

Emperor 5541

Chapter 5541: What Birds?

At first glance, this looked like a child playing with a branch. However, Qin Baifeng saw something different.

It wouldn't be an exaggeration to call her a sword master since she used this dao to obtain her sacred fruits.

Therefore, she had great insight into this aspect and became startled after seeing the man waving the branch.

"A good seed." Niu Fen couldn't help but praise. The apex dao lord was far stronger than Qin Baifeng, possessing superior vision and insight.

"The sword naturally has a dao heart as well." Li Qiye smiled and said: "The blade follows the heart."

"You know everything." The man sniffed up his snot and exclaimed: "Then do you also see the sword, it's right there."

"It's everywhere." Li Qiye smiled before raising one hand.

Mortals wouldn't notice anything special since there was nothing outwardly special about it. However, Baifeng and Niu Fen saw the indiscernible sword dao embedded in his movement. The momentum was there in spite of a void in technique and form.

"How did you do that?" The man stared at Li Qiye's hand as if it were the most interesting treasure in the world, unable to avert his gaze.

"I get it, I get it!" After a while, he burst into laughter and fell to the ground, kicking his legs in excitement just like a child who had just found his favorite toy again. This was pure happiness, no need for anything expensive or an unparalleled achievement.

This childish innocence shouldn't be present in a middle-aged man but it was clearly there.

As he rolled on the ground, he became dirty with mud on his clothes and snot on his face. He didn't mind at all and wiped it with his sleeve.

"You try it." Li Qiye showed an interest in the man.

"Okay, it's like this." He stood up and excitedly copied Li Qiye, raising his hand in the air and waving it.

"Buzz." Something was being dragged by his hand movement - a sword momentum.

Niu Fen and Qin Baifeng couldn't believe their own eyes, the latter even gasped in response.

This man was clearly a mortal yet he understood the dao profundity within Li Qiye's action. He possessed no dao power or chaos true energy but nonetheless, he was able to control the momentum of the sword.

"Incredible, this brat might be one of the greatest sword geniuses in history." Niu Fen murmured.

Li Qiye gathered the sword momentum without needing any technique or an actual sword. However, this was Li Qiye.

Now, the man was able to do so as well - something truly frightening.

"The fundamental is there." Li Qiye nodded: "But there are still sound and form, only a minor completion, not enough."

"Right..." He scratched his head and asked earnestly: "So how do I do it with no sound and form?"

"An innocent heart with happiness is enough." Li Qiye said: "But to reach the highest level, polishment and perseverance are necessary. Only by actively holding onto this natural innocence would you be able to achieve silence and formlessness."

"This is that dao heart again?" He asked with a pair of bright eyes freed from any impurity. The mortal coil left no mark in his windows to the soul for he still had the heart of a child.

"Yes, cultivation is easy, the same for obtaining the dao. Within the dao heart lies the true challenge." Li Qiye nodded.

"I see." The man said: "So that's how it is, I gotta protect it, keep it warm."

"You could say that." Li Qiye smiled patiently before patting the man's shoulder: "Here, take a look at her." He pointed at Qin Baifeng afterward.

The man was engrossed in the conversation with Li Qiye and the impromptu sword movement. He didn't notice anyone else standing nearby and even if he did, he would have forgotten about them right away. He barely could remember his own self, let alone anyone else.

He looked up and took a look at Qin Baifeng. In the mortal world, others would think that she was a celestial maiden and become captivated.

However, he wasn't interested in her beauty - only her sword dao and source.

"So many little birds, you take care of all of them?" He asked.

"What?" She didn't have a response.

"They're chirping and playing in your heart right now." He resembled a child who had just found a shiny new toy.

She immediately understood that he was talking about her sword dao. Although her main cultivation was Sunset Glow, she created her own sword dao to become a dragon lord.

The name of her Dao was "Reign of the Phoenix" - a technique manifesting in hundreds of birds worshipping the phoenix.

"This is my sword dao." She said.

"I see. Let me touch them." He then reached forward.

A man would find himself in a precarious situation for this rude and potentially perverted demand. Alas, his innocence and curiosity were as clear as day.

He didn't wait for permission and got close enough to touch.

"Blank!" Of course, he was touching her sword dao, not her body.

This mortal was capable of spotting a sword dao on top of reaching it. Anyone else would have been instantly attacked in an automatic response for the sword dao belonged to her only.

Alas, he possessed an innate gift of being infinitely intimate with the sword dao. No sword dao could ever refuse him, akin to best friends finally meeting again after a long separation.

Chapter 5542: Young Master Shuangjian

"How can this be?" She staggered backward in astonishment.

Not to mention a mortal, even a six-fruit dragon lord wouldn't be able to touch her dao without permission.

The sword dao was hers alone, gestating within her dao heart. Everyone else was considered an enemy, unable to reach it or risk being attacked.

In this case, her dao seemed rather intimate with him and hummed in resonance - something rather absurd.

"He has a sword heart, freed from desires and emotions, it starts and ends with the sword." Li Qiye smiled: "This innocence and purity allow him to befriend and communicate with any sword dao."

"This is a thing?" Qin Baifeng was startled by this incredible human. How did he obtain a sword heart without cultivation?

"A total infatuation with the sword." Li Qiye smiled.

"I love them, but not the kind you can see." He pulled back and told Li Qiye with a naive tone.

"Right, the invisible type." Li Qiye nodded.

"You can see them too, right?" The man excitedly asked, referring to the dao of the sword.

This was beyond the reach of mortals yet he proved to be an exception. No cultivators would believe this story if told.

"Let me show you something nice." Li Qiye grabbed a branch and started doodling on the granite slab beneath.

This slab was part of the temple so it was extremely tough. Alas, he wrote on it as if it was as soft as tofu, looking like a child drawing randomly or just exceedingly bad at calligraphy.

"Take a careful look." He told the man after finishing.

The latter didn't hear Li Qiye because he was engrossed again by the strange markings. He couldn't escape even if he wanted to.

"How beautiful." He murmured.

As for Qin Baifeng, she didn't see anything outside of its appearance on the surface.

"This sword dao..." The stronger Niu Fen took a deep breath.

After hearing this, Qin Baifeng activated her heavenly gaze and derived the myriad dao. She finally saw hints of a sword dao hidden beneath the random doodles. This left her entranced as well due to its irresistible complexity.

"Okay, let's go." Li Qiye tapped on her shoulder and woke her up.

He shook his head and said: "This isn't suitable for you, if you want to learn it, take your time doing so later."

Having said that, he sent a ray into her forehead, imprinting a sword dao inside.

"Thank you for the gift, Young Noble." She eventually regained her wits and bowed deeply.

"We're leaving." Li Qiye walked away.

"This brat should be polished." Niu Fen stared at the man stuck in a zen state and said.

The cloud only glanced curiously for a moment before catching up to Li Qiye. Qin Baifeng, on the other hand, changed her perspective entirely.

She was considered a sword genius who had created her own dao. Alas, she realized nothing while staring at the doodles until Niu Fen reminded her. Understanding the embedded mysteries would take an exceedingly long time.

As for the man, he had never cultivated before yet he saw enough to be mesmerized by the sword dao - a testament to the gap between them.

This was the difference between a mortal and a six-fruit dragon lord. However, it was flipped around in this scenario. Niu Fen calling him one of the greatest sword geniuses in history was not an exaggeration.

First, she never expected to meet someone like him in the mortal world. Moreover, it would be a shame for him to never cultivate. If he had gotten the same opportunity as other cultivators, he might already be a conqueror right now.

"Young Master Shuangjian! The master wants you home to eat." They heard someone calling for the man while leaving.

The man couldn't hear the servant since he was lost in cultivation.

"Young Master, the master will be angry if you don't come back now, eat first and then you can come out to play after." The servant tried to drag the man away.

"There are some good seeds in this world." Niu Fen couldn't help but say.

"Good seeds might not sprout. There has never been a lack of genius." Li Qiye smiled.

"You're right, Young Master." Niu Fen nodded: "There are too many temptations and cultivators can't resist them either. Geniuses always enjoy success, not to mention greed and desire, just one failure can take them down forever."

“They need to be polished as well. Otherwise, they might be able to smoothly obtain dao fruits but not maintain their dao heart.” Li Qiye replied.

“What happens when dao lords and other top cultivators fail to maintain their dao heart? Isn’t that just their personal issue?” Baifeng said, believing that apex cultivators had incredible mental fortitude.

“A minor case is self-destruction, a worse case leads to great harm to the world.” Niu Fen said.

“It’s always the latter. Only the weak will suffer alone, the strong wield the power to commit evil.” Li Qiye said.

“That’s true.” Niu Fen nodded.

Baifeng found this comment reasonable as well.

Chapter 5543: Time Is Merciless

The Qin of Heavensearch was located in Momentous Frontier as well. It was a sizable clan with several hundred members. Perhaps when considering the side branches, it had a thousand members or so.

They could be considered nobility in the mortal world. However, back during the days of the thirteen continents, Heavensearch Sect had a total of four Immortal Monarchs.

Its fame echoed across Pure Continent - a sect coveted by many from all over the world.

During its prime, it had millions and millions of disciples spreading across countless kingdoms and minor sects. The Qin was a pillar with great authority then.

The past was long gone now, the same for the clan’s golden days. In fact, they had no idea of their ancestors’ illustrious success, that their clan once stood on top of the world.

Now, they were regional lords in Momentous Frontier - not quite at the bottom of the totem pole but far from being comparable to the Guardian Clan. The majority of them were merchants and farmers. Only a few were capable martial artists.

This was nothing in the grand scheme of things. Even a weak cultivation sect suffering a drastic decline could easily exterminate them.

This all changed with the birth of Qin Baifeng. It has been so long since they had someone capable of cultivating successfully, and perhaps eras since their last dragon lord. This immensely boosted the clan’s status and prestige.

Normally, cultivators would not linger in Momentous Frontier due to its culture regarding cultivation. There were too many shackles for cultivators in this place.

Nonetheless, mortals here still looked up to cultivators with envy and respect. To have a cultivator as part of the clan was a great honor.

Their bloodline had changed drastically and became mortal-like, no longer suitable for cultivation. Nonetheless, everyone hoped that their children could somehow cultivate. As for their future, that was up to their fortune alone. Only the Guardian Clan had an ancestral guidance explicitly forbidding cultivation.

The moment Baifeng was shown to be capable of cultivation, she became the family's jewel. When she became a dragon lord, the clan master position was given to her.

She was no different from an immortal in their eyes. Thus, her return was a monumental event.

The entire clan mobilized for the reception ceremony. When the group arrived, they saw everyone down on their knees, welcoming the arrival of the immortal.

Eyes were filled with reverence as they stared at the marvelous cultivator. She possessed both a kingdom-toppling beauty and a transcending aura. They believed that she was the fairest in the world.

Baifeng was sentimental. Her clan members knew nothing about their glorious past but she did, being a dragon lord and being exposed to the legends.

Various emotions and sentiments sprung up in her heart after returning to the place where she had grown up. She had ascended to great heights and saw the wonders of the world. Thus, the respect of the small clan, in reality, was just normal.

“Normal” was the polite way of putting it. Another dragon lord would think nothing of this. This was akin to a mortal looking down on a bunch of ants.

Although she had strong sentiments about this place, this could disappear with time.

“Time is merciless.” She murmured as she knew that this was inevitable. Her birthplace was both familiar and distant.

“Yes.” Li Qiye understood what she was talking about and responded: “Time is merciless indeed, it won’t be long until you won’t return again.”

This was rather frank but she knew that it was the truth. Her attachment decreased with each subsequent visit.

At the start of her training, she missed home and her clan. Eventually, her parents and siblings would grow old. The familiar faces would no longer be here in due time.

Given her current realm, she might have to go into isolated training for ten thousand years and would recognize no one upon returning. At the very least, this wasn’t the case right now.

“Emotions wane for those who walk through time.” Li Qiye said: “This is inevitable for those aiming for the peak, a hurdle that must be crossed.”

“What’s next when there is no attachment left?” She couldn’t help but ask.

“One can guard their dao heart as long as there is some warmth left.” Li Qiye said.

“Yes, the dao path is endless, one must warm themselves and not rely on the world to do so.” Niu Fen nodded.

He had lived for far longer than Qin Baifeng and had ample experience with this matter.

“If you cannot persevere, your dao heart will falter in the future. The dao path is longer than you can imagine, don’t take the good times for granted. Appreciate and cherish them, only then will you be able to walk forward.” Li Qiye said.

“Throughout the ages, overlords with a heart as tough as iron still fell into the darkness. The world could warm their heart no longer, neither did themselves.” Niu Fen said sentimentally.

Chapter 5544: I Want To Be An Immortal

“Young Noble, Senior, thank you and I will not forget your warning.” She heeded their warnings and took a deep breath, bowing her head in response.

She was merely sentimental about her diminishing feelings toward her own clan. The excitement and anticipation were no longer there.

After a hundred thousand years, this place would mean nothing to her - only that she was once born here. If she were fortunate enough to stand at the apex, she would become isolated from the mortal realm, severing all ties.

This process had both positive and negative aspects. The good allowed her to walk further, not stopping for anything. The negative was that her heart would grow cold and emotionless.

This happened to countless emperors and monarchs along with the legendary overlords. Due to their lifespan, even their sects and cultivator descendants became meaningless, let alone mortals.

A million years was only a short time for the overlords while the world would undergo drastic changes. Sects and kingdoms rose and fell within that period.

Once their last loved ones succumbed to old age, they would no longer have any connection to the world. When their dao heart became unstable, they would fall into the darkness and devour everything else including their homeland.

Qin Baifeng’s journey had only started. As she became stronger, she would lose connection to the Qin and Sunset Glow Valley. Eventually, this applied to the entire continent and more...

“Young Master, how did you keep moving forward?” Niu Fen couldn’t help but ask while on this topic.

This particular matter reminded him of his past, starting from the nine worlds to Eight Desolaces and finally, the immortal continent. He had experienced numerous goodbyes - a test for his dao heart each time.

Today, he had the qualification to ask about the future.

“It’s a personal adventure. To put it bluntly, one might be a dog but that’s not a reason to eat shit.” Li Qiye said.

“How vulgar.” Niu Fen didn’t know whether to laugh or cry while Baifeng turned slightly red.

The cloud, on the other hand, looked as if it was stroking its chin in ponderance.

As the group walked deeper into the clan, they saw beautiful decorations. The clan members immediately prostrated upon seeing them.

“Immortal Aunt.” One child said respectfully.

“Immortals.” Many prostrated and said.

“I kinda like the mortal world, this atmosphere.” Niu Fen enjoyed the moment.

“It’s not like you haven’t been worshipped before.” Li Qiye smiled.

“It’s different. If a cultivator kneels before me, the guy definitely has ulterior motives, wanting a merit law or a gift. If a dao lord or conqueror bows to me, they want to talk about my cultivation experience or want to team up to kill someone for a treasure, just an example.” Niu Fen laughed and said: “Mortals, on the other hand, worship earnestly without anything else in mind since they view us as immortals.”

“Makes sense. Then why don’t you stay here like the other emperors?” Li Qiye said.

“No way.” Niu Fen shook his head: “That’s really boring, the same as putting on shackles and being stuck here forever.”

“That’s why they’re amazing. They know all of this yet are still willing to stay as protectors.” Li Qiye smiled.

“Not for me, I prefer being a dao lord. These gods are almost slaves.” Niu Fen shook his head.

Li Qiye chuckled and didn’t dwell on this matter. There was nothing wrong with Niu Fen’s hesitation.

Powerful cultivators roamed the world untethered. Everything was within grasp and they could do whatever they wanted - at least in the eyes of the mortals.

Nonetheless, Space Dragon Emperor and the others willingly sacrificed their freedom for a noble goal.

The clan master visited the group to pay respect - a middle-aged man versed in martial arts and a hint of cultivation. He could be considered an expert in the mortal world. Baifeng had abdicated her position previously since it didn’t matter to her.

“Aunt Baifeng.” In terms of seniority, he was considered her nephew: “We had a poor harvest this year, the yield is half of last year.”

Although he had done a commendable job at managing the clan, he still showed respect by reporting this to his immortal aunt. It was rare for her to come back and she was the reason for their prosperity.

“A weak harvest is a common occurrence, next year will be better.” She casually remarked, not having an interest in such a trivial matter.

“Aunt Baifeng, something else is going on here, I’ve been wanting to report this to you.” He said.

“What is it?” She asked.

“The Deity of Harvest ensures a smooth cultivation and bountiful harvest so that everyone can have enough to eat.” He said.

“Right.” Baifeng agreed that this deity rewarded his worshippers in terms of weather and harvest.

“This has not been the case in the past two years, crops often wither and the harvest is increasingly poor. I’m afraid life would have been hard without our surplus storage.” He explained.

Baifeng frowned after hearing this and said: “Could it be that your offerings and prayers are without sincerity?”

“Aunt Baifeng, we did the same every year, always with respect and sincerity. I just get the feeling that the blessings of the deity have not been as widespread.” He explained.

“Impossible.” Niu Fen shook his head: “I can sense that the old geezers are still protecting Momentous Frontier.”

“How is the deity’s temple?” Baifeng asked.

“We offer daily and monthly ceremonies at the temple, always with the most devoted descendants. Nonetheless, I think there is some fading going on at the temple, not to mention another serious matter.” He answered.

“What is it?” She asked with a serious tone.

He hesitated, unable to find the words.

“Speak.” Her voice became stern enough to intimidate anyone.

The clan master naturally couldn’t handle the pressure emanating from a dragon lord.

Chapter 5545: Missing Rice Stalk

“Aunt Baifeng, the divine stalk is missing.” The clan master said anxiously.

“What? How could it disappear? Did you lose it or was it stolen?” Baifeng’s eyes narrowed.

“Who would dare to steal such an item, that’s a great act of disrespect. It just suddenly disappeared one day, a member witnessed it with their own eyes.” He said.

“Impossible.” She said.

“This might be the reason for the terrible harvests in the last two years.” He elaborated.

“Hmm, the stalk is the focus of the technique, why is it gone?” Niu Fen murmured.

He had observed the dao of Momentous Frontier before, wanting to understand the methods of the emperors.

“We, we don’t have an answer.” His anxiety grew.

They were mortals and had no understanding of this method. Moreover, they thought that this was a serious matter and didn't dare to let outsiders know. Otherwise, they might be accused of being sacrilegious.

Thus, they saw a savior in Qin Baifeng - there was nothing their immortal couldn't solve.

"How strange, we've always been devout followers of the Deity of Harvest." Baifeng pondered.

They had never done anything disrespectful to the deity. Moreover, what could a mortal do to actually insult an Immortal Emperor?

"Aunt Baifeng, please come take a look." He asked.

"Young Noble, Senior, please rest." Baifeng couldn't ignore her clan's request.

"We're going too." Li Qiye smiled and stood up.

"We don't have anything else to do anyway, let's see what the geezers are up to." Niu Fen was interested in this matter as well, curious how far these ancient emperors could go using this path.

The clan master was ecstatic to hear this. Of course, he had no idea of their cultivation, especially Li Qiye who resembled a mortal just like them.

However, his aunt was very respectful toward them. Therefore, it shouldn't be a problem for these immortals to solve their predicament.

He hurriedly led the way but in reality, Baifeng already knew the way. They crossed through farms and saw their condition - slightly worse than the fields found in the outside world.

This was unacceptable since Momentous Frontier was blessed with year-round perfect weather. Now, it seemed that they had been abandoned by the deity.

The main temple was massive and extravagant because the Qin was a large clan with ample resources, at least in the mortal world.

They saw a statue of the Deity of Harvest inside the temple as well - one far more magnificent than the one seen in the shrine by the village. However, the divine rice stalk was nowhere to be seen.

Mortals considered the stalk to be a symbol of harvest. As for cultivators, they knew that this was part of the technique - a vessel to accumulate faith and worship.

Its absence meant that the clan was no longer being blessed.

"What happened?" She stared at the statue and could see a fading color due to a lack of divinity. This wasn't because of her clan not taking care of the statue.

As long as there were sincere prayers, Immortal Emperor Di Yu would be able to convert them into divine power. She knew that the clan didn't abandon their rites and offerings, so this was puzzling.

"Strange." Niu Fen said: "The dao is still there but not the old geezer's divinity? Is he just lacking power right now?"

Someone such as Immortal Emperor Di Yu could exert his divinity throughout Momentous Frontier after garnering enough power of faith.

This shouldn't be happening because this was a dao pact - an exchange of faith for divinity. This was the whole meaning behind the deities' existence.

"Try bowing." Li Qiye frowned and said.

Qin Baifeng focused up and tidied her outfit before bowing with reverence. This offering from a six-fruit dragon lord was rather effective.

"Buzz." Divinity appeared on the statue again and flowed to the side - the location of the missing stalk.

However, a sharp and bright aura resembling a sword manifested into reality. It seemed to be infected by darkness, twisting it into a dark mist.

"Whoosh!" This second presence immediately crushed the gathered divinity.

"What was that?" Niu Fen tried to scan but the thing had disappeared from sight.

He became emotional and said: "This aura isn't from this place."

"Is that what destroyed the stalk?" Baifeng had never seen or heard of anything like this before.

Li Qiye extended his hand and pinched two fingers - possessing full control over heaven and earth.

A strand of energy appeared, struggling to break free and seemingly screaming. Alas, this was futile.

"What is this?" Niu Fen came closer for a better look.

Chapter 5546: Momentous Frontier's Secrets

Niu Fen looked first before touching the gray aura, causing it to ignite in response. It possessed the same edge as a legendary divine blade, capable of cutting the stars.

He reacted quickly and erected a barrier. Nonetheless, blood still streamed from his finger.

"What the hell?" He became startled since a single flash managed to injure him.

Remember, he was famous among the apex cultivators for possessing absolute defense. Few things in this world could actually injure him.

"This thing is..." Li Qiye took his time analyzing the mysterious aura.

"Do you recognize it, Young Master?" Niu Fen was awfully curious.

"Quite similar, but nothing certain." Li Qiye shook his head: "In theory, this shouldn't be possible."

Having said that, he pinched harder and destroyed the strand of aura. His dao flame left nothing behind.

"Now let's look for the technique." Li Qiye said before channeling chaos true energy.

His pulsing dao summoned dao laws that gathered together into the form of a chapter. They were everywhere in this region - perhaps making up the very fabrics of reality.

"This is Momentous Dao." Niu Fen commented.

"Clank! Clank!" The dao laws twisted together for a final derivation, taking the form of a divine stalk.

"It's back!" The clan master of the Qin was jubilated.

"Too early for celebration." Li Qiye shook his head.

The recently created stalk withered and lost its divinity. Leaves scattered to the ground.

"Hmm, didn't you destroy the evil aura just now, Young Noble?" Baifeng didn't expect this.

"The problem is at the source." Li Qiye said: "Momentous Dao is still around along with its chapter and runes. However, your Deity of Harvest's dao source, the thing used to store your prayers, seems to be weakened."

"Yes, the stalks are just physical manifestations, I do say that it's a good symbol." Niu Fen said.

"So the source or in this case, the roots are weakened?" Baifeng asked.

"Yes, just not as serious as this particular temple. The deterioration makes it so that the divinity can't reach all temples, that's why you have lost the blessing." Li Qiye nodded.

"Do you know why this is happening? Something is wrong with the deity?" She took a deep breath.

"Hard to say, few can actually suppress the old geezer..." Niu Fen shook his head: "Moreover, there are more deities in this region. Their strength alone is incredible, let alone this united front in your land. Fighting one deity means fighting all of them."

By this point, the selfless cultivators have derived Momentous Dao to the limit, culminating in the formation of an incredible tablet as the foundation for this land. They became one after taking the form of deities - capable of fighting together.

Although this land was meant for mortals and didn't compete with the rest of the continent, this didn't mean that it was weak.

If someone had schemed against the Deity of Harvest, this could start a war capable of affecting the entire continent. This didn't seem to be the case.

"Let's go look at the root to see the problem." Li Qiye said.

"Haha, if we can find the root, the old geezer will be there too, we can just ask him then." Niu Fen laughed.

"Then you lead the way?" Li Qiye stared at him.

"Young Master, please don't embarrass me." Niu Fen smiled awkwardly: "I have a tiny bit of knowledge of their dao but we've lost contact after their transformation. They don't want to divulge their secrets to an outsider such as myself. Finding the actual root will take some time but it's different for you, Young Master. You just need to calculate a little bit and will learn all of Momentous Dao, the old geezer won't be able to hide."

"Getting rather cheeky now, aren't you?" Li Qiye playfully smacked the back of Niu Fen's head.

If others knew of his status as an apex dao lord, they would be astounded while watching him being treated like a junior.

Nonetheless, Niu Fen took pride in this. Others weren't qualified to be this close to Li Qiye.

"We're going." Li Qiye smiled and left the temple.

He took one step forward and derived the mysteries of Momentous Dao. Laws appeared on the ground beneath his path.

"Amazing, they must have tried so hard. Every inch of land and space has been blessed and refined with their power and dao. No wonder why it's so effective." Niu Fen stared at the exquisite runes in astonishment.

The deities didn't trick the inhabitants of the land. They merely used the power of faith to continue protecting the land.

Chapter 5547: Not Responsible

Sensing Momentous Dao was something beyond the ability of mortals and regular cultivators. Only characters such as Li Qiye and Niu Fen could do so.

The entire frontier was created by this dao; the creators then transformed into deities. The dao alone served as the land and the deities' foundation. Living beings and the deities were connected through the dao.

This made the land impregnable and fertile; disasters simply didn't happen here. Of course, there was no free lunch in this world. The payments were faith and prayers - something crucial to fuel this process.

"They knew this wasn't an easy road yet they still embarked, a heroic feat indeed." Li Qiye said softly.

In reality, these cultivators didn't need faith to grow stronger. They had the choice to continue cultivating - the world was their oyster.

Momentous Frontier would become their prison in a sense. Only a few were willing to accomplish such a selfless goal.

Cultivators had protected the world in the past, whether it be the previous epochs or the current. However, they rarely focused on bettering the lives of living beings, especially mortals.

Protectors could always get tired of their task and move on. For example, Immortal Emperors left the nine worlds for the next journey, the same for the dao lords in Eight Desolaces. Immortal Emperor Di Yu and his comrades lacked the same freedom, and this was a conscious decision.

The group followed the extending runes and eventually the remote region full of beautiful forests and majestic mountain ranges. Each grass and tree was brimming with life.

They stopped before a peak with a pinnacle surrounded by fog and clouds.

"Right here." Li Qiye glanced up and said: "The roots of harvest and the deity's divinity originate from this place before spreading to the rest of Momentous Frontier."

“Yes.” Niu Fen also sensed the peak’s majestic power.

“Open up, old geezer!” He shouted before raising his hand and summoning profound dao laws to knock on the peak.

“Boom!” Bright light circulated and took the form of a large gate. It also repelled Niu Fen’s rude knocking back to him since the peak was protected by numerous layers of barriers.

“This is his manor.” Niu Fen said.

“The abode of the Deity of Harvest.” Baifeng murmured.

Although she didn’t have the same devotion as the mortals, she still came from Momentous Frontier. Her family worshipped this deity, so she also had a special love for him.

Alas, the peak became silent and the deity didn’t appear.

“This old geezer is putting up an act.” Niu Fen knocked three more times, causing the entire peak to shake.

Given his power, he could uproot the entire mountain in spite of its barriers. Of course, he exercised restraint.

“Hey! My Young Master is here, come out and greet him already!” He shouted.

The Qin Clan Master’s jaw nearly dropped to the ground. This was his first time seeing something so powerful.

Alas, no one came out to greet them.

“Something’s wrong.” Niu Fen frowned because given the emperor’s power, he would certainly know about the guests and open the entrance.

“Not home.” Li Qiye shook his head.

“Where is he then?” Baifeng asked.

“Young Master, would you like me to break down the door so we can take a look?” Niu Fen said eagerly, wanting to try breaking the tough barriers.

“We’re here as guests, not fighters.” Li Qiye shook his head and placed his palm on the entrance. His interference caused the runes of Momentous Dao to surface.

“It’s amazing how far they managed to derive this dao, anyone can cultivate it.” Niu Fen took a look and said.

“Because it’s meant for the mortal world.” Li Qiye said.

“Young Master, does this have any relationship with the Seven Laws of the Golden Age? Can you perform a quick derivation?” Niu Fen asked.

“Two branches of the same thing, derived differently by future generations.” Li Qiye explained: “Those who aim for the dao will see them as the seven laws. As for the ones here who saw the tablet, they established this version instead.”

“I see, then I won’t be the one to bear responsibility. I believe the seven laws started with Duck Egg. Of course, some had done research before him but he was the first to popularize it, and then Blessed. So if there are mistakes and misinterpretation of the original intention, that’s their fault.” Niu Fen chuckled.

He continued on without holding back: “This six continents thing is even more distant from our time. Mistakes lead to more mistakes in interpreting the dao source and now, we have the old geezers coming up with another path with Momentous Dao.”

Chapter 5548: Seizing Merits

“I’m hearing a lot of critiques but I’ve never seen you train before.” Li Qiye glared at him and said.

“Young Master, it’s not my fault, I was busy cultivating the eighteen solutions taught by you, no time to learn about the dao source or whatever.” Niu Fen protested.

“That’s an entirely different issue. If you had only studied the eighteen solutions, how did you get your dao fruits?” Li Qiye asked.

“Hehehe.” Niu Fen smiled awkwardly but he had thick skin and said: “It’s not my fault, Young Master. Those guys back then got all the good stuff, taking branches and fruits. I didn’t do anything but enjoyed the moment, I just made some slight adjustments to the comprehension method of the mantras.”

“So you’re actually one of the first to pass them down.” Li Qiye said.

“Hehe, not me.” Niu Fen shook his head repeatedly: “Maybe the first to explore and ponder them. As for why the insights were lost, I don’t have an answer since I spent most of my time in the sect.”

“I’m telling you, blame Duck Egg, he’s the first dao lord. Or maybe that Puresun brat, he was the one running everywhere to preach the dao. And as for these continents, I don’t have anything to do with this, it was like this when I got here.” Niu Fen said: “But to be perfectly honest, if we’re gonna blame anyone, it has to be that brat Blessed. In my opinion, he purposely did this since the seven mantras or whatever didn’t exist during my era.”

Having said that, he prolonged the inflection of his voice and said: “Yes, that’s it, the little scoundrel, modifying the way to cultivate with the dao source. Now, only mortals cultivate the seven laws, no other cultivators.”

“It’s because all of you tried to seize merits.” Li Qiye said.

“Sigh, Young Master, not me because I remembered your teachings.” Niu Fen said: “Can’t you see that I have cultivated the eighteen solutions to the limit?”

“Fine, I don’t blame you due to your talent because, at the very least, modifying the source requires your current attainments.” Li Qiye smiled.

“Exactly.” Niu Fen nodded repeatedly: “Let me tell you all the suspects. First is Duck Egg, then in my opinion, Puresun is next. Later on, that ferocious lady must have had a part too, no one dared to provoke her back then. Whatever she said went, no one else had much to say. In the end, I don’t know what the original intention or the proper method is at all, I’ve never seen or touched it, let alone taken matters into my own hands.”

“Is that so?” Li Qiye glared at him after three consecutive denials.

“Hehe, of course.” Niu Fen said before gesturing with his thumb and index finger together: “Well, okay, I glanced at it a little bit, just this tiny bit.”

“Fine, whatever.” Li Qiye smiled and pressed his palm forward.

“Clank! Clank! Clank!” The laws of Momentous Dao twisted together and then loosened like a tightly clenched lock that was suddenly released.

“Creak.” The heavy gates opened, revealing the grotto inside.

Soft rays emanated from the interior and made people feel a surge of vitality spreading within their body. It was as if seeds were taking root and sprouting to life.

“Are you home, old geezer?” Niu Fen shouted.

Alas, he didn’t garner a response.

The group came inside and saw an exquisite paradise. Life force echoed like green waves. Flowers and trees were gestated by immense spirit energy. Just one strand of essence oozing out to the outside world could result in a bountiful harvest.

However, no one seemed to be here so the group moved forward. They reached the center and saw a pond with a golden liquid.

The mysteries of Momentous Dao constantly evolved within the water, turning this into a container for the dao. A rice stalk grew exceptionally tall in the middle.

The ones seen in the various shrines and temples were around three feet tall. This one looked like a tree and was full of grains the size of elongated fruits. They glowed golden, giving the impression of a bountiful harvest.

The radiance from the grains harmonized with the golden liquid. Who knows what was the original source of the golden hue? Perhaps they complemented each other from the start.

The power of faith and worship allowed this stalk to grow tall and awe-inspiring. It channeled its power into the pond and from that, Momentous Dao spread to the rest of the realm.

“This is it.” Niu Fen said.

“The Root of Harvest.” Baifeng murmured while sensing the power of faith gathered from everyone in Momentous Frontier. They prayed and gave offerings for good weather and a fine harvest.

“This thing again.” Niu Fen noticed something - a gray aura infecting the stalk.

It entwined the stalk and caused withering and decay. Branches and grain fell into the pool, dissolving into nothingness.

“Where is the old geezer?” Niu Fen wondered.

“Did someone infiltrate the grotto?” Baifeng became anxious.

“No sign of intrusion and fighting. He left on his own volition.” Li Qiye shook his head.

“Out of Momentous Frontier?” Baifeng became emotional.

“No, still here.” Li Qiye said.

“Something must have happened. Given their ambitious and noble goal, they won’t ignore problems or give up halfway. Their dao heart is indomitable.” Niu Fen said.

Chapter 5549: Not From This World

Li Qiye grasped the aura and skillfully extracted it. It unraveled like a cocoon around the divine stalk despite attempting to resist.

“Zzz...” The strands struggled in futility.

“Clank!” Once the process was finished, the strands came together and suddenly erupted, looking like an octopus attacking with its tentacles.

It released a beam of light that exploded into countless swords. Each could pierce through everything in the world; no treasure or barrier could hope to stop it.

“Watch out!” Qin Baifeng shouted because the sharp rays could turn Li Qiye into a sieve.

He didn’t panic and raised his finger. “Pop!” Time and space around him became infinitely slow.

The eruption of power became frozen as well - looking like a still image. He then waved his hand and summoned a dao flame to burn them.

Right when the aura was destroyed, a bright slash cut through space and appeared near Li Qiye, aiming to dismember him.

“Watch out!” Niu Fen’s expression soured. This ambush startled him because it was on a whole new level compared to the light eruption earlier. This could cut his shell and him down as well.

Nothing in the world was sharper than this unexpected attack. “Clank!” However, Li Qiye managed to grasp it with two fingers, fully immobilizing it.

“What is this?” Niu Fen was serious for once. Just looking at this thing alone hurt his eyes despite his current cultivation. He felt that in due time, it could blind him.

“We’ll see how much longer you can hide.” Li Qiye added strength to his finger.

“Zzz...” It struggled and made the group feel that it was alive, seemingly screaming in agony before destruction.

Nothing else came after this thing was destroyed.

“Still keeping cool, I see.” Li Qiye blew and caused the particles to disperse.

“Where the hell did this come from? Another foreign entity.” Niu Fen said in disbelief.

“Yes.” Li Qiye nodded.

Niu Fen glanced at the divine stalk and said: “Is Momentous Frontier a target now? A nefarious scheme is unraveling? Hmm, are the old geezers okay?”

“They’re fine for now, Momentous Dao is still complete.” Li Qiye said.

“Where is the Deity of Harvest now?” Baifeng murmured, wondering about the current situation.

‘Just a matter of time, can’t hide forever.’ Li Qiye sighed and thought to himself before channeling chaos true energy.

The gray and withered branches were bathed in a golden flow again. Everyone sensed divinity coursing through the stalk; the power of the deity could spread unobstructed once more.

“Let’s go, the issue isn’t here, this is only a minor spread.” Li Qiye glanced at the stalk and left the grotto with the group.

“To the tablet now?” Niu Fen asked.

“I heard there are many forbidden seals around the tablet, that area is a forbidden ground since it’s the foundation of our frontier.” Baifeng said.

“I know.” Niu Fen smiled: “The worm and ox toiled for this sake. Daoflame Dual Lords helped out too for the sealing.”

“Worm and ox? Do you mean Space Dragon Emperor?” Baifeng became curious. Calling the emperor a “worm” seemed rather disrespectful.

Space Dragon Emperor and Ox-dragon Ancestor were pioneers of the current dragon lord system. They were revered by the entire cultivation world; dragon lords viewed them as patriarchs.

Without their revolutionary achievements, Heavenly Sovereign would have been the highest realm for those who couldn’t become conquerors. They would have no way of competing against dao lords and conquerors.

“Who else?” Niu Fen laughed and said: “I do admit that the worm had changed from being a lousy cultivator to a benevolent hero. That’s like the sun rising from the west.”

“He will beat you up after hearing this.” Li Qiye smiled.

“As if I’m afraid of him, a powerful worm is still just a worm. Others might not know what he is but I do, I’m gonna make him call out for his parents just like how it was in the past.” Niu Fen immediately protested and declared with confidence.

Qin Baifeng became emotional. Although she didn’t know Niu Fen’s background, this was someone clearly on the same level as Space Dragon Emperor - something truly incredible.

“You’ve reached your true self but he did too.” Li Qiye smiled.

“That’s alright, our history together doesn’t change.” Niu Fen gloated.

Chapter 5550: Monkeys Reign In The Absence Of Tigers

Someone had been waiting by the grotto’s entrance and bowed after seeing the group.

“Fairy Qin.” The old man said respectfully. He wore a gray robe and had a vigorous aura - a Heavenly Sovereign. This was a rare sight in Momentous Frontier since no capable cultivator would want to stay here.

The land became a prison of sorts. Outside meant freedom while staying implied following certain rules and laws.

“Protector Guo, long time no see.” Baifeng recognized him.

Guo Cheng was a vagabond cultivator in Momentous Frontier, belonging to a group that wanted to stay here to protect the land. They weren’t strong enough to obtain a deity spot like the founders.

“It’s good to see you again, Fairy Qin. Otherwise, I wouldn’t know what to do.” He heaved a sigh of relief before looking at the group.

Li Qiye looked average and he couldn’t notice anything special. Niu Fen was using a stealth technique as well. The cloud turned out to be the strangest entity.

Nonetheless, Baifeng was a dragon lord so it was understandable for her to have interesting companions.

Although he had cultivated for a long time, the gap between him and Baifeng was insurmountable. Thus, she was indeed a fairy descending from the firmaments.

“What’s the matter, Protector Guo?” Baifeng had a serious expression since she could see that something was amiss in her home.

“Fairy Qin, please deliver us from this disaster.” Guo Cheng bowed and spoke with a heavy heart.

“What disaster?” Baifeng asked, wondering about the deities’ ever-present protection.

“You have just returned, Fairy Qin, so you might not be aware of the disasters happening all over, terrible harvests, illness, and livestock going crazy and dying.” Guo Cheng said: “This is still limited in scale but people are suffering.”

“What is going on, the deities are always watching over us?” Baifeng responded.

“A few places are no longer enjoying the deities’ blessings, whether it be the Deity of Harvest, Deities of Cleansing, and Deity of Livestock. Villagers and animals are dying.” He said.

“Prayers and offerings didn’t stop, correct?” She asked.

“Fairy Qin, everyone’s faith has always been strong due to the tradition instilled upon us since youth, we never dared to show a sliver of disrespect.” He said.

“Your cultivation is strong enough to deal with this, right?” She asked.

He smiled wryly and let out a sigh before responding: “Fairy, I have refined some pills. That can’t solve the terrible harvests but even sick villagers aren’t getting better after eating them.”

“Your pills aren’t working on mortals?” Niu Fen became curious.

Pills refined by a sovereign were extremely valuable. They were virtually immortal medicines when used on mortals, capable of healing any ailment.

A mortal with serious diseases could become vigorous again and gain a longer lifespan. Limbs and flesh could grow again.

“It’s like a plague. It started in several areas and now, it is out of control, I’m so glad to see you back.” He said emotionally: “Since my pills did not work, I also prayed sincerely but never got an answer.”

“Oh? The old geezers aren’t responding to you? They’re still here though.” Niu Fen interjected.

“This lowly one does not know.” He answered: “Lands are withering and if this continues, all of Momentous Frontier will be affected.”

With that, he prostrated and asked: “Fairy, please save us.”

“Young Noble, what is your opinion on this?” Baifeng didn’t know how to start because the deities were far stronger than her. There was something else beyond the surface.

“There’s no way they’re turning a blind eye to this.” Niu Fen said.

“We will check.” Li Qiye smiled.

“Protector Guo, please lead the way. The young noble wishes to investigate.” Baifeng ordered.

Guo Cheng obeyed while feeling puzzled about her respectful attitude toward Li Qiye. Was this ordinary guy stronger than Fairy Qin?

“Oh, there is something else.” He said along the way: “People from West Bank are here.”

“West Bank Imperial Clan?” Baifeng didn’t expect this: “Why are they here?”

This clan was prestigious and influential in Dao Domain. Some said that they owned half of Dao Domain. Of course, this was an overstatement but it still properly conveyed their influence.

“I do not know, a general and his men are here to try to deal with the disasters but it’s not effective.” He said.

“They shouldn’t be here, Momentous Frontier is not part of their jurisdiction or any outsider for that matter.” She said.

“I said that too but I’m just a lowly cultivator who couldn’t speak up in the presence of a general.” Guo Cheng said: “I think they might start camping here if the deities do not appear.”

“I see...” Baifeng murmured and thought that this was a terrible development. Momentous Frontier was meant for mortals, not cultivators.

“Monkeys reign in the absence of tigers.” Niu Fen smiled and said: “Everyone is in Immortal Dao City so this imperial clan gets to rule Dao Domain, hilarious.”

“Senior, have you heard the news of Immortal Dao City closing its gates?” Guo Cheng asked humbly.

“The gates are closed?” Niu Fen didn’t expect this.

“Do you know why?” Baifeng asked immediately.