

M. Slaying 291

Chapter 291: The Might of a Legendary Sword

Boom!

The sound of an intense explosion reverberated from the belly of Sword Sheath Peak.

The Weapons Master had sent the hall master of the Northern Abyss Hall flying with one punch, and the hall master's chest exploded repeatedly while in midflight. With each explosion, a ball of darkness would quickly condense, restoring the hall master's chest to its original state. However, there would be another explosion soon after, and the darkness would swiftly gather into a ball once again.

The Weapons Master had only thrown one punch, yet the impact from that one punch caused the hall master's chest to explode a hundred times. He crashed through layers of the mountain rampart before finally falling to the ground with a loud thud.

These two Eminent Ones had, of course, sensed the chaos that had erupted on Heaven-Reaching Peak. Consequently, the Weapons Master was in a hurry to end the battle as quickly as possible. On the other hand, the hall master of the Northern Abyss Hall wanted to keep the Weapons Master on Sword Sheath Peak to let the other members of his diabolical sect complete their tasks.

Many things could happen in the blink of an eye during a fight between Eminent Ones.

The two had just exchanged a round of blows, with the Weapons Master ultimately gaining the upper hand with one punch.

Meanwhile, the black-robed man had just approached Ling Ao. Nevertheless, Jiang Yuebai and Chu Liang attacked him together. One used an immobilization spell, and the other used the Heavenly Sword Seal.

When Chu Liang used the Crimson Executioner with the Heavenly Sword Seal, the amplified power of the seal was insanely terrifying, so much so that even a powerful cultivator at the pinnacle of the sixth realm wouldn't dare underestimate it. In fact, Chu Liang had already killed more than one sixth-realm cultivator with the Crimson Executioner in the past!

The black-robed man spun around and hurriedly released a black light shield from his inventory, but the Crimson Executioner shattered it instantly!

Despite that, the shield had absorbed the brunt of the attack, so the remaining sword qi only knocked the black-robed man back several zhang[ref]Reminder that one zhang is approximately 3.33m.[ref].

Still, that alone was astonishing!

Chu Liang was only at the fourth realm—two levels lower than the black-robed man! This difference in level was like that between the heavens and the earth!

This was Xu Ziyang's and Jiang Yuebai's first time seeing Chu Liang use this move, so they were both stunned. Xu Ziyang was simply surprised by Chu Liang's explosive power, while Jiang Yuebai's thoughts on this discovery were a bit more complex.

Chu Liang didn't use this flying sword earlier in our duel, even though it's several times more powerful than what he did use...

Was it because he underestimated me, or did he avoid using it on purpose?

Regardless, Jiang Yuebai had no time to keep thinking about this. The cave was shaking violently.

"Quick, go!" Xu Ziyang shouted, pulling Jiang Yuebai out of her thoughts.

It turned out that the battle between the hall master of the Northern Abyss Hall and the Weapons Master had resumed at an escalated intensity. They fought until half the mountain collapsed, and the belly of the mountain was almost hollowed out.

Darkness exploded from the hall master of the Northern Abyss Hall and compressed into a massive pitch-black orb, becoming so condensed that it seemed solid. It was clear from a glance that if this orb of darkness were to explode, the blast would raze Sword Sheath Peak to the ground.

Meanwhile, the Weapons Master used one of his iron hands to press down on the orb, suppressing the immense power to prevent it from exploding.

One party aimed to destroy, and the other aimed to protect. The second party was obviously at a disadvantage.

Consequently, Xu Ziyang reminded the others that they had to leave quickly. If they stayed behind, they would only hinder the Weapons Master. Xu Ziyang believed that once they had moved far from the orb, the Weapons Master wouldn't need to worry about their safety, and he would be free to do whatever he needed to prevail.

Right then, Ling Ao managed to break free. He immediately used his most powerful divine technique, the Divine Dragons' Great Blood-Burning Technique, to make a desperate escape!

However, the black-robed man had revived again!

The four most outstanding young disciples of the Mount Shu Sect fled together while the black-robed man persistently pursued them alone!

"You little bastard! I'm going to kill you!" yelled the black-robed man.

Just as those words left his foul mouth, a beam of purple light shot toward him like a streak of lightning!

Wham!

With a hand shrouded in darkness, the black-robed man smacked the Violet Draconic Sword away!

The Violet and Azure Twin Swords were still functioning in a masterless state and could not exert their full combat power. All they could do was strike the black-robed man a couple of times. Regardless, the black-robed man's smack didn't deal much damage to the Violet Draconic Sword either.

After that, the black-robed man transformed into a streak of darkness and rushed out of the cave in pursuit.

Chu Liang's group was fleeing swiftly, but the gap between their cultivation levels and the black-robed man's was too wide. They were like children to the black-robed man. It didn't matter even if he let them have a head start; he could catch up to them easily.

As the group exited the cave, a burst of wind blew toward them with a whoosh.

Xu Ziyang shouted resolutely, "I'll hold him off! You guys should go to Heaven-Reaching Peak for reinforcements!"

It would only take them a breath's worth of time to return to Heaven-Reaching Peak, but the black-robed man was capable of killing a person in the blink of an eye. If someone were to stay behind, it very likely meant they would be sacrificing their life for the others!

Ling Ao turned back first and said, "I'm the least talented. I'll hold him off!"

Jiang Yuebai frowned. "I'm the head disciple. It should be me!"

"Haaa..." Chu Liang sighed and grabbed the Azure Ophidian Sword, which had just caught up to him. "I have the Violet and Azure Twin Swords. It's best if I do it."

While Chu Liang and the others were discussing that, the streak of darkness had already caught up to them!

If they didn't leave now, they wouldn't be able to!

Jiang Yuebai said urgently, "You haven't mastered the sword seals for the legendary swords. It's pointless even if you have the Violet and Azure Twin Swords! You're the one who should leave first!"

"I have," Chu Liang replied calmly.

"What?" Jiang Yuebai uttered blankly.

She was taken aback, almost thinking she had misheard.

Those sword seals are on the same level as an immortal art. Moreover, the twin swords selected Chu Liang as their master just earlier. How could he have mastered the sword seals already?

How is that possible?

It was indeed impossible that Chu Liang had already mastered both of the sword seals... He had only mastered one of them.

Ever since he was selected by the twin swords, Chu Liang had been studying the two sword seals. The Violet Draconic Sword Seal and the Azure Ophidian Sword Seal were different, but they led to the same result.

He realized that the most difficult part of each sword seal was that he needed to let the sword spirit take over his meridians. His meridians needed to be fully linked to the sword spirit when he used the sword seal.

With his current low cultivation level, the legendary sword would become the master of his Sea of Qi and his qi-circulation routes. Rather than Chu Liang wielding the sword, it would be more accurate to say the sword would be wielding him.

It was very difficult for a cultivator to completely relinquish control over their meridians. The cultivator had to overcome their body repeatedly rejecting the sword spirit and eventually become one with the sword spirit. Any cultivator would require a long time to achieve this.

However, this wasn't that difficult a feat for Chu Liang. After all, one of the meridian systems wasn't actually his...

To be more precise, he was thinking of the Sea of Qi and the meridian system that the Golden-Core Puppet had formed in his body. That secondary meridian system, which he usually used to run the Qi-Circulation Technique at all times and circulate foundational qi into his body, was technically considered foreign to the meridian system of his actual body. So, if the Azure Ophidian Sword Spirit wanted to take over that meridian system, Chu Liang's body wouldn't reject it.

It was essentially something that didn't concern him.

Chu Liang's secondary Sea of Qi and meridian system technically belonged to the Golden-Core Puppet.

If the Azure Ophidian Sword wants to enter the doll's meridian system and take over... It's not like the doll can even reject it, right?

If it were the meridian system that the Violet Draconic Sword had linked to, it would be a much more difficult feat, and Chu Liang would need to train hard for quite a while. Nonetheless, he didn't have to do that with the one the Azure Ophidian Sword had linked to.

Just before Chu Liang executed the sword seal, the female sword spirit couldn't stop herself from exclaiming, "You sure are easy to get along with, kid!"

Chu Liang took it as a compliment. He formed a hand seal with his left hand and raised the Azure Ophidian Sword with his right. Waves of azure swordlight rippled through the air from the sword.

When the black-robed man emerged from the cave, he saw Chu Liang brandishing the Azure Ophidian Sword.

The black-robed man's first reaction was that it was impossible.

How could he have learned the sword seal for that legendary sword so quickly after being selected as its master?

Absolutely impossible.

Yet, a beam of sword qi darted toward him like an azure dragon.

The black-robed man was truly unlucky.

Chu Liang had already ruthlessly attacked the black-robed man with the Crimson Executioner earlier. To the black-robed man's dismay, there was still worse to come.

The Azure Ophidian Sword's immense sword qi was swift and fierce, and it exuded an intense killing intent as if it wouldn't stop until it had killed all demonic entities! It sliced through the vast blue sky like a rushing river!

After unleashing that sword strike, Chu Liang fell from the sky!

The sword strike had exhausted all of his vitality, qi, and spirit!

The Crimson Executioner required only one percent of Chu Liang's strength to unleash ten percent of its power. However, even if he put in five percent of his strength, the power that the Crimson Executioner unleashed might still be capped at ten percent.

On the other hand, the Azure Ophidian Sword would consume ten percent of its master's strength straight away to unleash fifty percent of its power! If its master still had strength left after that, the Azure Ophidian Sword could continue increasing the output of its power!

The difference between legendary artifacts and enchanted tools was that the power of legendary artifacts wasn't capped!

Despite being a cultivator at the pinnacle of the sixth realm, the black-robed man had unexpectedly suffered two fatal vicious attacks from Chu Liang! He'd barely managed to block the attack. Nevertheless, he couldn't do the same with the second attack.

He formed a shield of darkness and tried to avoid the attack. Yet, the Azure Ophidian Sword's explosive sword qi still managed to strike the left half of his body!

The might of a legendary sword was truly terrifying!

The Azure Ophidian Sword had slashed down from the black-robed man's left shoulder to his chest, and the man's blood sprayed into the air!

"Aaaaahhhhh!!!" the black-robed man screamed in agony.

Nevertheless, he did not die. Instead, he raised his hand and pointed at the blood that had sprayed out from his wound.

The blood immediately transformed into a black vulture, making guttural hisses as it flew toward Chu Liang. "Hroooh."

"Chu Liang!" Jiang Yuebai called out.

She swiftly flew over to catch the falling Chu Liang!

Seeing the black vulture about to attack, Jiang Yuebai hurriedly grabbed Chu Liang with her left hand. Wielding her sword with her right hand, she formed a barrier of swordlight!

Bam.

The black vulture collided with Jiang Yuebai's barrier. Its black wings smacked the barrier fiercely, causing Jiang Yuebai and Chu Liang to go crashing toward the ground.

The power of the sixth-realm cultivator was far greater than that of a fourth-realm cultivator!

The two figures wrapped in an embrace fell into the sea of clouds.

Meanwhile, Xu Ziyang and Ling Ao seized the opportunity to fly to Heaven-Reaching Peak.

The severely injured black-robed man hovered in midair, drenched in blood. A burst of darkness tried to extend over the shoulder wound to heal it, but a dense azure qi blocked the darkness from spreading. Since the darkness couldn't cover the wound, it couldn't treat it.

The black-robed man gritted his teeth furiously and dove into the abyss below the sea of clouds! If he couldn't at least kill the two people that had fallen into the clouds, he wouldn't be able to report back to his superior or alleviate his burning hatred.

He had nothing personal against Chu Liang before this, but he now harbored a deep hatred for the young man. It was going to be a fight to the death!

...

The situation on Heaven-Reaching Peak was becoming even more chaotic.

The colossal vicious beast Taowu descended, crushing numerous buildings. A large number of the visitors suddenly turned into disciples of the Dark King Sect. Amid the noise and disorder, dark clouds appeared, giving the scene an ominous atmosphere.

The numerous visiting disciples had no idea of what was really going on. They just assumed it was an internal conflict within the Mount Shu Sect and wanted to leave quickly to avoid being caught in the fight.

Meanwhile, Lu Xun was standing on the edge of Heaven-Reaching Peak public square, watching all of that unfold. He too wanted to quietly slip away.

However, someone suddenly appeared before him, blocking off his escape route.

"E-esteemed Teacher?" Lu Xun uttered fearfully in alarm.

The one standing before Lu Xun was the Alchemy Master.

Expressionless, the Alchemy Master asked in a heavy tone, "Where are you going?"

"I am, of course, going to go kill those diabolical disciples..." Lu Xun answered.

He felt flustered, but he did his utmost to keep a calm expression.

"In that case, what happened with Ling Ao?" the Alchemy Master asked.

Upon realizing that the Alchemy Master was aware of the matter, Lu Xun dropped to his knees and pleaded loudly, "Esteemed Teacher, please spare me! Those diabolical cultivators forced me to do it! It was not my intention!"

The Alchemy Master glanced at Lu Xun with a heavy gaze and said, "I'll deal with you later."

Then he pressed his palm lightly onto the top of Lu Xun's head.

Thud.

Lu Xun's vision went black. He felt like there was a tremendous force pressing against him from all sides. It was scorching hot and solid. There was no sunlight... no air... and no gaps. Everything around him was working to squeeze him into little bits... He couldn't move even his little finger...

That's when Lu Xu realized what was going on.

This was the immortal art Buried Alive!

It was an extremely vicious divine skill that could instantly bury a person hundreds of thousands of zhang deep underground! When a person suddenly appeared here, they would be trapped in the earth, unable to move at all!

If the skill caster didn't release the target from the effects of the skill, the target would face death very soon after appearing there.

It would be an incredibly terrible death filled with despair!

Lu Xun wanted to scream, but he couldn't even do that. All he could do was yell in his mind.

HEEEEEELP!!!

Chapter 292: The Cabin in the Forest

"Roar!"

As the massive Taowu landed on the public square on the Heaven-Reaching Peak, the destruction it brought forth was devastating. The rumbling shockwaves and clouds of dust instantly enveloped the entire peak, continuously spreading towards the sky above the sea of clouds.

From the Dao of the Major Evils of the Heavens and Earth emerged a beast known to be “Arrogant and Ferocious” or the “Untameable.” It was the most savage and ferocious creature. Its enormous head, resembling that of a tiger or a leopard, was adorned with a fiery mane around its neck. Its fangs were terrifying, with a biting force capable of crushing mountains!

Aside from its massive size, this vicious beast naturally emanated a murderous aura. The moment it appeared, it would stir up storms and cause the peaks to tremble. Clearly, it wouldn't stop until it crushed all thirty-six peaks!

The moment this beast appeared, Venerable Wen Yuan reacted. As an eighth-realm cultivator and a powerful cultivator at the Heavenly Origin Realm, he once suppressed a True Dragon with one hand. Naturally, he wouldn't be weaker than this vicious beast.

But when Venerable Wen Yuan raised his hand, he saw a mass of dark clouds above him. It was as though the curtains of the heavens had opened.

A gigantic face wrapped in countless chains, emerged from the clouds. Many present immediately recognized what it was.

"Evil Ksitigarbha!" countless people exclaimed.

Indeed. However, it was not just the Evil Ksitigarbha. It was the True Form of the Evil Ksitigarbha whose presence was like a god and devil.

This was ranked tenth in the Catalog of the Mortal World's Ten Thousand Treasures—the True Form of Ksitigarbha!

This diabolical legendary artifact belonged to the Dark King Sect and was the foundation of their power.

What price did Lu Chengchou pay to convince them to bring this to Mount Shu today?

This was not just a legendary artifact. No sect would allow an ordinary disciple to leave their headquarters with the legendary artifact.

If a legendary artifact were to be brought out of the sect, an eighth-realm cultivator must be the one carrying it! No one could bear the consequence of losing such a treasure.

Given that the True Form of Ksitigarbha appeared, it indicated that the leader of the Dark King Sect was definitely present as well.

This mysterious figure who could command the foremost diabolical sect was undoubtedly a powerful eighth-realm cultivator.

With a legendary artifact, an eighth-realm cultivator could be considered as having stepped into the eighth-and-a-half realm, capable of slaying other cultivators at the Heavenly Origin Realm!

Rumble!

Thunder rumbled and clouds swirled chaotically!

Venerable Wen Yuan's eyes grew serious as he gazed upon this scene.

For the first time ever, a solemn sparkle of light was revealed in his eyes.

For these supreme beings who were in control of their Heavenly Origin, they had one foot in the heavens, leaving only half a step in the mortal realm. Normally, the mundane matters of the world rarely stirred their emotions.

Thus, Lu Chengchou's earlier antics were mere trifles in his eyes.

But this was different. Only another cultivator at the Heavenly Origin Realm could make supreme beings in control of their Heavenly Origin take things seriously.

As Venerable Wen Yuan gazed up at the sky, he seemed to see a towering figure in the clouds, overlooking the entire world with an icy gaze.

The Dark King!

When the True Form of Ksitigarbha appeared, four colossal entities appeared as well, coming from four directions.

A black whale, as large as a mountain, glided through the clouds as if swimming in the Northern Abyss, casting a massive shadow. On its back stood numerous diabolical sect cultivators, each exuding fierce auras.

There was also a pavilion adorned with intricate carvings and decorations, with red lanterns and colorful banners fluttering.

The pavilion slowly drifted over. As the door of the pavilion creaked open, a figure in red appeared.

A skull as large as the Heaven-Reaching Peak, surrounded by thunderclouds and crackling lightning, appeared. On the back of the skull was a deep fissure that had yet to be repaired.

The most peculiar sight was a vast azure waterfall flowing from the distant sky. As the waves splashed in the river, one would realize that the river was filled with human faces wailing in agony.

The Northern Abyss Hall... The Scarlet-Robe Hall... The White-Bone Hall, the Vermillion-Azurite Hall...

The Four Halls of Darkness had assembled!

The Dark King Sect's army had surrounded the Mount Shu Sect!

Those righteous cultivators from other sects, who initially distanced themselves thinking it was an internal conflict within Mount Shu, now witnessed the arrival of the diabolical sect.

Obviously, there were those upholding justice feeling the urge to help the Mount Shu Sect.

But immediately, some people amidst the spectators rushed out while shouting, "Darkness never dies!"

They then started hacking and killing the people around them!

Chaos ensued! It became nearly impossible to tell allies from enemies.

With the legendary artifact's pressure looming overhead, most chose to retreat further, watching from a safe distance to keep themselves safe.

However, there were a very small number of people who made different choices.

"Scum of the diabolical sect! Fucking ask me if I will tolerate your evil actions!" A muscular man shouted as he swung a massive halberd.

Suddenly his clothes split open with a bang, revealing a set of strong, glistening muscles!

Who else could it be but Yun Chaoxian from the Great Astral Sect?

"Ah... Senior Brother, it's so chaotic, I'm so scared..." Beside him, Little Junior Sister Tang Shi was like a delicate flower in the storm, trembling with fear.

"Junior Sister, get out of here, don't get hurt!" Yun Chaoxian shouted amidst the battle.

"So scary—" Before she could finish her sentence, Tang Shi's voice suddenly became hoarse and deep.

It turned out that a diabolical cultivator had targeted Tang Shi behind Yun Chaoxian, seemingly trying to take her hostage to restrain Yun Chaoxian. However, this was a miscalculation.

The seemingly fragile girl instantly transformed, her muscles bulging, into a form no less imposing than Yun Chaoxian's. She wielded a large spear, and any contact with it would either result in a gaping wound or an explosion of blood and flesh.

The strange thing was, while she was slaughtering her way through the enemies, she kept shouting, "Ah... don't come near me, sniff... don't hit me, stay away..."

But with such a rough and powerful voice, it didn't evoke any sense of weakness, but rather seemed quite bizarre.

Soon, she had cleared a large area around her.

Terrifying.

The Dark King Sect had a large number of members.

Some elite disciples descended with the enchanted tools of the four halls, while others had already mingled with the crowd watching the ceremony at Mount Shu.

The disciples of the diabolical sect were not very familiar with each other and had different appearances. To distinguish fellow sect members, they all tied a black cloth around their waists.

This was a clue known only to the disciples of the diabolical sect.

However, as soon as the chaos broke out, the diabolical cultivators immediately sensed that something was wrong.

The disciples of the Mount Shu Sect, controlling their dazzling flying swords, also had black cloths tied around their waists when they landed. As a result, many diabolical cultivators mistook the cultivators in front of them as allies and were then pierced by their swords.

The battle had barely begun, and the casualties were already heavy.

With black cloth tied around their waists, some elite disciples of the Mount Shu Sect, fighting alone, would shout "Darkness never dies!" as they approached the disciples of the Dark King Sect. They would then swiftly strike them with their swords.

That was not the end of it.

There were also groups of disciples from the Mount Shu Sect forming a grand sword formation of forty-nine people. Each with a black cloth tied around their waists, they shouted "Darkness never dies" to lure the disciples of the Dark King Sect closer.

But that wasn't the most outrageous part.

The most outrageous sight was a tall woman surrounded by crimson-gold flames, with wings of fire forming behind her. She weaved through the crowd, burning every diabolical cultivator she encountered to ashes with a single burst of flame.

Anyone who had been attending the Mount Shu Summit for a few days would know this was Di Nufeng. Nevertheless, she too had a black cloth tied around her waist. After clearing an area of diabolical cultivators, she loudly shouted, "Darkness never dies! Dark King Sect brothers, gather around me!"

Not only was it terrifying, but it was also infuriating.

Who did the Mount Shu Sect think they were fooling?

...

Under the sea of clouds not far away, Chu Liang and Jiang Yuebai were in great danger.

The thirty-six peaks of Mount Shu soared above the clouds, including the mountain tops and mid-mountain regions. Below the mid-mountain, the lower areas were much bigger and were inhabited by many wild animals.

The entire area under the clouds was a vast, primitive forest.

A man in a black robe, with half of his body missing, transformed into a fierce black wind that howled past. His divine sense swept over every plant and tree, determined to find the two people he was searching.

A green energy kept flowing from the wound on his shoulder and chest, stopping it from healing. Normally, this injury wouldn't be serious for a disciple of the Northern Abyss Hall, but the sword qi from the legendary sword was continuously weakening his divine abilities, making it much worse.

At this moment, the intense pain was relentlessly torturing him.

He had been tracking the place where the two had fallen, convinced they were in this area. The black wind was also patrolling back and forth, not intending to miss a single blade of grass or tree.

What he didn't see was that, hidden in an inconspicuous mountain wall, Jiang Yuebai was still holding Chu Liang. The two were stuck tightly together in a narrow gap in the stone wall, inhaling each other's breath.

Earlier, when the two had fallen here, the man in the black robe had pursued them closely. In a moment of desperation, Jiang Yuebai had taken Chu Liang and traversed through the mountain wall.

The stealth traversal art itself wasn't difficult, but traversing through the wall while carrying someone would require a very high level of skill. This showed that Jiang Yuebai's current mastery of the art had indeed reached an astonishing level.

After waiting for a while, Jiang Yuebai continued to traverse forward. She didn't dare to retrace her steps and instead traversed through the mountain wall. After traveling more than ten zhang, they suddenly found an open space.

It was a bright and open area.

Behind the mountain wall, there was a spacious valley with lush green grass.

There was even a wooden cabin on the open ground!

"Is there really such a place behind this mountain wall?" Chu Liang looked at the space in front of him, quite amazed.

As they traversed through the stone wall in an instant, they unexpectedly emerged into another hidden valley within the mountain. This place was already beneath the sea of clouds, and so well-hidden that they might never have found it if not for a stroke of luck.

"Are there actually people living beneath the sea of clouds on Mount Shu?" Jiang Yuebai was also very surprised. "Let's go in and take a look."

"It's fine to go in and take a look..." Chu Liang said somewhat embarrassedly, "but Senior Sister Jiang, could you put me down first?"

Being held in Jiang Yuebai's arms wasn't a bad experience, but as a grown man, being carried like a princess by a young lady was somewhat embarrassing.

"Can you manage?" Jiang Yuebai, unconcerned with formalities, asked with a hint of concern.

"I'm much better now," Chu Liang quickly replied.

In fact, the reason he had been so weak earlier was because the Azure Ophidian Sword had instantly drained all his foundational qi as well as the three energies—vitality, qi, and spirit.

It wasn't that he had been injured.

But through the crazy recovery speed of his ultimate-tier Golden Cores, his Sea of Qi had recovered by half. He had returned to his normal state.

Nowadays, if there was one thing Chu Liang could boast about, it was his unparalleled recovery speed among his peers.

Since he said he was fine, Jiang Yuebai put him down, and the two walked side by side towards the wooden cabin.

"It looks like it has been deserted for a long time," Chu Liang said, looking at the thick dust piled up at the door as they approached the wooden house.

With that, he gently pushed the door.

It opened effortlessly, creaking because of its age and decay, and half of it fell off with a push.

A cloud of dust blew into their faces. Chu Liang waved his hand, and a breeze swept the dust away. Only then did the two enter the house.

The interior was very simple: a small bed, a desk with writing materials, and a yellowed book. It looked like the rough paper used by Mount Shu children to practice writing.

Chu Liang leaned closer to look and confirmed it was the familiar paper. Out of curiosity, they flipped through it.

The first page had the scrawls of a child.

"Haha, my teacher thinks making me reflect on my mistake while facing a wall is a punishment? Dream on! Who would've thought there would be a valley hidden beneath the sea of clouds? From now on, this is my secret hideout, and no one on Mount Shu knows about it!"

"The monkeys in this mountain are so annoying, always trying to invade my territory."

"The people on Mount Shu aren't as good as these monkeys; at least the monkeys are willing to be my friends."

"Oh no! I think Lu Wuqi found out that I would secretly traverse through the wall to this valley while I am supposed to reflect on my mistakes while facing the wall. How smart of him!"

"Hmm?" Upon seeing the name, they both exclaimed in surprise, "Is the disciple who recorded this from the same generation as Venerable Wuqi? That would make him an esteemed senior from at least four or five hundred years ago..."

It was astonishing that this rough paper had survived for so long. As they continued reading, they saw a mix of childish trivia and teenage concerns. Learning about the growth of an esteemed senior from hundreds of years ago was truly fascinating.

"The Mount Shu Summit is essentially held just for Lu Wuqi. There's no real competition for the head disciple. It is already very good that I was able to get second place."

"Teacher said it's a pity that his father is the sect leader. Otherwise, with his extraordinary talents, he would surely lead Mount Shu. But I think, if his father being the sect leader disqualifies him from becoming the sect leader, isn't that unfair?"

"So my mother was..."

"No wonder..."

"Why...why?!"

Something must have happened in between, as there was a long gap before the next entry. Chu Liang could tell there was a long gap because the handwriting on the next page was noticeably more mature and steady, indicating years of growth and experience.

"What should I do?"

"So, my mother has been trapped within the Demon-Suppressing Pagoda all these years! It was for my sake that she... Caiyi told me that I can only find the way to break the Demon-Suppressing Pagoda in the Divine Ruins Monastery."

Chapter 293: A Hand on the Back of the Head

Chu Liang's pupils involuntarily dilated, and Jiang Yuebai felt her heart throbbed with a violent swell of emotions.[1]

They never expected to uncover secrets of such magnitude inside a small wooden cabin in a hidden valley.

Chu Liang was mainly focused on the diary's mention of the attempt to break the Demon-Suppressing Pagoda...

Until now, no one knew the exact reason why the Mount Shu Sect unfortunately lost a legendary artifact five hundred years ago. Could this hidden cabin hold the answer to why it disappeared?

On the other hand, Jiang Yuebai was completely fixated on the three words "Divine Ruins Monastery."

She never expected to suddenly see this name here, and it immediately brought back a flood of memories and emotions.

Chu Liang quickly turned to another page, only to find it blank with jagged edges.

"The last page was torn out," he said slowly, "but the previous pages provided us substantial information."

Based on the previous pages, they could roughly piece together the life of this Mount Shu disciple.

He had few friends on Mount Shu since childhood; everyone avoided him. His flamboyant and unruly personality often led to punishments from his esteemed teacher.

He was of the same generation as Venerable Wuqi, and the fact that he could still rank second among them showed that his cultivation talent was top-notch.

Later, this guy discovered some things.

He discovered that his mother was trapped within the Demon-Suppressing Pagoda, which meant that she wasn't human.

Could this esteemed senior be a half-demon?

Legend had it that children born from the union of humans and demons were half-demons. They might resemble either a human or a demon initially, but regardless of their appearance at first, they would ultimately take on the form of a demon.

This was due to the demon bloodline being far stronger than human bloodline. The widespread belief was that even a single drop of demon blood in one's body could result in one becoming like a demon. Even if they once appeared human, they would likely become demons in the end.

And for some reason, the Mount Shu Sect adopted this half-demon child and this hybrid was told the way to break the Demon-Suppressing Pagoda...

"But the Demon-Suppressing Pagoda is the legendary artifact ranked first in the catalog. How could it possibly be broken..." Chu Liang muttered, "Did someone lie to him?"

"If it were anywhere else, it might be a trick, but if it's the Divine Ruins Monastery..." Jiang Yuebai's eyes filled with bewilderment as she spoke, "it might actually be true."

"Does that mean he became stronger than a ninth-realm existence?" Chu Liang gasped.

Even the demon god at the ninth realm could not break the highest-ranked legendary artifact in the world!

Chu Liang knew little about the Divine Ruins Monastery, having only heard surface-level information through rumors circulating in the martial community.

However, Jiang Yuebai clearly knew more. In fact, she had a connection with the Divine Ruins Monastery.

Previously, Jiang Yuebai had shared some of her background with Chu Liang and briefly mentioned the Divine Ruins, but she never delved into the details.

She had always felt a sense of apprehension about that place.

"Back then, there was more than one eighth-realm cultivator in the Jiang Family. My family held the level of combat power on par with the immortal sect in the Divine Nine," Jiang Yuebai explained. "But everything changed after that battle. We lost the strongest member and my entire family was annihilated..."

Chu Liang fell silent for a moment.

That made sense. In the Jiang family, there were cultivators at the Heavenly Origin Realm, whose peak combat power was on par with the Mount Shu Sect today. Yet, all of a sudden, they were wiped out without any warning.

They were such terrifying existences that it wouldn't be surprising if they had a way to break the Demon-Suppressing Pagoda...

"Yet, this sort of existence remained hidden within the Divine Ruins for reasons unknown," Chu Liang mused.

"I've been investigating the Divine Ruins Monastery for years, and I found..." Jiang Yuebai said slowly, "that every ninth-realm cultivator would step into the Divine Ruins at the very end of their lifespan. The very few who didn't enter the Divine Ruins died in great battles of a scale mentioned in mythologies. Traces of the Divine Ruins Monastery can be seen in these battles. However, records of those mythical battles have been erased, existing now only as legends spread throughout local communities, such as the evil deity of the Southern Regions in ancient times."

What?

The legend of the evil deity of the Southern Regions tells of how the Southern Bastion Mountain was formed. According to this tale, the evil deity and the countless demons it led were crushed by a mountain sent down from the immortal realm.[2].

Chu Liang had heard of it but never took such exaggerated ancient legends seriously.

Could it be true?

As he pondered, he suddenly remembered the mural he saw in the Blue Dragon's Hidden Realm. In the mural that depicted the Dragon God's last battle, there were a few tiny and blurry human figures...[3]

Rumble!

...

Chu Liang didn't have much time to think before a violent explosion echoed from the other side of the mountain wall. Two more blasts followed, and then the entire mountain wall collapsed with a deafening crash.

A half-destroyed, horribly disfigured man in a black robe charged through the mountain wall, his eyes blazing red. "So you were hiding in this hidden valley. You almost got away!"

As he stormed into the small valley, Chu Liang shouted, "Old Fei! Come out and do your job!"

Wisps of green smoke appeared as the disheveled Old Fei materialized with a gloomy expression. "My dear master, this isn't someone I can handle!"

"Both of you are halves of a sixth-realm cultivator. He's missing half his body, and you're halfway dead inside and out. What can't you handle?" Chu Liang retorted. "Just hold him off for a while."

After summoning Old Fei, Chu Liang didn't hesitate. He raised his hand to the sky, activating another summon.

Swish, swish—

Two streaks of sword light, one violet and one azure, flew towards him!

As of now, as long as he was in the territory of the Mount Shu Sect, he could summon the Violet and Azure Twin Swords with just a single thought!

Old Fei forced himself to stay alert as he flew out of the wooden house, shouting loudly, "If you want to hurt Chu Liang, you'll have to get through me first!"

With that, he raised his hand and pointed at the man in the black robe. "You shall not come within a radius of ten zhang!"

The Immortal Art: The Spoken Divine Law!

The power of this immortal art from the Confucian school was well-known. With those words, the man in the black robe was stuck ten zhang away, unable to move any closer.

But the man in the black robe only grinned maliciously, then raised his hand in a grasping motion and hurled it forward!

A spectral pike appeared out of thin air, instantly piercing through Old Fei's soul body!

"Ah—" Old Fei screamed as his soul was pinned to the mountain wall dozens of zhang away, his form flickering and on the verge of dissipating!

Despite being a formidable fighter, Old Fei was still not powerful enough to fight a cultivator at the peak of the sixth realm. Even though the man in the black robe was severely wounded, Old Fei couldn't compete with him at all.

Although Old Fei had fallen, the power of the immortal art, the Spoken Divine Law, remained effective, preventing the man in the black robe from advancing.

When the black-robed man couldn't step forward, he raised his hand.

Boom!

The entire wooden cabin instantly shattered and fell apart, revealing Chu Liang and Jiang Yuebai inside. At this moment, Chu Liang was surrounded by the violet and azure sword lights.

"Heh, I doubt you can still wield the Azure Ophidian Sword," the man in the black robe said coldly.

Earlier, he had witnessed Chu Liang being completely drained of his Sea of Qi the moment he swung the sword. Recovering from such a depletion was extremely challenging.

Chu Liang looked at the man in the black robe with a perplexed expression, as if he couldn't understand his confidence.

This time, Chu Liang formed a sword seal with both hands.

Not only can I wield the Azure Ophidian Sword, but I can also wield the Violet Draconic Sword... Chu Liang muttered in a low voice, "Dual sword combination—"

Swoosh, swoosh—

The two legendary swords sliced through the sky, intertwining as they emitted a mystical light and the sound of the heavens opening echoed around them.

The black-clad man and Jiang Yuebai were both stunned, their pupils widening in disbelief.

In such a short time, he had mastered the sword seal of the Violet Draconic Sword? Not only had he achieved this, but he had also learned to perform the dual sword combination—a feat several times more difficult than wielding a single legendary sword.

He was able to achieve even this?

Chu Liang's rapid mastery of new skills constantly redefined Jiang Yuebai's understanding of how quickly someone could learn a technique.

Chu Liang's eyes turned cold as he controlled the twin swords.

During this period, he had indeed mastered the Violet Draconic Sword Seal. The two sword seals shared many similarities, making the mastery of the second one somewhat quicker after he had mastered the first.

The reason he controlled both swords simultaneously was out of necessity. With his current cultivation level, wielding just one legendary sword might not have been powerful enough to kill the man in the black robe.

If he had attacked with only one sword and failed, he would have completely lost his combat capability. In that case, Jiang Yuebai would be left alone to face this man, and her fate would be uncertain.

Thus, he forcefully initiated the dual sword combination!

Rumble!

The twin swords merged, radiating an infinite rainbow of light, resembling divine punishment descending from the heavens. A dazzling divine light fell from the sky, carrying an inevitable force of destruction!

The man in the black robe couldn't dodge. All he could feel was a profound fear emanating from the depths of his soul!

Such was the power of legendary swords!

No matter where one fled, being locked on by this force meant certain death!

And the force descended!

Boom—

A brilliant light with the colors of the rainbow blasted above the head of the black-robed man, resembling a grand display of fireworks. As he watched, his pupils quivered madly.

Then, amidst the fireworks, a cursing voice could be heard.

"That's it? Kiddo, you completed the first seventy-two steps already, but your hands just had to tremble and lose control right at the end??" the voice of the male sword spirit sounded.

"Don't blame the kid. This was his first time, and it is already remarkable that he was able to continue for such a long time," said the female sword spirit.

"What do we do now? He definitely can't do it again," the male sword spirit said.

Chu Liang sat on the ground, smiling weakly, clearly exhausted.

At the last moment of unleashing the dual sword combination, he lost control, and the attack burst into an explosion of fireworks in the sky.

It was likely because this was his first time controlling such a powerful force that was far beyond his cultivation level. The sensation of controlling this power was hard to describe, and any slight misstep would cause him to lose his grip.

If given another chance, he might have done much better, but there wasn't another chance.

The man in the black robe, having just experienced sheer terror, was now filled with rage. His eyes fixed on Chu Liang, this fourth-realm cultivator whose mere existence he had considered insignificant. Yet, this "bug" had filled him with fear and put him at risk multiple times.

He was determined to tear Chu Liang apart to vent his anger and settle this grudge!

Just as he was about to strike and kill the two in front of him, he suddenly felt a hand pressing on the back of his head.

A hand on the back of my head? Huh? Who could have suddenly appeared beside me?

As he scanned with his divine sense, he saw a tall woman in red with her hand pressing down on his head.

The woman heaved a sigh of relief as she muttered, "Phew...I made it just in time."

The moment Chu Liang saw this woman, he let out a sigh of relief.

The Azure Ophidian Sword hadn't been by his side earlier because he had sent it to Heaven-Reaching Peak to call for help.

Xu Ziyang and Ling Ao had made it back safely, but they couldn't locate Chu Liang and Jiang Yuebai. Fortunately, the Azure Ophidian Sword was connected to Chu Liang through his qi pathways and could always locate him if he was on Mount Shu. And so, its presence made it easier for the rescuer to locate Chu Liang.

And so, when the Azure Ophidian Sword returned, it likely indicated the direction to the rescuer.

As expected, his teacher arrived.

Di Nufeng was the woman who had descended from the sky and pressed down on the head of the man in the black robe.

The intense premonition of death surged within the man in black once more.

Anyone who could subdue him so effortlessly had to be a powerful Eminent One. This Eminent One was capable of taking his life in an instant.

The man in the black robe knew he couldn't fight back; any movement of his foundational qi could provoke a lethal response from her. He quickly raised his hands and shouted, "Don't kill me! Let's talk!"

"Tsk," Di Nufeng scoffed.

Purple-gold flames erupted, instantly incinerating the man in the black robe, leaving no trace of ash behind.

"Talk to your mama."

Chapter 294: Riding the Skies on the White Dragon!

"Esteemed Teacher!" Chu Liang called out as he hurried over to Di Nufeng.

As always, my esteemed teacher never lets me down when fighting's involved. When I call her, she comes over at once. And when she arrives, she goes straight into battle mode. And when she fights, her battles always end in victory.

"I was having a great time fighting when the Azure Ophidian Sword's spirit suddenly came over and said you were in danger, so I rushed over." Di Nufeng had a lively, radiant gaze. It was obvious from a glance that she was on a high. "Are you all right? If you're fine, I need to hurry back."

There were jumping flames all over her body, revealing just how uncontrollably eager she was to get back to fighting. Her eyes were shining so brightly that it was blinding.

Chu Liang had never seen his teacher in such high spirits before.

It seemed that Di Nufeng's true nature had been released from the depths of her heart upon getting a rare chance to participate in such a grand battle.

Chu Liang handed over a yellow book and said, "Esteemed Teacher, I found something hidden beneath this sea of clouds."

Di Nufeng scanned the book with her divine sense and hastily put it away without taking a close look at its contents.

She remarked, "It has too many words. I'll find someone smart to read it later."

Di Nufeng was well aware of her weakness with words, but that wasn't the real reason she said that. She was just itching to return to the battlefield; she didn't want to miss out on too much of the battle. Di Nufeng wanted to fight!

Seeing her impatient expression, Chu Liang hurriedly asked, "How's the situation on Heaven-Reaching Peak?"

Di Nufeng answered, "We can't intervene in the battle in the sky, but we're gaining the upper hand on the ground. Thanks to the information you gave us, we were able to catch those cultivators from the Dark King Sect off guard."

The battle in the sky she mentioned involved those at the eighth realm. It was such an elite battle that even Di Nufeng could do nothing except gaze up at it... and dream of being able to participate in a battle like that in the future.

Nonetheless, the Mount Shu Sect was dominating the battle involving those at the seventh realm and below.

Chu Liang was quite satisfied. The time he'd spent working hard as an undercover agent had not been in vain. It was clear that the information he had given to his sect had played a role in helping them gain the upper hand.

Chu Liang was only at the fourth realm, so he would only be able to kill a few diabolical cultivators at most on his own. However, with just a small piece of information, he'd managed to help greatly reduce the number of casualties his sect might have suffered.

Then Chu Liang said, "Esteemed Teacher, if the situation on Heaven-Reaching Peak is stable, why don't you head to Sword Sheath Peak first? The Weapons Master is currently over there fighting the hall master of the Northern Abyss Hall."

The Weapons Master had the upper hand earlier, but the hall master of the Northern Abyss Hall had been famous for many years as a seventh-realm cultivator. Moreover, he was known to use unconventional methods. If they were to continue fighting, the Weapons Master might end up in danger.

It would be better to have my teacher go there and team up with the Weapons Master. Together, they would have the upper hand and be able to wipe out one of the Dark King Sect's key players. Then the Weapons Master would be free to join the main battlefield on Heaven-Reaching Peak as well, providing greater support to the main forces than my teacher alone.

"Sword Sheath Peak, right?" Di Nufeng glanced over in the direction of Sword Sheath Peak. "No problem."

Before she even finished talking, she'd spread open her wings of fire. With a loud whoosh, she turned into a streak of fire beelining in the southwest direction, leaving behind a blast of scorching air.

"Senior Aunt Di Nufeng..." Jiang Yuebai blinked in surprise as she looked at the ball of fire in the distance. "She works really hard."

"Haha." Chu Liang forced a smile. "She has always done her best to protect Mount Shu."

He felt a bit embarrassed saying that.

It was true that when Mount Shu was in danger, Di Nufeng would rush in immediately to neutralize the threat. However, when there weren't any threats, she might just be the greatest threat to Mount Shu...

Chu Liang shifted his gaze to Heaven-Reaching Peak and said, "Let's hurry over there."

Looking at Chu Liang, Jiang Yuebai asked, "Are you sure you can keep fighting?"

Chu Liang had used the Azure Ophidian Sword once earlier. Logically, that alone should have drained his Sea of Qi. Yet, he still managed to use the dual sword combination as well after that, which was astonishing. If he could immediately return to Heaven-Reaching Peak to fight even after all that, it meant... he had incredibly high endurance.

Chu Liang replied, "I'll be fine. I just need a moment to catch my breath."

He had two ultimate-tier Golden Cores and the Dragon-Blood Crystals, so he could almost always keep his body in peak condition. His Sea of Qi had been drained yet again earlier, but a moment was all he needed to recover from that.

"Alright."

Jiang Yuebai didn't dwell on the matter. Since Chu Liang had said that he could do it, Jiang Yuebai naturally believed that he could. She knew Chu Liang wouldn't recklessly pretend to be strong.

The pair took off for Heaven-Reaching Peak alongside each other.

However, just as they began flying, a loud boom rang out from Heaven-Reaching Peak. Chu Liang and Jiang Yuebai were far quite far away, yet they were still able to feel the explosive shockwaves surging outward from Heaven-Reaching Peak.

At the next moment, they fell into a daze, feeling like sky and the earth were moving around them. The world seemed to have been turned upside down in that instant!

"This..."

Chu Liang gazed at Heaven-Reaching Peak with his eyes wide open in shock!

Is this something that a human is capable of?

...

Ever since that ferocious face emerged from the clouds, a shadow seemed to be hanging over Mount Shu. Dark clouds were gradually descending onto the peak, accompanied by immense pressure.

As thunder rumbled incessantly in the background, the neck, chest, and arms of the True Form of Ksitigarbha gradually emerged from the clouds. There were numerous thick, black chains, which were covered in talismanic inscriptions, wrapped around the True Form of Ksitigarbha, trying to drag it back into the clouds!

Nonetheless, even a thousand chains could not restrict its movements! As the True Form of Ksitigarbha pressed downward, all of Mount Shu's thirty-six peaks shook. The bases of the mountains quaked, and the mountain peaks crumbled...

If the True Form of Ksitigarbha were to make a full descent, then the thirty-six peaks of Mount Shu would inevitably be destroyed and its inhabitants killed! That seemingly unending mountain range would be razed to the ground!

Boom, boom, boom.

Of course, Venerable Wen Yuan could not let that happen.

He swung out with his wide sleeves. It was just a simple movement, but he collected all the clouds in the sky with that one movement!

The sky instantly became clear. There wasn't a cloud in sight for ten thousand li!

The True Form of Ksitigarbha was revealed in its entirety. It was ginormous and seemed to cover the whole sky! Its height was almost the same as the length of Mount Shu!

Fortunately, the chains were still trying to pull the True Form of Ksitigarbha away, so it couldn't flatten Mount Shu yet. The chains themselves ran back to the black voids in the sky.

The sight of this frightening enchanted tool left everyone on the ground extremely shocked!

They now knew why a legendary artifact ranked top ten in the world was so terrifying. Even just the slightest bit of the suppressive force that it emitted could cause an ordinary person's internal organs to rupture!

Venerable Wen Yuan stood in front of it, looking as small as a speck of dust in comparison. Yet, he fearlessly raised his hand, and he let out all the clouds he had just collected!

However, they weren't simply released. They transformed into an enormous sword!

This sword was a hundred times larger than the sword Daoist Yan produced when she used the immortal art Heaven-Raising Sword. This enormous cloud sword was the right size to cut down the gigantic True Form of Ksitigarbha!

Nevertheless, this cloud sword was different from the Heaven-Raising Sword. Instead of tangible sword qi, this cloud sword mostly contained Dao essence.

In the world of immortality cultivators, it was said that those who at a cultivation level below the seventh realm fought using their divine abilities and skills. Whereas, those at or above the seventh realm fought using the Great Dao.

There was a huge difference between the seventh and eighth realms. Cultivators at the seventh realm cultivated one Great Dao. Cultivators at the eighth realm, who had attained the Heavenly Origin, had already begun combining various Great Daos to create their own unique world.

Every time eighth-realm cultivators even bumped into each other, it was like two worlds colliding.

Rumble—

On this day, if anyone in the southwestern lands looked up, they would witness a grand fight that was like a battle between two deities.

And so, the battle between the enormous sword and the gigantic statue began.

When the cloud sword approached, the True Form of Ksitigarbha, which had always seemed like an inanimate object, suddenly moved! It wasn't simply pressing downward like before; instead, it raised its hands!

As it moved, extremely loud thunderclaps rang out in the sky, and the numerous chains wrapped around the True Form of Ksitigarbha clanged deafeningly! Shockwaves surged outward, and the earth shook incessantly!

This was the might of a legendary artifact!

Wham.

The True Form of Ksitigarbha clamped Venerable Wen Yuan's cloud sword between its hands. They were in a deadlock for an instant. Then the True Form of Ksitigarbha shattered the cloud sword with a loud smack.

Nonetheless, the scattered clouds did not disperse. Instead, they reassembled above the True Form of Ksitigarbha and swiftly transformed into a mountain range.

That mountain range... looked exactly the same as Mount Shu below.

In the instant that the cloud mountain range was formed, Venerable Wen Yuan turned his hand over, and the world turned upside down!

This was the moment Chu Liang and Jiang Yuebai were witnessing. They were experiencing the shocking power of an eighth-realm cultivator for the first time!

With his power alone, Venerable Wen Yuan turned the world upside down!

Everyone on Mount Shu felt dazed for a moment, but they had not been moved at all.

Yet, the sky had become the ground, and the ground had become the sky.

He inverted the mortal world?!

Chu Liang quickly realized that the mortal world couldn't have actually been inverted...

It's likely some great divine ability or skill that used Mount Shu as a base. Perhaps an illusory technique? It just feels like the world really was inverted because Venerable Wen Yuan's extremely powerful.

The only thing that wasn't inverted was the True Form of Ksitigarbha.

It was initially directing its pressure down at the real Mount Shu, but after the inversion, its pressure was directed at the cloud version of Mount Shu. Thus, the pressure directed at the real Mount Shu instantly disappeared, and the ground stopped shaking, returning to a calm state.

Venerable Wen Yuan had probably been worried that the battle would destroy Mount Shu, so he used this method to divert the True Form of Ksitigarbha's pressure from it.

After the True Form of Ksitigarbha realized it had somehow been flipped upside down, it exerted its force upward instead... It wanted to stand up!

Every movement it made caused the world to shake. The countless chains were still trying desperately to pull the True Form of Ksitigarbha back, making it incredibly difficult for the True Form of Ksitigarbha to stand up. Yet, after struggling for a moment, the True Form of Ksitigarbha stood up in the clouds!

The pressure on the world had only just been lifted, and now it was back again!

However, Venerable Wen Yuan wasn't simply standing by and watching that unfold.

He pointed at Solitude Peak and said, "True Dragon, assist me."

When the True Dragon first arrived at Mount Shu, it had been kept at Solitude Peak to prevent it from causing problems on Mount Shu. Now, with Mount Shu in peril, the True Dragon was no longer willing to sit idly by. It had been restlessly fighting to break free from its restraints, eager to join the battle.

Once Venerable Wen Yuan pointed at Solitude Peak, all of the True Dragon's restraints were removed.

"Raaaar!"

With a single stride, Venerable Wen Yuan stepped onto the White Dragon's head, and the White Dragon rushed upward at full speed!

...

Against the backdrop of a clear blue sky, a man rode a dragon and soared toward the heavens!

Venerable Wen Yuan was riding the skies on the White Dragon!

Chapter 295: The Golden Falcon Emerged Over the Sea of Clouds

While the intense battle raged on Heaven-Reaching Peak, two unexpected visitors showed up at Silver Sword Peak.

"Wow," exclaimed the Whale-Riding Immortal, who had disguised himself in the form of a woman. He looked around Chu Liang's garden with genuine surprise and remarked, "I was under the impression that he would have planted a lot, but I did not think it would be this much."

Meanwhile, Jiang Guo, now in the form of a young boy, was on the brink of a frenzy. Her eyes turned red and she behaved like how Di Nufeng would upon seeing a diabolical cultivator. She squealed with excitement, ready to dash forward and indulge in the feast.

However, the Whale-Riding Immortal did not stop her. Instead, he said, "Go ahead and have a few bites while no one is around. Just remember, our main goal is to collect some for transplanting."

After speaking, he turned his gaze to the Golden-Furred Hou, which stood nearby with its eyes wide in astonishment. "Behave yourself now," he said gently.

When there was no one present on the Silver Sword Peak, the Golden-Furred Hou was usually in charge of guarding the peak. It performed its duty diligently, keeping a close watch on potential house robbers the entire time.

It wasn't that it didn't want to protect the garden; it was simply that these two thieves looked too fierce, and it didn't dare to make a move. If ordinary thieves had come, the Golden-Furred Hou would have definitely shown them the power of a sixth-realm vicious beast.

"Already at the sixth realm? You already took a Spirit-Enhancing Pill, so your potential for another advancement should be very limited by now," the Whale-Riding Immortal said as he approached the Golden-Furred Hou and patted its obedient head. "I'm not taking his fruit for free. I'll help solidify your foundation and leave some seeds for potential advancement. It's a fair deal."

After speaking, his right hand began to glow with a golden light. He gently traced a line down the Golden-Furred Hou's back, employing a technique that resembled a soothing massage.

The Golden-Furred Hou immediately lay down, closed its eyes, and let out a contented hum.

"A seventh-realm Golden-Furred Hou is quite rare. If you manage to advance to the seventh realm in the future, remember to thank me," the Whale-Riding Immortal said, patting its big head.

When the Golden-Furred Hou opened its eyes again, they were filled with gratitude and affection. It gazed at the Whale-Riding Immortal, its large tongue poised to offer a lick in appreciation.

The Whale-Riding Immortal had just helped smooth out the chaotic qi pathways within the Golden-Furred Hou, solidifying its sixth-realm foundation and planting seeds that could help it advance to the seventh realm. The cultivation system of spirit beasts differed from that of humans; to advance to the next realm, they wouldn't need to attain Dao or achieve enlightenment. Instead, the condition to level up was a sufficient concentration of energy. These seeds of energy would allow the Hou to experience power at the seventh-realm, saving it a great deal of effort for leveling up.

Previously, the Golden-Furred Hou was forcefully elevated to the sixth realm and barely had any potential for further advancement.

The series of actions by the Whale-Riding Immortal had not only made it stronger, but also gave it the chance to advance to the next realm.

Having quickly finished his task, the Whale-Riding Immortal was about to enter the garden again to transplant a Golden Vein Flower when he sensed a wave of terrifying qi emanating from Heaven-Reaching Peak.

Venerable Wen Yuan had inverted the mortal world!

"Impressive," the Whale-Riding Immortal remarked as he observed the scene. "If the enemy didn't have a legendary artifact, the sect leader would have a higher chance of winning. But looking at the current situation..."

A hint of hesitation flashed in his eyes, as if he was contemplating something.

Just then, a sudden glimmer of dawn brightened the sky. Upon sensing that divine light, his eyes lit up.

"So they did prepare for this?"

...

Boom—

The gigantic and fierce Taowu rampaged across Heaven-Reaching Peak, trampling everything in its path.

"All disciples of Mount Shu, fall back!" roared the black-clad Discipline Master. With a flash, she swiftly landed beside Taowu and pressed on the ground with her right hand.

Immediately, a golden light encircled Taowu, forming a radiant ring beneath it. When Taowu tried to step forward, it collided with an invisible barrier!

It was the Immortal Art: Ring of Confinement!

This technique was somewhat similar to Old Fei's immortal art, the Spoken Divine Law. However, the Spoken Divine Law could be applied in a wider variety of situations and offered more flexibility. In contrast, the Ring of Confinement was designed purely for imprisonment, making its controlling effect much stronger.

However, when Taowu's massive body crashed into the golden circle, it caused a significant fluctuation.

As the Discipline Master pressed down with both hands, exerting a surge of foundational qi, countless golden chains burst from the ground and tightly bound Taowu's massive body.

Finally, she managed to control the ferocious beast!

But seeing how violently it was struggling and causing the chains to shatter and tremble, it was clear that Taowu could break free in less than three seconds.

But all they needed was a second.

In midair, Daoist Yan brandished the Heavenly Cloud Ancient Sword, ready to strike.

Seeing that Taowu had been restrained, she immediately unleashed her most powerful sword technique: Heaven-Raising Sword!

Swish—

As the colossal sword light slashed down, Taowu seemed to realize its impending doom and began struggling and twisting frantically. Cracks echoed through the air as the golden chains around it started to split apart!

But it was too late.

The sword light sliced into Taowu's flesh, momentarily slowing it down. Even the Heaven-Raising Sword, which could easily penetrate the White-Bone Mountain, struggled to slice through Taowu's body immediately!

Slash—

With the eroding power of the sword qi and Dao essence, the sword qi finally pierced into Taowu's body, impaling half of its body!

However, this strike was not enough to kill it completely; it inflicted a severe wound, but this only fueled Taowu's fierce and proud nature!

"Rawr—" Taowu let out a thunderous roar, shattering the sword light. Blood splattered across half of the peak.

At that moment, a winding azure river came forth from the sky.

On the river was a boat with a lone figure on board and as the azure river approached, the person on the boat lifted a huge brush and gently swept it back and forth, splashing a cascade of black water onto Taowu.

This only enraged Taowu further, causing it to topple a pavilion in its fury!

The black water circled around Taowu before withdrawing and, astonishingly, reformed into the shape of another Taowu. In the blink of an eye, the black water condensed into an identical vicious beast, indistinguishable from the original.

This mythical technique executed by the Vermillion-Azurite Hall not only duplicated Taowu's appearance but also its combat strength.

It was impossible to tell that it was fake!

In a short amount of time, they had created another ancient vicious beast.

These ancient vicious beasts were incredibly powerful. Although they hadn't reached the level of the Heavenly Origin Realm, they posed a significant challenge to seventh-realm cultivators. No seventh-realm cultivator could face them alone.

Even if several seventh-realm cultivators joined forces, there was still a chance they wouldn't be able to contain the beasts' destructive power.

It was as though these vicious beasts were born for slaughter and destruction!

Initially, the Mount Shu Sect had the upper hand in the battle. With more than ten seventh-realm experts, the Mount Shu Sect was considered top-tier among the immortal sects in the Divine Nine.

The Dark King Sect had recently suffered a major blow, losing its two powerful Left and Right Guardians. This time, only four hall masters from the Dark King Sect, all seventh-realm cultivators, arrived for the battle. If the master of the White-Bone Hall hadn't unleashed several powerful golden corpses, the battle on the ground would have been entirely one-sided in favor of the Mount Shu Sect.

These golden corpses were the remains of the Eminent Ones that the Dark King Sect had stolen from the Ascending Immortal Tomb. They were refined and transformed into combatants with the power of a seventh-realm cultivator.

When these corpses emerged, the sight of them enraged the spectators from the other immortal sects. One after another, they joined the battle.

While the Dark King Sect had many disciples, they had a limited number of powerful, high-level fighters. In addition, they suffered from an ambush, which led to the members being in a state of chaos. Amidst this confusion, it became difficult for them to distinguish between allies and enemies.

In no time, many were slaughtered and utterly defeated.

If the leader of the Dark King Sect in the sky could not end the fight quickly, the disciples of his sect would soon face complete collapse.

Of course, the higher-ups of the diabolical sect did not care about the lives of the lower ranked members. They had probably received sufficient rewards for participating in this battle. In addition, they could always recruit more lower-level diabolical cultivators.

The diabolical sects allowed many with average talent to cultivate at a speed rivaling geniuses. Through the diabolical ways, they could reach levels they otherwise could not attain. As long as

these sects could provide these two benefits, they would always be able to recruit members by inviting people who sought quick gains and had dubious intentions.

As long as the Dark King Sect could defeat Venerable Wen Yuan, the disastrous defeat on the ground wouldn't matter to them.

As the True Form of Ksitigarbha faced Venerable Wen Yuan, who was riding the dragon up into the sky, it stretched out a finger. This finger emanated a murderous aura that surged to the heavens, seemingly destroying the Great Dao of the Heavens and Earth!

This finger alone could cause the collapse of countless mountains!

The space around the finger cracking and breaking!

Venerable Wenyuan didn't face this force directly. Instead, he vanished in an instant while riding the White Dragon. When he reappeared, he was already above the True Form of Ksitigarbha.

This move was like Dimension Compression, but even more elusive. As one executed this technique, one would feel as though they had been transported to another world.

It represented the actual Dao of Distancelessness!

This was why Venerable Wen Yuan chose the True Dragon as his mount. The True Dragon, being a true spirit of the world, allowed him to execute the techniques of the Great Dao with even greater mastery.

After traversing, he did not attack the True Form of Ksitigarbha directly. Instead, he raised his hand and pressed down, causing the entire space to sink instantly.

It seemed as though something had locked the space in place.

Immediately after, a glimmer of dawn appeared on the horizon, starting as a single beam but quickly transforming into a vast expanse of golden light!

A Giant Golden-Winged Falcon, capable of carrying mountains and seas on its back, appeared from the distant sky. Numerous monks bathed in golden light sat on its back, along with a massive lotus platform radiating immense Buddha light.

Seated atop the Dharma Lotus Platform was an elderly monk, eyes closed, chanting sutras. His deep voice resonated through the heavens and earth.

This was the eighth-ranked treasure in the Catalog of the Mortal World's Ten Thousand Treasures: the Dharma Lotus Platform!

This legendary artifact belonged to the Buddhist Cloud Monastery, one of the immortal sects in the Divine Nine.

Knowing that the Dark King Sect would take action, the Mount Shu Sect had naturally prepared a countermeasure for the True Form of Ksitigarbha.

From another direction, a black hive-like structure belonging to the Valley of the Three Absolutes appeared.

The allies of the Mount Shu Sect had arrived to provide support.

Of the immortal sects in the Divine Nine, the Mount Shu Sect had closer ties with the Celestial King Sect and would typically seek their help first in times of need.

However, in dealing with the Dark King Sect, the Mount Shu Sect had already collaborated with the Valley of the Three Absolutes and the Buddhist Cloud Monastery. Thus, it was easier to seek support from these two sects. Besides, this could be seen as a continuation of the previous battle against the White-Bone Hall. The Dark King Sect's attack could be considered a retaliation, and this concerned both the Valley of the Three Absolutes and the Buddhist Cloud Monastery.

While the Valley of the Three Absolutes and the Buddhist Cloud Monastery might not have assisted due to the bond, their support would still reduce the sacrifices the Mount Shu Sect had to make.

The support from the Valley of the Three Absolutes was secondary while the intervention of the Buddhist Cloud Monastery played the key role.

As one of the immortal sects in the Divine Nine, the Buddhist Cloud Monastery possessed a legendary artifact that would provide combat power that would rival the True Form of Ksitigarbha. This was vital!

With a majestic and dignified presence, a golden light shone brilliantly.

The Golden Falcon emerged over the sea of clouds!

Chapter 296: The Spirit of Mount Shu

At this moment, Chu Liang had just returned to Heaven-Reaching Peak and, alongside Jiang Yuebai, charged into the battle. The battlefield was in complete chaos, with enchanted tools and unleashing of divine abilities flying everywhere.

They didn't dare to recklessly charge ahead and instead advanced steadily and cautiously.

Initially, both sides had many organized teams. The disciples of the Mount Shu Sect formed sword formations, and Dark King Sect disciples formed soul formations, clashing fiercely with each other. However, every time this happened, the stronger cultivator from all sides would lead people to charge into the formation set up by the other team, dispersing the crowds. As the battle dragged on, most fought on their own or in small groups of two or three.

Previously, Di Nufeng was practically invincible on this battlefield.

She incinerated enemies with the unstoppable Samadhi True Fire. Enhanced by the Phoenix Spirit Blood Jade, her simple punches and kicks sent sparks of fire splashing, causing intense damage and easily obliterating swathes of enemies.

When she was called away to save Chu Liang and headed straight to Sword Sheath Peak, the diabolical cultivators finally heaved a sigh of relief.

Although the Mount Shu Sect had the upper hand, the Four Halls of the Darkness had a large number of people. Besides Di Nufeng, who was clearly a formidable force, it wasn't easy for the cultivators to kill each other. For a time, a stalemate ensued.

As the Golden Falcon appeared in the sea of clouds and the beehive emerged from the horizon, the situation on the battlefield changed once again.

At this point, the forces of the Mount Shu Sect had already fought fiercely to this point. When the large contingents from the Buddhist Cloud Monastery and the Valley of the Three Absolutes joined the battle, the tide immediately turned!

When the petals of the Dharma Lotus Platform unfolded on the back of the Golden Falcon, each petal revealed a monk. As these monks descended, they were enveloped in a seven-colored, glazed divine light of the Transcendent Dharma Mirror.

The Immortal Art of the Buddhist sect, the Transcendent Dharma Mirror, originated from the Dharma Lotus Platform. Every disciple of the Buddhist Cloud Monastery descending from the lotus platform carried the effect of the Transcendent Dharma Mirror, which lasted for fifteen minutes!

How could the Dark King Sect fight against that?

Bear in mind, though it might seem like a long time has passed, the battle had only been going on for fifteen minutes.

The Dark King Sect lacked physical strength, whereas the monks of Buddhist Cloud Monastery were immune to divine abilities and techniques, impervious to all spells. In an instant, they descended like legendary soldiers from the heavens, throwing the diabolical cultivators into chaos.

However, despite the powerful divine abilities of the Buddhist sect, they lacked a certain killing decisiveness. Although their techniques were grand in scale, they didn't kill many enemies. The truly ruthless ones were the reinforcements from the Valley of the Three Absolutes.

From the black, beehive-like enchanted tool emerged a swarm of dark shadows. Upon closer inspection, these were not humans but a massive swarm of black curse insects, their sinister forms writhing and buzzing with malevolent energy!

These curse insects specially targeted and devoured the diabolical cultivators, latching on and burrowing into their flesh like bloodthirsty leeches. A few might not have posed a threat, but a whole swarm of curse insects, like a black cloud, left the already disorganized diabolical sect cultivators even more battered and terrified.

After a brief pause, the cultivators from the Valley of the Three Absolutes emerged, wielding billhooks, curved sabers, and other weapons that gleamed with a green light, to harvest the enemies. Their strikes were swift and decisive, showing not a hint of hesitation.

The cold, emotionless gaze in the midst of the bloodshed made the disciples of Mount Shu Sect shudder. These people from the Valley of the Three Absolutes seemed to be more ruthless and savage than the diabolical cultivators.

Among the Divine Nine and the Terrestrial Ten, the Valley of the Three Absolutes was infamous for being both righteous and evil. Their methods were so unorthodox that they could never fit in with the other righteous immortal sects. As a result, they were often secretly mocked as a sect in the criminal world.

It was fortunate that these people were the allies of the Mount Shu Sect!

Seeing this, Chu Liang couldn't help but give a thumbs up.

Buddhist brothers are loyal! Brothers from the Valley of the Three Absolutes are reliable! We have connections in both the righteous world and the criminal world; how can the Dark King Sect compete with us?

Today's battle will teach you a lesson: the cultivation of immortality is not just about fighting and killing; it's about building relationships!"

...

Of course, no matter how much the Dark King Sect lost on the ground, the final outcome of this battle depended on the victory in the sky.

With the arrival of the Dharma Lotus Platform, the momentum of the Ksitigarbha was dramatically suppressed. The sky was now a breathtaking battlefield, split between the golden light and the black light.

In the golden light, a magnificent lotus platform emerged. Each lotus petal bestowed the Transcendent Dharma Body upon the disciples beneath it, while the old monk seated at the center gained a divine ability comparable to the Form of the Heavens and the Earth. His body grew infinitely, becoming a grand and imposing figure that matched the might of the True Form of Ksitigarbha, perfectly complementing the grandeur of the lotus platform.

In face of such a formidable enemy, the old monk slowly uttered, "It's never too late to mend your ways."

His voice thundered across the heavens and the earth, resonating like a mighty roar. Almost all the disciples of the Dark King Sect felt an overwhelming urge to retreat. Those with lower cultivation levels even started to contemplate abandoning their life of darkness for a peaceful existence in the countryside.

Under the pressure of the lotus platform, the Ksitigarbha swiftly responded.

It slowly opened its eyes.

Boom—

When the eyes of the Ksitigarbha opened, the sun and moon lost their light!

In an instant, the southwestern lands were plunged into darkness, and the world was shrouded in an impenetrable blackness. Amid the murky gloom, Mount Shu stood out, crowned by a massive black sun rising ominously above it, casting an eerie shadow over the land!

It was like the netherworld!

As the Ksitigarbha opened its eyes, a colossal black sun materialized above its head. Beneath this ominous sun, all the disciples of the Dark King Sect felt their cultivation energy and bloodthirsty battle intent surge to unprecedented heights!

In contrast, the righteous cultivators were overwhelmed by a surge of negative emotions, including disgust, fear, and sorrow.

This was just the beginning; the black sun faced the Dharma Lotus Platform and suddenly ignited it with black flames! The black fire clung to the lotus platform like a poisonous sore burrowing into the bones. Even the few sparks that fell to the ground incinerated everything to ashes, defying all attempts to extinguish them!

This was the Netherworld True Fire, second in lethality only to the Samadhi True Fire. If the Samadhi True Fire embodied ultimate yang, the Netherworld True Fire would represent ultimate yin.

Seeing the black sea of flames spreading, the old monk on the lotus platform slowly pushed out a palm towards the sky.

Whoosh.

He completely ignored the fire beneath the lotus platform, seemingly unaffected by it. One of the most terrifying flames in the world appeared non-existent to him.

As he thrust his palm forward, the black sun in the sky began to tremble and retreat. Where it receded, golden light burst forth, flooding the sky. Amidst the golden brilliance, a radiant, rainbow-like glow emerged, illuminating the heavens with a breathtaking spectacle!

While the two forces clashed, Venerable Wen Yuan did not remain idle. Despite being only at the eighth realm and struggling against an opponent at the eighth-and-a-half realm wielding a legendary artifact, Venerable Wen Yuan still played a pivotal role that could tip the scales in this epic battle!

Earlier, he had sealed off the entire area, ensuring that the True Form of Ksitigarbha couldn't escape. Now, with fingers poised like a sword, Venerable Wen Yuan traced a line in the air from a distance.

Swish—

On the bronze-like body of the True Form of Ksitigarbha, which stretched across half the sky, a white mark began to appear on its chest, as if it were being sliced by a sharp blade.

If not for the Ksitigarbha's indestructible form, even a mountain or an ocean would have been cleaved in two by the force of the attack.

Even so, this level of damage was not something that the True Form of Ksitigarbha could handle. As it faced Venerable Wen Yuan's attack, it seemed to show a hint of anger.

Immediately, it opened its mouth.

Seeing this, the old monk on the lotus platform's expression changed. He instantly raised his hand, scattering countless lotus petals to surround and envelop the True Form of Ksitigarbha!

In the next moment, a deep voice uttered, "Die."

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Petal by petal, the lotus flowers exploded, and in an instant, thousands of petals scattered and vanished!

If the Ksitigarbha spoke, the living world would transform into the netherworld.

All living beings who heard this word would perish.

If this sound reached the ground, aside from a few strong seventh-realm cultivators, neither the righteous cultivators nor the diabolical cultivators would survive!

This was a price the three righteous immortal sects were absolutely unwilling to pay!

With Venerable Wen Yuan and the old monk from the Buddhist Cloud Monastery, both at the eighth realm, along with the legendary artifact, the Dharma Lotus Platform, restraining the True Form of Ksitigarbha was not difficult.

The battle in the sky also seemed to favor the righteous path.

...

Seeing how the tables had turned and that the Mount Shu Sect had long been prepared, it seemed as though today's plan was on the verge of failure.

Lu Chengchou's eyes flashed with a ruthless glint. Despite also being at the seventh realm, he did not rush to find an opponent. Instead, he remained hidden and observed the situation for a long time.

Now, he was finally ready to take action.

Lu Chengchou leaped high into the air, raised the Heaven Authority Token in his hand, and shouted, "Spirit of Mount Shu, heed my command!"

Swish—

The Heaven Authority Token emitted a dazzling white light, and the various peaks of Mount Shu began to undergo abnormal changes!

The aura of life began to flow, and Mount Shu seemed to have come alive! Countless rays of light surged from beneath the sea of clouds, converging into hidden streams that conveyed a profound meaning. These streams intertwined, sketching out an ancient and mysterious enchanted formation!

The grand formation was activated!

The Human Authority Token, Earth Authority Token, and Heaven Authority Token, representing the three levels of authority in Mount Shu, were not mere decorations. Among them, the Heaven Authority Token possessed the greatest power, and its most important function was to control Mount Shu's protective grand formation!

As an ancient and powerful immortal sect, the Mount Shu Sect naturally had its own protective grand formation. This formation was extremely strong, ranking among the top in the Divine Nine and Terrestrial Ten. Its foundation was tied to the peaks of Mount Shu and the spiritual veins of the heavens and the earth, enabling it to withstand an eighth-realm cultivator for a short time!

Historically, Mount Shu's grand formation had rarely been activated, but each activation left a lasting impact. This formidable defense was a major reason other sects were hesitant to attack Mount Shu, understanding the significant advantage it conferred.

However, the world would never know that the Heaven Authority Token of the Mount Shu Sect had been lost for many years. During this time, there was never a need to activate the grand formation, and this secret might have stayed hidden forever.

It wasn't until the actual bearer of the Heaven Authority Token appeared. Lu Chengchou knew that Mount Shu could not activate the grand formation, which was why he dared to plan this audacious attack.

Sensing the changes in Mount Shu below, Venerable Wen Yuan frowned.

Lu Chengchou not only possessed the Heaven Authority Token but also knew the enchanted seal to activate the grand formation, which was unexpected. The activation seal was traditionally passed down orally by each sect leader, so even the descendants of the Lu family were not supposed to know it.

At this moment, Venerable Wen Yuan had to focus on restraining Lu Chengchou first!

At least the battle between the Dharma Lotus Platform and the True Form of Ksitigarbha was evenly matched. However, if he didn't stop Lu Chengchou, Lu Chengchou, empowered by the grand formation, would become invincible.

Boom—

And things transpired just as he had expected. The grand formation was not used to protect Mount Shu. Instead, Lu Chengchou absorbed all its spiritual energy, transforming into a towering figure shrouded in radiant light!

The Heaven Authority Token in his hand transformed into a seven-colored legendary sword, exuding divine power like that of a heavenly general!

Lu Chengchou looked up at the sky and shouted, "Wen Yuan! Every grievance has its cause, every debt its debtor! Today, I will settle this grudge with you! Behold my sword!"

With that, he gathered all his spiritual energy to wield the seven-colored legendary sword, and a mighty aura rose, covering the sky!

Just as Venerable Wen Yuan was about to counter, the True Form of Ksitigarbha turned its eyes and pointed a finger at his back!

At this moment, the True Form of Ksitigarbha was being attacked by the Dharma Lotus Platform. Yet, it didn't care! It shuddered as it endured the strikes coming from the Dharma Lotus Platform and charged towards Venerable Wen Yuan.

This startled Venerable Wen Yuan. Compared to the attack from Lu Chengchou, the attack coming from the True Form of Ksitigarbha's attack was more dangerous.

After all, the power of the seventh realm was still significantly different from that of the eighth realm. Even if someone at the seventh realm could control an eighth-realm power, they would never be able to fully display the true strength of the Heavenly Origin Realm.

The True Form of Ksitigarbha, however, was a genuine legendary artifact! Capable of slaying cultivators at the Heavenly Origin Realm!

The True Form of Ksitigarbha endured a heavy blow just to put Venerable Wen Yuan in a dire situation, forcing him to choose between two threats!

Venerable Wen Yuan spun around and with a powerful sweep of his hand, tore open a void before him. The True Form of Ksitigarbha's finger strike slammed into the void, sending shockwaves rippling through the air.

But the force of those ripples caused Venerable Wen Yuan's face to pale, clearly showing his suffering.

At the same time, Lu Chengchou, empowered by the spiritual energy of Mount Shu, swung the legendary sword he had condensed from the seven-colored rays of light.

But he did not aim the sword at Venerable Wen Yuan!

Instead, he aimed his strike at a nearby peak.

This time, he gathered forces from all directions to launch a surprise attack on the Mount Shu Sect with the sole purpose of destroying it!

But merely killing people indiscriminately wouldn't suffice to destroy Mount Shu. He had three main objectives!

The third objective was to eliminate several promising talents of Mount Shu Sect. This way, Mount Shu would have no hope at the next Assembly of Immortal Sects, and would fall from its current ranking among the Divine Nine.

The second objective was to kill Venerable Wen Yuan, which was a challenging task. Although Venerable Wen Yuan was his greatest enemy and the sect leader of Mount Shu, whose death would undoubtedly deal a severe blow to Mount Shu, it was still only the second priority!

The first and foremost objective was that serene, green peak in the distance!

That was the Guardian Peak!

Chapter 297: Kill Taowu

At Guardian Peak, the residence of Mount Shu's celestial beast, Baize...

The Mount Shu Sect had been a leader of the righteous path for many years, leaving behind a deep legacy. Even though the sect was lacking in legendary artifacts now, it still had many things that were considered the best in the world of immortality cultivators. Its guardian celestial beast was one of them.

Most immortal sects did not even have the patronage of a celestial beast. All the sects in the Divine Nine had guardian celestial beasts, but the Mount Shu Sect's Baize was definitely among the top celestial beasts and was previously as famous as the Azure Dragon of the Penglai Supreme Sect.

However, ever since the Demon-Suppressing Pagoda went missing, the celestial beast Baize had never appeared again. The Baize youngling was left behind like an orphan.

There was even some speculation in the world of immortality cultivators about whether Baize had disappeared along with the Demon-Suppressing Pagoda.

At this moment, Lu Chengchou redirected a sword strike that he'd initially aimed at Venerable Wen Yuan toward Guardian Peak instead, taking everyone by surprise.

Upon seeing that multicolored swordlight flying toward Guardian Peak, Venerable Wen Yuan showed a worried expression for the first time. It seemed that this was an even graver matter than if he had been struck!

Venerable Wen Yuan even wanted to use Dimension Compression to get over there and block the strike!

But the True Form of Ksitigarbha did not give him the chance to do that. It swung its giant hand down and sealed off the area, just like Venerable Wen Yuan had done earlier when he feared the True Form of Ksitigarbha would escape.

Now the tables had turned.

Boom.

The elderly monk on the Dharma Lotus Platform ordered the rainbow light to attack the black sun. The True Form of Ksitigarbha suffered a heavy blow, but it maintained its seal on the area, keeping Venerable Wen Yuan in place.

Thus, with the True Form of Ksitigarbha fighting two opponents simultaneously, the seven-colored swordlight was left unhindered. It struck Guardian Peak, instantly splitting the massive peak in half!

The split revealed a scene that made everyone's eyes widen in shock!

Guardian Peak's interior was completely hollow. All it contained was a five-colored translucent irregular spheroid object. It looked like a giant egg!

The egg took up all of the space in the mountain, and curled up inside it was a white beast, peacefully asleep. Who else could it be but Baize?

It turned out that the Mount Shu Sect had never lost Baize. Baize had been hiding in this form inside Guardian Peak this whole time!

What was this? Some special cultivation method?

The sword strike had split the mountain effortlessly, yet when it struck the egg, it only created ripples on the egg's surface! A hairline crack eventually appeared on the exterior of the egg, but the egg did not crack open.

Baize seemed to frown as if it had been disturbed from a deep sleep. It was about to wake up.

"Shatter that egg!" Lu Chengchou yelled.

His voice was filled with a sense of elation as if he was about to destroy Mount Shu's hope!

A group of the Dark King Sect's members that had the combat ability of seventh-realm cultivators flew swiftly toward the egg!

"Don't let anyone near Guardian Peak!" Venerable Wen Yuan commanded from midair.

The Mount Shu Sect's powerful seventh-realm cultivators rose in succession, bravely intercepting the Dark King Sect's members!

Meanwhile, Venerable Wen Yuan finally broke free from the True Form of Ksitigarbha's seal. He slammed Lu Chengchou into the ground with one hand.

Boom.

This was the wrath of an eighth-realm cultivator. Like Venerable Wen Yuan, Lu Chengchou wielded tremendous spiritual energy, yet he had almost no strength to fight back!

In a maddening rage, Venerable Wen Yuan pinned Lu Chengchou against the ground!

Boom, boom, boom—

Venerable Wen Yuan raised a finger and fiercely pressed it onto Lu Chengchou. Explosions rang out continuously from his glowing body! It was clear that once his armor, which had been formed using Mount Shu's spiritual veins, dispersed, Lu Chengchou's death would be imminent!

Nevertheless, Lu Chengchou didn't care about that and shouted furiously, "Taowu!!!"

He didn't even need to do that though. Taowu's eyes turned red the moment it saw Baize!

As an ancient giant vicious beast, it had a very long life, but it hadn't experienced many critical crises. In fact, there had only been one—when it was almost killed by Baize!

Taowu had never forgotten that!

Seeing the slumbering Baize now, Taowu let out a deep, enraged roar, "RAAAAR!!!"

The massive Taowu charged forward!

"You evil creature, don't you dare!" the Discipline Master yelled.

With her right hand, she swung a long, snake-like thorny black whip. It whizzed as it wrapped around Taowu several times, trying to bind it.

However, Taowu unleashed power that was far greater than before. Instead of getting held back, Taowu dragged the Discipline Master along with it as it charged forward!

"Damned beast..." the Discipline Master cursed angrily.

She swung out an identical thorny black whip with her left hand. Seemingly alive, the whip coiled toward Taowu's head, bent its tip inward, and stabbed fiercely!

Taowu's skin was tough, and its flesh was dense, but its eyes were vulnerable! The whip pierced through one of the eyes in a split second!

Simultaneously, Daoist Yan's swordlight arrived in a flash, along with the Conservation Master's divine light, the Alchemy Master's divine fire, and more. All the seventh-realm experts who could spare a hand unleashed their strongest attacks on Taowu, covering it in wounds in an instant!

Despite that, all the attacks did was make Taowu angrier. They could not stop its advance!

Taowu was determined to kill its old enemy! It was uncontrollable, fierce, and ruthless!

This was the main reason Lu Chengchou plotted to summon Taowu to Mount Shu; it was all for this moment!

Armed with countless divine abilities, Taowu was poised to pounce on the cracking egg!

Inside the egg, the eyelids of the beautiful divine being Baize twitched. It seemed like it would wake with just a little more disturbance!

Venerable Wen Yuan's eyes showed the despair he felt.

It has been the Mount Shu Sect's source of hope for the past five hundred years...

Could it be destroyed in an instant?

...

The events occurring on Mount Shu were beyond what ordinary disciples could have ever imagined. Even Chu Liang and Jiang Yuebai were unable to intervene. Genius disciples represented potential—the future of the sect.

However, they were still too young and underdeveloped to contribute in terms of combat power. All they could do was watch everything unfold with shocked expressions.

When the swordlight cut through Guardian Peak, Jiang Yuebai's shocked expression turned into one of concern.

She exclaimed with alarm, "Little Baize!"

"Ah," Chu Liang uttered, realizing Jiang Yuebai's concern.

The Baize youngling might still be on Guardian Peak! Did the sword strike injure it?

"I'll go check!" Jiang Yuebai said, immediately setting off.

She bypassed the chaotic battlefield to check on the situation at Guardian Peak.

"Senior Sister Jiang..." Chu Liang muttered worriedly.

A moment later, he decided to follow her to Guardian Peak.

However, after flying for just a few zhang, he was suddenly overwhelmed by a feeling of heaviness.

As Chu Liang fell into a daze, he heard a voice in his ear.

"Kid, don't make a sound. I'm the Whale Rider Immortal. We've met once before."

Startled, Chu Liang blurted, "Esteemed senior?"

"Don't speak out loud. Speak in your mind," the mysterious voice said quickly. "I can't show myself in public, so I need you to help with something."

"Eh?" Chu Liang then responded in his mind. What kind of help do you need from me, esteemed senior?

"It won't work with anyone else. But you've linked up with the Violet and Azure Twin Swords, right? Heheh..."

...

Taowu was drenched in blood, and one of its eyes had been gouged out from its massive head. It was unrecognizable, looking like a mountain of flesh after being pelted by blood rain.

Yet, Taowu still flew toward the giant egg containing Baize.

Born from the world's Great Dao of Evil, Taowu had been endowed with extraordinary talents. Even with such grave injuries, it would be able to recover from them with some time. That was why none of its enemies had ever been able to push him into dire straits.

But this Baize had done just that. Baize had nearly killed Taowu. That left a mark on Taowu that it would never forget! Taowu regarded Baize as its mortal enemy!

Now, that mortal enemy was sleeping right in front of it. Taowu was about to get its revenge!

Despite being in immense pain, Taowu ignored it. After all, it knew that all of its injuries would be healed once it devoured its enemy. Taowu's mind was filled only with the excitement of revenge!

Taowu opened its mouth wide, baring its fangs!

Its mouth was its most powerful weapon, capable of crushing mountains in one bite. Taowu could definitely bite off the head of the sleeping Baize!

Everyone else simply watched from behind.

Without the ability to stop Taowu, the Mount Shu Sect's Eminent Ones stood by helplessly, and Venerable Wen Yuan's eyes filled with despair. Despite being on the verge of death, Lu Chengchou was elated. Meanwhile, the countless disciples of the Mount Shu Sect and the Dark King Sect disciples were left confused...

Some of the people present might not know why this battle had occurred, but at this moment, everyone could tell that the outcome of this battle would likely be decided in the next instant.

The scene seemed to freeze.

The Mount Shu Sect's defeat appeared inevitable.

"Ahhh..."

There were already people letting out sorrowful gasps.

It was right at this moment that someone appeared before Taowu. He looked so tiny in comparison like a mosquito before a person.

It was a disciple of the Mount Shu Sect—Chu Liang!

Many of those present recognized him. It seemed quite absurd that Chu Liang was attempting to stop Taowu.

Yet, at the next second, that tiny figure unleashed a terrifyingly immense force.

Two vibrant beams of light, one violet and the other azure, flew over from afar and converged above Chu Liang's head like yin and yang flowing together in the primordial chaos before the world was created[1] They lit up with a burst of divine radiance that belonged to the deities.

Just a while ago, Chu Liang had attempted the dual sword combination beneath the sea of clouds. At that time, he'd used the meager amount of power he had left and almost killed a cultivator at the pinnacle of the sixth realm, two realms higher than him.

Now, boundless power flowed within him. It seemed to be borrowed from the heavens and the earth, inexhaustible and endless.

With the experience of his first attempt, Chu Liang would not fail this time!

The violet and azure swordlights scattered, instantly forming countless interconnected threads like an ocean of sword qi. This ocean ultimately converged in one place, creating towering waves of sword qi!

The glorious display of sword qi shook the heavens!

"Evil entity, how dare you attack Mount Shu! Violet and Azure Twin Swords, slay this monster and defend our Dao with me!" Chu Liang yelled. "Dual sword combination!"

Chapter 298: The Entire World Will Remember My Name

Taowu left this world peacefully.

The celestial beast Baize of the Mount Shu Sect has existed for many years, possessing power equivalent to that of an eighth-realm cultivator. Due to its long accumulation of power over time, it was often considered stronger than the current sect leader.

In the years when talented cultivators rarely emerged, there might not even be an eighth-realm cultivator in an immortal sect. In times like this, the guardian celestial beast with its long-lifespan would become very crucial as they would then take on the role of being the guardian of the sect. The guardian celestial beast existed precisely for this reason.

Since the Demon-Suppressing Pagoda went missing, the Baize has not appeared again before the eyes of humans. There has been much speculation in the world of immortality cultivators, but there has never been a definitive conclusion.

During the chaos at Mount Shu, even when reinforcements arrived, Baize did not appear.

This led to many cultivators from various immortal sects believing the speculation that Baize had indeed disappeared along with the Demon-Suppressing Pagoda.

However, now that Baize had reappeared in such a strange dormant state, everyone realized that the speculation was incorrect.

However, because their cultivation levels were not high enough, they could not understand why Baize was in such a state. In fact, they weren't even familiar with the kind of state Baize was in.

When the old monk on the Dharma Lotus Platform saw this, a sharp glint flashed in his eyes.

"No wonder the celestial beast Baize hasn't appeared for many years," he murmured with a hint of surprise. "It turns out it was achieving the Perfection of the Great Dao, preparing to break through to the ninth realm. The Mount Shu Sect has been showing weakness for years, but if Baize succeeds, it will once again become the leader of the righteous path in the human world!"

The old monk's words were still somewhat conservative. Every appearance of a ninth-realm existence had always brought about a reshuffling of the world's order!

After all, a ninth-realm existence would be the sole ruler of the world. Aside from the demon god, no other ninth-realm beings recorded in history had ever been overthrown by those of lower cultivation levels.

This precisely showcased the immense power of the Demon-Suppressing Pagoda.

Only those at the eighth realm could discern Baize's dormant state. They would know that it was not asleep but present in a small, perfected world within itself. Baize had reached enlightenment in the profound and all-embracing Great Dao, existing in another world ever since.

This could also be defined as Major Perfection of the Eighth Realm.

When given the opportunity, it would ascend along with its small world, becoming a profound existence at the ninth realm.

Its state of enlightenment was not the only factor; the death of the previous ninth realm was also crucial in providing this opportunity. Only through the death of a ninth realm could another ninth realm be born.

However, this did not mean that Baize would immediately take the place of the ninth realm upon the death of the ninth-realm demon god. After all, it was not the only eighth-realm being on the verge of achieving Major Perfection.

In some hidden corners of the world, there might be another being on the brink of ascension, lying in dormancy and waiting for the moment of opportunity.

If the demon god dies, these beings on the brink of ascension would then engage in the fiercest competition.

By then, it would be a true battle of the top-tiers, with only the victor reaching the summit while the losers would see all their efforts go to waste.

However, having one on the brink of ascension in the Mount Shu Sect meant that the sect had gotten a golden ticket. It all made sense now. No wonder the celestial beast Baize had never appeared despite any crisis over the past few hundred years.

This was a bet on the future!

This was precisely why Lu Chengchou made Baize his first target. If he could awaken it from its brink-of-ascension state, it would not be able to return to that state easily.

In comparison, humans might have an advantage. Although their lifespans were much shorter, they achieved enlightenment at a quicker rate, making it easier for them to re-enter the state of being on the brink of ascension. However, for beasts, achieving the state of enlightenment was far more difficult. It could take a hundred or even up to a thousand years for them to re-enter this state.

However, considering the long lifespan of celestial beasts, they might be given more than one opportunity to fight for the position of the next ninth-realm existence upon the death of the current

ninth-realm existence. In this case, humans' quicker rate of achieving enlightenment could be understood as the universe's way of maintaining balance.

For this reason, if Baize's brink-of-ascension state were successfully disturbed, Mount Shu would likely miss the upcoming great opportunity completely.

This would have more serious consequences than heavily injuring Venerable Wen Yuan.

His intention was purely malicious.

As Taowu was about to crash into the giant egg containing Baize, threatening to destroy the culmination of hundreds of years of painstaking effort, a swordlight appeared.

...

When Chu Liang unleashed that awe-inspiring sword qi with the dual sword combination, his gaze was exceptionally calm.

The grander the occasion, the calmer he became. Ignoring the countless astonished gazes, he simply needed to do what he had done once before.

When he tried dual sword combination last time, he failed. But this time, he would definitely succeed.

As for the massive amount of foundational qi infused within the dual sword combination, that was not his concern.

There was an immortal art called Longevity of Heaven and Earth.

Its function was to connect the caster with the recipient, allowing the caster's foundational qi, blood-stained aura, lifespan, and all their power to be unreservedly transferred to the recipient.

At certain times, this immortal art was useless, but at other times, its execution seemed almost god-like. For instance, now.

Although the Whale-Riding Immortal's location was unknown, an intangible and ethereal channel had already formed between him and Chu Liang. The Whale-Riding Immortal's true essence flowed like a mighty river, surging through Chu Liang's body and quickly infusing into the brilliant execution of the dual sword combination.

Boom—

Chu Liang could even hear the roaring sound in his meridians!

This feeling was both incredibly surreal and immensely exhilarating!

How many people in the vast world of immortal cultivators could ever have such an opportunity in their lifetime? To wield the legendary sword ranked seventeenth in the world and freely exhaust the power of a cultivator at the Heavenly Origin Realm.

And to slay the ancient, vicious beast that came into being through the Great Dao!

Swish—

Taowu's eyes widened with fury; one eye blazed with anger while the other bled profusely.

This creature was born ferocious and unmatched. Even when facing death, it showed no fear or retreat, but instead opened its bloody mouth wider! If this sword strike could not kill it, it would swallow both Chu Liang and Baize whole!

Then, the swordlight of the Violet and Azure Twin Swords fiercely shot into its mouth, penetrating from the mouth to the back of its head! The swordlight then slashed downwards, slicing through half of its chest!

This was the power of a legendary sword!

Without a legendary artifact, even Eminent Ones at the eighth realm would find it difficult to kill this vicious beast so cleanly and swiftly.

"Rawwwwrrr..."

This vicious beast, with its overwhelming aura, emitted intense fighting spirit until its death, as if it wanted to devour even death itself. Then, it fell heavily below the sea of clouds.

It was like a small meteorite crashing down, causing the ground to shake and the mountains to sway instantly!

Rumble rumble boom!

In the next moment, a massive mushroom-shaped cloud of dust erupted from beneath the sea of clouds, rising high into the sky with a thunderous roar.

A colossal golden apparition emerged with the dust, merging into Chu Liang's body. Finally, a joyful expression spread across his face.

Well, this is nice.

It had been a while since the White Pagoda had opened for business, and Chu Liang never expected the first one in so long to be such a significant kill. Although the rewards presented by the White Pagoda were not entirely determined by the imprinted being's cultivation level, there was certainly a slight correlation.

An imprint of Taowu's level was something he might never have been able to kill on his own, so he couldn't help but wonder what incredible reward he might uncover.

Everyone on the mountain peak and foothills, in the sky and on the ground, watched in awe as Chu Liang appeared out of nowhere and killed Taowu with a single sword strike.

Everyone was left dumbfounded.

Those unfamiliar with him might have guessed he was a hidden expert from Mount Shu. However, most of those present had just watched the finals of the Mount Shu Summit and knew that Chu Liang was merely a novice disciple.

Even if he had some talent, it shouldn't be to this extent...

Even if he was recognized as the master by both the Violet and Azure Twin Swords, wait... how did one person become the master of both swords? Right! How did he manage to execute the dual sword combination alone?

Amidst all the overwhelming shocks, this puzzling detail was just a minor surprise.

A bigger question was, even with the dual sword combination, how could a fourth-realm disciple possess the foundational qi needed to kill Taowu in one strike?

Anyone knew that if the foundational qi of a fourth-realm disciple was akin to a bucket of water, the qi needed to unleash this strike was like an ocean!

The difference was as vast as heaven and earth!

How did he do it?

While everyone was still in shock and bewildered, Chu Liang moved once more.

The dual swords that had just combined remained united. Chu Liang raised the brilliant swordlight high, pointing it toward the sky.

"No way? He still wants to join the battle above?"

"But with the Violet and Azure Twin Swords, it seems possible..."

"But he's just a novice disciple from the Mount Shu Sect..."

"Hah!" Chu Liang shouted clearly.

Amid countless incredulous gazes, he swung his sword once more, aiming it at the True Form of Ksitigarbha in the sky!

With this strike, the entire world will remember my name!

Chapter 299: Di Nufeng's Playground

In the Catalog of the Mortal World's Ten Thousand Treasures, the Dharma Lotus Platform was ranked eighth, the True Form of Ksitigarbha was ranked tenth, and the Violet and Azure Twin Swords were ranked seventeenth.

In the world of immortality cultivators, the first ten treasures were typically categorized as tier one, the next ten as tier two, and anything beyond the top thirty fell into yet another tier. Therefore, there was a difference in tier between the Violet and Azure Twin Swords and the top two legendary artifacts.

However, this did not mean that top-tier legendary artifacts were superior in every aspect.

Take the second-ranked Seven-Star Sword as an example. Compared to the first-ranked Demon-Suppressing Pagoda, the Seven-Star Sword did not possess the unparalleled power to subdue a ninth-realm existence.

However, in terms of the destructive power of a single-target slaying technique, the Demon-Suppressing Pagoda fell short when compared to the Seven-Star Sword, which was crafted solely for the purpose of attacking.

Therefore, although the Dharma Lotus Platform displayed many mystical abilities, its absolute offensive power was indeed slightly inferior to the Violet and Azure Twin Swords.

This was why the Dharma Lotus Platform did not inflict significant damage on the True Form of Ksitigarbha despite having attacked twice in succession.

However, the True Form of Ksitigarbha would not dare to underestimate this sword strike from Chu Liang.

Due to the suddenness of Chu Liang's sword strike, the Violet and Azure sword lights blazed across the sky like a long rainbow. The True Form of Ksitigarbha had no choice but to hastily raise a palm to block the attack head-on.

As the True Form of Ksitigarbha raised its palm, a rumbling sound filled the air. Countless chains extended from the void, their metallic clinks growing louder as they were pulled tight. Thousands of sealing forces converged, suppressing Ksitigarbha's palm with immense power.

Without the terrifying seal, the true power of the True Form of Ksitigarbha was unimaginable. Could it surpass the Demon-Suppressing Pagoda and claim the title of the strongest legendary artifact, capable of challenging even the mightiest ninth-realm existences?

Boom—

The sword qi collided with the palm of the True Form of Ksitigarbha, and in an instant, a brilliant light surged. For a fleeting moment, the light seemed to freeze.

With the support from the Longevity of Heaven and Earth, the power Chu Liang unleashed with the legendary sword was almost as powerful as the force needed to slay a being at the Heavenly Origin Realm!

When the light dissipated, an obvious hole could be seen in the palm of the True Form of Ksitigarbha. Although no blood flowed from its body, it was clear that it had been injured!

After the sword strike, the True Form of Ksitigarbha suddenly looked up and let out a thunderous roar, "Raaaaaar!"

With this earth-shaking roar, the wind and clouds surged violently, and the black sun reappeared, casting the world into an abyss of darkness. No trace of light remained as a powerful black hurricane erupted, sweeping from north to south, engulfing Mount Shu in its fearsome grasp!

Taking advantage of the brief chaos, the disciples of the Dark King Sect fled towards White-Bone Mountain, the black whale, and other enchanted mounts, desperately trying to escape!

The righteous cultivators naturally did not want to let them escape, but in this oppressive darkness, the disciples with slightly weaker cultivation levels felt their souls wavering, constantly at risk of being swept away by the hurricane!

"Sadhuuuuuuuu."

It was only when the old monk on the Dharma Lotus Platform started chanting a Buddhist phrase that everyone's souls began to stabilize.

However, those at the seventh realm had no such concerns and pursued their fleeing enemies to their heart's content.

Especially at this moment, a burst of fire erupted from the southwest, accompanied by an indignant roar. "Devils, don't you flee!"

Di Nufeng's fist, surrounded by purple-gold flames and infused with the crimson-gold blood qi of the Phoenix Spirit Blood Jade, fiercely struck toward the giant black whale!

Fortunately, a nearby azure river surged into a giant wave, forming a towering barrier that blocked the punch.

The black whale couldn't risk picking up more disciples of the Dark King Sect. And so, even before all the men of the Northern Abyss Hall had boarded, the black whale fled in haste!

Otherwise, if Di Nufeng's punch had landed, even this giant whale, that was as big as a hill, couldn't withstand it and would likely have been killed by a single blow!

As for Lu Chengchou, he was pinned down by Venerable Wen Yuan's palm. His eyes suddenly widened in shock, his mouth opened in a silent gasp, and he froze motionless.

He seemed dead.

Venerable Wen Yuan frowned.

This was a secret technique of the Dark King Sect, which extracted one's soul!

With Lu Chengchou under his grip, no one in the world could take Lu Chengchou. Yet, the Dark King Sect directly extracted his soul, which was unexpected.

Venerable Wen Yuan immediately raised his hand to grab the soul back, but the True Form of Ksitigarbha in the sky took a deep breath, instantly sucking Lu Chengchou's soul into its mouth!

Even as this tug-of-war happened, the soul still swiftly flew towards the True Form of Ksitigarbha.

It was still challenging to fight against the power of a legendary artifact.

Venerable Wen Yuan frowned again.

Lu Chengchou had reached the seventh realm of cultivation. If he found a suitable body, he might be reborn. However, for an Eminent One, losing the body they had cultivated in meant that their path of cultivation had been severed.

At best, he would be like Old Fei, an incomplete seventh-realm being who could only impress those below the seventh realm. However, his weakness of being an incomplete being would be obvious when facing true Eminent Ones.

This level of cultivation would no longer pose a threat to Mount Shu.

What Venerable Wen Yuan truly feared wasn't his cultivation level, but his identity as a Lu Family descendant and his knowledge of the Mount Shu Sect's secrets. Having such an enemy around made it impossible to sleep peacefully.

At this moment, a streak of lightning suddenly shot out from the side!

The Discipline Master flicked her hand, sending out a black light that coiled around the soul.

"Scoundrel, do you think you can escape?" she snarled.

Lu Chengchou, being in the form of a soul, displayed a look of terror. He screamed, raised his hand, and suddenly tore himself apart!

With a ripping sound, he ripped off the part of his soul bound below his chest, splitting it into two!

The small part above his chest flew into the mouth of Ksitigarbha, while the larger part was yanked down by the Discipline Master. With a swift, powerful palm strike, she crushed it into stardust!

Now he was missing most of his soul...

Even if he survived, he might not even have the power of the fourth or fifth realm.

Only an Eminent One could show such powerful tenacity. If Lu Chengchou wasn't at the seventh realm, this tug-of-war would have resulted in his soul being torn apart and scattered into thin air.

Of course, only the True Form of Ksitigarbha had the power to snatch a soul from the sect leader of the Mount Shu Sect. After absorbing Lu Chengchou's soul, it immediately looked up to the sky.

With countless chains pulling, in an instant, the giant True Form of Ksitigarbha was dragged into the void.

Venerable Wen Yuan no longer tried to stop it, knowing that no one present had the power to confine this legendary artifact. Even the Buddhist legendary artifact, the Dharma Lotus Platform, which wasn't particularly adept at killing and fighting, would be ineffective.

The remaining fragments of Lu Chengchou's soul as well as the True Form of Ksitigarbha departed.

Venerable Wen Yuan, whose flow of qi seemed disrupted, immediately looked around.

The members of the Four Halls of Darkness fled on their enchanted mounts, leaving behind many scattered disciples who couldn't catch up. Only the black whale of the Northern Abyss Hall was still present as its escape was delayed by the disruption caused by Di Nufeng.

"Hmph." Venerable Wen Yuan snorted coldly, reaching out his hand to grab something unseen.

The clouds in the void suddenly coalesced into a massive hand that shot down and grabbed the black whale, squeezing it firmly.

Boom—

The massive black whale exploded in mid-air, its flesh and blood ground into nothing by the crushing force of the clouds, leaving not a speck behind.

The Northern Abyss Hall of the Dark King Sect was completely annihilated.

This was the wrath of an eighth-realm expert. Against any existence at the eighth-and-a-half realm, he might seem slightly powerless, but against anything below the Heavenly Origin Realm, it was an unquestionable display of overwhelming power.

With the departure of the True Form of Ksitigarbha, the black sun vanished and daylight was restored. The righteous forces then set about eliminating the remaining disciples of the diabolical sect, cleansing the battlefield of their evil presence.

The Dharma Lotus Platform in the sky emitted a radiant Buddha light, enveloping all of Mount Shu and causing everyone to glow with vibrant rainbow colors.

This made it impossible for any disciples of the diabolical sect to hide!

The thirty-six peaks of Mount Shu immediately became Di Nufeng's playground!

"Little thing, where are you running!"

"Hehe!"

A fiery figure with wings spread wide leaped through the air, leaving intense afterimages. Each blazing spark claimed an enemy, lighting up the battlefield with relentless fury!

The disciples of the Mount Shu Sect and various other immortal sects gradually stopped, not daring to approach or pursue further...

They were all scared that they might be accidentally injured. These young disciples had only heard of Di Nufeng's notorious reputation in Mount Shu but did not realize just how terrifying she truly was.

After witnessing today's scene, they immediately understood.

Di Nufeng was both ruthless and exceptionally skilled at combat. No one would want to encounter an enemy like her!

Venerable Wen Yuan did not participate in the battle on the ground. Instead, he turned around and pointed towards Guardian Peak with a serious expression!

Amidst thunderous roars, countless rocks rose from the ground, swirling around Baize's giant egg and rapidly reassembling into a towering mountain. In the blink of an eye, dense trees grew back on the rocks.

In an instant, a mountain peak was effortlessly rebuilt!

...

Chu Liang did not participate in cleaning up the battlefield. After killing Taowu with one strike and injuring the True Form of Ksitigarbha with another, he felt the power of the Whale-Riding Immortal withdraw from his body. The moment that happened, Chu Liang experienced an indescribable pain in his meridians, bones, and soul.

Every part of his body had been forcibly and violently expanded by the immense power, far beyond what his body could endure!

This was the power of the immortal art, Longevity of Heaven and Earth. Under normal circumstances, even a seventh-realm Eminent One infusing foundational qi into the body of a fourth-realm cultivator would be enough to rupture their meridians and flesh, causing them to explode. It didn't need to be the power of an eighth realm.

However, after using the Longevity of Heaven and Earth, Chu Liang only experienced the side effect of full-body pain. This was not entirely bad for him; it served as a valuable learning experience. If he were to control a more powerful force in the future, he would be able to handle it more skillfully.

He wanted to thank the Whale-Riding Immortal, but he could no longer find him. At this point, Mount Shu was in chaos, a state that would likely persist for some time.

Chu Liang first spotted Liu Xiaoyu'er in the crowd.

The young girl was squatting in a corner under the stage, terrified by what had just happened, but luckily she was unharmed.

Chu Liang felt a wave of relief wash over him, which made him ponder why the safety of a koi fish concerned him so deeply.

Despite his musings, he knew the situation was still unstable. And so, he decided to send Liu Xiaoyu'er back to Silver Sword Peak.

The Golden-Furred Hou was still guarding the peak, and Chu Liang couldn't help but worry if the Golden-Furred Hou might be in danger.

But what he found was beyond his expectations.

The Golden-Furred Hou was fine, but their home was gone...

"I'm so stupid. Seriously..."

Chu Liang stared at the chaos before him. A quarter of the fruits had been devoured, another quarter lay uprooted from the garden, and amidst it all, the Golden-Furred Hou slept soundly, completely oblivious to the destruction surrounding it.

His gaze was lifeless, his whole body trembled, and his heart ached.

"I always knew the members of the diabolical sect were evil, but I didn't expect their bottom line to be so low that they wouldn't even spare innocent fruits!"

Chapter 300: The Previous Generation

Chu Liang sat down for a while and calmed down, letting his heartache dull a little. Then he figured out who the real culprit was.

The idea that the disciples of a diabolical sect had taken advantage of the attack on Mount Shu to steal some fruits to eat was pretty absurd. Chu Liang thought about it for a moment and concluded that it was very unlikely that had been the case.

An even more ridiculous possibility was that an eighth-realm cultivator had brought a seventh-realm cultivator to Silver Sword Peak to eat the fruits in secret... But it was highly likely that was the truth.

After all, there had been stories going around the past few days about an adult and a child robbing people of their berries. It wouldn't be surprising if they had stolen from Silver Sword Peak today. However, if it were truly those two who had stolen the berries, it wouldn't really be considered stealing.

The Whale-Riding Immortal had just helped Chu Liang, completely changing the course of the entire battle. In a sense, it could even be said that the Whale-Riding Immortal had saved Mount Shu.

Even without that as the reason, the Whale-Riding Immortal was suspected to be Jiang Yuebai's father... Could Chu Liang really ask the Whale-Riding Immortal to pay for the berries?

Hmm... Even if I were to ask for payment, it would certainly have to be a discounted price.

There was one more reason that made Chu Liang certain it was the work of the Whale-Riding Immortal and the little girl—the Golden-Furred Hou.

Big Head was now a sixth-realm vicious beast. That meant only Eminent Ones could make it behave obediently. If the thieves were of a lower cultivation level than an Eminent One, the Golden-Furred Hou wouldn't have been so docile.

Thinking of the Golden-Furred Hou, Chu Liang shifted his gaze to it and found it lying on the ground, sound asleep. He got the feeling that there was something different about the Golden-Furred Hou.

Chu Liang used his divine sense to examine the Golden-Furred Hou carefully and found that its aura had gotten denser and the divine light around its body was gentler than before.

It seemed that the Golden-Furred Hou had made another breakthrough.

Chu Liang wasn't sure if it had anything to do with Whale-Riding Immortal, but it was certainly a good thing. Now that the Golden-Furred Hou was stronger, it would be able to do a better job of guarding their home.

The commotion on Mount Shu continued for another hour before Chu Liang's teacher returned, enveloped in a blaze.

Di Nufeng landed heavily on Silver Sword Peak, sending a loud rumble through the earth.

She laughed heartily and said, "How satisfying! It's been so long since I felt this good."

The Golden-Furred Hou was startled awake with its fur standing on end. Its eyes flitted around warily, then it quietly slinked away.

"Esteemed Teacher," Chu Liang called out.

He had never seen Di Nufeng this happy before, not even during New Year's. She was so happy that she was practically beaming with joy.

"You did pretty well, you little rascal. You actually managed to complete the dual sword combination alone. That's unprecedented in Mount Shu." Di Nufeng grinned, patting Chu Liang's shoulder. "How did you do it?"

Chu Liang didn't mention his dual meridian systems; he just said that both the Violet Sword and the Azure Sword had selected him. He then focused on how the Whale-Riding Immortal had used Voice Transmission and assisted him.

When Chu Liang returned from his trip to the Immortals' Marsh previously, he'd told Di Nufeng about his encounter with the Whale-Riding Immortal. So, when he mentioned this person again, Di Nufeng remembered who it was.

"The Whale-Riding Immortal..." Di Nufeng muttered. "When you mentioned him previously, I didn't think much of it. But I saw that name in The Seven Stars Gazette after that. His style of doing things is quite familiar... There aren't many people in the nine provinces who can reach or have the potential of possibly reaching the eighth realm. Moreover, he has attained immortality... Could it really be that guy?"

"Hm?" Chu Liang uttered, looking up at her. He asked, "Esteemed Teacher, do you know that esteemed senior?"

"It's just a guess. Hang on."

Di Nufeng glanced in the direction of Azure Falling Peak. She darted out and then swiftly returned in a flash with a painting. It vaguely depicted a high-spirited young man with beautiful thick hair. He was dressed in long robes and standing with a sword in hand.

"Is this him?" Di Nufeng asked.

Chu Liang took a close look at the young man in the painting.

Perhaps if some beard stubble and that knife scar were added to the young man's face...

The young man in the painting truly did look around ninety percent similar to the Whale-Riding Immortal. The most striking similarity was the wild look in his eyes.

People will mature over time, but the light in their eyes will never dim.[1]

It shouldn't be difficult for an eighth-realm cultivator to change their appearance. Nevertheless, it was likely the Whale-Riding Immortal probably hadn't disguised himself as someone else, so Chu Liang was able to confirm quite quickly that the young man in the painting was indeed the Whale-Riding Immortal.

Chu Liang nodded. "It's him."

"As I expected." Di Nufeng grinned. "I knew someone who would help our sect at such a critical time couldn't have just appeared out of nowhere."

"Does this esteemed senior have a connection with our sect?" Chu Liang asked curiously.

Di Nufeng laughed and answered, "It's not just a connection. He was a disciple of Falling Waterfowl Peak."

"Eh?" Chu Liang uttered in astonishment.

So, it turned out that this was why Senior Sister Jiang's father had sent her to Mount Shu. However, if he's Senior Sister Jiang's father, that means he's a descendant of the Jiang family.

Why did he become a disciple of the Mount Shu Sect when his family's clan was still an influential immortal sect?

"Speaking of this guy, he really is quite legendary," Di Nufeng began. "His name is Jiang Tiankuo, a collateral descendant of the Jiang family[2]. His father died early, and his mother wasn't a member of the Jiang Family, so the mother and son were outcasts in the Jiang Family. When Jiang Tiankuo was just a young boy, he didn't want his mother to suffer in silence for the sake of his future, so he joined the Mount Shu Sect on his own, vowing that the Jiang family would one day beg him to return.

"For thirty years, the Yellow River flows to the east, and for the next thirty years, it flows to the west. Do not treat the youth with disdain just because he's poor, for times are ever-changing, and you never know what the future holds!"

"Wow!" Chu Liang exclaimed in admiration.

"At the Mount Shu Summit that year, he used some despicable methods to defeat me..."

Di Nufeng got rather angry as she talked about that.

Although Chu Liang didn't know what had happened, he could guess that what his teacher meant by "despicable methods" was probably just Jiang Tiankuo using his brain and strategizing.

Like Jiang Yuebai, Jiang Tiankuo had a Transcendent Spirit, so he probably had a similarly diverse range of divine abilities and skills in his repertoire. Back then, Di Nufeng had yet to fully develop her Samadhi True Fire, so it's quite possible she had been outplayed and defeated.

"But later on, he lost to Yan Zi, and Yan Zi became the head disciple of our generation," Di Nufeng continued. "After that, we represented our sect in the Assembly of Immortal Sects in the capital of Yu.

"There was pretty much no suspense at all as to whether we were going to win the Assembly of Immortal Sects. After we won, the top painter in the capital painted this just for Jiang Tiankuo," Di Nufeng said, pouting in annoyance. "Back then, he was the most popular disciple in our sect, and half of the young ladies in the capital were his fans."

Although Di Nufeng didn't say it outright, her tone was laced with jealousy.

Chu Liang wasn't surprised to hear this.

Daoist Yan was the head disciple, but she kept a very low profile. Meanwhile, Esteemed Teacher is beautiful and a powerful fighter, but she has a coarse demeanor.

As for Uncle Jiang, he was handsome, cool, and powerful. It makes sense that he was popular.

Looking at this vivid painting, Chu Liang could imagine just how dazzling the most talented and handsome young man in the capital of Yu had been that year.

Di Nufeng continued, "Jiang Tiankuo stood out a lot back then. The Jiang Family didn't have any outstanding young members in his generation, so the head of the Jiang Family personally came to invite Jiang Tiankuo back to the Jiang Family, fulfilling a wish he'd had for a long time.

"At first, Jiang Tiankuo didn't want to go back. But the Jiang Family must have offered him some generous terms, including grooming him to become the successor of the Jiang Family. The terms were so good that even the elders of our sect advised him to return to the Jiang Family. Consequently, he did just that..."

"Yan Zi was heartbroken for quite some time." Di Nufeng grinned slyly. "She thought I didn't know, but I knew everything, hehe."

Did something happen between Senior Aunt Yan and Uncle Jiang?

Chu Liang glanced toward Azure Falling Peak.

Senior Aunt Yan has remained unmarried all her life and has even been raising someone else's daughter...

If what Esteemed Teacher is saying is true, then Senior Aunt Yan must have loved Uncle Jiang deeply.

"In the following decades, we didn't see each other much. After all, the Jiang Family and Mount Shu are quite far apart, and we all had our own things to do," Di Nufeng said with a sigh.

What Di Nufeng was feeling was probably similar to the feeling of when good friends graduated from school and went their separate ways, seldomly keeping in touch.

Chu Liang sighed deeply as he mocked his teacher in his mind.

You all had your own things to do...? Uncle Jiang was working hard for the Jiang Family, and Senior Aunt Yan was focusing on her cultivation on Azure Falling Peak.

And you? Were you that busy getting drunk every night on Silver Sword Peak?

All three of you had such bright futures...

"The last time we met was probably at his wedding banquet." Di Nufeng recalled the scene with a sheepish grin. "I drank too much and caused a bit of a scene."

Of course, that means she must have made a pretty big scene... Chu Liang thought.

Di Nufeng explained, "You can't really blame me. Yan Zi insisted on going to the wedding banquet. When I saw her sitting there, I knew she was definitely feeling really sad, so I couldn't stop myself from drinking a few more cups of wine than I should have."

Chu Liang silently continued ridiculing her. Stop making excuses. You caused trouble even when Senior Aunt Yan wasn't sad...

"His bride was pretty amazing though. I only met her once, but she left a deep impression," Di Nufeng remarked. "Not long after that, a major event shocked the cultivation world. The Jiang Family was wiped out overnight, reportedly by the mysterious Divine Ruins Monastery. One day, Jiang Tiankuo suddenly returned to Mount Shu and entrusted baby Jiang Yuebai to Yan Zi before vanishing without a trace."

Chu Liang had heard a bit about the subsequent events from Jiang Yuebai. Her mother had emerged from the Divine Ruins, but the legendary Divine Ruins Monastery had targeted her. Ultimately, disaster had struck the Jiang Family.

Even until now, Jiang Yuebai had never met her parents.

Chu Liang asked puzzledly, "Didn't you say the wedding banquet was the last time you saw him?"

Di Nufeng shook her head and explained, "When he came to Mount Shu for the last time, I had drunk too much and missed the chance to meet with him."

Oh, Chu Liang thought. I see.