

## Necropolis 461

### Chapter 461: Mirage

Lu Yun retreated from the zone of attack caused by the crimson eyes. The only thing he could do now was set up a formation as quickly as possible; the extinction layout was still in effect and could destroy the tomb at any time.

As for the strange power that could kill cultivators... there was nothing he could do about it for the moment. Not even the Spectral Eye could pierce through the darkness ahead and figure out what manner of monster the eyes belonged to.

“Ge Long!” growled Lu Yun into the darkness.

“Aye, at your service, milord!” Ge Long responded without missing a beat.

“Stop tangling with your yum-yum and take this to the burial place!” The Formation Orb in Lu Yun’s hand separated into two and he threw the yin portion into the darkness.

“Understood!” Ge Long scrambled to catch the orb, which flared with great formation power to scatter the yin spirits attacking him. He made a run for it toward where the tomb’s owner was buried. When he passed the giant scarlet eyes, he paused.

“It’s that thing! So it’s been hiding here all along... It mustn’t be allowed to grow, or it’ll devour not only cultivators, but the entirety of immortal dao...” Ge Long’s expression was uncharacteristically grave.

In his haste to set up a formation—or more accurately, feng shui layout—Lu Yun overlooked the old servant’s reaction. The current environment didn’t meet his needs, so he had to reconstruct the feng shui and environment here to suit his purpose. Formation disk after formation disk emerged in his hands and were laid down on the ground in a pattern that only he understood.

Mo Yi watched quietly, but couldn’t figure out what Lu Yun was doing.

“This isn’t a simple formation,” she said suddenly. “This will sway heaven and earth... You’ve tapped into the power of formations to influence the world without setting one up!”

Formation masters of the world had long since noticed the pull that formations exerted on heaven and earth, but the power was fickle, unpredictable, and seemingly impossible to control. The same formation might influence the world differently in different environments, and the impact changed as the environment changed around it.

Great formation masters had attempted to study this unpredictable influence, but to no avail. Worse, they ended up delaying their own pursuit of formation dao and falling into mediocrity.

The power that formations exerted on the world—feng shui—was so complicated that, over time, formation masters in the world of immortals had given up on studying it. By now, many formation masters didn’t even notice its nebulous existence. Knowledge about the impact that formations had on the world had been lost.

Mo Yi hadn’t expected Lu Yun to be a master of that lost art!

“It’s feng shui,” Lu Yun said as he set up the layout, his injuries mostly healed. “Everything between heaven and earth comes together to form a vast feng shui layout. Formations are secondary, it’s feng shui that dictates the operation of the world!”

Mo Yi nodded bemusedly.

“Do you want to learn?” Lu Yun suddenly asked.

She shook her head. “Everyone has their own expertise, so learning this won’t do me much good.”

Lu Yun rubbed his nose. Mo Yi was tremendously, almost horrifyingly talented. After severing her own cultivation, she’d returned to the dao immortal realm in only a few months and exceeded her previous achievements. Even with the Tome of Life and Death and the Sal Tree of Life and Death, Lu Yun still wasn’t her match.

At the same time, she was right. There were different strokes for different folks. She’d learned the way of formations simply for her combat art of the Big Dipper. While she may be a grandmaster of formations, it wasn’t where her talent lay.

“That’s a technique of the branch from the ancestor planet,” the human demon mused when he saw Lu Yun’s handiwork. “So you’re a descendent of that branch.”

“Ancestor planet?” Lu Yun blurted out in shock. “Planet, not realm or world?”

“The ancestor planet is the ancestor planet. A brilliant, prosperous star. Sadly, the planet was destroyed when the human dao met its end,” lamented the human demon. “The planet may have been destroyed, but its heritage remains. Feng shui is part of that heritage, and the ancient tombs, this one included, are ruins of heritages left from the planet.”

Lu Yun nodded silently.

Hum.

The Yang Formation Orb in Lu Yun’s hand hummed as a giant mirror emerged, reflecting a hunched over figure: Ge Long. The Yin Formation Orb in his hand was glowing as well, resonating with the Yang Formation Orb.

Mirage.

A mirage was also a kind of feng shui layout. When certain conditions were met, it could project the scenery from one place to another.

Lu Yun had changed the environment in the ancient tomb with several formation-created layouts and met the conditions for a mirage to emerge. He’d then projected Ge Long’s image here through the connection between the two formation orbs.

There was a power that killed cultivators deep within the ancient tomb. He couldn’t reach the place, so he needed Ge Long to go in his stead and destroy the layout by giving instructions through the mirage.

“Do it!” Lu Yun ordered.

Snowflakes scattered from the sky to ensconce Lu Yun within as Mo Yi made her move. Something seemed to rush past the falling snow, causing a disturbance.

Swoosh!

Flame burst out of Lu Yun's body and he reached out to grab where the falling snow was diverted from its path.

Thud!

He crushed the attacking divine obsession with a firm clench and burned it with hellfire. Lu Yun didn't care at all how the divine obsession became sentient. According to the human demon, this was the resting place of the human emperor and had once been doused by his blood. Anything could happen here.

Relieved, Lu Yun turned to the mirage.

"What did you discover?" he asked, noting Ge Long's dark look.

The old servant sported a perpetual leer on his face that never changed, even when facing the greatest of dangers, but now, his expression was so broodingly serious that it made him look like a different person.

"Something terrifying," Ge Long said in a low voice. He fell silent after responding, since he'd reached the place where the tomb's owner was buried.

Darkness was driven away by a soft glow emanating from the coffin before him. A six-meter-long crimson coffin hovered roughly six meters above the ground; it was none other than a hanging coffin.

### **Chapter 462: The Sacred Origin Runes**

The bronze outer-coffin, netherwood coffin, and hanging coffin were the three most undesirable kinds of coffins to tomb raiders. They signified more than just misfortune; they always contained incredible peril.

The coffin in front of Ge Long was a hanging coffin of the purest kind. It was suspended in midair by a mysterious force and a gentle light came from it, lighting up about thirty meters of space.

Aside from the scarlet hanging coffin, there was nothing else here. The light of the Yin Formation Orb in Ge Long's hands couldn't break through the darkness, either. Lu Yun couldn't clearly see the layout at all through the mirage.

"Set up a formation according to my instructions..." He began directing Ge Long through a thick pall of darkness.

Under Lu Yun's authority, Ge Long was able to move freely in and out of hell. Through it, Lu Yun ferried a number of formation disks into his servant's possession.

The old servant was untrained in formations or feng shui, but he could follow instructions quite closely, at the very least. Under Lu Yun's guidance, every disk was correctly placed to form a radiant circle that banished the darkness step by step.

Thirty meters of light were doubled to sixty. When the new illumination finally laid bare what'd lurked beneath the darkness, Lu Yun's face grew even darker.

"Formation, rise!" He flung forth the Yang Formation Orb as he cried out and it remained in place over his head. At the same time, Ge Long's Yin Formation Orb took to the air as well.

Hum...

A quiet sound accompanied the activation of the formations Ge Long set down. Rays of formation light wove in the air and became something greater.

A Mirage layout!

The Yin and Yang Formation Orbs sank into the twin layouts, reinforcing them so that the two Mirage layouts in different locations could fuse together across the boundaries of space.

The scenery before Lu Yun, Mo Yi, and the human demon began changing, and a scarlet coffin hanging in midair appeared before them. Indeed, their surroundings looked exactly like where the coffin was located in the darkness.

"Is this... a formation to bend time and space? Have we been transported to where the owner of the tomb is?" Incredulity shot out of Mo Yi's stunning eyes. This was the stuff of legends! To her knowledge, at least, no one in the world was capable of such a feat.

"No." Lu Yun shook his head. "Unless I reach the same level as the primordial monster spirit ancestor and fully comprehend the Yin and Yang Formation Orbs, I won't be able to set up such a potent formation."

"How did we get over there, then?" The human demon was perplexed as well.

"We haven't, actually." Lu Yun shook his head. "What you perceive with your senses and consciousness are false. I've only used two Mirages to project what's over there to here. We're still where we were before."

Mo Yi and the human demon widened their eyes in shared disbelief. They were completely fooled by the veracity of what they sensed and saw.

"Still... a sufficiently advanced projection is indistinguishable from the real thing." A smile curled at the corner of Lu Yun's mouth. "When I change the projection here, the real world on the other side will be changed in the same way."

A layout like this would've been impossible even for the tomb raider forefather. It was a Lu Yun original, researched after years of carefully studying the Yin Yang Formation Orbs in hell.

"The Formation of Heaven and Earth," Mo Yi piped up suddenly. "That's what you put into this."

"Yes." Lu Yun nodded. "Only heaven and earth can connect truth and illusion. Whatever happens to one affects the other."

"One... affects the other?" Mo Yi picked up on the key in his words.

“They affect each other.” Lu Yun took a deep breath. “There’s an ‘us’ on the other side, too. If someone kills the ‘us’ over there, our real bodies here will die. Thankfully, anyone who shows up on the other side will show up here, too.”

“Then what’s the difference between the other side and reality?” The human demon was trying his best to make sense of things; it was all a little difficult to understand.

“That’s part of feng shui’s charm.” Lu Yun walked up to the hanging coffin and scrutinized it in great detail. “I still can’t see through it.” He furrowed his brow slightly. His Spectral Eye couldn’t pierce through the coffin; an unknown power over it protected it from his gaze.

The coffin was entirely scarlet, but runes of dark gold were etched across it. They resembled formation runes, but were something else entirely. These dark golden runes came together to form a very peculiar pattern that enveloped the entire coffin in a hazy glow.

“How? Why?” the perennially quiet Qi Hai uttered a rare interjection. He sounded confused, but for different reasons. “Isn’t this the tomb of an immortal? Why would this be buried here?”

“You recognize this hanging coffin, senior?” Lu Yun asked quickly.

Ever since entering the tomb, he’d kept a small gap open in hell for Qi Hai to watch the outside world. Unfortunately, Qi Hai hadn’t taken an interest in anything... until now. Whether it’d been talk of the ancestor planet beforehand or feng shui heritage, or later on when Lu Yun had laid out the twin layouts, none of it had prompted a reaction like this.

“The dark gold runes on this coffin are the Exalted Divines’ Sacred Origin Runes. In the era of human dao, they were the kings of their race, above the four cardinal divine tribes,” Qi Hai spoke very slowly. “Considering the runes... the one buried inside must be an Exalted Divine, and one of the imperial bloodline at that.”

Before the human emperor’s fall, the exalted divines had had a real emperor of their own. The Sacred Origin Runes were his creation, representing the truth he’d gleaned from the dao. Hence, the runes inscribed on the hanging coffin indicated that the one buried within was of that lineage.

“The Exalted divine tribe!” Lu Yun scrunched his face together. “Why would a descendant of the Exalted Divine Emperor be buried inside an immortal tomb... can it be for the same reason as Mount Myriad Formation? Perhaps the original owner was robbed of his rest.”

Suddenly, he thought of a possibility: the Exalted Immortal Sect! Back in the North Sea, he’d seen the corpse coffins of two female Exalted Divines. That was why he’d made the connection between the two.

Shoom!

A sword appeared out of nowhere to pierce through his forehead.

### **Chapter 463: Why Is It You??**

The attack was so fast that Lu Yun had no chance to respond. Even Mo Yi and the human demon were too slow to do anything other than watch the young man’s head be pierced straight through.

“Eh?!” a confused yelp sounded out.

“I’ve been waiting for you!” Ge Long cackled on the other side of the Mirage. He yanked his head off and flung it into the darkness as hard as he could. A flurry of commotion and a chaotic din of shrieks and yells ensued.

“What is this?!” sounded an angry roar from the unknown. Whoever it was was rather upset at having been thrown for a loop.

“Idiot, I’ve been waiting for you for a very long time.” Lu Yun put a hand on his forehead; there was no wound there at all. “When I said the effect was double-sided, I can’t believe you were fool enough to actually believe me. Do you not have a brain to use?”

He’d known someone was watching in the darkness from the very start, and had intentionally mislabelled everything as divine obsessions and slain one example to lower its guard. The mention of the dual layout’s reciprocal effects had been the perfect bait.

Ge Long had been waiting on the sidelines, and a feigned moment of absentmindedness was all it took to land the culprit hook, line, and sinker.

Killing a projected image meant the death of the real person as well? A feng shui layout that could do that was impossible to the point of sheer fantasy.

Ge Long’s body followed his head, barrelling into the darkness and fighting tooth and nail against whatever was there. Lu Yun couldn’t see into the depths, but the proceedings had Mo Yi and the human demon’s full attention.

Thump!

A figure was thrown out into the light to land in a heap at Lu Yun’s feet. He wore a blue-black robe and a cloudy current of air covered his face, obscuring his features. A sword was upon his back—the Sword of Chaos.

...Sword Divine! He was the one who’d been watching Lu Yun from the darkness!

A battered and bruised Ge Long walked back out into the light with his head between his fingers. He had quite a few bruises and holes all over his body, but otherwise seemed none the worse for wear.

“Heheheh. I’ve managed to carry out your orders, milord! I’ve got him!” The old servant sounded very proud of himself.

“So he was the one who ambushed you just now? And... you wanted to draw him out. Is that why you did all that?” asked a highly surprised Mo Yi.

“Not entirely.” Lu Yun let out a small sigh of relief. “I really did feel threatened by whoever it was, but I didn’t expect it to be Sword Divine. If I’d known it was him, I would’ve gone much further than that.”

The sight of the person at his feet felt a bit surreal. Someone who’d become his foremost enemy at some point in time was oddly easy pickings. Ge Long had done who knew what to restrict Sword Divine’s body. Entirely immobile, this longtime foe was forced to lie still upon the ground.

“Let’s see who you really are.” Lu Yun swatted aside the cloudy haze over Sword Divine’s face.

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“Y-you... why is it you...” Lu Yun’s face immediately paled at the revelation that the revealed face imparted and he stumbled backward in trembling fear. “How... how can you be the heir to the Sword of Chaos? Why...”

“And why can’t it be me?” Sword Divine snickered. He narrowed his sharp eyes and gazed coldly at Lu Yun.

“No, this is all wrong... the Sword of Chaos hadn’t been completed yet when you died... It can’t be you!” Lu Yun muttered feverishly, trying to convince himself.

Sword Divine’s identity defied sensibility and reality. He was Lu Shenhou!

In Lu Yun’s analysis of everyone he’d seen and met in the world of immortals, Lu Shenhou was the only one he had completely ruled out. But here he was, as Sword Divine!

This was a man who’d died and refused to believe his own death. A man who bore the strongest of convictions to lead Lu Yun and the others back to the ancient tomb to repair the path of cultivation and release the Dao Flower. That very same man was also the heir of the Sword of Chaos: Sword Divine!

The current Lu Shenhou possessed the body of a divine and was the same man as the one Lu Yun had seen during the Sovereign Ranking.

Indeed, Lu Yun was absolutely certain that his identification was correct. Any personal apprehensions aside, this was a revived and transformed Lu Shenhou for sure. In the same vein, the sword on his back was the Sword of Chaos, the one Lu Yun had seen in the Sword Barrow—no other sword could have its characteristics.

Lu Shenhou’s eyes only grew icier as time passed, and he didn’t dignify Lu Yun’s amazement with a response. Suddenly, a black light burst forth from the sword on his back, which gradually spread to his entire body.

“No!” Lu Yun blanched once again. He took out the Tome of Life and Death without hesitation, slamming it down upon Lu Shenhou as fast as he could. This was the first time he’d ever shown the book to any outsiders.

It seemed that no one knew such a book existed in the first place. Even Qi Hai, whose spirit had undergone countless reincarnations, hadn’t heard of the artifact before.

To Lu Yun, the Tome of Life and Death was his strongest treasure and greatest reliance. If the Sword of Chaos was acting up, the only thing that could quash it was the Tome of Life and Death.

Boom!

An absurd amount of force blasted from the tome. It transcended time, transcended space, transcended illusion and reality. Aside from the infinitely proximate Lu Shenhou, no one else in the room could feel it.

This was the power of the dead.

“Break!” Lu Shenhou roared with primal ferocity. His divine body spontaneously disintegrated and his true spirit was subsumed into the Sword of Chaos.

Clang!

The ringing sword violently cut a hole through nearby space. In the next instant, it was gone into the aether.

“A true spirit! Lu Shenhou is only a cultivator. How can he have a true spirit?” Lu Yun gasped.

The soul and true spirit were both essential parts of an immortal’s existence. In theory, only plucking a dao fruit would bring the latter into being.

However, Lu Shenhou was no immortal!

“That Sword Divine is a peculiar existence,” Mo Yi remarked coolly. “After you shattered his cloudy mask, I wasn’t able to see him anymore.”

The human demon nodded wordlessly in agreement.

“That’s too bad. I was so close... At least now that I know who he is, it’ll be a lot easier to deal with him from now on. Still... why does it have to be him?” A part of Lu Yun still couldn’t accept what he’d just learned and he stared off blankly into space for a long while.

#### **Chapter 464: Trap**

“That was too blatant,” Mo Yi suddenly said.

Lu Yun paused. “Hm?”

“He showed his face to you on purpose,” Mo Yi said after a bemused pause. Though she hadn’t been able to see him after Lu Shenhou revealed himself, she could still put two and two together. “You allowed yourself to be influenced by his identity, thus you missed many things.”

Emotions prevented one from seeing the truth. Lu Yun knew and admired Lu Shenhou, which was why the revelation had made him lose his calm. As an outsider, Mo Yi had a much more objective view of the situation.

“Your trap wasn’t that clever. If I were him, I would’ve waited for a better chance to kill you, rather than attacking your fake replica on a single, unverified fact.”

Lu Yun frowned.

“Why would he do that, though? Is he not Sword Divine? But he was indeed the one I faced in the Sovereign Arena and Sovereign World.”

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An island of about eighty meters across, deep within the vast East Sea.

Lu Shenhou knelt on one knee before a cyan figure, holding the Sword of Chaos up with both hands.

“I have completed my mission, master,” he said with great deference.



“Go to Dusk Province and kill the Lu patriarch,” the figure said in lieu of taking the sword. “Make the Lu Clan and Lu Yun irredeemable enemies.”

“Understood.” Calmly, Lu Shenhou rose to his feet and turned away.

“Since you insist on going against me, senior brother Lu, don’t blame me for not showing you mercy.” The man in cyan shook his head and turned to face another direction. “It’s your turn now. Let us see what the thing on Lu Yun is.”

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Within the ancient tomb, Lu Yun brooded pensively.

Lu Shenhou had come back to life. That spelled trouble whether he was Sword Divine or not. However, he didn’t have much time to spare at the moment to consider the ramifications. It was imperative for him to destroy the extinction layout here.

The feeling of being surveilled had dissipated, so Lu Yun put his full effort into setting up formations. He’d already established the twin layout, and what he did on one side would indeed affect the other, though he’d exaggerated its potency.

Through the layout, Lu Yun observed the environment on the other side. Ge Long had gone back to set up formations with the Yin Formation Orb, driving away the darkness.

Crack crack crack!

The hanging coffin etched with ancient ritualistic patterns suddenly rumbled and the lid seemed to shift. Lu Yun stopped what he was doing and stared at it. Mo Yi and the human demon stepped up in a flanking maneuver to guard him.

“Don’t worry. It’s all fake. These are just projections of what’s on the other side.” Lu Yun waved a dismissive hand. The crimson coffin began shaking and the ancient runes glowed, constricting it like a giant nest.

The trembling grew ever fiercer.

“Wait!” Lu Yun frowned deeply. “The runes weren’t etched to signify that the one buried here was an Exalted Divine... They were actually sealing the coffin!”

In hell, Qi Hai stood up and stared fixedly at the runes.

“The patterns belong to the divine emperors of the Exalted Divines, but...” Qi Hai had caught on as well.

“But this is a coffin for immortals,” Lu Yun continued. “Someone sealed the coffin with the runes of the Exalted Divines. They sealed the coffin to stop the dead from awakening and destroying the layout here.”

Realization finally dawned on him. If the tomb owner had wanted to destroy the human demon and the restriction against immortals, they wouldn’t have set up a roundabout extinction layout. The only explanation was that a third party had come and changed the tomb.

“It’s the Exalted Immortal Sect!” The answer came to Lu Yun, unbidden.

They were the first immortal dao sect he'd learned of after arriving at the world of immortals. If anyone was able to place such ancient runes in this tomb, it would be them, and Lu Yun had long suspected that the sect consisted of descendants of the Exalted Divines.

Suddenly, he whirled around and pulled Mo Yi to his side, taking a few steps backward.

"Who are you?!" Lu Yun snarled at the human demon. "Where's Senior Human Demon?"

The human demon levelled a calm gaze at him, the corners of his mouth quirking upwards. "You actually caught on. Didn't I tell you the first time we met? A very long time ago, people called me the Exalted Celestial Emperor."

The man transformed back into the celestial emperor before Lu Yun's eyes.

"The runes are your doing!" Lu Yun sneered. "Did you set up the extinction layout as well?"

"This is but a damaged ancient formation, the heritage of the human tribe from the ancestor planet. No other tribes are allowed knowledge of it. Even I, a descendant of the Exalted Divine Emperor, cannot touch that heritage." The celestial emperor admitted to his identity easily enough.

"Didn't Qing Buyi and Chen Xiao send you here?" Mo Yi asked with some puzzlement.

"Qing Buyi and Chen Xiao?" The Exalted Celestial Emperor smiled. "You, me, Qing Buyi, and Chen Xiao are kin from the same place. I just arrived earlier than you did, so your tricks won't work on me."

Lu Yun turned to Mo Yi and noted her inscrutable look. It was plain that the Exalted Celestial Emperor had allowed himself to be caught by Qing Buyi and Chen Xiao to become tribute for the restriction against immortals. That was the only way he could enter the ancient tomb and complete his setup.

Suddenly, she cracked a smile.

"If you're from the same place we are, then you should know the kind of bastards Chen Xiao and Qing Buyi are. Do you really think an idiot like you can hide anything from them?"

The celestial emperor's expression darkened. "Come what may, the two of you will meet your doom today! Let me see what your secret is, Lu Yun, why that dead human demon would awaken for you."

He made his move, attacking Lu Yun and Mo Yi with complete origin-dao-level strength.

"Kill us? You? I've already told you how thin the line between reality and illusion is." Lu Yun huffed out a laugh. "I don't need to reach the height of Return to Origin to reverse heaven and earth when a simple transportation formation will do."

Right before the divine's attack landed, the Formation Orb flared with light and blocked the tremendous force for a split second. Waving his hand, Lu Yun activated the Mirage layout, which swept over him and Mo Yi and took them away in a beam of white light.

Rumble!!

The divine's attack landed immediately after, shaking the entire tomb. Expression dark, the Exalted Celestial Emperor strode into the dark and made his way to the burial ground of the tomb's owner.

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"I could've killed him," Mo Yi said calmly.

Lu Yun grinned. "You said so yourself, there must be a reason for Qing Buyi and Chen Xiao to have sent him here. If you kill him, wouldn't that disrupt the plan of my dear brothers-in-law?"

The twin layouts had come together and transported Lu Yun and Mo Yi to the hanging coffin interring the tomb owner. He'd set up the layout not to have Ge Long change the feng shui in the area, but to transport them here.

He hadn't activated the formation earlier, because there'd been a vague notion niggling at him that something was amiss. It wasn't until the hanging coffin struggled against the ancient runes that he suspected the Exalted Immortal Sect to be responsible, which reminded him of the form the human demon had assumed: the Exalted Celestial Emperor.

### **Chapter 465: Something Alive**

"If the Sacred Origin Runes are the Exalted Celestial Emperor's doing, that means that he can visit this place too. We must act quickly!" Lu Yun immediately began setting up layouts when they arrived.

"I can restrain him even if he comes," Mo Yi dismissed, watching Lu Yun busy himself.

"If you do that, his companions will see you as a threat and go after you, too, from now on." After a few breaths of time, Lu Yun finished setting up another layout. Formless ripples spread across the area, but no visible changes could be observed.

Mo Yi paused. She'd refrained from intervening in conflicts thus far, and even allowed a measly empyrean immortal to threaten her in order to maintain the fragile order of the world of immortals. The only time she'd stepped into the spotlight was when she severed her cultivation and ascended to the void realm, a feat that'd been projected to the entire world by the Dao Flower.

She'd never contemplated the possibility that someone might go after her. She knew only the simple life of cultivation and had never thought about fighting for anything with anyone.

"Do you know why Sword Divine attacked me?" Lu Yun said seriously. "He told me to stay out of his business in the Sovereign World, but then he set Qing Han up... so I stopped him. That made me his enemy.

"Do you think people will ignore you simply because you never clash with them? There are now more than a handful of people in the world who want something from you."

Mo Yi fell silent.

"Here he is," Lu Yun transmitted. The lit radius of sixty meters had expanded to a hundred and fifty meters.

The Exalted Celestial Emperor emerged from the dark. To Mo Yi's surprise, there was an invisible figure behind the man, its four hands covering his eyes and ears with the man none the wiser. He made straight for a piece of rock and circled around it like he was possessed.

Mo Yi gave Lu Yun a questioning look.

“He’s too powerful, so I’m not sure how long I can keep him confused,” he transmitted in response. “Find the real Senior Human Demon. He was seriously injured in his fight with Scarlet Ape, so he must be sealed away somewhere.”

Mo Yi nodded. “Then you be careful.” She turned and left.

Lu Yun had set up the layout of Ghost Hits Wall with the power of the Formation Orb of Yin and Yang, and the immortal ghost on Exalted Celestial Emperor’s back was a feng shui spirit created by the layout.

It was a kind of reverse evolution.

There were two kinds of Ghost Hits Wall. One was the feng shui layout born when certain conditions were met in an environment, thus fooling a living being’s senses and consciousness; the other happened when one was possessed by a yin spirit to the same effect.

The feng shui layout Lu Yun had set up was the first kind of Ghost Hits Wall, but it’d reached the greatest heights possible and given birth to a spirit, turning into the second type of Ghost Hits Wall. The spirit was combined with the layout itself, but the Formation Orb’s power was still required in order to fool the celestial emperor.

Nevertheless, Lu Yun didn’t dare look at the man. For someone at his level, he’d instantly sense any attention directed at him and come to his senses, breaking out of the hold of Ghost Hits Wall.

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The crimson hanging coffin stopped trembling, and the runes on its surface dimmed. Ge Long stood by its side, keeping a watchful eye on the darkness behind. Dangerous spirits and creatures would emerge from that direction every once in a while.

Lu Yun splayed his fingers and activated the realms of yin and yang, attempting to collect the coffin into hell.

“It’s not working,” he panted heavily. The coffin was one with the tomb. If he wanted to collect the coffin, he’d have to collect the entire tomb.

His gaze could scan only a hundred and fifty meters in any direction. There were things he noticed, but no signs of the extinction layout. As for the darkness... Lu Yun was certain the crimson eyes would kill him as soon as he set foot into it.

“Can you break the ancient runes, senior?” Lu Yun had to turn to Qi Hai.

“I can’t.” Qi Hai shook his head. “The runes are the dao runes of the only emperor of the divine race, and that which the entire race is oriented toward. Only descendants of the divine emperor or those who are more powerful than him can break the runes.”

Lu Yun started. “Do you mean the divine emperor is still alive?”

“He’s dead. They’re all dead.” Qi Hai shrugged like Lu Yun often did. “A great fight claimed the emperor and the other emperors in all the worlds. This is the resting place of the human emperor, where the last

great emperor of the human race died. The same happened to the divine race—their emperor died in his resting place as well.

“There were only a handful of great emperors at the time, less than even the nine so-called celestial emperors.”

“They all died? Did something similar to the great war a hundred thousand years ago happen back then?” Lu Yun posed the questions instinctively.

He didn’t really know what kind of an existence the great emperors were; they were probably something like the present celestial emperors, or the immortal emperors in the Primordial Era. After all, a millionaire and a billionaire were no different in the eyes of a man who couldn’t keep himself fed.

“I don’t know, I didn’t exist back then,” Qi Hai answered with resignation. “And all things having to do with the great emperors have become taboo. If I hadn’t possessed some status in my clan, I wouldn’t know anything. No one knows what happened then.”

Lu Yun heaved out an exasperated sigh and looked around, searching for a solution.

“Wait, don’t move,” Qi Hai said suddenly. Lu Yun was confused, but did as he was told.

“Don’t turn around or sweep the area behind you with your consciousness,” Qi Hai sighed in relief when Lu Yun stopped moving and continued, “otherwise, you’ll die.”

“What’s behind me?” Lu Yun’s hair stood on end.

“Ge Long!” he called out, but the old servant didn’t respond. His heart sank.

Swoosh!

Hellfire burst from his body.

“Hellfire won’t work on it,” Qi Hai said apprehensively. “It’s alive.”

“What is it?” Nervousness began to catch up to him.

Without a word, Qi Hai emerged from hell and stood before Lu Yun, assuming the body of an Infernum to manifest himself. He looked at whatever was behind Lu Yun, and Lu Yun stared at the reflection in his eyes.

#### **Chapter 466: The Rotten Flesh of All Living Things**

In Qi Hai’s eyes, Lu Yun saw both himself and the thing behind him. He couldn’t quite exactly describe what the thing was; it looked like a pile of bloody, rotten flesh, firmly stuck to his back, but he couldn’t feel it at all.

“It’s alive?” He forced himself to calm down.

“Yes, it is,” nodded Qi Hai.

“And you know what it is?” Lu Yun asked instinctively. Qi Hai’s sombreness worried him.

"I told you when you were refining the hearts' blood of ten thousand spirits that the blood brings misfortune, so be cautious," Qi Hai sighed.

The shamans still possessed the Blood Formation of Ten Thousand Spirits, but the method to refine hearts' blood had been lost to time. Xingzi's memories contained only the formation; it'd been the long-lived Qi Hai who'd taught Lu Yun the method.

He'd warned the young man back then that using it would attract misfortune, but Lu Yun had naturally ignored it at the time, not realizing that the so-called 'misfortune' would come for him now.

"It lives, but there is no blood in it. It thirsts for your own heart's blood," Qi Hai continued. "You cannot look at it directly or try perceiving it using any of your senses. Otherwise, it will steal your blood in an instant."

When Lu Yun had harvested the ten thousand spirits' hearts' blood, he'd taken only a tiny bit from each, then healed them afterward with pills. The thing on his back, on the other hand, would take all of the blood in his heart at once.

The heart was the most important organ in the human body, and the blood flowing through the aorta was the source of life for both body and soul. If it were drained, the body would instantly die, and the soul would be considerably injured as well.

Lu Yun took a deep breath. "It... really doesn't seem like it's alive."

"Yet it does live." Qi Hai pressed his lips together. "Its soul is filled with turmoil and spurred by resentment, but it's definitely alive."

"How can I get rid of it?" This was the question Lu Yun most wanted to know the answer to. Master of hell, lord over Life and Death, hijacked by some bizarre creature after his blood? The prospect upset him greatly.

"I don't know," Qi Hai shook his head. "Only two people have ever lived after refining the hearts' blood of ten thousand spirits. I thought this thing was long gone... I had no idea it was still alive! I wouldn't have taught you how to refine the blood in the first place if I'd known it was alive."

The shamans' Blood Formation was set up with blood left over from the era of human dao. No shaman actually knew how to refine the blood themselves; even if someone were to harvest the hearts' blood of countless creatures today, they wouldn't be able to mix all of the blood together.

The ancient strode forward and grabbed at the thing behind Lu Yun, but the young man handily sidestepped him. Despite the grave obstacle on his back, he could still move.

"You want to take that thing onto yourself?" Lu Yun frowned.

"It's the only way," said Qi Hai. "I will bring it into hell, where you are the master. Perhaps you can destroy it there."

"Absolutely not!" Lu Yun shot him down. "I'm worried it'll make more trouble there."

Although he could momentarily get rid of the thing plastered to his back if he returned to hell, he would return to the same moment in time and space once he exited.

In other words, he would be back where he started. Plus, the rotten flesh was a terrifying living creature that was far stronger than him. He didn't actually have the ability to bring it into hell himself, which was why Qi Hai had wanted to transfer the rotten flesh. He could do what Lu Yun couldn't.

"Hell is still broken, I don't want anything that can't be controlled to get in there," Lu Yun said slowly. "It must be destroyed here."

He took out Violetgrave. Qi Hai was stunned for a second, then narrowed his eyes with wariness. In the ancient's opinion, the sword was much more fearsome than the rotten flesh.

But this time, Violetgrave failed to stir to wakefulness. Lu Yun also had no intention of using the celestial emperor corpse puppet.

According to Qi Hai, even an expert in the era of human dao had fallen prey to this heap of pulsating flesh. Since Qi Hai had once borrowed the power of the Blood Formation of Ten Thousand Spirits to manifest himself, he was tainted by a bit of the blood the creature was after and could attract it to himself.

However, the account was more than revealing of the overwhelming likelihood that Lu Yun would be too weak to fight it even in hell. The netherworld was rather dilapidated right now. Even inside hell, Lu Yun could only reach peak origin dao immortal—about as strong as a celestial emperor.

Because Lu Yun cultivated a broken immortal dao, hell couldn't circumvent it to grant him extraneous power. Unless the path of cultivation was mended, he couldn't become stronger than that, even in hell.

"No reaction? Does this thing taste bad or something?" Lu Yun found the impassive Violetgrave rather surprising.

Qi Hai remained stoically speechless.

"Ptooy! What do you take me for?!" Violetgrave's voice sounded lazily inside Lu Yun's mind; she was as lethargic as ever. "How can you make me eat something so disgusting?!"

"You know what this is?" Lu Yun blinked.

"The rotten flesh of many lives," Violetgrave answered casually. "Once upon a time, someone truly dumb harvested the hearts' blood of every life in eighteen thousand worlds. The creatures who had their blood drained fused together into... this."

"Dead?" Lu Yun gasped.

"Alive." Within the sword, Violetgrave shook her head. "That idiot put all those worlds' living creatures into just one world, then took their blood all at once while they were still alive.

"All the resentment piled up and they turned into this monster before they managed to die. And then, well, the idiot who did all that got eaten. ...do you need me to deal with it for you?" Violetgrave suddenly smiled.

"You can deal with it?" Heightened vigilance quickly followed on the heels of momentary relief. Lu Yun still didn't quite trust the sword. "At what cost to me?"

In the past, Violetgrave helped him refine that dread zombie into a celestial emperor corpse puppet—but not for free. Lu Yun had to offer himself as a sacrifice for the sword. Thankfully, the Sword of Dao's appearance had saved him from making good on the payment.

This time, Violetgrave would no doubt ask the same!

"Cost?" The spirit grinned shrewdly. "We're old friends now, aren't we? Free."

Through his mind's eye, Lu Yun could clearly see her smile inside the sword.

"Forget it, I'll figure it out myself." The young man didn't buy it.

"You better think about it some more. That rotten flesh managed to eat the emperor of its time!" Violetgrave sounded quite serious, but the humor in her eyes was too bright to ignore.

### **Chapter 467: To Copy**

"It, me... it's all the same if you're going to be eaten anyway. Why not let me have you instead? Do you hate me so much?" Violetgrave feigned heartbreak, but her voice was filled with enchantment.

Lu Yun turned a deaf ear and put the sword away. "I can't look at it or try to sense it... well, I'll just ignore it for now. Let's get rid of the extinction layout here first." Really, there wasn't much else he could do.

Qi Hai gawked at the young man's apparent callousness for his dire situation. Anyone else would be weeping in fear right now and begging the world for a solution.

"Think about it, it's been quite a while since I refined the hearts' blood and it hasn't come for me all this time... but as soon as I enter this tomb and reach where the tomb's owner is buried, it just pounces on me?" Lu Yun explained as he looked over the scarlet hanging coffin.

The rotten flesh was almost thirty meters tall, a mass of writhing yellowish-grey that looked incomparably sticky on Lu Yun's back. A tilt of his head was all he needed to catch a glance of it in his peripheral vision.

"Plus, why would it only attack me after I see or sense it?" he couldn't help but add.

Qi Hai shook his head. He couldn't answer that, either.

"Perhaps someone refined it into this tomb. If I break the part of the tomb that this thing is connected to, I may very well be able to get rid of it. Of course, it's possible that I'll set it loose on the outside world too.

"Anyways, are the Sacred Origin Runes really that complicated?" A wave of Lu Yun's hand caused the floating Yin and Yang Formation Orbs to fuse back into a congruous whole. "A divine emperor's dao runes? I'm sure they're high level, but they're just another kind of formation or talisman rune in the end. They're a pattern meant to summon a greater power from heaven and earth."

Taking out an immortal crystal, the young man began drawing in the empty space in front of him.

"What are you doing? Stop that immediately!" Qi Hai was scared out of his wits.



He wanted to break up what Lu Yun was doing, but his current host was merely an ordinary Infernum. Although he was stronger than Lu Yun, he was beholden to the youth's control. The Sacred Origin Runes were an emperor's masterwork, inextricably tied to the dao! Such a thing was forbidden to ordinary beings!

"I'm copying the runes, of course," Lu Yun responded matter-of-factly. "If I want to crack the code, I need to first understand it."

Boom!

The space he drew on exploded with dark golden light. The runes he replicated shattered, and the corresponding runes upon the hanging coffin flickered for a brief moment.

"Aha!" Lu Yun's eyes lit up. His fingers began dancing through the air. The immortal crystal disintegrated at top speed, fusing itself into the path he traced.

"W-what are you doing?!" Qi Hai stared open-mouthed at the young man. Cracking the code of the divine emperor's Sacred Origin Runes? No one had dared voice such a thing even in the era of human dao, to say nothing of actually putting their words into action.

"Do you remember what I said before? What happens to one will affect the other! The twin layouts here will make sure of that. When I copy the Sacred Origin Runes and make a mirrored layout here, I'll be able to affect the real thing through that!" Lu Yun brimmed with confidence.

"Ah... didn't you say you can't actually do that?" Qi Hai couldn't tell which part of Lu Yun's words were real or fake any more.

"I was lying to Lu Shenhou. He had the Sword of Chaos so he wasn't going to be caught that easily. How could I reveal my trump card in front of him?"

The young man began working anew as he spoke. He was more careful this time, however; the runes he mimicked now were a hundred times weaker than the last copy. Thankfully, it was because of this comparative weakness that the copied runes weren't destroyed by the originals on the coffin.

"You really managed to copy the divine emperor's Sacred Origin Runes!" Incredulity was the only thing on Qi Hai's mind.

"That idiot over there can't even break through my double Ghost Hits Wall. What kinda 'divine emperor' is he?" Lu Yun pointed at the Exalted Celestial Emperor still bumbling about the layout in the darkness. "Although these Sacred Origin Runes were invented by a divine emperor, completing them requires his descendants' own understanding.

"If the runes here were set up by the Exalted Divine Emperor himself... even at this distance, we'd be dead! Thankfully we got that fool over there instead, but too bad the runes are imbued with a bloodline requirement. Anyone who isn't one of the emperor's descendants can't make use of their full power."

Lu Yun was a bit disappointed. By now, he'd copied down the entirety of the runes on the coffin. Instead of stopping there, he began to retrace his current foundation. Each iteration of imitation thickened the duplicate of the Sacred Origin Runes.

Qi Hai fell silent and kept a watchful eye on the pile of flesh on Lu Yun's back. If it made a single wrong twitch, he wouldn't hesitate to transplant it onto himself through whatever means he could.

"If that Exalted Celestial Emperor is a descendant of a divine emperor... his body must be that of an Exalted Divine," Lu Yun murmured to himself. "Is there any relation between him and the two that buried Su Xiaoxiao?"

After who knew how long, he finally came to a conclusive stop. A tiny scarlet coffin hung in the air in front of him, wrapped in a layer of dark gold runes. The entire exhibit was an exact duplicate of the real thing, a mirror in miniature.

One real, one fake.

Suddenly, Lu Yun shrugged as he felt an increasing weight on his back; the scent of decay entered his nostrils.

"Don't turn back!" Qi Hai hastily reminded him, seeing his head begin to turn.

The young man recovered himself immediately. He closed his eyes and gave his head a vigorous shake. The pressure on his back and the rotten smell went away.

"I must've touched something it finds dangerous! That's why it actively attacked me." His attention back on the coffin, Lu Yun was invigorated by the prospect. "There must be something in the real coffin that can counter the rotten flesh!"

He produced another immortal crystal, with which he began to draw over the Sacred Origin Runes on the mirrored coffin.

The twin layout was already taking effect. Every line he drew on the mirror image affected the main, and tiny lines began snaking over the Sacred Origin Runes.

#### **Chapter 468: This Old Servant Ate It**

The lines were so faint that as to be nearly invisible, but they were indeed present on the Sacred Origin Runes of the hanging coffin, compromising the solid integrity of the runes.

That was enough for Lu Yun.

"The patterns the runes form are most likely an unknown formation, one that isn't even recorded in the Formation Orb... Well, maybe it is, but neither Feinie nor I can access it due to our lacking cultivation."

Lu Yun stopped damaging the reflection of the Sacred Origin Runes and carefully peeled them off the reflected coffin. The real runes shifted slightly before settling down.

"If Lu Shenhou had attacked with a thousand slashes in a split second, he would've killed me through killing my reflection." Lu Yun touched the center of his forehead, where there was an imperceptible wound left by Lu Shenhou's attack. Shockingly, Lu Yun had failed to heal the strange wound after many attempts.

Such was the unique power of the Sword of Chaos.

“My level of cultivation right now is too low, too damn low... if I reach the heights of the emperor in the era of human dao, the twin layout and its reflective properties will allow me to replace reality with illusions and kill people without even touching them!” Lu Yun smacked his lips together, his thoughts straying from the incomplete Mirage layout.

Ever since visiting the tombs of yin and yang on Levitating Island, he’d practiced these kinds of twin layouts by projecting feng shui layouts from one place to another with the same technique.

The pair he’d set up here was a prototype. To perfect it, he would have to improve his mastery over formations and feng shui. It wasn’t only a feng shui layout, but also a formation, a perfect amalgamation of the two sides of the same coin.

That was a height Lu Yun had yet to reach, but the layout was good enough to deal with imperfect Sacred Origin Runes.

Despite the runes that’d been set up by the Exalted Celestial Emperor being inferior to those of the true divine emperor, they were still formations Lu Yun didn’t know, thus they would greatly enrich his knowledge in the field.

He’d been unable to see the complete picture and all of the secrets behind the runes, but the small opening left the runes imperfect, allowing Lu Yun glimpses into the runes’ secrets.

His eyes turned pitch black as two balls of faint flames burst out. As he entered a trance, his hands fluttered and twisted like butterflies, breaking apart the reflection of the runes.

Splash!

After an imperceptible amount of time, the reflection abruptly fell apart. The real runes on the hanging coffin trembled in response. Seemingly oblivious to the changes, Lu Yun closed his eyes and took out an immortal crystal to replicate the runes again.

Once, twice, thrice!

Lu Yun created a reflection of the runes again and again, each time compromising the perfect reflections and disassembling them. Every time he broke apart the reflection, the real runes on the hanging coffin shook until the coffin itself began to tremble.

After copying the runes over for the eighteenth time, he broke the reflection apart immediately rather than damaging it first. However, it took him ten times longer to do so this time. He breathed out heavily, taking a pill out of his storage ring and making to plop it into his mouth.

“Don’t!” Qi Hai stopped him hurriedly. “You can’t eat, drink, or replenish energy for the moment, or the thing on your back will eat you.”

“What?” Lu Yun gave him a flabbergasted look.

“An old friend of mine once ignored it like you are doing now, planning to take it slow and steady to find a way to deal with the thing. Then...” Qi Hai paused. “The thing devoured him when he was eating.”

Sullenly, Lu Yun put the pill back and caught his breath. Again, he picked up the immortal crystal and copied the runes over. This time, the runes he created were far stronger, and the entire process took him much less time.

Qi Hai had become numb to the proceedings. He stared blankly ahead as Lu Yun recreated and disassembled the runes again and again, the original runes on the scarlet coffin growing increasingly dimmer.

The tomb owner in the coffin had struggled to break the seal over the coffin at the start of things, but now it'd quieted down so as to not disturb Lu Yun.

"He really has deciphered the Sacred Origin Runes of the divine emperor." Qi Hai had lost the ability to be surprised by the time the real runes disappeared.

That Exalted Divine fool is nothing. This kid is the heir to hell! Its past overlord could kill a hundred Exalted Divine emperors with a single punch. Qi Hai had now become fully accustomed to Lu Yun's other identity.

"Although the Exalted Celestial Emperor isn't particularly skilled, the Sacred Origin Runes he etched are something else. While that Formation of Heavenly Spirits and Earthly Demons of mine can be incorporated into the body and help cultivators and immortals draw out the power of the world, it's flawed and may sometimes fail to take shape.

"If I can integrate these runes into the formation, it will become much greater and reach the heights of true perfection." Lu Yun's eyes shone with glee. He walked up to the hanging coffin and lightly knocked on its lid. "This junior has removed the runes, senior. Please feel free to come out."

Whoever it was had died, but to both tomb raiders and tomb owners, a tomb was a world that belonged to the dead, which effectively made the tomb owner alive on their premises.

Qi Hai stared fixedly at the hanging coffin. He, too, wanted to know who would dare set up their own tomb at the center of the resting place for the human emperor.

"You must not open the coffin," boomed a low voice out of thin air. A pair of enormous eyes manifested in the air and looked down coldly on Lu Yun and Qi Hai.

"Human Demon." Qi Hai lifted his head to meet the eyes.

This was the real human demon.

As a heavyweight from the age of human dao, it was no surprise that he knew what the human demon was—the guardian of the resting place of the human emperor.

This had become a sacred land of some sorts for humans due to the blood of the human emperor shed here, and the human demon was its guardian. Qi Hai hadn't recalled this memory until now, due to all the various recollections he'd accumulated when his soul reincarnated.

The resting place had been compromised and the human demon slain, transforming into a zombie residing in the tomb to protect the site in another way. The blood of the human emperor had made the resting place the foundation of the human race and the hope for humans to rise again.

The human demon shifted his gaze to Qi Hai.

“Leave now,” he suddenly said. “Or you will be trapped here forever.”

Qi Hai started.

“The extinction layout has been activated,” Lu Yun spoke up before Qi Hai could. “In no time at all, the ancient tomb will fall apart and the power against cultivators in the dark will spread through Dusk Province!”

“The extinction layout exists to destroy that thing,” the human demon responded remotely. It was obvious that he knew feng shui and understood the purpose of the extinction layout. “Go now. Leave the coffin. Else, everything Chen Xiao and Qing Buyi set up will all be for nothing.”

Once the coffin was opened and the tomb owner emerged, the extinction layout would be destroyed. However, Chen Xiao and Qing Buyi had set up the layout here to destroy the true form of the power that could kill cultivators.

That thing couldn't be destroyed, to Qi Hai's knowledge, but Chen Xiao and Qing Buyi had somehow merged it with the ancient tomb. They'd also sent the Exalted Celestial Emperor here to etch the Sacred Origin Runes to entrap the tomb's owner.

Although Lu Yun had removed the runes on the surface, there existed another layer of runes within the coffin that kept the tomb owner under control.

“You'll die, too,” said Lu Yun.

“I died a long time ago.” The human demon's eyes flickered in and out of existence. Something was constraining him, preventing him from manifesting for long. “Take Mo Yi and leave.” The eyes disappeared.

“I will stay here,” Qi Hai declared solemnly. “The extinction layout will end up killing the human demon as well. This place needs a new guardian!”

What had been guarding the land wasn't the human demon or the ancient tomb, but the restriction against immortals. Even after the tomb and the human demon were destroyed, the restriction and its power against golden immortals and above would remain. The human demon was merely the power's carrier.

Once activated, the restriction exerted its power through the human demon. After his destruction, it would need another carrier.

Qi Hai had reincarnated thousands of times. Heaven had failed to destroy him, and the earth had failed to keep him buried. A mere extinction layout wouldn't be enough to destroy him, either. Moreover, the human demon had just warned that Qi Hai would be trapped here forever, rather than be killed by the extinction layout.

“Milord... Hic! This old servant is back, milord!” Ge Long's voice rang from the deepest darkness. It sounded like he'd stuffed himself full. “That big trouble... hic! is now in my stomach! This old servant... is going to sleep.”

## Chapter 469: A Pair of Eyeballs

“What... what did you eat?” Lu Yun asked, flabbergasted. Qi Hai gaped at Ge Long as the old servant emerged out of the darkness.

“Hic!” Ge Long belched and wiped away the smears of blood at the corner of his mouth. “The terrible thing that kills cultivators... hic! It’s thanks to milord that this old servant could eat it!” Drowsily, he continued, “Milord, this servant, this servant is going to sleep.”

“Wait!” Lu Yun hurriedly stopped him from drifting off. “Can you eat the thing on my back?”

“Hmm... Such a great yum-yum.” Ge Long looked over Lu Yun’s shoulders with heavy eyelids and wiped away drool from the corner of his mouth, then shook his head. “They’re poor things looking for what they’ve lost... This old servant can’t possibly eat them.”

Ge Long shook his head and murmured, “The matriarch... Milady can resolve their grudges...” He went still and toppled to the ground, his snores thunderous.

“Where does your steward come from?” Qi Hai stared dumbly at Lu Yun, at a complete loss of what to say. Ge Long had just... eaten the thing that the human demon had grimly decided to destroy, even at the cost of his life?

Qi Hai was from the era of human dao and thus knew how terrible the guardian of the resting place of the human emperor was.

Although the human demon was no longer at his peak, he was still someone Qi Hai couldn’t rival. Qi Hai had been one of the senior council of the human race, while the human demon was the guardian of the human sacred land.

Lu Yun sent Ge Long back to hell with a wave of his hand and probed his surroundings. The power that could easily snuff him out had indeed disappeared.

“I’d like to know what he is, too.” Lu Yun shook his head. “He’s the first person I killed.”

Although it’d been Wanfeng who’d cut off Ge Long’s head, he’d died at Lu Yun’s hands before that.

There was no point in hiding such things from Qi Hai. He knew Lu Yun was the overlord of hell, and he knew about the strange abilities at the young man’s disposal. In some ways, he knew hell better than Lu Yun did.

“Since that thing has been dealt with,” Lu Yun continued before Qi Hai could say anything, “I’ll let the tomb owner out to destroy the extinction layout!”

He could see the layout, but couldn’t locate where it was. Although the threat in the darkness was gone, some power was still hindering his senses. More importantly, he was exhausted. The rotten flesh of many lives had prevented him from replenishing his energy, and he didn’t even have enough for the Dragonsearch Invocation any more.

“Open the coffin!” Lu Yun opened the way to hell and summoned a few Infernum to open the lid of the scarlet hanging coffin, but didn’t relax his guard.

Netherwood coffins, bronze outer-coffins, and hanging coffins interred only the most dangerous things in the world. Qi Hai couldn't fight now, and Lu Yun had almost no energy left. His only option was to summon helpers from hell. Fortunately, the restriction against immortals didn't reach where the tomb owner was buried.

Rumble!

The hanging coffin trembled as its lid was pushed open.

Hum!

Beams of dark golden light shot into the sky, forming a criss-crossing web of Sacred Origin Runes. Remnants of the outer layer of runes etched on the surface were reflected as another layer within the coffin. This inner layer had formed after the outer had slowly seeped into the coffin over the course of a thousand years, forming a second seal, but it was much weaker than the one Lu Yun had just taken down.

After some rest, Lu Yun began disassembling them as well. It took him about an hour to destroy the last layer of runes, bringing the scarlet hanging coffin to a soft landing on the ground.

Breath hitched, Lu Yun and Qi Hai quietly stared at the coffin.

"It..." They both widened their eyes in shock, gaping at the thing crawling out of the coffin. It wasn't a zombie or an immortal ghost, like Lu Yun had expected, but a... pair of eyes.

A pair of regular-sized, very pretty eyes. The gaze in them was bright and focused as they gave Lu Yun and Qi Hai a onceover.

"The tomb owner is a pair of eyes?" Lu Yun breathed in shock, but then was reminded of something. "No wonder Senior Human Demon always manifests as a pair of eyes first. He borrowed the power of the tomb owner."

"You should not have let me out," the eyes transmitted.

"That thing has been eaten," Lu Yun answered the unspoken question.

"It will come back to life. Many have tried to destroy it over the years, but they have always failed. The extinction layout passed down from the human ancestor planet is the only hope to destroy it.

"But... I don't want to be destroyed completely either, so I had to take action to bring down the layout."

"You know feng shui as well?" Lu Yun asked despite himself.

"I don't, but I know how to dismantle the extinction layout..." The consciousness of the eyes was conflicted and resigned.

"Be careful," Qi Hai suddenly said in Lu Yun's head. "The eyes are dangerous and in no way a kind soul. They weren't buried here, but sealed here. ...wait! This thing isn't the tomb owner!" he suddenly concluded with great urgency, suddenly recalling a terrible legend.

Lu Yun was completely unfazed by the sudden twist. He was the greatest commandant of tomb raiders in history, so of course he'd noticed that something was amiss. The eyes were alive and sentient!

Moreover, although they looked bright and clear, the crimson light hidden deep within couldn't be concealed.

"I need to borrow your body to take down the extinction layout," continued the eyes.

"Borrow my body?" Lu Yun paused. "Don't you see the thing behind my back?"

"I can deal with them for you," the eyes cast a glance over Lu Yun's shoulders and transmitted. The use of 'them' suggested that the eyes knew what the rotten flesh of many lives was.

"Go on, then." Lu Yun opened his arms and closed his eyes.

"I'll have to scoop your eyes out first." The eyes turned crimson, as did the patch of light and the darkness behind them.

The layout of Ghost Hits Wall shattered and the feng shui spirit behind Exalted Celestial Emperor's back disintegrated with a mournful wail. The celestial emperor jerked out of his trance.

#### **Chapter 470: Scripture of Salvation**

The eyes grew increasingly larger, their crimson gaze casting the tomb in bloody luminescence. The twin layouts, Mirage, and Ghost Hits Wall set up by Lu Yun all shattered at the same time.

The manner in which the layouts were broken was blunt and direct. Lu Yun was certain that the eyes—or whoever the eyes belonged to—had mastered the art of feng shui. Even with only raw power, the eyes knew very well which parts they should attack in order to dismantle the layouts.

The entire tomb had been dyed scarlet and the darkness expelled. Lu Yun could see everything in the tomb, as well as the true form of the extinction layout—an eerily shaped wilted branch set against the crimson sky.

Having broken out of Ghost Hits Wall, the Exalted Celestial Emperor stared at the giant eyes with first a grave look, then a sneer.

"You really let him out! I may not know how you managed to break the emperor's runes, but you're all dead. You'll all die here!"

The celestial emperor laughed heartily. The extinction layout was close to being shattered and there was nothing he could do now. His only consolation was that Lu Yun was doomed as well. The pair of crimson eyes were far from harmless; its grudges could rival the flesh attached to Lu Yun's back. Moreover, they were sentient.

Sword Divine saw Lu Yun as a thorn in his side because of the human's interference. Although the divine's plan had been disrupted, at least Lu Yun wouldn't be getting out of here alive, either.

.....

"A divine?" The eyes shifted their gaze to the Exalted Celestial Emperor. "Ah, an Exalted Divine. No wonder there were runes of the Exalted Divine Emperor keeping me suppressed."

All of the hair on the Exalted Celestial Emperor's body stood on end as he abruptly felt like a lamb targeted by the wolves. He slumped listlessly, all energy drained out of his body.



“With an Exalted Divine here, I don’t have to break the damn extinction layout to get away!” Crimson light burst out of the eyeballs, prompting a ghastly scream from the Exalted Celestial Emperor as his eyes exploded out of his head. The floating crimson eyes took their place and settled down in the gory eye sockets as the man screamed and convulsed.

“Legends paint the Exalted Divines as the embodiment of dao itself. With the head of a human and the body of a snake, the traces they leave behind during their movements form the character for dao. In the era of human dao, the human race ruled over the different worlds as the sole authority, but there was one tribe that remained independent—the Exalted Divines.

“They were the ones to crush immortal dao and end the rule of the human race, establishing their divine dao and the divine court.” Qi Hai smirked at the writhing celestial emperor. “It is his destiny to be possessed by the eyes. All those who dare call themselves emperors are sure to meet with misfortune, and he is no exception, despite having evaded his tribulation before.”

Lu Yun nodded without a word.

When the celestial emperor’s screams gurgled down, they were replaced by a long peal of hearty laughter.

“I can finally escape this damned place!” The ‘Exalted Celestial Emperor’ looked up at Lu Yun and Qi Hai, his eyes as red as two sparkling rubies. “This seat will permit you to live as I have just regained freedom today. You can take care of the extinction layout yourself, hahaha!”

He suddenly transformed into the true form of an Exalted divine—human head, body of a snake, and a third eye settled between the brows. With a twist of his tail, he vanished into thin air, leaving the ‘dao’ character in his wake.

“Who do the eyes belong to?” Qi Hai frowned deeply at where the ‘celestial emperor’ had been. “He knows the Exalted Divines better than they do themselves. What he displayed just now is an innate talent of the Exalted Divines, but that was sealed away by various human lords acting in concert after the Exalted Divine Emperor died...”

“There’ve been eyes as far as the eye can see lately.” Lu Yun didn’t have Qi Hai’s wealth of knowledge, which prevented him from seeing more than what met, well, the eye. “First there was Wayfarer, then another pair of eyes from this ancient tomb. What’s with Dusk Province and all the strange eyes?”

“What?” Qi Hai turned to Lu Yun. He shrugged with outstretched hands.

Yuying had temporarily set aside the problems at hand and contacted Qing Han, who in turn had been preoccupied with the troubles of the Chen Clan lately.

The Chens were her family. When the Qings considered her a bad omen and ostracized her as an outsider, the Chen Clan had taken her under their wing, caring for her like she was theirs.

She wouldn’t give up on them.

When she heard that Lu Yun was in trouble, however, she immediately set out for the ancient tomb. It’d been the Envoys of Samsara who stopped her from springing into hasty action. In the end, she’d found a scripture left in the three seals from the creators of immortal dao and sent it to Lu Yun through Yuying.

“The ‘Scripture of Salvation’?” Lu Yun paused after receiving the scroll.

The scripture existed on Earth as well, but the two versions were very different. The one on Earth seemed to be an abridged version, and many key parts had been excised.

Lu Yun didn’t have the time to spare for such musings; time was of the essence. He had to make quick work of the rotten flesh on his back, or he wouldn’t be able to put forth his full effort into dealing with the extinction layout later.

He closed his eyes, sat down cross-legged, and read out the Scripture of Salvation. Rays of pristine white light radiated from his body, casting the area in a solemn glow. Qi Hai schooled his expression into an impassive mask and sat down cross-legged to recite the scripture along with Lu Yun.

Upon being bathed by the light, the rotten flesh on Lu Yun’s back squirmed and slowly disintegrated. With their disappearance came a sliver of enlightenment for the young man.

“This scripture was created by the founders of immortal dao to release this pile of flesh from their torment. However, the process was cut short for some reason, and this flesh on my back is left over from the interrupted ritual.”

The flesh broke apart into dots that glowed like fireflies, dancing around Lu Yun and Qi Hai in swirls of radiance. Lu Yun could hear their pleading voices echoing at his ears, murmuring their past and experiences.

With a faint sigh, he waved a hand and opened the Gates of the Abyss. A path of Hell Flowers slowly extended from the gates to guide the glowing particles into the netherworld. Their souls were scattered and their spirits damaged, ruling out reincarnation as an option. They could only be nurtured in the Hell Flowers, gradually recovering their spirits and regathering their souls as they bided their time waiting to be reborn.

A rain of light drizzled down on the netherworld and Hell Flowers bloomed along the depleted River of Forgetfulness.

“So... the living beings in the era of human dao all had souls.” Lu Yun opened his eyes with a mutter. “Does that make the living beings of today incomplete?”

“My... memories regarding this topic have been erased.” Prompted by Lu Yun’s question, a pained expression floated onto Qi Hai’s face as he struggled to recall something.