

Necropolis 1421

Chapter 1421: Old Scores

Three days.

The rules allotted three days for the top one hundred to claim their battle servants and make preparations for the battles to come.

Things had changed now—the top one hundred had been robbed down to their last purple crystal. They were on pins and needles just sitting here, to say nothing of claiming battle servants. It was more a concern that these devils might change their minds and claim the top one hundred as battle servants instead, to say nothing of the original rules.

Several of them tried to approach Lu Yun over the three days, wanting to determine what made him so special. However, Qing Di, Seven Slaughters, Azureclad, Blackclad, and others stepped into the role of personal bodyguards, delivering a thorough beating to whoever dared approach Lu Yun.

Their current level of strength absolutely qualified them to challenge and replace any of the top one hundred, but they didn't do so for some unknown reason.

The estrangement between Purpleclad, Bloodclad, Azureclad, and Crimsonclad grew wider. By now, their relationship was irreparable. Despite Azureclad and Crimsonclad not fearing Zhan Lingge, Purpleclad and Bloodclad's complete indifference to their fate had utterly broken their hearts. The once four representative personages of the Hongmeng would now go their separate ways.

Lu Yun spared no effort for the arcane beasts during this time. Their battle style was wholly different from the cultivators'—a brand new field of knowledge. Thankfully, he could utilize formula dao and derive his own path using arcane beast combat arts as a basis.

Nearly nine hundred arcane beasts reached the titled duke level after his instruction! That meant all twenty-nine hundred and ninety-nine latecomers were titled dukes!

Lu Yun's strength advanced even more after this experience. He'd peeped into the dao and combat arts of arcane beasts, thereby improving his capabilities and broadening his horizons. In fact, he'd gained far more than the arcane beasts had.

Another large door appeared after three days—not the dragon gate from before, but the exit from this minor world.

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"Time's up, they should be coming out!" Nearly ten thousand kings were gathered on Dragonhollow Mountain. As the seniors of the geniuses participating in the Dragonling Assembly, they wore varying expressions of joy or sorrow.

"Who knows how many of the three thousand from the rainbow bridge survived?" wondered the Dragonsea city lord. Since events after the rainbow bridge had been obscured, they'd patiently waited here for the outcome. Half a month wasn't that long for heavyweights of their level.

Apart from the kings that'd come with the city lord, a few others had also been directly invited to the mountain's seventh floor. The city lords of Azure Dragon and Coiling Dragon City were among them.

Two faintly azure figures stood side by side, gazing upon the slowly opening door with slight melancholy.

"You lose, brother." The Coiling Dragon city lord appeared to be a young man dressed in long azure robes. A slight smile crossed his face. "Not only did you lose a half step ultimate treasure to me, but you also lost a true ultimate treasure to the Immortal Pagoda. Azure Dragon City's incurred great losses during this assembly."

He turned his hand over and materialized a hazy purple bead that glowed with brilliant light. It was the half step Hongmeng treasure that Qing Ting had given to her father.

The two city lords resembled each other, but the Azure Dragon city lord was stronger than his younger brother. He was a ninth step king, while the Coiling Dragon city lord was an eighth step king!

Both of their cultivation levels were concealed by a special treasure, making them appear as ordinary seventh step kings. They also didn't seem to be as disagreeable with each other as the stories made them out to be.

The Azure Dragon city lord smiled ruefully and didn't say anything in response.

"I'll be able to return to ninth step kingship with these thirty-six creation pills. It's time that I addressed the ill will from that old Dragonhollow imbecile shattering one of my dao rules," murmured the Coiling Dragon city lord as he looked at the depths of the mountain.

"It is indeed time to settle old scores and end this farce of a Dragonling Assembly." The Azure Dragon city lord inclined his head.

They weren't the only ones with frosty smiles on their faces, so did the other invited kings bear the same expression. Many were here just to observe the proceedings—none of their juniors were participating. At the same time, anyone listed among the top one hundred of the Dragonling Ranking was taking part in the assembly, even if they were from the Immortal Region or Ten Valleys of Evil.

Of that, Dragonhollow Mountain had been surprisingly uncompromising.

Since the mountain was offering dragon qi of creation as a gift, the various factions of the realm hadn't taken offense at their insistence.

Only the true dragon of the realm—the ancestral vein of the Hongmeng—could nurture the power of creation. Not even Redbud Mountain produced any, so no one could resist its siren's call.

"They're out! Who knows what battle servants our Bloodclad Duke have claimed!" laughed a man with blood-red hair dressed in long blood-red robes.

"Azureclad, Purpleclad, Crimsonclad, and Bloodclad were once the emblematic characters of the realm's half step kings. Unfortunately for Azureclad and Crimsonclad, they no longer have the right to be listed next to Bloodclad and Purpleclad," chuckled an elder next to him. "I once sent Purpleclad to the Starspace King so he could weather a tribulation of emotion. Now that the king is dead and Purpleclad successfully endured his tribulation, he will soon become a titled king!"

The two looked at each other and laughed heartily. "The apex battle of the Dragonling Ranking will be the one between Purpleclad and Bloodclad!"

"Hmph," snorted the Torch King. "Tigers and dragons abound in the Hongmeng, you should watch what you say."

"Yes yes yes," the white-haired elder agreed merrily. "There are crouching tigers and hidden dragons within the realm, and geniuses are as many as carp in the river. Your Crimsonclad Duke has probably become someone's battle servant."

The Torch King ground his teeth and would've rushed over to beat the old man if the other hadn't been a seventh step king. At the same time, worry showed in his eyes. None of the top one hundred half step kings were kind souls, and it was very likely that Crimsonclad had been claimed as someone's battle servant.

Once she was, she'd be cannon fodder in the ranking battles to come and have to risk her life for another.

"Don't fret." Dragonfeather shook his head. "Don't forget the last scenes we saw. Nothing can be determined beforehand when the Champion Duke and Qing Ting are there."

The Torch King calmed down when he heard these two names.

"Those two little rascals..." he said wearily.

"They're coming, they're here!" someone shouted.

Heads hanging, all of the top one hundred geniuses walked through the door. Though they were in perfectly fine condition, they looked like someone had robbed them of their worldly possessions.

Chapter 1422: Exposed

"That's weird... why aren't there any battle servants next to them?" someone raised the question.

According to general sentiment, the top one hundred of the Dragonling Ranking was sure to claim battle servants. Those they claimed would be servants in name and truth; they wouldn't leave their master's side before the assembly ended.

The issue of battle servants hadn't been public knowledge until the Dragonling Assembly began. If the kings had known about it beforehand, they wouldn't have let their faction's juniors participate in the gathering. Apart from the top one hundred, the rest of the candidates were all voluntarily present.

Though the top one hundred remained exactly as they were in ranking and number, none of the spectators had imagined that there would be no battle servants with them!

"Can it be... that none of the cultivators from the rainbow bridge made it past the dragon gate? That the old dragon ate them all?" Unease began to stir through the audience. The only possible explanation for the lack of servants was that none of the alternative candidates had leapt over the dragon gate!

“How could that old dragon...” A fifth step king started shaking. One of his juniors was fortunate enough to be one of the three thousand to pass through the rainbow bridge, but they’d died to that black dragon!

“That’s right, the old dragon went on a rampage and broke the rules. Even the Champion Duke and Coiling Dragon’s Qi—eh, the Champion Duke and Qing Ting are out!” This speaker stopped halfway through his passionate declaration like something was caught in his throat.

The kings watched as the Champion Duke and Qing Ting walked out in front, followed by Qing Di, Azureclad, Crimsonclad, and the others. All two thousand nine hundred ninety-nine cultivators and arcane beasts walked out of the door in neat rows.

“This is... two thousand... nine hundred ninety-nine titled dukes?!” The kings gaped at the second batch that emerged and swallowed hard.

“My Gan’er was just an ordinary half step king. How did he suddenly gain the strength of a titled duke??” A third step king with white hair at his temples gently shook his head, finding it hard to believe. He hadn’t come with the Dragonsea city lord. Rather, those of Dragonhollow Mountain had specifically extended an invitation to him after his disciple passed through the rainbow bridge.

Anyone who set foot onto the floor of dragon qi had their faction senior invited to the rest of the proceedings.

“Where’s, where’s my little one? Didn’t they say he successfully made it through the rainbow bridge?” An old donkey scanned the crowd with an increasingly woeful expression.

“The little donkey... ah, he was the first to try the dragon gate and ended up in the black dragon’s stomach,” Golden Armor said apologetically when he heard the old donkey’s words.

Tears trickled down the old donkey’s face, but it didn’t dare say anything else. This was Dragonhollow Mountain and the Golden Armor Dragon Beast possessed a noble bloodline. It couldn’t afford to offend such a lofty individual.

“What are you lot doing still following us?” Qing Ting suddenly grumbled with annoyance. “Go back to your homes and your moms.”

“Umm...” Cultivators and arcane beasts respectively came back to their senses. This part of the Dragonling Assembly had concluded. They could convene with their faction’s elders and make appropriate adjustments for the ranking battles to come.

Many cultivators and arcane beasts remained where they were, staring ardently at Lu Yun and refusing to leave. Those who departed first looked back at him every three steps, reluctance marking every unwilling bend of their bodies.

Meanwhile, the top one hundred of the ranking glared hotly at Lu Yun and Qing Ting, their eyes almost spitting fire.

“What’s going on here?” The kings looked around blankly.

“They... no they didn’t... Did they rob the top one hundred geniuses of the ranking too?!” exclaimed the Dragonsea city lord.

“Hmph!” snorted Zhan Lingge after being called out so blatantly. He wished for nothing more than to find a hole in the ground to burrow into. Apart from a very select few like him who’d truly been robbed, the rest of the top one hundred had voluntarily handed over their wealth without even being prompted to.

He’d been made an example of and had been the first to be robbed!

“So you really were robbed?!” Incredulity filled the city lord’s eyes.

“Robbed? What is this?” asked baffled kings who hadn’t been present in Dragonsea City for the earlier part of the assembly.

“Ahem!” A Dragonhollow king stepped forth. “There are three days until the ranking battles begin. Until then, we have arranged residences for everyone and invite you to rest well.”

Bridges unerringly extended to the bottom of everyone’s feet. No mistakes were made and their occupants were lifted into the air to be transported to a Dragonhollow address.

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Dragonhollow Mountain erupted in an uproar shortly afterward. Word of what had taken place from Dragonsea City to the rainbow bridge and beyond spread throughout the mountain.

Champion Duke of the Trueriver Sect and Qing Ting of Coiling Dragon City had robbed everyone starting from Dragonsea City, continuing their enterprise in the mountain! Whether it was ordinary cultivator or one of the top hundred, no one had been spared!

Well, that wasn’t quite true since there was Long Batian and Dragon Butterfly, but many chose to ignore the lucky two. It felt much better to think that every single person and beast had been robbed.

In his last operation, the Champion Duke took out Pills of Creation as compensation for helping him corral the top one hundred geniuses.

Pills of Creation!

Pills that contained the power of creation!

Apart from the Immortal King being able to refine eighteen such pills at once, there was no one else in the Hongmeng who could manage such a feat.

“You say that the Champion Duke’s teachings helped you suddenly see the light and vault into the ranks of titled duke strength?” Shenyu asked an ordinary titled duke cultivator.

“That’s right, the Champion Duke himself taught me.” The cultivator’s face filled with veneration when he mentioned the name. Not only had the Champion Duke taught him and helped him advance to a new level, but he’d also received a Pill of Creation that helped him progress to a more rational state of being.

“Very well, you are dismissed.” Shenyu waved a hand.

“Master... just who is that Champion Duke??” Li Yiran snarled with indignation, wanting to rip the person in question to shreds.

“Champion Duke? What Champion Duke!” Shenyu sneered. “He changed his name to the Champion Duke and snuck into the Dragonling Assembly to profit from troubled waters. I won’t let this stand!”

He suddenly rose into the air.

“To think that the mighty and noble Immortal King would take on the alias of Champion Duke and cavort with ordinary cultivators. As one of the great heavyweights of the realm, your thick skin knows no bounds!” His voice traveled throughout the mountain to everyone on the seventh floor.

“What?! The Immortal King?!” General shock reigned at his announcement.

“The Champion Duke is the Immortal King??”

“Don’t they say that the Immortal King is just a supplemental king? That his true battle strength is pitifully weak? That he makes use of supplemental dao to exert his dominance?”

“But when I watched him rob others in Dragonsea City, he didn’t use any supplemental arts other than the Stellar Sword...”

“Runaway King, is the Champion Duke really the Immortal King?”

Shenyu’s face darkened when he heard the usage of his title. He suddenly felt that he’d set foot into a massive trap.

Chapter 1423: Having a Bone to Pick

“The Immortal King is here?” Eyebrows shot high when the three thousand and ninety-nine participants of the Dragonling Assembly heard the name. It was one that provoked very polarizing reactions.

Some viewed the king as their idol—a goal to chase and worship for the rest of their lives. Some were immensely disdainful—he was useless for anything that wasn’t supplemental dao. At least, the top one hundred of the Dragonling Ranking didn’t think much of him.

“What did the Runaway King say? That the Champion Duke is the Immortal King?” Qing Di doubted his ears and life itself. He turned around stiltedly to look at Qing Ting and Azureclad.

The Azure Dragon and Coiling Dragon delegations now walked together and occupied the same residence. Qing Ting looked blankly back at him, an imperceptible blush darkening her complexion.

The Runaway King and Immortal King were sworn enemies and Haotian Tower was set up next to the Immortal Pagoda. If they said the Champion Duke was the Immortal King, then there should be no doubt about it.

“The Immortal King? We were robbed by the Immortal King?” The other half step kings didn’t know what to feel when they learned of this truth.

“Immortal King, Immortal King...” Crimsonclad and Qing Ting turned redder and redder until they were bright red. They’d acted completely lovestruck in front of him on more than one occasion!

“Is he really the Immortal King?” Azureclad still couldn’t believe it. “That’s... right. If he wasn’t the Immortal King, why would he have so many Pills of Creation? If he wasn’t the Immortal King, how would he dare rob the cultivators of the Dragonling Assembly...”

“Li Zhen absolutely idolizes the Immortal King. If that kid knew that the Champion Duke was the king himself...” Azureclad suddenly thought of the long absent Li Clan member.

“It doesn’t matter whether he is the Immortal King or not,” Crimsonclad smiled ruefully. “All of us have witnessed his performance from the Dragonsea City until now. To me, he’s pretty much the same as the Immortal King.”

“Pretty much the same?” Azureclad glared.

“Hmph,” snorted Crimsonclad when she saw his expression. “Don’t think I’ve forgotten how you had your sights set on his dao partner.”

Instead of explaining away the misunderstanding, she only wanted to jeer back at him. Azureclad flushed beet red and stammered something unintelligible.

All of Dragonhollow Mountain was thrown off balance by the revelation, particularly the top one hundred of the Dragonling Ranking who’d been unequivocally contemptuous of the Immortal King.

“No, no, this isn’t right. That Champion Duke, or rather, the Immortal King, must’ve used supplemental dao to defeat us,” Zhan Lingge muttered with indignation.

“You weren’t defeated by the Immortal King, Zhan Lingge. You were defeated by Qing Ting of Coiling Dragon City!” A red-haired girl curled her lip. “What a pity I’m a titled king already, or I’d love to challenge the Immortal King as well. Just how strong are the Champion Duke and Qing Ting?”

She’d coalesced four dao rules and every one of them was immensely powerful—she was a peak fourth step king!

“The Immortal King will become a titled king sooner or later, you can challenge him then,” Zhan Lingge scoffed back. He refused to use the Champion Duke name.

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“Your identity’s been revealed,” a smiling Qing Yu blew softly next to Lu Yun’s ear.

“So what if it has?” Lu Yun spread out his hands. “I’m participating in the Dragonling Assembly only because I want to get Dragon Butterfly into the mountain. I robbed all those people so everyone’s eyes would be on me and not potentially on her true identity.”

Dragon Butterfly had run off somewhere and Lu Yun didn’t want to pry too much into her affairs.

“That Qing Ting and Crimsonclad Duke are both interested in you, they keep talking about being your concubine.” Curled up in Lu Yun’s arms, Miao tilted her head back.

“Um...” Lu Yun rubbed his nose and coughed awkwardly. “I, uh, there’s no room in my heart for anyone else.”

“I managed to force myself in,” the little fox grumbled with some embarrassment.

“Immortal King!!” came a heaven-shaking roar; the very air trembled in response as well. An elder with white hair at his temples hovered over the residence and looked coldly at the trio. “You are a vaunted

supplemental king. Why did you bully my son with your superior strength and rob him of everything he owns?!”

The elder was a seventh step king and his son one of the top one hundred geniuses of the Dragonling Ranking. His son had become highly confident and vain as a peacock after being selected as one of the top one hundred geniuses for the assembly, but had been utterly demoralized by the robbery.

This seventh step king wouldn't stand for this.

It was very hard for beings to propagate their bloodlines after ascending to titled kingdom. This particular king had tried endless times before siring a son. His child was the apple of his eye and the light of his life! If it wasn't for Dragonhollow Mountain forcing their participation, he wouldn't have sent his son here.

Other people also crowded around the residence; they either had a bone to pick or wanted to watch the show.

“Me, bully your son with superior strength?” Lu Yun blinked. “I haven't ascended to titled kingdom through battle strength, have I? I'm a supplemental king without dao rules or a force field, and just a titled duke half step king if I set aside supplemental dao. My title is the Champion Duke, so where does this accusation of bullying come from?”

He picked himself up from Qing Yu and Miao's embrace with a certain degree of surprise. His emergence in the yard with one arm around a mysterious girl and the other around the Intrace King confirmed his identity.

Qing Ting, Qing Di, Azureclad and the others were all in attendance; they looked at Lu Yun with complicated expressions. He was still in the guise of the Champion Duke and not the dashing Immortal King.

“Who knows if you used supplemental dao when robbing people? How else would a trashy pill addict like you have the right to be considered one of us?!” snarled the elder's son. He was dressed in a black combat outfit and his golden eyes added a surprising pop of color.

“Trashy pill addict?” Lu Yun was highly taken aback by the unexpected insult.

“After you said that inferior and common realm cultivators were useless, that cultivators can and should start off in the superior realm... Yes, it was after that time that many who don't know you started calling you a piece of trash created through pills,” Miao murmured.

“But... I'm right. Cultivation in the Hongmeng starts at titled kingdom,” Lu Yun responded matter-of-factly.

“Hooo!!” The elder could no longer contain himself. “Return my son's treasures with due haste, Immortal King! Otherwise, you will not leave Dragonhollow Mountain alive!”

“I can do the deed, father!” the golden-eyed youth sneered coolly. “The Immortal King never robbed us himself, he merely assembled the other two thousand-some cultivators to coerce us. He's no match for me if we face off one-on-one!”

Chapter 1424: Immortal King or Champion Duke

The golden-eyed youth looked down at Lu Yun from above and assessed him with great assurance.

“I see... and here I thought the Immortal King—or rather, the Champion Duke—really did possess stunning ability enough to rob all top one hundred geniuses in the Dragonling Ranking. So he was just making others do his work!” the white-haired elder laughed heartily.

The crowd around them breathed out with relief to hear this. As the Immortal King was not yet a titled king, it would be beyond terrifying if he could already rob all of the half step kings in the top one hundred of the Dragonling Ranking.

“It’s true, I saw it with my own eyes how the Immortal King took out enough Pills of Creation to bribe more than two thousand half step kings. It was due to pressure from the others that we handed over our storage seeds and all of our treasures!” the golden-eyed youth forced out through gritted teeth. His eyes glowed with a sheen of uncanny golden radiance at the same time.

It was quite aggravating to have to speak of this. A group of ants had forced him to hand over his personal weapon! If he had a chance to do it over again, he would absolutely... still hand it over. There was nothing for it—he would rather die than be stripped naked and hung up for all to see.

“Refining Pills of Creation... the Immortal King does indeed lay good plans. Winning over others, robbing the top one hundred geniuses of the Dragonling Assembly, trying to devastate their dao hearts... Tsk tsk tsk, this level of cunning and these methods...” the white-haired elder tutted with wonder.

“Level King, speak directly of whatever you wish to say. Don’t beat around the bush like this.” The Coiling Dragon city lord suddenly appeared on the scene and frowned at the elder.

“Hahahaha!!” the elder threw his head back with laughter. “My son spoke directly enough. He wants to fight one-on-one in a fair battle against the Immortal King!”

The golden-eyed youth flicked a look of towering battle spirit at Lu Yun. This was the Immortal King!

A personage almost deified by the realm and one that many high level kings listened to!

But he, Jin Yue, son of the Level King, would challenge such a character in broad daylight. He was throwing down the gauntlet to a mythical being of the Hongmeng!

Jin Yue’s blood boiled at his grand magnificence and extremely lofty sentiment rose from his heart.

“That’s right! I wish to fight one-on-one in a fair battle against the Immortal King!” he shouted.

All of Dragonhollow Mountain quieted down and countless minds focused on this particular residence. Everyone knew that Jin Yue, son of the Level King, was treating the Immortal King as a stepping stone to glorify his own name.

He was sure to ascend to titled kingship after this fight, regardless of what the outcome was. If he won, then his momentum would build to an ultimate apex and he might break through as a high level king.

Everyone held their breaths and gave way to Jin Yue and the Immortal King. These two were the true protagonists of the gathering.

“Oh?” Lu Yun lifted his head and calmly addressed the youth up in the air. “Are you challenging the Immortal King or the Champion Duke?”

“Is there a difference?” Jin Yue sneered.

“Of course there is.” Lu Yun nodded. “As a supplemental king, the Immortal King can kill hundreds of idiots like you with a single glyph. If you want to challenge the Immortal King, I will meet you in battle as a supplemental king.”

Jin Yu turned beet red and opened his mouth, but didn’t know what to say.

“If you challenge the Champion Duke, I will fight you with only battle strength. You’ll quickly see why the Champion Duke could rob his way from Dragonsea City all the way to Dragonhollow Mountain.”

He raised his right hand and placed his thumb and forefinger together. A talisman sparkling with purple light collected over his fingertips. It emanated terrifying power ripples and would annihilate even sixth step kings if he brought it down.

“You said earlier that I used supplemental dao to rob those one hundred baby geniuses. If I really did so, would you still be able to stand here and run your mouth?” Lu Yun snorted dismissively.

“Immortal King...” the Level King hastily interjected.

“Shut up.” Lu Yun flicked him a sideways glance. “A mere seventh step king has no right to speak here.”

Color drained from the Level King’s face.

“In that case, I challenge the Champion Duke!” Jin Yu set his jaw. “I’ll spar with the Immortal King after I reach titled kingdom!”

“Very well.” Lu Yun nodded and twitched his fingers, dismissing the domineering talisman that he’d formed.

Watching from the shadows not too far away, Shenyu’s pupils contracted violently. He was the Dao King’s disciple and a strong supplemental king himself, but his command of the supplemental arts was far from such an adept level.

“You’ve taken my personal treasure...” Jin Yue flushed red again.

“Don’t even think about it.” Lu Yun shook his head. “I’m not letting go of any treasure that found its way into my hands. Since you’re not using a flying sword, I won’t use a flying sword. We’ll fight with pure strength. Don’t tell me that you can’t project your internal force yet.”

Jin Yue’s jaw clenched and two radiant beams burst from his golden eyes, shooting at Lu Yun with such speed that the two cutting rays of sword qi were almost an ambush.

“What incredible potential!” Lu Yun started. He hadn’t thought that this Jin Yue would possess such strong innate talent. This combat art was almost on par with the arcane beasts’ natural talents.

“You said it, Immortal King! No supplemental dao and no treasures!” shouted the Level King.

Lu Yun couldn't be bothered with the old fogey. He shifted slightly and vanished on the spot, reappearing in the air.

The two uncommonly sharp beams of light continued straight toward Qing Yu and the little fox. Just when they were about to touch the two girls, they dissipated in the air.

No one knew whether Jin Yue had dismissed his attack himself, or if one of the ladies had done so. And no one cared.

A ray of silver sword light shot out from Lu Yun's fingertips the moment he reappeared.

Dragonrise!

The move struck Jin Yue with a piercing dragon howl. There was no Stellar Light Magneticus or any accompanying supplemental dao—just pure sword dao!

Hummm.

Jin Yue's eyes turned a pure gold and energy burst out of them, so dense that it was almost a tangible sword.

Rumble—

Black lightning seemed to strike from the sky as Jin Yue's radiance was shattered almost as soon as it appeared. Lu Yun's silver sword light firmly stopped half a millimeter away from the center of Jin Yue's forehead.

It would take only a twitch of Lu Yun's fingers to claim his opponent's life.

"Should we continue?" Lu Yun dismissed his sword light.

"I yield." Cold sweat beaded Jin Yue's forehead. The Champion Duke wouldn't need a second move to kill him. "...am I stronger, or Zhan Lingge stronger?" He was suddenly curious since Qing Ting had defeated Zhan Lingge in open combat.

"Zhan Lingge," responded Lu Yun.

Well, the kid's got a strong mental, I'll give him that.

Chapter 1425: The Eighth Floor

Zhan Lingge was the only one to be defeated in face-to-face combat out of the top one hundred. Though it hadn't been Lu Yun who'd defeated him, he'd become the barometer by which other half step kings measured themselves against. That was why Jin Yue asked the question—he wanted to indirectly determine the gap between himself, Qing Ting, and Lu Yun.

He greeted the answer with no skepticism when Lu Yun responded that he was less than Zhan Lingge. He finally had a realistic view of his own strength.

Jin Yue nodded, looked at his father a bit apologetically, and left.

The Level King wordlessly opened and closed his mouth. He raised a cupped fist salute to Lu Yun and left with his son.

Lu Yun hadn't killed his opponent or broken Jin Yue's confidence. He'd used his strongest move to defeat his challenger and demonstrate the disparity between the two of them. He could naturally understand their mood after this outcome.

Jin Yue's departure resulted in the crowd also raising cupped fist salutes and taking their leave. Shenyu's wish of multiple kings attacking the Immortal King together and forming death feuds failed to materialize. Rather, his big reveal enhanced Lu Yun's reputation instead.

When the Immortal King ascended to kingship through supplemental dao and received his title, he slaughtered sixth step kings with a wave of his hand! Now that he is the Champion Duke, he is the greatest half step king in the Hongmeng. Even a genius on the Dragonling Ranking has no chance to deploy a second move when facing him!

"This was... a grave miscalculation. It seems that I stepped into his trap without realizing it." Shenyu's expression flickered unpleasantly; there was nothing he could do about the situation now.

Dragonhollow Mountain was unlike any other place in the realm. It almost rivaled the Immortal Region and could dictate various things in the Hongmeng through sheer power alone. They counted among the strongest powerhouses throughout the land.

"If there's anyone to blame, it's the Immortal King for having such a good temper. Since he's strong enough to rob those geniuses, why can't he be a little more arrogant and overbearing about it?" Shenyu rubbed his head, unable to wrap his mind around it.

Lu Yun's attitude just now had been a ready willingness to respond to whoever came at him, but he'd been neither supercilious nor obsequious. He'd also refrained from causing additional trouble. The mindset of "everyone here is trash" had been the furthest thing from what he'd displayed.

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"Champion Duke!" rang a voice forced out through gnashed teeth. "I want to challenge you!"

Qing Ting vaulted through the air and landed in front of Lu Yun. She brandished the Azure Sky Sword and aimed its sword light at the young man.

The kings, cultivators, and arcane beasts that'd been dispersing paused with interest, gazing upon the newest standoff. They knew full well of the history between the two. Qing Ting of Coiling Dragon City and the Champion Duke had formed the Robber Couple in Dragonsea City. The two had robbed everyone in the city and continued their exploits throughout Dragonhollow Mountain. Was the Robber Couple finally going to raise swords against each other?

"Challenge me? Sure!" Lu Yun grinned. "But first things first. If you lose, heh, you need to hand over your seed storage and treasures."

Qing Ting's furious expression froze slowly. She snuck a peek at the people around her and ran off without another word.

"Uh... what?" The crowd was baffled by the turn of events.

"Pfft, money grubber." Lu Yun shook his head and returned to his residence with a mighty leap. Multiple layers of formations surrounded his abode in the next second, preventing anyone from spying on him.

Qing Ting was no match for him. Hand over her precious baubles if she lost? She'd never agree to that condition.

"We should give him space, he's going to dual cultivate with his dao partners now." Jealous jeering rose from those still in the vicinity.

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"What, you're not planning on taking Qing Ting for yourself? She wants to marry you and be a concubine," the little fox teased again.

"Okay, okay, enough of that." Lu Yun pressed her head down and thoroughly tousled her long hair.

Miao and Qing Yu fell silent when he closed his eyes; his attention was wholly on his projected self. The Dragonling Assembly wasn't his goal—the azure dragon's ancestral blood was.

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Dragon Butterfly, Long Batian, and Lu Yun had taken a tiny path to enter the hidden eighth floor. According to Dragon Butterfly's senses, the ancestral blood should be on the ninth floor or higher.

"Who would've thought that you'd be the incarnation of the second—third biggest dragon of the Hongmeng!" Dragon Butterfly muttered to the little girl next to her.

"So you're the big dragon of Redbud Mountain, no wonder you felt a bit familiar." Long Batian was equally surprised.

Known as the greatest dragon of the realm, Redbud Mountain was listed ahead of the second greatest Myriad Dragon Valley. Controlled by the Immortal Region, the latter's development was stunted. Its dragon had employed countless methods to carefully win its freedom, ultimately transforming into Long Batian and quietly making her way to Dragonhollow Mountain.

Her goal was also the ancestral blood.

Since Long Batian's growth had been constrained, she was far weaker than Dragon Butterfly and in much more desperate need of the ancestral blood.

Dragon Butterfly naturally wanted to help someone with the same origins but who was much worse off than her. Thus, she readily agreed to bringing Long Batian with them.

"How do you know all this? How did you find the path to the eighth floor?" Dragon Butterfly looked admiringly at the girl.

"I came here once a long, long time ago..." Uncertainty appeared on her little face. "But I've forgotten when or who it was that brought me here..."

"Careful," Lu Yun suddenly warned. "There's ninth step kings on the eighth floor. We must avoid revealing ourselves."

There were Silence and Size Manipulation Talismans stuck to the two dragons; the trio was currently many times smaller than the most minute particle floating in the air. Lu Yun didn't dare exercise anything less than extreme caution in a place like Dragonhollow Mountain.

The two dragons fell silent and the three followed the map that Long Batian had drawn days ago, slowly drifting toward the path to the ninth floor.

“Dragon Lord!!” came a low roar. Tremendous air currents rocked the void like a storm, throwing the trio off course. However, they didn’t dare adjust their trajectory. “Do you think the two little girls of Redbud Mountain and Myriad Dragon Valley will come?”

The speaker was an enormous scarlet dragon. He was in dragon form and blazing with violent flames. Coiled around a large mountain peak, he roared at the main peak of the eighth floor.

“Perhaps they’re already on the eighth floor and hidden in a corner somewhere, listening to you speak.” The lord of Dragonhollow Mountain was a blue-haired young man. Sitting cross-legged on the main peak, he smiled back at the scarlet dragon.

There were nine major peaks on the eighth floor, each with an enormous dragon curled around it. Including the dragon lord, that made for nine ninth step kings on this floor.

Dragon Butterfly and Long Batian’s hearts skipped a beat when they heard his response. If it wasn’t for Lu Yun’s Silence Talismans completely concealing their presence, these two indeterminably old, yet completely inexperienced girls would’ve been instantly exposed.

“Their goal is the azure dragon’s blood—the fresh blood that the old ancestor left behind when he perished. But the ninth floor’s been sealed off since his death and even I can’t open it. If they can access it, it would be a show of their strength and well deserved if they obtain it,” the dragon lord remarked casually.

Lu Yun’s projected body maintained death grips on the two girls. He was highly concerned that the two would suddenly charge for the ninth floor.

Chapter 1426: Battling Methods

“They’ll say whatever they can because they’re still looking for us. If that dragon lord finds you, both of you will definitely die awful deaths!” Lu Yun hastily transmitted to the two girls. Masked by the power of karma, his transmission didn’t stir up any ripples and was wholly undetected by the group of ninth step kings.

Dragon Butterfly and Long Batian calmed down only when they heard his urgent warning; the color drained from their small faces. They were respectively a seventh step king and a half step king—if one of Dragonhollow’s old monsters caught them, they wouldn’t even have the chance to commit suicide.

These two incarnations of Hongmeng’s greatest dragons were incredibly important. If someone refined both of them at the same time, that person would gain control over the second and third greatest dragons of the realm.

Though the two girls had lived for a long time, they were inexperienced in the ways of the world and unaware of why they existed. They didn’t even know that they were overhearing a conversation purposefully held to draw them out.

Dragonhollow Mountain was certainly aware of their arrival at the Dragonling Assembly; only their exact location remained a mystery. The faction had pinpointed Dragon Butterfly and Long Batian’s identities

when the two suddenly vanished, but could only utilize this kind of subpar strategy to lure the two out. It was one more suitable for tricking children.

"Listen carefully to me and don't make any brash moves," Lu Yun transmitted solemnly.

"Do you think he'll refine us?" Long Batian stuck her face next to Dragon Butterfly's.

"Nope!" came the firm response.

"How are you so sure?" A mystified Long Batian looked at her own kind.

"I just am." Still in the form of a young man, Dragon Butterfly puffed out her chest. "Birds of a feather flock together and like begets like! I am a modest gentleman of noble character, so those I set my eyes on are the same as well!"

Who knew where she'd learned those nonsensical things from?

Lu Yun didn't know what the two girls were thinking. He was focused on carefully manipulating the air currents in their surroundings to shift their particle as far away from the terrifying ninth step kings as possible. Approaching the entrance to the ninth floor was out of the question for the moment. Surely Dragonhollow Mountain had sent up a tight encirclement for them.

"...wait a second, they already know we're here!" Alarm rang in Lu Yun's mind when he discovered multiple consciousnesses sweeping through the void like waves of mercury, making sure to cover every nook and cranny.

"Dragonhollow Mountain... the intelligence of these old dragons really can't be underestimated!" Lu Yun took a deep breath. His projected body suddenly froze in place and disintegrated into a cloud of pure thought. He wrapped around the two girls in his new form.

"What is it?" They jumped with shock and froze as well. Both of them remained quiet inside Lu Yun's projected body.

"Don't believe a single word from these old dragons and don't react to what they say," Lu Yun's voice rang in their minds. "No, wait, seal off your senses and consciousness and give everything over to me!"

He took another deep breath, his thoughts in a bit of disarray. This was his first time going against a ninth level king and there were nine of them, not just one! He had to bring out everything he had and remain on high alert.

His true self sat down cross-legged and focused all of his attention on his projected body. He wasn't a ninth step king and lacked the strength to withstand a ninth step king, but was now battling wits and strength with nine of them at a time. This was both daunting and a little exciting.

Vast storms swept through the eighth floor as nine consciousnesses continuously searched through the disturbance, attempting to uproot anything hidden on their floor.

However, the ninth step kings only thought that the two girls were using a special method to hide themselves. Never would they imagine that Lu Yun had used the Size Manipulation death art to turn the trio into something even smaller than the imperceptible particles hovering in the air.

Additionally, Lu Yun's Silence Talismans were refined from karmic fruit, perfectly concealing the user's presence. Even the tiny ripple of a combat art was completely erased.

Such was the fullest capabilities of his supplemental dao. He was using pure supplemental dao to battle the ninth step kings.

Lu Yun's projected body fully disassembled in the void and bundled up the two girls with pure power of thought. They burrowed into another tiny dust particle and fully concealed themselves. At the same time, his mind directed this particle of dust to follow other particles and slowly drift toward the entrance to the ninth floor.

Each of the nine old dragons occupied their own mountain peak. They sent out their consciousness like the tidewaters, searching through everything suspicious in this part of the void.

"Nothing." The dragon lord opened his eyes with a displeased expression. "Why is this... one of those dragons is a seventh step king and the other not even a king. How can they possibly avoid our detection??"

"Maybe they're not here?" a huge black dragon asked hesitantly.

"They're absolutely here and already on this floor." A resolute look remained unwavering in the dragon lord's eyes. "They must be here. Someone's helping them from the shadows."

"...the Immortal King?" Another dragon subconsciously named Lu Yun.

The dragon lord didn't respond. "The Immortal King is on the seventh floor and he's sunk into meditation after his battle with Jin Yue..."

However, he wasn't very convinced of what he'd said. If the Immortal King was helping the two dragons on the eighth floor while he was on the seventh floor... that would be too frightening.

"Can it be..." ventured the scarlet dragon who appeared brash, but was very shrewd. "That a true king is helping them?"

"A true king?" The dragon lord shook his head. "If a true king is here, they can just break right into the ninth floor. We wouldn't be able to stop them! So it can't be a true king..."

"Don't listen to their lies!" Lu Yun split out a tendril of thought when he felt the two girls waver and knocked their foreheads. While these two may not be true kings, their strength rivaled one. The ninth step kings were mentioning this level in another attempt to tease out the two girls that they couldn't find.

A true king?

Perhaps the black dragon king had been a true king, but he'd been trapped in the mountain all the same to be one of the tests for the Dragonling Assembly.

"Good thing I decided to accompany them today. How would these two girls be a match for this group otherwise?" mumbled Lu Yun as he directed their dust particle to the next floor's entrance.

Chapter 1427: A Big Uproar

“Honestly, what’s the point of a group of old dragons plotting against two little girls? Just gift the azure dragon’s ancestral blood to you two and help you take form so you can control your true bodies. Wouldn’t it be better for Dragonhollow Mountain to ally with strong powerhouses of similar origin?” Lu Yun nattered on and on.

“No!!” Dragon Butterfly shook her head rapidly. “Dragonhollow Mountain almost scattered my true spirit once. I will never ally with them, even if they give me the ancestral blood!”

“Me too!” Long Batian said resolutely. “There are no good people in Dragonhollow Mountain!”

“Alright, alright.” Lu Yun shrugged and let it go.

No good people in Dragonhollow Mountain... Be careful of anything from the mountain... The black dragon king had once issued a similar warning as well.

Lu Yun had thought that the black dragon king was the incarnation of Myriad Dragon Valley’s big dragon, but Long Batian had overturned that speculation. The black dragon king possessed an even more impressive background.

Though Lu Yun hadn’t read any deception in the black dragon king’s emotions, he didn’t believe the dragon’s words. He trusted only in his own judgment.

He’d met the lizard-dragon in the world of immortals—a powerhouse from Dragonhollow Mountain. The lizard-dragon now resided quietly in hell, docile and refraining from causing any trouble.

Despite that, Lu Yun remained on guard and didn’t levy any restrictions on it; he’d only beaten the creature into submission and set the Bridge of Forgetfulness over it. Now that he’d sent the bridge to the fourth realm, it would take Lu Yun visiting hell in person to keep the lizard-dragon under control if it decided to go on a rampage.

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Lu Yun carefully manipulated their uncommonly small dust particle, drifting toward the passage between the eighth and ninth floors. His previous conjecture was right—there was formation upon terrifying formation that completely sealed off the tiny entrance. There were no cracks available for even a dust particle to pass through.

“If the entrance to the ninth floor is sealed off like this, doesn’t that mean the ninth floor is very safe? If we...” Dragon Butterfly whispered.

“You’re wrong, this is all a trap to make you think that the ninth floor is very safe. They want you to risk your life and fight to the death at its entrance, so you’ll try to pass through at the cost of everything else.” Lu Yun continued to rebuff her viewpoint.

He opened the Spectral Eye and noted that there was another ninth step king sitting behind the layers of formations. This one, however, had turned himself into an enormous statue. If it wasn’t for the Spectral Eye piercing through life and death to see pulses of vitality coming from the statue, Lu Yun might very well have been fooled.

There were ten ninth step kings on the eighth floor of Dragonhollow Mountain. The tenth guarded the entrance to the next level in the guise of a stone statue. His form was a colossal humanoid figure,

appearing to be a towering mountain from the distance. He wielded an immense halberd and completely sealed off the path to the ninth floor.

There were three thousand formations around the entrance; the stone statue was the heart of the formations.

“Can we get past?” Dragon Butterfly paled. The three thousand formations were one with the ninth step king—infinately close to the level of dao rule fusion.

“Yes,” Lu Yun was very confident. “The king turned himself into a statue to better assimilate with the formations, but do any of his senses remain after transforming into stone? He’s just a huge blockhead that poses no threat whatsoever.”

He’d easily deduced the proper way to handle this obstacle after digesting the unexpected turn of events.

“I’ll rip apart the formations in a bit. But once I do so, Dragonhollow Mountain will know that I’m here and the Immortal Pagoda will truly become enemies with this faction.” Lu Yun’s projected body reformed into human shape and he looked at the two girls. “I can’t help you for free.”

“My Redbud Region is yours after I get the ancestral blood. You can do whatever you want with it!” Dragon Butterfly swore immediately.

“I...” Long Batian stared dumbly at Lu Yun. “I... I just have myself. What if I promise myself to you?”

“That won’t be necessary, just join the Immortal Pagoda after you find your dao. The Immortal Region is an enemy of my Immortal Pagoda,” Lu Yun countered solemnly.

“Alright!” Long Batian agreed without hesitation. Though she normally appeared dazed and confused, she was no fool. She knew what Lu Yun wanted her to do—take back her true body and Myriad Dragon Valley!

Myriad Dragon Valley was the foundation of the Immortal Region. If it was withdrawn, the faction would fall without a single push from outside forces.

Boom!

Boom!

Boom!

Hazy purple pillars of light erupted from the void, blasting ferociously at the array. What was an incomparably sturdy configuration of formations instantly teetered on disintegration. Fearsome pillars of purple light fired upon their weakest connection points, making them wobble with impending failure.

“What is this?!” Confusion engulfed the eighth floor of the mountain and the nine dragons rose from their peaks, looking at the pathway to the ninth floor with alarm. The stone giant roared and waved his halberd around, trying to find enemies that he couldn’t see.

“These are the purple crystal cannons of the Immortal Pagoda! They are helping the two girls!” roared the dragon lord.

Purple crystal cannons had become renowned throughout the land after the war of Starspace Region. Countless Hongmeng cultivators regarded them with awe, but the Immortal Pagoda labeled the weapon as a prohibited item and didn't list any for sale.

If they were present at Dragonhollow Mountain, that could only mean that the Immortal Pagoda was helping the two dragon incarnations.

More importantly was that as powerful as they may be, just the cannons alone wasn't enough to destroy a great formation made of three thousand others. Only a supplemental king highly versed in formations could locate the flaws in the arrangement and dismantle it in one move like this.

The number of supplemental kings in the realm capable of such a feat could be counted with one hand. The Immortal King was listed among them.

"Go!" Taking advantage of the continuous cannon barrage, Lu Yun took the two girls through the formations and into the passageway.

Humm.

An enormous figure appeared in front of the path right after the trio entered. It was a puppet covered in Detonation Talismans and exploded the second it appeared.

The absolute mess of an eighth floor further dissolved into disarray from the detonation; ten ninth step kings snarled in unison.

"Immortal King, Immortal Pagoda, there will never be peace between us!!" howled the dragon lord in a fit of fury. He took human form and shot for the seventh floor, throwing Dragonhollow's grand plan out of his mind. Screw the Dragonling Ranking and Dragonling Assembly! All he wanted to do was to crush the Immortal King's group!

"Dragon Lord, please stay your hand!" called out the other dragons. "The two dragon incarnations won't be able to obtain the ancestral blood even if they enter the ninth floor, the will of the azure dragon has awoken!"

The dragon lord jolted with realization and came to a halt, slowly regaining his clarity.

"Regardless, the Immortal King is our eternal enemy for helping those two dragons!" The dragon lord gnashed his teeth. "We need to teach him a lesson!"

Chapter 1428: Kill Him and Stick Him in a Soup

The disruption of the eighth floor gave rise to disturbances all over Dragonhollow Mountain. However, most denizens were unaware that there was an eighth and ninth floor to the mountain. Thus, they couldn't locate the source of the mysterious confusion.

Masses of overwhelming aura descended from the skies, filling the air around the mountain. This was aura unique to ninth step kings.

Nine enormous dragons drifted in and out of sight in the sky, sending tremors of fear through everything on the mountain.

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“What are those old dragons on about?” Shenyu frowned at the nine ninth step kings in the air. “Can it be... that the Immortal King’s helped those two girls get the azure dragon’s blood? But that’s not right. If that Long Batian has the blood, there would be some changes in Myriad Dragon Valley...”

Shenyu thoughtfully stroked his smooth chin. He knew about Long Batian’s existence and what she was planning, but the Immortal Region wasn’t aligned with Dragonhollow Mountain. Though they were both apex factions of the Hongmeng, they didn’t quite see eye-to-eye.

Since he knew what Dragonhollow Mountain wished to do, he naturally also knew what the dragon incarnations wanted. This was a game with multiple players; it remained to be seen who would have the final laugh.

However, he hadn’t anticipated that Lu Yun would become involved as well. Having the big dragon of Redbud Mountain befriend the one of Myriad Dragon Valley? That was a bit startling.

This was why Shenyu hadn’t been able to sit still and exposed Lu Yun’s identity.

“Young lord, should we make a move?” asked the experts of the Immortal Region and Supplemental Dao Alliance that were sitting next to him.

“There’s no need, we can just sit back and watch tigers take down each other.” Shenyu shook his head. “I already put myself forward when I revealed the Immortal King’s identity. They can have fun with their own nonsense.”

“Understood.” The experts stood down, dismissing the power they’d gathered.

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The ninth step kings continued to sharpen into focus until they resolved themselves as nine dragons of different colors circling outside Lu Yun’s residence. The dragon lord revealed himself over the clouds—he was a domineering man in blue robes. The Hongmeng qi around the residence dispersed when he waved his hand; a lack of energy meant Lu Yun’s formations instantly crumbled away.

Lu Yun remained sitting cross-legged in the center of the yard, seemingly unaware of the events happening around him. He was fully focused on controlling his projected body.

“You’re living quite the leisurely life, Immortal King.” The dragon lord loftily regarded the young man on the ground and addressed him in gentle tones. He didn’t seem to be here to demand answers. It was as if the vast and imposing commotion from earlier was just to emphasize how mighty they were.

“The Immortal King isn’t living a leisurely life at all, he’s cultivating.” Qing Yu walked up with a frosty look.

“How dare you! My lord speaks to the Immortal King, there is no room for you!” shouted the scarlet dragon next to the dragon lord. “Immortal King, the dragon lord addresses you. It would behoove you to keep your dao partner under control.”

“You think I don’t have the right to address the dragon lord?” Qing Yu chuckled.

“Hmph,” snorted the scarlet dragon. The dragon lord hadn’t responded to the girl from beginning to end; this was how suppression targeted at Lu Yun would take shape.

Everyone knew that the Immortal King’s mysterious dao partner was a powerful titled king. But to Dragonhollow Mountain, a king was just a king. This level of being had no right to speak to their dragon lord.

At the same time, neither did the Immortal King. It was a paramount honor for him that the dragon lord had favored him with an audience.

“You piece of shit!!” echoed an angry yell. A young man with white hair and black robes abruptly appeared in front of the scarlet dragon and delivered a ringing slap.

The scarlet dragon king shrieked with pain and flew backwards, smashing into a nearby mountain peak and knocking it over.

“Profound King!” the dragon lord identified with irate shock.

The other dragon lords also clamored with censure, but they didn’t take action. The Profound King was the greatest king of Hopeless Major—one of the Ten Valleys of Evil! He was an unfathomably supreme powerhouse who overlooked the entire Hongmeng from the height of peak ninth step kingdom!

Hopeless Major geniuses had naturally been invited to the Dragonling Assembly, and it went without saying that an invitation had been delivered to the Profound King since he was the strongest of the faction. Who would’ve thought that he would suddenly attack and gravely injure the Scarlet Dragon King of Dragonhollow Mountain??

“Hmph!” The Profound King ignored the group of outraged dragons and landed in front of Qing Yu. He sank to one knee, much to the utter shock of everyone present.

“Greetings to the eminent one!”

“Greetings to the eminent one!”

“Greetings to the eminent one!” All Hopeless Major kings attending the assembly also sank to one knee and bowed to Qing Yu.

“The... eminent ruler of Hopeless Major?!”

“She’s the eminent ruler of Hopeless Major?!”

“How is this possible?! The Immortal King’s dao partner is the eminent ruler of Hopeless Major!”

“Rumors speak of civil strife in the ten valleys and Origin World sealing itself away. The remaining eight valleys attacked Hopeless Major, but couldn’t breach its defenses.”

“How is a young girl the ruler of Hopeless Major?!”

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“You may rise.” Qing Yu waved her hand.

“We hear and obey!” The Profound King stood up. “Your Eminence, that scarlet dragon disrespected you. Shall we kill him?”

Hearts pounded painfully at his words. What kind of being was the Scarlet Dragon King? One of the few ninth step kings of Dragonhollow Mountain! Indeed, he’d given offense to the ruler of Hopeless Major in his ignorance, but was he to die for that??

It would seem that the tyranny of the Ten Valleys of Evil was even more outrageous than how it was described in the stories.

Scarlet Dragon struggled to his feet—still in dragon form. He ground his teeth and glared at the Profound King. Though they were both peak ninth step kings, he was so much weaker than the Profound King.

“Mm, kill him.” Qing Yu nodded. “The little fox has been talking about trying dragon tendon soup. That scarlet dragon’s tendon will do.”

“WHAT?!”

“Hopeless Major, don’t you go too far!”

Her words raised the roof off the mountain. Kill and cook one of their ninth step kings?! This was so ludicrous that it couldn’t be put into words! They were at Dragonhollow Mountain!

“Hopeless Major, are you dead set on becoming enemies with us?!” roared the dragon lord as he exploded with power, directing it at the Profound King.

“You know perfectly well why we are here. We also know why you are here. We’re enemies to begin with, so there’s no possibility of easing tension between us,” Qing Yu chuckled softly.

“Save me, Dragon Lord!” wailed the scarlet dragon as a black and white surge of power cut across him like two enormous blades.

Plop!

A huge dragon head fell from the sky. A young man with white hair and black robes held a headless dragon corpse, slowly peeling out a crystalline dragon tendon from it.

They really had stripped the dragon tendon from the Scarlet Dragon King!

Chapter 1429: Lacking Some Flavor

As the Scarlet Dragon King was a ninth step king, he wouldn’t die so easily. While his soul had been scattered to the four winds, he could still resurrect from the void.

What was more pressing was that he’d been decapitated in broad daylight and his dragon tendon extracted to brew a soup. This immense humiliation would extend to Dragonhollow Mountain as well.

However, equally terrifying was that the mysterious eminent ruler of Hopeless Major—the Emphyrean King—was at the mountain. There were rumors among the social circles of high level kings that the Emphyrean King had defeated the World King when the latter was armed with the Nineworld Origin

Diagram. They'd fought each other in single combat, and Origin World was now sealed away because of her.

Qing Ting and Azureclad weren't sure what to make of these revelations.

"Qing Yan, do you think the Emyrean King would ever be interested in you?" Qing Ting suddenly poked her brother's waist. Azureclad swallowed hard, opened a crack in the earth, and crawled into it.

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The three greatest heavyweights of Hopeless Major, the Profound, Yin Yang, and Soulmask Kings, were all present at Dragonhollow Mountain. Each of these peak ninth step kings rivaled the dragon lord. He wouldn't enjoy a single advantage if facing any of them separately, much less all three together.

Profound and Soulmask took up protective stances on either side of Lu Yun's residence, facing off against the eight old dragons. Meanwhile, Yin Yang began to skin and clean the scarlet dragon to brew him into a soup.

Mournful howls traveled out of the mountain, but no one—no dragon dared make a move. They'd insulted the enemy first, to which Hopeless Major responded by killing the Scarlet Dragon King. If this matter wasn't handled properly, it might result in open warfare between Dragonhollow Mountain and Hopeless Major.

It was plain to see that Hopeless Major felt they had nothing to lose in the current situation. If battle did break out, they wouldn't be the least bit concerned.

"You better avoid any brash actions, Dragon Lord," suddenly came a femininely sinister voice. A young man enveloped in bloody light sneered coldly, "We attacked Hopeless Major because of instigation from others. It was also an internal ten valleys affair. But if you dare do anything to the Emyrean King...

"Then we'll see if the Ten Valleys of Evil can take down Dragonhollow Mountain!" This young man within the bloody radiance was a heavyweight of Ingress Blood Island—the Night King. His position in the faction was on par with the Profound, Yin Yang, and Soulmask Kings. They were all peak ninth step kings.

The Night King's words threw the dragon lord into glowering uncertainty.

"Hahahahaha!"

"Hehehehe..."

"Hyuk hyuk hyuk hyuk." Strange laughter sounded from the void and filled the mountain's seventh floor with an eerie atmosphere. Representatives from all ten valleys—including Origin World—had arrived. These were all people who'd once been falsely accused of villainy, but now took pride in the title. Their tempers were eccentric and they switched between happiness and anger at the drop of a hat.

If they weren't satisfied in this matter, they might very well slaughter the mountain's residents themselves. Although the dragon lord wasn't necessarily afraid of them, Dragonhollow Mountain wouldn't win anything if the two sides erupted in open hostility.

"Hmph." Shenyu suddenly materialized next to the dragon lord. He sneered, "The degenerates of the ten valleys have finally shown themselves. The Dragonling Ranking is of paramount importance and

connected to the future partition of the realm after the immortal dao arrives. This is a grave matter for the Hongmeng.

“Are all of you brave enough to be enemies with the entire world?”

“Runaway King?” cackled the Night King. “You better keep your head down and nose clean, or I might lose control and kill you on the spot. You and your master slunk through the valleys to sow discord between us, setting us at each other’s throats. If you keep talking in the Dao King’s absence, I really might...”

“Just try it, if you have what it takes.” Shenyu looked fearlessly at the Night King. “Just you alone is no match for me.”

“What about me?” the little fox suddenly interjected. “How about we go again, Runaway King?”

“The Illusion Immortal King? Or Intranse King?” Shenyu nodded at her. “I was caught off guard for a moment that day, which gave you space for your ambush to work. Do you really think that I can’t beat you?”

He waved a hand and manifested a flag in his grasp. Rays of hazy purple light immediately filled the air and dyed Dragonhollow Mountain’s seventh floor purple. This was an ultimate Hongmeng treasure!

Losing to the Intranse King and having his title revealed was the greatest humiliation of his life. Redemption through victory was the only possible way to erase this stain from his record. Though many kings from the valleys were in attendance, so had the Immortal Region sent a good number of kings. Under Shenyu’s guidance, they were drifting toward allying with Dragonhollow Mountain.

It was difficult to determine which side would win if a battle did break out. This was Dragonhollow’s home territory and they were aided by the Immortal Region. They also possessed their own signature faction treasure.

The crowd held their breaths; the Dragonling Assembly and Dragonling Ranking were no longer the main focus. With the arrival of these ninth step kings, the ranking was as if fleeting clouds in the sky—they would disperse with a simple puff of air.

But suddenly, a fragrance that gladdened the heart and refreshed the mind drifted through the immensely hostile scene. An enormous pot had been set up at some point and the Scarlet Dragon King’s dragon tendon and flesh placed inside. Fires of black and white burned beneath it, simmering the contents into golden-yellow soup.

The rich fragrance came from the pot, drawing mouthfuls of saliva from everyone.

The Yin Yang King didn’t seem to have noticed how metaphorical swords were unsheathed and bows drawn around him. All he knew was the dragon tendon soup brewing in front of him.

“They really did it... The Yin Yang King made soup out of a ninth step king of Dragonhollow Mountain...” someone murmured.

The Night King and other ninth step kings of the Ten Valleys of Evil were scared out of their wits. They’d thought that the Empyrean King was just making empty threats and that the Yin Yang King was only going through the motions. Flaying the Scarlet Dragon King alive, skinning and stripping his tendon was

already pushing the limits of what could be done. Who would've thought that they'd really continue with making soup!

A violent tremor traveled through the Night King's lips. There would still be room for mediation if they'd only killed a ninth step king and exacted cruel punishment on him. After all, the dragon king could still resurrect.

The two sides remained exchanging insults for the moment, no real blows had followed. The tense posturing was just a backdrop for dividing profits to come. But now that the dragon king was made into soup... This had developed into a great feud that would not be resolved until the death of one party.

"Is it ready is it ready?" The little fox followed her nose and ran over the pot, brandishing a large soup ladle. She retrieved an enormous spoonful of sparkling soup and sipped it daintily.

Eyes around her bulged with incredulity. One king dared make the soup, another dared to drink it... Hopeless Major's audacity knew no bounds!

"H-how ddoes it taste?" someone asked through chattering teeth.

"Hmm... it's lacking some flavor," the little fox smacked her lips with some dissatisfaction. "Add some salt..."

"....."

Chapter 1430: Upper Rank Dragon Soup From Dragonhollow Mountain

The crowd wanted to squeeze this impertinent girl to death with their bare hands. A pot of golden soup shimmering from the dragon tendon of a ninth step dragon king? The other kings wouldn't dare take a sip even if they wanted a bite!

But this brazen wench turned her nose up at it and complained that it lacked flavor?

Dark expressions appeared on many cultivator and arcane beast faces.

"What's... salt?" the Yin Yang King asked dumbly with a blank look. How would a character of his level pay attention to such minutiae? Qing Yu commanding him to make soup was already a tall order.

Miao held her forehead and carefully retrieved a small bottle of salt from her seed storage, pouring it into the pot in front of them.

"Have a taste," she said to the Yin Yang King. He summoned a fist-sized ball of soup from the pot and sent it into his mouth while everyone watched.

"Eh? Hmm!" His eyes lit up. "So this is salt? Its addition does indeed make the soup... soup..."

The Yin Yang King froze in place, not sure of what to say.

"Pfft, how is this a soup when there's no seasoning?" the little fox grumbled and fished out a variety of spices that only existed in the world of immortals, dumping all of them into the soup.

What was already an extremely tantalizing pot of dragon tendon soup instantly rose to new heights of allure. Even those of Dragonhollow Mountain were tempted by the fragrance.

“I’ll have a taste too!” Qing Yu walked over with a ladle of her own. The two enjoyed soup by the mouthful.

“This goes too far, this is too much!” the dragon lord suddenly howled and reverted back to his true form as a black azure dragon three hundred meters long. Snarling and brandishing his claws, he pounced on Qing Yu and the little fox.

Bam—

He flew backwards at double speed.

The sneering Yin Yang King stood in front of Qing Yu and Miao. “What kind of trash did that idiot Dragon Lord use for a body double?”

His words made eyebrows rise in shock, including those of the remaining seven dragons of the eighth floor.

“The dragon lord is fake?” gasped the Night King.

“Of course,” snorted the Yin Yang King. “The dragon lord is highly shrewd and requires careful deliberation before any move. Under his guidance, Dragonhollow Mountain has ambushed countless Hongmeng powerhouses. This is just a pot of scarlet dragon soup—why would he rush over for it like an idiot?”

“He is immensely capable, but the double he’s using is trash.”

The Yin Yang King beckoned with his hand and closed it around the azure dragon. While also a peak ninth step king, he was far inferior to the Yin Yang King. The azure dragon wouldn’t even have a chance to respond if the Yin Yang King attacked in earnest.

Dragonhollow Mountain fell silent at last; the seven old dragons didn’t dare make a brash move. Since the dragon lord wasn’t here in person, they didn’t have what it took to battle the Ten Valleys of Evil.

The dragon lord controlled every bit of power from the mountain. Since he’d sent a substitute here, then he was surely overseeing something extraordinarily important. Those of Dragonhollow Mountain didn’t know what their lord was doing and feared ruining his affairs if a conflict erupted on the seventh floor.

With that, the two sides silently stared each other down, both playing for more time. Only the little fox and Qing Yu stood next to the pot, casually trying mouthfuls made from the dragon tendon of the Scarlet Dragon King.

“Hmm? Qing Ting, come here!” Qing Yu suddenly thought of something and turned around.

“Huh?” Qing Ting blinked, subconsciously arriving in front of the Empyrean King.

“Try this!” Qing Yu ladled out a bowl of soup, to which the dazed girl didn’t know what to do after accepting it.

The Trueriver King stood in front of the Dragonfeather King and gently patted Dragonfeather's shoulder. The latter smiled ruefully, finally understanding what the strange expression on Trueriver's face had been for.

This was probably how the Trueriver King had become one of the Immortal Pagoda's.

"Ah, yes, you have the bloodline of the azure dragon. Therefore, scarlet dragon soup isn't suitable for you." A detail registered to Qing Yu and she turned to the Yin Yang King. "Kill the one in your hand too, make soup out of it!"

"....." The kings around them swallowed hard in unison.

This azure dragon was plainly not an ordinary azure dragon—he was the dragon lord's body double. Whether in terms of status or bloodline, he was very similar to the dragon lord. How else would he have the right to serve the dragon lord in this fashion?

He was very likely the dragon lord's son! And now the Emyrean King of Hopeless Major wanted to brew him into a soup!

The Yin Yang King obeyed Qing Yu's every command. He snapped the dragon lord substitute's neck as soon as she spoke; life immediately seeped out of the dragon's body.

"Hang on!" Miao quickly interrupted. "Start another pot. If you put the azure dragon in this one, the flavors will mix together."

"....." The kings around them didn't know what to think anymore. Flavors mix together? Their brains hurt from the confusion.

Simmering two ninth step dragon kings together would cross contaminate the pot?

Was that important at all?

"The ten valleys are the ten valleys alright! They came all the way to Dragonhollow Mountain to cook a dragon, and a ninth step king at that!"

The other dragon kings were so furious that they almost spat fire from their eyes. Though they didn't know this azure dragon's exact background, they were guessing that he might very well be the dragon lord's son.

And yet, they couldn't make any brash moves. The ten valleys were waiting to pounce on them at any time. In the dragon lord's absence, they might all end up in soup pots if further conflict broke out.

The seven old dragons also had a vague idea of where the dragon lord was—the ninth floor of the mountain!

If they allowed the completely unbridled Ten Valleys of Evil to reach the ninth floor, not only would that wreck the dragon lord's business, but it would also be a devastating blow to the mountain.

Once the dragon lord returned upon concluding his task, he would sweep away these ten valleys, Emyrean King, Profound King, Night King, and other rabble so easily that it would be an afterthought.

The Yin Yang King did as the little fox said and started another pot, placing the azure dragon inside. Qing Ting accepted another bowl and mechanically fed the sparkling golden soup into her mouth.

“You go as well.” The Azure Dragon city lord suddenly kicked over Qing Di beside him.

“Ah? I...” Qing Di didn’t know how he’d arrived before the soup pot and looked helplessly at the two stunning ladies.

“The Azure Dragon city lord is a sensible man,” smiled Miao and handed an empty bowl to Qing Di. “Eat with us.”

“Ah... sure.” Qing Di wasn’t an idiot, he immediately realized what drinking the soup signified. Azure Dragon City was officially breaking off relations with Dragonhollow Mountain and joining the banner of the Ten Valleys of Evil—or the Immortal Pagoda!

“So good!” He ladled a large bowl for himself and drank with gusto.

Alliance via soup, nice.