

Necropolis 1611

Chapter 1611: An Aboveboard Enemy

"You're a figurehead?" Lu Yun paused, dazed by the declaration.

"Indeed, that I am," Jian Zhuxian smiled with resignation. "What else should I be otherwise? Dead like Xianxian or Luxian? Heh, Juexian is lucky because there's traces of you on him. That's why he's alive—so he can be bait. The Luminaries saw everything when Yun Zhongzi visited us a hundred years ago."

Lu Yun remained silent; this was different from his expectations. Ingress Sword Island hadn't changed allegiances, but surrendered.

"The Luminaries want sword dao and Ingress Sword Island represents all of the sword dao in the Hongmeng. That's why they marched on us. Without a sequence expert in residence, my faction is nothing before the Luminaries," murmured Jian Zhuxian as he tilted his head to the sky.

"Can't you set foot into sequence yourself?" Lu Yun asked. In his eyes, Jian Zhuxian absolutely had the strength to.

"Set foot into sequence? What an easy thing to speak of. It's been countless eons since the dawn of the new epoch, but no one has been able to do so in the known expanses of the Boundless Planes," Jian Zhuxian chuckled ruefully. "So many seniors stronger than me have failed to accomplish this achievement, so what right do I have to succeed?"

Lu Yun blinked when he heard the response, realizing that something was gravely amiss. Jian Zhuxian's memories and knowledge had been altered, just like his had once been. It seemed that anyone who had the potential to access sequence would have their understanding of the world altered to believe that this was an impossible task.

Thankfully, Lu Yun possessed the Tome of Life and Death. His true memories and knowledge would return as soon as the slightest suspicion developed in his mind. Lacking the same advantage, Jian Zhuxian wouldn't know the truth unless a sequence expert restored his memories and knowledge.

Who knew what other nonsense was present in Jian Zhuxian's mind? There was at least enough to make him dispirited about his future. It was probably why he'd been permitted to live, and it'd likely take Daoist Ingress to restore his memories.

Lu Yun remained silent.

"So what if I can access sequence? The Quiet Sovereign King, founder of the Sword Clan, is one such powerhouse. His current status? Unknown after persecution from the Luminaries.

"...you should hurry and leave. They want to use me to see if the old man is still alive, so they won't do anything to me. But you'll die without a doubt if you remain. Nothing that's ever emerged from the Central Hongmeng has met with a good end," Jian Zhuxian advised when he saw that Lu Yun wasn't responding. "If you're here for Juexian, he'll live if you're alive. If you die... then he'll die as well."

"Are the Luminaries not going to stay their hand after Immortal's End has reappeared?" Lu Yun frowned ferociously.

“Immortal’s End?” Jian Zhuxian chuckled. “Nothing matters if the old man doesn’t show himself, not even if his personal weapon—the Qingping Sword—appears.” [1]

Lu Yun nodded, then waved the armless halves of the Great Brahma into existence.

“This is... the Great Brahma under the Sun Sovereign King’s banner?” Jian Zhuxian’s eyes widened.

“A life for a life, how about it?” Lu Yun called out to the sky. Another figure had appeared over the mountain’s peak at some point in time.

He was dressed in white with white hair and white pupils. His expression was remote and lacked any flicker of emotion. While he was a strong Nihil World Sovereign, he didn’t practice sword dao. Plainly, he wasn’t from Ingress Sword Island. The young man who Lu Yun had knocked unconscious stood next to him.

“That is fine.” The man nodded after a long moment of contemplation. “Since you spared the Great Brahma, we will not seek trouble with you this time. You may go.”

“Milord!” protested the young man.

“All are brothers once they join the Luminaries,” replied the man. “Though our enemies must be eliminated, we cannot have our brothers sacrifice needlessly. It was our mistake to underestimate the Star Sect this time. Our oversight should not be borne by the Great Brahma.

“Bai Hongtian under the Sun Sovereign King’s banner thanks the fellow daoist for your mercy.” The man retrieved the two halves of his comrade’s body with a wave. He raised cupped fists and left with a turn.

“Did you see that? That is the Luminaries. I cannot afford to make enemies of them and neither can you,” Jian Zhuxian sighed after Bai Hongtian left. “Joining the Luminaries means joining a brotherhood, one in which all are equal. Perhaps that’s just a motto, but he was indeed willing to trade Jian Juexian and your life for the Great Brahma.”

Lu Yun inclined his head as he looked in the direction where Bai Hongtian had left. “But their brotherhood extends only to the few, to those strong enough to be extended the right. Look at him, he isn’t part of it.”

The young man whose name Lu Yun still didn’t know pointed at him for a long while before scampering off in shame. He couldn’t fight Lu Yun.

Soon enough, a weary Jian Juexian flew to them from another direction and landed on the mountain peak.

“As I thought, it’s you, Feng Feifan!” Jian Juexian snapped out the name—he knew Lu Yun’s true identity now.

“A name is a name, why be caught up in it?” Lu Yun smiled at his friend.

“Hmph,” Jian Juexian snorted and sat down on the ground, sulking. “They took Immortal’s End and probably won’t give it back to me,” he forced out through grit teeth after a while.

“I’ll take you to your old master, you can train by his side.” Lu Yun didn’t know the relationship between Jian Juexian, Jian Zhuxian, and Daoist Ingress, but referring to the latter as “old man” wasn’t something that anyone could do. Even the disciples that Daoist Ingress had accepted in the great wilderness had to respectfully hail him as the Venerable Sect Master or master.

“Is that old man really still alive?” Jian Zhuxian’s eyes lit up.

“The Great Brahma was worth only me and Jian Juexian, so I can’t take you with me. But if you stay here, Ingress Sword Island is still Ingress Sword Island. If you leave, it will become the Luminaries’ Ingress Sword Island,” Lu Yun asserted solemnly.

Jian Zhuxian nodded.

“Are Jian Xianxian and Jian Luxian both dead?” Lu Yun asked again.

“Dead. Deader than dead,” Jian Zhuxian responded in a muffled voice.

“Give me the legacy for Argent Snow.” Lu Yun suddenly recalled that this man was number one on the Hero Ranking. He would certainly have Argent Snow’s full legacy!

Deriving the heritage of the eight soul weapons was a massive undertaking. Lu Yun had managed only a few bits and pieces, so he would never pass up this opportunity.

“That Bai Hongtian planted a restriction in my soul force just now, I can’t give it to you,” Jian Zhuxian replied helplessly. “But... I can teach it to Juexian, who can then give it to you.”

He pointed before either of the two could respond and sent his Argent Snow heritage into Jian Juexian’s mind.

The recipient grunted ruefully. Though he’d once trained his soul force, he wasn’t interested in it and was only first level. He knew even less of supplemental dao and thus, didn’t understand anything that Jian Zhuxian had shared with him.

“Go on, say hello to the old man for me. Tell him I miss him.” Jian Zhuxian looked at Jian Juexian with a trace of envy.

“I will,” Jian Juexian nodded. “The day he returns is the day that a reckoning of the Luminaries arrives.”

“Lu Yun, you should be counting your lucky stars that it’s the Luminaries against you and not any other faction,” Jian Zhuxian suddenly said meaningfully. “As ambitious as they are, they never conceal their intentions or tracks. They are open, aboveboard, and keep their word. If it was anyone else—like the one who revealed your movements—you’d already be dead.

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“The Luminaries always defeat their enemies fair and square so they can intimidate others and rule through virtue.”

“I know what you mean!” Lu Yun nodded. “But an enemy is an enemy. As open, aboveboard, and men of their word they might be, they are still the enemy. When it comes time to kill them, I will not hesitate.”

He raised a cupped fist salute and left with Jian Juexian.

“We’ve released Lu Yun and Jian Juexian. What of your deliberations?” Bai Hongtian appeared next to Jian Zhuxian when the others were gone. One Great Brahma was not enough for two lives.

“Ai... I will join the Luminaries,” Jian Zhuxian heaved an immense sigh and acceded in the end.

Bai Hongtian nodded, then took out the Great Brahma’s two halves.

“Senior, senior brother Bai Hongtian, take me back to headquarters, quick! Ask His Sovereign Majesty to repair my body.” The Great Brahma was awake and his eyes burned with hate. “I’m going to rip that Lu Yun to pieces after I recover!”

“Great Brahma, you have violated a heavenly ordinance and should be sentenced to death,” Bai Hongtian looked at him expressionlessly. “I was investigating just now and confirmed that you released your aura in the World Plane. You massacred three billion, three hundred and ninety-six million, eighty-three thousand innocent souls. Your crimes cannot be forgiven.”

The Great Brahma’s eyes widened.

1. Qingping Jian (green water lily sword) is a complete Chinese sword system which appeared in literature as early as the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220). According to an 18th century book, a Daoist monk named Pan Zhenren created the system. An excellent swordsman and scholar himself, Pan Zhenren is said to have meditated for years on the Dragon & Tiger Mountain. He developed a complete sword system fusing the strengths of many martial arts schools and Daoist theories. 📖

Chapter 1612: Requesting Aid

“We Luminaries seek to be an existence like the heavenly court of the original Hongmeng. If we are to rule the Boundless Planes, we must also protect them. Your wanton massacre of innocents places an evil reputation at our feet. Such a crime cannot be forgiven.”

“But, I...” the Great Brahma gaped. He hadn’t thought that Bai Hongtian would... want to kill him after trading Jian Juexian and Lu Yun for him?

“There are no buts about this. I exchanged our prisoners for you because you are part of the Luminaries. You are my brother. In the same vein, I kill you because you have violated one of our sacred tenets and thus deserve death.

“A perfect circle is impossible if there is a lack of regulation. You must pay the price when you commit a crime.” Bai Hongtian raised his hand and shattered the two halves of the Great Brahma.

All this took place in front of Jian Zhuxian. He wasn’t the least bit surprised—plainly, he’d known that this would happen.

“You are now my brother after joining the Luminaries, Jian Zhuxian, but if you run afoul of the sacred tenets, I also have the right to kill you,” Bai Hongtian said solemnly.

“Yes yes, I know,” Jian Zhuxian replied lazily. “Are you moving on to the Sword Clan next? If the Luminaries want sword dao, just one Ingress Sword Island isn’t enough. You need the Sword Clan too, don’t you?”

“It’s not that we want sword dao, but that the Boundless Planes need sword dao. It is an immensely powerful order—if it is infused into the realm, the overall orders will grow stronger.”

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Lu Yun didn’t know what took place on Ingress Sword Island after his departure, but he was slightly disappointed that none of the plans he’d left behind took effect.

“I wonder if I can get a sequence expert,” he murmured after leaving. “According to Ah Zhi, activating sequence isn’t just a cultivation level. There’s nine levels to them, so while I might be able to take down a first level sequence expert, I’ll be the one dead if I encounter anyone stronger.”

“Ah, yes, Juexian, do you think there’s been anyone who’s set foot into sequence since the dawn of the new epoch?” A sudden thought struck Lu Yun.

“Of course,” Jian Juexian answered with an odd look at his rescuer. “Aren’t the Star Sovereign King of the Star Sect and Quiet Sovereign King of the Sword Clan all sequence experts from the new epoch?”

“This proves you don’t have the potential to access sequence.” Lu Yun looked him up and down and pursed his lips. “You even lost the Immortal’s End sword that your old man gave you!”

Jian Juexian fell into a sheepish silence.

“Is the old man really still alive?” The two had gotten closer after Lu Yun rescued Jian Juexian from Ingress Sword Island and the latter was much more open with the young man now.

“Yep, alive and kicking. He’s living it up.” Lu Yun nodded. “Help me out with something before I send you to him.”

“Release the overlord of Ice?” Jian Juexian immediately guessed what his friend wanted to do. Lu Yun came from the original Hongmeng and had learned the overlord’s shortcut to accessing sequence. Now that he possessed the strength to capture the Great Brahma, of course he wanted to free the overlord.

“That’s right,” Lu Yun nodded. “I’ve spent the last hundred years deriving the way to free the overlord—I’ll need another Nihil World Sovereign to help me apart from you. The three of us together will result in a successful mission.

“Do you have any other friends in the Boundless Planes?”

Jian Juexian opened and closed his mouth.

“Fine, you don’t.” Lu Yun flicked a sideways glance at the sheepish man. “Should I go back to the sect for help? ...no, the Luminaries already have their eyes on the Star Sect. The regular disciples should be fine, but any Nihil World Sovereign that leaves the World Star will be attacked.”

He operated formula dao again to search for the way forward.

“...no way!” Lu Yun’s eyes widened. An answer had come to him as soon as he started his calculations—the Brightheart World King.

She'd become a Nihil World Sovereign and was now called the Brightheart Sovereign, or simply Heart Sovereign. Who would've thought that it'd only take one hundred and ten years for her to break though!

Though he'd been the one to reach this conclusion, it'd come from a new iteration of formula dao that had nothing to do with him. The group on Divine Alchemist Mountain had already induced a qualitative change in formula dao. While it couldn't easily deduce events fifty thousand years in the past or future, anything or anyone who'd formed a karmic relationship with Lu Yun would be revealed by formula dao.

He was utilizing the most sophisticated portion of the art—inferring karmic consequences. This wasn't something that formulas could calculate. One needed to be a true initiate of formula dao and be able to jointly utilize all levels of formulas to calculate karma.

Since formula dao was a joint creation between Lu Yun and Qing Yu, they would always be the first beneficiaries no matter what heights formula dao evolved to.

"You mean that Brightheart lass is a Nihil World Sovereign now?" Jian Juexian blinked. Last time he'd seen her, she was a peak Void World King and only half a step away from breaking through. Such a distance, however, would take at least one hundred million years of hard work to bridge. He didn't really believe Lu Yun, but there was no reason for the young man to lie to him.

"Come on, let's go find Brightheart!" Lu Yun sped off in the right direction after determining it with formula dao.

Nihil World Sovereigns viewed things from the perspective of a world. All of the Boundless Planes were in their purview and everything was simply a bridge to their destination. Powerful Nihil World Sovereigns crossed a plane with each step they took.

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The Abstruse Plane was located in the southwest cluster of the Boundless Planes. It was an unremarkable plane and its denizens not particularly strong. A World Manifest cultivator could reign supreme here, so no one imagined that there'd be Nihil World Sovereigns in seclusion in the area.

Brightheart and her master lived here. Her master, the Cicada Sovereign, was also a powerful Nihil World Sovereign. She had close ties to the Star Sect; it was due to a recommendation from Xing Shenzuo that Brightheart had been able to take her for a master.

Xing Wuliang's senior brother, Xing Hun, had originally selected both Xing Wuliang and Brightheart. Given that Brightheart's aspirations didn't lie in supplemental dao, though, she didn't fulfill the Star Sect's recruitment standards. However, her potential was so strong that Xing Shenzuo had felt compelled to send her to the Cicada Sovereign.

Neither did the girl disappoint—she reached Nihil World Sovereign when Xing Wuliang was still a World Manifest.

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"You came just as we thought, senior brother Feifan, senior brother Juexian!" Brightheart appeared before the two right when Lu Yun and Jian Juexian arrived in the Abstruse Plane.

“Eh? You knew we were coming?” Jian Juexian floundered for a response.

“My master’s been studying a great dao called the formula dao lately. Apparently, it can derive all things and it showed us that the two senior brothers would come,” Brightheart explained with a smile.

Lu Yun quickly understood. Though formula dao was being studied on Divine Alchemist Mountain, the various Nihil World Sovereigns of the sect were already propagating it throughout the fourth realm. Those of their peers on good terms with the Star Sect received a bit of formula dao’s heritage. Of course, any accomplishments the new pupils attained were also sent to the group on the mountain.

Such was the assembly of collective wisdom.

As Lu Yun and Jian Juexian were here to request aid, they didn’t conceal their presences. The Cicada Sovereign’s comprehension of formula dao was quite high, so she’d easily determined their arrival through the karmic ties to her disciple.

“Since junior sister knew we’d come, I will not beat around the bush. I’m here to request your help in undoing the seal on the overlord of Ice,” Lu Yun responded candidly, easily calling her his junior sister. There was no hierarchy in learning and whoever attained the accomplishment first was senior. He was stronger than her, so he was the senior brother.

Additionally, Brightheart had glimpsed certain things in the Tomb of the Hallowed Emperor; this was also why she called Lu Yun her senior brother.

“But of course!” She smiled broadly. “My cultivation level is yet to stabilize and my master says that I will encounter a great opportunity on this trip. I will truly solidify my strength and even improve one step further.”

That Cicada Sovereign probably practices more than formula dao... Abstruse Plane... Lu Yun nodded to himself.

Chapter 1613: Transformed Into a Tomb

Lu Yun didn’t think further on the mysterious Cicada Sovereign. Somehow, he felt that she was the most suitable expert to cultivate formula dao and disseminate it across the realm.

However, he didn’t intend to ask her to emerge from seclusion and focus on researching formula dao just yet. He trusted Yun Zhongzi, the Formation Sovereign, and the others. They had their own thoughts, and no matter where formula dao evolved to, the first beneficiaries would always be Lu Yun and Qing Yu.

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As a Nihil World Sovereign, Brightheart was now titled the Heart Sovereign. Her cultivation level was yet to fully stabilize, so her battle strength wasn’t much different from before. That was fine as Lu Yun’s calculations indicated it was enough for her to be a Nihil World Sovereign.

The Southwest Cluster was extraordinarily far from the Eastern Cluster. The known expanses of the Boundless Planes were divided into nine clusters named after the cardinal directions. There were the Central, North, South, East, West, Southeast, Southwest, Northeast, and Northwest Clusters.

Apart from the Central Cluster, the other eight spanned the border of the known expanses. Anything beyond was part of the unknown expanses.

Lu Yun and his companions quickly rushed to the Eastern Cluster.

“Something’s off.” Jian Juexian unsheathed his sword as soon as they arrived at the Eastern Cluster, scanning the premises with a wary expression.

“Indeed... has the guy in the Tomb of the Hallowed Emperor made his move and begun to encroach on the Eastern Cluster?” Lu Yun’s heart skipped a beat as well.

The Eastern Cluster was a destitute backwater compared to the other clusters. There were few inhabitants and its presence of order wasn’t as apparent. Lu Yun had arrived in this cluster on his first visit to the fourth realm, thereby mistaking the entire fourth realm to be an empty void.

Something had changed in the Eastern Cluster, something that made him shake with fury.

“Someone’s built an enormous tomb over the entire cluster, using it for the foundations. Does he plan to bury everyone alive?!” Brightheart inhaled sharply. Though she didn’t train in supplemental dao, she knew enough to recognize what she was seeing. The Eastern Cluster—all of its planes and worlds—had been reconfigured into the layout of a grand tomb. It was the same layout as the Tomb of the Hallowed Emperor they’d once visited.

No, it would be more proper to say the Tomb of the Original Emperor.

Lu Yun didn’t know what this would do to the original Hongmeng, but it boded nothing good for the overlord of Ice. The overlord sat in the center of the plane of Ice and oversaw the entire plane, safeguarding the Central Hongmeng. But now that the plane cluster was a tomb, he would be the first to be buried within.

The order of life and death wasn’t very clearly defined in the fourth realm—zombies were also a form of life. Anyone could transform themselves into a zombie if they so desired, something that the Bridge of Forgetfulness had once done for self protection.

But zombies were dead things at the end of the day and they eroded the soul. The longer one maintained the status of a zombie, the weaker their soul grew and eventually, one would forever be a zombie.

Although they counted as a form of life, they were regarded as evil spirits.

Zombies were already observable in the Eastern Cluster. Since their environment had changed into a layout of burial, local denizens had to transform themselves into zombies if they wished to survive.

“Too far, this goes too far!” Lu Yun gnashed his teeth; Di Yin was behind this.

He’d recently assumed control over the Tomb of the Original Emperor and its three experts. However, the Fog, Corpse, and Shadow Sovereigns couldn’t leave the tomb. Thus, Di Yin had decided to assimilate the entire plane cluster as part of the tomb in order to expand his territory and lay claim to the Eastern Cluster.

This crossed Lu Yun’s bottom line. His home, the Central Hongmeng, was in the plane of Fire.

He took a step forward when his thoughts traveled here, his eyes burning with six colors.

“Don’t be brash!” Jian Juexian and Brightheart hastily pulled Lu Yun back. As impoverished as the Eastern Cluster was, someone who could rearrange it into a tomb was absolutely terrifying.

“Who goes there!” rang out a cold voice the second Lu Yun stepped into the tomb of the Eastern Cluster. “It’s you!” The challenger’s expression changed when he saw Lu Yun. “Greetings to the honorable world sovereign!”

“Longshan Yan.” Lu Yun frowned slightly to see the other.

“It’s me!” Longshan Yan was the one who’d brought Lu Yun to Dragonmountain Clime, Di Yin’s second son. If Lu Yun’s guess was correct, however, Longshan Yan now went by Di Yan.

Di Yan was now peak Void World King and very close to Nihil World Sovereign. It was clear to see that Di Yin highly valued his second son and had used certain methods to raise his cultivation. Despite that, it was still up to himself to see if he made it to Nihil World Sovereign.

“Should I call you Di Yan now?” Lu Yun looked coldly at him.

The young man remained silent.

“You should hurry and leave, milord,” he said apologetically after a long moment. “My father has killed three Nihil World Sovereigns already and the Eastern Cluster is now Di Clan territory. With the clan’s revival, all external Nihil World Sovereigns are forbidden from entering.”

His presence here wasn’t an indication that he’d fallen out of favor. On the contrary, he was entrusted with the important task of guarding the borders. He wielded great authority and commanded a number of powerhouses.

“Where is the overlord of Ice?” Lu Yun stared fixedly at Di Yan.

“The overlord...” The young man’s face spasmed to hear the question. He didn’t know how to respond.

“If something has happened to him, there will be no point in your Di Clan existing further!” Lu Yun flew into a rage.

The Luminaries had sealed the overlord into his plane due to him sheltering the Central Hongmeng. He’d also taught Lu Yun the method of nothing so he could temporarily access sequence and resolve various crises. Lu Yun owed him a great debt of gratitude.

If the Di Clan had done anything to him, Lu Yun wouldn’t care whose bloodline they were. Since the Central Hongmeng seemed fine for the moment, that meant Di Yin didn’t have the courage to march on it yet.

“You talk a big talk.” An enormous shadow loomed out of the void as a mammoth figure seemed to extend from it.

“Shadow Sovereign!” shrieked Jian Juexian before Lu Yun could act. “I was bound by the tomb’s rules last time and couldn’t bring my full strength to bear. I was humiliated by your shadows, so I will kill you no matter what this time!”

Whoosh!

Crimson sword intent rose from his hands and formed a massive sword of crimson light that cut down on the shadow.

Chapter 1614: Domain of Glorious Snowdrift

Jian Juexian couldn't refrain from springing into action when he saw the Shadow Sovereign. He drew his sword in a ringing motion and slashed at the enemy.

Though he'd been imprisoned right after his return to Ingress Sword Island and Immortal's End taken from him, Daoist Ingress had given him more than just a sword. He'd gifted a complete legacy of immortal end to Jian Juexian.

Thus, though he'd been imprisoned, his strength had grown by the day and increased with every second. Given enough time, he would certainly surpass Jian Zhuxian and become the greatest of Ingress Sword Island.

With his level of skill, any regular sword became another Immortal's End in Jian Juexian's hands. One stroke was sufficient to slice the Shadow Sovereign in two.

The Shadow Sovereign howled and roared with indignity. A blazing sun suddenly popped into existence and illuminated the void, while a shadow wielding a dagger abruptly jumped out from Jian Juexian's feet and charged him.

Their shadows were alive again.

As Jian Juexian's strength increased, so did his shadow's. The shadowy dagger waved with a trace of Jian Juexian's sword dao.

"The greatest enemy of those who are too pompous is themselves! You will never defeat yourself!" The Shadow Sovereign's voice faded in and out of the area; he'd melded into the shadows projected by the nearby worlds.

He was correct—someone who was too self centered or arrogant would never behold anyone else in their line of sight apart from themselves. Jian Juexian was one such person, so his greatest enemy wasn't anyone else but himself.

His shadow was suppressed the moment it moved. Jian Juexian sparred grimly with it; he'd noticed that with his increase in sword dao, so was his shadow also much stronger.

"They're shadows!" Lu Yun shouted. "Just make it impossible for them to appear."

Sent flying with a blow, Jian Juexian brightened and reversed his sword with a quick backhand, piercing toward the blazing sun that the Shadow Sovereign had summoned.

His shadow jerked with surprise and leapt upward, blocking the blade before it reached the sun. While that spared the sun, it resulted in heavy injuries to the shadow.

"You talk too much!" snorted the Shadow Sovereign. Lu Yun's shadow cautiously poked his head out beneath Lu Yun's feet.

“Be a good boy and stay still.” Lu Yun stomped his shadow back down. Shivering with fright, it docilely stayed put. As Lu Yun’s true cultivation level was peak true nihil realm, that was his shadow’s strength as well.

Meanwhile, Brightheart’s shadow jumped out beneath her feet wielding a dagger of black light. She stabbed it at Brightheart’s head.

“Master was right, my opportunity is here. There is nothing that tempers the heart better than overcoming oneself.” Brightheart had already experienced this once in the Tomb of the Hallowed Emperor, so she faced this instance with equanimity. She wasn’t as narcissistic as Jian Juexian, so there was no pressure in fighting herself.

While Brightheart and Jian Juexian were preoccupied with their shadows, Lu Yun strode forward and walked into the depths of the Eastern Cluster, toward Ice.

“You court death!” The Shadow Sovereign manifested a tangible form when he noticed Lu Yun’s movement and charged the young man.

As one of the four sovereign kings under the original emperor’s banner, the Shadow Sovereign had long since accessed sequence. After the new epoch dawned, he hadn’t had a chance to activate sequence again before the withered wood cursed him to death.

He still hadn’t fully recovered and could only manifest through the laws of burial in the Eastern Cluster. His strength was less than a ten thousandth of his prime, but he was no weakling. In fact, he was part of the elite among Nihil World Sovereigns.

Most importantly was that he’d walked his great dao to its apex. He’d perfectly combined supplemental dao, cultivation, and combat arts in his shadow dao. Just that alone was sufficient to propel him to the apex of powerhouses in the Boundless Planes.

Hummm.

Silver ripples oscillated from Lu Yun’s body and silver snowflakes drifted around him. Terrifying ripples undulated over each snowflake as well. One thousand and eighty snowflakes interlaced together in a horrific blizzard.

Peak Domain of First Snowfall!

The Shadow Sovereign’s true form was revealed the moment he entered the domain. He was a middle-aged man with a wan pallor who seemed to live in the shadows.

“So it’s Argent Snow.” A keen light flashed through his eyes. “Just Argent Snow alone will not confine me.”

He turned into another ball of shadow and shot toward Lu Yun, but rematerialized before he’d advanced half an inch forward.

“How is this possible?!” he shouted.

“Nothing is impossible while you remain a ghost. Any Nihil World Sovereign can harm me in the fourth realm, but you guys? No.” Snowflakes danced around Lu Yun as they grew in number. With the young

man as the center, an area fifteen hundred kilometers around them turned into a snowy landscape—Domain of Glorious Snowdrift.

The snowflakes were silver, but close perusal would resolve them as silver flames in the shape of snowflakes.

Peak domain.

Such was a peak domain of a soul weapon. Not only would it deploy the weapon's own strength, but the wielder's dao and combat arts would become part of it and part of the attack.

The snowflakes in this Domain of Glorious Snowdrift were projected by disordered hellfire.

Though Lu Yun had been traveling with urgency, he'd constantly operated formula dao ever since receiving Jian Zhuxian's complete Argent Snow legacy. He'd combined it with his own and reached peak mastery over the Domain of Glorious Snowdrift.

Wide-eyed with dismay, the Shadow Sovereign discovered that he was trapped in the domain. He couldn't move a single muscle.

The silver flame of disorder was also hellfire. Though the six hellfires served different functions, they possessed a characteristic in common when they gathered on Lu Yun—suppressing the dead and ghosts.

Last time in the tomb, Lu Yun hadn't dared deploy anything because his foundations were weak. But this time, formula dao had taken shape in the Star Sect and his wings were full. He wasn't afraid of anything anymore and needed to make a strong statement instead of continuing to hide away.

"Your primary body would be able to break this domain, but since you're just a replica, you're better off dead. Otherwise, that Di Yin will think I'm an easy target." Lu Yun slowly walked up and smashed the stick in his hand onto the sovereign's head.

The replica crumbled to dust and the blazing sun vanished. Jian Juexian and Brightheart's shadows returned to their feet; everything returned to normal.

Di Yan looked at Lu Yun with a complicated expression.

"Lead the way. You were the one who brought me to Dragonmountain Clime last time, so it shall be you again this time," Lu Yun said expressionlessly to the man.

Di Yin had done nothing to him, but they were meeting as enemies this time.

Chapter 1615: Hidden Ace

Di Yin didn't possess major ambition—all of his attention was focused on revitalizing the Di Clan and bringing back this once glorious faction, the one who'd ruled the original Hongmeng, to the Boundless Planes.

But his goal obstructed too many people and at the same time, too many blocked his path, including Lu Yun.

Lu Yun had guessed this might be the outcome before they entered the Tomb of the Hallowed Emperor, but he hadn't been able to do anything different then. And now, he couldn't express any weakness whatsoever.

He'd also guessed that Di Yin would first set his sights on his previous benefactor once he came into his own. Lu Yun's easy control of the Imperial Seal had undoubtedly ignited Di Yin's desire to kill him. However, his karmic relationship still existed with Lu Yun at that time. To kill him would be the height of ingratitude—even the nebulous emperor of the original Hongmeng wouldn't forgive him if he'd done so.

.....

Di Yan didn't reject Lu Yun's demand. He gestured invitingly and led the trio into the vast Eastern Cluster.

Though the cluster was enveloped by the tomb's orders, it hadn't fully transformed into the Tomb of the Hallowed Emperor yet. It was still a plane cluster, but it wasn't far from becoming a real tomb.

"Where is your primary body?" Lu Yun suddenly asked as they traveled.

"Buried in the tomb to raise my strength," Di Yan answered frankly. He was still grateful to Lu Yun as, if it hadn't been for the latter, the Dragonmountain family would've perished a long time ago. "Honorable world sovereign, my clan's strength is far greater than what it was before and my father views you with enmity..."

"That's enough, you don't need to speak on." Lu Yun waved him off. "When your father let us go last time, that was the last of our karmic relationship. Whether we meet as friends or enemies this time is up to him."

Di Yan fell silent.

The Broken Primeval Plane was now a bonafide tomb. The Tomb of the Hallowed Emperor stood at its center and was the source of burial laws floating through the land. They slowly assimilated the Eastern Cluster and transformed its denizens into inhabitants of the tomb.

Although Lu Yun was headed to far off Ice instead of the Broken Primeval Plane, his heart hardened the further in they traveled. Killing intent wafted from him and the other two glowered as well. They hadn't thought that Di Yin would dare turn an entire plane cluster into a tomb!

Di Yan could sense their killing intent, but there was nothing for it. His father had suffered endless humiliation for countless eons, even to the point of almost sacrificing his life just so the family could live on. Revitalizing the once royal clan of the realm had been his dearest wish.

Now that he'd obtained the ancestor's power, his bottled up feelings were released in full. However, his mindset had been warped to the point of viewing everything in the fourth realm as his enemy.

Thus, he would turn everyone in the Eastern Cluster who was not of the Di Clan into dead spirits.

The Fog, Corpse, and Shadow Sovereigns had yet to fully resurrect. They couldn't leave the tomb, which was why Di Yin thought of irradiating the entire cluster with the tomb's rules so that it would become his territory.

He didn't care about the orders of the fourth realm or the Central Hongmeng. He had eyes only for his clan. If he could sacrifice even his own life for the Di Clan, what were other lives worth to him?

"Where is the overlord of Ice?"

When they reached Ice, the overlord was nowhere to be seen. Everything that'd once inhabited Ice and its neighbor Fire was gone. Only a lonely Hongmeng hung by itself in the plane of Fire.

Di Yan remained silent.

Puff!

Lu Yun reached out and popped Di Yan's replica with a squeeze. This was an indication of his sentiments and an official declaration of hostilities with all of the Di Clan in the Hongmeng.

"Should we go to the Broken Primeval Plane?" asked Jian Juexian as he scanned the cluster blanketed by the tomb's rules.

"Yes," Lu Yun nodded. "If Di Yin doesn't give me an explanation, I'll raze the Di Clan out of existence!"

He still had a hidden ace up his sleeve that he'd wanted to save for the Luminaries. Who would've thought that Di Yin would get up to trouble before Lu Yun ran into them?

"There's no need for you to travel further. Let us settle all grudges and hatred here."

An endless horde of corpses suddenly appeared in the void. They were the original inhabitants of the Eastern Cluster that'd been affected by the tomb's rules—they were all zombies now. There were World Manifests and Void World Kings among them, and even two Nihil World Sovereign from other clusters.

They were all under the Corpse Sovereign's control.

The Corpse Sovereign cultivated the great dao of zombies. He'd even changed his life form into a zombie and forever remained a zombie. Though he was now dead, it didn't matter to him. What was the difference between a living and dead corpse?

The plane of Ice was immediately filled with endless zombies. They were corpses that the sovereign had refined with his great dao, making them more terrifying than regular zombies. All of them screamed at the same time, making it impossible for Lu Yun and Jian Juexian to determine who was the real Corpse Sovereign.

"Di Yin, it looks like there's nothing to talk about between you and I." Lu Yun remained calm and coolly addressed the vast tide of zombies.

"There could have been, but you became my clan's enemy the second you touched the Imperial Seal—my ancestor's only inheritance," Di Yin's voice traveled from another direction. He didn't seem inclined to show himself. He knew that Lu Yun intended to kill him, and that he'd be the first target if he dared materialize.

"Kill him and don't bother leaving his corpse behind. Destroy everything about him," his voice came again.

“Roar!!” the zombies howled in unison and shuffled out of their random positions into a strange formation. The great dao of zombies surged forward as they charged the trio like the floodwaters.

Though the three were Nihil World Sovereigns, they still felt pressure from the bizarre formation. As the weakest among them, Brightheart’s skin fractured from the pressure.

Bam!

Lu Yun reached out and smashed a mammoth item into the void next to him. It clanged into the air with a muffled thud as a cloud of eerie black fog wafted from it.

It was an enormous coffin that was gray all over and roughly forty-five thousand kilometers tall, the first poisonous tumor that he’d removed from the tomb. He’d kept it in his inner world and fixed the ugly fracture on it, bringing it out for the corpse formation. This was the hidden ace that he’d wanted to save for the Luminaries!

Chapter 1616: Advancing With a Coffin On His Back

This coffin had once been a poisonous tumor in the Tomb of the Hallowed Emperor—the biggest tumor, rather. Instead of placing it there to lure others into his schemes, however, Yun Zhongzi had set it up to counter the tomb.

The Tomb of the Hallowed Emperor was meant to manifest that of the emperor of the original Hongmeng and entice the Imperial Seal to reveal itself in the Broken Primeval Plane. Yun Zhongzi himself knew that once the tomb began to shift into the one for the original emperor, everything within would break free of his control.

He didn’t know if that would be good or bad. Thus, he’d left the coffin at the most important site of the tomb—its entrance—for the purpose of keeping the tomb in check.

If the coffin had remained in place, it would’ve been a thorn in Di Yin’s side despite his control over the tomb. It would’ve nailed the tomb’s orders and laws in place so they couldn’t spread to the outside world.

However, Yun Zhongzi never fathomed that Lu Yun would subdue and remove the coffin. It was due to this coffin that the young man had fallen into Yun Zhongzi’s trap, and he now brought it out once more.

Rumble.

The coffin that Lu Yun had repaired echoed with dull roars of thunder. The zombies that were rushing the trio shuddered and halted in unison. Fear shone out of their ghastly white eyes—not the fear of the zombies, but fear from the great dao of the Corpse Sovereign.

“You brought out that thing!” Jian Juexian shrieked with horror despite the boundless sword light surrounding him. That coffin was evil beyond compare!

It shattered the corpse dao around them as soon as it arrived; Brightheart’s cracking skin slowly healed as well.

A coffin forty-five thousand kilometers tall didn’t mean much in the vast fourth realm. But for some reason, it towered like an enormous mountain at the moment.

“Who’s buried in the coffin?” The Corpse Sovereign’s voice echoed from all directions—he didn’t recognize it. Lu Yun had already taken the coffin away when he regained consciousness. In spite of that, he could clearly sense the terrifying aura coming from it.

Bam!

Bam!

Bam!

Explosions rang out from the coffin, each boom knocking the dao of corpses and burial in the surroundings back a little bit more.

Craaaaack.

Gray fog surged forth as the coffin’s lid lifted.

Pfffffft.

An enormous mushroom cloud rushed into the upper reaches of Ice.

“What a pity... I won’t be able to use this coffin against the Luminaries anymore after I’ve brought it out,” Lu Yun sighed with reluctance.

That the Eastern Cluster had transformed into a giant tomb was good news for the Luminaries. The development completely destroyed the cluster’s roots, making it nigh impossible for the Central Hongmeng to rise again.

But the ambitious Luminaries would still keep this place under watch, despite controlling the known expanses and even the heart of the known expanses. Everything that happened here was under their purview.

They would be on their guard after Lu Yun brought out the coffin and develop ways to counter it.

But the Eastern Cluster was his homeland! If it really turned into a giant tomb, the Central Hongmeng would be completely done for. All talk of formula dao and immortal dao would become naught but an empty breeze.

He would never let Di Yin do as he would.

The coffin was open and a gray hand probed out from it.

Whoooosh.

A scent of corruption, decay, and decline wafted out with the hand. It was the despair of a world on the eve of its destruction, the last moments of light during a sunset, and an intoxicating yet rotten beauty.

A bizarre world slowly manifested on top of the hand.

A door to order. A rotten order, a broken order, an order on the brink of destruction.

At the same time, it was a true world of order—indefinitely stronger than the shortcut that the overlord of Ice had taught Lu Yun.

No, it would be more accurate to say that the two couldn't be compared at all.

Bam!

The door shook before the Corpse Sovereign could say anything. An overwhelming presence of deterioration filled the entire plane.

The teeming masses of zombies crumbled as soon as it washed over them, disintegrating into dust. They were already dead and had become zombies upon their death, a weapon of the Corpse Sovereign.

For them, such destruction was a release.

"So there was a world of order buried in that coffin. A world of order on the edge of ending." Jian Juexian gazed appreciatively at the mighty Lu Yun who'd defused the Corpse Sovereign's zombie tide as soon as it appeared.

"Come with me." Lu Yun expanded to fifty-thousand kilometers tall and grabbed the coffin next to him, putting it on his back. He strode forward and headed toward the Broken Primeval Plane.

That was the heart of the Eastern Cluster now.

The Corpse Sovereign's primary body was on the scene, but he didn't dare meet Lu Yun in combat. Though he'd once been a sequence expert, that was in the past. For now, he was just a Nihil World Sovereign, an ant when facing order.

He continuously retreated until he reconvened with the Shadow and Fog Sovereigns. The Fog Sovereign was the strongest of them, but he was also regarding the coffin with a grim look.

"It's Yun Zhongzi's order," he gnashed his teeth. "Our previous world of order dissolved when we practiced the orders of the new epoch. Somehow, Yun Zhongzi managed to bury his in the coffin!"

A golden stick appeared in his hand, swirling a golden wind that carried gray fog toward Lu Yun.

The Aureate Wind soul weapon was the Fog Sovereign's weapon of choice. Not only did his wind refrain from dispersing the fog, but the latter became even more tangible and ensconced thirty-seven planes, blocking Lu Yun's way forward.

The Fog Sovereign slowly dissipated, reappearing inside the fog.

"Fog Sovereign, I am no match for you at my current level of strength, so I won't throw myself against you." With his senses obscured, Lu Yun couldn't see, touch, or even hear the words he'd spoken. He would've loved to bring Lunar Pivot out and measure himself against the sovereign if it'd been any other time.

But he was hardly in the mood for that now; he didn't have time to spare.

The longer this dragged on, the more deeply embedded the way of burial would be in the Eastern Cluster and the more corrupted the Central Hongmeng would be. It would also be increasingly difficult to determine the overlord's condition.

Another arm probed out from the coffin on his back and swiped at the void.

Boom!

The golden wind billowed backward and the gray fog retreated. The Fog Sovereign spat out a mouthful of blood and flew backward for an indeterminable distance.

Lu Yun finally reached the Broken Primeval Plane. The tombstone that'd belonged to the Tomb of the Hallowed Emperor was erected in front of it, and the plane had wholly transformed into a tomb.

Chapter 1617: The Corpse King Appears

The last traces that the Hallowed Emperor had left behind were gone. The Tomb of the Hallowed Emperor was no more, it was replaced by the Tomb of the Original Emperor.

"Hand over the overlord of Ice and get the hell out of the Eastern Cluster with your tomb," Lu Yun said calmly as he looked at the tombstone.

Di Yin sat cross-legged on top of it, looking the same as when Lu Yun had first met him. The only difference was the enormous seal floating over his head—the Imperial Seal of the emperor of the original Hongmeng.

"And if I don't?" Di Yin stood up with a vaguely concerned look. The three sovereigns took protective positions next to him; their master was still a Void World King as he hadn't forcefully enhanced his strength.

"No?" Lu Yun frowned slightly. "You, or rather, your Di Clan aren't native to the Eastern Cluster. This Tomb of the Original Emperor is a mobile construct. There are countless places suitable for you in the vast fourth realm, why stay here?"

"Is it only because the Imperial Seal was lost here? ...or are you afraid of meeting the emperor, who happens to still be alive?"

"It is whatever you say. But regardless, I will not rest easy as long as you are alive." Di Yin shook his head. "We battle today, resulting in either your death or mine."

"Of course it will not be yours. I finally have you, Immortal King. This is your doomsday!" A very out-of-place voice suddenly rang in the air as a man dressed in black walked out of the void. His hair was black, but his skin was so pale that he was almost translucent.

"You've allied with the Curse King." Lu Yun gazed expressionlessly at Di Yin. "The Curse King has something to do with the demise of the original emperor."

"But you just said so yourself, the emperor of the original Hongmeng is not dead," the Curse King chuckled softly. "Since he is not dead, then there are no grudges between me and the Di Clan."

The Curse King was a figure from mysterious origins that Yun Zhongzi had personally labeled as the enemy. He and his mysterious power were intricately tied to the fall of the original emperor and original Hongmeng.

Lu Yun said no more. Di Yin wasn't someone who could be hoodwinked into an alliance with the Curse King. He was sure to know the full story of everything that'd occurred.

“Forget it, I can’t convince you otherwise since you’ve already decided.” Lu Yun put down the coffin on his back to allow a gray corpse to walk out. It was Yun Zhongzi’s body from his past life, the sequence expert that’d opened the doors to sequence during the original Hongmeng.

The past self punched the Curse King with no hesitation whatsoever when it emerged. In Lu Yun’s eyes, the Curse King was a far bigger threat than Di Yin. He was an enemy of the original Hongmeng!

“Hahahaha!!” The Curse King threw his head back with a long peal of laughter before he jumped into the air, manifesting a strange combat art in the void. He’d plainly reached the peak of his great dao and he was also a sequence expert. Sequence wreathed his every move and gesture.

He managed to shake Yun Zhongzi’s past self—after all, it was dead while the Curse King was alive!

“It’s our turn next,” sneered the Fog Sovereign. He stepped forward with a wave of Aureate Wind and released gusts of golden gales, aiming them at Lu Yun, Jian Juexian, and Brighthouse.

“Hang onto the coffin.” Lu Yun threw the coffin to Brighthouse so she’d have the ability to protect herself. He then called upon the method of nothing and charged the Cloud Sovereign with Argent Snow raised high.

The Corpse and Shadow Sovereigns also came for Lu Yun, but Jian Juexian and a coffin-wielding Brighthouse stepped into their way. However, it was plain to see that without support from Yun Zhongzi’s past self, the three were no match for the three sovereigns serving Di Yin.

“Catch!” Lu Yun suddenly summoned Quiet into his hand and tossed it to Jian Juexian.

“Quiet...” Jian Juexian trembled violently when he caught the sword and high emotion flushed his cheeks. The translucent Quiet abruptly turned into a brilliant crimson and melded with Jian Juexian’s sword dao.

Lu Yun’s jaw dropped.

“Jian Juexian practices the path of immortal end whereas Quiet... is a connate divine sword. Can it be that Jian Juexian’s the reincarnated form of Quiet?!” Lu Yun was rather taken aback at what had just happened, but there was no time to consider it further. He faced the Fog Sovereign, the strongest of the three.

Lu Yun refocused his mind to fully deploying the Domain of Glorious Snowdrift. A most wonderful snowy landscape crashed with the sovereign’s golden gales.

Buttressed by the sword, Jian Juexian’s strength grew prodigiously and he slashed his shadow into two. He gripped Quiet with one hand and rushed at the Shadow Sovereign. Shrieking piercingly, the sovereign manifested the same dagger that his shadows wielded—but one that was infinite times stronger.

They finally met in battle.

Brighthouse managed to temporarily hold the Corpse Sovereign’s zombie dao at bay and delay his formation with the coffin, but she was so much weaker than him that defeat was only a matter of time. And while Jian Juexian blazed mightily since he’d obtained Quiet, he wouldn’t be able to maintain the condition for long.

“It looks like you are indeed the one to die this time.” Di Yin plucked the seal hovering over his head and caressed it gently. “My heart will not be at peace for as long as you are alive.”

Lu Yun’s Domain of Glorious Snowdrift lay in tatters around him. His chest was dyed with blood and he looked expressionlessly at the Fog Sovereign in front of him.

“I lost,” Lu Yun coughed gently. “What a pity...”

“It is indeed a pity, so you can die with your regrets. But don’t worry, this place is about to become a real tomb and has the dao of burial enveloping it. Your soul will become a vicious ghost in the tomb after death and your body belong to the Corpse Sovereign.” Though the Fog Sovereign was talking, his hands never stopped moving. He brought a palm down on Lu Yun’s head, a blow that would leave no room for survival if it connected.

“It is a pity that I finally meet a true elite of the fourth realm and can’t truly battle you.”

Poof!

His body shattered into a cloud of dust—a golden warrior.

“A replica?” the sovereign scoffed. “So what? At my level, I can kill the primary body through the replica. Die!!”

He flung out another palm strike, one that rippled with golden waves—the power of Aureate Wind.

Hummmm.

A black flame suddenly rose in the air and traveled up the waves, recoiling onto the sovereign instead.

“Hadal hellfire!” he gasped with dismay.

Chapter 1618: Corny and Cliche

“I am afraid of many things in the vast fourth realm, but the last thing I’m afraid of is ghosts...” Lu Yun’s primary body slowly shimmered into existence. Hadal hellfire blazed around him and blasted the golden wind back before it had a chance to approach him.

The Fog Sovereign was a dead entity, so he could only struggle for survival in a place that was enveloped by the dao of burial, such as the current Eastern Cluster. All of his strength came from being a yin ghost, including his soul force that powered the Aureate Wind. Everything he commanded was the power of death.

Death was countered by hellfire.

An explosion of hadal hellfire swept away the three sovereigns’ power. It consumed everything and set even the sovereigns ablaze. Coolly confident just a second ago, Di Yin surged to his feet.

“Stop!” he roared with shock. No one had fathomed that Lu Yun would possess hellfire—even Jian Juexian was dazed by the sudden development.

“Hellfire?” the Curse King frowned. “So that’s what you have. ...die!”

He summoned a strange power from his body that immediately forced the fiercely burning hellfire to curl backward. The three sovereigns that were almost burnt to a crisp hastily ran for their lives, fleeing into the Tomb of the Original Emperor.

Hellfire recoiled onto Lu Yun and sent him flying. A mouthful of fresh blood welled up and ugly cracks fractured his body. Invincible throughout all of Lu Yun's travels, hellfire had been extinguished by the Curse King's blow.

Such was the strength of a sequence expert. No matter what treasure Lu Yun possessed, it was as fragile as paper in front of such an expert—meaningless and useless.

Jian Juexian and Brightheart couldn't move when suppressed with such terrifying aura.

"I have nothing to fear anymore now that I know your trump card," the Curse King sneered and punted Yun Zhongzi's past self away. He emitted a shrill shriek and manifested glyphs in the void, forming an enormous curse.

"We smashed even the five original hells that supported the original Hongmeng, so what do I care about another five hells? Fire from just the Hadal Hell? What does that matter?!"

The terrifying curse morphed into a living creature, one with a yawning maw that descended upon Lu Yun to tear at his flesh.

Yun Zhongzi's past self roared with fury and pounced on the curse creature with hands outstretched.

"Hahaha!! Yun Zhongzi!" the Curse King roared with laughter. "You were no match for me when you were alive, and your body will become fertilizer for my curse dao in death!!"

If it wasn't for the Curse King eying Yun Zhongzi's body, he would've torn it to pieces a long time ago. The corpse of any sequence expert was remarkably precious. One that was dead but maintained its connection to its door of order was even more valuable fertilizer to the Curse King. Devouring Yun Zhongzi's past self and the order that he'd accessed would take the Curse King's great dao one step further.

"Yun Zhongzi was indeed no match for you when he was alive, but neither are you here in the flesh," an ethereal voice suddenly sounded.

A silver moon appeared in the sky and scattered silver radiance over the Broken Primeval Plane. Dressed in silver silk, a young girl sashayed down from the void. Lithe and graceful, she raised faint ripples in the silver moonlight with every step she took. They eroded the curse creature until it faded away into the air.

With its disappearance, Lu Yun's trio could move again and Brightheart quickly opened the coffin, retrieving Yun Zhongzi's past self.

"How dare you ruin my affairs, Moon Sovereign King!" the Curse King snarled savagely at the young girl.

"The Moon Sovereign King, one of the three sovereign kings of the Luminaries!" Lu Yun suddenly felt like he'd escaped from the lion's den only to run across a pack of wolves. In his current state, there was no difference between landing in the Curse King's grasp or the Luminaries. The outcome would be death either way.

“Of course I wouldn’t dare, if your primary body was here,” the Moon Sovereign King smiled. “But since only your replica is here, then of course I dare.”

She reached out a hand and manifested a short silver stick in it—the Lunar Pivot soul weapon.

Though Lunar Pivot was also silver and looked the same as Argent Snow, the latter’s glyphs were snowflake shaped whereas Lunar Pivot’s were bright moons.

The radiant wheel in the void was deployed from her Lunar Pivot, and now the Domain of Lunar Pivot was complete.

A bright moon, small bridge, and flowing water provided the backdrop to a talented man meeting a beautiful woman beneath the moonlit sky. Such a charming scene was illustrated by more than just moonlight—it was a bonafide picture scroll.

Inspiration flashed across Lu Yun’s mind when he saw it. Though it was only a second, he managed to grasp the true meaning of the three domains of Argent Snow.

The Curse King’s replica howled and raged under the winsome scenery until he finally crumbled with a final, reluctant scream. He didn’t have a chance to counterattack when faced with Lunar Pivot’s strongest move because only his replica was here. The Moon Sovereign King, on the other hand, was here herself.

“Longshan Yin, you’ve got some nerve to turn the entire Eastern Cluster into a land of zombies just for your Longshan family! This is unforgivable!” The sovereign king smashed her palm down on the tomb after she retracted her soul weapon.

“Damn it, why is this woman here in the flesh??” Di Yin paid no heed to anything else and waved the Imperial Seal, fully releasing its strength to defend against the harrowing blow.

Rumble!

Behind him, the Tomb of the Original Emperor shook; it seemed like a giant was awakening. The tomb released a terrifying aura to soften the Moon Sovereign King’s blow.

“They’re just a side branch and not your true bloodline. Is there a need to defend them like this?” She shook her head and vigorously waved Lunar Pivot, summoning the bright moon again.

Rumble—

The indistinct gigantic figure was blown apart, but an unknown strength surged from some part of the fourth realm and pulled the entire tomb away into an undefined corner.

The dao of burial that’d enveloped the Eastern Clusters vanished.

“So the original emperor has gone to the unknown expanses,” the sovereign king murmured as she looked in the direction where the tomb had disappeared to.

“Are you here to capture me?” Lu Yun plucked up his nerve to address the close by Moon Sovereign King. This was his primary body, not a replica. He was truly in dire straits and had no effort to spare for even the vanished tomb or overlord of Ice.

“If I captured you, wouldn’t master beat me until I can’t sit down?” the sovereign king winked mischievously. “Martial granddaughter Yueyi greets the little martial forefather.”

Lu Yun:

Chapter 1619: Yueyi

Lu Yun was a little lost for words. He looked back at Jian Juexian and Brightheart—they still had worried expressions on their faces. It would seem that they couldn’t hear the Moon Sovereign King’s conversation with Lu Yun.

He felt that this was the corniest, most cliché plot he’d ever heard of. The big bad guy out for his head in the fourth realm, his greatest enemy for the moment, was his martial grand disciple?

Yueyi?

Lu Yun had indeed heard of the name before.

The Fish King had once told him that Lu Qing had three disciples—first disciple of the venerated enforcer, second disciple Yueyi, and third disciple the Fish King.

But Lu Yun was still confused. Yueyi was the Moon Sovereign King? A sequence expert? How damn awesome was his son to have these kinds of disciples?

“Are you... really Yueyi?” Lu Yun asked dumbly.

“That is me,” Yueyi nodded. “But master only knows that I’m called Yueyi. He doesn’t know my true identity.”

Lu Yun raised his eyebrows.

“The Central Hongmeng is mysterious and dangerous, many powerhouses from the Boundless Realms have set up schemes there. The Luminaries have naturally done the same, so there I went,” Yueyi sighed. “After my primary body entered the Central Hongmeng, I fell into a trap set by the Curse King’s senior brother—the Poison King. I almost died and had to reincarnate into the Hongmeng for survival. But, my injuries were so severe that I completely forgot who I was in the natural fog of the womb.”

She didn’t speak of what happened after, but Lu Yun could make a few educated guesses. Despite the natural fog of the womb, Yueyi was still exceptionally talented; she’d possessed some of the greatest potential in the realm. Lu Qing had happened upon a young Yueyi and accepted her as his disciple.

What surprised Lu Yun was that his son’s good fortune was simply a little too good for words. He’d run into such a pivotal character, just like that, and successfully recruited her as his disciple?

Aw yeah, he’s my son alright!

“My primary body isn’t actually here to track you down, little martial forefather. I’m not here to take care of that Longshan Yin either.” Yueyi called Di Yin by his old name—a strong indicator that she didn’t think much about this descendant of the emperor of the original Hongmeng.

She thought for a bit and continued, "I left the Central Hongmeng not too long ago. We've met there before too. It's thanks to the martial forefather that I was able to recover my sense of self and return to the Boundless Planes."

"You are..." Lu Yun's eyes widened. "The Moon King?"

There was a familiar presence on her that'd been immediately apparent when Yueyi appeared. He'd been so preoccupied then that he hadn't had the chance to muse over it. Now that she raised the point, he instantly grasped the implications.

"That is correct, the Moon King that'd turned into a ghost king and plagued Starspace Region was me," Yueyi replied. "Though I'd reincarnated into a Hongmeng denizen, the Poison King's ghost poison was still on me. Ultimately, I turned into a ghost due to its effects. Once a ghost, I was like any of their kind—obsessed with occupying the Hongmeng and destroying it.

"In the last battle of Starspace Region, martial forefather awakened the great dragon with the Dragonquake Scripture. One blow from the scripture vanquished the corpse poison inside my body.

"Not only did I become the Purple King's disciple again, but I also regained myself in the Boundless Realms." A smile appeared on her face. "I left the Central Hongmeng to rest and recover in the Eastern Cluster until today.

"I learned about your matters during this period, and also through messages from senior brother and junior sister."

The venerated enforcer had always known about Lu Yun's existence, but the Fish King hadn't and thus gave rise to many a ridiculous situation. After Lu Yun's reputation rose in the fourth realm, the venerated enforcer and Fish King contacted Yueyi to ensure that she wouldn't follow in her senior sister's path.

However, they didn't know that she'd once turned into a ghost king or that she was the Moon King of Starspace Region. While Lu Qing's three disciples could contact each other, their methods were more like leaving messages as opposed to real time conversation.

They knew of each other's existence, but had almost never met each other before.

"So are you now the Moon Sovereign King of the Luminaries, or Lu Qing's disciple Yueyi?" Lu Yun asked calmly as he looked into her eyes.

"Whether it is the Moon Sovereign King or Yueyi, they are all me," she answered with a smile. "Are Feng Feifan and Lu Yun two different people?"

"That's different," Lu Yun shook his head. "Feng Feifan's ideals are the same as Lu Yun's, but Yueyi differs from the Moon Sovereign King."

Yueyi started and fell silent for a long time. "How much of the Luminaries do you know, martial grandfather?"

"Not much, all hearsay, really." Lu Yun shook his head. "But it's true that the Luminaries want to kill me."

“Bai Hongtian has executed the Great Brahma who attacked you, because he slaughtered more than three billion lives on the World Star,” Yueyi announced.

Lu Yun blinked.

“What people know of the Luminaries is similar to what martial grandfather knows of us. All hearsay,” Yueyi murmured. “We have never wished to conquer the Boundless Planes, or at least, I haven’t. All we want is for the great dao of the Boundless Planes to prosper again, for those clans and factions who shut their doors to share their great dao with the realm. Only then will the realm’s orders be truly perfected and not require a specific existence to keep them under control.

“Perhaps our methods are too radical... which gave rise to the notion that we want to conquer the Boundless Planes.”

Lu Yun paused, then nodded. “Your goals are all the same—to maintain the order of the realm. But your ideals and methods are different.”

“That is correct,” Yueyi nodded. “If the original Hongmeng appears again, it will result in what happened last epoch—distilling all daos into seeds of nothing and using them to suppress order. But the original Hongmeng failed.

“No matter why it perished, the ending has been written. If we try again, there will be no other ending.”

Lu Yun finally stopped with shock. Previously, he’d refused to admit that the original Hongmeng had failed. In his understanding, it’d self-destructed due to a mistake. But... defeat was defeat, what did it matter if there was a difference in process?

If it hadn’t been for external invasion, would that existence have used the Dragonquake Scripture unless they had to? Would they have called upon all of the dragons in the original Hongmeng if they’d had any other choice?

“I never once used the Dragonquake Scripture to revitalize the original Hongmeng in the thirty-three loops, likely because of this same reason. Was I convinced by another, or did I come to that conclusion myself?” Lu Yun turned things over in his mind, having drawn certain conclusions.

“Thus, martial grandfather, what difference is there between Yueyi and the Moon Sovereign King?” Yueyi smiled and waved her hand. A figure approached them from the distance—the overlord of Ice. He’d been freed from the unchanging ice and a big-headed doll followed by his side—the future brush.

Chapter 1620: Territory

Though the overlord of Ice walked over from the other side of the void with the big-headed doll, he didn’t seem to see Lu Yun. The latter was in Yueyi’s world of order; it would take another sequence expert to see the young man’s existence.

However, Lu Yun could see the outside world just fine.

“Martial grandfather, I will take the overlord and three brushes with me. It would be a disaster if they stayed by your side as you cannot protect them,” Yueyi said as she watched the overlord approach.

Lu Yun nodded. There was no point in refusing, Yueyi's gaze was resolute. She'd plainly come with this idea in mind.

She was also right, the brushes of the three reincarnations were too important. Just like Lu Yun, they were existences that'd broken free of the cycle of reincarnation. In the endless loops he'd experienced, they'd never existed.

As a sequence expert, Yueyi could naturally see that there was something special about them. If she could, so could other sequence experts. Thus, if the brushes stayed with Lu Yun or the overlord, they would ultimately be taken by someone else.

"And that Brightheart, I see some traces of myself in her. She seems to share a destiny with me, so I'll also be taking her back with me." Startled appreciation flashed across Yueyi's face when she looked at the girl next to Jian Juexian.

"She's the Cicada Sovereign's disciple." Instead of refusing, Lu Yun clarified Brightheart's background.

"So the girl is one of her's, no wonder," Yueyi nodded. "Then, martial grandfather, until we meet again."

She bowed to Lu Yun and gently waved her hand, shifting the overlord, doll, and Brightheart out of sight.

"What just happened?" Jian Juexian jumped with shock. Brightheart had suddenly disappeared without warning; she'd been right next to him! "Was that the Moon Sovereign King of the Luminaries? She saved us?" It was all too incredulous to process.

"Yes," Lu Yun nodded, then spoke with some trepidation. "That's it for everything here. Thank goodness I had the Blood Sovereign move my men, or they would've all died."

All of the Hongmeng worlds and various planes in the Eastern Cluster were empty. Everyone had been buried under the dao of burial emanating from the Tomb of the Original Emperor and turned into a zombie, or refined by the Corpse Sovereign.

If Lu Yun's people had stayed here, the same fate would've befallen them. The Blood Sovereign was no match for the Corpse Sovereign. As opposed to staying to their deaths, they were now in the innermost depths of the Boundless Planes.

As former prisoners of the Hadal Hell, they were prodigiously strong in the past. Not only were there Nihil World Sovereigns among them, but there were also sequence experts. The Blood Sovereign was helping them recover their past selves instead of staying put and training in one location. Even the weakest Bridge of Forgetfulness and She Nong were uncommon individuals, so who knew what the rest might be?

"So the emperor of the original Hongmeng is still alive. Yueyi said just now that the original emperor is in the unknown expanses." Lu Yun thought about it some more. "If there are no living beings in the Eastern Cluster anymore—does that mean it's mine?"

One plane cluster was infinitely vast, containing four hundred and eighty million planes. And they were now all Lu Yun's!

"When the immortal dao traverses the fourth realm, let's rename this cluster to the 'Immortal Region'." A smile curved Lu Yun's lips.

There was an Immortal Region in the Hongmeng as well. The Dao King had established it to help facilitate the immortal dao take root in the third realm. Unfortunately, the Curse King's curses had proven too strong—the immortal dao of the worlds had never been able to fully develop. The Curse King even infiltrated and controlled the faction in the end.

In the battle between the Dao King and Curse King, the Dao King was unquestionably defeated.

But now, the Curse King's replica—one with the true strength of sequence—was no more after a single blow from Yueyi. The curses and pawns he'd left in the Hongmeng were left without support, making them easy targets for the people that the Dao King had left behind in the Hongmeng.

However, there was still something that bothered Lu Yun.

The Poison King.

The Curse King's senior brother had been able to kill Yueyi's primary body, forcing her to reincarnate into the Hongmeng. The poison had been so strong that it'd continued to attack her then, transforming her into a ghost. It wasn't until Lu Yun happened to hit her with the Dragonquake Scripture that it was dispelled.

"The person who didn't have the luxury to consider anything else and called upon the great dragons of the Hongmeng... that probably had something to do with the Poison King. I wonder if this Poison King is still in the Hongmeng?"

Yueyi hadn't spoken about her battle with the Poison King, but judging from her expression, it was highly likely that he was still in the third realm.

"What are you thinking about?" Jian Juexian asked curiously when he saw Lu Yun's expression flicker rapidly.

"I'm wondering just what are you to have Quiet meld with your sword dao." Lu Yun summoned the sword back to him with a wave of his hand.

Though the Quiet Sovereign King had perished, there remained a hint of instinctive sword dao within the sword. Lu Yun had melded his sword dao with it to communicate with Quiet, thus establishing a partnership between equals.

At the same time, it'd never accepted Lu Yun's sword dao. It'd only allowed the young man to borrow the sword dao in the weapon.

But when it landed in Jian Juexian's hand, the man's sword dao immediately became one with the sword. Their combined might resulted in terrifying power. If it hadn't been for Jian Juexian being suppressed by the Curse King's order, he would've killed the Shadow Sovereign.

"I... don't know." Jian Juexian shook his head with bafflement, looking at the sword with a trace of fervor.

"I can't give you the sword," Lu Yun huffed at him. "You lost Immortal's End already!"

Quiet hummed at the end of Lu Yun's words, as if agreeing with him.

Jian Juexian smiled ruefully.

“You have no other place to go to, want to stay here and help me?”

“Didn’t you say you’d take me to the old man?” Jian Juexian grumbled. Though he’d already inwardly agreed, he still had to make a show of protesting.

“Your old man’s in there. If he wants to see you, he’ll come out to see you.” Lu Yun pointed at the plane of Fire where the Central Hongmeng was.

Jian Juexian’s eyes lit up.

“Alright then, I’ll stay here to protect your territory.” Jian Juexian nodded. “You want me to kill anyone that comes out of the Central Hongmeng if they’re not one of yours?”

“No,” Lu Yun shook his head. “But do capture any of the Curse King or Poison King’s men. If you can’t, kill them.”

Since Yueyi had just killed the Curse King’s sequence expert replica, he wouldn’t dare court death again in the short term. Yueyi didn’t just represent herself, but an entire organization with three sequence experts.