ETERNAL SK 481

Chapter 481: Frightening

The battle on the Foundation Establishment battlefield had already stopped.

The Foundation Establishment Cultivators of Blood Crow Palace and the other four major sects were scared out of their wits by Su Zimo's methods and did not dare to advance.

Clang! Clang!

Su Zimo beckoned gently and the 18 flying swords that were streaking around the Foundation Establishment battlefield returned to him, hovering above his head and buzzing loudly.

"Candlelight Sword Formation, condense!"

Right after, the 18 flying swords gathered together with their tips pointing outwards in unison, forming a gigantic sword-shaped circular disk. 18 rays of sword qi were released like a blazing sun and was extremely dazzling!

"Kill!"

Propping the seal with his left hand, Su Zimo held his saber with his right and flapped his spirit wings, charging forward with the Candlelight Sword Formation above him.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

Flying swords tore through the air one after another, sharp and dense as raindrops.

Spirit arts exploded, covering the skies as they arrived.

Su Zimo was calm and seemed composed.

With his spirit wings coupled with Divine Steed Fleeting alongside his spirit perception that was gained from cultivating the Mystic Classic of the Twelve Demon Kings of the Great Wilderness, his movements were unpredictable.

At times, he would be light as a feather and at others, he would be swift at lightning – no one could read him at all.

Shifting nimbly in the air, his tendons and bones constricted and expanded, allowing him to shock everyone by producing motions that were far from ordinary!

Like anacondas, snakes, apes and horses, Su Zimo keep closing in on the distance between him and the Golden Cores.

"You..."

A late-stage Golden Core looked at Su Zimo who was charging at him and his eyes were widened in disbelief.

Was that even a human?

He could not imagine how a human could contort their bodies to that extent and dodge such an intense flurry of attacks while rushing over without any injury!

He no longer had the chance to think about it anymore.

Swoosh!

Su Zimo raised his saber instantly!

Countercurrent surged forth.

After entering Extreme Foundation Establishment, Su Zimo's spirit energy grew much richer and he could not release saber forces in succession.

That Golden Core was shocked and found himself having difficulty breathing, as though a surging wave was rushing at him. Thunder sounded inside his ears and the tide arrived almost instantly.

"Go!"

This man was a late-stage Golden Core after all and composed himself swiftly. Maneuvering his flying sword above his head, he circulated his Golden Core and spirit energy gushed out!

No matter what, the strength of a late-stage Golden Core was not something a Foundation Establishment Cultivator could handle!

As long as he could withstand a move or two till the attacks of the others arrived, his enemy would naturally be trapped.

Su Zimo smiled faintly with a hint of ridicule in his eyes.

To him, the way the Golden Core changed tactics was full of flaws.

Su Zimo's seemingly unstoppable saber suddenly stopped and was only an inch away from the man's flying sword.

Swash!

Swinging his wrist, the angle of his slash changed.

Suddenly, the massive blade of Blood Quencher turned extremely flexible, like ripples on the surface of water. It wrapped around the flying sword and sliced the person's throat gently.

Right after that insane toughness, it turned extremely flexible.

There was no sluggishness at all and the process was smooth as water!

That person's eyes dimmed and a gash appeared on his throat.

The next moment, his head was lopped into the air as blood gushed out in a terrifying manner like a fountain!

Melee combat was the most dangerous and one would be dead with a single misstep!

Su Zimo had been through countless battles in his cultivation journey and he was extremely experienced.

While the strength of late-stage and perfected Golden Cores was strong and could even injure or threaten his life, even the physique of a perfected Golden Core could not match up to him!

That was an advantage he had that could make up for his inferior strength.

As long as he closed the distance between them, even perfected Golden Cores could not escape death!

Die Yue had once told Su Zimo that demonic cultivators are the best at killing people above their levels.

That was the logic in that statement.

After killing someone, Su Zimo did not have to pause at all as he used the Candlelight Sword Formation and Coiling Dragon Seal to smash against some incoming flying swords and spirit arts from early and mid-stage Golden Cores.

At the same time, he dodged the attacks of late-stage and perfected Golden Cores, fleeing away to kill at the other side.

A Golden Core could not react in time and was closed in by Su Zimo who raised his Coiling Dragon Seal to smash down on the former's head violently!

"Pfft!"

The person's head was smashed and his entire body ripped into pieces with fresh blood flowing everywhere – he died on the spot.

Swerving within the crowd, Su Zimo did not bother to fight against late-stage and perfected Golden Cores forcibly at all. The moment he missed an attack, he would flee instantly without lingering.

Even when dozens of Golden Cores attacked at the same time, they could not keep Su Zimo to a single spot.

A moment later, Su Zimo was only filled with a couple more superficial wounds that healed within the blink of an eye.

However, more than ten Golden Cores on the side of Blood Crow Palace had already died!

Everyone was getting more fearful.

This man was way too frightening!

He already possessed the capability to kill Golden Cores without even forming a core of his own.

Furthermore, he was battling dozens of Golden Cores and yet, instead of being disadvantaged, he was slowly controlling the situation!

This man looked to be in his twenties - how did he possess such terrifying combat talent?

"Kill!"

Seizing an opportunity, Su Zimo took a few strides forward and arrived before Sima Zhi. Lifting his Coiling Dragon Seal, he smashed it down at the latter's head!

The Coiling Dragon Seal shone with a bright golden light and let out a thunderous bang as it landed.

Boom!

The seal landed with a frightening aura!

Suddenly, a vicious glint shone in Sima Zhi's eyes as he said icily, "I've been waiting for you for a long time!"

Swoosh!

Sima Zhi circulated his Golden Core to its limits and a phenomenon suddenly appeared behind him.

Searing flames burned more than a hundred feet tall, letting out a scorching heat. Swiftly, he engulfed Su Zimo with a blazing momentum!

It was a Golden Core phenomenon!

The reason why Sima Zhi endured till this point was because he wanted to kill Su Zimo thoroughly with his Golden Core phenomenon!

However, Su Zimo did not avoid nor dodge as his bloodline raced. He pushed down his blinding Coiling Dragon Seal violently like it was a blazing sun!

"You must have a death wish!"

Sima Zhi roared and his Golden Core phenomenon intensified.

Boom!

The Coiling Dragon Seal collided against the power of the Golden Core phenomenon and a deafening bang was produced as their powers ran rampant!

The instant of the collision, the momentum of the flames was actually repressed by the Coiling Dragon Seal!

Since he was extremely close to the sea of flames, Su Zimo could only grit his teeth and endure the incoming blaze. He channeled his bloodline and spirit energy to fight against it repeatedly.

Both sides exerted their strength!

The Coiling Dragon Seal was less than an inch away from Sima Zhi's head but it could not go down further due to the obstruction of the Golden Core phenomenon.

A moment later, a gigantic flame burned over, engulfing Su Zimo's arm completely.

The fire sizzled.

In an instant, Su Zimo's arm was charred and his flesh ripped apart in a terrifying manner!

Sighing internally, Su Zimo withdrew himself and retreated.

It was no wonder why Golden Core phenomenons were the strongest techniques available to Golden Cores.

Even with his connate spirit weapon and tsunami bloodline, he could not manage to break through the defenses of the Golden Core phenomenon.

Swiftly, Su Zimo avoided the attacks of many Golden Cores and escaped.

His arm was still burning with fire and his flesh was already in a bloodied mess!

There was no way to purge Golden Core phenomenons except for extreme means!

"Haha!"

Sima Zhi laughed loudly. "Sima Zhi, your arm is already crippled!"

"Not necessarily,"

Su Zimo harrumphed coldly and took a deep breath of air. The spirit sea in his dantian roared and his bloodline surged, cruising through his limbs towards his injured arm.

Clack!

The flames extinguished and smoke billowed.

"Hmm?"

The cultivators watched with widened eyes.

The next moment, something even more frightening happened!

The charred black flesh on Su Zimo's arm fell off gradually and fresh, tender meat started growing with a shiny luster!

It was an uproar!

Chapter 482: Great Qian Empire

"Father, are you really going to just sit by idly and watch?"

Ji Yaoxue had a blaming look in her eyes the way she looked at the Emperor of Great Zhou. The assertiveness in her eyes was overwhelming and she already possessed a sort of dominance that was unique to the emperor!

"First, Su Zimo is my lifesaving benefactor. Putting the past aside, even in the ancient battlefield this time round, I would have died in the hands of Jun Hao and the others if it wasn't for him!"

"Second, he's the number one Weapon Refinement Master of Great Zhou and would definitely become a Great Weapon Refinement Master in the future with limitless accomplishments."

"Third, and most importantly, he has unlocked nine spirit meridians and has reached the legendary Extreme Foundation Establishment realm. This is the second person in history who has done so apart from the Human Emperor! Is a paragon as such not worthy of the Great Zhou's attention?" Ji Yaoxue's three sentences caused the emperor to turn entirely silent.

In reality, the third point was still the one that moved the emperor the most.

If he could take an Extreme Foundation Establishment Cultivator under his wing, there was a huge possibility that the Great Zhou Dynasty could one day defeat all the other three dynasties and reign over the entire North Region of Tianhuang Mainland!

However, Blood Crow Palace's Lord was from the witch race, one of the Primordial Nine Races.

If he dealt with this wrongly, it wouldn't be impossible for the entire Great Zhou Dynasty to be destroyed into ruins, let alone rule over the North Region of Tianhuang Mainland.

More than 10,000 years ago, a massive entity stood on this piece of land... known as the Great Qian Empire!

The title of an empire was only given if one could rule over all the dynasties and vassal states of a single region in Tianhuang Mainland!

The might of the Great Qian Empire was far greater than the current Great Zhou Dynasty and its territory was vaster.

There were even multiple super sects of Tianhuang Mainland within the territory of the Great Qian Empire. Even just within the Buddhist monasteries, two of them resided in the Great Qian Empire!

The Dao of Buddhism was glorious in the Great Qian Empire.

However, it was unfortunate that a catastrophe arrived.

Almost overnight, the Great Qian Empire was dismantled and even its capital was turned into ruins.

Because of that, the North Region of Tianhuang Mainland fell into chaos and the flames of war raged everywhere. Devastation spread and millions of lives were lost with corpses scattered all over the place.

From then on, the Great Qian Empire disappeared with the winds!

The place was in chaos and many vied for supremacy.

Four great vassal states conquered many places and rose swiftly, turning into the Great Zhou, Great Shang, Great Xia and Great You dynasties of the North Region of Tianhuang Mainland today.

In other words, the four dynasties were established on the ruins of the Great Qian Empire!

The progenitor of that catastrophe was one of the Primordial Nine Races!

The patriarch of the Great Zhou Dynasty has lived for more than 10,000 years and personally witnessed the destruction of a great empire. As such, he viewed the Primordial Nine Races with a sense of trepidation.

As a Dharma Characteristic expert and a Dao Lord, it wasn't difficult for the patriarch to come forth and take down Blood Crow Palace's Lord who was at Void Reversion.

However, if he were to incur the wrath of terrifying existences such as the mighty figures or patriarchs of the witch race...

Even if there were ten Great Zhou Dynasties, they would all have to be destroyed!

The battle was turning more intense and things were not looking good on the side of Ethereal Peak; it was also difficult for Su Zimo to hold the fort singlehandedly.

No matter how strong he was, he could not affect the direction of victory for the Nascent Soul battlefield and as such, he could not decide the fate for Ethereal Peak!

Ji Yaoxue was anxious. When she saw her father remaining silent, as though he was reminiscing about something, she could not help but say, "Father, what are you hesitating for? If you can't make a decision, how about sending a message to the patriarch of Great Zhou and ask him to make one?"

Returning to his senses, the emperor shook his head and replied firmly, "The patriarch will definitely not agree to this."

"How do you know if you hadn't tried?"

She looked at her father without blinking.

The emperor could clearly sense the anxiousness and worry within Ji Yaoxue's heart. However, she was trying her best to control herself and she wasn't offensive through her words either.

He sighed internally.

In truth, among the younger generation, the one who resembled him the most and had the most potential to be the emperor was not the many princes, but this daughter of his.

However, Ji Yaoxue was a woman and could not inherit his legacy.

"I'll admit that Su Zimo is an unprecedented paragon who managed to reach the Extreme Foundation Establishment realm, second only to the Human Emperor. His future accomplishments are unpredictable, but..."

The emperor changed the topic and said deeply, "Su Zimo is about to die and he has no future. As such, what accomplishments do we have to speak of? This time round, both Ethereal Peak and Su Zimo are stuck in this calamity and I can't think of any way in which Ethereal Peak is able to break out of this situation!"

Ji Yaoxue said in a slight huff, "Nothing is absolute."

The emperor replied grimly, "If... if Su Zimo manages to tide through this calamity, then..."

He did not continue but merely raised his head and looked at Ji Yaoxue deeply.

At that moment, he made a decision in his mind.

If Su Zimo could survive this calamity, he would go against all odds and pass the throne down to Ji Yaoxue!

On the other side of the forest.

"There's no chance left,"

Gu Xi shook her head. "Since that person didn't come, it's over for Ethereal Peak."

"Auntie Gu, what other way is there to save him?" Demoness Ji frowned deeply.

"I'm at late-stage Nascent Soul and even if I step in, the most I can do is help stabilize the Nascent Soul battlefield. However, the old beast of Ethereal Peak up above the clouds can no longer hold on,"

Gu Xi replied regrettably, "It's a pity that as the second person in history to reach the Extreme Foundation Establishment realm, Su Zimo is about to die without the chance to grow further."

Demoness Ji's eyes dimmed.

Gu Xi sighed. "The impression left on the cultivation world by that catastrophe 10,000 years ago is way too deep. No cultivator or sect is willing to make an enemy as strong as the witch race just for the sake of Ethereal Peak!"

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Beneath Ethereal Peak, blood flowed in rivers and the corpses were stacked like mountains.

On the Golden Core battlefield, Su Zimo made use of his strong physique and terrifying movement techniques to sustain in the fights continuously, ensuring that they did not lose.

However, Ethereal Peak was already completely defeated on the Nascent Soul battlefield!

There were more than a hundred Nascent Souls but more than half of them had already died. The remaining Nascent Souls were wounded and could only struggle to defend while being steadily defeated.

It was only a matter of time before Ethereal Peak was annihilated!

The situation of the old immortal crane above the clouds was even worse!

To begin with, the old immortal crane did not have long to live. Unless she progressed in her cultivation realm, she would have only held on for a few dozen more years even without this calamity.

Although her true form was a Bi Fang, a pure-blooded ferocious bird, she was already old and her combat strength was not even half of when she was at her peak.

Of the five Void Reversions that were fighting in the battle, one of them was even from the witch race. By this point of the battle, the old immortal crane was already at the end of her road.

Wounded all over, her gaze was dimmed and her feathers shed endlessly; even the flames on her body were starting to extinguish.

Blood Crow Palace's Lord waved his bone staff and shot forth an extremely evil blood arrow.

"Pfft!"

The old immortal crane was unable to dodge in time and an additional bloodied hole the size of an arm appeared on her wings.

A sizzling sound was produced from the wound and it ate at her flesh nearby. Oozing with thick blood, the smell was pungent as the old immortal crane grunted.

Immediately after, the attacks of the remaining four Void Reversions landed on the old immortal crane.

Poof! Poof!

Two more wounds appeared on her body and blood gushed like a stream.

The old immortal crane's body almost exploded and one of her legs was snapped. It was a tragic sight as she swayed, about to fall.

The old immortal crane had protected Ethereal Peak for thousands of years ever since the Founder Master passed away. She had truly given it her all and fought to the very last moment without backing off!

Everyone from Ethereal Peak was heartbroken when they saw that.

"Senior crane!"

Sect Master Ling Yun exclaimed miserably.

The outcome was decided. The moment the old immortal crane falls, all the other Ethereal Peak cultivators would be akin to fish on a chopping board, helpless to being slaughtered.

"Fufufufu!"

Blood Crow Palace's Lord sneered, "Old beast, I've already told you. Today, I'm going to massacre Ethereal Peak from top down, leaving no one alive!"

Chapter 483: Black-Robed Man

"Leaving no one alive?"

Suddenly, another voice could be heard from above the clouds. It was deep and a little hoarse. Although it wasn't loud, it reverberated through everyone's ears!

Who would dare appear at a moment as such?

All the cultivators looked over instinctively.

From the horizons, a man in black robes strode over in an unhurried manner.

Initially, it was just a blurry figure. However, he arrived in the blink of an eye!

Everyone on the battlefield was surprised.

That person walked extremely slowly as though he was taking a leisure stroll. However, by arriving instantly, he created a strong visual impact!

Now that he was so close, everyone could finally see clearly.

He had long shoulder-length black hair that fell freely like a waterfall. His face was extremely sharp and angled and he possessed a frosty expression, emitting an aura that was equally cold.

For some reason, after the black-robed man appeared, everyone on the black-robed man, including the five Void Reversions above the clouds, felt a sense of trepidation!

There was no reason behind it.

They merely felt fear and trepidation upon seeing that man!

Be it the Golden Core, Nascent Soul or Void Reversion battlefield, all the cultivators stopped what they were doing and looked over instinctively.

"You've... come,"

The old immortal crane had a conflicted expression and sighed gently when she saw who it was.

It was clear from the old immortal crane's tone that she knew the person.

Everyone from Ethereal Peak, Sect Master Ling Yun included, were in a daze.

"It's him!"

Suddenly, among the dozens of Ethereal Peak Nascent Souls left, an old man who was clearly at the end of his life exclaimed, glaring at the black-robed man with his cloudy eyes.

"H-He's back!"

The Nascent Soul old man shivered emotionally.

"Little Yi, you've still got three years to your lifespan,"

Shifting his gaze, the black-robed man looked at the Nascent Soul old man and said calmly.

Little Yi?

Su Zimo and the other cultivators of the younger generation were confused.

However, Sect Master Ling Yun, Xuan Yi and the others shuddered.

The name of that nascent soul was Ning Yi and apart from the old immortal crane, he was the oldest Grand Elder of Ethereal Peak with a lifespan of over 1,000 years!

Golden Cores had lifespans of 500 years.

Nascent Souls had lifespans of 1,000 years.

Void Reversions had lifespans of 5,000 years.

Almost all the cultivators in the generation of that Nascent Soul old man had died of old age, leaving him.

If the black-robed man before them addressed Grand Elder Ning Yi as Little Yi, didn't that mean that he was even older than the latter?!

The black-robed man should have been someone from more than 1,000 years ago and that was why the generations from Ling Yun onwards did not recognize him.

Ling Yun's heart skipped a beat when he saw the reaction of the old immortal crane and Grand Elder Ning Yi, as though he recalled something.

"Could it be him?"

Xuan Yi and the other Golden Cores gasped, exchanging glances – they had already guessed it.

Outside Ethereal Peak.

Ji Yaoxue looked at the newcomer with a confused expression and turned to ask, "Father, who is that? He seems to have some sort of a relationship with Ethereal Peak and is rather formidable."

"I don't recognize him,"

The emperor shook his head.

Suddenly, his heart skipped a beat as he thought of someone.

Someone that he had never seen before but have heard of from the legends!

The emperor murmured, "Perhaps he should be the only one who would care nothing about the witch race."

On the other side.

Gu Xi and Demoness Ji heaved sighs of relief when they saw the black-robed man appear.

Clapping, Demoness Ji laughed. "Hehe, this senior still chose to appear!"

Gu Xi said, "With him, there's nothing to worry about for the Void Reversion battlefield. If I step in to stabilize the Nascent Soul battlefield, they should be able to tide through this calamity."

"I won't be heading over since father's watching from the other side," Demoness Ji blinked.

Gu Xi nodded and took out a mask from her storage bag. Wearing it on her face, she turned into another person and headed to the battlefield.

"Hmm?"

Far in the depths of the capital of Great Zhou, an old man sensed something and suddenly opened his eyes. A bright light shone from his glabella and a small person the size of his palm flew out, glowing with a radiance.

It was his Essence Spirit!

A mysterious energy fluctuation spread forth from the radiant little man.

His spirit consciousness was spreading.

A moment later, the radiant little man returned to the old man's glabella and vanished.

Letting out a long breath, the old man murmured softly, "To think that he would have returned. There's no wonder why he's the number one paragon of Great Zhou back then. After not seeing him for 1,000 years, he has already cultivated to that point."

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The skies above Ethereal Peak.

The black-robed man surveyed the surroundings. When he saw the corpses strewn all over, his expression did not change and he merely commented indifferently, "It's truly been a long time since it was so crowded at Ethereal Peak."

When they heard that, Xuan Yi and the others were even more certain about this man's identity.

Su Zimo frowned.

No matter how he looked at it, the black-robed man seemed like he had a deep connection with Ethereal Peak, as though he was a cultivator from it in the past!

However, Su Zimo could not sense any bit of emotions coming from that man.

He had no reaction even after seeing Ethereal Peak cultivators dead all over the place with their corpses forming mountains.

Indifferent, cold-blooded and heartless.

That was the first impression the black-robed man gave Su Zimo.

1,000 years ago.

Suddenly, a thought flashed through his mind as he recalled a person.

The first time he heard about that person was through the disheveled old man.

Thereafter, he heard senior crane mention a little about him back in Thunderclap Valley.

This was the owner of the Mystic Gold Silk Armor!

Someone who was invincible across the Foundation Establishment and Golden Core realms in the North Region of Tianhuang Mainland in the past!

When this person joined Ethereal Peak, his method of dispelling the Eight Distresses Formation was by killing everyone!

Because he was cold, heartless and extreme in his ways, the moment he showed signs of turning into a fiend, he was locked in Thunderclap Valley to reflect in seclusion.

This was also the same person who found the Void Thunder Manual in the ancient battlefield and placed it inside the Mystic Gold Silk Armor to await someone with affinity!

Later on, this man descended into the Dao of the fiend and betrayed the sect!

He was the terrifying expert 1,000 years ago!

Now, he has returned!

The five Void Reversion experts above the clouds, Blood Crow Palace's Lord included, had grim expressions and were sizing up the black-robed man the entire time.

Each of them felt danger exuding from that man.

A moment later, Dao Being Jing Ming of Iridescent Clouds Palace narrowed his gaze and asked with cupped fists, "Fellow Daoist, may I know what is your name and what sect you are from? Also, why are you interfering in this matter?"

The black-robed man shifted his gaze towards Dao Being Jing Ming before saying slowly, "Do you think someone like you is worthy to know my name?"

Before his words were finished, the black-robed man's glabella shone brightly and a blood beam shot forward!

A terrifying aura burst forth.

Blood Crow Palace's Lord and everyone else were shocked as they scurried to retreat.

Poof!

Immediately after, right in front of everyone, Dao Being Jing Ming's head exploded as though it was a watermelon – he died on the spot and his Essence Spirit didn't even get the chance to escape!

He was dead!

A Void Reversion expert died just like that!

A dead silence crept through the air above and beneath Ethereal Peak.

This was a truly savage man who was decisive to kill!

The black-robed man was emotionless after killing a Void Reversion as he turned towards the other four expressionlessly with a gaze cold as ice.

Chapter 484: Asura

The death of Dao Being Jing Ming frightened the other four Void Reversions and their hairs stood on end.

The expression of Blood Crow Palace's Lord turned extremely terrible as he glared at the black-robed man. His gaze was dark with a faint green light.

It was extremely difficult for one to die once they were at Void Reversion realm.

Although Nascent Souls could cultivate Essence Spirits, their Essence Spirits had impurities and were in turbid states, causing them to be extremely fragile.

Without any protection, upon leaving their physical bodies, their Essence Spirits would be akin to babies situated in forests and could die at any moment!

A strong gust of wind, an exposure to the blazing sun or even any slight activity could injure the Essence Spirit.

If they met with any misfortunes, their Essence Spirits would be destroyed instantly!

The death of one's Essence Spirit was the true meaning of death whereby it would be useless even if their physical bodies remained intact.

However, it was different at Void Reversion realm.

By comprehending the heaven and earth and making use of the Dharmic methods to visualize the Essence Spirit, Nascent Souls could cultivate their Essence Spirits continuously to remove the impurities within it. Eventually, after obtaining some Pure Yang Spirit, they would be able to enter the Void Reversion realm!

That was the meaning of the saying 'Cultivating one's spirit to return to the void' in the cultivation world.

At Void Reversion realm, one's Essence Spirit would resemble the physical body of the cultivator. Flawless without impurities, they do not fear the scorching sun, heavy rains or misfortunes. They would truly be able to break out of the restraints of one's body and roam the world, traveling everywhere!

At that point of the Essence Spirit's cultivation, it would be akin to a corporeal body outside of the cultivator.

There was another saying in the cultivation world of one's spirit leaving them and taking form.

By leaving them, it referred to the Essence Spirits exiting their bodies and taking form referred to the corporeal bodies outside of their physical self.

In the ancient era, Void Reversion realm was also known as the Corporeal Spirit realm.

For Void Reversion Dao Beings, even if their bodies were destroyed, if they reacted fast enough and sent their Essence Spirits out of their bodies, they would be able to survive!

Although their bodies were destroyed, the presence of their Essence Spirit was equivalent to their survival.

The black-robed man killed a Void Reversion with a single thought and the latter vanished on the spot without a chance to let his Essence Spirit escape.

That single move caused the hearts of Blood Crow Palace's Lord and the other three to skip a beat – they were inevitably feeling fearful!

Turning slightly to the side, the black-robed man looked at the utterly wretched and wounded old immortal crane who was swaying unsteadily nearby. He swiped his hand on his storage bag.

Instantly, an elixir the size of a longan appeared and there were a few patterns on its surface, emitting a rich medicinal fragrance.

"That is..." True Fire Sect's Dao Being Liao Yuan narrowed his eyes with an alarmed expression.

"Vitality Reprisal Elixir!"

Blood Crow Palace's Lord said it word by word.

The moment those words were uttered, although the others did not have much of a reaction, all the Nascent Souls and Void Reversions present were shaken.

Dao Being Liao Yuan glared at the elixir in the hands of the black-robed man with an extremely scorching gaze, wanting nothing more than to devour the latter's hand right now!

A Grade 5 Elixir, the Vitality Reprisal Elixir was created by the Elixir Emperor of the ancient era and it illustrated the meaning of lucidity for one's final moments.

No matter how badly injured a Void Reversion was, as long as they weren't dead and consumed a Vitality Reprisal Elixir, they would definitely instantly invoke a tremendous amount of vitality and their injuries would be completely healed.

The Vitality Reprisal Elixir had long been lost on Tianhuang Mainland.

It was akin to a second life of a cultivator!

The black-robed man sent the Vitality Reprisal Elixir before the old immortal crane through a single thought.

Dao Being Liao Yuan and the others were green with envy.

A precious elixir as such was given out just like that!

The few of them revealed jealous expressions and their eyes shone with vicious glints; they even had thoughts of snatching it over for themselves!

The old immortal crane had a conflicted expression and did not take it over immediately.

Blood Crow Palace's Lord sneered, "That old beast is at the end of her lifespan and is on the brink of death. She won't be able to live for much longer even if her injuries are fully recovered!"

While the Vitality Reprisal Elixir could heal one's injuries almost immediately, it could not add on to one's lifespan.

It was also the same reason why the old immortal crane did not take the elixir immediately.

The Vitality Reprisal Elixir was way too precious and it was a waste for her to use it.

"I won't take back anything I give out,"

The black-robed man said indifferently, "You don't have to have any considerations as well. The reason why I'm giving you the elixir is to sever the karma between us."

"But..."

The old immortal crane sighed gently. "The Vitality Reprisal Elixir is too precious and rare. As a Void Reversion, you need it as well."

"I don't, because... no one can injure me!"

The black-robed man's tone was calm without any fluctuations, as though he was talking about something that was only logical.

Instantly, the entire place went silent.

Almost everyone was stunned by the casual majesty revealed by the black-robed man through his words.

Looking at the old immortal crane, the black-robed man continued, "You still have a sliver of hope."

The old immortal crane understood what the black-robed man meant.

Her sliver of hope was to recover her wounds by consuming the Vitality Reprisal Elixir and make use of this great battle to advance in her cultivation realm!

As long as she made a single step of advancement, her lifespan would increase exponentially and she would be averted from the imminent crisis of her expiring lifespan.

As for Ethereal Peak, it would be blessed with the rise of a Dharma Characteristic realm pure-blooded ferocious bird!

Little crane cried softly with a concerned expression, urging repeatedly.

Sect Master Ling Yun, Su Zimo and everyone else looked at the old immortal crane, hoping that she could make use of this opportunity to gain rebirth through nirvana!

The old immortal crane took a deep breath before nodding and reaching out for the Vitality Reprisal Elixir, swallowing it.

The moment it entered her mouth, a tremendous amount of vitality burst forth like a tornado, surging through all her limbs to every single part of her body!

The wounds on the old immortal crane were healing at a speed visible to the naked eye.

Su Zimo and the others were elated when they saw that.

If the old immortal crane could advance a step further, it would be a blessing in disguise!

Although Ethereal Peak suffered great losses due to this calamity, if the sect had a Dharma Characteristic pure-blooded ferocious bird as its support, it would definitely be the strongest among the five major sects and it would only be a matter of time before its rise!

The black-robed man shifted his gaze towards Blood Crow Palace's Lord and the others.

"I know who you are!"

The Palace Lord harrumphed coldly. "There aren't many cultivators at Void Reversion realm with strength like yours. You should be the titular disciple of Asura Sect, this generation's Asura!"

The black-robed man was expressionless.

"To think that the Asura notorious for killing would have crossed the North Region to be a busybody here, fufu," The Palace Lord sneered.

The black-robed man was still silent and his expression did not change.

The Palace Lord gripped his fists and repressed the killing intent in his heart, saying darkly, "Asura, since you insist on interfering with this matter, I can take a step back. However, that person must leave with me!"

He pointed towards Su Zimo who was beneath Ethereal Peak.

Instantly, everyone from Ethereal Peak felt their hearts sink in despair.

It was already unexpected that the black-robed man was able to protect Ethereal Peak. However, he had no relationship with Su Zimo, so how could he possibly offend someone of the witch race just for the sake of a Foundation Establishment Cultivator?

The black-robed man shifted his gaze towards Su Zimo.

For some unknown reason, Su Zimo felt a mysterious feeling inside his heart.

The gaze of the black-robed man was as though he was looking at his successor of the younger generation and was extremely odd.

After pausing for a moment, the black-robed man finally spoke with a single word.

"No!"

Everyone was shocked.

Nobody expected that he would choose to offend someone of the witch race just for a Foundation Establishment Cultivator!

Furthermore, he was so decisive in his rejection!

Chapter 485: Killing Indiscriminately!

"Asura, you should know of my background. Let's each take a step back,"

The Palace Lord said with a dark gaze, "All I want to do is take away that Foundation Establishment lad. That has nothing to do with you. If you continue pushing your luck..."

Before the Palace Lord could finish, the black-robed man let out an impatient expression and interrupted, "I want to push my luck. What can you do about it?"

Everyone was in an uproar!

He was way too savage!

He did not leave the other party a single way out at all!

"His reputation truly precedes him. It's no wonder why he was invincible across the Foundation Establishment and Golden Core realms on Tianhuang Mainland back then. He's truly way too savage," Xuan Yi lamented.

The disheveled old man sighed. "He is fearless even when the Great Zhou royalty does not dare to interfere. He's truly incredible."

"It's just a pity that he has turned into a fiend, otherwise..." Liu Hui did not continue but her meaning was clear.

At this point of his cultivation, Su Zimo was no longer as resistant and negative towards the fiend sects.

Iridescent Clouds Palace, Southern Mountains Sect, True Fire Sect and Azure Frost Sect could be considered to be part of the immortal sects as well. They were self-proclaimed to be righteous and viewed slaying demons and fiends as their responsibilities.

But now that Ethereal Peak was in trouble, those sects chose to take advantage of the opportunity and kick it while it was down and out. How were their actions different from the 'fiends'?

The black-robed man was someone of Asura Sect, a fiend sect. Yet, upon knowing that Ethereal Peak was in danger, he rushed over here from thousands of miles away across the Middle Continent and North Region!

Who were the true immortals and who were the true fiends?

Su Zimo found himself agreeing more and more with Demoness Ji's words.

The Dao of fiends was not the Dao of evil, but one of obsession and extremity!

At that moment, the disheveled old man asked, "The sect has severed connections with that man a long time ago. Who was the one who informed him?"

"That's right,"

Xuan Yi exclaimed softly, "I heard that Asura Sect is situated in the Middle Continent of Tianhuang Mainland and is most likely millions of miles away from Ethereal Peak. Even for a Void Reversion at full speed, they would need close to a year to arrive. How did he manage to get here in time?"

Sect Master Ling Yun's heart was filled with the same doubt.

Didn't that mean that someone had managed to locate the black-robed man a year ago and told him the news of the possible calamity that was about to befall Ethereal Peak?

Ling Yun was certain that nobody in Ethereal Peak, including the old immortal crane, had contacted the black-robed man.

Who was it then that managed to spread the news over to him?

Su Zimo was curious as well when he heard the discussions of the peak masters.

At that moment, a gaze lingered on him for a brief moment.

Sensing it, Su Zimo looked up into the air.

In midair, a woman in a gauze top had appeared unknowingly. She was not a cultivator of Ethereal Peak and had extremely ordinary looks. However, her figure was voluptuous and curvy; a single look was enough to seduce anyone.

Su Zimo had never seen that woman before.

However, for some reason, he felt a sense of familiarity.

He went deep in thought.

Above the clouds, the black-robed man was overbearing and instantly, the Palace Lord's expression turned extremely terrible.

Right now, he was in a difficult position.

The Palace Lord declared coldly, "Asura, although you're the titular successor of the fiend sects, all of us are at Void Reversion realm and I'm even someone of the witch race. We're not going to be afraid of you!"

"That's right!"

True Fire Sect's Dao Being Liao Yuan said deeply, "There's four of us Void Reversions here, don't go overboard, fellow Daoist!"

Southern Mountains Sect's Dao Being Lao Yang and Azure Frost Sect's Dao Being Han Ming looked at the black-robed man with cold gazes; they were tense and ready to strike at any moment.

"You're still not leaving?"

The black-robed man's eyes were initially closed. However, they suddenly opened up and he spoke.

That sentence was uncalled for and sounded ridiculous. Yet, the Palace Lord and the other three of them felt chills run down their spines as their pupils constricted.

Raising his head, the black-robed man had an indifferent gaze. "Very well, don't leave then. All of you can stay here!"

Before he finished his sentence, his glabella shone and he sent forth another killing move!

Asuras don't open their eyes but if they do, they kill!

Instantly, the world changed.

The black-robed man did not do anything and his glabella merely shone with a blood-colored light, but a sea of blood instantly appeared in the void, emitting a nauseating stench as it surged towards the Palace Lord and everyone else!

Those methods had already surpassed the knowledge of Su Zimo and the other Golden Cores.

This was a fight between the Essence Spirits!

A faint green light shone from the Palace Lord's glabella and a gigantic, menacing skull was formed in midair.

It opened its bloodied mouth and swallowed the sea of blood in huge mouthfuls, the same way a whale swallowed water as though it wanted to devour the entire sea!

At the same time.

The glabellas of Dao Being Han Ming, Dao Being Lao Yang and Dao Being Liao Yuan shone brightly as their spirit consciousnesses were released, conjuring multiple phenomenons.

Swoosh!

A massive fireball that was like a blazing sun surged towards the blood sea.

Boom!

A mountain materialized and descended, attempting to suppress the raging tides of the blood sea.

Swash!

Snow filled the entire place and froze everything!

Layers of frost appeared on the surface of the blood sea.

It was an attack of the spirit consciousnesses!

These were killing moves that could only be used after entering the Void Reversion realm!

By conjuring phenomenons with their spirit consciousnesses, these were corporeal illusions that attacked the other party's Essence Spirit directly!

The defending cultivator could only block them with their own spirit consciousnesses.

A fight between Essence Spirits was extremely dangerous and a single misstep would lead to death!

Previously, Dao Being Jing Ming of Iridescent Clouds Palace was attacked by the black-robed man's spirit consciousness and instantly, his head exploded and his Essence Spirit was destroyed, resulting in his death!

"Kill!"

Right now, the black-robed man was fearless despite facing four opponents. Shouting, his eyes shone ferociously and he exuded a shuddering killing intent!

In midair, the gigantic skull was swallowing the blood sea at a much slower speed and was shivering.

Crack! Crack! Crack!

A series of cracks appeared on the surface of the skull.

The Palace Lord's expression changed.

At the same time, a sinister roar echoed from the depths of the blood sea!

Bang! Bang! Bang!

The ice on the surface of the sea suddenly cracked as one after another, corpses with terrifying auras whirled their fists and destroyed the frost. Leaping out of the sea, they roared from the depths of their throats and floated in the blood sea.

It was a mountain of corpses and a sea of blood!

No matter which faction they were from, all the cultivators in the vicinity of Ethereal Peak felt chills upon seeing that.

Those methods were truly shocking and struck fear through everyone!

The blood sea surged and created massive waves, threatening to devour the entire world as it howled!

Dao Being Han Ming gasped.

Shing!

The fireball in midair was drowned by the blood sea and its flames were extinguished.

Dao Being Liao Yuan shuddered and blood drained from his face.

In the spirit consciousness of Dao Being Liao Yuan's glabella, an Essence Spirit with his exact appearance burned with dense flames. Gradually, it dimmed and the flames on its body were extinguished.

Dao Being Liao Yuan's lifeforce was severed as he fell from midair.

He was dead!

Even though he was fighting against four people, the black-robed man managed to kill a Void Reversion in reverse!

Boom!

A thunderous bang sounded from the unyielding mountain in the middle of the blood sea as it was attacked by the corpses repeatedly.

Before long, the mountain crumbled and was devoured by the blood sea.

At the same time, Dao Being Lao Yang's Essence Spirit exploded in his spirit consciousness!

He was devoured by the blood sea and turned into one of its corpses.

Another Void Reversion had fallen!

Chapter 485: Killing Indiscriminately!

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He was devoured by the blood sea and turned into one of its corpses.

Another Void Reversion had fallen!

Chapter 487: Remnant of the Witch Race

Clang!

The saber sliced the flying sword into two the moment they clashed.

Dao Being Han Ming grunted and spat out a mouthful of blood.

The flying sword was his Lifeforce Dharmic Weapon and was connected to his Essence Spirit.

With his Lifeforce Dharmic Weapon crippled, Dao Being Han Ming's Essence Spirit received an immense impact and was severely injured!

The black-robed man's saber technique was still sharp and his momentum did not pause, cutting down heavily onto the shield in midair and letting out a deafening sound of metal screeching!

Boom!

The shield exploded into pieces.

A terrifying power surged into Dao Being Han Ming's body and his organs, bloodline and bones were disintegrated into pieces due to the sharpness of the blade!

Poof! Poof! Poof!

A series of blood mists spewed out from Dao Being Han Ming.

A single slash was all it took to sever Dao Being Han Ming's vitality entirely!

A glowing little man scurried out of the top of Dao Being Han Ming's head frantically.

His Essence Spirit was exiting and escaping into the distance!

However, it was a pity that the two of them were extremely close. Dao Being Han Ming's Essence Spirit did not manage to escape far before the black-robed man caught up to it, grabbing it and crushing it with his palm!

After losing the protection of his body, the Essence Spirit was too weak and could not withstand a single attack.

In the blink of an eye, the Void Reversions of the four major sects had already died in the hands of the black-robed man, leaving Blood Crow Palace's Lord.

The Palace Lord had just conjured his Dharmic technique when Dao Being Han Ming had already died.

Gritting his teeth, the Palace Lord waved his bone staff and uttered an indecipherable incantation.

The skull on top of the bone staff gradually filled with blood and two scarlet blood beams shone from its eye sockets, as though it was alive.

"Blood Bat, form!"

The Palace Lord roared in rage and pointed his bone staff at the black-robed man.

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Buzz! Buzz!
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The skull opened its mouth and blood-colored bats flew out one after another continuously. Like a swarm of locusts, they charged towards the black-robed man in a dense pack.

This was a secret skill of the witch race.

All of those were bloodsucking bats and if a cultivator was trapped in their encirclement, their blood would be sucked dry within a single second!

"How dare the light of a firefly try to compete against the shine of the moon for glory!"

The black-robed man sneered.

He did not retreat or dodge the looming swarm of bats and instead, took a step forward and slashed again!

The weather changed.

That single slash seemed as though it had unleashed endless Hell!

The sky and earth collapsed.

Endless firestorms descended from the skies and the ground ripped apart, causing scarlet lava to gush out; the vast land was filled with ugly scars and corpses were strewn everywhere!

The blood bats cried endlessly upon entering that endless Hell and they disappeared before they could even get close.

A look of panic flashed through the Palace Lord's eyes.

Swoosh!

In a flash, the black-robed man had already arrived before the Palace Lord.

He slashed in reverse at an extremely fast speed and the sound of ghosts wailing could be heard as his saber sliced through the void.

The Palace Lord felt his heart skip a beat. With no time to think, he could only receive the attack with his bone staff.

Screeeeee!

A jarring sound was let out as the saber glided across the bone staff.

A faint imprint was left on the bone staff!

The Palace Lord shuddered and a mouthful of blood rushed up his throat before he swallowed it back forcefully.

Although the witch race was one of the Primordial Nine Races, they did not have strong physiques and neither did they specialize in melee combat.

The Palace Lord was already severely injured from that single slash.

With each breath he took, he could taste the damp stench of blood and feel a ripping pain in his lungs!

It was proof that his organs were already injured!

If the battle continued, it may very likely result in irrecoverable wounds for him.

The Palace Lord burst in retreat and waved his bone staff, setting up faint green layers of barriers before him.

As if oblivious to them, the black-robed man charged at them readily.

Crack! Crack! Crack!

The faint green barriers shattered repeatedly and could not stop the black-robed man at all.

The black-robed man's gaze was icy cold and his killing intent was chilling as he moved like a phantom!

Sensing the killing intent of the black-robed man, the Palace Lord was finally nervous and shouted with widened eyes, "Asura, I'm someone of the witch race! If you dare take my life, you will bring about destruction for Asura Sect!"

Su Zimo was secretly alarmed when he heard that.

The tone of the Palace Lord was extremely tough and firm, as if he truly meant it.

Could there truly have been super sects that were destroyed by the Primordial Nine Races on Tianhuang Mainland?

"Do you think that a remnant of the witch race like yourself is enough to threaten me?"

The black-robed man took a stride forward with a frosty glare and slashed at the Palace Lord once more.

Clang!

Although the Palace Lord managed to defend against it, he could not endure it anymore and spat out a huge mouthful of blood. His organs had shifted positions and were almost ruptured!

The words 'remnant of the witch race' caused a commotion in the crowd.

In the cultivation world, ferocious beasts that had impure bloodlines were called remnant beasts.

In other words, the Palace Lord was not completely considered as someone of the witch race and could only be considered as a half being!

Suddenly, Su Zimo recalled that back then at the primordial ruins, the divine dragon said something similar, berating that the Palace Lord had an impure bloodline and was merely a bastard child.

The Palace Lord's expression turned extremely harrowing after the black-robed man exposed his background.

The black-robed man sneered, "Notwithstanding the fact that you're a remnant of the witch race, even if someone who was truly of the witch race came forth, I would dare to kill him as well! There's no one in this world that I, Yan Beichen, wouldn't dare to kill!"

It was only at this moment that Su Zimo knew that the name of the terrifying expert from a thousand years ago was Yan Beichen.

The Palace Lord did not dare to linger and bit his tongue, spitting out a mouthful of essence blood to release his secret skill.

He turned into a streak of light and fled into the distance at an extremely fast speed!

"Where can you run to?"

Yan Beichen's eyes lit up with a dark glint. He slashed forward and it seemed to cross the voids, landing heavily on the Palace Lord.

There was nowhere to escape!

"Pfft!"

A stream of blood gushed out.

The Palace Lord's body was split into two instantly!

His Essence Spirit left his body and hovered in midair – it was a little man that shone with a dim blood light and looked exactly the same as his physical body.

"Blood Tribute!"

The Palace Lord's Essence Spirit escaped and let out a spirit consciousness fluctuation.

The Essence Spirit traveled through villages where there were countless innocent mortals. There were farmers who were plowing the fields, muscular men who were chopping firewood, mothers preparing to cook and children who were playing merrily...

All of those living beings suddenly froze, as though they were engulfed by some mysterious power!

In the blink of an eye, their bodies withered at a visible speed, turning into streaks of blood light as their lifeforces surged into the Essence Spirit that was escaping in midair!

The eyes of the Palace Lord's Essence Spirit shone brightly as it recovered rapidly.

Everyone from Ethereal Peak was heartbroken at the sight of that!

Hundreds of thousands of innocent mortals were met with the calamity, turning into dried corpses and died in miserable manners – it was the same situation that Su Zimo and the others encountered at Linfeng City in the past!

Yan Beichen chased in pursuit with his saber and took huge strides, crossing through the voids.

Unfortunately, the distance between them increased further and further.

When Void Reversions lose their bodies and were left with their Essence Spirits, although their combat strength were weaker, their speeds were at least doubled without the restrictions of their flesh!

Furthermore, the Palace Lord released the evil Blood Tribute technique and replenished a massive amount of energy, allowing him t escape from Yan Beichen's pursuit before long.

"Asura, one day, I'll definitely make you pay for destroying my physical body today! Hahaha!"

The blood light disappeared into the horizon, leaving nothing but a sinister laughter.

Chapter 488: You Sure Are Bold!

Blood Crow Palace's Lord fled more than a thousand meters away.

The remaining cultivators were dumbfounded.

This was supposed to be a calamity for Ethereal Peak and yet, the tides turned immediately after the appearance of a cultivator!

The advantage of Blood Crow Palace and the other four major sects had disappeared entirely.

Su Zimo's gaze burned bright like a torch and he swept past the crowd. He could not find Perfected Being Cang Lang and sneered internally, "You sure are quick to run."

Many cultivators yelled and fled everywhere.

The Blood Crow King gazed above the clouds at that terrifying figure standing in midair. He had a venomous look that lingered for a brief moment before he turned to escape.

All of a sudden!

"Hmm?"

Yan Beichen turned around and his gaze was extremely sharp, landing on the Blood Crow King instantly!

"You still dare to harbor killing intents towards me?"

Instantly, the Blood Crow King felt chills run down his spine and his limbs went cold – the blood within his body seemed to have stopped flowing!

"You sure are bold!"

A massive shout echoed through the clouds, reverberating through the ears of many cultivators in a deafening manner!

Immediately after, a gigantic saber beam descended from the skies and swept through the void, as though it wanted to slice the world apart!

Boom!

The ground shook and the mountains trembled!

The saber beam burst into the crowd that was escaping and blood mist spewed everywhere.

The Blood Crow King had just transformed to his true self and was about to fly into the skies when he was cut down by Yan Beichen's slash without a corpse left!

Long blood-colored ravines were left at the foot of Ethereal Peak as a torrential killing intent surged into the skies. They were filled by countless corpses and looked terrifying, like blood scars on the ground that everyone was forbidden to enter!

More than 10 Nascent Souls died at the very least because of that slash.

There were even more Golden Cores and Foundation Establishment Cultivators that were beside the blood ravines and died, unable to withstand the killing qi that was sent forth from the saber!

Finally, Ethereal Peak's calamity came to and end after Yan Beichen's slash.

The cultivators of Ethereal Peak that survived felt a sense of relief after a major calamity.

However, immediately after, when they saw the corpses that were strewn at the foot of the mountain, they felt a tragic sadness.

All of those were their sect mates!

They had grown up together in Ethereal Peak, cultivating and slaying evil while protecting the masses for many, dozens, and even hundreds of years...

But now, many of them were dead because of a massive battle and they could never hear from them ever again.

This was the cultivation world which was incomparably cruel.

For the first time, Su Zimo felt that the cultivation world was much more savage and had more bloodshed than Cang Lang Mountain Range!

After consuming the Vitality Reprisal Elixir, most of the old immortal crane's injuries had already recovered and it had gotten a new life.

However, a look of weariness could still be seen from the eyes of the old immortal crane.

This battle had expended most of her life's essence and vitality.

If she could not advance a step further, she would have to pass away here!

Maintaining its ferocious bird form, the old immortal crane stood at the peak of Ethereal Peak on one leg and closed its eyes to cultivate. A power was rumbling within its body, raring to spew out!

Old skin started shedding from its body and its green feathers were incinerated. However, right in front of everyone, new skin regrew alongside green feathers that shone with a shiny luster!

The flames that were originally extinguished from her body had appeared once more.

Although the flames were small, they emitted a scorching temperature and were growing steadily; the void around the flames were already starting to contort due to the heat!

The old immortal crane's condition was gradually turning better.

The little crane cried softly and jumped in joy.

Sect Master Ling Yun swallowed a mouthful of elixirs and started managing the situation, dragging his injured body while focusing his spirit. First, he ordered the cultivators on the battlefield to return to the sect and treat their injuries.

Next, he requested for the Qi Refinement Warriors who did not take part in the battle to come forth and clean up the battlefield.

Although he was severely injured after experiencing such a calamity, Ling Yun did not panic and displayed strong leadership in controlling the situation.

The sect started moving in an orderly manner after his instructions were pumped out.

"Fellow Daoist, please wait,"

At that moment, when Ling Yun saw the gauze-top woman turn to leave, he called after her immediately and bowed deeply, saying in a sincere manner, "Thank you for your assistance, fellow Daoist. Please stay a couple of days in Ethereal Peak so that we can host you properly."

"There's no need."

The gauze-top woman waved it off with an indifferent expression.

Sensing the firmness in the gauze-top woman's attitude, Ling Yun did not force things and cupped his fists. "May I know what's your name and what sect you are from? I'm unable to leave now because our sect has just been through a huge calamity. However, I'll definitely pay a visit personally to your sect in the future to express my thanks."

"There's no need for thanks either,"

The gauze-top woman shook her head and turned to Su Zimo. "The reason I stood forth this time round was because I was bequeathed to repay a favor."

Upon hearing that, Su Zimo no longer had any doubts.

She gauze-top woman was definitely Gu Xi!

The person who bequeathed her should be Demoness Ji.

Instinctively, he turned to look around but did not catch sight of Demoness Ji.

Ling Yun followed the gauze-top woman's gaze and froze momentarily.

"Zimo?"

The elders of Ethereal Peak revealed odd expressions when they heard that as well.

A Nascent Soul as powerful as such came forth just to repay a favor for a Foundation Establishment Cultivator?

The gauze-top woman continued, "If you want to express your thanks, do it to him."

With that, the gauze-top woman did not linger and flew away.

Ling Yun and the others looked at Su Zimo with endless admiration in their eyes, as though they had just discovered the most precious treasure in this world!

Even without the gauze-top woman's remark, Su Zimo had done great merits in this battle.

Furthermore, he was at Extreme Foundation Establishment1

This was the second person after the Human Emperor in history to have achieved that.

If he was already able to kill Golden Cores and possessed such terrifying potential and combat strength at Foundation Establishment realm, his future accomplishments would definitely not be inferior to that person above the clouds!

Of course, the Asura of the fiend sects was still the key to them turning the tides and securing victory.

Prior to this, everyone in Ethereal Peak harbored immense hatred towards those of the fiend sects. As people of the immortal sects and the path of righteousness, they viewed the extermination of fiends and demons as a personal duty and would definitely not want to be associated with anyone of the fiend sects.

But now, after this incident, everyone had complicated feelings towards those of the fiend sects, or at least, towards Yan Beichen.

It did not matter whether he betrayed the sect or he was an evil fiend. What was undeniable was that Ethereal Peak owed him a lifesaving debt.

Ling Yun wanted to head forth and express his thanks.

However, when Yan Beichen remained thousands of feet up above the clouds, Ling Yun couldn't reach that height given his cultivation realm.

Yan Beichen's hands were behind his back and he had a cold expression, giving off an aura that forbade people from approaching him.

A Grand Elder shook his head and said, "Forget it. Even if you head up, given that person's cold and aloof nature, he wouldn't pay any attention to you."

"That's right. After all, we are all considered to be of the younger generations compared to him. Senior crane is probably the only person in the sect who is qualified to speak to him," Another Grand Elder added.

Ling Yun nodded.

Right then, Yan Beichen who was initially up above the clouds suddenly descended.

Instantly, he arrived before everyone else and looked at Su Zimo, saying indifferently, "Su Zimo, follow me."

With that said, he turned and headed in the direction of Ethereal Peak's Thunderclap Valley.

Everyone from Ethereal Peak was shocked.

The Grand Elders who spoke earlier on almost bit their tongue as their eyes widened!

Did the two of them... know one another?

Chapter 489: Saber Test

Everyone from Ethereal Peak exchanged glances speechlessly.

When they recalled how firm Yan Beichen was in rejecting the Blood Crow Palace's Lord's request in taking Su Zimo away, their minds starting reeling.

The attitude of the fiend sects' Asura towards Su Zimo was rather strange.

It did not seem as though he merely cherished the fact that Su Zimo was at Extreme Foundation Establishment.

"Is he thinking of taking Su Zimo with him to Asura Sect?"

A Grand Elder frowned in deep worry.

After all, Su Zimo's potential was way too great and there was a chance that Ethereal Peak would rise in glory if he remained in the sect!

"Let's not think too much about it. Even if that's what he wants, there's nothing we can do and there's no one who can stop him either."

"That's right."

•••

In the void not far away.

Everyone from the royal family of Great Zhou watched on with shocked expressions, taking a long time to recover.

Ethereal Peak suffered great losses for that battle.

However, the remaining cultivators, be it at Foundation Establishment, Golden Core or Nascent Soul realm, had gone through the baptism of blood and life and death and would definitely grow to be the strongest supports of Ethereal Peak in the future!

This calamity would only cause Ethereal Peak to turn even stronger!

Without any accidents, the old immortal crane would also advance a step further to become a Dharma Characteristic ferocious bird.

One could almost predict that Ethereal Peak's reputation would grow after this battle and many cultivators in the territory of Great Zhou would head over due to their great name.

Ethereal Peak would rise swiftly!

As for the other four major sects, they would have to leave with defeated spirits.

Not withstanding the fact that their Void Reversions were dead, they had countless Nascent Souls, Golden Cores and Foundation Establishment Cultivators who were severely injured or dead as well – it was a great loss for their sects.

Be it their cultivators of the younger generations or their top experts, the four major sects won't be able to challenge Ethereal Peak any longer.

"The fact that they were not annihilated despite the circumstances is proof of how much providence is shining on them. At the very least, for the next thousand years, Ethereal Peak's position would most likely be unshakable!"

The Emperor of Great Zhou lamented.

Upon returning to the capital, he was prepared to send cultivators over to Ethereal Peak with a huge gift of plenty of elixirs.

"Let's return,"

Waving his arm, the emperor led the crowd back.

•••

Su Zimo followed Yan Beichen into Thunderclap Valley.

Waving his arm, Yan Beichen set up a barrier that isolated the sounds of rumbling thunder outside. Thereafter, he turned to look at Su Zimo quietly with a scrutinizing gaze.

"You were the one that obtained the secret skill inside the Mystic Gold Silk Armor?" Suddenly, Yan Beichen asked.

Su Zimo nodded. "Thank you, senior."

Yan Beichen pouted his lips. "The Void Thunder Manual is a secret skill that's said to be the Thunder Emperor's compilation of his life's work before his ascension back then. Unfortunately, I only managed to obtain a page of it in the ancient battlefield."

The Thunder Emperor!

It was no wonder why the demonic qi in Su Zimo's bloodline could be purged just through the mantra of a single page.

It was because the Void Thunder Manual had such a powerful origin!

A moment later, Yan Beichen asked, "You were the one who obtained the Saber Emperor's inheritance in the ancient battlefield?"

"I was,"

Su Zimo admitted to it.

The Sea Calming Manual had been lost for many years and it was normal that the cultivators of the Great Zhou Dynasty could not recognize it.

However, Asura Sect was one of the super sects of Tianhuang Mainland and Yan Beichen who was before him was an expert at the Void Reversion realm. It was only natural that Su Zimo's saber technique was recognized by the latter.

All of a sudden!

Su Zimo's heart skipped a beat and he recalled the thought that he did not complete earlier on.

A thousand years ago, the Saber Mountain Spirit Sea, Asura Sect, paragon who used a saber...

All the clues that were laid out before him pointed out to an incident in the past clearly.

"Senior, you... were the Asura Sect paragon who obtained the Saber Emperor's inheritance from the ancient battlefield a thousand years ago, the Tidal Manual?" Su Zimo blurted out.

Yan Beichen nodded.

Suddenly, Su Zimo was enlightened.

It was no wonder why Yan Beichen stared at him earlier on with such an odd expression as though he was looking at a successor of the younger generation.

It was not only because he was a disciple of Ethereal Peak and had obtained the Void Thunder Manual.

It was because one after another, they obtained the inheritance of the Saber Emperor as well!

"Go on, attack. Let me see how much of the Saber Emperor's inheritance you managed to comprehend!"

Yan Beichen raised his palm lightly and endless spirit qi gathered towards his palm.

In the blink of an eye, it condensed into a sinister saber.

No longer speaking, Yan Beichen attacked immediately after.

Su Zimo's reaction was extremely fast and he whipped out his Blood Quencher. Attacking upwards, he released the Sea Calming Manual's Countercurrent right away.

Clang!

The two sabers collided and let out a crisp sound, causing sparks to fly everywhere.

The power of the attack was not heavy.

Su Zimo could clearly feel that Yan Beichen had repressed his power countless times in order to test his saber!

Yan Beichen's attack had already reached the level of force.

After that attack, Yan Beichen was expressionless and flicked his wrist; the next attack had already arrived stealthily.

His saber technique was blurry and unpredictable, yet, its killing aura was instantaneous and shuddering!

"Not good!"

Su Zimo's heart almost exploded.

Against that killing intent, Su Zimo truly thought that Yan Beichen was about to kill him!

Instinctively, he unleashed his spirit wings and was about to retreat backwards.

However, the moment his spirit wings were summoned, they dissipated and turned into specks of light that scattered in the void.

Needless to think, that must have been done by Yan Beichen!

Su Zimo buckled his knees and channeled his bloodline, wanting to dodge backwards.

Immediately after, to his horror, he realized that there seemed to be three walls erected on his left, right and back – he could not move and could only stand motionlessly on the spot.
"Use your saber!"

Yan Beichen's voice sounded coldly, "Or die!"

Nobody could question the killing intent of the fiend sects' Asura.

He had said previously that there was nobody he couldn't and wouldn't dare to kill in the world!

An Asura did not require reason to kill.

Yan Beichen's attack was one of the stances from Asura Saber.

Asura Sect's fiend heir, Bai Yu, had used it before in the ancient battlefield as well and it was the exact same move.

However, although they were exact, the might that was produced from Yan Beichen was worlds apart!

That attack was ethereal and was imperceivable.

Although Su Zimo felt so terrible he wanted to throw up, he had nowhere to retreat!

Taking a deep breath, Su Zimo composed himself and closed his eyes instead, choosing to follow his heart. Suddenly, he slashed out at the void before him!

It was the Ripple stance of Sea Calming Manual.

The entire void seemed to drawn in by that slash and spirit qi swirled, as though it was creating a massive vortex.

Under Yan Beichen's pressure, the Vortex stance had also reached the level of force!

Although the saber was only slashing at an empty spot, it possessed a centrifugal power of attraction that instantly broke through Yan Beichen's Asura Saber's intent state.

The initially imperceivable saber was now appearing.

Clang!

The two sabers collided once more and retraced upon a single contact.

A subtle hint of admiration could be seen flickering through Yan Beichen's eyes.

"Carry on!"

His voice was still cold as ever without any emotions.

The Sea Calming Manual was a saber technique comprehended by the Saber Emperor at the seaside. Be it in terms of toughness or flexibility, it was majestic and overbearing, unlike Asura Saber.

Asura Saber was a technique that was purely created for killing and every single move was sinister and lethal!

The two different techniques, one righteous and one evil, were supreme secret skills in the Dao of the saber.

Yan Beichen continued attacking in succession and the angles of his attacks were tricky; they withdrew, lifted or were hidden...

Every single attack was filled with boundless imagination that left one speechless!

Against such a saber technique, Su Zimo could only deal with them using the Ripple stance of the Sea Calming Manual, fighting gentleness with gentleness.

Su Zimo's Ripple stance turned increasingly mature against that immense pressure and a saber force that was akin to ripples on the surface of water started to appear gradually...

Chapter 490: Tidal Manual

A moment later, Yan Beichen retracted his saber and stood upright.

Su Zimo heaved a sigh of relief and he could barely contain the joy in his eyes.

Apart from the final stance of the Sea Calming Manual which he was still unable to produce, he managed to comprehend the force levels of the other four stances completely!

It was all because of the pressure that Yan Beichen gave him that he was able to comprehend them so quickly.

Otherwise, even if he practiced against air for dozens of years, he might not be able to reach this step unless he had another opportunity.

If cultivators wanted to grow, they would have to grind against the brink of life and death continuously!

Of course, what truly brought joy to Su Zimo was not only because he managed to comprehend the realm of force.

More than that, under the pretext that they were both on the same power level, he was not weaker than this number one paragon of Tianhuang Mainland North Region in the past in terms of his saber technique!

Although Yan Beichen had been immersed in the Dao of the saber for countless years, Su Zimo was not disadvantaged.

"Amazing!"

Su Zimo was drenched in sweat and was invigorated.

Yan Beichen's expression was cold and his gaze was calm, as though he could read Su Zimo's mind.

"Do you think that you're incredible because you're able to defend against my attacks?" Yan Beichen asked indifferently.

Su Zimo remained silent.

During their previous exchange of blows, although Yan Beichen was repressing him the entire time, Su Zimo did not reveal any openings and in fact, he managed to defend all of the former's various attacks!

However, Su Zimo was embarrassed to admit to something like that after Yan Beichen read his mind.

Yet, Yan Beichen's next remark caused Su Zimo's heart to sink as chills filled his body!

"Take a look at your body,"

Yan Beichen's eyes was shimmering with a hint of disdain.

Furrowing his brows slightly, Su Zimo lowered his head and he froze up, his pupils constricting violently.

Before he knew it, a series of cuts had already been made on the green robes in front of his chest. They intertwined near to his heart and formed a gigantic character for the word 'death'!

"This..."

Su Zimo felt his limbs go cold.

This meant that if this was an actual life and death battle, he would have died more than six times in that short exchange earlier on!

The most frightening thing was that he did not notice it at all up till now!

The more Su Zimo thought about it, the more alarmed he was.

The pride and exhilaration he displayed earlier had vanished entirely.

If there were no restrictions and he could rely on his movement techniques from the Mystic Classic of the Twelve Demon Kings of the Great Wilderness, his speed and his terrifying physique, Su Zimo might not lose.

However, at the very least, he was completely defeated in terms of saber technique.

Yan Beichen swiped his storage bag and two more ancient manuals appeared in his hands. He handed them to Su Zimo.

Focusing his gaze, Su Zimo could not help but exclaim.

"The Tidal Manual!"

The Saber Emperor left two inheritances in the ancient battlefield, one of which was the Sea Calming Manual which Su Zimo had obtained.

The other one was the Tidal Manual which was taken away by Yan Beichen a thousand years ago.

Yan Beichen said, "The Tidal Manual is not a saber technique, but a secret skill with nine levels to it. It was created by the Saber Emperor in the past while he was at the seaside, observing the ebb and flow of the tides. He combined that as a skill together with the Dao of the saber and it possesses the obscurities of the universe."

"The Tidal Manual and Sea Calming Manual complement and complete one another. After cultivating the Tidal Manual, you'll be able to utilize the might of the tide. At Level 1, each time you make an attack, there will be an additional layer of power to it and that's the Tidal Might."

Su Zimo seemed to have an understanding.

Yan Beichen continued, "At Level 1 of the Tidal Manual, you'll experience a 10% increase in strength. At Level 2, 20%. Don't look down on the percentages because in actual combat, the difference will be significant!"

Su Zimo was secretly shocked.

If he managed to cultivate to Level 9 of the Tidal Might, it would be equivalent to an additional 90% and that would be akin to twice of his strength – it was enough for him to overwhelm anyone else of the same cultivation realm!

"Of course, the most important use of the Tidal Might is to make up for the flaws of the Sea Calming Manual."

Yan Beichen explained, "You are already extremely proficient in your first four stances. However, there is still some sluggishness in your transition between gentleness and toughness while changing stances."

"While ordinary cultivators are almost blind to these openings, you will be in danger of dying if you meet with people who are truly impressive!"

Suddenly, Su Zimo was enlightened.

Indeed, he had experienced slight sluggishness while he was practicing his saber techniques earlier on.

However, when he battled in the ancient battlefield against the paragons of the immortal, Buddhist and fiend sects, nobody noticed those openings. As such, Su Zimo did not pay much attention to it."

He had not expected that his openings would be so fatal when they were exposed to true experts!

Su Zimo was immensely grateful.

He had not thought that Yan Beichen would impart to him the Tidal Manual so easily without hesitation.

"Senior, I'll demonstrate the Sea Calming Manual once and describe to you the details of it,"

Su Zimo's thought process was simple – he wanted to impart the Sea Calming Manual to Yan Beichen as well as a form of exchange.

"There's no need."

Yan Beichen waved it off indifferently. "I've already begun to comprehend my own Dao. In my eyes, the Sea Calming Manual is no big deal!"

There was a hint of arrogance in Yan Beichen's tone.

He was firmly convinced that he would definitely be an emperor in the future with accomplishments above the Saber Emperor!

Su Zimo did not press on further and took the Tidal Manual. When he saw the second ancient manual, he could not help but frown. "Asura Saber?"

The other secret skill was Asura Sect's secret skill, Asura Saber!

"This..."

Su Zimo was confused.

By doing this, did it mean that Yan Beichen wanted him to join Asura Sect?

Su Zimo hesitated for a moment before returning Asura Saber. "I haven't thought about leaving Ethereal Peak before. Senior, please take the Asura Saber back."

Yan Beichen glared at him but did not take it back.

"Even if you don't join Asura Sect, you can take this saber manual to cultivate."

"Is this... appropriate?"

Su Zimo frowned.

Usually, one would be severely punished and might even be killed if they imparted the secret skills of a sect!

"You're telling me that even though I dare to impart it to you, you don't dare to learn it?" Yan Beichen sneered.

Su Zimo was silent.

In the ancient battlefield, he had truly created quite a bit of trouble and there was nothing he wouldn't dare to learn.

Furthermore, it wasn't as though Su Zimo hadn't cultivated techniques of the fiend sects before.

Back in the river undercurrent, when he was stuck with Demoness Ji in that cramped stone coffin, he cultivated the Blood Refinement Fiend Sutra that was left inside.

At that thought, Su Zimo accepted both the ancient manuals.

After pondering silently for a moment, he recalled something and asked, "Asura Sect is located in the Middle Continent. Senior, were you able to arrive in time because Senior Gu Xi sent you a message?"

Yan Beichen and looked at Su Zimo with a strange stare. "To think that this generation's Pure Maiden of the fiend sects would have chosen you as her tripod."

This was the second time that Su Zimo had heard of the term.

The first time was under the Human Emperor's Palace when Demoness Ji confessed to it after being questioned by the Sealer of the Illusion Fiend Cult.

"What's the meaning of being a tripod of the Pure Maiden Sect?" Su Zimo could not help but ask.

Yan Beichen did not reply.

When Su Zimo saw that, he suppressed the curiosity in his heart for now. He thought for a moment and asked again, "Why are all the sects, cultivators and even the royal family of Great Zhou so wary of the witch race?"

"That cautiousness stems from a catastrophe that happened 10,000 years ago," Yan Beichen replied indifferently.

Chapter 491: Secret of The Catastrophe

"10,000 years ago, there was an overlord in the North Region of Tianhuang Mainland and that was the Great Qian Empire. Its territories were vast and it was extremely powerful. Unfortunately, the center of the Great Qian Empire, its glorious capital, was turned into ruins overnight!"

Yan Beichen continued, "Not only that, the two Buddhist monasteries that resided in the territory of the Great Qian Empire and supported it were annihilated! 10,000 years ago, there were eight Buddhist monasteries, not the current six."

"Ah!"

Su Zimo was shocked and exclaimed softly.

There were eight Buddhist monasteries 10,000 years ago!

A single catastrophe had not only turned an empire into ruins, it even destroyed two super sects of Tianhuang Mainland!

He could not help but ask, "What sort of a catastrophe was it? Did it have something to do with the witch race?"

"No,"

Yan Beichen shook his head. "It was another one of the Primordial Nine Races, the dragon race!"

Su Zimo's mouth opened gradually in a slight daze.

The dragon race!

He had quite a bit of a feud with the dragon race as well.

Yan Beichen continued, "There were many rumors to why the catastrophe happened. However, the conclusion was that... a certain dragon in the Dragon Bone Valley was enraged."

"Dragon Bone Valley?"

Su Zimo frowned slightly and he thought about the endless white bones he saw back in the primordial ruins. There was also a long sea of bones and a towering dragon carcass.

"The Dragon Bone Valley is one of the nine forbidden grounds of Tianhuang Mainland," Yan Beichen explained.

"Indeed!"

Su Zimo felt a sense of trepidation as he recalled his encounter in the Dragon Bone Valley back then.

If not for the mysterious Lin Xuanji, he would have died there even if he had ten lives.

Suddenly, he recalled something that Yan Beichen said earlier and could not help but question in shock and disbelief, "It was all because of a dragon?"

A single dragon was enough to bring the Great Qian Empire and two super sects to ruins, changing the state of Tianhuang Mainland's North Region entirely?

"That's right."

Yan Beichen nodded. "An ancestral level divine dragon."

As though he could tell that Su Zimo did not understand the concept of an ancestral level divine dragon, Yan Beichen added, "His combat strength can match the Human Emperor!"

Su Zimo was stunned.

A moment later, Su Zimo composed himself and continued asking, "How many Ancestral Dragons are there in the dragon race?"

"No one knows,"

Yan Beichen replied, "However, the Ancestral Dragons are not the strongest of the dragon race. The dragon race also has a Dragon Emperor whose power is far beyond the Ancestral Dragons!"

Suddenly, Su Zimo felt like he was being suffocated and was in immense pressure.

If an Ancestral Dragon could fight against the Human Emperor, who in the world could stop a Dragon Emperor if it was born?

Yan Beichen continued, "The Primordial Nine Races are innately strong from birth and can wipe out almost everyone else at the same cultivation realm! Throughout history, there has been countless emperors but among them, there are less than ten emperors of the human race who can go against the emperors of the Primordial Nine Races!"

Su Zimo remained silent.

That was the difference between them.

Humans were born weak and that was a fact that couldn't be changed.

The experts of the Primordial Nine Races are already able to fight against emperors of the human race when they were at the ancestral level; they did not even have to be emperors themselves!

After a brief pause, Yan Beichen said, "The reason why humans were able to win the ancient war was because of the birth of the Human Emperor. He was a supreme hero who shocked history and could look down on all other emperors!"

At the mention of the Human Emperor, even someone as prideful as Yan Beichen revealed a tinge of admiration in his tone.

At that point, Su Zimo gradually understood.

What the royal family of Great Zhou was fearful about was not the Blood Crow Palace's Lord, but the true experts of the witch race!

"Blood Crow Palace's Lord is merely a remnant of the witch race with an impure bloodline. Otherwise, his combat strength wouldn't have been so pathetic. Now that his physical body was destroyed by me, he won't be able to recover in a short period of time and Ethereal Peak is in no danger for now. However..." Yan Beichen paused for a moment before changing the topic. "You've been extravagant in your ways in the ancient battlefield, killing the fiend heir of Malevolent Earth Sect and destroying Poison Sect while defeating Glass Palace. You'll have to watch out from now on,"

"Glass Palace and Malevolent Earth Sect are located at the North Region of Tianhuang Mainland!"

Su Zimo's heart skipped a beat.

Although no one else in Xuantian City apart from Ji Chengtian and the others knew of his background, given the strength of Glass Palace and Malevolent Earth Sect, if they truly wanted to hunt him down, it would just be a matter of time.

The only way for him was to hide in seclusion without coming forth.

However, what worried Su Zimo even more was that Glass Palace's Pei Chunyu was severely injured and escaped into the Fog Valley with his fate unknown – there was a chance that he would have survived and made it back to Tianhuang Mainland!

That man was a latent danger.

For the first time, Su Zimo felt that there were way too many latent dangers around him.

Glass Palace, Malevolent Earth Sect, Poison Sect, Blood Crow Palace's Lord...

The moment all of those latent dangers erupted, the outcome would be unimaginable!

He had to get stronger as quickly as possible!

With those latent dangers ticking down, the only shot he had at survival was to get stronger as soon as possible.

Yan Beichen turned around to leave but paused for a moment before remarking indifferently, "You're at Extreme Foundation Establishment and is the second person in history to do so apart from the Human Emperor. However, you have to understand that before you form a core, everything is merely a dreamscape."

"In the super sects of Tianhuang Mainland, Foundation Establishment Cultivators are only outer sect disciples and they will only become inner sect disciples after forming a core."

That was the difference between super sects and Ethereal Peak.

In Ethereal Peak, Golden Cores could become elders.

However, in those super sects, they were only inner sect disciples.

Yan Beichen added, "I heard that Divine Phoenix Island produced a monster incarnate. Although you're at Extreme Foundation Establishment, you're probably only on par with him."

Su Zimo did not reply.

He could not possibly divulge the identity of Divine Phoenix Island's monster incarnate.

Everyone in the cultivation world knew right now that the Divine Phoenix Island's monster incarnate's right hand was a precious piece of divine phoenix bone. If the mighty figures and patriarchs of various factions were to come fight for it, no one could protect him at all!

"Additionally, although phenomenons are the strongest techniques available for Golden Cores, there's a difference in strength between the phenomenons,"

Yan Beichen said, "The Golden Core phenomenons you experienced earlier were the low-end ones with limited power. If you meet with Golden Cores with ancient phenomenons, even an early-stage Golden Core would be able to kill you!"

"Are all ancient phenomenons definitely strong?" Su Zimo asked with a frown.

"The phenomenons that are cultivated by ancient emperors, mighty figures and patriarchs have gone through the sands of time and are still not destroyed. Their legacy crosses time and it's only natural that their powers are incredible!"

Su Zimo asked again, "Are all Golden Core phenomenons cultivated by the later generations weaker than the ancient phenomenons?"

Yan Beichen shook his head. "It's very difficult. All the cultivation techniques you're using right now has been passed down from history. As such, it's only natural that the phenomenons you cultivate can't break out of the shadows of the past ancient phenomenons that easily."

"If you can really create a mighty phenomenon that's able to compare against the ancient phenomenons, you'll definitely be recorded into the books of history and be nominated into the Unusual Phenomenon Ranking!"

"Unusual Phenomenon Ranking?" Su Zimo was slightly stunned.

Yan Beichen replied, "You should know that the ancient battlefield was formed from dimensional shards and is differentiated into different levels based on its stability."

"Yes."

Su Zimo nodded – Demoness Ji had told him about that many years ago.

Yan Beichen continued, "Foundation Establishment Cultivators can be sent into the elementary ancient battlefield and it can be opened once every 10 years. The intermediate is more stable and can allow Golden Cores to cultivate within, opening up once per 100 years."

"In the intermediate ancient battlefield, there's an extremely famous divine ranking that has been passed down from history known as the Unusual Phenomenon Ranking! The ranking list has a total of 108 positions and millions of Golden Cores fight for a spot!"

"Only those that have their names listed on the Unusual Phenomenon Ranking are befitting of the word, paragon!"

Chapter 492: Divine Powers!

Yan Beichen said, "I'm sure I don't need to elaborate more about the benefits of the ancient battlefield. Both you and I are beneficiaries of them."

Su Zimo nodded.

If he hadn't entered the ancient battlefield, there was no way he would have cultivated to his current cultivation realm within a short period of time.

Be it the path of immortals or demons, Su Zimo was already half a step through to creating a core!

Furthermore, he wouldn't have been able to unlock nine spirit meridians and reach the legendary Extreme Foundation Establishment realm!

He wouldn't have had a chance to obtain the secret skill, Ancient Dragonification Manual, and the connate spirit weapon, the Coiling Dragon Seal either.

Su Zimo had truly benefited way too much from the elementary ancient battlefield.

"The intermediate ancient battlefield only opens up once every 100 years and the Unusual Phenomenon Ranking refreshes once per 100 years as well."

Yan Beichen continued, "Apart from fame throughout the cultivation world, the higher one's name was on the ranking list, the more benefits they would obtain. There's a very high chance for one to obtain a massive opportunity and skyrocket from that point!"

Su Zimo's heart skipped a beat and he suddenly asked, "Senior, what was your ranking on the Unusual Phenomenon Ranking in the past?"

"Number one,"

Yan Beichen replied calmly, as though he was recounting something that couldn't be any more normal.

All of a sudden!

Both Su Zimo and Yan Beichen sensed something and turned around, gazing into the distance.

On a mountain peak, the old immortal crane stood with bedazzling green feathers that burned with fiery flames; its body seemed to have gotten much larger than before.

The red crown on its head seemed like it was a massive fireball!

It had broken through!

The old immortal crane was already a Void Reversion pure-blooded ferocious bird to begin with. Now that it advanced a step further, it was akin to a Dharma Characteristic Dao Lord of the human race and had broken through the restraints of heaven and earth, breaking free from its imminent crisis of an expiring lifespan!

Demons had an extremely different cultivation method from humans and they did not have early, mid and late-stages to their major cultivation realms.

Therefore, demons would usually be stuck in a major realm for a long time and could not break through for hundreds or thousands of years.

The good thing was that demons were innately strong from birth and they had a much longer than humans on the same cultivation realm.

For example, the old immortal crane had been stuck in the Void Reversion realm for more than a thousand years!

However, once a demon achieves a breakthrough and breaks free of the shackles of heaven and earth, it would mean that they have advanced a major cultivation realm and their increase in strength would be utterly frightening!

Prior to this, the old immortal crane had no chance of winning against Blood Crow Palace's Lord.

But now that the old immortal crane had advanced and was equivalent to a human Dharma Characteristic, she could kill the Palace Lord with ease!

Suddenly.

The old immortal crane opened its eyes and reared its head into the skies, crying.

It was a piercing screech that reverberated through the world!

An extremely terrifying aura burst forth from the peak of Ethereal Peak and started spreading out!

All five peaks were shaken!

The ancient forest shook and all the living beings within the radius of 500 kilometers sprawled on the ground, silent with fear!

Instantly, the entire world went silent.

Even the air around Ethereal Peak went still and the clouds stopped floating.

Yan Beichen's pupils constricted slightly.

Even he was feeling some slight palpitations through that power!

"Innate divine powers!"

Yan Beichen took a deep breath of air and murmured, "Is that what divine powers are like? It's truly strong!"

"What are divine powers?"

Su Zimo could not help but ask.

Up till this point of his cultivation, he had only heart of spirit arts and Dharmic arts that were above the former. However, he had never heard of divine powers.

"Divine powers are even more terrifying than spirit and Dharmic arts!"

"Simply put, divine powers goes beyond one's imagination and are the type of methods you only hear of in legends!"

Su Zimo was shocked to hear this.

It was even more terrifying than spirit and Dharmic arts!

Yan Beichen said slowly, "Lifting mountains and chasing the moon, that's a divine power. Plucking the stars from the heavens, that's a divine power. Incinerating the heavens and burning the seas, that's a divine power. Summoning wind and rain, scattering beans to form troops... those are all divine powers!"

Su Zimo's mouth opened slightly and he could not contain the shock in his eyes.

One could pluck the stars in the skies, one could boil the oceans and even burn the heavens...

Everything was truly beyond Su Zimo's imagination.

A brand new cultivation that was vast and incredible started forming in his mind; it was something that invigorated him and made him look forward to!

Suddenly, Su Zimo realized...

Although he had already started cultivating a long time ago, he had only just begun on the long path of cultivation.

"How do you cultivate divine powers?"

Su Zimo asked excitedly.

Shaking his head gently, Yan Beichen replied, "You are too far from divine powers and even I'm unable to cultivate them. Void Reversions are known as Dao Beings. Thereafter comes the Dharma Characteristic realm where they are known as Dao Lords. Even after that is the Conjoint Body realm where one will be known as a Mighty Figure. Lastly, they will reach the Mahayana realm and be known as Patriarchs!"

"One is only qualified to cultivate the art of divine powers when they are at the Mahayana realm."

Su Zimo was a little disappointed.

He was only at Foundation Establishment realm right now and even the Void Reversion realm was far from his reaches, let alone the Mahayana realm.

However, on second thought, he exclaimed softly and asked with a frown, "However, senior crane has just broken through and is only equivalent to a Dharma Characteristic. How is she able to comprehend divine powers?"

"That's because she's a demon,"

Yan Beichen replied, "After Void Reversion realm, demons would comprehend a divine power with every step they advance thereafter. The purer their bloodline, the more frightening the divine powers they comprehend would be!"

Suddenly, Su Zimo's eyes shimmered when he heard this as he was enlightened about something.

The Mystic Classic of the Twelve Demon Kings of the Great Wilderness had a total of nine sections. The seventh section, Core Formation, was equivalent to the human Golden Core realm. The eighth section,

Yin Spirit, was equivalent to the Nascent Soul realm and the ninth section, Yang Spirit, was equivalent to the Void Reversion realm.

There was nothing to the Mystic Classic of the Twelve Demon Kings of the Great Wilderness beyond that.

Initially, Su Zimo could not understand why there were only nine sections to the Mystic Classic of the Twelve Demon Kings of the Great Wilderness.

But now, he understood that there was no need for any manuals and techniques after the Yang Spirit section.

As long as he made an advancement after that, he would be able to comprehend his own innate divine powers!

Su Zimo asked again, "Demons are already able to comprehend innate divine powers at Dharma Characteristic realm. Since divine powers are so strong, how do human cultivators deal with them?"

Yan Beichen replied, "Once a human enters Dharma Characteristic realm, they would naturally undergo transformations and be able to sense heaven and earth while summoning supreme Dharmic powers. At that point, the heaven and earth dharma characteristics that they conjure would be able to fight against the innate divine powers of the demon race!"

Su Zimo seemed to have an understanding.

It was the same as when demons formed their Inner Cores. At that point, the strength and speed would increase exponentially and their physiques would reach a terrifying level of toughness that weak humans couldn't fight against.

However, after the elites of the human race formed their Golden Cores, they would be able to produce Golden Core phenomenons.

The immensely powerful phenomenons could enable them to fight against demons!

From the point where they were enslaved in the primordial era to their rise in the ancient era, the cultivation methods of the immortal, Buddhist and fiend Daos of the human race had matured for a long time.

The rise of the human race was definitely not due to luck!

"I've already severed my karma, it's time for me to leave,"

Yan Beichen left a single remark and did not linger further, soaring into the skies before speeding into the distance.

"Little Chen!"

The old immortal crane called out hurriedly when she noticed that.

In the eyes of the younger generation, Yan Beichen was a cold and indifferent old monster.

However, more than a thousand years ago when he joined Ethereal Peak, he was still a child.

The old immortal crane had seen him grow up and advance step by step.

Yan Beichen's figure staggered for a brief moment but did not turn back. He continued heading forward and disappeared into the horizons before long.

When he saw that, Su Zimo came to a sudden realization.

The reason why Ethereal Peak lingered so long in Ethereal Peak after the battle was not merely because of him.

Yan Beichen was worried about the old immortal crane's safety and was actually defending her in silence here!

Given Yan Beichen's character, he would definitely not admit to something like this.

The old immortal crane had a conflicted expression and sighed gently.

Su Zimo could vaguely sense that there was something more as to why Yan Beichen betrayed Ethereal Peak and joined the fiend sect, Asura Sect, more than a thousand years ago.

Chapter 493: Subduing the Monkey Mind and Calming the Prancing Horse

The old immortal crane turned and transformed into a middle-aged redheaded beauty. She had blushed fair skin and looked to be in her early thirties.

Waving her arm casually, her robes extended thousands of feet away and brought Su Zimo before her instantly.

"Congratulations, senior,"

Su Zimo was truly elated when he saw that the old immortal crane was able to break free from the shackles of heaven and earth and extend her lifespan.

With the addition of a new Dharma Characteristic expert, itinerant cultivators in the territory of Great Zhou would definitely want to join Ethereal Peak in the future and the rise of the sect was certain.

"I should be the one thanking you,"

The old immortal crane smiled and looked towards a spot in the forest outside of Ethereal Peak. "Someone from the fiend sects must have sent a message for Little Chen to arrive in time. I suppose that has something to do with you?"

Su Zimo remained silent.

"I don't have any biasness towards the fiend sects. Head over there and take a look, someone has been waiting for you for a long time," THe old immortal crane pointed to a deep portion of the forest and said with a smile.

"Alright."

Su Zimo smiled and spread his spirit wings, speeding towards the forest.

In the depths of the forest, a pink figure stood upright with black hair that fell like a waterfall. Her long dress accentuated her curvy figure to its best.

The veil on the girl's face had already been removed and she was smiling towards his direction with a peerlessly flawless face.

"Thank you,"

Su Zimo was silent for a long time after arriving before finally speaking.

"Pfft!"

Demoness Ji could not help but stifle a laugh.

Blinking her eyes, she skipped around gently and closed in to Su Zimo playfully.

A fragrance wafted over.

Their cheeks were extremely close together and Demoness Ji asked with a sweet breath, "How are you going to thank me?"

With that said, she bit her cherry lips in a seemingly dissatisfied manner and looked at Su Zimo expectantly.

He lowered his gaze with the calmness of an old monk. Not daring to meet with her gaze, he took a step back instead.

After not seeing her for half a year, Demoness Ji's charm techniques had gotten even more terrifying.

Su Zimo lamented to himself, "Seems like she has gotten quite a few opportunities in the Human Emperor's Palace back then as well."

"Alright, I won't tease you anymore,"

Demoness Ji returned to normal and chuckled before remarking with a relaxed tone, "You don't have to thank me since you've saved me before as well."

Su Zimo heaved out a sigh of relief.

After a brief silence, Demoness Ji whispered, "You offended so many people in the ancient battlefield, why didn't you join the fiend sects together with Senior Asura? Although he is cold, indifferent and doesn't care about relationships, I can tell that he seems to treat you rather specially."

Su Zimo shook his head.

Demoness Ji continued, "There's another 20 years to go before the intermediate ancient battlefield opens up. Ethereal Peak doesn't have the strength and isn't able to break through the barriers to enter the intermediate ancient battlefield as well. At that time, remember to come look for me. I'll bring you in."

"We'll discuss it again. In any case, there's 20 more years to go. There's no hurry."

"I'll... make a move first?"

"Yes."

Seeing that Su Zimo had no intention of asking her to stay, Demoness Ji was secretly frustrated and harrumphed gently in a begrudging manner.

She had just turned around when his voice sounded, somewhat hesitantly.

"What's the meaning of the Pure Maiden Sect's tripod?"

Demoness Ji's back was facing Su Zimo and a hint of shyness flickered through her eyes. Hiding it swiftly, she turned around with a fake smile. "What do you think it means?"

There was a saying in the cultivation world that tripods were members of the opposite sex captured and used by evil cultivators to increase their cultivation realms. They would use the tripods to do a double cultivation method by using the tripod's Yin to replenish their Yang or vice versa.

Tripods were akin to slaves and most of them ended up in miserable states, dying from a complete exhaustion of their Yin or Yang essences.

Naturally, Su Zimo had heard of that saying before. However, he did not believe that the Pure Maiden Sect's tripod was the same thing.

"I don't know," He shook his head.

Demoness Ji smiled. "Tripods are naturally used for cultivation!"

When he saw that Demoness Ji clearly did not wish to elaborate, Su Zimo did not question further.

"I'm going!"

She waved to Su Zimo with her back facing him. "I'll tease you again next time."

Gazing at Demoness Ji's departing back view, Su Zimo took a deep breath of air and turned to leave as well, heading towards Ethereal Peak.

This time round, he intended to enter seclusion to try and form his core upon returning!

Su Zimo wanted to form his cores for both his immortality and demonic cultivations!

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Nighttime.

Ethereal Peak, a cave abode.

Su Zimo assumed a lotus position and his eyes were shut.

He had already sat there for an entire day without budging like a statue.

Although it seemed like he did not make any progress, Su Zimo was making preparations to ensure that nothing went wrong.

There were only 12 words to the first sentence of the Core Formation section.

Calm the monkey mind, control the prancing horse, subdue dragons and tigers!

That was the first and most important step to core formation.

An active mind was like a monkey, unable to keep still.

The fluctuations of emotions was like a prancing horse, running wildly.

One had to conquer the monkey mind and prancing horse with unparalleled determination and even subdue dragons or tigers if necessary!

All things were connected.

In the immortal sects, one would achieve a pure mind by adhering to the extremities of silence. In the Buddhist monasteries, one would chant Buddhist proclamations and refrain from speaking. In reality, all of those were guiding one towards calming the monkey mind and the prancing horse of one's intents!

For young people, they were in experienced and emotional. As such, it was the most difficult for them to calm the monkey mind and prancing horse while cultivating.

Older cultivators have been through endless events and are jaded towards the world. As such, it becomes comparatively easy for them instead.

Although Su Zimo was not old and he had cultivated for less than 30 years by now, he had been through endless ups and downs in life and wandered around the boundaries of death as well.

His mind was resolute and could not be moved.

Often, he treated things with humbleness and took care of the overall picture, paying keen attention to things.

He took things in his stride and did not overly meddle. Subconsciously, he was already suppressing his monkey mind and the prancing horse while subduing dragons and tigers with supreme determination!

After entering meditation, the first six sections of the Mystic Classic of the Twelve Demon Kings of the Great Wilderness revolved through his mind in an unhurried motion thoroughly.

It went from the beginning, Body Tempering, to Tendons Transformation, Bones Strengthening, Marrow Cleansing, Organs Refinement, then to the Orifice Cleansing section...

There was a remark in the Core Formation section: "Cultivate the qi of the five organs and consume the seven lights!"

The seven lights referred to the seven orifices.

As time flowed, countless nights passed by in the blink of an eye.

Within the cave abode, the demonic qi that was surrounding Su Zimo intensified and his seven orifices shone with a divine radiance.

His skin, flesh, tendons, bones, marrow, organs and seven orifices formed a perfect Major Heavenly Cycle, circulating endlessly.

Gradually, the demonic qi outside his body started converging towards the center of his chest.

After Qi Condensation and Foundation Establishment, cultivators would enter core formation and their Golden Cores would be created an inch beneath their naval, located at where the spirit qi sea and dantian was at.

But now, the location of Su Zimo's demonic cultivation for his Inner Core was clearly different!

It was at the center of his chest, extremely close to his heart.

The scarlet demon qi was limitless and boundless, converging towards his chest repeatedly while swirling, as if a massive vortex was about to materialize!

Be it for demons or humans, core formation was always the most critical step of their cultivation path!

This was a sort of finale towards their earlier path of cultivation.

After forming a core, it would be the first time they truly broke free of the shackles of heaven and earth, increasing their lifespans.

If they failed, everything would come to an end!

Su Zimo was motionless and his black hair swayed without any wind. A series of ancient demons were conjured around him, baring their claws and fangs with a menacing ferocity as their eyes shimmered with a red gleam.

All of those ancient demons paused for a brief moment before being sucked into Su Zimo's chest by that scarlet vortex!

Su Zimo's aura was turning increasingly terrifying!

Under the shroud of the scarlet vortex, his body underwent another baptism and transformed once more.

His flesh started expanding and his bones and veins shook and buzzed, as though metal was clashing.

Twitching violently, his major tendons gave off snapping sounds like thunder and it was shuddering!

Chapter 494: Inner Core Formation

"Hmm?"

At the back mountain from Ethereal's main peak, the old immortal crane felt something and jolted awake from her meditation cultivation.

More than ten days ago, Ethereal Peak experienced a calamity and suffered immense losses. Up till now, many cultivators were still healing and had not recovered completely.

Even though the old immortal crane was in cultivation, she was paying attention to any activity within the sect keenly.

Right now, she was in the Dharma Characteristic realm and her strength had grown immensely. Her Essence Spirit's cultivation had also deepened as well.

When released, her spirit consciousness could travel thousands of kilometers away and every single slight activity would be noticed by her!

She sensed the strange situation on Su Zimo's side a long time ago.

"What a strong aura. He's about to break through!"

Although the old immortal crane was at the back mountain, her spirit consciousness engulfed Su Zimo's cave abode and saw everything clearly.

As time passed by, the shock in the old immortal crane's eyes deepened.

"Even a pure-blooded ferocious beast doesn't have such a strong demonic technique within its lineage memories!"

She murmured to herself sternly, "This lad truly has too many secrets on him."

Even with her experience, she could not see through all the secrets.

They were things that she could not comprehend even at her cultivation realm!

How could a human cultivate a technique meant for demons?

In the primordial era where the thousands of races reigned, an apocalyptic battle broke out and countless races were destroyed, going extinct.

The races that remained formed a massive group that became known as the demons to the later generations.

Therefore, there were many different types of demons and birds, beasts, flora, fishes and even insects were considered as part of it.

A massive bear that was as big as a mountain could be considered as a demon. However, the same could be said for an ant as tiny as a speck of dust or even a blade of grass in the forest!

There were many legends in the cultivation world of grasses and wood obtaining spirits and gaining the Dao.

The myriad of varieties meant that every single demon had a different body structure and it was even more different when compared to humans.

For example, flora demons did not have skin, flesh, tendons, bones or organs.

Bull demons had four hooves and two horns while snake demons had no legs nor horns...

The old immortal crane truly could not imagine how there would be a demon technique that a human could cultivate in this world, let alone one that was so terrifying!

Unless, there was a single possibility.

It was a technique that retained all the essence of various demon cultivation techniques. By sieving out the portions that were suitable for a human to cultivate, one could combine all of those together!

However, that was a massive project and would require unimaginable effort and focus!

Even the ancient emperors wouldn't be able to do it.

Who was it who could have created such a cultivation technique?

What was the point of this cultivation technique's existence?

Could this terrifying being have spent endless effort and hard work just to create this demon cultivation technique to impart to Su Zimo?

The old immortal crane fell into deep thoughts.

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It was pitch-black within the cave abode.

Suddenly.

Su Zimo opened his eyes and it was extremely sinister, like two flashes of lightning streaking through the dark night!

Swoosh!

He stood up and his flesh expanded. His bones shifted with a series of cracking sounds and his entire body grew, as though he was about to break through the clouds!

It was akin to the rise of a massive ancient demon in the darkness!

Bang! Boom! Boom!

Su Zimo's body continued growing endlessly and his head was almost bursting through the ceiling of the cave abode. The entire place shook as though it was about to collapse at any moment.

Broken rocks fell on Su Zimo's head continuously but he was perfectly fine!

For a disciple such as Su Zimo, the layout of his cave abode was already similar to that of a Golden Core.

It was spacious and had a high ceiling.

Without the use of external objects, Golden Cores could soar through the air and reach a hundred feet in height.

Naturally, the height of the cave abode had to be more than a hundred feet!

What was a hundred feet akin to?

It was similar to a building with ten levels!

Now that Su Zimo was breaking through the roof of the cave abode, it meant that his body had already grew to the height of a hundred feet!

Energy surged into his body endlessly and gathered around his chest.

His body expanded rapidly and caused his flesh to tear open, creating blood mists. His bones were cracking non-stop and even his major tendons were being extended to their limits!

Su Zimo was covered in blood.

His immensely strong regeneration abilities were healing his injuries repeatedly.

Healing after being destroyed, healing after being destroyed...

The cycle continued.

The aura that was given off by his body was turning increasingly terrifying!

The process of his flesh tearing and regenerating was extremely unendurable – Su Zimo was undergoing unimaginable torment!

A long time later, finally unable to hold it in, he slouched his spine and opened his mouth, revealing veins that burst forth from his neck as he let out a thunderous roar from the depths of his throat!

"Roar!"

It sounded like a dragon and a tiger, spreading through the entire place and shocking the world!

Night was the time for birds and beasts to roam and hunt for food and their roars and cries could be heard everywhere.

However, after Su Zimo's roar, all the mountains nearby fell into complete silence!

The old immortal crane jolted awake from her thoughts and her heart skipped a beat.

The glabella of the old immortal crane shone and she released her spirit consciousness swiftly, forming a pitch-black light barrier that isolated Su Zimo's cave abode from the outside world; no one could check on him using their eyes or spirit consciousness.

Su Zimo's demonic cultivation must not be revealed yet.

Cultivators bore a deep-rooted grudge towards demons and that was a fact that was difficult to change.

If they knew that Su Zimo was undergoing demonic cultivation, the other cultivators of the sect would not be able to accept it.

The commotion it would cause would be too great.

Many Nascent Souls and Golden Cores were alarmed. Thinking that a strong foe had arrived, they came forth from their cave abodes one after another despite the fact that their wounds were not fully healed.

Gazing over, everyone caught sight of a light barrier and could not see what was going on inside.

"Leave first and continue healing up. There's nothing important happening here."

The old immortal crane's voice rang in everyone's mind.

All the Ethereal Peak cultivators heaved a sigh of relief and returned, albeit with slightly confused gazes.

Everyone had heard that roar loud and clear.

Even the Nascent Souls of the sect felt their hearts skip a beat!

"What demon was that? It sounds terrifying."

"I don't know, but its background shouldn't be simple."

"It should have been taken down by senior crane."

Many cultivators of the sect discussed in hushed whispers as they went their separate ways.

They could not see that the cave abode that was within the pitch-black light barrier had already collapsed.

In the rumbling dust, a towering figure more than a hundred feet tall stood.

Unknowingly, Su Zimo's clothes had already been torn apart, revealing defined bronze muscles that shone with a metallic luster.

Blood vessels surfaced on his body one after another as the green veins lined the entire place in a terrifying sight, as though snakes were crawling everywhere!

This was a body that could be described as perfect!

A series of terrifying phantoms surrounded that body, exuding ancient auras.

There was a desolate bull that plowed the heavens.

A mighty and towering rock bear.

A swiveling anaconda.

A wild sanguine ape.

A rampant divine steed.

A cruel Hell's tiger.

A wind leopard that traversed the winds.

The seven ancient demons that he had cultivated up to this point of the Mystic Classic of the Twelve Demon Kings of the Great Wilderness were appearing, baring their fangs and claws in a frightening life-like manner!

A round ball of blood was swiveling in Su Zimo's chest, beside his heart, and emitting a rich demonic qi – that was the Inner Core of the demon race!

Inner Core formation, success!

Chapter 495: Terrifying Physique

Sensing the seven ancient demons that were revolving around him, Su Zimo gained a semblance of realization.

There were already seven demon kings up till this point of his cultivation.

In other words, five more had yet to appear.

The limits of his cultivation of the Mystic Classic of the Twelve Demon Kings of the Great Wilderness should be when all twelve demon kings appeared!

Su Zimo did not know who were the other five demon kings.

In the mystic classic that Die Yue left him, the Yin Spirit section was a mystery.

Given his current cultivation realm, he could not understand it at all.

A blood-red Inner Core swiveled slowly within his chest.

Su Zimo could barely contain the joy in his eyes and merely gripped his fists gently. With every single action he took, he could sense the massive power coming from each part of his body that seemed to be able to crush mountains!

It was a leap in quality!

Su Zimo withdrew a supreme-grade flying sword from his storage bag and injected spirit energy to it.

The sword shone brightly with a cold intent.

Su Zimo flicked the blade with his finger gently.

Buzz!

The blade quivered.

The clash of his flesh and a supreme-grade flying sword had actually caused the sound of metal clashing to be emitted!

Circulating his spirit energy fully, the spirit sea in Su Zimo's dantian surged and nine spirit meridians appeared.

He took a deep breath of air and with a blazing gaze, struck the supreme-grade flying sword heavily against his arm!

Clang!

The flying sword was repelled.

His arm was completely fine.

Although Su Zimo had not managed to cultivate a Golden Core in his immortality cultivation yet, he was at the legendary Extreme Foundation Establishment realm. At full power, his strength was comparable to an early-stage Golden Core.

Right now, the sword did not even leave a single mark on his arm!

Even the old immortal crane was shocked when she saw that.

The most resilient parts of a demon's body were mostly their fangs and claws.

If a supreme-grade flying sword couldn't even penetrate Su Zimo's flesh, a perfect spirit weapon might not be able to hurt his bones as well!

If that was the case, it was even less likely that his organs could be injured.

The old immortal crane was certain that Su Zimo's body was even stronger than pure-blooded ferocious beasts at Golden Core realm!

That was because she was a pure-blooded ferocious bird herself.

Su Zimo had just formed his Inner Core and yet, he was already in possession of such a terrifying physique. If he were to continue cultivating and arrive at the limits of core formation...

The old immortal crane did not dare to imagine.

Piak!

Right then, a crisp sound rang out from Su Zimo's cave abode!

The old immortal crane's pupils constricted and her heart skipped a beat.

Su Zimo was holding onto the dim shards of a broken sword with both palms.

The supreme-grade flying sword from earlier on was snapped by his bare hands!

"This..."

The old immortal crane was a little stunned and her eyes widened while her mouth opened.

She suddenly recalled the little mysterious pitch-black beast of unknown origins that Su Zimo had brought back four years ago.

As she thought about the terrifying fangs and claws of that little mysterious beast, she could not help but lament, "This lad's physique is probably comparable to Night Spirit by now."

Until now, she did not know of Night Spirit's origins.

"Both of them are monsters!"

The old immortal crane could not help but add another remark mentally.

Compared to Su Zimo and Night Spirit, her bloodline as a pure-blooded ferocious bird was akin to the bloodline of a domestic fowl...

In the cave abode.

Looking at the broken sword in his palms, Su Zimo thought about that fateful night when Die Yue imparted to him the Mystic Classic of the Twelve Demon Kings of the Great Wilderness and could not help but go into a daze.

She once mentioned that he had to reach the seventh section, Core Formation, if he wanted to seek revenge from Perfected Being Cang Lang.

Right now, he was there.

Eight years have passed since that night.

His entire journey up till his point had been surreal.

As he recounted the times he spent in the cultivation field back in Ping Yang Town with Die Yue, Su Zimo went silent and gradually entered a trance-like manner.

"Zimo."

Suddenly, the voice of the old immortal crane sounded within the cave abode.

"Don't get distracted. You have just formed a core and you have to continue cultivating to stabilize your cultivation realm!"

Su Zimo jolted awake.

It was only at that moment that he realized how much of a mess his breakthrough had created. His cave abode had already collapsed and dust was rumbling everywhere as debris laid on the ground.

The reason why the other cultivators were not alarmed was due to the pitch-black light barrier in his surroundings.

Su Zimo bowed hurriedly. "Thank you, senior crane."

He shocked himself with his comment.

His voice had changed completely!

It was loud as a bell and robust, enough to shake one's mind!

The old immortal crane said gently, "You have to control the power of your Inner Core to a point where it's natural. Otherwise, how are you going to be able to face other people? Even your voice will be enough to scare them."

Su Zimo nodded and did not delay it any further. Shrugging his massive body, he assumed a lotus position and continued cultivating.

After forming a core, stabilizing his cultivation realm and controlling the power of his Inner Core was relatively simpler and did not carry any risk.

All he had to do was spend time to feel the Inner Core and familiarize himself with it while getting accustomed to the many changes to his body. At that time, his cultivation realm would stabilize gradually as well.

As time passed by, the phantoms of the seven demon kings surrounding Su Zimo gradually faded.

His body was shrinking as well.

The demonic qi surrounding him gushed into his chest continuously.

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In the blink of an eye, three days had passed.

Morning, daybreak.

A ray of sunlight broke through the mist and landed on a clear and elegant face.

His black hair fell casually like a waterfall and swayed gently by itself.

The man's eyes were closed and the sunlight moved slowly around his body until he was shining from head to toe.

Against the shroud of the sunlight, his body shone with sparkles and was as shiny and flawless as jade.

The man resembled a deity that had just entered the mortal realm and was in a pure silence.

That was a true transformation!

All of a sudden!

The man opened his eyes and two divine lights shone in a dazzling manner that was even more intense than the sunlight!

However, the divine lights faded swiftly as well.

Calmness returned to his eyes.

Lowering his head, the man looked at his body that had returned to normal and nodded in satisfaction. Retrieving a set of green robes from his storage bag, he wore them was more.

The man was Su Zimo who had just formed his core.

Right now, he was already able to master the power of his Inner Core completely!

As long as he did not make use of the power of his Inner Core, even if he channeled his bloodline, Su Zimo's body would not change in an obvious manner.

Before he knew it, the isolating pitch-black light barrier set by the old immortal crane had already disappeared.

Su Zimo rose and took a deep breath of air, relishing the freshness of the mountains. His entire body was relaxed and every single one of his pores seemed to have opened up.

His cave abode had already turned into ruins and he couldn't stay in it any longer.

Rising slowly, Su Zimo flew past the ruins and headed outside without a sound.

"Hmm?"

Suddenly, Su Zimo's gaze shifted and he exclaimed softly, pausing in his tracks subconsciously.

Outside the ruins, a young girl sat on the ground hugging her knees. Her features were exquisite and she had golden hair, but it was messy and had many curls.

She had not rested for a long time and the girl looked extremely fatigued. Leaning on a cold slab of rock beside the entrance of the ruins, the girl was snoozing.

Su Zimo pondered and understood what happened.

He had created such a huge commotion with his core formation that it must have alarmed many people. Because Nian Qi was worried, she guarded at the entrance and was unwilling to leave. She was dirty all over and her petite face was filled with specks of dust. However, they could not conceal her moving and peerless features.

Chapter 496: Nian Qi's Background

Perhaps the sunlight was blinding, or perhaps she sensed something after Su Zimo glared at her for a long time, Nian Qi's eyelids twitched and she opened her eyes, stirring awake.

"Ah!"

She exclaimed and blushed slightly when she saw Su Zimo looking at her from nearby with a smile on his face.

Nian Qi stood up hurriedly and patted away the dust on her body. Not daring to look at Su Zimo directly, she remarked in a shy manner, "Uh, I fell asleep by accident."

"How long have you been here?"

Su Zimo realized that his voice had already returned to normal and was gentle and warm.

"Three days," Nian Qi replied.

That warmed Su Zimo's heart.

Three days ago was the moment when he had just formed his Inner Core and his cave abode had collapsed.

Because he had both demonic and immortality cultivation, three days without rest was nothing much to him and he was still energized. However, it was unendurable for a young lady like Nian Qi.

Su Zimo said tenderly, "Go back and rest, I'm fine."

"Oh."

Nian Qi nodded and continued, "Master said that your cave abode is destroyed and asked you to relocate to another one."

"Master?"

Su Zimo froze for a moment.

Nian Qi replied merrily, "Senior crane has accepted to take me in as her disciple!"

"That's great,"

Su Zimo was delighted and nodded, quipping at her, "Your seniority in the sect is even higher than mine from now on."

The old immortal crane was the most senior and the strongest within the sect – Nian Qi's future accomplishments would be limitless learning from the old immortal crane directly!

"Don't worry, young master, my cave abode is right beside yours."

Nian Qi explained hurriedly, "You can call for me if you require anything from now on. I'll help you do it right away, just like back in Mo Spirit Weapon Workshop."

Su Zimo smiled. "From now on, we're sect mates. There's no need for us to get along like before."

"That won't do. If you hadn't taken me in back then, I wouldn't be here today,"

Nian Qi shook her head and replied solemnly, "Young Master, no matter what cultivation realm or status I reach in the future, I'll always be the same maidservant by your side."

"You're speaking nonsense again,"

Su Zimo chuckled and did not take it to heart.

What he did not know was that the nonsense to him was a resolute oath in Nian Qi's heart.

Su Zimo remarked, "Let's go, take me to the cave abode."

"Yes."

Nian Qi nodded.

The two of them traveled on their flying swords one after another.

Along the way, Su Zimo pondered for a moment and asked in a seemingly casual manner, "Did anything big happen during this period of time?"

"Nothing much,"

Nian Qi thought for awhile. "There's just many itinerant cultivators that want to join the sect. The royal family of Great Zhou and the other four major sects sent cultivators with gifts one after another as well to express goodwill."

Now that Ethereal Peak had a Dharma Characteristic expert in their midst and had undergone rebirth through nirvana after the flames of war, their rise was only a matter of time.

Those changes were naturally within Su Zimo's guess as well.

Going silent for a moment, he narrowed his gaze and asked, "Iridescent Clouds Palace and True Fire Sect sent people as well?"

"That's right."

Nian Qi nodded.

After a brief pause, she continued, "Don't worry, young master. The other four major sects lost their Void Reversions and many of their Nascent Souls, Golden Cores and Foundation Establishment Cultivators were injured and dead after this battle at Ethereal Peak. Given the immense losses, they wouldn't be able to recover within the next thousand years and won't be a threat to us."

Su Zimo remained silent.

Although the other four major sects had already showed signs of submission, the life and death feud between him and Perfected Being Cang Lang was irreconcilable.

Perfected Being Cang Lang must have realized that his chances would get slimmer the longer time passed!

Su Zimo was at Extreme Foundation Establishment realm.

However, what was Perfected Being Cang Lang's potential?

How could he possibly compete with the growth of someone at Extreme Foundation Establishment?

Before long, the two of them arrived before two cave abodes.

Nian Qi chuckled. "We're here. Mine is the right one and yours is on the left, young master."

"Alright, go and have a rest."

"Alright, call for me if you need anything, young master."

Nian Qi did not reject him because she was truly too tired and left that remark before heading into her cave abode.

"Right,"

Suddenly, Su Zimo called Nian Qi back and hesitated for a moment before asking, "How much do you remember about your childhood?"

"Ah?

A hint of panic flickered through the depths of Nian Qi's eyes. Lowering her head, she stuttered, "I ccan't remember. I-I've been wandering around t-the capital of Great Zhou the entire time u-until I met you, young master."

Su Zimo looked at Nian Qi deeply without pursuing it further. "It's nothing much, I was merely asking. Go on then."

Nodding, Nian Qi did not dare to look at Su Zimo and ran along a path towards the cave abode behind her.

Su Zimo gazed at Nian Qi's back view with deep thoughts.

Actually, Nian Qi's background has always been mysterious.

Back in Mo Spirit Weapon Workshop, Su Zimo already knew that.

It wasn't just because of Nian Qi's innate divine strength and shocking cultivation speed, there was something else.

Back then, when they first met and Su Zimo handed Nian Qi some food, Night Spirit who was in his embrace had actually closed in and sniffed Nian Qi from head to toe!

There were not many things that could interest Night Spirit.

The dragon egg in the Dragon Bone Valley was one of them...

Of course, that alone was not enough to suspect that there was anything wrong with Nian Qi's background.

The most important thing was that from the moment Su Zimo met Nian Qi, the latter was already around 15 years old.

But now that four years had passed, she still looked like a young girl!

Time seemed to have stopped on Nian Qi's body.

This was impossible.

Unless... Nian Qi's innate lifespan was extremely long such that four years was almost negligible compared to her total lifespan!

What sort of person, or rather, race, would possess such a long lifespan upon birth?

Su Zimo had a vague guess in his mind.

It might not be an accurate guess.

After all, there were many treasures and strange fruits on Tianhuang Mainland. It was possible that Nian Qi might have consumed some miraculous fruit or elixir in the past, resulting in her innate divine strength and extremely long lifespan.

The old immortal crane must have spotted something as well and that was why she chose to take in Nian Qi as her disciple.

Of course, it wasn't because Su Zimo suspected Nian Qi's intents.

Although Nian Qi hid her background intentionally, she was a simple and kind girl and harbored no evil intentions towards him or Ethereal Peak.

Who didn't have their own secrets?

Su Zimo had his own as well.

He would definitely not tell anybody about his demonic cultivation casually!

Taking a deep breath of air, Su Zimo set the matter aside temporarily. He took a walk around and relaxed himself before returning to his new cave abode.

He was prepared to continue to form his Golden Core!

Although he had already cultivated an Inner Core and his strength had increased exponentially, he did not dare to activate the power of the Inner Core and kill his enemies in his demon form recklessly.

He could only be considered as a true Golden Core if he entered the Golden Core realm through his immortality cultivation!

Furthermore, Su Zimo was excited to see the type of Golden Core phenomenon he would create!

Chapter 497: Trap to Kill

Iridescent Clouds Palace, Ash Parasol Mountain.

An old man in scarlet robes flew through the air without relying on any external objects, descending slowly in front of a cave abode on the middle of a mountain.

The sect badge on his waist indicated that he was from True Fire Sect.

This was Sima Zhi, a Golden Core of True Fire Sect.

A towering ancient tree stood in front of the cave abode with a stone table beneath it. A man in azure blue robes sat solemnly on a stone stool, his long, narrow eyes shimmering coldly.

"Brother Cang Lang, why have you called for me so urgently?"

Sima Zhi asked the moment he landed.

The azure-robed man was Perfected Being Cang Lang of Iridescent Clouds Palace!

Perfected Being Cang Lang had a calm expression and took a sip of tea unhurriedly, only speaking after he put down the teacup, "Brother Sima, you don't even know that you're at death's door?!"

"Ah?

Sima Zhi was startled. However, he composed himself in the blink of an eye and shook his head, laughing. "Cang Lang, what kind of joke is this?"

"That Su Zimo is at Extreme Foundation Establishment. Given his vengeful nature, do you think he's going to let us off once he enters Golden Core realm?" Perfected Being Cang Lang snorted coldly.

Sima Zhi's expression darkened and he kept quiet for a brief moment. "To be honest, I did think about this after the fight at Ethereal Peak. However, our sect has already sent people to reconcile with Ethereal Peak, so there's nothing I can do about it either."

"I can't possibly head over to Ethereal Peak singlehandedly, right? What's the difference between committing suicide if I did that?"

After pausing for a moment, Sima Zhi continued, "Furthermore, Sima Zhi is at Extreme Foundation Establishment. Whoever lays a hand on him will have to suffer the wrath of Ethereal Peak!"

"Others might have their considerations but you and I? We're different,"

Perfected Being Cang Lang said with a deep voice, "The situation is extremely clear right now. It's either Su Zimo or the both of us who dies! We only have a shot at this and we have to be quick about it! Otherwise, there will be a lot more things to account for once that lad makes a breakthrough to Golden Core realm."

Sima Zhi's gaze shimmered and he took in a deep breath of air after a moment. "Brother Cang Lang, what do you think we should do then?"

"There's no hurry. I've already invited three helpers and they should be arriving soon."

Perfected Being Cang Lang gestured for Sima Zhi to take a seat and calm down.

Not long after, three Golden Cores arrived through the air. In the middle was a skinny middle-aged man with thin lips and a cold expression.

On the left was a Golden Core holding a long cloth. His face was plump and he was all smiles.

The one on the right was dressed in a martial arts outfit and looked sturdy with muscles bulging like rocks. There was a ferocious aura coming from him.

Perfected Being Cang Lang welcomed them.

Pointing to the Golden Core with a long cloth on the left, Perfected Being Cang Lang introduced, "This is the most famous Formation Master of the Tianhuang Mainland North Region, Perfected Being Tan Hao."

"This is Fellow Daoist Gao Hu, he's at late-stage Golden Core and specializes in body tempering,"

The martial arts man nodded towards Sima Zhi.

Finally, Perfected Being Cang Lang looked towards the skinny man in the middle and smiled. "This is the renowned Fellow Daoist Liang Heng of the North Region. At perfected Golden Core, he entered the intermediate ancient battlefield 80 years ago and contested for the Unusual Phenomenon Ranking!"

Sima Zhi's heartt skipped a beat.

Within the territory of Great Zhou, there were no sects or factions that had the capabilities to break through the barrier of the intermediate ancient battlefield and send cultivators in.

Sima Zhi and the others did not have a chance to witness the Unusual Phenomenon Ranking, let alone compete for a spot on it with other cultivators.

Liang Heng waved it off and pretended to be humble. "It's nothing much. After all, I did not manage to obtain a spot on it."

"The Unusual Phenomenon Ranking isn't something that can be compared with us. The fact that you're even qualified to compete for a spot on it proves your strength, fellow Daoist," Sima Zhi praised hurriedly.

Perfected Being Cang Lang said with a smile as well, "Fellow Daoist Liang Heng missed leaving his name on the Unusual Phenomenon Ranking by just a little 80 years ago. For the next Unusual Phenomenon Ranking, you'll definitely be able to rank within the top ten!"

"Yes."

Liang Heng nodded, pleased with their flattery.

He did not have much ties with Perfected Being Cang Lang. The reason he came this time round was mainly because he heard that Su Zimo had a connate spirit weapon!

If he could obtain that connate spirit weapon, he would definitely be able to obtain a spot on the Unusual Phenomenon Ranking the next time he entered the ancient battlefield!

Of course, it was a fool's dream to want to obtain a top ten spot.

The top ten of the Unusual Phenomenon Ranking were one more terrifying than the other!

Sima Zhi asked, "Right now, Su Zimo should be in seclusion within Ethereal Peak and would most likely not appear before he formed a core. Do we have any way of luring him out?"

"I've got a female disciple called Shen Mengqi. She was childhood sweethearts with that kid,"

Perfected Being Cang Lang declared confidently with narrowed eyes, "If he hears that her life is in danger, he'll definitely come forth!"

Sima Zhi's eyes lit up and he nodded in agreement.

The Formation Master at the side, Tan Hao, pondered for a moment before saying with a smile, "I've got three questions. First, you said that they were childhood sweethearts. Would he come forth just for someone that's about to die?"

"Definitely!"

Perfected Being Cang Lang's tone was confident.

"Alright, second question,"

Tan Hao continued, "We can't set the location at Iridescent Clouds Palace. Otherwise, that lad might not take the bait."

"Of course, I've already taken that into account and planned things," Perfected Being Cang Lang asserted.

Tan Hao nodded before adding, "The third question is that even if he takes the bait, how do we kill him down? The fight at Ethereal Peak, ha, had quite an impact in the cultivation world. I heard that this Su Zimo lad is at Extreme Foundation Establishment realm and has the capabilities to kill Golden Cores beyond his level."

"With the five of us Golden Cores attacking together, do we have to fear a single Foundation Establishment Cultivator?" Gao Hu asked darkly.

Tan Hao remarked, "It's not about fear, I'm worried about accidents. If he manages to escape, we won't get a second chance."

"His death is certain with me around!" Liang Heng declared coldly.

"Everyone, please listen to me,"

Perfected Being Cang Lang said with a dark tone, "This kid is at Extreme Foundation Establishment realm and has many trump cards up his sleeves. He possesses a pair of spirit wings and even has an extremely terrifying secret skill that can go against my Golden Core phenomenon!"

Liang Heng, Gao Hu and Tan Hao's expressions changed slightly upon hearing that.

The rumors were real.

A secret skill released by a Foundation Establishment Cultivator could truly go against a Golden Core phenomenon!

Even though Perfected Being Cang Lang's Golden Core phenomenon was not considered to be strong, it was still a shocking fact.

"Even a lion uses its full might to chase down a rabbit. Since I chose to make a move, I won't underestimate my opponent, even if the kid is only a Foundation Establishment Cultivator!"

Perfected Being Cang Lang said darkly, "Fellow Daoist Tan Hao, you have to set up your array formations before hand to ensure that this lad doesn't escape!"

"No problem,"

Tan Hao replied with a smile, "With me setting up the formations personally, even Golden Cores won't be able to escape!"

Perfected Being Cang Lang narrowed his eyes and said coldly, "Everyone, take a look at what I've truly prepared for this kid!"

With that said, he withdrew a jade bottle from his storage bag. There was a scarlet flower that resembled an orchid in the middle of it, giving off a faint fragrance.

The other few Golden Cores swept their gazes across and their expressions changed as they retreated one after another.

"Spirit Lock Flower!"

Liang Heng frowned and asked, "This fiend flower has already gone extinct in the ancient era. How did you get your hands on it?"

The Spirit Lock Flower would not cause any direct harm to a cultivator.

However, its fragrance had a fiendish power that could lock a cultivator's spirit energy; even Golden Cores could not defend against it!

The Spirit Lock Flower was one of the most famous fiend flowers of the ancient era!

Chapter 498: Paper Crane

Perfected Being Cang Lang gave a smirk and replied darkly, "I got my hands on this Spirit Lock Flower from the Great Qian ruins! I've only managed to resurrect it after nourishing it for dozens of years!"

At the mention of Great Qian ruins, the expressions of the other four Golden Cores changed and they took deep breaths in silence with wary looks in their eyes.

A long time later.

Gao Hu said, "Fellow Daoist Cang Lang, why don't you ask us along the next time you go look for treasures in the Great Qian ruins. That way, we can look after one another as well."

"Heh! That's a place that we'll most likely die in and I'll never return again,"

Perfected Being Cang Lang remarked with a sense of trepidation, "The previous time round, I merely took a spin around the outer perimeter of it and I nearly died there!"

Tan Hao replied with a bright smile, "It seems like you take this Su Zimo guy rather seriously don't you, Fellow Daoist Cang Lang? To think that you would be willing to make use of an extinct ancient fiend flower, the Spirit Lock Flower."

"Isn't it excessive to use the Spirit Lock Flower against a Foundation Establishment Cultivator?" Gao Hu asked moodily.

The Spirit Lock Flower restricted one's spirit energy absolutely.

Putting away the Spirit Lock Flower, Perfected Being Cang Lang said coldly, "I've already said that even a lion uses its full might to chase down a rabbit! I won't allow any mishaps to happen for this attack!"

Tan Hao nodded. "With the Spirit Lock Flower, the kid's greatest trump card, his secret skill which allows him to conjure a divine dragon, is now useless."

"Furthermore, even if he enters Golden Core realm, it's useless! With his spirit energy locked, he won't be able to use any techniques as a Golden Core and with the formation set up outside, he won't be able to escape even if he has wings!"

True Fire Sect's Sima Zhi's eyes lit up and he got increasingly excited as he spoke.

"Wings?"

Perfected Being Cang Lang sneered, "Don't forget, he won't even be able to use Ethereal Peak's secret skill, Ethereal Wings, with his spirit energy locked! He can only stand on the ground and look up to us!"

Gao Hu grinned. "In that case, all we have to do is stand in midair and that kid won't be able to hurt us no matter how many tricks he has up his sleeves or how strong his body is. On the other hand, all of us can just attack him as we want to!"

"That's right."

"That's great!"

The five of them exchanged glances and laughed with relaxed expressions.

"Let's discuss how we want to distribute his treasures after killing him first, lest we get into needless arguments later on," Liang Heng remarked indifferently.

"Don't worry, we'll go with our initial agreement,"

Perfected Being Cang Lang said with a deep voice, "We'll give that kid's dragon conjuring secret skill and connate spirit weapon to Fellow Daoist Liang Heng. His body tempering technique will be for Fellow Daoist Gao Hu. His sword formation techniques will be for Fellow Daoist Tan Hao. As for his weapon refinement techniques, they will be for Brother Sima."

"Lastly, we'll divide the remaining spirit stones, elixirs and spirit weapons he has equally among the five of us!"

"That's good,"

Liang Heng and the other four nodded delightfully.

Gao Hu was a body tempered warrior to begin with and the thing that attracted him the most was Su Zimo's body tempering technique.

Everyone got what they wanted.

Just as everyone was about to leave, Sima Zhi frowned and asked, "I heard that this female disciple of yours disobeyed your orders previously and did not partake in the battle against Ethereal Peak. Are you sure she's going to help us this time round to go against her ex-lover?"

"Since they're childhood sweethearts, he will definitely be familiar with her handwriting. If you forge something out, there will definitely be flaws," Tan Hao was calm.

"Humph!"

Perfected Being Cang Lang harrumphed coldly with a glum expression, "She won't get to decide this time round!"

Sima Zhi and the others felt their hearts skip a beat.

From the murderous look on Perfected Being Cang Lang's face, it seems like he was going to sacrifice his disciple in order to kill Su Zimo!

"That traitor will cause trouble for me sooner or later if I continue to keep her by my side,"

Perfected Being Cang Lang narrowed his thin eyes and declared frostily, "Coincidentally, she's about to form her core, fufu. It isn't that easy for anyone to enter Golden Core realm and of course, it couldn't be anymore natural if an accident happened during the process of it."

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A month later.

Ethereal Peak.

Su Zimo was in a lotus position in his cave abode. His palms rested on both his knees and faced up while his eyes were in a seemingly closed state as he breathed steadily. From head to toe, he exuded an extremely serene intent, akin to an immortal.

A long time later, Su Zimo opened his eyes and took a long breath, waking up from his meditation.

"I still can't do it,"

Su Zimo shook his head.

For the past month, he had been cultivating with Qi Condensation while comprehending the Tidal Manual and Asura Saber at the same time as a conclusion to the many secret skills he had obtained after stepping onto the immortality cultivation path.

Although he had to form cores for both his demonic and immortality cultivation, they were starkly different.

The demonic Dao required him to subdue his monkey mind and prancing horse intent while condensing demonic qi repeatedly. At that point, things would come together naturally and he could form his Inner Core.

However, the immortal Dao required more of comprehension and understanding.

If he tried forming a core forcefully, it would not only lead to problems easily, the Golden Core phenomenon that he created might not be up to his expectations as well.

Therefore, Su Zimo did not dare to be careless.

Half a month ago, he had already reached the limits for his spirit energy and his spirit sea could not expand further.

In other words, he was already at the peak of Extreme Foundation Establishment realm!

Given those circumstances, he attempted to form his Golden Core.

His cultivation path up till this point had been overly complex and apart from immortal techniques, he had cultivated many fiend techniques as well.

However, the differences between the Dao of immortals and fiends were way too vast.

Immortality placed emphasis on nature and being one with the heavens.

However, fiends were obsessed about the extremities of things.

By nature, the spirit energy that Su Zimo cultivated was of a fire attribute. However, many of the cultivation techniques he cultivated such as the Sea Calming Manual, Tidal Manual and Blood Refinement Fiend Sutra were related to water.

Immortals and fiends were irreconcilable as was fire and water.

After half a year, Su Zimo still did not manage to cross that gap.

If he tried forming a core forcibly, there would definitely be a large problem!

"The timing isn't right,"

He went deep in thought.

On the path of cultivation, if one wanted to break through a major realm, they would often have to require the synergy of multiple factors, such as the environment, comprehension of the heaven and earth, fate and their mental states.

Some people gain enlightenment at the lakeside.

Some people gain epiphany after traveling through mountains and valleys.

Some people form their cores in the spur of the moment while they are listening to the wind and looking at rain fall.

Some people sever their karmas overnight and attain enlightenment mentally, forming their Golden Cores...

But of course, there were even more people who die old with regrets without even getting to form a core!

Rising, Su Zimo got off his bed gently and murmured to himself with a clear and deep gaze, "Seems like it's time for me to head out and take a walk."

Right then, a soft knock came from his door.

Su Zimo waved his sleeves and the door opened correspondingly.

Nian Qi stood at the entrance, gazing in left and right.

"What's wrong?"

Arriving beside her, Su Zimo looked at the paper crane in her hands and asked softly.

The paper crane was one of the most commonly seen messaging tool in the cultivation world and it was a type of talisman, created by the Thousand Crane Sect.

Nian Qi handed him the paper crane. "This is for you, young master. It states that it's from an old friend from Ping Yang Town."

Su Zimo furrowed his brows slightly.

There was probably only a single person who was an old friend from Ping Yang Town and knew how to make use of paper cranes to send messages.

Receiving the paper crane, Su Zimo opened it slowly.

A few lines of sentences were written with a dainty handwriting.

"Zimo, I've failed in my core formation and my spirit meridians have been severed. The injuries are extremely severe and I'm now back in Ping Yang Town to recuperate in silence."

"Our relationship has ended a long time ago and I shouldn't have bothered you to begin with. But recently, I feel that my limits have been reached and I don't have much time left. I hope that you can return for us to meet one last time."

Regards, Shen Mengqi.

Chapter 499: Make a Clean Break

The handwriting towards the end was slightly messier, as though she couldn't muster her strength.

Su Zimo's expression was calm after he finished reading it and there wasn't a single bit of emotion in his eyes.

Out of curiosity, Nian Qi could not help but inch forward to take a look.

"It's her?!"

She had some recollection towards Shen Mengqi.

Back then, the woman behind Perfected Being Cang Lang outside Mo Spirit Weapon Workshop was Shen Mengqi.

Nian Qi said, "Young Master, could this be forged? It might be a trap!"

"The handwriting is hers,"

Su Zimo said before sneering, "However, there's definitely a trap."

The longer time passed by, the more afraid Perfected Being Cang Lang would be.

Therefore, Su Zimo predicted that Perfected Being Cang Lang would definitely make his move!

However, there was no chance for Perfected Being Cang Lang to do anything if Su Zimo remained in Ethereal Peak.

Therefore, no matter what kind of message it was, whether it was at Ping Yang Town or anywhere else, Perfected Being Cang Lang only had a single motive – to lure him away from Ethereal Peak!

When Nian Qi saw that Su Zimo was calm and did not lose his cool, she felt relieved.

However, immediately after, Su Zimo's next sentence alarmed Nian Qi.

"I'm going to leave the peak,"

"Ah?

Nian Qi frowned and asked, "Young Master, you're going to continue despite knowing that it's a trap?"

"That's right."

Su Zimo smiled and gazed into the distance.

A breeze blew over and his black hair swayed gently. As if he was reminiscing, Su Zimo looked a little emotional and murmured, "It's just nice that they're all around. It's time to make a clean break and settle all the grievances of the past."

"However, the other party is prepared and must have set up an impenetrable trap for you, young master!"

Nian Qi had a worried expression as she analyzed calmly, "You're not at Golden Core realm yet, young master. There's truly no need for you to take the risk."

"Don't worry. If the situation doesn't seem right, I'll retreat first,"

Su Zimo smiled slightly. "Furthermore, I haven't been getting much progress recently in my attempts in core formation. Continuing that way isn't going to be helpful and I've been meaning to head out as well."

Before Nian Qi could persuade him further, Su Zimo already rode on his flying sword and turned into a streak of light, tearing through the void.

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Ten days later.

Ping Yang Town, night.

It was dead quiet on the streets without anyone around.

Within a room in a mansion not far away from the Shen family, everything was pitch-black.

All of a sudden!

In the darkness, a pair of eyes lit up and a skinny figure appeared faintly.

The person's ears twitched before whispering, "Someone's here!"

Immediately after, a hushed voice sounded from the side, "Brother Liang Heng, you're indeed impressively strong. We didn't even detect anyone at all."

As he spoke, another few pairs of eyes lit up in the room as a couple more figures appeared one after another – it was Perfected Being Cang Lang's group of five.

Before long, the sound of clothes fluttering through the air arrived at an extremely fast speed.

The sound of it definitely indicated that the person was headed for Ping Yang Town!

The five of them exchanged glances and their killing intents surfaced.

Perfected Being Cang Lang went to a window and peered outside through a slit.

Before long, a green-robed figure arrived above the Shen residence. His robes were fluttering as he stepped on a flying sword, standing upright in the air with a calm expression.

Perfected Being Cang Lang could not help but smirk when he saw that.

"He took the bait!"

Turning around, he nodded to Liang Heng and the other three.

"Are we going to make a move now?"

Gao Hu rubbed his palms with a murderous look – he was raring to go.

"Let's wait a little more, there's no hurry,"

Perfected Being Cang Lang was extremely calm and whispered, "Let's observe further to see if the kid has any expert on his heels. Otherwise, we might be the ones falling into a trap!"

"That's right,"

Sima Zhi nodded.

"Expert? What expert?"

Liang Heng sneered, "If they are Golden Cores, it doesn't matter how many of them come because I'll be able to take them down singlehandedly! As for Nascent Souls..."

"Ha, do you guys think that any Nascent Souls would be so free as to accompany this lad for such a long distance just so he could meet his ex-lover?"

Gao Hu nodded in agreement.

"There's nothing wrong with being a little more careful,"

Perfected Being Cang Lang added with a slight frown.

Although Su Zimo had already fallen into the trap and everything was proceeding as planned, for some reason, he felt uneasy as though something was amiss.

"Isn't everything going too smoothly?"

A moment later, Perfected Being Cang Lang suddenly asked.

"Fu!"

Liang Heng could not help but stifle a chuckle and shake his head. "Cang Lang, you're truly overly suspicious. We've planned this for so long with so many backups, what are you still worried about?"

"I have no idea as well."

Perfected Being Cang Lang shook his head.

He could not help but recall the scene eight years ago back in Ping Yang Town when Su Zimo provoked him through words intentionally and survived because of that.

As he recounted, he thought about how Su Zimo played him like a fiddle in front of Mo Spirit Weapon Workshop and humiliated him completely...

"This kid is so difficult to deal with. How is he falling for this so easily?"

Perfected Being Cang Lang was still worried.

With a cold expression, Tan Hao asked with a hushed voice, "When you saw him earlier on, what was his cultivation realm?"

"Foundation Establishment realm,"

Perfected Being Cang Lang was the first to freeze after replying.

The other four could not help but laugh as well.

"Perhaps I'm overthinking it,"

Perfected Being Cang Lang chuckled. "Since he's at Foundation Establishment realm, there's truly nothing to worry about."

"Even without everything we've prepared, if the five of us rush up, it'll be nothing much for us to take down a Foundation Establishment Cultivator!" Gao Hu grinned.

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The sky above the Shen family.

Su Zimo stood upright on his sword with ridicule in his eyes.

Before he attained greater mastery of his Orifice Clearing section, he had already reached the state where he could hear everything.

Now that he had formed his Inner Core, his hearing was even more terrifying!

If Su Zimo wanted to, he could even listen to the sounds of ants crawling underground and mosquitoes buzzing within a thousand feet loud and clear, let alone the whispers of Perfected Being Cang Lang and the others.

Initially, Su Zimo had the intention of rushing over to kill Perfected Being Cang Lang and the other four instantly.

However, his gaze soon shifted towards the courtyard of the Shen family beneath him and his eyes turned slightly cloudy.

It was cold and quiet in the Shen family and of the four rooms around the courtyard, only two were occupied.

The person in the room to the south had a racing heartbeat, panting in a seemingly nervous manner – it was a man who had never cultivated before.

If he was not wrong, that should be Shen Nan.

In the room to the west, there was an intense twilight aura and the person within it had a weak and faint breathing – this person should not have long to live.

Twitching his nose, Su Zimo caught a whiff of medicinal fragrance.

The person in the room was severely injured and was beyond cure!

"How could this be?"

Su Zimo furrowed his brows slightly.

To him, since the handwriting on the paper crane was authentic, it meant that Shen Mengqi was in cahoots with Perfected Being Cang Lang and everything that was written was all a ruse just to lure him here.

If that was the case, why was Shen Mengqi truly on the brink of death?

In that instant, two possibilities flashed through Su Zimo's mind.

First, Shen Mengqi wanted to trick him here despite her impending death so that she could drag him down with her.

Second, she was just an... abandoned chess piece.

Su Zimo had a conflicted expression and sighed gently internally.

At that moment, he already had an answer in mind.

Chapter 500: The Tricks of Fate

Putting away his flying sword, Su Zimo descended slowly and silently into the courtyard.

He headed forward and pushed the door open.

Instantly, he was welcomed with a suffocating medicinal smell.

Within it was a hint of a woman's fragrance and a faint flowery scent.

Frowning, Su Zimo strode inside.

A woman laid down on the bed silently with her eyes shut. Her face and lips were pale and she was covered in a large blanket, breathing weakly.

Arriving before the bed, Su Zimo looked at the woman quietly without any joy nor sadness internally.

The woman was reeking with the aura of death.

Her pulse was weak and her organs were starting to fail.

Even an immortal wouldn't be able to save her at this point!

Eight years.

Who would have thought that the impressive young girl selected by an immortal eight years ago would end up in such a state.

This was how fate loved to play tricks.

Probably sensing something, Shen Mengqi's eyelids twitched and she opened her eyes slowly.

The pair of brilliant and moving eyes from Su Zimo's memories were now empty and lifeless with a cloudy shade.

Her gaze was seemingly dazed, as though she could not adapt to the environment.

Arriving at Su Zimo's face, her stare lingered for a long time before her eyes gradually widened, shimmering with a glint of light.

Shen Mengqi looked slightly more spirited as well.

"You've come,"

Her lips twitched as she revealed a smile.

However, she did not have much strength left and even her voice was as soft as a mosquito.

"What happened?"

After remaining silent for a long time, Su Zimo finally asked with a calm tone.

"I was in too much of a hurry to try and form my core. Sigh, there's no way it would be so easy to form a core,"

Shen Mengqi chuckled bitterly. "My foundation wasn't stable and I lost control of my spirit energy, causing my meridians to sever. I entered Qi Deviation and failed in my core formation, nearly losing my life. Thankfully, my master stepped in and managed to save my life."

At the mention of the word 'master', Shen Mengqi glanced at Su Zimo. When she saw that the latter was expressionless and wasn't bothered by it, she continued, "Since I knew that I didn't have much time left, I wanted to return to Ping Yang Town and return to my roots."

"Because he dotes on me, master even sent me back personally."

Su Zimo remained silent but a hint of pity could be seen within his eyes.

He wasn't pitying Shen Mengqi for her fate, but her ignorance.

Even up till now, she had not realized that she was sacrificed and abandoned by Perfected Being Cang Lang!

Shen Mengqi murmured, "I know that I owe you too much. T-The fact that you're willing to come see me and listen to me is enough for me to leave without regrets."

Su Zimo surveyed the room and finally, his gaze lingered on a scarlet flower that was on the wooden table beside the bed, frowning.

"This flower ... "

He narrowed his eyes, seemingly pondering about something.

All of a sudden!

A cold voice sounded from the void outside the door.

"Activate!"

The moment the voice ended, a bedazzling light shone outside, bright as day.

It was the light of formation patterns!

Su Zimo was a Sword Formation Master to begin with. Even without heading out to take a look, he could sense the aura of a massive formation being activated.

Shen Mengqi had a stunned expression, not understanding what was going on.

The next moment, the entire room was ripped apart by a tremendous power, causing dust and gravel to fly everywhere.

"Hahahaha!"

An arrogant laughter rang in the courtyard, reverberating endlessly.

When she heard that laughter, Shen Mengqi asked in disbelief with a shocked expression, "Master?"

Su Zimo turned around, completely unaffected.

After the dust settled, five Golden Cores could be seen in a line in the skies above the courtyard, bearing sharp gazes and murderous intent.

Iridescent Clouds Palace's Perfected Being Cang Lang was among them!

"Master, you guys..."

Shen Mengqi's lips quivered and the shock in her eyes vanished gradually; she did not continue speaking.

She was no fool and had already understood when she saw that lineup.

Glaring at Shen Mengqi, Perfected Being Cang Lang remarked coldly, "Traitor, if I didn't need you to lure this b*stard here, I would have killed you personally a long time ago!"

"Why? Why ... ?!"

Shen Mengqi struggled to sit up and trembled, looking at Perfected Being Cang Lang and asking with a quivering voice, "W-Was it because I didn't accompany you in the fight against Ethereal Peak?"

"It's because your death is the only thing that can bring Su Zimo here!"

Perfected Being Cang Lang's expression was frosty. "Additionally, today, I'll let you understand how you die as well. As a five meridian Foundation Establishment Cultivator, you had a high chance of succeeding in your core formation. Yet, you failed..."

At that point, Shen Mengqi's mouth opened slightly as she shook her head repeatedly, as though she could tell that something terrifying was coming!

Smiling sinisterly, Perfected Being Cang Lang said, "Do you remember the elixir I gave you before you entered seclusion?"

"Indeed, that elixir does help in circulating spirit energy and aiding one in core formation. However, I've added some extra ingredients into that elixir! Hahaha!"

"Pfft!"

Shen Mengqi spat out a mouthful of blood and her face was frighteningly pale. Her face was veiled with an aura of death and she looked even more frail.

"I've noticed long ago that you haven't given up on this b*stard,"

Perfected Being Cang Lang continued, "Indeed, you're a good disciple of mine and didn't let me down. After I sent you back, you could not wait to send a paper crane message to Ethereal Peak. Everything was as I had predicted."

"I've given you a chance but you didn't cherish it. Stupid lass, the only thing awaiting you if you go against me is death! Since I can take you onto the path of immortality cultivation, I can naturally destroy you as well!"

"Eight years! Did our eight years of relationship as master and disciple mean nothing..." Shen Mengqi's voice was shaking and her eyes were brimming with tears.

"Fufu."

Perfected Being Cang Lang stifled a laugh. "Good disciple, let me give you one last truth as your master."

"There's no such thing as a relationship in the cultivation world! In my eyes, you're nothing but a chess piece!"

Steaming tears rolled down as she sobbed silently.

By now, Shen Mengqi could no longer feel the pain coming from her body.

All she felt was a gutting wrench of her heart, as though she was about to faint as her limbs went cold!

Every single sentence from Perfected Being Cang Lang struck her already injured body relentlessly like arrows.

Shifting his gaze, Perfected Being Cang Lang looked at Su Zimo and asked with a slight frown, "Su Zimo, you don't seem to be surprised?"

Sima Zhi stroked his beard and laughed smugly. "You don't have to fake your composure. I'm sure you must be frightened to death by now, right?"

"Do you think that the five of you along with this lousy array formation is enough to scare me?"

Su Zimo smiled as well.

In the ancient battlefield, he was in a much deadlier situation going against the paragons of the immortal, Buddhist and fiend sects alongside their Sealers!

"Rubbish!"

"He truly doesn't know his limits!"

Liang Heng, Gao Hu and the others yelled, exuding their might as Golden Cores to suppress Su Zimo endlessly.

"Su Zimo, I'm even using an ancient fiend flower just to set this trap and kill you!"

Perfected Being Cang Lang said coldly, "I'm sure you've already realized by now that your spirit energy has been locked. Your death today is certain!"