

Necropolis 1431

Chapter 1431: The True Dragon Lord

A commotion began to build on the seventh floor of Dragonhollow Mountain. The Azure Dragon city lord's actions signaled to uninvolved kings that it was time to choose sides.

However, many remained unmoved and didn't immediately express their opinions. As domineering as the Ten Valleys of Evil were, they didn't seem internally unified. After countless eons of suppression from the Immortal Region, they'd almost completely perished in their ancient rival's hands not too long ago.

Winning support from high level kings just by making two dragon kings into soup? What a ludicrous daydream!

Although the Immortal Pagoda seemed to be one of Hopeless Major's factions, there was an even more frightening Supplemental Dao Alliance with the Immortal Region. The alliance's true strength was several hundred of millions of times greater than the pagoda.

What was a mere Immortal King and Intransigent King worth? There were more than ten thousand supplemental kings in the Supplemental Dao Alliance!

.....

"You go as well." The Coiling Dragon city lord kicked Azureclad over. Soon after, Crimsonclad, Seven Slaughters, Blackclad, and others arrived by the soup pots, eating and drinking with gusto.

No one else made a move. If any more went over to drink the dragon soup and eat dragon meat, the remaining seven dragons would surely die of fury.

.....

"Your dao partner has cooked my son." On the ninth floor of Dragonhollow Mountain, the dragon lord was dressed in azure robes and appeared to be a handsome young man. There were minuscule differences between him and the dragon lord who'd appeared in front of the crowd—he seemed more mild-mannered and his eyes were brighter.

Currently, he was dejectedly drinking wine.

"You can send your dao partner to the chaos and cook my son too." Lu Yun sat at a nearby stone table and picked up the dainty cup in front of him, taking a small sip.

"She can't, your son is too perverse! He's a hugely perverse genius! When I was a ninth step king, he was a sixth step king. Now I am still a ninth step king, but he's a mother fucking true king!!

"You're a perverse genius and so is your son!!" the dragon lord bawled at Lu Yun.

Smash!

Lu Yun flung his wine cup at the dragon lord's face.

“How. the. mother. fucking. fuck are you the dragon lord?! How much time, effort, and resources have I invested in you?! Why the fuck are you the dragon lord?!” Lu Yun shouted right back in his face.

“Who, who should I be if not the dragon lord?” Despite the dragon lord’s face covered in wine, he wasn’t the least bit outraged. He seemed more aggrieved than anything.

“I thought you were the will of the azure dragon.” Lu Yun frowned.

“Will of the azure dragon? The ancestor dragon of the dragon race? He’s nothing good,” the dragon lord smiled wryly. “if I was the will of the azure dragon, I’d make sure to kill you in the world of immortals.”

The dragon lord... was the Azure Dragon King of the world of immortals!

The very one who’d been half dead and clung to life through feeding off the Sal Tree of Life and Death. He’d been wholly unwilling to join Lu Yun’s camp in the beginning, but eventually bowed his head, joining the Dao Academy with the entire azure dragon race.

After arriving in the Hongmeng, Lu Yun calculated that the Azure Dragon King was closely related with a major faction in the Hongmeng, Thus, he’d hauled the dragon king here after entering the ninth floor.

Who would’ve thought that the Azure Dragon King would immediately absorb the power in the surroundings upon emerging from hell and return to his origins as the dragon lord!

Lu Yun was beside himself with annoyance. He’d thought that the dragon king might be the reincarnated azure dragon of the third realm! Not only that, but he’d confirmed that Origin World of the Ten Valleys of Evil was the faction that God had established. God had once been a heavyweight of the Hongmeng!

A founder of the Ten Valleys of Evil!

God’s background was the same as Violetgrave—both from the fourth realm and powerhouses there as well.

Dragon Butterfly and Long Batian gaped behind Lu Yun, swiveling between the dragon lord and Lu Yun with disbelief. They couldn’t fully wrap their minds around this.

“The azure dragon is nothing good.” The dragon lord gently wiped wine off of his face. “As it stands, Dragonhollow Mountain is under the azure dragon’s control. The two little girls behind you were purposefully summoned by the awakened dragon will.

“If they really try to obtain the ancestral blood, they will only end up becoming a replica for the azure dragon!”

“Don’t trust him!” Dragon Butterfly hastily interjected. “The black dragon king told us that everything from Dragonhollow Mountain is crafty without end. We can’t trust anything from the mountain!

“The black dragon? The one suppressed by the rules of the Hongmeng Sea?” The dragon lord’s expression shifted and he sneered, “That black dragon... heh. Find an opportunity to cook him too!”

“Where’s the black dragon from?” Lu Yun raised an eyebrow.

“Myriad Dragon Valley gave birth to two great dragons,” explained the dragon lord. “Did you note the black dragon when you came?”

He looked at Long Batian, who shook her head in return.

Lu Yun understood—he'd suspected then that the black dragon hailed from Myriad Dragon Valley, but dismissed the notion when Long Batian appeared. Who would've thought that the black dragon really would be a great dragon of the valley!

"Myriad Dragon Valley holds the greatest dragon and greatest mines of the realm, second only to Dragonhollow Mountain. However, Redbud Mountain is listed higher due to the valley being almost completely depleted after birthing two great dragons.

"How else would the Immortal Region let Redbud Mountain go and focus on Myriad Dragon Valley instead?" sighed the dragon lord.

He'd spent some time in a world of immortals ruled by the immortal dao. It'd only been six hundred million years since then, a negligible period of time for a powerhouse like the dragon lord.

Everything he spoke of had happened six hundred million years ago. If the same amount of time was expressed in second realm terms, it would've been prior to countless chaos tribulations. The worlds hadn't even been born then.

"You are naturally deficient not because of the Immortal Region, but because the black dragon took most of your opportunities." The dragon lord shook his head. "The black dragon is no kind soul—his true nature is the same as the azure dragon's. He chooses who he wishes to eat. He came for the ancestral blood back in the day, but I stopped and sealed him. Otherwise, he would've become the azure dragon's replica long ago."

"He said you're the one who killed the azure dragon," mumbled Long Batian.

"I don't have the capability to kill him... Logically speaking, the azure dragon is my ancestor and the first dragon among the Hongmeng. All dragon bloodlines in the realm come from him, including chaos dragons and other dragons in the worlds. All is due to him, and I'd be ending my own ancestor if I really made a move against him.

"The original founders of the Ten Valleys of Evil were the ones who killed the azure dragon. Mm, ancestral villains are what the Immortal Region calls those ten stunning powerhouses," he paused. "Now, do you still want the azure dragon blood?"

Mic. drop. You guys remember this guy, yeah?

Chapter 1432: The Great Hongmeng Tomb

Both Dragon Butterfly and Long Batian looked at Lu Yun.

"It'd be a bit of a pity to not get the azure dragon blood since we're already here." Lu Yun thought for a moment. "I also want to see just what the first dragon of the Hongmeng is like. But there's no rush."

He shook his head and took a close look around. It was a hazy, foggy world on the ninth floor. Absolutely terrifying dragon power surrounded them from all sides. Legend spoke of the ancestral blood being located on this floor, but there was only the chaotic power left behind after the azure dragon fell.

The azure dragon had perished on the ninth floor of Dragonhollow Mountain, but his will remained and lingered throughout Dragonhollow Mountain, unobtrusively impacting the faction.

That the dragon lord had entered the world of immortals and taken on the identity of the Azure Dragon King was, in large part, due to influence from the azure dragon's will. It wasn't that the dragon lord had been under the ancestor dragon's control, but that he wanted to break free from the azure dragon.

"The azure dragon's will was only imperceptibly affecting Dragonhollow Mountain before, but now that he shows signs of revitalizing..." Lu Yun looked around and sank into slight contemplation.

"If the two little girls weren't with you, they would've been refined by the azure dragon's will as soon as they set foot onto the eighth floor." The dragon lord sighed as he looked at Lu Yun. "The azure dragon's will doesn't dare draw close while you stand here because he is still dead for now. Since he is dead, he falls under your jurisdiction!"

Lu Yun had pulled the dragon lord to the Hongmeng through hell, so the latter naturally knew of the young man's identity and abilities.

Lu Yun nodded.

"In actuality..." said the dragon lord. "The Hongmeng and world of immortals will not collide."

"Hmm?" Lu Yun blinked.

"The Hongmeng, chaos, and worlds are one entity."

"Yes, I know that."

"No, you don't!" The dragon lord shook his head. "All beings within the Hongmeng think that the realm is an enormous egg, that the Hongmeng is the outermost and most sophisticated layer. They think the chaos and worlds are the inner layers of the egg and thus, less advanced realms. This is a misconception."

"Is it?" Lu Yun started. He and Qing Yu had once followed the edges of the Hadal Hell all the way to the fourth realm. According to Qing Yu's calculations, the fourth realm was a circle surrounding another circle.

"No," the dragon lord shook his head. "This is also the world of immortals. The Hongmeng, chaos, and world of immortals were all one entity to begin with!"

To Lu Yun's great shock, the dragon lord opened his arms and manifested tendrils of immortal qi from the void. The qi gracefully sank into his body and he reverted back to the Azure Dragon King.

"A yin tomb and a yang tomb!" The hair on the back of Lu Yun's neck rose with horror.

His throat was dry and his scalp tingled with numbness. This was a tomb layout—absolutely a tomb layout! It wasn't a naturally occurring one either, someone had set it up!

"All I needed to do to easily enter the world of immortals was to drop this outer appearance." The Azure Dragon King turned into the dragon lord again. "The Hongmeng is an enormous cage and all of us its

captive birds. If we wish to soar into the skies, we must break the confines of this cage. There are countless Hongmengs in the fourth realm and each of them is in the same straits.

“But somehow, our Hongmeng is different. Someone, somehow, at some unknown point in time, turned our realm into a very, very big tomb.

“The yin tomb and yang tomb, as well as another layer of tomb, firmly entrap this Hongmeng. We must pay a million or ten million times more the price if we want to break free of our shackles!

“If we don’t do so as soon as possible, all of us might become the wild ghosts and zombies of this tomb.” The dragon lord lifted his head and looked through layers of space to the cosmos outside. “As for why the ghosts attack us in unceasing numbers, that’s because we were once a ghost region!

“Protect the world of immortals, protect the immortal dao... Facilitate the immortal dao’s return to the world of immortals and chaos so that it restores order to our own realm and help us become a normal Hongmeng again... that was the original intent of the Ten Valleys of Evil.

“That was also the mission of Dragonhollow Mountain after the azure dragon died.”

Lu Yun didn’t say a word.

“What of the Immortal Region?” Long Batian asked in a small voice. “It’s wanted to refine the world of immortals all this time.”

She’d slipped out of the Immortal Region, so she naturally knew everything about it.

“The Immortal Region... I don’t know.” The dragon lord shook his head. “It suddenly appeared out of nowhere and I don’t know where they’re from either...”

Lu Yun patted Long Batian’s shoulder, indicating for quiet. The dragon lord’s emotions seemed to be in a bit of a turmoil. Lu Yun looked at him silently and didn’t engage him in further conversation.

“Our enemy now isn’t the Immortal Region or the azure dragon, and it’s not those who oversee the orders of the realm. It’s the ghost race!” The dragon lord suddenly lifted his head. “The ghosts invade with power that violates our realm’s order. The more ghosts there are in the Hongmeng, the faster our orders collapse. Soon enough, there will come a day when we turn into a real tomb!”

The current Hongmeng was just the layout of a yin and yang tomb. But as more ghosts invaded, they would turn the layout into a true tomb. Once that took place, everything within the Hongmeng would turn into ghosts.

The tides of yin spirits in the world of immortals and ghosts of the Hongmeng absolutely hailed from the same origins.

“Alright, let us take the azure dragon blood. I’d like to see the azure dragon’s will as well and assess what’s going on.” Lu Yun stood up and looked at the ninth floor, where the only mountain vein resided.

It was also the corpse of the fallen azure dragon and his fresh blood was sealed within. If Lu Yun wasn’t using his projected body to keep Dragon Butterfly and Long Batian in check, they probably would’ve already rushed over to search for it.

The dragon lord nodded and then mentioned dejectedly, “Stop turning my dragons into soup... Who knows how long it’ll take for them to recover after you kill them?”

“I’ve only killed two for a taste of something new, it’s not like they’ve really died.” Lu Yun swept a glance at the seventh floor—the kings there remained locked in a standstill and forcing others to choose sides.

The dragon lord smiled ruefully. Since the Azure Dragon King was one of Lu Yun’s, that meant he was one of Lu Yun’s. The entire mountain was also his since the dragon lord was the absolute ruler of Dragonhollow Mountain.

Chapter 1433: Something Wrong

Lu Yun didn’t know how strong Dragonhollow Mountain was overall—the other eight dragons of the eighth floor were just the faction’s surface level strength. He also didn’t ask what kind of power the dragon lord wielded, but he knew that the dragon lord had suppressed a black dragon king that’d set foot onto the path of true kingship.

Lu Yun was in no hurry and, in fact, couldn’t expose his relationship to the dragon lord. It would result in incredible trouble otherwise. He’d noticed a few particular words that the dragon lord had used earlier—“those who oversee the orders of the realm”.

.....

The mountain formed from the azure dragon’s corpse towered into the heavens, becoming a small world within the separate world that was the ninth floor. It emanated hazy azure radiance, illuminating the ninth floor as its only source of light.

“Be careful,” Lu Yun suddenly warned. “There’s ghosts in that mountain.”

His projected body was also his true body; it was akin to a clone with the same strength and abilities as the original. He opened the Spectral Eye and read a variety of vicious ghosts, zombies, and wild souls within its green illumination.

“There are dragon ghosts... and...” his lips trembled. “Geniuses of Dragonling Assemblies past.”

“The azure dragon’s will created the Dragonling Assembly,” explained the dragon lord. “He wants to use it to collect the various instances of dragon bloodline scattered throughout the realm. He will resurrect himself in that way, and the final victor of historic Dragonling Assemblies have all died in ghastly fashion. None of them were met with a good end.

“Apart from that, he also killed previous dragon lords when they reached peak ninth step kingship. You must be careful—the strongest existences here are all vicious ghosts of preceding dragon lords.

“They were infinitely close to being a true king in life, so they’ve certainly broken through after dying!”

Lu Yun paused when he looked at the foot of the azure mountain. He now possessed ninety-nine tendrils of order thanks to the support of endless ghost crystals. He was almost a third of the way to the requisite three hundred and sixty-five tendrils of flame.

He was unable to use the five great hellfires at the moment, but the hellfire of the hell of order was gradually beginning to materialize. Though it was very ineffective when it came to restraining ghosts, it

was devastating to existences that violated order. It so happened that the ghosts in the Hongmeng violated order.

And of course, his Tome of Life and Death was the key to suppressing ghosts.

An azure figure appeared at the bottom of the mountain; its appearance seemed very natural. It was an uncommonly mild mannered man who was dressed very similar to the dragon lord. He smiled at Lu Yun's group. "You should go back, this isn't the time for you to be here."

"Father," the dragon lord said blankly when he saw the man.

"Mm." The man in azure robes nodded. "Go back. It is not yet time for you to be involved with the dragon ancestor's affairs."

The dragon lord looked at Lu Yun instead of responding. The man in front of them was the previous dragon lord and the father of the current one.

"Let's go back." Lu Yun took a deep look and nodded at the previous dragon lord.

The man inclined his head in return and slowly faded away.

"The azure dragon's will has awoken. Your father is dead without a doubt after we leave," Lu Yun remarked meaningfully to the dragon lord.

The previous dragon lord had become a vicious ghost and thus "lived" on in the form of one. After the azure dragon's awakening, he was certain to want to claim Dragon Butterfly and Long Batian for his own use. He would never forgive the previous dragon lord for sending them away at this time.

"It... is very painful to live in the form of a ghost," the dragon lord sighed after a long moment. "This was his choice."

The dragon lord hadn't lived a peaceful life in the world of immortals. He'd latched onto the Sal Tree of Life and Death and become a zombie tree with it. That was also living in the form of a ghost, and it was far better to die than to suffer that kind of agony.

"Mhmm." Lu Yun nodded. "You should... try to keep your dragons in check. If they really piss me off, I'll turn them all into soup."

The dragon lord nodded ruefully.

.....

Lu Yun slowly opened his eyes on the seventh floor of Dragonhollow Mountain. Dragon Butterfly and Long Batian slipped back through a passageway he'd created, refraining from drawing too much attention.

The situation was still tense.

Two ninth step kings stewed in big pots while Miao, Qing Yu, and a few other half step kings gorged themselves next to the pots.

The Yin Yang King scanned the other seven dragons with eyes as sharp as an eagle's. He seemed to be waiting for Qing Yu's command to grab another.

Shenyu and a host of Immortal Region kings had stepped forward to protect the old dragons. The Immortal Region seemed to have allied with Dragonhollow Mountain

"Alright, alright, none of this." Lu Yun suddenly stood up with a lazy stretch. "The Dragonling Ranking battles are about to begin. What are all of you doing crowding around here instead of preparing for them?"

He waved a hand and gathered a hundred thousand formations, resealing the small residence. The gathered kings had been ready for a show, but were preempted by Lu Yun sealing off the area again.

"I cannot interfere in what's to come, so you must be careful. There are three venerated dragon sovereigns in Dragonhollow Mountain that rival your Profound, Yin Yang, and Soulmask Kings. There's also an ultimate treasure called the Myriad Dragon Sea that is essentially the ultimate treasure of a ten valley," the dragon lord's voice echoed ponderously in Lu Yun's mind.

"What about you?" Lu Yun frowned. The azure dragon's will wouldn't permit the dragon lord to return like this.

"I took refuge in the world of immortals all those years ago to avoid the azure dragon's pursuit. After becoming the Azure Dragon King, not only do I possess the azure dragon's power, but I also have the foundations of immortal dao from the world of immortals. It won't be that easy for the azure dragon to kill me." Confidence crept into the dragon lord's voice. "I need seven days to recover my strength. Once I am at my peak again, I can set foot onto the path of true kingship and fuse my dao rules into one."

"Fuse your dao rules?" Lu Yun's brows furrowed deeper before nodding expressionlessly.

"I feel like there's something strange about the dragon lord you grabbed from the world of immortals." Dragon Butterfly stuck her head next to Lu Yun's for a whispered conversation.

"I agree, no one would remain so unmoved at seeing their father die to protect him. That would hold true even if their father is now a ghost." Lu Yun nodded. "There's definitely something wrong with him."

Chapter 1434: Azure Dragon

Qing Yu and the little fox didn't know what'd occurred on the ninth floor of Dragonhollow Mountain. Thus, they listened quietly to Lu Yun's retelling without interjecting.

The two pots of dragon soup had been cleaned out and everyone returned to their own camp. Anyone who'd eaten from the pots, regardless of identity, was now tagged with either the label of the Ten Valleys of Evil or the Immortal Pagoda. They were now these factions' unwavering constituents.

News of the Empyrean King, eminent ruler of Hopeless Major, being the Immortal King's dao partner was too stunning to believe. So the Immortal Pagoda was essentially Hopeless Major!

However, it remained to be seen whether Hopeless Major could represent the Ten Valleys of Evil.

None of valleys' cultivators had partook in the pots of dragon soup. Though the Night King had challenged the old dragons of Dragonhollow Mountain, he'd only done so verbally. If the valleys were truly united, more would've gotten involved.

For now, no other faction stepped forward apart from Azure Dragon City and Coiling Dragon City of Azure Dragon Region, and Exalted Firmament Region.

"The Azure Dragon King is the real dragon lord?" Qing Yu found this incredulous. She was very familiar with this character—he'd lived in her Scroll of Shepherding Immortals when they were in the world of immortals and had helped her on a few occasions.

"What do you say?" Lu Yun looked at Miao instead of responding.

"The Azure Dragon King definitely isn't the dragon lord!" the little fox responded firmly. "He's still in the world of immortals as we speak, so what did you bring over??"

"What?!" It was Lu Yun's turn to be shocked. "The Azure Dragon King is still in the world of immortals?! ...so I brought over an unknown entity and not the Azure Dragon King??"

Now this was hard to believe. He was the one who'd summoned the Azure Dragon King to hell and then yanked him to the Hongmeng.

"That guy was once part of the Scroll of Shepherding Immortals and his core essence is still in it. The Azure Dragon King isn't the dragon lord. Whoever you brought from home isn't the Azure Dragon King!" Miao repeated herself with clear enunciation.

Lu Yun glowered with terrifying menace. "So where's the real one gone to? Who's the thing that was talking to us? He knows Lu Qing is my son!"

Qing Yu had no answers; a lost Dragon Butterfly and Long Batian also had no idea what to say.

"I keep feeling that the black dragon king in the Hongmeng Sea is very friendly. It's this dragon lord that gives me a very unsettling impression," mumbled Dragon Butterfly.

The little fox looked at Lu Yun while Qing Yu operated formula dao with her full strength, attempting to discern who the dragon lord was. To her, it didn't matter if he was the dragon lord or not. What mattered was who he was and where the real Azure Dragon King had disappeared to.

"He knows everything about me, the combat arts of modern immortal dao, and the nascent spirit observation method. Probably the only thing he doesn't know is that I left a back door on the ninth level of the mountain. I can go back anytime.

"All of you wait here, I'm going to meet the will of the azure dragon!" Lu Yun sat down cross-legged and projected himself to quietly enter the back door that he'd created.

He hadn't trusted the dragon lord to begin with—throwing the cup of wine at his face had been a test, but who would've thought that the dragon lord would be able to keep his cool from that grave insult?

.....

The previous dragon lord sat in the same spot on the ninth floor, smiling when he saw Lu Yun's projected body arrive.

"You've returned." He nodded at Lu Yun.

"You knew I'd come back?" the young man started.

"The ancestor dragon has been waiting a long time for you." Instead of responding, the previous dragon lord made a welcoming gesture.

Lu Yun nodded and set foot onto the azure dragon vein. The dragon's presence was everywhere, chaotic and brimming with the power of death. However, it was also unusually gentle and didn't attack those present.

There was another world that existed on the ninth floor, one that was independent from its surroundings.

An enormous droplet of pale azure blood hovered in the center of this small world. It was like a deep azure sun, radiating immense smoothness and light. This was Dragon Butterfly and Long Batian's goal: the azure dragon's ancestor blood!

Countless vicious ghosts, zombies, and other lost souls utilized the ancestor blood's illumination to maintain their minds. They lacked the overwhelming air of violence commonly found in ghosts outside and quietly cultivated in this world.

Lu Yun didn't sense a strength from them that violated order—one so often found on ghosts. The ones here gave him the same feeling as the Meteorite King had projected.

A pale figure stood in the air beneath the drop of fresh blood, his back to Lu Yun. This was the projection of the azure dragon's will. Brows furrowed tight, Lu Yun looked right at it.

"Do you still remember the four spirits of azure dragon, white tiger, vermilion bird, and black tortoise in Fuxi's tomb?" came a voice from the dragon will. "They were the root of the curse on the dragon race, cast by the Curse King.

Lu Yun nodded. Fuxi's tomb had been intimately connected with the Skandha Extinction Tomb in Dusk Province. When he killed the four spirits in Fuxi's tomb, the other tomb had fallen apart on its own.

"I am the azure dragon that died in Fuxi's tomb." The azure dragon's will turned around to look at Lu Yun.

It was an unfamiliar face that he hadn't seen before, but the energy from the dragon's thoughts seemed somewhat familiar.

Lu Yun inclined his head and committed the "Curse King" name to memory. "You are the source of dragons in both the chaos and the worlds."

"Correct." The azure dragon nodded. "The azure dragon's will in the Hongmeng stirred to life only when the azure dragon of the world of immortals died."

"Who is the dragon lord now?"

“The dragon lord did indeed enter the world of immortals, but he didn’t succeed. He failed just as completely as the Di Clan—a complete perishing,” sighed the azure dragon’s will. “The waters in the worlds are so deep that even a titan like the Di Clan was completely destroyed, to say nothing of a simple ninth step king.

“You should be able to guess now who you brought as the dragon lord.”

“So it’s him.” Inspiration struck Lu Yun. “Only he could kill the Azure Dragon King and replace him with none the wiser. Most importantly, he even fooled me. ...does this mean he killed the previous dragon lord as well?”

“Many Hongmeng heavyweights who entered the world of immortals died in his hands. He took everything from them. He can be the dragon lord or any other ninth step king in the realm,” nodded the azure dragon. “It’s not necessarily a bad thing that he’s in the third realm now. At least that means he won’t make further trouble for you in the world of immortals.

“However, the stronger he grows in this realm, the more terrifying he becomes. When the world of immortals brings the second realm to rejoin the Hongmeng, you might discover that you are no longer his match.”

“This locale collects the aggrieved souls of past dragon lords and geniuses of historic Dragonling Assembles,” Lu Yun changed the subject. “Are you planning on killing them and borrowing their bloodlines to resurrect yourself?”

“Yes.” The azure dragon nodded. “I’m a living being complete with my own selfish desires and wants. I want to live too, even if it means sacrificing my descendants.”

Chapter 1435: Climb the Mountain

Lu Yun nodded silently. “You probably saw how I revived Fuxi, right?” he suddenly asked.

“Heh heh heh, hahahaha!!” laughed the azure dragon. “I would be stamped with your label and become your subordinate if you resurrected me. The Azure Dragon King of the world of immortals was unwilling to fall under your banner, and that is naturally the same for me.”

“By the way, who is the real Azure Dragon King?” Lu Yun changed the topic.

“What real Azure Dragon King? After the demon of immortal dao killed the dragon lord, he took the dragon lord’s skin to become the Azure Dragon King. If it wasn’t for his endless sabotage from the shadows, how would the world of immortals have broken so easily a hundred thousand years ago?” snorted the azure dragon.

What... the...

It felt like a bucket of ice cold water had been dumped over Lu Yun. So the Azure Dragon King had always been the demon of immortal dao, and he’d been by Lu Yun’s side all this time! He’d watched over everything the young man had done in the world of immortals and could’ve killed the master of hell at any time, multiple times over.

Fuck.

Thankfully, he'd wanted to use Lu Yun to travel to the Hongmeng. The consequences would've been inconceivable otherwise. Even now, everything in the world of immortals was infested with the demon's preparations. His plots were completely entangled with the power that Lu Yun wielded in the world.

Numbness crept over the young man and it took conscious effort to keep his hands from trembling. What a great blessing it was that the demon hadn't been able to fully control his emotions after coming to the third realm! It'd sounded the slightest offkey note and helped Lu Yun to discover the truth. To be forewarned was to be prepared. Despite this frankly crazy revelation, at least he was no longer in the dark.

"Are you saying that it wasn't the Dao King who destroyed the world of immortals a hundred thousand years ago, but the demon of immortal dao?" Lu Yun quickly asked.

"The Dao King? Why would he destroy the world of immortals?" the azure dragon responded with surprise. "He entered the world for the same reason as the other heavyweights of the realm—to protect the world of immortals and ensure that it successfully becomes one with the Hongmeng. Only in this way will the layout of the great tomb be broken."

Lu Yun nodded; at least the demon hadn't lied about the relationship between the Hongmeng and the world of immortals.

"The demon of immortal dao is different. He wants to destroy the world of immortals and create a world of demonic dao so that he can complete his own great dao. You must be careful, he is not a being from our Hongmeng.

"The worlds, chaos, and Hongmeng coming together as one will break the layout of the great tomb that our Hongmeng suffers under. The demon wishes to prevent this from happening, but our Hongmeng... heh, it's quite different from the others," chuckled the azure dragon. "I know you won't believe me as too much has happened after you've come to Dragonhollow Mountain, but I trust that you have your own thoughts and know what to do. I tell you all this because it benefits me too."

"Mhmm." Lu Yun nodded. "What about Dragon Butterfly and Long Batian? Do you really want to refine the two little girls?"

"Refine them? Why would I want to refine them? I need legitimate bloodlines of my descendants to exist if I wish to come back to life. I need to return to my origins and be reborn through borrowing the strength of the later generations. They are the first breed of dragons born in the realm. If I refine them or turn them into my replicas, then the only possible outcome for my strand of will is to ultimately return to being a senseless dragon of the land." The azure dragon shook his head with a wry grin.

"If that dragon lord hadn't said that you'd refine the two girls, I might still have full faith in him." Lu Yun curled his lip.

"Also, your identity is no secret to the true kings of the realm. You should refrain from being too blatant about things," warned the azure dragon.

"I see." Lu Yun spread out his hands. "I haven't really set myself against the true kings either. That Metal Potentate was a true king, right? I didn't stop him from taking my friend away.

“Alright, I’m going to head back and leave the demon of immortal dao in your hands. I can’t fight him and don’t really want to at the moment. Since he’s in Dragonhollow Mountain, I give him to you.” Lu Yun smiled at the azure dragon and dismissed his projected body.

“Ancestor...” The other dragon ghosts came crowding over.

“Forget it, let him go.” The azure dragon smiled and opened his hand, distributing a cultivation method. “We owe him a favor, after all. This is a legitimate cultivation method for ghosts. Practicing it to the utmost will set you on the path of ghost dao under the immortal dao. When the immortal dao arrives, you will be a legitimate part of it as well.”

The ghosts around him blinked.

“There is none other than him in the Hongmeng who knows of such a cultivation method. Very well, all of you will cultivate well.” The azure dragon waved his hand.

“Understood!” The dragon ghosts dispersed after receiving a copy. Plainly, they’d voluntarily sacrificed their bloodlines so the azure dragon could come back to life. The azure dragon had also done good by his people. He’d transformed these dragons into ghosts and protected them with his last remaining drop of blood.

Lu Yun spoke no more of obtaining the ancestor blood. Everything the demon had said was to set him against Dragonhollow Mountain. The demon had spoken a mixture of truth and falsehood, thereby gaining Lu Yun’s trust. Sadly, he’d been a bit too hasty in their last meeting.

.....

Lu Yun felt a great weight lift off his shoulders after clarifying everything.

“Are you still going to participate in the Dragonling Assembly?” Qing Yu leaned against Lu Yun’s shoulder.

“Of course, why not?” Lu Yun nodded. “We’re in the Hongmeng now, so we must participate in all of its major events and try our best to meld into this realm. Many of its denizens think that the Immortal King is complete and utter trash apart from supplemental dao. I’m going to prove that I’m very strong without it!”

“Your easy defeat of Jin Yue in front of everyone has already proven your capabilities,” Qing Yu smiled.

“That’s not enough. Who knows what they’ll say behind my back if I don’t beat my superiority into their brains?” Lu Yun stretched lazily.

.....

The final battle of the Dragonling Assembly—the Dragonling Ranking—was about to begin.

The ranking was also a product of the azure dragon’s will; it would delineate some order to the vaguely defined Hongmeng. At the same time, the ranking was an honor that would motivate many geniuses.

An enormous mountain slowly rose from the seventh floor and shot for the horizon.

Hummm.

Indistinct azure radiance blossomed when the mountain appeared. An immense figure appeared at its peak.

“The final stop of this Dragonling Assembly is about to arrive.” The immense figure slowly sharpened into focus. It was a young man with azure hair—not the dragon lord or any of the old dragons that’d appeared before, and not the azure dragon. He seemed to have appeared out of nowhere, and his strength was so domineering that he hinted at a level above ninth step kingship.

True king!

There were true kings on Dragonhollow Mountain!

“The final stage of the Dragonling Assembly is to climb the mountain. There are three hundred and sixty-five spots on the ranking. The first three hundred and sixty-five to arrive at the peak are the geniuses who will be listed on it. They will be bestowed with creation qi and ultimate treasures of the realm from the ancestor dragon’s will. Let us begin.”

Three thousand ninety-nine half step kings looked blankly at each other when the speaker finished, not sure of what they should do. Just climb the mountain? They’d thought there’d be countless rounds of grueling battle. So... what was the point of telling them to claim battle servants?

But soon enough, they realized why that had been a task. The Dragonhollow half step kings that’d remained out of sight all this time finally showed themselves.

There were three thousand and a hundred of them!

Chapter 1436: The Azure Dragon’s Corpse

Three thousand and one hundred cultivators of Dragonhollow Mountain occupied the high ground and sneered down at the cultivators and arcane beasts that had come from other parts of the Hongmeng. Uniform contempt curved their lips.

“They don’t seem to think much of us,” Long Batian whispered next to Lu Yun.

“Dragonhollow Mountain is exceptionally rich in natural resources. They possess the greatest dragon in the Hongmeng and endless power of creation. It’s natural that their geniuses look down on geniuses from elsewhere.” Lu Yun nodded.

“Where’s Dragon Butterfly?” Long Batian looked around, but saw no sign of the other dragon incarnation.

“Dragon Butterfly became a titled king a long time ago, there’s no need for her to participate in the Dragonling Ranking,” Lu Yun replied.

Dragon Butterfly was a true king; her only goal at Dragonhollow Mountain was the azure dragon’s blood. Since that was no longer possible, there was no point in further participation. A Trueriver Sect disciple had stepped into her spot.

“I see.” Long Batian nodded. “But... I still want the drop of blood for some reason.”

“We’ll get it if there’s a chance to.” Lu Yun nodded. “That azure dragon’s not telling me the truth either, he’s holding some things back.”

Long Batian blinked.

“The will of the azure dragon tells me that there never was an Azure Dragon King, that it was always the demon of the immortal dao in the skin of the dragon lord...” A cold smile played on Lu Yun’s lips. “It’s true enough that the dragon lord is the demon of immortal dao, but the Azure Dragon King does indeed exist!”

After the little fox’s Scroll of Shepherding Immortals combined with the one from Origin World, some unexpected developments took place. The Azure Dragon King’s core essence within the painting began to awaken. By now, it was well on its way to becoming a spirit.

He had been dead, but was now resurrecting.

The real truth about everything would have to wait until he was fully revived.

“I hadn’t wanted to participate in the rest of the assembly, but I have to get to the bottom of this since that azure dragon isn’t telling me the truth,” snorted Lu Yun.

The azure dragon’s last words had been a substantial threat, but Lu Yun happened to be someone who couldn’t be threatened.

“Eh? What are all of you doing here?” He suddenly discovered that, apart from the ninety-nine geniuses of the ranking, the remaining two thousand nine hundred ninety-nine half step kings were all gathered by his side.

“Continuing the grand robbery enterprise with you, of course,” Qing Di chuckled merrily. “Imm— Champion Duke, I’m someone who drank dragon soup and am completely with you now. I’ll follow you wherever you go.”

“I wanted to drink from the pot too, but my faction’s representatives wouldn’t let me,” grumbled Golden Dragon.

“Alright... then.” Lu Yun smiled ruefully. “There are three hundred and sixty-five spots for those climbing the mountain. The three thousand of us...”

“Will block them at the halfway point!” roared Golden Dragon. “Only whoever hands over their treasures may pass!”

“That’s right!” clamored the other arcane beasts and cultivators.

“Why do I feel... that this Dragonling Assembly has turned into a Robber Assembly?” Golden Dragon murmured. “Historic assemblies have always been a show of blood and gore, reaping lives from Azure Dragon City to Dragonsea City, then up the mountain. But this time...”

“It’s been a road of robbery and intimidation. Mm, all of you are the victims!” Qing Ting declared proudly.

“Heh heh heh, so now it’s our turn to rob someone else and find some balance that way, no?” Qing Di interjected.

Qing Ting, Azureclad, and others had all drank from the pots and refined the dragon bloodlines within the soup. Their strength had improved by leaps and bounds—they were now many times stronger than before.

The top one hundred of the Dragonling Ranking were no longer a match for them.

“Come on, let’s go climb the mountain!” Lu Yun laughed heartily and beckoned with his hand. The group of three thousand set off with great fanfare toward the enormous mountain as the cultivators around them frowned at what they’d heard.

If three thousand titled duke half step kings truly robbed their way through the mountain, then even the local geniuses would have to capitulate.

“The mountain is gigantic, how are they going to stop us all?” scoffed the top one hundred of the ranking. They didn’t think that they’d still lose in the last trial of the Dragonling Assembly. Apart from them, there were also thirty-one hundred geniuses from Dragonhollow Mountain to contend with!

.....

An enormous multicolored cloud abruptly descended from the sky, enveloping the peak of Dragonhollow Mountain and cutting off contact with the outside world. The kings watching from the outside couldn’t pierce through the cloud to see what was taking place on the mountain. Not even ninth step kings were an exception.

“What’s going on here?” Complaints rose from the audience. “What do you mean by this, Dragonhollow Mountain? Why are you isolating the mountain?”

“The last battle of the Dragonling Assembly isn’t as simple as just climbing the mountain,” laughed the Dragonhollow true king. “Dangers abound and only through fullest effort and employing all of their methods will geniuses defend their lives and successfully climb the mountain. You don’t want your disciples and geniuses’ repertoire to be exposed to the general public, do you?”

“Impartial rules are in charge of the mountain, so not even those of Dragonhollow Mountain can observe what is taking place. The rules are fair, all we need to do is to await the results.”

As dissatisfied as the remaining kings might be, there was nothing else they could do about it. Their disciples and descendants vied for spots on the ranking, so what these kings should do was to sit down and thoroughly discuss how to split the gains to come.

Qing Yu and Miao met each other’s eyes and said nothing else. The rules were fair? Utter bullshit.

Bestial roars echoed from the mountain the moment the cloud appeared. All of the cultivators that’d gathered together were completely shuffled apart and sent to various parts of the mountain.

Qing Di and the others who’d planned on jointly robbing the geniuses saw their plans crushed by this development.

“So this is what battle servants are about... If we’d claimed any, they would be by our side now.” It wasn’t until now that everyone realized what battle servants were for. Their enemies weren’t each other on the mountain, but the unknown creatures around them.

Terrifying roars and howls shook them to the core—their owners were most likely titled duke or higher. There might even be true kings lurking around them. Hence, the Dragonhollow cultivators also remained on high alert.

“This is the dragon mountain?” Lu Yun smirked at the newly arisen azure mountain. He’d seen it before—a mountain formed by the azure dragon’s corpse on the ninth floor. The blood of the azure dragon, will of the azure dragon, and countless dragon ghosts were in its depths.

Chapter 1437: First of the Dragonling Ranking

“So you did come after all,” a slightly gloomy voice sounded in Lu Yun’s ears. A ghost that was the previous dragon lord materialized by his side.

“Did the azure dragon send you to keep an eye on me?” Lu Yun regarded his new shadow with resignation. “It looks like the rules aren’t fully in charge here.”

“The ancestor dragon... is the rule,” nodded the previous dragon lord. “Everything here is under his determination. This occasion’s Dragonling Assembly involves the future of the Hongmeng and the great ancestor dragon is one of the ancestor gods of the realm. Though he has his own ambitions, he will not interfere in this gathering.”

“So what are you doing here?” Lu Yun grumbled. “I’m not yet a titled king, just a half step king. I am fully qualified to participate in the Dragonling Assembly. Aren’t you already interfering by coming to me?”

The previous dragon lord blinked dumbly at Lu Yun, not sure of what to say.

In everyone’s eyes, Lu Yun was at least as strong as a high level king, perhaps even as strong as a ninth step king. But in reality, he hadn’t even set foot into titled kingdom yet.

Theoretically speaking, supplemental kings weren’t real kings. They hadn’t coalesced dao rules within their bodies and didn’t possess their own force fields. They only possessed a title bestowed by the Hongmeng Tower.

Supplemental grandmasters used their arts to forcefully enhance their battle strength so they could quickly ascend to kingdom. There weren’t many half step supplemental kings in the realm. If it wasn’t for Lu Yun needing to form the hellfire of order, he would’ve broken through a long time ago instead of spending so much time in this cultivation realm.

“What do you think?” Lu Yun asked again.

“No no, you can’t participate in the Dragonling Assembly or the battles of the Dragonling Ranking. That will ruin the equilibrium!” The previous dragon lord suddenly muttered with dissatisfaction and waved his hand, making the world spin around Lu Yun.

When everything calmed down, he discovered that he was already at the peak of the mountain. There were three great rankings in front of him.

The Dragonling Ranking!

The Soaring Dragon Ranking!

The True Dragon Ranking!

A name glittering with purple-golden radiance had appeared at the top of the Dragonling Ranking—
Champion Duke!

Champion Duke was listed first on the ranking!

Lu Yun's jaw dropped and he stiltedly turned around to stare at the previous dragon lord.

"I'm not cheating and haven't interfered in the assembly. You're the strongest out of all the half step kings to begin with," mumbled the previous dragon lord as he plopped down next to Lu Yun.

"And ah, there are some parts of the cultivation method that you gave to the ancestor dragon that I don't really understand..." He looked up at Lu Yun with a hint of anticipation.

Lu Yun grinned ruefully. He hated that the azure dragon had kept things from him, especially regarding the Azure Dragon King, but he also knew that the azure dragon meant him no harm. He wouldn't have taught them the cultivation method of ghost dao otherwise.

.....

"How is this possible!! How was he so fast?!" An outcry rose from the mountain when Lu Yun's name appeared on the ranking. Many half step kings roared with indignation—they'd been fully confident of placing first, but the Champion Duke had quietly made it to the peak!

"Heh heh heh... the Champion Duke is the Immortal King, he must've used supplemental dao to easily climb the mountain. There's nothing to be concerned about. Once the ranking is finalized, we still have a chance to challenge others. I'll challenge the Immortal King then!" sneered a young woman with a jade-green dragon scale embedded between her brows.

She was the greatest genius of Dragonhollow Mountain; her title was the Jade Dragon Duke. This title had been personally bequeathed by the ninth step dragon kings and dragon lord substitute. A frosty expression filled her face as she ground her teeth—she'd already earmarked the first spot on the ranking for herself. To think the Champion Duke would appear at this time!

"Come, let us make it up the mountain at top speed. Kill anything we run into that is not native to the mountain." She turned to three battle servants by her side.

"Understood!" They were also Dragonhollow geniuses with the strength of a titled duke.

Ghosts and vicious beasts abounded on the way up, but these obstacles were nothing to a powerhouse like the Jade Dragon Duke.

"Weren't we going to go up together? What about our grand robbery enterprise?" Qing Di was gathered with Qing Ting, Azureclad, and Crimsonclad. He gaped when he saw the name on the ranking.

Qing Ting, Qing Di, and Azureclad had their own ways of communicating with each other since they were in the same clan. Azureclad and Crimsonclad were essentially dao partners, so the quartet found each other with the fastest speed possible after the mountain scattered them apart.

“He’s the Immortal King. If he ascended the mountain with us, he’d break the equilibrium and eliminate many geniuses that should appear on the ranking,” Azureclad coolly analyzed the situation.

“What about robbing others if the Champion Duke isn’t here?” Qing Di fretted.

“He’s not here, but I am!” Qing Ting brimmed with confidence. She puffed her chest out and declared proudly, “I’m the one who robbed everyone in Dragonsea City!”

“I’d always thought that the Champion Duke led you astray, but it looks like you’re the one who dragged him into robbery,” Azureclad expressed his displeasure.

“Cut the nonsense, there’s someone over there headed to the mountain top. He’s got battle servants, so he should be a Dragonhollow genius. Let’s go rob him!” Crimsonclad interrupted.

“Let’s go!” They moved out without hesitation. They sprinted toward the target, their primary motive to rob others instead of climbing the mountain!

“Roar!!” A giant black dragon-shaped beast burrowed out of the ground and opened his maw at Qing Ting.

“Piss off!” Qing Ting shouted and kicked the huge beast. It yelped with pain and ran off.

“Hold on!” A new thought occurred to her. “There’s the power of creation within those beasts! We’ll get it if we kill the beast!”

“What?!” gasped the other three. “These violent beasts have creation inside of them?”

Up until now, they’d stayed as far away as possible from those groups, avoiding exchanging any moves with them.

“Mmhm.” Qing Ting nodded and shoved a creation pill into her mouth. “But we don’t lack for power of creation either.”

Her latest batch of pills had come from Qing Yu yesterday; Qing Ting didn’t know why the Emphyrean King would give her so many. However, she didn’t turn the gift down.

“Forget them for now, we already nurture the cycle of creation within us. What we need to do instead is to rob all of the Dragonhollow geniuses to increase our confidence and foundations!” Qing Di immediately raised.

“Then forget about them!”

“Yup, let’s go hunting!” Azureclad and Crimsonclad both chimed in.

Chapter 1438: Master of the Hongmeng

The Dragonling Ranking as established by this time’s Dragonling Assembly was of paramount importance. Dragonhollow Mountain wanted to fill the role of leader of the realm. Hence, they

expended their greatest efforts to ensure this gathering would be a success—even offering the power of creation as a reward.

Naturally, the last battles of the ranking wouldn't be a simple affair either. Blood had to be shed if one wanted to scale the mountain. The vicious beasts and ghosts here were free game. Only through obtaining the power of creation within their bodies could one make it up the mountain.

At the same time, cultivators and arcane beasts needed to fight each other and claim the power of creation from other candidates. Once a participant accumulated sufficient power of creation, the rules would automatically take them to the peak and list them on the Dragonling Ranking.

The stronger one was, the faster one would collect power of creation and the higher one's name would be on the Dragonling Ranking.

No one was aware of these rules; the half step kings had to fumble their way forward and utilize both brain and brawn.

Qing Ting and the others didn't know of the rules, and neither would they care if they knew. Robbery had become a way of life. When they saw opponents, their first thought was to rob the other, not how to defeat them.

Qing Ting, Qing Di, Azureclad, and Crimsonclad were forces to be reckoned with before considering anything else. After taking Lu Yun's Pills of Creation and drinking the dragon soups, their strength was so far removed from what they used to command that they couldn't be considered against the same backdrop at all.

The four of them robbed one Dragonhollow genius after another, leaving their victims befuddled. Why had this happened? Why were there robbers on the mountain?

Those who were robbed remained in contention for the ranking, but there were new owners for their treasures and seed storage.

As time went on, more and more cultivators and arcane beasts gathered around the four—the original crew that'd robbed the top one hundred of the Dragonling Ranking.

.....

The previous dragon lord bowed and scraped with utmost humility in front of Lu Yun, but also kept a sharp eye on the young man to ensure that he wouldn't cause mischief. However, he was dumbfounded by the events on the mountain.

"They... they..." He gaped at what was taking place halfway up the mountain, not sure of what to say.

"Now do you finally understand?" Lu Yun sighed. "It was never my idea to rob others. On the contrary, I'd be a bit nicer if I was down there. I wouldn't take their signature treasures."

The previous dragon lord shook his head. "It's their own fault for being weaker than their opponents. This outcome is well justified."

"Who is the Azure Dragon King of the world of immortals?" Lu Yun suddenly demanded.

“He is the Hongmeng Tower—eh??” The dragon lord started and shut his mouth.

“He’s the Hongmeng Tower??” Lu Yun’s eyes widened.

The previous dragon lord glared at Lu Yun and wouldn’t say anything else for the life of him.

“That would make sense if he’s the Hongmeng Tower... The azure dragon’s core essence is in little fox’s Scroll of Shepherding Immortals, so it makes sense that it’d help her to the degree it has,” Lu Yun murmured to himself.

“Don’t try to trick more information out of me!” the previous dragon lord snapped alertly. “You better not ask more about this matter either, there’s nothing in it for you!”

Lu Yun also looked at the man in front of him. “Alright then, I’ll teach you the dao of ghost immortals. Ghost dao is actually another great dao in the Hongmeng and ghosts are living beings too, just in another form.”

He talked circles around the previous dragon lord; the latter didn’t know how to respond anymore. However, he was ever more on guard against this young man who looked like an unassuming half step king, but was more difficult to handle than a peak ninth step king.

Lu Yun dropped the Azure Dragon King topic and began explaining the path of ghost dao. Since the immortal dao was not yet part of the Hongmeng or even present in it, all he spoke of was theory. However, his comprehension of ghost dao was far more comprehensive than the previous dragon lord’s.

The dragon lord stayed vigilant at first, but when Lu Yun delved into a deeper explanation, he couldn’t help but lose himself in it.

“The four divisions of the azure dragon, white tiger, vermilion bird, and black tortoise are present in both the worlds and the chaos. They must be present in the Hongmeng too, right?” Lu Yun asked.

“Mhmm, they are the ancestor gods of the realm and the first connate spirits to be born in the land,” the dragon lord nodded and responded with forthright candor. “Our old ancestor was born of the great Hongmeng dragon, thus becoming the first dragon of the realm. Vermilion bird, white tiger, and black tortoise were also born from the land. However, they view each other with unfriendly eyes and sometimes outright hostility.”

“Is it the Hongmeng Tower in charge of the realm’s orders at the moment?”

“No, six cities are in charge of the realm’s orders, not the tower. Ever since the tower’s master went missing, the tower lost its control over the land. All it does now is bestow titles and help cultivators coalesce their dao rules.” The dragon lord very naturally accepted a wine jug that Lu Yun brought out and poured a large gulp into his mouth.

“What about the keys to the tower?” Lu Yun frowned.

“You’ll know everything there is to know when the eleventh key appears.” Cheeks faintly flushed, the previous dragon lord couldn’t help take another large mouthful.

“The Azure Dragon King isn’t the spirit of the Hongmeng Tower, is he?”

“No.” The slightly tipsy dragon lord shook his head. “He’s an incarnation of the first azure dragon within the chaos and the first being to reach the third realm from the second. He bears the six great orders of chaos and wanted to replace the Hongmeng orders with them, so that he might rule the realm.

“The master of the Hongmeng Tower—the overall master of the realm, really—suppressed him within the tower and turned him into a guardian beast.

“When the master went missing from our realm, that was because she’d traveled to the world of immortals to practice immortal dao and become a life form under the immortal dao. She wanted to combine the Hongmeng and the immortal dao this way, thereby breaking our layout of a great tomb.

“The guardian beast traveled to the world of immortals with her. Hmm... the Dao King didn’t enter the world of immortals to destroy it or refine the immortal dao. He merely wanted to form a karmic relationship with the master of the Hongmeng—hic!”

He belched and continued in fine tipsy form, “Who would’ve thought that the master would travel through time and space in another time period, thereby rendering the Dao King’s efforts fruitless?”

“I see.” Lu Yun understood. So the azure dragon hadn’t told him about the Azure Dragon King not because of the king’s own identity, but because the azure dragon had wanted to conceal the fact that there was a master of the Hongmeng.

As the once true ruler of the realm, her whereabouts were too important.

“So who’s the master of the Hongmeng?” Lu Yun frowned, mentally paging through everyone he knew.

“Wait!!” The dragon lord jerked convulsively. “What have I been telling you?! What what what kind of wine did you give me?!”

Chapter 1439: Disciples of the Immortal King

“Nothing, just ordinary wine.” Lu Yun took the wine jug and poured himself a mouthful, smacking his lips afterward. “The Inrance King brewed it herself, it’s fine wine.”

“Inrance King...” The previous dragon lord’s expression darkened. That was a terrifying supplemental grandmaster of illusion! Even the Dao King’s foremost disciple—Shenyu—had fallen into her illusions. What could a simple ghost cultivator like him do against her prowess?

“Want another sip?” Lu Yun offered the wine jug again.

The dragon lord hastily shuffled backward in alarm, not daring to come near the jug.

“Then I’m drinking it myself.” Lu Yun poured out the jug’s contents and quaffed it with gusto.

As dark as the dragon lord’s expression was, he swallowed hard. Wine from the hands of the Inrance King was marvelous indeed. Otherwise... he wouldn’t have been taken in, not at his cultivation and concentration level.

“Look at that, the two thousand and nine hundred ninety-nine geniuses that I taught have found each other and are starting to rob Dragonhollow Mountain. Tsk tsk tsk, they’ve just about robbed all thirty-one hundred Dragonhollow geniuses.”

Of the mountain's geniuses, one hundred of them were deemed to be Dragonhollow's best and worthy of being top one hundred on the Dragonling Ranking. The other three thousand were either their challengers or battle servant fodder.

Their rules mirrored those for the geniuses from other regions. However, Dragonhollow Mountain seemed a little too arrogant in the eyes of outsiders. Setting just one faction against the entirety of the Hongmeng? That was too patronizing of geniuses from other parts of the land!

"Ai... What a pity that Dragonhollow also suffers from fierce internal competition. If our geniuses were able to come together, they wouldn't be in their current straits," the previous dragon lord remarked with resignation. "You're already at the peak of the mountain and listed first on the ranking, but your peers still stand united. Why haven't they started fighting among themselves? The little girl from Coiling Dragon City doesn't have the same kind of charisma as you do." Confusion flashed through his eyes.

"They do this because they want to, it has nothing to do with me." Lu Yun shook his head. "When they formed the Robber Slayers in Dragonsea City, they already showed signs of being willing to work together. I've just shown them that there's greater strength in greater numbers."

He'd personally taught all of these cultivators and arcane beasts, starting from the rainbow bridge all the way to Dragonhollow Mountain. They'd sparred and conversed with each other along the way, forming relationships that would exist among fellow peers of the same faction.

When they were last gathered together, they'd joined Lu Yun in robbing the top one hundred geniuses on the ranking. Added to that receiving Pills of Creation in reward—that created a marvelous connection between them.

When they found out that the Champion Duke was the Immortal King, many of them self styled themselves as disciples of the Immortal King. Though most of them hadn't drank from the pots of dragon soup, they still viewed themselves as one of the Immortal King's. He was like an unfading obelisk raised in front of all cultivators beneath titled kingship in the third realm.

He was already many people's idol after displaying his supplemental dao to break the Supplemental Dao Alliance's monopoly. His actions at the Dragonling Assembly further raised his reputation to new heights, creating an interesting sense of kinship between those that'd followed him during this time.

This was something that outsiders were unable to perceive. On the contrary, those of Dragonhollow Mountain firmly regarded themselves as geniuses and refused to acknowledge the Immortal King. They wanted to challenge him simply to prove their own capabilities, so they would never ally with anyone else.

Indignation was the most they felt when robbed by the contingent.

.....

"The vicious beasts and ghosts here all possess the power of creation. If we kill enough of them, we'll be able to use the power to reach the top of the mountain and be listed on the Dragonling Ranking!" Golden Dragon approached Qing Ting.

He'd completely dismissed the idea of vying with Azureclad or Qing Ting. Though Crouching Dragon City hadn't been brave enough to send him to the pots of dragon soup, Golden Dragon still walked with Azureclad and the others.

As strong as Golden Dragon was, he was still second to Azureclad.

"Then go on, go kill vicious beasts and ghosts. I wish you luck in making it onto the Dragonling Ranking." Qing Di curled his lip at Golden Dragon.

The latter fell silent and rubbed his nose.

"We're the Immortal King's disciples, does it matter if we rank or not?" snorted Seven Slaughters. "The mountain is so afraid of the Immortal King that they directly sent him to the top of the mountain so he could come first."

"That's right, while the Dragonling Ranking is impressive, it's enough for it to list only the Immortal King's name," chuckled Blackclad. "Our mission now is to protect it so that he's the only name listed on it!"

Golden Dragon:

"Yeah, this'll be fun!" Long Batian applauded heartily. "I heavily dislike the Jade Dragon Duke. She slipped out of my grasp just now, so you guys help me this time and we'll rob her together."

"I've got it." Qing Ting walked forward, Azuresky blossoming with scintillating sword light. "They say that the Jade Dragon Duke is the greatest genius of Dragonhollow Mountain and an incredibly accomplished cultivator of the azure dragon bloodline. If I defeat her, that'll be a huge blow to the face of all of their geniuses—"

Boooooom.

A small mushroom cloud rose into the air before she could finish speaking. A young man in black had stolen a march on them and was already fighting the duke. What stunned the group was that the greatest genius of Dragonhollow Mountain was no match for the young man!

"It's the venerated enforcer!" someone identified the other.

"He's so strong... the venerated enforcer is..." Qing Ting stared fixedly at him. "I'm weaker than him!"

"What?!" Numerous half step kings around her gaped. In their eyes, Qing Ting was so strong that she should be second beneath the Hongmeng kings. First was Lu Yun. But now, she said that she was weaker than the venerated enforcer!

Qing Ting spoke no more. She stared intently at the young man, observing his every gesture, movement, and combat art trajectory.

The venerated enforcer wasn't deploying overwhelming strength—he was just an ordinary titled duke half step king at most. But his technique and combat art circulation method was incredibly exquisite. All of his combat arts reaped the greatest benefits for the smallest price possible.

He beat back all of Jade Dragon's combat arts before they had a chance to erupt at full strength.

“Have you noticed that the venerated enforcer fights very similarly like the Champion Duke? The Champion Duke rarely uses superior strength to dominate his enemy. He usually makes use of the other’s weaknesses and openings...” Azureclad suddenly said.

Because Lu Yun had taught them all, their battle styles were undergoing a change and developing in a similar direction. Who would’ve thought that the venerated enforcer—once hailed as the strongest in the realm beneath titled duke—would fight in this fashion as well?

“You don’t mean to say that the venerated enforcer is also a disciple of the Immortal King?” Golden Dragon asked subconsciously.

Why yes, I mean. I do mean.

Chapter 1440: Just One Name

“What do you think the Immortal King will do once he finds out we’re calling ourselves his disciples?” Qing Di rubbed his nose.

“You guys, not me!” Long Batian protested. “If I use my full strength, I might be able to kill him with a single punch.”

“Sure sure, we all know you’re super strong.” Qing Di flicked a sideways glance at the little girl and couldn’t be bothered to argue with her.

“I’m the senior sister, you’re all junior brothers and sisters!” Qing Ting laid down the law. “The Immortal King’s disciples... doesn’t actually mean his disciples. It’s just... um... people wanting to cultivate with him. He won’t refuse that, will he?”

“There’s two thousand and nine hundred ninety-eight of you guys. We’re two short of being a full three thousand... One of the spots should be Li Zhen’s. He’s absolutely obsessed with the Immortal King. As for the last...” Qing Ting stroked her chin thoughtfully.

“Let’s leave it empty. There are three thousand great daos in the Hongmeng. If the Immortal King has three thousand disciples, there’s nowhere to go but down after achieving perfection. The moon waxes only to wane. Two thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine is perfect.” Azureclad shook his head. “The little donkey eaten by the black dragon king also had that written into its destiny.”

Golden Armor fidgeted uncomfortably.

While the battle between the venerated enforcer and Jade Dragon Duke continued, anyone could see that the venerated enforcer was having an easier time the longer the fight went on. He comfortably held the upper hand.

Bam!

The venerated enforcer directed his sword qi into a massive dragon. One instance of Dragonrise swung down on Jade Dragon.

Color drained from her face and she vomited a mouthful of blood. She was incapacitated from fighting further, but her eyes remained fixed on the venerated enforcer. She’d never imagined that she’d lose to

an outsider, and lose so thoroughly at that. She'd lost before she had a chance to deploy her strongest moves!

The venerated enforcer lifted his head after defeating the Jade Dragon Duke and looked toward the mountain's peak, where there was a sparkling name written in gold on the ranking—the Champion Duke.

A slightly complicated expression crossed his face. He'd always thought that he was the strongest in the Hongmeng beneath titled kings. Even Hua Fengwen of a hundred thousand years ago was firmly beneath his foot.

But now, the first name on the Dragonling Ranking was set in stone and confirmed to be... the Champion Duke.

"Forget it, he's my martial grandfather after all. It's not humiliating to lose to my martial grandfather. If I take him out, master will beat me," grumbled the venerated enforcer. There were certain notes of reluctance and indignation in his voice. In his eyes, the Immortal King was no match for him. He was number one only because he was the Purple King's father, which prohibited the venerated enforcer from challenging him.

"Number two will do. It's not that embarrassing to be listed beneath my martial grandfather." Having already put the fight out of his mind, the venerated enforcer took to the air and headed for the peak of the mountain.

Whoosh!

An azure figure suddenly appeared before him. Qing Ting stood with her sword upraised, planted in the middle of where the venerated enforcer needed to pass through.

"You... want to challenge me?" The venerated enforcer blinked. "You're on par with the Jade Dragon Duke at most. You're no match for me."

Resting on the ground to recover from her wounds, Jade Dragon looked up at Qing Ting.

"I know that." The girl nodded. "I'm not challenging you."

"Then what are you doing blocking my way?" frowned the venerated enforcer.

"There can only be one name on the ranking." Qing Di approached from another side of the void and stood next to Qing Ting. Seven Slaughters, Azureclad, Crimsonclad, Seven Slaughters, and Blackclad also materialized, surrounding the venerated enforcer.

"What do all of you mean by this?" The venerated enforcer started, his tone turning unfriendly.

"It's simple." Golden Dragon appeared and announced, "There can only be one person at the peak of the mountain, and that person is no one climbing it!"

Hummm!

Sword qi intersected in the air as two thousand nine hundred ninety-nine titled duke half step kings released their strongest power at the same time.

Dragonhollow Mountain quaked. So many half step kings deploying their strength at the same time shook the rules at play and affected the rules with their own will.

The previous dragon lord's jaw dropped at this development.

"Madness, this is madness. What do these children want?!" He suddenly regretted bringing Lu Yun here so early. If the young man was still below and keeping his people in line, none of these so-called Immortal King disciples would be so out of control.

Lu Yun shrugged; he was finally seeing what he wanted to see. Dragonhollow Mountain had dug a huge pit, only to bury themselves in it.

His newfound disciples forbade other half step kings from scaling the mountain. This was interesting, as the other half step kings, whether it was the top one hundred outsiders or the thirty-one hundred of Dragonhollow's geniuses, would never work together.

They regarded each other with hostility even now. While they might team up, they would never be a match for the legion of Immortal King's disciples. Those were all titled dukes!

"You go too far, Azureclad and Crimsonclad!" Purpleclad and Bloodclad stepped forward to censure them.

"Too far? You want to see what's really too far?" Out of concern that her brother and his dao partner would turn nostalgic about their old friendships, Qing Di didn't let them speak. "Minions, get these dukes and strip them naked. We're going to hang them up!!"

"Understood!" Hardly concerned with the amount of trouble they were creating, the rest of the legion roared in understanding and charged the two dukes.

Bloodclad and Purpleclad froze with shock, then turned around and ran off with alarm.

"Let's rush them together! They can't hold all of us off!" cried out someone on the other side. Though there was some shuffling in the crowd, no one shifted into action.

One needed sufficient power of creation from vicious beasts and ghosts before they could make it to the top. Therefore, not all of them would succeed even if they rushed forward together. Most of them hadn't collected sufficient creation. They would just be doing work on behalf of others if they attacked.

Apart from the Immortal King's disciples, half of the other cultivators were busy collecting creation and not gathered here.

"You're the one who said that just now, didn't you?" Qing Di leered at a strong man dressed in black. "You have enough creation to make it to the top, but it's all mine now!"

He rushed the man, but the venerated enforcer moved when he moved as well. His target was Qing Di!