

Disciples 691

Chapter 691: Nostalgic Battle Intent

Ever since he became Ji Tiandao, Lu Zhou had been reminiscing about the past where he fought against ten cultivators. He went through the scenes when the mountain was being besieged. That was the true strength of an Eight-leaf cultivator. He obtained the power through the Peak Form Card in the end. Although it was an enjoyable battle, it felt slightly unreal. The crushing strength granted by the Peak Form Card lacked the pressure and excitement from being in danger. However, the injured Qiong Qi gave him those feelings today. He felt nostalgic when he felt his battle intent.

Naturally, this was the outcome when his extraordinary power was completely exhausted.

Qiong Qi's strength had exceeded his expectations.

He could only manage to injure it with half of his extraordinary power; he could not kill it. Clearly, it was as tough as Chi Yao of the black water.

Throughout the battle, the combination of extraordinary power and his Eight-leaf cultivation base managed to hurt Qiong Qi.

The man and beast fought for hours.

The cultivators looked at the sky, but they did not feel tired.

If two Eight-leaf cultivators were to fight, it was not surprising if they fought for five days and five nights.

However, Lu Zhou had no intention of spending so much time fighting the beast. He was going to give it his all. With this, Qiong Qi would have to respond in kind. The duration of their battle would be greatly reduced.

Bam!

There was another sound of a collision.

Lu Zhou flew backward.

Qiong Qi flipped backward as well.

Lu Zhou gauged the remaining Primal Qi in his dantian's sea of Qi; he only had half left.

Qiong Qi was not in a much better state. Apart from its flattened hair, its nose was bruised, and its face was swollen. As it panted, its belly rose and fell in tandem. It lowered its stance and flicked its tongue out.

Lu Zhou looked down at the tear on his sleeve. "You're the first beast that managed to damage my sleeve. I'll give you another chance... Surrender and you may live."

Upon hearing this, the other cultivators were speechless. An elite was truly an elite. To think this was the first time the patriarch had his sleeve damaged by his opponent.

When they thought about it, they wondered if it did not count when the ten great sects dealt grievous injuries to the patriarch? If it did not, then, there was no issue with the patriarch's words.

Woof! Woof! Woof!

The strange Qiong Qi barked thrice.

Lu Zhou, naturally, did not understand it. Moreover, the system did not send him any notification saying the beast had been tamed. He would have to forge on, it seemed. "If you refuse to submit, I'll continue beating you until you submit."

With a flurry of movements, Lu Zhou launched energy fists out.

Qiong Qi struck with its claws and flapped its wings.

Bam! Bam! Bam!

The energy fists were like a tempest when it struck the beast's chest.

Qiong Qi was huge. However, it did not underestimate this frail human.

Grrrr!

Qiong Qi suddenly rolled around. It brought its fangs down as it attempted to maul Lu Zhou.

Lu Zhou thrust his hand upward and summoned his avatar.

The 100-foot avatar wrapped around Lu Zhou and held Qiong Qi's jaw.

Bam!

Qiong Qi did not expect Lu Zhou to suddenly summon his avatar. Although it had a huge mouth, it could not swallow a 100-foot avatar. There was a crisp sound as one of its fangs broke off. It roared and thrashed in pain!

Bam!

Lu Zhou used his avatar to block the incoming attacks. Nevertheless, the huge impact pushed him back.

The avatar disappeared.

Lu Zhou stabilized his footing. "Livestock. Are you satisfied now?"

He extended his arms and pushed up.

Energy swords appeared!

"Primal Restoration!"

The energy swords thrummed and vibrated.

Qiong Qi flapped its wings in a frenzy. Its hairs stood up again. It seemed exhausted.

"You're furious?" Lu Zhou frowned. He was certain this beast was of the Nine-leaf stage. He did not feel as strained when he was fighting Jiang Wenxu back then! Without a second thought, he launched the energy swords of Primal Restoration!

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

They merged into one and stabbed at Qiong Qi!

Then, Lu Zhou flipped his palm around before Unnamed materialized in his hand.

Lu Zhou rose into the air. "Livestock... If you're not willing to submit, I'll send you on your way."

The energy swords wrapped around Unnamed.

Although Qiong Qi was furious, he was just like an arrow at the end of its flight at this moment. A powerful defense would not do him any good. Unnamed could surely breach his defense.

Lu Zhou held Unnamed as charged forward at top speed. The Primal Qi in his dantian's sea of Qi condensed into energy.

Lu Zhou saw the fervor in Qiong Qi's eyes. This livestock loved to battle!

Return and Enter Three Souls.

Three shadows appeared.

Even Qiong Qi was distracted.

In the next second, Lu Zhou swung with Unnamed.

When it looked up, Lu Zhou saw a look of fear in its eyes. He pressed with his thumb and turned the blade 180 degrees around.

Bam –

The blade and the energy swords struck Qiong Qi's body.

Bam!

Qiong Qi flew sideways.

Lu Zhou stepped into the air. He wielded his sword in his right hand and raised it.

"I'm giving you a chance here... I'll take your life if you insist on being stubborn." Lu Zhou's loud and clear voice reached Qiong Qi's ears.

Unexpectedly, Qiong Qi did not choose to submit. As much as it loved to fight, it did not have any intention to continue the fight. It wanted to retreat.

Lu Zhou stepped forward.

Everyone who saw this was stunned.

The patriarch really defeated Qiong Qi with his Eight-leaf power! Who in the world could do this, apart from him?

The two red lotus cultivators who were being watched by Nan Gongwei and Feng Yizhi had lost all ability to think. They had sent the information of the Nine-leaf stage progress in Great Yan back to the Sky Martial Court. However, it seemed like they had jumped the gun. They had underestimated the strength of a Nine-leaf cultivator here!

Lu Zhou looked at Qiong Qi. "Too late."

Grrrr!

Lu Zhou knew Qiong Qi was either going to attack or flee.

Lu Zhou shook his head. "I'll leave your fate to the heavens. It's up to you to survive this... Thunderblast!"

Lu Zhou flipped his right hand. Unnamed was replaced with a Thunderblast Card.

This was his final Thunderblast Card. There was a sure-kill rate of 1% and a 10% rate of dealing a serious injury.

The Thunderblast Card shattered.

In just an instant, thunder clouds rolled above the nine heavens.

A purple bolt of energy akin to a bolt of lightning appeared. Then, the purple energy struck Qiong Qi.

Boom!

Lu Zhou observed Qiong Qi silently, waiting for the result. There was no announcement of its death nor were there any rewards of merit points.

'You're in luck.'

Qiong Qi's body was charred as though it was struck by actual lightning. Having been heavily injured prior to this, Qiong Qi could no longer support its huge body, and it plummeted to the ground.

The others exclaimed in shock.

Boom!

Qiong Qi crashed onto the ground and destroyed several barns.

Lu Zhou descended, holding a Deadly Strike Card in his hand.

The sky above Yu Province City was once again peaceful.

The cultivators got closer to the barn and looked at where Qiong Qi crashed.

Lu Zhou went up to the place where Qiong Qi was lying.

Qiong Qi blinked. Its body was black. Moreover, its life aura was weak as gossamer.

Lu Zhou frowned slightly... 'Have I gone overboard? Can I still own it when it's this wounded?'

He looked at the heavily wounded Qiong Qi and asked, "I can save you if you submit to me."

Woof!

Qiong Qi barked weakly.

It was a weak bark.

At this time, a notification rang in Lu Zhou's mind.

"Ding! Qiong Qi is tamed. Master recognition is successful. You are now Qiong Qi's master. Reward: 5,000 merit points."

'I did it!' Lu Zhou nodded, pleased. Seeing that the beast was charred, he wondered if he should go back on his words and kill Qiong Qi to earn more merit points. "Oh well... since you've submitted to me, I shall fulfill my promise."

Lu Zhou flipped his palm. His remaining extraordinary power surged out before a blue lotus appeared and bloomed.

Vitality swirled around Qiong Qi.

"It's not enough." Lu Zhou frowned. He raised his palm again. A Critical Heal Card shattered.

The Buddhist Merciful Ark of Salvation appeared. The double effects of vitality and healing wrapped around Qiong Qi.

Qiong Qi tried to lift its paw, but it could not move. It tried to move its head as well but discovered he could only blink. All it could at this moment was blink its eyes and pant heavily. In the end, it closed its eyes and whimpered once.

Chapter 692: Reversal

The cultivators in the air above Yu Province City sighed. They knew Senior Ji's intention for doing this. However, taming a mount was an incredibly difficult feat. Moreover, this was a ferocious beast. As the saying went, 'It's easier to change a mountain than to change a person's character'. Similarly, how could wild dogs change their nature? How could beasts tamper their instinct to dominate?

Although the cultivators sighed, they felt relieved as well.

Some of the cultivators hovering in the air and looked down and said, "Senior Ji, your might knows no bounds. You're truly impressive. However, this beast is stubborn to the very end. In the end, it has brought about its own death."

"Fortunately, you arrived in time, Senior Ji. Otherwise, there would've been a rain of blood in Yu Province City."

Lu Zhou stared at Qiong Qi intently. He had yet to receive the notification of Qiong Qi's death. Therefore, he knew Qiong Qi was not dead.

Lu Zhou continued to wait and observe, He would not leave until the result was clear. He had been fighting Qiong Qi for a long time and spent all his extraordinary power. Apart from that, he had exhausted his item cards as well. If it died like this, he would incur a huge loss.

Since Lu Zhou did not move, the other, naturally, did not dare to rush him. They remained hovering in the air as they looked down.

Without the barrier and the clouds in the skies, the heat of the scorching sun hit the land mercilessly. It shone on Qiong Qi whose eyes were closed.

The burned Qiong Qi looked like a piece of dried charcoal at this moment.

The cultivators' cultivation bases could keep them cool so they did not mind the heat very much.

However, Qiong Qi was not as fortunate.

"Ding! Qiong Qi has given up on living."

"Ding! Killed Qiong Qi. Reward: 5,000 merit points."

"Given up on living?"

'It really died? I've been painstakingly trying to tame it, but it died? Why did it give up on living?' Lu Zhou's mind was filled with questions.

At this moment, Bi An lunged forward.

Bam!

It landed on Qiong Qi's carcass and stomped on it, eyeing Qiong Qi warily.

"Bi An, get off it."

Compared to the huge Qiong Qi, Bi An seemed small.

Bi An obeyed Lu Zhou's order. It leaped off the carcass and lay down next to it as it kept its eyes trained on Qiong Qi.

Crack!

A crisp sound suddenly rang in the air.

'Hm?' Lu Zhou looked at Qiong Qi's body. Qiong Qi's body that was charred seemed to have cracked open.

Crack! Crack! Crack!

Cracking noises continued to ring in the air.

Upon seeing this, the cultivators hovering in the air were shocked.

"This is..."

"Incredible, this is truly incredible!"

A cultivator who had a keen eye nodded as exclaimed, "I've loved reading books about beasts in the past! I didn't expect to be able to see Qiong Qi in real life. Qiong Qi is notorious for its love to fight for dominance. It's impossible to tame an adult Qiong Qi. However, it's possible to tame a young Qiong Qi."

"A young Qiong Qi?"

"Keep watching, everyone."

Crack!

The charred portion of Qiong Qi's body continued to crack.

Then, a louder crack rang in the air as the charred part broke away completely.

"It... I-it gave birth?" the others exclaimed in amazement.

Realization finally dawned on them.

Lu Zhou was also looking at Qiong Qi's belly in surprise. As they expected, a young Qiong Qi emerged from the adult Qiong Qi's belly. Its wings were as supple as a newborn. It had yellow fur, and its limbs were trembling from its weight. It climbed up with great difficulty on the charred Qiong Qi, looking as though it was going to fall at any moment.

Nobody expected the huge Qiong Qi's offspring would be so tiny. It was rather difficult to believe. Its size was akin to that of domestic sheep; it was barely larger than a puppy.

Lu Zhou stroked his beard as he looked at Qiong Qi's pup. How awkward.

The cultivator who was knowledgeable about Qiong Qi cupped his fists and said, "Congratulations, Senior Ji, on obtaining the mount, Qiong Qi!"

Lu Zhou looked at the person and asked, "Do you know much about Qiong Qi?"

"Senior Ji... Qiong Qi isn't like other beasts. According to the records, it's one of the Four Perils. It's so vicious that it would even devour its mother. Therefore, even if you didn't kill the adult Qiong Qi, the pup will one day devour its mother as well. Qiong Qi is very intelligent. To prevent that from happening, usually, they would not mate. What a surprise that this one was pregnant."

Upon hearing these words, the others cupped their fists together.

"Congratulations, Senior Ji."

Lu Zhou nodded. He looked at the person and said, "You're not bad."

"Thank you, Senior Ji... I've always admired the Evil Sky Pavilion. I wonder if I may... join the pavilion?"

Everyone instantly turned to look at the man.

Lu Zhou said, "I've always admired talented people. Since you have the intention, you may join the Nether Sect's branch in Yu Province City and become its branch master. What do you think?"

The man was elated when he heard these words. He bowed and said, "Thank you, Senior Ji!"

This also showed the others that joining the Evil Sky Pavilion was not easy as they thought it would be.

At this moment, the little Qiong Qi took a few faltering steps on the charred carcass as it flapped its wings.

Swoosh!

The little Qiong Qi leaped off.

Thud!

It fell onto the ground in a spectacular manner.

Lu Zhou frowned as he saw this. He considered his options. A second ago, he had felt he had obtained the most powerful mount in the world. Now, he felt that might not necessarily be the case.

Lu Zhou checked the system dashboard. As he expected, Qiong Qi's name was added to the list. This meant that little Qiong Qi was indeed his mount.

Little Qiong Qi was not discouraged by this little setback. Instead, it got back up on its feet and walked to Lu Zhou...

Woof! Woof! Woof!

It barked at Bi An, looking like a puppy trying to be fierce,

Lu Zhou was speechless.

Bi An bared its fangs.

Little Qiong Qi immediately lowered its head. Its bark became a whimper.

The other cultivators broke out in laughter. Even so, none of them dared to underestimate this little Qiong Qi.

"Senior Ji, this Qiong Qi might be little now, but it grows at a very quick pace compared to humans. I believe it'll become a powerful helper to you in less than a few years."

'A few years?' Lu Zhou could not even wait for months. He waved his arm. He sent it onto Bi An's back with his energy and said, "Look after it."

Bi An lay down.

Nan Gongwei and Feng Yizhi flew over, each with a person in tow.

"Congratulations, Senior Ji," the duo said in unison.

The cultivators in the skies were puzzled when they saw this.

When the two cultivators whom Nan Gongwei and Feng Yizhi brought over saw the huge carcass, a frightened expression appeared on their faces as their eyes widened in shock.

"Qiong Qi is dead?"

"H-he's even capable of killing Qiong Qi. This..."

Both of them gulped, speechless.

Nan Gongwei looked at the two of them before kicking them. "On your knees! Don't you know that you should salute Senior Ji when you see him?"

The two of them fell to their knees immediately.

"Senior Ji... We're from the same side. Why are you doing this?!"

"That's right... What did we do? Why are you treating us like this?"

The duo feigned an innocent expression on their faces.

The cultivators hovering in the air did not understand what was happening. They turned to look at Lu Zhou.

Lu Zhou said indifferently, "Where did two of you enter from?"

The duo's hearts trembled. However, they feigned a bewildered expression and said, "Enter from where? I don't understand,"

Lu Zhou flipped his palm. The Golden Taixu Mirror appeared. With his remaining Primal Qi, he activated the mirror and shone its golden light at the duo...

Chapter 693: Who Can Threaten Me?

Under the shine of the golden light, two miniature red lotus avatars appeared above the two cultivators. The red lotus spun and seemed exceptionally dazzling.

The other cultivators broke out in a commotion immediately.

"Red lotus? Why are their lotuses red?"

"What Other Tribe is this?"

"A red lotus?!"

Men would always fear and feel wary about the unknown.

Although Lu Zhou had a blue lotus, he had a golden lotus as well. With this, the others thought he was using some secret technique. Similar to how the Fiend Zen would turn one's energy black. For this reason, nobody dwelled on Lu Zhou's blue lotus.

However, this was their first time seeing red lotuses. Their shock was not any less than when they saw the wolf king avatars of the Other Tribesmen from Rongxi and Rongbei. Even so, they knew about the Other Tribes and could easily investigate them. However, what about the red lotus? Where did it come from?

The cultivators moved to have a better look at the two cultivators.

The two red lotus cultivators looked frightened. They did not expect Lu Zhou to possess a treasure that could reveal their avatars. With this, they had been thoroughly exposed. Without any hesitation, as though they had a tacit understanding, both of them summoned their avatars.

Two red lotus avatars appeared and shot into the air.

The red lotus cultivators were trying to run away!

Alas, they were already surrounded, to begin with.

Although Lu Zhou did not have much power left, there were still Nan Gongwei and Feng Yizhi. How could they possibly get away?

When the red lotus avatars took flight, the cultivators in the air attacked at the same time.

Bam! Bam! Bam!

They attacked without questions

Nobody without a Seven or Eight-leaf cultivation base could have withstood this, let alone the two red lotus cultivators who were only at the Five-leaf stage.

Shortly after, two Eight-leaf golden lotus avatars tackled the red lotus avatars at greater speed.

Boom! Boom!

The two red lotus cultivators fell!

“You think you can get away?” Nan Gongwei said with a sneer.

Feng Yizhi and Nan Gongwei retracted their avatars and landed next to the two red lotus cultivators.

“Senior Ji, how should we punish them?”

Lu Zhou looked at the two red lotus cultivators who were sprawled on the ground and said, “Seal their cultivation bases.”

“Understood!”

With Feng Yizhi and Nan Gongwei personally making a move, the two red lotus cultivators had their cultivation bases firmly sealed. They were dragged before Lu Zhou, where they remained on their knees.

Lu Zhou stared at the two of them with a deep gaze. He asked sternly, “From where have you entered?”

One of the two red lotus cultivators coughed before he said, “At this point, you can do whatever you want with us!”

“I’ve already sent the information of the golden lotus domain back to the red lotus domain... If you dare lay a finger on us, our people will return the favor tenfold!”

Bam!

Nan Gongwei kicked the duo. He glared at them and said, “Is this really the time for you to act tough?”

“Act tough? Senior Ji, do you really dare to kill me? I swear on the heavens that the Sky Martial Court will annihilate the golden lotus domain!”

Lu Zhou seemed exceptionally calm.

On the other hand, the other cultivators were brimming with fury. How dare these people challenge Evil Sky Pavilion’s Master under the heavens?

“If our life stones shatter, the Sky Martial Court will be alerted immediately. If you know what’s best for you, you’ll let us go!”

Lu Zhou walked over.

Feng Yizhi and Nan Gongwei were about to say something when Lu Zhou raised his hand to stop them.

As Lu Zhou advanced toward the duo, the duo retreated, and their confidence seemed to falter.

"Are you threatening me?" Lu Zhou asked tonelessly.

"I... I think so..." Despite being frightened, the duo remained unyielding. At this time, they could only ensure their survival by intimidating this Nine-leaf cultivator with the red lotus domain.

"Even if a Nine-leaf cultivator were here, I wouldn't think much about him, let alone two Five-leaf cultivators like you."

"Hm?" The red lotus cultivator kneeling on the left suddenly saw a cold glint of light. When he looked up, he saw the old man wielding a delicate sword with black runes. Black? He could not help but shudder.

"Senior..."

The blade was drawn across his throat.

The remainder of his words died with him as blood gushed out from his throat.

It was a simple, clean, and thorough move.

The red lotus cultivator did not seem to have time to process his death as life left him. His chest was dyed red by the blood gushing out from his throat. The scarlet shade resembled a red lotus avatar. Then, his head lolled to the side.

Thud!

He fell down and stopped breathing.

"Ding! Killed a target. Reward: 1,500 merit points. Domain extra: 1,000 merit points."

His comrade, the remaining red lotus cultivator here, widened his eyes.

Lu Zhou shifted his gaze to the red lotus cultivator and said, "What do you have to say?"

"I have nothing to say. At this point... you can do whatever you want with me." The red lotus cultivator turned his head to the side, seemingly resigned to his fate.

Lu Zhou grabbed the red lotus cultivator's neck. "I killed Jiang Wenxu, Gu Ming, Chi Yao, Qiong Qi... Tell me why you don't think I can kill you?"

When the red lotus cultivator heard the strings of names coming out of Lu Zhou's mouth, a fearful expression appeared on his face again.

Lu Zhou lifted him up by his neck until his legs dangled in the air and his face flushed red.

He tried to pry Lu Zhou's fingers away. Alas, Lu Zhou's grip was firm.

"You're only a Five-leaf cultivator, but you don't know your own place!"

"Spare... Spare me..." He was frightened by Lu Zhou's cold gaze.

"Too late."

Crack!

Lu Zhou clenched his hand, snapping the red lotus cultivator's neck.

His head lolled to the side; he was no longer breathing.

Lu Zhou released his grip on the red lotus cultivator's neck, and the red lotus cultivator fell to the ground with a thud.

The other cultivators were relieved when they saw this, but they did not dare to make a sound. Although there were no flamboyant and ostentatious moves or energies, they felt terrified. Lu Zhou's earlier words were etched into their minds, and they vowed inwardly that they would never try to threaten an elite like the Patriarch of the Evil Sky Pavilion.

"Ding! Killed a target. Reward: 1,500 merit points. Domain extra: 1,000 merit points."

With the deaths of the two red lotus cultivators, Lu Zhou earned 5,000 merit points.

This was much easier than killing Qiong Qi.

Lu Zhou was troubled by the fact that he needed more merit points. Since the two cultivators had crossed his bottom line, how could he live up to his title of Old Villain Ji if he did not kill them?

For a time, nobody said anything.

Lu Zhou no longer cared about the dead men. He looked at Nan Gongwei and Feng Yizhi and asked, "Why are both of you here in Yu Province?"

Nan Gongwei snapped back to his senses. He wiped the sweat off his brows and said, "S...Senior Ji..."

"There's no need to be nervous. I've always been merciful."

"We learned that a beast was attacking a city. Hence, we thought of coming out to train," Nan Gongwei replied.

"Elder Chu Nan said you intend to preach about the Nine-leaf stage... How could we miss such a thing," Feng Yizhi added.

They were stuck at the Eight-leaf stage for a long time now. If there was a way to reach the Nine-leaf stage, they would be more than happy to learn.

The cultivators in the skies were overjoyed when they heard this. There were only rumors about this before. Now that the patriarch himself had confirmed it, how could they not feel elated? Even if they were not at the Eight-leaf stage yet, what they would learn would certainly be of value in the future. Hence, they bowed and said in unison, "Your magnanimity is something we should all learn from, Senior Ji!"

"You're our role model!"

Finally, the current matter had been dealt with.

Lu Zhou stroked his beard and nodded. He turned to look at Bi An and said, "Let's return to the Evil Sky Pavilion."

The others bowed. "Safe journey, Senior Ji!"

Lu Zhou leaped onto Bi An's back and hovered in the air. At the same time, he looked at the little Qiong Qi next to him and sighed. He was barely in the air when he saw the civilians in the vicinity swarmed out of the streets.

Perhaps, Bi An's appearance was too frightful, the commoners thought that another beast had appeared. Hence, they scattered and ran back into their houses.

Lu Zhou immediately produced a Disguise Card. He shattered it in his palm.

A Nine-leaf golden lotus avatar towered in the air. The nine leaves were dazzling and eye-catching.

Bi An sped forward with the 150-foot avatar.

The golden radiance shone on Yu Province City.

The cultivators worshipped him.

When the civilians saw this, realization finally dawned on them.

As far as the eye could see, people were bowing down and kowtowing at Lu Zhou.

"Ding! Worshipped by 30,000 individuals. Reward: 30,000 merit points."

Chapter 694: Reversal Cards and Shining Stones

Lu Zhou, naturally, deliberately manifested his Nine-leaf avatar so the people would worship him. He thought he would fail, but who knew it would turn out to be a success? According to the system, he could scheme or force people to worship him. However, what he just did worked.

Perhaps, the timing was important. Or maybe the people worshipping him had to be sincere and truly grateful for him to earn merit points. That was why he did not earn merit points from those cultivators who only acted respectful to him.

He was lucky this time around. If this was any other city, the people would only be temporarily awed. They would not go so far as to worship him.

The Disguise Card cost him 10,000 merit points. The cost was truly high. He could not afford to take risks. It was clear to him that the event that led to the worshipping was the key.

Ten seconds passed in an instant, and his avatar disappeared.

The cultivators who hovered above Qiong Qi's carcass were still in awe.

"Senior Ji is unrivaled. He's a Nine-leaf cultivator, but he can kill Qiong Qi with an Eight-leaf cultivation base."

"That just shows how confident he was... We're Eight-leaf cultivators as well, but we couldn't take down Qiong Qi even if we joined forces. In contrast, Senior Ji overpowered Qiong Qi on his own. Although we're using the Eight-leaf stage strength, we're as different as heaven and earth."

Nan Gongwei and Feng Yizhi's minds were filled with many thoughts.

At this moment, someone next to them said, “Senior Ji aside, the Evil Sky Pavilion’s first disciple, Yu Zhenghai, and second disciple, Yu Shangrong, have never lost a single battle, and they’re both Eight-leaf cultivators as well. During the battle on Cloud Radiant Forest, both of them were evenly matched. Although they’re peerless among Eight-leaf cultivators, there’s a rumor that both of them couldn’t even defeat Senior Ji when they joined forces.”

With this series of events, Lu Zhou was now invincible in their hearts.

...

Back at the Evil Sky Pavilion.

Si Wuya and Mingshi Yin went to the eastern pavilion immediately to greet Lu Zhou.

Bi An landed before the hall.

When Mingshi Yin saw the little pup, Qiong Qi, beside his master and on Bi An’s back, he frowned.
“What’s that?”

Si Wuya turned to look as well. He did not recognize Qiong Qi.

“Welcome back, master.” The fourth and seventh disciples bowed in unison.

Lu Zhou leaped off Bi An. With a wave of his hand, little Qiong Qi fell off Bi An’s back.

He did not expect little Qiong Qi to adapt to external environments so quickly throughout their rushed journey. Its footing was already stable. Perhaps, this was the beasts’ strength.

“Master, this is...” Mingshi Yin pointed at little Qiong Qi with a confused expression.

Woof! Woof! Woof.

Little Qiong Qi flapped its wings at Mingshi Yin. Its fur had flattened and looked neat. With this, it resembled a silly little puppy even more.

“Heh... I didn’t offend you, did I?” Mingshi Yin looked at little Qiong Qi.

Little Qiong Qi wagged its tail and ran over. It sniffed around but seemed to find the scent unbearable. It rolled over with its feet facing the skies.

Mingshi Yin. “...”

Lu Zhou glanced at the pup and said, “This beast is Qiong Qi.”

“Qiong Qi?” Si Wuya walked over; an expression of slight disbelief could be seen on his face. He did not expect there was such a little and cute Qiong Qi. Was this the beast that wreaked havoc in Yu Province City?

“Yu Province City’s problem has already been dealt with. This little Qiong Qi is the offspring of the Qiong Qi that wreaked havoc. Look after it,” Lu Zhou said.

The offspring of Qiong Qi?

Si Wuya clicked his tongue. Realization dawned on him before he said, "Congratulations on obtaining another mount, master."

"A mount... This is a mount? Woof, I'll bite you, you hear?"

Woof! Woof! Woof!

Little Qiong Qi and Mingshi Yin seemed to be bickering.

Si Wuya was rendered speechless by Mingshi Yin's behavior. 'How childish!'

At this moment, Little Yuan'er returned with Conch. Both of them were holding hands. When she saw little Qiong Qi rolling on the ground, her interest was instantly piqued.

"Fourth Senior Brother, what's this?"

"Little Qiong Qi!"

Woof! Woof! Woof.

The two girls began to play with it.

Young girls always had a soft spot for cute animals that tried to be fierce, after all.

Lu Zhou remembered how ferocious the adult Qiong Qi was. He could hardly reconcile the image of the adult Qiong Qi with this little Qiong Qi. In the end, "Don't underestimate Qiong Qi."

Conch and Little Yuan'er played with it some more before standing respectfully before Lu Zhou.

"Master, Junior Sister Conch is now in the Nascent Divinity realm," Little Yuan'er said.

Lu Zhou looked at Conch. Her speed was within his expectations. At the same time, he could not help but wonder if she was in her awakening state? If that was not the case, where did her cultivation base come from? Before Jiang Wenxu's death, he denied the notes were left behind by Luo Shiyin. At that time, he inferred that it was impossible for Luo Shiyin to be Conch. In that case, what was the relationship between the two?

Despite his thoughts, Lu Zhou replied calmly, "Good."

"I'll continue to work hard!" Conch clenched her small hands.

Lu Zhou looked at Conch, feeling slightly hesitant. He was learning more about the red lotus domain by the day. Since Conch was from the red lotus world, would she one day stand against him?

There were good and bad people everywhere. Luo Shiyin left her notes here and encouraged Great Yan cultivators to improve themselves. On the other hand, Jiang Wenxu suppressed the progress of cultivation for his selfish reasons. Clearly, not everyone from the red lotus world was maniacs who only wanted to kill.

'Forget it. I'll deal with it when the time comes.'

Lu Zhou turned to look at little Qiong Qi and said, "Qiong Qi is still young. Who wants to look after it?"

"Me!"

“Me! Me! Me!”

Conch and Little Yuan’er raised their hands simultaneously.

Si Wuya took a step back; he was not interested in this.

Mingshi Yin raised his hand reluctantly. “Nice! Little pup, you have two ancestors as your new caretakers now. Off you go...” He nudged little Qiong Qi with his foot.

Woof! Woof! Woof!

Little Qiong Qi grabbed hold of Mingshi Yin’s right leg.

“...”

“What’s wrong with you? This is master’s order. I don’t have any time to spare for you. Get off!” Mingshi Yin tried to shake it off.

However, Qiong Qi only tightened its grip.

Lu Zhou found this strange as well.

Qiong Qi had acknowledged him as its master. He did not expect it to be so attached to another person.

“Mingshi Yin,” Lu Zhou said.

“Yes, master.”

“You’ll look after it,” Lu Zhou said.

“Huh?” He was stunned.

Woof! Woof! Woof!

Little Qiong Qi rubbed its face on Mingshi Yin’s foot.

Conch and Little Yuan’er said, “Master...” They had their own opinions.

Lu Zhou shook his head. “Qiong Qi is fiercer than Bi An. Are you sure that you want to look after it?”

“...”

The two girls shook their heads.

“Old Fourth... Any objections?” Lu Zhou asked.

No. I promise to take good care of it,” Mingshi Yin said with a stiff smile on his face.

Woof! Woof! Woof! Woof! Woof!

Little Qiong Qi continued rubbing its face on Mingshi Yin’s leg.

Mingshi Yin was slightly annoyed by this.

...

Lu Zhou returned to his room.

He called up the system dashboard and checked his merit points.

Merit points: 45,140.

Items: Deadly Strike Card x2, Critical Block Card x72 (passive), Binding Cage Card x2, Whitzard (resting), Bi An, Ji Liang, Qiong Qi, Golden Taixu Mirror, Disguise Card x3, Reversal Card x350, Shining Stone x1.

Weapons: Unnamed, Life Cutter, Jade Horsetail Whisk, Spotless Dagger, High Void, Magistrate Brush.

He gained more than he thought he did.

According to his previous experiences with the lucky draw, this number of merit points should be enough for him to accumulate enough Reversal Cards.

“Lucky draw.”

“Ding! Spent 50 merit points. Obtained: Reversal Card x5.”

That was a nice start.

Lu Zhou decided to continue.

Chapter 695: African Chief or European Emperor?

There was no excitement in the subsequent lucky draws.

No matter how enthusiastic a person was, they would still get bored if things were repetitive.

Lu Zhou was the same.

He drew for the entire night so he felt slightly tired the next morning.

Perhaps, it was due to his lack of extraordinary power, he could not stay awake for too long.

...

A night went by.

Aside from the good start, his next 100 draws ended with thank-you messages.

If Lu Zhou was not tired and fed up, he would have started cursing.

He decided to do another draw seeing that he still had 100 merit points...

“Lucky draw.”

“Master!” At this moment, Zhu Honggong entered the room. He exclaimed in excitement, “Master, I’m now at the Four-leaf stage!”

“Ding! Spent 50 merit points. Thank you for your participation. Luck point +1.”

Lu Zhou looked up at Zhu Honggong who entered the room. With a stern expression, he said coldly, “Scram!”

Zhu Honggong shuddered. He hastily said, "I'll scam right away." He hastily retreated from the room and closed the room.

Outside the eastern pavilion, Zhu Honggong scratched his head and mumbled, "Why is master in such a bad mood? Did I do something wrong?" He went down the stairs, still puzzled. 'Does Master think that my cultivation base is too low?'

When he thought about it, he thought that might be the case. After all, among the other disciples, his cultivation base was the lowest.

...

"Son, did your master praise you?" Zhu Tianyuan walked into the room.

Zhu Honggong smiled and said, "He did... He praised me a lot."

"How did you praise you? What did he say?"

"Scram."

"Is that how you talk to your father? I was just asking how your master praised you."

"I told you... Scram!"

"Heh, spare the rod and spoil the child. Do you think your father's Eight-leaf cultivation base is just for show?"

Then, a miserable cry rang in the air.

...

Inside Lu Zhou's room.

Lu Zhou felt slightly groggy. Therefore, he entered his meditative state and meditated on the Heaven Writing scrolls.

As his extraordinary power was being replenished, a cool sensation filled his mind. His mental state was being restored. Apart from that, he could also feel that his meditation speed when meditating on the Earth Scroll was much faster than before.

...

In just a blink of an eye, three days had passed.

"Ding! You've meditated upon the Earth Scroll 100 times. Obtained one Open Heaven Scroll."

'Open Heaven Scroll?'

Lu Zhou opened his eyes. It had been a long time since he saw this item. He did not think he would be rewarded with this when he meditated on the Earth Scroll.

Based on his previous experiences, every time he obtained an Open Heaven Scroll, they had always been remnant pieces. Would it be the same this time?

He checked the dashboard. Indeed, there was an Open Heaven Scroll.

"A complete one?" He was surprised by this.

It seemed like the system was feeling generous today.

Lu Zhou nodded in satisfaction.

He used the Open Heaven Scroll.

Faint glittering lights swirled around him. Soon after, they entered his body.

He felt nothing much after obtaining the Open Heaven Scroll so he continued to meditate on the Heaven Scroll.

...

Another three days passed.

According to his previous meditation speed, his extraordinary power should have been replenished by now. However, after six days and six nights of meditation, his extraordinary power had not been fully replenished.

"Is this the effect of the Open Heaven Scroll?" Lu Zhou stopped meditating on the Heaven Writing Scroll.

He could feel that the rate at which his extraordinary power was accumulated did not change. This meant that the Open Heaven Scroll provided him with a greater upper limit of extraordinary power.

Lu Zhou was satisfied with his increased durability.

"Lucky draw."

"Ding! Spent 50 merit points, 100 luck points, Shining Stone x2, Reversal Card x30."

...

Throughout the next month, Lu Zhou kept repeating the dull routine of attempting lucky draws and meditating on the Heaven Writing scrolls. At the same time, he did not forget to cultivate as well. Everything he did was to prepare himself for the real Nine-leaf stage.

There were two main requirements. The first one was that he had to have more than 876 Reversal Cards. The second was for him to reach the peak of the Eight-leaf stage.

Lu Zhou was getting closer and closer to meeting these two requirements.

...

Meanwhile, in the red lotus domain.

Inside the main hall of the 12 halls of the Sky Martial Court.

"Elder Qiu, we've received basic information about the golden lotus domain. We're sure that there is only one Nine-leaf cultivator there. Also, the life stones of Gu Ming and his two companions have shattered," a core disciple said with a bow.

Elder Qiu lowered his brush. He nodded and said, "What do we know about this Nine-leaf cultivator?"

"The man's name is Ji Tiandao. He had just recently reached the Nine-leaf stage. Against such a weak opponent, we should head over as soon as possible."

"No," Elder Qiu raised his hand and slowly said, "The Flying Star House's Jiang Wenxu went to the golden lotus domain several centuries ago. I received a letter from the Flying Star House's Meng Changdong. Jiang Wenxu's life stone has shattered. Before he died, he sent a crystal back to the Flying Star House. This Nine-leaf cultivator is the only one who could've killed Jiang Wenxu."

How could they underestimate someone who could kill the Nine-leaf Jiang Wenxu?

"You're right, Elder Qiu."

"What's the status of the research on the Sky Shuttle?" Elder Qiu asked.

"We need another month... For now, there are two ways to reach the other side. The first is through the Black Water Mystic Cave, but it's easy to get lost in there. The advantage is that it's calmer and safer if we travel in a transporter. The second is the Endless Ocean. However, its waves are violent, and they might damage the transporter. We're still researching the Sky Shuttle and the Water Shuttle. I suggest that we proceed with both at the same time."

"Let's do that, then. What's the Flying Star House up to recently?" Elder Qiu continued asking.

"Recently, the Flying Star House is having troubles of its own. I'm afraid we can only count on ourselves to get to the golden lotus domain."

"Troubles?"

"They've lost several Nascent Divinity realm cultivators recently... They suspect that the Thousand Willow Monastery is behind this, but I feel the monastery master, Xia Changqiu, isn't capable of such feats."

"They can deal with that on their own. Focus our efforts on researching the Sky Shuttle and the Water Shuttle."

"Yes, elder."

...

Inside the eastern pavilion of the Evil Sky Pavilion.

Lu Zhou inhaled deeply.

"Lucky draw."

This was his 800th draw.

"Ding! Spent 50 merit points and 10 luck points. Obtained: Reversal Card x10, Shining Stone x2, Disguise Card x2, Critical Block Card x66."

Lu Zhou was satisfied with this draw.

He was not too concerned about the number of Reversal Cards he obtained. The two Shining Stones were much more precious.

He closed the lucky draw interface and looked at his items list.

Items: Deadly Strike Card x2, Critical Block Card x138 (passive), Binding Cage Card x2, Whitzard (rest completed), Bi An, Ji Liang, Qiong Qi (juvenile), Golden Taixu Mirror, Disguise Card x3, Reversal Card x900, Shining Stone x5.

Weapons: Unnamed, Life Cutter, Jade Horsetail Whisk, Spotless Dagger, High Void, Magistrate Brush.

When he saw that he had 900 Reversal Cards, Lu Zhou began to calculate inwardly.

900 Reversal Cards were equivalent to more than 1,232 years of life. This meant that he finally had enough Reversal Cards.

Lu Zhou closed the interface and closed his eyes slightly. He sensed his remaining Primal Qi in his dantian's sea of Qi. He was one step away from reaching the peak of the Eight-leaf stage.

Everything was ready.

"Is anyone there?" Lu Zhou called out.

A disciple appeared in the eastern pavilion, "Your orders, Pavilion Master?"

"Bring Si Wuya here."

"Understood."

...

Shortly after, Si Wuya arrived at the eastern pavilion and entered the room. When he saw his master was in good spirits and looked healthy, he said respectfully, "Master... you asked for me?"

"I'm going to preach about the Nine-leaf stage in seven days."

When Si Wuya heard this, he exclaimed in shock, "How are you going to preach about it, master?"

Chapter 696: Preaching to the World (Part One)

Lu Zhou stroked his beard and pondered on it. When a master preached, he would give sincere advice, impart knowledge, cultivation methods, and his earnest thoughts. Everything originated from the teacher himself. Apart from teaching the students new things, a good teacher would seriously guide his students even if it meant having to rebuke them occasionally. Teachers were like light towers that guided the way of the students.

Some nicer teachers would teach their students their own cultivation secrets or pass on their own unique secrets. Usually, only disciples who had earned their teacher's trust and were deemed worthy would be given this treatment.

The chief of the Three Sects, Yun Tianluo, could not bring himself to reveal the scenes of his attempt to break through to the world. In the end, he chose to seal it within the chessboard. Lu Zhou, who was older than him, was the one who undid the seal.

How was he going to demonstrate it again?

Si Wuya was feeling extremely curious at this moment.

After pondering on it for a moment, Lu Zhou said, "I'll sprout the leaf again as a demonstration to all."

Si Wuya was shocked. He did not expect his master would choose a troublesome method such as this. Even if his master wrote his thoughts down and spread them to everyone, no one would have anything negative to say about his master. In fact, they would have felt incredibly grateful.

"Master, why do you have to wait for that specific day?" Si Wuya asked, puzzled. His master was already the greatest and the only Nine-leaf cultivator in Great Yan. It was not difficult for his master to demonstrate the process of sprouting a leaf again. All his master had to do was suppress his avatar's strength and recreate the scene of him sprouting the nine leaf. Why did his master need to wait?

Lu Zhou looked at Si Wuya and said, "You're asking too many questions."

Si Wuya hastily bowed and no longer dared to ask any questions. Since his master refused to answer his questions, how could he dare to ask any more questions? He only bowed again and apologized. "Forgive me my rudeness, master."

"I'm just preaching to the world by making a demonstration. It won't directly raise their cultivation bases. It's up to the individual to determine how much he or she can understand," Lu Zhou said.

"I understand, master. I will spread the word." Si Wuya nodded.

Lu Zhou nodded in satisfaction. "If there's nothing else, that will be all."

Si Wuya said, "Master, the modifications of the Ten Terminal Formation are complete. Apart from that, the two academies did their best to create new Formations. In these uncertain times, with the invasion of beasts, humans should band together and deal with the common threat. I've made two decisions on my own."

"Two decisions?"

"The first one is to make the nine provinces equal with Formations of the same grade. However, we will tweak it somewhat so that our enemies won't be able to easily find their weaknesses. The second decision is to tell the people that it's possible that the beasts contain treasures. This is to motivate them and give them the courage to fight the beasts," Si Wuya explained.

After listening to Si Wuya's words, Lu Zhou nodded slightly and said tonelessly, "Good."

Indeed, Si Wuya's second decision would greatly motivate the cultivators to kill the beasts.

Then, Si Wuya said before respectfully leaving the room, "I'll take my leave, then."

...

News about the Evil Sky Pavilion's Patriarch intention to preach to the world spread throughout the cultivation world like a wildfire.

The relay stations in the main cities in the nine provinces informed each other of this news.

...

In a certain relay station in the Divine Capital.

"I heard that the Evil Sky Pavilion's Patriarch is going to preach to the world and demonstrate the way to reach the Nine-leaf stage. I'm truly impressed by his magnanimity," someone exclaimed emotionally.

"With the beasts wreaking havoc everywhere, perhaps, the Evil Sky Pavilion's Patriarch is the only one who has the ability to deal with them now. was the only one who would possess this ability. Now that I think about it, the ten great sects in the past were truly sinister."

A cultivator nearby raised his cup and said, "I heard that red lotus cultivators have appeared in Yu Province. The patriarch exposed them with the golden mirror and killed them on the spot! I reckon the wild beasts aren't our only problems. There are also the Other Tribes!"

To Great Yan cultivators, those with wolf king, tiger king, or lion king avatars, and the red lotus cultivators were all classified as Other Tribes.

"Will you go?" someone asked.

"I don't think it's open to everyone though. Everyone in attendance is surely geniuses who have high chances of reaching the Nine-leaf stage. Those who aren't talented would only gain more knowledge, at most. It's almost useless for those who are untalented to attend. In any case, even with the patriarch's teachings, it all boils down to the individual's ability to improve. It's not like everyone can reach the Nine-leaf stage after listening to patriarch's teachings."

"You have a point."

...

In the corner of the relay station, a middle-aged man put his teacup down. Then, he tossed two silver coins on the table before he left the relay station.

After leaving the Divine Capital, he flew toward Golden Court Mountain.

When he was halfway there, the middle-aged man looked at the winged beasts in the air and shook his head. "A falcon? Slightly too weak."

He continued flying until he was in a dense part of the forest before landing on a spot filled with Formation veins. He moved his palms and circulated his Primal Qi. Wisps of red energy appeared. Then, he produced some talismans from his pocket and drew some symbols over them with his energy. When he raised his right hand, a red lotus blossomed and flames burst forth.

The talismans were burned to a crisp and disappeared.

"I hope the Sky Martial Court will send their forces here soon... Great Yan is progressing much more quickly than we expected."

If they waited until there were more Nine-leaf cultivators here, it would be too late for the red lotus domain's forces to come here.

He stayed in the area filled with Formation veins and did not leave.

After a while, the center of the Formation shone with a red light.

Upon seeing this, the middle-aged man was clearly overjoyed. He circulated his Primal Qi and laid out talismans. His red energy fell on the talismans and formed scripts on them. "A single-capacity Sky Shuttle is successfully formed! One person can be transported in seven days!"

Swoosh!

The talismans were burned to ashes again.

At the same time, the Formation veins on the ground disappeared as well.

The middle-aged man frowned as he muttered to himself, "I'm out of talismans. Are Gu Ming and the two idiots dead?"

Transmitting information through Formations was a process that consumed many talismans and much Primal Qi. Without the talismans, it was almost impossible to transmit information. Most of the talismans he brought here had been taken by his comrades so he was on his own now. Fortunately, he was not disappointed this time.

"Seven days..." the middle-aged man muttered under his breath. Then, he took flight and made his way to Golden Court Mountain.

...

Five out of the seven days have passed.

Many cultivators were waiting around Golden Court Mountain.

Tangzi Town, the settlement closest to Golden Court Mountain, was packed to the brim.

Although many of the people here had very low chances of reaching the Nine-leaf stage, it did not stop them from coming to admire the elites.

Meanwhile, those who genuinely wanted to learn about the method to reach the Nine-leaf stage had directly made their way to Golden Court Mountain.

...

Inside the eastern pavilion.

Lu Zhou was cultivating with his eyes closed.

"Master... There are many Eight-leaf cultivators at the foot of the mountain requesting an audience. Will you meet them?" Mingshi Yin's voice rang in the air.

Lu Zhou opened his eyes and asked, "Which Eight-leaf cultivators?"

"From the Three Sects: Nan Gongwei, Feng Yizhi, and Chu Nan. From the Big Dipper Academy: Zhou Youcai and ten of his disciples. There's also the Purple Yang Faction's Master, Li Zhangfeng. From the Core Yang Sect, there's Shen Liangshou, also known as the first person on the white list. There's also the Clear Water School's Chen Ranzhi, the Ten Thousand Poison Sect's Lu Liang, the Fiend Temple's Duan Xing, the Blossom Faction's Madam Zhang, and the Ancient Saint Cult's master, Jie Kai..."

“The Ancient Saint Cult’s Master?” Lu Zhou interjected.

Mingshi Yin smacked his forehead as though realization just dawned on him. “I’ll chase him away now.”

“Wait.”

“Master, what do you mean?”

“You can discuss this with Old Seventh before you make a decision.”

“Understood.” Mingshi Yin turned around and left. However, he was puzzled. Old Eighth’s father, Zhu Tianyuan, was the Master of the Ancient Saint Cult. However, an impostor, Jie Kai, had come? That Jie Kai must be dreaming if he thought he could sneak him. As his master suggested, he spoke to Si Wuya, and both of them descended the mountain.

...

At the foot of the mountain.

Countless cultivators were hovering in the air.

Chapter 697: Preaching to the World (Part Two)

The cultivators waited silently. They came from all over the nine provinces and major sects. There were many elites from the Divine Capital gathered here as well. They were fearful and respectful.

They looked at the Evil Sky Pavilion situated at the top of Golden Court Mountain. Throughout the years, they had never once felt that the Evil Sky Pavilion was as invincible as it was today.

Golden Court Mountain was not steep or towering. However, that did not stop the cultivators from regarding everything here with fearful respect. They even treated the plants here in that manner.

At this moment, Mingshi Yin and Si Wuya flew down from the mountain.

The cultivators looked up with expressions of fearful respect on their faces.

The first person on the white list, Shen Liangshou, said, “They’re the Evil Sky Pavilion’s Mister Fourth and Mister Seventh.”

The others nodded.

From the Three Sects, Nan Gongwei and Feng Yizhi cupped their fists together at the same time. “Mister Fourth, Mister Seventh.”

The others greeted them as well.

Mingshi Yin and Si Wuya flew out of the barrier. They swept their gaze across the cultivators present.

Si Wuya frowned slightly. Their numbers were slightly more than what he liked. Although the Evil Sky Pavilion had four pavilions, there were thousands of cultivators here. Even if they could fit inside the pavilions, they would be uncomfortably packed.

Some cultivators began to discuss among themselves in hushed tones.

“This is Evil Sky Pavilion’s Mister Seventh. He’s the master of the Darknet, the brains of the Evil Sky Pavilion. He has agents everywhere.”

“That’s Mister Fourth. He has both brains and brawn... Don’t be fooled by his weak cultivation base. He always managed to defeat opponents more powerful than himself.”

At this moment, Si Wuya projected his voice with Primal Qi. “Silence.”

The lively crowd immediately quietened down as they looked at Si Wuya.

Si Wuya scanned the crowd and said, “My master has decided to preach to the world so that everyone can improve their cultivation bases as quickly as possible and fight against the invasion of the beasts. I’m sure everyone here is aware of the manmians and Qiong Qi’s attacks. I won’t go into detail about that... The preaching itself is only a means. There’s no guarantee that everyone will be able to reach the Nine-leaf stage. I’m going to lead you up the mountain on my master’s orders... However, before that, I’d like to make something clear.”

At this moment, Si Wuya’s voice deepened as he said sternly, “Those who enter must abide by the Evil Sky Pavilion’s rules. There will be no noise-making, infighting, flying, going near the eastern and southern pavilions, or loitering around the forest. Those who break these rules will have to bear the consequences.”

The others nodded in agreement after Si Wuya finished speaking.

The Tian Sect’s Master, Nan Gongwei, cupped his fists together and said, “That’s only natural. Since we’re here to learn, we must disregard our own positions. Moreover, this is the Evil Sky Pavilion. Who would dare to go against the rules?” He spoke in a loud and clear voice.

“That’s right! There can be no order without rules! A chaotic situation won’t be conducive to learning. You’re a wise person, Mister Seventh!”

“I agree!”

“I completely agree!”

Most of the cultivators raised their hands and agreed.

Mingshi Yin said in a voice only Si Wuya could hear, “Since when did we have these rules?”

“Just now...” Si Wuya replied in an equally quiet tone.

“...” Mingshi Yin gave him a thumbs-up. He gave him a look that said: You’re the man.

Si Wuya continued addressing the crowd in a loud voice, “To ensure that the preaching progresses smoothly... Those who enter the Evil Sky Pavilion must fulfill the following conditions...”

The cultivators seemed to have expected as much. They knew not everyone would be allowed entry. This was the Evil Sky Pavilion, not a street in the city.

“First, those above the Five-leaf stage, move to the left. Pass through the barrier and summon your avatars,” Si Wuya said.

Then, hundreds of cultivators flew to the left excitedly.

Regardless of the times, cultivators above the Five-leaf stage were always the mainstay in the cultivation world.

The others looked disappointed. However, they understood the reasoning behind this so they had no complaints.

This condition alone filtered out most of the cultivators.

“Second, those between the One and Five-leaf stage who are younger than 50, move to the right. Pass through the barrier and summon your avatars.”

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

This time, only dozens of cultivators flew out to the right. However, they were no less excited than the cultivators standing on the left.

“Third, those who have entered the Divine Court realm within ten years or enter the Brahman Sea realm within five years, move to the middle. Pass through the barrier and summon your avatars.”

This time, only three cultivators stepped forward and moved to the middle.

At this moment, someone who did not meet the conditions said, “Mister Seventh, how are you going to judge if our cultivation bases are authentic or not? I can also say that I’ve entered the Brahman Sea realm within five years.”

Si Wuya nodded and said, “I have a technique of judging a person’s age by touching his bone. Those who lied will leave on their own accord. I won’t hold it against them...” Then, he looked at the people to his right and in front of him.

Two cultivators to the right trembled and immediately apologized. “Please forgive us, Mister Seventh. Have mercy! We’ve made a mistake. We’ll leave!”

The others frowned at the duo as they left.

When the forest was large, there would be all kinds of birds. Even the sun, with its size, could not shine on every corner of the world.

“I’d ask the rest of you to go back to where you come from...” Si Wuya said before he flew toward the barrier’s opening.

The chosen cultivators gathered around him.

The other cultivators did not leave right away. They stayed and watched.

At the entrance of the barrier, Si Wuya said, “This way.”

The cultivators entered the barrier.

“Nan Gongwei of Tian Sect.”

“Feng Yizhi of Yun Sect.”

“Zhang Zhishui of Blossom Faction.”

Every cultivator would announce their names and factions they belonged to. At the same time, they summoned their avatars to prove their strength before entering the barrier.

After some time...

“Jie Kai from the Ancient Saint Cult.” Jie Kai summoned his avatar. Unlike the others who only one manifested miniature avatars, he was the only who manifested his full-size avatar. It was 100 feet tall.

The others in the area were in awe.

Currently, the Evil Sky Pavilion was currently the place with the highest number of elites gathered in the golden lotus domain. Naturally, there were many elites and geniuses who could not make it due to the distance.

“Wait a minute...” Si Wuya said.

The Ancient Saint Cult’s Master, Jie Kai, asked, “Is anything the matter, Mister Seventh?”

“I heard the Ancient Saint Cult’s Master is Zhu Tianyuan...” Si Wuya said.

“The Ancient Saint Cult has withdrawn from the cultivation world for many years now. I’m surprised the Evil Sky Pavilion knows this. Zhu Tianyuan is the former sect master. He resigned and left a long time ago,” Jie Kai said. Based on his words, it was obvious he was unaware of the relationship between Zhu Tianyuan and the Evil Sky Pavilion.

This was related to the promise made when Ji Tiandao recruited his disciples. The disciples of the Evil Sky Pavilion had to sever all ties with their past. Their family members were not allowed to speak about it as well. It was only natural that Jie Kai did not know anything about the matter.

“Proceed.” Si Wuya made an inviting gesture.

A curious expression appeared on Mingshi Yin’s face as he asked in a hushed tone, “Why did you allow him to enter?”

“Zhu Tianyuan is in the southern pavilion... Isn’t it better for them to settle their problem?” Si Wuya asked.

“You have a point... I can count on you to be cunning,” Mingshi Yin said with a smile.

Soon enough, the cultivators had all entered the barrier.

The talented cultivators at the left and center flew in as well.

Many female cultivators with delicate and pretty appearances exposed their arms in preparation for Si Wuya to check their bones.

Si Wuya shook his head. “Proceed.” He allowed them to enter without touching them.

“Heh... Old Seventh, since when did you become a hypocrite? Why aren’t you checking them when you should?” Mingshi Yin said as he rolled his eyes.

Si Wuya said in a low voice, "I made that technique up as well."

"No... I think it's true. Don't be shy, go on..." Mingshi Yin said.

Si Wuya. "... He did not want to entertain Mingshi Yin.

At the same time, the middle-aged red lotus cultivator was looking at the opening of the barrier nearby in the forest. He muttered under his breath, "Two more days..."

Chapter 698: Preaching to the World (Part Three)

The middle-aged man stayed until the cultivators vanished into the barrier's opening before turning around and leaving. After all, he was not from this domain. He was not as maniacal and passionate as the other cultivators. There were two more days to go; it was useless for him to stay here.

On the other hand, the cultivators who were here to watch the show and admire the elites did not leave even if they could not see or listen to the patriarch's preaching.

...

After passing through the barrier, the cultivators walked up the mountain as promised. They were not exhausted and chatted merrily among themselves as they enjoyed the scenery.

In terms of height or steepness, Golden Court Mountain was a far cry from the Three Sects. However, Golden Court Mountain did not have many disciples. It was not as huge as the Three Sects that had tens of thousands of disciples. A single mountain was enough to strike fearful respect into the cultivators' hearts.

When the cultivators were halfway up the mountain, a man with a silver mask could be seen under a gazebo. He was looking at the distant mountains as he rested one hand on his back.

"Shh... He's Leng Luo, the first person on the blacklist 300 years ago. He's now one of the Evil Sky Pavilion's elders." The one who had spoken was Shen Liangshou.

"Shen Liangshou, you sure know much about the Evil Sky Pavilion."

"Well... I'm only committing faces to my memory so that I won't repeat the same low-level mistakes such as looking down on others based on their appearance." Shen Liangshou recalled what had happened in the past. Ever since then, for a year, he had made sure to commit to his memory every single person in the Evil Sky Pavilion, even those who had just joined. He prided himself on his knowledge of the Evil Sky Pavilion more than anyone else.

"You're the first person on the white list and can be considered to be of the same rank as Senior Leng Luo. Why don't you go up and greet him?"

Shen Liangshou said awkwardly, "Stop making fun of me. He made it to the top with his strength, I made it to the top by bragging..."

The others broke out in laughter as they continued climbing the mountain.

They were still near the gazebo when they saw two little girls flying about in the air.

The cultivators were confused.

‘Wasn’t flying prohibited on Golden Court Mountain?’

Shen Liangshou was the first to speak. “Don’t be surprised... The one with the red silk is the Evil Sky Pavilion’s Miss Ninth. The one wearing the Cloud Feather Raiment next to her must be her sister. Don’t think that they’re unaccomplished because of their young age. In the Evil Sky Pavilion, the disciples fawn over Miss Ninth the most. Everything she does is supported by her seniors. Look for...”

“...”

How terrifying! Everyone doted on that girl! That was terrifying enough.

The two girls flew gracefully like fairies. They were young, but they were already peerless beauties. These two were little ancestors whom they could not afford to offend.

Shen Liangshou stopped walking. He studied Conch who was behind Little Yuan’er and committed her face to his memory. He did not know much about Conch, but he knew for her to be able to stay here, she must not be ordinary.

The cultivators continued walking up.

“This is the Evil Sky Pavilion’s Mister Eighth. He might look silly, but when he was only a Divine Court realm cultivator, he was the leader of the Tigerridge Gang. He’s someone valued by Mister First and Mister Seventh,” Shen Liangshou continued to explain.

Someone spoke up at this moment. “Mister Eighth’s father has fought against the Other Tribesmen of the seven nations in the battle at Liang Province. He’s an Eight-leaf elite who lives up to his name... If I’m not mistaken, he’s from the Ancient Saint Cult.”

Everyone instinctively turned to look at Jie Kai, the supposed Master of the Ancient Saint Cult Master.

Jie Kai walked past the other cultivators and made his way to Shen Liangshou. He asked warily, “May I know your name?”

“It’s insignificant. I’m Shen Liangshou.” Shen Liangshou returned the greeting.

“You said that Mister Eighth’s father is from the Ancient Saint Cult?”

“That’s right.”

“May I know his name?” Jie Kai asked.

“Zhu Tianyuan.” Shen Liangshou covered his mouth with a hand as he whispered the name into Jie Kai’s ear. After all, it was considered disrespectful to mention another person’s name openly.

When Jie Kai heard the name, his eyes widened in shock, and he staggered backward.

Shen Liangshou asked, “What’s wrong with you?”

“He’s the Ancient Saint Cult’s Master, Jie Kai,” someone said.

“...” Realization dawned on Shen Liangshou immediately. “Zhu Tianyuan was from the Ancient Saint Cult, and you’re the sect master... Destiny leads enemies to meet. Take care,” he said with a sigh as he shook his head and patted Jie Kai’s shoulder.

...

Soon after, the cultivators arrived in front of the Evil Sky Pavilion’s great hall.

Si Wuya and Mingshi Yin did not pay attention to the cultivators’ discussion.

Si Wuya ordered someone to lead the cultivators to the northern pavilion before the duo returned to their own affairs.

...

Inside the eastern pavilion.

Lu Zhou was no longer meditating on the Heavenly Writing scrolls. Instead, he was cultivating with all his might to raise his cultivation base.

His host, Ji Tiandao, had already expanded his dantian’s sea of Qi to the peak of the Eight-leaf stage. Hence, throughout Lu Zhou’s process of progressing from the Body Tempering stage to the peak, he never had any problems or met with obstacles and bottlenecks.

His life had been prolonged to a point where his cultivation base was not affected by his age. His cultivation speed had improved greatly as well.

At this moment, Si Wuya arrived in the eastern pavilion. “Master, the cultivators who are here to learn have already settled in.” Then, he added, “Also, I made the decision to let Jie Kai, the Ancient Saint Cult’s Master, up the mountain.”

Lu Zhou replied with his eyes closed. “I see.”

“I’ll take my leave now.” If his master did not give him a clear directive, it meant that he was allowed to make the decision. This was something he had hoped for.

Si Wuya had barely left the eastern pavilion when he saw the Ancient Saint Cult’s Master, Jie Kai, walking through the corridors and passing gazebos. He was being led by Pan Zhong.

From afar, Jie Kai, who had noticed Si Wuya, nodded and bowed as he said, “Jie Kai of the Ancient Saint Cult offers his greetings, Mister Seventh.”

“What’s the matter?” Si Wuya asked.

“Zhu Tianyuan is my older brother. There are some misunderstandings between us. I wonder if you can bring me to meet him, Mister Seventh?” Jie Kai asked.

“There’s no need for that... However, I have a suggestion for you,” Si Wuya said.

“What is it, Mister Seventh?”

“It’s simple. Return the position of the sect master to him and leave the Ancient Saint Cult of your own accord. It’s better for both of you this way.”

“...” Jie Kai did not expect Si Wuya to be so blunt; he was slightly taken aback. Then, he asked, “Is the Evil Sky Pavilion going to meddle in the Ancient Saint Cult’s affairs?”

“Can’t we?” Si Wuya retorted.

Zhu Honggong was the eighth disciple of the Evil Sky Pavilion. He was also the heir of the Ancient Saint Cult’s Master, Zhu Tianyuan. Why could they not meddle in the matter?

Although Jie Kai had prepared himself mentally, he was still shocked by Si Wuya’s reply. After a moment, he asked, “Aren’t you going to ask about the story behind the matter, Mister Seventh?”

“Why should I?” Was it not natural for the Evil Sky Pavilion to take the sides of their members?

Jie Kai said with a sigh, “I knew it; I’ve been too hopeful. I thought the Evil Sky Pavilion would be impartial in this matter. Forget it. Let it be as you’ve said, Mister Seventh.” After saying this, he turned around and made to leave.

“Wait.”

“Is there anything else, Mister Seventh?” Jie Kai was annoyed, and his annoyance leaked into his voice.

“The Evil Sky Pavilion has always drawn clear boundaries between favors and grudges. If you have any misgiving about this, I can make a proposal to my Eighth Junior Brother,” Si Wuya said. He paused for a moment before he continued to say, “However, I must warn you, this is the Evil Sky Pavilion, not the Ancient Saint Cult. You’d better do away with that useless pride. If my master didn’t give me an order, you would’ve been a dead man because of what you said earlier.” After he finished speaking, he placed his hands on his back and walked away.

Jie Kai trembled. When he lifted his head again, his back was already drenched in sweat. He no longer had any ideas or fantasies. He returned to the northern pavilion and tried to have someone pass a message to Zhu Tianyuan, saying that he would step down as cult master and leave the cult.

...

When Zhu Tianyuan learned of this, he was so happy that he could barely close his mouth. He laughed as he said, “Jie Kai, to think that you’d have such a day. Is this how it feels to take advantage of one’s position and bully another?”

...

Time flew by. Two days passed in just a blink of an eye.

Inside the eastern pavilion of the Evil Sky Pavilion.

Lu Zhou slowly opened his eyes. He felt that his dantian’s sea of Qi had been fully replenished yesterday. He had been cultivating until now because he was simulating the scene of breaking through to the Nine-leaf stage in his mind.

To the others, he was merely demonstrating something he had already done before. He was the only one who knew this was his first time sprouting the ninth leaf.

He called out, “Is anyone there?”

A disciple outside the door bowed and asked, "Your orders, Pavilion Master?"

"Tell them to gather outside the Evil Sky Pavilion."

"Understood."

...

The cultivators in the northern pavilion were individuals with high positions from all over the nine provinces. However, none of them disdained the conditions of the northern pavilion.

They were already gathered as they awaited the orders from the Evil Sky Pavilion's Patriarch.

At this moment, a voice reached them. "The pavilion master has summoned everyone to gather before the great hall. This way, please."

The cultivators were delighted and excited as they hastily made their way to the great hall. There were hundreds of them.

...

Meanwhile.

Outside Golden Court Mountain, many cultivators hovered in the air as they tried to catch a glimpse of what was going on inside.

Those who could not fly too high or fly at all could only shake their heads and sigh.

...

Shortly after, the four elders, Leng Luo, Pan Litian, Zuo Yushu, and Hua Wudao, arrived. They were individuals whose reputations preceded them. In front of them, most of the cultivators were juniors.

Soon after, the disciples of the Evil Sky Pavilion, apart from Yu Zhenghai and Yu Shangrong, arrived as well.

Whenever a member arrived, the cultivators would cup their fists together and greet them.

Even the lowest-rank members, Pan Zhong and Zhou Jifeng, who were like general workers were treated with respect.

Soon after, a loud voice rang in the air. "The Pavilion Master is coming!"

The cultivators turned to look at the eastern pavilion.

Although Lu Zhou was renowned throughout the world, many of them had never seen his face. They highly anticipated this opportunity to witness the patriarch's grandeur with their own eyes.

Whizz!

A unique sound of resonance resounded in the skies.

"Up there!"

Lu Zhou appeared above the Evil Sky Pavilion. His back was facing the cultivators as he stroked his beard and looked at the sky. His robes fell loosely on his body. At this moment, he had an erudite and elite air about him, not dissimilar to an immortal.

The others were slightly stunned.

An elite was truly an elite. The patriarch would even use a grand technique when he made his entrance. Well, he, the Evil Sky Pavilion's Patriarch, was the greatest and the only Nine-leaf cultivator in Great Yan, after all.

"Hail, Pavilion Master!"

"Hail, Master!"

The cultivators present bowed fearfully.

Chapter 699: The Arrival of the Nine-leaf Cultivator (Part One)

Lu Zhou looked at the surrounding scenery. From where he was, he had a great view. Then, he turned around and swept his gaze across the cultivators in front of the Evil Sky Pavilion's great hall. Everywhere he looked, there were Nascent Divinity realm cultivators. There were also the many cultivators who hovered outside the barrier... and those at the foot of the mountain.

"Rise," Lu Zhou said.

Everyone lifted their heads at Lu Zhou's word. Apart from fear and respect, a hint of anticipation could be seen in their eyes.

"I'll be preaching about the method to reach the Nine-leaf stage today on hopes that all of you will reach the Nine-leaf stage soon so that you can fight the beasts together," Lu Zhou said, "Since the dawn of men, we've always advanced in the midst of disasters. That was how it was, and how it will always be."

Although Lu Zhou's tone was indifferent, his words stirred up waves of emotions in the cultivators' hearts.

"I won't elaborate on how the Nine-leaf stage will bring forth disasters and the invasion from the red lotus domain..."

The cultivators present had vaguely heard about these matters. However, that was not important now. Their priority now was to raise their cultivation bases as quickly as possible. News of the red lotus domain would spread throughout Great Yan sooner or later.

"Cultivation itself is defying the heavens. The heavens set a shackle on life; it's a taboo. Due to this, humans' cultivation has been stuck at the Eight-leaf stage. It's difficult to progress further. I managed to solve this problem through sheer coincidence and reached the Nine-leaf stage... Today, I will openly speak about what I know." When Lu Zhou spoke, he would pause briefly in between his words, and he spoke in a calm tone.

At this point, Lu Zhou had everyone's undivided attention.

All the cultivators stared at him as they listened to his words. All of them were beside themselves with excitement. However, it had to be said that they would have preferred it if the patriarch could preach on the ground. It was slightly tiring having to crane their necks up for so long.

Then, Lu Zhou proceeded to reveal to the cultivators several ways a person could reach the Nine-leaf stage.

There were three methods. One was to sever one's golden lotus and recultivate to the Nine-leaf stage. Second was to break through with one's golden lotus. Third was to choose not to form a golden lotus when one entered the Nascent Divinity realm.

When the cultivators heard the golden lotus required more than 1,000 years of life, there was a slight commotion as they discussed among themselves.

"No wonder it's impossible to reach the Nine-leaf stage... That's why the predecessors who attempted the Nine-leaf stage died shortly after their failure."

"The Nine-leaf stage needs more than 1,000 years of life, but an Eight-leaf cultivator can only live for 1,000 years. This is a problem without a solution. However, it seems like Senior Ji has found a solution though."

"There's no need to worry about that if you don't have a golden lotus. The one who discovered this method is a genius!"

Lu Zhou swept his gaze across the cultivators who were having a lively discussion.

The cultivators were tactful and quietened down immediately.

"I won't elaborate about other matters. Just look closely..."

The most exciting part was finally here!

The cultivators watched unblinkingly as their eyes were trained on Lu Zhou.

Lu Zhou slowly spun toward the sky and looked at the cultivators outside the barrier.

The cultivators outside the barrier could clearly see him as well. That was not too bad even though they could hear his words.

Lu Zhou focused his mind. He raised his right hand slowly.

Whizz!

There was a familiar sound of resonance.

A miniature golden lotus avatar appeared above his palm. It was an Eight-leaf golden lotus.

Mingshi Yin was all smiles when he saw this. He said, "When I sprout my leaf next time, I want to stand there as well!"

Duanmu Sheng who was standing next to Mingshi Yin asked, "Aren't you planning to remain at the Eight-leaf stage forever?"

"If master can reach the Nine-leaf stage without severing his golden lotus, I should be able to do it as well..." Mingshi Yin stroked his chin with one hand and held his arm with the other.

"Hm?" Duanmu Sheng turned around and held his Overlord Spear before himself. He stared at Mingshi Yin.

An ominous feeling rose in Mingshi Yin's heart so he hastily said, "Look! Master is about to start."

Meanwhile, Lu Zhou watched the golden lotus spin. His eight leaves were succulent like never before. They were bright and dazzling.

Then, he raised his hand, and his avatar rose. In just an instant, golden radiant rings appeared around its waist and slid down.

"It's the same process of sprouting leaves that we're familiar with."

"The Primal Qi of the avatar is gathered in the golden lotus, promoting the growth of a leaf. At that time, you sprout the leaf... That's how it is for the One to the Eight-leaf stage. Those without a golden lotus can directly stimulate the sprouting of the leaves."

"Look closely..." Lu Zhou looked at his golden lotus avatar intently as energy rings slid down one after another.

Everything seemed ordinary; nothing was out of place.

It was as silent as a graveyard in front of the Evil Sky Pavilion's great hall. Nobody moved as well.

The cultivators nodded when they saw the golden lotus picking up speed as it spun.

"So, that's how it is! Maintaining a high-speed will stimulate the lotus leaf."

"Senior Ji's methods are truly of a high level. Ordinary Eight-leaf cultivators can't achieve this speed."

Whizz!

The golden lotus spun faster.

The cultivators felt their visions blurred. The eight leaves seemed as though they had merged into one. The golden lotus looked like a golden basin now.

The golden radiance was more resplendent than before as well.

From below, the cultivators could only see the vague outline of the spinning lotus.

Shortly after, the golden lotus resembled the sun.

Lu Zhou frowned. The radiant energy rings slid down more quickly than before.

A moment later, Lu Zhou felt his body stiffen. His skin began to wrinkle as well. He tilted his head to look at his hair. His half-black hair was visibly whitening.

The energy rings would be swiftly absorbed after they entered the golden lotus.

"The golden lotus is sucking up his vitality!"

“I knew it!”

Even the cultivators without a lotus were terrified by this sight.

The Eight-leaf cultivators could empathize with this the most. They had all experienced their vitality being sucked away by the golden lotus before.

Lu Zhou opened the system dashboard.

Remaining life: 40,536 days.

‘It’s gone down by 400 days.’

A few breaths later.

Remaining life: 40,036 days.

500 days were lost.

The numbers kept falling.

Although Lu Zhou was aware of the secret of a cultivator’s vitality being sucked away due to his memories, he was still shocked by the golden lotus’ effect now that he was experiencing it.

Lu Zhou no longer hesitated. A Reversal Card materialized in his left palm.

“Use!”

On the dashboard, his life was prolonged for another 500 days.

However, as the golden lotus spun, it quickly dropped by 500 days again.

Lu Zhou flipped his left hand again and used another Reversal Card.

As Lu Zhou kept using the Reversal Cards, a peculiar scene began to emerge.

The vitality in the surroundings was converging toward him. The vitality within 1,000 meters converged toward Lu Zhou’s body like clouds being blown by the wind.

When the four elders saw this, realization dawned on them. They recalled the times they saw vitality gathering in the eastern pavilion’s courtyard back then.

On the other hand, the cultivators were completely at a loss.

Meanwhile, the cultivators without a golden lotus did not care about the converging vitality. They kept their eyes trained on the spinning golden lotus.

The cultivators knew the Evil Sky Pavilion’s Patriarch had overcome the problem of longevity being sucked away. At the same time, they understood that it was extremely difficult to fulfill the requirements of reaching the Nine-leaf stage with the golden lotus.

In any case, severing the lotus or keeping the lotus was up to the individual.

As the golden lotus absorbed Lu Zhou’s life force, it grew stronger!

Although Lu Zhou had deliberately manifested his avatar in a miniature size, it was now much larger than before.

Lu Zhou kept using his Reversal Cards as vitality kept converging toward him.

Lu Zhou looked at the spinning golden lotus. At this moment, it resembled a golden vortex that kept devouring the Reversal Card's life force. At the same time, he did not forget to keep an eye on the system dashboard.

The numbers would rise and fall. However, for now, it was balanced.

It was just as he had predicted.

The next step was to verify if the Reversal Cards, which contained 1,200 years of life, could satisfy the golden lotus so that he could reach the Nine-leaf stage.

The radiant rings slid down more swiftly now as the spinning golden lotus increased in size. The rate at which his life force was being absorbed had increased as well. The radiance grew brighter as well.

Lu Zhou remained calm. He pushed his palm forward. His avatar grew to a height of 100 feet. This was the largest size for an Eight-leaf avatar.

The golden radiance from the lotus completely shrouded Lu Zhou's body.

Everyone within several miles of Golden Court Mountain and at the foot of the mountain could see the towering 100-foot avatar in the air.

The cultivators in the vicinity knew this was the Evil Sky Pavilion's Patriarch showing the world how to reach the Nine-leaf stage.

The cultivators with high comprehension skills would be enlightened after watching an elite sprouting a leaf. With this, their leaf-sprouting process would be smooth as well.

It was just like how the Buddhist, Daoist, and Confucian Societies taught their disciples their ultimate moves. The master would first make a demonstration, and the students and disciples would try to replicate it and improve it on their own.

Meanwhile, Lu Zhou looked at his remaining Reversal Cards. He had 792 cards left. He did not expect to use more than 100 Reversal Cards in just a quarter of an hour.

Chapter 700: The Arrival of the Nine-leaf Cultivator (Part Two)

If Lu Zhou did not prepare enough Reversal Cards before he attempted the Nine-leaf stage, similar to his host, he would have rapidly aged and died as a result. The golden lotus' ability to absorb one's life force was truly terrifying.

He suddenly recalled Gong Yuandu, the sword path genius of the northern capital, even went as far as to remain inside a coffin in the Swords Mausoleum for 100 years just to attempt the Nine-leaf stage. In fact, 100 years was nothing to an Eight-leaf golden lotus cultivator. Gong Yuandu's experience was not meaningless. Gong Yuandu had revealed the fact that golden lotuses absorbed cultivators' life forces.

Lu Zhou remembered the leader of the Three Sects, Yun Tianluo, as well. He lost many years of his life trying to reach the Nine-leaf stage. He even sealed the memories of his attempt inside a chessboard. From that, Lu Zhou confirmed that golden lotuses truly absorbed cultivators' life forces.

Then, did this mean Luo Shi Yin's record about the golden lotus absorbing 1,200 years of life was true?

At this time, Lu Zhou was prepared to stop sprouting the ninth leaf at any moment. If there was even the slightest abnormality, he was going to stop immediately without any hesitation. He was even prepared to accept the loss of the 900 Reversal Cards he had used. Apart from that, it was also not important what the other cultivators might think. After all, with his Disguise Cards and Heavenly Writing Powers, he could still maintain his status. If it came down to it, he could just thicken the skin on his face and say this was only a demonstration of what they should not do when sprouting the ninth leaf.

Whizz!

Currently, Lu Zhou's golden lotus was spinning twice as quickly compared to before. Apart from that, he was also using up his Reversal Cards much more quickly.

He comforted himself that he was going to use the Reversal Cards sooner or later anyway; there was no point in saving them. "Use all of the Reversal Cards!"

The cultivators looking up from the Evil Sky Pavilion's great hall discovered the golden lotus had completely obscured their vision.

The vitality energy in the air had converged to one specific point. The sky above the Evil Sky Pavilion that was filled with vitality shocked the cultivators slightly.

Many people wanted to see Lu Zhou's appearance. Alas, they could only see his silhouette. However, there were more people who were focused on the golden lotus.

At this moment, the vitality energy in the surroundings surged and rose like a tsunami.

The cultivators inside the barrier felt the powerful vitality around them; expressions of bewilderment could be seen on their faces.

No one, including the Evil Sky Pavilion's disciples, knew what method Lu Zhou used to obtain so much vitality energy.

The Evil Sky Pavilion disciples had witnessed their master's blue lotus. Compared to when the blue lotus bloomed, the vitality now was much purer and denser.

"This is the crucial stage!"

"I didn't expect it'd be so difficult to reach the Nine-leaf stage!"

"Since Senior Ji has been a Nine-leaf cultivator for a while now, I can't begin to imagine how difficult it must have been when he first attempted to reach the Nine-leaf stage."

"However, don't you think this looks like the real thing? Senior Ji is truly amazing. He can even recreate such life-like reenactment of breaking through to the Nine-leaf stage."

The golden lotus was buzzing louder than before due to its increased spinning speed.

Lu Zhou who was basking in the golden light no longer thought about how others might perceive him. All his attention was focused on reaching the Nine-leaf stage. He had no experience nor techniques; this was his first time attempting to break through to the Nine-leaf stage. In Great Yan, this was also the first time anyone had reached this stage in the process of reaching the Nine-leaf stage.

Lu Zhou looked at his remaining life.

Remaining life: 433,500 days.

-300!

-200!

-400!

This series of numbers meant that the Reversal Cards was bringing him back to his youth.

He touched his face and looked at his hair. His skin felt as supple as a newborn's, and his hair was as dark as ink. He was slightly distracted by these discoveries. 'Am I... Am I handsome now?'

Buzz!

The buzzing sound from the golden lotus quickly pulled him back to his senses and away from his narcissistic thoughts.

He noticed the numbers on the interface were still dwindling. This meant the golden lotus was still absorbing his life force.

Meanwhile, the cultivators felt uneasy as they watched Lu Zhou. They were worried and nervous as though they were the ones who were trying to sprout the ninth leaf. Although they knew this was just a demonstration, they could not help but feel amazed.

The cultivators outside the barrier who were unqualified to enter saw this dazzling display as well.

The cultivators, both inside and outside the barrier, were hit with a sudden realization of why the patriarch chose to demonstrate the process of sprouting the ninth leaf in the sky above the Evil Sky Pavilion. It was so that everyone could see the demonstration with their own eyes. All of them could help but feel moved by his magnanimity.

The dazzling golden light burst forth from the 100-foot avatar that towered over everything. It struck fear into the hearts of everyone present on the scene. The dazzling light seemed to shine for a long time like the sun and the moon.

Meanwhile, Lu Zhou who kept his eyes trained on his avatar discovered the golden lotus that resembled a vortex had begun to slow down.

When he looked at the dashboard, he noticed the numbers had been reduced by half.

'Is it finally satiated?' The rate the golden lotus was absorbing his life force was slowing down.

At the same time, he felt his own body. He seemed to be in his prime after youth was returned to him.

Time ticked by. Although the speed had slowed down, the numbers on the interface were still dwindling. Naturally, he would age each time the numbers dwindle.

At this moment, a small commotion broke out among the cultivators.

“Look! The avatar is growing taller!” someone exclaimed.

“The golden lotus has grown larger as well!”

“The ninth leaf is about to sprout!”

Everyone held their breaths at this moment as their eyes were firmly trained on the golden lotus.

To everyone else, Lu Zhou was merely giving a demonstration. That was why he was so calm and composed.

However, despite Lu Zhou’s outwardly calm expression, inwardly, he was beginning to feel uneasy. ‘Am I... close to the Nine-leaf stage yet?’

The golden lotus’ speed slowed down again while the golden light’s brightness remained the same.

...

In the forest beyond Golden Court Mountain’s barrier.

The middle-aged red lotus cultivator fisted his hands as he stared at the avatar above the Evil Sky Pavilion. A hint of surprise could be heard in his voice as he muttered disgruntledly, “The golden lotus domain’s Nine-leaf cultivator... is able to gather so much vitality?”

He was perplexed. He could not understand what was going on.

His confusion was only natural since there was no such problem in the red lotus domain. Since he had just arrived in the golden lotus domain, he was unaware in the golden lotus domain that one had to give up years of their lives to reach the Nine-leaf stage. In his opinion, breaking through to the Nine-leaf stage in the golden lotus domain was much more grandiose compared to breaking through to the Nine-leaf stage in the red lotus domain.

The avatar kept growing taller, and the golden lotus kept growing bigger.

Other cultivators appeared in the forest as well, but the middle-aged man ignored them.

Even Other Tribe cultivators from Rongxi and Rongbei had come to watch. Naturally, they could only stay outside the barrier to watch as they held their breaths.

...

Crack!

A crisp sound rang in the air.

The eight spinning golden leaves spun around a specific spot of the huge golden lotus. They seemed to be moving toward the energy rings at the avatar’s waist.

“What’s happening?”

“I get it now! No wonder we can’t break through to the Nine-leaf stage. The golden lotus absorbs our lives. Once it’s satiated, there would be an outpour of energy from it. Even without the golden lotus, the lotus leaves would do the same!”

This statement seemed to enlighten many cultivators present on the scene.

When the commotion below reached Lu Zhou’s ears, he refocused his attention and continued to focus on sprouting the ninth leaf.

In truth, he was not sure what was happening. The numbers on the interface were still dwindling. At this moment, the numbers had dwindled until it was in the four digits.

“Wait... This is more than 1,300 years!” Lu Zhou frowned.

900 Reversal Cards were equivalent to more than 1,232 years. Coupled with his 112 years, he had 1,344 years of life.

Remaining life: 8,675 days.

However, he was left with 23 years of life now.

The golden lotus had absorbed more than 1,300 years of his life. This was more than what Luo Shiyin had recorded!