

Necropolis 1661

Chapter 1661: A World of the Mind

Lu Yun's pupils constricted with surprise. He hadn't thought that the power of a world would be so immense. In fact, he'd never fully understood what the worlds were. It wasn't until the one hundred and eight soldiers manifested heaven and earth, using the power of one to forcibly expunge the Curse King from immortal dao, that Lu Yun realized the might of the worlds.

This was the true ultimate order.

Most importantly was that the Formation of Heavenly Spirits and Earthly Demons being assembled was the same formation that Lu Yun had once used to make immortal dao whole and etched into cultivators' bodies! The soldiers were borrowing his formation to restrain the Curse King.

Wisps of vivid black smoke wafted from the Curse King's body. As he struggled and howled, his almost transparent skin turned pure black and even darker glyphs crawled over his skin.

"What is he?!" Sea Lord Haidong Lin jumped with shock and hastily backed away, deathly afraid of being affected by the Curse King.

"Perhaps there was a Curse King long ago, one that traveled to the Hongmeng in search of the origins of the withered wood," the Soldier King said as he stood in midair. "But the thing in front of us is absolutely not him anymore. The true Curse King is dead and whatever is occupying him has used the corpse to resurrect himself."

What the Curse King had said before was possibly true, but only from the real Curse King's perspective. The thing that'd killed and become him was something outside the scope of order. Thus, the power of a world could restrain him and the Disordered Hell could bury him.

However, his primary body wasn't present in Myriadsea World. Perhaps even the primary Curse King wasn't his true form either.

"A creature from the darkness?" Lu Yun surreptitiously stretched out his hand and grasped a section of the Curse King's aura so he could analyze it with formula dao. It changed into something like a black worm as soon as his hand closed around it, exploding with a bang after writhing a few times.

"Do you think this tiny world is all that it takes to trap me?" the Curse King threw his head back with laughter. Since he'd revealed his true form, he no longer needed to hide his strength. The black glyphs crawling over his skin morphed into tiny black worms and flung themselves at the assembly. Lu Yun and the Sea Lord were their primary targets.

Apart from the Soldier King, the Sea Lord was the strongest out of the crowd. Since they had a common enemy at present, Lu Yun naturally wouldn't restrict the latter in any way. The Sea Lord became one with the sea dao in the outside world and regained ninety percent of the world's seas as his body.

A torrent of violent force surged from all sides and reinforced the world of immortal dao, attacking the Curse King in a mad barrage at the same time. The world manifested by the one hundred and eight soldiers was already part of the world of immortal dao. Immortal dao encompassed all and most importantly, encompassed a world!

“It seems that it’ll be impossible for me to refine this world of sequence and create a world of curse dao sequence. But sacrificing a replica to bring down a troublemaker like you is well worth it.” The Curse King suddenly appeared in front of Lu Yun, ignoring the Soldier King, Sea Lord, Jian Bu’er, Dongfang Mo, and Demonic Vine. No one knew how he’d bypassed the others to attain this positioning.

A delicate fragrance emanated from his body and wafted into Lu Yun’s nose, melting into the young man’s body. It wasn’t a real fragrance, but the manifestation of a curse. The fake Curse King was the lord of curse dao and had reached great perfection with it. His strongest methods were also curse dao, ones that exceeded the once real Curse King.

“You know that I’m a troublemaker, but still openly approach me to enter the world of my mind. Are you trying to ensure mutual destruction?” The power of the Six Royals had faded from Lu Yun’s body, returning him to the cultivation level of World Manifest. He had no chance of defying the Curse King.

Rather than the real world, the two currently communicated in something like a mental one. In the outside world, the Curse King standing in front of Lu Yun was no more. It appeared that he’d already been defeated.

“I know that you might have some tricks up your sleeve to resurrect yourself if I destroy your body from the outside world. Killing you in the world of the mind is the best course of action.” The fragrance around the Curse King intensified and continuously corroded Lu Yun’s mind and soul.

He’d learned his lesson after snapping Lu Yun’s neck. That Lu Yun had only been a replica refined from a section of the Myriad Spirit Root. This time, he entered his enemy’s mind to ensure the annoyance’s demise from inside.

It was the same course of action that Lu Yun had crafted for the Sea Lord. So what if the Sea Lord was still alive when his mind and consciousness were gone? He would hardly be a threat if he was a walking dead.

As the Curse King stood in front of a mental manifestation of Lu Yun, the fragrance wafting from his being grew ever stronger. It wasn’t his core strength—that was outside the scope of order. He wouldn’t commit such a basic mistake when the Disordered Hell could suppress all instances of disorder.

Lu Yun remained calm and silently watched his opponent.

“I’m wondering what kind of being are you? Something outside the scope of order?” Lu Yun asked with confusion. “I know that you, or your side, destroyed the original Hongmeng. Did you destroy it because you were afraid of the worlds it manifested?”

“You’ve been causing no end of trouble in the Central Hongmeng, destroying world after world. You’re not doing so for the seeds of nothing or to destroy immortal dao. You’re doing it solely to destroy the worlds.”

He gently extended a hand to summon the true form of the Hadal Hell. The hell glistened like a string of nine flawless black pearls. The true form of the Hadal Hell wasn’t nine Hongmengs, but nine worlds. Nine worlds that had grown to the level of the fourth realm.

Apart from the Central Hongmeng, these were the last worlds in the fourth realm. Someone had destroyed them all the same and refined them into the Hadal Hell, turning even their denizens into the hell's prisoners.

"You have no need to understand that." The Curse King shook his head; he had no intention of wasting time with Lu Yun. His moves were swift and decisive. His curse was cast and continuously built on Lu Yun. There was no need to chat with his doomed opponent and give the latter a chance to identify any flaws or openings.

"It looks like you still don't understand." Lu Yun shook his head while the Tome of Life and Death slowly emerged from the top of his head, enveloping this world of the mind. The heavy fragrance immediately faded away.

"What is that?!" The Curse King cast a terrified look at the book.

"I wouldn't be able to do anything to you in the outside world, but in my mental world? You can just sit back and relax in irrevocable humiliation."

Chapter 1662: Victor, You Can Now Die With Peace of Mind

The Tome of Life and Death completely caged in the Curse King's strength. However, deep-seated fear suddenly dissipated from his face and an eerie smile stretched his lips from ear to ear.

"This is your trump card, isn't it? After so much time and effort, I finally understand how you managed to break out. It's all because of this item, huh?"

Lu Yun's heart skipped a beat. Break out!

Break out of what? Destiny? The endless loops?

A multitude of thoughts replicated in his heart like demons; a variety of distracting thoughts bounded into being and a wisp of black flame rose in Lu Yun's mind. What had been a bright mental world began to darken and the dark flame coursed through the area.

"Tsk tsk tsk." Contempt traced the Curse King's smirk. "So you do know that you're just a plaything in the hands of a great being. So what of the worlds? What of your immortal dao? It is all naught but flowers in a mirror and the moon's reflection in water. Transient and ephemeral, a dreamlike illusion."

"If that's the case, why are you so obsessed with me?" Lu Yun's eyes brightened and the black demonic flame sputtered out of sight, absorbed by his hell dao.

That'd been the fire of an internal demon. Once an internal demon developed and stirred to action, the flame of the heart would devour the body.

"Obsessed with you? Who do you think you are for me to be obsessed with you?" the Curse King chuckled. "I was only curious about the bronze book you carry. I wanted to know what it was, that it could help you leap out of this extensive river.

"But it turns out to be entirely inconsequential, something that's only stirred up a tiny ripple. It's not worth speaking of." Though the Curse King was firmly suppressed by the treasure, he wore the smile of a victor.

Lu Yun stared fixedly at the Curse King before he, too, chuckled.

“You’re trying very hard to hide it, but you can’t disguise the trace of fear in the innermost depths of your heart.” He keenly recalled the split second of terror from the Curse King when the Tome of Life and Death first appeared. It hadn’t been an act; the other was truly afraid. He was engaging Lu Yun in conversation simply because he wanted to gloss over the moment.

They were in a world of the mind. Martial strength of the outside world held no meaning here. One’s doom was nigh when a mental weakness developed.

Weaknesses abounded in Lu Yun’s mind, but he was protected by the book. The Curse King labored mightily to withstand the treasure as it didn’t come down to whether or not he was willing to forsake the replica, but that he couldn’t.

This replica housed some of his memories and some secrets were hidden in those memories. Thus, he was attempting to buy time to burn his memories.

“You win this round since you’ve learned of my trump card. Victor, you can now die with peace of mind.” Of course Lu Yun knew what the Curse King was trying to accomplish. He brought out the withered wood and combined the six hellfires into one pure black hellfire. They enveloped the Curse King’s mind and followed the wisp of fear into the deepest parts of the body before he could fully destroy his memories.

Bam!

The Curse King’s mental body suddenly exploded. Self detonation! His replica and anything it contained were instantly blown to smithereens.

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A certain locale in the known expanses of the Boundless Planes.

A man with black hair slowly opened his eyes. His face was as white as a sheet and a trickle of blood dribbled down his chin.

“He actually forced me into mental self detonation.” The Curse King coughed lightly as he looked piercingly in a particular direction of the void.

Mental self detonation was vastly different from destruction via outside force. Mental self detonation required the primary body to connect the core essence of their mind to the replica’s mind. Once detonation was undertaken, the primary body’s mind would also be affected. If a replica was destroyed by outside force, all the primary body needed to do was to sever the connection.

“What is that book?” The Curse King’s hands were as pale and slender as a woman’s. He stroked his smooth chin and sank into contemplation. “I was only testing the waters when I said ‘break out’, but he developed an internal demon from the phrase. What does he know?”

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“Pity, most of the memories were destroyed in that explosion.” Despite the majority of important details being lost in the self detonation, Lu Yun carefully collected the Curse King’s scattered memory fragments. He could see hints of useful information in them.

“I see, so it wasn’t the original Hongmeng that kept the fourth realm’s orders under control, and not the seeds of nothing either.” He frowned deeply. “Someone has been purposefully leading us down the wrong path. Whether it’s a dao that traverses the fourth realm or the world of immortal dao that Mo Yi thought of, neither will be able to corral order...

“No, the world of immortal dao can, but it needs to nurture a true world first.”

It’d never been the Hongmeng that’d suppressed order, but the worlds inside it. Heaven and earth were the true masters of order, the existences that accepted all order and manifested them.

The worlds of the original Hongmeng had reached terrifying heights. Once they expanded to their fullest, they would incorporate all of the known and unknown expanses of the fourth realm, making it a true realm of order.

However, being as weak as they were, the worlds needed protection. The chaos and Hongmeng had never been the best guardian for the worlds. That honor went to immortal dao!

Immortal dao encompassed everything, including the worlds. It could shore up weaknesses and mutually depend on the worlds. If Mo Yi’s world of immortal dao was to protect the worlds, then it would perfectly accomplish their goals.

However, Lu Yun still didn’t understand what she really had in mind.

Though there were many hints and clues in the Curse King’s memories, Lu Yun didn’t dare fully believe any of them. The Curse King was a crafty and insidious fellow. Everything in his memories, apart from the worlds, could be fake. The bits about the worlds were true only because they matched Lu Yun’s own calculations. Some things could also be verified with the powerhouses of the original Hongmeng and fourth realm.

“According to the Curse King’s understanding, he walks the path of justice and we are the irredeemable evil, the cavities that disturb existence?” Lu Yun glimpsed something interesting. “He’s seriously so childish. There is no absolute right or wrong in the world, just a difference in perspective.

“So what if we’re the holes in the paper? As long as our existence is rational, then come one day, we might become the paper.” He opened his eyes and stretched out his limbs.

“Hmm? My cultivation’s taken another step forward and I’m a Void World King now?” Lu Yun blinked with surprise.

The Curse King’s mental body had completely melded into Lu Yun’s body. Though the young man could access only his true cultivation level for now, his realm of Nihil World Sovereign yet existed. He just lacked the proper strength and cultivation level as befitting his realm.

With the Curse King’s self detonation, the Tome of Life and Death transmuted his immense mental power into pure strength and directed it into Lu Yun’s body, thereby raising his cultivation level.

Chapter 1663: Qinglie

The world of immortal dao had finished dispersing; Jian Bu'er, the Demonic Vine, and the Sea Lord had returned to their homes. Dongfang Mo had departed as well.

The Army Pagoda hovered over Lu Yun's head, trailing down curtains of light that kept him protected.

"Where's the Soldier King?" Lu Yun raised a brow when he saw that there was only one soldier standing in front of him. There was nothing else present on the scene apart from the tower and that soldier.

"There's been some developments inside Ruina. The king and the other soldiers have all gone inside." The soldier raised a cupped fist salute at Lu Yun. "Since the young lord has awakened, I will seek out my liege. Farewell."

He vanished as a streak of light while Lu Yun rubbed his aching temples.

"Developments in Ruina huh? Probably nothing good..." He engaged formula dao on the newest problem, but gave up when he couldn't calculate anything. "I've broken through World Manifest to become a Void World King. That cultivation level makes me a titan in the fourth realm, but it's worthless here."

Lu Yun sighed and deployed Boundless Step to leave as well. Though he couldn't determine what was happening inside Ruina, it appeared that more than eighty percent of the strongest presences in Myriadsea World had vanished. They'd likely all entered the mysterious heart of the world.

Instead of heading in himself, he traveled to Immortal Nation. The new Immortal Myriadtree spanned spatial barriers; half of its roots were planted in Ruina, the other half in Lu Yun's dantian. Thus, it was rooted to wherever he traveled to.

However, he refused to completely store the tree in his body. He didn't want to become a human-shaped Immortal Myriadtree.

The immortal dao was still expanding; more than eighty percent of former demonic dao territory now belonged to it. Immortal dao was gradually becoming the greatest dao in the world, second to only sea dao.

Monster spirit, martial, shamanic, and many other supplemental daos backed away, not wanting to provoke the rising star. Immortal dao beholder Dongfang Mo had only needed five rays of immortal light to trounce martial dao beholder Wu Di. Who dared trouble immortal dao after that?

Most importantly was that many dao beholders in the world had disappeared. Apparently, they'd all entered Ruina to fight for that last wisp of opportunity.

Now that immortal dao occupied more than eighty percent of former demonic dao territory as well as having devoured eighty percent of demonic dao, it'd raced ahead of the other great daos. The few dao beholders who didn't enter Ruina gave a wide berth to this dao, and the altar that the Curse King had destroyed reappeared again.

"This altar is quite unusual... It's very possible that I arrived in this world because of it." Lu Yun quickly derived a bit of cause and effect as he looked at the newly reappeared altar.

The altar was the oldest existence in Immortal Nation and had been present before Truecloud Nation was established. It'd been so ordinary and commonplace that it'd never drawn much attention.

After the nation's founding, generations of kings regarded the altar as their foundation and renovated it. When the Truecloud Sect appeared, the altar became a bridge between Myriadsea World and the Truecloud Sect's world of immortals.

Upon crafting the worlds of immortals, Dongfang Mo also fashioned the anti-reversion passages so that immortals couldn't easily leave their worlds. This was done to protect them; if they wandered Myriadsea World willy-nilly, it would only be a matter of time before they were discovered by cultivators of the other great daos and hunted down.

No one had ever discovered the wonders of the altar. Not even Dongfang Mo or the Sea Lord knew of its secrets. It wasn't until the altar mysteriously reappeared after its destruction that Lu Yun realized there was something special about it.

"It's not a mother altar like the one God created, but some other kind of altar..." Lu Yun closely observed it, discovering that his core essence was tightly integrated with this world of sequence. Somehow, the altar appeared insignificant despite plainly being momentous. It was a great art that'd somehow concealed itself.

Lu Yun jumped up and returned to the altar, taking a cross-legged position and operating formula dao with all of his strength, focusing it on the altar. Though he couldn't deploy formula dao to its utmost since he was no longer reinforced by the six orders of the highest degree, the altar wasn't so extraordinary that he couldn't probe its secrets with his skill alone. Formula dao also wasn't its former self, where one needed an exceedingly high cultivation level to be able to use it at certain heights...

In its current iteration, cultivators only needed to be skilled in the various calculation methods and formulas to start with elementary formulas. They could then progress from the most basic existences to the more sophisticated.

However, an enormous amount of concentration and time was still required for this process. Setting one foot wrong was to set all steps wrong. The final result would be impacted, so utmost care and caution was required.

Thanks to the Tome of Life and Death and being one of the founders of formula dao, Lu Yun's calculation speed was a hundred million times faster than ordinary cultivators.

"What is it?" He abruptly stilled his mind and opened his eyes, glancing at a Qi Fengyun who'd stood at the bottom of the altar for a long time. The man had returned to Immortal Nation after Dongfang Mo entered Ruina and continued to be Marquis Windcloud, conquering more territories for Immortal Nation.

"In response to master, curse dao has attacked us." His response was short and to the point. He was an immortal now and many times stronger than regular immortals. He was a peerless genius that Lu Yun and Dongfang Mo had created together.

Being highly versed in formula dao, Qi Fengyun knew what actions were appropriate for the times. He would never have disturbed Lu Yun if it hadn't been an emergency.

"Has the beholder of curse dao come?" Lu Yun recalled the woman in an outfit of multicolored feathers who'd stood with the Curse King.

“Yes,” Qi Fengyun nodded. “She wants to see master, but senior brother Dongfang has blocked her.”

Dongfang Ao was also in Immortal Nation and could hinder a dao beholder after undoing his seal.

“Since fellow daoist has come, why trouble yourself with these juniors?” Lu Yun stood up on the altar and called out to a corner of the sky.

“Hehehehe—” Giggles tinkled from the air as the feathered woman sashayed into view.

The one fighting with Dongfang Ao suddenly turned into a feather and drifted to the ground. Expressionless, Dongfang Ao turned around and landed at the foot of the altar.

The armies of curse dao had swept in from the previous world of demonic dao and slowly invaded the sphere of immortal dao influence. And yet, their leader had already reached immortal dao’s heartland!

The curse dao beholder had previously been the Curse King; the feathered woman had naturally become the new beholder upon his death. When she first appeared in Myriadsea World, Lu Yun had suspected that the Curse King had known he’d die on this excursion. Thus, he’d brought her along to familiarize herself with the lay of the land.

“This humble Qinglie greets the beholder of immortal dao.” The woman swept a graceful curtsy at Lu Yun.

Lu Yun frowned slightly, then relaxed his brow with a smile. “So you’re called Qinglie, I’d thought you’d be called Chickadee or Tit, or something like that.”

Qinglie remained smiling merrily in spite of the obvious offense. Since she was here to kill Lu Yun, he was firing back with no holds barred.

Chapter 1664: The Color of Blood

“Be it Qinglie or Chickadee, it doesn’t matter what I’m called if I can kill the beholder of immortal dao from the Central Hongmeng.” Qinglie smiled beguilingly and elegantly extended a hand, flicking her wrist to slam her palm down on Lu Yun. Just like the Curse King, she preferred to kill with her first move instead of engaging in wordy exchanges.

As a curse dao heavyweight, her palm strike manifested countless demons in the void. They spilled forth like shadows, enveloping Immortal Nation in the blink of an eye. Their target was also Lu Yun.

“If the Curse King was still alive, he would not have made this trip,” Lu Yun sighed gently as he took in the endless horde of demons. These demons were all horrific curses. Any normal living being, even an expert who’d accessed the first level of sequence, would be annihilated if they were grazed by any of the creatures.

“Oh?” Qinglie started as her eyes snapped to Lu Yun on the altar. There was no time for her to further consider the comment—three thousand and six hundred curse demons charged up the structure.

“Because I never fall down in the same place twice.” Lu Yun waved his hand and summoned the Army Pagoda. Its curtains of light surrounded the young man with a cocoon of protection a split second before the curse demons arrived.

Though it'd become the barracks of the Soldier King and his men, essentially a spatial treasure, its nature hadn't changed. It was still a Profound Pagoda, the first one to ever appear in the Boundless Planes.

Lu Yun's current level of strength couldn't deploy the pagoda's full power, but the Soldier King had left a formation of heaven and earth before his departure to use as the hub in commanding the treasure. Lu Yun could use the formation as a lever to pry into the pagoda's power and release purple-golden light, pushing it out in all directions.

"Damn it, that Profound Pagoda!" Qinglie cursed at the sudden might from the pagoda and left without another word.

After Lu Yun killed the Curse King's replica, he'd sat cross-legged over the ocean for three years. The pagoda had watchfully hovered over his head during that time; no one had been able to shift it. Qinglie hadn't thought that the Profound Pagoda would remain by Lu Yun's side after the last soldier left for Ruina.

"That brat must be God's bastard son!" Qinglie swore in a bad temper and ran off with curse dao's heavyweights. She didn't dare try for Lu Yun's head when such a terrifying treasure stood by his side.

The Curse King had given her a command before he died—never, ever try to kill Lu Yun. She'd come regardless because there was a tiny rebellious murmuring in her heart.

Lu Yun would never fall down in the same place twice, and thus he would never be killed in the same manner twice.

"Running off just like that?" He shook his head. "I wouldn't be able to do anything to her if she insisted on invading immortal dao. All I can manage now is to defend myself."

"Although Qinglie can't do anything to master, martial uncle will make trouble for her when he returns," Qi Fengyun laughed. "Her only goal was master and not immortal dao. Occupying immortal dao now wouldn't benefit her in the slightest. In fact, it'll only attract disaster to curse dao."

"She's already attracted disaster to curse dao," Lu Yun grinned. "Dongfang Ao, take three thousand golden immortals and go on a stroll through curse dao's world. Kill some folks, set off some fires, knock a few places down. See what she can do about it."

"Curse dao's disciples are in low spirits after the Curse King's death. Qinglie has just come to this world of sequence, the dao's denizens don't recognize her yet."

"Understood!" A bit dejected at how earlier events had gone, Dongfang Ao promptly perked up at Lu Yun's command.

All immortals now practiced the new immortal dao and worked with new foundations. Dongfang Ao was ten times stronger than before. He'd yet to fully unleash his power when he fought the intruder, so this time, he would have at it with Qinglie no matter what.

He was Dongfang Mo's disciple, after all. Perhaps he'd been a bit too weak before the foundations of immortal dao were changed, but he was certainly on a dao beholder level now. Those dao beholders had stopped at nothing to kill his senior and junior brothers and sisters!

Unless Qinglie wanted to die, she wouldn't dare take personal action against Dongfang Ao and the three thousand golden immortals.

Lu Yun sat down cross-legged again to derive the connection between the altar and this world of sequence. There seemed to be something amiss.

"Master!" Qi Fengyun suddenly spoke up.

"Speak." Although Lu Yun was deep in his calculations, he wasn't distracted by his disciple's interruption.

"Your disciple also conducted a series of calculations when the altar reappeared."

"What did you find?"

"Nothing good."

"How?"

"Your disciple didn't theorize on the core essence of the altar, but used it as an opening to analyze Myriadsea World." Qi Fengyun took a deep breath.

"Oh?" Lu Yun blinked. He hadn't thought of this angle. He'd been focused on the altar all along and its connection with Myriadsea World. Qi Fengyun had sidestepped that entirely and viewed it as the backdrop for the entire world.

"What did you find?"

"Blood!" Qi Fengyun looked a bit pale. "Perhaps I'm not skilled enough and came to an erroneous conclusion... but I did see blood, mayhem, and the keening of endless souls. This isn't a world of sequence, and the final world it evolves into will not be the world of sequence for a great dao!"

Lu Yun jerked with surprise. Qi Fengyun was second only to him when it came to formula dao. He was the third greatest in the art and his practical application of formula dao was superior to Lu Yun's. Some of his ideas were outside the scope of Lu Yun's capabilities.

Since Lu Yun was the founder of the dao, Qi Fengyun's overall accomplishments would never surpass his master's. Anything he attained strengthened formula dao, an improvement that would be instantly conveyed to Lu Yun. And so, Lu Yun didn't doubt his disciple's words.

He copied the idea and analyzed the altar as if it was Myriadsea World.

Boom!

A bloody cloud rose over Lu Yun's head and exploded, releasing a bloody face that pounced on the young man with an open mouth.

"Piss off!" Lu Yun snorted and waved the burning withered wood out of the void. He directed it at the face.

Kaboom!

The altar trembled and blood trickled out of the simplistic azure structure, dying it red.

Chapter 1665: Realm Monster and Altar

The sudden development alarmed Qi Fengyun and he hastily backed away, searching for the best hiding spot. He'd been slightly self-congratulatory just moments ago because he'd calculated something that Lu Yun hadn't. Though he hadn't exceeded his master, he was showing many signs of the pupil surpassing the teacher.

In this moment, he fully understood how ridiculously wrong he'd been. These phenomena were occurring because Lu Yun had inferred some taboo topics. These were the consequences.

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"Don't move." Lu Yun darted to his disciple's side the second he shifted and pressed down on his shoulder. "It's all fake." A cold leer played at Lu Yun's lips. "Trying to use a layout of absolute death against me?"

Layouts of absolute death were a creation of the akasha ghosts, which happened to be a creation of Lu Yun's future self. His own resentment was encompassed within the layouts. Now that he understood the cause and effect, his mind was clear and he would never be affected by them again.

However, it was very mystifying why this layout had appeared here.

"No, no, the layout of absolute death doesn't originate from the akasha ghosts, per se. They got it from a fragment of a combat art they intercepted in the void. That thing, or that art, is the true source of the layouts." Inspiration flashed through Lu Yun's eyes as he definitively plumbed the depths of the layout of absolute death with the new formula dao.

The layout of absolute death used falsehoods to conceal truth. Death was a foregone conclusion after one was caught in such a layout. It was both an illusory art of the mind and a feng shui killing formation. The interaction between the two culminated in an almost tangible world.

When Lu Yun recreated formula dao, he also incorporated the way to defeat these layouts into the dao. From his perspective, layouts of absolute death could temper the mind and enhance a cultivator's alertness, toughening the heart. Subconsciously speaking, one of the most terrifying existences out there was no longer a concern once formula dao could counter it.

What the altar projected now was a similarly frightening concept, one even more challenging than the layout of absolute death.

Being a formula dao genius, Qi Fengyun had unknowingly practiced the way to dismantle such layouts. Though he'd never seen one before, he immediately composed himself and struggled free of the terrifying illusion after his master's reminder.

"Have you learned it well, my disciple?" Lu Yun winked at Qi Fengyun.

"Eh?" The man blinked.

"Arts like the layout of absolute death are ancient arts. They've remained unchanging and eternal from the moment they appeared," Lu Yun chuckled. His disciple didn't know what to make of the sudden bizarre declaration.

“Though this art is incomparably strong and has tricked many senior powerhouses, it doesn’t know how to change. It can’t adapt to the times and was instantly suppressed by the new formula dao. You and I are as insignificant as ants to it, but it’s unable to kill us. Instead, we’re able to see right through it.”

Ah, understanding dawned on Qi Fengyun.

“The times are always changing—they never stop. Combat arts, cultivation methods, great daos, and orders progress at every minute and second. Elimination by the times is on the horizon as soon as one stops with self satisfaction.”

Qi Fengyun quite agreed with this viewpoint; it’d been fully illustrated with immortal dao. The version in Myriadsea World was undeniably powerful, but it’d fallen behind immortal dao in the outside world because it’d never changed from its roots.

Lu Yun was using a dangerous situation as a teaching moment, changing his disciple’s views bit by bit. Whether it was the world of immortals, fourth realm, or original Hongmeng, to Lu Yun, the most advanced thinking was found on ancestral planet Earth.

Fuxi had always been on Earth—the three-eyed man that’d taken his place in the chaos was his evil self. Everything had been part of his plan so that Earth would evolve into his ideal world. Although Lu Yun was part of the vast fourth realm now, his mentality was still that of an Earthling’s. His gaze was always fixed to the distance and he never stopped to beam with pride at any accomplishment. Time progressed and life advanced. Never stopping, never ending.

“How do we defeat it, master?” While Qi Fengyun was no longer affected by the mental realm, he was still trapped inside. A foggy mist met his eye in all directions—he couldn’t see the outside world. It was a world the color of blood.

“What do we want to defeat it for?” Lu Yun shook his head. “This kind of layout of absolute death is purely mental. It doesn’t exist as long as it doesn’t have a foothold in your heart.”

“It doesn’t exist as long as it doesn’t have a foothold in my heart?” Spontaneous enlightenment occurred to Qi Fengyun. The blood-red color faded before him and the altar returned to its aged azure color.

“Perverse genius,” Lu Yun grumbled and continued operating formula dao again.

The altar began to tremble. It seemed to be alive and flared with a mote of tangible bloody light, attempting to stop Lu Yun’s calculations.

“It would’ve taken a bit of effort to discover your existence if you hadn’t given yourself away.” Lu Yun suddenly paused. “Since you have, I can guess what you are without having to analyze you.

“When I wielded the power of the Six Royals, I derived the core essence of Myriadsea World, of the Sea Lord, Curse King, and another incredibly strong existence. The last one is you, isn’t it?”

Lu Yun narrowed his eyes at the altar beneath his feet while Qi Fengyun shuddered.

“That poor Sea Lord. He thought he’d be the one to manifest a world of sequence after he devoured all the other great daos. He’s been unknowingly working for the benefit of someone else all this time. There’s no world of sequence here, it’s a trap from beginning to end!

“This so-called world of sequence is a simulation by a realm monster!”

A realm monster!

Worlds destroyed by the chaos ultimately transformed into realm monsters, setting their sights on newly born worlds to turn them into more realm monsters out of bitterness that they were still alive. The world they stood on, Myriadsea World, was a creation of a realm monster!

Lu Yun might not have been able to determine the truth of the world if he hadn't seen a realm monster before. But since he had, and had personally killed one, he was very familiar with their presence. Akasha ghosts had once allied with realm monsters as well.

What he didn't know was what kind of world had given rise to such an enormous and terrifying realm monster. It'd hoodwinked all powerhouses, including the original emperor, making them think this was a world of pure sequence that could be molded for their use.

“This altar... and the realm monster...” Lu Yun's expression turned unnatural as he considered the altar beneath his feet.

Chapter 1666: Ruina Nation

Lu Yun slowly shifted from a stiff expression to outright ashen faced. His scalp went numb and it felt like his brain was about to explode.

He was extremely uneasy.

The Curse King had mentioned “breaking out”—plainly, he knew something about the constant loops of reincarnation, despite not knowing that Lu Yun's future dao fruit self had personally experienced many of them. If he wasn't one of the conductors of the loops, he was at least an informed participant.

The Curse King had snuffed out more than ninety percent of his memories before his replica met its end. Only fragments of falsehood intermixed with truth remained to bewilder Lu Yun. Anything regarding the truth of existence and the endless reincarnation loops had been erased. That was the most important that could not be divulged—not even a hint.

Everything was either a game or its rules in the Curse King's eyes, be it immortal dao, the worlds, or destroying the Hongmeng. It was critically important that the game pieces remain unaware of their reality.

Herein lay the problem.

The Curse King didn't know the truth about this world either! He'd brought curse dao into Myriadsea World and attempted to devour the Sea Lord to create a world of curse dao sequence.

He'd been deceived by this world too!

“Can it be...” Lu Yun didn't dare see this line of reasoning through. He didn't know what to think anymore. The world he could see was large enough, but the realm monster and the altar's origin were far beyond his zone of comprehension. He couldn't reconcile the circumstances against the backdrop of his understanding.

Lu Yun's brows furrowed ever more deeply and two faint flames appeared in his eyes.

"Master?" Qi Fengyun gently pushed Lu Yun when he saw the young man's expression turn dark.

Lu Yun shuddered and snapped back to his senses.

"Holy shit, that was close!" Cold sweat poured from his brow. The realm monster—or rather, the altar—had invaded his mind and nearly stirred up his internal demons! If they'd taken effect, he would've died to a heart engulfed in flames.

Thank goodness that Qi Fengyun had noticed something amiss and awoken him at a crucial moment!

"Master, what is it?" Qi Fengyun asked compulsively. His master had undoubtedly derived the truth behind the altar and this world. He was very, very curious.

"Just a ghost," Lu Yun sneered. "I acted very carefully before because I didn't know what kind of parasite had attached to the realm monster. Now that we know, there's nothing to worry about.

"I leave Immortal Nation to you, my disciple. I'm heading to Ruina." Lu Yun vanished with a turn, leaving behind a baffled Qi Fengyun. No matter how many times the man operated formula dao, he came to the same results as before.

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The immense underwater cavern beneath Ruina Immortal Nation wasn't the real Ruina. The true Ruina was above the sea. The Sea Lord had so easily refined more than ninety percent of the orders around the area because this had been an endless sea to begin with. Ruina was the origin of the sea and its final resting place.

The sea here didn't just represent Myriadsea World. It represented all of the seas and all of the worlds. Legend had it that those who died in the great sea ultimately found their way to the kingdom of Ruina, that it was the equivalent of hell within the sea.

But that was just a myth. Since Lu Yun walked the path of hell dao, he naturally knew that whether it was the sea, sky, or land, all beings belonged to hell after death. His six hells had fully formed and were beginning to operate in tandem, overseeing the sequence of reincarnation within this realm. Once hell dao reached perfection, Lu Yun would become the master of life and death in the Boundless Planes and control everything's existence.

That was incredibly far off for now.

If the legends of Ruina were true, then its kingdom likely lay in ruins. Lu Yun suspected that the altar and the Ruina of Myriadsea World had something to do with that kingdom.

He'd attempted to create hell dao before, but had never truly succeeded. That'd been overturned in Myriadsea World; he'd even created combat arts for hell dao. These outcomes were proof enough that this world contained an imperceptible trace of hell dao.

That trace was the final piece to the puzzle of his hell dao. In addition, one of his Yama Kings confirmed his speculation that the Ruina of Myriadsea World was also the mythical kingdom of Ruina.

Xuanxi!

She was a shark spirit, the race rumored to be the masters of Ruina. The shark spirits of the world of immortals possessed great potential, but were themselves extremely weak. They'd essentially become the playthings of the good-for-nothings in the world, but Xuanxi was different.

After becoming an Envoy of Samsara and then a Yama King, her bloodline was fully activated and she demonstrated incredible talent that rivaled any of the other Yama Kings.

By now, Lu Yun was piecing everything together. While it seemed that he'd casually and randomly selected his Yama Kings, his actions had followed mysterious guidance from the Tome of Life and Death. The ten Yama Kings represented the ten different hell daos, and Xuanxi represented the Ruina hell dao.

Ruina hell dao had appeared in Lu Yun's dao long ago, but he was unable to glimpse the kingdom. He couldn't see everything in full just yet, so here he was. The source of the infinite sea, its final destination, and a hell that was the equivalent of the sea.

This was also an existence that soared above the endless reincarnation loops.

Lu Yun deployed the Boundless Step and covered a hundred million kilometers with one pace, making his way to the true heart of the world. It was a patch of seawater that was extremely far from land.

"The altar, realm monster, and Ruina are three independent entities! The altar took the kingdom's fragments and latched onto the realm monster, trying to turn it into Ruina so it could rebuild the kingdom," Lu Yun murmured. "But since the kingdom has broken, it needs sustenance from sea dao. Thus, the Sea Lord arrived in this world to answer an unknown calling, but his sea dao is too weak to satisfy that altar. That's why everything afterward happened!"

"If the Sea Lord succeeds in devouring all of the great daos, then the world of dao sequence he manifests won't be one of sea dao, but the kingdom of Ruina!"

"The thing leeching off the realm monster will possess his body, just like the Curse King was possessed!"

Formula dao operated furiously in Lu Yun's mind and his eyes shone brightly. His voice started off as gentle murmurings and built to ringing tones.

"But with immortal dao occupying Ruina, what was a perfectly laid plan has been knocked awry. Thus, that dead thing can't sit still anymore and threw out bait, luring most of the dao beholders into Ruina so it can personally devour them and rebuild the kingdom."

Lu Yun paused. There was a massive vortex that spanned millions of kilometers beneath his feet, drinking in the waters around it. A blue-haired man with a fish tail stood above it; he wielded a crystalline-blue metal bident and looked quietly at Lu Yun.

The Sea Lord!

Chapter 1667: Half a Face

"See, I was right, there are many flaws and holes in formula dao. It's not a perfect great dao." The Sea Lord tilted his head up to Lu Yun and smiled. "At the very least, you failed to derive that I am the master of the altar."

Lu Yun silently looked down at the Sea Lord beneath him.

“You announced your findings and speculations in a loud manner to draw me out, didn’t you?” the Sea Lord continued. “So here I am, right in front of you. Satisfied?”

“Still trying to throw me off balance even now?” Lu Yun slowly breathed out and smiled in return. “It’s true, I didn’t calculate that you’re the master of the altar and the terrifying existence lurking in Ruina.

“But does it really matter to me whether or not I figure it out? Is it important to formula dao? If formula dao really can take every conceivable possibility into account, what would that mean to living beings?”

The Sea Lord’s expression shifted as he listened to Lu Yun.

“Everything that exists is unpredictable, constantly changing, unfathomable, and unpredictable. Even I can’t possibly know everything that is to happen in the future and took place in the past. Though the cycle of reincarnation has repeated infinite times, many changes have still cropped up. It’s not always one hundred percent the same—I am an anomaly in this iteration, and perhaps other unexpected developments also appeared in others.”

“I see, so you knew about that long ago.” The Sea Lord’s mood changed slightly. “That Curse King told you about it, didn’t he? He came here because of me, to eliminate the aberration that is me. Refining a world of curse dao sequence is just a ruse, but to think you are an anomaly as well!

“How about the two of us ally together to break free of this misbegotten place?” The Sea Lord looked seriously at Lu Yun. “This forsaken place is a massive prison, an enormous tomb. Everything drifts sluggishly along the never-ending cycles of reincarnation, repeating the same things again and again. True freedom is forever out of reach and we are never able to shake off destiny.”

“Ally with you?” Lu Yun raised an eyebrow. “How?”

“Give me immortal dao, give me formula dao, and give me hell dao. Also, give me that treasure that’s enabled you to break free of these endless cycles. Help me return to my full strength so I can blast apart the destiny here.” The Sea Lord stared intently into Lu Yun’s eyes and carefully enunciated each word.

Lu Yun:

“How about it? I will reward you handsomely if I escape and bring you out with me. What do you think?” The Sea Lord rose into the air to draw level with Lu Yun.

“Look into my eyes.” Lu Yun was uncommonly grave at this moment as well.

“Mmhmm, I am.” Success was within reach! The Sea Lord stared sincerely into Lu Yun’s eyes.

“Do. you think. I look like a fucking idiot?” Lu Yun articulated gingerly with the same grave expression.

The Sea Lord blinked.

“Or do you think I’m a fucking idiot??”

Whoosh!

Black flame ignited around Lu Yun and he slammed his fist into the Sea Lord's face. Crying out with anguish, the Sea Lord lost his mermaid body from that single punch.

"I wouldn't dare come if you were alive, but you're just a dead thing! You know that this young master practices hell dao and can restrain all ghostly and dead entities, but you still dare scheme against me?" Lu Yun sneered. "There's holes in my formula dao? I didn't calculate your existence?? Fuck you motherfucking piece of shit! Do you think that little of me?! Would I have come to my death if I hadn't already derived what you were??"

The dead entity once more coalesced a mermaid body, but Lu Yun punched it to pieces before it was complete. A pained wail echoed around the vortex.

Lu Yun's hell dao had truly taken form and could restrain all ghosts within creation. He no longer feared even the ghost race or yin spirits of the world of immortals. Though he couldn't command their lives as of yet, he could trounce any ghost in single combat, including the one in front of him.

He hadn't believed anything that the bastard had said. Lu Yun had come with only one goal in mind—beat the living daylights out of him!

His analysis had been correct, with one modification—the ghost had absorbed part of the Sea Lord's power to transform into his image. The ghost wasn't strong. If he was, he wouldn't have set a fake Sea Lord as bait. It would've been the ghost himself.

That Lu Yun had dared come meant that he was in full control and assured of kicking the other's face in. In fact, the ghost turning into the Sea Lord to deceive him meant that the ghost was afraid.

Sadly for him, Lu Yun wasn't.

Punch after punch. Power from the Hadal, Nether, Sanguine, Nihil, Abyssal, and Disordered Hells transformed into six basic combat arts of hell dao. Their combination gave rise to even more sophisticated combat arts, similar to the calculation methods and formulas of formula dao. From elementary came advanced, from ethos to burgeon to creation...

The unknown ghost gave up the form of a shark spirit and took his own—half of a face.

It wasn't a human face, but that of an unknown species. Lu Yun couldn't determine what it was either. It was dark blue and covered with tiny scales, looking rather like a reptile. It had no mouth or nose, just a broken eye.

Lu Yun smashed punch after punch into it, dimming the face with each blow.

"ROAR!!" The face suddenly formed a mouth and snarled with fury. The enormous vortex beneath it erupted and an ice-blue hand reached out, grabbing for Lu Yun.

"Finally!" Lu Yun brightened. The sudden hand was no ghostly force, but pure strength from sea dao. When the terrible strength closed around Lu Yun, it crushed him out of existence and reduced him to a shriveled soybean.

Endless sea waters gathered together into a transparent body and wrapped around the face. They reformed into the body of the Sea Lord—a shark spirit.

Extreme fury was visible on the ghost's face. He'd guessed that Lu Yun wasn't here in the flesh, that the young man was just a replica. That was why the ghost hadn't called upon his own strength—he was preoccupied with all of the dao beholders in Ruina.

However, he hadn't imagined that just a soybean replica would nearly devour him! In the meantime, the dao beholders that he'd lured in struggled free from their confinement due to his distraction.

Chapter 1668: The Realm Monster Awakens

"Damn it!" Sweat beaded the ghost's forehead and his hands turned clammy. "That damned Lu Yun only needed a soybean replica to beat me so badly that I could only wish for death. I had to use power from Ruina to fend him off! I will be ground beneath his heel for as long as he is in the kingdom!"

Ruina and the kingdom of Ruina were two different concepts. Ruina was the origin and final destination of the sea. The kingdom was the hell within it. While the kingdom had given rise to Myriadsea World, the strength of Ruina was also present within the kingdom. As opposed to the power of the dead, the strength of Ruina was from the living and part of sea dao.

Given that it was the core of Ruina, whoever controlled the kingdom wielded all of Ruina's power. As of now, the kingdom was shattered and assimilation of sea dao was required to repair it.

"Thank goodness there's still a trace of Ruina's power within the kingdom, and that the first being to arrive on this world bearing sea dao hailed from the shark spirits. Otherwise, it would be my doom today." The dead entity no longer nursed ambitions to steal Lu Yun's great dao. All he wanted to do was to see this plague lord out.

The ghost vanished from the true Ruina with a shake of his body. He wasn't afraid of Lu Yun—if he could find the young man's true body, he would snuff out Lu Yun's existence with one strike. But up until now... he'd never seen Lu Yun's true self.

The young man had vanished after killing the Curse King. All of the ones around now were either golden armored warriors or a replica from the Myriad Spirit Root of the World.

Lu Yun appeared again after the ghost left.

"You want to get away from me? I, on the other hand, want to get close to you, more's the pity for you. My hell dao has just formed and if it's to mature to the point of commanding life and death, I'll need to refine this Ruina Hell in the middle of your precious Ruina."

He dove into the waters and entered the enormous vortex. Endless seawater churned around him and sought to crush him. There was nothing else here apart from the power of water and the sea. Not even immortal dao could reach inside. But since he'd dared jump in, of course he was fully prepared.

Of his ten Yama Kings, Aoxue was a blood dragon, Xuanxi was a shark spirit, Cangyin was a blood qilin from the water qilin race, and Luli was a blood tortoise. The heart of their previous cultivation was sea dao, and as their master, Lu Yun could access their potential and easily obtain their dao.

Thus, he temporarily transformed his own dao into sea dao and nearly became one with Ruina. He continuously operated formula dao to derive the relationship between sea dao and Ruina. Meanwhile,

hell dao casually devoured the power around it to manifest the kingdom of Ruina—the hell within the seas.

“Lu Yun!!” The partial face that was the ghost suddenly appeared and bawled, “You go too far!”

“Then come and get me,” Lu Yun snorted at the entity. “Or shall I smash your face in again?”

Whoosh!

Black flame ignited on him—the hellfire of the combined six hells. Despite its nature being of fire, it had no problem burning in water. Lu Yun leveraged its might to deploy the Hadal Hell Dao combat art, whipping it at the ghost.

Livid, the dead entity immediately dismissed his body and vanished without a trace. There was no point in using Ruina against Lu Yun’s replica—it would be ineffective. Besides, its strength needed to be reserved for the real Sea Lord, Jian Bu’er, and others.

Use it to fight a soybean? Utterly meaningless.

“He’s confined the power of the kingdom around here.” Lu Yun suddenly halted—his hell dao was no longer absorbing strength from the surroundings.

“This is just Ruina, the start of the seas. Although it’s also the origin of the kingdom, there is a real kingdom somewhere in Myraidsea World.” He contemplated the situation with a frown. “No, most of Ruina’s strength is concentrated over there. If I head there, that thing will easily suppress me.”

Although the start of Ruina was this locale, most of its strength was centered on the kingdom and refining the various dao beholders that’d entered the kingdom. That was why Lu Yun had come here. It was the most dangerous place, and thus the safest.

“Lu Yun,” the ghost’s voice rang again. “You should reconsider the proposal that I offered earlier.”

“What, give you everything that is me and bet my life on you as well?” Lu Yun shook his head. “You’re not a moron, why do you think I am?”

The other fell silent. Lu Yun sat down cross-legged and employed formula dao on the premises, trying to find an opening.

“As strong as your dao is, Lu Yun, and it is a very strong one even outside of this forsaken place,” the entity said meaningfully, “You are too weak and too small. There are many things you can’t see, so you cannot analyze them.”

“You’re right, there are many things I cannot see, but I know the truth of this world.” Lu Yun retracted formula dao and summoned a ball of black light into his hand.

“What, what are you doing?!” The entity seemed to sense something.

“Everything about you is too big for me. I don’t know where you come from or where this world comes from, but I do know what you’re attached to—a realm monster!” Lu Yun leered. “All of my problems will be resolved if I awaken it.”

“You, you, what??? Stop. STOP!!” The ghost panicked when he heard this. This was the last thing he expected!

Realm monsters were formed from dead worlds and carried the resentment of an entire world. They were terrifying ghosts. This one was so strong that the entity had had to use the strange altar to barely subdue it.

Wham!

Lu Yun didn’t give the entity any time to think as he flung his arms wide open and pushed the waters back, releasing a pillar of black light that soared into the firmament. Another Lu Yun appeared on the altar in the middle of Immortal Nation, likewise releasing the same black light.

An image of the Tome of Life and Death slowly coalesced in the air and the world began to tremble.

“Stop, stop!!” The entity frantically waved his hands. He forsook the form of a mermaid and returned to his true form—one half of a face. A corresponding altar emerged over the face, the one that stood at the center of Immortal Nation.

The strength it displayed now was leagues apart from the altar in Immortal Nation had exuded before. This was its true shape—greater than the vortex formed by Ruina. It suppressed the awakening realm monster the second it appeared, sending it back into a deep sleep.

Lu Yun’s replica on the altar in Immortal Nation flew apart upon the wind, but another Lu Yun stepped forward and sent the same black light into the sky, connecting with the Lu Yun in Ruina and calling out to the realm monster once more.

Chapter 1669: Judgment of Life or Death

“Ahhhh! AHHHH!!” The partial face lost its mind. Power from the suppressed dao beholders in the kingdom of Ruina concentrated on the altar and made the face whole. A body filled in the gap beneath the face—a graceful one covered with tiny scales. It was... a woman with long blue hair.

She was neither a shark spirit nor human, but a divine! The altar was her foundation; she was the divine spirit that’d formed from the altar. [1] Her appearance was roughly the same as a human’s, but her hair was deep blue and scales of the same color covered her body. Profound patterns ran through each scale, forming a bizarre image when they were viewed in tandem.

She glowed with black light; all of sea dao and Ruina bolstered her strength, creating a vortex just as massive as the one in the seas.

Lu Yun’s hell dao operated at full force and he compelled the Tome of Life and Death with it, using the treasure to poke the realm monster awake. As strong as the altar and its divine spirit might be, they couldn’t contend against the book.

“Lu Yun!!” the woman shrieked. “I will grant you your wish since you want to die so badly!”

Bam!

She annihilated his replica in Ruina with a single punch, then swept through Myriadsea World with its frightening power. Since she couldn't find Lu Yun's true self, her only option was to destroy everything, kill all life in the world, and start over.

It would be a disaster incarnate for the goddess if the realm monster awoke. She could and would rather have all of the daos on Myriadsea World shatter and life wither. She could start anew with a completely blank slate, but the realm monster could not be allowed to wake up.

Only she knew the realm monster's background and what would happen when it was conscious again. She'd brought the altar to Ruina not to refine land for her own uses, but to turn the realm monster into Ruina so she could suppress it once and for all!

Only when the realm monster became Ruina could it be killed. Any number of living beings could be sacrificed for this end.

Nothing she'd said to Lu Yun before had been true, whether it was to claim immortal dao, formula dao, the Tome of Life and Death, or to break out of the cycle of reincarnation. It'd been complete bullshit spouted for the purpose of determining Lu Yun's weakness and eliminating this unstable factor.

She'd never imagined that Lu Yun would be so crazy as to use his strength to awaken the realm monster!

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"You want to kill me? Sure."

Rumble.

A purple-golden pagoda appeared in the void with a rumble—the Army Pagoda. Curtains of light trailed down from it to pummel the rampaging power from Ruina. The Soldier King and his men manifested around the pagoda. With the goddess deploying Ruina's strength against Lu Yun, that freed the dao beholders trapped in the kingdom.

Their jaws dropped with shock when they re-emerged in the world and saw an epic battle taking place before their eyes.

Lu Yun after Lu Yun walked out of the void, each of them calling upon hell dao and the Tome of Life and Death to defy the altar. His primary body sat beneath the pagoda, protected by one hundred and eight soldiers. Ruina could not break the pagoda's defenses!

The dao beholders gaped for a split second before they rushed back to their worlds and utilized their great dao to protect their denizens. They had no desire to participate in the fight, even if they had the right to. Now that they knew about the goddess' existence and what they were about to face, it was the best outcome if Lu Yun, the immortal dao, and the goddess were all heavily injured after their clash.

Piercing cold rose from an unknown source and formed a chilly wind, howling through the world. One drop of seawater slowly froze in the arctic blast, causing a chain reaction that froze the sea and then the entire world.

Color drained from the goddess' face and she stood dazedly on the altar, uncertain of what to do.

“Do you know what you’re doing... I sacrificed myself to suppress the realm monster. Half of a face and a fragment of soul is all that is left of me...” she murmured.

Lu Yun arched a brow but didn’t still his movements. He continued using the Tome of Life and Death to stimulate the realm monster’s thoughts.

Wintry gusts stabbed into the air and snowflakes drifted through the void. Myriadsea World was encased in ice as a terrifying presence ravaged the land. A pair of enormous eyes slowly opened and piercing shrieks echoed beneath the heavens.

Even the void around the world began to ice over.

“You’ve done well, Lu Yun. I was right to use the last bit of my strength to summon you.” A resonant, ice-cold voice pierced through bone and reverberated throughout Myriadsea World. “I knew you would succeed and awaken me.”

The world was silent. Most people didn’t understand what’d just happened. Weren’t they in a world of sequence? Why was it alive? Who was talking??

“Cretin!!” shrieked the goddess and concentrated Ruina’s power on the altar in a violent motion, diving down onto Myriadsea World.

Craaaaaack.

Her altar shattered and she was encased in ice.

Lu Yun’s heart pounded painfully.

“You’re the one who sealed away the overlord of Ice,” he said slowly.

“The overlord of Ice?” the realm monster blink. “You must speak of the little guy who found his way to time dao from his ice dao... Indeed, I sealed him away.

“He is the undisputed main character of this reincarnation, the first among geniuses. He might’ve gotten a hint of the truth if I didn’t freeze him. He’d then break free and suppress me like Qinglin.”

Qinglin was the goddess now frozen in ice.

“Lu Yun, I bequeath to you Qinglin’s kingdom since you have awoken me. You will be able to complete hell dao and become the strongest of this cycle, overseeing the life and death of all.”

Whoosh!

The shattered altar abruptly rematerialized and smashed toward Lu Yun. It was Qinglin’s core essence and the basis of her command over the kingdom of Ruina.

“Death art,” Lu Yun suddenly murmured. “Judgment. Of. Life! Or! Death!”

He pointed at the boundless world beneath his feet, the true form of the realm monster.

Boom!

Blazing hellfire set the world aflame amid a cacophony of agonized shrieks.

Chapter 1670: Mazu

The sudden development caught the yet half sleeping realm monster off guard and flabbergasted the frozen Qinglin.

This version of the Judgment of Life or Death employed a hellfire that was the combined product of the six hells. Thus, it was a hundred million times greater than when Lu Yun powered it with only Hadal hellfire. The frozen Myriadsea World spontaneously turned into a realm tossing and turning with flames.

Hellfire churned with not only heat from hell, but also the Judgment of Life or Death!

One judgment to determine life and death!

Retribution encircled the realm monster as it'd committed massive acts of atrocities and slaughter. When Qi Fengyun determined the future of boundless blood, violence, and death, he'd derived the existence of the realm monster.

The thought had occurred to Lu Yun then that whether it was Qinglin or the realm monster, both were his enemies. If he could capture them in one fell swoop, he wouldn't need to take action again. Thus, he'd called out to the realm monster, attacking it when it was focused on Qinglin and still half asleep.

It was an inert world instead of a living being when it slumbered; Lu Yun's death art had no effect on it. Only when it was awake and turned the world into a realm monster could the Judgment of Life or Death take effect.

Although the realm monster was beset with flames, the raging hellfire didn't harm any other living being. The flames consumed only the realm monster. It wailed, shrieked, and howled. In its half awake state, it couldn't comprehend what was going on. Though it could tell that Lu Yun was using a combat art against it, it was a mighty being! Even Qinglin, the previous mistress of Ruina, had to sever her soul, sacrifice her body, and destroy her foundations to barely manage to seal it away.

How could a somewhat decent young man, just starting to rise to the forefront of the Boundless Planes, hurt it?? And even possibly kill it?!

Immobilized in the ice, Qinglin's jaw mentally dropped.

"Is this... a combat art of hell dao?" Her eyes widened and the scales on her body trembled. This kind of art exceeded the limits of her understanding.

She couldn't grasp why a tiny Lu Yun, one that'd barely reached Void World King, could burst forth with such magnificent and terrifying strength. How could he burn the realm monster with hellfire and also refrain from harming anything else in the process?

Hellfire had developed to great perfection and would incinerate the heavens once it ignited. This was a flame that nothing could deny when it blazed with full fury.

"He's not going to release all of the strength to be found within hellfire, not at his cultivation level. He wouldn't be able to control it then. This can only mean that the fires blazing now are his combat art!"

Crack crack craaaack.

The ice around her fell away and vanished into the void. Qinglin was free again, but she'd lost the altar beneath her feet and the power of Ruina in this world. Her eyes bright, she stared unblinkingly at Lu Yun.

The demise of the realm monster's seal meant that the horrific being was dead. Its true form had turned into a real world, one grasped in Lu Yun's hands.

The realm monster had flung the altar at Lu Yun not because it wanted to gift the great dao of Ruina to the young man, but because it wanted to sacrifice the altar to claim his life. That would free it from the last vestiges of constraint—Lu Yun was just one of its pawns.

A barest hint of its thoughts had escaped being sealed away and traveled through the Boundless Planes, attaching itself to the overlord of Ice. It glimpsed a bit of threat from the overlord and thus sealed him away when the Luminaries came to warn him. The realm monster sought to both prevent the overlord from opening the door to sequence, and to preserve his body to be one of its replicas after it was freed.

The realm monster had also seen Lu Yun then, as well as the budding hell dao on the young man. Thus, the hint of its thoughts connected to its primary body and utilized Qinglin's altar to bring Lu Yun to Myriadsea World. Once hell dao was complete, the realm monster would find a way to have Lu Yun awaken it.

Who would've thought that Lu Yun would do the deed without needing any prodding and then execute the realm monster with a single death art??

The strongest of powerhouses and most capable of experts didn't dare let retribution stain themselves. Even a heavyweight that walked the path of slaughter would try to shunt their karmic repercussions elsewhere. To be soiled with retribution was to have a weakness.

Combat arts such as the Judgment of Life or Death weren't rare in the world. However, there were none that could kill via simply igniting retribution.

With the realm monster's death, the power of Ruina it'd delivered to Lu Yun before became the young man's possession and he slowly refined it into himself. The strength of Ruina was the strength of the seas, their origin and ultimate destination. It nurtured the power of the Ruina Hell, which was what Lu Yun wanted.

When the strength of Ruina's hell assimilated into his hell dao, the latter would be truly complete.

"I see merit on you, unfathomable merit." Lu Yun suddenly looked at Qinglin. "Although there's a bit of resentment mixed in with it, I know that you're not my enemy."

Qinglin stayed silent.

"Are you the mythical sea goddess... Mazu?" [1]

Tales of Mazu abounded in the great seas of all major worlds. She was the goddess of the sea and protector of all. Any living being born of the sea worshiped her.

Lu Yun had never imagined that this legendary goddess would control Ruina and perish together with a horrific realm monster. She'd lured all of the dao beholders to this fake world of sequence in order to fully suppress and kill her enemy.

Lu Yun didn't know where the realm monster came from as his Spectral Eye couldn't glimpse the start of the world yet, but he could identify the boundless merit on the goddess.

Qinglin remained quiet for a long time. "You are correct. I am Lin Mo."

"May I have the kingdom of Ruina?" Lu Yun asked.

"You eliminated the realm monster and pacified potential disaster. Take Ruina if you want it." Qinglin faded away as they spoke. "I have no further regrets now that the realm monster is dead. Ruina does indeed need a ruler."

She vanished without a trace.

"She..." Dongfang Mo stood at Lu Yun's side.

"She was already dead. She was able to turn into a ghost because her obsession refused to fade away since the realm monster was still alive. Now that it's dead, what's left of her can rest," Lu Yun sighed.

"She is the sea goddess who protects all beings. Her spirit will be reborn as long as everyone worships her."

A tiny altar appeared in his hand with a flip of his hand—Qinglin's altar.

"It can't," the Soldier King responded. "The realm monster was so strong that even Mazu couldn't withstand it. Her death was a true one. Even if a second Mazu appears on the altar, it won't be the one from before."

Lu Yun remained silent.