

Necropolis 1561

Chapter 1561: To the Peak of Dao

“Be careful, the shadows here are alive. We need to imitate those four and stand in an empty clearing,” Xing Wuliang said.

There was a mountain not too far from them and its shadow also ended not too far away. When Lu Yun took a closer look at it, he discovered there were at least seven thousand shadows within it—they all belonged to the beings that had died here. There were also shadows of Void World Kings among them.

“This mountain’s shadow can’t possibly be this big, it must be soooo crowded in there. Some shadows are gonna get squeezed out sooner or later. Look at how fat the mountain is!” Lu Yun suddenly pointed at the mountain’s shadow and roared with laughter.

A mystified Brightheart and Xing Wuliang stared at Lu Yun, not understanding why he was suddenly cracking such a lousy joke. However, their expressions froze the next second.

The enormous shadow seemed to have heard Lu Yun and shrank back a little, appearing a bit more normal than before.

“The shadow is also a great dao.” Lu Yun’s smile slid off his face as he considered it. “The one buried here is a powerhouse of shadow dao.”

“Supplemental dao?” Xing Wuliang asked reflexively.

“All three thousand great daos lead to the same end.” Lu Yun shook his head slightly.

Xing Wuliang didn’t fully understand, but Brightheart did.

“Supplemental dao and cultivation become one if you walk either path to the end,” she clarified.

“Shadow dao is one such example.”

Taking a path to the end didn’t mean the ultimate peak of cultivation, but the peak evolution of that dao’s order. Shadow dao was both supplemental dao and cultivation—a product of both paths to their apex.

This kind of dao had gone extinct in the fourth realm since the disappearance of the Di Clan.

No legacy of this sort had been preserved in the tomb; this kind of peak dao had been buried here.

Affected by such a great dao, the shadows beneath their feet had come alive. However, they remained shadows. They had to kill and devour their primary selves before they could become independent entities.

“That mountain isn’t a mountain, it’s a burial mound,” Lu Yun suddenly gasped. “The great expert skilled in shadow dao was buried in a pile of dirt!”

“What?!” shrieked Xing Wuliang and Brightheart. The latter knew full well how formidable peak dao was. Someone who could reach those heights was at least a Nihil World Sovereign!

A Nihil World Sovereign had been dumped under a burial mound after their death? How fiercely must their resentment burn!

Unbidden, the two looked to the mountain.

“This isn’t a proper location for a burial mound either, this mountain is just a burial good!” Xing Wuliang realized with shock. “The Cloud Sovereign killed a Nihil World Sovereign skilled in shadow dao to accompany the tomb’s master in death?!”

“No, no wait, not burial goods, but tomb keepers! These shadows are here to guard the tomb!”

Lu Yun shuddered when he heard these words. Thank freaking goodness he hadn’t done anything out of bounds after obtaining the tomb’s approval. Despite possessing his full strength, he’d still traveled through the tomb as a true void cultivator.

Otherwise...

If his shadow suddenly attacked him as a Nihil World Sovereign... Lu Yun’s blood ran cold to entertain the thought.

A true void shadow naturally didn’t dare do anything to a primary body that could turn into a Nihil World Sovereign at any time. Under shadow dao, shadows were bestowed with sentience and intelligence.

Though Lu Yun’s shadow had awoken thanks to shadow dao, it was stuck at the true void realm despite its primary body’s true strength.

Why the fuck did you do this to me?!

Lu Yun’s shadow wanted to cry, but couldn’t find the tears to.

“The one buried here shouldn’t be related to the Hallowed Emperor. They should be someone important to the Cloud Sovereign instead. Shall we go in and take a look?” Xing Wuliang asked carefully, still on the lookout for his shadow.

Though he was only a major World Manifest, he was also a supplemental grandmaster. Who knew if his shadow would also possess his supplemental dao prowess?

But instead of attacking him, his shadow had left as soon as it came alive. Plainly, the shadow of a supplemental grandmaster felt that one should use supplemental methods to attack the primary self.

Xing Wuliang felt a headache setting in.

“All of the shadows here are intelligent.” Lu Yun lifted his foot and stomped on his own. “You, go fetch Xing Wuliang’s shadow.”

Lu Yun’s shadow once more rapidly shook his head.

It was a very bizarre sight. The four gaping World Manifests rubbed their eyes to confirm they were seeing things. The boy’s shadow didn’t dare attack himself!

“You four better come with us. too, or his shadow will be the end of you guys.” Lu Yun smiled at the quartet. “The shadow of a supplemental grandmaster won’t behave in a conventional way. He might not choose to kill his primary self.”

The four men shuddered with horror. They’d seen Xing Wuliang’s shadow slip away with their own eyes.

“No!” the bearded man declined sternly. “The shadow of a supplemental grandmaster might not kill himself, but that Void World King’s shadow will definitely come for her! We’ll be dragged in if we follow you!”

“Forget it then.” Lu Yun curled his lip. “Shame, could’ve had four cannon fodder.”

Xing Wuliang:

Brightheart:

“I knew it! We’re not falling for that!” harrumphed the man. They were trying to find the way out of here. Leaving this world was the safest and wisest decision. Even Void World Kings had fallen to their shadows and been decapitated with one stroke.

“Since the cannon fodder won’t come with us, we’ll go ourselves!” Xing Wuliang was highly wary of his shadow now, deeply afraid that it would suddenly spring out of a rock somewhere and chop his head off.

There were at least seven thousand headless corpses on the ground, and those were just the ones they could see.

Meanwhile, Lu Yun was more focused on the corpses, as was Xing Wuliang also on his guard against them. The latter was one of the most brilliant supplemental grandmasters in the fourth realm—well versed in feng shui and the dao of burial. He could tell that there wasn’t only shadow dao present.

If there were burial mounds for tomb keepers, then there would be four of them in total. One for each cardinal direction, thus providing four peak daos to envelope the world. The corpses here hadn’t fallen to the ground in a random, haphazard manner.

“AHH!!!”

“Help!”

The four cannon fodder screamed the second Lu Yun and the other two left, becoming headless corpses. Brightheart’s shadow stood next to them with a sharp dagger in hand. Her shadowy face splitting apart into an empty void with defined features.

“Who says we have to kill our primary selves first?” sounded a voice that sounded exactly like the Brightheart World King.

Chapter 1562: Who Does It Bury?

“Who says we have to kill our primary selves first?” The menacing voice drifted in and out of earshot, providing a backdrop for numerous shadows to walk out of the surroundings. All of them wielded sharp daggers that dripped with blood.

Lu Yun's shadow wanted to join them, but he absentmindedly stomped it back into place.

Xing Wuliang looked around warily, stuffing Horizon's Edge into his junior brother's hands and shrinking behind Brightheart, the very image of a spineless man.

Lu Yun put away the Water Virtue Orb and Metal Virtue Orb. As strong as their worlds were, they were far less than Horizon's Edge.

Kerthunk.

The cube rotated gently and turned into a drawing compass, landing in Lu Yun's hand.

"Why have they all come out all of a sudden? Are we that much of a threat?" Brightheart looked a little pale and stared uneasily at her wraith-like shadow. Logically speaking, she was the strongest out of the three of them, but she hadn't helped much thus far on their journey. It'd been Feng Feifan and Xing Wuliang who'd taken care of anything that came up.

"Good thing the young man with the sword isn't here. We'd be doomed if his shadow came out!" Xing Wuliang muttered.

"Who says I'm not here?" a dejected voice sounded behind them. Jian Juexian suddenly emerged with his sword dragging on the ground. His robes were disheveled and his neat hair bun chopped off in various places.

He'd plainly weathered a fearsome battle.

"Did you win? Or lose?" Lu Yun asked with a smile before stomping on his shadow again, keeping it quietly still beneath his feet.

"It can hit me, but my blows pass through it," Jian Juexian responded wearily. "At the same time, it's impossible for it to kill me."

"Then it looks like you lost to your own shadow," Lu Yun declared without mercy.

Jian Juexian grimaced at Lu Yun, but didn't deny the conclusion. He had indeed lost to his own shadow.

"You should figure out how to handle these ones first," Jian Juexian pointed at the approaching shadows. "They're all out here, which means that whatever exists in the burial mound knows that you three are a threat. They'll find a way to kill and keep you here."

He leaned back and grinned widely, like he was watching a highly entertaining show. If Lu Yun hadn't exposed his failings, he might've helped the trio. But if his junior and senior brothers learned that he'd been defeated by his own shadow, he would no longer have the face to emerge in public anymore.

Jian Juexian was a Nihil World Sovereign, but so was Feng Feifan! Since they were peers, he absolutely had the right to throw a small tantrum in front of someone on the same cultivation level.

Nihil World Sovereigns being aloof and remote personages was just a misconception that lower level cultivators held. Who would stand removed from other people on the same footing as them? As strong as these sovereigns were, they were also living beings with their own emotions and motivations.

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Lu Yun glared at Jian Juexian and drew a flat, round world with the drawing compass. A tremendous suction force blossomed out of it and swallowed all of the shadows. He then closed the compass, extinguishing the world.

“...that’s it?” Jian Juexian’s jaw dropped.

“That’s it.” Lu Yun nodded.

“You took care of the problem?” Xing Wuliang was also flabbergasted.

“I took care of it.” Lu Yun lowered his head and looked at his shadow, discovering that it was shaking with fear.

“Was my shadow swallowed too?” Jian Juexian asked dumbly.

“It was swallowed if it came out and wasn’t if it’d remained in hiding,” Lu Yun explained.

“Does that mean I have no shadow from now on?” Xing Wuliang asked hesitantly.

“No, our shadows turned into shadow demons only because of the shadow dao present in this world. Everything will return to normal after we leave,” Brightheart clarified. “The shadow dao probably also has something to do with the dim sun in the sky.”

Xing Wuliang nodded with a rueful grin. Though he understood what peak dao was, he still had no idea what shadow dao could be.

The headless corpses on the ground twitched when Lu Yun eliminated the shadows, but nothing else happened beyond that. All the same, he remained on high alert.

“Senior brother Wuliang, your shadow wasn’t devoured by the cube,” Lu Yun suddenly said.

“What?!” Xing Wuliang jerked with shock. His shadow hadn’t revealed itself since leaving his body. Perhaps shadows of supplemental grandmasters were smarter than the others?

“It should be hiding in the burial mound.” Jian Juexian’s face was pale. He wasn’t a Nihil World Sovereign at the moment and he was suppressed by the entire tomb. He couldn’t even ensure the tomb’s demise with his if he wanted to.

There was someone buried here who was extraordinarily important to either the Cloud Sovereign or Hallowed Emperor. It would be incredibly unjust if Jian Juexian were to die in this tomb, but extreme curiosity filled his heart. Just who was buried here?

The Hallowed Emperor and the Cloud Sovereign!

Both had passed on before Jian Juexian became a Nihil World Sovereign and were legends of the fourth realm. The Tomb of the Hallowed Emperor was as its name indicated—its only master was the Hallowed Emperor.

Thus, it was highly unexpected that someone else was also buried here. The oddness drew Lu Yun with interest.

“We won’t be able to reach the main tomb if we don’t break this burial mound of shadow dao.” Xing Wuliang shook his head at the burial mound that towered like a mountain. “The shadows that junior brother Feng took care of were just the ones from people who came later. If this really is a burial mound for a powerhouse of shadow dao...”

He stopped talking. His shadow had entered the burial mound because its master had selected it.

Lu Yun took another look at the headless corpses on the ground and inclined his head. He called upon Horizon’s Edge again and drew a circle in the void. The world drifted over to the burial mound—he was going to contain it as well!

This burial mound was far removed from the coffin earlier. As strong as it might be, it was just a pile of dirt.

Hummm.

The burial mound’s shadow abruptly stood up as a massive giant and punched out at the circle.

Bam!

Craaaaack.

The world shattered from the collision and returned to nothing.

The Water and Metal Virtue Orbs appeared around Lu Yun at the same time, manifesting their two worlds. The shadow giant continued lunging for Lu Yun after destroying the world since the young man was the biggest threat.

Chapter 1563: Fallen Into a Trap

As the shadow giant smashed down on Lu Yun, the two virtue orbs by the young man’s side flared with their respective worlds and met the blow.

Kabooooom.

The giant scattered as a multitude of shadowy shards; energy from the two worlds churned the shards into nothing. Lu Yun had identified long ago that the power of a world was the antithesis to these shadows. Otherwise, he wouldn’t have been able to so easily destroy them with the drawing compass.

Horizon’s Edge was now an enormous drawing compass five thousand kilometers wide over Lu Yun’s head. It began tracing circles in the void, creating one huge circular world after another. They interlocked with each other to form an even more massive and durable world.

Lu Yun didn’t immediately cover the burial mound with the world. He was thinking. The headless corpses on the ground were twitching again, but nothing else was happening.

“What are you waiting for?” Xing Wuliang asked when Lu Yun continued to hesitate. Brightheart also looked at him, but Lu Yun was looking at Jian Juexian.

“I’ve fallen into a trap,” he transmitted to the young man.

“What?!” Jian Juexian blinked.

“We shouldn’t have excised those tumors. They aren’t trying to erode the tomb, but to break the tomb’s layout! Therefore, I’ve set foot into a trap.” Lu Yun brooded ominously.

Cutting out poisonous tumors had granted him the freedom to utilize the strength of a Nihil World Sovereign within the Tomb of the Hallowed Emperor. A world sovereign could break the layouts in the tomb!

The Cloud Sovereign was dead and the tomb had stood for countless eons. Many of its layouts had been depreciated by time. A Nihil World Sovereign was enough to dismantle all of them completely.

If he did so, he would fall into another layout—the one who set up the tumors in the tomb.

“The layout isn’t for the entire tomb—it’s just for this tomb realm,” Lu Yun’s voice echoed in Jian Juexian’s ears again. “The creation seed is here!”

“The creation seed is buried over there!” Jian Juexian jerked with realization. It wasn’t a person under the pile of dirt, but the creation seed!

As a mighty Nihil World Sovereign, Jian Juexian would never come in search for another sovereign’s legacy, even if that one had opened the doors to sequence.

The creation seed!

“That’s right!” Lu Yun and Jian Juexian conversed in a way unique to Nihil World Sovereigns. Anyone below their level couldn’t see their actions or hear their words.

Lu Yun turned to Xing Wuliang, suddenly grasping why the latter’s shadow hadn’t done anything other than simply vanishing on the spot.

Xing Wuliang had also fallen into the trap, but his shadow hadn’t due to the other pair of eyes in his pupils. Though he wasn’t a Nihil World Sovereign, he was a powerful supplemental grandmaster. His shadow had likely realized something to result in its inaction.

These shadows are controlled by something. Lu Yun once more looked at the headless bodies on the ground.

“Do you sense something off?” he asked out loud.

Xing Wuliang looked around uncertainly, feeling that something had gone wrong now that his junior brother mentioned it.

“...soul force!” He took a deep breath and smiled wryly after cautiously sending out his consciousness. “My shadow is telling me through soul force that I can’t die no matter what, and that I shouldn’t use the grandmaster-level soul force in this world.”

Bitterness welled up in his mouth; he believed his shadow. The others had been attacked by theirs as soon as the shadows broke free, but his hadn’t done anything.

He looked at Brightheart; her eyes shone brightly with comprehension.

“Those poisonous tumors,” she said calmly without a change in expression. “Both of you took care of them and received some benefits for doing so. Your grandmaster-level soul force comes from the tomb!”

“Yes.” Xing Wuliang nodded. The world king was immensely experienced and no fool. She could quickly connect the dots after momentary thought.

“I really am a useless lump now, you three need to protect me!” Xing Wuliang said seriously. “My shadow says that if I die here, you’ll face thousands of supplemental grandmasters.”

He subconsciously looked at the bodies on the ground. He would join them if he died and become their king. His shadow was feeding information about everything to him, including the fact that the creation seed was buried here!

“You and him are both caught in the trap, so you can’t do anything and you can’t die,” snorted Jian Juexian. “Little girl, only you and I can fight back. How do our chances of survival look if we work together?”

Lu Yun’s world from the Horizon’s Edge had fully taken shape and fell down from the sky, enclosing them with protection. His worlds of sword and water virtue had completely eliminated the shadow giant. The tomb world was calm again, as if all danger had been taken care of.

However, the burial mound no longer had a shadow.

“If only you and I work together, then the group’s chances of survival are none.” Brightheart shook her head and asked with surprise, “Junior brother Feng has already counterattacked a few times. Why hasn’t that resulted in backlash from the tumors?”

“Because I can destroy this place even without falling into the trap. But right now, we need to protect Xing Wuliang. If he dies here...” Lu Yun’s blood ran cold with the thought of countless supplemental grandmasters popping out of everywhere. If he’d exerted the strength of a Nihil World Sovereign at any point in time, a layout targeting him would’ve also appeared. That layout would be one of a Nihil World Sovereign and not soul force of supplemental dao.

“Then we keep going!” Xing Wuliang set his jaw. “The master of these tumors wants what’s buried in the mound. If we touch it, he won’t be able to sit still. We have a chance once the layout changes!”

He took large strides forward and headed for the center of the tomb realm. The creation seed was there and he was sorely tempted. All he needed to do was to take one look at it.

Lu Yun knew what Xing Wuliang was thinking and didn’t object. That was indeed the best course of action—if they had to remain unchanging, then the layout had to change. Flaws would appear once the layout changed.

The plotter had likely never imagined he’d attract a perverse existence like Lu Yun. Here was a Nihil World Sovereign with incredible soul force who could use a connate treasure!

Lu Yun guided Horizon’s Edge to keep its world covering them at all times. As they headed deeper into the world, the burial mound’s shadow appeared at some point in time. The shadows that Lu Yun had

eliminated also reappeared and jumped into the mountain's shadow to keep a covert eye on the young man.

His own shadow wanted to freely run around too, but he kept it firmly underfoot.

Chapter 1564: A Shadow That Bleeds

Gusts of yin wind howled around them as general illumination dimmed the more they progressed. The dull sun in the sky was still there, but its radiance turned to darkness when it hit the ground.

"Is it really the creation seed?" Brightheart asked.

"What else would command so much effort from someone?" Jian Juexian responded matter-of-factly. In his eyes, only a creation seed would inspire the unknown existence to set up this kind of layout.

Brightheart didn't know Lu Yun and Jian Juexian's true cultivation level, but a layout that could forcefully increase the strength of someone in it was a heaven-defying one.

Lu Yun started with surprise. Scheming against Nihil World Sovereigns, drawing them into a plot... Is it really just a creation seed?

"...how do you know there's a creation seed here?" Jian Juexian's gaze abruptly turned sharp as he trained it on Brightheart.

Xing Wuliang knew about it because his shadow had told him, but he hadn't shared it with the rest of the group. Lu Yun and Jian Juexian's conversation had been in the manner of Nihil World Sovereigns; Brightheart couldn't have heard them.

Xing Wuliang also looked at the world king.

"Don't tell me that your shadow told you." Jian Juexian's sword scraped free of its scabbard as he leveled a frosty stare at Brightheart.

Brightheart looked at Xing Wuliang; he was already one step in front of her and blocking Jian Juexian's suspecting gaze.

"So what if Brightheart knows about the creation seed?" Derision curved his lips. "You're not one of us."

Jian Juexian blinked, then looked at Lu Yun. The latter was completely ignoring them and soldiering forward in the oppressive world.

"Be careful, the darkness here is shadow, not darkness," Lu Yun said. "We're in the belly of a massive shadow. Be quick about anything you want to do. We won't be able to do anything after we leave this patch of shadow."

The shadow was somehow isolating them from the outside world and didn't fear the power of the world. It wouldn't have the courage to swallow the world he'd drawn otherwise. Lu Yun had already seen the shadows that he'd killed earlier come back to life.

As long as shadow dao persisted in this world, those shadows would never die.

“Who says I’m not afraid of the power of a world?” sounded a muffled voice as soon as Lu Yun finished speaking.

He trembled with shock and the other three lifted their heads with stupefaction.

“Shadows can talk?” Xing Wuliang asked dumbly.

“Didn’t you guys hear part of the truth earlier?” the shadow continued. “The Shadow Sovereign voluntarily laid himself to rest in the burial mound so he could protect this place. Therefore, it isn’t the creation seed that’s buried here.”

“My shadow... lied to me?” Xing Wuliang frowned.

“Of course it did. Not only does it lie to you, but it also wants to kill you,” the voice responded matter-of-factly. “You fell into that person’s trap and everything about you is polluted, as is your shadow.”

Lu Yun frowned slightly. Had he misjudged and the other pair of eyes not had any effect?

Oh, wait a second! That pair of eyes was hiding in Xing Wuliang’s in order to “see” the creation seed. If it helped Xing Wuliang as soon as he fell into a trap, the one behind the tumors would learn about its existence.

Thus, Xing Wuliang’s shadow smoothly became one of the pawns and started controlling all of the shadows in this world. It even wanted to attack the shadow dao that governed it since there was more than just shadow dao at play here.

“You’re the one who swallowed us—do you have something to say?” Jian Juexian put his sword away and looked up at the darkness that was actually shadow.

“Why do I need to tell you anything?” It seemed to be pouting. “I’m just preventing you from approaching the tomb in the center of the burial mound. Whatever you are, my duties are to keep you away from it.

“And it’s not the creation seed here. If you want that, you can go to the main tomb. The Hallowed Emperor has the seed, it’s not here.”

Lu Yun was growing ever more curious about the state of this tomb world.

“Why should I believe you?” he chuckled and flung out the Water and Metal Virtue Orbs. “The more you want to keep it from me, the more I want to take a look.”

Not the creation seed?

Perfect. Though he was a little curious about them, he could ask Violetgrave for all of them if he wanted. She would never turn him down.

If it wasn’t the creation seed buried here, then it had to be a stunning treasure. At this point in their exploration, he could sense that what lay ahead wasn’t a living being, but a treasure.

He put thought of everything else out of his mind and raised Horizon’s Edge, walking forward and holding it high. Though they were in the stomach of a shadow, a shadow was a shadow and not truly alive.

Yes, a shadow was talking to them, but that was a byproduct of shadow dao. It was the more the equivalent of the Shadow Sovereign talking to them.

A tomb keeper?

They were the living dead, but it would be over the top for the Shadow Sovereign to bury himself in a pile of dirt, then use his own boundless resentment to turn other people's shadows into shadow demons to guard the tomb.

"You seek death!" The voice flew into a rage at seeing Lu Yun forge ahead without considering anything else. The shadows he'd eliminated earlier reappeared, charging the group with sharp daggers.

They were formless and shapeless, immediately entering the world drawn by Horizon's Edge. While the shadows earlier had been afraid of the power of a world, these ones seemed to have been modified to withstand it.

"Hmph!" Jian Juexian sneered and unsheathed his longsword, slicing more than a dozen into half with one stroke. Blackish-red blood flowed out of his defeated opponents.

Shadows bleed?

He paused with surprise.

"The shadows before were afraid of the power of a world, but they were also formless, shapeless, and didn't belong to our world. Hence, we couldn't kill them," Brightheart called out. "Now that they've returned to this world, they aren't afraid of the power anymore. But, that means we can kill them."

A tic throbbed in Lu Yun's cheek. So Brightheart had seen through everything long ago!

Chapter 1565: Immortal's End

Jian Juexian and Lu Yun looked at each other. The Brightheart World King suddenly seemed much more than she appeared. She'd remained completely unmoved when Lu Yun and Xing Wuliang worked to remove the tumors—likely because she'd already determined the inner workings of everything.

Lu Yun looked at Xing Wuliang again; he was already fighting a shadow—his own.

His shadow was also a major World Manifest and a supplemental grandmaster. However, it wielded only a sharp dagger. Xing Wuliang successfully kept his shadow at bay because he could haul out endless treasures.

The corner of Jian Juexian's eyes twitched and his shadow appeared again before he could say anything, coming down at him with an upraised dagger. He yelped and barely managed to fend off the attack with a backhanded blow. Quickly preoccupied with fighting for his life, he wasn't concerned with how to sever his shadow, but how to stay alive. Jian Juexian really had no way to defeat his shadow.

The worlds of water virtue and swords blossomed from Lu Yun's side at the same time.

Energy of water virtue wove around boundless golden swords and rained down on the shadows in a combined offensive.

There was no answering movement from the mammoth shadow in the air. It seemed to want to just quietly observe the weaknesses of the four in its stomach. In its eyes, Jian Juexian was undoubtedly the worst off. He barely managed to escape multiple times, but he wasn't that far behind Xing Wuliang.

Though Xing Wuliang had suppressed his shadow, it was so strong that it could command other shadows from the surroundings; its plethora of available methods seemed never ending.

The one most at ease wasn't Lu Yun, but the Brightheart World King. She'd vanquished her shadow with a single move the moment it appeared; not even Lu Yun witnessed how she'd killed it.

"Are you still observing things, you idiot?!" Brightheart suddenly paused and roared at the shadow overhead. "Can't you tell that the shadows have been corrupted, or is it that you've betrayed the Shadow Sovereign too?!"

"Of course I am completely loyal to the Shadow Sovereign!" the muffled voice rang out. "I just want to use you to clean out this rot!"

Lu Yun:

"Then turn the shadows back to what they were before and I'll use the power of a world against them," he forced out through grit teeth.

"Didn't you just try it?" declined the shadow. "The shadows will just resurrect from another void. Only through making them return to this world will they be completely eliminated.

"See, the girl's shadow didn't come back to life after it died. You need to work harder, good luck and do well!"

Lu Yun:

He rolled his eyes and manifested a sword into his hand, banishing a shadow with a single strike.

"An ultimate treasure of the Hongmeng, and one from the original Hongmeng!" Xing Wuliang sent his shadow flying with a kick and whipped his head around, staring intently at the sword glowing with a violet hue in Lu Yun's hand.

The Purple Sunrise Sword.

This sword was an ultimate treasure of the original Hongmeng, making it more powerful than connate treasures of the fourth realm. It'd been born earlier than the legendary "Quiet" and was a sword dao unto its own.

Lu Yun hadn't thought much of the Purple Sunrise Sword when he was in the Hongmeng, but after arriving in the fourth realm, he discovered with great surprise that it was stronger than the two virtue orbs. It was even stronger than Xing Wuliang's Horizon's Edge!

"No wonder the guy with the sword kept wanting you to join Ingress Sword Island, you carry an ultimate treasure of sword dao from the last epoch!" Xing Wuliang finally understood why Jian Juexian hadn't left Lu Yun alone.

The last epoch!

To fourth realm denizens, the time in which the original Hongmeng ruled the fourth realm was ancient history of the last epoch. When the original Hongmeng perished and the fourth realm rebuilt its orders, that was the dawn of the new and current epoch.

“The Purple Sunrise Sword...” Jian Juexian gazed intently at the sword in Lu Yun’s hand. He recognized it too. “So the Purple Sunrise Sword is on him, which means...”

Jian Juexian put the rest of the thought out of his mind.

“Lend me the sword!” he suddenly shouted at Lu Yun. “I’ll give it back to you after I kill my shadow!”

His shadow jerked, then quietly slipped away. It was also corrupted by Xing Wuliang’s shadow and had become part of the poisonous tumor.

Whether it was Jian Juexian or Lu Yun, neither of them could tell what was behind the tumor this time. That Jian Juexian’s shadow had been polluted meant he was caught in the trap too. Killing it would set him free.

“No can do.” Lu Yun flicked a sidelong glance at Jian Juexian.

The young man nearly flew into a rage on the spot. He wielded an ordinary sword since he wanted to hone his sword dao. Such a commonplace weapon didn’t give him any advantage against his shadow. It wasn’t even a match for the dagger in his shadow’s hand!

The Ingress Sword Island disciple had been fiercely proud of himself and very self assured that it didn’t matter whether he wielded a mundane or divine weapon. He finally realized how wrong he was when he faced himself. How dearly he wished to be brandishing a stunning sword in this moment!

That brat’s not lending it to me! Jian Juexian almost shattered his teeth with anger. I gave him the Metal Virtue Orb, but he won’t even lend me a sword!

“I have a better one, do you want it?” Lu Yun suddenly winked at him.

“Give it here!” Jian Juexian yelled when he saw his shadow charge out again.

Lu Yun waved a hand and shot out a streak of purple light that landed in Jian Juexian’s hand. He trembled violently when he firmly grasped it, staring at it with incredulity.

A faint purple sword was in his hand.

“This is...” He felt a vast sword intent from an unknown space as soon as he touched it. This sword didn’t seem to be just a sword, but a key that opened the sequence of swords.

Immortal’s End.

Chapter 1566: Keep It

“Immortal’s End!” Jian Juexian subconsciously identified the weapon.

There was no sense of distinction between him and the sword. It became one with him as soon as it entered his hand, as if it was destined to be his. The characters in his name literally stood for “sword end immortal”, a natural fit for a sword called Immortal’s End.

As his shadow charged over once more, Jian Juexian slashed down with a streak of purple haze and cleaved it into two.

The shadow that'd caused him no end of trouble did not appear again.

Jian Juexian looked dumbly at the sword in his hand. He didn't ask Lu Yun where he'd obtained it. This was the sword of the Ingress Sword Island forefather, one of the four swords that condemned immortals.

Four great sword daos existed on the island—the paths of immortal condemnation, immortal entrapment, immortal slaughter, and immortal end. Jian Juexian was the master of the immortal end path. Their corresponding swords had vanished with the forefather, and to think one of them would reappear in a stranger's hand on this day!

No wonder he'd kept wanting to bring this young man back to the island!

"DIE!!" Jian Juexian roared and struck out with a flaming purple wave, shooting sword qi in all directions.

Every shadow within half a kilometer perished, including the mammoth shadow in the air and Xing Wuliang's shadow.

Jian Juexian retracted the sword and gaped at the meter length of gleaming edge in his hands, sinking into an inexplicable mental state.

"Jian Juexian can open the doors to the sequence of swords. He is a Nihil World Sovereign under the path of immortal end, so he can use this very sword to enter sequence," Mo Yi's voice rang in Lu Yun's mind.

She'd given the sword to Lu Yun so he could give it to Jian Juexian. Lu Yun knew that despite being present in the Disordered Hell, she still possessed a marvelous connection with the world of immortals that he wasn't able to fully fathom.

"Will it affect Daoist Ingress to lose his sword?" he frowned.

In many people's eyes, the highest level of sword dao was the absence of a sword in one's hand and heart. However, a mighty sword was always a potent addition to one's strength. What talk of sword dao could there be without a sword?

"You're too focused on form over function." Mo Yi shook her head lightly. "Ingress himself is the dao of four swords. He can manifest them at any time if he's willing."

Lu Yun carefully turned over her words in his mind.

"The Immortal's End is like the Glacial Fire Hammers that the overlord of Ice gave to you. They're both keys to sequence. While you cannot enter sequence with the hammers, Jian Juexian can do so with the sword."

"Nihil World Sovereigns do not repeat the same path..." Lu Yun lowered his head and mumbled, "But Jian Juexian walks the path that Daoist Ingress once walked."

“Ingress is not a Nihil World Sovereign, he never was. He never walked that path.” Mo Yi’s voice echoed in his heart like the morning drum, ringing in both volume and meaning.

“That’s right... Nihil World Sovereign is a dao of the fourth realm and ‘ingress’ is a dao of the original Hongmeng. He walked the dao to its peak and activated sequence,” Lu Yun murmured to himself. “But all daos lead to the same end...”

Mo Yi stood within the Disordered Hell and raised her head to Lu Yun outside of it, not saying anything.

“No dao originally existed beneath the heavens. They came into being after people traveled down their paths,” she suddenly said after a long pause and sat down again. She resumed fishing and ignored Lu Yun.

“Yes... all of the daos in existence are a result of people walking that particular path. There is no formula dao in the fourth realm because no one’s walked that path yet,” Lu Yun heaved a long sigh of ease. He was finally hitting upon the truth.

His dao heart had been knocked askew after listening to Jian Juexian, but Mo Yi’s conversation re-stabilized it. That Nihil World Sovereigns didn’t repeat the same path didn’t preclude wielding the same dao; it meant that they didn’t walk the exact same path to the same dao. The legacy in the Tomb of the Hallowed Emperor wasn’t a great dao, but the way to walk it.

Create a great dao myself?

That was difficult beyond belief. The all-encompassing formula dao that Lu Yun and Qing Yu jointly created had failed to take root in the fourth realm. It hadn’t traversed the realm to become one of the great daos that everyone could cultivate.

Daoist Ingress, however, had created four sword daos himself. Jian Juexian walked his path of immortal end, but he did so in his own manner.

.....

Jian Juexian unequivocally eliminated the shadows in the surroundings, including the enormous shadow in the air. Immortal End’s was a sword that could sever even shadow dao, to say nothing of the shadows under its control.

The surroundings thus purified, the sky returned to normal and dim light scattered from above, not at all warm or illuminating. Despite that, everyone’s shadows returned to their feet. Everything seemed to be back to how it should be.

Jian Juexian didn’t move; his eyes were closed and he remained in an extended position of reaching forward with the sword. He was carefully savoring the sword dao within the weapon.

“Do I need to give it back to you?” He opened his eyes and looked at Lu Yun piteously. He’d asked to borrow the sword before, so naturally, he had to return it.

“Keep it.” Lu Yun waved him off.

Xing Wuliang's jaw dropped. He could see how terrifying Immortal's End was—it was a powerful connate treasure many times stronger than his Horizon's Edge! Feng Feifan had so easily given it to the young man with a sword?

Truth be told, it disgruntled him slightly. He now saw Feng Feifan as a full Star Sect disciple, so all of his treasures were naturally the faction's treasures. To so easily give it to an outsider like this...

"It belonged to Ingress Sword Island to begin with, I'm just returning it to them. He kept inviting me to join them only because of that sword," Lu Yun gave a plausible explanation.

"I see." Xing Wuliang nodded and looked at Brightheart. "Are you really Brightheart?"

"Nope." She shook her head.

"Then who are you?!" Panic and dismay flooded the man's face. He was angry, concerned, and a little bit wary. If she wasn't the Brightheart World King, where was the real Brightheart? Was she alright?

The woman burst out laughing when she saw Xing Wuliang's expression. "Who do you think I am?"

"She is indeed the Brightheart World King that we know." Lu Yun patted his shoulder. "She's also a stunning genius. If you don't work harder, she might be a Nihil World Sovereign when you make it to Void World King."

Xing Wuliang looked dumbly at Lu Yun.

"The Brightheart World King's true strength is greater than the Divine Fire World King's, she's almost a Nihil World Sovereign." Jian Juexian put Immortal's End away and returned his sword to its scabbard. "She didn't display her true strength before, probably because she was being mindful of your feelings."

Chapter 1567: Herding Zombies

"Your master sent you here for the creation seed and mine sent me for what's buried in this tomb," Brightheart suddenly sighed. "I didn't want to come, but I was somehow at the right place at the wrong time and ended up in here."

"Could you tell early on that the one behind the tumors is here for that item as well?" Xing Wuliang asked when he got over his shock.

"Yes." Brightheart nodded. "The plotter is stronger than my master, so my master has given up on this place."

"Has he really?" Jian Juexian asked suspiciously.

"Only someone who has opened the doors to sequence can lure you, the master of the immortal end dao of Ingress Sword Island, into a layout. My master cannot afford to provoke someone like that," Brightheart admitted candidly.

"So you saw through my identity a long time ago?" Jian Juexian's eyes narrowed warningly.

"If that wasn't the case, why would my master have given up?" Brightheart nodded at Xing Wuliang. "His master's also given up."

Jian Juexian's expression flickered darkly and he subconsciously glanced at Lu Yun. The two kids in front of them didn't seem to know their companion's true identity. He was also a Nihil World Sovereign, one that could release his full power in the tomb!

Though the Brightheart World King—or her master, rather—had seen through Jian Juexian's true self, they hadn't seen through Lu Yun's.

Unbidden, the hairs on the back of his neck rose with horror. He couldn't see through Lu Yun either. In Jian Juexian's eyes, Lu Yun was just a true void cultivator. If it wasn't for the young man displaying the strength of a Nihil World Sovereign and utilizing a pair of hammers to activate sequence, Jian Juexian would've never guessed the truth about him.

"Why are you looking at me like that?" Lu Yun didn't know what Jian Juexian was thinking, but he could sense a gaze so terrified that it almost physically pierced him.

"Where did you two meet this Feng Feifan?" Jian Juexian transmitted a hasty question to Xing Wuliang. He now suspected Lu Yun, that he was a transformed yin spirit from the tomb.

"Outside the Tomb of the Hallowed Emperor, what of it?" Xing Wuliang answered out loud, then quickly explained when he realized the motive behind the question, "When I met junior brother Feng, he was knowledgeable in supplemental dao, but not skilled in it. He didn't even have methods to cultivate in supplemental dao. He possesses his current soul force only after I passed on the Three Thousand Soul Daos and gave him a Profound Nineroot."

Now that Xing Wuliang knew Jian Juexian's identity, he treated the latter with nothing but respect. Jian Juexian breathed out with relief upon hearing how the two met Lu Yun.

"Then he's not a yin spirit from the tomb."

"Definitely not."

"What? You suspect junior brother Feng to be a disguised yin spirit??"

"Yes! He's so uncanny..."

"That's impossible!"

.....

"What's going on with you three?" Lu Yun asked oddly when he read the expressions on the other three's faces. He couldn't be bothered to eavesdrop on their conversation.

"Nothing." Jian Juexian caressed his new sword. With Immortal's End in hand, he wasn't afraid of anything. Plus, Feng Feifan was most likely not a yin spirit in the tomb and certainly not the horrifying hand directing everything behind the scenes.

"If you guys aren't going to go, then I'll go take a look." Those three were becoming increasingly weirder to Lu Yun. He retracted the world from Horizon's Edge, returned the treasure to the form of a cube, and threw it to Xing Wuliang.

The man had broken out of the trap thanks to Jian Juexian's keen sword edge, but Lu Yun was still caught in it.

"You be careful." Jian Juexian nodded, dismissing the notion of further exploring this strange tomb.

Xing Wuliang and Brightheart also had no intention of proceeding further. They weren't the first batch of people here, perhaps there were others ahead of them who were caught in the same trap.

The headless corpses on the ground were still present and remained unmoving. Lu Yun swept his gaze over them and took out a bell.

Tinkle.

The bell rang crisply and commanded the bodies to rise and amble forward.

"You..." Jian Juexian's eyes widened and he stared incredulously at Lu Yun. Manipulating corpses? What kind of method was that?

"The dao of herding corpses!" Xing Wuliang identified with shock. "Legend has it that there is a terrible sect called the Corpse Refiners in an unknown part of the Boundless Planes. They can turn corpses into battle zombies and wield a great dao of herding corpses. They can compel zombies to do their bidding..."

"Are you a Corpse Refiner, junior brother?"

The Boundless Planes were so vast that no one could fully explore it. Thus, they divided the realm into the known and unknown. When Jian Juexian made a circle with his fingers, that'd included countless unknown spots. They were unknown, undeveloped, and unexplored. Everything about them was unknown and all was a mystery—such as the Corpse Refiners Xing Wuliang had just mentioned.

"Corpse Refiners..." Lu Yun raised a brow. There were Corpse Refiners in the world of immortals as well! Those were now a legitimate path under the immortal dao and the sect was in charge of Truespirit Major, one of the nine majors of the world of immortals.

The technique he was using came from them, and he'd never imagined that there would also be a Corpse Refiners in the fourth realm! So they're based in an unknown spot?

Lu Yun didn't know where the Corpse Refiners of the world of immortals originated from and he didn't know their secrets. He'd never conquered the entire world to hold in the palm of his hand; he didn't even completely eliminate those who'd once opposed him.

He'd only set everything back to its proper path, a normal path, and let the struggles between good and evil, different perspectives, and different motives continue as they would. He was removed and independent from it all.

That was how things were in the world of immortals, chaos, and Hongmeng.

Now that he heard the Corpse Refiners name again, his hackles rose. He'd thought that this sect didn't have the right to be his enemy any longer.

"You know, I never once saw them in the thirty-three cycles. Fucking hell, I was too small to see them!" he grumbled and vigorously rang the bell, sending the corpses forward.

“I’m not a Corpse Refiner, I got this technique from a rival. He was probably one of them,” Lu Yun offered after some thought. He wasn’t lying, the Corpse Refiners in the world of immortals was indeed his rival.

“Do you know Ye Guangxiong?” Jian Juexian suddenly asked.

“Ye—what?” Lu Yun blinked.

“Ye Guangxiong,” Jian Juexian repeated.

“Never heard of him... is he a Nihil World Sovereign too?” Lu Yun transmitted back.

Jian Juexian didn’t answer him.

Boom!

Boom!

Boom!

Explosions rang from the front as the moving corpses mysteriously detonated one after another.

Chapter 1568: The Plotter

Lu Yun whirled around to look forward. The headless corpses under his control were exploding one after another, returning to bodies on the ground. They laid down quietly, as if nothing had ever taken place.

A slight frown creased Lu Yun’s forehead.

“Are these bodies also tomb keepers?” Xing Wuliang gasped at the sight.

“Yes,” Lu Yun answered, keeping his eyes fixed on a spot. There’d been a corpse there under his command, but it was now gone. “Now they are,” he added.

“Huh?” Xing Wuliang didn’t quite understand.

“Stay here and don’t move.” Lu Yun waved the bell in his hand once more and raised the corpses again, sending them in a shaky advance.

They didn’t blow apart this time, instead creating a road that Lu Yun followed in. He slowly vanished from the group’s sight.

“What’s going on?” Xing Wuliang’s head ached. He didn’t understand what was happening. Jian Juexian looked at Brightheart, who was still trembling with fear.

“When we first arrived, we faced both the shadows and formation of corpses. But thankfully, the formation was corrupted. Otherwise, we would’ve died in the double assault of the two.” Fear marked her expression. Thank goodness the formation had also been caught in the secondary schemes of this world, or the entire group would also be headless corpses on the ground.

.....

Lu Yun seemed to have entered another world. It was the same as the previous one with an identical layout and terrain. The only difference was a vivid blue sky overhead and bright, dappled sunlight.

He saw no sign of Xing Wuliang and the others when he looked back; the headless corpses next to him were also gone. He paused and began deriving the truth about this place.

“You don’t need to look any further, this is the true appearance of this world,” rang a slightly frosty voice.

Lu Yun lifted his eyes to see that the body that’d disappeared was standing in front of him, whole and complete like it’d never died. Plainly, something was using it to appear here.

The Roastwave World King.

The vanished body had belonged to Roastwave, and if Lu Yun had read its information clearly before its disappearance, the world king had also fallen into the trap due to removing some of the poisonous tumors.

Not only was he dead, but his corpse was being used by another. He was a pawn that someone was possessing to manifest in the Tomb of the Hallowed Emperor.

“What are you?” Lu Yun asked.

“I am the Roastwave World King, of course. I have taken his body and soul to replace him in the world of the living,” the world king responded matter-of-factly.

“So you’re just a wild ghost,” Lu Yun sneered at the answer. He was certain that the ultimate plotter in the tomb had appeared—the Roastwave World King in front of him.

Or rather, the ghost that’d possessed his body.

Lu Yun gave up the act once he saw that the plotter had slipped into a Void World King’s body. He exerted the strength of a Nihil World Sovereign and slammed his hand down on Roastwave.

“You’re the Nihil World Sovereign!”

Delight!

Tremendous delight!

The plotter beamed with joy and opened his arms wide, meeting Lu Yun with a bear hug.

“So it’s you! Fantastic, this is so wonderful! I’ll be a Nihil World Sovereign with your body and I’ll be able to claim the Imperial Seal. I’ll be the new emperor in this part of existence!”

“What? Imperial Seal??” Lu Yun started when he heard the words.

He’d calculated that the hand behind the scenes, the creator of the tumors, must be within the tomb and fighting with the tomb’s legitimate arrangements. He’d be able to lure the plotter to him if he entered the layout.

But the Roastwave World King had done so before Lu Yun could reach this step. He was also a powerful world king who was concealing his true strength. His cultivation was on par with the Divine Fire World King—though he paced outside the door to Nihil World Sovereign, he wasn’t too far from the cultivation level.

He was the perfect target for the plotter to possess and come back to life in. But the latter had never imagined that Lu Yun would appear in front of him, that the Nihil World Sovereign would also fall into the trap.

He hadn't been able to see through Lu Yun, just like Jian Juexian couldn't. To anyone who looked at him, Lu Yun was just a true void cultivator. But the plotter spent every moment fighting the Cloud Sovereign and Hallowed Emperor, so he could naturally feel that there was a Nihil World Sovereign walking through his layout.

Unfortunately, it was incredibly difficult to compel a personage of that level to reveal themselves. It wouldn't be easy to lay eyes on a Nihil World Sovereign that'd come to the tomb in person, much less one who was aware he'd fallen into a trap.

But against all expectations, his most desired target had appeared right in front of him!

Hummm—

A black shadow jumped out of Roastwave's body and barreled into Lu Yun's body through his palm.

"You have fallen into my trap and absorbed the power of the tomb. You are now the most optimal cauldron for me to truly come back to life in!" Voices echoed in Lu Yun's ears and gradually overlaid with each other to become one voice.

He paused and stood still.

"The body of a true void cultivator and the cultivation level of a Nihil World Sovereign. This is the perfect cauldron to play the pig for eating the tiger! My rivals will definitely be surprised to see me come back to life in this body!" A gleefully surprised voice rang out from Lu Yun's body.

"Who are your rivals?" Lu Yun suddenly asked. "People who've activated sequence?"

"It is incredibly difficult to access sequence," answered the plotter. "Those who have done so since the new epoch can be counted on two hands.

"You haven't obtained the overlord of Ice's legacy, have you? He hasn't accessed sequence either. Though he's created a few tricks, that's not truly setting foot into sequence," the voice dismissed disdainfully upon discovering certain things in Lu Yun's body. "If it wasn't for the overlord wanting to use those tricks, he would've entered sequence long ago and wouldn't need to be sealed in ice."

"The overlord of Ice is even older than the Hallowed Emperor?" Lu Yun blinked. The Tomb of the Hallowed Emperor was so old that it couldn't be dated. In order to create these tumors and assimilate the tomb, the plotter would've had to make his move shortly after the tomb's construction. It had to have been done before the tomb's arrangements and layouts fully melded together.

The plotter knew of the overlord, which meant that the overlord had already reached his fame and been sealed away not long after the tomb's creation.

"Of course the overlord is older than the Cloud Sovereign and Hallowed Emperor—wait!!" Fear crept into the voice's words. "You, this, there's something in your body! This!! This is that piece of wood! You've returned it to its origin!!

“Let me out, let me out!!”

Seeming to have glimpsed something horrifying, the plotter wanted to rush out of Lu Yun’s body. However, Lu Yun had already sealed himself off with the Tome of Life and Death.

etvolare’s Thoughts

I’m not stuck in here with you, you’re stuck in here with me.

Chapter 1569: What Is It?

“Is the withered wood that terrifying?” Lu Yun’s soul projected a replica into his consciousness so he could quietly regard the trespasser.

The interloper was a middle-aged man dressed in purple robes and purple qi curling around him. Immensely dignified, he carried himself with an impressive bearing. It was very apparent that though he was dead, his tremendous soul force far eclipsed Lu Yun’s.

He was a supplemental grandmaster who’d reached the peak of the fourth realm. If he’d been in his prime, just his soul force alone would’ve crushed Lu Yun to death.

But currently, a powerful grandmaster who should’ve been coolly composed, unconcerned with anything, was pale and shaking. He ricocheted to and fro, trying to break out of Lu Yun’s consciousness and escape his body.

A segment of withered wood hovered in the middle of Lu Yun’s consciousness.

It was rotten, decayed, and heavily scored by the ravages of time. It looked like it would break apart at any second and crumble into dust. Yet, it was also this decrepit wood that induced extreme fear from a supplemental grandmaster!

“Do you know the origin of this wood?” Lu Yun’s soul force replica approached the wood and picked it up, bringing it to the plotter.

It’d originally been placed in the Pool of Karma in the kingdom of hell; he’d wanted to nurture it with the power of karma. But once Lu Yun deduced that everyone around him, including powerhouses like Fuxi and Daoist Ingress from the original Hongmeng or fourth realm, would die because of the withered wood, he took it out of the Tome of Life and Death and stored it in his consciousness. He would not allow it to bring about the deaths of everyone he cared about for a thirty-fourth cycle.

And to think that the plotter was afraid of the withered wood!

“You, you, you you you!!” The plotter backed up in alarmed panic; his perfectly coiffed hair turning into a disheveled mess. Though he was just an entity of soul force, that was no different from a primary body for a supplemental grandmaster.

“Do you want to be a walking instance of horrendous misfortune, or do you want to cause your own death?!” He finally managed to compose himself and directed a burning glare at Lu Yun.

“It’s not a bad thing to be misfortune on legs.” Lu Yun shrugged. This was a reference to an Earth saying, but it now looked like the idiom didn’t originate from Earth.

Earth was the root of the worlds and the original great wilderness, but the great wilderness that he knew wasn't necessarily the one of the worlds. The traces of civilization found there stretched to the fourth realm—so the saying of something “on legs” belonged to the original Hongmeng.

At the same time, the core of the original Hongmeng was the worlds.

Lu Yun had visited the original Hongmeng in all thirty-three cycles he experienced, but it'd been so big that he hadn't known what the immense world he'd seen in the long river of time was.

The plotter's eyes darted around; he didn't know what Lu Yun was thinking.

“You probably don't know what that withered wood is, do you?” he suddenly asked.

“I don't, I was just about to ask you.” Lu Yun nodded. “Also, what's the Imperial Seal?”

“First things first, the wood!” declared the plotter. “That piece of withered wood carries the resentment of all beings in the original Hongmeng. Whoever holds it is tainted by that bitterness and cursed for it!”

The destruction of the original Hongmeng hadn't just been the downfall of a world, but the end of an epoch, the oblivion of hundreds of billions of beings. What undefinable heights would their resentment reach? How much retribution would be involved in such an incident?

Virtue itself would be set afire from all the retribution!

Thus, Lu Yun hadn't asked Mo Yi who'd used the Dragonquake Scripture to destroy the original Hongmeng. There wouldn't be a hint of them left—retribution would've erased them from existence.

“Then what is the withered wood?” Lu Yun asked.

“A curse, of course. Whoever touches it will die!” the plotter proclaimed.

“What is it exactly?” Lu Yun scowled with annoyance.

“A curse, of course—”

Smack!

Lu Yun suddenly lifted his hand and slapped the plotter across the face, hitting him so hard that he went flying.

“How, how dare you hit me?!” The plotter clutched his face and gasped incredulously.

“You plotted against me, lured me into a trap, and almost made me lose my sense of self. Now you run into my body to try to steal it. What should I be doing instead of hitting you? Inviting you to stay for dinner?” Lu Yun rushed over and pummeled the man with kicks and blows.

The plotter yelped and howled with pain, but couldn't return any blows in kind.

This was Lu Yun's consciousness and the Tome of Life and Death floated over their heads. It was his source of strength, providing him with so much reinforcement in his mind that he'd thrash even a powerhouse who'd stepped into sequence.

After a hefty beating, Lu Yun demanded with a dark face, "Speak, what is the withered wood? It managed to retain a tiny bit of itself after weathering the resentment of a destroyed epoch. What is its main form and the five branches that make them able to endure incredible resentment?!"

The plotter finally understood what Lu Yun was asking.

"How... how do you know about the five branches?" he asked haltingly.

Lu Yun darted forward and stomped down on the man's face. "Talk!"

"Just kill me!" The plotter's temper flared to be humiliated like this. He couldn't fight Lu Yun and he couldn't force his own death. Out of options, he sat down on the ground and glared viciously at the young man.

"You're made of soul force, aren't you..." A cold sneer played on Lu Yun's lips and he gently waved his hand. The six hellfires ignited in unison next to him, shocking the man on the ground.

"Hadal, Sanguine, Abyssal, Nihil, and Nether... are all on you! But there's six flames, what's the silver hellfire?! Why are there six hellfires?!" The plotter fell to the ground and he looked apprehensively at the jumping flames. Not only was he afraid, but he was more so mystified.

"The six paths of reincarnation and the order of reincarnation. Don't you know this as a peak supplemental grandmaster?" Lu Yun sent black hadal hellfire to the plotter. "Out with it, what is the withered wood?"

"I see, I see... its five branches suppress the five hells and light the five hellfires. No wonder you know about them..." murmured the plotter. "I don't know what it is, only that it was once rooted in the center of the original Hongmeng and supported the entire realm. It vanished on the eve of the realm's destruction. The Hongmeng wouldn't have fallen if it'd remained!"

"It reappeared when the Hongmeng shattered and shouldered the collective resentment from the original Hongmeng and that epoch.

"Heavenly thunder roared and black lightning smited its main body, extinguishing its vitality. It withered away into wood that was thunderstruck..."

etvolare's Thoughts

Two things, I wonder if someone did that meaning to do good, and second, what if the original Hongmeng had to break for a better future and blahblah?

Chapter 1570: Yun Zhongzi?

"You can drop the act." Lu Yun shook his head when he met the plotter's cowering eyes. "It's only one of your replicas here."

The strained expression on the plotter's face shifted when he heard the young man's words.

"So you saw right through me." The man shed the pretense of being terrified out of his wits and stood up to face Lu Yun. "That's right, this is just one of my replicas."

He no longer displayed the same fear that he'd shown moments ago, but wariness still gleamed out of his eyes when he looked at the withered wood. The flash of emotion wasn't fake, he really was cautious, or even afraid of, the wood.

His interactions with Lu Yun had been playing for time so that his other replicas could rush to the scene. There was more than the Roastwave World King who'd fallen into his trap; some of his victims were even stronger.

"You didn't show any flaws, just that your acting was over the top. How would someone who schemed against the Hallowed Emperor and Cloud Sovereign, one who stole the existence of this tomb, be afraid of a newly budded Nihil World Sovereign?" Lu Yun gestured welcomingly at the plotter.

"When you hit me... were you trying to get me to lose my temper so I'd make mistakes?" A new thought occurred to the plotter.

"What do you think?" Lu Yun smiled. "Sit."

His consciousness abruptly shifted into a world that was a magnificent palace tower. A large table groaning with fine wine and delicacies appeared to ply its wares, replete with chairs for both of them.

"Refining illusion into reality... Return to Origin! The ultimate peak for formation dao." The plotter raised an eyebrow. "You're not only a Nihil World Sovereign, but a powerful supplemental grandmaster as well."

"Oh no no, I'm not a grandmaster yet. My soul force is only ninth level," Lu Yun hastily corrected.

"Hahahaha!!" the plotter threw his head back with laughter. "When did soul force become the barometer for grandmaster? Is one a grandmaster just because one's soul force exceeds ninth level?"

He snorted with laughter. "That Xing Wuliang outside possesses a grandmaster-level soul force, but can he utilize the methods befitting his level? Can he deploy his connate divine weapon and draw out the true strength of the Horizon's Edge?"

"You're a grandmaster even if your soul force is still ninth level. You can use the Horizon's Edge and summon its second form."

Lu Yun started. He didn't know too much about the supplemental dao of the fourth realm. Xing Wuliang had once been an ant gazing up at the world of dragons when he hadn't been a grandmaster. He'd used the perspective of an ant to derive the domain of dragons.

But in this moment, a grandmaster who'd reached the peak of his craft discussed his cultivation level with Lu Yun—the real perspective of dragons.

"Please grace me with your instruction!" Lu Yun regarded his trespasser with great respect.

"And why should I teach you? I'm your prisoner at the moment," the plotter scoffed. "My other replicas have all been reborn through possession, it'll be your doom when they get here. So what if you're a Nihil World Sovereign? I control more than half of the rules in this tomb."

Lu Yun shook his head. "You can't kill me, and your replicas will end up the same as you if they dare come."

“Oh?” The plotter looked at Lu Yun with a supercilious smile.

“I’ve learned the tricks that the overlord of Ice commands. Though I can’t truly access sequence, I can open its doors. Specifically, the sequence of time.” Lu Yun grinned radiantly. “Have your replicas try me if you don’t believe me.”

The plotter’s expression froze.

“The overlord taught me this method so I could banish the withered wood into time. If even the wood can be exiled, do you think your replicas will be any challenge whatsoever? If I want to, I can exile this entire tomb.” Lu Yun bared his teeth in a bloodthirsty grin, eliciting a shudder from his audience.

The plotter absolutely believed Lu Yun because the young man had already banished the huge face in the world of treasures. That face had been another one of his poisonous tumors—one to devour souls instead of leading people into a trap.

Lu Yun had completely dismantled it.

“Alrighty then, let’s sit down and have a nice chat. I don’t care if you want to draw things out, I have nothing else to do. I’ve got nothing but time.”

The plotter took a deep breath and picked a chair. “What do you want to know? I didn’t lie about the withered wood, that is all I know.”

“What’s your name?” Lu Yun asked.

The plotter rolled his eyes. “Is that important?”

“It’s important to be honest with each other if we’re to converse. My name is Feng Feifan,” Lu Yun said without skipping a beat.

“Yun Zhongzi.” The plotter flicked a glare at Lu Yun.

“Huh?!” Lu Yun blinked. “Yun Zhongzi?!”

The plotter nodded solemnly.

“Disciple of the Jade Pure One, the foremost, the golden immortal of the Chan Sect??” Lu Yun asked again while taking a close look at his guest. [1]

“One of my replicas did take the Jade Pure One for his master and followed him into the Central Hongmeng,” Yun Zhongzi responded with a frown. “So you’re from the Central Hongmeng... No, the worlds?”

Lu Yun had once met the Jade Pure One in the great wilderness and collected a strand of soul force from him and the Grand Pure One, ensuring their rebirth in the sea of Hell Flowers. He’d also met Yun Zhongzi and all twelve immortals of the Chan Sect, but never had he thought that the plotter scheming against the Hallowed Emperor and Cloud Sovereign would be this august figure!

Now that he took a closer look at the man, he could indeed see traces of the mythical figure in him. But how could one called the foremost of a most benevolent sect, magnanimous and untouched by karma, be a plotter that schemed for the deaths of thousands of souls?

“Who are you?!” Yun Zhongzi erupted. “If you recognize me, then we must know each other!”

“Do you know who Jian Juexian outside is?” Lu Yun asked. “He has the Immortal’s End sword now.”

“The heir of Daoist Ingress,” the man answered nonchalantly. “If it wasn’t for that, I would’ve entrapped him long ago and had his shadow kill him.”

With Jian Juexian’s skill, it was easy for him to eradicate the troubles in the tomb. But when even the Roastwave World King had managed the deed several times, he’d failed to eliminate a single one. The only time he’d fallen into the trap was because of his shadow.

He couldn’t defeat his shadow, but neither did his shadow come for his head.

Lu Yun sank into deep contemplation at this response.