

## Necropolis 661

### Chapter 661: Confounding Truth and Falsehood

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Without any hesitation, he employed the Wandering Step and set forth to where Qing Yu and the others could be found. She'd joined the Exalted celestial emperor and was besieging a hole shrouded by the same black mist they'd seen in the cavern under Mount Exalted. There was another demon fetus in there!

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"This place gives off a strange feeling." Sword in hand, Zhao Wushuang stared fixedly at the giant hole in front of him, a grave expression on the disguised girl's face.

Inside the hole, a black flame fanned all the way to the horizon like a smoke signal. Faintly discernible ghost faces hovered above the wispy flame, an appropriate omen of a demon god's arrival.

However, Zhao Wushuang didn't perceive any signs of warning from the heart of the Sword of Chaos in his hand, as if this place were an ordinary place like any other. Meanwhile, many immortals from Exalted and Nephrite Major frantically attacked the smoke. As long as they could dispel it, they would be able to enter the cave and slay the fetus inside.

Neither House Donglin nor the fur seals were present. The fur seals had gone with Ge Yanxia to sacrifice themselves to the true demon fetus, while the noble house had scattered elsewhere in the divine tomb in search of treasures.

The demon god fetus? They cared not a whit for it.

"Where has Lu Yun gone?!" the Exalted celestial emperor demanded of Qing Yu. Had Lu Yun and his crystal cannon been with them, perhaps the smoke would already be history by now.

Qing Yu hugged the little fox in her arms and gently stroked the soft fur, staying away from the melee. She was aware that everything here was fake. Rather than helping the assembled immortals, Lin Yu and Lin Xuan were deploying formations in an attempt to alter the environment.

There was no demon fetus to be found inside the cave; instead, what awaited was a terrible zombie. Once the smoke was destroyed, the zombie would have free rein to come into this world.

When she heard the celestial emperor's question, Qing Yu raised her head.

"You people should prepare yourselves. What you'll find inside isn't a demon fetus, but a zombie," she warned calmly. "When it comes out, the plans you've made against a demon fetus will prove ineffective."

"What?" The celestial emperor froze.

Boom!

A sudden explosion broke through the air as Ge Yanxia's enormous frame made a heavy landing that shook the entire tomb.

"Die!" As if gone mad, Ge Yanxia threw a punch at Qing Yu the moment she landed. Having reverted back to human appearance, she was naked from head to toe. Her punch shattered space and reached Qing Yu faster than one could blink.

Zing!

A black light flashed in front of Qing Yu, accompanied by a Black Tortoise's roars at the sky, its simple and thick shell blocking the force of the punch.

Snap!

Shattering sounds came in quick succession as formations fractured one after another. They formed the Black Tortoise Formation that Lin Yu and Lin Xuan had laid down together. Though still incomplete, it'd nevertheless stopped Ge Yanxia's attack.

"Die!" The fur seal struck again, aiming straight at Qing Yu's head this time. Cruel excitement glinted in her bovine eyes; she'd destroyed the Black Tortoise Formation with the first punch, and her second blow was thirty percent stronger.

"What are you doing!!" Color draining from his face, the Exalted celestial emperor rushed in front of Qing Yu, the Exalted Chart glittering above him as he countered Ge Yanxia's punch with one of his own.

Boom!

The space between them shattered into a black hole thirty centimeters in diameter. Ge Yanxia slid back, a hesitant expression in her bovine eyes.

"Celestial Emperor!" Ge Yanxia's voice rang out thinly, but it somehow evoked the sound of a gong as well. "Lu Yun partnered up with the demon fetus a long time ago. He's gone to the real location to release it."

Falsehoods flowed freely out of the fur seal's mouth the moment her sausage lips pried open. "Risking life and limb, this seat had to sacrifice all of my children to stop his evil plot. And now, this little lover of his is planning to bury all of you here! If I hadn't arrived in time and destroyed that formation... before long, all of you would've become food for the monster under the black smoke."

The crowd blinked in confusion, then turned to Qing Yu in astonishment. With light sources illuminating the area, the premises were no longer as dark as they previously were.

She'd remained unmoving through the commotion, her expression calm and at ease. Not a single soul could associate her devastatingly beautiful mien with anything remotely untoward.

In contrast, Ge Yanxia looked like a vicious ghost that'd crawled out of a grave, a manifestation of pure evil. Moreover, black fumes steamed from the fur seal's completely naked body. Such a scene instinctively revulsed anyone who laid eyes on it.

“The clothes don’t make the man! This wench might look very pretty, but none of you realize that she possesses the heart of a, of a scorpion!” Ge Yanxia felt rather smug that she’d come up with several human idioms. “If you don’t want to offend Dusk Province, I’ll do the deed and execute her right here!”

Though weakened, she still had a cultivation at the origin dao realm. The only things she feared were the Exalted celestial emperor and the Exalted Chart above him.

The celestial emperor hesitated as well. Deep down, he very much wished that Ge Yanxia would kill Qing Yu. If that happened, there would be a perfectly legitimate reason for the Scroll of Shepherding Immortals to fall into his hands. With that treasure in hand, he could awaken the bloodline of the Exalted Divines and welcome the tribe back to the world.

However, now wasn’t the time to arbitrarily decide where the truth lay. If the fetus were to descend upon the world, all of Exalted Major would be transformed into demonic soil. To dispose of it, he had to rely on Lu Yun’s Yi Wood Cleansing Thunder. Moreover, he couldn’t be certain whether Ge Yanxia was speaking the truth. Therefore, he remained staunchly in front of Qing Yu and prevented the fur seal from harming the girl.

“Step aside, your Exalted Major can’t bear the consequences if Lu Yun succeeds. Also, the Scroll of Shepherding Immortals is on her. Don’t you want it?” Ge Yanxia’s irises were pure crimson. It wanted to kill Qing Yu and obtain the Embittered Bamboo from her at all costs. As one of the ten great connate spirit roots, the demon fetus would be as good as born with a sacrifice of that caliber!

“I see, then don’t blame me for this... die!!” With a furious shriek, colossal waves surged from the fur seal, the power of the inexhaustible seawater shaping into a massive whirlpool.

Blanching violently, the celestial emperor quickly retreated. The seawater was inconceivably dangerous, as it’d submerge the entire mausoleum once it crashed down.

“You... stop this at once!!” he shouted frantically. However, lips curled into a malevolent smile, the fur seal didn’t show any hint of stopping. Space had become a small world of its own above her head, one filled with an increasingly higher level of seawater.

Hum!

Boooooom!

A pillar of white light suddenly tore through the void and blew up the miniature world. At the same time, a scorching bead rose into the sky and evaporated the seawater within with fearsome heat waves.

A man clad in blue walked out of the emptiness, crystal cannon in one hand and the connate Divine Fire Bead in the other.

“It’s you!!” Ge Yanxia stiffened at the sight.

“Yin Qingran!!” exclaimed a nearby Ling Chenzu.

Yin Qingran had stolen the Divine Fire Bead and hung the Ling Clan out to dry against the zombie of the fire god. The clan had killed the zombie in the end, but more than two hundred immortals had paid for that feat with their lives.

With no more than a few dozen people left in his team, Ling Chengzu had had no choice but to rejoin the clan's main group and convene with the Exalted celestial emperor. To think they'd run into the Yin bastard here!

"So you're the one called Yin Qingran!" Ge Yanxia bared her fangs, bovine eyes full of rage. Yin Qingran had been the one who'd ruined her first set of plans!

"Yin Qingran? What's going on here?!" The celestial emperor recognized Yin Qingran, of course, but hadn't expected to see the fellow appear with a crystal cannon and a connate-grade treasure... Perhaps this genius who'd covered three provinces of Exalted Major with his phenomenon of ascension had come across another fortuitous encounter!

"Yin Qingran, hand over the Divine Fire Bead, or else... our Ling Clan will see your Yin Clan exterminated even if it costs us our lives!" Ling Chengzu seethed.

The Exalted celestial emperor frowned faintly.

"This old cow is the demon fetus' lapdog." Lu Yun ignored Ling Chengzu and flashed a cold smile at Ge Yanxia. "The younglings it brought along were meant to be sacrifices for the demon fetus. Thankfully, I disrupted its plans.

"Miss Qing Yu possesses a connate spirit root. That's why the creature is so anxious to attack the young lady. It wants to steal the spirit root and sacrifice it to the demon fetus."

"You... die already!!" Seeing Yin Qingran immediately reminded Ge Yanxia of what had happened earlier. This kid had ruined her plans twice in a row, so she hated Yin Qingran's guts far more than she'd ever hated Lu Yun.

Leaping into the air, the creature lunged at the newcomer.

The immortals who'd come here naturally knew what the demon fetus was, and were also aware of the true goal in the tomb. Dumbfounded by what they were witnessing, they had some trouble collecting themselves. Ge Yanxia, an ignorant, benighted fur seal, was a servant of the demon fetus?

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Lu Yun lifted his crystal cannon and fired again at Ge Yanxia. The creature no longer had the ripple-like treasure with it, but she certainly possessed other defensive treasures. Therefore, while the attack from the cannon sent her flying, it did so in a way that defied common sense. The fur seal's enormous frame drew a strange arc in the air and crashed heavily into the pillar of black smoke.

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### **Chapter 663: Birth of the Demon Fetus**

‘Ninth Heaven’s Demon-Destroying Patriarch’ was a very unfamiliar name, not only for the crowd of gathered immortals, but also for the Exalted celestial emperor, Zhao Wushuang, and even Empress Myrtlestar inside the Scroll of Shepherding Immortals. All of them were thoroughly mystified.

They’d never heard of anyone with such a title in the world of immortals, but there was no doubt that the man was a powerhouse beyond compare, one that surpassed the celestial emperors of the nine majors!



Unbeknownst to the rest, Lu Yun's mind was also in chaos. Just now, the Demon-Destroying Patriarch had nodded at him!

The ancient records spoke of the summoned patriarch as a simple demon-slaying entity. Once the target was destroyed, the summons would dissipate. Nowhere had he ever read that the patriarch possessed its own thoughts and consciousness!

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"Aiya!" Lu Yun whacked his head and shouted loudly, "There's more pressing matters at hand! Come with me, I'll show you where the demon fetus is really sealed. We need to stop it before it's among us!"

"Where the fetus is truly sealed?" The Exalted celestial emperor frowned.

"Stop it from arriving among us? More like you want to use us as sacrifices to welcome it to the world!" Ling Chengzu sneered. Close to a thousand immortals had died to the zombie just now. All those casualties from one zombie!

Scarred by the experience, almost every immortal present lacked the courage for further action. If even a simple zombie was this strong, how could they fight against a so-called demon god?

"Yin Qingran, you colluded with the zombies of this tomb to steal the Divine Fire Bead from our clan. Now repay this debt!" Ling Chengzu stepped forward and released nine aether dao fruits from his body, projecting a vast, terrible aura that restricted the young man's movements.

Sneering coldly, many nearby looked at 'Yin Qingran' with frosty looks. For his part, the Exalted celestial emperor remained silent. The Yin Clan was nothing but a piddling second-tier clan. A true immortal from that inconsequential faction had somehow gotten his hands on a connate treasure!

A second-tier clan? Who were they to possess such an item?

A connate treasure could propel a major clan to the apex of the world. Even the nine heavenly courts lusted after such items.

The Exalted celestial emperor couldn't stop all of these immortals by himself. In fact, he was desperately fighting his own impulses. As a freshly crowned celestial emperor, Zhao Luo wasn't as impervious to worldly desires as the nine emperors from the previous generation had been.

"Ladies and gentlemen, let us handle the connate treasure another day. The demon fetus is the most pressing matter for now!" Zhao Wushuang pleaded. "Do not let petty gains blind you to the greater picture!"

"Hahaha!" other immortals countered. "The demon fetus? Prince Wushuang, didn't you see the formidable strength of the Ninth Heaven's Demon-Destroying Patriarch from Dusk Province? Didn't he slay the one you called the zombie of a divine emperor in one blow? Don't they want to be a sacred land? Something as important as exorcising a demon should be left to them.

"As for us, we are just ordinary people. We only care about connate treasures!" The immortals laughed merrily and didn't show the slightest intention to help. "Also, I see that Yin Qingran is in possession of a crystal cannon from Dusk Province. What's more, he uses it without any concern whatsoever. He's clearly become Lu Yun's lackey!"

“Lu Yun of Dusk Province is the head of the Star Demon Sect. What an illustrious character, a demon among demons! It’s the duty of us all to put him down. Yin Qingran, since you’ve become his dog, you should be prepared to be hunted down by the entire world!”

Lu Yun didn’t recognize the ones speaking and doubted he’d ever offended them in any way. He’d stolen the connate treasure from under the Ling Clan’s nose because there was enmity between them, but seeing people he had no grudge with suddenly turn on him caught him by surprise.

“In the world of immortals, does one have to be either a friend or an enemy? Is there no middle ground?” he mumbled to himself with a frown.

“Junior brother Yin!” Eldest disciple of Destiny City, Xi Yingchen, stepped out and asked with a severe expression, “I would like to know where we might find Destiny City’s martial uncle Qi Hai!”

“Qi Hai? He’s right where the fetus is sealed. Currently, he’s fighting to stop the advent of the demon,” Lu Yun replied expressionlessly.

“In that case, please show us the way, junior brother Yin!” Xi Yingchen’s attitude softened immediately. When Lu Yun handed him a jade slip etched from a nascent spirit, he took a deep breath and added, “Many thanks, junior brother Yin!”

“Disciples of Destiny City, come with me!” More than three thousand immortals flew like the wind to where the demon fetus was sealed. Inside the jade slip was marked the shortest route, as well as a few spots of danger along the way.

“We’re also going.” Noting Lu Yun’s expression, Qing Yu realized how critical the situation was. She immediately collected Lin Yu and Lin Xuan and headed in the same direction without further ado.

“You can go if you want!” An arcane dao immortal from the Exalted Immortal Sect blocked her way. “Just leave behind the Scroll of Shepherding Immortals and your connate spirit root!”

This arcane dao immortal was blessed with handsome features and seemed extraordinarily youthful, but his eyes betrayed a sinister, licentious glint.

Boom!

A pillar of white light exploded as soon as he spoke and hit him dead on. The man shrieked miserably, his body torn to pieces and life gone in the blink of an eye. His true spirit then entered hell and became an Infernum, but the violent and unpredictable undulations inside the netherworld promptly shredded him to pieces and killed him for good.

“Don’t you people want the Divine Fire Bead?” Lu Yun patted the crystal cannon beside him with a faint smile. “Have at it! I’ll gladly hand the bead to anyone who can survive a shot from my cannon!”

“Ling Chengzu, why don’t you give it a try?” He pointed the cannon straight at Ling Chengzu.

“No, no, that’s—”

Boom!

A blast hit the man before he could fully articulate his thoughts. This time, the victim didn't even have time to scream before being mowed down. Like the arcane dao immortal before him, he, too, died for good as soon as he entered hell.

The scene cowed the rest of the crowd. No one expected that 'Yin Qingran' would truly dare to use the cannon!

Yin Qingran... of course it was Yin Qingran.

Lu Yun was masquerading as Yin Qingran even now. With Shapeshifting, he'd become the man himself and none of his own features could be seen anywhere. Alas, yet another misdeed had been firmly pinned on the hapless Yin genius!

At that moment, the real deal had hunted down ten Donglin immortals and was gleefully counting up how many immortal crystals he'd receive in exchange.

For his part, Lu Yun was too furious to care about who was taking the fall for him. He only cared about killing! He had to kill, or the flames of anger raging in his heart wouldn't be appeased.

"Who else wants the Divine Fire Bead?!" His cold eyes swept past the crowd.

Boom!

Clouds of dust kicked up in the air as the entire tomb shook following a large explosion.

"Ouuuuu!" A demonic howl swept the mausoleum, accompanied by overpowering demonic energy that flooded into every corner of the tomb. Centimeter by centimeter, the energy corrupted the ground at their feet and transformed it into... demonic soil!

"The demon fetus... is born!" shuddered the celestial emperor, his eyes bespeaking his despair.

"So Ge Yanxia used a third way to bring the demon fetus into this world," Lu Yun sighed. "Let's go. Whatever happens next has nothing to do with us."

#### **Chapter 664: Rampaging Corpse Demons**

As the demon fetus arrived in the world, demonic energy swept through the Exalted Divine Tombs, transforming every inch of the ground into a demonic land. Every corpse buried in the tombs was spontaneously demonized and crawled out as the living dead, replete with ringing shrieks and wails.

Shadowy figures emerged from the dark and converged upon the immortals, ghastly howls and screams echoing through the air. Every formation and layout in the mausoleum was destroyed within seconds, including the space-restriction formation.

"Run, run!" yelled an immortal as he soared into the air and shot back to where he'd entered the tombs.

Snap!

A snake-like creature whipped through the air in a red blur, swallowing the fleeing immortal in a single gulp. Their compatriot's swift demise chilled everyone to the bones. Lu Yun had seen such a snake before—within the Ichor Bog outside the tomb. So the creatures had entered the tomb after the birth of the demon fetus!

“How, how did everything turn out like this?” Appalled, the Exalted celestial emperor looked on with an ashen face. Didn’t they have another three to four days until the demon fetus was born?

Why had the timeline shifted up? By now, the Exalted Divine Tombs were fully corrupted and reeked with the miasma of a demonic land.

“S-senior brother Yin mentioned that Ge Yanxia was trying to accelerate the birth of the fetus through different methods,” Qing Yu sighed faintly.

“You, you can do s-something about this, can’t you?” babbled the celestial emperor. “You can kill that demon fetus even now... What about the Ninth Heaven’s Demon-Destroying Patriarch? He’ll be able to deal with it if he’s willing to!”

The corpse demons had surrounded the group of the living and were poised to attack.

“He can’t just do that.” Lin Xuan opened his thick archive again. “The patriarch can only be summoned every forty-nine days. That’s right—he isn’t a living soul, but a heroic spirit summoned by a particular method.”

Despair wrapped tightly around everyone while the celestial emperor overflowed with regret. If he’d been a little more decisive earlier and taken everyone to where the demon fetus really was, they would’ve accomplished their mission already.

So this was how it felt to reap what he’d sown. Only now did he resonate with the mindset of the previous nine celestial emperors, but all was too late now.

Screeching, the dreadful corpse demons picked up momentum in a forward charge. As they were demonized zombies, they were more powerful than regular zombies. Even now, a couple of them might’ve been manageable, but absolutely not when they were gathered in the tens of thousands. Even the Exalted celestial emperor felt helpless against them.

Demonic howls could still be heard echoing from the heart of the tomb; something seemed to be fighting the newly born spirit. Yin Qingran had said that Qi Hai was there, and the group of Destiny City disciples must have arrived as well.

“Go! We kill our way to the land that seals the demon fetus and rendezvous with Senior Qi Hai. We may still stand a chance then, but all of us will die if the situation remains as it is now!”

The Exalted celestial emperor’s command shone as a guiding beacon into the gloom of desperation. Roaring in unison, the less than ten thousand survivors rushed toward the demon. The Exalted Chart sparkled radiantly above the celestial emperor’s head, and the heavenly mandate of Exalted Major shimmered to life as it sent the despairing immortals through the darkness like a glowing lance. Any others still struggling in the murk reconvened with them as soon as they saw the light.

The real Yin Qingran was also among them.

Neither Qing Yu nor Lu Yun followed the group, and the latter transformed back into himself.

“What should we do?” Qing Yu turned to Lu Yun worriedly.

She knew nothing could stop him from leaving, if he wanted to. The Path of Ingress could transcend space and take them away immediately, now that the strange restriction was gone. However, she also knew Lu Yun would never leave like this.

He might resent immortals for their greed and lack of integrity, but he would also never allow the demon to run free through the world.

“Let’s go find the treasure Ge Long mentioned,” Lu Yun said after a pensive pause. “If it’s as powerful as he said, it should be able to kill the demon! Where’s Yueshen? Where’s she gone off to?”

The immortal-ghost-possessed-Li Youcai had disappeared quite a while ago.

“She said she was going to find the god.” Qing Yu had seen Yueshen once prior to meeting up with the Exalted celestial emperor. The immortal ghost had said god was in this mausoleum, and that she was going to find him.

“She’s going to find the god? Then we’ll go find her!” Lu Yun opened his hand and projected nine coffins from his palm.

The Ninefilia Specter Fostering Formation!

This was Yueshen’s core, one that she was unable to stray too far away from lest her soul scatter. However, Lu Yun had freed her from those constraints by sending the formation to hell, then further empowered her by storing the formation in the Tome of Life and Death.

Yueshen had recovered her memories and abilities not only because she’d absorbed the power of hell, but also because her core was now protected by the book. Lu Yun could also use the formation to find her!

If she was trapped, he would be able to summon her back through the formation as well. Since Yueshen had hared off to find a real god, Lu Yun wanted to see for himself just what these entities were.

He’d scanned every part of the tomb with the Spectral Eye along the way, but found no trace of the treasure Ge Long had mentioned. Perhaps the treasure was in the hand of this god.

Crackle.

Lu Yun casually killed the corpse demons approaching him with a wave of dark cyan lightning.

Yi Wood Cleansing Thunder!

The demon-counteracting lightning was more than enough to kill these lesser corpse demons. The group set foot on the Path of Ingress and made their way to Yueshen with the formation as their guide.

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The Exalted Immortal Sect at the foot of Mount Exalted.

The land suddenly cracked open as demonic energy surged, propelling corpse demons out from beneath the ground.

“Demons... Corpse demons!”

“Here they come! Activate the grand defensive formation!”

Chaos engulfed the Exalted Immortal Sect. Formations lit up one after another to stop the emerging corpse demons, but the defenses were meant to halt outside invasions, not threats from below. The corpse demons had destroyed all of the formation disks and stones as they burrowed upwards.

Corpse demons swarmed and rampaged, slaughtering immortals and devouring the young disciples. Elites of the sect almost wept blood to see their juniors being eaten. These younglings were the future of the Exalted Immortal Sect!

“Kill, kill, kill!” snarled the head of the sect. The longsword in his hand twirled and churned through corpse demons like a meat grinder. “Block the cracks!” he screamed. “Now!”

Demons briefly overwhelmed the sect when the ineffectiveness of their efforts became apparent, only to be pushed back when various elders and venerated elders leapt into coordinated action to methodically cleanse their territory and block the cracks.

Wham!

A black hand suddenly shot out of the earth and grabbed the sect head, popping him with a single squeeze! A three-hundred-meter-tall corpse demon followed its hand out from the ground. Clad in a set of tattered armor, it had four heads and eight arms.

### **Chapter 665: A Group of Marvelous Women**

The head of the Exalted Immortal Sect was dead!

Faced with a horde of corpse demons rampaging through the sect, the orderly battle formations quickly collapsed and the sect’s immortals were once again routed. None of them noticed that, at the sect’s rear mountain, a hazy grey shadow suddenly came into view inside a small, unremarkable courtyard. It looked to be inserted into the sect’s lifepoint like a spike.

The Death Spike.

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At the foot of Mount Exalted, the major’s capital city naturally noticed something afoot in the sect.

Martial law was quickly declared, and all of the formations in the sky above and ground below flared to life. Golden curtains of light trailed down from the heavenly court floating overhead and covered the city like a protective blanket.

Soon after, the Exalted Legion emerged from every corner of the void and rushed to the sect’s rescue. Their mission was to keep the corpse demons confined to sect territory and prevent them from fanning out elsewhere.

Even the Exalted Immortal Sect, one of the strongest factions of Exalted Major, had suffered disastrous losses. If the corpse demons were to break through the blockade, the situation would quickly spiral into devastating tragedy that bespelled the major’s destruction!

“There’s a rift connecting the Exalted Divine Tombs to the outer realms. We need to seal it off!” Inside the palace up in the sky, the major’s foremost celestial king, Zhao Jifeng, gave another order to a regiment of a million warriors. While they frantically battled the tide of corpse demons, he kept an eye on the overall situation.

“Is the demon fetus already among us...?” He breathed in deeply, an uneasy expression on his face.

Harassed by a divine peng, the four-headed, eight-armed zombie couldn’t disengage itself from the projection of the Great Peng Battle Formation. As for Exalted Major’s original great peng... it’d been heavily wounded in the Dusk battle and hadn’t been spotted in public since.

The soldiers of Exalted Major were warriors of extraordinary valor. While they were at most august immortals, their highly coordinated battle formations staunchly repelled the corpse demons and restricted them to Exalted Immortal Sect grounds.

But there was no end in sight to the tide of corpse demons, and the pressure on the army grew with each passing minute. Out of the nine Great Peng Spirit Formations around the mountain, three lay in pieces, millions of soldiers killed on the spot when they were breached.

Zhao Jifeng wanted to join in the fray, but he had an unwavering feeling that there was a pair of eyes fixed on him from the dark. The moment he exposed himself... the entity lying in wait would ambush him, just like it’d crushed the sect head.

Therefore, he dared not act brashly. Without its commander-in-chief, the Exalted Legion would be a headless dragon, fated to be swallowed whole by the corpse demons.

Squee! Squee! Squee!

Suddenly, three bird cries echoed in the sky. Three additional golden-winged pengs came to the soldiers’ rescue and dive-bombed the crowd of corpse demons. The soldiers stationed in other parts of Center Province had arrived!

“Milord! There’s a few women outside who seek entrance into the Exalted Divine Tombs!” one of Zhao Jifeng’s deputies suddenly reported.

“They want to go inside the mausoleum? Tell them something’s happened inside, it’s impossible to go in now!” Distraught irritation distracted Zhao Jifeng.

No corpse demon had ever been spotted in their land, but here these creatures were in endless droves. An unending supply of them crawled out with surges of foul corpse and demonic energy; even the most oblivious fool would realize something was amiss by now. In all likelihood, the demon fetus had been set loose into the world!

Zhao Jifeng was the foremost celestial king of Exalted Major, a position he’d held since before the previous celestial emperor’s abdication. Since then, his status had grown more entrenched, especially now that he’d become the new emperor’s most trusted right-hand man.

When Zhao Luo had gone inside the tombs to kill the demon fetus, Zhao Jifeng had stayed outside to protect the court. Hence, he naturally knew of the demon fetus’ existence. As for the tombs, quite a few people had come to explore their depths after the celestial emperor opened them to the public.

“Understood!” The deputy exited, but returned in next to no time. “Milord, these young ladies call themselves immortals of Dusk Province and say they can seal the opening!”

“What?!” Zhao Jifeng sprang up from his seat, his eyes sparkling with excitement. “Hurry and show them in! No, I’ll go see them myself!”

He rushed outside, ardently wishing he could teleport to the spot. “Sure enough, it’s them!” Agitation warred visibly on his face.

Lu Yun’s nine Envoys of Samsara.

Each of the nine women possessed astounding beauty that could fell nations, and they all possessed a cultivation that made one’s heart tremble. They were all peerless immortals!

More importantly, they were peerless immortals with formations of heaven and earth! Each and every gesture of theirs was imbued with the fearsome power of the land.

Though Lu Yun had previously bestowed the same formation to a thousand immortals, they were now safeguarded as national treasures. Carefully stowed away, they remained strictly inside their factions so that formation grandmasters throughout the world could study the formations inside them.

For their part, Yuying and the other eight had set out as soon as hell had been sealed off. Diexi had also wanted to come, but Yuying had firmly left her in Dusk Province. Two personalities lived inside the zombie king and there was no telling what might happen if she visited a foreign mausoleum—especially this one.

“Miladies...” Zhao Jifeng was filled with elation as he looked at the nine rather young girls.

“Let us not waste time on trivialities. Tell your men to evacuate the premises, they’ll only be a hindrance if they stay.” Su Xiaoxiao waved her hand impatiently. If it hadn’t been impossible to avoid harming innocent bystanders, she would’ve tossed poison into the rift as soon as they’d shown up.

“But there are too many corpse demons here!” Zhao Jifeng’s eyebrows shot up. These nine ladies looked far too dainty to stop the horde of dreadful corpse demons by themselves.

“Not even an ocean of yin spirits in Nephrite Major’s Azure Province could stop us, to say nothing of a few corpse demons,” Huangqing countered coolly.

With a sharp intake of breath, the celestial king ordered his remaining regiments to fall back from the Exalted Immortal Sect. Apart from an extremely low number of elders and venerated elders, all sect disciples had perished. As a faction, the Exalted Immortal Sect would be stricken from the lists after today.

Zhao Jifeng’s troops had also suffered heavy casualties. A full million soldiers had died in battle, a number that made the commander’s heart bleed. But despite their tactical retreat, the soldiers remained nearby in case the corpse demons threatened to scurry out of sect grounds and spill over into other areas.

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“They would’ve been safe and sound if they’d stayed inside the ancient tomb, but to show themselves in broad daylight... Do these corpse demons have a death wish?” Su Xiaoxiao and Xingzi stood in the sky and smiled at each other as they sprinkled dark green seeds on the ground.

Roughly the size of a grain of rice, the seeds attached themselves to the corpse demons as they fell. Taking root in undead flesh, they germinated and grew into small flowers.

“Grooowl!!”

“Ouuuu!!” screamed the corpse demons in anguish. Relentlessly sucking away corpse energy, the seeds blossomed into crimson flowers that festooned their undead victims. The strange flowers incapacitated corpse demons in less than three breaths, turning their hosts into further fertilizer.

These flowers were a new genus that Xingzi and Su Xiaoxiao had developed by studying the Hell Flowers. Created for the express purpose of subduing zombies, they needed at least fifteen minutes to germinate and sprout inside a tomb devoid of sunlight. But under direct sunlight, they could kill a zombie in a few short breaths!

Roar!

Anger exploded from the rift in the ground as more than a dozen four-headed, eight-armed zombies rushed out of the opening and charged Su Xiaoxiao and Xingzi.

Hum!

A buzz traveled through the firmament as Aoxue, Huangfeng, Cangyin, and Luli walked out of the void and positioned themselves in the four cardinal directions. The images of a blood dragon, blood phoenix, blood qilin, and blood tortoise flashed in the air. Together, the four ominous beasts formed a strange battle formation that dyed the sky in searing scarlet.

Faced with this formation, the zombies were instantly repelled and sent back into the rift. It was then Feinie’s turn to walk out of the emptiness and draw a giant formation without foundation that landed on the giant fissure like a seal.

Boom!

A giant hand from below immediately punched it, bulging the formation at the point of impact.

Paling, blood trickled out of Feinie’s mouth as an ugly crack formed on the sealing formation. From some distance away, Xuanxi waved a hand and poured talismans into Feinie’s body to treat her wounds.

“Be careful, there’s a big fellow below... If we want to seal off this place, we need to dispose of him first!” Feinie wiped off blood from her lips.

“I’ve got it.” Yuying waved her hand, igniting dark-green Emerald Mistfire inside the giant fissure. Two flames blazing in her eyes, she made pill seals with her hands. She was refining that ‘big fellow’ in the crack as she would a pill!

Shrieks of pain and anguish ripped through the air a split second later, lingering long after their owner perished.

Zhao Jifeng shuddered uncontrollably. Each of these women was a formidable existence in her right, but they displayed such cohesive teamwork that they might as well be a single person. Just how had Lu Yun convinced these extraordinary women to pledge themselves to his cause with such steadfast loyalty?

Yuying retracted her pill seal roughly a hundred breaths later. A fist-sized pill as black as ink floated out of the crack and landed in her hand.

“Corpse demons, alright...” Expression veering on the dark side, she took a good look at the pill before clenching her fist tight and squeezing it to dust. These kinds of pills were worthless. “Let these corpse demons be the instrument of my revenge.”

A content smile spread across her face. She was naturally aware of the Death Spike that Lu Yun had planted inside the Exalted Divine Sect, the true source of the sect’s destruction.

Off to the side, Feinie once again called a mighty formation into being and sealed off the rift below.

“My deepest thanks, fairies... errr...” Zhao Jifeng stepped forward to express his profound gratitude, but suddenly realized that the nine women were nowhere to be found. He smiled wryly at what had just transpired. “Truly a group of astounding women!”

Although his present concerns had been resolved, his heart was still heavy. The demon fetus was among them... It was only a matter of time before Exalted Major became a land of demons, and none of its denizens would be spared the fate of being turned into more corpse demons.

### **Chapter 666: Great Horror**

When Feinie sealed off the rift, the nine women conveniently slipped inside at the same time. For Lu Yun, the arrival of his nine envoys would be an appreciable boost to his strength.

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Meanwhile, the lord of Dusk and his companions were quietly suspended in midair as minute particles. Not far ahead of them was Yueshen, the immortal ghost having finally caught sight of the god she’d been chasing after.

It was a giant statue more than three thousand meters tall that possessed four heads, eight arms, and magnificent armor adorning his body.

This entity appeared identical to the last emperor of the divine dynasty. The four heads represented the powers of the four original elements, respectively earth, air, water, and fire.

Was this Yueshen’s god?

Had a god been the one to usurp the imperial throne and overthrow Exalted Divine rule? Or perhaps the final divine emperor simply resembled this god?

Yueshen stood unmoving. Instead of leaving Li Youcai’s body, she was silently observing the statue through the human’s eyes.

An enormous altar stood in front of the statue, but bereft of sacrifices for countless years, the altar was more of an empty shell. Time had so thoroughly ravaged its surface that its original appearance was impossible to discern.

“Milord, this is an altar of origin.” Yueshen suddenly whispered. “At the dawn of history, living beings offered sacrifices to the gods on this very altar. Thus were born divine spirits... And in turn, those divine spirits became the divines!”

“This statue depicts the first sacrifice-born divine spirit, he who controls the four original elements, the divine spirit of origin.”

“Is he not a god himself?” the dust-sized Lu Yun subconsciously asked with a start.

Yueshen shook her head. “God is no more. Akasha ghosts might be related to him, but they certainly didn’t arise from his death.”

Plop!

Li Youcai toppled stiffly to the ground as Yueshen withdrew from his body and returned to her immortal ghost form. She strode toward the altar for a closer look.

Lu Yun remained hidden, but Empress Myrtlestar appeared from the Scroll of Shepherding Immortals, her purple-golden starlight illuminating the area like a shield of light around Lu Yun and Qing Yu.

“So he was God,” the empress murmured.

“What?” Lu Yun blinked in confusion. They sounded like they were talking about a specific being...

Next to the altar, Yueshen turned back without being surprised by the newcomer. She knew of the empress’ existence and was aware of her identity.

“Have you seen God before?” The startled immortal ghost looked at Empress Myrtlestar with an expression of longing. She’d thought she’d touched upon God’s secrets, but as it turned out, she’d just been following the trail of the first sacrifice-born divine spirit in the tomb.

The primogenitor of the Exalted Divines was the first divine spirit to be born from nature, the shape of dao itself, rather than a sacrifice-born spirit. However, the statue with four heads and eight arms was the semblance of the first divine spirit arisen from sacrifices... which was why its descendants wanted—and eventually did—overthrow Exalted Divine rule.

However, neither of them was God.

“I have indeed seen him.” Empress Myrtlestar nodded gently. “God is dead.”

Blaring silence projected from the immortal ghost.

“Someone killed God and drew his essence into a painting scroll,” Empress Myrtlestar quietly added.

In Qing Yu’s arms, the little fox was trembling violently. Yueshen’s eyes grew wide, and Lu Yun... found the shift in conversation almost too much to believe. He suddenly recalled Ashu’s words during his meeting with Art and Zither Saint: You killed the court’s divine celestial master and used his essence to draw this peerless treasure of the divine race.

Art and Zither Saints used to be the human celestial master, Celestial Master Zhang! He'd killed the divine celestial master and used his essence to paint the Scroll of Shepherding Immortals!

God... Had the divine celestial master been this God they were speaking of?!

And someone... had killed him?

That explained why the Scroll of Shepherding Immortals could revive the essence of the Exalted Divine Tribe. Every divine spirit, whether arisen from sacrifice or born of nature, originated from God's bloodline, so it went without saying that God's core essence could restore the Exalted Divine bloodline, because they were born from his bloodline to begin with!

Yueshen looked at Empress Myrtlestar in a daze. "Is God truly dead?"

"The traces of God you found must have been left behind by the divine celestial master. Among the four celestial masters, the divine celestial master was always the most secretive one. We've been trying to investigate his past as well, but it wasn't until I saw the altar that I finally realized the truth."

This altar of origin had once been consecrated to the gods. All sacrificial arts of the world flowed from here. Only a god revered by all things living before the advent of civilization could possess such an ability.

"It's possible that God died at a certain point in time, then reincarnated into the Primordial Era's Divine Celestial Master. Even now, I can't tell you for certain whether the divine celestial master is truly dead or not." Empress Myrtlestar gently shook her head.

"In any case, this is an altar of origin, the mother altar. The five elemental altars are all derived from this one, so if we can restore it, we'll be able to locate the other altars!" Yueshen interrupted.

"If you say so, then I shall take your wise advice and make this altar mine!" A resounding laugh came from the air, followed by a man suddenly appearing on the altar.

Donglin Taihuang!

Before anyone could react, he waved his sleeves and tried to collect the ruins of the enormous altar.

"Hmm?" Contrary to his expectations, the altar didn't budge at all. With a frown, Donglin Taihuang lifted his foot and moved to kick the sculpture away.

"Don't!!" Lu Yu turned pale with fright. "Run away! Everyone, run away!!"

He immediately took out the Demonic Sovereign Cauldron and swept Qing Yu, Lin Xuan, Lin Yu, Yueshen and Li Youcai inside, then whirled around and beat a hasty retreat.

A tomb with carved stone accumulates yin and malevolent spirits. In the presence of life, stone spirits are formed. Beware of such monstrosities. Great horror lies ahead!

Stone spirits!

Rumble!

Completely unbothered from Donglin Taihuang's kick, the deep sound of stone grinding against stone came from the statue and thunderous breathing exhaled from its nose nonetheless.

Donglin Taihuang's breath caught and his eyes shot wide open. To his stupefaction, the statue's four faces were all identical to his own!

"If I can obtain the woman with the cosmic constitution, I will overcome my constraints and become an origin dao immortal... What is an origin dao immortal?" A mumble came from the stone spirit, but its eyes stared fixedly in the direction that Lu Yun had left in. "Obtain the female with the cosmic constitution..."

Rumble!

The stone spirit's foot crashed down, shattering the already ruined mother altar as it chased after Lu Yun. As for Empress Myrtlestar and Donglin Taihuang, they didn't even dare blink. What a terrifying entity!

The empress had a striking hunch that the giant stone spirit would be able to squash her like a bug. Even during her heyday, she would've found it impossible to contend against this monster!

Great horror lies ahead... great horror!

She finally understood why Lu Yun had said to "run away".

Run away!

For the first time in her life, the notion of 'running away' arose in the great empress' mind.

### **Chapter 667: Possession**

The Exalted Divine Tombs were an enormous mausoleum. Here lay not only divines from time immemorial, but also many creatures from the outer realms who'd happened to perish here. Altogether, their collective spite and resulting yin energy reached prodigiously unfathomable realms.

However, Lu Yun hadn't sensed any such malice or resentment after arriving, and the only yin energy he sensed in the vicinity was accumulated in the yin dragon vein above the land where the demon fetus was sealed.

The only possible explanation was that something else had absorbed all of the spite and energy of yin. He'd understood that as soon as he saw the statue. But in the beginning, the only ones around had been Yueshen and his people. Though Yueshen had ascended the altar, she wasn't a living entity and thus wouldn't awaken the stone spirit.

However, Donglin Taihuang just had to suddenly appear and kick the statue, as if some kind of cosmic conspiracy was at work!

After assimilating Donglin Taihuang's life force and consciousness, the statue had transformed into a stone spirit. Donglin Taihuang's one obsession in life was to obtain Qing Yu and her cosmic constitution, so the stone spirit immediately chased after Lu Yun upon inheriting this thought.

The stone spirit of the divine spirit of the origin was powerful beyond measure, a great horror in the... flesh. Even Empress Myrtlestar, an invincible figure from the Primordial Era, had no choice but to run for the hills.

With a speed that belied its mass, the stone spirit caught up to Lu Yun in a few strides.

“The woman with the cosmic constitution is mine.” The statue’s expression was stiff, but its tone mimicked Donglin Taihuang’s to the point where it could easily be confused for a real person.

Lu Yun had shrunk to the size of a microscopic particle and employed the Wandering Step without rest, but none of that prevented the stone spirit from catching up. For the statue, there was no difference between the dust particle that was Lu Yun’s and a normal-sized human.

It was extraordinarily powerful, far surpassing what immortals past or present could comprehend. To Lu Yun, its strength exceeded the cultivation realms he knew of—ingress, primordial, principal, supreme pure, jade pure, grand pure... The statue was a powerhouse of an even higher realm!

With the Wandering Step, one could traverse thousands of kilometers in a single stride, but the stone spirit was even faster! Given the threat, Lu Yun had no choice but to revert to the Boundless Step or the statue would’ve quickly overtaken him. But even so... he still couldn’t shake it off.

“What should I do, what should I do?!” Flustered and with growing panic settling in, he wanted to return to hell, but hell was currently even more fearsome than the stone spirit. Run over as it were by a horde of akasha ghosts, if not for Ge Long holding down the fort, they would’ve long destroyed hell in its entirety.

“That’s right... the demon fetus!” Lu Yun’s eyes lit up as he looked in another direction. The demon god fetus!

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Giant tentacles burrowed out of the ground and relentlessly battered Qi Hai, Liu Chen, and the Exalted celestial emperor in midair.

The Exalted Mandate’s power was on full display. It’d propelled the celestial emperor’s strength to a level never before seen, so much so that he’d transcended origin dao immortal realm!

Meanwhile, the Exalted Chart threw off dazzling light, unleashing rays of brilliance that churned up the tentacles like sharp blades. The yin dragon vein in the sky had long been smashed into the ground to suppress the land. For that reason alone, the demon fetus was still kept underground, unable to fully emerge.

However, the tentacles themselves were enough to back the immortals into a corner, and there was still a sea of corpse demons that surged from every direction to slaughter the immortals like sheep.

Anyone still alive was seized with despair. If not for Lu Yun’s nine followers arriving in the nick of time, perhaps the Exalted celestial emperor, Qi Hai, and Liu Chen would be the only ones standing by now. Everyone else would have been swallowed whole by the corpse demons, Zhao Wushuang included.

The latter was presently covered in blood. In her hand, the heart of the Sword of Chaos danced in the air and carved up any corpse demon that came too close to her.

“We’ll all die sooner or later at this rate!” In despair, she looked up at the sky, stunned awe flashing through her eyes at the sight of the nine magnificent women.

She was now a void-ascended immortal, one whose phenomenon of ascension had affected the entire world of immortals! But compared to these nine women, the difference was night and day.

Each of them was a force of nature and cornerstone of the world. Thanks to their timely arrival, the lives of close to ten thousand immortals had been saved.

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“Xiaoxiao, plant your flowers!” Yuying suddenly shouted.

“Very well!” Su Xiaoxiao waved her arm without hesitation. Seeds sprinkled down to the ground and quickly took root in corpse demon flesh.

“Yin Qingran,” Yuying yelled loudly.

“Ah?” Hidden in the crowd and busily making himself scarce, Yin Qingran looked up in confusion, wondering why the fairy had suddenly called his name.

“The Divine Fire Bead!” Yuying continued.

“What?” Yin Qingran stared with utter bafflement.

Boom!

A scorching heat wave spread outward as a miniature sun rose into the sky, bathing the area in blinding light and searing heat.

The Divine Fire Bead!

“Thank you.” Yuying nodded gratefully.

Yin Qingran’s jaw dropped.

“What? That bastard Yin Qingran is here? Find him and put him to death!” Ling immortals stomped with rage and swore out loud when they heard the name Yin Qingran.

Alas, being surrounded by corpse demons as they were, they were in no position to retrieve the bead, not to mention the even more dreadful tentacles drilling out of the ground every now and then.

With the emergence of the Divine Fire Bead, the seeds infesting the corpse demons began to sprout and blossom into small blood-colored flowers, sucking away the undead energy. One after another, corpse demons toppled over.

“Be careful of the human-headed octopi.” Xingzi remained hidden beside Su Xiaoxiao, standing guard as her protector. The human-headed octopi on a tear through the area had gone missing when the demon fetus emerged, but she’d just caught a glimpse of the creatures again.

Corpse demons continued falling to pieces beneath them, their numbers dwindling at an increasing rate. Though even more approached from the distance, Feinie used the Formation Orb to deploy a great formation that prevented them from drawing closer.

“Raaaaughhh!!” A tremendous bellow ripped through the air as the ground fissured into small chunks, broken by an irate strength that erupted out of nowhere.

Boom!

The yin dragon vein shattered with a bang, leaving only the palace coffin to suppress the demon fetus. A tall black shadow slowly stood up from the ground.

“Is this the body thou hast chosen for me?” With no physical existence of its own, the shadow ‘looked’ at Princess Zhao Qing’s skeleton inside the palace coffin, modern human language coming out of its mouth.

“Honorable Lord Demon God, Princess Zhao Qing’s corpse is the flesh your children have picked for you!” Ge Yanxia’s voice reverberated in the sky.

Her body somehow wrinkled and shriveled, the dense retribution that’d coiled around her being was no more, and her cultivation had returned to aether dao immortal realm. Without a doubt, that retribution had been crucial to the advent of the demon fetus.

Whoosh!

The demonic shadow streaked into black light that barrelled into the palace coffin and melded with Zhao Qing’s figure.

Glug glug glug...

Flesh and blood quickly grew on Zhao Qing’s bones.

“Bastard!!” With a furious scream, Qi Hai blurred into a streak as he charged into the palace coffin.

### **Chapter 668: The Exalted Daofire**

Smack!

Just as Qi Hai was about to enter the palace coffin, an enormous tentacle shot out from the ground and slapped him away. A giant human-faced octopus emerged, its head three hundred meters wide and eight slender tentacles thousands of meters long. The tentacles the immortals had been fighting belonged to this very octopus.

An icy fist of fear gripped Liu Chen as the bottom fell out of his stomach. The terrible existence growing inside the demon fetus had finally arrived in this world. Moreover... it’d possessed the body of Zhao Qing, the daughter of the primordial Exalted Divine Emperor!

With the advent of their master, the corpse demons stopped moving and human-headed octopi streamed out of the ground, positioning themselves in a defensive ring around the palace coffin.

“At long last, freedom is mine once again.” Zhao Qing’s flesh had fully regrown on her bones. Soft, beautiful locks flowed down her back like a cloud, and her cool eyes shone like the brilliant moon on a dark night. Her mien could drive every male being mad with desire. But right now, her otherworldly beauty only served to make the atmosphere inside the tomb incredibly bizarre.

‘Her’ voice was male.



“Don’t celebrate too soon,” a female voice sounded from Zhao Qing’s figure.

“Qing’er!” Thunderstruck, Qi Hai looked into the depths of the palace coffin as new hope flared to life in his eyes.

“Your true spirit hasn’t been extinguished yet?” the male voice spoke once more. But this time, Zhao Qing didn’t answer.

Rumble!

A faint golden flame suddenly erupted from the throne she occupied and enveloped her figure.

“Exalted Daofire!” an alarmed voice rang out from Zhao Qing’s body. Soon after, a demonic shadow emerged from her body and tried breaking free from it. However, the pale golden flame was connected to the throne and sealed off everything in its vicinity.

As the Exalted Daofire raged on, the princess’ body remained strangely intact. Her true spirit, however, and the one that’d possessed her body were fully set aflame. Just like the Exalted Immortal Reaper, the Exalted Daofire left the flesh intact and only harmed true spirits. But in comparison, the Exalted Daofire was more intense and more virulent.

And little wonder it was, for the fire in the Exalted Immortal Reaper was modeled after the Exalted Daofire.

Zhao Qing remained unmovingly stoic while the demon lord shrieked and flailed like a madman. Outside, the human-headed octopi swam frantically about and sealed off any access to the palace coffin.

Helpless, Qi Hai sagged limply to the ground. He shook with dry sobs, no tears to be found in the depths of his sorrow.

Liu Chen watched on silently. He’d known about the princess’ final trump card since a long time ago. Once the demon lord was born, he was bound to occupy her body, so she’d left the Exalted Daofire hidden below the throne coffin as her final ace.

Mutual destruction!

Even if her true spirit were to disintegrate and disperse along the wind, she wouldn’t let the demonized true spirit of a divine emperor run free in the world.

Liu Chen trembled uncontrollably. Once, he used to dream of freedom with every breath he took, fantasizing about going wherever he pleased after Zhao Qing’s death, living a life free of care or worries.

But now, a sharp pain deep pricked his insides like a needle.

“Your Highness!” He broke into loud sobs and fell to his knees, kowtowing with resounding thumps at the palace coffin.

“Soul shroud!” Zhao Qing’s voice came from the throne, curt, piercing, and filled with inexplicable frustration.

Yes, frustration!

There was a soul shroud on the demon god that warded off the Exalted Daofire!

The princess' true spirit had been fully consumed by the Exalted Daofire, but only seventy percent of the demon's true spirit had been incinerated, thanks to the soul shroud's protection. This true spirit had once been the emperor of the divines!

"Hahaha, hahaha..." the demon god's laughter boomed out of the palace coffin.

Rumble!

The palace crumbled explosively. Now that he'd fully integrated with the princess' body, the demon's true spirit transformed his female host into the body of an imposing man. He roared victoriously at the sky, his laughter filled with pride.

Although more than seventy percent of his true spirit had been consumed in the process, he'd still emerged the winner in the end. In due time, he would recover, and then... become a true emperor!

Gesticulating wildly, the octopi defending the palace coffin opened their mouths wide and shrilled with joy, tentacles wiggling in celebration.

"Lord Demon God, may you live forever and your reign be eternal!" Ge Yanxia threw her head back, braying with laughter.

"All of you will swear allegiance to me now or die!" The demon's smile slipped off his face as he looked at the crowd of immortals.

"I will fight to the death! So I pledge!" Liu Chen stood up, his eyes shining with ghostly fire as he shot a glare of singular viciousness at the demon god.

Yuying and the other eight envoys stood silently in the air, their eyes cold as they looked at the demon. There was only one god in their hearts, and his name was Lu Yun!

"In that case, all of you can d—hrm?"

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The ground suddenly shook violently as a faraway giant stone statue reached them in the blink of an eye.

"The woman with the cosmic constitution belongs to me! To me, Donglin Taihuang!" the statue repeated obsessively.

"What? Donglin Taihuang?!"

"Step aside, step aside all of you, this Yin Qingran has arrived!" Yin Qingran's voice rang out loud and clear. "Demon god, demon ghost, or demon slug, hand over your life!"

Hidden in the crowd of immortals, already planning to surrender to the demon and climb to new heights with his new master, Yin Qingran shuddered convulsively. He could've sworn he'd kept his mouth shut, so why was his voice emitting from his body for some reason?

His head spun at the paradox.

“What is this!” The demon god stood up and looked at the giant statue, expression going dark. The statue’s strength beggared belief! He wouldn’t have been afraid had he been in perfect condition, but not now, when he lacked most of his strength. He only had thirty percent left at his disposal!

More importantly, this stone statue... was charging straight at him!

“Avast, ye cretin!” The demon struck the stone statue with a backhand.

“Those who obstruct me... shall die!” The statue’s stone eyes were lifeless and showed no particular focus. Had it possessed eyes of flesh and blood, the demon god would have realized that the statue’s vision was firmly locked on to a certain speck of dust.

This microscopic particle had landed on Yin Qingran moments ago and spoken a few words before escaping. It was now inside the ruins of the palace coffin. However, the fearsome stone statue fully occupied everyone’s attention, demon god included, so he failed to notice this tiny speck of dust.

From his point of view, he himself was the monster’s target.

“Did Yin Qingran bring a helper?” the demon god mumbled to himself as his fist smashed into the statue’s chest.

Yin Qingran sprawled bonelessly to the ground with abject helplessness. For one reason or another, he’d been scapegoated one time too many.

High above, two mighty figures were trading blows. The demon god had once been an unparalleled powerhouse in the Primeval Era, and after stealing a divine emperor’s true spirit with a soul seed, he was in the prime of life. Backing away from a strange stone statue was naturally out of the question.

For its part, the stone spirit had inherited Donglin Taihuang’s obsession. Come what may, he had to obtain the woman with the cosmic constitution, so to see someone stand in its way drove it wild with rage.

### **Chapter 669: Take Your Place, Tenth Envoy of Samsara**

The demon god expanded to more than three thousand meters tall, his aura tremendously imposing as he fought the stone spirit in close quarters combat.

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“Go, hurry!” Seeing that another monster had shown up to contend with the terrifying demon, the Exalted celestial emperor drew upon the power of his heavenly mandate and sent all immortals out of the tomb, Qi Hai and Lu Yun’s nine followers included.

However, he himself stayed behind. The moment the demon god was born, he became a true celestial emperor in both thought and deed. No longer a ruler who cared only about consolidating his own authority and power, he was one who held all lives in his heart, be they of Exalted Major or the other facets. Anyone could run from this danger, but not the celestial emperor. He had to stay to deal with the demon, even at the cost of his life.

“You have become a true celestial emperor.” Liu Chen calmly showed himself beside the ruler of Exalted Major.

The Exalted heavenly mandate shook as the ninth dao fruit took shape in the celestial emperor's body. Within the heavenly mandate was the heritage of a celestial emperor, which took shape as his ninth origin dao fruit!

Only by bearing the true heart of a celestial emperor and fulfilling the role of a leader who tended to the fate of the entire world could he gain his ninth origin dao fruit!

This dao fruit was extremely powerful, several times more so than the ones the Exalted celestial emperor had plucked himself. It was a dao fruit from the Primordial Era!

During his time in Exalted Major, or under Mount Exalted, to be more precise, Liu Chen had witnessed many imperial epiphanies and acquisitions of the ninth origin dao fruit. He'd lost himself when the last Exalted celestial emperor acquired his ninth fruit, but had regained his clarity in time to see the current celestial emperor truly take on the mantle. What a shame it was that Princess Zhao Qing couldn't see it for herself as well.

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Within the palace coffin, Lu Yun let out a deep breath.

"Fortunately, that fellow doesn't have much of a brain. It's simply under the influence of Donglin Taihuang's obsession!"

The stone spirit was too ponderous. Even the spirit newly born within could only control its body. It would take some time for it to develop intelligence, a luxury that the spirit didn't have.

The palace coffin was wrecked and the throne destroyed by the demon. The three coffins before the throne, however, remained intact.

"Shards of the Gates of the Abyss!" Excitement lit up Lu Yun's eyes and he inhaled deeply. "I have the demon god to thank for destroying the fragment of hell created by the shard. I wouldn't have been able to collect them otherwise."

He couldn't tap into the power of hell at the moment, which would be what he needed to tame a fragment of hell. Fortunately, the demon god had saved him quite a lot of trouble.

"Collect!" With a wave of his hand, the three pitch black coffins flew into a projection of a giant gate behind his back.

Rumble!

Trembling, the outline of the Gates of the Abyss solidified a little more once it took in the three coffins. Also constantly shaking, hell stabilized somewhat with the new additions.

"That does it..." Ge Long cut down an akasha ghost with one stroke and looked over his shoulder at the looming gates, his lips curled into a smile.

Swoosh!

Waving a hand, he summoned starlight from the Cosmic Sea that'd become one with the sky in hell, radiance that took shape as bolts of sword energy furiously striking down akasha ghosts. However, there seemed to be an endless supply of these ghosts; they were impossible to completely eliminate.

The three coffins had only just entered the Gates of the Abyss, and the fragment of hell associated with them was still contained within the coffins. It would take the gates a very long time to fully incorporate the coffins.

"Where's that treasure you were talking about, Ge Long?" Lu Yun transmitted to Ge Long.

"The treasure cannot be forced into your hands, milord," Ge Long answered with resignation. "If it's fated to be yours, you will find it. If it's not..."

His four swords could tame the treasure, but if the swords were taken away now, hell would fall apart.

"Am I just not meant to have the treasure?" Lu Yun stood pensively within the deteriorating palace coffin.

The fight between the two giants grew fiercer, and as time passed, the eyes of the stone spirit turned with the brightening glint of intelligence. It was becoming sentient.

"Zhao Qing set fire to her true spirit with Exalted Daofire, but her body is possessed by the demon god..." Although Lu Yun hadn't been present at that time, he could bring himself up to date through his envoys.

What the daughter of the historic emperor had done only further cemented Lu Yun's determination to make her his envoy.

"I really need to act now, or the body really will become the demon's..."

Once that happened, all traces of Zhao Qing's existence would be erased and Lu Yun wouldn't be able to make her an envoy. He could see the demon's life energy growing increasingly stronger, while traces left by Zhao Qing gradually dispersed.

Liu Chen and the Exalted celestial emperor had joined the fray. Their goal was simple: help the stone spirit kill the demon god!

Although the stone spirit was powerful as well, it was all brawn and no brain. If the demon god was allowed to leave the tomb, Exalted Major would be its to claim!

"Wait!" Lu Yun's eyes gleamed as he took a closer look at the throne. He'd collected Cangyin as his envoy by locating just a tiny shard from her egg. If he could find even a tiny bit of Zhao Qing's remains on the throne, he would be able to do the same with her!

"Fortunately, the Exalted Daofire destroyed only the true spirit, and not the body..." Lu Yun found a long strand of hair on the throne, one that radiated a fierce sword energy. It'd been snipped from Zhao Qing's head when Diexi collected her sword!

With the Spectral Eye, he confirmed that the hair was indeed Zhao Qing's! It was the only trace she'd left in this world before being possessed by the demon!

“Tenth Envoy of Samsara... Take your place!”

Boom!

Hellfire barrelled out of Lu Yun’s body and the Karmic Tree emerged above his head. The long strand of hair ignited as Zhao Qing’s figure slowly materialized before him.

She was naked, like all the other envoys had been in their first appearance, but her lower body was that of a snake’s, her figure the shape of the dao. Long hair cascaded down her form, covering her porcelain skin.

“Zhaoqing, tenth Envoy of Samsara, greets the master!” She sank to her knees, her voice as pleasant as the winding creeks in the mountains.

“What is this?!” screamed the demon god outside the palace coffin as black smoke evaporated from his body, seemingly ignited by some mysterious force.

Swoosh!

With a flash of black light, the demon took full control of Zhao Qing’s body and erased all traces of her existence.

“How have you come back to life, Zhao Qing?!” He turned to see Zhaoqing standing in the palace coffin.

### **Chapter 670: Ten Yama Kings**

Zhaoqing suddenly disappeared, like she’d never been there, as soon as the demon god gave voice to his shock. Liu Chen whirled around frantically, but saw nothing but a man in cyan robes—Yin Qingran.

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Kaboom!

Hell trembled as its laws blared. The Tome of Life and Death materialized and took a position in the sky, radiating black light down onto the ground.

Legions of akasha ghosts wailed in terror as ten giant palaces loomed out of the void and descended upon the patch of civilization in hell, coming down for a firm landing.

Boom!

Great ripples oscillated from the ten palaces and destroyed the roaming legions of invaders. Yuying, Feinie, Aoxue, Xuanxi, Huangqing, Su Xiaoxiao, Cangyin, Xingzi, Luli, and Zhaoqing all manifested replicas and sent them into the giant palaces.

The Ten Halls.

Earth’s myths regarding hell contained mentions of the Yama Kings of the Ten Halls, and the ten Envoys of Samsara precisely filled those spots! Now that they’d taken their positions, a connate cultivation method emerged in their consciousness: the Invincible Yama Method!

With the evolution of hell, the ten envoys were now Lu Yun’s Yama Kings, and a true kingdom of the netherworld was beginning to take shape!

“The kingdom of the netherworld sits upon the eighteen levels of hell to keep them in check. It rules over the realm of the dead, while the Yama Kings of the Ten Halls are its overseers!

“According to the myths of Earth, the true master of hell is the Heavenly Taiyin, also known as the Great Emperor of the Eastern Peak, He Who is Equal to Heaven. Is that the case in this world, and was that being a great emperor of the human race?” Lu Yun lowered his head and fell into deep thought.

There was nothing else for him to do at the moment but quietly watch hell evolve, like he were an outsider completely removed from the proceedings. However, he could clearly feel his strength in hell—in his kingdom—growing stronger and stronger.

“Was the Great Emperor of the Eastern Peak in charge of hell back in the era of human dao? If the Yama Kings of the Ten Halls are real, then what does that make me? Someone like the great emperor? But... based on what the myths say, his control over hell seems inferior to mine.” While in a trance, Lu Yun acquired information about the great emperor from the Tome of Life and Death, including his combat arts and techniques.

Though they were incredibly powerful, they still belonged to a great emperor who had lost, and subsequently been killed in, the battle of Emperors Fall—in other words, a loser. Lu Yun might reference them and extract the essence from the dross, but he wouldn’t view them as treasures that shouldn’t be tampered with. Otherwise, he would only retread the fallen emperor’s path!

His was a path of bold advancement and progress.

The Method of Life and Death and the Invincible Yama Method were two cultivation methods provided by the Tome of Life and Death. They were connate methods tailor-made for their owners, rather than something passed down from the past.

Rumble!

Hell continued trembling as its kingdom took shape, and the netherworld as Lu Yun had known it all along collected into one single layer and moved beneath that kingdom, forming a prison-like minor world and the first of seventeen other faint worlds.

“Eighteen levels of hell? To be in charge of all the reincarnations of the multiverse and pass judgment based on one’s karma?” Lu Yun looked down at the Karmic Tree manifesting above his palm.

Now he understood from where the Karmic Tree derived its name. It would enable him to establish the wheel of reincarnation, determine good from evil, and pass judgment over life and death!

“No!” Lu Yun’s eyes shone with resolution. “All living souls are free. The cycle of life and death mustn’t be controlled by a single individual!”

He was suddenly reminded of how humans had controlled the life and death of all worlds when they owned hell, and how they’d dictated reincarnation of all beings. In the end, every living soul rebelled and the universe itself ostracized the human race. They’d almost gone extinct as a result!

Lu Yun wouldn’t allow that to happen again.

Men had their own wants and needs, which inevitably led to corruption. Such a great responsibility would only bring disaster to everything between heaven and earth if grasped in the hands of a single living soul.

Wham!

Those thoughts prompted Lu Yun to wave a hand and send the Tome of Life and Death shaking. The first level of hell shattered and reintegrated itself with the kingdom of the netherworld, forming a whole, complete world.

“The laws of nature will determine good from evil and preside over the judgment of reincarnation... I will just be me.” Lu Yun cracked a smile, noticing how his nascent spirit had become purer at that moment, and that his cultivation had somehow made a great leap forward. Even the Tome of Life and Death enveloped him in a radiant, blinding light.

It seemed he’d finally gained its approval.

By the dried riverbanks of the Yellow Springs, Hell Flowers swayed in the breeze as living souls popped out from them. Life bustled in the netherworld.

“Who says there can’t be sunlight in hell?” Lu Yun sent out the Divine Fire Bead with a wave of his hand, which then melted into the Cosmic Sea in the sky.

Soft sunlight washed over hell. The pure yang energy within the Divine Fire Bead was insulated by the Cosmic Sea, so the only thing cascading down to the land below was a cold light imbued with yin energy.

Also known as the realm of dead, the netherworld was the counterpart to the world of living. What nourished the outside world would be anathema to hell, if not processed in some way. Meanwhile, the living souls born out of Hell Flowers pitched in to aid her evolution. They’d retained their memories of life, imparting to them true senses of the self.

“Congratulations, milord! Felicitations, milord!” Ge Long ran up to Lu Yun, dancing with joy and excitement. He hadn’t expected Lu Yun to be man enough to forgo control over reincarnation, thereby gaining the approval of the Tome of Life and Death.

If Lu Yun had accepted the power and turned hell into the eighteen levels of the human dao era, he would’ve become nothing more than another Great Emperor of the Eastern Peak. Now, however, Ge Long didn’t dare speculate what his future might look like.

Great Emperor of the Eastern Peak?

Perhaps all of the Yama Kings under Lu Yun’s command would become such great personages.

“Just what are you?” Lu Yun stared at Ge Long and observed him closely: frail figure, hunched back, and an ever present humble smile.

“This old servant is your servant, milord!” Ge Long pointed at the Tome of Life and Death in the air. His name was written on the very first page of the book.



Rolling his eyes, Lu Yun decided against pushing for an answer. He cast his eyes to the edge of his kingdom; the dark void still persisted beyond the light, and the four strange coffins acted as a line of defense.

“Will you tell me where the treasure is now?” Lu Yun said, changing the subject.

Ge Long pointed at Zhaoqing. “She knows!”

Lu Yun had attempted to read her memories, but something had sealed them away and denied him access. It was the simplest seal of time... Zhaoqing had been dead for too long.

“This servant knows where the treasure is, master.” Zhaoqing smiled. “Please follow me!”