

## Necropolis 801

### Chapter 801: Flames of Extreme Cold

“You subdued the realm monster?” Ashu looked incredulously at Lu Yun. He knew full well just how terrifying realm monsters were; even great emperors would be ripped apart like paper when encountering these horrors!

Lu Yun shook his head slightly in response, not willing to speak more of this matter. Too much was tied to the Embittered Ocean—if the person who set all this up was still alive, then he had just thrust himself to the forefront of danger.

Taking stock of the situation, Ashu very smartly pressed no further.

Up on the peak of the mountain, Xuanyuan Xiaoyue stood forlornly in front of her ice coffin. Her long hair was the color of snow and her skin resembled ice. She was so pitiful that sympathy bubbled up in anyone that saw her.

The realm monster had left, the Embittered Ocean had been sent to hell, and she’d returned to normal. She was no longer cold, but a frosty bleakness filled her eyes still. The Xuanyuan bloodline had ended. Even she herself had died and become a ghost.

“Xiaoyue.” Ashu walked up to her and patted her lightly on the shoulder. “We have our ways if you want to return to life.”

“Uncle Ling...” Xiaoyue looked at Ashu and shook her head. “It was destined that our clan meet its doom. It was corrupted after my father died, and nothing will bring it back even if I come back to life.”

Ashu sighed softly and had no response to that.

“Do you know who set everything up in the tomb?” Lu Yun came flying up to them.

Xuanyuan Xiaoyue looked out over the world, at how the realm of ice and snow was beginning to melt with the departure of the Embittered Ocean and the realm monster. The sculptures of the frozen Xuanyuan members softened and sagged to the ground, swiftly decomposing and filling the realm with the pungent stench of decay.

She shook her head. “All of this happened after I died. Maybe whoever killed me did it.”

“Whoever killed you...” Ashu frowned.

Xuanyuan Xiaoyue said a name, but it didn’t have time to travel through the air before a mysterious power scattered it.

“Uncle Ling, you should know who I spoke of. He’s listed himself as taboo, which means no one can say his name as long as he’s alive.”

Ashu nodded solemnly. He’d listed his own name as taboo a long time ago. Apart from his kin and friends, no one could talk about his existence at all.

“Alright then, these high up muckety mucks have seriously got too much time on their hands.” Lu Yun sighed with resignation. These so-called great personages were really too petty—listing their name as taboo so they could melt into the backdrop of the world?

Oh, give me a break.

“Lu Yun!” Ashu turned seriously toward the young man. “You should know how large the world is and how many combat arts there are beneath the heavens. There are certain terrible factions with particular combat arts that can capture a whiff of your presence just by saying your name. With that capability, they can then injure or even kill you by reaching across multiple major worlds!

“Many great experts throughout the worlds have hidden their true names and only go by their daoist name or titles. Do you really think it’s because they have too much time on their hands?”

Lu Yun shuddered with recollection. The shamans! They definitely had such an art; they could curse someone through space if they knew their target’s name.

“It looks like I need to get myself a daoist title in the future as well,” he grumbled.

Ashu flicked a sidelong glance at him. “You’ll be fine.”

Lu Yun ignored him.

“The entrance to the yin tomb is there.” Xiaoyue pointed to the patch of chaotic space beneath the mountain. “Go through there to find the passage to the yin side of the Xuan Yuan Tomb. You should be on your way now, I need to bury my clansmen.”

They weren’t in the tomb anymore, or the internal world manifested by Great Emperor Kunpeng. That world had died and become a realm monster, while the island was an entrance to this world—a world that had once been a paradise for the last of the Xuanyuan Clan, but was now dead.

There was nothing keeping Lu Yun and the others here. Xuanyuan Xiaoyue was dead, as was her heart. Remaining here to safeguard her people and father was the best decision for her. Taking stock of their current situation, they headed for the foot of the mountain.

As she watched the group leave, Xiaoyue’s ruddy-faced complexion drained to a stark white. Color leached out of the world while two balls of ghostly fire ignited in her eyes; she waved a hand and raised scores of burial mounds and tombs from the ground. The new structures swallowed the corpses littering the earth and buried them within their final resting places.

If any of the immortals struck down to mortality after the great war a hundred thousand years ago saw this scene, they’d surely erupt in shrieks and disbelief. The very same had occurred during that time!

However, those who’d survived the great war had paid for it with their immortality and their memories of everything having to do with the war.

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An ill wind blew within the yin tomb and everything was varying shades of monochrome. Broken and dilapidated burial mounds slanted every which way along the earth, while a dark shadow loomed in the distance, blotting out everything like a towering mountain without a peak in sight.

“That mountain is the snake outer-coffin!” Lu Yun took in a deep breath when he pointed to it.

The outer-coffin was refined from the moat snake’s body and what he’d seen from the Heaven Locus Marsh. After countless numbers of trials and hardships, he’d finally made it here.

Explosions suddenly rang by his ears while he took in the sight and the earth rumbled before an enormous, ghastly white hand blotted out the sky, slamming down upon Lu Yun and the others.

Zombies!

Zombies of the titan race!

They were more frightening than the giants of the Xuan Yuan Slaves. Wreathed with dense corpse energy and gray corpsefire, it plowed right through the group before they could react, pinning them to the ground.

Rummmmmble!

Another tremendous disturbance shook the gray earth as a gigantic skeleton rose from the ground, shaking off the zombie that was a full five kilometers tall.

It was the Venerated Sacrosanct Demon Sovereign’s body of white skeleton; the Hadal Bonefire burning in his eyes was more than twice as strong as before. After devouring the frosty air within the Embittered Ocean Orb, it was traveling down an unknown evolutionary path. While still the same flame as before, it was now a fire of pure cold.

The demon sovereign stepped forward and punched the zombie square in the chest, scattering the corpsefire around it. The zombie immediately froze into a statue and then... cracked into pieces all over the ground.

The group blinked at the anticlimactic result as the demon sovereign stared dumbly at his hands, unable to process what had just happened.

“Is this the zombie we had so much trouble with before?” He returned to human form with glee flooding his face.

“What a tremendously strong cold fire! So this is the strength the Hadal Bonefire has gained after devouring connate cold energy!” Incredulity flashed across Ashu’s face as well.

Though the Hadal Bonefire was powerful, it was just an ordinary flame in his eyes. After its latest supplement, however, it wasn’t far from becoming a true peak flame.

## **Chapter 802: Altar of Earth**

It wasn’t that Hadal Bonefire wasn’t strong enough—on the contrary, the true version of the fire rivaled the three great immortal flames.

It was that the Venerated Sacrosanct Demon Sovereign manifested his fire through the nascent spirit observation method. After combining the flames with his nascent spirit, that meant they were limited by the demon sovereign himself.

Upon devouring the frosty energy released by the Embittered Ocean Orb and becoming a pure flame of glacial cold, the Hadal Bonefire more than doubled in strength! Though it now exuded arctic air that was on par with what the group had met before, the core essence of the flames hadn't changed at all.

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"Hahahaha—" the demon sovereign threw his head back in laughter when he sensed the heights of his newfound strength. He waved a hand and sent frightful fire of frost in all directions, freezing another dozen zombies coming their way.

Ashu rubbed his forehead when he saw the demon sovereign lay into their enemies with gusto. "This fellow bumbles around like a fool, but the foolish have their own fortune. He's enjoyed quite the string of luck."

"It's not just luck." Lu Yun cast a glance at the gleeful demon sovereign. "He's a quick study. Once he fully awakens his sense of self, he'll probably be another pillar of the world."

The Venerated Sacrosanct Demon Sovereign was a character that the primordial immortal emperor himself had saved. After his demise, the Green Firmament had extended an olive branch to his soul, but seeing as the demon sovereign would defy even the immortal emperor, he never would've bowed his head to serve another.

Presently, he'd decided to use the snake outer-coffin as a punching bag after running out of immediate enemies. A terrifying blast of hoar frost coalesced as a white avenue in the air, ramming straight at the outer-coffin and freezing whatever zombies or dead spirits it ran over.

The blast of cold air was so domineering that it even made the zombies stop in their tracks. Zombies didn't feel fear, but they did possess base instincts. Those instincts were telling them to stay away from this dreadful air.

The demon sovereign looked at Lu Yun and made an inviting gesture, to which the young man shook his head.

"You should put your cold air away. This yin tomb is far more frightening than it looks, and the titan zombies are probably just a group of minions in here."

The demon sovereign's expression froze.

"The immortals who've come here have suffered heavy losses, and there are more unknown factors here other than corpsefire and zombies. Your frost can counter the fire-wielding zombies, but it won't be of any use against the other things."

Lu Yun had established a connection with Zou Longxiu as soon as he'd entered the yin tomb and was quickly brought up to speed on everything that'd taken place so far.

The yin tomb appeared to be an empty land, but threats and dangers abounded within its reaches. Half of the immortals that'd entered from the Heaven Locus Marsh had already died, but the door in the outside world remained open.

More immortals constantly poured in, following their fates of the past hundred thousand years to enter tombs, search for treasure, and die in tombs. Theirs would be another futile quest this time since there

was an enormous fissure between the outskirts of the yin tomb and its heartland. It kept all the immortals out of the most crucial area of this tomb.

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Lu Yun wasn't predisposed to saving the immortals. Such had been their modus operandi for the past hundred thousand years—he wouldn't change anything just with him alone. The demon sovereign retracted his fire, but the avenue of ice remained. Instead of flying through the air, the group took the path to the outer-coffin.

It was a strangely smooth passage and they didn't meet any obstacles along the way. The zombies were deterred by the avenue, and all of the other unholy denizens of the tomb seemed to have vanished without a trace

"Something's wrong here." The former priest of flames frowned. The level of protections for the yin tomb were many times greater than the yang tomb. All of the dead Xuan Yuan Slaves ended up here, or became zombies or vicious ghosts.

But apart from a few titan zombies, there was nothing else here at the moment.

"Would you like to leave?" Knowing full well what was about to happen, Lu Yun looked at Ashu.

Ashu shook his head. "I need to face my demons in the end. If I remain on the run for my entire life, my final ending will be in its stomach!"

He'd known for a while that the zombie tree was here, so he didn't want to run from the inevitable confrontation. It would pinpoint him with accuracy no matter where he fled. In fact, it'd been fattening Ashu like a pig for slaughter. Whether it was resurrection or Ashu gaining more power, either were favorable outcomes for the tree.

When Ashu had used his core essence to protect Xuanyuan Xiaoyue earlier, that set him on the path of slowly recovering his true self. Once he did and stepped back into the role of Ling Weiyang, the zombie tree would no longer have a chance of devouring him.

Therefore, the tree chose to come to the Xuan Yuan Tomb before this happened.

All ghosts, spirits, and undead entities in the yang tomb were drawn to it. Its origins were too terrifying to think of and it was on the same level as the Dusk River, corpsefire, and Traceless. But somehow, it accidentally gained a spirit along the way—Ashu.

Though Ashu had split off from it and was slowly recovering his own identity, another set of thoughts appeared in the zombie tree: their only goal to consume its spirit.

However, the Azure Dragon King had possessed it for a very long time and it'd also collected a hint of hell after that encounter with Lu Yun. The dead things in the tomb couldn't resist hell's siren call and congregated to the tree as soon as it arrived.

After an indeterminate period of time, Lu Yun and the others arrived in front of the outer-coffin.

It was so lofty that they couldn't see its top. Like a tremendous shadow, it dwarfed everything within the core area of the yin tomb. The mouth of the snake gripped an enormous scarlet coffin roughly fifty

kilometers long that was emblazoned with lines of dark gold runes. Etched into the coffin, the runes seemed to represent the ultimate theories of the universe and the great dao between heaven and earth.

An enormous altar sat beneath the coffin, one exuding a bright yellow-brown light that illuminated the structure. There were also a few people standing in front of it—the priest of earth, priest of forest, priest of ocean, priest of blades, and a daoist wearing yellow-brown robes.

Grasping a golden staff, the priest of earth fixed a sharp stare on You Si.

“I thought you’d been swallowed by that person’s human-shaped treasure, but you actually betrayed Xuan Yuan and your faith!” He pointed the staff at You Si while the altar beneath his feet roared into action.

### **Chapter 803: Xuan Yuan**

You Si’s eyes blazed with hatred when they fixed on the priest standing atop the altar of earth.

“I’ll give you one more chance, priest of flame...”

“You misspoke. I am not the priest of flame, I am You Si.” Her voice was as cold as ice, and she didn’t even attempt to conceal blatant killing intent as she glared murderously at her former peer.

“Why did you do it?!” she roared. “The Xuan Yuan Slaves have guarded this tomb for hundreds of millions of years. They are our kin!!”

The other high priests frowned.

“Wrong, they weren’t our kin, but tools to be wielded by our hands,” interjected the priest of forest. “Our bloodline originates from the true Xuanyuan Clan rather than those pathetic slaves who were worse than dead. The only purpose and value that the slaves possessed were as sacrifices to open the door to the yin tomb.”

You Si fell silent while an inferno burst out from her body and the Fire Altar emerged beneath her feet. Lu Yun, the demon sovereign, and Ashu stepped back to give her room. This was her business, so it wouldn’t be appropriate for them to interfere.

“The Fire Altar! The real Fire Altar!” Face darkening, the priest of earth warily regarded the change in situation. The altar of earth he stood on radiated power as well, but it wasn’t under his control. It’d long been refined by the young daoist in a brown dao robe beside him—the divine spirit of the world’s spleen.

“I won’t interfere in your fight. You may use this altar for now.” He made a placating gesture and pushed off gently with his feet, flying from the altar to Lu Yun.

“Eeeyah!” You Si shrieked piercingly as the Fire Altar surged in power and slammed into the altar of earth like a shooting star. The priests of forest, ocean, and blades panicked, and the Fire Altar barrelled into them as well before they could react.

Boom!

An enormous mushroom cloud rose into the sky. The altar of earth shook violently as the priest of earth took the brunt of the impact, blood bursting out from every pore in his body. The other three priests fared no better, and they all turned to You Si with looks of sheer fear.

“How is she so powerful? How?? She’s the weakest of the five of us!” snarled the priest of earth. Ignoring his injuries, he spun the golden staff in his hand with gusto and launched a counterattack with the altar of earth.

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“The Fire Altar is no longer the Fire Altar,” said the daoist that was the spleen’s manifestation upon examining the structure supporting You Si. “A mysterious power has descended upon it, transforming it into something else.” The man turned to Lu Yun. “That change comes from you, doesn’t it?”

Lu Yun shrugged in lieu of a response. He’d met the divine spirits of the lungs and kidneys—both violent spirits possessed by rampaging killing intent. The divine spirit of the spleen, however, was completely different. There was a distinct lack of fury, and Lu Yun detected no malice with the Karmic Tree.

“You’ve met Xiaoyue, haven’t you?” the spirit asked suddenly.

Lu Yun exchanged a glance with Ashu before nodding. “We did, she wanted to be with her clan.”

The daoist sighed, his face shifting into a solemn expression. “I can give you the spleen, but you must make a promise in return.”

There was a turbulence to the man’s energy, something wild and terrifying brewing beneath the calm facade that was simply suppressed by the daoist’s will. Otherwise, he would’ve attacked Lu Yun and his companions as soon as they arrived.

“You’re not the divine spirit of the world’s spleen!” Lu Yun realized with a start. His head snapped up and his eyes searched out the crimson coffin in the mouth of the snake outer-coffin. He blurted out, “You’re Xuan Yuan!”

After a brief pause, the daoist nodded. “I am. I am the dead man named Xuan Yuan. It’s been a very long while, Ling Weiyang.”

“So it is you, Xuan Yuan.” Ashu’s expression tensed when the man called him Ling Weiyang, but he didn’t comment on the term of address.

“The world has indeed changed,” Xuan Yuan remarked. “We old men have become cowardly and shrink into ourselves, so much so that we don’t even dare admit who we are.” He looked up at his coffin and settled into a prolonged silence.

“Senior Xuan Yuan.” Lu Yun’s heart spasmed.

Xuan Yuan! The name was something of a religion to him. Emperor Xuan Yuan, also known as the Yellow Emperor, was the forefather of ancient Chinese culture—he who forged the five thousand years of glory and honor. It was a name most sacred to every child of China.

However, Lu Yun didn't know what relationship existed between the Xuan Yuan before him and the Xuan Yuan in the legends of Earth, if any. Earth's history placed the Yellow Emperor at roughly forty-seven hundred to five thousand years ago.

Five thousand years marked an unbearably long period of time for Earthling. Titles such as "primeval" or "primordial" could be applied to those eras. In the world of immortals, however, five thousand years was but the blink of an eye. Such a span of time was nothing to write home about, and the Xuan Yuan before him was from hundreds of millions of years ago.

Master and sovereign of the world before Emperors Fall, an utmost peak existence from the Primeval Era! Anything so far in the past that it couldn't be quantified was grouped under this period.

"You are indeed from the ancestral planet." Seeming to sense the agitation deep within Lu Yun's heart, Xuan Yuan nodded at him. "Promise me that when the cataclysm descends upon the ancestral planet, you will protect it even at the cost of your own life."

Ashu listened in silence. Earlier on, he'd ended the conversation prematurely when Lu Yun mentioned he was from the ancestral planet. He didn't expect Xuan Yuan to talk about it here in such an open manner!

"The ancestral planet is protected by the Great Formation of the Nineheavens Gates," the holy lord finally broke his silence. "Even the five of us together wouldn't be able to break through the formation and land upon it!"

"Everything decays and changes in the long river of time..." Xuan Yuan turned to the high priests battling in midair. The five of them had once been kind caretakers who cared for their subjects like their own children. They would've given their own lives without hesitation in order to protect their people.

Now, though, they'd sacrificed all of the Xuan Yuan Slaves guarding the tomb for their own gain. They'd failed the test of corruption administered by the corrosion of time. To Xuan Yuan, the great formation protecting the ancestral planet was no different. It would decay and eventually be destroyed.

"Ear—the ancestral planet is my homeland." Lu Yun nodded. "If a calamity befalls her, of course I will protect it with my life. It's not a promise to you, but to myself."

A smile tugged at Xuan Yuan's lips. Immediately after, however, black smoke puffed out from him and a sinister voice traveled forth, "You won't be giving my body to anyone, ghost of a dead man! Your true spirit is here, old tree! Eat it now!"

The divine spirit of the world's spleen leapt out, seizing a momentary lapse in Xuan Yuan's control.

Boom!

A thunderous rumble exploded as a giant black tree burrowed out from underground. It was the zombie tree! It came with a gray fire that was the corpsefire that Lu Yun had encountered before.

#### **Chapter 804: Qing Hongchen**

Flaming corpsefire blazed on the zombie tree, the gray flames dying this shadowed world a ghastly shade of monochrome.



The zombie tree was so large that it was bigger than even the snake outer-coffin, and there was a human face on it. When Lu Yun saw it, his heart skipped a beat. He was very familiar with this face—it was one he'd almost forgotten.

Qing Hongchen!

Qing Yu's fifth brother, a son by way of adoption from Patriarch Qing Taxian. The Treasurefall Coin in Lu Yun's hand had once belonged to the young man.

Back in the Myriad Formation Summit, Qing Hongchen had left that enormous burial mound through a transportation formation without a set destination. Unfortunately, he'd ended up in the tomb realm of the Skandha Range and been captured by the zombie tree.

The last time Lu Yun saw him, he'd been almost completely devoured by the tree and become a puppet under its control. But seeing him now in the branches of the zombie tree awoke Lu Yun to some new possibilities. Maybe it hadn't been a coincidence that Qing Hongchen had been sent to the tree!

Perhaps Qing Hongchen was something that the tree had created and reincarnated into the world of immortals, where he'd drifted around until adopted by the Qing Clan. As for what kind of existence he was precisely, Lu Yun couldn't tell.

"We meet again, Lu Yun." Amusement flickered through Qing Hongchen's long thin eyes when he saw Lu Yun.

"It's you, Qing Hongchen?!" Lu Yun shrieked with surprise.

Face grave, Ashu looked mutely at the face upon the zombie tree and didn't say a word.

"I can help you restrain the spleen's divine spirit, but you'll have to take care of Ling Weiyang's treasure yourself," Xuan Yuan murmured as he looked at the zombie tree that'd suddenly appeared.

Ashu's face spasmed and Lu Yun trembled as well. Xuan Yuan's words had just ripped apart the final veil of plausible ignorance. Ling Weiyang was one of the four powerhouses buried in the four ancient Nephrite tombs exceeding emperor-grade!

"Ling Weiyang, Ling Weiyang!" Lu Yun repeated the name through grit teeth. "I should've guessed a long time ago who you are. You're one of the characters worshipped by the emperors of the ancestral planet!"

Ashu still had nothing to say. He hadn't fully recovered his old self yet and moved about in a foggy haze. However, he knew who he was by now. His sleeping consciousness had slowly awoken in the Xuan Yuan Tomb, alerting him to the reality that being the spirit of the zombie tree wasn't his true self.

Before his death, he'd sent his true spirit into a divine tree to avoid being obliterated. That the tree would later be corrupted into a zombie tree was completely unexpected.

"I finally see you again, my true spirit." The dreadful corpsefire on the zombie tree jumped up to form a humanoid shape—the image of Qing Hongchen that Lu Yun had first met years ago.

Instead of immediately heading to the yin tomb, the zombie tree had first visited the source of the corpsefire and captured it. Corpsefire was on the same level as the zombie tree and both were raised to

new heights when they came together. The tree now could manifest its thoughts through the corpsefire, just like Lu Yun's thoughts could project a double of himself in hell.

"Ashu, do you choose to voluntarily return of your own accord, or will I have to do the deed and skin you alive?" Qing Hongchen's long eyes stared fixedly at the holy lord.

Ashu hadn't fully found himself yet, so he was still the true spirit of the zombie tree and thus under its control. Lu Yun took half a step forward and shielded the holy lord behind him.

"You and what army? A freak halfway between life and death like you wants to devour the person behind me?" Chilliness sparked in Lu Yun's eyes.

"Lu Yun, do you really think I'll let you off a second time after I was so kind as to spare you once? In that case, I'll kill you first and then swallow my spirit!"

Whoosh!

Qing Hongchen exploded into gray corpsefire that roiled toward Lu Yun. It swallowed all of the yin spirits and undead around it, increasing more than ten times in strength compared to what it was before. However, the fire scattered away with jitters when it neared Lu Yun, as if it'd suffered some enormous sort of shock.

A flame pure black rose from the young man's body.

"Hellfire! So you're the heir to the hell of human dao!" Qing Hongchen's giant face appeared on the zombie tree trunk again, terrified to the extreme, but his voice brimmed with euphoria.

"Ahhhhhhh!!" The face vanished once more while an extremely excited, yet also deeply agonized voice traveled forth from the zombie tree. It uprooted from the ground and swiftly gathered its sprawling network of roots to form two feet. Branches melded together as two enormous hands, transforming the towering tree into a treant five thousand kilometers tall in the span of a few breaths.

"I will obtain the heritage of the primeval human hell if I eat you and become an unparalleled existence beneath the heavens!"

Boom!

The ground trembled with every step the treant took, its terrifying presence so thick that it was almost tangible. It sealed off the premises like it were bands of iron.

"I have no further strength to deal with this, so it is up to you now," sighed Xuan Yuan as he moved away with the divine spirit of the world's spleen.

Roaring and snarling in defiance, the Venerated Sacrosanct Demon Sovereign released every last ember of frosty Hadal Bonefire that he possessed, forming a thick carpet of frost upon the earth. He didn't revert to his skeletal figure, opting instead to face off against the zombie treant in human form.

Wham—

The tremendous shadow of a fist collided with the zombie tree's foot; the demon sovereign spat out a gout of white fire and hurtled backwards, smashing into the snake outer-coffin before dropping to the

ground. His terrifying cold flames were snuffed out by a single stomp, and the foot moved unabated toward Lu Yun and Ashu.

Hummmm.

A black ripple oscillated around Lu Yun at this time, manifesting a young man with black hair and black eyes in long black robes. Currents of sword qi drew scroll upon scroll of sword atlases in the air, which all moved in unison toward the zombie tree's legs.

Hack hack hack.

Black splinters flew every which way as the treant's legs were smashed like kindling! Losing its support, the zombie tree set its stump down on air and pitched forward, just in time to receive a punch from the young man.

Xing Chen.

Lu Yun's replica had arrived on the scene!

1. WTF, THIS GUY?!

### **Chapter 805: Dusk River versus Corpsefire**

The zombie treant flew out several thousand kilometers before it stabilized itself.

Eyes glittering like the stars, Xing Chen's black robes fluttered majestically around him while ten thousand sword atlases unfurled behind his figure. The Sugato Sword hovered over his head, trailing down curtains of brilliant sword radiance.

"A holy king of the underworld!" shrieked the zombie tree when he registered what kind of existence Xing Chen was. Locked in battle with You Si, the priest of earth's heart skipped a beat.

Ashu had told them a long time ago that Lu Yun's replica was the fourth holy king of the underworld, but the high priest hadn't believed him then. Lu Yun was just a mere empyrean immortal—a holy king of the underworld was a tremendous personage on par with a primeval human king! How would the high priest ever connect the two??

Not to mention, an empyrean immortal's replica as a holy king? Then that ant of an immortal would immediately lose his self awareness and become the holy king's replica instead!

The high priest was keenly aware of what an underworld's holy king represented. The underworld's will reigned supreme over all, so anyone who entered it, even if they became a holy king or holy lord, would find themselves hard pressed to leave it.

If a replica became a holy lord or king, they would lose sight of their origins and revolt against their primary body thanks to the interference of the underworld's indomitable will. Ashu was an exception, because he was Ling Weiyang.

When he'd first mentioned Lu Yun was a holy king, the priest of earth had believed it for a little while. But after spending a period of time with Lu Yun's group, he dismissed that belief when he didn't detect any presence of the underworld.

However, Xing Chen was on the scene now and unleashing the battle strength of a primeval human king without reserve. He'd shaken the zombie tree and almost completely crushed the desire to fight from the other four high priests.

You Si lifted her head, a small measure of pride written across her face. With her name written in the Tome of Life and Death, she was now one of Lu Yun's subordinates. Upon gaining his approval, she'd learned more of his secrets and was now absolutely loyal to him. That his replica possessed the battle strength of a human king and had punched the zombie tree into oblivion with one move gave a large boost to her self-regard and pride.

"I concede defeat." Crestfallen, the priest of earth took in a deep breath. "So Master Xuan Yuan long restrained the evil god of the spleen that we were secretly nurturing..."

The other three priests arrived at his side with the same expressions of bleak despair. You Si turned to look at Lu Yun. Xing Chen was facing off against the zombie treant, so there was no immediate threat to her master at the moment.

"Where is the mother altar?" he asked the priest of earth.

"In the center of the yang tomb." There was no point in hiding anything now. "But the Great Formation of the Nineheavens Gates protects it. You can only break its protective seal if you activate the power of the altar through offering the fresh blood and souls of countless living beings..."

"The Great Formation of the Nineheavens Gates?!" Lu Yun jerked in shock and raised his head to where Xuan Yuan stood on the crimson coffin.

Ashu had once said that that formation protected the ancestral planet, and hearing it again now helped Lu Yun understand something. Though the Great Formation of the Nineheavens Gates sealed away the mother altar, sacrificing untold lives could trigger the altar's power and break the seal!

So this is why Xuan Yuan wanted me to make that promise.

What was corrupt wasn't the formation, but people's hearts. There were likely a great deal of people out there who knew how to dismantle the formation; Xuan Yuan had been alluding to a day in which someone bathed the universe in blood so that they could undo the protections around the ancestral planet.

"So the mother altar is the key." Lu Yun began to worry for Qing Yu.

He'd taken the Embittered Ocean and his beloved was currently resolving the restrictions of the five elements so she could collect the volcano. If she discovered the mother altar in the yang tomb, she would absolutely brainstorm a way to grab that as well. The mother altar was the key to breaking the Great Formation of the Nineheavens Gates. Combined with Xuan Yuan's earlier words, that meant there were certainly traps and other arrangements set up around the altar.

"Senior Violetshade, I'm afraid I'll have to trouble you to make a trip to the yang tomb. I'm a little concerned for Little Yu's safety," Xing Chen transmitted to the former Myrtlestar corpse puppet; she was here with him on this trip.

“I would’ve gone even without your request.” Violetshade nodded. “It’s time I take care of some old business.”

With that, faint purple light flashed through the air as she vanished without a trace. She’d visited the Xuan Yuan Tomb once before when she was Empress Myrtlestar, so she knew how to travel between the yin and yang tombs, even though she was now the fifth holy king of the underworld.

Sensing the ripples left behind in her wake, the zombie tree shuddered violently. One Xing Chen could already go toe-to-toe with him and send him flying. If another holy king took to the field, he’d have no choice but to make a run for it.

They were in the tomb realm of an enormous tomb, a place where holy kings of the underworld had unfettered freedom to revel in their strength. Things would’ve been different in the underworld, as a clash between heavyweights of their level would’ve devastated the land. That was why the holy kings hadn’t done anything to the zombie tree when it’d taken refuge in the underworld.

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“Alright, let us continue.” Xing Chen’s lips quirked with a cruel curve while the Sugato Sword over his head abruptly disassembled into countless motes of sword light, which then coalesced into sword atlases aimed straight at the zombie tree.

Whoosh!

Corpsefire flared from the zombie tree and formed a fiery tornado, enveloping the tree protectively. Howling with fury, the gray tornado spun itself into even greater violence.

There was no heat to these flames. If they’d ignited on someone alive, it would’ve felt like a stale air current had draped over their victim, resulting in almost no damage whatsoever.

However, Xing Chen had received the heritage of the underworld and the strength of a holy king. Though his primary body wasn’t a living dead, he was employing the power of one. As such, corpsefire was a deadly counter to any living dead or truly dead spirit it touched.

Expression shifting slightly, he quickly recalled the Sugato Sword so that it could ward off the threat with curtains of misty blue sword light.

Unfortunately, the corpsefire was so fierce that it continuously incinerated whatever power Xing Chen brought to bear. Consecutively falling back, there wasn’t anything else in his personal arsenal that he could bring to bear. The Sugato Sword was unleashing its true strength thanks to being imbued with the strength of a holy king, but the corpsefire had smacked it right back to its original form.

“Dammit, how did the tree conquer corpsefire? It’s supposed to guard the tomb!” This was a most unwelcome development. “Xuanxi!” he suddenly roared.

Boooooom!

An enormous black river appeared over their heads—the Dusk River!

It coiled around Xing Chen like an enormous black chain the moment it appeared, then churned viciously at the tornado of corpsefire.

## Chapter 806: The Will of Death

Kabooooom!

Spatial turbulence rocked the tomb realm as its insurmountably stalwart space was blasted open. Ruinous spatial storms rode in on the turbulence and ripped into the tomb realm, trying to turn it all into chaotic currents of the void.

However, the tomb realm was one created by the moat snake and even sturdier than the world of immortals outside. The spatial storms only had time to wreck their havoc for a hundred millionth of a second before all of the turbulence disappeared entirely. All the same, if the storms had made their way outside, they would've destroyed the world of immortals!

Once the pitch-black storms were ejected, the enormous Fire Altar revealed itself from concealment. It'd protected Lu Yun, Ashu, the Venerated Sacrosanct Demon Sovereign, and the other four high priests from that blink of earlier violence.

Unwilling to see harm come to them, You Si had protected the four priests in that crucial moment as well. If she had any kin left in the world to speak of, that would be the four of them.

The priest of earth threw her a grateful look, but she didn't bother returning the gesture.

Eyes bright with the projection of the Tome of Life and Death hovering over his head, Lu Yun was one with Xing Chen in this moment and had forced the usage of his combat arts onto his replica. As strong as the heritage of a holy king may be, it was no match for the treasure of death!

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The Dusk River and corpsefire clashed only once before both of them flew backwards. Xing Chen was thrown thousands of kilometers into the distance, recoil that was reflected in the zombie tree as well. The two seemed evenly matched.

Qing Hongchen's face appeared once more on the zombie tree and he looked guardedly at the black chain in midair. The Dusk River seemed to be corpsefire's bane.

"Using corpsefire against me?" Xing Chen leered. "I'll show you what it means to be the heir of the primeval human hell!"

Rumble!!

The black chain of the Dusk River came snaking back through the air, this time with hellfire burning on it. It seemed to be a snarling dragon wrapped in an inferno from the black flames of hell—it pounced upon the zombie tree.

Raging with berserk madness, the tornado of corpsefire came howling back to its wielder and became one with the tree again. Shuddering violently, the zombie treant planted its roots in the ground and returned to its original form. When both the Dusk River and hellfire were about to reach it, the soil around its roots started quaking uncontrollably.

Black soil shot upward in a reverse waterfall, forming a liquid shield that rebuffed the two-pronged attack. Up on the Fire Altar, Ashu looked at Xuan Yuan, who looked helplessly back at him.

“The living soil is dead, I can’t control it either.”

Living soil! The last of the five great treasures!

This treasure had also perished and become a dead thing. Languishing in the Xuan Yuan Tomb, the zombie tree had subdued it when it took the corpsefire. Just as wood fed fire, so too could it contain earth. Therefore, the zombie tree hadn’t spent much effort in capturing two treasures that were already dead.

The treasures of wood, fire, and earth deployed at the same time in a terrifying combination that beat back the Dusk River; even Xing Chen on the other side suffered grave injuries. Coming together as one, the awe-inspiring mixture of strength then barreled into the zombie tree’s body. While a shell-shocked Xing Chen watched on, the tree’s hulking girth swiftly shrank into the size of a regular human being.

A slim and slender young man exuding hazy gray light appeared in front of him.

Qing Hongchen.

The very one that Lu Yun had seen all these years ago, other than the incredible presence of death’s will around him.

The presence was so intense that, in Lu Yun’s eyes, it surpassed the limits of primeval hell. It represented the final destination of all things and the truest end of all!

“I would be truly complete if I obtain the Dusk River and the blade of nonbeing. I wouldn’t need that spirit anymore,” murmured Qing Hongchen to himself, his eyes devoid of any light. The blade of nonbeing was what Lu Yun had named Traceless.

“I’ll leave immediately if you give me the Dusk River and the blade of nonbeing. I’ll depart from the world of immortals and travel the endless cosmos. I swear to never come back or make any trouble for you!” Qing Hongchen suddenly roared with a rush of desire, displaying an abrupt surge of strength that was on par with Xing Chen.

“I might’ve actually believed you and handed them over if I didn’t know what kind of person you are. But now? Go choke on that big fat dream of yours.” Derision quirked Xing Chen’s lips.

Traceless wasn’t dead—it hadn’t been contaminated by the terrifying yin energy. It was the only one of the five that was intact and in perfect condition. Though Lu Yun didn’t know what would happen if the five great treasures were gathered in one place, he knew that nothing good would result from Qing Hongchen possessing all of them!

Xing Chen stepped forward, bringing the strength of the Dusk River and hellfire to bear at the same time. Churning forth in an overbearing mass of fire and water, he rammed into Qing Hongchen. Their collision was so great that this part of the world threatened to crumble to pieces!

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Upon the Fire Altar, You Si deployed the power of the altar with all of her strength and prevented the fearsome shockwaves from flattening the group. Lu Yun was seated on the ground and directing the Tome of Life and Death, melding his thoughts with Xing Chen’s and imbuing his replica with the power of hell.

He couldn't move at the moment, so a stunning woman in white robes suddenly materialized next to him. She approached the four high priests lying listlessly on the Fire Altar and thought for a moment.

"Are you four willing to serve my master?" She loftily considered the four with cool indifference. The three immortal fires chased each other in her eyes, imparting to her a certain formidable aura.

Yuying, first of the Ten Yama Kings!

"Master? Lu Yun?" The priest of earth shook his head. "To serve him is to serve the underworld. There is no release after one enters the underworld, so we would rather die."

"Master's existence is something you lot can hardly comprehend," You Si spoke up. "You will obtain what you want if you serve him—the altars!"

Xuan Yuan had taken the altar of earth, but he was only a string of thoughts now, not even a soul fragment. He was unable to call upon the altar's strength.

Yuying nodded and extended her hand to reveal the Wood, Metal, and Water Altars floating above her palm. Despite being the size of a palm, the priests of forest, ocean, and blade immediately glued their gazes to them.

#### **Chapter 807: The Reason Behind Xuan Yuan's Death**

The combined strength of the zombie tree, living soil, and corpsefire was so great that even Holy King Xing Chen felt at a disadvantage.

However, neither he nor Qing Hongchen seemed willing to engage in pitched battle before the snake outer-coffin. The man and tree slowly made their way to the vast gray land on the fringes of the yin tomb as they fought.

Atop the Fire Altar, Yuying awaited the four priests' response with three small altars floating above the palm of her left hand. Previously, the Wood Altar had been the only one in Lu Yun's possession, while the Water and Metal Altars resided within the celestial master tomb in the underworld. Xing Chen had paid the tomb a visit and collected the two altars before making his way here.

A misty halo blossomed from the three altars, resonating with one another.

The priests of forest, ocean, and blades panted at the sight. They'd wished for the true altars their entire lives, so much so that they'd almost developed an obsession. Now, the altars that would bring them to new heights and enable them to become true high priests of the five elemental rites were right at hand!

Nevertheless, the other three priests remained silent while they waited for the priest of earth to speak; he was their leader. The four priests were merely successors of the high priests who'd once served Xuan Yuan, but the current priest of earth was his predecessor's son. Xuanyuan blood flowed in his veins. Looking up, he gazed at the man upright on the snake coffin with confusion in his eyes.

Xuan Yuan was his ancestor.

However, the man hadn't even spared him a glance. From his perspective, the priest of earth was no longer a clansman after sacrificing all of the Xuan Yuan Slaves to pierce through the Great Formation of Nineheavens Gates. He wouldn't have only lent the altar to the priest otherwise.



Fifty thousand kilometers away, Xing Chen and the zombie tree repeatedly clashed without pause. Situ Zong, who'd transformed into a connate-grade treasure spirit, emerged as well.

Once the Pelagic Orb had completed its evolution into a connate-grade spirit treasure, the Pelagic Realm hidden within had taken concrete shape and became the external manifestation of the treasure; the orb withdrew into the realm to act as the treasure's core.

Situ Zong merged with the Pelagic Realm to imbue Xing Chen with its surging might, granting the holy king unlimited power. He dared not join the fray himself. While the Pelagic Realm might be able to survive a grand battle between two individuals rivalling the primeval human kings, Situ Zong's consciousness couldn't.

One blow from the zombie tree was all it would take to destroy his mind, and the Pelagic Realm would revert back to being a dead connate-grade spirit treasure. His only choice was to imbue Lu Yun's replica with his own power.

Even so, much to everyone's surprise, Xing Chen was only able to fight the zombie tree to a standstill, since the tree had gained the corpsefire and living soil. Neither the replica nor the zombie tree could defeat the other.

The tree's goal was to acquire the Dusk River, Traceless, and devour Ashu. It was all Xing Chen could do to stop it, so it was impossible for him to outright destroy it!

Directed by Lu Yun's will, elemental power circled around Xing Chen to form a perfect revolution of the five elements, attacking corpsefire and living soil in concert with the Dusk River.

Meanwhile, Lu Yun withdrew his hellfire. It was a powerful flame, but its level of strength was tied to his own. He couldn't tap into its full power yet, so deploying it here would do more harm than good.

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"We agree," the priest of earth answered with difficulty after a long pause. "We will serve Lu Yun as his followers!"

At his response, Xuan Yuan finally looked down at the priest of earth with an approving gaze.

A tremor ran through the priest's body as the grudges, grievances, and anger he'd accumulated for the past hundreds of millions of years evaporated without another word, leaving his mind and spirit crystal clear.

He realized with great shock that the altar of earth was voluntarily establishing a close connection to him, communicating with him as if the treasure had always been his.

"I see, I understand now... The real Earth Altar has always been mine... Father..."

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Ice and snow had returned to the realm. Tombs of all sizes made from frozen snow protruded, foresting the world with crude, delicate, large, and small variations. Despite the variety, the layout of every single tomb was impeccably established, fully complying with the dao of burial and feng shui doctrines.

"I am not alone in this world!" Standing on the peak of the snowy mountain, Xuanyuan Xiaoyue suddenly turned around with joy in her eyes. She looked happily in a certain direction and waved her hand, shrinking the snowy world into an orb and hanging it before her chest.

She then entered the Xuan Yuan Tomb with a light step.

"So this is the divine tree that Uncle Ling Weiyang tended to." She saw the towering zombie tree as soon as she entered the tomb.

Having returned to tree form, its roots stretched firmly into the land as its branches reached for the vast sky above it. It looked like a pillar of the very world. Since the earth beneath it flowed like water, the zombie tree wasn't at all hindered with its roots in the ground.

Xing Chen was smaller than even an ant in front of it. However, the manifestation of the powerful Dusk River and assorted projections from endless elemental power were massive enough to blot out the sky, crashing again and again with the zombie tree.

Sky and earth trembled.

The resulting shockwaves ripped through the lesser immortals who'd entered the tomb, while a chorus of screams and wails rang from those lucky, or unlucky enough to survive.

With Lu Yun's will amplifying Xing Chen's power, immortals who lost their lives to the tumult entered the kingdom of hell after their death and became Infernum, but even more of them were claimed by the zombie tree before they could attain a second lease on life. Its power was much greater than Xing Chen's, and those it snatched ended up nutrients for corpsefire.

Xuanyuan Xiaoyue looked at the suffering masses with pity in her eyes. With a soft beckon, she gently sent the immortals in the tomb outside.

The door leading to the outside world slammed shut with a bang.

Outside the Xuan Yuan tomb, the surviving immortals sprawled bonelessly on the ground. Sharing stunned looks with each other before looking up at the blue sky and white clouds above them, it felt like a lifetime had passed during their explorations.

Zou Longxiu lowered his head, he was in no better state than the others. His knowledge of feng shui had allowed him to navigate the tomb with ease, but he'd been as fragile as a newborn the second the zombie tree appeared.

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Xuanyuan Xiaoyue jumped forward and landed between the zombie tree and Xing Chen. Alarmed, the tree immediately put some distance between them.

Qing Hongchen's face emerged again, his wary eyes shifting to Xuanyuan Xiaoyue. In its eyes, she was terrifyingly powerful. Though she was a vicious ghost, corpsefire couldn't kill her, and she seemed to nurture a vast world.

Out of nowhere, Lu Yun appeared beside Xing Chen and disappeared with his replica.

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“I’ve neglected to tell you something, sir,” Ge Long said with a grave expression when Lu Yun and Xing Chen returned to hell with the spleen Xuan Yuan had given them. “Xuan Yuan’s death is connected to the five altars. Someone wanted to nurture the world’s organs with his altars, that’s why they killed him.”

### **Chapter 808: The Body of the World**

“And you’re only telling me this now because...?” Lu Yun chuckled wryly. Did he have any other choice?

The zombie tree was too overwhelming. As long as its roots reached beneath the earth and were protected by the living soul, its strength was boundless and inexhaustible.

Though the Pelagic Orb provided tremendous energy to Xing Chen, it couldn’t compare to a supreme treasure like the living soil. Not to mention, the zombie tree itself was also a treasure of that level.

Despite taking up unwelcome residence in the underworld, the three holy kings hadn’t dared evict it. Now that it possessed the corpsefire and living soil, it was wholly in its element as if a tiger had gained wings.

Only after refining the spleen of the world would Xing Chen rival the three ancient holy kings in the underworld. Only then would he truly possess the strength to combat the zombie tree. Lu Yun didn’t want to consider anything other than that for now.

“Do I have any other choice?” He looked at Ge Long.

The old servant shook his head. “The living soil belongs to the zombie tree now, and it’ll be able to endlessly consume the strength of the tomb as long as it stands in the tomb realm. The Xuan Yuan Tomb will be sucked dry in the end, bequeathing to it the strength of a moat snake. There shouldn’t be anyone who can withstand a moat snake in the current world of immortals.”

“My name is Carmine Arbiter!” objected the moat snake, currently strolling through the City of the Dead with her colleague. Despite their leisurely jaunt, their attention had been focused on events in the outside world.

Lu Yun spread out his hands dismissively. “Let’s begin. The owner of the five organs will at most come looking for my replica after I refine all five of them. They won’t think much of my primary body.”

“Sir,” Ge Long raised solemnly. “All things that exist are rational. There is no absolute right or wrong, or good and evil in the world. Xuan Yuan was the great human sovereign, but his killer may not be a villain.”

“Are you trying to tell me that you ate Xuan Yuan?” Lu Yun asked instead.

Incredulity crossed Ge Long’s face and he hastily shook his head. “No, no, certainly not. I would fall over myself to pay my respects to him, so how would I ever commit the great sin of killing him? I’m just pointing out that whoever killed him may not be an evildoer.”

“Alright, I understand.” Lu Yun nodded. “Let us begin.”

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With the spleen incorporated into Xing Chen's body, the five organs of the heart, liver, spleen, lungs, and kidneys were thus all present and accounted for. The energy of the five elements rose from the organs as rays of scintillating radiance, and Xing Chen's body began to change at a rapid pace.

Upon the collection of the five elements, their energy formed a complete cycle that both nurtured and suppressed each other in endless succession. Five rays of brilliant luminescence centered on the replica like a pentacolored rainbow, but that wasn't all. This was just the result of the five organs coming together; their true strength hadn't been displayed yet.

A series of marvelous changes took place once all five organs settled down in Xing Chen's body. Pure elemental strength that originated from later development in nature manifested the earth, flame, forest, ocean, and blade. These physical apparitions interacted with each other to support or destroy one another, and all of them eventually went up in a blaze of glory to exhibit the myriad of possible changes beneath the heavens.

The six yang organs, meridians, blood vessels, flesh and blood grew in Xing Chen's body, making him no different from an ordinary person. However, since these had all come from the organs of heaven and earth, that placed them on the same level as the world's organs.

"AhhhhHHHHH!!" He suddenly threw his head back and roared at the skies, opening his mouth to also devour the Cosmic Sea hanging in hell's firmament!

Twilight instantly draped over the once-brightly lit kingdom of the netherworld.

"Well met! The kingdom of hell is one of darkness and shadow, there should have been no stars or light in the first place. The addition of the cosmos obstructed its development instead!" Ge Long applauded heartily.

Lu Yun then accelerated time in hell to ten thousand times its usual pace. His replica and its new organs grew swiftly while beams of starlight filtered out from his body. In this moment, the Cosmic Sea truly became one with heaven and earth.

Xing Chen finally opened his eyes again after a hundred million years, or perhaps it was ten billion years. A plethora of emotions flickered through his gaze, as if he'd experienced much of the fickleness of life.

"I see, I see at last..." Lu Yun and Xing Chen spoke at the same time. They looked at each other, both reading amazement in the other's eyes.

Lu Yun brought out his luopan and deployed formula dao for a few calculations before nodding in satisfaction.

"You knew a long time ago how to fix the immortal dao and repair the dao immortal realm!" Lu Yun looked at Ge Long. "Someone set all this up in the Primeval Era—"

"Sir!!" Ge Long quickly interrupted his master. "No more, no more!"

Lu Yun nodded and changed the subject. "Mmhmm, I know what decisions to make."

A faint smile floated onto the old servant's face. "The immortal dao existed in the Primeval Era as well, but it was too weak then. It was because of this feebleness that we could hypothesize and speculate its future development, determining what weaknesses and trends it would develop. Someone made certain arrangements beforehand with this knowledge.

"Although a few unexpected deviations happened along the way, milord's fortuitous appearance guided the immortal dao back onto its proper path." Gratification flashed through Ge Long's eyes. If it wasn't for Lu Yun's appearance, he'd already be dead.

The young man in question nodded back at the old servant. Xing Chen was still undergoing his metamorphosis. After swallowing the Cosmic Sea, the Cosmic Eye and Cosmic Skycarver came flying through the air to assimilate into his body. The Cosmic Eye became his new eyes, and Skycarver his weapon! The three were seamlessly incorporated into one new whole!

They'd originally belonged to Qing Yu, but she had no need for them after the world of the heavenly palace was complete.

Boooooom.

An enormous rumble rang out while silver waves washed over Xing Chen, painting the kingdom of hell with the color of the stars. The elemental power manifested by the organs vanished, becoming pure energy of the world. Nurturing an entire world within oneself was the kind of power grasped by peak great emperors!

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When Lu Yun and Xing Chen returned to the yin tomb, they displayed the strength of a peak great emperor with abandon.

"What is this?!" shrieked the zombie tree as Ashu and the others gawked as well. In their eyes, only the blink of an eye had passed before the fourth holy king of the underworld had suddenly exploded into an existence that rivaled Great Emperor Kunpeng!

"How is this possible, how can this be? You transformed in a split second! Even if you obtained all five organs of the world, you'd need a hundred million years to refine and incorporate them. It would take at least that long before you can manifest a world within yourself. It's not possible to do it so quickly!!" The zombie tree rejected the reality in front of them, but Xing Chen really did possess that legendary level of achievement!

Someone who'd attained such heights was destined to surpass even great emperors. It'd only be a matter of time before they were on par with Ling Weiyang and Xuan Yuan.

The zombie tree suddenly shrank in on itself and streaked into a ray of black light, seeking to escape from the tomb.

Hummmmm.

The tomb shook violently as the five elemental altars appeared out of the void, locking down all of the Xuan Yuan Tomb. You Si, the high priests of earth, ocean, forest, and blade stood on their respective altars, all of them directing overwhelming elemental energy to seal off the void.

However, the zombie tree really was too overbearing; just the combination of corpsefire, living soil, and its own strength proved sufficient to challenge the five altars. It hadn't been long since the five priests obtained their altars, so they were unable to deploy their full strength and wavered in the face of the zombie tree's frontal charges.

"Give that here!" Xing Chen strode forward and grabbed the living soil and corpsefire, wresting them away for his own. He then pressed gently on the tree's trunk.

Kabooooom!

The thick trunk immediately decimated into a shower of splinters.

"Lu Yun!! To become a great emperor in this day and age is to seek death! Just you wait, it's coming for you!!" the zombie tree yelled as a portion of its trunk broke through the air and made its escape.

Condemnation ringing in their ears, things settled down in the Xuan Yuan Tomb. In all of the chaos, Xuanyuan Xiaoyue had remained silently looking at a faint figure on top of the snake outer-coffin. A beautiful smile crossed her face.

"I'd like to live now, I think." She looked at Lu Yun.

"Gotcha." Lu Yun waved a hand and opened the invisible Gates of the Abyss in front of her. Stepping forward lightheartedly, she entered hell.

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"What a shame he got away," sighed the Venerated Sacrosanct Demon Sovereign with disgruntlement.

Lu Yun raised an eyebrow at him. "Though the zombie tree was really here, he still left a section of trunk outside. So even if I'd gotten all of him just now, that still wouldn't be enough to kill him."

"Sir, does this mean that the entire world is yours now that you're a great emperor? You can be the master of the world of immortals and unite it all?" Ardent enthusiasm burned in the demon sovereign's eyes.

"The immortal dao is not yet complete, making great emperors a forbidden realm. Whoever dares become one or call themselves an emperor must die. I am no exception." Xing Chen walked up with a sigh. "What a pity, I'll miss feeling this strength. My apologies, senior holy kings. I'm afraid I'll be dying before I've done anything for the underworld as her fourth holy king."

Though he was about to die, there wasn't any disappointment or loneliness on his face. In fact, Xing Chen looked... expectant.

"For the good of all!" Holy Kings Atrophy, Desolation, and Antiquity applauded in the underworld.

Ashu looked at Xing Chen and nodded as well. "That you are willing to give up this replica means Xuan Yuan has not died in vain."

A trace of gratification appeared on Xuan Yuan's face before he slowly dissipated.

**Chapter 809: What We Mean By Destiny**

With the last of Xuan Yuan's wishes fulfilled, his lingering obsession abated and he finally sought out eternal rest.

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"If that old ghost's finally found his peace, does that mean I'm free as well??" Chained to the dragonbolt pillar, the torch dragon shook his head slightly and took another look at the door of bones. A complicated smile stole across his face. "It's actually not that bad here, I'll never be lonely if I keep my kin company."

Whoosh!

The iron chains connected to the pillar scattered to the ground as metallic shards. A silver shadow of a nine-tailed fox darted forward and vanished from the premises.

"Hmmp, I'm not leaving now even if you beg me to." Indulging in a nice stretch, the torch dragon swiftly shrank himself and coiled around the bone door. However, a second version of him appeared in short order—his projection from the nascent spirit observation method.

"That kid's observation method is magical indeed. By observing all things in the world of immortals and using that as the foundation, I can go anywhere I want.

"But his mindset and vision is on par with Xuan Yuan's. He can relinquish the body of a peak great emperor just like that, without any reluctance or hesitation..." the torch dragon sighed.

Xuan Yuan had willingly gone to his death, or rather, his murder, so that he could fully imbue the five altars with his power. Only then would they possess enough strength to nurture organs of the world.

He was the sacred emperor of humanity, an existence beyond the realm of great emperor. If he hadn't wanted to die, who could've killed someone who stood at the very heights of the heavens themselves?

His death served to facilitate the survival of later generations, so that there might be a ray of hope preserved for their continued existence in the future.

"Hehehe, little girl Tushan, you've forgotten who you are, haven't you? The monster spirit emperor? A great emperor?" Grumbling, the torch dragon dismissed his projection and fell fast asleep coiled around his kin.

.....

Qing Yu and Violetshade easily obtained the mother altar without running into any obstruction.

"These are the Xuan Yuan Slaves sacrificed to the mother altar!" Qing Yu picked out a dense throng of figures on the altar. Though she'd never seen them before, she could still identify who they'd been in life.

There was no fury or hatred on their faces, there wasn't even a hint of resentment. It was as if they'd long known that this was to be their destiny, their only value within their Xuan Yuan Tomb. Their only purpose was to be sacrificed to the mother altar and break apart the Great Formation of the Nineheavens Gates.

“Lu Yun can resurrect them,” murmured Qing Yu.

“But what would be the point of that?” Twin sparkles of purple flashed through Violetshade’s eyes. She mused pensively as she looked at the slaves, “They knew of their destiny a long time ago. Their only reason for residing here was to await the day in which someone would sacrifice them.

“Protect the Xuan Yuan Tomb? It was the tomb who protected them.” She sighed softly when she finally caught sight of a slender corpse beneath the mother altar.

Back when she was Empress Myrtlestar, she’d once visited the tomb and planted the roots of karmic repercussion with someone. The person had remained on her mind all this time and had just perished, and Empress Myrtlestar herself had transformed into Holy King Violetshade and Fuying. Any debts or feuds from the ancient past were thus rendered null and void.

“She died not too long ago by willingly offering herself to the mother altar... is this what we mean by destiny?” Qing Yu lifted a hand and quietly raised an unassuming burial mound, sending the corpse to her final rest.

Since Qing Yu didn’t know who the corpse was or what her background was, burying her with a humble pile of dirt was the only thing that could be done. She saw no resulting resentment from the corpse, a sign that residing in a burial mound was enough for her.

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In a patch of unknown space, a singed and charred section of the zombie tree’s trunk melded with another section of tree that’d been planted in a safe location.

“Lu Yun... the day your great emperor replica dies is the day you die as well!” The zombie tree morphed into Qing Hongchen. He stood in the air and scowled at Dusk Province. “One day, I’ll take root in Dusk Province and turn it, no, the entire world, into zombie dirt!”

He was gravely injured after having his treasures taken by Lu Yun and even his own body sorely wounded. The strength of a great emperor was too dominating. He’d only have been able to hold his own if he’d obtained Traceless, the Dusk River, and called upon all five elements.

In the end, he’d been able to escape with a little bit of trunk because Lu Yun knew there was no point in annihilating him in the tomb. Rather, there might be a bit of use leaving some part of his trunk intact.

“Take root in Dusk Province and turn the world of immortals into zombie dirt?” a gentle voice suddenly sounded. “Why don’t you give your body to me instead? The two of us can work together to take root in the world of immortals and turn it into demonic soil.”

A little dot of light darted into the zombie tree.

Wham!!

Qing Hongchen immediately reverted back into tree form and took root in the air. He screamed, shouted, and flailed around wildly, but there was nothing he could do. His face on the zombie tree slowly adjusted itself until it became the demon god’s.



“Well well, I’ve finally found an appropriate body for this great emperor true spirit of mine. But the immortal dao is not yet complete, so whoever dares become a great emperor must die.

“It won’t be long now though, hehehehehe! The immortal dao will be fully complete when its path is completely laid out. Great emperors will return to the world, and I will be the first among the entire multiverse, a great emperor of a demon god!”

He’d split off a replica of himself to walk the path of cultivation and become a void-ascended immortal, then returned to his primary body—made from the Ichor Bog—so that his true spirit would fall under the immortal dao as well.

It’d been perfect timing to ambush the zombie tree when it was grievously wounded, and now was the time to use the Ichor Bog to nourish it so it’d become a demonic tree. Then, when the immortal dao was complete, he’d become a great emperor.

.....

“We’re too late, someone’s already taken possession of the zombie tree!” Yin Jiuying and Jiang Chen assessed the lingering traces in the air with sour expressions. “It’s the demon god...”

.....

On the tenth day of the third month, in the first year of the Xuanhuang calendar.

Perhaps in response to the calendar receiving approval from the immortal dao, a revitalizing atmosphere of spring and renewal descended upon all the facets on this day.

There had been no seasons in the world of immortals before. But now that Lu Yun had decreed there to be four seasons in the calendar, rules pertaining to the passage of the seasons slowly formed in the immortal dao and administered the world. They were still very weak, so weak that many didn’t sense the creation of the four seasons.

The matter of the Xuan Yuan Tomb was put to rest. Though there were still a few zombies roaming the Heaven Locus Marsh, they were of no threat to the residents of that facet. The door to the tomb had closed, and though there were countless primeval and even connate treasures inside it, Lu Yun wasn’t inclined to touch them at all.

“Did you just say that you want to compile a record of history?” Qing Yu’s eyes widened with surprise at Lu Yun.

“That’s right, I want to put in writing all the events of the world.” Lu Yun nodded. “With history as a warning, we will know our future prosperity or decline. There are many things that shouldn’t be forgotten by everyone!”

History was a forbidden topic in the current world of immortals and many things were concealed, including Emperors Fall and the great war a hundred thousand years ago. To put brush to paper meant that Lu Yun was issuing a challenge to those unknown powers in the shadows.

## **Chapter 810: A Plan of Extinction**

To compile a record of history!

He'd nursed such plans ever since exiting the Xuan Yuan Tomb.

Holy Emperor Xuan Yuan had willingly gone to his death in the Primeval Era for the sake of future generations, but no one in modern times even knew of his name. Such a character like him should not, and could not be forgotten by the world.

However, the time wasn't ripe yet; Lu Yun wasn't strong enough to realize his ambitions. The day in which the immortal dao ran through the heavens and held all life in its purview would be the moment when the curtains were truly pulled back on history.

Instead of returning to the underworld, Xing Chen remained in the kingdom of hell. He discovered at this time that the restrictions from the underworld on him had disappeared, and the strength of a holy king that'd infused him before had turned into his own power. He sat down cross-legged beneath the Karmic Tree at the middle of the kingdom, borrowing strength from the tree to slowly refine the Cosmic Sea, Cosmic Eyes, and Cosmic Skycarver.

As he and Qing Yu had finished theorizing how to repair the immortal dao, all proceeded in an orderly fashion according to their plans. Drawing on the memories of his ten Yama Kings and various expert followers, Lu Yun began to draft an edition of history for the world of immortals.

His work was a real book and not a nascent spirit jade slip, its papers stemming from a refined branch from the Karmic Tree. They exuded a haze of virtuous merit and were impervious to water and fire.

As he worked on the draft, he placed it under the Karmic Tree for blessing and protection. His ten Yama Kings, Ge Long, Meng Wang, Venerated Sacrosanct Demon Sovereign, Carmines Eternal and Arbiter, a few Infernum with impressive backgrounds, as well as the slowly recovering Xuanyuan Xiaoyue all visited the Karmic Tree to place their memories down in this first annal of the world's history.

Only the Karmic Tree could endure the monumental gravity of this task. Karmic fruits dotted its beaches, each of them archiving a portion of history that no one knew anything about.

"Little Yu, what would you say is the purpose of us tomb raiders digging up the bodies of those who've passed before us?" murmured Lu Yun as he watched the group beneath the tree's branches.

Qing Yu looked wordlessly at her beloved.

"It's to air out the histories covered in dust underneath the ground and bring them back out into the light. Most of what people know nowadays comes from these tombs."

Qing Yu nodded with much on her mind.

.....

The Dao Academy flourished and prospered, attracting immortals and cultivators from all over the world. No matter what kind of mindset or plans they came with, all were disciples of the academy once they enrolled and had the right to learn anything its curriculum offered.

But if they wished to study anything of a higher level, such as tomb raiding or feng shui, they had to pass the outer academy examinations after sixty years and make it into the inner academy.

Apart from Headmaster Lu Yun, there were five more additions to the ranks of the academy's deans in recent times—the deans of the five elements.

The deans of metal, wood, water, fire, and earth. In other words, the five high priests of the Xuan Yuan Tomb.

Now that they'd obtained the real altars of the five elements and controlled elemental core essence, they received the immortal dao's recognition the moment they entered the Dao Academy and became the official deans of the five elements beneath the heavens.

To grasp a great dao in the era before Emperors Fall was the hallmark of becoming a great emperor. However, the five elemental deans wielded their great dao through the altars, so they were representatives of the five elements at most, not great emperors.

The great dao of the five elements bolstered the immortal dao like five pillars supporting the sky, nurturing the will of the immortal so much that it showed signs of awakening from its perch in Mount Xuanhuang.

As time went on, increasing numbers of disciples flocked to the Dao Academy to the point where all forty thousand kilometers of Dusk Province were the academy in a general sense.

On the first day of the ninth month, in the first year of the Xuanhuang calendar, the Dao Academy made a certain announcement. Mortals were also denizens of the world of immortals, so they too had the right to cultivate whether or not they possessed a spirit root.

From henceforth, all mortals aged six and above could attend the Dao Academy and cultivate. It was no matter if they didn't possess a spirit root, the academy had the Aurum Openia Pill! Any mortal or sentient mundane item that enrolled in the academy could obtain such a pill and embark on their path of cultivation!

Of course, it'd been less than a year since the Dao Academy's founding, so its reputation and influence weren't the greatest. This initiative could only be conducted in Nephrite Major and the parties friendly with Lu Yun such as the East Sea court, South Sea court, Unsullied Sea, and others.

Still, this sent the world of immortals into an uproar! A fearsome atmosphere shrouded the peak factions of the world like heavy smog, inescapable and unavoidable.

Though the world of immortals had developed for a hundred thousand years, there were still hundreds of millions of mortals in the world. These mortals were the foundation of the realm and the exclusive domain of many peak factions.

Apart from developing their own clansmen, these factions selected a few mortal youths with stunning potential each year for further fostering and brainwashing into their own troops. There were also numerous factions that created nations of mortals for use in worshipping divine spirits, so that they could support the guardian spirits of the clans.

The sudden announcement from the Dao Academy was worse than ripping out their hearts! This was a plan that spelled out their extinction!

Mortals were boorish and crude, while cultivators and immortals were magnificent, regal gods. Only fear and veneration came to mind when they thought of those who walked the path of cultivation.

At the same time, they dearly wished that they, too, could fly through the air and ground like the invincible immortals. They would sell everything they possibly could to gain the chance to cultivate for themselves or their close kin.

Just as immortals had their grudges and feuds, so did the mortals have a world of strife and cooperation of their own.

But now...

The Dao Academy deposited hope right in their laps! No matter who they were, all could enter the academy and cultivate if they were six years old!

There were no requirements to be met!

No potential to consider!

No spirit root to be tested!

The Dao Academy had the Aurum Openia Pill that could turn a born piece of trash into a cultivator!

With something like the Dao Academy there, who would continue to dash their heads against the ground for a chance to make it into their faction's cultivation quota?

Immortals of the various celestial courts and peak factions erupted in panic. The Dao Academy's impact had been limited before, but they were backed by the merchant alliance all the same. The alliance's network stretched all over the world. If it stirred into operations, there was nothing easier for it to accomplish than to ferry mortals to the Dao Academy!

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"Crazy, they're absolutely crazy!" Patriarchs of the Ling, Zhu, Yue, and other various clans of Nephrite Major gathered together, all with exceedingly disgruntled expressions.

Their current emperor was Zhao Shengguang, and though Chen Xiao and Qing Buyi treated him like a lackey, he was still firmly in Lu Yun's camp. That meant he would wholeheartedly oversee the rollout of this enterprise.

Thus, the first ones to bear the brunt of this delusional action would be the various top factions of Nephrite Major. They hadn't even had time to prepare before their wonderful celestial emperor collected all of Nephrite's mortals and sent them to the academy!

"This is simply a plan to wipe all of us out. That Lu Yun wants to weaken us, so this time, we must stand together. Otherwise..." The patriarch of the Ling Clan glowered forebodingly.

Things weren't as simple as they initially came across. There were plenty of immortals in their factions that couldn't cultivate, and though they grew despondent at their lack of personal success, they still had a myriad of ties to the faction.

The mortals wished to cultivate!

