

Myth Beyond 2021

Chapter 2021 Shrouded in Doubt

Even after Yun Lintian disappeared from her sight, Yan Siqi continued to stand there for a very long time.

Yan Feihong approached cautiously. "Your Majesty, would you like me to invite him over?"

Since Yan Siqi had personally come here, Yan Feihong believed Yun Lintian must be very important. She simply couldn't understand why Yan Siqi didn't go over and greet him herself.

Yan Siqi retracted her gaze and turned to face Yan Feihong and Yan Jingru. "Do not inform him of my arrival. And don't stop those people from attacking him."

Confused glances were exchanged between Yan Feihong and Yan Jingru. "Understood," they replied in unison.

"What about the White Tiger God Clan, Your Majesty? I already contacted them," Yan Feihong inquired.

"Leave it to me," Yan Siqi said softly before walking away.

Yan Feihong and Yan Jingru didn't speak further and hurried after her.

Fury crackled in the air around Jin Yang. The walls of the chamber where he resided seemed to tremble under the oppressive aura he exuded. The sight of Nantian Yu, his woman, grabbing that wretched Yun Lintian's arm and pulling him away sent a spike of murderous jealousy through him.

Jin Yang slammed his fist on the armrest of his chair, shattering it to pieces. "That damned bastard! How dare he touch what's rightfully mine!" he roared, his voice echoing through the chamber.

The two guards kept their heads down, silent. Such a scene appeared to be nothing new to them.

"You always lose control when it comes to her," Jin Yuxin said as she entered the chamber. "This is precisely why His Majesty hasn't issued an edict recognizing your claim to the throne. You need to learn better self-control."

Jin Yang glared at Jin Yuxin and asked coldly, "Why didn't you eliminate him?"

"His background is shrouded in mystery. It's best to investigate him first," Jin Yuxin replied, omitting any mention of the bloodline suppression she'd felt from Yun Lintian.

"Hmph! You are simply a coward." Jin Yang snorted coldly. A cruel smile twisted his features. "If you lack the courage, then go and contact the Blood Fiend. I want him dead before the celebration."

Jin Yuxin frowned slightly. "It's worth noting that Yan Feihong is determined to protect him."

"So what?" Jin Yang sneered. "Do you think I fear their Vermilion Bird God Clan?"

He didn't wait for Jin Yuxin's response. He waved his hand dismissively. "Go. Don't make me repeat myself. Otherwise, I wouldn't mind acquiring a new protector."

Jin Yuxin's eyes flickered with disapproval. She bowed slightly and said, "As you command."

A sense of dark satisfaction settled over Jin Yang as Jin Yuxin bowed in agreement. He envisioned Yun Lintian dead, a cold corpse.

Jin Yuxin didn't say anything further and vanished from the chamber.

Inside the private room on the top floor of the tower, Huang Yiming personally poured a cup of tea for an unexpected guest, Yan Siqi.

"When I heard my subordinate's report, I doubted you would come," he said, handing her the cup.

Yan Siqi took a gentle sip of her tea and inquired, "Have you seen him?"

Huang Yiming set the teapot down and said, "So you come here because of him."

They sipped their tea in silence for a moment.

Breaking the silence, Huang Yiming said, "I detected all the divine bloodlines in his body. The first person who came to mind was him."

"Without a doubt, he's a son of that person," Yan Siqi confirmed softly.

Huang Yiming studied her. "Do you have some knowledge of this?"

Yan Siqi offered a small nod, then a hesitant shake of her head. "The only thing I'm certain of is that I shouldn't be here. However, my curiosity was too strong to resist. Thankfully, he was preoccupied and didn't notice me."

Huang Yiming didn't seem surprised by the last part. He believed Yun Lintian could have sensed her presence.

"Honestly," he said with a frown, "the unease in my heart has been growing lately. It feels like there's an undercurrent we're completely unaware of. This young man's appearance further strengthens that feeling. He's an existence that shouldn't be here."

Yan Siqi remained silent, her mind racing as she tried to decipher the situation.

"Do you know his whereabouts?" Yan Siqi abruptly asked.

Huang Yiming shook his head. "It's impossible to find him unless he chooses to contact me himself."

"When was the last time you met him?" Yan Siqi pressed further.

"Around two thousand years ago," Huang Yiming revealed without reservation. He left me a message saying something could not be changed—at least, not here. I haven't quite grasped what he meant by that."

"Something cannot be changed. At least, not here..." Yan Siqi echoed the sentence thoughtfully.

"What about you? What did you mean by saying you shouldn't be here?" Huang Yiming inquired.

"He visited me two thousand years ago," Yan Siqi replied honestly. "He instructed me to stay away from this place when the appointed time arrived... And that time, I believe, is now."

Huang Yiming frowned. "What exactly was he trying to tell us?"

Yan Siqi was equally perplexed. Witnessing her own power within this unknown young man had left her utterly bewildered.

"Senior Long..." Huang Yiming suddenly recalled someone. "Why don't we consult him? He surely possesses some knowledge."

Yan Siqi shook her head. "I attempted to contact him before coming here. Unfortunately, he remains secluded. This clearly suggests something amiss."

Huang Yiming took a sip of tea to compose himself and said, "Regrettably, I can't currently reach my master. He has ventured into the Netherworld."

After a moment's contemplation, Yan Siqi spoke. "I should take my leave. Sister Xiaoyun will undoubtedly come here."

Huang Yiming was surprised. "Is she truly her daughter?"

"There's no doubt about it," Yan Siqi confirmed as she rose to leave. "The little girl possesses Sister Xiaoyun's primal bloodline."

A look of astonishment contorted Huang Yiming's face. The primal bloodline, referring to the original power of a divine beast, was a unique entity belonging to that specific individual. It could only be passed down to another person, solidifying Linlin's identity as Bai Xiaoyun's descendant.

"Be careful," Yan Siqi said softly before vanishing from the place.

Huang Yiming remained deep in thought for a long time before finally speaking. "Come in."

Li Shan entered the room and bowed respectfully. "What are your instructions, my lord?"

"Instruct our people to be on high alert. We must be prepared to fight at a moment's notice," Huang Yiming ordered.

Despite his confusion, Li Shan responded promptly. "Understood."

Chapter 2022 Bond

After finishing dinner at a restaurant, Yun Lintian and Nantian Yu returned to the Jade Inn for some rest.

"That's it for today. See you tomorrow," Nantian Yu waved goodbye and entered her room.

Yun Lintian smiled and walked into the room next to hers.

Entering the room, Yun Lintian meticulously checked the interior, his mind recalling the scene he had witnessed previously. There had been a battle in this room, evidenced by a skeleton on the ground. If it truly followed the timeline, he might be facing a battle soon.

However, Yun Lintian remained unsure whether he had truly traveled back in time. He doubted he could verify it at this point. The only option he had right now was to go with the flow and see what unfolded.

Yun Lintian sank onto the bed, lost in deep thought. Now, another dilemma occupied his mind: should he intervene to prevent Nantian Yu's death?

Qingqing, having nothing else to do, drifted off to sleep as soon as she hit the bed. Meanwhile, Linlin curled up on Yun Lintian's chest, gazing at him silently.

Yun Lintian gently patted her head and asked, "Are you thinking about your mother?"

"Mhm," Linlin responded, purring under his touch.

"I believe your mother will come here right away once she hears the news," Yun Lintian said softly.

Linlin remained silent, but a flicker of hope ignited in her heart. It would be a dream come true if the Bai Xiaoyun here turned out to be her mother.

Yun Lintian sighed. "Let's get some sleep, shall we?"

"Mhm," Linlin responded, closing her eyes.

Yun Lintian activated the isolation and protection barriers before letting his mind drift, sinking into sleep.

Time flowed unnoticed. Linlin's eyes snapped open at a familiar voice.

"My child..." The voice, carried by the breeze, resonated with uncertainty and hope. It swirled around her, a ghostly echo seemingly emanating from all directions at once.

Tears welled in Linlin's eyes as she scanned her surroundings. Doubt wrestled with a desperate yearning. Could it truly be her mother?

Her heart hammering a frantic rhythm against her ribs, Linlin rose from Yun Lintian's chest. She attempted to wake him but discovered it was futile. Yun Lintian and Qingqing seemed under a powerful spell.

"My child... You are truly my child..." The voice grew stronger.

Unable to resist the yearning in her heart, Linlin leaped off Yun Lintian's chest and headed straight for the window.

Landing on the rooftop, she saw a familiar figure standing there, gazing upon her. The woman was breathtakingly beautiful, her face etched with worry lines that deepened as their eyes met. Eyes, the same shade of gold that mirrored Linlin's own reflection, brimmed with unshed tears.

Undoubtedly, it was the White Tiger God, Bai Xiaoyun.

"Mom?" Linlin's voice cracked, barely a whisper on the wind.

"It's me..." A choked sob escaped Bai Xiaoyun's lips.

The world around them seemed to vanish, replaced only by mother and daughter, their tearful gazes locked in a silent exchange.

Initially, Bai Xiaoyun refused to believe the message from Yan Feihong. She had never given birth to a daughter, that much was certain.

However, the moment she laid eyes on Linlin, a wave of emotions flooded her heart. Tears streamed down her face as an unshakeable intuition confirmed it: Linlin was her own flesh and blood.

Unbelievable as it was, it was true.

The blood connection was an undeniable force. Despite never meeting before, their bond was instantly recognized.

Linlin no longer held back her emotions. She leaped into Bai Xiaoyun's embrace, her tears soaking her mother's chest. "Mom... I miss you so much."

"It must have been so hard, my darling daughter." Bai Xiaoyun clung tightly to the child she'd never met. A fierce maternal love bloomed within her, whispering that the little girl in her arms was the most precious thing in the world.

While Linlin poured out her emotions, Bai Xiaoyun couldn't help but observe Yun Lintian. Upon first glance, she was utterly stunned by the sheer quantity of divine bloodlines coursing through him.

But an even more perplexing discovery awaited her. The White Tiger God bloodline within him was demonstrably purer than hers. And this wasn't limited to the White Tiger God bloodline - all of them were stronger... What kind of being could possess such power?

Linlin calmed down and lifted her head to meet her mother's gaze. "Mom, you're so beautiful," she said.

The memory of Bai Xiaoyun in Linlin's mind was hazy. She couldn't recall anything before meeting Yun Lintian. The information Bai Xiaoyun left within her soul was limited to the White Tiger God bloodline's power.

This was the first time she saw her mother face-to-face.

"You're beautiful too," Bai Xiaoyun replied with a warm smile. "Can you tell me, darling, how you came to be here?"

Although Linlin recognized the woman as her mother, she hesitated, unsure if she should reveal the truth.

"It's alright if you don't want to share," Bai Xiaoyun said gently, sensing her daughter's struggle. "But can you at least tell me your name?"

"Yun Linlin," Linlin answered softly.

"Yun Linlin? Not Bai Linlin?" Bai Xiaoyun was taken aback. Even if she ever desired a daughter, she'd prefer using her own primal bloodline rather than finding a mate. Why would her daughter carry another man's surname?

"Big Brother Yun gave me the name," Linlin explained. "And you told me to take his surname."

"Me?" Bai Xiaoyun's confusion deepened. A proud woman like her wouldn't allow her daughter to use someone else's surname. What on earth had happened?

Naturally, she harbored a vague suspicion that Linlin might be from the future, but she couldn't imagine of her saying that. What could have caused her to change her mind?

"Do you like him?" Bai Xiaoyun inquired curiously, noticing the close bond between Linlin and Yun Lintian.

"Mhm!" Linlin nodded emphatically. "Big Brother Yun is the most important person in the world, besides you, of course, Mom."

Bai Xiaoyun chuckled and affectionately patted her daughter's head. "I never thought you'd fall for a man. You've broken this mother's heart!"

Linlin scrunched her nose playfully and retorted, "What are you thinking, Mom? He's my brother."

"Yes, yes, I understand," Bai Xiaoyun said with a smile.

Turning to look at Yun Lintian, she asked, "Does he treat you well?"

"Yes," Linlin replied with a sweet smile. "Big Brother Yun always gives me the best things."

"That's reassuring," Bai Xiaoyun said with relief.

Linlin hesitated and said. "Although I can't tell you everything, I can give you general information, Mom."

Chapter 2023 Transformation

"So, you've appeared here for no reason? And something bad is about to happen?" Bai Xiaoyun spoke after listening to her daughter's story. An image of a certain man flickered in her mind.

"You need to leave as soon as possible, Mom," Linlin said with a serious expression. "Nothing should happen to you."

Bai Xiaoyun nodded solemnly. "I'll leave shortly."

"That's good," Linlin said, relieved. Though she longed to stay with her mother longer, she wouldn't let her take a risk because of her selfishness.

"Can you tell me more about him?" Bai Xiaoyun asked, not expecting much in return. Perhaps she just wanted an excuse to spend more time with her daughter.

"Big Brother Yun... he's quite pitiful," Linlin said with a downcast expression.

"Oh? Why's that?" Bai Xiaoyun inquired, her curiosity piqued.

"I've been by his side since the beginning of his journey," Linlin explained softly. "While he's had moments of leisure, he's constantly burdened by a responsibility he never sought."

"He just yearns for a simple life, free of worry. Unfortunately, I'm too weak to help him."

Linlin's strength had grown immensely over the years, but she felt powerless against his enemies, who remained far beyond her reach. No matter how hard she trained, the gap seemed insurmountable. This often led her to question her own purpose.

Bai Xiaoyun gently touched her daughter's head. "How could you doubt yourself? You're my daughter, Bai Xiaoyun's daughter. There's no such thing as weakness."

"Mom..." Linlin began, but Bai Xiaoyun cut her off.

"I don't know why my future self restricted your body, perhaps it's related to your enemy. Now that you're here, I'll remove it," she declared.

A golden spark of lightning flashed from Bai Xiaoyun's eyes. Linlin instantly felt something shift within her, followed by a surge of power coursing through her body.

"Focus your mind," Bai Xiaoyun instructed softly.

Taking a deep breath, Linlin concentrated her divine energy. A warm sensation spread through her, bones realigning, muscles rearranging. A soft gasp escaped her lips as fur receded, replaced by smooth, sun-kissed skin. Her tail coiled and vanished, transforming into a pair of slender legs.

Linlin blinked, taking in her new form. Gone was the imposing white fur, replaced by a simple white cotton robe that concealed the faint tiger stripes still marking her arms. Her once snowy white mane was now a cascading waterfall of midnight black hair.

Her eyes, normally an unsettling golden glow, now shone with a warm, honeyed hue. In her human form, Linlin was breathtakingly beautiful, yet a hint of wildness lingered in her gaze, a constant reminder of the majestic beast within.

Standing at about 1.6 meters tall, Linlin emerged from her mother's embrace. Tentatively exploring her new body, a strange joy filled her heart. Previously, attempts to take human form had failed, an invisible barrier holding her back. Now, with the restriction lifted, she could finally embrace this new form.

"It's true," Bai Xiaoyun explained, "we divine beasts are strongest in our beast forms. However, for training purposes, a human form proves more efficient."

"That young man," she continued, "possesses an abnormal growth rate and unprecedented strength. Were it not for his complete loss of control of his mind, I wouldn't have put him to sleep like this. Frankly, except for the Primordial Gods themselves, I've never encountered anyone like him."

"However," Bai Xiaoyun turned to her beautiful daughter, "you're no ordinary beast either. I sense a strange entity within you, one that enhances your power."

"Now, with the restriction lifted, your growth will be similar to his, or even better. After all, divine beasts like us can directly absorb power from divine cores."

Bai Xiaoyun extended her hand, a golden interspatial ring materializing. "Consider this a gift, my dear. While not as impressive as the one on that young man's finger, it's certainly one of the finest interspatial rings available. Inside, you'll find divine cores from various high gods and God Ascension beasts. Take them with you when you return."

Linlin stared at the golden ring in astonishment, especially after seeing its contents. Countless divine cores, enough to form a mountain, awaited her. Absorbing them all would undoubtedly propel her towards the High God Realm or even higher realm in a short time.

"Thank you, Mom," Linlin said, clutching the ring tightly. It felt like a precious relic, perhaps the first and last gift she would receive from her mother.

Bai Xiaoyun, a hint of sadness in her eyes, patted her daughter's head lovingly. "It pains me," she admitted, "that I cannot witness your growth firsthand."

"Mom..." Tears welled up in Linlin's eyes again. She threw her arms around her mother in a tight embrace, reluctant to let go.

Bai Xiaoyun ran a hand gently down Linlin's back, murmuring, "Though I don't know the nature of your enemy, I pray for your safety. Promise me you won't give up on yourself, understand?"

Linlin hummed softly, burying her face deeper into her mother's embrace.

Bai Xiaoyun offered a small smile, continuing to stroke her daughter's back. Her gaze then shifted towards a figure appearing in the distance – Yan Siqi.

Yan Siqi, respectful of the reunion, stood silently without disturbing them.

Once calmed, Linlin lifted her head. "Mom," she asked, "do you know who owns the ring on Big Brother Yun's finger?"

Bai Xiaoyun shook her head. "No, my dear. The creator must be at least a powerful True God, someone beyond my own capabilities."

"There are people stronger than you, Mom?" Linlin inquired, her naivety evident.

"Of course, silly girl," Bai Xiaoyun replied with a fond smile. "The vastness of the Primal Chaos ensures there are those more powerful than me hidden somewhere."

Her gaze returned to the invisible ring on Yun Lintian's finger. "However," she continued, "this person must be very close to him... someone who holds him very dear."

Bai Xiaoyun sensed a trace of aura lingering within the ring, a distinct origin power. It was clear the ring's creator intended to protect Yun Lintian from even the Primordial Gods. This, she believed, was a testament to their immense power, exceeding even her own.

Linlin was shocked. The revelation that the ring's creator wielded power surpassing even the Primordial Gods shattered her expectations. Her mother's words echoed in her mind: the ring held enough power to protect Yun Lintian from such formidable beings... Who could they be?

Chapter 204 Grand Scheme (1)

Bai Xiaoyun traced her daughter's hair gently. "It's time for me to go now," she said softly.

Linlin bit her lip, fighting back tears. "Mmm," she mumbled in response.

Bai Xiaoyun gazed at her daughter with overflowing tenderness. "Remember, Linlin," she said, her voice thick with emotion, "your mother will always be with you."

Her figure slowly faded from view, leaving Linlin alone.

"Mom!" Linlin cried out, her voice echoing in the empty space. Tears streamed down her face as she searched desperately for any sign of her mother. But Bai Xiaoyun was truly gone.

Linlin allowed herself to grieve for a while before finally calming down. Clutching the ring tightly, she whispered, "I love you, Mom."

With a shift, she transformed back into her miniature form and returned to the room. Curling up on Yun Lintian's chest, forcing herself to sleep.

In the distance, Bai Xiaoyun watched her daughter, tears welling in her eyes. Every fiber of her being yearned to stay, but reality held her back.

"You should have spent more time with her," Yan Siqi remarked softly. "There might still be some time left."

Bai Xiaoyun shook her head. "No," she said, her voice heavy. "Seeing me leave would only make her sadder."

Wiping away her tears, she turned to Yan Siqi. "Did you see it?"

"Yes," Yan Siqi confirmed gently. "Our primal souls reside within his body, along with Senior Long, Sister Feng, Sister Huian, and Brother Shen. We've all entrusted everything to him."

"Sister Feng and Sister Huian surprise me the most," Bai Xiaoyun admitted, furrowing her brow. "It seems what transpired back then wasn't as we believed."

Yan Siqi remained silent, but a frown creased her forehead. Recalling the past incident left her confused and troubled.

"Let's find Senior Long," Bai Xiaoyun decided. "He might have answers."

Yan Siqi silently agreed. With a shared nod, the two figures vanished without a trace.

The Next Morning

Yun Lintian woke up in a daze, blinking at the ceiling. He hadn't expected to sleep so soundly here.

Shaking off the lingering grogginess, he looked at Linlin, and Qingqing curled up beside him. With a playful smile, he tapped their heads lightly. "Rise and shine, sleepyheads! The sun is burning your butts already!"

"Mhm..." Qingqing mumbled in annoyance, rolling over to avoid his touch. As a spirit body, she didn't require sleep, but for some reason, she had relished it today.

Meanwhile, Linlin stirred and stretched languidly. Yun Lintian couldn't help but notice a subtle change in her demeanor. Something seemed different, though he couldn't quite put his finger on it.

Yun Lintian rose from the bed, retrieving three cups of coffee. He took a steaming cup and leaned against the window, gazing at the bustling street below.

On his return to Earth, Yun Lintian brought back a significant supply of coffee. He'd even cultivated a variety within the Land of Beyond Heaven. Now, he could indulge in his preferred beverage whenever he desired, a welcome change from the ever-present tea.

Linlin, mimicking Yun Lintian's habit, picked up her cup and perched on the windowsill, slowly sipping her coffee. However, her thoughts lingered on the memory of her mother's departure the previous night.

Qingqing, detecting the aroma, twitched her nose and opened her eyes. In a swift movement, she leaped out of bed and snatched her coffee cup, downing it in one go.

"More, Big Brother Yun!" she chirped, licking her lips and holding out her empty cup.

"Greedy cat," Yun Lintian chuckled, pouring her another cup.

A knock interrupted their morning routine. It was Nantian Yu's voice calling out, "Lintian, let's go! The competition is about to begin."

Yun Lintian performed a quick washup before heading out. They grabbed breakfast from a street vendor and made their way to the plaza where the competition was taking place.

Today marked the final round. The plaza thronged with an even denser crowd compared to the previous day. Yun Lintian and Nantian Yu navigated the throng and secured a spot to witness the competition.

The event commenced, punctuated by thunderous cheers erupting periodically. While ten competitors participated, the true spectacle unfolded as Yan Jingru and Jin Yang engaged in an intense, hours-long battle. Ultimately, the victor emerged as everyone had anticipated: Yan Jingru claimed victory fair and square.

While Jin Yang displayed evident dissatisfaction, he surprisingly managed to control his emotions. He scanned the crowd and spotted Yun Lintian and Nantian Yu. A flicker of anger crossed his eyes, swiftly replaced by a chilling smile.

Nantian Yu noticed this exchange, a frown etching itself onto her face. A wave of unease washed over her. Undoubtedly, Jin Yang was harboring some scheme.

Yun Lintian, naturally, caught the exchange as well. However, it held little concern for him. He easily surmised the nature of Jin Yang's brewing plot.

City Lord Li Shan ascended the stage to announce the results. He presented rewards to the top three winners, followed by a speech about the upcoming Yellow Emperor celebration event. Finally, he proceeded with the closing ceremony.

As the crowd began to disperse, Yun Lintian pulled Nantian Yu towards Yan Jingru.

"Congratulations, Miss Yan," Yun Lintian offered sincerely.

The Vermilion Bird God Clan disciples scrutinized Yun Lintian curiously. However, upon recognizing Nantian Yu, they promptly dismissed him from their attention.

"Thank you," Yan Jingru replied with a gentle smile. But a pang of guilt flickered in her heart as she saw Yun Lintian today.

Before she could speak further, Yan Feihong intervened, addressing Yun Lintian. "Our lord is pressed for time. You may take your leave."

Yun Lintian raised an eyebrow, sensing something amiss. He didn't press the issue, however. With a cupped fist salute, he said, "Thank you for your time. I'll excuse myself now."

He turned and departed directly. Since Yan Siqi evidently had no intention of meeting him, Yun Lintian would seek alternative methods to contact Bai Xiaoyun and even the Primordial Azure Dragon God himself.

"You should leave him," Yan Jingru advised Nantian Yu, her voice laced with concern. "He's in danger."

Nantian Yu fell silent, fully aware of the truth in her statement.

Lifting her head, she said, "I understand. Congratulations on your victory."

With Yan Jingru's guilty gaze trailing behind her, Nantian Yu turned and walked away.

"Let's go," Yan Feihong said, his attention no longer lingering on Yun Lintian as he escorted Yan Jingru away.

Yun Lintian looked at Nantian Yu and said reassuringly, "There's no need to worry. Trust me, he can't harm me."

Nantian Yu met his gaze and declared, "I'm leaving tomorrow."

Chapter 2025 Grand Scheme (2)

Yun Lintian halted in his tracks. Guilt flickered in Nantian Yu's eyes. Even with his reassurance, her determination to leave remained unwavering.

With a slight nod, he conceded, "Understood. If possible, you should leave immediately."

The thought of her supposed demise gnawed at Yun Lintian. He suspected a significant event unfolding either tonight or tomorrow. To change Nantian Yu's fate, he demanded her immediate departure.

A pang of disappointment stabbed at Nantian Yu's heart. Though she understood Yun Lintian's intentions, sadness welled within her. The past two days were the happiest since her mother's passing. If possible, she yearned to stay longer... Unfortunately, the thought of endangering him fueled her resolve to leave.

"Alright," Nantian Yu responded softly, "farewell, then."

"Don't misunderstand," Yun Lintian said, seemingly seeing through her thoughts. "This isn't goodbye. Your safety is paramount. While Jin Yang wouldn't dare harm you, a prolonged stay poses a different threat."

Nantian Yu bit her lip, worry etched on her face. "Are you certain you can handle this alone? Should I call for reinforcements?"

"Rest assured. They are nothing." Yun Lintian replied, his voice devoid of arrogance. With the combined divine bloodlines and souls within his body, he was practically the ancestor of all divine beasts. Even Bai Xiaoyun or Yan Siqi would tread cautiously in his presence.

Despite her lack of knowledge about Yun Lintian's true strength, Nantian Yu could sense an unfathomable power emanating from him. His genuine demeanor further solidified her trust in his words; arrogance wasn't part of his nature.

A brief hesitation later, Nantian Yu presented Yun Lintian with a red jade hairpin. "This is a parting gift," she explained, "it possesses protective properties."

Yun Lintian examined the hairpin closely. A fiery aura emanated from its golden phoenix design.

A flush crept across Nantian Yu's cheeks. "Forgive me," she stammered, "it's the only valuable possession I have." "Of course, a hairpin wouldn't be practical for a man like Yun Lintian.

"Thank you," Yun Lintian replied with a smile, offering Nantian Yu the Celestial Buddha Lotus, significantly enhanced by time. "This should aid you in overcoming your current obstacle."

Surprise painted Nantian Yu's face as she received the high-level lotus. "Thank you," she reciprocated.

Their gazes lingered on each other for a moment before Nantian Yu spoke. "Then, I shall take my leave. Please take care of yourself."

"You as well," Yun Lintian replied with a smile and a nod.

Nantian Yu cast one last lingering look before turning resolutely and disappearing into the crowd.

Yun Lintian watched her go until she was lost in the crowd. With time on his hands, he decided to explore the western part of the city again.

Jin Yang, who had observed the scene, narrowed his eyes coldly. "Where are they now?" he demanded.

Jin Yuxin, standing beside him, responded calmly, "They have arrived."

"Good," Jin Yang said with a chilling smile. "Tonight, I want his head on a platter."

He turned and walked away after delivering his ultimatum.

Jin Yuxin, however, watched Yun Lintian's retreating figure with a contemplative expression. While she suspected attacking him might be unwise, she didn't anticipate a catastrophic outcome. After all, it was the Blood Fiend attacking him, not her.

The late afternoon sun bathed the rippling surface of the Jadewater Canal in a warm orange glow, painting the scene in hues of burnished gold. Yun Lintian perched on a smooth, moss-covered rock jutting out from the bank, dangling his legs over the edge and occasionally letting them skim the cool water.

The sweet fragrance of blooming jade lotuses filled the air, their pearlescent petals peeking out from the emerald foliage lining the canal. This was Yun Lintian's second visit, and he was deeply captivated by the peaceful atmosphere.

Although the celebration would begin at nightfall, most people had already headed to the avenue before the tower. In this tranquil spot, Yun Lintian could enjoy a rare moment of serenity.

A flicker of movement caught Yun Lintian's eye. He opened his eyes to see a kingfisher, its plumage a dazzling display of azure and sapphire, perched on a nearby branch. The bird cocked its head, studying him with a beady black eye for a moment before diving into the water with a graceful splash.

"It looks delicious," Qingqing remarked, a glint of drool forming at the corner of her mouth.

Yun Lintian chuckled softly. "Catching one here wouldn't be appropriate. Let me order you some instead."

He turned and summoned a waiter from the nearby restaurant, ordering a few plates of grilled bird. The three of them enjoyed a peaceful meal by the bank.

As the last rays of the sun dipped below the horizon, casting long shadows across the water, Yun Lintian rose, a renewed sense of peace settling within him. It was time to witness the night's events.

"Let's go," Yun Lintian declared, heading towards the distant tower.

The air crackled with joyous anticipation, rivaling the sizzle emanating from the street food stalls lining Yellow Plaza. Over a hundred thousand practitioners, a vibrant tapestry of flowing robes and gleaming armor, milled about, their faces flushed with excitement for the looming celebration.

Paper lanterns, resembling miniature celestial bodies, cast a warm glow upon the bustling scene. Li Shan stood atop a makeshift dais constructed from ornately carved jade slabs.

A hush fell over the plaza as Li Shan raised his hand. The clatter of chopsticks and excited chatter faded into an expectant silence. "Esteemed citizens, venerable practitioners! Today, we stand united not only as Nine Firmament but as children of the Yellow Emperor, inheriting a legacy that stretches back millennia!"

A ripple of awe ran through the crowd. While everyone here was familiar with the Yellow Emperor's prestige, hearing it reiterated invoked a sense of wonder.

Li Shan continued, his voice resonating with pride. "The Yellow Emperor, the father of our arts, guided us on the path of cultivating our essence, harnessing the power of the cosmos, and striving for divinity. Tonight, we celebrate his wisdom, his courage, and the foundation he laid for generations of practitioners like ourselves!"

A wave of fervent nods and excited murmurs rippled through the crowd. Young apprentices, wide-eyed with wonder, hung onto Li Shan's every word. Seasoned practitioners, their faces etched with the lines of experience, bowed their heads in silent reverence.

Li Shan raised a golden cup filled with a shimmering liquid: the legendary Sunfire Wine. "May the Yellow Emperor's legacy forever illuminate our path! May his wisdom continue to guide us on our journey towards divinity! To the Yellow Emperor!"

Chapter 2026 Grand Scheme (3)

As Li Shan's voice trailed off, the crowd erupted in a thunderous roar that echoed through the city walls and reached the star-studded night sky. Thousands of lanterns, each symbolizing a year in the Yellow Emperor's reign, were released, ascending like celestial fireflies into the heavens.

The air crackled with a potent mix of reverence and anticipation. The celebration had begun - a night to honor the past, a promise for a brighter future, all under the watchful gaze of the Yellow Emperor, the undying legend who had started it all.

After downing the cup, Li Shan excused himself and retired to the hall where high-ranking figures were gathered— the main venue for the evening's festivities.

Inside the hall, Huang Yiming personally welcomed the esteemed guests, most of whom were True Gods from various realms across the Primal Chaos.

"Congratulations, Brother Huang!" A middle-aged man clad in a black robe adorned with a golden crow pattern boomed with laughter as he raised his wine cup. This was Jin Huoxuan, the current Golden Crow God.

"Thank you for joining us today," Huang Yiming replied, raising his cup and taking a sip of wine.

Jin Huoxuan extended his arm in greeting. "The thanks are mine! It's a pleasure to have my son under your care during this time."

Jin Yang stepped forward tacitly and bowed respectfully. "Junior Jin Yang pays his respects to Senior Huang."

Huang Yiming smiled and said, "You performed admirably today."

"Unfortunately, I fell short of victory," Jin Yang responded modestly.

"Don't be discouraged," Huang Yiming offered gently.

"Thank you for your guidance, Senior," Jin Yang replied respectfully, taking a step back.

Jin Huoxuan chuckled. "Don't be fooled by his humble facade. Back home, he's quite the arrogant one. I haven't figured out how to rectify that yet."

Huang Yiming chuckled. "It's natural for young men to carry a bit of arrogance. Weren't we all like that in our youth?"

"Indeed, you're right! Ha ha!" Jin Huoxuan boomed with laughter.

Jin Yang, observing the interaction, couldn't help but smile inwardly. This was his first encounter with Huang Yiming, and he hadn't anticipated such a warm rapport between his father and the esteemed host.

"Hmm?" Huang Yiming's gaze suddenly darted towards the crowd outside.

Jin Yang's heart lurched – could Huang Yiming have sensed the Blood Fiend's presence?

"Is something wrong, Brother Huang?" Jin Huoxuan inquired, oblivious to any anomaly.

"It's nothing," Huang Yiming replied with a shake of his head.

Meanwhile, on the street several kilometers away from the tower, Yun Lintian surveyed the densely packed crowd with a grimace. He had grossly misjudged the celebratory fervor and found himself unable to approach the main avenue.

"Looks like a lost cause," Yun Lintian muttered to himself, deciding to return to the Jade Inn. At least from there, he could enjoy a good vantage point of the festivities.

Just as he began to move, Yun Lintian felt a prickle of awareness. It was subtle but undeniable – someone had been observing him earlier. The skill of this unseen presence hinted at a master of concealment.

The possibility of an assassin dawned upon him. He had anticipated Jin Yang resorting to underhanded tactics, and assassination was a distinct possibility.

Feigning ignorance, Yun Lintian continued his walk back to the inn. Upon entering his room, he immediately activated the isolation barrier, forgoing the less potent protective barrier for the time being.

"Be ready," Yun Lintian sent a sound transmission to Qingqing and Linlin.

The two immediately responded with heightened seriousness, their vigilance reaching its peak.

While Yun Lintian waited for assassins to appear, Nantian Yu found herself back in front of the inn, worry etched on her face. Though she had initially planned to leave, a nagging concern wouldn't let her go. Before she realized it, she was back at the inn's entrance.

Recalling how she'd seen Yun Lintian enter the inn, Nantian Yu made a decisive move and walked inside.

At this moment, Yun Lintian immediately sensed the change in the space around him.

A sudden stench of blood suddenly filled the air within Yun Lintian's room, followed by the appearance of a bloody slit. A crimson figure emerged from the tear, lunging at Yun Lintian's heart with a sharp blade. The entire event unfolded in a split second, seemingly impossible to dodge even for a top-tier practitioner.

However, the blade screeched to a halt before piercing Yun Lintian's chest. The bloody figure trembled in terror, his eyes wide with disbelief.

Yun Lintian met the gaze of the seemingly male figure with his draconic eyes. An azure light danced wildly within them as his soul power surged outward.

The intruder, a mere Lower God Realm practitioner, had clearly underestimated Yun Lintian's strength.

Just as Yun Lintian was about to question the figure, another sharp blade materialized behind him, forcing him to dodge.

Without missing a beat, Yun Lintian grabbed the head of the first assassin and slammed it onto the floor with brutal force.

BANG!

A sickening splatter echoed as the man's head exploded in a spray of gore.

Yun Lintian whipped around to face the second assassin, sending a cold dread slithering down the assassin's spine.

"Lintian!" Nantian Yu burst into the room at that moment, unleashing a torrent of phoenix flames.

The remaining assassin, restrained by Yun Lintian, was engulfed by the inferno and reduced to ashes in an instant.

"Are you injured?" Nantian Yu rushed to Yun Lintian's side, her voice laced with concern.

Yun Lintian furrowed his brow, scanning the room meticulously. Everything appeared exactly as in the scene he had seen before.

He turned to face Nantian Yu, his voice laced with anger. "Why did you come back?"

Nantian Yu flinched at his sudden outburst.

Before Yun Lintian could elaborate, screams erupted from outside, tearing his attention away.

Through a sudden veil of darkness, a tide of ghastly figures flooded into the city. These emaciated humanoids, their translucent skin stretched taut over skeletal frames, glowed with an unnatural, sickly green luminescence. Their hollow eye sockets, filled with flickering soulfire, held a ravenous hunger that instilled a primal fear within the city's inhabitants.

Yun Lintian's pupils constricted. As a Yama King, he recognized this aura all too well. It was the unmistakable presence of the Netherworld!

"This..." Nantian Yu was shocked.

Yun Lintian frowned deeply and dragged Nantian Yu out, heading to her room next to him.

He quickly activated the protective barrier and said to her. "Listen. No matter what, do not leave the room. Understand?"

"Understood." Nantian Yu responded in a daze.

Chapter 2027 Grand Scheme (4)

Yun Lintian slammed his palm against the wall. Vermilion bird flames erupted from within his body, instantly forming a barrier around the room.

Nantian Yu's eyes widened in shock. "You..." ALL

Yun Lintian turned to face her. "Don't forget. Don't leave the room."

With that, he opened the window and leaped out with Linlin and Qingqing, disappearing into the night.

Nantian Yu stared blankly at the sky, an eerie mix of darkness and crimson. "Be careful," she muttered.

"Arghhhh!"

"Help me!"

The once joyous bustle of Nine Firmament City had been replaced by a symphony of screams. Shrieks pierced the night air, mingling with the unholy keening of unseen attackers.

Stalls overturned like dominoes, their vibrant wares scattered like discarded toys. Shopkeepers, their eyes wide with terror, were easy prey for the spectral horde that had descended upon the unsuspecting city.

The spectral warriors surged forward. Their forms flickered in and out of existence as they slammed into the unprepared citizens. A young woman selling candied lotus flowers, her laughter still echoing in the air moments before, was snatched by a skeletal hand. Her scream cut short as she vanished into the spectral form.

An old man, hunched over a stall of shimmering silk robes, was cleaved in two by a spectral blade, his life force feeding the insatiable hunger of the ghosts.

Many practitioners started to fight back, unleashing a flurry of spells and profound techniques. Shimmering blades met spectral claws, jade talismans flared against the onslaught of ghostly wails. But the tide of phantoms was overwhelming.

Panic gave way to despair. The spectral warriors were relentless, their forms impervious to mortal steel. With each fallen citizen, the ghosts grew stronger, their wails turning into a chorus of malevolent triumph.

The once vibrant city was now a scene of carnage, the air thick with the stench of blood and ozone. Hope dwindled with each passing breath, leaving only the chilling certainty of a gruesome demise for the city and all its inhabitants.

At this moment, Huang Yiming and the others appeared above the sky, their expressions solemn as they gazed upon the horrific scene.

They swept their spiritual senses across the city, discovering that more than half the people had been brutally slaughtered. Everything happened in a split second, too fast even for True Gods like them to react in time.

"How could they appear here?" Jin Yang, standing behind his father, spoke in a trembling voice. He had never witnessed such a gruesome scene before.

No one had an answer. These spectral creatures seemed to appear out of nowhere.

"All the formation nodes have been destroyed," Li Shan said with a grimace. "All our guards are gone. What should we do now, my lord?" The news shocked him greatly. It was clear that whoever was behind this knew everything about this place, like the back of their hand.

Huang Yiming's eyes flickered with a cold light. He raised a hand, and the very fabric of reality seemed to bend to his will. A wave of pure, cleansing energy surged outward, washing over the battlefield. Spectral warriors shrieked in agony as their forms began to disintegrate, their stolen life essence ripped away.

With a flick of his wrist, Huang Yiming unleashed a bolt of golden lightning. The remaining ghosts, overwhelmed by the sheer power of the True God, dissolved into wisps of ectoplasmic smoke, their mournful wails fading into the night.

A collective sigh of relief rippled through Nine Firmament City. The air, thick with the stench of death just moments ago, was slowly being cleansed by the golden light radiating from Huang Yiming. The True God's power lingered, a balm on their shattered spirits.

But as Huang Yiming raised a hand to channel his divine energy and fully heal the wounded, the ground trembled with an unnatural tremor. The golden light flickered, momentarily disrupted. A collective gasp escaped the survivors' lips as a monstrous tear ripped open the very fabric of reality, spewing forth a new, even more terrifying horde.

This wasn't a ragtag group of vengeful spirits like before. This was a disciplined army, their forms radiating a cold, malevolent power unlike anything the citizens of Nine Firmament City had ever witnessed.

Grotesque figures clad in obsidian armor that seemed to devour light itself marched in unison. Their eyes burned with an unholy red fire. At their head stood a towering figure, its form shrouded in shadow. Its voice, a cacophony of whispers, chilled the survivors to the bone.

"Huang Yiming," the entity boomed, its voice echoing through the city. "Do you think you can save them?"

Huang Yiming's expression hardened. The golden light around him flared with renewed intensity, pushing back against the encroaching darkness. "Yin Sikong," he uttered coldly.

The expressions of Jin Huoxuan and the other True Gods changed drastically upon hearing the name. Yin Sikong was one of the most powerful ghost lords under the God of Death.

"Yin Sikong," Jin Huoxuan muttered, his voice laced with trepidation. "That explains the sheer power and organization. But why has he suddenly come here?"

Unwavering in his gaze, Huang Yiming addressed the shadowy figure once more. "Yin Sikong," he boomed, his voice echoing with repressed power, "you overstep your bounds. Withdraw your forces, and I might plead your case before the God of Death."

In Huang Yiming's opinion, Yin Sikong must have acted without permission.

A guttural laugh erupted from the figure, the sound twisting and distorting as it bounced off the spectral warriors. "Plead our case? It seems you have no idea what your master did."

Huang Yiming's golden brows furrowed like cracks in a mountainside. The entity's words hung heavy in the air, a cryptic riddle wrapped in a shroud of darkness. "What do you mean?"

The shadowy figure tilted its head, its unseen eyes seeming to pierce through Huang Yiming's very being. A chilling silence descended upon the battlefield, broken only by the ragged breaths of the wounded and the flickering of spectral embers on the ground. Finally, the entity spoke, its voice a chorus of whispers that sent shivers down the spines of even the True Gods.

"Your precious master, the God of Mortals," it hissed, "killed our people and trampled our dignity!"

"Impossible!" Li Shan uttered in confusion. Jin Huoxuan and the other True Gods mirrored his expression. How could the God of Mortals kill people for no reason?

"Impossible? Do you think I come here and attack you because I'm bored?" The voice boomed. "Since your master has slaughtered our people, it's rightfully justified for me to do the same!"

Chapter 2028 Grand Scheme (5)

Huang Yiming's gaze narrowed. While Yin Sikong's words dripped with vengeance, a kernel of truth resonated within him. His master, the God of Mortals, might have had a close relationship with the God of Death, but Huang Yiming couldn't shake the feeling that something was amiss since the God of Mortals' last return from the Netherworld.

Huang Yiming had dismissed it as a misconception, especially when the God of Mortals ventured back to the Netherworld just last week. It seemed to confirm everything was normal. But now...

"We will investigate your claims, Yin Sikong," he declared, his voice firm. "However, know this. If you seek to exploit this situation for your own gain, you will face the combined might of the Celestial Realm."

"Keke..." Yin Sikong chuckled. "Investigation? Unnecessary. All of you will die today."

A colossal gate materialized behind Yin Sikong, its obsidian surface etched with grotesque symbols that pulsed with an unholy light. From the swirling darkness within, demonic figures poured forth – hulking brutes with razor-sharp claws and nightmarish creatures defying description. Their bloodshot eyes scanned the celestial realm, hungry for destruction.

"Asura..." Jin Huoxuan spoke in a deep voice. The golden crow flames erupted around his body as he sent a sound transmission to Jin Yuxin. "Get him away from here."

Without hesitation, Jin Yuxin grabbed Jin Yang and vanished.

"Allow me to assist you, Brother Huang," Jin Huoxuan stepped forward, and a massive golden crow image materialized in the sky, followed by a deafening cry.

Screech!

The colossal golden crow image descended upon the battlefield, its fiery wings casting grotesque shadows on the grotesque demons. Demons closest to the impact zone shrieked as they were consumed by the inferno. The sheer heat pushed back the tide of demons momentarily, creating a much-needed respite for the citizens below.

The golden sword in Huang Yiming's hand vibrated with celestial energy, a stark contrast to the obsidian armor of the monstrous Asura.

"Since you insist on a fight, let me stop you here," Huang Yiming uttered coldly.

Yin Sikong smiled with sinister amusement. "Come on. Show me what you've got. As long as you can beat them, I will play with you."

With a battle cry that echoed through the city, Huang Yiming charged.

The Asura God, its eyes burning with cold fury, met Huang Yiming's charge with a thunderous roar.

BOOM!

The impact of their collision shook the very foundations of Nine Firmament City. Buildings trembled, citizens were thrown off balance, and a shockwave rippled outwards, shattering windows and sending debris flying.

An epic battle between gods had officially begun!

In the far distance, Yun Lintian watched everything unfold with a solemn expression. He finally understood the situation – this must be the beginning of the Primordial War!

He studied Huang Yiming carefully. This person was undoubtedly the Yellow Emperor. Looking at the battlefield, a sudden thought struck him. Before arriving here, there weren't even traces of battle. Most of the skeletons possessed no wounds. But now, it seemed different.

Doubts crept back into his mind. Yun Lintian couldn't determine again whether he had traveled back in time.

Crackle!

At this moment, Yin Sikong, his expression unreadable, raised a hand. The air crackled with dark energy as a grotesque portal ripped open in the sky, revealing a swirling vortex of inky darkness.

A monstrous skeletal hand clawed and dripping with a decayed aura, reached through the portal.

Jin Huoxuan, his face grim, turned to Huang Yiming. "Brother Huang, we cannot continue like this."

There were only ten True Gods on their side. The people from the White Tiger God Clan and the other clans hadn't arrived yet. It was difficult to fight Yin Sikong and the Asura Gods he brought with him.

Huang Yiming blasted away the Asura God in front of him and swept his spiritual sense over the city. Li Shan and the others were engaged in fierce battles with the other Asura Gods while the citizens desperately fought back the demonic horde. The situation was dire.

And now, Yin Sikong finally made his move.

As the monstrous hand pulled itself further through the portal, Yun Lintian recognized the aura of the Great Law of Death emanating from it, a terrible premonition gripping him.

Huang Yiming, his golden sword held high, met Yin Sikong's gaze. "Has the God of Death ordered this?" he asked solemnly.

Unease gnawed at him. First, the God of Mortals' alleged actions against the Netherworld people, and now Yin Sikong wielding the Grip of Death, a mysterious entity under the God of Death's dominion. Had the two Primordial Gods truly fallen out?

"What do you think?" A cruel smile twisted Yin Sikong's lips.

A cold dread settled in Huang Yiming's gut. Yin Sikong's cryptic response confirmed his worst suspicions. The God of Mortals and the God of Death were indeed at odds!

The Grip of Death extended further, and the aura of the Great Law of Death immediately washed over the city. Many people below fell to the ground one after another as if their souls had been ripped away.

Yun Lintian's expression changed drastically. The power of the Great Law of Life erupted from within him. He whirled around and rushed towards the inn.

"Hmm?" Yin Sikong raised an eyebrow in surprise, glancing at Yun Lintian in the distance.

Huang Yiming's face hardened. He raised his sword and swung at Yin Sikong, unleashing a torrent of golden light.

The golden brilliance slammed into Yin Sikong's defenses, sending shockwaves through the ravaged city. However, the surprise attack wasn't enough to break through Yin Sikong's defenses, or more precisely, the power of the Great Law of Death that shielded him.

"A big fish lurks here," Yin Sikong scoffed, a dark chuckle escaping his lips. "No wonder you wouldn't leave."

Meanwhile, the Grip of Death, its skeletal fingers radiating decay, continued its descent towards the city. Below, screams ripped through the air as the mere presence of the Grip drained the life force from unsuspecting citizens.

Witnessing this scene, Jin Huoxuan made a difficult decision. "Forgive me, Brother Huang."

As he spoke, the Golden Crow image in the sky exploded into a sea of golden flames. Jin Huoxuan, engulfed in the golden flames, vanished from the battlefield – he had escaped!

Unfazed by Jin Huoxuan's escape, Huang Yiming seemed to have a sudden realization. He now understood why Yun Lintian had appeared here and the meaning behind his cryptic words...

Chapter 2029 Grand Scheme (6)

Huang Yiming had to admit his shock at the aura of the Great Law of Life Yun Lintian exuded. It also deepened his understanding of why Yun Lintian appeared here.

At this moment, Yin Sikong glanced at the two Asura Gods behind him. They immediately disappeared, chasing after Yun Lintian.

Seeing this, Huang Yiming shouted, "Li Shan! Protect him!"

Li Shan's aura erupted from his body, blasting away the Asura God in front of him. He then transformed into a streak of silver light, rushing towards Yun Lintian's position.

The two Asura Gods materialized beside Yun Lintian in almost an instant. Their True God auras locked onto him, immobilizing him completely.

Yun Lintian's expression changed dramatically. Even if he went all out, he wouldn't be able to break free from the restraint of two True Gods.

Suddenly, a wave of oppressive darkness descended upon him. The hulking Asura God with obsidian scales and glowing red eyes among the two unleashed a devastating attack. A giant black claw, radiating pure destruction, tore through the air towards Yun Lintian.

Just as the claw was about to engulf him, a blinding silver light erupted from behind. Li Shan, his spear imbued with a dazzling brilliance, intercepted the attack head-on. The clash of energies sent shockwaves rippling outwards, momentarily pushing back the Asura God.

The impact sent tremors through Li Shan's body, but he held firm. Though he didn't understand the importance of protecting Yun Lintian, he was a man who never defied his master's orders. With a mighty roar, he pushed back against the Asura Gods, creating an opening for Yun Lintian to escape.

Yun Lintian, momentarily shaken by the close call, looked back at Li Shan's determined figure holding back the monstrous Asura Gods. A surge of gratitude welled up within him, fueling his resolve. He couldn't let Li Shan fight alone.

Swoosh!

Suddenly, the Yama King's robe materialized on Yun Lintian's body. The vibrant green aura that had surrounded him moments ago vanished, replaced by an oppressive cloak of darkness that seemed to drain the life from the surrounding air. In his hands, the Book of the Dead and Judge's Pen appeared, radiating an otherworldly glow.

The battlefield fell silent. The clash of steel and the roar of Asura Gods faded into the background as all eyes converged on Yun Lintian.

"Yama King? How is this possible?" Yin Sikong, his composure shattered, narrowed his eyes at Yun Lintian. He couldn't be more familiar with the Yama King, but he was certain Yun Lintian wasn't the Yama King he knew.

Before anyone could unravel the mystery, Yun Lintian raised his head, the Judge's Pen clutched tightly in his hand. His voice, devoid of its usual warmth, boomed across the battlefield, carrying the chilling weight of a supreme command.

"All souls under Heaven, heed my call!"

The remaining grotesque demons and the Asura Gods were brought to an immediate halt. Their eyes turned towards Yun Lintian as if responding to his command.

"Return to the Netherworld," Yun Lintian boomed again. All the demons instantly sank into the ground and vanished completely.

However, Yun Lintian noticed with a jolt that the Asura Gods remained unmoved. Their red eyes continued to fixate on Yun Lintian, treating him as prey.

"Roar!" A low growl rumbled from the colossal Asura God in the far distance. Its dark energy pulsed with a malevolent light.

A flicker of unease ran through Yun Lintian. The Judge's Pen felt heavy in his hand, the borrowed power of the Yama King coursing through him like a chilling current. He hadn't used it for the second time since acquiring it, unsure of the intricacies of wielding such power.

One thing was certain: it was useless against a True God.

The Grip of Death continued its descent, unstoppable.

At that moment, Yin Sikong's aura abruptly exploded, engulfing the entire city in a deathly aura. He locked eyes with Yun Lintian. "You cannot escape."

A chill ran down Yun Lintian's spine. However, his concern lay solely with Nantian Yu's safety. The Vermilion Bird flames he put around her room wouldn't hold against the Great Law of Death.

Just as Yun Lintian prepared to unleash his full power, a golden streak rocketed towards the sky, forming a massive golden barrier around the city.

The barrier shimmered against the encroaching Grip of Death. It was a valiant effort, but the raw power of the True God aura threatened to breach it.

Huang Yiming, bathed in brilliant golden light, looked at Yun Lintian. "Leave. Now."

Li Shan recovered his senses and launched attacks at nearby Asura Gods, sending them flying.

Recognizing the situation, Yun Lintian morphed into a shadow, darting towards the inn.

Yin Sikong turned to Huang Yiming. "Ah, there you are. I feared you wouldn't reveal your true strength."

Huang Yiming's voice, laced with cold killing intent, remained calm. "You will pay for this."

"Come on, then," Yin Sikong laughed coldly. His aura surged, splitting the world into halves – black and gold.

Reaching Nantian Yu's room, Yun Lintian was relieved to find her unharmed, though pale.

Nantian Yu sighed in relief upon seeing him. "Are you okay?"

"We need to leave," Yun Lintian said, reaching out to take her hand.

Suddenly, a bloody figure materialized in the room, unleashing a sharp, explosive power. A bloody blade thrust towards Yun Lintian's heart with lightning speed.

Caught completely off guard, Nantian Yu was blasted out of the room and collided with the hallway wall.

A cold glint flashed in Yun Lintian's eyes. Genuine anger flared. This bastard actually dared to attack him again in such a situation.

Without dodging, Yun Lintian swiftly raised his hand to meet the incoming blade.

Puff!

The blade pierced his hand, stopping its momentum as he gripped it firmly.

"Get lost!" Yun Lintian uttered coldly, pulling the blade towards him before delivering a punch to the bloody figure's head with his other hand.

Splash!

The bloody figure's head exploded in a spray of gore that splattered across the room and the window behind Yun Lintian.

"Big Brother Yun," Linlin called out, her gaze falling on the bloodstain on the window.

Yun Lintian glanced at it, his heart skipping a beat. The bloodstain was identical to the one he'd seen earlier.

In a flash, he vanished from the spot and reappeared in the hallway.

Nantian Yu had already risen from the ground, a trickle of blood running from the corner of her mouth.

Just as Yun Lintian reached out to help her, the world plunged into complete darkness...

Chapter 2030 Phoenix Cry

The world lurched back into existence, a disorienting rush. Gone were the screams of battle and the oppressive aura of death. Time itself seemed to stand still.

The expressions of Huang Yiming, Yin Sikong, and the other True Gods morphed in shock. They recognized the power – the power of only one being: the Primordial God!

Before they could even react, a wave of the Great Law of Death swept across the space with horrifying speed.

True Gods and Asura Gods in the far distance instantly became skeletons as the aura washed over them.

"The God of Death?" Huang Yiming uttered, confusion lacing his voice.

"My lord!" With a roar, Li Shan unleashed his full power and charged towards Huang Yiming. Without hesitation, he shoved Huang Yiming away with all his might.

As he successfully sent his master flying to the tower, Li Shan was consumed by the deathly aura, turning into a skeleton that crumbled to the ground.

"Hahaha! You're finished, Huang Yiming!" Yin Sikong cackled wildly. Though bewildered by his master's sudden intervention, he didn't dwell on it – perhaps his master was simply venting his anger.

Yin Sikong's laughter died in his throat as his own body began to decay.

"No! Master?!" he shrieked in disbelief, attempting to react, but it was too late. In a heartbeat, he too was reduced to a skeleton.

The Grip of Death itself withered and dissipated into nothingness as the aura swept past it.

Huang Yiming floated above the tower, a silent observer of the unfolding scene. He knew his demise was imminent.

Turning to Yun Lintian, he muttered under his breath, "Some things... cannot be changed. At least, not here... I see—"

His voice was abruptly cut short as the aura washed over him, transforming him into a skeleton. It toppled onto the tower's roof, lying there peacefully.

Utterly stunned, Yun Lintian had never witnessed such power before. Was this the true strength of the Great Law of Death?

"Be careful!" Nantian Yu appeared before Yun Lintian in a flash, her phoenix flames erupting outwards to form a barrier around them.

Yun Lintian snapped back to his senses and unleashed everything he had. The crown materialized on his head, resonating with the power of the Great Law of Life. A vibrant green barrier instantly materialized around them.

The aura of the Great Law of Death slammed into the barrier with a bone-jarring impact.

"Ugh!" Yun Lintian coughed up a mouthful of blood, his face draining of color. He could feel his energy depleted by more than eighty percent. There was no way he could withstand the deadly power of the Primordial God.

Linlin and Qingqing tried their best to help, but their efforts were futile. They were rendered powerless with a single blow.

Nantian Yu reached out and touched Yun Lintian's chest. A serene smile graced her face as she met his gaze. Perhaps it was the inevitability of death that brought her such calmness.

"Do you remember telling you that I felt like I'd known you for a long time?" Nantian Yu spoke softly. "I think I understand why now."

Screech!

A phoenix's cry pierced the air, followed by the emergence of a fiery Divine Phoenix Soul.

At the same moment, Yun Lintian felt a resonance within his own soul, more precisely, with the Divine Phoenix Soul residing within him.

Suddenly, another Divine Phoenix Soul erupted from Yun Lintian's body, its cry echoing in response to Nantian Yu's.

"I knew it," Nantian Yu smiled. "You truly possess the Divine Phoenix Soul."

"What are you trying to do...?" Confusion clouded Yun Lintian's voice. However, he noticed the position Nantian Yu assumed – a perfect mirror of the skeleton he'd seen before.

Before he could react, Nantian Yu spoke again, her voice filled with resolve. "In the past, you protected me with your life. Now, it's my turn... You must live on, my Feng."

Nantian Yu's Divine Phoenix Soul quickly enveloped Yun Lintian's, seemingly bidding farewell before soaring skyward. The phoenix flames surrounding it burned with renewed vigor. In a burst of brilliance, the Divine Phoenix Soul exploded into a sea of flames.

The flames illuminated the darkness like a celestial firework before descending upon Yun Lintian, forming a powerful fiery barrier that somehow managed to ward off the aura of the Great Law of Death.

"You..." Yun Lintian was speechless, a wave of shock washing over him.

Nantian Yu smiled as her body rapidly decayed. In a matter of moments, her arms, legs, and waist all turned into bone, leaving behind a skeleton that mirrored the one from his vision.

With a thud, Nantian Yu's skeleton crumpled to the ground in the exact position he had witnessed before.

Yun Lintian's mind reeled. He stared blankly at the skeleton, his thoughts utterly numbed.

Screech—

The Divine Phoenix Soul above let out a mournful cry that echoed through the devastated city, a lament that pierced the veil of death.

"Legend speaks of twin phoenixes: Feng and Yu..."

"...Feng and Yu faced a formidable foe, and Feng sacrificed itself to protect Yu..."

Yan Jingru's voice echoed in Yun Lintian's mind.

"Why...?" Yun Lintian mumbled in a daze.

Enveloped in darkness, the phoenix flames burned fiercely around Yun Lintian, a testament to Nantian Yu's unwavering will to protect him.

Time seemed to lose its meaning. When Yun Lintian finally regained his senses, the darkness receded, revealing a bizarre sight. Time itself seemed fast-forwarded. Everything around him – the inn, the once-prosperous city – was rapidly eroded by the relentless march of time.

As the scene unfolded, Yun Lintian glimpsed figures vaguely appearing in the city, their faces obscured by time.

When the scene stopped abruptly, Yun Lintian found himself back in the inn. Nantian Yu's skeleton and the phoenix flames were gone.

With a whoosh, Lin Yitong and the others materialized around him.

"Are you okay?" Long Qingxuan asked with concern.

Lin Yitong glanced at the empty space in front of Yun Lintian and then at Nantian Fengyu. Recalling Nantian Fengyu's story, though unbelievable, it must be...true.

Nantian Fengyu approached Yun Lintian and wrapped her arms gently around him. "It's alright."

Yun Lintian subconsciously hugged her back tightly, his voice a murmur. "Will you disappear too, Fifth Sister?"

Nantian Fengyu closed her eyes, pressing her face against his chest. "No, I won't."

Yun Lintian clung to her even tighter, a primal fear gripping him – the fear of losing her.

Yun Yi, Zhang Yu, and Long Qingxuan watched silently, their words lost in the face of such raw emotion...