

## Disciples 791

### Chapter 791: An Intense Battle

Yu Zhenghai and Yu Shangrong exchanged a glance. They tacitly flanked their junior sisters as they flew toward the golden flames.

The cultivators from the Sky Martial Court and the Flying Star House looked at Nie Qingyun who had flown out as well.

With Sikong Beichen and Nie Qingyun around, the Sky Martial Court and the Flying Star House did not dare to act rashly.

The Sky Martial Court had the support of Yu Chenshu, a Ten-leaf cultivator who managed to master the karmic fire. Meanwhile, the Flying Star House that had a good relationship with the Sky Martial Court had a Ten-leaf cultivator among their ranks as well.

The 10,000 cultivators flew out closely in a huge group. It made for a rather majestic sight.

“Where’s he going?”

“No idea. Just keep going after him!”

The cultivators kept moving.

Apart from the Ten-leaf cultivators, most of the cultivators had a hard time catching up to Lu Zhou and Ye Zhen. Fortunately, the Ten-leaf cultivators did not leave the others behind and adjusted their speed to accommodate the others.

Lu Zhou’s expression was calm as he flew toward the cage.

Ye Zhen had lost three lives consecutively and had suffered heavy injuries. Moreover, he was still in the process of sprouting a leaf. He wanted nothing more than to find a hole to hide in forever. At this moment, he finally landed on the northernmost observatory platform of the 12 peaks. His eyes were bloodshot as he looked at the cage that was sailing toward him before he shifted them to his red lotus.

“Sprout!” Ye Zhen channeled a huge amount of energy into his red lotus in a frenzy. He desperately hoped he would be able to break through to the Ten-leaf stage at the critical moment. This was his only hope of turning the tides of the battle.

The Binding Cage Card shone intensely with golden light that covered the entire round observatory platform.

The round observatory platform was several hundred feet wide and had four pillars in four directions. Apart from that, there were six huge rocks hovering in the air as though they were shackled in place by some unique Daoist veins.

Boom!

At this moment, the Binding Cage dropped on the observatory platform.

Boom!

The golden cage surrounded the 170-foot Nine Infants avatar on the observatory platform as soon as it dropped.

'What is this?' Ye Zhen looked up. Although he had read many books and was familiar with many cultivation paths, he could not identify the golden cage. At this moment, he finally realized just how superficial his understanding of the old man was. It seemed like... the number of leaves on a lotus was no longer an accurate way to measure someone's cultivation base.

The cage disappeared soon after.

Lu Zhou dove and landed on the observatory tower. He stroked his beard with one hand on his back. He looked at Ye Zhen expressionlessly as he said, "You're quite lucky."

"Lucky?" Ye Zhen was baffled.

Lu Zhou looked at Ye Zhen's spinning red lotus and said, "You have nowhere to run."

"Don't be so sure about that." Ye Zhen stomped his feet.

The observatory platform's Daoist veins shone.

Ye Zhen's Confucian robes were shredded by a gust of energy and scattered in the wind. One could immediately see the Confucian runes that were inscribed on his body. Apart from that, there were also red symbols, lines, and the Nine Infants.

The 10,000 cultivators who had hurried over were shocked by this sight.

Ye Zhen's performance kept renewing everyone's knowledge. They knew he had a profound cultivation base and was knowledgeable. However, they did not expect him to have an unknown side to him as well. Not only did he worship the Nine Infants, but he had also inscribed the Nine Infants on his body and branded it on his blood and soul.

The karmic fire burned away at Ye Zhen's robes before pieces of the robe turned into final talismans and rune seals above the observatory platform.

The Nine Infants inscribed on Ye Zhen's body glowed faintly.

Lu Zhou kept his eyes on Ye Zhen.

At this moment, Ye Zhen said, "I've created many new cultivation paths over the past century. For example, the way to make my avatar appear humanoid, form different energy seals, and the way to enable my avatar to move freely and kill. This current technique is called Exchange of Life; I can exchange one life for an incredibly powerful attack."

Ye Zhen struck with his palm as soon as he finished speaking. One of the three heads on his avatar drooped immediately.

A blast of red energy began to surge and swell, accompanied by the rune seals.

"You want to sacrifice one of your lives? You're dreaming." Lu Zhou raised his hand again. He tossed his final Thunderblast Card at Ye Zhen's main body.

The others watched as a palm seal with lightning descended.

The fragments of the Confucian robes tried to repel the lightning bolt immediately.

Boom!

The Thunderblast passed through the rune seals in the air and hit Ye Zhen.

Ye Zhen grunted in pain as he was sent flying by Thunderblast, spitting out blood. He looked at Lu Zhou incredulously.

Lu Zhou stepped forward. Unnamed materialized in his hand again. The black runes swirled around the blade. He unleashed his grand technique and appeared above Ye Zhen's Nine Infants avatar. He brought his blade down mercilessly on the neck of one of the heads.

The energy around Unnamed slashed through the neck like a hot knife through butter.

Ye Zhen received another heavy blow. His expression was murderous as he glared at Lu Zhou. Blood trickled out of his orifices as the patterns on his body dimmed slightly. With a loud bang, he crashed against a huge pillar on the observatory platform.

At the same time, Ye Zhen's spinning red lotus began to slow down.

The decapitated head fell and vanished, returning to nature.

"Ding! Killed a target. Reward: 4,500 merit points."

Ye Zhen fell to the ground. He flipped and landed on his knees. He supported his weight with both hands on the ground. Exchange of Life was the technique he had the most confidence in, but it was still stopped by Lu Zhou. The difference between their strength was too great!

With this, Ye Zhen lost... again.

Lu Zhou withdrew Unnamed after his attack landed with utmost precision. He had moved at lightning speed that almost no one noticed the black runes on Unnamed. Moreover, Unnamed was glowing with golden energy and there were many red rune seals in the air that confused the others. All in all, it was incredibly difficult to notice the black runes.

Lu Zhou stroked his beard as he looked at Ye Zhen, who was kneeling on the ground, with a blank expression. "You're really not tactful at all."

"..."

The 10,000 cultivators remained silent, too afraid to make a sound.

'Is Ye Zhen going to submit?'

"The difference is too great. Ye Zhen can't possibly be a match for Brother Lu," Sikong Beichen said confidently.

Meanwhile, the word ' said Sikong Beichen.

The words 'not tactful' grated on Ye Zhen's nerves and stabbed his heart. He could hardly endure this. Blood continued to trickle out of his orifices onto the stone floor. After a beat, he channeled his Primal Qi from his palms into the stone floor.

The four pillars immediately formed pillars of light that sealed off the observatory platform. The six rocks hovering above the observatory platform shone before they merged and formed a Formation.

Then, Ye Zhen suddenly rose to his feet. He looked even more terrifying with blood flowing out of his eyes. This was a stark contrast to his earlier scholarly image.

Currently, Ye Zhen only had two leaves left on his avatar. Moreover, they looked weakened as well.

At this moment, Nie Qingyun suddenly remembered the Formation on this observatory. He led the others and retreated swiftly. "It's the observatory's Five Terminal Formation of the observatory platform! Move back!"

The others were shocked and swiftly moved back.

Sikong Beichen frowned slightly. "The Five Terminal Formation?"

"The Five Terminal Formation is a modification of the Ten Terminal Formation. It's not as wide or grand as the Ten Terminal Formation, but it has the same effects," Nie Qingyun said.

Sikong Beichen said to Yu Shangrong and Yu Zhenghai, "Look after the others. I'll go over to assist your master."

"There's no need to help my master," Yu Zhenghai said, "You'll understand soon."

Great Yan's Ten Terminal Formation was drawn by the Imperial tutor, Jiang Wenxu, who was actually a Flying Star House elder. Therefore, it was not surprising there were Formations in the red lotus domain that were similar to the Ten Terminal Formation in Great Yan.

The Five Terminal Formation was activated in just an instant.

Ye Zhen had practically exhausted his Primal Qi with this action. When he saw he had been successfully activated, he smiled, clearly pleased with himself. With the blood on his face, he looked vicious and terrifying when he smiled. He wiped the blood from his face as he looked at Lu Zhou murderously and said, "Old geezer, you've underestimated me... The Five Terminal Formation is complete. Most of the Primal Qi has been cut off. You can't kill me, but I can kill you."

Lu Zhou shook his head as though he was looking at a pitiable insect. He stroked his beard and said, "You're really pitiful. You're still unaware of the vast difference between us."

"Let's die together!" Ye Zhen stepped forward. With his final bit of Primal Qi, he lunged at Lu Zhou with his avatar.

The two heads bared their fangs.

At this moment, Lu Zhou formed an energy sword with two fingers. The blue energy sword slashed at the first head that descended on him with merciless precision.

Just like that, another head was decapitated.

“Ding! Killed a target. Reward: 4,500 merit points.”

Lu Zhou lowered his hand for a moment before raising it again. He pushed forward and channeled all his remaining extraordinary power into his hand and grabbed the neck of the final head on Ye Zhen’s avatar.

Ye Zhen’s eyes widened in horror. “Impossible!”

Lu Zhou’s expression remained calm. He thought the effort he had expended was rather worthwhile. After destroying this head, he would have taken seven of Ye Zhen’s lives. It was truly worth it!

At this moment, Lu Zhou was almost out of extraordinary power and he did not have much Primal Qi due to the Five Terminal Formation.

Similarly, Ye Zhen did not have much energy left as well. Nevertheless, he was adamant about sprouting the tenth leaf! Since most of the Primal Qi had been cut off by the Formation, his red lotus was spinning at an incredibly slow pace.

Lu Zhou shook his head and said evenly, “If I clench my hand slightly, you’ll die.”

“No, no, no...” Ye Zhen panicked.

At this moment, the observatory platform was silent.

The disciples and elders from the Flying Star House wanted to dive down, but with Nie Qingyun and Sikong Beichen in front of them, they did not dare to make a move,

At this moment, the Five Terminal Formation shattered.

The pillar of light disappeared, and the Daoist veins faded away.

At this moment, a scarlet figure shot toward the observatory platform and shouted, “How dare you harm a Flying Star House elder? Die!”

A scarlet energy sword that was dozens of feet long and 10 feet wide flew out toward Lu Zhou.

“The Ten-leaf Chen Tiandu!”

“The house master is here!”

Ye Zhen was invigorated. His voice trembled as he cried out, “House Master, save me! He’s out of Primal Qi!”

Chen Tiandu advanced with his 200-foot avatar and energy sword that was dozens of feet long.

Lu Zhou frowned slightly.

Sikong Beichen joined his palms together and shouted, “I’ll deal with him!”

Nie Qingyun stopped Sikong Beichen immediately. “What are you thinking?”

“Step aside!” Sikong Beichen said gruffly.

At the same time, Yu Shangrong and Yu Zhenghai manifested their 150-foot avatars!

Nie Qingyun manifested his avatar as well!

Another great battle was about to begin!

The elders and disciples from the Flying Star House closed in.

At this moment, without letting go of the final Nine Infants' head, Lu Zhou raised his left hand and threw a Deadly Strike Card out.

Abandon Wisdom!

The palm seal suddenly grew as large as Buddha's palms!

The 10,000 cultivators held their breaths as they watched in shock.

Upon seeing this, Sikong Beichen recalled the scene in the Holy Palace. It was like déjà vu. He said somewhat emotionally, "Finally! Brother Lu is finally no longer suppressing his realm."

Nie Qingyun. "..."

The palm seal easily passed through the red energy sword and continued on its trajectory.

Boom!

It struck Chen Tiandu's face and chest heavily, causing him to plummet 100 feet down to the foot of the mountain.

A palm-shaped chasm was left in the wake of this attack.

"Ding! Killed a target. Reward: 5,500 merit points. Domain extra: 1,500 merit points."

"..."

The heavy atmosphere seemed to freeze due to this shocking and heaven-defying palm strike. No words could describe everyone's feelings. The old man before their eyes easily killed a Ten-leaf cultivator with just a single strike. How could they not be shocked speechless?

## **Chapter 792: My True Strength**

The place was deathly silent.

Those who had manifested their avatars silently withdrew them. They gulped, frightened and confused.

Ye Zhen was only a Nine-leaf cultivator. Although he had mastered the karmic fire and had several lives, his most deadly attribute had to be his cunning. His strength was a far cry from a Ten-leaf cultivator.

Meanwhile, Chen Tiandu was renowned under the heavens. Apart from Ye Zhen, he was the mainstay of the Flying Star House. He could even fight on even ground with Sikong Beichen. And yet, such a peerless character died after being hit by one of Lu Zhou's palm strikes. He was completely powerless to fight back!

At this moment, Lu Zhou had used up all his extraordinary power. 'I'm out of Deadly Strike Cards as well. Moreover, I'm sure that the price has gone up as well.'

However, Lu Zhou knew that he could not save this card even if he wanted to.

Ye Zhen was stunned. For as long as he could remember, his heart had always been as calm as a still lake. No matter how great a disturbance was, he had always remained unmoved. The more people he killed, the more he grew numb. Nobody could pressure him or threaten his life. Currently, his life was being held in another person's hand. This was the first time he had felt such helpless despair. He looked at the palm-shaped pit in a daze as he called out haltingly, "House... House Master?"

The expressions of the 10,000 cultivators were indescribable.

When the Five Terminal Formation was broken, Primal Qi was restored to the Nine Infants avatar.

Lu Zhou's cultivation base was restored as well. However, he did not have much energy left after such a long battle. Naturally, he still had the Peak Trial Card, but he did not think it was worth it to use the card in this situation.

Lu Zhou's display of strength today served as a strong deterrent. No one dared to move recklessly.

Lu Zhou's hand was still firmly gripping the last head on Ye Zhen's Nine Infants avatar. Golden flames burst forth from between his fingers at this moment.

The remaining head struggled desperately.

Meanwhile, the red lotus karmic fire and golden flames canceled each other out.

It did not seem easy to destroy the last head of the Nine Infants.

Lu Zhou gauged his extraordinary power again. Indeed, there was nothing left. He looked at Ye Zhen who was breathing rapidly, 'Should I purchase a Deadly Strike Card right now and end this battle?'

Ye Zhen's consciousness was fading away; his eyes were rolled up into the sockets. However, at this moment, his red lotus buzzed.

Ye Zhen's 170-foot avatar grew to 200 feet tall.

"A Ten-leaf Nine Infants!" Yu Zhenghai could not help but feel amazed. "This is the first time someone has lasted this long against my master."

The members of the Flying Star House saw a ray of hope amidst the darkness and despair. They really hoped Ye Zhen would survive but felt slightly conflicted when they thought about the Nine Infants. Even if he survived, would it be right for him to continue to stay in the Flying Star House? Indescribable despair filled their hearts when they thought about their dead house master.

The balance was destroyed at this moment.

Sikong Beichen was fully on guard.

Ye Zhen's power increased several folds in just a moment.

Bam!

Ye Zhen finally managed to break free of Lu Zhou's grip. After he caught his breath, he chuckled. Currently, he resembled the vicious and horrifying Nine Infants. It was difficult to even look him in the

eyes. He reveled in his increasing strength and the new height of his avatar before he looked at Lu Zhou and said triumphantly, "The heavens are on my side! The heavens are on my side! So this is what it feels like to be a Ten-leaf cultivator? You've used up all your strength... It's my turn now!"

Lu Zhou shook his head. "Everyone thinks you're smart, but you're acting extremely foolish now. Not even Chen Tiandu can withstand my palm strike. What makes you think you, with your crippled Nine Infants avatar and recently attained Ten-leaf stage, are able to defeat me who had just recently attained the Ten-leaf stage. How are you going to defeat me?"

Ye Zhen was taken aback. "... Lu Zhou's words were akin to a bucket of cold water that was splashed on his face. He recalled that shocking palm seal earlier and was reminded of Chen Tiandu's death.

'Run!'

Ye Zhen withdrew his avatar. He tapped his dantian's sea of Qi and ignited his sea of Qi. In just a moment, he was bathed in flames and shot toward the horizon like a meteorite.

The others were stunned speechless by this.

'He had spoken so arrogantly just a moment ago, and now, he's making such a cowardly move?'

Lu Zhou stroked his beard and shook his head. Then, he raised his hand again.

Binding Cage Card!

This was his third Cage Bind Card.

The golden cage flew out along with Lu Zhou as he pursued Ye Zhen in the air.

The others followed suit.

Lu Zhou looked at the golden cage and said, "I don't think you'll be lucky every single time!"

Ye Zhen did not even look behind himself as he continued shooting past a few peaks. If he went further, he would be leaving Cloud Mountain's range.

Ye Zhen turned to look at the golden cage and recalled the golden cage from before. He wondered if it was the same trick. He was under the impression that the golden cage was used to track him so he landed on the ground and waited for the golden cage to drop. At the same time, he looked at the nearby peaks, searching for the best route to escape.

The cultivators followed Lu Zhou and flew above the forest.

At this moment, the golden cage dropped down on a canopy of trees.

Boom!

Ye Zhen nodded, pleased with his judgment. 'It's time to leave.'

Ye Zhen pushed away from the ground, flying at an angle. He had thought the golden cage would fade away when, contrary to his expectations, the golden cage began to close in on him.

"Hm?" Ye Zhen launched several palm seals at the golden cage.



A huge golden net was formed on the ground and in the air as it tightened.

When Lu Zhou saw this, he nodded. 'It's finally triggered!'

The trees around the golden cage were crushed by the cage.

At this moment, Ye Zhen had naturally sensed the abnormality of the situation. He continued to attack the golden columns that were closing in on him.

This resembled the scene when Lu Zhou captured Leng Luo.

A cornered beast would still fight...

"What technique is this? Why is it different from before?" someone asked in confusion.

"Wasn't this a tracking energy seal? It can restrict one's opponent as well?"

The cage continued shrinking.

The sounds of Ye Zhen's attacks colliding with the cage resounded through the forest and the mountain range. Alas, no matter how he struggled, he could not stop the cage from shrinking.

A square bald patch was created in the forest as the golden cage drew tighter.

Bam! Bam! Bam!

Ye Zhen seemed to snap at this moment. "Despicable!"

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Ye Zhen rammed against the cage in a frenzy. Alas, it was futile. Eventually, the cage tightened around his body like metal rings. He was bound tightly on the ground, and he had lost all access to his cultivation base.

Lu Zhou hovered above Ye Zhen and looked at him indifferently.

Ye Zhen's heart shook as he looked at the calm old man. At this moment, he finally felt the extent of the old man's power. It felt as though the person hovering above him was not human but a towering and insurmountable mountain.

It seemed like the old man had intentionally lured him into lowering his guard with the first golden cage. Ye Zhen despaired. 'How sly!'

Lu Zhou raised his hand slowly. Unnamed appeared. He pointed the tip down as he asked evenly, "Ye Zhen, any last words?"

Ye Zhen looked around himself. He gritted his teeth and asked with a hint of defiance, "Is this your true strength?"

Lu Zhou shook his head and said, "You're not fit to witness my true strength."

"..."

The others gulped.

At this moment, the elders of the Flying Star House cried out, "The palace forces are here! We can't lose Ye Zhen! Old senior, are you going to stand against the royal court?!"

"You've already killed the house master. Are you going to wipe us all out?!"

It seemed like the Flying Star House intended to struggle until the end. The moment the house master, Chen Tiandu, died, the power balance had been disrupted. The Flying Star House was now without a leader, and Ye Zhen was now a fish on the chopping board.

Lu Zhou stroked his beard indifferently and said, "Even if Chen Tiandu were alive, he wouldn't have dared to speak to me in that tone." He lowered Unnamed and asked, "So what if I decide to wipe all of you out?!"

Swish!

Under the eyes of the members of the Flying Star House, the Sky Martial Court, and the Cloud Mountain Sect, Lu Zhou brought Unnamed down. Energy shrouded Unnamed as it pierced Ye Zhen's skull with utmost precision.

Bam!

"Ding! Killed a target. Reward: 5,500 merit points. Domain extra: 1,500 merit points."

Indeed. What could the others do if the old man wanted to kill all of them? They felt chills run up their spines.

Ye Zhen could not resist, and he could not unleash Primal Qi. Therefore, Unnamed easily pierced his head.

With this, the new Ten-leaf Ye Zhen died! He was truly dead.

Lu Zhou raised his hand and withdrew Unnamed.

"..."

The pillar that supported the Flying Star House was completely destroyed!

The people from the Flying Star House panicked and began to retreat behind the Sky Martial Court cultivators.

### **Chapter 793: Extermination**

The reason why the Flying Star House could become a major sect and one of the great powers was mainly due to its house master, Chen Tiandu, and Ye Zhen. In a certain sense, Ye Zhen's contribution to the Flying Star House was far greater than Chen Tiandu's. Chen Tiandu was only a Ten-leaf cultivator who looked after the sect. It was all thanks to Ye Zhen that the Flying Star House rose to its height today.

Now that Ye Zhen and Chen Tiandu were dead, how could the elders and disciples not panic? They could only hide behind the Sky Martial Court in search of a hope to survive.

Behind Sikong Beichen, Meng Changdong was overwhelmed with emotions and thoughts. The Flying Star House was made greater and destroyed by Ye Zhen.

The Sky Martial Court cultivators retreated.

Lu Zhou looked at them indifferently before he shifted his gaze to Ye Zhen on the ground. Just to be safe, he brought the Golden Taixu Mirror and channeled Primal Qi into it.

The Golden Taixu Mirror buzzed. A beam of golden light shone on Ye Zhen's corpse.

Sikong Beichen nodded and said, "What a great treasure to reveal monsters! Nie Qingyun, that Cloud Mountain Mirror doesn't seem like much in comparison."

Nie Qingyun was ghastly pale now. The Cloud Mountain Mirror could not reveal Ye Zhen's true avatar nor could it reveal Lu Zhou's true avatar.

Under the radiance of the golden mirror, Lu Zhou struck with his palm.

Several energy swords shot out, mincing Ye Zhen's corpse into shred.

"Uh..."

The members of the Flying Star House gulped again and retreated further.

Bam!

When one of the energy swords slashed Ye Zhen's corpse, a crisp noise rang in the air.

"Hm?" Lu Zhou was puzzled.

Under the shine of the golden mirror, there was a dark purple spot of light.

When the other cultivators saw this, they grew curious.

Lu Zhou waved his arm casually. The spot of light floated higher and flew toward his palm.

"Ding! Obtained Violet Glazed Ceramic. Grade: Heaven. Owner: Ye Zhen."

"Violet Glazed Ceramic: calms the nerves, increases Primal Qi recovery. It may conceal one's aura when Primal Qi is channeled into it."

'This isn't bad. This must've been the reason Ye Zhen was able to trick the Cloud Mountain Mirror. As for how he turned his Nine Infants avatar into a humanoid form, I don't think it's because of the Violet Glazed Ceramic's function. It must've been one of his techniques.'

In the golden lotus domain, once one had severed one's golden lotus, one's avatar was capable of making a few moments. Nobody in the red lotus domain had tried severing their lotuses. Indeed, Ye Zhen was a genius for discovering this technique.

Lu Zhou put the Violet Glazed Ceramic away before he looked at the cultivators from the Sky Martial Court and the Flying Star House again.

"Flog the corpse?" a Flying Star House disciple could not help but wonder out loud.

Lu Zhou flew toward the others.

As Lu Zhou drew closer, the members of the Sky Martial Court and the Flying Star House retreated further as though they were faced with a great enemy.

"We're leaving," one of the Sky Martial Court elders ordered loudly at this moment.

Thousands of cultivators led the others from the Flying Star House and left.

"Hold up." Lu Zhou's voice was cold and forceful. "Who gave you permission to leave?"

"..."

"You... You... Are you really going to kill all of us?"

"Stop them." Lu Zhou waved his arm.

Yu Zhenghai and Yu Shangrong shot forward.

Sikong Beichen hastily shot Yao Qingquan and Zhao Jianghe a meaningful look. 'Why are the two of you so daft? Can't you read the atmosphere?'

They immediately nodded in understanding and moved swiftly. They worked together with Yu Shangrong and Yu Zhenghai to surround the Flying Star House and Sky Martial Court elders and disciples.

"Anyone who dares to move will be killed immediately," Lu Zhou said.

"..."

After that, Lu Zhou turned to look at Nie Qingyun.

Nie Qingyun was flustered. He hastily bowed and said, "Senior Lu, kindly give us your orders."

"The Flying Star House has led your disciples astray. Why are you keeping them instead of killing them?" Lu Zhou asked.

"Uh..." Nie Qingyun's expression turned sour.

"I've never liked scheming individuals," Lu Zhou said as he stroked his beard.

Ye Zhen was a master of schemes, and he had met a terrible end in Lu Zhou's hands. He had lost all six of his lives!

Nie Qingyun said, "There's nothing I can do since they're from Cloud Mountain. I hope you can forgive me for this, Brother Lu."

"Brother Lu?" Lu Zhou looked at Nie Qingyun as he raised his brow slightly. Although he had been engrossed in battle, he still kept an eye on Nie Qingyun. He asked, "How do you explain your action of stopping Sikong Beichen?"

If Sikong Beichen joined in the battle earlier, Ye Zhen would have to stay behind even if he had ten lives. However, Nie Qingyun had held Sikong Beichen back. Naturally, it was also partly due to the members of the Sky Martial Court and the Flying Star House.

When he heard these words, Nie Qingyun's expression changed drastically. He remembered what Lu Zhou said. He immediately flew up and bowed. "I admit that I had some serious thoughts..." He paused

slightly before he said in a distressed tone, "It's difficult for a sect to remain for long. I'm sure Monastery Master Xia understands this well... If a sect is weak, it will have to strike the water on the left and right and curry favor with the stronger ones. Meanwhile, the stronger ones will also align themselves with those who are stronger than themselves. However, the sky has no limits... Who's the real person at the very top? It's difficult to fathom the hearts of men, and experts are often replaced. This is a world where it's the survival of the fittest. There's no such thing as reasons. When the beasts ate the humans, it never negotiated with men, and men are more vicious than beasts... I've poured half of my life into protecting Cloud Mountain. I can't bear to see it being destroyed in Ye Zhen's hands... Three centuries ago, Cloud Mountain fought against the Ninth Temple for seven days and seven nights, incurring thousands of casualties. After the battle, Cloud Mountain and the Ninth Temple's grudge has lasted to this day... Senior Lu, don't you think it's only reasonable that I'm wary of the old fiend, Sikong?!" He looked up and met Lu Zhou's deep gaze.

Lu Zhou said tonelessly, "What does that have to do with me?"

"..."

Nie Qingyun's heart sank.

Lu Zhou placed his hands on his back and said, "My arrangement with the Ninth Temple aside, on account of Sikong Beichen protecting a few of my disciples all this time, do you think I can let this matter go?"

"Senior Lu!" Nie Qingyun bowed lower.

"I don't have a habit of bullying the weak. If you survive my palm strike, I'll spare you," Lu Zhou said.

A hint of hesitance could be seen in Nie Qingyun's words. After he thought about it for a moment, he steeled his heart and cupped his fists together before he said, "Alright." However, he could not stop the scenes of Chen Tiandu being killed by that shocking palm strike from playing in his mind.

Lu Zhou nodded slightly. He purchased another Thunderblast Card. He raised his right hand slightly and pushed his palm forward, shattering the Thunderblast Card.

A shocking lightning bolt shot toward Nie Qingyun at once.

An expression of terror appeared on Nie Qingyun's face. He lifted his arms before himself as red energy shrouded him. At the same time, he released Primal Qi and formed a tough Daoist seal that defended him from above.

Everyone watched as the Ten-leaf cultivator unleashed his full strength to defend himself,

This seemingly insignificant Thunderblast palm seal required a Ten-leaf cultivator to defend against it with his full might. What bewildered them further was that this old man who had crushed Ye Zhen still had that much power left in him. It seemed like his statement to Ye Zhen about Ye Zhen not being worthy to witness his full strength did not seem to be a lie.

Boom!

The Thunderblast seemed to have a penetrative power as it pierced through Nie Qingyun's layers of Daoist seals. The lightning crackled and made short work of the Daoist seals.

Nie Qingyun merely felt a power that he was helpless to fight against strike his body.

Bang!

Nie Qingyun grunted as he recoiled.

“Sect Master!”

“Sect Master!”

Two elders swiftly flew toward Nie Qingyun and caught him.

The remaining Cloud Mountain disciples retreated and behaved as though they were facing a great enemy.

Nie Qingyun spat out blood. His head was drenched in sweat. After receiving this blow, the immensity of the power of his opponent finally dawned on him. He had no chance of winning; he was completely powerless to fight back. He was suddenly filled with a slight admiration for Ye Zhen. Ye Zhen must have possessed unyielding and stubborn willpower to be able to last so long in front of that old man.

Lu Zhou stroked his beard. ‘Hmm, only the damage effect of the Thunderblast Card was triggered.’ In any case, he had successfully deterred Cloud Mountain with this card.

Nie Qingyun coughed violently before he quickly bowed and said, “Thank you for showing mercy, senior Lu.”

“If you do something like this again, I’ll take your life.”

Nie Qingyun was ghastly pale. He immediately bowed.

On the cloud platform, Nie Qingyun had been of some help to Lu Zhou. Keeping him alive would be more useful than killing him. He had to plan for the long term.

The thousands of cultivators continued to retreat.

“What are you trying to do?” one of the Flying Star House disciples asked.

Lu Zhou waved his arm and ordered, “Leave none of the Flying Star House disciples alive.”

## **Chapter 794: Killing the Heart**

After saying this, the Sky Martial Court cultivators swiftly flew to the side to draw a distinct line between them and the Flying Star House cultivators.

The Flying Star House cultivators’ expressions were grim.

Yao Qingquan said loudly with a smile, “I’ve been wanting to do this for a long time. Senior Lu, just leave this to Zhao Jianghe and me!”

Lu Zhou shook his head and said, “My two disciples will be enough. The two of you don’t have to interfere.”

Yao Qingquan was moved. He was utterly impressed with the way the old senior did things. He even ordered his own disciples to clear up the stragglers instead of troubling his friends.

The duo from the Ninth Temple retreated.

Lu Zhou looked at the Sky Martial Court.

At this moment, Sikong Beichen reminded him, "The cultivators from the palace are here."

In the sky to the east, thousands upon thousands of cultivators arrived in throngs. There were so many of them that they resembled dark clouds moving toward Lu Zhou and the others.

The members of Sky Martial Court seemed delighted. 'We're saved!'

The Flying Star House members were even more delighted.

Lu Zhou glanced at the newcomers. 'This is bad... Apart from the Peak Card, I don't have any other combat methods at my disposal right now. I can purchase item cards, but won't that mean that I'll incur losses? It wasn't easy for me to accumulate this many merit points. Can't I keep the Peak Card for a little longer?'

Just when Lu Zhou was trying to figure out a countermeasure, Sikong Beichen said, "I'll stall them." Then, he shot the duo a meaningful look.

Yao Qingquan and Zhao Jianghe followed Sikong Beichen.

In just a moment, the group from the palace was 100 meters away from them.

The one standing in the lead stood out from the others. He wore red and white armor while the others wore black armor. He was clearly the leader of the troop.

The leader said loudly, "I'm Lu Zhan, deputy commander of the capital's royal guard. I'm here on orders to capture the foreign tribesmen... Where are they? They are to surrender without a fight."

Sikong Beichen said nothing. Instead, he manifested his avatar.

A 200-foot avatar rose from the ground as a Ten-leaf red lotus blossomed and slowly spun. Its light illuminated the sky and complemented the light from the setting sun.

Lu Zhan, who had just put on a tough act, frowned when he saw the 200-foot avatar. "A Ten-leaf cultivator?"

Yao Qingquan asked, "Well? Aren't you going to greet Temple Master Sikong?"

When Lu Zhan, the deputy commander, heard this, his expression changed. He asked tentatively, "Ninth Temple's Senior Sikong?"

Sikong Beichen withdrew his avatar. His avatar clearly worried Lu Zhan and the others. He said, "There's no need for formal greetings. Tell your commander, Xiahou Sheng, that there are no foreign tribesmen here."

"None?" Lu Zhan scanned the scene further ahead. He saw the members of the Sky Martial Court and the Flying Star House.

At this moment, one of the Flying Star House cultivators said, "Commander Lu, save me..."

Lu Zhan smiled. "I think that's a cry for help."

"You're mistaken," Yao Qingquan said.

"All lands under the heavens belong to the king. There seem to be members of the Flying Star House over there. The Flying Star House has served the royal court well over the years. I can't sit by and watch them suffer. Senior Sikong, please step aside. Otherwise, I'll have a hard time explaining this to the palace."

When the members of the Flying Star House heard this, they were overjoyed.

"Commander Lu, he's a foreign tribesman. All of them are! Elder Ye Zhen and the house master were killed by them!"

Upon hearing these words, Lu Zhan frowned deeply. "This is a grave matter. Senior Sikong, forgive me for not being able to do as you command."

"Impudent!" Yao Qingquan snapped. "Even if Xiahou Sheng were here, he wouldn't dare speak to the temple master in such a manner. Who do you think you are?!"

Lu Zhan's expression soured. Indeed, absolute power was everything. He had no retort. He had assumed with Chen Tiandu and Ye Zhen here, all the palace needed to do was provide support. The current situation was beyond his expectation.

"Senior Sikong, I have no intentions of offending you... This matter today has nothing to do with the Ninth Temple. I'm merely after the foreign tribesmen. If the Flying Star House and the Sky Martial Court are in trouble, it's only natural for the royal palace to ensure that justice is served. Otherwise, how are we supposed to govern the lands?"

Just when Sikong Beichen was about to speak, Lu Zhou's voice rang from the back. "In that case, there's no need for you to govern the lands anymore."

"Hm?" Lu Zhan's gaze shifted toward the old man with silver hair. "Who are you?"

"Commander Lu, he's the one who killed the house master and Elder Ye. He's also the one who killed the Sky Martial Court's chief instructor!" a Flying Star House elder said. It was clear he had decided to risk it all. He would die anyway if he did not do anything. At the very least, with this, there was a slim chance of survival.

On the contrary, the Sky Martial Court cultivators remained silent.

Lu Zhan waved his arm and said, "A life for a life. I'm sure you're aware of this convention."

Lu Zhou said, "Who gave you the courage to challenge me?"

"..." Sikong Beichen once again sensed the killing intent in Brother Lu's tone. He hastily said, "Get lost! If you offend Senior Lu, not even Xiahou Sheng can save you if he were here. These are my, Sikong Beichen, words!" He emphasized his name when he spoke. Although he knew Lu Zhou's cultivation base was unfathomable, he did not wish to have such a huge conflict with the royal palace.



Lu Zhan said, "I can get lost, but I'm bringing the men of the Flying Star House and the Sky Martial Court with me! How am I supposed to explain to the palace otherwise?" After seeing Sikong Beichen's firm attitude, he decided to compromise. When he looked past Nie Qingyun, he noticed the Cloud Mountain disciples seemed like eggplants weighed down by the snow; their heads were lowered.

"Sect Master Nie!" Lu Zhan shouted.

Nie Qingyun cupped his fists together. "This matter has nothing to do with Cloud Mountain. Please don't put me in a difficult spot, Vice Commander Lu... No matter what you plan to do, don't involve me. Everyone, stand back."

The Cloud Mountain disciples retreated as far as they could.

When they were a distance away, Nie Qingyun suddenly said, "Vice Commander Lu, a word of advice."

"What is it?"

"If I were you, I'd return obediently."

After saying this, Nie Qingyun turned around and left.

Lu Zhan shook his head helplessly and asked, "What are all of you up to?"

"The Flying Star House has done something wrong. It's only natural for them to be punished..." Yao Qinghan replied.

"They're with the royal court. Who dares to touch them?" Lu Zhan immediately protected them using the name of the royal court.

Sikong Beichen said, "Ye Zhen was from the Cherry Blossom Nation, and he had a Nine Infants avatar. He's infiltrated Great Tang many years ago. He was the true foreign tribesman. Senior Lu has gotten rid of the foreign tribesman, and yet, you're trying to protect these people? You still have the audacity to preach about governing the lands?"

"I don't care, I'm merely doing as I'm ordered to do. So long as I'm here today, nobody is allowed to touch the Flying Star House," Lu Zhan said stubbornly. He knew he was no match for a Ten-leaf cultivator, hence, he had used the royal court to apply pressure on the others. He was sure this tactic would work.

Alas, Lu Zhou waved his arm and said, "Kill them."

Yu Shangrong smiled faintly. His Longevity Sword left its scabbard!

Immediately, a golden energy sword danced in the air and sailed toward the disciples and elders of the Flying Star House.

Yu Zhenghai said loudly, "Second Senior Brother, let's have a contest!"

"As you wish."

In an instant, the area where the members of the Flying Star House were hovering were covered with countless energy sabers and energy swords.

Miserable cries and sounds of breaking limbs resounded chillingly in the air as dismembered parts flew and blood splattered everywhere.

Yu Zhenghai and Yu Shangrong slaughtered the people from the Flying Star House in the presence of the royal court's representatives!

Lu Zhan was filled with so much rage upon seeing this. He shook, furious. "You..."

"Ding! Killed a target. Reward: 500 merit points. Domain extra: 500 merit points." (Rewards for One to Five-leaf targets are reduced.)

The notifications kept ringing in Lu Zhou's ears.

Lu Zhou stroked his beard as he calmly looked at the ghastly pale Lu Zhan. Then, he uttered another chilling statement, "Sikong Beichen, do you intend to keep someone as untactful as him alive for the new year?"

"New year?" Sikong Beichen was taken aback, but he could guess the gist of the message. He immediately pointed at Lu Zhan and said, "You'll die here today."

## **Chapter 795: Invasion Plan**

The Sky Martial Court and the Flying Star House finally understood. The person who could order Sikong Beichen around did not have to prove his status and cultivation base. If there had been a need, his act of crushing Ye Zhen and killing Chen Tiandu with a single palm strike was enough evidence. Despair and terror gradually filled their hearts.

When the cries died down, 2,000 disciples from the Flying Star House had died.

Many of the cultivators nearly went insane from this experience. They forced themselves to manifest their avatars and fled with their grand techniques.

The Jasper Saber and Longevity Sword seemed to have eyes of their own as they sought out targets and promptly killed them.

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

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

"There are Eight-leaf cultivators among them?" Lu Zhou nodded with a pleased expression on his face when he heard the notification. The unending stream of merit points credited into his account made him realize just how powerful the Flying Star House was. If such a force had invaded the golden lotus domain, it would certainly become the greatest sect. Alas, those who decided the rise and fall of the sects were often the cultivators at the top. No matter how many Nascent Divinity cultivators they had, without Nine or Ten-leaf cultivators, they were no different than a bunch of monkeys waiting to be slaughtered.

For the Nether Sect's Master, Yu Zhenghai, and Yu Shangrong, who killed at the slightest disagreement, they were not nauseated or disgusted. They knew one side had to die. If the Flying Star House had been victorious, their fates would be worse.

Nobody could survive the onslaught of attacks by Yu Shangrong and Yu Zhenghai who had experienced countless battles. Even the other Nine-leaf cultivators were no match for the two of them.

Meanwhile, the Ten-leaf Sikong Beichen moved with divine speed and agility. He leaped into the air as though he was as light as a swallow and extended his hand.

Lu Zhan sensed the killing intent and leaped back before he attacked with his energy sabers.

The neat rows of energy sabers attempted to keep Sikong Beichen at bay. However, Sikong Beichen remained calm and nonchalant. His Ten-leaf lotus blossomed, and his red lotus avatar released energy swords into the surroundings. Then, his body faded out of focus. He easily sidestepped the attacks and arrived before Lu Zhan. He controlled the energy swords shooting out of his avatar and directed them at Lu Zhan's chest.

"Block!" Thousands upon thousands of energy sabers converged into a shield in front of Lu Zhan.

The shocking sword strikes from the Ten-leaf cultivator easily pierced the barrier, the protective energy, the energy sabers, and finally Lu Zhan's body like a hot knife through butter. It reached his heart without any resistance. He looked at the 200-foot avatar before him with widened eyes before he lowered his eyes to look at the narrow and bloody wound across his torso. The Primal Qi inside his Extraordinary Eight Meridians seemed to be blocked. The only thing flowing out was his blood.

It was easy to kill but difficult to save.

Lu Zhan knew that he did not have much longer to live under these circumstances. He shook slightly and pointed at Sikong Beichen. "Is t-the N-Ninth Temple revolting?" He coughed once before he plummeted with his eyes open.

"Vice Commander Lu!" The other warriors exclaimed in shock.

Someone tried to pull Lu Zhan back with an energy seal, but he was falling too quickly. Before the warrior could even react, Lu Zhan had already fallen to the ground.

Sikong Beichen shook his head slightly. He understood why Lu Zhou wanted him to do this.

Lu Zhou had wiped the Flying Star House out. If the Ninth Temple were to stay out of the muddied water at this time, their alliance would easily crumble. Now that Sikong Beichen had killed Lu Zhan, the Ninth Temple's fate was now bound to the Evil Sky Pavilion.

The troops from the royal court looked at Sikong Beichen. Who could be a match against this peerless expert? With Lu Zhan dead, they were left without a commander.

Sikong Beichen said gruffly, "Go back and tell Xia Housheng that the Flying Star House has been harboring foreign tribesmen and has been wiped out. He'll have to obtain my permission if he intends to destroy the Ninth Temple. Get lost!" His voice resounded thunderously in the ears of the thousands of royal court cultivators.

The royal court had made a wrong move today. They had thought sending Lu Zhan was enough to quell the disturbance. After all, they had the Sky Martial Court and the Flying Star House on their side. No matter how they looked at it, the Twelve Sects of Cloud Mountain would be annihilated no matter what. The Ninth Temple was weak and without allies; they would be wiped out sooner or later. Who would

have expected when the troops arrived, the Flying Star House had already lost and was even slaughtered before their eyes.

The palace cultivators were frightened out of their wits and turned tail to flee. The royal court did not send elites to deal with this matter.

Lu Zhou did not think these small fries would provide him with many merit points.

At this time, all the members of the Flying Star House present on the scene were dead.

Yu Zhenghai and Yu Shangrong, the two Nine-leaf golden lotus cultivators, displayed their outstanding sword and saber techniques.

The Sky Martial Court cultivators shivered in fear. Without their chief instructor, Chen Fangluo, the Sky Martial Court was only a platter of loose sand.

Sikong Beichen returned to Lu Zhou's side. "Brother Lu, what should we do with the members of the Sky Martial Court?" He wondered if Lu Zhou would kill them as well.

The people of Sky Martial Court heard the question and panicked even more.

"Don't... Don't even think about it. Our... Our court master..."

Their sole support was their court master, Yu Chenshu. He was the only Ten-leaf cultivator who mastered the karmic fire in the red lotus domain.

"I don't even care about the royal court. Do you think that I'd be wary of your puny Sky Martial Court?" Lu Zhou placed his hands on his back.

Yu Zhenghai bowed and said, "Master, these people are too rude. Why don't we kill them as well since they wish to repeat the Flying Star House's mistakes."

The Sky Martial Court cultivators started before they shrank back in fear.

Lu Zhou glanced at the Sky Martial Court cultivators and said, "Lock them up in Cloud Mountain."

"Understood."

Four Nine-leaf cultivators flew toward the Sky Martial Court cultivators.

"Don't blame me for being merciless if any one of you tries to escape. Move!"

The Sky Martial Court cultivators had no choice but to allow themselves to be ushered onto the cloud platform.

...

On the cloud platform.

The Cloud Mountain disciples who had been bought over by Ye Zhen were all captured and brought here. All of them were kneeling, too afraid to move.

Nie Qingyun did not seem as prideful as before as well.

Lu Zhou said, "Nie Qingyun, I'll leave the members of the Sky Martial Court to you."

Nie Qingyun was taken aback. He said respectfully, "Cloud Mountain has suffered great losses after this battle. Senior Lu, what's the reason for this?"

"The Sky Martial Court and the Flying Star House colluded to annihilate Cloud Mountain. Now that I've dealt with them on your behalf, why are you so afraid?" Lu Zhou asked.

Even the Thousand Willow Monastery and the Ninth Temple were bold enough to challenge the royal court, and yet, the disciples of the Twelve Sects of Cloud Mountain dared not.

"The Sky Martial Court has Yu Chenshu and the support of the royal court..." Nie Qingyun trailed off when he saw Lu Zhou looking at him.

Lu Zhou shook his head and said, "If these people from the Sky Martial Court dare to take half a step out of Cloud Mountain, I'll go on a killing spree."

"..." Nie Qingyun's heart shuddered. He knew Lu Zhou was doing this to force Cloud Mountain out of their neutral stance.

If Lu Zhou could pit Cloud Mountain against the Sky Martial Court, it would be easier for him to deal with the cultivators from the Sky Martial Court and the capital. If he killed the Sky Martial Court disciples right away, Yu Chenshu would only come knocking on the doors of the Ninth Temple and the Thousand Willow Monastery. Moreover, Yu Chenshu would also try to lure Cloud Mountain to his side. How could Lu Zhou allow a force such as Cloud Mountain to be controlled by the palace and the Sky Martial Court?

Nie Qingyun fell deep into thoughts for a moment before he ordered loudly, "Lock the Sky Martial Court disciples up in the prison."

"Understood."

The Cloud Mountain disciples moved to seal the cultivation bases of the Sky Martial Court disciples and took them away.

Sikong Beichen cupped his fists together and said, "That was a brilliant move, Brother Lu!"

With this, Cloud Mountain would be on the opposite side of the Sky Martial Court. As the saying went, 'The enemy of an enemy is a friend'.

Lu Zhou ignored Sikong Beichen's flattery. Instead, he said, "For such an important occasion, the Sky Martial Court and the royal court did not send any elites at all. Don't you find this strange?"

A contemplative expression appeared on Sikong Beichen's face when he heard these words. "Indeed, it's strange."

At this moment, Meng Changdong said, "I suspect that Yu Chenshu and the others are held up by other matters."

Lu Zhou looked at Meng Changdong. "Is there anything more important than this?"

“From what I know, the Sky Martial Court has recently developed the Sky Chariot. It’s capable of transporting up to 100 cultivators across the Endless Ocean. I suspect that the Sky Martial Court and the royal court have sent their experts to the golden lotus domain.”

### **Chapter 796: Completely Defeated The Red Lotus**

The Cloud Mountain disciples cleaned the cloud platform up. It now looked as though nothing had happened.

Meng Changdong’s words made everyone fall silent.

Yu Shangrong and Yu Zhenghai frowned when they heard this. After a moment’s silence, the two of them exchanged a glance and stepped forward. “Master, requesting permission to return to the golden lotus domain!”

Sikong Beichen was already convinced that Lu Zhou was an elite from the golden lotus domain. He wondered in confusion, “Brother Lu has initiated his Birth Chart, and the overall strength of the golden lotus domain is much greater than the red lotus domain. Why are both of you so worried?”

“...”

The four Evil Sky Pavilion disciples remained silent. Could they tell Sikong Beichen there was only one Nine-leaf cultivator in the golden lotus domain? In general, the golden lotus domain was much weaker than the red lotus domain.

“Master, I want to go back as well.” Little Yuan’er came in between Yu Shangrong and Yu Zhenghai as she said, “Eldest Senior Brother, Second Senior Brother, bring me with you! I’ll clobber those who dare bully my seniors to death!”

“...” Lu Zhou looked at his two eldest disciples and said, “It’ll take too long. I don’t think you’ll make it in time.”

Sikong Beichen said, “Brother Lu, since we have these many hostages from the Sky Martial Court, we can negotiate with them.”

Indeed, that was a sound suggestion.

“The Sky Martial Court has always been conceited. I’m worried they won’t bother with us.” Yao Qingquan was frequently in contact with members of the Sky Martial Court so he knew how prideful they were. The same could be said of the Flying Star House.

Meng Changdong cupped his fists and said, “Hall Master Yao has a point. I don’t think it’s the best moment for a negotiation unless we have another two major sects on our side.”

“This matter aside, do you have any way of obtaining information from the golden lotus domain?” Lu Zhou asked.

Meng Changdong paced back and forth as he pondered. Finally, he said, “I do, but it will be costly.”

“Let’s hear it.”

"We'll need 1,000 rare paper talismans. At the same time, the people on the other side will have to set up the same talisman Formation as well. I know how to draw the Sky Martial Court's talisman Formation, but... we don't have any talismans," Meng Changdong said.

Lu Zhou and Sikong Beichen turned to look at Nie Qingyun in unison, frightening and startling Nie Qingyun. He had been considering Cloud Mountain's future so he was in a daze and was not paying attention to the conversation in his surroundings. When he felt the unnatural gazes on him, he realized what situation he was in and hastily said, "I'll provide the talismans."

"The wise adapt to the times. Nie Qingyun... In consideration of Brother Lu, I'll put our quarrels behind us for now," Sikong Beichen said.

"In consideration of Senior Lu, I won't quarrel with you as well," Nie Qingyun said before he ordered his men to collect all the talismans in the Twelve Sects.

"Talismans are divided into low, middle, high, and best quality as well. For an observation at such a range, using 1,000 best quality talismans is too costly. The requirements are high as well. We'll also need the same Formation on the other side. Hence, even if I set up the Formation here, we might not be able to see anything," Meng Changdong said.

Upon hearing these words, Nie Qingyun felt a pang of pain in his heart. However, this was not the moment to be frugal.

Lu Zhou asked, "Can we send a message?"

"Unless we have a contact among the Sky Martial Court's group, and someone in the golden lotus domain has laid out the same Formation as well, it's impossible to send a message with the power of the talismans," Meng Changdong replied.

Lu Zhou nodded. It would be ideal if he could contact Si Wuya. Alas, it seemed like it would be difficult.

...

An hour later, the talismans were finally brought over and handed to Meng Changdong.

Meng Changdong drew a circle on the ground and began carving the Formation veins. He stuck the talismans onto the Formation and added more detailed inscriptions. He kept drawing for an hour on the ground. His head was drenched with sweat and he was panting heavily from the effort. Finally, he stood in the center of the Formation and said, "It's done."

Sikong Beichen saw how tired Meng Changdong was and asked, "Do you need help?"

"Do you know how, Senior Sikong?"

"Naturally."

"..." Meng Changdong cursed at Sikong Beichen inwardly, 'You could've said this an hour ago.'

If they had worked together on this Formation, things would have been done more quickly and easily.

However, considering the difference in their statuses, Meng Changdong could only smile stiffly and said, "Thanks. I've already made all the preparations."

Shortly after, Meng Changdong joined his palms together and channeled his Primal Qi.

The inscriptions on the ground shone.

Buzz!

The talismans caught fire and floated up. They merged and formed talisman seals.

Between the talisman seals, a round area quickly appeared. The talisman seal seemed like a mirror as images began to appear.

“It worked!”

They were in luck.

The others seemed delighted as they gathered before the circle of talismans.

What they saw was the Sky Martial Court’s Sky Chariot. On the chariot, there was an Eight-leaf cultivator who was also sending a message with the same talisman Formation.

Through the Formation, they saw the Sky Martial Court’s Sky Chariot was already in the golden lotus domain.

100 cultivators leaped down from the chariot toward the golden lotus cultivators who guarded the coastline.

It was clear the golden lotus cultivators were weak. They were completely crushed by the cultivators from the Sky Chariot.

Upon seeing this, Sikong Beichen, Yao Qingquan, and Zhao Jianghe remained silent even though they were baffled.

Meanwhile, Yu Zhenghai and Yu Shangrong watched with a scowl on their faces.

“Master, we can’t afford to wait anymore! I request permission to storm the Sky Martial Court and force them to call off the invasion,” Yu Zhenghai said.

Sikong Beichen said with a sigh, “I didn’t expect them to act this quickly.”

As he watched the golden lotus cultivators being defeated in the image, Lu Zhou said evenly, “We’ll kill one of Sky Martial Court’s members for every life we lost.”

The others shivered despite the temperature.

At this moment, Yao Qingquan exclaimed in shock. “What’s that?”

In the Formation, they saw a colossal beast charging in. Thunderous explosions rang in the air as its feet moved on the ground, causing the earth to quake and the mountains to shake.

“There’s such a huge beast in the golden lotus domain?!” Zhao Jianghe exclaimed, surprised.

A Nine-leaf red lotus expert manifested his 150-foot avatar and flew toward the huge beast. The beast swiped with its paw.



Bam!

The Nine-leaf avatar recoiled.

A white-clad lady could be seen on the back of the beast. She flew out and attacked the Sky Martial Court's Sky Chariot.

"Sixth Senior Sister! It's Sixth Senior Sister!" Little Yuan'er cried out as she jumped in excitement.

The white-clad maiden was Evil Sky Pavilion's sixth disciple, Ye Tianxin. At this moment, she fought alongside Cheng Huang. In just a moment, she turned the tides of the battle and killed the invading cultivators in a frenzy.

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

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

Whizz!

A Nine-leaf golden lotus avatar appeared. The rising flames surged toward one of the Sky Martial Court's Nine-leaf cultivators.

"Karmic power!" Yao Qingquan was shocked.

Xia Changqiu immediately asked Little Yuan'er, "That's your Sixth Senior Sister?"

"Of course! Do you think I won't be able to recognize my Sixth Senior Sister?" Little Yuan'er said confidently.

"..." Xia Changqiu suddenly remembered Little Yuan'er's words about how her fellow disciples from the Evil Sky Pavilion could easily smash their heads. '... It seems like the little girl wasn't exaggerating at all!'

Lu Zhou was surprised as well when he saw Ye Tianxin did not only reach the Nine-leaf stage, but she had mastered the karmic fire as well! With this, he felt more at ease.

At this moment, Yao Qingquan pointed at a peculiar radiance that was shooting toward Ye Tianxin. He cried out, "What's that?"

"A desolate-grade weapon! A desolate-grade weapon is sneaking up on Miss Sixth?" Xia Changqiu was shocked.

The others looked over.

They saw a weapon that resembled a blade and a hook at the same time that moved at lightning speed.

Meng Changdong grunted. "Time's up!"

The imagery blurred and ripples appeared briefly before disappearing completely.

With a whistle, the remains of the talismans scattered in the air.

## **Chapter 797: Great Harvest**

The talismans burned too quickly.

Countless predecessors had inscribed the Formation veins onto the expensive pieces of paper. When they were burned, they would form the energy seals needed by the Formation that could be used to watch, communicate, and convey messages despite the distance.

Needless to say, the talismans were expensive to produce.

When the Sky Martial Court first sent their members to the golden lotus domain, they had only brought 1,000 talismans with them to send messages and fake the power of a Nine-leaf cultivator to lure Qiong Qi out into the open.

Meng Changdong looked at the talismans with a wistful expression on his face. Then, he said with a sigh, "I did my best to extend the time."

Little Yuan'er clenched her little fists and stomped her feet as she said, "We were so close to seeing the asshole who attacked Sixth Senior Sister from the back!"

Sikong Beichen said, "There's no need to worry. If my eyes didn't deceive me, your Sixth Senior Sister wielded a desolate-grade weapon. Moreover, she has mastered the karmic fire and has the huge beast's support. Unless it's a Ten-leaf cultivator, I don't think anyone will be able to harm her."

The others nodded in agreement when they heard these words.

Lu Zhou remained silent. He knew this was not the time to charge to the Sky Martial Court's doorsteps. Apart from the Peak Card, he did not have much to defend himself with. Even the Flying Star House was wary of the Sky Martial Court, proving that the Sky Martial Court was stronger than the Flying Star House. It was like that the Sky Martial Court's Yu Chenshu was even more difficult to deal with than Ye Zhen

...

Meanwhile, in the golden lotus domain.

When Ye Tianxin tossed her Amorous Hoop out, she saw a beam of light shoot past her and a glimpse of a Nine-leaf avatar.

The beam of light pierced through the Nine-leaf red lotus avatar.

"Fourth Senior Brother, not again!" Ye Tianxin said, slightly disgruntled. She had heavily injured the red lotus elite with Cheng Huang's help. She was one attack away from defeating her opponent when Mingshi Yin dealt the final blow and claimed the kill.

Mingshi Yin withdrew his avatar and appeared in front of Ye Tianxin. He said with a smile, "Sixth Junior Sister, you must be quick, merciless, and decisive when dealing with such a person. You can't give him any chance at all."

"He was not a match for me! Do you think he could've gotten away?" Ye Tianxin said.

Mingshi Yin suddenly pointed down at the corpse and said, "Look! He has come back to life!"

"What? Where?" Ye Tianxin looked down but saw nothing.

The red lotus elite had clearly fallen into the sea and was instantly devoured by the rampaging oceanic beasts.

When Ye Tianxin looked up, Mingshi Yin was no longer in sight.

“Liar.” After organizing her thoughts, she flew toward Cheng Huang.

Cheng Huang seemed to understand her. They were both in sync.

“Cheng Huang, bring me to the Sky Chariot!” Ye Tianxin said.

The Sky Chariot was much larger than ordinary mounts and flying chariots. Its speed, defenses, and power were also great. At present, it was the best transport to cross the Endless Ocean.

Cheng Huang lifted its head to the sky and howled.

The Great Yan cultivators in the surroundings were invigorated when they heard Cheng Huang’s howl.

Ever since Ye Tianxin returned with Cheng Huang, she frequently traveled between the major provincial cities. For this reason, Cheng Huang had become like a guardian beast in the hearts of Great Yan people.

Recently, Cheng Huang alone had killed countless beasts. The larger ones would stay away when they saw it, afraid to make a move.

Meanwhile, the barbarians and Other Tribes sought protection from Great Yan.

Upon hearing Ye Tianxin’s words, Cheng Huang shot into the skies toward the horizon.

Ye Tianxin exclaimed in surprise, shocked by Cheng Huang’s power. Since her encounter with it in Moonlight Woodland, she had never seen it really fly. Cheng Huang in flight. Due to its size, Cheng Huang rarely needed to fly. After all, with just a single leap, it covered a shocking distance.

Cheng Huang leaped into the air and flapped its wings, shooting toward the Sky Chariot that was high up in the air.

Upon discovering this, Ye Tianxin smiled and patted Cheng Huang’s back as she said, “Go up.”

“No!” An Eight-leaf cultivator, who was maintaining the talisman Formation on the Sky Chariot, cried out when he sensed the impending danger. He quickly withdrew his hands, causing the talismans to scatter and the Formation to fade away.

...

Inside Lisheng Hall in the Sky Martial Court.

Numerous elders lined up at the sides. Their expressions were grim after they watched the scenes that had just been cut off.

Mo Buyan said, “Looks like the golden lotus domain has become much more powerful. Judging by these two alone, it seems like we’ll have to send Ten-leaf cultivators there to regain the advantage.”

Meanwhile, no ripples could be seen in Yu Chenshu’s expression.

Jian Tingzhong, who was standing at Mo Buyan’s left, said, “I don’t quite agree with Elder Mo.”

“What are your opinions, Elder Jian?”

“We’ve sent many over to the golden lotus domain, and they’ve all failed. The Sky Chariot has encountered two Nine-leaf cultivators, and they have the help of that colossal beast. Apart from that, the inhabitants of the golden lotus domain have already invaded our lands. Not only are we incapable of capturing them, but we’re losing more and more of our men every day. Clearly, the golden lotus domain is much more powerful than we are,” Jian Tingzhong said.

Whether it was Jiang Wenxu who had been one of the earliest to go to the red lotus domain or the karmic fire user, Fa Hua, none of them survived their trip to the golden lotus domain.

Someone said, “Elder Jian has a point. Moreover, the court master can’t possibly travel to the golden lotus domain himself. Such a feat is beneath him. The Sky Martial Court needs its master here.”

Mo Buyan said, “Why don’t we send a Ten-leaf cultivator from the palace?”

“Chen Beizheng’s death remains a mystery to this day. The royal court won’t send another Ten-leaf cultivator without a good reason.”

At this moment, a Sky Martial Court disciple hurried into the hall. After bowing, he said, “Court Master, elders, we just received word from Cloud Mountain. The Flying Star House has been completely annihilated. The troops from the royal court were defeated as well. Currently, our members are being held prisoner on Cloud Mountain.”

The others scowled upon hearing this.

The disciple said hurriedly, “The Flying Star House Master, Chen Tiandu, is dead. Their grand elder is... dead as well. The deputy commander of the king’s guard, Lu Zhan, is also dead. The Sky Martial Court’s chief instructor and three other instructors are dead. Those who survived are now being held on Cloud Mountain.”

“...”

The elders’ frowns deepened.

Yu Chenshu looked at the disciple and asked, “Ye Zhen is dead as well?”

“Yes. It has been confirmed.”

“Tell me everything, from the beginning, without omitting a single detail,” Yu Chenshu said.

“Understood.”

...

Lu Zhou and the members of Ninth Temple did not leave Cloud Mountain that day. They were assigned individual lodgings on Cloud Mountain instead.

That night, Lu Zhou was sitting cross-legged as he meditated on the Heavenly Writing scrolls to replenish his extraordinary power.

With the help of the Violet Glaze Ceramic, even if it had not been refined, the speed of his cultivation and the replenishment of his Primal Qi and extraordinary power increased.

Lu Zhou opened his eyes. It was time to upgrade the Violet Glazed Ceramic.

He checked the system dashboard.

Merit points: 220,540.

Remaining life: 219,744 days.

Item: Critical Block Card x138 (passive), Whitzard, Bi An, Ji Liang, Qiong Qi, Disguise Card x1, Golden Taixu Mirror, Appearance Alteration Card x3, Shining Stone x2, Reversal Card x76, Refining Talisman x3.

Weapon: Unnamed, Jade Horsetail Whisk, Magistrate Brush, Nine Strings Zither, Square Box, Violet Glazed Ceramic.

Cultivation method: Three Scrolls of Heavenly Writing.

Most of his points came from killing Nascent Divinity cultivators and from the domain extras. Ye Zhen had given him 10,000 merit points, but what the others lacked in cultivation base, they made up for in number. This was a great harvest.

He looked at his 220,000 merit points and fell deep into his thoughts. If he killed everyone in the Sky Martial Court, Cloud Mountain, and the palace, he would be able to earn 500,000 merit points and purchase the Thousand Realms Whirling avatar. Alas, he could only use the Thousand Realms Whirling at the Ten-leaf stage.

Finally, Lu Zhou extended his right arm. The gem-like Violet Glazed Ceramic appeared in his hand. Subsequently, he brought out a Refining Talisman to refine the Violet Glazed Ceramic.

After an hour, he was finally done refining the Violet Glazed Ceramic.

“Obtained Violet Glazed Ceramic. Grade: heaven. May acknowledge a new master.”

Lu Zhou was in no hurry to make the Violet Glazed Ceramic acknowledge him. Instead, he took out a Shining Stone to raise the grade of the Violet Glazed Ceramic.

Since Lu Zhou was familiar with the process, after he used the Shining Stone, he no longer paid any attention to the Violet Glazed Ceramic while it was being upgraded. Instead, he looked at his merit points, wondering how he should spend them.

He opened the system dashboard and checked the price of the Deadly Strike Card after deciding on stocking up on trump cards.

### **Chapter 798: Away with the Traitors, Peace to the Lands (Part One)**

Lu Zhou checked the price of a Deadly Strike Card. As expected, it was now at 23,000 merit points. Based on his recent experience, the price hike would be triggered every time he purchased, used, or raised his cultivation base. If he used all his merit points to purchase the cards now, the price would become exorbitant. However, if he did not buy them, he would not have cards to use while his cultivation base remained the same.

“Purchase.” He bought one Deadly Strike Card, and the price rose to 24,000 merit points immediately. Then, he bought one Impeccable Card, and both cards rose to 25,000 merit points. These were within his expectations. He could accept this. After all, true experts were rare.

“Hm? New cards?” Soon enough, Lu Zhou discovered two new cards listed at the bottom.

“Mentor. Long-lasting passive skill. Whenever you train your disciples, you’ll achieve twice the effect with half the effort. Price: 30,000 merit points.”

“Eternal Paragon. Long-lasting passive skill. When your disciple learns from you, you’ll achieve twice the effect with half the effort. Price: 30,000 merit points.”

He was rather satisfied with the effects of the new cards. His disciples’ improvement was akin to his improvement. However, the price was rather high. He would need 60,000 merit points just to buy the two new cards. 60,000 merit points were not a small number. How many people would he need to kill just to obtain 60,000 merit points? These cards were too expensive!

In the end, Lu Zhou did not purchase the two cards. He decided to wait and see. His four disciples who were here with him did not need any particular guidance from him at the moment. They learned quickly as well. It was his disciples in the golden lotus domain who needed guidance. Therefore, he decided to buy the cards when he returned to the golden lotus domain.

‘10 luck points? It’s time to try my luck!’

...

Early the next morning.

Lu Zhou looked at his 110 luck points and shook his head.

After meditating on the Heavenly Writing scrolls for an entire night, he regained some of his extraordinary power. However, it was still far from being replenished.

He suddenly remembered that he had recently obtained an Open Heavenly Writing Scroll. However, it did not provide him with a new power.

‘Is the open scroll a fake?’

Sizzle!

The sound of the burning Shining Stone rang in the air at this moment.

Lu Zhou turned to look and saw the Violet Glazed Ceramic was glowing purple, and the flames from the Shining Stone were quickly dissipating. This meant the Violet Glazed Ceramic was almost done being upgraded.

He stopped meditating and slowly rose to his feet. He stroked his beard as he waited for it to be done.

After 15 minutes, the flames finally went out.

Lu Zhou extended his hand and brought the Violet Glazed Ceramic into his hand with a palm seal.

Just like before, it was not hot to the touch. Instead, the Violet Glazed Ceramic emitted a faint chill that entered his body through his palm before entering his Extraordinary Eight Meridians and his sea of Qi. With this, the Primal Qi in his sea of Qi circulated even more quickly than before.

Lu Zhou was amazed by this.

“Ding! Obtained the desolate-grade Violet Glazed Ceramic. Reward: 1,000 merit points.”

Lu Zhou formed a small energy dagger with two fingers and drew it across his finger. A drop of blood dripped onto the Violet Glazed Ceramic.

When he looked at the dashboard again, it showed he was now the owner of the Violet Glazed Ceramic. Now that he was the owner, he could acutely feel the effects of the Violet Glazed Ceramic were much better than before. The speed of the restoration of his Primal Qi and its circulation speed had increased by one-third of their original speed.

“Where did Ye Zhen obtain this treasure from?” Lu Zhou wondered out loud as he put the Violet Glazed Ceramic away. Now that it has been upgraded, he felt it was only second to Unnamed. With this, he could cultivate more quickly.

After putting the Violet Glazed Ceramic away, he gauged his cultivation base. He was at the late stage of the Nine-leaf stage. With the Violet Glazed Ceramic, he was certain he would be able to attempt the Ten-leaf stage soon.

Subsequently, he continued to meditate on the Heavenly Writing scrolls. He could feel the runes of the Heavenly Writing scrolls were flowing more smoothly. With this, the rate of him accumulating his extraordinary power increased as well.

...

Three days passed in just a blink of an eye.

When Lu Zhou opened his eyes, his extraordinary power was already fully replenished.

In addition to the night before, he merely spent four days replenishing his extraordinary power.

“To think that the Violet Glazed Ceramic has such an effect.” Lu Zhou was truly amazed by the Violet Glazed Ceramic’s effects.

He looked out the window. The rays from the setting sun shone on the balcony.

After a beat, he emerged from his room.

Two Cloud Mountain disciples standing guard in his courtyard greeted him respectfully as soon as he appeared. “Greetings, Senior Lu.”

Lu Zhou stroked his beard and nodded in response before he walked down the stairs.

The disciple on the left bowed and said, “Senior Lu, I’ll notify the sect master and Temple Master Sikong.”

“There’s no need for that.”

It was getting late.

"I'm just going to take a stroll. You may leave," Lu Zhou said.

"Understood." The two Cloud Mountain disciples left with shaky legs.

Lu Zhou looked at the sky, lost in thoughts. He thought about the people from the red lotus domain invading the golden lotus domain with the Sky Chariot.

Now that they had imprisoned 1,000 cultivators from the Sky Martial Court on Cloud Mountain, the Sky Martial Court certainly would not let the matter go. He decided it was better to take the initiative rather than wait for them to attack.

With this thought in mind, Lu Zhou swiftly left the courtyard. He activated the Violet Glazed Ceramic and concealed his aura as he flew away from Cloud Mountain. The desolate-grade Violet Glazed Ceramic even concealed the waves from his Primal Qi.

When he was in the sky, he summoned Whitzard and flew toward the Guannei Circuit.

...

Inside Great Tang's palace.

Above Ganlu Hall.

Li Yunzheng looked at the setting sun as he said with a frown on his face, "The royal court, the harem, and the royal guard are on their side... What am I supposed to do?"

He continued mumbling to himself for a moment before he shifted his eyes to a dark corner. He said harshly, "I've already said I don't need your protection. Get lost!"

In the corner, Ye Xiao knelt and said, "Your Majesty, I have to ensure your safety. Ever since the recent incident, General Xiahou has said that he'll have my head if anything similar were to happen again!"

Li Yunzheng scowled as he said, "Do you answer to me or him?"

"Uh... Of course to you, Your Majesty..." Ye Xiao said, somewhat hesitantly.

"Then, why aren't you getting lost?"

"At once!" Ye Xiao hastily turned around and disappeared into the darkness.

After what seemed like hours, the sun set. Night came, and the moon climbed into the sky.

Li Yunzheng heaved a long sigh. 'My cultivation base isn't profound nor am I talented. Apart from the royal blood coursing through my veins, I have nothing.'

At this moment, a large wizened hand patted his left shoulder.

"Young man, calm down."

Li Yunzheng started. Then, he quickly turned around and exclaimed excitedly, "Old Mister, it's you!"



“Hm?”

With the Violet Glazed Ceramic and his previous experience, Lu Zhou was rather at ease. “I’m an assassin.”

“I know.”

“Then, you should be nervous, out of respect for me if nothing else,” Lu Zhou said as he stroked his beard.

“But... you told me to stay calm, Old Mister,” Li Yunzheng said innocently.

Lu Zhou’s feelings about the young man not being as simple as he seemed grew stronger. He asked, “Are you a prince?”

Li Yunzheng shook his head.

“The Crown Prince, then?” Lu Zhou asked again.

Li Yunzheng shook his head again.

Lu Zhou frowned. His grip on Li Yunzheng’s shoulder tightened as he gruffly said, “If you’re not a prince or the Crown Prince, how could you linger in this place?”

“Ouch! Old mister, stop it!” Li Yunzheng moved, trying to loosen Lu Zhou’s grip on his shoulder.

At this moment, Yun Xiao attacked from his hiding place in the dark. “Who dares to lay a hand on His Majesty?!”

‘The emperor?’ Lu Zhou let go. ‘What a young emperor! I’ve been reckless.’

Lu Zhou looked at the black figure calmly. He raised his palm that was glowing blue. Under the moonlight, it was a beautiful sight to behold.

When Ye Xiao was upon him, Lu Zhou easily dodged before he advanced. He easily breached Ye Xiao’s protective energy like a hot knife through butter before his hand found Ye Xiao’s neck. “Is this all you’ve got?”

### **Chapter 799: Away with the Traitors, Peace to the Lands (Part Two)**

Ye Xiao was swift. He moved like a phantom in the night. He had always been proud of his agility and speed, but faced with the old man, he felt fragile.

Before an eagle caught a chicken, the chicken would still have a chance to run away. to break free. However, Ye Zhen did even have that chance. It felt as though he had presented his head on a silver platter to the old man in front of him.

Lu Zhou’s face was expressionless as he gripped Ye Xiao’s neck.

Soon enough, Ye Xiao’s breathing grew ragged, and his face slowly turned purple. Although he was a cultivator, he would not be able to survive for long if he could breathe. Apart from that, the old man’s Primal Qi and energy suppressed him and made him suffer in ways he had never experienced before. He felt as though there was a 1,000-cattie weight pressing on his chest.

“Old mister, he’s my personal bodyguard. Please have mercy,” Li Yunzheng hastily said.

Lu Zhou turned to look at Li Yunzheng and asked, “You’re the current Emperor of Great Tang?”

“Uh... I-I think so...”

“What do you mean by you think so? It’s either you are or you are not...” Lu Zhou said, confused.

Li Yunzheng was too ashamed to answer Lu Zhou. Indeed, he was the emperor. However, he was just like a puppet emperor who held no authority to govern the empire. He even had to accommodate the officials who never asked for his opinions during meetings. He was only an emperor in name. How could he not feel ashamed to say this? How could he not feel frustrated at having to live in this manner?

In the end, Li Yun Zheng replied with a sigh, “I... I’m the current emperor.”

Lu Zhou said, “Strange...”

“Ye Xiao is loyal and won’t think twice about throwing his life away for me. He’s one of my most trusted subordinates. I hope you’ll show mercy, old mister,” Li Yuncheng said.

“Trusted subordinate?” Lu Zhou looked at Ye Xiao who was trembling at this moment. “Li Yunzheng, previously, did someone retrieve the golden hairpin for you before you gave it to me?”

“Why would you ask that, old mister? Apart from Ye Xiao, nobody else has touched it,” Li Yunzheng said.

Ye Xiao trembled upon hearing these words. At the same time, fear crept into his eyes.

Lu Zhou shook his head. “Young man, you’re still too green. You don’t understand how difficult it is to fathom the hearts of men.”

Lu Zhou tightened his grip around Ye Xiao’s neck.

Ye Xiao struggled to make some noise to alert whoever was in the surroundings.

“Old mister! You mustn’t harm him...” Li Yunzheng was shocked.

Lu Zhou ignored Li Yunzheng’s words as he continued to tighten his grip.

“Old mister! You...” Li Yunzheng cried out in exasperation.

Lu Zhou loosened his grip.

The corpse fell before the Ganlu Hall.

He stroked his beard and said, “I killed a traitor for you. You should thank me.”

“Huh? Traitor?” Li Yunzheng was flustered and confused.

“You’re the monarch of an empire, and yet, your personal bodyguard is only a Three-leaf cultivator? Are you sure your officials truly have your best interest in mind?” Lu Zhou stroked his beard and turned around.

Li Yunzheng staggered backward before he sat limply on the ground. The moon cast a spotlight on his face that wore a dejected expression.

Lu Zhou continued to say, "Ye Zhen is truly capable."

"He's with Ye Zhen?" Li Yunzheng's eyes widened in disbelief.

"This is the pure gold hairpin. I'm returning it to you." Lu Zhou tossed the used hairpin to Li Yunzheng.

When Li Yunzheng caught the hairpin, realization dawned on him. Indeed, Ye Xiao was the only one who had touched the hairpin back then. Rage bubbled in his heart when he made this discovery. His eyes burned with fury as he raised his fist and struck the ground.

Bam!

"Isn't there anyone who's sincere to me?!"

Lu Zhou ignored Li Yunzheng's outburst. He used the Heavenly Writing power to confirm there were no other cultivators in the vicinity. Then, he brought the Golden Taixu Mirror out and shone it on the corpse on the ground.

Li Yunzheng asked in confusion, "Old mister, what are you doing?"

As Lu Zhou had expected, the Golden Taixu Mirror revealed a beast avatar that resembled a hybrid between an owl and a sheep above Ye Xiao.

Li Yunzheng was shocked. "Xiao Yang?!"

Lu Zhou put the Golden Taixu Mirror away and pushed his palm forward. Unnamed materialized in his hand. Black runes swirled around it as it shot forward and pierced Ye Xiao's chest.

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

After he heard the notification, Lu Zhou raised his hand and pulled Unnamed back to his hand.

Ever since he fought Ye Zhen, he grew even more cautious than before.

When he heard the notification, Lu Zhou raised his palm and retracted Unnamed. He did not think the Three-leaf personal bodyguard was as simple as he appeared.

"You recognize the beast?" Lu Zhou asked as he stroked his beard.

After a moment, Li Yunzheng finally calmed down. He said with a resigned sigh, "I have nothing to do in the palace except to read."

Lu Zhou nodded. "Do you know why I came here?"

Li Yunzheng shook his head.

Lu Zhou said, "If you're a prince, I'd kidnap you... Alas..."

"Alas, I'm the emperor?"

The Sky Martial Court had invaded the golden lotus domain. Initially, Lu Zhou planned to kidnap the Crown Prince to use as leverage. Who knew Li Yunzheng was not the Crown Prince, but a puppet emperor?

Li Yunzheng rose to his feet slowly, feeling helpless. The wind blew against him as he looked at Lu Zhou and asked, "I remember what you said before you left previously, old mister. You said that I should remove anyone who stands in my way. If I tell you that everyone in the palace is in my way, what do you think I should do?"

"A true man will clear all of the obstacles in his path even if the whole world stands against him," Lu Zhou said indifferently.

"How am I supposed to remove them when I don't even have the strength to strangle a chicken?"

Lu Zhou turned to look at Li Yunzheng. After a brief moment of silence, he said, "Do what you can."

It was easy for Li Yunzheng to do his best, but his best was not enough. His strength was too insignificant. Perhaps, his death would not even cause a stir in the palace. He said with a sigh, "How is a mantis supposed to move a tree?"

"The journey of a 1,000 mile begins with a single step. The 1,000-mile dike will be failed by an ant hole. If you don't take small steps, you won't be able to cover 1,000 miles. If you don't gather small streams, you won't be able to have rivers or an ocean," Lu Zhou said.

Li Yunzheng felt something stirred in him when he heard these words. In the past, he had many opportunities laid out in front of him, but he never cherished them. He could have become an emperor who was feared and respected, just like his father. Whether it was the authority to govern the empire or cultivating, when he understood everything, it was already too late.

Li Yunzheng stared at the corpse on the ground for a moment before he cupped his fists together at Lu Zhou and asked, "What's your name, old mister?"

"You can call me Lu."

"Senior Lu, please accept me as your disciple and teach me how to cultivate!" Li Yunzheng said before he fell on one knee.

Lu Zhou was slightly surprised and confused. "Do you trust me?"

"I have nobody else whom I could trust," Li Yunzheng replied.

"Aren't you worried that I'm one of Ye Zhen's men as well?" Lu Zhou asked.

Li Yunzheng looked up and said, "If that's the case, then I submit to fate. You can't possibly be one of them, old mister. Please accept me as your disciple."

Ganlu Hall was exceptionally quiet at this moment. The still night sky and the silence gave birth to a melancholic atmosphere.

Li Yunzheng had no friends or family. He had lived alone in the palace all his life. If he did not have a strong will, he would have broken down a long time ago.

Lu Zhou finally said, "I already have ten disciples; I have no plans of accepting another disciple. If you wish to cultivate, I can introduce a teacher to you."

Despite being disappointed, Li Yunzheng said, "Kindly guide me, old mister."

“There are hundreds of cultivation styles under the heavens. Which one do you like the most?” Lu Zhou asked.

Li Yunzheng considered this for a moment. After a long pause, he said, “I don’t know which style I’m suited for.”

Lu Zhou stroked his beard and looked at the moon as he thought to himself. Then, he said, “You’re a monarch, and you need to temper your body before you can govern and bring peace to the lands. You need to learn more than just cultivation... How about this? Learn everything that he teaches you. What do you think?”

Li Yunzheng was delighted to hear this. He immediately bowed. “Thank you, Old Mister Lu! Uh... When can I meet this teacher? How will I meet him?”

### **Chapter 800: A Stroke of Luck in the Dark**

Lu Zhou stroked his beard and shook his head as he said, “He’ll meet you when the time is right.”

Li Yunzheng scratched his head, clearly disappointed. He asked, “Does my teacher possess a cultivation as profound as yours, old mister?”

Lu Zhou shook his head. “There’s nobody under the heavens whose cultivation base is more profound than mine.”

“...” Although Li Yunzheng had not started cultivating, he had the basic knowledge of cultivation. He did not know how he should react to Lu Zhou’s words. ‘Oh, well. You can brag all you want. I’ll keep you entertained.’

Li Yunzheng asked, “In that case, can you tell me about how capable that teacher is, old mister?”

“He has an average cultivation base, but he’s good enough to be your teacher.”

At this, Lu Zhou looked up at the moon that was growing brighter. He did not expect time to pass so quickly. At this moment, he heard approaching footsteps. “Someone’s coming. What should we do with the corpse?”

Lu Zhou glanced at Ye Xiao’s corpse on the ground before he raised his hand.

An energy seal carried the corpse up,

Li Yunzheng was surprised. ‘A golden energy seal?’

When the corpse was in the air, it burst into flames. Within a few breaths, the corpse was reduced to nothing by the golden fire.

A complicated expression appeared on Li Yunzheng’s face. He said, “Your cultivation base is on par with the Sky Martial Court’s Yu Chenshu, old mister.”

“Yu Chenshu?”

Li Yunzheng sighed. “Let’s not talk about him.”

Lu Zhou wanted to inquire further, but the footsteps were drawing closer. Therefore, he said, "I have something else to attend to. Take care."

"Old mister..." Before Li Yunzheng could finish his words, Lu Zhou disappeared into the night.

...

Meanwhile, it was calm and peaceful on Cloud Mountain.

Yu Shangrong stood with his arms crossed on a boulder halfway up the mountain as he looked at the sky, seemingly staring at nothing.

He maintained this posture for a long time.

After a while, he closed his eyes.

The Longevity Sword he carried on his back would vibrate occasionally.

Suddenly, an energy sword materialized before him before it quickly disappeared again.

Yu Shangrong opened his eyes. He shook his head and sighed before he muttered under his breath, "So close to the son of heaven's sword. I should ask master for guidance on this difficult sword path..."

As soon as he finished speaking, he saw a black figure shooting past the forest below.

Yu Shangrong smiled. "Rats."

He pushed away lightly from the rock and shot toward the figure at lightning speed.

The terrain of Cloud Mountain was extremely complicated. It was easy for cultivators to get lost in the. However, this did not pose any difficulty to someone like Yu Shangrong.

Yu Shangrong unleashed his Nine-leaf cultivator's speed and arrived at the base of the mountain in no time at all.

The black figure came to a stop as well, as though he had deliberately waited for Yu Shangrong.

Yu Shangrong hovered in the air and looked down at the black figure. He said tonelessly, "You're really suspicious. If you're wise, you'd adapt to the circumstances and surrender."

The black figure did not turn around. He spoke with his back facing Yu Shangrong. "I have no wish to fight you. I'm merely here to convey a message. Tell your master that we'll meet again in the future. I'll also remember the grudge of the Flying Star House."

Yu Shangrong said, "The Flying Star House?"

"It's only a matter of time before karma bites back. Farewell." The black figure faded out of focus and fled into the distance.

Yu Shangrong smiled faintly and said, "Since you came, why are you in such a hurry to leave? What do you say to having a cup of tea with me on the mountain?" He unleashed his grand technique three times consecutively and gave chase.

The black figure was taken aback and quickly increased his speed.

The two of them shot past several mountain peaks.

Yu Shangrong was still following closely behind the figure with a calm expression on his face. "Too slow..."

"You." The black figure came to a halt. He regarded Yu Shangrong with a surprised expression. "You can keep up with me?"

Under the cover of night, the moon shone on Yu Shangrong's chiseled face, making him look dignified. He said, "This is how the Sword Devil has always acted. Make your choice, sir. Will you live or die?"

"Sword Devil?"

"It's nothing but a superficial title given by the masses. It's insignificant." Yu Shangrong raised his right hand.

His Longevity Sword left its scabbard.

The black figure gulped and quickly retreated.

At this moment, a hoarse voice rang from behind the black figure. "Xiao Sheng, stand back!"

"Huh? My lord, you're here!" The black figure knelt down, overcome with emotions.

"Is it done?"

"I've done as ordered. However, I didn't expect this man to follow me. Please get rid of him, my lord," the black figure said.

A cloaked figure appeared in Yu Shangrong's field of vision.

Yu Shangrong sensed the man's peculiar aura and smiled, clearly pleased. "You're much more powerful than he is. Interesting."

The cloaked figure chuckled. He seemed to be pleased as well as he said, "To travel far and wide in search of something, only to find it so effortlessly... I finally found you."

"We've never met. Why do you say that?" Yu Shangrong was puzzled.

"I saw you through Zhong Diao's eyes... You're skilled, sir," the man said.

Yu Shangrong nodded and said, "So, you're Zhong Diao's master..."

The man removed his cloak. His face was illuminated by the moonlight immediately. His right eye was blind, but his left eye had a sharp edge to it.

"I'll send you to the afterlife to keep my Zhong Diao company."

When the man's cloak fell to the ground, the black figure moved swiftly and picked it up respectfully. He stood in the distance and said, "I'll await your victorious return, my lord."

Yu Shangrong smiled. "I'm afraid that you'll be disappointed."

His Longevity Sword suddenly shot out of its scabbard. Several energy swords immediately shot toward the partially-blind man.

The shining golden energy swords illuminated the surroundings immediately.

The semi-blind man faded out of focus. He seemed to disappear into a mass of black mist as he avoided the energy swords. He appeared above Yu Shangrong and dove at an angle. "Hit!"

An ominous-looking purple palm seal shot out.

"Witchcraft?" Yu Shangrong retreated calmly. His Longevity Sword returned to his palm, and then, he brought it down.

Bam!

The palm seal was cleaved into two.

Yu Shangrong's movements were as smooth as flowing water. There was no wasted movement at all.

The partially-blind man seemed slightly taken aback. Then, he said, "Nice moves... Alas, I must avenge my Zhong Diao!"

He left several afterimages in his wake and was upon Yu Shangrong in an instant. Then, he launched a tidal wave of palm strikes.

Bam! Bam! Bam!

Yu Shangrong brandished his sword calmly.

The two of them fought intensely under the moonlight. It was clear the battle would not end anytime soon.

The black figure, who was watching from a distance, frowned deeply. He muttered to himself, "That Old Man Lu's disciple is so powerful?"

At this moment, the partially-blind man seemed to have found an opening. He sent a barrage of palm seals toward Yu Shangrong's chest.

Yu Shangrong held his Longevity Sword before his chest and pushed away from the ground before he flew back with movements as light as a swallow. He moved several hundred meters back before he suddenly descended. As soon as his feet touched the ground, he summoned his avatar.

A Nine-leaf golden lotus avatar towered before them. Its rich Primal Qi poured out into the surroundings.

The partially-blind man crossed his arms and flipped backward, blocking the attack. "Golden lotus."

"You're wide open." Yu Shangrong appeared behind the man. With both hands gripping the hilt of the sword, he brought it down on his opponent.

The partially-blind man frowned and spun around. He brought his palms together, catching the Longevity Sword between them. Purple gas emerged from his hands as he retreated. "I have to say, among all the cultivators below the Ten-leaf stage that I've met, your sword path is the greatest..."



