

## Necropolis 751

### Chapter 751: Poison

“A holy king from the underworld?” A disquieting voice rang out from a corner of the void as a vivid streak of blue flashed across the sky.

“What was that?!” Alarmed, the holy king leaned slightly backward and snatched at the vivid shadow. His hand closed around a writhing snakeling that hissed furiously and suddenly twisted with a freakish motion, breaking its back to bite the hand that held it.

“Be careful, that’s nascent spirit poison!” Lu Yun quickly called out.

“Nascent spirit poison?” An unnatural blue flashed through Holy King Atrophy’s eyes and slowly crept into his hair and teeth. “Though the poison of a spirit snake is strong, I am immune to it. ...you are a creature of the Blood Sea, no wonder...”

The light in the holy king’s eyes dimmed. “There will only be two holy kings in the underworld upon my death... the underworld needs guardians... I sincerely beseech you to become a holy king and keep watch over the tombs of that world.”

Hiss hiss hiss.

Lu Yun didn’t have a chance to respond before the Spiriteater Demon Snake emerged out of the shadows. Its enormous head swung toward the holy king and sought to swallow him whole.

“Oh fuck OFF!!” Lu Yun roared and let loose with everything he had, punching straight at the snake’s head.

A brilliant ball of bloody light exploded from the snake king and unfolded in the air like it was a mini-Blood Sea, sending him flying backward with great force.

“So the Spiriteater Demon Snake is the creature from the Blood Sea!” Abrupt realization dawned on him. The two trails of footprints by the Blood Sea shores must have been misdirection. Holy King Atrophy wouldn’t have been unaware that a creature from those waters had made landfall, and indeed, he’d been on guard against them all along. If there was anything that could harm him in the world of immortals, it’d be something from those bloody depths.

Lu Yun and the holy king had both noticed the snake king’s existence early on, but ignored it since its nascent spirit poison couldn’t affect them. Instead, they’d focused their attentions on the smear of blood hidden in the void. Neither of them had expected that to be a diversion, and for the real threat to be the Spiriteater Demon Snake!

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“It’s said that one can obtain the underworld if one devours a holy king. With the fortification of the world that’s existed since the dawn of time, I’ll be able to break through my current limitations and reach the realm of the primeval human kings...”

Poisonous radiance of vivid blue shimmered around the snake king, marked by an undertone of bloody qi. Its maw yawned open once again as it slithered toward Holy King Atrophy.

In the air, countless rotting kun pulsed in anger and barreled down on the snake as if they'd gone mad. However, all of them shrieked in anguish as soon as they came in contact with the venomous light around the snake. They tumbled to the ground, never to move again.

So even the rotting kun couldn't approach the Spiriteater Demon Snake.

"What an incredible nascent spirit poison!" Lu Yun rushed over again and waved his hand, popping a middle-aged man in long jade-green robes into existence. His hair and eyebrows were green, and even his pupils were green. Toxic green smoke discharged from all over his being.

The Poison Fiend!

One of Lu Yun's Infernum, this was an ultimate entity of poison that Lü Guhong of Mist Land had refined. However, it'd gone to Su Xiaoxiao and Xingzi once they'd arrived on the scene. After being reworked by the two Yama Kings, the entity that was closer to a weapon spirit had evolved into a real life form.

After truly coming to life, the Poison Fiend began cultivating an exceedingly vicious poison method and was now a void-ascended immortal. Being a new immortal, he wasn't all that strong yet, but the poison he possessed was absolutely terrifying and on a similar level to the snake king's nascent spirit poison.

One poison affected only the nascent spirit, while the other targeted only the physical body. Blue light and green smoke intertwined in the air when the two great poisons clashed against each other. They tore and ripped into each other, giving rise to violent poisonous fluctuations.

Greatly alarmed, the snake king hastily reared backward and didn't dare touch the green smoke. At the same time, the Poison Fiend didn't dare let the blue light graze its skin.

"These disciples humbly request the presence of the Ninth Heavens Demon-Destroying Patriarch to root out evil!" Two coolly composed voices delivered loud proclamations, summoning a sky full of stars and coalescing starlight into a tall and lean figure.

The Ninth Heavens Demon-Destroying Patriarch!

Outside Life Province, the Lin brothers struck a steady pose and brandished longswords while chanting continuously. After setting foot into immortality, they could summon a much stronger Ninth Heavens Demon-Destroying Patriarch than before. What had previously been a blurry figure with indistinct features was now a real, solid man in his mid-thirties. Penetrating clear eyes, chiseled face, and a small crown of pure gold in his hair, he wore a daoist robe embroidered with the Big Dipper. Long hair flowing around his face emphasized his otherworldly tendencies.

"The Cosmic Skycarver," he uttered in a magnetic voice the moment he landed.

Lu Yun quickly lobbed the sword in his hands to the patriarch. The second it entered the patriarch's grasp, the stars over his head brightened and rays of cosmic radiance crisscrossed to concentrate into various starstones.

"It really is the Ninth Heavens Demon-Destroying Patriarch!" Lu Yun's eyes lit up. The power of starstones and power of the cosmos originated from the patriarch. When Chen Xiao found one for Qing Yu to suppress her cosmic constitution and poison curse, he'd unwittingly stumbled upon the patriarch's legacy!

Dang, those two monkeys of mine did good this time and summoned the real patriarch! But the patriarch's only meant to subdue ghosts and evil... Oh, wait, since the Spiriteater Demon Snake died and then came back to life in the Blood Sea, it counts as a dead spirit.

When the Ninth Heavens Demon-Destroying Patriarch struck out with a lunge, the starlight in the firmament gathered into a terrifying longsword of cosmic power.

Hummmmm.

Any location the longsword passed through thoroughly expelled all traces of blue light or green smoke. The Poison Fiend squalled with anguish and took off running. He'd been grazed by the light from the Cosmic Skycarver and was billowing black smoke from his wound. As he'd just become an immortal, he had no resistance whatsoever to the strength carving through the sky.

"Gyak gyak gyak—" vocalized the snake king. He took human form with a brisk shake, becoming a menacing man in a long crystalline blue robe. An enormous long spear of bone scintillated with blue light in his hand, and it took only a heartbeat for the snake king to launch into a run at the sword.

Boom!

Flung back from recoil, the patriarch grunted and fell a few steps back as well.

"I might have shown you some respect if you were alive, Ninth Heavens Demon-Destroying Patriarch! But you're just an image summoned by two true immortals, so what can you do to me!" The snake king threw his head back with a howl, transforming his spear into a snake and lunging at the patriarch.

At this moment, a bolt of blue and purple flashed through the sky and intersected, both making a beeline for the snake king.

Boom!

The combined bolts smashed the white bone spear to pieces.

### **Chapter 752: Carmine Eternal**

Xing Chen stood protectively in front of the Ninth Heavens Demon-Destroying Patriarch, wielding the weapon of space in one hand and the weapon of time in the other. When the two dao weapons intersected and were augmented by the six paths of his nascent spirit, he deployed the reincarnation of space-time.

"You!" yelled the Spiriteater Demon Snake, almost vomiting blood as he looked at the broken bone spear in his hand. This was his ultimate weapon, the spine of a primeval human king. It'd been refined with his core venomous fang, but had been destroyed after one blow of Lu Yun's dao weapon!

Sadly, there was no time for the snake to wallow in misery—the Ninth Heavens Demon-Destroying Patriarch and Xing Chen were coming for his head.

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Lu Yun's primary body arrived beside Holy King Atrophy and shoveled into the latter's mouth all of the various antidotes and medicines that Xingzi and Su Xiaoxiao had refined.

“Don’t waste them.” The holy king shook his head. “This is more the power of the Blood Sea than just a poison of the nascent spirit. There is no one in this world who can cure it.”

Poisonous blue light had completely invaded his body, but he clung to the hem of Lu Yun’s clothes with his remaining strength. “Promise me, become a holy king of the underworld, protect the underworld! If the underworld is destroyed, the world of immortals will be no more, and all life will fall to Chaos!”

“You’re not going to die.” Lu Yun called upon the Tome of Life and Death, slowly infusing the book’s strength into the holy king’s body. He wasn’t going to try and dispel the nascent spirit poison; instead, he was going to just bring the holy king back to life.

Death art: Resurrection!

This death art could revive anything that’d died within the last seven days, but Lu Yun didn’t want to wait and elected to forcefully continue Holy King Atrophy’s life before then. The nascent spirit poison had ended the holy king’s life prematurely, so Lu Yun would create a new one instead!

“What... is... going... what are you doing?!” Holy King Atrophy yelled in disbelief upon discovering that vitality was returning to his soul. His originally dead body was also slowly coming back to life as well!

“No, wait, I can’t come back to life! Stop, stop!!” he yelled frantically.

Lu Yun frowned, then wordlessly redirected the flow of energy from the death art to the nascent spirit and soul instead. As life drained back out of his body, the holy king slowly retained his calm. He gaped at Lu Yun, unable to speak for the longest time.

“You can... just return Holy Lord Ashu back to life with a snap of your fingers...” he murmured, having just experienced a complete cycle of life and death. After being poisoned, he’d skipped the process of actually dying since Lu Yun had saved him.

“He doesn’t need it.” Lu Yun shook his head and stood up. “He can return to life through his own strength. Also, I can be a holy king of the underworld. My replica Xing Chen has refined the organs of heaven and earth. He’s stronger than me and so is more suited to be a holy king.

“He’s refined out of the sacred shamanic item the Nine Yin Soul-Parting Wood. As a connate constitution of extreme yin, he’ll be even more powerful in the underworld. What do you think?”

He floated over to Qing Yu as he spoke, remaining solidly planted in front of her. Two hours had passed, and two hours remained. Up in the air, Mo Yi, Chen Xiao, Qing Buyi, and Lu Feng had also joined the fray against the Spiriteater Demon Snake.

Wavelets of the Blood Sea surged around the snake king and an unending tide of creatures reared from the bloody depths, pouncing toward the Central World. If Holy King Atrophy had come to the world of immortals for Lu Yun, then the snake king was here for the Central World.

All of Nephrite Major was overcast in a deep crimson. If it wasn’t for Zhao Shengguang deploying his heavenly mandate and directing the celestial palace in protective maneuvers, the major would’ve been fully tainted by the Blood Sea by now.

By this point in time, everyone on Lu Yun's side had committed themselves to battle. The thirteen heavyweights of the merchant alliance, five forefathers of the Star Demon Sect, Venerated Sacrosanct Demon Sovereign, and the ten Yama Kings were facing off against the Blood Sea.

After Holy King Atrophy revived, he shot into the sky and punched out at the snake king, almost destroying the void with his terrifying strength. This time however, the snake king's strength grew to match his.

The Blood Sea to the southwest of Life Province also streamed into the air, imbuing the snake king with even greater power and turning him snow white. He returned to snake form, raising curtains of scarlet light throughout the sky. Though the punch connected, Holy King Atrophy did absolutely nothing to the snake, and neither was Lu Yun's reincarnation of space-time having an effect anymore either.

"The Blood Sea has stirred into action, the Spiriteater Demon Snake coming ashore is just a scouting party! What do they want? Do they really want to destroy the world of immortals?!" Holy King Atrophy called out, "Old fellow, aren't you afraid that my underworld will wage war on your Blood Sea?"

"Wage war?" a chilling voice answered from the bloody waters. "There are only three holy kings left in the underworld and you are hard pressed to defend yourself as well. The holy lords in your domain all have their own plans in mind and want to make their escape. Wage war? With what?"

"Indeed, the underworld is rotten and decayed, struggling for its last breaths," another voice sounded. "This time, my Blood Sea will take advantage of an inactive immortal restriction to assimilate the entire world in one go. The Blood Sea will be the masters of the world of immortals!"

The key to such ambitions lay within the Central World. Although the twenty-fourth facet was a dead world, it was still part of the world of immortals. If the Blood Sea attempted to conquer the rest of the world, it would certainly face backlash from the immortal dao. Having just taken form, the Blood Sea couldn't defy the will of the immortal dao yet.

However, the Central World was a dead world. If they began there, the immortal dao wouldn't pay attention to anything they did in that facet.

With a thorough eruption of power and the snarls of the snake king, both entities churned toward Qing Yu over the Central World.

"Begone!" Unmoving thus far, the seventy-two peak origin dao golden warriors finally leapt into action. Like they rehearsed beforehand, they moved in perfect synchronization and flared with iridescent light, coalescing an enormous shield in midair.

Wham—

The snake king crashed into the shield and bounced right off, explosively rendering the warriors into dust as well.

Boom!

Boom!

Boom!

Boom!

Four enormous booms sounded in the air as four enormous coffins loomed out of the void. The Enneawym Coffinbearers, Nine-Phoenix Casket, Enneaqilin Coffinbiers, and Ninefooted Turtle Cist!

They weren't accompanied by the four swords this time. Instead, an enormous red snake slowly manifested in the center of the coffins.

"Carmine... Eternal!" shrieked the snake king in terror.

### **Chapter 753: Violetshade**

Slumbering beneath the Karmic Tree all this time, Carmine Eternal had recovered enough to emerge from hell. However, she remained in snake form and the wings that'd been folded on her back were gone.

The Blood Sea trembled the second she appeared, as if affected by some sort of power.

"Impossible, how are you still alive?!" Vivid blue drained out of the Spiriteater Demon Snake's eyes, leaving them a terrified stark white.

"I was indeed dead." Carmine Eternal's voice was as biting as deep frost. "But you idiots recreated the Blood Sea in the world, so I came back to life again. Whether it is the Blood Sea of the past or the Blood Sea now... I am eternal so long as it exists."

Scarlet light flared from her body and exerted control over the Blood Sea in the skies of Nephrite Major.

Despair wrapped around the snake king; he was imprisoned in midair and couldn't move a muscle. The creatures that'd scrambled out of the bloody depths all shuddered in horror and scampered right back.

"Carmine Eternal's core is heavily damaged. She lingers between life and death and hasn't fully resurrected!" a great voice boomed out of the Blood Sea. "Kill her now..."

"Who do you think you're killing?" A second figure appeared over the four coffins. *Ge Long*. He wielded a longsword shimmering with hazy light in his hand and turned around to look coldly into the scarlet depths.

"You, you, you're alive too, old monster!" With a solemn exclamation, the voice in the sea fell silent.

*Ribbet!*

*Ribbet!*

*Ribbet!*

Enormous frog croaks reverberated in the void as a frog half a kilometer long each hopped out of nothing at all.

"A Spiriteater Demon Frog!!" shrieked the snake king. He thrashed and gyrated wildly, desperately trying to break free of Carmine Eternal's restraints. Alas, nothing had an effect no matter what he tried.

"Haven't they all gone extinct? What is one doing here?!" he demanded with petrified shock.

Spiriteater Demon Frogs and Spiriteater Demon Snakes shared exceedingly similar names, but the two were natural rivals. A fight to the death ensued whenever the two species met each other as they could swallow the other to fortify themselves.

The Spiriteater Demon Frog popping into existence was just at the true immortal realm—tasty snacks for the snake king under any other circumstances. However, Carmine Eternal keeping him in check meant that he was a sitting fly for these frogs.

“RIBBIT!” This frog was naturally the one outside the Sword Barrow. Having set foot into immortality, its eyes sparkled with excitement as it focused on the snake king. Without further ado, it hopped over and swallowed the enormous snake with one bite.

Hissing with abandon, the snake king sought to break free of the hold, but he couldn’t call on any of his power and was also being countered by his natural bane. His protestations grew fainter and fainter until finally, they sounded forth no longer.

The Spiriteater Demon Frog belched with satisfaction and swayed down from the air, erupting with loud snores when it hit the ground.

Clear blue skies slowly returned to the firmament. Ge Long and Carmine Eternal returned to hell; the four evil coffins remained arrayed in the air to protect Qing Yu and the Central World. The five forefathers of the Star Demon Sect worshipped the coffins before taking their leave.

When he saw their actions, Lu Yun finally fully understood why the sect had bizarrely come under his control and take him as their leader, and why the desolate willow was so respectful toward him. It was all because of these coffins!

Or more precisely... Ge Long.

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Lu Yun’s strength receding marked the passage of the full four hours; Xing Chen also returned to the arcane dao immortal realm. A purple haze flashed by Lu Yun’s side before a shapely figure walked out of the light.

Violetgrave’s corpse—the dread corpse.

Having undergone three uses of the dread corpse’s strength, it was freed from playing the role of a battle zombie and could reemerge once again. However, she seemed a bit different from when Lu Yun first met her.

The deathly air about her and the strength that belonged to a zombie had vanished, replaced by the power of the living. Oddly enough, her soul was alive, but her body was dead. In fact, she was a living dead now, the same kind of existence as the tomb keepers of the underworld.

It was the thoughts of the dread corpse that inhabited her body and not the soul of Empress Myrtlestar. They were transmuted to a soul due to the empress’ power. When she’d used her combat arts to create three uses of the corpse puppet for Lu Yun, each exercise had consumed the power of death within the dread corpse. Upon the consumption of every last bit of death within the corpse, it’d birthed a soul that’d returned to yang and was therefore alive.

She possessed all of Empress Myrtlestar's combat arts and memories, but was her own person completely different from the empress. Her strength now was what the empress had possessed at her peak—beyond the principal realm!

"You are free," Lu Yun spoke quietly without looking at her.

"Indeed, I am free." The newly born living dead mused pensively, "The world is quite vast, but where is there a place for me?"

"Come to the underworld." Holy King Atrophy approached her. "Become our fifth holy king!"

She lowered her head in thought, then raised it for a nod. "That will do. I will go to the underworld and be your fifth holy king. From now on, my name is... Violetshade."

"Good, wonderful, most excellent!" Holy King Atrophy applauded loudly. He'd come for Lu Yun this time and possessed a backup plan of forcefully abducting the young man if unsuccessful. Most surprisingly, Lu Yun was willing to send his replica with the organs of the world to the underworld, and now a living dead made from the corpse of a primordial empress was willing to be the fifth!

Fourth Holy King Xing Chen and Fifth Holy King Violetshade!

"However!" The holy king suddenly turned solemn. "You need to think this through. There is only duty and responsibility for a holy king of the underworld, no authority! There will be no return once you enter."

He was speaking to Violetshade. As Lu Yun's replica and refined from the Nine Yin Soul-Parting Wood, Xing Chen wasn't a living dead and could freely come and go as he wished in the underworld.

The same was hardly the case for Violetshade, who nodded wordlessly in acknowledgement.

"I would ask that the two fellow daoists stand guard over my dao partner," Lu Yun suddenly requested of the holy king and Violetshade.

"Do not worry." The holy king scanned the premises, noting the immortals that'd clustered around again after Lu Yun lost his strength. He and Violetshade remained where they were as two door guardians, deterring everyone and even the demon god from approaching.

"Since I am the fourth holy king of the underworld, I can thereby pardon Ashu and allow him freedom in the world of immortals," Xing Chen suddenly said.

#### **Chapter 754: The Dust Settles**

"Ashu..." Holy King Atrophy's forehead smoothed out from a slight frown. "He is the strongest holy lord of the underworld and bears the potential to become a holy king. But since you are willing to be the fourth, fellow daoist, we will pressure him no further."

Lu Yun inclined his head; hidden off to the side and not daring to show himself all this time, Ashu could finally heave a long sigh of relief. He really didn't want to stay in the underworld—or it might be more accurate to say that none of the living dead wanted to remain in a world of perpetual darkness. The only ones who retained their clarity of thought and willingly guarded the underworld was the three holy kings.



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Time passed by slowly. The Blood Sea returned to calm and immortals all over the world silently focused on Qing Yu. She was now in the skies over Dusk Province, the Central World floating in front of her as a ball of light the size of a thumb.

Qing Yu had ascended to immortality.

There was no heavenly tribulation, no tribulation beast, and no phenomenon of ascension. She'd become an immortal in a very matter-of-fact manner, as if that outcome was the most natural and given thing in the world.

A ray of resplendent immortal light circled around her, imparting an incomparably sacred air to the dao sovereign. The immortal dao resonated and the world of immortals trembled. For some reason, a most peculiar feeling blossomed in everyone's hearts, as if... the world had become a bit more sturdy.

Having been split asunder, it'd been glued into one piece by the four great oceans. But now, the broken world seemed to come together as one whole and form a true world of immortals.

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A dark red door hovered quietly in a patch of unknown void. Nine great figures sat cross-legged on the ground in front of it, doggedly supporting the door drenched with blood.

Corpses in imperial robes lay scattered around them. Some of them were whole and others ripped to pieces, their features indistinguishable. These were the successive generations of past celestial emperors. Innumerable bodies of dead divines lay even further out beyond the initial ring of celestial emperors. They all wielded sharp weapons and faced the door, as if ready to assemble into formation and charge at enemies on a moment's notice.

"The doors to the world of immortals are about to open." A striking figure beneath the door turned around to look at the previous crop of celestial emperors. He possessed four heads, eight arms, and was clad in golden armor. He looked the same as an origin divine of the legends.

"My life force is spent and I have strength no more... It is up to you now." Fresh blood welled out of all four of his mouths. "My... my poor divine race... We took on the mission of protecting the world when everything teetered on a knife's edge, but received only the title of the world's sinners after standing faithful for twenty thousand years..."

The divine tilted his head to the sky and heaved a long sigh before breathing out his last and toppling to the ground. For a moment, the light of blood on the door shone even brighter and dyed the skies a brilliant scarlet.

"Everyone, how much longer can we hold out?" Zhao Fengyang asked, his voice deep and raspy, like two pieces of withered wood rubbing against each other.

"Seventy years," someone else answered. "I will be at the end of my rope in seventy years. Even if I don't die, I won't be able to protect the door any longer."

“Seventy years...” Zhao Fengyang sighed. “I’d thought we were the strongest cohort of celestial emperors over the past eighty thousand years, but who would’ve thought that we’d only last seventy years!

“May the latest generation comprehend the true benevolence of our positions after seventy years and come replace us then.”

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The dust settled on everything. Holy King Atrophy returned to the underworld with Violetshade and Xing Chen. Everything returned to normal in the world of immortals, as if nothing had happened at all.

However, everyone knew full well that great things were afoot. Qing Yu was an immortal now and had refined the Central World, becoming its mistress. As such, the thing that everyone was afraid of would soon come to pass.

The sacred land of Dusk Province!

Lu Yun no longer had any other concerns tying him down, so his next course of action was naturally to build his sacred land. This was now an incontrovertible truth set in stone.

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“I hadn’t thought that things would turn out like this,” murmured Empress Myrtlestar next to Qing Yu. “Violetshade coming back to life and taking my past self to the underworld to be a holy king... and I... I truly revived as well.”

She walked out of the Scroll of Shepherding Immortals as a real life form, soul fragment no longer. Having reformed her soul and utilized the projection of the Dao Flower for her body, she was a connate dao constitution in name and form.

Though her true spirit was immensely powerful in her reborn body, the cultivation of her past life had departed with Violetshade and her past body. Empress Myrtlestar now was just an ordinary mortal without any experience in cultivation whatsoever, the purest of uncut jade.

“You and Violetshade have both severed your ties with the Empress Myrtlestar of your past lives. You are no longer that renowned empress.”

Myrtlestar nodded. “I was not the Great Empress of the East to begin with. I only filled in for the position after the previous great emperor fell in battle.

“I am a new me, so we need no longer mention the title of the Imperial Lady of the East.” She opened her palm, allowing the faintly sparkling Imperial Star to slowly rise from her palm.

Whoosh!

The violet starstone abruptly vanished into the air.

The underworld.

In the process of receiving a holy king’s legacy, Violetshade started as the Imperial Star landed before her.

“For the good of all!” The three preexisting holy kings—Holy Kings Atrophy, Antiquity, and Desolation—of the underworld applauded loudly when they saw the arrival of the starstone.

“You will be the first among holy kings after receiving the Imperial Star, fellow daoist,” Holy King Atrophy laughed heartily.

Holy King Violetshade nodded silently, then glanced at Xing Chen next to her. “I know where the spleen is.”

“No hurry.” Xing Chen shook his head. “I’ve just obtained the kidneys and haven’t fully refined them yet. I’d be biting off more than I can chew if I took the spleen now. We can take a look at them when I’ve fully assimilated the kidneys.

“Instead, I would like to know the truth of what happened a hundred thousand years ago.” He turned to Holy King Atrophy.

“What happened a hundred thousand years ago?” The holy king shook his head. “We don’t know who they were either. We counted eighteen holy kings a hundred thousand years ago, and only the three of us are left after that great war.”

“And what about now? The underworld is still devouring the world of immortals.”

“Such has been the law of the universe, established since the dawn of time,” answered the foremost holy king, Desolation. “As the underworld devours the world of immortals, so does the world of immortals devour the underworld.”

He waved a hand and projected a portrait of yin-yang fish in the air. “This is the relationship between the underworld and the world outside of it.”

Xing Chen blinked, staring at the picture of the white fish biting the tail of the black fish, and the black fish biting the white fish as well. He finally nodded in the end.

“However, there was once a heavenly boundary separating the underworld from the rest and all operated in accordance with the law. That boundary is on the verge of collapse...” Holy King Desolation sighed; his two peers were equally resigned.

“Is this world really the underworld in lieu of hell?” Xing Chen murmured to himself.

### **Chapter 755: The Origins of the Coffins**

“The underworld isn’t a version of hell, it’s the world’s mausoleum,” Holy King Antiquity suddenly spoke up. “A very, very long time ago, there was no underworld. But something happened, and so this world was born.

“Buried here are the ancient eras and civilization found through time, making the underworld the mausoleum of the world.”

After a pensive pause, Xing Chen nodded.

“There is something you must do.” The holy king’s tone turned serious. “It has to do with the divine race!”

Xing Chen met his eyes.

“The divine race—gods and the divine spirits they created—are the guardians of heaven and earth. They guided every newborn civilization, and they protected us for the first eighty thousand years after the great war.

“However, history has been distorted to paint them as sinners who were exiled from the world of immortals.

“You must clear their names!” Holy King Desolation implored gravely. “The four Abysses of Divine Burial in the world of immortals must be levelled as well. The divines imprisoned there are all heroes who have done a great service for life itself.”

Xing Chen nodded with a solemn expression. He’d long picked up on the signs and had wanted to head to the Skandha Range for an answer from the desolate willow. The holy king’s words confirmed his and Qing Yu’s speculations.

“I will look into this. If this is the truth, I will level the four abysses.” Xing Chen didn’t immediately give the holy king a promise, not this time. He wouldn’t make the final decision until he verified the truth with his own eyes. He’d already experienced too many twists and turns in this world to take this at face value.

He didn’t ask about the abyss in the celestial master tomb. As no divine spirits were buried there, it was established only to seal the world’s lungs.

The world’s heart had been in Holy Lord Ashu’s possession, the divine spirit within eradicated. Lu Yun believed it was only a matter of time before the spleen came into the hands of the underworld’s tomb keepers as well.

His replica would have to receive the heritage of holy kings in order to become one himself. He would then be granted power that rivalled a primeval human king. However, the power belonged only to the underworld and Xing Chen.

Once Xing Chen received the heritage of the underworld, a new nascent spirit would be born inside of him, severing his connection to the six paths of Lu Yun’s nascent spirit, thereby ensuring that he would lose usage of the death arts as well.

Lu Yun would no longer be able to share Xing Chen’s power through his nascent spirit, and his cultivation would fall from arcane immortal back to the august immortal realm. That wasn’t a problem for him, though. He’d already come up with a plan when he sent Xing Chen to become a holy king of the underworld.

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Empress Myrtlestar also changed her name. Her official name Myrtlestar was derived from the Imperial Star she’d refined. Now that she’d given the star to Violetshade, she naturally wasn’t going to keep the old name.

She was now Fuying—her name before she became a great empress. About to set foot on the path of cultivation anew, Ge Long suddenly appeared to offer to be her master.

Fuying knew about Ge Long and had guessed who he was when she saw the sword formation in Dusk Province. Therefore, she didn't hesitate to accept his proposal.

"Did you kill my people?" Arriving at the edge of the kingdom in hell, Fuying stared dumbly at the Enneawym Coffinbearers, bleak melancholy flashing through her eyes.

Her people, a tribe entirely of emperors, had been slaughtered overnight. She herself was no exception; they were then buried in the Skandha Range and formed the basis of its curse. She didn't know how she'd died... but recalled seeing the Enneawym Coffinbearers that terrible night. She didn't know how to react upon seeing the coffin again.

Although her people were still bound to be erased from the world in the great war a hundred thousand years ago, that tragedy was a blade stabbing into her heart. She had to understand how her people were killed. She had to assuage the hatred in her heart.

Ge Long looked up at the four coffins. They had once been among the most powerful individuals in the world, but now, they were harbingers of endless catastrophe. He shook his head. "Not I, the four coffins were tamed by Sir Lu Yun. I merely used them to nurture my four sword spirits."

Fuying wasn't the only one stunned by the revelation; Lu Yun was just as surprised. He'd come to hell to listen in on Ge Long's conversation with Fuying, and this went beyond his expectations.

He'd thought that the Enneawym Coffinbearers belonged to Ge Long... but it turned out that it, along with the Nine-Phoenix Casket, Enneaqilin Coffinbiers, and Ninefooted Turtle Cist, had been all tamed by himself!

What the Star Demon Sect and Skandha Range worshipped wasn't Lu Yun or Ge Long, but the four coffins!

"The coffins used to be four powerful beings who could rival great emperors! They were the ancestors of the dragon, phoenix, qilin, and turtle clans, to be exact.

"Once upon a time, a madman cultivated the demonic method as a human and established the demonic dao. Eventually, he was enthralled by the demonic dao and committed great atrocities. I was the one tasked to kill him.

"However, the fiend cultivated a strange method that rendered him almost unkillable. I couldn't destroy him completely even after hacking him to pieces.

"In the end, I set up the sword formation and severed his body with the strength of my four swords. The ancestors of the four clans volunteered their bodies to bury the fiend piecemeal in coffins to seal him.

"After that, the dragon, phoenix, qilin, and turtle clans were revered as the four auspicious divine spirits, and the four coffins sealed," Ge Long told the tale at a measured pace. "Unfortunately, the fiend's demonic power was so great that he turned the coffins to evil, which then gave birth to the blood dragon, phoenix, qilin, and turtle. The four blood demons wreaked havoc all over the world.

"The demon god who's taken over the true spirit of the Exalted celestial emperor is the heir to the fiend once sealed in the coffins."

Lu Yun listened quietly to Ge Long's recounting. The man spoke of a myth that had been long lost to history. He was reminded of the Enneawrym Coffinbearers layout in Dusk City that'd damaged the earthen vein under the province and destroyed its fortunes.

In fact, the layout had become tangible and attempted to devour Lu Yun, but the Tome of Life and Death within him emerged and subdued the layout.

The first time that Lu Yun had seen the true body of the Enneawrym Coffinbearers was in hell. There, it'd transcended space to take the blood dragon that was Aoxue, but Lu Yun had stopped it. That was when the Tome of Life and Death had truly tamed the coffin.

The four coffins were a collective. Once the Enneawrym Coffinbearers was tamed, the Nine-Phoenix Casket, Enneaqilin Coffinbiers, and Ninefooted Turtle Cist followed it into hell without protest.

"I'd already found myself again when Sir Lu Yun subdued the four coffins, so I refined them again and buried my four swords in them. As for the corpse of the fiend once resting inside, I destroyed it with the power Empress Vastspace left in Vastspace Mountain." Recalling something, Ge Long grinned brilliantly into the darkness at the edge of the kingdom of hell and added, "Oh, right, with your power as well."

There, a faint white figure scowled ferociously.

Lu Yun nodded, remembering what had happened in Vastspace Mountain. The four coffins had gathered and simultaneously opened their lids, allowing an enormous human skeleton to walk out. That must have been the remains of the demonic fiend.

"Everything related to the four blood demons and the four coffins in the world of immortals is the fiend's doing, including the curse of the Skandha Extinction Tomb within the Skandha Range.

"You must be careful, sir. The fiend is very powerful. Although his soul has scattered and his body decimated, his true spirit isn't so easily destroyed." Ge Long's expression turned grave. "When his body parts gathered in Vastspace Mountain, a chaos tribulation struck and destroyed Witherdew Major... The target of the tribulation was the fiend's true spirit!"

"What?" Lu Yun started.

"The fiend's true spirit wasn't in the coffins, but in the altar at the Star Demon Sect. Now that it's been destroyed, the true spirit must have reincarnated." Ge Long shook his head. "If the fiend is allowed to grow, he'll become a demon sovereign and break free of those from a hundred thousand years ago."

The implications of his words were clear: The fiend hadn't willingly committed his actions in the world of immortals or the business with the blood demons. He'd been controlled.

Lu Yun could guess by whom he had been controlled—beings like the akasha ghosts and Lu Shenhou. Those the immortal emperor referred to as the enemies.

"What about you?" Lu Yun asked, enunciating every word as he stared at "Ge Long". "You... aren't the Ge Long I met at first, are you? You must be someone of great importance. Why are you here? How did you become my follower? The name written in the book is Ge Long's and not yours."

"I..." Ge Long sighed. "I am dead and I have always been here. Once you arrived and became hell's master, sir, I became your servant. Ge Long was the first being you killed after your arrival in the world

of immortals. That is why I became Ge Long, similar to how you became the young governor of Dusk Province.

“Ge Long was no regular man, either. He was a descendent of the primordial demon celestial master. That gave me a demonic streak, which is, of course, how I am able to refine the coffins burying the fiend’s body and make them mine.”

Ge Long chuckled. He’d become a living dead as soon as his name was written into the Tome of Life and Death. He needed to constantly absorb yin energy and malice to regain his sense of self. That was why he’d been wreathed in thick demonic energy during that time and formed the habit of throwing his head at anything that contained what he needed.

### **Chapter 756: Gates to the World of Immortals**

Everything proceeded in an orderly fashion.

The Dusk restriction against immortals had vanished—incorporated into the Central World and refined by Qing Yu. Constrained by the restriction all this time, the human demon regained his freedom and was in fact stronger than when the restriction was in place.

A full seven days passed after Qing Yu’s ascension to immortality. All was calm and tranquil in these seven days, as if everything in the world was as normal as before.

This took quite a few powerhouses of the world aback, since if it were up to them, they would’ve jumped right into establishing the sacred land of immortal dao so that all beings in the world could worship them. The current Lu Yun absolutely had the right to do so.

After all these battles, though Lu Yun himself didn’t possess great strength and often had to rely on others, what he could call upon had been validated by the world. If anyone—not just Lu Yun—wished to establish a sacred land, they needed to experience challenges from everyone in what was called a human tribulation.

He’d successfully endured the human tribulation and possessed the capital needed to truly establish a sacred land. Therefore, the world waited with bated breath for him to finally materialize his plans.

However, he and Qing Yu chose to depart Dusk Province hand in hand.

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A glimmering white avenue shot into the skies and soared up into the highest reaches of the atmosphere. It was the main body of the Path of Ingress—Nephrite Major’s greatest treasure. Zhao Shengguang had gifted it to Lu Yun as it could be used to greater effect in his hands.

Naturally, Lu Yun didn’t accept this gift without offering anything in return. After all, the Path of Ingress was very important to the major, the basis on which its protection were based. His response was to send the Black Tortoise to Xiankan.

Nephrite Major possessed four great legions—Azure Dragon, White Tiger, Vermilion Bird, and Black Tortoise. They were the four greatest troops of the major and their battle formations were based off the four divine beasts.

At peerless immortal, Black Tortoise wasn't all that strong, but it was a real divine beast formed from the divine energy of the north. If the Black Tortoise Legion of Nephrite Major meditated on its form, they would be able to summon a true Black Tortoise divine spirit when they assembled into battle formation and become even stronger.

In certain respects, possessing a living Black Tortoise was even more important to the major than the Path of ingress.

Of course, with Zhao Shenguang's pestering and insatiable personality, he came calling for the other three divine beasts as well. Lu Yun kicked him out with one hefty punt.

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The Path of Ingress traversed heaven and earth like a snow-white chain.

"We're here." Qing Yu mentioned softly with a raise of her eyebrows.

They were at the highest reaches of the world of immortals. If they looked down, they would overlook the nine majors, ten lands, four immortal seas, and four great oceans. Each of the facets were different sizes and in fact, shards of a world embedded in this local area of space.

In actuality, each of the facets had evolved their own forces and manifested personal mandates. As time went on, the relationship between each of them would continuously decline until they formed independent worlds. When that happened, the power of the four great oceans would no longer constrain the facets and the world of immortals would collapse, never to be whole again.

The boundless starry sky surrounded them, also known as the outer realm and where Lu Feng had battled Yin Jiuying. Sparkling, crystalline stars floated around Lu Yun and Qing Yu. They were starstones instead of real stars—the culmination of the energy of the stars. The real cosmos was to be found outside the reaches of the world of immortals. Here, they were still in its upper atmosphere.

"This is the place, but we can't see it." Qing Yu frowned. "Only by refining all of the mandates of the world and perceiving the heart of a celestial emperor will we be able to see the gates to the world of immortals."

Dense information of death flooded into Lu Yun when he opened the Spectral Eye.

"This is the place alright... previous generations of celestial emperors and all sorts of divines died here..." he murmured. "The origins of that ancient great war are here too! But, apart from the denizens of the world of immortals, I don't see any information about the enemy. ...open!"

Black and white light suddenly flashed in front of them as the Formation Orb appeared over Lu Yun's head. Its light swept the emptiness, projecting the truth of the place they stood in.

It was a dusky and crimson land—the red dirt underfoot plainly crushed bones drenched with blood. An enormous scarlet door rose at the end of this territory; bloody light danced upon it as boundless killing intent flooded this land.

Nine great figures sat crosslegged on the ground in a strange formation, constantly battling the malice from the other side of the door. Lu Yun glimpsed a massive origin divine on the ground, one who lay unmoving in the stillness of death.



“Damn, we’re a little bit too late. I could’ve saved him had we gotten here a day earlier.” Lu Yun sighed faintly as he studied the withered husk of the origin divine. “Junior Lu Yun greets the nine seniors.”

He waved a hand to retrieve the Formation Orb as he and Qing Yu had already entered the world formed by the gates.

“You came here so quickly!” Zhao Fengyang’s eyes shot wide open when he saw their visitor. He’d thought very highly of Lu Yun and wanted to personally raise him before the abdication overruled everything. That had been when the previous generation of celestial emperors had fallen, and they had no choice but to step down from their positions to fill in the hole.

“To think you’d achieve such accomplishments in less than six years!” sighed another celestial emperor. “It’s a shame that we haven’t made enough time for you. If you had another thousand years, I’m sure you would do your utmost to protect the world. Alas... we only have seventy years!”

“Can it be that after seventy years... seniors...” An unnatural expression hung on Qing Yu’s face.

“Isn’t it laughable? We nine have exceeded the dao immortal realm and set foot into the ingress realm, but we can only hold on for seventy years!” Zhao Fengyang laughed bleakly. “If no new celestial emperors arrive here after seventy years, that means the end of the world as well.”

It was a pity that the newest crop of celestial emperors had no idea what their position truly entailed. Most importantly, Witherdew Major was destroyed. No new ruler would be born there for a very long time.

“Seventy years is too short,” sighed the nine.

“What’s behind the doors? The people who destroyed the Primordial Era?” Lu Yun asked after a pause.

“No.” Zhao Fengyang shook his head. “Yin spirits, a never-ending tide of them! After life in the multiverse perished, they became yin spirits! In all of the worlds, ours is the only sanctuary that hasn’t been destroyed.

“The great war a hundred thousand years ago wasn’t just one confined to our world, but a great war against all life in the entire multiverse! We barely managed to hang on, but everywhere else outside the world of immortals has become ravaged ruins.”

### **Chapter 757: Violetgrave Holds Down the Fort**

“In other words, generations of celestial emperors and countless divines have stood guard here not to defend the world against that ancient enemy, but just to have their strength passively sapped away? In fact, the enemy from a hundred thousand years ago is able to deplete the world of immortals of her geniuses and experts without lifting a finger at all?” Lu Yun’s expression grew ugly.

“Mmhm.” The nine celestial emperors nodded and fell silent at the same time.

“Seventy years, you only have seventy years,” Zhao Fengyang finally spoke again after a long moment of silence. “I hope you can create a few more miracles in these seventy years and hold off the endless hordes of yin spirits outside the door.”

Lu Yun looked up to see that some sort of power had dyed the sky here a bloody red. However, it seemed different from the strength in the Blood Sea.

“Seventy years may not be enough,” he murmured. “Please hold on for a bit longer, seniors.”

He waved a hand to coalesce nine sparkling fruits in the air.

Karmic fruits!

They melded into the celestial emperors the moment they appeared, sending trembles through the august personages, bringing shine and vigor back to their haggard faces.

“What is this?!” Zhao Fengyang exclaimed. That shimmering golden fruit had taken root in his body and was supplying him with boundless energy, helping him maintain peak condition.

“This is a karmic fruit. The nine celestial emperors have performed many deeds of great merit for the world, so of course the karmic fruits will protect you.” Lu Yun bowed to the nine rulers.

They wanted to rise and return the gesture, but they didn’t dare move at all right now, for fear of backlash from the door. Last time Zhao Fengyang had sent a sliver of a replica into the world, things hadn’t yet progressed to these dire straits. The pressure from behind the gates grew steadily greater, increasing danger at a constant rate. They no longer knew if the door would be destroyed first, or if they would first be crushed under that titanic pressure.

“With this, we can endure for another hundred years.” Zhao Fengyang made a rough calculation. “After a hundred years, the pressure from beyond the door will be unbearable. Even if we are at peak condition then or reach the primordial realm, we will still be crushed by the pressure from behind the door.”

“It may not have to be a hundred years!” Qing Yu took a deep breath. “The world of immortals is undergoing a revolution at the moment. When Lu Yun establishes his sacred land and incorporates a brand new dao into the immortal dao, the world’s civilization will surely reach a new peak surpassing the prosperity of the Primordial Era. Combat arts have yet to undergo a renaissance, and supplemental paths will be king!”

She looked at Lu Yun with these last words. He nodded in acknowledge and set out for the massive door for a closer look.

“Don’t go near it!” Zhao Fengyang and his cohort wanted to stop the young man.

“No matter, I want to see just what’s behind this door.” Opening the Spectral Eye and combusting inky hellfire on his body, he forcefully pushed back the scarlet power in the air.

“You can advance no further.” An ethereal voice suddenly sounded by Lu Yun’s ears as a charming young girl in old robes appeared in front of him. Her delicate brows were elegantly shaped and her hair drifted around her like the clouds. A short sword in the shape of a butterfly perched on her head.

Diexi!

Absent for such a very long time, Diexi had appeared in this patch of space!

“What are you doing here?” Lu Yun asked blankly and retracted the hellfire on him.

“I’m here to replace him in guarding those nine.” Diexi pointed at the celestial emperors behind Lu Yun and then at the recently dead origin divine. “They, too, need guardians while they guard the door. Out of the entire world of immortals... here is most suitable for me.”

“You...” The turn of events threw Lu Yun for a loop.

“I was born out of the Abyss of Divine Burial, and you should know who put me there and set up the tomb of the living.” The zombie king dimpled. “I inherited the last wishes of that person and the divine race. To stand guard here is my only purpose in life.”

“Wayfarer.” Lu Yun nodded. Wayfarer... the primordial Celestial Master Zhang. That was the only person who came to mind.

“I’ve only just evolved from a zombie to a zombie king and come back to life, reversing yin from yang. I don’t want to die yet... so can you lend me two people?” Diexi asked seriously.

“Who?”

“Wushen Ruyi and Yueshen Jixiang!”

“Are you two willing?” Lu Yun summoned the two from hell. Waving an arm at the piles of divine bodies in the area, he explained everything to the two immortal ghosts.

“We divines protected the world eighty thousand years ago. Since the two of us still exist, then we will continue to protect it further.”

Both of their memories had fully awakened by now. Naturally, they weren’t only part of the twenty-four divine kings back in the day, their backgrounds were even greater.

“That’s the crown prince.” Ruyi looked at the lifeless origin divine on the ground and sighed softly.

So the last guardian had been the crown prince from eighty thousand years ago! He wasn’t born an origin divine, but had practiced some sort of combat art that enabled him to take this form.

“If even the crown prince has fallen in the line of duty, how can we shirk our responsibilities?” Yueshen chuckled. “Please place this servant’s coffin layout here, sir.”

“That won’t be necessary, I’ll keep both of your core essences in hell. If you die, you’ll be reborn there.”

Lu Yun sent out Yueshen’s nine bloodcorpses as well. She was still an immortal ghost, so these nine bodies were her strongest attacks. Meanwhile, Ruyi had occupied the Divine Spymirror, so she was also incredibly strong in her form as a treasure.

“It won’t take a hundred years!” Lu Yun declared with certainty. “Passively taking punches like this isn’t my style. I promise that it won’t be long before I open this door myself and conquer the stars!”

He’d been the enemy of almost the entire world in everything that had happened, but he hadn’t hunkered down in Dusk Province. Instead, he’d taken the fight to his detractors multiple times. House Donglin was no more and the Exalted Immortal Sect gone as well. The Jin and Feng Clans had declined to where they’d exited the world stage.

Lu Yun reached out with his hand and materialized a purple immortal sword.

Violetgrave, the sword!

He continued forward with the sword in hand, using the violet sword light to hew through the blood fog until he arrived beneath the door. It was thirty thousand meters tall and impossible to see the top of at a glance. What had been a sacred, stately door now more resembled a bloody maw ready to devour the entire world of immortals.

Whoosh!

He suddenly raised Violetgrave and stuck it right in front of the door.

“Ai...” a long sigh sounded from the sword. “Come take me back after a hundred years, or you’ll find that I’ve become even more dangerous than the yin spirits outside that door.

Boom.

Violet brilliance flared from the sword, dying the door a deep purple and forcing back the blood color that’d covered it.

### **Chapter 758: Rise of Mount Xuanhuang, Establishment of the Dao Academy**

All of Dusk Province boomed and shook. An enormous mountain of bronze soared into the clouds from the outskirts of Dao City, seated north and facing south from its position by the city. Astoundingly, it came with the influence that’d once graced Mount Exalted, and in fact seemed even more awe-inspiring than the mountain that’d once stunned the land.

In the world of immortals, bronze was reserved for sacrificial rites and most of the altars in the realm were made of this metal. Formation runes crisscrossed and formations overlapped over the growing mountain. The moment it fully took shape, the world trembled and a strange power encompassed all of the facets.

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“He’s used the tools of sacrifice to forcefully pull together a world on the brink of disassembly!” On Levitating Island, Silverlight gasped in the direction of Dusk Province. The mountain next to Dao City was too enormous and too distinct. No matter where one was in the four great oceans, the first thing they’d see when they looked in the direction of Dusk was that mountain cast from bronze.

“The moment Qing Yu became an immortal, she used her own strength to suppress the immortal dao and compel the shattering world back into one. And now, this mountain concentrates immortal dao with a strange momentum that will fully repair the cracks in the world.

“It won’t be long before our current world is as of the one in the Primordial Era—reborn as one whole, complete world.” Somewhere far in the depths of the South Sea, Qi Hai stared blankly as he muttered to himself.

“All of this is what I’d wanted to accomplish once upon a time, but to think he was one step ahead of me!” He’d reverted to his appearance in the Primordial Era, that of a genteel and refined pill master.

“You wouldn’t be able to do it,” sighed the city lord of Destiny City from his position beside Qi Hai. “The immortal dao is the dao of all and not the dao of the human race. You lack the immortal dao’s acknowledgement and thus you would never obtain the acceptance of the world.”

“The immortal dao of all, is it?” Qi Hai shook his head, a lost look in his eyes. “The three founders of immortal dao were human. Why is their creation a dao of all living beings and not of humans? Did those three luminaries betray humanity as well?”

The city lord had no response to that.

“Junior brother, do you recall the rumors of our time?” Qi Hai suddenly asked.

“What rumors?” The city lord blinked.

“The ones about the battle of Emperors Fall,” Qi Hai said woodenly as he looked at the bronze mountain sharpening into focus.

There were fifty million kilometers between the South Sea and Dusk Province, but he could still see the enormous mountain rising from Dusk. This wasn’t testament to how towering it was, but a sign that the laws of immortal dao had imbued it. Mount Xuanhuang was poised to become the sacred mountain of the world of immortals, a landmark infused with laws of the immortal dao and worshipped by all in the world.

Of course, it wasn’t really a sacred mountain yet. It still needed to receive the worship of all beings in the world before it would slowly gain the holiness needed to anchor the world of immortals. With its appearance in Dusk Province, everyone was clear that Lu Yun was ready to create his sacred land.

“Rumors of the battle of Emperors Fall?” The city lord’s heart skipped a beat.

“Before that battle, every great emperor possessed their own great dao and were the representatives of the almighty dao. They were the sovereigns of all living beings,” Qi Hai murmured to himself. “After that battle and the deaths of countless great emperors, someone took their great dao away.”

Trembling violently, the city lord noticed that a corner of the sky had turned a blood red. Terrifying killing intent locked onto Qi Hai and the city lord. If Qi Hai dared continued speaking further, that killing intent would solidify into real action and destroy them both.

Thus, Qi Hai shut his mouth. He lifted his head with a trace of contempt playing on his lips. “Pathetic worms.”

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When the soaring bronze mountain fully materialized, it loomed to the north of Destiny City and reached for the clouds. A blurry halo of blue light shimmered into existence on the mountain, as if an enormous consciousness had descended from the heavens to sink into the landmass and gradually settle down into slumber.

This was the will of the immortal dao.

It had directed the first Sovereign Ranking Battle, but that had been when it was newly awoken and been in a muddled, jumbled state. Another entity had even seized control of it in the end.

But now with Qing Yu as the dao sovereign and ascended to immortality, she'd used the strength of the heavenly palace to wrest the immortal dao free of the entity's control. Sealing it into the bronze mountain for safekeeping, the garden of immortal crystals on the other side of Dao City faded into a hazy image and shifted to become one with the mountain.

"This mountain is greater than even Mount Exalted!" Lu Yun floated up to take in the sight and found himself gripped with solemnity instead. "The heavens and earth are oft referred to as xuan and huang, and the universe is vast and timeless... This mountain shall be named Mount Xuanhuang!"

Boom!

A clap of thunder sounded in the sky with his words as golden smoke billowed into the firmament. Countless bolts of lightning crashed down onto the mountain of bronze in front of him, melting the metal and transforming it into another matter.

The characters Xuanhuang flashed across it before disappearing.

"Lu Yun!" A great yell echoed between heaven and earth. "Do you wish to establish a sacred land?!"

The yell seem to originate from the world, but also from within Mount Xuanhuang as well. Or was it the questioning from all of life?

It roiled through the world of immortals and the Dao Flower blossomed, shadowing Mount Xuanhuang with its petals. Everyone held their breaths and looked silently upon the mighty mountain and the tiny figure of Lu Yun beside it.

"I, Lu Yun, have walked the path of cultivation for only six years. I am but a mere true immortal even now, so by what right and basis do I have to establish a sacred land?" Lu Yun shook his head in midair. "Today, I, Lu Yun, along with the presence of Dao Sovereign Qing Yu, do hereby establish the academy of immortal dao.

"All lives are equal within the Dao Academy. Of the three realms, six paths, and grand multiverse—any who have awoken to intelligence may enter the academy for study.

"I, as headmaster, will offer up all that which I know for the benefit of all.

"I, as headmaster, will teach all those who come and propagate all knowledge that there is.

"I, as headmaster, will..."

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One distinguished proclamation after another rang from Lu Yun's mouth, shaking the world with their reverberations. Jaws dropped as everyone stared at him.

The Dao Academy?

A school of dao and enlightenment for the masses?!

While this wasn't a sacred land, it was more frightening than one! A sacred land was holy and sacrosanct, an inviolable existence to be revered. Ordinary people were not to defile it; it was more a spiritual totem than anything.

However, Lu Yun's Dao Academy spoke of a vision to bring enlightenment to everyone—he would be the guide of all living beings! He really did want to be a saint, even though this path would be filled with obstacles, pitfalls, and be uncommonly hard to traverse.

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“As the headmaster, you are willing to offer up all that you know, disseminate knowledge, and edify all life?” a dismissive snort traveled through the air as rays of bloody light converged into a humanoid form over Dusk Province. The demon god's Ichor Bog replica had arrived.

“Then I ask you, are you willing to pass onto me a formation of heaven and earth for dao immortals?” he sneered.

“Those who enter my academy may learn it,” Lu Yun responded calmly with his hands behind his back.

### **Chapter 759: Supplemental Paths Above All**

“Enroll in your Dao Academy?” the demon god sneered. “That would brand me as your disciple and subject me to the mercy of your whims!”

“Hahaha!” Lu Yun couldn't contain his boisterous laughter. “As the headmaster of the academy, I educate all lives on behalf of the immortal dao. All of you live under the immortal dao and bear its brand. Does that put you at the mercy of its whims?”

He looked around. The true Dao Flower had emerged above Mount Xuanhuang. With its power, Lu Yun could scan all denizens of the nine majors, ten lands, four immortal seas, and four great oceans with a single glance.

“Educate all lives on behalf of the immortal dao? Your pompousness knows no end!”

The statement came from a newcomer—an elderly man of impressive grace and stature. With his hair tied and capped and donning a long crimson robe, he walked down from the clouds toward Lu Yun.

“Grandmaster Gu Xun, known as the Pill Sovereign of the world of immortals!” Some were visibly stunned to see him.

Known simply as the Pill Sovereign, Gu Xun was the greatest pill master in the current era. His cultivation had reached peak arcane dao immortal realm, and his name was known all over the world. Master Gu Zun, who had competed with Lu Yun for the Ten Orientations Stone back in Xiankan, was in fact Gu Xun's descendent.

Gu Xun had long removed himself from the matters of the secular world to study pill dao and prepare to pluck his origin dao fruit. Until Lu Yun established the Dao Academy, that was.

Yuying looked on with a serious expression from Dao City; Gu Xun had achieved a great many feats in his lifetime. Although he didn't rival Qi Hai of the Primordial Era, it was a near thing. His mastery over pill dao dwarfed even hers.

Upon Gu Xun's declaration, another three figures emerged in the sky. They were sovereigns of the other three supplemental paths: Zhurong Die, sovereign of treasure dao, Formation First, sovereign of formation dao, and Venerated Talisman, sovereign of talisman dao.

Their cultivation rivaled that of Gu Xun's as they were all peak arcane dao immortals. Gathering here in person meant concentrating the greatest achievements of the supplemental paths in a singular spot!

The demon god's expression turned grave at their emergence. While the four masters were stuck as arcane dao immortals due to the current state of the immortal dao, they'd never stopped advancing in their pursuit of their respective supplemental path. In certain respects, the four of them had reached the heights of the primordial masters.

"Lu Yun greets the four seniors." Lu Yun bowed his head in deference.

"Hmm?" The sovereigns were ready to fly into a rage, but to their surprise, Lu Yun didn't preempt them by losing his temper.

"You say that you will establish an academy to educate all lives on behalf of the immortal dao, Lu Yun, but you have not obtained our approval first." Formation First appeared as a young man. Layers of formations faded in and out of existence around him, and he looked at Lu Yun with a half smile.

"Supplemental paths were your starting point. You refined a Heaven Descent Pill, restored primordial pill recipes, and claimed many lives with formations. Today, the four of us have come to challenge your mastery over the supplemental paths. If you can't defeat us..."

"Then you can still educate all, but not with the supplemental paths," finished Zhurong Die, a red-haired and red-bearded old man wearing a long fiery-red robe. His tone was as brash as his appearance suggested, and he pulled no punches. He was the most powerful immortal of the Zhurong Clan and the greatest master refiner in the world of immortals.

Lu Yun didn't deem that worthy of a response. Instead, he turned to the man dressed in dark cyan robe, Venerated Talisman.

The man smiled diffidently. "I didn't want to come, but I couldn't turn down my three good friends. So here I am, supporting their cause and seeing for myself how good the young man who believes in the superiority of supplemental paths is."

Lu Yun nodded and smiled in return. "I await your examinations, seniors. Besides, there is always wisdom to be found in collective intelligence. The four seniors are the four supplemental masters in the world of immortals. I am sure to benefit greatly from your challenges."

He gestured his acceptance as he spoke.

"Hmmp!" the demon god huffed suddenly. With his eyes on Lu Yun and the four sovereigns, he said coldly, "You say you're establishing a dao academy to educate all, Lu Yun, but is this academy of yours a sect, or a clan? Will all students become yours to command once they enter your academy and learn from you... just like what happened to the top clans that joined Dusk Province?"

"Hahaha!" He laughed before Lu Yun could answer. "I know the answer already. Once the academy is established, no immortals will be able to resist the temptation to attend. All the treasures and cultivation methods you've sold in Dao City were merely setting the stage for your academy, weren't they?"

"How insidious. Your academy will undermine the foundations of the ancient factions of the world as soon as it opens," he laughed as he turned to leave.



The senior council of the top factions shuddered and looked on with visible concern.

“Ancient factions... what difference is there between them and tribes of a primitive society?” Lu Yun looked in the direction the demon god left in. “These peak ancient factions are the ones who have held back the pace of progress in this world. It’s been eighty thousand years, high past time for their influence to be curbed.”

His murmuring made all four sovereigns frown.

“Lu Yun has the heart of a wolf alright, the four of us must stop the academy from being established.” They exchanged a look and read the same determination in one another’s gazes.

“The peak factions are the foundation of the world of immortals,” said Gu Xun. “We need them to excavate tombs and develop the immortal dao... Lu Yun wants to enlighten all and advance the immortal dao all on his own? What a joke.”

None of them had lowered their voices to stop Lu Yun from hearing their conversation. However, he appeared entirely unfazed.

“If the seniors defeat me in the supplemental paths, I will give up establishing an academy just as you wish.” Lu Yun smiled. “If I win, however, I would like you to put aside your prejudices and join the academy, passing down your legacy to the world.”

Minute changes flickering over their faces, the four sovereigns gave his words some thought before nodding in agreement.

“That is acceptable. If we lose, we will join the academy. If you lose, you will never again mention establishing your Dao Academy or a sacred land in Dusk Province.”

“Let’s start with me,” offered Formation First. “I will set up a formation, and I don’t need you to break it. You win as long as you can walk out of it.”

With a wave of his hand, the power of heaven and earth gathered and consolidated into a concrete formation, lodged firmly in the air. Such was the ultimate height of formation dao—formations without foundation.

Formation First had mastered the technique at supreme heights. Unlike regular formations without foundation that drifted about untethered, he was able to root his solidly in the air.

Nodding, Lu Yun turned and entered the formation.

“Dao Brother Formation First,” Zhurong Die spoke up hurriedly, “Lu Yun has in his possession the connate-grade treasure Formation Orb. If he uses it...”

“If he does, he automatically loses in mentality,” Formation First said faintly with his hands behind his back. “Someone like that doesn’t deserve to be the master of a sacred land.”

## **Chapter 760: Submission**

Formation First was called thus because he was first in the world when it came to formations, an existence far beyond the likes of Formation Thirteenth who Lu Yun had met such a long time ago. His

formation was unconventional and extremely strong, almost seeming to modify the laws of local space to form its own world.

“This is the prototype of a formation orb. If he continues to build this formation with the same method, then it’ll become a new formation orb sooner or later,” Lu Yun murmured to himself while observing the grand formation in front of him. “It’s already coalesced a formation spirit and is the signature formation for Sovereign Formation First... if I break it, his efforts of a lifetime will go down the drain.”

The formation in front of him was as if a great maze, its environment constantly shifting and reforming. He spotted seven hundred formations at a glance, but one thousand and eighty feng shui layouts as well! That meant that in its complete form, this great formation would comprise one thousand and eighty minor formations.

“While this formation is impeccable from the perspective of formations, there’s three spots in which the feng shui conflict with each other and mar the setup. It’s a little too tough to alter the formation, but the feng shui layouts... I’ll be able to erase the three flaws if I just change the local terrain.”

Lu Yun took a step forward with an immortal crystal in hand, etching some formation runes into the air. Formations without foundation—his runes remained embedded in the air as well.

Hummm.

The formation trembled slightly as a soft hum rang out, wiping out the three minor imperfections that he’d spotted. Abruptly whirring into full operations, the formation suddenly became real and transformed into a giant maze.

“My Ingenium Formation!” came Formation First’s delighted exclamation from the foot of Mount Xuanhuang. “It’s broken through the final bottleneck and entered that legendary realm... reality from illusions!”

“Congratulations, senior, greatest of felicitations. Your mastery of formations has reached that of the primordial monster spirit ancestor, and you are able to turn something real from its origins as a mirage,” Lu Yun called out, having exited the formation at some unknown point so that he could offer his congratulations to the formation sovereign.

“Not at all, not at all!” Formation First quickly returned the bow. “Fellow daoist’s mastery of formations has attained the realm of great perfection, I didn’t identify its flaws even with five thousand years of study. Today, you’ve not only found them, but repaired them as well. I am unworthy!”

“This first round concludes with my loss!”

The Ingenium Formation was his signature creation, and the formation sovereign had long realized that it was just shy of perfection. However, he hadn’t been able to identify just where the defects were even after five thousand years of scrutiny.

Who would’ve thought that Lu Yun would identify the crux of the problem after a casual stroll through it and easily resolve the problems? Now that the Ingenium Formation was complete, it had returned to its origins and would one day become an existence like Myriad Returns City. No, it would be its own—Ingenium City!

“Thank you for your instruction!” Lu Yun didn’t put on a show of overdone humility after his first victory. Instead, he looked to the other three, ignoring the stunned crowd around them.

First when it came to formations in the world of immortals, Sovereign Formation First, had conceded his match! He’d been defeated in broad daylight by a minor junior with less than six years of cultivation experience under his belt!

Lu Yun had once been a genius in the eyes of the world, a genius with unlimited potential and ability. But now... that stunning genius had come into his own and was the foremost authority in formations!

Somehow, at some point, and for some reason, he’d eclipsed the previous formation sovereign!

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“Lu Yun, you may have reached the point of being able to teach Formation First a thing or two after six years, but I don’t believe you can do the same when it comes to refining treasures!” Zhurong Die took the stage.

Twin flames burned in his eyes as he looked eagerly at the youth. Since the governor of Dusk Province had dared accept their challenge, there must be a reason for his confidence and boldness. Who knew how long it’d been since Zhurong Die had met someone who could truly match him tit-for-tat when it came to refinement? He was so excited that he was almost shaking.

Wham!!

Space in front of him shook; a fiery inferno accompanied the appearance of a forge of earth and sky. His forge represented the utmost of his craft and was almost a real forge. Massive waves of heat rolled out of the enormous construction and assaulted the surroundings.

“Ai!” Lu Yun sighed softly as he looked at the forge. “Senior Zhurong, you’ve lost.”

“Eh?” Zhurong Die and everyone assembled blinked in incomprehension. Nothing had taken place yet!

“That’s not how you use the forge of earth and sky.” Lu Yun waved a hand to summon a tendril of Emerald Mistfire in front of him. And then...

The power of the land descended upon the tiny flame, crushing it mercilessly and melding it into the void, where it then set the entire sky aflame. At the same time, Lu Yun gave voice to a long whistle.

“With earth and sky as forge, yin and yang as fuel, and nature as labor...”

Rumble!!

Zhurong Die’s forge shattered right in front of him. This part of the world itself seemed to have become a large forge, and the immortals on the scene were the bronze within, ready for refinement.

“You... refined Mount Xuanhuang with a forge like this...” Zhurong Die looked blankly at Lu Yun before suddenly whipping his head around to consider the majestic and sacred mountain.

“I did.” Lu Yun nodded. “Forge of earth and sky, the earth and sky as the forge... Same words, just in a different order, but the breadth of a single hair can lead one astray. The sky and earth are an enormous

forge to begin with, one can just use them as is. Why go to the extraneous step of condensing another forge out of it?"

The great dao intersected with each other between heaven and earth, inexhaustible, boundless, and infinite. The peak realm for formation masters was to draw formations forth from nothingness, while the same heights for master refiners was to utilize the world as their forge!

The great dao of the world was the great dao of all, so nature could create whatever life sought from it.

"I see... I see!" Zhurong Die felt like lightning had struck him, and that a dusty, long-sealed door was slowly opening in front of him. He could tell that his skills were about to advance into a new realm!

Lu Yun looked at the other two. "Talismans are the trajectory of the great dao and the weave of the world. If a talisman is drawn with the lay of the land, it will be able to call upon the world itself."

He drew a Principal Nineheavens Talisman in the void, whereupon it changed from being able to restrain akasha ghosts to shimmering with the grand strength of nature. Yet more glyphs sparkled around it, coming together as talismans that then assembled themselves into talisman formations. When complete, the formations convened as brand new glyphs that further formed new talismans.

Coming full circle, inexhaustible, boundless, and infinite.

"I have received quite a lesson!" Sovereign Venerated Talisman took in a deep breath and bowed to Lu Yun, showing the respect that he might show a teacher.

"Pill dao, the path of living beings! Condensing the essence of nature and discarding the dross, we overlook the fact that there is essence in dross. Every blade of grass, every tree, every grain of sand, and every rock can be made into a pill." Lu Yun grabbed a handful of dirt from the ground.

Rumble—

Blue Lucent Voidfire danced in the air before delivering a fragrant pill into his hand. It was an ordinary first-rank immortal pill, but one that Lu Yun had refined from dirt.

The ultimate peak of pill dao was to reform medicinal properties in the sense of deconstructing various herbs and medicines, then reconstructing them to obtain the effect that one needed. However, Lu Yun had just created a pill from pure dirt!

He'd distilled essence from ordinary dirt without any special properties to it whatsoever and turned it into an immortal pill! This kind of mind-bogglingly result was something that foremost pill master Qi Hai of the Primordial Era wouldn't have been able to achieve!

"I... submit!" Gu Xun smiled wryly. He finally realized in this moment just how frightening this youth of six years tenure was. No wonder the previous celestial emperors had chosen him.