourd bottle out. It shone with a golden light.

Feng Liu defended himself with his arms.

Bam!

Feng Liu stumbled three steps backward before he regained his footing. "You're as powerful as ever, old senior. As expected, your cultivation base is being restored. Alas, your internal wounds are serious..."

Pan Litian was slightly shocked. He did not expect Feng Qinghe's disciple to possess such a profound cultivation base. However, his expression remained unchanged as he said, "Did you come here to try and drive a wedge between me and the Evil Sky Pavilion?"

"The Fiend Path is cruel and vicious. It deserves to be persecuted. Yu Zhenghai has ravaged the nine provinces, and the people are living in misery! Old senior..."

"Shut your piehole," Pan Litian said in a deep voice.

"Very well... In that case, all I ask of you is that you fulfill your promise, old senior... I'm sure you remember how my master helped you leave the Clarity Sect all those years ago..." Feng Liu said.

Pan Litian remained silent.

Feng Liu bowed and said, "Truth be told, Feng Ping is my younger twin brother. He ran into Old Villain Ji in Liang Province and has lost his cultivation base. He's now a good-for-nothing. My demand isn't excessive. Of the nine Evil Sky Pavilion disciples, pick one and destroy his or her cultivation base. With that, the debt between you and my master will be considered paid. What do you say?"

Chapter 429: You're too Green, Child

Pan Litian said, "What does my personal affair with Feng Qinghe have to do with the Evil Sky Pavilion?"

"Are you going to disregard your debt of favor with my master?" Feng Liu asked. He was genuinely worried that Pan Litian would respond in the positive. After all, Pan Litian had joined the Fiend Path.

However, Pan Litian was from the Clarity Sect after all. He was once the greatest elite of the sect. It was not in his nature to leave his debts unpaid. When he was saved by the Fourth Prince, he spent many years at the borders just to repay the life-saving debt.

In the end, Pan Litian said, "A junior such as yourself has no right to talk to me. I want to meet Feng Qinghe."

"That can be arranged. Old senior, this way please."

The two of them traveled southeast through the air.

...

Four hours later. The night grew even darker.

While they were flying, Feng Liu asked, "Old senior, with your identity and standing, you could've easily joined any of the seven great sects. You'd be an elder, at least. Why must you join the Evil Sky Pavilion?"

"Because I like it."

"Although Old Villain Ji's cultivation base is terrifyingly profound, he still can't defy the will of the heavens. Moreover, at his age, he can't sever his Golden Lotus to cultivate," Feng Liu said.

Pan Litian glanced at him and asked, "You know about that method as well?"

"The method of severing the lotus has spread in the entire cultivation world. Everybody knows about it," Feng Liu replied.

Pan Litian sneered and said, "If I were you, I'd live in seclusion and study the method of severing the lotus. When I'm at the Nine-leaf stage, nobody will be able to stop me from taking out the Evil Sky Pavilion."

"Time waits for no man. It takes too long to reach the Nine-leaf stage. There are many treasures and cultivation methods in the Evil Sky Pavilion. Almost every sect covets them." It seemed like Feng Liu was finally honest about his intention. At the end of the day, their motivation was the benefits they would gain from taking down the Evil Sky Pavilion. It had nothing to do with being on the Noble or Fiend Paths. If their true goal was to take down Ji Tiandao, they could have just patiently waited out ten years. Why were they so insistent on taking down the Evil Sky Pavilion when it would lead to heavy casualties? The quarrels and disputes in the world were fundamentally caused by greed.

Feng Liu suddenly stopped flying. As he hovered in the air, he said, "Old senior..."

"Hm?"

"Why don't you join Zhencang Branch... Our master has said that if you're willing to join us, the seat of the First Elder will be yours," Feng Liu said.

Pan Litian suddenly found this young man's impudence grating. He said, "Don't you understand what I've said to you?"

"I don't."

"You will once I meet Feng Qinghe," Pan Litian said.

"I'm afraid you won't be meeting my master."

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

100 cultivators suddenly appeared on the treetops.

Several of them nocked their bows, and some of them circled the air above their heads.

"A trap?" Pan Litian scowled. He did not expect the Zhencang Branch's Feng Liu to resort to such lowly methods.

Feng Liu retreated in the air. With a smile, he said, "I had no choice. I wanted to persuade you to return, but since you refuse, you'll be buried here."

Pan Litian wielded his wine gourd bottle, and he descended. He was at the center, surrounded by cultivators on all sides.

"I thought Feng Qinghe is a man who knew how to differentiate between right and wrong. It seems like I'm wrong." Pan Litian raised the wine gourd bottle in his hand and took huge swigs from it. In just a brief moment, he emptied the wine gourd. His clothes were wet from the wine that spilled from the edges of his mouth.

Feng Liu said, "It's useless to talk about morality with those on the Fiend Path. I've said everything I wanted to say. You're no longer at your peak. If you quietly surrender, you might be left with an intact corpse."

Pan Litian tossed the bottle out. The wine gourd turned golden as it circled him. "You're right... I'm heavily injured, and I'm no longer at my peak... Even so..." He paused for a moment. His voice deepened as he said in a deafeningly loud voice, "I'm not so weak so as to be pushed around by the likes of you!"

Boom!

Pan Litian stomped his feet on the ground and shot into the air like a fired arrow. He attacked without warning as his wine gourd shone with a blindingly bright golden light. The light grew larger and shrouded him.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

A dozen cultivators reeled back as they were hit by the golden gourd bottle. They spat out mouthfuls of blood in the sky.

"Intoxicated World! How do you like that?"

Feng Liu shouted, "What a wonderful cultivation base! Shoot him down!"

Several archers in the distance fired their energy arrows at Pan Litian. Arrows sailed across the sky like meteors toward Pan Litian.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

Pan Litian tossed his golden gourd bottle out again. He dove.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The wine gourd circled around Pan Litian and parried all the energy arrows.

"Continue," Feng Liu ordered.

“Drunk on the Mountain!” Pan Litian descended and suddenly shot to the side. He left the range of the energy arrows at lightning speed, and his gourd bottle immediately crashed on two nearby cultivators.

Boom! Boom!

The two of them were sent flying back. Their Ten Worlds avatar flashed briefly before vanishing.

Pan Litian laughed and said, “It’s been a long time since I’ve behaved this freely! If this is all Feng Qinghe has, I’m afraid you’ll be disappointed!”

“This is only the beginning.” Feng Liu waved his hand.

More than ten cultivators lunged at Pan Litian from all directions. Since he was in the middle, he felt the pressure from all sides. He fought hard to keep the lump in his chest down and to stabilize his old wounds as best he could. Then, he said, “Drunk on the Battlefield!”

Swoosh!

Pan Litian suddenly descended like a huge rock. When his feet touched the ground, a loud boom resonated in the air. After he evaded the attacks, he threw his golden gourd bottle out again.

Bam! Bam! Bam!

The golden gourd bottle was moving extremely fast and formed a golden circle in the air.

A dozen or so cultivators retreated immediately.

“He’s powerful!”

“Isn’t he injured? Why is he so powerful?”

As the cultivators retreated, they regarded Pan Litian with a shocked expression.

“This shows the Fiend Extermination Alliance’s plan is right. In any case, he must die!” Feng Liu commanded the cultivators again, “Archers, don’t stop firing!”

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

Feng Liu’s voice had barely faded when dozens of energy arrows shot toward Pan Litian.

Pan Litian looked at Feng Liu as a burst of energy surged out of his body.

Bam! Bam! Bam!

The energy arrows dispersed. Pan Litian flew toward Feng Liu.

“Eldest Senior Brother, stand back!” The cultivators in the surroundings joined their palms and formed script seals.

The air was suddenly filled with script seals.

Pan Litian had no choice but to call off his assault. He descended again and looked up. “The Confucian Sect’s expansive energy seal?”

The Confucian Sect's expansive energy seal was a kind of Expansive Heavenly Energy. All they did was condense the energy into seals and shaped them into scripts. It was fundamentally similar to the Daoist talisman seal although the Daoist seal required more brush strokes.

The scripts danced in the skies. They consolidated rhythmically and dove toward Pan Litian. "Block." The golden gourd bottle hovered before him and spun rapidly.

The script seals kept attacking while the gourd bottle parried them.

Bam! Bam! Bam!

The sounds of collision seemed never-ending, and ripples of colliding energies could be seen everywhere.

Pan Litian's arms were growing numb from the impact.

At this moment, Feng Liu shot toward Pan Litian with a sword in his hand. At the same time, he summoned his Six-leaf avatar.

Whizz!

"Expansive Energy Sword!" A great surge of energy wrapped around the sword in Feng Liu's hand, turning it into a shining golden sword. The sword shot toward Pan Litian like a bullet.

Pan Litian waved his arm. The gourd bottle rose slightly. He clapped his hands together.

Bam!

Pan Litian caught the sword between his hands. However, he was pushed backward by the force of the sword. He wrapped his feet in energy as he slid backward, leaving two shallow indents. When he finally stopped moving, the energy sword was barely half a foot away from him. His golden gourd bottle still circled him, deflecting the incoming energy arrows. "Trying to sneak up on me?"

"You're old... just like Old Villain Ji, old. The first elite of the Clarity Sect can't even hold his own against a Six-leaf cultivator like myself. Why do you have to throw your life away for that old villain?!"

"You're still too green, child!"

Chapter 430: If I Could Turn Back Time To When I Was Young

Pan Litian's palms shone with a golden light before it quickly turned red like molten iron. He held the tip of Feng Liu's sword tightly between his palms. Their Primal Qis and energies battle it out and buzzed loudly.

The golden gourd bottle continued to parry the incoming energy arrows above their heads as loud crashes rang in their ears.

Pan Litian stomped his feet to stabilize himself. He stopped moving backward as Primal Qi erupted from his body.

Bam!

Feng Liu was pushed backward by the sudden blast of energy. His sword flew into the air. He somersaulted a few times before he landed on his feet again. At this moment, he looked at Pan Litian fearfully. His arms had gone numb from this exchange, and he felt a pain in his chest as his blood essence roiled in his body. As the saying went, 'A starving and emaciated camel is still larger than a horse'.

At the same time, the wine gourd bottle fell into Pan Litian's palm.

Whizz!

Shining golden energy wrapped around Pan Litian, completely keeping the incoming energy arrows at bay. Since he possessed a heaven-grade weapon, the sword path elites around him did not dare to recklessly make a move. They only circled in the air, looking for an opening.

"Your cultivation base hasn't recovered yet, and you're heavily wounded. However, you're able to hold for so long. I'm impressed." Feng Liu's gaze was lively.

Pan Litian shook his wine gourd bottle. Unfortunately, it was empty. He had no more wine to drink. "Boring."

"It'll get interesting in a moment!" Feng Liu waved his arm again. The dozen or so sword path cultivators dove with their swords.

"Really?" Pan Litian hurled his wine gourd bottle out again. The gourd bottle shone even more blindingly than before.

Bam! Bam! Bam!

The cultivators were sent flying back. However, the energy arrows did not relent.

"In any case, you won't be able to last long."

Script seals sailed in the air again like fluttering butterflies.

The cultivators from Zhencang Branch disciples surrounded Pan Litian on all sides. They kept making hand signs and condensing their Qis. Script seals and energy seals began to cordon off the area around Pan Litian.

"Script Seal Formation!"

Script seals more powerful than the previous ones flew toward Pan Litian.

Pan Litian's gourd bottle kept the script seals at bay. It flew at a greater speed. At this moment, he began to cough.

Upon seeing this, an expression of joy appeared on the Zhencang Branch disciples' faces.

This was their chance!

"Go!"

A circle of cultivators advanced with their script seals.

Pan Litian shouted, "Thoroughly Drunk!"

When the script seal descended, the wine gourd bottle suddenly unleashed dozens of energy seals. Every energy seal was shaped like the wine gourd bottle as they shot in all directions.

Bam! Bam! Bam!

'Wine gourd bottle seals?' Feng Liu frowned slightly. He looked at Pan Litian who was at the center of the pincer attack with a grave expression.

At this moment, Pan Litian vanished from sight. He ricocheted through the surroundings like a flitting phantom.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

Bam! Bam! Bam!

Two cultivators reeled back. They spat out mouthfuls of blood and died on the spot.

The script seals kept flying toward Pan Litian and landed on the wine gourd bottle energy seals. The collision of energies made the air in the surroundings violently turbulent.

Pan Litian moved as though he was drunk. He tottered and crashed onto someone or something, a wine gourd bottle energy seal would attack in coordination.

For a time, both sides were engaged in an intense battle.

Feng Liu rose into the air and shouted, "Hold him down!" He knew Pan Litian had internal injuries. There would be no problem so long as they could hold him down.

Bam! Bam! Bam!

The script seals were attacking with a much higher frequency.

Feng Liu kept his eyes on the flitting Pan Litian.

"Avatar!"

Whizz!

A Hundred Tribulations Insight with six leaves appeared in the air.

The others summoned their avatars as well. It seemed as though the entire forest was on fire.

The instant Feng Liu summoned his avatar, he looked at Pan Litian's moving figure and said, "Now!" His sword sailed through the air. With his avatar in tow, he made a beeline for Pan Litian with his sword before him.

Pan Litian instantly felt a chill on his back and turned around.

"Break!" Feng Liu yelled.

Pan Litian instinctively moved his wine gourd bottle energy seal in front of him.

Bam!

This time, Pan Litian was sent flying back. However, he did not fly too far back, and the altitude was not too high. He landed on the ground with a thud.

The script seals and wine gourd bottle energy seals vanished.

The entire place fell silent.

The disciples of the Zhencang Branch looked down from the skies at Pan Litian, who fell on the ground.

Feng Liu's attack had successfully landed!

Pan Litian lay on the ground as he looked up into the sky. He felt the lump in his chest threatening to escape. He gave a strange, guttural laugh. It was not as if he could not block Feng Liu's attack, his reflexes merely could not keep up. He had sufficient experience, knowledge, and skills to counter it... Alas, he still could not keep up.

"Accept your fate, old senior..." Feng Liu landed. His sword was in his right hand as he walked toward Pan Litian.

Pan Litian chuckled. He supported his weight with his hands and sat up with great difficulty. "To think that Feng Qinghe taught a disciple like you."

Feng Liu did not miss the barb in Pan Litian's words. He raised his hand and sent a hand seal toward Pan Litian.

The hand seal landed on Pan Litian.

Bam!

Pan Litian defended himself by crossing his arms. He slid backward.

Feng Liu smiled. "The first elite of the Clarity Sect, Pan Litian? You're nothing."

Pan Litian launched into another coughing fit. Blood trickled down the edge of his lips.

Someone from the side said, "Eldest Senior Brother, let's not waste words with him. The branch master has told us to finish this as quickly as possible."

"There's no need to rush. I've never fought an elite such as him before. He's an Eight-leaf cultivator..." Feng Liu smiled, clearly feeling pleased with himself.

Everyone desired to be respected, to be an elite feared and revered by all.

When Feng Liu saw Pan Litian make no attempt to get up, he raised his hand again and launched another hand seal.

Bam!

Pan Litian slid backward again.

"Senior... Please don't hold back. I've always wanted to witness your glorious strength," Feng Liu said mockingly as he launched another hand seal.

Bam!

Pan Litian flew backward again!

Feng Liu continued moving forward in this manner while pushing Pan Litian back with his hand seals.

"See? This is the so-called Eight-leaf expert..." Feng Liu reveled in this feeling of trampling on an expert.

Perhaps, Feng Liu was taking too long. One of the disciples called out again, "Eldest Senior Brother, we can't afford to dally any longer."

Feng Liu nodded. His gaze grew colder.

At this moment, the Zhencang Branch disciples surrounded Feng Liu in the air. They looked down at Pan Litian who was lying on the ground.

Feng Liu said, "Old senior... If you have to blame someone, blame yourself for picking the wrong side." He raised his sword and wrapped his energy around it, causing the sword to vibrate.

Pan Litian suddenly launched into another violent coughing fit. His chest rose and fell heavily. This released the lump in his chest as he spat out blood. After that, he laughed as he looked at the Zhencang Branch disciples who were looking down at him. He looked at the starry sky and many glorious scenes from days of old flashed before him. He saw himself as a young man full of mettle. He continued to laugh. His laughter rang deafeningly in the air. All of a sudden, he slammed his palms on the ground. "If I could turn back time and become a young man again, I'd wipe those smirks off your faces..."

All of a sudden, Primal Qi surged from his dantian's sea of Qi and condensed into energy swords that shot in all directions! The energy swords charged toward the cultivators like a storm.

"This is bad! Retreat!" Feng Liu's eyes widened as he summoned his avatar and retreated as quickly as he could.

The Zhencang Branch disciples retreated as well.

Pan Litian's gaze was sharp. He summoned his avatar as his energy swords surrounded him. Eight-leaf Golden Lotus, the Hundred Tribulations Insight! With one hand tightly gripping the golden gourd bottle, his eyes were fixed on the retreating Feng Liu!