

Necropolis 2031

Chapter 2031 – Bait

Eight hundred billion years was a very, very long time ago. It would be given a primordial descriptor in the chief worlds. A sword left by a demon outsider from eight hundred billion years ago? Now that was a bit interesting.

Based on Lu Yun's understanding, the combat arts and dao methods of the outside were far superior to the ones in this world. The sacred supreme himself had killed the outsider? What was a sacred supreme? Was it the cultivation level above empyrean supreme?

And what did they call themselves? The Three Thousand? Three Thousand??

Lu Yun focused on deducing what he'd just learned, but all he saw were hazy shapes in front of him. The existence of a sacred supreme was out of his current reach. Evidently, that was a personage that even the Disordered Empyrean Supreme feared.

A sword glinting with frosty light was presented on the auction block. Lacking a hilt and sword guard, it was just a singular blade that was one third of a meter long. It shimmered like a water ripple.

Lu Yun's heart spasmed painfully when he saw the sword and an inexplicable agitation rose from the bottom of his heart. His long dormant sea of sword intent stirred with intent. If he obtained this sword, his sword dao would soar to the heavens like a tiger granted wings!

But the young man quickly forced his turbulent emotions down. He primarily cultivated hell dao combat arts these days and was gradually transforming them into arts under the dao of reincarnation.

Sword dao was useless to him now.

If the great dao of reincarnation took shape, it would be the equivalent of all methods in existence and be able to manifest all combat arts.

"This is a trap." Lu Yun's lips curved into a smile. The sword was certainly bait. By now, he'd spent roughly a month in Cardinal Sacred City. He'd visited a variety of treasuries and broken through all of their defenses, no matter how rigorous. Any he visited was left completely empty when he walked out.

He was robbing Cardinal Sacred Palace right beneath its nose. If they still hadn't realized it, they might as well end themselves and save everyone the trouble.

As it turned out, the faction had indeed discovered the thefts, but didn't raise a fuss. Some of them guessed that the outsider roamed among them.

He'd awed half of the Three Thousand after demonstrating Vast Dragon Seaturner in public. In many people's minds, the outsider was a genius sword cultivator focused squarely on the sword.

Therefore, how would sword cultivators resist such a wondrous sword as the one on the auction block?

Thus, the auction commenced with the sacred palace knowing full well that the outsider would come. They could guess what he was thinking—that while the treasures in the vaults were precious, they were

just leftover stock held in reserve. The real treasures would be with the powerhouses or traded through the market.

Such as this sword.

Thus, Ark Auction House brought out this sword whenever a new face entered it. Anyone who bought it was killed. The sword would then be returned to the auction house for its next sale.

Such was the Cardinal Sacred Palace style—they would rather kill innocents than let a potential suspect slip through their fingers.

“Good thing they only know that I have sword dao and not that I’m skilled in formula dao. This kind of trap? Heh.” Lu Yun curled his lip, but displayed a flicker of interest on his face. He shook his head with a sigh as he looked at the spear in his hand.

It was an act masterly done and perfect projection of disdain for the sword on sale. After that, he paid no attention whatsoever to the lot.

Cultivators of the Three Thousand weren’t interested in treasures from the outside. They rejected these items with every fiber of their being, just like they rejected the demons from the outside.

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The auction failed and the proceedings moved on to the next lot.

Su Muzhou was the owner of the auction house and the empyrean supreme surveilling the premises. His brows were slightly furrowed as he’d been focused on Lu Yun. However, the young man only showed a hint of curiosity before dismissing the sword.

“This stranger has lingered in Cardinal Sacred City for ten days, is he really not the demon outsider?” Su Muzhou leaned against the shoulder of the man next to him.

The muscular man gently caressed his face before murmuring back, “It’s just as well that he’s not. Who knows what kind of trouble would develop if the outsider really is among us?”

“Mm.” Su Muzhou nodded and fell silent.

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Lu Yun wasn’t able to detect the consciousness of empyrean supremes, but he wouldn’t give anything away, not with his level of alertness. Thankfully, while the Cardinal Sacred Palace would rather kill innocents than let a potential suspect slip through, they weren’t deranged to the point of killing every single stranger that visited the city. That would turn it into a ghost town.

With how vast the Three Thousand were, not even the sacred supreme knew everyone. Thus, they had to employ a variety of methods to probe everyone. As outdated as their dao methods were, they were no fools. They wouldn’t repeat past mistakes after once encountering a stumbling block.

At the same time, neither was Lu Yun an idiot. His remaining one thousand and seventy-nine replicas had quietly left the city to avoid overexposure. Having already detected his presence, the sacred city

would be under heavy guard. It would be a complete disaster if he accidentally revealed the formation that he'd painstakingly set up.

When more treasures that caught his eye appeared, Lu Yun struck swift and true. He won each of them at a price that was three to five times higher than their worth, angering everyone who bid against him.

Su Muzhou had been in dejected spirits and paranoid of every new face he saw, but broke out in a large grin when he saw the newcomer spend dao crystals like water. The muscular man next to him was so delighted that his cheeks were spasming from smiling so much.

They'd completely forgotten the purpose of this auction. In their eyes, the demon outsider would never be able to obtain so many dao crystals.

The auction soon concluded with Lu Yun's racing heart. He'd obtained true treasure—treasure that was even more effective than the spirit herb with a hint of opposition. It would help him swiftly become a grand supreme!

He picked up the pace and sought to leave the city as soon as possible. Of course, he'd already sent the treasures to his primary body. His replica was just putting on a show.

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"Kid, hand over all of your dao crystals!" boomed a rough voice. A burly man six meters tall with knots of muscle all over his body had stopped Lu Yun. He was the man next to Su Muzhou.

Chapter 2032 – Next Time

"Empyrean supreme!" Lu Yun gasped when he saw the muscular man. He knew that the enemy had him in their sights, but didn't think they'd act so quickly. He'd just departed from Cardinal Sacred City, yet here they were—and an empyrean supreme!

Being a mere high supreme, Lu Yun's show of extreme wealth had caught the covetous eyes of many at the auction house. Despite that, no empyrean supreme would normally debase themselves to rob a high supreme.

Unfortunately for him, he was encountering the man behind the scenes of Ark Auction House and his... dao partner. The two had made their fortune through robbery, something they hadn't fallen out of habit doing even after constructing the auction house.

Due to the suspected arrival of an outsider, Cardinal Sacred City permitted Su Muzhou and his dao partner to conduct their affairs as they saw fit. Thus, they'd been completely out of control lately.

Su Muzhou and his dao partner Suiyue Jinghao were both men. In the realm of Three Thousand, cultivators were straightforward about pursuing their dao. No one cared about their gender and how they'd become dao partners.

The only thing that people gossiped about was that dual cultivation was supposed to be the harmonization of yin and yang, yet these two fell on the side of yang. Well... one supposed it was just another path at the end of the day.

Su Muzhou had built his fortune from scratch. Apart from a flinty attitude and ruthless style, it was also thanks to Suiyue Jinghao's support that he was able to establish Ark Auction House. The Suiyues were a premier clan in the Three Thousand. Ranking below only the five sacred palaces, they were a foremost faction of the era.

Suiyue Jinghao was a preeminent genius and a core disciple of his clan. But when he went against the clan's wishes and objections to become dao partners with Su Muzhou, he was exiled from the Suiyues.

Notwithstanding all of the obstacles in their way, both Su Muzhou and Suiyue Jinghao eventually became empyrean supremes and found their place at the top of the pyramid. Due to these accomplishments, relations had slightly thawed between the couple and the Suiyue Clan in recent years.

Empyrean supremes were the greatest powerhouses of this world—so long as there weren't sacred supremes present. Although the Suiyues possessed a sacred supreme, they still couldn't ignore two powerful empyrean supremes.

Thus, Ark Auction House steadily grew in scale until Su Muzhou and Suiyue Jinghao became important members of Cardinal Sacred City and wielded certain authority.

Of course, a tiger never changes its stripes. While the two were highly feted empyrean heavyweights, that didn't change their habits of robbery and theft. Thus, Suiyue Jinghao immediately chased after the young man after he left the city.

His reason for doing so was very presumptuous—the demon who'd invaded from the outside world was a high supreme. That perfectly matched the high supreme in front of him, so he would capture the young man first and ask questions later.

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Lu Yun raised his head to look at Suiyue Jinghao slowly descending from the sky. He grinned lopsidedly. "All of my dao crystals? I haven't got any dao crystals, but I do have a major combat art. Do you want to take a look?"

"A major combat art? What combat art?" Suiyue Jinghao didn't know what the young man had in his back pocket. He should be ashen faced and trembling with fear, so how was a mere high supreme still able to smile?

And smiling so strangely?

"This combat art!" Lu Yun threw his head back with loud laughter and exploded.

Kaboom!!

A mushroom cloud also rose from the nearby Cardinal Sacred City.

"Hahaha!!" Even more self-satisfied laughter rang out as an enormous figure appeared over the city's airspace. The figure swatted the mushroom down with a casual backhand.

"Demon, did you think we would be unprepared even though we knew you'd come to our city? We've been monitoring every unfamiliar face that roams our streets! Although we don't know what your goal is, it certainly won't be accumulating goods and riches!"

It was Su Muzhou. Clad in long pink robes, he stood proudly over Cardinal Sacred City. His words informed the crowd that the outsider had come to Cardinal Sacred City to blow it up!

Thankfully, there were countless empyrean supremes in residence as well as the sacred supreme. What could a mere high supreme get up to in their vaunted city?

The mushroom cloud was smashed flat the second it rose in the air.

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“Ah Hao and I were only guessing that you were the demon, but to think that it really is you! Ah Hao, take him!”

Although Lu Yun’s replica had self-detonated, there was no difference between a replica and primary body to an empyrean supreme. They would be able to track down the outsider’s primary body even though the replica was a pile of dust.

But at this moment, shocked screams rang out from Cardinal Sacred City.

“What’s going on?? What’s happening??”

“What’s happening to the city?!”

Fear and bafflement pierced through the air. Expressions shifting, Su Muzhou and Suiyue Jinghao frantically looked back at the city.

The grand city that snaked thousands of kilometers over the land was fracturing like a massive piece of porcelain. Minute cracks covered every inch of its walls and the buildings. They appeared inconsequential, but covered the entire city like a massive net.

With that, the city began breaking apart.

As Su Muzhou did a double take and looked at the city again, he found it was already a pile of rubble. Whether it was the city gates, walls, buildings, or the Ark Auction House that he and his dao partner had endeavored to build throughout their entire lives—all collapsed with loud rumbling.

Ethereal wisps of light flitted through the ruins and transported away everything possessing qi and the rhythm of order, yet lacking thought. The city had collapsed into debris that somehow perfectly formed a transportation formation!

It was a horrifying sight as no one among the Three Thousand understood such a formation, much less cultivators of this world. How did one first use a formation to destroy a city, then use the city’s collapsed remains to perfectly form a transportation formation??

Even the sacred supreme within the Cardinal Sacred Palace froze with incomprehension and disbelief.

Boom!

The transportation formation collapsed into a third formation. Lu Yun’s image formed in it, turning into a giant five thousand kilometers tall.

“This is my first and final warning,” his voice echoed through the land like waves. “I robbed and leveled Cardinal Sacred City this time, which means I can do the same to the Eastern or Western Sacred Cities any time. I can do this to any city in this world!

“I didn’t kill anyone today, but take a wild guess. Do you think I’ll turn the entire city into an altar next time and sacrifice everyone inside?” He smiled an exceedingly evil smile. “You know what, let’s do that next time. If those eyes of great dao keep searching for me, there will be such a next time.”

Chapter 2033 – Abandoning the Altar

Lu Yun’s warning resulted in great effect. The three hundred and sixty-five eyes of great dao that’d been searching for him returned to Cardinal Sacred Palace after meandering around for a few more circuits.

The Three Thousand were completely cowed by the outsider’s gesture. Who would’ve thought that the demons outside would possess such terrifying destructive power?? Cardinal Sacred City was the number one city in everyone’s eyes, but someone had easily destroyed it and looted all of its treasures?

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No one regarded the situation with glee or schadenfreude. It was just as the outsider had said—if he could destroy Cardinal Sacred City today, he could destroy any city in the world tomorrow. He could even possibly slip into the Cardinal Sacred Palace and bring it down as well!

His methods left the cultivators of the world at a loss. Not even the palace’s sacred supreme could locate the outsider, leaving Lu Yun to a period of casual ease.

Having secured the resources of an entire Cardinal Sacred City and removed the sources of potential trouble, he could brazenly cultivate and raise disciples without reservation. Of course, he still exercised caution. Although the eyes of great dao had been recalled, the sacred supreme was on the move.

He’d delivered a resounding slap to the Cardinal Sacred Palace by destroying their city—the faction wouldn’t easily let him off for it. They’d recalled the eyes only out of concern for his terrifying methods and his usage of one word: sacrifice.

In the Three Thousand, sacrifices were an absolute taboo to cultivators. The moat was clearly defined between cultivators and mortals. One side obtained strength from cultivation and another from sacrifice. Cultivators did not readily interfere in the territory of mortals because of the existence of sacrifices.

Who knew what would happen if the outsider made good on his threat and sacrificed an entire city of cultivators? Not even the sacred supreme dared take the gamble. He had no choice but to recall the eyes, but that didn’t mean they’d given up.

At the same time, Lu Yun began an in-depth study of the sacrificial art. The Sacred Radiance altar had been fully repaired, but the tribe discovered that the altar didn’t seem as invincible as they once thought.

After practicing the tree ramming method, their current strength was far greater than what the altar sent them. There were also the mountain slamming, river dashing, and fire charging methods. While

these notions also came from Lu Yun, he didn't personally teach anyone anything. He just planted the ideas in their thoughts and allowed them free rein to contemplate and grasp the methods.

He merely started the job, leaving Sacred Radiance to figure out the rest. It was enlightenment, or sparking intelligence of a sort.

Cobwebs and dust covered the Sacred Radiance altar as no one maintained it anymore. The original purpose of the sacrifices was to worship the ancestors. Therefore, while the altar fell out of use, the temple in which the ancestors were honored still saw plenty of foot traffic.

Sacred Radiance completely abandoned their altar after three years and conducted no further sacrifices. They focused on various ramming methods, yet somehow didn't realize that they'd become the mighty cultivators who could fly through air and earth.

The tribe's development reached its peak. While its numbers didn't increase by much, its members were all hale and hearty. Sacred Radiance territory also doubled from what it was before.

But for reasons unknown, their neighbors started furiously attacking the tribe, like they'd received certain guidance to do so. Not only that, but the strength that their neighbors received from their altars was far in excess of what they obtained before. It was greater than several times over!

Altars had become a primitive source of strength to the current Sacred Radiance. The tribe defeated eighteen major tribes and destroyed their respective altars after three months of grueling battle. Since it no longer sacrificed to its altar, the people of the eighteen tribes all, without exception, became slaves. They either helped establish more territory for the tribe or grow its numbers.

Under Lu Yun's unobtrusive influence, Sacred Radiance was beginning to grow into a "nation". This was an inevitable development over the course of a civilization's growth.

The tribe's current leader abdicated in favor of Lu Yun, who happily accepted. This was his ultimate goal as it was the only way to perfectly meld his dao heritage into the legitimate daos of this realm.

It was just as Fuxi had once done.

He'd tied his fortunes to the human race after becoming one of its holy emperors. He'd safeguarded the race for an eternity and was blessed by humanity's fortunes in return to have Lu Yun resurrect him.

Lu Yun knew that if he wanted the tribe to truly proceed down the path of a developing cultivation, he would be besieged on all sides. Just breaking the tradition of sacrifice wasn't enough, he had to become their strongest backer.

This was where the Disordered Emyrean Supreme came in.

She'd returned from her travels, complete crestfallen. Plainly, she'd once left some traces in this world, but someone had erased them.

Lu Yun guessed that she'd left a copy of shamanic dao somewhere, but that it was no longer present or intact.

"Are you... teaching these people how to cultivate?" She assessed the situation as soon as she returned. "And... and you broke their tradition of sacrifice?? Do you want to die??"

She shook, unable to believe what she saw. She hadn't dared take things to this step in her time. She'd only dared surreptitiously nudge people down her desired path. To think that Lu Yun would need only three years to have the tribe abandon their altar and the tradition of sacrifice!

"I succeeded because I'm not afraid of death. You failed because you were." Lu Yun looked calmly at her. "Be my backer and take care of any powerhouses that come. I'll finish things off if you can't handle it."

"That's right, you have the power of nihil on you. What, aren't you going to save it for the World Heart?" the Disordered Empyrean Supreme sneered. The fragment of the Firmament Prison was at the World Heart. If Lu Yun obtained the fragment, he would be able to manifest the complete hell dao and fulfill his promise.

But if that power of nothing was consumed, his odds of gaining the fragment would drastically decrease.

"That's why I need your help," Lu Yun smiled faintly. "Be my backup so you can at least scare off the empyrean supremes that come poking their noses around."

The Disordered Empyrean Supreme snorted irritably and ignored Lu Yun.

Chapter 2034 – Ancestor

"There's no need for you to continue hiding after those eyes of great dao have been recalled, no? There are so many treasures in this world. What you brought back from the Cardinal Sacred City is a drop in the bucket compared to what's out there," the Disordered Empyrean Supreme said after a long period of silence.

"Too much greed sometimes gets in our own way." Lu Yun shook his head and thought of something else. "Have you come back after finding something? Do you need my help?"

The hint of a smile finally floated onto the empyrean supreme's face. "Yes, I did find something, something good. A tomb."

"Another tomb?" Lu Yun pursed his lips. He made some silent calculations and exclaimed, "A tomb for a being not of this world?"

"With the dao methods of this world, would I need your help if it was homegrown?" the Disordered Empyrean Supreme snorted. "It's Ancestor's tomb. Who would've thought that he'd die, and to that bunch of native idiots?"

"Native idiots?" Lu Yun had to shake his head at that. "As sophisticated as you are, you'll meet your doom at a single blast of light from their great dao. The cultivators of the Three Thousand are no idiots. Who's Ancestor?"

That was an obnoxiously arrogant name.

The Disordered Empyrean Supreme pointed at the long abandoned altar in the center of the tribe. "That belongs to Ancestor."

Lu Yun's eyes shot wide open.

“There are two terrifying beings in the nihil—Ancestor and Forebear. They’re dao partners and the creators of all of the altars in the Three Thousand.

“The original masters of this realm are those two—there were no cultivators here to begin with. All of them had been chased out and drifted aimlessly through the nothing. Everyone living here was Ancestor and Forebear’s people. They only needed to make sacrifices and offer their faith to receive anything they needed. They could even ascend to sacred supremes if they desired to.”

The Disordered Empyrean Supreme sighed with emotion. “But after some time, for reasons unknown to anyone, Ancestor and Forebear left the Three Thousand together and entered the nothing. And then, this realm turned into what we see now.

“I never thought that Ancestor would be dead...”

Lu Yun blinked, digesting the new knowledge. “I always thought that it was God behind the altars?”

“God?” the empyrean supreme paused when she heard the name. “God is their son.”

First there were the forefathers, then there was God.

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Lu Yun’s jaw dropped and he stared dazedly. The possibility of such an impressive background had never occurred to him. He’d thought that God was a manifestation of the nascent spirit from a certain powerhouse.

“If Ancestor is dead, then it’s... Forebear behind these altars?” He very much cared about the truth behind the altars as increasing numbers of tribes attacked Sacred Radiance after the tribe abandoned theirs. Plainly, they had received certain guidance to do.

As Lu Yun kept himself hidden in the shadows, the rest of the world thought that Sacred Radiance had attained spontaneous enlightenment and grasped a rough method of cultivation. It was why nothing more extreme had been brought to bear against the tribe.

If Lu Yun showed himself, swift and thorough devastation would arrive.

“No,” the Disordered Empyrean Supreme shook her head. “I originally thought that it was Ancestor and Forebear behind the altars as well. But if they are, why do the humans of this realm continue to exist in such a primitive state? Their development should’ve far exceeded anything derived from the corpses of the nihil, and it should’ve done so a very long time ago.”

Ancestor and Forebear wanted worship, not sacrifices. The altars had been modified and Ancestor had died in this world, which meant that Forebear must have also suffered a devastating blow. The person behind it all was neither Ancestor nor Forebear, and it certainly wasn’t God.

Lu Yun’s gut instinct was to decline helping the Disordered Empyrean Supreme, but Ancestor was God’s father, which also made him the young man’s senior. As utterly lawless as he might be, he couldn’t refuse to help in a matter like this. Ancestor was mysteriously dead and there was no trace to be found of Forebear. Only the tomb held answers.

“Alright, I’ll go with you,” Lu Yun responded. “But we can’t do anything to Ancestor’s body. I’m entering the tomb only because I want to know the truth.”

“I want to know the truth too.” The Disordered Empyrean Supreme’s lips curved up in a smile. Other than hell dao, nothing else mattered to her or raised her interest. Therefore, she rarely coveted anything. Even this instance was only a matter of satisfying her curiosity—she wanted to know why Ancestor had died and where Forebear had gone.

Those two were the earliest beings to appear in this part of existence. Its orders were derived from their actions and assembled into rules that gave rise to great dao, which further shaped the realm.

First there was Ancestor and Forebear, then there was heaven. When later generations used the terms ancestor and forefather, the honorifics were based off of the couple’s names.

Ancestor and Forebear were just the first batch of living beings. There were more than just them, but they were the strongest out of the first to come. And since they were dao partners, it was almost impossible to kill either one of them.

That was sufficient to raise the Disordered Empyrean Supreme’s curiosity and propel her to discover what’d happened in the distant past.

“How do you know all this?” Lu Yun suddenly asked.

“Because I am the Disordered Empyrean Supreme,” the woman smiled. “When you become an empyrean supreme, you will find that there are no longer any secrets beneath the heavens. You can see whatever you wish to know when you stand at those heights—other than what has been purposefully concealed by others.”

Matters such as the grand plan set up by Yun Yi and her family, Ancestor’s cause of death, and Forebear’s whereabouts were examples of knowledge purposefully kept out of sight.

“Yun Yi probably didn’t think of this possibility...” A small hint of pride flourished in Lu Yun’s heart. Yun Yi likely hadn’t foreseen that he’d explore Ancestor’s tomb. What would she do if she was still alive? The thought suddenly flashed through his mind.

“It’s a good thing I just broke through yesterday. We can go to Ancestor’s tomb and stretch our legs,” Lu Yun grinned.

“Broke through? To grand supreme? That fast?” The Disordered Empyrean Supreme jumped with surprise. It should’ve taken at least ten years, according to Lu Yun’s own calculations. But it’d only been three!

Three years to grand supreme?

A tribulation was also necessary to become a grand supreme, but there’d been no sign of a heavenly tribulation anywhere within fifty million kilometers of the tribe.

That was due to Lu Yun’s command over reincarnation. Everything underwent the cycle of reincarnation in his grasp. He’d sent the inconsequential tribulation through the cycle before it had a chance to fully manifest.

“I came back from Cardinal Sacred City with some nice things, so of course I quickly broke through.”

“And you want to explore the tomb with your primary body??” The Disordered Empyrean Supreme had thought that the young man would send his golden armored warriors with her, but it looked like he wanted to go in person!

“Those replicas are summons from a combat art. They’ll turn back into soybeans at special locations that negate combat arts, so we can’t rely on them. It’s better if I go. None of the local inhabitants will see through my true nature if there are no eyes of great dao around.”

Chapter 2035 – Ancestor’s Tomb

“Boss, something’s happening at the tomb.” A young man dressed in long yellow robes sat cross-legged in the void within Cardinal Sacred Palace. There were four individuals around him that bore hints of a similar resemblance. They were dressed in long robes of red, blue, black, and white.

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These five were the heads of the five sacred palaces and existences beyond empyrean supreme—sacred supremes.

The Eastern Sacred Supreme—a young girl dressed in blue—opened her eyes and addressed the Cardinal Sacred Supreme in the center, “The place called Ancestor’s tomb buries the forefather of those demons. The demon that destroyed Cardinal Sacred City must be there if something is different about it than usual.”

“Not necessarily,” the Cardinal Sacred Supreme shook his head. “There is more than one demon from the outside lurking in our midst. But developments at the tomb will indeed draw in the other demons. It will be a good opportunity to kill them all in one fell swoop.”

“However... the demons cultivate a thriving dao and their combat arts are uncanny. We of the Three Thousand cannot withstand them.”

The Cardinal Sacred Supreme snorted dismissively. “Forsaking the core essence of dao to detour into side branches ultimately leads to nothing but rootless drifting upon the wind. That is why they are demons and unable to gain a footing in the only patch of existence within the endless nothing. The demons are not worth worrying about.”

The five sacred supremes were under certain limitations and could not leave the Cardinal Sacred Palace. Thus, they could not visit Ancestor’s tomb.

At the same time, the empyrean supremes under their banner were no match for the outsiders. If it wasn’t for the sacred supremes holding down the fort, the outsiders might’ve long conquered the Three Thousand.

Lu Yun’s appearance and his destruction of Cardinal Sacred City was a massive morale boost to the outsiders lingering in the world. They wouldn’t have dared to do anything if Ancestor’s tomb had appeared at any other time. But Lu Yun’s actions had warned off the local cultivators, emboldening outsiders to move with impunity.

The young man knew about their existence, but never contacted them. Neither was he interested in getting to know them. The way he viewed the situation, every cultivator in the Three Thousand other than him was an enemy.

Even the Disordered Empyrean Supreme by his side might turn on him in the next breath. The enemy of the enemy was a friend?

This kind of friend could not be relied upon.

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Ancestor's tomb was located in the eastern reaches of the world—the easternmost domain of Eastern Sacred Palace territory. This wasn't the limit of the world as there was still unbounded land and sea to the east of that area. For those who lived under the rule of the five sacred palaces, that was an unknown dominion.

To them, it was what the lands of unknown had once been to denizens of the fourth realm.

Lu Yun was yet to deduce what kind of order the sacred palaces held. There had also been sacred palaces in the chaos—they'd wielded the supreme orders of the highest degree. Overseeing the second realm, they were its indubitable rulers.

This time, Lu Yun couldn't determine what the sacred palaces of the Three Thousand wielded. Or perhaps he was unable to see things clearly because the sacred supreme was suppressing his vision. Another possibility was that they ruled without a need for order because they controlled everything.

It would be too frightening if they really did control all order already. Lu Yun wouldn't stand a chance against them if that was the case.

Of course, his goal wasn't to fight them. All he needed was a foothold in this world so he could create a state that was wholly his.

But why do I need to operate within the confines of the sacred palaces? Why can't I establish my land in those parts of the unknown? The thought suddenly floated into his mind. He shuddered with horror as soon as it did so.

"What's in the places outside sacred palace rule?" he asked the Disordered Empyrean Supreme.

"Monsters... giant beasts!" she trembled as well. "Do you remember the humans in the tomb of the empyrean supreme? The existences that live in the unknown are just like them. They aren't cultivators, but they are stronger than those who cultivate.

"Those in the tomb are dead, but the giant beasts are alive. The weakest of them is empyrean supreme!"

"The weakest?" Lu Yun asked incredulously.

"Right, the weakest! The strongest of them have surpassed sacred supreme and have the right to enter nihil," nodded the Disordered Empyrean Supreme. "But they don't invade this particular area due to a certain agreement. Hence, denizens of this part of the world call their home a sanctuary. But to the beasts, this so-called sanctuary is a backwater that they can't be bothered with.

“Any being from this area—whether mortal or cultivator—that dares set foot outside these bounds will be met with no mercy.”

Lu Yun’s mouth turned dry.

“As for their attitude toward us...” The empyrean supreme’s lips curved upward. “They also think of us as demons, parasites, and maggots!”

“I see,” Lu Yun nodded. At the end of the day, the world’s great dao profoundly affected its denizens’ notions. He would have to change the great dao if he wanted to alter their perspective.

“Ancestor’s tomb is up ahead. ...damn it, what are those idiots doing here?!” the Disordered Empyrean Supreme swore and hastily descended from the sky. She hid to the side with Lu Yun—a superfluous action since the two were smaller than motes of dust in the air thanks to the Shapeshifting and Size Manipulation Talismans.

Not even empyrean supremes would be able to detect them without taking a close look.

After the Tome of Life and Death transformed, its Shapeshifting and Size Manipulation death art was more profound than before. Empyrean supremes wouldn’t be able to discern them with a simple glance.

How else could Lu Yun hide for so long in the Three Thousand without being discovered?

A scene of complete pandemonium reigned outside the tomb; all of its layouts had been pretty much destroyed. At the very least, Lu Yun couldn’t make out what had been there before.

The damage was so severe that he couldn’t even tell if the tomb had naturally formed or was the result of manmade construction afterwards.

“You’re right, they’re all idiots.” He hadn’t wanted to damage the tomb, much less than destroy its layouts. Although the layouts outside had been broken, the power they contained had seeped into the tomb. It was impossible to dismantle the layouts from the outside.

The Spectral Eye only showed Lu Yun that all was dark and sinister inside the structure. Resentment wafted through the air and death information flooded the premises. Who knew how many had died inside?

Lu Yun even saw an uncontrollably powerful ghost deep within its depths.

Maybe it was Ancestor.

He couldn’t see clearly as the ghost was too strong. It exceeded the limits of the Tome of Life and Death—the treasure needed to evolve again to impose control over it.

Chapter 2036 – Yun Tian and Ling Qu

Good thing I refined the fruit of life and death before this and derived the power of reincarnation. If I’d come here before the Tome of Life and Death evolved again, I’d be dead without a doubt. Lu Yun celebrated silently.

Something new cropped up in his line of sight—cultivators of the Three Thousand.

Su Muzhou and his dao partner Suiyue Jinghao were also present. They'd concealed themselves with arts of disguise, but such rudimentary skill was nothing to the Spectral Eye. Even cultivators from the outside could see through them.

But given the current situation, no one wanted to escalate things by provoking the locals. Thus, they pretended not to see the two.

Su Muzhou and Suiyue Jinghao also weren't so arrogant as to think they'd really pulled the wool over the demons. They kept to themselves and stood to the side, not getting involved.

"There are eighteen empyrean supremes here, twelve of them are from the Three Thousand," the Disordered Empyrean Supreme counted. "There's another one... from the past chief worlds."

"An empyrean supreme from the chief worlds?" Lu Yun blinked. "Weren't there only ever three in history?"

"Yes, he broke through to empyrean supreme here." She looked in another direction. "He's weaker than me though."

Lu Yun nodded.

Though the Disordered Empyrean Supreme had spent a significant amount of time in death, her will lingered in the chief worlds when she was dead. The changes of the realm's great daos had continuously affected her.

That was even more the case after she was resurrected and returned to her old cultivation level. Having assimilated into the shamanic race, she'd obtained the approval of heaven and earth. Most importantly was that she'd gone to the World of Immortals.

The current World of Immortals could be viewed as the origin of all great daos in the chief worlds. Formula dao was able to analyze all things and constantly help the realm's great daos and worlds improve.

In contrast to the chief world empyrean supreme in this world—while he was from a stronger realm, he'd remained here all this time and missed out on too many eras. The combat arts of this realm were also stagnant, so while that empyrean supreme's cultivation had continued to progress, his combat arts and dao methods were stuck in the past.

Although he was stronger than the empyrean supremes of this world, he was far weaker than the Disordered Empyrean Supreme who'd ascended after him.

"Are there any sacred supremes here?" Lu Yun wasn't interested in the empyrean supreme who'd come from the chief worlds. If there weren't any sacred supremes on the scene, then he and the Disordered Empyrean Supreme could soundlessly slip into the tomb. The situation would be a bit tricky if there were sacred supremes present as well.

He wasn't able to access the tomb in his current condition. He had to dig a thief's tunnel—a crucial segment of tomb exploration no matter where he was. If he tried to use an earth elemental art or any other art to transport himself inside, he might be trapped if anything caused the tomb's layouts to shift and negate these arts.

Although such a thing had never happened before, he wasn't willing to risk it.

A thief's tunnel was the safest way to proceed, and he couldn't do it by himself. The layouts were so ruined that he didn't know where to start. He needed to reconfirm the layout of the land and re-analyze the premises.

He could do that with the aid of the Size Manipulation combat art, but that would cause a disturbance and expose himself. The death arts were his trump card; he didn't want to expose them at this point in time.

He had to keep them hidden for now. If his enemies caught wind of his capabilities, they would be on guard against him and thus limit what he could do with the death arts in the future.

Although the dao methods of the Three Thousand were horrifically out of date, its people were closer to the core essence of dao. They'd brought out the eyes of great dao when they learned that Lu Yun could change into anything he desired. Who knew what they'd do next if they further learned that he could modify his size however he wished?

He wouldn't have been this cautious before—his views changed after he heard the 'sanctuary' moniker from the Disordered Empyrean Supreme.

Could inhabitants of the Three Thousand be dismissed as weak just because they cultivated the core essence of dao and didn't continue to develop after that?

Core essence could break through everything on its own if it was strong enough. The giant beasts followed an agreement in staying out of this territory, but all agreements were predicated on the basis of strength.

Would the beasts respect any agreement if they hadn't been beaten into submission first?

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Several tens of thousands were gathered in this world, but they docilely remained in the so-called Three Thousand. They didn't dare raise any sort of fuss—there was obviously something here that they were afraid of.

Well, even Lu Yun had been scurrying to and fro to run from the eyes. If it wasn't for the Tome of Life and Death, ten of him would be dead already.

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"No sacred supremes, they can't come here," the Disordered Empyrean Supreme shook her head. "This place is off-limits to them."

"What exactly are sacred supremes? Who's stronger, them or the powerhouse in the nothing that I met before?" Lu Yun asked.

"The guy in the nothing, of course," she chuckled ruefully. "As strong as sacred supremes are, they are still existences of heaven and earth. They will be assimilated by nothing if they leave its confines and vanish from existence."

“The one who calls himself a Nihil World Sovereign in the nothing is different. People like that guy can live in the nothing, they themselves are order. Each of them is a world in nihil—their existence is below only that of this world.”

Lu Yun nodded slowly and attached another talisman to his companion. Both of them appeared in public view at the same time as cultivators that Lu Yun had once seen before—a young man and a young girl dressed as a maid.

They were both local inhabitants of the Three Thousand, but an eye of great dao had destroyed their home. Everything had vanished within one hundred and fifty million kilometers of their home, including the two of them.

Given that the eyes of great dao were firing with area attacks, the Cardinal Sacred Palace didn't care who lived or died. Thus, no one knew that these two were already dead.

Lu Yun and the Disordered Empyrean Supreme were thus free to borrow Yun Tian and his maid Ling Qu's identity.

Their aura and ripples of great dao were the same as their fellow citizens. They also carried a deep hatred in their heart—something that the Shapeshifting Talisman had created.

“Hoi! Do you see what I see? The native idiots of this world dare come here? Do you want to die?” a grand supreme jeered when he saw the two.

Su Muzhou and Suiyue Jinghao also looked curiously at the newcomers.

Chapter 2037 – There's Ghosts Here

Denizens of the Three Thousand viewed outsiders as maggots and demons. At the same time, those from the outside thought of them as primitive bumbling fools.

Although there were numerous locals on the scene, they were all disguised as outsiders. They didn't dare blatantly appear in the open. It would be quite the stroke of misfortune if an outsider casually disposed of them on their way to demonic business.

That was why the first local cultivator that Lu Yun had come across after arriving at the Three Thousand imitated the ripples of immortal dao. He'd been so successful that Lu Yun nearly took him at face value for being a real immortal.

Thus, the unvarnished appearance of a local boy and girl raised quite a bit of interest.

“Yun Tian? I thought you were dead.” An outsider in the guise of a young man brightened and approached Lu Yun to offer a cupped fist salute. “An eye of great dao destroyed Divine Yun Valley, but Brother Yun luckily made it out alright!”

Lu Yun understood this stranger must be acquainted with his identity, so he operated formula dao to determine their exact relationship. His adept usage of formula dao was now unparalleled—he could track something back to its source from a simple greeting or exchange of thought. Everything about the stranger was laid out in front of him.

Lu Yun ran calculations regarding Yun Tian's matters before assuming his identity, so he knew the deceased's background and experiences like the back of his hand. With that in mind, he identified the nature of Yun Tian's relationship with the young man in front of him.

Yun Tian was the young lord of Divine Yun Valley. A gallant personality with a carefree air, he loved to befriend heroes from all over. He even counted demons of the outside world among his friends!

It was because of this that Divine Yun Valley had been destroyed.

The young man in front of them was one of his friends, but Yun Tian hadn't known that he was an outsider.

"Hmph," Lu Yun snorted. "Demon."

"What's happened to you, Brother Yun?" responded the young man with mock astonishment. "Don't you befriend people without caring about where they are from?"

"Speak some sense!" The Disordered Emyrean Supreme couldn't help but roll her eyes. "See if you look at things the same way after your entire family's been killed."

"Although it was the eye of great dao from the Cardinal Sacred Palace that destroyed the valley, it had everything to do with you demons," Lu Yun forced out through clenched teeth. "They say that this tomb contains the demonic combat arts of the outsiders. I'm here today to claim them and enact vengeance on the Cardinal Sacred Palace!"

The young man fell silent; the others had nothing to say.

Internal strife between the locals? That would be lovely! In fact, those of them not native to this world would eagerly fan the flames from the shadows, add a bit of spice here and there, and cook the pot until it boiled over and fractured the world.

The only thing they didn't dare do was to outright incite war. If war broke out, that would affect the great daos and propel the long stagnant combat arts of this world into progressing again.

Perhaps there'd been wars in the Three Thousand sometime in its past, but now the five sacred palaces jointly put a stop to any wars that took place. Whoever raised the flag of war first would further be crushed for their impertinence; cultivators were only allowed their personal scuffles and clashes.

Many were the outsiders that once tried to alter the great daos of this world, but they'd all failed.

Thus, Yun Tian's appearance gave them a glimmer of hope. The outsiders didn't need to take action themselves anymore—all they needed to do was to goad this Yun Tian into causing trouble throughout the world.

Many had formed strong hunches on why the dao methods of the Three Thousand had stagnated at this stage. It wasn't for the pursuit of eternal life, but that certain people wished to become great dao. If the outsiders could alter the great dao in this world, they would be able to defeat the one who sought to assimilate into it. That would pave the way for open hunting in this world.

It turned out that the Disordered Empyrean Supreme was correct in saying there was an overseer in the so-called sanctuary of this world, and that the three hundred and sixty-five eyes of great dao were under its control.

That existence had noticed Lu Yun's Tome of Life and Death, which is why the young man was subject to such relentless pursuit.

However, the five sacred cities were critically important to the sanctuary. The destruction of one could be salvaged, but the destruction of the rest of them would render the Tome of Life and Death pointless even if the overseer laid hands on it.

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Lu Yun bristled with so much hatred and resentment that it was as if he was a porcupine. Just as he said, he was here to locate the combat arts within the tomb and enact vengeance on the sacred palace.

He was here with a death wish.

"Yun Tian" and "Ling Qu" were just grand supremes, but two uncontrollable grand supremes was sufficient to cause everyone's death in the uncanny Ancestor's tomb.

Three empyrean supremes had jointly destroyed the layouts outside the tomb. They'd done so to locate the way to enter the tomb, but they'd died after destroying the tomb acupoint.

Completely without warning and in a very eerie fashion.

No one knew how they'd died. They'd just suddenly fallen to the ground with blood streaming out of their orifices. Their bodies dissolved into bloody water that vanished without a trace.

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"How do we get inside?" The Disordered Empyrean Supreme didn't find any passages leading inside the tomb after a round of observation.

"There should be a door to go inside, but something's sealed it shut." Lu Yun managed to find a few clues despite the layouts being completely ruined.

"Hey, little bro Yun Tian, do you have a way to get inside?" Numerous outsiders jeered at him when they saw Lu Yun poke around the surroundings, looking as if he actually knew what he was doing. Their grins were deeply tinged with malicious amusement.

"Hmph," he snorted and ignored them. "Let's dig our way in!" he suddenly snapped. "This young master will dig a tunnel if there's no path!"

He rolled up his sleeves and took out a flying sword, stabbing the sword into the dirt and using it as a shovel. The ground outside the tomb was inordinately durable. It was very hard for Lu Yun to dig a thief's tunnel himself, but he had no other choice but to put on a desperate act.

No, he really was putting his back into it.

"What is it?" The Disordered Empyrean Supreme noted something off about his mood.

“There’s a ghost here,” he transmitted back. “A very strong ghost. Hurry and dig in this spot! We need to dig deep and destroy the layout before we do anything else!”

Horror pricked at the back of his neck. The three empyrean supremes had destroyed the layouts outside the tomb, but created another one—one for breeding ghosts.

Chapter 2038 – A Face-Off Between Feng Shui Masters

The layout for breeding ghosts had grown so quickly that the first one it produced was a horrific ghost king. It was the reason behind the three empyrean supremes dying so suddenly.

Critically, the appearance of such a layout wasn’t by happenstance. There were experts behind the scene, similar to how Lu Yun had set up his formations to destroy Cardinal Sacred City and then used its rubble to create a new formation.

This layout was the same. Someone had calculated everything in advance and anticipated the three empyrean supremes that would destroy the layouts around the tomb. If rubble was to become a new layout, their arrangement and bearings had to be determined beforehand. That meant the mysterious mastermind had foreseen how the empyrean supremes would act and what would happen as result of their actions.

Lu Yun’s Spectral Eye could not see the ghost king, but he could sense the ghost king’s presence. It was through this entity that the young man detected the extremely well-hidden layout for breeding ghosts. Where he dug wasn’t the prime location for a thief’s tunnel, but the life point of the layout.

Uprooting it would disperse the terrible yin qi that’d gathered and naturally break the layout.

The ghost king hadn’t erupted in all out slaughter because it needed ghostly soldiers. Everyone gathered at the tomb was its potential recruits. The layout meant to breed ghosts out of living people.

“The disturbances in the tomb aren’t due to anyone’s visitation,” Lu Yun inhaled deeply and muttered. “Someone wants to use this tomb to create ghosts. Nothing changed in it from beginning to end—it was all fabricated.”

Thoughts flew rapidly through his mind as he quickly understood what was going on. An incredible disturbance had rocked the sanctuary of the Three Thousand upon his arrival. That was why the mastermind moved to create something unusual here, attracting both outsiders and locals to this spot so they could activate their plot to breed ghosts.

Cold sweat soaked Lu Yun’s collar. This meant that person knew he was behind Cardinal Sacred City’s destruction and that he’d used the rubble to form another transportation formation! He’d also known that Lu Yun would come to the tomb. With the young man’s mastery over formations and feng shui, he would certainly identify the weaknesses of this layout and know how to break it.

That person knew Lu Yun could dismantle his plans, so things weren’t as simple as they appeared. There must be something that he was overlooking.

In fact, Lu Yun suspected that if he broke this layout, it would reassemble into a new and more terrifying layout!

Fear danced in his heart for a split second, but quickly morphed into excitement. He'd yet to encounter any decent feng shui masters since leaving Earth. All of the layouts he encountered were legacies from experts past or naturally formed from heaven and earth.

He'd finally met another master! What a chance to match wits!

"Are you trying to use me as your blade so you can manifest an even stronger layout?" He looked away from the Disordered Empyrean Supreme and raised his head to regard the overcast skies.

Lu Yun dismissed the Spectral Eye and closed the Tome of Life and Death. A contest between feng shui masters had no need for external treasures. It was down to their personal knowledge and skill.

Of course, he would still use the death arts and treasure if he lost and was about to lose his life. He didn't blindly stick to the principle of things.

The Disordered Empyrean Supreme didn't say anything when he paused his motions; she acted just as a maid would. Three empyrean supremes had already died here and she didn't think that she was stronger than them. The three were also from the outside, their dao unaffected by the great dao of this world. Thus, their combat arts and dao methods hovered on the bleeding edge of the times.

Her skin had crawled with fear when Lu Yun spoke of a ghost. Empyrean supremes were the strongest existences in the chief worlds and other realms. They were the absolute apex of existence, but in the Three Thousand, there were sacred supremes beyond them.

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In this realm, empyrean supremes had to tuck their heads in and look meekly at the ground. All she could do now was rely on Lu Yun.

The young man was already making his move. Unaffected by his environment, he fully concentrated on the layout that he wanted to create.

The Dragonspike layout!

The Dragonsearch Invocation, Dragonshift Method, and Dragonspike Litany were the three secret arts of the Dragonquake Scripture. Dragonspike was the strongest layout within the Dragonspike Litany.

Lu Yun had set up one such spike when he visited the Exalted Immortal Sect of the world of immortals and easily destroyed the sect. He was going to set up the entire layout this time, creating something that was infinite times stronger than a singular spike.

He wasn't going to just destroy the tomb, he wanted to destroy the layout and everything within it!

Rumble—

The Dragonshift Method and Dragonspike Litany deployed at the same time as he called upon all of the great dragons within fifteen hundred kilometers, forming a mountain in front of him. The earth shook and trembled.

“What is he doing?!” gasped the cultivators still studying how to enter the tomb. It was only a moderately sized mountain, but it exuded a presence that made them pale with horror.

“The Dragonquake Scripture!” A petrified scream rang out from Su Muzhou and his dao partner concealed in the crowd. “The Dragonquake Scripture is the ultimate treasure of the Three Thousand and few are those who have the right to practice it. How, how did a traitor like you learn it?!”

They recognized the Dragonshift Method and Dragonspike Litany as the secret arts of the Dragonquake Scripture since Su Muzhou was part of the senior council of the world. He’d once seen a sacred supreme deploy the method and deploy the great dragons of the world to kill a demon from the nothing. How was it in the hands of someone who’d betrayed the Cardinal Sacred Palace??

Greed sent their hearts racing.

The Dragonquake Scripture was a most priceless treasure of the realm and infinitely close to the core essence of great dao. No, it would be more accurate to say that it was a cultivation method that was the equivalent of the core essence of dao. It was the pinnacle accomplishment sought by innumerable cultivators of the Three Thousand!

Cultivating the Dragonquake Scripture would grant them the right to set foot outside of sanctuary and roam the vast Three Thousand!

“Give it here!” Suiyue Jinghao was the first to explode into action as a wild torrent of empyrean force blasted from his body. It coalesced into a large hand that swung down on Lu Yun.

“Away with you!!” sneered the Disordered Empyrean Supreme as she shot forward and kicked the man in the face, sending him flying.

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