

## Disciples 71

### Chapter 71: Is it Too Late to Run Away Now?

They left the inn and sped toward the east of Runan City in a horse-drawn carriage.

Halfway through the journey, Jiang Aijian obstructed their path as he held a sword in one hand while the other hand held a half-eaten pear. He moved toward the carriage as he said with a smirk, "Master, I'll be tagging along."

Zhao Shuo had a puzzled expression on his face as he asked, "Dear brother, we're going to deal with the villain. Aren't you afraid?"

"Of course I'm afraid. I feel as though I'm going to die from fear. However, since master is here, there's nothing to worry about," Jiang Aijian replied.

Lu Zhou stroked his beard and asked, "Do you have any news?"

Jiang Aijian only smiled. Although he was shameless and crafty, he was truly skilled in obtaining information.

Lu Zhou did not care about Jiang Aijian's method of obtaining information as long as there were results. He made a gesture with his hand for Jiang Aijian to come onboard before motioning for the horse carriage to continue on its journey.

Jiang Aijian stared straight ahead and said in a hushed tone, "Someone from the palace is here."

Upon hearing this, Lu Zhou remained silent as he stroked his beard.

Jiang Aijian continued to say, "Someone from the palace is the mastermind behind the incident on the holy altar... I'm sure they're dissatisfied with you since you foiled their plan. However, put aside your profound cultivation base, I don't think they'll attack a senior Buddhist monk no matter how displeased they are."

Lu Zhou nodded.

The horse carriage rattled as it picked up speed.

Jiang Aijian looked at the road ahead and said, "The Evil Sky Pavilion's fourth villain, Mingshi Yin, cultivated the Bluewood Heart Technique. It's a troublesome cultivation method. His opponents will have a hard time subduing him. When you encounter him later, please don't hold back, master. You should take him down with a single strike and not give him any chance to run away."

Lu Zhou said, "You seem to know a lot about the Evil Sky Pavilion."

A confident expression appeared on Jiang Aijian's face as he said, "I won't hide this from you, master. When Ji Tiandao was attacked by the ten great elites..." He paused for a moment to point at himself before he continued, "I was there!"

Jiang Aijian looked proud as he continued to say, "That was the battle of the century! Ten great elites! Half of them had Six-leaf Avatars, and the other half had Seven-leaf Avatars! And yet, they still couldn't defeat Ji Tiandao who had an Eight-leaf Avatar!"

Lu Zhou was taken aback inwardly when he heard this even though his expression remained calm. He, naturally, had access to this memory. However, he truly did not expect Jiang Aijian had personally witnessed that fight.

Jiang Aijian continued to ramble on, "The battle went on for three days and three nights. In the end, they only fought to a draw. The old villain, Ji Tiandao, was hurt... Even now I still can't figure it out. How did the ten great elites fail when they besieged the Golden Court Mountain after a month?"

Lu Zhou did not continue with the topic. Instead, he asked, "You're afraid of him?"

Jiang Aijian said with a sigh, "Ever since I witnessed that great battle, I swore to stay away from that man. He's too terrifying! How can a human be so terrifying?"

Little Yuan'er quickly covered her mouth with a hand as a burst of small laughter escaped from her mouth. It did not take long before she began to laugh uproariously.

Jiang Aijian did not think this was strange. After all, he was used to this young girl's ridicule. He decided to let her be.

Zhao Yue seemed at a loss. She did not know if she should be laughing right now.

"Halt!" Zhao Shuo's voice rang out suddenly.

The horse carriage skidded to a stop.

Jiang Aijian leaped off the horse carriage. He was shocked when he saw the chaotic scene before him and the heads that were hung on the city gates. He exclaimed, "How cruel!"

Lu Zhou alighted from the carriage as well. He looked at the bloodied human heads.

Zhao Shuo said with a deep frown, "The villain must be close by... I've already contacted several Divine Court realm cultivators to search the area. We should be able to locate him soon."

Lu Zhou said, "The dead were mounted brigands."

"That's not important," Zhao Shuo said righteously, "I'll do anything to capture the villain."

Lu Zhou turned to look at Zhao Shuo. He shook his head. 'It's meaningless to talk to him.'

A mocking and maniacal laughter suddenly resounded in the air. "You people think you'll be able to capture me? Dream on!"

"The Evil Sky Pavilion's villain is here! I'm taking my leave!" Jiang Aijian turned tail and was just about to run when Lu Zhou grabbed his arm.

"Don't be afraid."

"Er... I'm not afraid..." Jiang Aijian scratched his head.

Several figures shot past the rooftops in the air.

The maniacal laughter continued to resound in the air.

"Here comes the villain!"

Everyone looked in the direction of the laughter. A man with peculiar eyes and flowing black hair who was dressed in a white robe shot toward them at high speed as he taunted and hurled insults at the cultivators around him. "Come on! Come after me!"

Zhao Shuo's eyes widened in anger as he unsheathed his sword.

Whoosh!

Zhao Shuo said before he left, "Master, I'll leave the safety of Runan City's citizens in your hands."

Lu Zhou looked at the incoming Mingshi Yin calmly. His eyes took in the cultivators who were chasing after Mingshi Yin as well. His expression did not change at all.

Since Lu Zhou was here, Jiang Aijian was not overly worried. However, he felt a bit strange since he was used to observing from afar as he hid in a corner. This was his first time observing out in the open.

Mingshi Yin's laughter drew closer. "I'm getting bored!" As soon as he finished speaking, he sped up, covering the distance of several hundred meters in just a blink of an eye.

"Nascent Divinity Tribulation realm!" Jiang Aijian's words shocked everyone.

Based on Mingshi Yin's speed, it was clear he was a Nascent Divinity Tribulation realm cultivator.

Jiang Aijian gulped. He felt diffident. As an early-stage Nascent Divinity Tribulation realm elite as well, he felt those from the Evil Sky Pavilion were much stronger in comparison.

As everyone looked at Mingshi Yin who was charging toward them, Zhao Shuo cried out, "Villain of the Evil Sky Pavilion! Die!" He slashed his sword in the air. His sword was shrouded with a destructive energy as it slashed toward Mingshi Yin's face.

Mingshi Yin laughed as he swatted the sword away with one hand.

Bang!

The sword shattered in just an instant!

Mingshi Yin said smugly, "You won't be able to do anything to me with these techniques!" Suddenly, he came to a halt as he muttered under his breath, "T-that old man... looks like master!"

Zhao Shuo stumbled back in shock. He thought he had incurred the villain's wrath and was now being targeted. This villain was someone who killed without batting an eyelid. He quickly retreated to Lu Zhou's side.

Lu Zhou stroked his beard calmly. He could not blame his other disciples if they did not recognize him since the Reversal Card had altered his appearance quite a bit. However, there was no way Mingshi Yin would not be able to recognize him.

Mingshi Yin frowned as he studied Lu Zhou. After a moment, his expression changed drastically. He quickly dispelled the energy around him and descended.

Jiang Aijian hurriedly took a step back and unsheathed his sword. "This is bad! The villain is coming down!" However, when he saw Lu Zhou, he was baffled by how calm Lu Zhou was.

As soon as Mingshi Yin landed, he quickly ran over to the group. He cried out in excitement, "Master!" When he arrived before the group, he bowed before he lifted the hem of his robes with his right hand and fell to his knees with a thud. He said reverently, "This disciple pays respect to master!"

Jiang Aijian and Zhao Shuo were baffled.

Lu Zhou stroked his beard before he waved a hand. "Stand up and talk."

Mingshi Yin smiled modestly. His arrogance from earlier had completely vanished. Before Lu Zhou could say anything, he asked carefully, "Master, didn't we agree to meet in Like The Clouds Inn? What brings you here?"

Zhao Shuo's eyes widened in understanding as he quickly retreated to the side. He stuttered, "You... y-you... you..."

Little Yuan'er said indignantly, "Watch your mouth! See if I don't pull your tongue out if you keep offending my master!"

Jiang Aijian was stunned. 'This is great. Is it too late for me to run away now?'

## **Chapter 72: Duped**

Zhao Shuo's actions caught Mingshi Yin's attention as well. Being the quick-witted person he was, he rose to his feet and stood before Lu Zhou as he asked, "Master, should I kill him?"

When Jiang Aijian heard this, he fearfully took a step back. Lu Zhou patted his shoulder heavily, and he fell to the ground with a frightened expression on his face. He waved his hands frantically as he said, "Misunderstanding, this is all a misunderstanding... This has nothing to do with me! Can everyone just let me go and treat me like a fart?"

Little Yuan'er felt as though her anger had been vented as she said, "Let's see how my master will deal you, you shameless person!"

Mingshi Yin turned around and looked at Jiang Aijian in confusion. He asked, "Master, should I kill this man as well?"

"..." Just how badly did Mingshi Yin want to kill another person?!

Everyone's attention was focused on Lu Zhou at this moment.

Lu Zhou's expression was indifferent as usual. He glanced at Mingshi Yin and slowly said, "You shouldn't be showing off like this."

Mingshi Yin bowed and said, "You're right, master."

Lu Zhou asked, "There's a rumor going around that you're abducting young girls, is it true?"

Mingshi Yin fell to his knees again. He gestured with his hands as he said, "I've been wrongly accused! It was the mounted brigands who abducted the girls. I was passing by coincidentally, and I saved them! I was meting out justice for the heavens and acting chivalrously. Not only was I not committing evil acts, but I was doing good!" He emphasized the words, 'meting out justice for the heavens' and 'acting chivalrously'.

The people in the surroundings frowned when they heard Mingshi Yin's words.

Jiang Aijian was speechless. 'The villains from the Evil Sky Pavilion are as bad as they come. Do you think people will believe that you were doing good?'

Mingshi Yin continued, "If you don't believe me, master, you can send someone to investigate this! Things will be clear once they're investigated."

Lu Zhou was not bothered about these things. He did not care if Mingshi Yin was doing good or committing evil. He would be happy as long as his disciples did not stir up trouble and cause havoc wherever they went like before. After all, he would not be able to clean up their mess every single time.

"General Zhao." Lu Zhou looked at Zhao Shuo.

Zhao Shuo trembled before he lifted the sword in his hand. However, he realized too late that he had raised his scabbard in defense instead. This man was the most powerful villain in the world, would a scabbard even protect him?

"What do you say if we leave this matter as it is?" Lu Zhou's penetrating gaze sent another wave of fear into Zhao Shuo's heart.

At this moment, the few Divine Court realm cultivators who were chasing after Mingshi Yin finally arrived. With the difference of one realm, their speed was, naturally, very different.

"General Zhao! We came just in time! Where's the senior Buddhist monk?" The senior Buddhist monk in their imagination was a bald old man dressed in a kasaya. They did not notice Lu Zhou who was the only old man present on the scene.

Zhao Shuo coughed before saying softly, "Retreat."

"Retreat?" The Divine Court realm cultivators were taken aback. "We can't! We've chased after him this long just to stall him! We can't let him off that easily."

Jiang Aijian wanted to cry. As he looked at the foolish Divine Court realm cultivators, he was reminded of his own foolishness as well.

Mingshi Yin bowed and said, "Master, these people refuse a toast only to be forced to drink a forfeit... I ask that we teach them a lesson."

The five Divine Court realm cultivators were dumbfounded. In truth, they were only stalling for time by giving chase. With their cultivation base, there was no way they would dare charge at Mingshi Yin. Even if Mingshi Yin's cultivation base was not at the Nascent Divinity Tribulation realm, they still would not dare to do such a thing. When they saw the villain they had been chasing for half a day addressing this old man as master, they instantly knew who this old man was. Upon discovering this, they were even more frightened than Zhao Shuo. Their faces shone with sweat.

Lu Zhou shook his head. "Just give them a slap on the wrist."

"Yes, master!" When Mingshi Yin looked up, he saw Zhao Shuo was the first person to run.

Zhao Shuo ran as fast as his legs would bring him. The other five had no choice but to frantically run for their lives as well.

Mingshi Yin covered 300 miles with just a single step, leaving afterimages in his wake as he gave chase.

Lu Zhou turned around and looked at Jiang Aijian before patting Jiang Aijian's shoulder, looking like a grandfather patting his grandson. He said, "Don't be nervous."

"Ma-master... Oh, no, Ji, Great Senior Ji..." Jiang Aijian stuttered after he gulped. He instinctively leaned backward as he said, "I... Can I break our agreement..."

"Am I that terrifying?" Lu Zhou remembered that Jiang Aijian had said that Ji Tiandao was the person whom he feared the most.

"N-no..." Jiang Aijian said, contrary to his true feelings.

Lu Zhou stroked his beard and said, "I've always valued promises... Similarly, I hate those who do not abide by their words the most."

"But you didn't tell me who you are!" Jiang Aijian weakly protested, his voice cracking.

"Did you ask?" Lu Zhou retorted. He did not say he was a senior monk either.

Jiang Aijian racked his brain. Indeed, it seemed like he had never asked about Lu Zhou's identity. He had been duped! 'Oh, this is eight lifetimes of accumulated rotten luck! I've boarded a pirate ship without noticing it!' Even if he were to run away now, he would definitely be hunted down in the future. It was better to dismiss such thoughts.

A moment later, Mingshi Yin returned. He cupped his hand at Lu Zhou and said, "Master."

Lu Zhou nodded and said, "Bring Zhao Yue back and lock her in the Cave of Reflection."

"Yes, master." Mingshi Yin walked up to Little Yuan'er and glanced at Zhao Yue. When he saw the golden lotus on Zhao Yue's forehead, he appeared shocked. "Witchcraft?"

Little Yuan'er said, "Senior Brother, Fifth Senior Sister's cultivation base has been sealed. If master didn't arrive in the nick of time, I'm afraid..." She did not finish her sentence.

Not for the first time today, Jiang Aijian felt like crying as he thought to himself, 'As it turns out, all this trouble is just a master rescuing his disciple. To think I thought we were going to punish the she-villain. I really thought too much!'

Lu Zhou waved his hand casually. Whitzard materialized out of thin air.

When he saw the legendary mount, Jiang Aijian's eyes widened. He was stunned. He was not interested in mounts, but he knew how difficult it was to possess two legendary mounts. 'As expected of the Master of Evil Sky Pavilion. He really lives up to his name as the greatest villain who dominated the world.'

"Master, you'll let me return with Whitzard?" Mingshi Yin asked disbelievingly.

"Go on." Lu Zhou waved his hand.

Mingshi Yin was overjoyed. He nodded continuously. "Thank you, master."

Zhao Yue bowed at Lu Zhou and said, "This disciple knows that she has committed a grave mistake. She'll certainly repent back on Golden Court Mountain."

After that, the two villains rode on Whizard and flew into the air before they left.

Little Yuan'er moved next to Lu Zhou and asked, "Master, where should we go to have fun next?"

Lu Zhou knocked her head and reprimanded her, "I still have some business to attend to."

"Oh."

Lu Zhou turned to look at Jiang Aijian who was smiling bitterly. He did not say anything and continued staring at Jiang Aijian. After a while, he only shook his head helplessly and said, "What a shame."

Little Yuan'er asked in confusion, "Master, what's a shame?"

"That person is smart and cautious..." Lu Zhou said as he stared at Jiang Aijian, "Where would he be, if not here?"

Realization dawned on Jiang Aijian immediately. He rose to his feet and turned a full circle before flying into the air to look at the surroundings. However, he did not find anything. After he landed, he asked, "Old Senior, you're saying the person from the palace has been following us?"

Lu Zhou stroked his beard and said, "It's just a guess."

"Well..." Jiang Aijian chuckled awkwardly.

"Jiang Aijian, why don't you drop the act?"

"..."

### **Chapter 73: Improving Cultivation Base (Part One)**

Jiang Aijian was startled. He looked at Lu Zhou incredulously. His legs felt weak as his guilty conscience weighed heavily on his mind. After a while, he chuckled and said, "Senior Ji, what are you talking about? Are you joking?"

Lu Zhou said slowly, enunciating each word clearly, "You're from the palace." He spoke in a tone that brooked no arguments as though he was certain of it.

Jiang Aijian's heart skipped a beat. He forced a smile on his face as he said, "How is that possible..."

Lu Zhou did not bother to reply.

Jiang Aijian was smart. There was no need to waste words when speaking to someone smart. Jiang Aijian had known about the plans of the monks from the Temple of Great Emptiness. He knew about the grand ceremony. He also knew Zhuo Ping was from the palace. Most importantly, when he had boarded the carriage, he had said someone from the palace was around. Who else would be so familiar with the incident on the holy altar? Who else would know about the schemes of the palace?

Lu Zhou sent Mingshi Yin off with Whitzard while he remained behind. The elite from the palace had remained as well. The elite did not dare to act recklessly since Lu Zhou's identity had been exposed. Someone had also been sending him information about the she-villain, Zhao Yue. Most importantly, when Jiang Aijian found out he was the master of the Evil Sky Pavilion, he was completely flustered since his plans were disrupted, and he began to panic. All these signs pointed to Jiang Aijian being from the palace.

"I've always been direct with my words... You're smart so you should know what I mean," Lu Zhou said calmly.

Jiang Aijian remained silent. His silence could be considered as his admission. Beating around the bush would only waste everyone's time. He sighed before he said, "You're very astute, Senior Ji."

Lu Zhou stood with his hands behind his back, remaining silent.

Jiang Aijian continued to say, "You're only half right, old senior... Indeed, I'm from the palace, but that's in the past. I left the palace a long time ago. There are too many schemes in the palace, and a person like me isn't cut out for a place and life like that." He sighed again. His usual smiling face had been replaced with a solemn expression. "The people from the palace fight and scheme against one another most of the time, deceiving each other... Old senior, would you believe me if I told you this?" He did not think the old villain would believe his words.

"I have my own thoughts about this," Lu Zhou answered ambiguously.

Jiang Aijian shook his head helplessly and said, "To each his own, I suppose. I like the outside world where I'm free and unfettered. However, my friends prefer to stay in the palace. Whenever we meet up for a few drinks, they would share what they know about the palace with me."

Jiang Aijian's words made sense. Otherwise, there was no way a rogue cultivator like him would be privy to the palace's plans. After a while, he said regretfully, "Alas, it's too late for some of my friends to leave the palace now. Some of them had even died."

Lu Zhou said, "Their lives have nothing to do with me."

Jiang Aijian nodded. It was true. The human relations in the palace were very complicated compared to the outside world. He took a deep breath before asking warily, "Old senior, since you know about my identity... Can we call off our previous agreement?"

Jiang Aijian loved his life very much. He was extremely guarded when he asked this question since he was not sure if the always-calm Lu Zhou would attack him.

Lu Zhou shook his head and said indifferently, "You can try."

"..." Jiang Aijian was speechless. 'I don't think I'll ever be able to disembark from this pirate ship.' He said, "Will I be safe if people find out about this?"

Lu Zhou said, "I don't care about that." Inwardly, he thought to himself, 'I don't think there's a need to worry about your safety since you value your life so much.'



Lu Zhou turned to Jiang Aijian and said, "As long as you're not working against Evil Sky Pavilion, I won't interfere with whatever you do." He was, naturally, lenient toward those who were talented. He added, "Since you were from the palace, I'm sure you understand the Evil Sky Pavilion and how we work."

Jiang Aijian nodded. He sighed and said, "Fine... About the swords you promised me, old senior..."

"I'll give them to you."

Jiang Aijian hugged his sword and said. "It's a deal then!"

Lu Zhou nodded with satisfaction. He flicked his sleeve lightly before his mount, Bi An, rushed forward. Before he leaped onto Bi An's back, he said, "I don't care about the palace's affairs, but they better not drag the Evil Sky Pavilion into their schemes and feud."

Little Yuan'er pulled a face at Jiang Aijian before she leaped on Bi An as well.

Jiang Aijian cupped his hands together and said no more.

Bi An rose into the air before rushing toward the Evil Sky Pavilion.

As soon as Lu Zhou left, Jiang Aijian slumped to the ground. He was really surprised the old villain did not press him about the matters in the palace. This was good. After all, there were many things about the palace that he did not dare to give voice to.

...

As Bi An traveled across the sky, Lu Zhou checked the system dashboard. His merit points were now at 5,010. He had only gained 500 merits points when he gained an informant. Regardless, he thought it was a good deal. Someone like Jiang Aijian was only suited to collaborate with, he was not suited to be a subordinate.

Little Yuan'er asked in a small voice, "Master, are we not going to Divine Capital?"

Lu Zhou chided her softly, "Little girl, all you think about is playing."

Little Yuan'er pouted and said, "Master, we shouldn't trust Jiang Aijian."

"I know."

Little Yuan'er continued to say, "He had worked for the palace. Why would he become your informant?"

"Enough." Lu Zhou rapped his knuckles on Little Yuan'er's head. However, he was inwardly pleased that she was thinking about such matters. This was much better than before.

...

Meanwhile, in the Tiger Ridge headquarters.

The person sitting on the throne was not Evil King Zhu Honggong, whose name inspired fear, but the Darknet Cult's chief, Wuya.

"Seventh Senior Brother, your information network covers the land, and your information has always been reliable. However, don't you think there's something wrong about the information regarding the

incident on the holy altar? Kong Xuan from the Temple of Great Emptiness is only a Four-leaf Nascent Divinity Tribulation realm at best. Is he really capable of taking Zhao Yue away with so many people from the Noble and Fiend Path around? I find it impossible,” Zhu Honggong said.

Si Wuya said indifferently, “Kong Xuan didn’t take Zhao Yue away. He was killed by a senior Buddhist monk.

“Kong Xuan is dead? Impossible!” Zhu Honggong exclaimed in shock.

“My informants have always been trustworthy. The bald donkeys from the Temple of Great Emptiness activated the Brahman Lullaby, impeding my men from advancing, so they could only observe from afar. However, based on what they saw, there’s no doubt that only a senior Buddhist monk is capable of casting the hand seal for the Great Vajra Wheel!”

“How ironic that Kong Xuan was killed by one of his own kind.” Zhu Honggong scratched his head.

As both of them continued their discussion, a cultivator rushed in and fell to one knee before he said, “Reporting to the cult master. Sword Freak Chen Wenjie has been killed by Senior Sword Devil.”

“Alright.” Si Wuya did not seem surprised, but Zhu Honggong was stunned.

“Cult master, I have another report.”

“Speak.”

“Ren Buping, the Master of Fiend Temple Master, has come out of seclusion!”

Si Wuya shot up to his feet immediately. “A breakthrough?”

“I don’t know!”

“Is the Fiend Temple making any move?”

“Not for now.”

“Inform me right away if they’re making a move.”

“Understood!”

## **Chapter 74: Improving Cultivation Base (Part Two)**

The Fiend Temple’s influence had been expanding in recent years. Many elites had joined its ranks as well. Currently, it was like a tiger that had sprouted wings.

Previously, Si Wuya had heard that Ren Buping, the Master of Fiend Temple, had gone into seclusion to cultivate. Occasionally, there would be news about the huge improvements that Ren Buping made, but he had never been able to verify the news. The growth in the Fiend Temple’s influence had affected the Darknet and especially, the Nether Sect. For this reason, he had placed a spy near Ren Buping to keep an eye on Ren Buping’s every move.

Ren Buping was not the only one who was cultivating in seclusion. The Temple of Great Emptiness’ Kong Yuan, Luo Xingkong, the former Sect Leader of the Heavenly Sword Sect, and the Confucian School’s elite, Chang Xian, who had failed to take down Golden Court Mountain, had all gone into seclusion to

cultivate in hopes of achieving a breakthrough in their cultivation bases. However, none of them had shown any signs of a breakthrough thus far.

Si Wuya thought to himself, 'If Ren Buping has a breakthrough in his cultivation base, what is he going to do? Is he going to expand the influence of the Fiend Temple or will he seek revenge from the Evil Sky Pavilion?' He turned to Zhu Honggong and asked, "Old Eighth, what are you thinking about?"

Zhu Honggong mulled over all the possibilities before he said, "I'm just thinking if the senior Buddhist monk who cast the hand seal for the Great Vajra Wheel is master's ally."

"Master never liked to ally himself with others. However, times are different now. It's not entirely impossible for master to do something like that. After all, there seems to be a new addition to the Evil Sky Pavilion."

Zhu Honggong's eyes brightened. "Master has accepted another disciple?"

"I wouldn't say that person's a disciple. He's more like a... staff. Apart from that, the Golden Court Mountain's barrier has been restored even though the reason for that is unclear. As for the other matters, let's wait until he has exhausted his allocated lifespan."

"Another staff? Seventh Senior Brother, why don't we return to the Evil Sky Pavilion?" Zhu Honggong suggested.

Si Wuya did not deign to reply. He only looked at Zhu Honggong coldly, causing shivers to run up Zhu Honggong's spine.

...

In a hidden chamber in Evil Sky Pavilion on Golden Court Mountain.

Lu Zhou glanced at his current merit points; 5,010 merit points. He did not earn many points from the holy altar's incident. He thought to himself, '5,000 points are just enough to purchase the avatar, the Mighty Four Quadrants. I can improve my cultivation base immediately. However, should I spend all my merit points just to purchase the avatar?'

Lu Zhou did not think it was worth it as he calculated the numbers inwardly. He considered the lucky draw for a second before dismissing it. He once spent 66 merit points on the lucky draw only to receive a Reversal Card. However, there was always a chance of him hitting the jackpot. It was unfortunate that he had a little more than 5,000 merit points. He did not have the extra points to try his luck on a lucky draw. "I should wait until I have more merit points."

It was safe on Golden Court Mountain so Lu Zhou could take his time to earn merit points. For now, he decided to improve his cultivation base. Item cards were only effective against single opponents, after all. He got lucky during the incident on the holy altar. Under normal circumstances, he could not guarantee he would always be able to have a one-on-one showdown.

Lu Zhou controlled the system with his mind and purchased the Mighty Four Quadrants avatar.

"Ding! Obtained the avatar, the Mighty Four Quadrants." As the system notification popped up, Lu Zhou's original avatar, the Three Condensing Flowers, disappeared before it was replaced by the Mighty Four Quadrants. He felt his Primal Qi surging like a flood within his body. With his new avatar, it broke

through his dantian's sea of Qi. His Primal Qi grew quickly and easily broke through from the middle stage of the Sense Condensing Realm to the peak of the Sense Condensing realm. It did not take long before his dantian's sea of Qi was filled with Primal Qi.

A man standing between the heavens and the earth was like a vessel. The vessel's endurance would determine how much Primal Qi the vessel would be able to take in. The sizes of the meridian channels and dantian's sea of Qi were crucial aspects in determining the strength of a cultivator.

Lu Zhou was no ordinary cultivator! He was the most powerful villain in the world. His dantian and meridian channels had been sculpted and tempered since a long time ago!

When the Primal Qi surged in, it was as though the floodgates of Yangtze River were opened. Lu Zhou could not stop it at all as his cultivation base rose quickly.

Lu Zhou quickly sat down and crossed his legs, focusing his mind. He did not dare to take this lightly and quickly directed all his attention to improving his cultivation base.

Apart from that, Lu Zhou understood something. Initially, when he obtained the system, his cultivation base was at the Nine-fold Body Tempering. Body Tempering cultivated his muscles, bone, and skin. Ji Tiandao had already accomplished this before, therefore, there was no need for him to cultivate them again. As for the five apertures of the Mystic Enlightening realm and the Sense Condensing realm, they were like the cultivation of the will. In other words, the improvement in his cultivation base now was completely dependent on the avatar's level and the amount of Primal Qi he absorbed! With his eight meridians connected, if he had the right avatar and Primal Qi, he could reach all eight meridians in one go.

"Heavenly Writing." With just a thought, Lu Zhou brought out the Heavenly Writing. He felt it would be easier for him to calm his spirit and concentrate, to keep distracting thoughts away, if he read the Heavenly Writing. As soon the Heavenly Writing appeared, his eyes landed on the complicated scripts.

...

Mingshi Yin locked Zhao Yue in the Cave of Reflection upon their return. He paced up and down, keeping guard ever since he had locked her up.

When Zhao Yue entered the Cave of Reflection, she saw Ye Tianxin whose hair, skin, and expressions were pale. She was extremely terrified.

Mingshi Yin explained, "Junior Tianxin's cultivation base has been disabled by master... Without her cultivation base, it's inevitable that her body would decline. It's no surprise that she ended up looking like this."

When Zhao Yue heard this, she was inwardly shocked. 'What did she do to warrant such a heavy punishment?' Suddenly, she felt extremely grateful that she still possessed her cultivation base. She was not as tenacious or bold as Ye Tianxin, she felt there was no difference between having no cultivation base and being dead. She thought to herself emotionally, 'Luckily, I didn't commit a grave mistake like Junior Sister Tianxin did.'

“Junior Sister Zhao Yue, this time... you’re very lucky to have been brought back unharmed by master. Master has ordered me to keep both of you in here to reflect on your actions. Please don’t blame senior brother for this,” Mingshi Yin said.

Zhao Yue nodded and said, “I’m grateful, senior brother... I don’t blame you.” Compared to her eccentric master, she much preferred her Fourth Senior Brother. At the very least, she would not need to tread on eggshells all the time. Moreover, she did not have to worry about being beaten or punished for saying the wrong thing.

At this moment, Ye Tianxin suddenly looked up. She looked at Zhao Yue with exhaustion in her eyes. A hint of surprise could be seen in her eyes as well.

“Witch... witchcraft...”

Mingshi Yin nodded and said, “Indeed, it’s witchcraft... Junior Sister Tianxin, you’ve learned a lot during your time in the outside world.”

Ye Tianxin gave a hollow laugh and said, “Witchcraft Restrictions... Cultivators would have a difficult time undoing it. It’s no different from having your cultivation base disabled... I was dealt with this fate, and now Zhao Yue suffers the same fate. I wonder who will be next?”

Zhao Yue asked in confusion, “Junior sister, what’s the point of resenting master at this point?” She looked at Ye Tianxin who was as pale as a piece of paper.

Mingshi Yin shook his head helplessly. “Junior Sister Tianxin, do you really want to stay in the Cave of Reflection for the rest of your life?” If she did not change her way of thinking, she would have to stay in here forever.

“What’s the difference? With the state I’m in, there’s no difference from being dead.”

“Stubborn!” Mingshi Yin shook his head.

Dong!

Suddenly, the resonance of Primal Qi energy reached their ears from afar.

Mingshi Yin frowned slightly and said, “The two of you should reflect on your actions here. I’ll visit you every day.”

“Thank you, senior brother,” Zhao Yue said with a nod.

...

“Ding! Disciplining Zhao Yue. Obtained 100 merit points. Loyalty: +5%.”

...

Mingshi Yin came outside. He cast a suspicious look in the direction where the noise had come from. It was the Evil Sky Pavilion. Although the Primal Qi’s resonance was subtle, he managed to sense as soon as it sounded. “Someone’s connecting meridians in the Evil Sky Pavilion? How did a Brahman Sea cultivator get into Golden Court Mountain?” He was puzzled. The Evil Sky Pavilion was not a place where

scoundrels were allowed to run rampant. “You’ve got balls coming here. I’ll teach you a lesson!” With that, he covered 300 miles in a single stride, leaving afterimages in his wake.

## **Chapter 75: Strange Power**

‘What will the others think if any Dick, Tom, or Harry can just barge into the grand Evil Sky Pavilion? I’ll have to bear the consequences if master blames me for this!’

Mingshi Yin knew he was extremely fortunate that he was not blamed when the Golden Court Mountain’s barrier broke previously, giving the cunning Zhou Jifeng a chance to sneak up on master. However, if it were to happen again, he would feel annoyed at himself even if his master did not blame him.

Mingshi Yin had coincidentally passed by the back of the mountain.

Zhou Jifeng was once the grand disciple of the Heavenly Sword Sect. He was a Divine Court realm cultivator and well-known among cultivators. He had felt the strange pulse from the Evil Sky Pavilion as well. When he saw Mingshi Yin shooting past, he could not help but call out, “Mister Fourth?”

“Get lost... I’ll beat you up if you dare return!” Mingshi Yin cursed.

Zhou Jifeng was startled into jumping. His ears went numb from the vibrations of the soundwave from the Primal Qi, causing him to stumble several steps back. Then, he stood as still as a wooden chicken. ‘I don’t think I’ve offended you, did I? Are there no normal people in the Evil Sky Pavilion?’

...

When Mingshi Yin finally arrived at the Evil Sky Pavilion, he saw Little Yuan’er. He walked up to her and asked, “Little Junior Sister, did you see any outsider sneaking into the Evil Sky Pavilion?”

Little Yuan’er replied with a puzzled expression, “I didn’t. What’s wrong?”

Mingshi Yin sped through the pavilion, looking like a phantom as he left afterimages in his wake.

Little Yuan’er found the sight dazzling. She clapped her hands and said, “Senior Brother, your Bluewood Heart Technique is truly amazing!”

Whoosh!

Mingshi Yin appeared before Little Yuan’er again, his afterimages disappearing. He looked at Little Yuan’er solemnly as he asked, “You’re certain you didn’t see anyone?”

“I’m certain...” Little Yuan’er tapped the tip of her left index finger with the tip of her right index finger together as she looked at Mingshi Yin in confusion.

“Where’s master?”

“He’s resting...” Little Yuan’er pointed in the direction of the hidden chamber.

The hidden chamber was where Lu Zhou rested. However, he spent most of his time in the east pavilion and rarely visited the hidden chamber.

“The hidden chamber?” Mingshi Yin looked in the direction of the hidden chamber with a perplexed expression on his face before walking over.

Little Yuan’er barred Mingshi Yin’s way and said, “Senior brother, master has said that he doesn’t want to be interrupted!”

Mingshi Yin raised a hand and gestured for Little Yuan’er to keep quiet. Then, he said in a hushed tone, “I’m just going to take a look. What if there’s an intruder here?” He proceeded to cautiously walk toward the hidden chamber. He was convinced the source of the aura earlier came from the hidden chamber.

As Mingshi Yin inched closer to the hidden chamber, he thought to himself, ‘Is it possible that someone’s trying to steal something from master’s hidden chamber? Maybe master isn’t in the hidden chamber at all. Is there another reason for this?’

...

Meanwhile, Lu Zhou was completely focused on the scroll and paid no mind to what was happening outside.

The hidden chamber was as quiet as a library. The burst of aura was from when Lu Zhou Primal Qi surged through his eight meridians. He was intrigued to find that the eight meridians were not as powerful compared to before even though it had been connected by Ji Tiandao when he was still alive. It felt as though a drain had been dug, but the Primal Qi he had obtained was only a bucket’s worth.

According to the normal cultivation sequence, the first meridians to be connected were the Ren and Du meridians, followed by the Chong, Dai, Yangwei, Yinwei, Yangqiao, and Yinqiao meridians. Lu Zhou’s cultivation base would have to be at a certain level before he would be able to connect all eight meridians. Every meridian required a more profound cultivation base than the previous one.

Lu Zhou was the exact opposite. His avatar’s level was too low, which restricted the amount of Primal Qi he absorbed. In the Brahman Sea realm, two connected meridians would enable him to cultivate the Five Energies Universe, four connected meridians would enable him to cultivate the Six Recombinant Trigram Lines while eight connected meridians, the peak state, would grant him the avatar, the Seven Star Soul. The great realm had three avatars, and the difference in their strength was immense. His avatar was only the Mighty Four Quadrants!

Lu Zhou did not stop cultivating. He continued reading the Heavenly Writing. As usual, when he was focused on reading, he would immerse himself so deeply in the text that it was difficult to snap him out of it. Although the text was dry and boring, and he clearly could not understand it, he still enjoyed the feeling.

Shortly after, Lu Zhou felt a faint cooling sensation again. It came from his dantian’s sea of Qi and spread through his eight extraordinary meridians. His heart was as calm as a still lake, and his mind was clear and alert.

At this moment, Lu Zhou heard Mingshi Yi’s voice. “M-master?”

...

Mingshi Yin was, currently, standing at the door of the hidden chamber. He tried to peek inside through the gap in the door. However, the door of the hidden chamber was, naturally, different from ordinary doors. It was completely sealed, and he could not see a single thing. For this reason, he decided to call out to his master. Shortly after, he heard a grunt from the other side of the wall that reached his ears with a powerful soundwave from the Primal Qi.

Bang!

Mingshi Yin reeled from the impact, falling to the ground. His expression was one of fright as he stared at the sky. Even with his Nascent Divinity Tribulation realm's cultivation base, he had fallen due to a soundwave. He did not even have time to react. 'Impossible!'

Little Yuan'er looked at her senior brother in shock. He had flown back a few dozen meters before he crashed on the ground.

Although Mingshi Yin could have broken his fall, he did not dare to do it. He took the brunt of the hit before he got up on his knees and said pleadingly, "This disciple is wrong! I suspected that someone had infiltrated the Golden Court Mountain... Please forgive me, master!"

A silence hung over the Evil Sky Pavilion.

Lu Zhou was surprised by the strength of the soundwave. It was certainly not something that a cultivator who recently entered the Brahman Sea realm was capable of.

The Brahman Sea realm and the Nascent Divinity Tribulation realm were two realms apart. How could he have possibly repelled Mingshi Yin?

Lu Zhou stood up slowly. He had a suspicion. 'Is he putting on an act?'

Mingshi Yin was kneeling on the ground as he kept glancing at the hidden chamber. He was truly amazed by his master's amazing strength, but he was curious why his master did not come out. At the same time, he sensed his surroundings. There were no enemies or any other signs of movement. How strange! All of a sudden, he heard the sound of moving machinery.

Bzzt!

The stone door of the hidden chamber slowly slid to the side, and Lu Zhou walked out with his hands on his back. His expression hid his emotions.

Mingshi Yin hastily praised Lu Zhou, "Your strength is truly unrivaled, master! I'm no match for your sound technique at all!"

Meanwhile, Little Yuan'er ran over and supported Lu Zhou. "Master, you've come out!"

Lu Zhou's gaze fell on Mingshi Yin and said, "Old Fourth."

"Hm?"

"Nice show," Lu Zhou said knowingly.

Mingshi Yin was dumbfounded. 'Nice show?'



Lu Zhou said coldly, "Since you like acting so much, go to the Cave of Reflection and stay there for three days..."

Mingshi Yin was truly bewildered. He tried to explain, "Master, I'm telling the truth. I didn't put on an..."

Lu Zhou's expression was cold as he interjected, "Are you questioning your master?" Did a master need an excuse to punish his disciples? Of course not!

"I dare not! I'll accept the punishment! I'll head to the Cave of Reflection now..." Mingshi Yin obediently accepted his punishment.

Lu Zhou thought he would obtain merit points from disciplining Mingshi Yi, but he did not hear a notification from the system. He thought to himself, 'Dissatisfied? I'll deal a heavier punishment next time!'

Mingshi Yin kept shaking his head until he reached the Cave of Reflection. He could not help but sigh. "I thought master is different from before. It seems like I'm thinking too much. Master is still as unpredictable as ever!" He scratched his head, genuinely confused. "Nice show?"

Mingshi Yin quickly went into the Cave of Reflection. It was extremely cold and uncomfortable in there. As soon as he entered, he saw Zhao Yue shivering in the corner. 'Zhao Yue's cultivation base has been sealed. How can she resist the cold?'

Mingshi Yin pushed his dissatisfaction aside and said, "Junior Sister, don't blame me for not helping you."

"Senior brother, you're doing more than enough by visiting me. I can't possibly ask for more," Zhao Yue said before turning to look at Ye Tianxin, "I'm just worried that Junior Sister Tianxin would not be able to hold on for much longer."

## **Chapter 76: The Mystery of Ye Tianxin**

Ye Tianxin's head was lowered. Due to her prolonged stay in the cave, she appeared listless. Most of the time, she appeared unconscious. Although her cultivation base had been disabled by her master, her physical constitution was good. The cold from the Cave of Reflection was not enough to take her life.

Out of curiosity, Mingshi Yin approached Ye Tianxin before helping her up. However, as soon as he touched her, he almost pushed her away out of shock. He discovered her skin was currently as white as jade, and her hair was much whiter than before as well. Without her cultivation base, it was inevitable that her body would deteriorate. However, it should not have deteriorated to this extent. He furrowed his brows as he thought to himself, 'What's happening? In any case, this isn't normal.'

Zhao Yue asked, "Fourth Senior Brother, what's wrong with Junior Sister Tianxin?"

"I'm not sure... I've never seen anything like this. She doesn't seem to be hurt, and this isn't a residual effect from losing her cultivation base. Look closely..." Mingshi Yin motioned toward Ye Tianxin's skin with his eyes. There were no wrinkles on her skin. It was smooth just like a piece of white jade. He was also at a loss as to why she was unconscious.

"Junior Sister Zhao Yue, please look after her. I'll try to beg for mercy from master."

“Senior brother... Junior Sister Tianxin has committed such a grave mistake, what if master no longer cares about her?” Zhao Yue was slightly worried. She had a feeling there was something else afoot apart from her cultivation base that had been disabled. She could not help but feel that it was dangerous.

Mingshi Yin did not waste any time and shot out of the Cave of Reflection. When he saw some of the female cultivators from the Derived Moon Palace hurrying about, he called out to one of them, “Prepare a stretcher...”

“M-mister Fourth! Why do you need a stretcher?”

“Just go get it. Why’re you asking so many questions?” Mingshi Yin did not have the time to explain himself to them.

Mingshi Yin’s words made the female cultivators nervous.

The female cultivators from the Derived Moon Palace had been taking care of Golden Court Mountain lately. Apart from repairing the damaged buildings, they stayed in the Evil Sky Pavilion’s west pavilion. Although they felt the villains of Evil Sky Pavilion were eccentric, it was fine as long as they were able to keep their lives intact. They, naturally, carried out Mingshi Yin’s order.

...

In no time at all, Mingshi Yin arrived at the great hall of the Evil Sky Pavilion. When he saw his master and Little Yuan’er, he quickly made his way to them.

Lu Zhou frowned. ‘So, Old Fourth isn’t satisfied at all...’

Mingshi Yin had no time to think about other matters. He quickly knelt on the ground and said, “Master... Junior Sister Tianxin is dying!” That was all he said. He did not plead for mercy nor did he badmouth Ye Tianxin. He only waited silently for his master’s reply.

Mingshi Yin did not understand his master’s thoughts. Did his master intend to torture Ye Tianxin and make her life a living hell? Or was he only seizing this chance to punish her harshly? If it was the former, no good would come out of him pleading for mercy on her behalf. If it was the latter, there might still be some hope left. Since he was not certain of his master’s intention, he did not dare to act recklessly.

Lu Zhou stroked his beard and said, “Has she thought things through in recent times?”

“Well...” Mingshi Yin hesitated, caught in a dilemma. He visited Ye Tianxin frequently in the Cave of Reflection. Her stubbornness had exceeded his expectations. She had never once reflected on her actions.

Little Yuan’er only watched, not daring to speak up.

Lu Zhou shook his head. He searched his memories for information about Ye Tianxin, but he found nothing. He did not make a decision instantly. Instead, he left the Evil Sky Pavilion with his hands behind his back.

When Mingshi Yin saw this, he was overjoyed. He hastily got up to his feet and followed Lu Zhou.

...

On the mountain.

Lu Zhou saw the female cultivators from the Derived Moon Palace gathered together as they prepared a stretcher. They kneeled in unison as soon as he appeared. He ignored them and made his way to the Cave of Reflection.

The others had no choice but to follow Lu Zhou.

When the female cultivators from the Derived Moon Palace saw Lu Zhou and the others going to the Cave of Reflection, they kneeled again and pleaded for mercy.

Without waiting for Lu Zhou to reprimand them, Mingshi Yin spoke in his deep voice, "Don't cause trouble! Three or four of you stay back. The others can go back to their tasks!" He had wanted to tell them to get lost, but he did not think it was appropriate for him to lose his temper when his master was present.

...

Lu Zhou walked into the Cave of Reflection, and Little Yuan'er followed closely behind.

"Greetings, master." Zhao Yue endured the cold and kneeled to greet her master.

Lu Zhou waved his hand in reply before walking to the other corner of the cave. He saw Ye Tianxin leaning against an ice-cold wall, and her head was hung at an awkward angle. Her hair obscured her face.

Just by looking at Ye Tianxin's shoulder, he knew what was happening. Skin as white as jade. He brushed her hair to the side and frowned when he saw her face.

Little Yuan'er covered her mouth in shock and took a step back. She had never seen anything like this before. She asked in confusion, "What happened to senior sister?"

Lu Zhou merely frowned, he did not seem surprised. He was calm as though he had expected this day to come.

In fact, Lu Zhou had been more shocked when he had met Ye Tianxin for the first time. However, due to the circumstances back then, he did not have time to ponder about the matter. When he had first met her, he had felt she was pure and unsullied, she had principles and was incorruptible even though she had grown up in mud. More importantly, the system dashboard displayed a completely different notification.

Name: Ye Tianxin

Race: Bai

Cultivation base: Nascent Divinity Tribulation realm (disabled)

Hatred: 40%

'Her hatred level has decreased,' Lu Zhou thought to himself. The main point was not her hatred, but her race.

Lu Zhou had noticed this during their first meeting. He knew people from Bai Nation had white complexion and white hair. They were like white jade. However, that was all he knew about her since he had no memories of her. Therefore, he had no choice but to keep her confined in the Cave of Reflection.

"Master..." Mingshi Yin cupped his hands again.

Lu Zhou's expression was indifferent as he said, "There's no need to worry. She won't die. Keep her in the south pavilion. I have questions for her."

Mingshi Yin nodded. He quickly called two female cultivators from the Derived Moon Palace over to carry Ye Tianxin out.

Zhao Yue was left alone in the cave.

Lu Zhou glanced at Zhao Yue's forehead that still bore the mark of a golden lotus. He called out, "Zhao Yue."

"Yes, master."

"This is the Evil Sky Pavilion, it's also the only place where you can stay alive. This witchcraft Restriction doesn't just seal your cultivation base, it'll expose your whereabouts as well," Lu Zhou said.

"Please master, have mercy on me and help me undo this Restriction," Zhao Yue said as she fell to her knees immediately.

"Do you think that I can undo the Restriction?" Lu Zhou asked.

Zhao Yue gave it some thought before answering, "I don't know."

"When you've sorted out your thoughts, we'll talk more about witchcraft," Lu Zhou said before he left. He saw that Zhao Yue's loyalty was only about 30. That was far from enough.

Moreover, this was Lu Zhou's first time dealing with witchcraft. It would be easier for him to kill someone. A Deadly Strike Card would have done the trick. However, item cards could not be used to undo witchcraft spells. Since he was still uncertain about Zhao Yue, it was best to leave her in the Cave of Reflection for now.

After leaving the Cave of Reflection, Lu Zhou made his way to the south pavilion. This was where his nine disciples once lived.

Little Yuan'er and Mingshi Yin quickly caught up to Lu Zhou.

Little Yuan'er asked, "Master, how did Senior Sister Tianxin end up in that state?"

## **Chapter 77: Binding Cage**

Lu Zhou did not reply to Little Yuan'er's question. Instead, he waved his hand and went into the room alone. The others waited outside since they did not dare to follow him.

The few female cultivators from Derived Moon Palace knelt at the door, worried sick.

Duanmu Sheng, Pan Zhong, and Zhou Jifeng came over when they heard about the matter.

Duanmu Sheng dragged his chains along as he made his way over, but they did not seem to impede his speed. It seemed as though his wounds were almost completely healed. He asked, "How's junior sister doing?"

Mingshi Yin shook his head and said, "Things aren't looking too good."

Duanmu Sheng frowned and asked, "Old Fourth, what happened?" In other words, he was asking about what happened between Lu Zhou and Ye Tianxin.

As soon as Duanmu Sheng finished speaking, everyone turned to look at Mingshi Yin.

Mingshi Yin sighed and said, "All I know is Sixth Junior Sister was brought back from the Fish Dragon Village, south of Great Yan's river. Ever since then, she's been staying on the mountain." He did not dare to divulge much information about his master. He shuddered just thinking about the consequences of speaking too much.

Pan Zhong chimed in, "South of Great Yan's river... That's the territory of Yun, Tian, and Luo Sect."

As soon as the three sects were mentioned, a stifling atmosphere seemed to descend on the place.

However, Little Yuan'er clearly did not notice the strange atmosphere. She said in confusion, "Fourth Senior Brother, Senior Sister, I don't understand..."

Mingshi Yin said in a hushed tone, "All the lands under the heavens belong to His Majesty. Some years ago, there were Other Tribes near the Measure Heaven River. They were constantly fighting with cultivators. Shortly after master brought Junior Sister back, the Fish Dragon Village vanished."

Duanmu Sheng frowned. "So, does this mean that master..."

Mingshi Yin started and quickly interjected, "Shh!"

As soon as Mingshi Yin hushed Duanmu Sheng, a deep voice rang from the room. "Have you said enough?"

Duanmu Sheng and Mingshi Yin's hearts sank. 'We're dead.'

"Slap each other 30 times and reflect on your actions in the Cave of Reflection for three days." Lu Zhou said in a tone that was neither heavy nor light.

Duanmu Sheng and Mingshi Yin felt like crying but no tears came out.

Mingshi Yin kept shooting looks at Duanmu Sheng.

The others did not dare to speak up on their behalf. They did not even dare to breathe heavily.

A boneheaded teammate could do more harm than a formidable opponent.

Duanmu Sheng and Mingshi Yin could only bow toward the room with a gloomy expression on their faces. "We accept our punishment."

Zhou Jifeng and Pan Zhong used to be proud and boastful. However, since they arrived on Golden Court Mountain, they had been forced to become humble and to keep a low profile. Being nosy here came with its own consequences.

...

Inside the room.

Ye Tianxin had regained her consciousness after leaving the Cave of Reflection. Since her cultivation base had been disabled, she could not heal her wounds. She did well for being able to hold on until now. She opened her eyes in a daze, the room was quite bright. As soon as she saw Lu Zhou, she instinctively shrunk back.

Upon seeing this, Lu Zhou was speechless. Among his nine disciples, Little Yuan'er was the only one who did not fear him.

"M-master?" Ye Tianxin called out, a hint of disbelief could be heard in her voice. It was as though she could not believe her master would send her to a room.

Lu Zhou's expression was cold as he shook his head and said, "I don't have a disciple like you."

Ye Tianxin had instinctively addressed Lu Zhou as master. She realized she had misspoken as soon as she heard Lu Zhou's words. She looked at him and stubbornly said, "I deserve to be in this condition."

"Yes, you do," Lu Zhou replied.

"..." Ye Tianxin was speechless. She did not know how she should react. She did not dare to retort with a stronger language, afraid that she would drag her sisters in Derived Moon Palace into this matter.

The room was deathly silent for quite a while.

When Ye Tianxin recalled what her Fourth Senior Brother said in the cave, she hesitated for a moment before she asked, "Since you're capable of annihilating the entire Fish Dragon Village, why didn't you kill me as well?" A hint of derision could be heard in her voice.

Lu Zhou was bewildered when he heard this. After all, he had no recollection of annihilating the entire Fish Dragon Village. He saw Ye Tianxin had gotten emotional as she spoke. Apart from that, her hatred had increased slightly from 40%. It was obvious her hatred stemmed from his apparent destruction of the village. He could not be certain if he was the culprit behind that. However, based on the memories he had access to, Ji Tiandao was not the type who would slaughter innocent people even though he was the most powerful villain in the world, outrageous with his actions, and strict and harsh toward his disciples.

Lu Zhou sighed. His lost memories were proving to be a problem. 'Why did I lose them? Is this an effect of transmigrating?' He knew there was no point thinking about this matter too much, he could only slowly look for the answers. After a moment, he looked at Ye Tianxin and asked, "Did you see me destroying the village?"

Ye Tianxin was slightly stunned, her expression was not right. Finally, she bit out a reply, "It's the same as personally witnessing it."

Lu Zhou shook his head and said, "The ones who know me best under the heavens are the nine of you. Have I ever acted in secret?"

Ye Tianxin was speechless.

Indeed. Lu Zhou was the greatest villain the world had ever known. He was number one on every blacklist. Did he need to hide or cover up his actions?

"Ye Tianxin," Lu Zhou called out softly, causing Ye Tianxin to shudder inwardly, "If you ever try to slander me..." He did not finish his sentence, leaving it up to Ye Tianxin's imagination.

Lu Zhou's meaning was clear. He was no longer the old Ji Tiandao. Although he did what he wanted, he would not allow anyone to slander him.

"Ding! Disciplining Ye Tianxin. Obtained 100 merit points."

Lu Zhou waved his sleeve and walked out of the room. He did not bring up Ye Tianxin's identity as a Bai nor did he press her about it.

Ye Tianxin was stunned. At this moment, she heard the pleas from her sisters from Derived Moon Palace outside the room.

Unfortunately, Lu Zhou was unmoved. He returned to the Evil Sky Pavilion.

Little Yuan'er was trembling with fear along the way. She did not even dare to speak. After they entered the Evil Sky Pavilion, she quickly brought her master a cup of tea in an attempt to appease him. She said, "Master, please don't be angry. If there's no other way, I'll kill that little traitor for you."

Lu Zhou was not angry. On the contrary, he was calm. He even felt cheerful. At the very least, he had gained some basic information. "Yuan'er, send word to Jiang Aijian."

Little Yuan'er nodded and said, "I'll grab a pen and papers."

"Tell him to investigate the incident of Measure Heaven River's Fish Dragon Village. Tell him to get back to me as soon as possible," Lu Zhou said before he returned to the hidden chamber.

Initially, Lu Zhou had planned to continue reading the Heavenly Writing. However, when he recalled how his Brahman Sea opened up his eight meridians, he felt conflicted. He did not expect his avatar would restrict his cultivation base. He had thought it was a good thing that he was able to directly purchase his avatar. After all, this meant he would not encounter any bottleneck when cultivating. Many cultivators spent their entire lives trying to break through a bottleneck but to no avail.

Currently, Lu Zhou did not have enough merit points as well.

"210 points."

'What can I do with these meager merit points?'

"Lucky draw."

"Ding! Spent 50 merit points. Gained Binding Cage x3."

"Binding Cage: 30% chance of shackling the target."

Lu Zhou's eyes brightened. The system was suddenly being kind to him. He finally had a stroke of good luck.

"Lucky draw."

“Ding! Spent 50 merit points. Thanks for trying. Luck +1.”

As expected. He had a bad feeling about this.

He chose the lucky draw three times consecutively, and he was only thanked for his efforts. In the end, he was left with 10 merit points and 3 additional luck points. ‘Just as well. There’s no need for me to keep drawing.’

Lu Zhou turned his attention to the Binding Cage. “30% chance. Isn’t that too low?” He could just imagine how embarrassing and humiliating it would be if the world’s greatest villain missed when trying to capture his target.

## **Chapter 78: Leader of the Black Knights**

Lu Zhou opened the Heavenly Writing’s interface and prepared to study it again. He had connected his Brahman Sea’s eight meridians, but they were not true Brahman Sea’s eight meridians. All he had were drainages and not the water source. His avatar, the Mighty Four Quadrants, had restricted his intake of Primal Qi. Moreover, he had no other way to quickly earn merit points. He had no other choice but to study the Heavenly Writing.

After a while, Little Yuan’er’s voice rang from the other side of the door. “Master, I’ve written to Jiang Aijian.”

Lu Zhou did not reply. He was confident in leaving the investigation to Jiang Aijian. Suddenly, he remembered he had to give Jiang Aijian a sword or two as a reward. Thinking about this, he shook his head. It was not easy to find a sword that was not inferior to the male and female double swords.

Lu Zhou looked around his surroundings before his eyes fell on a saber that Unnamed had scratched previously.

“Hm? A hole?” Lu Zhou suddenly noticed a hole on the saber. He was shocked by this discovery. ‘Is this caused by Unnamed?’ He removed the saber from the rack and inspected it. The saber’s quality was good. Although it was a mediocre weapon, it was forged from good metal. It would not break easily.

Lu Zhou thought to himself in disbelief, ‘Unnamed is so powerful? Well, seeing is believing!’

Lu Zhou raised his right arm and Unnamed materialized in his hand. He wielded it and slashed at the saber without any hesitation. Then, he inspected Unnamed and discovered it was undamaged. However, the same could not be said for the saber. He discovered a fine crack on the saber where Unnamed had landed.

Lu Zhou was truly shocked. He did not think Unnamed was useless, but he did not think it was especially powerful as well. Who knew Unnamed would be able to damage the high-quality saber? He felt satisfied. ‘This isn’t junk, it’s a treasure!’ He quickly waved his arm again, and Unnamed disappeared into thin air.

Perhaps, Unnamed had improved along with his cultivation base. No matter how weak his Brahman Sea’s eight meridians were, they were still much more powerful compared to the Sense Condensing realm.

Lu Zhou continued his search for another sword.



Many weapons on the rack were covered with a layer of dust due to neglect.

Lu Zhou waved his arms slightly, using Primal Qi to clear the dust.

“What’s this...” Lu Zhou discovered a spear with strange designs. It was roughly thirteen feet long. Its tip and pole were forged from pure steel. A dragon wound around the pole.

Lu Zhou gripped the spear, shocked by its weight. Its weight was about 100 catties. Fortunately, this weight was nothing to a cultivator who had gone through Body Tempering.

“Ding! Recovered the weapon, the Overlord Spear. Recommended owner: Duanmu Sheng.”

Lu Zhou muttered skeptically, “Duanmu Sheng?”

The Overlord Spear was huge and heavy. It looked majestic and imposing. Indeed. It was not suited for Lu Zhou’s old bones. He much preferred Unnamed. Moreover, Unnamed could transform into various types of weapons. It was undoubtedly more useful.

After a while, Lu Zhou discovered a sword lying on the floor in a corner. Treasures usually appeared insignificant. He picked the sword up and pulled it out of its scabbard as the sound of metal against metal rang in the air.

“What a good sword!” Lu Zhou exclaimed. His words were still echoing in the room when...

Crack!

The sword broke.

Lu Zhou coughed in embarrassment, and his face was flushed red as he tossed the ‘treasure’ aside. It was as brittle as glass. It shattered at the slightest touch. Why was a defective weapon stored in the hidden chamber?

Lu Zhou suddenly lost all interest in the weapons inside the room. He did not have the time to inspect every single weapon. He decided to get some of his disciples to sort the weapons out in the future. Jiang Aijian’s sword would have to wait.

Shortly after, Lu Zhou returned to his spot and sat cross-legged before he began to cultivate.

...

The next day, early in the morning.

Little Yuan’er skipped and hopped as she made her way to the Evil Sky Pavilion. “Master, that shameless person has replied.”

Lu Zhou looked at Little Yuan’er emotionlessly and said, “Read it for me.”

Little Yuan’er cleared her throat. She mimicked Jiang Aijian’s way of speech as she said, “First, nothing can be found from the cultivation world about the destruction of Fish Dragon Village at the Crossing Heaven River for now. However, there’s something in the palace’s archives and the local archives. Investigations show that the culprit is Ji Tiandao. That’s you. Second, there are signs that the records have been tampered with. The most suspicious person at the moment is an officer of the Black Knights,

Fan Xiuwen. The Black Knights are under the emperor's direct command. They're a special squad of Imperial Guards. I'll add two additional pieces of information here. First, nobody believed Zhao Shuo when he told them about your true identity. Second, please don't forget about my sword, old senior! Hahaha!" She even mimicked his laughter, sounding unnatural.

Jiang Aijian was truly talented. He managed to get to the heart of the matter in such a short time.

Lu Zhou muttered, "Black Knights... Fan Xiuwen?"

"Master... is this person powerful?"

Lu Zhou did not respond to Little Yuan'er's question. He did not seem to have any memories of this person. Well, he must be a minor character. After a while, he said, "Bring Old Fourth here."

"Oh." Little Yuan'er was slightly puzzled, but she still obediently carried out her order.

A short while later, Mingshi Yin ran over with an ingratiating smile on his face. Anything was better than having to stay in the Cave of Reflection. He did not want to spend a second longer in there. He respectfully saluted Lu Zhou. "Greetings, master!"

Lu Zhou said nonchalantly, "I have a mission for you."

When Mingshi Yin heard this, he was overjoyed. He quickly said, "All you need to do is ask, master!"

Lu Zhou asked, "Do you know the leader of the Black Knights, Fan Xiuwen?"

"Not really... He seems to come from a family of officials. He doesn't have much to do with the cultivation world."

"Inform him that I want to meet him." Lu Zhou's voice was light.

"Understood!" Mingshi Yin accepted the order reverently. He seemed to be reinvigorated! 'I like this! There's nothing better than a simple mission like this!' He descended the mountain like an arrow that had been shot out.

As soon as Mingshi Yin left, Little Yuan'er saw a messenger bird above the Evil Sky Pavilion.

"A letter!" Little Yuan'er waved. The messenger bird dropped the letter and disappeared with amazing speed.

Little Yuan'er cried out, "Master! It's another letter from Jiang Aijian!"

"Read it."

Little Yuan'er began to read. "I'm sorry, I ran out of paper. Anyway, Fan Xiuwen's actual name is Leng Luo. He's known as the Grim Yama. He was ranked on the top of the blacklist 300 years ago. Old senior, I think you know this person better than I do so there's no need for me to elaborate."

Little Yuan'er clicked her tongue. She crumpled the paper scornfully, and it turned to dust in her fist. She scratched her head in confusion when she recalled the content of Jiang Aijian's second letter. She was not even 16 years old. There was no way she was familiar with someone from 300 years ago. However, if

that person had lived so long before becoming the leader of the Black Knights, his cultivation base had to be quite profound.

“Leng Luo...” Suddenly, memories of this person surfaced in Lu Zhou’s mind. “It’s him?”

“Master, who’s this person? We can’t trust Jiang Aijian’s words.”

Lu Zhou shook his head. These matters did not conflict with Jiang Aijian’s interests. There was no reason for Jiang Aijian to lie.

“Where’s Old Fourth now?”

“With Fourth Senior Brother’s speed, he should have gone beyond the barrier by now...”

## **Chapter 79: Intelligent Mingshi Yin**

Lu Zhou stroked his beard as he shook his head slightly. Leng Luo was 200 years younger than Ji Tiandao. However, 300 years ago, Leng Luo was a great villain who committed every evil act imaginable. He was notorious for his cunning in the cultivation world. He burned, killed, robbed, and looted everywhere he went while humiliating others. However, this person usually operated alone and never worked with anyone else. He had committed many evil deeds on his own. He managed to escape with his life intact even though thousands of cultivators had gone against him. This earned him the top spot on the blacklist.

Ji Tiandao had fought this person to a draw previously. Although Ji Tiandao was older than Leng Luo, at that time, he had not reached the peak of his power yet. After he had reached the pinnacle of power, Ji Tiandao began accepting disciples with a vengeance. The name of Golden Court Mountain’s Evil Sky Pavilion shocked and resounded in the world. Soon after, Ji Tiandao rose to the top of the blacklist. It was at that time that Leng Luo seemed to have vanished without a trace.

In this world, only accomplished cultivators were able to live for more than 300 years. It was only natural that the younger generation had never heard of Leng Luo.

300 years ago, this person was at the Nascent Divinity Tribulation realm with a Six-leaf Golden Lotus Hundred Tribulations Insight avatar. Now that 300 years had passed, what was his cultivation base like? Even if he made no progress over the centuries, he was certainly stronger than Mingshi Yin who had just recently attained his Hundred Tribulations Insight avatar. He was not someone Mingshi Yin could defeat.

Lu Zhou said solemnly, “Send word to Old Fourth. That man is extremely dangerous. Tell him to be careful.”

“Extremely dangerous?”

When Little Yuan’er heard this, she blinked and asked, “Master, should we summon Fourth Senior Brother back?”

Lu Zhou shook his head and said, “There’s no need for that.”

Mingshi Yin was a Nascent Divinity Tribulation realm expert, after all. After spending so many years being tormented by Ji Tiandao, he now had the character of a loach.

When the Righteous Sect and Heavenly Sword Sect elites besieged Golden Court Mountain previously, even Lu Zhou's third disciple, Duanmu Sheng, was captured. However, Mingshi Yin managed to stay free. Moreover, all he was supposed to do was pass on a message to Leng Luo. Even if there was a trap laid out, it would be difficult for people to capture a disciple like Mingshi Yin. If Lu Zhou did not have item cards, he would not even be able to control Mingshi Yin.

Lu Zhou thought to himself, 'Leng Luo might have attained a Seven-leaf or even an Eight-leaf avatar by now. However, any higher than that, I'm afraid it's very unlikely!' He was quite concerned about the skills and hidden tricks that Leng Luo, or as he was currently known, Fang Xiuwen, had gained after 300 years.

...

A day later. In the Eastern Capital that was also known as Upper Prime City.

A troop of mounted soldiers in black armor and dark masks rode their huge stallions along the street.

The commoners scattered to the side, making way for the troops. They did not dare to get in the way of the troops.

Some of the cultivators would glance at them from a distance before going about their own businesses.

Nobody dared to offend these black people on mounts.

The soldiers stopped at Upper Prime City's gates.

At the front of the troop, three mounted black knights were at the lead. They were clearly different from the others.

These three men were rumored to be among four of the most powerful black knights. Collectively, they were known as the Four Dark Knights. They each had their specialized talent and had a profound cultivation base. Nobody knew the extent of their strength.

The first black knight asked, "How long is Old Third going to take?"

"Old Third's archery is peerless under the heavens. Any target that's unfortunate to fall into his radar will definitely die. It shouldn't be difficult for him to kill the traitor of the Upper Prime City."

"Our mission in the Upper Prime City can be considered as completed. The four of us should drink to our hearts' content when we return to the Divine Capital."

"I hope the leader will be satisfied."

At this moment, they heard the sound of whistling from a sailing arrow.

Whoosh!

With a loud thud, the arrow embedded itself on the city's gates. A human head was attached to the arrow.

The three black knights did not seem surprised or frightened. They only nodded in satisfaction.

"As expected of Old Third!"

“His archery is truly peerless under the heavens.”

The black knights looked toward the end of the street. A black knight was speeding toward them with a bow and a quiver of arrows on his back. This was the black knight, one of the Four Dark Knights, who was most skilled in archery.

The leader of the Four Dark Knights spoke in a deep voice, “Report back to the Divine Capital!”

“Understood!”

The Black Knights paraded majestically out of the city gates.

Hooves thundered on the road, kicking up clouds of dust as the Black Knights sped toward the Divine Capital.

When the troop passed a forest, a peal of cunning and strange laughter resounded in their ears.

Neigh!

The leader of the Four Dark Knights immediately pulled on the reins of his steed before he raised a hand.

The Black Knights were well-trained. They quickly stopped in their tracks. They were well synchronized as well.

When they heard the laughter, Old Third, the one who was skilled with a bow, immediately leaped into the air. He nocked an arrow and looked around his surroundings. If he could see the target, this arrow would send the person to meet his maker.

However, even after the laughter faded away, nobody appeared.

“Who dare block our way?” The leader of the Black Knights said in a deep voice.

For some unknown reason, they were slightly unnerved by this peculiar laughter even though they were used to operating in darkness and tainting their hands with the blood of others.

The laughter rang in the air again.

“Old Third!”

“Roger!”

‘Look for the target from the direction of his laughter.’

Twang!

Old Third of the Four Dark Knights sent his arrow flying through the air in the direction of the laughter, flying into the dense foliage before disappearing. The feathered arrow was shrouded with Primal Qi!

There was no sound at all.

“Did you get him?”

This question was directed at the archer, Old Third.

Only users of the bow would know if the arrow had hit its target.

Old Third had a slight frown on his face. He fell silent for a moment before he finally replied, "No!" An elite could tell by their instincts.

"This person must be a Nascent Divinity Tribulation realm elite!"

The black knights behind the Four Dark Knights shuffled around to shift formations.

The laughter rang in the air again. This time, it was accompanied by a mocking statement. "Nice shot."

A black knight shouted, "Who's there?!"

The voice rang in the air. "I'm a disciple of Golden Court Mountain's Evil Sky Pavilion... Where's the leader of the Black Knights, Fan Xiuwen?"

The Four Dark Knights exchanged glances. Although they were wearing masks, they could feel each other's astonishment.

There was not a single soul under the heavens who did not know about the Evil Sky Pavilion.

"So, it's a friend from the Evil Sky Pavilion..."

Upon hearing this, the person laughed before he said derisively, "Friend?" The voice seemed to come from all directions. The trees in the surroundings began to move as well.

"Where is Fan Xiuwen?!" This voice belonged to Mingshi Yin, the Evil Sky Pavilion's fourth disciple.

Mingshi Yin was not only intelligent, but he was exceptionally cunning. This was a forest, this place was advantageous to his Bluewood Heart Technique. Even a Nascent Divinity Tribulation realm cultivator with a Six-leaf avatar might not be able to capture him. In this place, he was king!

"The leader is in the Divine Capital, what business do you have with him?"

Mingshi Yin was displeased. He had made many inquiries before he finally found out the Black Knights were on a mission in the Eastern Capital. He had waited here the entire day, certain that the Black Knight would pass by. He thought to himself, I waited the entire day for the Four Dark Knights and a bunch of small fries?

"Listen up! I'll give you three days. The Evil Sky Pavilion wants to meet Fan Xiuwen... If he doesn't show up, your fates will be the same as this tree!"

A towering tree suddenly snapped and fell, crashing toward the Black Knights.

The Black Knights were elite troops. They quickly retreated and dispersed.

The Four Dark Knights wrapped themselves with energy.

Bang!

## **Chapter 80: On the Top of the Blacklist**

The huge tree fell with a loud crash before the Black Knights before it shattered.

The black knight in the lead looked up before he gave the archer, Old Third, who was still hovering in the air, a meaningful look.

Old Third landed on his steed.

"I shall convey your message."

After that, the troop of black knights hurried along the small path toward the Divine Capital.

Shortly after, peace and quiet returned to the forest. Mingshi Yin walked out from behind a huge tree. He looked at the leaving black knights with interest. "Since four of them are so strong, it's impossible for Fan Xiu Wen to be weak. Oh, master, who are you trying to provoke this time?"

The Four Dark Knights' cultivation bases were almost at the Nascent Divinity Tribulation realm while the remaining black knights' cultivation bases were at the Divine Court realm. Without considering the great and second disciple of the Evil Sky Pavilion, these black knights could have fought on par with the Evil Sky Pavilion. There was no way that a person who commanded these people was a nobody in the cultivation world.

Mingshi Yin's curiosity was piqued. He wondered aloud, "Fan Xiuwen, who are you?" He tapped the ground with a foot and flew up to the trees with the agility of a swallow. His Bluewood Heart Technique was at its full potential in a forest. He moved with lightning speed before he seemed to vanish without a trace.

...

When the Black Knights arrived in the Divine Capital, they did not go into the city immediately. Instead, they skirted around the capital and continued north.

The Imperial Guards guarded the capital. The Black Knights were a covert group and only operated in the shadows. Their existence was not publicly acknowledged. Naturally, their base was not located in the capital. Only a handful of people knew of the location of their base.

...

At the foot of a hill. The Black Knights Headquarters.

The Four Dark Knights entered a hall at the same time.

"My lord, we've completed our mission. The Upper Prime City's traitor has been eliminated by the Black Knights."

Four of them kneeled on the ground and cupped their hands together.

A long brown and empty table stood before them. Next to the table, a tall and muscular man dressed in black armor stood with his back facing them.

"Very good." The voice was hoarse and deep.

"My lord, I have another report."

"Speak."

"We encountered a villain from the Evil Sky Pavilion on our way back. The Evil Sky Pavilion has a message for you."

The Four Dark Knights exchanged glances. Their leader paused for a moment before he said, "The Evil Sky Pavilion wants to meet you. They've given us three days." He had softened Mingshi Yin's words out of fear of angering his leader.

Fan Xiuwen was not angry. Instead, he turned around slowly and walked toward the table before gracefully taking a seat. He wore a mask as well. Even his face was completely covered. No one knew what he looked like.

After a moment's silence, Fan Xiuwen chuckled before he said in his deep voice, "This is a tribulation that I must face in my lifetime."

"My Lord, the Evil Sky Pavilion is notorious in the cultivation world. It has produced nine great villains over the centuries whose names shocked the lands. The patriarch of the Fiend Path, Ji Tiandao, possesses an unfathomable cultivation base. My lord, I suggest that we avoid the Evil Sky Pavilion..."

Fan Xiuwen raised a hand slowly and said, "I've received an order from the palace. The Evil Sky Pavilion has meddled in the palace's plans."

The Four Dark Knights were stunned by Fan Xiuwen's words, their mask hiding their shocked expressions.

"My Lord, are we making an enemy out of the Evil Sky Pavilion?"

Fan Xiuwen shook his head and spoke in his raspy voice, "The Evil Sky Pavilion is indeed terrifying. We have no idea about the cultivation bases of its nine disciples... Rumor has it that Ji Tiandao possesses an Eight-leaf Golden Lotus Avatar. It's not surprising for him to be able to repel the ten great elites."

Fan Xiuwen's four subordinates lowered their heads and listened quietly.

After muttering to himself for some time, Fan Xiuwen placed his hands behind his back and said, "I have no intention of making the Evil Sky Pavilion an enemy... It's only natural that we should avoid making an enemy out of such powerful people."

The Four Dark Knights felt relieved inwardly. They were worried their leader would be overconfident. Although the Black Knights were powerful, if they were to butt heads with Ji Tiandao, both sides would surely sustain great losses. After all, there was no need for them to be impatient. When Ji Tiandao's time was up, they would be able to easily destroy the Evil Sky Pavilion.

However, when Fan Xiuwen spoke again, his words seemed to have taken a sharp turn. "However, since the palace has issued an order, we must obey the order. Since the Evil Sky Pavilion wants to see me, I'll go see them."

The Four Dark Knights were taken aback. They did not expect the palace would order the Black Knights to negotiate with the Evil Sky Pavilion. Was this only a coincidence?

They were Fan Xiuwen's most trusted subordinates. Naturally, they knew about Fan Xiuwen's identity as well. Fan Xiuwen was younger than Ji Tiandao, but he was a unique talent in the cultivation world. When he was at the top of the blacklist, the Evil Sky Pavilion had not even existed yet. Ji Tiandao and their leader had fought to a draw. However, Ji Tiandao experienced a huge leap in his cultivation base and



went on to establish the Evil Sky Pavilion. They did not know how profound Fan Xiuwen's cultivation base was, but they were certain it was not higher than an Eight-leaf avatar.

"Master! At Ji Tiandao's age, his time should be up in a decade, at most. He'll be gone by then. Why do we have to rush there now?"

"I concur!"

"I concur!"

"I concur!"

The four of them raised their cupped hands at the same time.

Fan Xiuwen looked at all four of them. He was not angered. After all, these four people were his most trusted subordinates. He stayed silent for a moment before he finally said in a deep voice, "I can wait, and the Black Knights can wait. Even the emperor can wait. However, Great Yan cannot wait."

The Four Dark Knights were baffled. They did not understand their leader's words.

When Fan Xiuwen saw his subordinates were about to speak, he waved his hand and said, "Three days later, accompany me to the Evil Sky Pavilion. This matter is settled."

...

"Ding! Mingshi Yin has accomplished his mission. Gained 300 merit points."

When Lu Zhou received this notification, he was not surprised. He was pleased. Apart from the rascals who left the Evil Sky Pavilion, those who remained were quite smart. Their only shortcoming was that it was difficult for them to improve their cultivation bases after being suppressed by Ji Tiandao for so long. He had to quickly change this situation.

Lu Zhou had a feeling that the world did not dare to act against the Evil Sky Pavilion due to Ji Tiandao's cultivation base. However, as time passed, probing attacks such as the one before would only increase in frequency. The limit of one's life was determined after all.

Lu Zhou was still deep in thoughts when he heard Little Yuan'er calling out to him.

"Master, I've waited the entire day but Fourth Senior Brother still hasn't written back. Do you think he received my letter?" Little Yuan'er launched into a lengthy complaint the moment she appeared before Lu Zhou.

"It's fine." Mingshi Yin had completed his mission. As long as he did not cause trouble elsewhere and return safely, there would not be a problem.

However, Little Yuan'er said, "Master, is Senior Brother dead? I've asked Blockhead about this, he said the leader of the Black Knights, Fan Xiuwen, is very dangerous. Nobody knows who he truly is."

"Blockhead?"

"Pan Zhong! He said that Fourth Senior Brother will die! I gave him a piece of my mind after I heard his words," Little Yuan'er said huffily.

“A piece of your mind?” Lu Zhou recalled that time when Pan Zhong’s face was swollen and bruised.

Little Yuan’er raised a thumb and said in a small voice, “Well, I might have accidentally scratched him...”

Lu Zhou shook his head. ‘When will she change her violent habit of hitting others on a whim?’ He knocked her head. “You’re becoming unrulier by the day.”

“This disciple knows that she’s wrong.”

Boom!

A loud explosion suddenly rang from the back of the mountains.

Lu Zhou frowned slightly. The Golden Court Mountain was protected by a barrier. ‘Who’s causing the disturbance?’

At this moment, Pan Zhong appeared in a rush. He quickly cupped his hands together before he said, “M-mister Third has had a breakthrough!”

Duanmu Sheng had attained the Nascent Divinity Tribulation realm?