

Emperor 5531

Chapter 5531: Preparation For Winter

The winds blew gently along a cliff where only three of five patches of grass could be seen. Leaves scattered downward around an old beggar.

He sat on the edge and seemed to be blind - a risky choice of a place to rest. His robe was worn out with numerous patches sewn unevenly. Whoever did it was far from being skilled.

He wrapped his arms around his shoulders, looking unable to handle the chilling winds.

Li Qiye appeared and sat down next to him.

"Where is your beggar bowl?" He asked with a smile.

"Sigh, I lost it. I can't believe that someone would be so cruel as to steal it from me." The old beggar shook his head.

"Evil people exist everywhere, but their evil doesn't compare to your kind." Li Qiye said.

"One shouldn't commit a sin just because the crime is petty nor should one ignore an act of kindness due to its triviality." The old beggar said.

"Did pearls just come out of a dog's mouth?" Li Qiye couldn't help but laugh.

"You disagree, Mister Li?" The old beggar squinted hard enough to see Li Qiye.

"I am neither good nor evil, just myself. Morality is nothing more than perspectives." Li Qiye shook his head.

"There's certainly a right answer." The old beggar said.

"Then it's relative. If I compare myself to a mortal, I'm a heinous villain, but if I were to compare myself to you all, then I'm as virtuous as can be." Li Qiye smiled.

"I don't feel like that's a fair and accurate assessment regarding your deeds, Mister Li." The old beggar said.

"If I am as evil as you claim, then why are you here begging? Shouldn't you be afraid of my chopping off your head after plowing your land?" Li Qiye said.

"I don't have a good response." The old beggar admitted.

"Mister Zhao is such a nice guy and has good food, why don't you go beg at his place instead?" Li Qiye continued.

"His food is delicious indeed, but eating it means having to cultivate more fields as repayment." The old beggar replied.

"So here you are, running to my place." Li Qiye said.

"At the very least, you're open about the price." The old beggar nodded.

“My benevolence is priceless.” Li Qiye said: “And my prices are reasonable so I don’t think my comment regarding my morality was an exaggeration.”

The old beggar shuddered again due to the wind. After a while, he said: “Mister Li, you stay true to your words and reputation but our paths are different, we cannot walk together.”

“Then let those on the same path walk together. I wonder how similar your path is to Mister Zhao’s.” Li Qiye said.

“Our goal is consistent, I suppose.” The old beggar looked up, seemingly capable of seeing everything despite being blind.

“Even if you achieve your goal, what do you think will be the next outcome?” Li Qiye asked.

The old beggar fell into a brief silence before asking: “What happens if we go with you, Mister Li?”

“Now you have an inaccurate assessment of your worth.” Li Qiye smiled: “First, I might not need your group and when I actually do, you no longer have the freedom to make choices. After all, what can you do beneath the might of the villainous heaven?”

“You are confident in winning, Mister Li.” The old beggar chuckled.

“More or less, it’s a matter of how flawless I want the victory to be now.” Li Qiye said leisurely: “Perfection might require a helping hand but that’s just when it’s beneath the heaven. I can handle everything above so realize how insignificant you are to me.”

“You are willing to let go of this world?” The old beggar asked.

“It has its own karma, completely separated from me.” Li Qiye said: “What about your group’s karma?”

“Our karma.” The old beggar murmured.

“Your karma is gone, everything is already predetermined. If you want to have a new cycle of karma, you must have permission from either me or the high heaven.” Li Qiye smiled.

“Mister Li, you are conspiring with the villainous heaven right now.” The old beggar remarked.

“You all would *conspire* if you are eligible. Unfortunately, this was thrown away when you abandoned your dao heart.” Li Qiye responded.

“Are you sure that everything will be just like the beginning, Mister Li?” The old beggar asked.

“For me yes, I don’t know about you all.” Li Qiye said.

“It sounds like you are forcing us.” The old beggar said.

“Uttering these words is ridiculous and pompous in the present day. I won’t force you or anyone else, the path is right beneath your feet, feel free to walk however you like.” Li Qiye cradled the back of his head and said calmly: “If anything, you won’t be able to last that long. It’s approaching and will reduce everything to ashes. Are you confident in enduring the inevitable?”

“It’s approaching...” The old beggar expected this but still glanced up at the sky with a solemn expression.

“You’re running out of time, all of you.” Li Qiye remarked.

“Perhaps this is a chance. As the saying goes, there’s always a way out even during the most perilous situation.” The old beggar said seriously.

“That’s a nice phrase and I do not deny the possibility. However, who will be the ones finding the way out? You? Mister Zhao, or someone else? I’m sure the chance has to be seized, would Mister Zhao let you seize it first?” Li Qiye said.

“Hmm, who knows?” The old beggar shook his head.

“You’ll be eaten for sure.” Li Qiye said: “Why not gain a bit of fat before winter? That’s the only way to survive. Plus, all of you know this better than anyone.”

“Are you truly this carefree? We’re not the only ones.” The old beggar paused for a bit before asking.

“No need to worry, I have chosen my path and I shall walk it regardless of the storm. If one expects others to provide shelter, maybe they should have chosen a different path.” Li Qiye said.

“Will you just be a spectator, I don’t think so.” The old beggar said.

“Hence the conspiracy that you accused me of.” Li Qiye said.

“I don’t quite understand.” The old beggar said.

“If I were to advance alone, I wouldn’t need to go through all this trouble. Decapitating all of you would be much simpler.”

Chapter 5532: What Are You Afraid Of?

“I can’t help being amazed by your confidence, Mister Li.” The old beggar shuddered and said.

“Do you think you are superior to the primordial geezers?” Li Qiye answered with a smile.

The old beggar stared at him for a while before responding: “If I remember correctly, you only have one beam of primordial light.”

“Yes, only one.” Li Qiye smiled: “But think about this, if I had managed to obtain such a thing, what else couldn’t I do?”

“That’s a bold statement.” The old beggar said.

“Not at all, I seek perfection but can accept some flaws if necessary. I don’t think all of you have the same luxury.” Li Qiye said.

“Mister Li, there are more than just a few over there. A certain person had arrived.” The old beggar said.

“Yes, that person, so close to the high heaven.” Li Qiye wasn’t surprised.

The old beggar remained silent.

“You know he had lived far longer than me and any of you. In fact, not counting the dead geezers, how many are older than him up there?” Li Qiye asked.

“No one, only the heaven itself.” The old man contemplated for a bit before responding.

“Yes, infinitely close to possessing everlasting life.” Li Qiye commented.

“Just like the villainous heaven.” The old beggar said.

“Now here’s the question, why had he never made a move?” Li Qiye asked: “And, who do you think is stronger between him and me? What do Mister Zhao and the others think?”

“He is.” The old beggar didn’t need to think.

“Yes, that’s the consensus.” Li Qiye nodded.

“You disagree?” The old beggar asked.

“The truth is that you all fail to grasp the key principle behind this. It’s not about eternal life or who is stronger.” Li Qiye smiled.

“What is it about then?” The old beggar’s gaze sharpened.

“It’s about the pursuit.” Li Qiye said.

“The pursuit?” The old beggar murmured.

“You all are well aware of your pursuit and how similar it is.” Li Qiye said.

“What do I want then?” The old beggar asked.

“Either eternal life or becoming the replacement.” Li Qiye smiled.

“Because of this, within your heart looms a primal fear. All of you try to erase it through strength and cultivation.” Li Qiye said.

“Do you not have fear, Mister Li?” The old beggar asked.

“Of course I do, all living beings have fear, no exception.” Li Qiye admitted.

“What do you fear?” The old beggar expected no response.

However, Li Qiye actually answered: “Myself.”

“Yourself?” The old beggar was surprised.

“A me who fails to maintain my dao heart.” Li Qiye elaborated while looking up at the sky: “As long as I want to be myself, I will have no fear. Otherwise, it shall consume me.”

“I see, the way you avoid fear is by continuing to perfect yourself and maintain your path.” The old beggar said.

“On the contrary, immortality or replacement are solutions to overcome the fear of death in your heart. As long as this is your pursuit, the fear will always be there for they are one and the same. Thus, you all consume others, your own epochs, and other worlds. You view everything as insignificant and not worth saving, they have let you down so you consumed them as revenge. In the end, all of you are rather pitiful.” Li Qiye concluded.

“And you, Mister Li?” The old beggar stared at him.

“I am the same, pitiful because I have no choice but to walk this path and pitiful if I ever become your kind.” Li Qiye said: “Nonetheless, I prefer to stay unique for as long as possible.”

“How broad-minded of you.” The old beggar remarked.

“It’s not that. The dao beneath our feet supports us so that we can move forward. Alas, the only thing in your group’s eyes now is immortality.” Li Qiye said.

“Would you refuse immortality if it is before you?” The old beggar asked.

“It would be a lie to say that I don’t want it, but only if it requires me bending down and picking it up. You all searched for it tirelessly, only to lose your dao heart in the process.” Li Qiye said.

The old man didn’t respond.

“Do you think the villainous heaven sought out immortality?” Li Qiye continued.

“He is immortal already.” The old beggar said.

“That’s a shallow understanding. He doesn’t know what life and death are, so he does not care for immortality.” Li Qiye said.

“Please elaborate.” The old beggar asked.

“Since you all are blinded by this pursuit, what did some of you even see after fighting the villainous heaven?” Li Qiye asked.

“You’re saying that you had seen it clearly?” The old beggar said.

“Not clearly, but yes. What do you think the villainous heaven is?” Li Qiye asked.

The old beggar took his time finding the right words: “Born from the primordial.”

“Everyone seeks immortality yet it does not know of life and death.” Li Qiye didn’t continue the topic on the villainous heaven.

The old beggar ruminated before asking: “Mister Li, you surely know more about him.”

“Just a general idea. Go on.” Li Qiye smiled.

“Please don’t be offended when I say this, but the prime candidate to reach immortality or replacement is none other than him. I’m afraid you’re not at the top.” The old beggar said.

“I’m not offended.” Li Qiye smiled and shook his head: “He and all of you are not qualified for either path. There is only one outcome for your lot, destruction. That is, if you don’t change your way.”

“How can you be so sure?” The old beggar asked.

“How long have you all been scheming? Have you succeeded? No, and what have you become? You lost your own epoch. You believe that you are in control of your destiny yet what life are you leading right now? Merely existing while having thrown everything else away. For what?” Li Qiye criticized.

Chapter 5533: Exception

The old beggar took his time before responding: "Perhaps this is merely the process, not the final outcome."

"Do you know what the final outcome is?" Li Qiye said.

"It seems like you know it very well, Mister Li." The old beggar said.

"The truth is that the one who knows it best is him, not me." Li Qiye smiled.

"Him?" The old beggar's eyes shifted to the side after hearing this.

"To repeat once more, he had lived the longest among us, so what is the difference between him and the villainous heaven?" Li Qiye asked.

"Virtually identical." The old beggar said.

"Not quite." Li Qiye chuckled and said: "If they were completely identical, he would have become the new heaven, and you all would have zero opportunity."

"That makes sense as well." The old beggar agreed.

"Then why the wait across the epochs?" Li Qiye asked.

"Hmm..." The old beggar glanced upward in rumination while Li Qiye enjoyed the high breeze with a relaxed expression.

After a long while, the old beggar asked: "What is your explanation for this, Mister Li?"

"In a sense, the fundamentals are too similar. Why would he and all of you be able to surpass the villainous heaven? While you're all trying to obtain immortality, the villainous heaven has transcended life and death. How can you compete?" Li Qiye smiled.

"How can one truly know without being in that position?" The old beggar said.

"No need because this is a law of the world, everything is predetermined including your disadvantages. This applies to him as well, so it's hopeless." Li Qiye shook his head.

"I suppose you think you are different." The old beggar said.

"Indeed, I'm the exception." Li Qiye smiled.

"I see." The old beggar stared at Li Qiye with his blind eyes.

"That is why the villainous heaven didn't come to you and the others. You all aren't qualified." Li Qiye tapped his shoulder and said.

"I can't say I agree, Mister Li." The old beggar said.

"Then tell me, what are you all protecting now?" Li Qiye asked.

"The villainous heaven had destroyed plenty in the past." The old beggar said.

“He upholds the rules of heaven and earth, carrying out destruction and creation. Have you ever seen him devour an epoch or a world? No, only destroying the form, not the essence. The end of an epoch means the start of another. Living beings can rise again and enjoy the returned essence. Your bunch, on the other hand, are the real villains who have fallen into darkness.” Li Qiye said.

He continued while smiling at the beggar: “This is why he had never done such a thing before. He has more knowledge and understands that if he were to do so, he would immediately lose his qualification so in that regard, you were right that he was the most qualified. Of course, this is limited to your group.”

“You don't deny his probability of success.” The beggar said.

“Can his limit surpass the villainous heaven's limit? When they are relatively similar, how can he win?” Li Qiye said.

“What is your limit then, Mister Li? What do you protect?” The beggar asked.

“A limit might not be necessary since I'm the exception. As for what I protect? It's not this world but rather, myself and my dao heart.” Li Qiye said: “You all fell to the darkness because you couldn't even protect yourself, let alone others. No protectors at all but more like, shepherds who ultimately only want to consume sheep.”

“Sheep are nutritious.” The beggar said sentimentally.

“Yes, so in the end, you will only be a shepherd, nothing more.” Li Qiye said.

The beggar didn't respond.

“Take care of business now, death isn't a bad option.” Li Qiye remarked.

“Mister Li, there will be a gap during the descent, isn't that a great opportunity?” The beggar said.

“That's a self-comforting angle, mere wishful thinking.” Li Qiye responded.

“Mister Li, perhaps you haven't seen it with your own eyes, but it's not something one can anticipate. This will be a prolonged war due to ample preparations.” The beggar said.

“I know, this is your chance to take down the villainous heaven, the pits are ready for his demise.” Li Qiye said.

“That's the idea.” The beggar nodded.

“How confident are you in this plan succeeding?” Li Qiye said casually.

The beggar fell into silence again.

“If you were confident, you wouldn't be here asking me for food. That is why you snuck down here, unless, you have a similar purpose like that unknown guest.” Li Qiye said.

“I do not.” The beggar said.

“You're fully aware that it won't work, hence taking the initiative in planning an escape route with me.” Li Qiye said.

“So will you spare some food, Mister Li?” The beggar asked.

“That depends on your choice and the path beneath your feet. You know this.” Li Qiye said.

The beggar gazed into the distance and eventually murmured: “To let go...”

“There’s no shame in this, not that you haven't done your fair share of shameful deeds in the past.” Li Qiye said.

The beggar let out an echoing sigh, seemingly recalling a distant epoch before agreeing: “Yes...”

“Only when one truly reaches a dead end will they seek repentance. This type of repentance is cheap.” Li Qiye shook his head.

“Say what you want, Mister Li, I suppose I must walk away from the path laid out before me.” The beggar said.

“Of course, there is no free lunch.” Li Qiye smiled.

“What do you want, Mister Li?” It seemed that the beggar had finally made up his mind. In reality, he had already made this choice once he came here.

“I don’t need to ask you for treasures, just a few tasks. Instead of just repenting, it is time to contribute.” Li Qiye said.

“Very well.” The beggar didn’t hesitate for a second: “Mister Li, for what reason do you trust me?”

“No reason, I’m merely taking a chance.” Li Qiye stood up, patted his hands, and walked away.

Chapter 5534: Three Thousand Battlefields

After the conversation with the beggar, Li Qiye looked around and said: “To the battlefield, shall we?”

A cute cloud landed next to him, looking around curiously. As for Niu Fen, he assumed a snail form with a full stealth barrier erected, looking pathetic and withered.

“What are you doing?” Li Qiye didn’t know whether to laugh or cry after seeing this.

Niu Fen peeked out of the shell like a thief and said: “Hehe, this is called keeping a low profile. Since I stand at the apex, my arrogance and power are too conspicuous and make others jealous, it’s best not to attract attention.”

“Please, this is just sad. They left already, you don’t have to do this.” Li Qiye shook his head.

“Hehehe, I just don’t want to steal your limelight, Young Master. But honestly, you often hang around extraordinary folks. One of them might think that I’m tasty and make a meal out of me.” Niu Fen said.

“Hmm, boiled snail, doesn’t sound too bad. And a grand-completion dao lord too, must be extra tasty.” Li Qiye stroked his chin.

“Young Master, that’s not funny.” Niu Fen hid back into the shell and said: “Look at my decrepit body, the meat will be tough and old, akin to biting wood.”

The cloud stared at Niu Fen curiously, wanting to know the reason for his appearance.

Li Qiye jumped on top of the snail and smiled: "To the ancient battlefield."

"Alright, let's go!" Niu Fen laughed and gathered his strength, instantly sprinting ahead.

As for the cloud, it kept up in a leisurely manner, just floating side by side with Niu Fen.

Niu Fen had learned from the previous encounter so it no longer tried to outrun the cloud, maintaining an acceptable pace instead.

They arrived at the largest battlefield of Immemorial Epoch War. Physical damages aside, the death of emperors and monarchs turned this land into something ominous. Not to mention regular cultivators, even the strongest ones had trouble crossing through.

Space was torn apart and time obliterated. Storms could be seen raging across the plains, capable of destroying anything.

Various majestic auras and emotions remained - still enraged in battle. Energies from swords and sabers were virtually permanent. Dao infernos couldn't be extinguished. They continued to ravage the area and foolish intruders.

Rumor has it that it didn't have this scale at the start. Numerous battles occurred and as the scale increased, they spread and formed a single battlefield.

It served as a barrier separating the world. The only way to get through was from a divine bridge stretching above the chaos.

"We just need to cross this battlefield and we'll reach Immortal Dao City, the territory of The People." Niu Fen said.

"They fought fiercely." Li Qiye gazed at the scene.

"So many fell, Crimson, Can Long, Ba Zhen, Hu Yue, Brilliant Devil Emperor... all behemoths." Niu Fen said.

This battlefield was the climax of Immemorial Epoch War and the resting place of many amazing cultivators.

The few survivors were known by all - World Emperor, Nether Emperor, Sword Emperor...

"It's difficult to gather corpses given its current state." Niu Fen said sentimentally.

The powers of the fallen emperors and monarchs remained. Since they used their strongest possible attack before death, the remnant forces didn't dissipate after these eras.

Those capable of entering and purifying these powers didn't want to expend the effort due to the lack of benefits. A divine bridge was built instead, bypassing the deadly battlefield.

The cloud stared at this awe-inspiring yet tragic scene with great curiosity.

“We’re entering.” Li Qiye jumped off Niu Fen and walked into the battlefield. The two hurriedly followed him.

“Boom!” Chaotic storms immediately greeted them with sheer destruction.

Moreover, since all affinities have been obliterated, the battlefield has become a maze of time and space.

Li Qiye became radiant while Niu Fen grew larger. Runes appeared around the cloud.

“Rumble!” Taking one step forward was difficult for most but Li Qiye left behind footprints imbued with primordial light. Each step stabilized space and time, preventing the storms from causing further damage.

“Boom!” Once they made it through, a dao inferno containing a golden imperial affinity greeted them in full force.

Chapter 5535: Brilliant Devil Emperor

The dao inferno seemed endless with a scorching heat, capable of melting time and space.

“Crimson Emperor’s golden flame, truly domineering.” Niu Fen couldn’t help but praise while blocking it.

“Boom!” The inferno continued to head straight for the group, wanting to reduce them to ashes.

Li Qiye simply walked forward; each step resembled a supreme nail of heaven and earth, preventing the inferno from causing damage.

“Clank!” A sword hymn could be heard before a sweeping slash cutting through ten million miles. This could traverse through time and kill top cultivators, pushing away any dao and law in the process.

“Can Long’s sword dao, such a massive area of effect!” Niu Fen couldn’t help but praise, activating dao eludication for his shell to block the attack.

“Rumble!” The same thing occurred - Li Qiye’s steps were able to freeze the overwhelming slash.

“Zzz...” Up in the sky vault, the power of the light approached like a tsunami, instantly engulfing the region.

This looked like the sun but instead of being the fire affinity, this was the holy power of light. It could purify all sinners and prevent them from joining the reincarnation cycle - to be subjected to eternal punishment. This seemed more like a curse than anything at this point.

“What a madman, Brilliant resorted to using a curse instead of just fighting normally. I would have crushed him if we were from the same generation.” Niu Fen was annoyed having to deal with this suppressive curse.

The endless curse of light couldn’t hinder Li Qiye’s pace, unable to infiltrate the area around him.

The ancient battlefield was filled with different powers and attacks - remnant marks from the fierce battles between emperors and monarchs in the past.

Bloody marks scattered here and there - the final resting place of the combatants. Near them were lingering shadows. Some shouted or spewed out runes of titanic proportion.

The rarer bloody marks were embedded into space. It seemed that the victims suffered from an explosive attack capable of destroying space. Their blood stained the air instead. Terrifying storms and tornados were formed as well, continuing to devour everything around them.

The aftermath of the carnage was a forbidden and perilous land. The rage and unwillingness of the combatants lingered perpetually. Instead of delivering physical blows, they had a mental effect capable of harming the dao heart.

Weaker visitors could find themselves being twisted by the raging emotions and becoming insane. All of this made it essential for the divine bridge to be built above.

The survivors, dao lords, and conquerors didn't test themselves here without an essential reason. The risks far outweighed any reward.

Li Qiye and Niu Fen had a first-hand experience witnessing the last emotion of the fallen combatants. Of course, his step continued to freeze them all.

The moment he finished his path, the battlefield became peaceful and silent. Their rage was now contained and became still like an image. One could observe the minute details and changes.

Upon closer inspection, all of Li Qiye's footprints were connected through time and space, seemingly imbuing a supreme chapter into the battlefield. This had an overarching suppressive effect on the region.

The only things still active were his primordial footsteps. Everything else found a moment of rest.

Chapter 5536: Taking Credit

Li Qiye radiated the primordial light while forming a mudra and uttering a mantra: "The dao returns to nothingness, nothingness returns to silence, depart from this world..."

The footprints became brighter and illuminated every inch of the land. The rays emanating from them intertwined and harmonized with one another. His mantra also echoed and turned the footprints into primordial runes.

The culminating chapter came from the start of the world. It included the various affinities that shape reality - yin and yang, reincarnation, and anything that could derive life...

Majestic figures slowly emerged amidst the intensifying primordial light. Some were swinging their swords while others roared, shattering the myriad realms...

During this fleeting moment, they ceased their attacks and sheathed their weapons...

The figures included Crimson Emperor, Immortal Emperor Can Long, Immortal Emperor Ba Zhen, Immortal Emperor Hu Yue, Nether Heaven Emperor, and many more...

Time started reversing and the damages caused by these top cultivators ceased to exist. All eyes were on Li Qiye.

The devastating storms gradually stopped and became normal again. Laws and orders returned and the broken fabrics of reality were mended.

“Return from whence we came, let it all go...” Li Qiye chanted and primordial light surged around him.

“Boom!” Eventually, a seal descended and stabilized the region, heralding an everlasting tranquility.

Everything fell into the proper place again. The majestic figures slowly dissipated and became countless particles.

The mighty techniques with world-shattering potential - whether it be dao flames or light curse - were reduced to particles as well. They scattered on the ground and assisted the healing process.

Their energy turned into soil, mountains, and valleys. With the region reformed, seeds sprouted and turned into vegetation and trees.

Water started streaming through the cracks and formed streams. They came together to form rivers and eventually, the low-lying areas turned into oceans...

Life came next with birds and fish, replacing the destruction. The primordial power gestated all living beings. One could see dao runes with a faint light among the leaves, trees, and all else.

“It’s a paradise now...” Niu Fen murmured after seeing the drastic shift.

The rage and various emotions of the fallen combatants couldn’t be dispelled in the past. They never found peace until now with Li Qiye’s arrival.

They were able to move on while the devastation left behind was fixed by Li Qiye. New lifeforms sprouted and the land flourished. In the near future, many will be able to call this their home.

Niu Fen became sentimental because this was beyond the force of a single cultivator. He and the other ancient cultivators wouldn’t be able to duplicate this task.

Li Qiye finally stopped to take a look at the new land. He thought that it could become a paradise in the future.

“We’re leaving.” He patted his hands after finishing the task. Now, this area no longer had anything to do with the previous battles.

“Okay!” Niu Fen was happy to see this development and carried Li Qiye away.

The cloud, on the other hand, took its time since it was curious about this new creation.

“Buzz.” It suddenly released runes that seep into the ground, becoming one with the land. Most wouldn’t be able to detect this change.

With that, it caught up to Li Qiye and Niu Fen. Li Qiye shook his head and smiled: “Want to take credit by planting that seed? You want that to be your world?”

The cloud stared at Li Qiye before looking back at the new world, seemingly rather satisfied.

Li Qiye chuckled and didn't mind in the slightest.

Chapter 5537: Momentous Frontier

The moment the group left the new world, they met a familiar face.

"Sir." The person was surprised to see Li Qiye as well. It was none other than Qin Baifeng from Sunset Glow Valley.

She didn't expect to see him again, let alone so soon.

"Fate again." Li Qiye sighed.

"Sir, where are you heading?" She asked.

"Dao City." Niu Fen peeked his head out and answered before hiding again.

She glanced at the old snail and then the cloud. She recognized the latter since it came from the immortal artifact of her sect.

"I am also heading to Dao City, Sir." She said.

"Then let's go together." He smiled and tapped the spot next to him.

"Thank you, Sir." She happily got up and sat down next to him.

"We're going!" Niu Fen shouted before rushing forward. This trip wouldn't take long since Dao City was nearby.

"Not staying at the valley?" Li Qiye asked.

"Senior Sister can handle everything back in the sect and I am at a good spot regarding training, so I am coming back to take a look." She responded.

"Qin Clan, the Heavensearchers." Niu Fen interjected.

This slightly surprised her already, let alone his next line: "Divine Emperor Baili, truly a tragic death at Celestial Court." [1]

"How do you know this, Senior?" She blurted out.

"It's no secret, anyone who can reach that place knows." Niu Fen shook his head.

She opened her mouth and didn't say anything since it was indeed not a secret. This was the reason why their clan left and chose to stay in Dao City instead.

Li Qiye didn't bother to inquire about past matters, still having a smile on his face.

"Sir, may I ask why you are heading to Dao City? Is it for Immortal Dao City?" She asked Li Qiye while glancing at the cloud.

She had never seen the immortal artifact before. However, Li Qiye left the valley with only this mysterious cloud. She speculated that it must have a deep connection with the artifact and therefore, Immortal Dao City.

"I'm not sure yet, just taking a look for now." Li Qiye smiled and stared ahead.

"That's Dao City, also known as Dao Domain." Niu Fen stopped and elaborated.

They observed the majestic scenery ahead - towering peaks with stars rotating around them. Waterfalls seemed to come from the heaven itself and divine trees of unimaginable size...

Ancient walls and cities could be seen, projecting magnificent auras. This was a true manifestation of prosperity with no end in sight. Countless sects and villages populated the land.

The farthest reaches had an immortal energy. Although it was faint, one could still sense it from ten million miles away.

Nothing was more conspicuous than this type of energy. Each strand contained untold power, capable of pushing up the heaven or crushing the earth.

Beneath this expanse of energy was a city capable of withstanding the test of time. A calamity wouldn't be able to destroy it.

It seemed to have been crafted by nature, completely unstained by the touch of men.

"Dao City, and Immortal Dao City." Niu Fen murmured.

Immortal Dao City was one of the Nine Heavenly Treasures. Now it served as the headquarters for The People.

Immortal Monarch Yi Ye and Immortal Emperor Bu Zhan were the first to reach the city, stopping waves of attack from Celestial Court.

In the end, they defended the city long enough for the duck egg buyer and others to arrive, successfully repelling the attackers. From then on, Immortal Dao City belonged to The People.

The surrounding areas and cities were known as Dao City or Dao Domain. It became the new home for the unfortunate victims of Immemorial Epoch War. They moved here and found hope for the future.

The cloud stared in the direction of Immortal Dao City, looking left and right. It seemed to find this place rather familiar.

As for Li Qiye, he only glanced briefly at the treasure before focusing on something else.

When others took a look, they would note the undulating mountains and flowing rivers. As for Li Qiye, he saw images of a great momentum - a golden age. However, he frowned after seeing that something was missing.

"That is?" He pointed ahead.

"Still a part of Dao Domain, mostly inhabited by mortals." Niu Fen said.

Qin Baifeng became excited and said: "Sir, that is Momentous Frontier, our clan is there right now."

“Momentous Frontier.” Li Qiye stroked his chin.

“Would you like to visit our humble abode?” Baifeng hurriedly invited.

Li Qiye patted Niu Fen and said: “Notice anything?”

“Haha, Young Master, you don’t need to test me. I don’t need to look to know what’s there, a tablet capable of controlling the momentum of many eras.” Niu Fen said.

“What a shallow observation, go there.” Li Qiye patted him again.

“Alright...” Niu Fen obeyed.

“Sir, we would be honored if you don’t mind staying at our residence.” Baifeng saw that he wanted to go to her region.

“Very well.” Li Qiye nodded and said: “It’s been a while since you’ve been back?”

“Yes, I am a clan master there but there are limits to training in Momentous Frontier, so I received permission from the ancestor to join Sunset Glow Valley.” She elaborated.

The Qin had fallen and couldn’t produce a capable cultivator. Moreover, there were certain rules to Momentous Frontier as well. Thus, she had no choice but to leave for Sunset Glow Valley.

Since her cultivation improved recently, she took a break to visit home again since it had been a long time. Unlike a traditional clan master, she wasn’t responsible for passing down the clan’s legacy and cultivation, only keeping a watch and making decisions when necessary.

Chapter 5538: Finally Back

Momentous Frontier was one of the most flourishing areas in Dao Domain, albeit not cultivation-related.

It hasn’t produced a top master in a long time. In fact, capable and ambitious geniuses had no choice but to depart their home.

An abundance of mortals made up for the lack of cultivators. Mortal towns and cities could be seen everywhere instead of sects and factions.

It’s rare to see cultivators flying around or any divine auras associated with cultivation. Only shrines could be seen on the outskirts of villages and towns, perhaps a larger temple in a main city.

Mortals didn’t need to cultivate, only wanting to occasionally burn incense at the shrines to pay respect to the deities. They hoped for good weather, livestock health, and family happiness.

They didn’t worship powerful cultivators such as emperors and monarchs capable of burning the sky and ending an ocean.

They had special gods and deities whom they believed could listen to their prayers. With ample offerings, the land was blessed with great weather and no natural disasters - a perfect place for mortals to live.

“Pop!” When Li Qiye’s group entered the frontier, they felt as if they had just crossed through a barrier to another world.

The smoke of the mortal realm immediately greeted them - something different from the majestic life force usually found in cultivation kingdoms and sects.

This presence had an overwhelming amount of seven emotions and six desires. The smells of great food invited them to leave the cultivation world.

“Momentous indeed.” Li Qiye commented.

“It’s incredible.” Niu Fen said: “Immortal Emperor Yu Shou, Daoflame Dual Lords, Immortal Emperor Di Yu, Space Dragon Emperor, and many more had an ambitious goal of building a home for everyone. They refined this land and created a surrounding momentum.”

“Senior, you know the history quite well.” Baifeng was surprised.

“This tale has been passed down for a while now. It’s a shame that when I came, they had already finished the great work of art. Their intention was benevolent and grand.” Niu Fen said.

Rumor has it that Immortal Emperor Di Yu and Daoflame Dual Lords launched a proposal to build a region different from the rest of Dao Domain.

The list started with Immortal Emperor Yu Shou, Bones Dao Lord, Immortal Emperor Bu Si, Space Dragon Emperor, Ox-dragon Ancestor, and many more.

They researched a particular tablet and created a dao momentum and frontier. They then became its deities, the foundation of this land.

The focus was to provide shelter for the common people from all over the world. Those who eventually became strong enough could join the momentum in a process known as attunement.

However, those with a more ambitious soul who wanted to grow stronger and see the world had no choice but to leave Momentous Frontier in search of their own dao. They had no desire to become deities who receive offerings and grant wishes.

This created a scenario where the region was perfect for mortals, not cultivators. In their absence, a lack of competition and deadly wars on top of ample resources allowed mortals to thrive.

They always maintained neutrality as well, not participating in outside conflicts. Because of this, powerful cultivators from the other regions rarely visited Momentous Frontier.

“Impressive, a grand aspiration. I hope that they will be able to uphold this mindset.” Li Qiye nodded.

“It’s a very interesting place.” Niu Fen said: “Well, it’s a little too boring for me, I can see others wanting to settle down and experience an ordinary mortal life.”

“Yeah, it’s not right for you.” Li Qiye smiled.

“Even sects with a bit of strength can’t stay here, let alone dao lords or conquerors.” Niu Fen agreed.

Niu Fen and those on the same level weren't interested in staying here. They considered it a shallow pond - not worth their time or a trip. This was akin to a giant looking down at an ant hill.

Nonetheless, this was a good thing in that sects on the verge of downfall could move here to survive. The Qin of Heavensearch was one example.

They became too weak to survive in the outside world. Now, the only goal was to maintain their lineage.

Qin Baifeng was a member blessed with enough innate talent to move on. She had no other choice if she wanted to improve her cultivation.

"Finally back." She said sentimentally.

Despite being a pond unable to accommodate a true dragon, its serenity often called out to weary cultivators.

Chapter 5539: Paying Respect To The Deities

They came to a village with an old shrine at the entrance. There were ample incense sticks burning on the thurible and a line of worshippers.

Li Qiye jumped off Niu Fen and came inside. It was mainly open-air to let sunlight through and could only accommodate five or so worshippers.

To the left and right of the entrance were couplets. In the center was a statue with offerings and incense sticks in front of it.

All in all, the simple shrine lacked extravagance and was built from regular bricks and tiles. The pillars have turned dark from being stained by incense smoke, the same for the walls.

Li Qiye revealed a faint smile after seeing the statue depicting an old man in plain clothes and a straw hat. He appeared amiable and resembled an old farmer.

There was a stalk of rice next to him, looking thick and large - a symbol of a bountiful harvest.

"This is our frontier's Deity of Harvest." Qin Baifeng, a native, introduced the statue: "The deity oversees the wind and rain, ensuring a smooth season and bountiful harvest. Most in rural areas worship him."
[1]

"I see, very helpful." Li Qiye nodded with a smile.

"I know who he is, Immortal Emperor Di Yu." Niu Fen chuckled.

"Do you know the deity?" Qin Baifeng was surprised.

"As far as I know, he had obtained a divine tree with the right affinity for agriculture. It is rather fitting that he's the Deity of Harvest now." Niu Fen smiled.

"I heard the same legend after joining Sunset Glow." She said before approaching the statue and bowed with reverence.

When she bowed sincerely, the statue shimmered and its light coursed to the rice stalk nearby.

“Oh?” She didn’t expect this phenomenon.

The last time she paid respect was long ago, before becoming a powerful dragon lord with six dao fruits. Now, she was virtually a deity in the eyes of mortals.

“You have six sacred fruits.” Li Qiye said: “Your sincerity is equal to the prayers of ten thousand mortals. It will give this deity enough power of faith to protect the villagers.” Li Qiye smiled.

“I see.” She understood the logic.

“This is Momentous Dao.” Li Qiye said: “They were amazing for learning and utilizing it effectively.”

The cloud tapped Niu Fen gently first while gesturing toward the statue.

“I cannot worship Immortal Emperor Di Yu, we are more or less acquaintances.” Niu Fen smiled and shook his head.

“If you bow sincerely, it will grant prosperity to this village for ten thousand years.” Li Qiye said.

“Will you bow too, Young Master? What will happen then?” Niu Fen tried to instigate.

“If I bow, the guy won’t be able to stay a deity, you do it.” Li Qiye shook his head.

“Very well.” Niu Fen couldn’t refuse any longer.

He took a deep breath, cleared his mind, and tidied his outfit. Although Immortal Emperor Di Yu was an ancient emperor, he might not actually be stronger than Niu Fen, or Calamity Dao Lord.

Since they were at a similar level, there was no reason for Niu Fen to pay respect since he didn’t need protection or a bountiful harvest.

Moreover, he didn’t grow up here and lacked the appreciation and love seen in a native such as Qin Baifeng.

Nonetheless, he still bowed sincerely to the statue - something he would never do even if the man were here in person.

After he finished the rite, Li Qiye smiled and told the group: “Let’s go.”

Niu Fen let out a roar and rushed outside. Everyone left the village afterward.

“Buzz.” A golden radiance brimming with life surged in the shrine after their departure.

It illuminated the entire village and took the form of golden grains, pouring down on all the fields. Fruits, grains, and vegetation immediately grew at a rapid rate - ready for the harvest.

This left the villagers in awe despite being used to agricultural prosperity. Because of their deity, their harvest has always been better than anything seen in the outside world. As long as they prayed with reverence, a year of abundant harvest was coming. However, this accelerated process was truly unprecedented.

“Our Deity of Harvest is visiting us, blessing us with his grace!” Some were moved to tears.

Subsequently, the village erupted in celebration with gongs and drums. They set up colorful decorations such as flowers and lanterns. They enthusiastically slaughtered livestock for a feast to worship their deity.

Of course, the prostrating villagers before the shrine had no idea that this wasn't their deity appearing but rather, Niu Fen.

As an apex dao lord, his respectful bow was akin to the return of their deity - enough to bless them for ten thousand years.

The group arrived at perhaps the largest city in Momentous Frontier - a place with countless mortals.

Carriages and pedestrians filled the streets. Trading flourished in this city, allowing its inhabitants to prosper.

The group consisted of the mightiest cultivators. The moment they walked through the gate, they could sense that this region was one with heaven and earth. There existed a supreme sword dao all around them. This city was no different from an impregnable fortress, protected by a greater power.

"Sword City, the richest and most populated area in our Momentous Frontier." Qin Baifeng said.

"The resting place of Daoflame Dual Lords." Niu Fen nodded approvingly: "The couple continues to protect for eras after their passing."

"Are you referring to the Deity of Blades?" Qin Baifeng couldn't help but ask. [2]

"Yes, they are husband and wife, a match made in heaven." Niu Fen nodded.

Chapter 5540: Watching Ants Fight

The couple was among the greatest dao lords in history. Their brilliance in cultivation was only surpassed by their love for each other.

Darkfrost was a poor scholar from Dao Institution while Snowcloud was a princess from Flame Valley. Their love was met with heavy resistance from her side.

They decided to elope and had the fortune to come across Darkflame Sword Dao - one of the nine.

He picked Dark Sword Dao while she chose Flame Sword Dao. The two cultivated together and became dao lords at the same time - a rare occurrence that could be described as miraculous.

Their journey continued all the way to the immortal continent. They chose to pass away peacefully without any attempt at life prolongation or hibernation. She was the first and he followed. Their sword dao and supreme dao fruits melted into the land; they then became deities known as the Deity of Blades.

Born not on the same day but had the fortune to pass away on the same day - truly a tale for the ages. What else could one ask for in life but having the perfect companion?

Their descendants lived in the city and were known as the Guardian Clan, enjoying the protection of their renowned ancestors.

In all of Momentous Frontier, if one somehow found themselves in a position of danger, they just needed to pray sincerely and a sword dao would protect them.

Thus, the inhabitants of the region considered the Deity of Blades to be the guardian deity.

Among the many shrines in the city were those dedicated to the guardian deity. They enjoyed a constant stream of worshippers.

"It's a nice place." Niu Fen couldn't help but praise: "They were apex dao lords indeed, there are traces of their sword dao everywhere still."

"They have the most worshippers here." Qin Baifeng commented. This didn't come as a surprise to anyone given that the great city was the final resting place of the pair and their everpresent sword dao.

"Prosperous indeed." Li Qiye could tell that mortals had a high quality of life in this paradise.

"The Guardian Clan has done a commendable job at administration. They are the descendants of the blade deities." Baifeng commented.

"I heard that Daoflame Dual Lord had established a rule where their descendants aren't allowed to cultivate." Niu Fen said.

"Their descendants have not let them down by obeying the ancestral rule and remaining as mortals. Their policies over trading only improved the city's economy." Baifeng said. Although Daoflame Dual Lords were virtually unbeatable during their era, they forbade their descendants to cultivate.

Li Qiye smiled after hearing this, looked up at something, and continued forward. The others followed right behind him.

They came to a shrine clearly meant for the Deity of Blades. It boasted a magnificent and imposing appearance due to having many visitors.

However, Li Qiye approached an old tree in front of it where a middle-aged man was resting. He appeared to be in his thirties or forties, dressed in luxurious clothing.

Judging by his appearance, he most likely hailed from a wealthy family - the most affluent type. Both the materials and craftsmanship were awfully expensive in the mortal world.

From this, he should have been quite dignified, if not imposing. At the very least, he should have an air of pampered refinement. This was not the case since he lay on the ground like a child. His expensive robe was stained with mud and grass.

His hair was a mess. Even if someone were to help him tidy up, it would become disheveled in the next second. Worst of all, he had snots running down his nose, looking like a fool occupied with watching something.

Li Qiye crouched down next to him and saw that he was watching a group of ants brawling over a cricket's leg.

He was immersed in the fight and didn't notice Li Qiye sitting next to him. Qin Baifeng and the others came over as well.

The group didn't find this particularly strange. After all, some cultivators learned the dao through watching ants fighting or a snake versus a crane. However, they didn't need to do so given their current dao attainments. On the other hand, Li Qiye himself was watching - this changed the circumstances drastically.

After a while, one group emerged victoriously after a hard-fought battle.

"Was that brilliant?" Li Qiye asked with a smile.

"Yes, General Tiger performed valiantly, not just with its raw strength but also tenacity. The courageous emerged victoriously." The man nodded, still not fully recovered from the exciting brawl just now. He gestured excitedly as if he had personally participated in the battle.

Any spectator would think that there was something wrong with his head. Li Qiye, on the other hand, entertained him: "Well, do you think there is anything General Tiger can do better?"

"Too reckless and aggressive, blindly charging forward and risking injuries. If it encounters someone slightly stronger who can block a few attacks, its courage and spirit will wane, resulting in inevitable defeat." The man answered.

"That is true. If enemies can last just a bit longer, General Tiger would certainly taste defeat." Li Qiye nodded in agreement.

"This is where resilience and perseverance come into play." The man was in high spirits while discussing this matter: "The outcome won't be obvious."

"Where do they come from?" Li Qiye asked.

"From absolute conviction, not yielding when facing insurmountable adversity while holding onto hope." The man scratched his head before answering.

"Mmm, this concept is known as the dao heart." Li Qiye nodded again.

"The dao heart..." The man murmured these words. His eyes lit up and he clapped: "I like it, dao heart, that's it, we'll call it the dao heart!"

He then picked up a branch and waved it around: "Well, does a sword have a dao heart as well?"

The casual swing employed zero strength and dao profundity. It moved as naturally and unpredictably as the antlers of an antelope, not possessing any technique or form yet clearly in harmony with the sword dao.