

Necropolis 981

Chapter 981: The Cosmos of the World of Immortals

The cosmos of the world of immortals was infinitely more dangerous than that of the lower realms. If it was said that a Supreme Immortal of Original Order could hold down the fort in the lower realms and protect a ruined world by themselves, then they would be the party receiving protection in the cosmos of the world of immortals.

Only human kings of the Three Purities realm possessed the requisite level of strength to enter space and safeguard it for the realm. There were no great emperors in the world of immortals at the moment. Though the little fox was an empyrean master, she was an anomaly as she wasn't a great emperor beneath the immortal dao.

However, Lu Yun was confident that in the less than seventy years to come, there would be great emperors who appeared on the scene. His Yama Kings, at least, would absolutely break through to that realm. And now that there was a sapling beside the Karmic Tree, that meant Tianqi was about to return.

Lu Yun had never hoped that the world of immortals could defeat their age old enemy in one single battle. Opposing the dead spirits and the chaos creatures behind them would be a long and arduous process. The immortal dao was established six hundred million years ago, may it, the world, and realm still exist after another six hundred.

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"You've finally found the root cause of everything!" Violetgrave smiled to see Lu Yun and Qing Yu appear hand in hand. "The six dao palaces are the source of the dead spirits in this realm. If you eliminate them, that will decrease the amount of dead spirits in the lower realm by more than half.

"However." The sword turned grave. "The two of you will die without a doubt if you enter the cosmos with your current level of strength."

The cosmos was incredibly vast and currently suppressed by the world projected by the World Gates. It had once been the cosmos of the world of celestials, the most prosperous locale in this realm.

Lu Yun still retained Yinglong's gift of the star map in his mind. Though it recorded the constellations of the great wilderness, that was the same night sky as the world of celestials—which was also the current projected cosmos of the world of immortals. A hundred million years had changed space beyond recognition, but its core essence was the same. The familiar cosmic power and principles could be found in the cosmic layout.

The only difference was that dead spirits had completely occupied the cosmos. Even great emperors wouldn't dare enter now.

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"Who says we're going out there in person?" Lu Yun smiled faintly and sat down cross-legged on the ground. A young man wearing white linen robes with loose long hair framing slightly rough hewn features walked out over his head.

Flame Emperor Lie Shan!

Lu Yun had employed the nascent spirit observation method to project a double created from hellfire, which gave Lie Shan the same strength and cultivation level as Lu Yun.

Qing Yu smiled faintly and operated the same method, summoning a wheel of Sol Truefire. A young girl with regal features and dressed in an opulent imperial robe walked out over her head.

This was her projected double.

Now that she'd refined the heavenly palace and coalesced Sol Truefire as the fire of the immortal dao, she created an empress of immortal dao when she viewed herself!

The first great emperor of the human race and the first immortal empress of the immortal dao!

"I see, one of Sol Truefire and one of hellfire. The two of you won't meet with any danger out there if you manifest with those flames." Violetgrave gently batted her forehead and fell silent.

Lu Yun and Qing Yu smiled at each other, then sent their doubles through the World Gates into the vast space. When they looked back at their world, they saw the planet itself and a faint cocoon of light around it. That was the inner cosmos of the world of immortals, of which the World Gates stood at its highest point to separate the inner and outer cosmos.

Dense tides of yin spirits drifted aimlessly through space, devouring everything they sensed in front of them, including themselves. A massive horde of scarlet bale spirits were gathered outside the gates. It drew back and rammed against the indestructible World Gates again and again.

Radiance as pure as white jade sparked over the gates and illuminated space. It looked incomparably sacred and was inscribed with profound runes of the immortal dao. However, fresh blood dyed these pristine gates.

Lu Yun didn't know whose blood it was, either.

Inexhaustible numbers of dead spirits sensed Lu Yun and Qing Yu the moment they appeared, surging in their direction like sharks scenting blood.

Whoosh!

Whoosh!

One golden and one black flame ignited in space, sending the spirits scattering in disarray with ghastly shrieks.

"What a pity that only hellfire and Sol Truefire can scare them off," Qing Yu lamented. Even connate li fire didn't have such qualities. If it burned in this part of space, the dead spirits would immediately put it out. Only Lu Yun and Qing Yu could perfectly control the flames that the spirits were afraid of.

"There's no time to be lost, let's go find the two dao palaces!" Lu Yun could sense a ponderous presence slowly rising from the depths of space. It would seem that a terrifying giant creature slept in the cosmos, protecting the yin spirits here.

If it awoke from slumber, it would instantly erase Lu Yun and Qing Yu's projected doubles.

"Over there!" Qing Yu pointed in a certain direction after some calculations.

“Let’s go!” Lu Yun deployed the Boundless Step and traveled five hundred thousand kilometers with one step.

An enormous golden palace appeared in front of them after an hour—the dao palace! This was one of the palaces located in the cosmos.

“There are chaos creatures inside, but no empyrean realm humans!” Qing Yu’s eyes lit up.

When Lu Yun had captured the empyrean humans from the second dao palace, they’d self-detonated when they realized they were prisoners. At the time, Lu Yun couldn’t be bothered to use a death art to resurrect these traitors.

The palace in front of them was staffed with neither chaos beasts nor empyrean human masters. Plainly, the chaos creatures felt this territory to be absolutely safe, that no immortal would dare bring trouble to them here.

“Alright!” Lu Yun smiled. “Stay here and keep track of these coordinates for me. I’ll turn into a Size Manipulation talisman formation and claim this palace!”

No ripples of existence traveled from their doubles, thanks to the properties of hellfire. They were solidly concealed in the cosmic deep. Lu Yun’s projection soundlessly made its way to the dao palace, then used Shapeshifting to turn himself into a Size Manipulation talisman formation!

Puff!

The dao palace as large as a star immediately turned into a dust particle and vanished from space.

Chapter 982: Give You My Head

With hellfire and Sol Truefire concealing their projections, not even purple bale spirits could discover Lu Yun and Qing Yu.

The cosmos was too vast and there were too many dead spirits—tens of thousands of times more than what existed in the lower worlds. The two flames from Lu Yun and Qing Yu had forced away the dead spirits to give them room, to vanish into the void like a drop of water in the ocean.

Being the flame of immortal dao, Sol Truefire could return to the immortal dao and perfectly obscure Qing Yu’s presence. As a Size Manipulation formation talisman, Lu Yun’s projection emanated a faint ripple of power outside the dao palace.

“Waugh augh augh!!” A hundred purple bale spirits sensed the disturbance and screeched furiously, charging over with fury.

“Enemies are here!” The chaos creatures occupying the dao palace were dismayed by the alarm on their perimeter. They hadn’t thought that someone would be able to quietly breach their defenses and deploy a strange combat art to swiftly shrink their surroundings.

“We need to go!” They didn’t dare hesitate.

The power of a realm would corrode their bodies the moment they were exposed to the cosmos. If it didn't kill them immediately, it would feel like ten thousand blades scraping away at their flesh. It would be a sensation worse than death.

As the Gates of the Abyss opened, they flung themselves through a one-time use transportation formation.

Boom!

The tiny formation exploded.

"You would've resisted the change if you hadn't left, which would've made it impossible for me to take the dao palace. But now that you've left with your kind..." Lu Yun grinned.

If the beings within the dao palace had shown any resistance, that would've prevented the Gates of the Abyss from taking it in. But since the only beings left were some completely placid empyrean humans that'd suddenly appeared, Lu Yun's heist went off smoothly. The humans wanted to go along with the intruder's plan and see if there was an opportunity for gathering intelligence or sabotage.

The magnificent dao palace vanished from space and entered hell. This time, Lu Yun was prepared. The moment it touched ground, the blood demon flashed into the dao palace with Bloodmoon and restrained the five empyrean humans left behind.

"Heh heh heh. If you get to self-detonate this time, I, a chaos realm master, will give you my head!" The blood demon cackled smugly at the five masters on the ground at his feet.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!

Five muffled bangs rang out from the heads of the five masters on the ground. Their eyes dimmed and the blood demon looked dumbly at five new corpses at his feet. There were no longer any ripples of life or even traces of great dao in their bodies anymore. They'd become the corpses of ordinary humans.

"You can give me your head now," Lu Yun curled his lip at the blood demon.

Acting with resolute decisiveness, the blood demon had Bloodmoon slice his head off and presented it with a pitiful look at Lu Yun. The master of hell snorted and left the netherworld, returning to Qing Yu's coordinates.

The blood demon had only suppressed the five masters' power and bodies, but not their minds. It hadn't occurred to him that it'd be possible for the humans to destroy themselves through thought alone.

"But these corpses belong to mundane humans, they've never cultivated before." The blood demon placed his head back on his neck and bent down for a close look. "The chaos creatures have used some special methods to turn ordinary humans into great masters of the combat arts!"

Shock filtered through the blood demon's eyes. "If... if after they conquer a world, they round up the humans there and brainwash them, then use special methods to mass produce empyrean realm masters... This would be an utter disaster!"

He immediately brought this to Lu Yun's attention, who paused after having returned to the cosmos. He thought back to everything he'd seen in the Quiet Realm. The chaos had forbidden the abandoned races to harm humans and there was an embryo made of human flesh in the dao palace...

"Come on, let's go harass the other dao palace." Lu Yun and Qing Yu smiled at each other, already heading for the other palace in space.

Meanwhile, their true forms arrived in Harshcloud Realm, the most dangerous of all the lower worlds. Its main world had fallen long ago and numerous boundaries of the world cracked into useless pieces. However, the world of immortals had set up numerous strongholds in the area to protect the remaining survivors. Harshcloud immortals who could ascend had also long been forced to ascend. They would only be in the way if they remained here and would likely be worse than useless.

The biggest stronghold in the region was one built by the Dao Academy. Patriarch Lu Daoling of the Lu Clan and Qing Yu's father, Patriarch Qing Taxian of the Qing Clan, were in attendance here. They were both Supreme Immortals of Original Order due to Lu Yun and Qing Yu's help and they had Kui for reinforcement. The safety of this stronghold was no issue at all.

Though many factions in the world of immortals were boycotting the Dao Academy, the institution still flourished greatly in the lower realms as its bulwark and great benefactor.

After the bloody cleansing that shook the world, the academy's disciples began to moderate themselves and no longer dared contemplate killing others for their treasure. The establishment of the merit system also enabled them to grow stronger by absorbing goodwill. This induced them to do good deeds in a tireless fashion, further raising the Dao Academy's reputation in the lower worlds.

The lower realms were different from the world of immortals since the latter was still relatively safe. That was why the factions dared present allied defiance of the academy. But in the lower worlds, danger and death lurked around every corner. No one dared raise hostilities out in the open, lest they set in motion cataclysmic destruction. Veiled exchanges in the shadows were the most that anyone could attempt.

When Qing Yu and Lu Yun arrived in Harshcloud Realm, a terrifying battle was in progress. The formation of heaven and earth around the Dao Academy stronghold had broken and all personnel had boarded fortress ships. However, unending torrents of scarlet bale spirits latched onto the ships like locusts, madly gnawing away at their structural energy.

Crystal cannons on the ships lit up with barrage after barrage, but they didn't have much of an effect. Lu Yun counted ten lord-grade fortress ships hovering in space, with another five already wrecked on the ground.

It would appear that lord-grade fortress ships couldn't withstand the tides of dead spirits here at all.

Kui was in the field and lightning flashed all around him, smiting a crowd of thousand purple bale spirits. If those bale spirits charged over, then the remaining ten ships would be instantly breached.

Chapter 983.1: Fuxi and Fuxi

The horde of purple bale spirits a thousand strong was vastly different from the ones Lu Yun had seen before. They were stronger and faster; even Kui in the supreme pure realm could only barely hold them

off. A thousand of them amassed together could also bring forth strength that rivaled a supreme pure realm immortal!

Lu Yun and Qing Yu regarded the scene broodingly. The lord-grade fortress ship couldn't even withstand the dead spirits, they'd never be able to put up any resistance to the purple bale spirits.

"The fortress ships can sweep the world of immortals and some of the weaker lower realms, but they're ineffective in Harshcloud realm!" Lu Yun sucked in a sharp breath and deployed the Divine Glory with a quick thought. Black ripples undulated from the vessel and destroyed the dead spirits it came in contact with.

These black ripples were the sound combat art that he'd inadvertently invented before. Supremely effective against dead spirits, it'd been incorporated into combat art talismans and popularized throughout the world of immortals. The combat art had also been refined into a treasure that was installed on the Divine Glory.

An explosion of the sound combat art instantly cleared the field, and the remaining ten lord-grade fortress ships knew that Lu Yun had come when they saw the Divine Glory. Quickly gathering around, the eleven fortress ships worked in tandem with each other and repelled the endless tide of dead spirits.

Though the Divine Glory was stronger than the other ships, it wasn't fundamentally any different. It was still a lord-grade fortress ship. At most, it benefitted from Lu Yun's strange inventions and strong treasures. It was the hand at the helm rather than the ship itself that was the greatest contributing factor to its strength.

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"Father, are you alright?" Qing Yu rushed onto one of the ships and looked around for her father. Her shoulders sagged with relief when she saw that Qing Taxian was unharmed.

"I'm fine." Qing Taxian turned solemn when he saw Lu Yun board the ship after his daughter. "Harshcloud Realm was dangerous to begin with, but the dead spirits weren't as crazy as they are now. For some reason, they lost their minds a few days ago and attacked all of our strongholds with unprecedented ferocity. All of the Harshcloud strongholds have been lost, leaving just a few fortress ships running around for dear life."

Qing Taxian grimaced with anguish. The five fortress ships in pieces on the ground below had belonged to the Dao Academy, each of them transporting hundreds of thousands of lives. Destruction of five of them meant that a million lives had been snuffed out!

"I know what's going on." Lu Yun's expression darkened further. This was all his fault.

He'd inflicted heavy losses on the chaos creatures by taking three of their dao palaces. This was why they'd directed the dead spirits to furiously massacre the beings of the lower realms in revenge.

However, this also resulted in heavy casualties to the spirits. By now, the world of immortals had developed a variety of methods to counter the dead spirits; Lu Yun's sound combat art was just one of them.

“Rebuild the Dao Academy branch and bring all of the immortals and beings in Harshcloud Realm here,” Lu Yun said decisively.

“But...” Lu Daoling hesitated at hearing these words. “If the rebuilt academy falls once again, that will mean the end of all Harshcloud descendants.”

“That won’t happen, not this time.” Lu Yun took a deep breath. “The dead spirits won’t be able to raze this Dao Academy no matter what they try this time.”

Wham—

He waved a hand and materialized a palace as large as a star above them. The Harshcloud main world was quite vast, larger than any celestial body in this part of space. Even its sun star was smaller than the main world, so something as big as a regular star could easily enter the main world.

Immensely incredible energy of a realm blasted out from the dao palace, forming a boundary of heaven and earth that crushed the dead spirits into powder. The ten Yama Kings had modified the palace, placing formations into it that were the bane of dead spirits, as well as a treasure that could purify the lingering malice in the spirits.

This treasure could not only cleanse the soul force that immortals absorbed when fighting, but it could also purge the spite that’d already accumulated in them. It was too costly to become a mainstream personal item, so Lu Yun had come up with another way and refined it into the dao palace to deploy it for mass use.

Being as large as a star, the dao palace could reach several million kilometers out and irradiate half of the main world with its range. When immortals fought within this radius, any malevolence they came in contact with was instantly purged from their bodies, helping them remain unaffected by the negativity’s interference.

When Lu Yun planted the dao palace down on the main world, several hundred fortress ships came out from hiding to convene where they were.

Harshcloud Realm was the biggest of the lower worlds and contained the largest population. Thus, the world of immortals sent far more immortals here than anywhere else. Several hundred lord-grade fortress ships meant that there were ten million souls gathered in this locale.

Ten million might appear to be a great sum, but Harshcloud Realm once boasted of hundreds of millions at its peak. Factions and clans too numerous to count dotted its worlds, and it had such a complement of experts that it saw fit to challenge the world of immortals.

There were only ten million left of them now, the last embers of this mighty realm. There had been five thousand fortress ships on duty in this region of space, but only less than five hundred were still intact.

“Greetings to the headmaster, greetings to the immortal sovereign!” Hope flared anew in people’s hearts when they saw that Lu Yun and Qing Yu were here in person.

Many immortals had wanted to retreat long ago, but the purple bale spirits had destroyed the descent platform. The ascent protocol required a hundred breaths to complete, during which the dead spirits could kill them a hundred times over.

In addition, if the immortals didn't devote their attention to maneuvering the ships, the dead spirits would run them over in seconds. This newly arrived dao palace as large as a star bought them some breathing room.

Meticulously renovated by Lu Yun and his Yama Kings, even the purple bale spirits would find it difficult to breach these doors. However, it was almost impossible for Lu Yun to create something like this on his own.

Experts of the chaos creatures had created the dao palace, he didn't possess the same level of ability to do so. He could at most modify the original structure, turning it from a palace for the chaos creatures to one of the realm.

He, Qing Yu, the ten Yama Kings, Daoist Yuyu, Carmines Eternal and Arbiter, Fuxi, and others had spent tens of thousands of years in hell before they finally overhauled the dao palace. He'd extracted their chaos stars in the meantime and suppressed them within hell.

Chapter 983.2: Fuxi and Fuxi

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"What? The Dao Academy is recalling the lord-grade fortress ships?!" The news quickly spread throughout the world of immortals and lower realms, shocking everyone who heard it.

Since becoming a public enemy after its cleansing, many factions such as the Qingfu Nation and others had banded together and set their sights on the Dao Academy. But now that it announced it was recalling the fortress ships, everyone floundered with panic.

Lord-grade fortress ships were the prized possessions of all major factions. Perhaps experts who'd broken through to the divine dharma realm had no need of them, but they were crucial weapons to dao immortals and everyone below that cultivation level. They'd become insurance and trump cards particularly in the lower realms.

If it wasn't for the five thousand ships in Harshcloud Realm, everything in that realm would've been exterminated the moment the dead spirits broke out in their crazed offensive.

The Dao Academy wants to recall the fortress ships?

Though they'd all purchased ships from the academy, the factions were equally concerned of any potential countermeasures buried within their ships that made it possible for the academy to reclaim the vessels at any time.

What came next enabled them to breathe with ease again.

"The lord-grade fortress ships are unable to effectively fight the dead spirits. Thus, Headmaster Lu Yun has invented a brand new, constellation class fortress ship. These can sail through space and face the dead spirits head-on. Each lord-grade can be traded in for a constellation class ship!"

Many factions immediately visited the Dao Academy to trade in their old ships for the new constellation class. Many improvements could be seen all over the new fortress ships, the most notable of which was that there were no longer any crystal cannons mounted on them. Instead, a brand new treasure was in their place, one that could release combat arts.

Of the combat arts that could be deployed, the sound combat art so effective against dead spirits was one of them. The treasure that could purify malice was also standard issue on the constellation class ships.

Apart from that, the heart of the new ships was an enormous furnace. Immortal crystals could be combusted to provide propulsion for the ship and power for the treasures and formations onboard. Compared to directly burning immortal crystals, it was more efficient and effective to burn them through the furnace.

Since there were no crystal cannons on the new ships, they were also stripped off of the lord-grade ones before being traded in. The factions wanted to retain their cannons and make it an equitable trade.

Lu Yun didn't mind that; crystal cannons were about to be made obsolete anyway. In his eyes, they were simply too wasteful. One blast consumed a hundred million immortal crystals! Compared to that, weapons that absorbed the energy of the world and released it straight into the dead spirits were much more useful.

It was only at this moment did he suddenly understand that the ancients had invented the original weapons of war to battle the dead spirits!

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Constellation class fortress ships quickly appeared in the lower realms and turned the tide against the dead spirits. Each ship was five kilometers long, four kilometers tall, and two and a half kilometers wide. Installed in the center was a treasure that Lu Yun named "Enigma Tower", one that could cleanse malicious resentment for fifty kilometers around.

That was to say, any immortal that fought within fifty kilometers of the constellation class ships wouldn't be affected by the vengeful wrath found in the beads left behind by defeated spirits.

This greatly bolstered the world of immortals and three more lower realms were quickly reclaimed, their worlds expunged of dead spirits. Unfortunately, the battle in Harshcloud Realm didn't go that smoothly.

The numbers and caliber of dead spirits here were second to only the world of immortals, which made for far stronger spirits here compared to the other lower worlds. Its dao palaces had also cloaked themselves in the void. Lu Yun and Qing Yu could only vaguely pinpoint where they were, but couldn't locate the palaces no matter what they tried.

Within the cosmos over the world of immortals, the remaining dao palace vanished as well.

Plainly, the chaos creatures had understood Lu Yun's plans and hid the dao palaces as a result. After all, these palaces weren't used in warfare, but were a meeting point for chaos creatures in the realms to produce and release dead spirits.

"There's actually another chaos creature within the universe." Fuxi approached Lu Yun calmly when the youth fretted over his next steps.

"Mount Buzhou?!" Lu Yun jerked in surprise. "Ah, the fake you."

"That's right." Fuxi nodded, "If my guess is right, he should be a chaos creature too. I just don't know what method he's used to avoid the energy of our realm and survive here."

"I visited him when I traveled here from the great wilderness. He grasped my plans and I knew his thoughts, but neither of us foresaw that you would be the one to break our game of chess."

Fuxi had been grappling with his imposter ever since traveling to the future, but he returned to the great wilderness in the end and followed the progression of history. He entered the chaos to retrieve Heavenfall, ultimately dying there and enabling the chaos creature to enter the great wilderness in his skin.

"But he's gravely injured too now and suppressed by Mount Vastspace and Timelight Tower. It shouldn't be a problem to capture him," Fuxi mused.

"Then... I'll give it a try!" Lu Yun returned to Mount Xuanhuang with a thought and once again took the path to the space of Earth.

With Fuxi accompanying him this time, the two quickly found their way to the core of that cosmos and the peak of Mount Buzhou.

The sun that was Taiyi's corpse had gone out and become a black ball hanging silently in space. Mount Buzhou was a land of death now. All humans and other living beings had retreated to the ancestor planet or its nearby celestial bodies.

There was only "Fuxi" and... a youth dressed in purple on the mountain.

"You're here." The fake Fuxi and purple-clad youth sat on the mountain's peak. He flashed a smile at the real Fuxi. "I surmised that you wouldn't die, but to think that you've actually come back to life again!"

"I did die." Fuxi shook his head. "He brought me back to life. After all this time, there's still one thing I don't understand." He frowned at the man who looked just like him. Or rather, the man who wore his skin. "You should be the one responsible for passing down the heritage of the human sacred land to the ancestor planet. I just want to ask: why? Why did you pass on these things instead of destroying them?"

Chapter 984: Karma That Cannot Be Repaid

Fuxi had always been most curious about this. If he hadn't seen for himself that the heritage from the human sacred land of the great wilderness had been passed down, that it had continuously evolved, transformed, and become uncommonly prosperous through the times... he wouldn't have willingly gone to his death in the chaos.

"By the heritage of the ancestor planet, do you mean this?" Fake Fuxi pointed at the air, eliciting three tiny dragon croons. A dragon with three heads, three tails and twelve feet flashed through the air.

"A chaos dragon!" Lu Yun exclaimed when he saw the figure. "The Dragonquake Scripture! ...I know who you are!"

He stared fixedly at the man in front of him who looked just like Fuxi. "You're the creator of the Dragonquake Scripture. You attached yourself to Holy Emperor Fuxi back when he found the three fragments in the chaos!"

The fake Fuxi knew everything about the real Fuxi, including his past and future, because he'd always been a part of the holy emperor.

“And, you purposefully revealed a chink in your armor to give the game away and lure me into the chaos.” Lu Yun fully grasped the picture at hand after seeing the chaos dragon flash by.

“That’s right, I let my guard slip for a split second so you would search out that tomb.” The fake Fuxi nodded. “But there’s one thing you guessed wrong, I’m just someone who’s obtained three fragments of the Dragonquake Scripture. Everything I’ve done is to complete them, so that they would become a real Dragonquake Scripture again.

“The formations of your world of immortals and the so-called heritage on the ancestor planet are all derived from the Dragonquake Scripture. Formations? Feng shui? That’s all there is to them. I left this inheritance behind so it would grow and evolve in this realm, all for the sake of the Dragonquake Scripture.”

At this, the fake Fuxi looked at Lu Yun with great satisfaction. “You did it, you successfully completed the Dragonquake Scripture, but you didn’t operate it to its fullest mysteries either in the past or in the modern age. That was why I purposefully revealed a flaw and lured you into the chaos.”

Lu Yun had made the scripture whole again the moment he fully operated it in the chaos. It’d combined the three secret arts in the imposter’s body and transformed them into the Dragonquake Scripture.

The fake Fuxi gently opened his arms and summoned the image of the chaos dragon again, wrapping it around him.

Fuxi, Lu Yun, and Qing Yu took a step backward in unison and tensely watched the man’s features rearrange themselves.

Fuxi’s skin on his body melted away, revealing a man with an uncannily sinister appearance. With the exception of three eyes on his face, he looked very much like a human.

“In all honesty, I should thank all of you. If it wasn’t for you, I wouldn’t so easily obtain the Dragonquake Scripture. It’s ranked number one out of the ancient methods in the chaos.” The three-eyed man spoke slowly as he scanned Lu Yun’s group, his eyes settling on Lu Yun in the end. “However, you and I share a karmic relationship of life and death. I suffered irreversible injuries when I entered this realm from the chaos and you cured me with arts of life.

“This is a tremendous boon, one that I cannot hope to repay. My inability to do so will have ill effects in the future, so... I can only kill you to sever this strand of joint karma.”

Benefaction that could not be repaid!

Lu Yun had thought he was saving Fuxi. As the holy emperor of humanity, Fuxi protected the human race so it could flourish and prosper in the great wilderness. Since Lu Yun was human, it seemed only natural that he use his arts to restore Fuxi to good health.

But since the three-eyed man was an imposter, he contributed nothing to humanity after he became Fuxi, apart from passing down the three fragmented scraps of the Dragonquake Scripture. He’d been wholly unmoved even when Wahuang, Huaxu, and Leize died.

If Lu Yun truly wanted to look into the matter, the three-eyed man would die such an ignoble death that he wouldn’t even have a burial place.

Intangible karmic relationships of the unknown were the most terrifying. Even great masters among the chaos creatures wouldn't be able to suffer their consequences.

As he spoke, the three-eyed man released an incomprehensible presence. Lu Yun, Qing Yu, and Fuxi felt their connections to the world spontaneously snapped off. Breathing grew difficult, as if they were fish out of water. The presence bearing down on them increased in density as blood seeped out of their pores.

"Ai—" suddenly said the purple clad youth sitting cross-legged next to the three-eyed man. "Let it go, fellow daoist."

The youth waved a hand as he spoke and dispersed the man's power. Lu Yun and the other two dropped to their knees, heaving for breath.

"Hongjun, do you wish to stop me?" The three-eyed man frowned at the purple clad youth.

"It's time that you left this realm. There's nothing to be gained if you stay here further." Hongjun shook his head. "He is Violetgrave's host and as such, she will plunge you into the abyss if you dare do anything to him."

"Violetgrave?!" The three-eyed man's expression snapped with shock and hesitation gleamed in his eyes. Apparently, this man who was unfathomably strong, mightier than even a creator, was extremely wary of Violetgrave.

"You should leave. Your goal has been attained and it would be wise if your thoughts didn't stray in other directions. Violetgrave's first host is also within this realm. It would be even more disastrous than angering Violetgrave if you aroused his wrath." Hongjun looked like a boy of thirteen years old, but an uncommonly deep look shimmered in the depths of his eyes, as if he had seen much of the fickleness of life.

Hongjun... was the previous Lu Yun. The Lu Yun of the world of immortals. The exceedingly downcast Lu Yun on Earth that had been dealt all the hardest cards in life was his last reincarnation. Now that he'd found himself and returned to who he was, he again possessed the strength he once had.

The three-eyed man took a deep breath and looked piercingly at Lu Yun, finally nodding in the end. "I will not move against you since you are Violetgrave's host. However, the ties of karma between us must be addressed."

He suddenly reached into the void and dragged over an enormous dao palace from the other side of the cosmos.

"I cannot repay the debt of karma in one attempt, so let this dao palace be a little bit of compensation." Without further ado, the three-eyed man left with a twist of his body.

"What... in the blazes just happened?" Lu Yun goggled at Hongjun and ignored the dao palace.

"What a nigh invincible existence such as him fears most is karma. It is enough to doom him once karma attaches to him. Even an eternal life such as him would be threatened by it," Hongjun smiled faintly. "His injuries would've recovered after several million years, but you used a death art to resurrect him. The gift of a life... is an immense boon that he will not be able to repay, no matter what he does."

“Well, it’s his fault for turning into Holy Emperor Fuxi. I didn’t expect him to repay it, either,” Lu Yun responded morosely. He hadn’t thought that a good deed would almost spell the downfall of himself and his people.

“Once karma takes shape, it lies with him and not you. It will become an internal demon for him.” Hongjun shook his head.

Chapter 985: Conquering Witherdew Major

The identity of his imposter had been a mystery to Fuxi all this time; he’d always thought that he was matching wits with the other. Who would’ve thought that the imposter would be an entity stronger than even a creator? That he’d left the heritage of the ancestor planet intact just because he wanted humans to perfect the Dragonquake Scripture for him?

The imposter had been in perfect control of everything all along, constantly one step ahead of Fuxi. The only time he’d lost was when Lu Yun unexpectedly pulled him back from death.

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“Congratulations to fellow daoist for weathering your tribulations and a triumphant return!” Lu Yun breathed a small sigh of relief and smiled at Hongjun.

“Triumphant return?” Hongjun blinked, then thought of his experiences on Earth in his past life. He smiled, “I am no king to be making a triumphant return. Besides, I am still undergoing my tribulations.”

.....

The four conversed for a long time at the peak of Mount Buzhou. However, Lu Yun still didn’t learn what he wished to know. More about the chaos creatures, for instance, or who the three-eyed man or Violetgrave was.

Everything seemed to be a layer of mist shrouding his eyes. He could make out some figures in the haze, but nothing came into focus.

“In actuality, what you know now is far beyond the limits of what you should know,” Hongjun said meaningfully. “You should know that I refrain from telling you things not because I want to conceal them from you, but because I want to protect you.”

Lu Yun paused, thinking back to the eyes that burned with netherfire in Pangu’s tomb. It’d said the same as well. The less he knew, the longer he’d live.

Lu Yun and Qing Yu looked at each other, nodding at the same time.

“Alright then, you can go on back. Fuxi will remain on Mount Buzhou to guard this place,” Hongjun bade his guests farewell after a while.

The couple rose to take their leave. They knew that Mount Buzhou was eminently important to Earth. If the chaos creatures wanted to destroy this realm, the fastest way would be through destroying Earth.

Earth was the root source of this realm. Its destruction would be the end of the realm's foundations, and all would be slowly doomed to die. In his tomb, Xuan Yuan had once told Lu Yun to protect Earth with his life, that he had to safeguard the ancestor planet of humanity at all costs.

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Lu Yun possessed four dao palaces now and four chaos stars. The power within the stars corresponded to four grand orders within the chaos—ethos, burgeon, creation, and opposition.

Of the remaining two, one was in the cosmos of the world of immortals and the other in the lower realms, respectively representing inception and nirvana.

The three-eyed man had offered up only one of the dao palaces of the lower realms. After all, there were experts among the chaos creatures as well. He didn't want to establish another karmic relationship while trying to repay the first.

Lu Yun was in no hurry to collect the remaining two as the chaos creatures were likely out of their minds with rage after this swift loss of four palaces. Devastating retribution would descend upon him if he dared take anymore. The chaos creatures had also undoubtedly laid foolproof plans for his arrival.

Currently, his goal was Witherdew Major of the world of immortals.

Akasha ghosts had occupied Witherdew Major, and more had gathered there after they were expelled from the immortal dao. That major was now a haven of akasha ghosts.

They didn't cause mischief anywhere else, but Lu Yun knew that when the World Gates opened and the yin spirits within the cosmos attacked the world, that would be when they rose up as well. He had absolutely no desire for his backyard to catch on fire while he fended off intruders at the front door. He'd wanted to eradicate them long ago, and now was a perfect opportunity.

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Three dao palaces popped into existence and formed an enormous triangle in the skies, enclosing Witherdew Major within. A hundred thousand constellation class fortress ships barreled out of the dao palaces, charging into Witherdew Major from three different directions.

Earth cracked and skies shook everywhere they passed through; large swathes of the land were demolished and countless akasha ghosts were obliterated from the firepower of a hundred thousand ships.

Akasha ghosts were uncommonly dreadful, particularly their biggest brethren. The latter used their bodies to nurture akasha souls that were formless, intangible, killed invisibly, and were impossible to defend against.

Lu Yun had specially developed the constellation class fortress ships to counter dead spirits and akasha ghosts. One of the treasures on board perfectly imitated the power of the Scroll of Shepherding Immortals. The scroll contained the core essence of God and could restrain akasha ghosts, and was now a treasure onboard every single ship.

Most importantly was that akasha ghosts used to come and go like the wind when they were residing in the immortal dao. But now that they'd been expelled, they lost more than seventy percent of their power since they could no longer draw off the immortal dao.

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"You little bastard Lu Yun, we've done nothing to you, but here you come kicking in our door!" The Witherdew celestial court used to stand at the center of Witherdew Major. A big akasha ghost with four heads and eight arms sat upon the emperor's throne—the origin divine.

First of the divine spirits in this world, it'd borrowed God's power to arrive in this realm and steal the opportunity that belonged to the Exalted divine spirits. It could be found everywhere, whether in the great wilderness or the era of human dao. It'd even been active during the time of the immortal dao!

When the divines carved their sacred runes into the Dao Flower to complete the immortal dao, it'd been the origin divine that almost ruined their efforts. One of its replicas had also lived within the Dao Tree as a parasite. After destroying the tree, Lu Yun had realized that the origin divine must still be alive somewhere in a corner of the world of immortals.

He hadn't thought that it'd turn itself into a big akasha ghost and possess the ghost's powers!

Countless akasha souls lived within its body as well, and it led the charge of a horde of akasha ghosts out of Witherdew Major.

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The Dao Academy conquering Witherdew Major shook the heavens. Three dao palaces formed a triangle and slowly shifted toward the heartland of Witherdew Major. Neither akasha ghost nor akasha soul could hide in any place the palaces passed through.

As the fortress ships increased in number, they connected with the dao palaces and formed a mammoth triangular boundary. Immeasurable might of the realm descended from the skies, blasting into the akasha ghosts within.

"Dao palaces!!" The origin divine was struck speechless when he saw the palaces—as large as celestial bodies—hovering in the air.

It was a creation of the chaos creatures, so it naturally knew how dreadful the palaces were. The six palaces were treasures refined by great masters of the sacred race. The structures could create a vacuum of space unaffected by the energy or rules of a realm and facilitate the chaos creatures to safely reside within.

But now that three of them descended upon Witherdew Major, it was a sight of untold disaster for the big akasha ghosts.

"Lu Yun's taken these dao palaces from the lords! But since he's removed the chaos star from them, there's only one percent of their usual power left to them. We still have a chance!

"Ge Yanxia, send your fur seals to stop Lu Yun!" a big akasha ghost commanded a massive black thing.

“Understood!” While fear also sparkled in female fur seal Ge Yanxia’s eyes, she couldn’t defy a command from the big akasha ghost.

She and her kin had become one massive whole after assimilating into the Ichor Bog. Though the race had first betrayed the demon god for the blood demon, they’d ultimately ended up beneath the akasha ghosts’ banner. They were the troops that the akasha ghosts had used to take over Witherdew Major.

The fur seals had essentially been reborn after becoming one with the Ichor Bog. Their previous patriarch, Ge Yanxia’s father, had refused to switch his loyalties from the blood demon, so Ge Yanxia resolved things by killing and eating him.

Ge Yanxia was the matriarch of the race now, like an empress. She copulated furiously with her kin everyday and continuously spawned new fur seals. The fur seals were now more than ten times their previous number.

They emptied out of the bog upon the akasha ghost’s command and streamed toward the fortress ships.

Chapter 986: First Great Emperor Beneath the Immortal Dao

Three great sovereigns sat in the principal seats of the dao palaces—dean of monster spirit dao Miao, dean of demonic dao the demon god, and dean of pill dao Qi Hai.

Qi Hai’s strength recovered swiftly after he arrived at the Dao Academy. He returned to peak grand pure realm after only a dozen years—the equivalent of human king realm in the Primeval Era. This took him only half a step away from great emperor and rivaling the demon god as the two great powerhouses of the Dao Academy.

As he’d weathered countless reincarnation cycles and run the gauntlet of what life had to offer, his combat arts and methods were just as varied as a connate demon god from the great wilderness.

When it came to the demon god himself, Lu Yun had already returned his ultimate treasure—the black sickle from his past life as Ji Du. Lu Yun had first gifted the sickle to Tianqi, who’d returned it after reaching the chaos realm. It’d traveled back to the present with Lu Yun where it’d rested quietly until now.

The demon god’s strength leapt forward after regaining his greatest treasure from his past life, putting him below only the little fox in the Dao Academy.

With the three greatest experts of the academy personally overseeing the dao palaces, they marshaled the three structures into an inviolable line of defense in Witherdew Major.

After integrating into the Ichor Bog, the fur seals had turned blackish-red in color and were almost invincible. But when faced with the sheer might of three dao palaces and a hundred thousand constellation class fortress ships, they still blew apart in great masses.

“Those akasha ghosts must be out of their mind to want to use my own Ichor Bog against me!” Inside one of the dao palaces, the demon god glared darkly at the dense carpet of fur seals flooding their way. They were fearless and invincible, using their own bodies to obstruct the ships from advancing forward.

“Return!” The demon god suddenly materialized outside his respective dao palace and roared into the air. Beams of bloody light flared from his body and blasted into the depths of the major at the nearly boundless Ichor Bog.

The Ichor Bog didn’t belong to the demon god; it was something created by his master, the blood demon, to use against his disciple.

During the time of the great wilderness, Luo Houluo and Ji Du were a master and disciple pair that constantly plotted and schemed against each other. They never overlooked an opportunity to stab the other in the back, and Asura had only been born after Ji Du ambushed both Luo Houluo and Darkriver.

Asura had nursed a grudge after that, one that he didn’t give up even after Daoist Yuyu sectioned him to pieces and buried him separately. He would have his vengeance on his disciple and see him stumble his way through reincarnation, losing more of himself with each life!

Indeed, Ji Du had slowly turned into the demon god and one of the blood demon’s pawns. The Ichor Bog was refined out of the flesh and blood of countless beings, and had immediately turned the demon god into a puppet when he merged with it. But just as the blood demon was about to reel in the net and collect the results of all of his plans, Lu Yun appeared on the scene.

The blood demon’s undying hatred of Lie Shan was almost an internal demon of his dao heart in its own right. So even though Lu Yun hadn’t been Flame Emperor Lie Shan at the time, the blood demon had recognized him all the same.

Now that both the blood demon and demon god were Lu Yun’s subordinates, the various plans that the blood demon had laid on his disciple were transformed into the demon god’s personal strength.

The Ichor Bog to the rear of Witherdew Major shuddered violently, shaking out countless fur seals from its swampy depths. They smashed to the ground as misshapen blobs of meat. Once out of the Ichor Bog, the fur seals were like the akasha ghosts exiled from the immortal dao, bereft of a great source of their power.

It’d been an alliance of mutual benefit between the blood demon and akasha ghosts. The blood demon had created the Ichor Bog with their help; sacrifices had taken place on the altars within the Exalted divine tomb for the flesh and blood that the bog required. The akasha ghosts had also later visited the tomb to send the used altars into the Ichor Bog so that they could be refreshed.

In the present day, the blood demon had gifted the Ichor Bog to the demon god and the akasha ghosts banished from the immortal dao had no basis with which to vie for control over the bog. Therefore, it fell completely into the demon god’s hands.

“Master, mercy!” Ge Yanxia was also expelled from the Ichor Bog. Taking the form of a woman so rotund that she was more accurately described as swollen, she knelt in front of the dao palace and loudly begged for forgiveness.

“Where is your father, the big fur seal?” asked the demon god with a frown. He caught no glimpse of his most loyal subordinate in the bog.

“My father?” Ge Yanxia asked reflexively. “He tasted good, and fur seal penis is very nutritious.”

SMACK!

The demon god slapped the female fur seal into a quivering heap of unstructured meat onto the ground. With that, a hundred thousand fortress ships finally exterminated the fur seals down to their last member.

The demon god had wanted to reclaim the fur seals as his troops and turn them into a force for the Dao Academy. However, he couldn't accept Ge Yanxia eating her own father and expressing such abhorrent sentiments. He'd killed her without a second thought.

If it'd been in the past, he wouldn't have minded this as much, even though he didn't care for it. He would've employed the fur seal all the same. But now as the dean of demonic dao, though he wasn't affected by the merit system from the Karmic Tree, simple osmosis of morality had instilled a slight ethical fastidiousness in him.

He could no longer tolerate such actions, so he rendered the fur seals extinct without another word.

Upon doing so, his black sickle blossomed with a profound radiance. The demon god's heart quailed as a terrifying surge of power descended from the immortal dao and filled his body.

Boom—

Black smoke rose from his body as a black cloak wrapped around him. Black sickle in hand and a cloak obscuring his features, the black smoke wafting from him depicted him like the Grim Reaper of Earth's legends.

In fact, all of Earth's legends about the Grim Reaper were based off of Ji Du. The demon god had suddenly returned to his true form and broken through to great emperor!

The first great emperor beneath the immortal dao!

Unusual ripples undulated from this part of the land and resonated with the demon god. Pristine white flowers drifted down from the immortal dao, similar to how the Dao Flower's petals had once floated down.

"My, my deepest gratitude to you, fellow daoist." Stunned for a very long while, the demon god slowly came back to himself.

He hadn't thought that he'd be the first great emperor to appear beneath the immortal dao after the rebirth of cultivators from the Primeval Era. Upon slight contemplation, he quickly realized the reason for this.

A boost from the true spirit of the Exalted Divine Emperor that he'd absorbed!

Therein lay a strand of opportunity to become a great emperor, but the demon god had never located it. Who would've thought that his decision to destroy the fur seals would be met with the Exalted Divine Emperor's approval? The divine emperor had released that opportunity so that the demon god could break through!

The first great emperor beneath the immortal dao!

After his ascension, his own true spirit budded and the one belonging to the Exalted Divine Emperor disengaged from the demon god's soul, to drift aimlessly away into the air.

"The headmaster should be able to resurrect you," murmured the demon god as he looked down at a speck of true spirit he'd quickly cupped in his hand.

Chapter 987: A Chance at Life

The Exalted Divine Emperor had been a supreme powerhouse in the era of human dao, but no one knew whether he'd been a great emperor or in the chaos realm. In that age, "great emperor" was both a title of honor and a cultivation realm.

He'd been inexplicably murdered before Emperors Fall instead of dying in that great battle, and his death still remained one of the greatest mysteries in the world.

At that time, the Exalted Divine Emperor had been of the same mind as Bai Zhaoju, Ling Weiyang, Chi Biaonu, and the others—willing to sacrifice his great dao and integrate it with the immortal dao for the sake of future descendants.

But someone had killed him before he could do so. The ancient divine court wouldn't have risen otherwise, going to all that painstaking effort to rule over the immortal dao so they could etch their Sacred Origin Runes into the Dao Flower.

Now that the Exalted Divine Emperor's true spirit was free, Lu Yun immediately whisked him away. The demon god raised a cupped fist salute and paid his respects at the empty air.

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With the arrival of the first great emperor beneath the immortal dao, all of heaven and earth resonated in unison. However, life in the world of immortals didn't know that the demon god was the first great emperor. General knowledge put the dean of monster spirit dao as the first great emperor. Therefore, this second great emperor also originated from the Dao Academy, and he was the dean of the demonic dao!

Monster spirits and demons? Was this age about to see their ascendancy?

"Tushan is an anomaly beneath the heavens. She's an empyrean realm master instead of a great emperor, but to think that the first great emperor would be Ji Du!" There were now many in the world who knew about the demon god.

"Ji Du's opportunity came from the true spirit of the Exalted Divine Emperor... What a pity that he hid in the Dao Academy after we awoke, making it impossible for us to do anything," fumed the grand pure experts of the ten lands.

Even Dusk Province was the lair of a tiger to them, to say nothing of the academy. That incredibly vicious sword formation guarding the province could take down great emperors, so it barely needed to activate to exterminate a few grand pure experts.

That was why the factions of the world only dared to ally together and boycott the academy, but refrained from actually invading Dusk Province.

“Torch dragon!” One of the rulers of the ten lands looked in the direction of Heaven Locus Land. “Your race went extinct because of the humans...”

“Scram!” spat the torch dragon coiled around the dragonbolt pillar when he heard his name.

The ruler who’d called out to him scowled ominously. They only knew the torch dragon as the sole surviving member of his species; they didn’t know anything else about him. Thus, they had no idea that this was also the first torch dragon of his kind, a connate demon god birthed by nature. He’d signed a contract with the Flame Emperor of the human race to be a guardian for humanity.

Once a mighty master in the lofty chaos realm, the torch dragon had descended to human king, which was now peak grand pure realm, because he’d voluntarily offered his great dao up to the immortal dao.

The torch dragon had already died by the time of Emperors Fall, but since he was a connate demon god born of hellfire and a signatory with the Flame Emperor, he could continuously be reborn as long as hellfire remained burning. However, the caveat was that he could no longer recover to his peak after rebirth and would forever remain at human king realm.

With all that said, it would be the most fantastical tale ever told if the rulers of the other nine lands convinced him to band with them against the Dao Academy. The headmaster of the academy was the Flame Emperor of the human race!

To take things one step further, the Xuanyuan Divine Nation hailed the Flame Emperor as their god. After all, this was the one who’d enlightened Emperor Xuanyuan and facilitated his rise to the chaos realm.

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The battle of Witherdew Major raged on. The appearance of the first great emperor beneath the immortal dao instantly boosted academy morale to new heights.

Formations assembled by constellation class fortress ships rampaged through the major, distributing the power of the Scroll of Shepherding Immortals through undulating ripples that massacred any akasha ghost and soul they touched.

The Bell of Chaos hung upside down over the little fox’s head, the actual Scroll of Shepherding Immortals in her hands. Her consciousness was locked onto the Witherdew court. Once the big akasha ghost was thrown out of the premises, she would immediately suppress it with her treasures at hand.

Whether it was the big akasha ghost that was the origin divine or the others, all of them were cowering in the major’s court and didn’t dare show themselves. The Scroll of Shepherding Immortals exerted too much force over them. When Qing Yu had faced her first akasha ghost, she’d used the scroll to kill its replica.

The three dao palaces and a hundred thousand fortress ships had now reached the heart of Witherdew Major. Its capital had been destroyed long ago, leaving only a broken palace hovering over the ruins of its capital city.

As the dao palaces had sealed off the entire major, it was almost impossible for the akasha ghosts to leave the territory. However, a hazy force had coalesced into a bizarre boundary outside the Witherdew court. It would also be very difficult for the Dao Academy to take it down.

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“Flame Emperor, do you intend to show no mercy?” A big akasha ghost floated out like a wisp of smoke. Formless and intangible, the only part of it that could be made out was its ghostly face that was both laughing and crying.

These ghosts displayed a crudely sketched face without true features to the world, but in this moment, almost everyone glimpsed a trace of inerascable sorrow on this one’s face. Both laughing and crying, but neither at the same time, its expression was a result of being unable to fully express its emotions.

“You lofty masterminds behind Emperors Fall stripped our great dao from us for the sake of so-called righteousness of the heavens and a laughable future. You were the ones who filled human dao with resentment and malice!

“Our true spirits transformed into akasha ghosts instead of fading away and we occupied the immortal dao due to the remnants of our great dao. Now you expel us from the immortal dao and want to erase us entirely! You want to build your glorious achievements off the backs of our pain and suffering!” The akasha ghost’s voice drifted in and out of the crowd’s ears. “You abandoned us for this supposed immortal dao of all, but are we not also part of this all?!”

The despairing accusations were anguished shrieks from the bottom of tortured hearts, filling the hearts of everyone present with stifling misery.

“We just don’t want to die! We burn with hatred for how things have turned out! Do we deserve to die simply because we are great emperors and masters of a great dao beneath the heavens?!”

“The Flame Emperor isn’t here.” In human form, the little fox walked out of a dao palace with the Bell of Chaos over her head and the Scroll of Shepherding Immortals in her hand. She calmly addressed the broken Witherdew palace. “The Flame Emperor has gone off to seek out a chance at life for all of you. It’s up to you now, whether you choose to fully disappear or continue to live on.”

“A chance at life?!” A shrill denouncement cried out from the palace. “We’re already dead! How do we live on?! Do you really think that hell of human dao will resurrect us?! Impossible!! We’re orphans of the world and heavens! You’ve abandoned us and the world has abandoned us!”

An enormous akasha ghost rushed out from the dilapidated structure and grasped at the little fox with razor-sharp claws and piercingly keen power.

The little fox read a hint of familiarity from its eyes.

Humm—

The bell over her head shook violently and the scroll lashed outward, blasting the ghost back.

“Dijiang, who would’ve thought you’d turn into an akasha ghost from your trivial speck of resentment?” the little fox said coldly in midair. “Do you think I’d make the same mistake twice?”

She recognized the origins of this particular ghost. He was no great emperor, but the lingering resentment of a connate demon god—Dijiang!

Dijiang had once ambushed the little fox in the cosmos of the great wilderness and beaten her almost to death, seizing the Bell of Chaos from her. After meeting with defeat once, she wouldn't leave herself open again.

Dijiang's actual target had been a fortress ship just now, not the little fox. The constellation class ships could kill ordinary akasha ghosts, but couldn't do anything to the big akasha ghosts. However, the little fox had remained unmoved. She'd known that she was the true target. Indeed, the second it neared the ship, it suddenly turned around and shot at the little fox.

Acting decisively, she brought down the big akasha ghost with the bell and scroll and found it to be Dijiang!

After Lu Yun fatally wounded him with Rearbow in the skies of the world of celestials and Asura devoured his true spirit, that should've spelled the end of him.

But Dijiang refused to go out like that. After obtaining the Bell of Chaos, he should've been the great demon god of the great wilderness, superior to even Leize! Unfortunately for him, he bumped into the Flame Emperor and was then eaten after his utter rout.

His enormous resentment lingered in the cosmos until the big akasha ghost appeared during the battle of Emperors Fall. It collected all of the great emperors' resentment and bundled them into the immortal dao when it was born, helping them become the akasha ghosts beneath the immortal dao.

Dijiang's resentment was part of the harvest collected. Though his great dao wasn't part of the immortal dao, he, too, was delivered into the new dao.

Now that he saw the little fox, his old tricks were dusted off as he sought to grievously injure the little fox. However, circumstances were different now. She'd been protecting Lu Yun back then, but the ones on the ships today were academy disciples and... Lu Yun's Infernum.

Even if they died, Lu Yun only needed to expend a few karmic fruits to resurrect them from the Tome of Life and Death.

Waving a hand, she clapped the scroll down over Dijiang.

"What does your life or death have to do with us?" the little fox snorted at Dijiang. "Though these akasha ghosts were unwilling, their great dao still became part of the immortal dao and thus they have achieved a great deed for the heavens. Lu Yun is willing to sacrifice himself and seek out a chance for them on account of this virtuous merit.

"But you? A connate demon god who happens to be a right bastard, one who made himself an enemy of life and colluded with the realm monsters. Asura ate your great dao, so it's vanished from the world. You're nothing but a cancerous tumor to the immortal dao. What I should do is thoroughly wipe you out from existence!"

Dijiang's expression remained both laughing and crying, but there was a clear sense of great terror permeating his thoughts.

The little fox lifted her head and looked at the first akasha ghost that'd spoken. "Do you choose to fade away here or do you wish to continue living? Though you have done a great deed for the heavens and immortal dao, you have done nothing but endanger life and threaten this realm since the establishment of immortal dao. Your wrongs have long cancelled out your merit and we are only enemies now. There is nothing more just and proper than your death!" She delivered the last in ringing tones of righteousness.

She was stunningly beautiful and once the foremost beauty of the great wilderness. Her current bearing elevated her to a most noble empress on high.

None of the akasha ghosts in Witherdew court dared say a word. Their loyalties lay with the chaos creatures, who also determined their life or death. Therefore, they didn't dare express any opinions.

"What about me?" the origin divine suddenly spoke. "I... am also just a cancerous tumor to your realm."

The little fox immediately understood the situation at hand. He was the one who ruled over all of the akasha ghosts here.

"If you can lead these once great emperors back to the world, you will also achieve a great deed of boundless virtue. The Flame Emperor left a ray of hope for those connate demon gods before. He's not the type to be utterly ruthless," she responded calmly.

Chapter 988: Ghost Ancestor

Pushing a species into extinction was never part of Lu Yun's plan; he always left them with a bit of hope. He'd shown mercy even to the connate demon gods that Fuxi had so deeply hated, refraining from eradicating them completely.

.....

The three dao palaces had fully surrounded Witherdew Major. Though Lu Yun and the others had modified the structures, they were still designs from the creatures of chaos at the heart of things. Perhaps items of the realm wouldn't be able to fully exterminate these akasha ghosts, but the treasures of the chaos could deliver devastating blows to them and ensure their eradication.

Most importantly, three magnificent treasures flickered into existence in the sky over Witherdew Major—a tower, a bell, and a cauldron.

The three great weapons of the primitive great dao!

"Will the Flame Emperor really show me mercy?" The origin divine didn't quite believe these words and stared fixedly at the little fox with its eight drawn-on eyes.

"He will," she responded resolutely. "The Flame Emperor's magnanimity isn't something that you can comprehend. Surrender now and he will see that you return to life."

"Traitor!!" As the origin divine and other akasha ghosts wavered, a furious bellow roared out of the Witherdew court. An enormous shadow charged out of it, turning the bright day of Witherdew Major into night.

It was an enormous akasha ghost so titanic that it dwarfed the entire major. In contrast to the other akasha ghosts, its face was dark and its features bright red, though they also appeared to be drawn on.

Strange footprints suddenly dotted the ground, as if countless barefoot children were running over it. Those were the akasha souls, nurtured out of the enormous akasha ghost's body. They were the souls of the living beings that the ghost had devoured—the more it ate, the more souls would be present in their body.

Pairs of footprints covered the major, the only sign that these akasha souls existed. They weren't really standing on the ground, but left these marks all the same.

The origin divine shrieked with madness and streaked into a white shadow that sought to escape from the region, but a black one smashed it right back.

Despair permeated Witherdew Major—the akasha ghosts had given up hope. The moment the black akasha ghost appeared was the moment that spelled their end.

“Since you dare betray the sacred race, you can all die!” Snarling, the black akasha ghost summoned bizarre mouths in the air that swooped down on the crowd before it. These mouths opened directly in the void, as if they were mouths of space. Immortals from the Dao Academy were caught up in their path as well.

“Hah!” The little fox shouted angrily and sent the drifting Scroll of Shepherding Immortals forward as a long white chain that churned into the sky. She called upon the maximum strength of her cultivation level—empyrean realm!

Hers was an empyrean realm beneath the immortal dao, but though the little fox was at this level, she was an anomaly in that she hadn't become a great emperor with her realm. Upon releasing her full strength, the scroll exploded with power that wrapped around all of Witherdew Major, clashing forcefully with the black akasha ghost.

At the same time, the three weapons of the primitive great dao hidden in the upper Witherdew firmament revealed themselves, cutting down upon the ghosts with piercingly cold light. The true masters of the Purple, Green, and Crimson Firmaments finally stepped into public view. They were humans, neither yin gods, dead spirits, or connate demon gods. They were living humans.

“They're pieces that Xuanyuan secretly put into place!” The little fox suddenly realized that the light glistening from the pagoda, bell, and cauldron was the sword light of the Xuanyuan Sword!

Emperor Xuanyuan's sword dao.

Up in the sky, the shadow of an enormous sword took shape and slashed down on the akasha ghost.

“Ghost ancestor!” came a girl's cry. Dressed in flowing white robes, Xuanyuan Xiaoyue broke through the black akasha ghost's blockade and entered Witherdew Major like a ghost herself. The shadow of the enormous sword transformed into a real sword while the pagoda, bell, and cauldron landed in her hands.

“The eldest princess of the human race!” shrieked the black akasha ghost—the ghost ancestor—when it saw Xuanyuan Xiaoyue. “...a realm monster?! How are you possibly a realm monster?!”

The ghost ancestor was the progenitor of all ghosts. Whether it be akasha ghosts or vicious and immortal ghosts within the world, all were a result of the ghost ancestor's power in the immortal dao.

In the original chaos, living beings could turn into yin souls, yin spirits, or others upon their death, but the only thing they couldn't turn into was a ghost. With the appearance of the ghost ancestor and its impact on the heavenly dao, it forcefully created the dao of ghosts within the world.

From then on, if something died with malice or resentment in their heart or if they absorbed yin energy, they would be impacted by the ghost dao and turn into various ghosts upon their death, possibly even akasha ghosts.

“Didn't experts of the sacred race personally see to the extinction of the realm monsters?! How are you possibly a realm monster??” The ghost ancestor's expression twisted from both laughing and crying into one of intense fear.

From its shock, the little fox and other experts of the Primeval Era realized something that shocked them as well. The chaos creatures had been the ones to destroy their ancient enemy, the realm monsters!

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Wielding the Xuanyuan Sword, Xuanyuan Xiaoyue stood side by side with the little fox.

Both beauties that would topple nations, their stunning grace, astounding talent, and mesmerizing bearing imprinted themselves into the minds of all beings in the world of immortals. The immortals had raised up Mo Yi and Qing Yu as the goddesses of their heart before, but now there were two more.

Dean Tushan of the monster spirit dao in the Dao Academy, and Xuanyuan Xiaoyue, daughter of Emperor Xuanyuan and the eldest princess of the human race!

The two holy girls faced down the terrifying ghost ancestor in tandem, who was slowly recovering from its horrified shock.

It'd once tried using its ghost dao to influence dead worlds, but those worlds had turned into realm monsters instead and almost killed the ghost ancestor. It was only with the help of the chaos creatures that it slowly recovered from the turnaround.

After that, it became the vanguard of the chaos creatures in destroying worlds of the realms. An untold number of worlds fell to the ghost ancestor and akasha ghosts under its command. However, the realm monsters that dead worlds turned into were still the bane of its existence.

Realm monsters briefly became the minions of the chaos creatures, but mysteriously betrayed their masters before the battle of Emperors Fall. Unable to resolve the situation, the chaos creatures had to destroy all of the realm monsters in the end.

The ghost ancestor grew ever stronger after the realm monsters were eradicated, and it created stronger akasha ghosts than before. They were now their own race—the akasha ghost race.

Chapter 989: Four Heavenly Kings

With the appearance of the ghost ancestor, an endless tide of akasha souls appeared throughout Witherdew Major. The akasha ghosts outside of the major's palace, including the origin divine, immediately fell to a prone position and cowered on the ground.

Though Xuanyuan Xiaoyue and the little fox were jointly suppressing the major with the Xuanyuan Sword and Scroll of Shepherding Immortals, they were unable to erase fear of the ghost ancestor from the akasha ghosts. After all, this was the head mastermind behind the deaths of countless worlds and realms, and it'd resided in the chaos for countless aeons.

Xuanyuan Xiaoyue wasn't the strongest kind of realm monster there was, and the ghost ancestor was afraid of only a boundless horde of realm monsters. She was here by herself!

The akasha souls stirred into action under the ghost ancestor's command, walking out of a state of nothingness as scarlet beings. They looked like eerie human babies, but were more than ten times bigger than actual infants.

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"Kill!" Gaze cold, the little fox roared her command.

Three dao palaces and a hundred thousand fortress ships lit up at the same time. Light from a variety of combat arts and treasures blasted squarely at the ghost ancestor and enormous infant akasha souls.

The great battle was joined once again.

Frosty killing intent crackling in the air, Xuanyuan Xiaoyue brought out her Embittered Ocean Orb and charged at the ghost ancestor. Snarling in response, the ghost ancestor dove at Xuanyuan Xiaoyue. No matter how the eldest princess of the human race had turned into a realm monster, it would kill this last realm monster that existed!

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Rumble—

An enormous door of light slowly swung open in the void, releasing strange ripples through the air. Numerous scarlet babies were flung backward from the force.

"You akasha ghosts already know the existence of hell, so I won't hide it any longer." Lu Yun's voice slowly traveled out from the abyss over the threshold. "You will have a chance at life if you enter hell through the Gates of the Abyss. Otherwise... die here."

Despite that, the akasha ghosts didn't immediately walk through the doors. They were born of the ghost ancestor and it possessed a natural deterrence by being physically present on the scene. Normally ruthless and bloodthirsty, they didn't quite know what to do.

Rumble—

A second explosion traveled from the air as a pair of doors made of milky-white light opened above the Gates of the Abyss, also releasing enormous ripples that swept back the akasha souls charging at it.

"You can come to my heavenly palace if you don't wish to enter his netherworld kingdom," Qing Yu's voice echoed slowly. "It's gotten too crowded in hell, but there are no residents in my palace yet. You can be my heavenly soldiers if you join me."

Having taken complete shape, the heavenly palace offset the kingdom of hell. One was in charge of the heavens and the other in charge of the earth. With battle raging at peak fury, Lu Yun and Qing Yu displayed their domains at the same time.

“The heavenly palace?!” shrieked the ghost ancestor while locked in combat with Xuanyuan Xiaoyue. “How is it possible that the heavenly palace and kingdom of hell exist?! They’re just things of legend, they’re not actually real!”

Though the ghost ancestor knew that Lu Yun was the master of hell, that place was just something derived from the hell of human dao in its eyes. It wasn’t a real kingdom of the dead. But the heavenly palace and kingdom of hell both manifesting at the same time threw it into utter disarray and panic.

It was also quite confused. How had something of myths and legends manifested in this realm? Did they even have a chance of destroying this place anymore?

Legend spoke of the first great world within the chaos possessing the heavenly palace and kingdom of hell. It was also the continuous growth of this world that almost entirely occupied the chaos and annihilated the chaos creatures. Its ultimate treasures were the heavenly palace and kingdom of hell!

The sudden arrival of their myths imparted a grave sense of danger to the ghost ancestor.

Bam!

Caught off guard, Xuanyuan Xiaoyue sent it tumbling head over heels with the Embittered Ocean Orb.

It no longer wanted to fight. It wanted to leave and bring word of what it’d seen to the chaos creatures. Though it wasn’t a chaos creature itself, it’d long considered itself one. The chaos creatures had saved its life, and though it was the ancestor of all ghosts, it understood the meaning of gratitude.

However, Xuanyuan Xiaoyue retained her core essence of humanity despite becoming a realm monster. The combination of human strength and realm monster power gave her strength that neither species possessed. She could deploy the Embittered Ocean Orb to its fullest power as she was in the chaos realm!

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“We are willing to serve the heavenly palace!” Before the akasha ghosts could respond, the hidden masters of the Purple, Crimson, and Green Firmaments walked out from the void and bowed their heads to Qing Yu.

They were the last descendants of Taiyi’s celestial court. They’d created the three Firmaments to quietly stand guard over this realm and the world of immortals. They’d never left and would turn into yin gods upon their deaths, joining the Green Firmament to continue protecting the land.

“Very well.” Qing Yu nodded. “You three will be heavenly kings of my palace from now on, and you will be the fourth if you are willing to join.”

She was looking at the origin divine. Akasha ghosts were unique ghosts in that their resentment was stronger than any other ghostly entity, but they retained their original sentience. They could even communicate with the immortal dao and become part of it, everywhere and anywhere.

If it wasn't for Qing Yu ruling over the immortal dao, they would've left Witherdew Major through it a long time ago. After all, their great daos were still part of the immortal dao.

Of course, this batch were great emperors of this realm to begin with. There were true akasha ghosts elsewhere in the chaos, created by the ghost ancestor. Only a few of those big akasha ghosts had traveled to this realm and they'd all died in previous encounters.

The origin divine had still been the origin divine when it arrived in the realm. It'd visited Pangu's tomb with another big akasha ghost—one to absorb the fortunes of the Exalted divines, the other to occupy Pangu's body.

When the big akasha ghost failed, the ghost ancestor turned the origin divine into an akasha ghost as well and sent it into the immortal dao to possess the Dao Tree.

"I, I agree!" Finally making up its mind, the origin divine fell to the ground and bowed down to Qing Yu, then led the tide of akasha ghosts into the gates of the heavenly palace.

As they passed through, a heavenly book of blank pages appeared over the gates, flaring with a milky-white radiance that enveloped the akasha ghosts. With that, the heavenly palace forcefully pulled them back from the abyss of death!

Howling with rage, the ghost ancestor broke through Xuanyuan Xiaoyue's containment and charged at Qing Yu and the heavenly palace.

Boom!

A huge golden seal smashed toward it with the force of a towering mountain.

Chapter 990: Establishing the Heavenly Court

The Skyturning Seal!

The Venerated Sacrosanct Demon Sovereign!

The Venerated Sacrosanct Demon Sovereign had completely broken free of his Hadal Bonefire body, and even the flame itself had been returned to the blood demon at Lu Yun's discretion. The demon sovereign had undergone such drastic changes that it was as if he'd been reborn. He possessed his own great opportunity now—the Skyturning Seal.

As one of the weapons refined by the three founders of immortal dao, there would be no dispute in hailing the Skyturning Seal as the foremost weapon beneath immortal dao. After refining it, the Venerated Sacrosanct Demon Sovereign immediately integrated the immortal dao within the treasure into himself and was imbued by the immortal dao to become the first immortal king in history.

Now the Venerated Sacrosanct Immortal King, he shot out of the void and smashed the Skyturning Seal into the ghost ancestor with the force of a thunderbolt.

Lacking a physical body, the ghost ancestor somehow seemed tangible beneath the seal. The violent blow threw the ghost ancestor to the ground. Snarling with fury, the ghost ancestor clambered up and hurtled at the heavenly palace again!

With the heavenly palace sealing off Witherdew Major, it seemed even the ghost ancestor couldn't break out of this suppression. According to legend, the heavenly palace was the ultimate treasure of the first realm to appear in the chaos. It'd once conquered the chaos and even the sacred race had had to bow down to it.

Here it was again, in the realm of the world of immortals. The ghost ancestor wanted to bring word of this development at all costs, or even trade its life for the destruction of the heavenly palace!

The Skyturning Seal smashed into it again and again, but the ghost ancestor doggedly climbed back up no matter how many times it was slammed into the ground. There was only one target in its eyes!

As an immortal king of the heavenly palace, the Venerated Sacrosanct Immortal King outranked even the four heavenly kings. Sol Truefire blazed over him while he directed the Skyturning Seal and the immortal dao shadowed his moves, instilling him with power. He was now peak grand pure realm, on par with the human kings of the Primeval Era.

In the primordial world of immortals, the Venerated Sacrosanct Demon Sovereign had set himself at odds with the immortal emperor. Out of an appreciation for talent, the immortal emperor purposefully cracked his dao heart so the demon sovereign would die from an inability to form his true spirit.

That way, he evaded the cataclysm a hundred thousand years ago and the experts of the Green Firmament were able to find him to recruit him. However, the demon sovereign fought his way back out of the firmament, becoming the first genius to ever revolt against the faction.

Most importantly now was that he'd received the Skyturning Seal's approval and become its new owner. Bolstered by the treasure, the demon sovereign made progress with tremendous strides and reached peak grand pure realm in the blink of an eye.

His cultivation continued to race forward after the establishment of the heavenly palace, transforming him from demon sovereign to immortal king, placing him as the first immortal king of the heavenly palace. This put him on par with the ten Yama Kings of hell and superior to the newly submitted heavenly kings. The heavenly kings were the kings of the heavenly palace, but an immortal king was the king of the immortal dao.

Though he was only peak grand pure realm at the moment, he absolutely had the right to face the ghost ancestor with his support from the immortal dao! The ghost ancestor's exact cultivation level was unknown, but it possessed the battle strength of a chaos realm master.

Currently, heavenly kings from the Green, Purple, and Crimson Firmaments, Xuanyuan Xiaoyue, the demon god, and Qi Hai were all on the field. Surrounded by experts on all fronts and overshadowed by the heavenly palace, the ghost ancestor couldn't bring its abilities to bear no matter how strong it was.

The Skyturning Seal howled through the air as the Xuanyuan Sword exploded with brilliant rays of sword light. Though this meant the three weapons of primitive dao lost the sword's sheen, they were still great treasures of the world.

Wham!

A black Embittered Ocean Orb descended from the skies and crashed into the ghost ancestor's face.

A final wail rang out as its body flew apart into shadowy fragments that filled the sky. When the fragments cleared away, blue skies were restored to Witherdew Major.

Unstoppable in its momentum, the Skyturning Seal smashed through akasha soul after akasha soul, but when cleanup was complete, a ghostly face that seemed to be both crying and laughing appeared in the skies.

The ghost ancestor. It'd become one with the space of Witherdew Major and glared down venomously at every creature from above.

A full one hundred thousand akasha ghosts entered the heavenly palace and were absorbed by the blank book. The book returned them from the state of dead spirits to living beings, and they became the first native lifeforms of the heavenly palace—Qing Yu's heavenly army.

They were similar to Lu Yun's Infernum and the native lifeforms of hell. As the heavenly palace and kingdom of hell ran parallel to each other, their layouts were also similar. However, the kingdom of hell was based off of the hell of the Primeval Era, while the heavenly palace was a completely new world.

After the ghost ancestor's demise, the major seemed to have eaten it. Its laughing and crying face was embedded in the sky so that it could glare upon all life at all times.

The Dao Academy had poured out almost all of its strength to conquer Witherdew Major, and even the extremely mysterious Dao Sovereign Qing Yu had manifested her heavenly palace. The combined strength of the little fox, Xuanyuan Xiaoyue, Venerated Sacrosanct Immortal King, demon god, Qi Hai and others were already frightening enough, but they were now joined by the heavenly kings of the Green, Purple, and Crimson Firmaments, a newly recruited heavenly army a hundred thousand strong, and fourth heavenly king the origin divine!

Even the newly awoken rulers of the divine nations in the ten lands fell silent now. The scarlet apes of Levitating Island goggled with fear. Xuanyuan Xiaoyue was the daughter of Emperor Xuanyuan, the eldest princess of the human race!

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In the forty-fifth year of the Xuanhuang calendar, Dao Sovereign Qing Yu established the heavenly court in Witherdew Major!

Not the courts of the nine majors and ten lands, but a heavenly court of the world of immortals! It would illuminate the realms and become the court of the entire world, just like that of the Primordial Era!

The Immortal Subjugation Seal slowly coalesced from a ray of iridescent splendor, sinking into a magnificent being.

The heavenly emperor!

The first heavenly emperor of the heavenly court had been anointed. Not an immortal emperor, but one of the heavens. Lu Yun and Qing Yu had imitated ancient custom to create this position.

An immortal emperor would only be an emperor beneath the immortal dao, but the heavenly emperor would be the master of heaven and earth. The first to take on the mantle was Qing Yu's father, Qing Taxian!

This propelled the Qing Clan into becoming the imperial clan of the world of immortals. They could accept this with ease as the curse on emperors and anything related to them had long been broken.

Though the Qings were the first imperial clan, they didn't dare abuse their newfound power. The lessons of the Dao Academy were still fresh on their minds, and Qing Yu had become even stricter on them after emerging from her seclusion.

After ten years of tempering, Qing Taxian returned from Harshcloud Realm as a Supreme Immortal of Original Order. Ten years of experience and strength and ten years of struggling between life and death had formed such foundations for him that could not be matched.

He broke through to ingress realm after swallowing ten karmic fruits, and his cultivation speed showed no signs of stopping.