

ODYSSEY 1521

Chapter 1521: Crisis

Lu Yin stared at the ground with a complicated expression. There was yet another former retainer of the Lu family here.

"Grandpa Zhiyi, it's Xiao Tu! Grandpa Zhiyi!" Young Master Tu was also shouting, his eyes bright red. Still, there was no response from Wan Zhiyi at all.

Uncle He sighed. "Every move that Old Senior makes is carefully watched."

Young Master Tu roared, "Those traitors! The Lu family will return sooner or later and destroy them, and yet they dare to imprison Grandpa Zhiyi?! Traitors! Traitor!!!"

Uncle He felt helpless. He released a long breath and looked to the other side, where he just happened to see Lu Yin, and the older man's eyes flickered.

Lu Yin knew that Uncle He was still worried about how he was a part of the White Dragon Clan. Thus, Lu Yin merely nodded and left.

Three days later, as he was resting, Lu Yin heard a voice from outside his quarters. "Are you Brother Long Qi?"

Lu Yin opened his eyes and walked out. As he emerged, he saw a ferocious-looking bald man. Lu Yin instantly recognized the man: Baldy Tooth. This man was one of the Forsaken Soldiers' few Envoys. He was a powerhouse who lived close to where Lu Yin had taken up residence.

"I am junior Long Qi. Might I ask what senior needs with me?" Lu Yin asked.

Baldy Tooth stared at Lu Yin for a moment before solemnly stating, "Let's talk inside."

Lu Yin nodded and moved aside to allow Baldy Tooth in.

"Brother Long Qi, I've been a part of the Forsaken Soldiers for a long time, and I've developed some understanding of this place. I'd like to find out, which side would you like to join?" Baldy Tooth asked.

Lu Yin had to ask, "Which side?"

Baldy Tooth was serious as he replied, "Respectable people don't hide their words, and it's unbecoming of Brother Long Qi to play stupid."

Lu Yin shrugged. "I'm sorry, but I really don't know what you're talking about."

Baldy Tooth frowned and stared at Lu Yin for a while before finally continuing, explaining, "There are different factions within the Forsaken Soldiers. For example, the Lu family's former retainers form one faction, which includes people such as the Qiming family and the All-Dao family. Big Sis Luo Sha is nearly as powerful an expert as the two Semi-Progenitors here, and she leads another faction. As for us, we are here because we offended some people in the Perennial World and were sentenced to this place because of it. Naturally, we have formed yet another faction. So, does Long Qi brothers understand now?"

Lu Yin lowered his eyes. "The remnants of the Lu family's vassals?"

Baldy Tooth replied, "That's right. That Young Master Tu who's been harassing you is from that faction, and you must be frustrated with him. However, it's important for you to know that those former vassals aren't easy to mess with, though you shouldn't even consider trying to join them. For starters, they only accept their own people, but even besides that, if you get close to those people, things won't be good for you after you return to the Perennial World. You definitely won't meet a good end in that case."

"Do you feel disgusted by the Lu family?" Lu Yin asked in turn.

Baldy Tooth snorted. "All who have ruled this Perennial World are revolting!"

After getting to this point, Baldy Tooth started to get impatient. "'Tell me, do you want to join us? Don't forget, during that battle just three days ago, there were more than 100 casualties. It's normal for 10,000 people to die during each battle, and I even saw that one of the corpse kings went after you. I wanted to help, but you dealt with it by yourself. Still, that was only due to some luck. The fighting's just going to get worse from here on out, and how long can you count on your luck to last?"

"Join us so that we can help each other. That way, we'll have a better chance of surviving, right?"

Lu Yin stared at the Baldy Tooth with an odd expression. "Do you know where I'm from?"

Baldy Tooth sneered, "Don't bother trying to use your White Dragon Clan to scare me! That's useless here. The only way to leave this place is after the two Semi-Progenitors coordinate an exchange, and you're no exception to that! Others from the four ruling powers have also come here, but all of them died. So, don't think that you'll get any special treatment while you're here."

The man's words clearly showed that he knew nothing about Long Qi at all and that most of the people in the Forsaken Soldiers did not even know that the reason why the Semi-Progenitors had taken the initiative to attack Xiang City was to save Lu Yin. This man's faction was composed of the Perennial World's worst criminals, and it was clear that Young Master Tu and his faction despised the convicts, and Big Sis Luo Sha likely felt the same. The two Semi-Progenitors would not bother paying any attention to this faction of criminals, which was probably why they believed themselves to be impressive.

Baldy Tooth had likely seen Lu Yin repairing the sourcebox array, and that was his motivation behind approaching Lu Yin.

"You should go. I have no interest in joining your faction." Lu Yin was clear on the type of people in this particular faction, and thus, there was no need to continue the conversation.

Baldy Tooth frowned and switched tactics to threats. "Long Qi, you're with the Forsaken Soldiers now! You won't be treated like someone from the White Dragon Clan anymore, and not even the two Semi-Progenitors can afford to keep you safe. Our faction is the most numerous and reliable on the battlefield, so you should think this through carefully."

Lu Yin waved a hand dismissively. "You can see yourself out."

Baldy Tooth let out another snort. "After a few more battles, you'll come to understand! Let me remind you that we won't bother risking anything to save you before you join us, so find your own way to survive!"

With that, the man turned and left, clearly in a bad mood.

Lu Yin was unconcerned. Just as he was about to return to his rest, from the corner of his eyes, he caught a glimpse of liquid trickling down the side of the mountain, and his own mood suddenly fell. That bastard was back.

"That was fun! You're pretty cool," Young Master Tu shouted from higher up the mountain.

Lu Yin had a terrible expression on his face when he walked up. "When do you want to get beaten up?"

Young Master Tu pursed his lips. "I saw Baldy Tooth leaving your place. You better not join up with that trash."

"That's got nothing to do with you," Lu Yin replied.

Young Master Tu rolled his eyes. "You know what, go ahead and beg me! I can ask Grandpa Zhiyi to keep you safe. You were already able to see just how powerful Grandpa Zhiyi is!"

Lu Yin was taken aback. "Is that old senior protecting you?"

Young Master Tu coughed. "Of course! Why else would I call him Grandpa if he didn't care for me?"

"Go ahead and ask him now, see if he agrees or not," Lu Yin angrily challenged. It was instantly clear that Young Master Tu was lying.

Young Master Tu gritted his teeth. "Kid, you don't know how to accept kindness! Hurry up and beg me!"

Lu Yin really saw expectation in Young Master Tu's eyes. This person frequently mistook Lu Yin for someone else, and he also tried his best to get Lu Yin to act more submissively as though he were trying to cater to a subtle wish. It was almost as though Young Master Tu wanted Lu Yin to bow his head because Young Master Tu had once wanted that other person to bow his head; but in both cases, he had never succeeded. If Lu Yin was not mistaken, he was actually that very same person.

"Go ahead and ask that old senior to come out and discuss this matter," Lu Yin pressed.

After that, he went back to his place on the mountain.

Young Master Tu grew anxious. "Kid, it looks like you don't believe me! You better beg me soon, or else you won't be so lucky during the next battle! I was actually the one who spoke to Grandpa Zhiyi last time, and that's why he made a move! Kid, did you hear..."

Out of everyone on the Stacking Mountain Range, the most pitiful person was the one who lived below Lu Yin. Whenever Young Master Tu let water flow, it trickled down and fell onto Lu Yin's lower neighbor, right in the main entrance to his quarters. He wanted to speak up, but he did not have the courage to do so. He also wanted to move, but he was very hesitant about trying to move anywhere else on the mountain. Despite his frustrations, the man could do nothing but silently curse to himself.

Lu Yin's mood had been ruined as he did not know what Shaman God was up to. Ever since the all-out assault on the array bases had ended, Marquis Green Bamboo had been keeping a constant eye on the Forsaken Soldiers, and he had even been sending corpse kings to attack them. After a few more days, the battle intensified and started growing worse.

Lu Yin activated both of the sourcebox arrays and started slaughtering corpse kings, staining the entire Stacking Mountain Range red with blood. As Lu Yin focused on his task, he was attacked by three Envoy corpse kings. If not for Uncle He and Zhou Tang protecting him, Lu Yin would have suffered miserably.

However, even if the human Envoys were able to stop their corpse king counterparts, they were not able to do anything when Marquis Green Bamboo made a move.

No one expected Marquis Green Bamboo to suddenly attack a youth, but green bamboo shoots shot out from the void, appearing from nowhere and blasting into Lu Yin's body.

Had Shaman God died? One of the Twelve Marquises had actually attacked Lu Yin!

Lu Yin felt death approaching, and he prepared himself to summon Mister Mu. However, an old man suddenly grabbed Marquis Green Bamboo. The old man's hand looked like it belonged to a skeleton, as it was completely devoid of flesh and blood, though the man was still underground.

Lu Yin immediately knew that this old man was Wan Zhiyi, the All-Dao family's grand elder.

Puff!

Lu Yin crumpled to the ground as he spat out blood. Young Master Tu raced over to catch Lu Yin. "Hey! You're not dead, right?"

Lu Yin's chest was covered with blood. He had not taken any reactionary measures or retaliated when Marquis Green Bamboo had attacked, as anything that Lu Yin could do would be worthless against a Semi-Progenitor's attack.

"I can't die." Lu Yin coughed up more blood before quickly swallowing a medicinal pill. His breathing was ragged.

If not for Wan Zhiyi appearing, Lu Yin would have been pierced through by Marquis Green Bamboo's attack. Even if Lu Yin had not died, he would have been seriously injured. Still, it was far more likely for him to have died. If a Progenitor attacked, just the shockwave alone would be enough to annihilate Lu Yin's body.

If not for the Cloudguard Robes, the strike from the shoot of green bamboo might have killed Lu Yin without even needing to get close to him.

It was unfortunate that the attack had completely destroyed Lu Yin's Cloudguard Robes.

"You aren't dead? Just how tenacious are you?" Young Master Tu was shocked to see that Lu Yin was still alive, and the young master's voice took on an odd tone.

Lu Yin's fingers trembled, but his body was constantly fed with fresh vitality, and his injuries quickly recovered.

Without Lu Yin to control it, the spherical red sourcebox array had grown weak, though the array with the cone-shaped sourceboxes was fine, as it was able to operate automatically.

Up above Lu Yin, Wan Zhiyi's expression was solemn. However, due to the fact that the ancient powerhouse was nothing but skin and bones, it was quite difficult to read his expression. "I'm surprised to see that one of the Twelve Marquises, Marquis Green Bamboo, actually made a move against a mere Enlightener realm junior."

Marquis Green Bamboo smiled casually. "Junior? That's simply how you humans view things related to the passage of time. To me, he's someone who became an Array Master at a young age. The fact that he's able to kill Envoy level corpse kings while still at the Enlightener realm means that he presents a grave threat to my people, and he even has equipment that allowed him to survive an attack from me. Judging by how you humans do things, he is no mere junior, and he is certainly qualified for me to move against him.

"Besides, I keep having the feeling that he looks familiar, and I'm certain that I've seen him somewhere before."

Wan Zhiyi glanced back at Lu Yin, and his eyes hesitated on Lu Yin's face before he looked back at Marquis Green Bamboo. "Does this old man look familiar to you?"

Marquis Green Bamboo laughed. He continued to act in a calm and refined manner. "You look nothing like you did before. You were once full of spirit and energy, but now, you're about to die. The Lu family is gone, and there's you people's lives hold no value. You should just go die."

After speaking, the marquis disappeared.

A blazing killing intent suddenly filled Wan Zhiyi's eyes, and he also disappeared.

Even though Lu Yin was able to observe the true universe, he could not see the battle between the two.

"Grandpa Zhiyi will definitely win! Grandpa Zhiyi is the most powerful of the Semi-Progenitors. He's only a single step away from becoming a Progenitor! If not for the fate that befell the Lu family, my Perennial World would be protected by one more Progenitor," Young Master Tu said quietly.

Lu Yin held his chest as he recuperated. His injuries had recovered quickly, and thanks to the Cloudguard Robes, the shockwave of the marquis's attack had not entered Lu Yin's body. Without the armor, Lu Yin would have suffered badly. Upon realizing this, he did not hesitate to put on his universal armor, and only after that was he able to relax a bit.

Young Master Tu stared blankly at Lu Yin's universal armor. "What is that?"

Lu Yin answered quietly. "It's a defensive armor. Can't you tell?"

Young Master Tu was surprised. "Will that even help?"

It was at this moment that several corpse kings attacked the two men; two had the strength of Enlighteners while three were as strong as Hunters. Lu Yin used his Vacuum Palm and blew all five of the corpse kings away.

Uncle He appeared at that moment. "It's not safe here. Let's go."

With that, he grabbed Young Master Tu and started heading for the top of the Folded Mountains.

Chapter 1522: Oath

Uncle He did not take Lu Yin with him as he was only focused on protecting Young Master Tu.

Lu Yin remained where he was, surrounded by corpse kings. Still, given the defense of his universal armor, as long as no corpse king that was equal to an Envoy who had passed three tribulations appeared, Lu Yin would not be in any danger. There were only a few experts whose power levels exceeded 700,000.

However, that did not mean that Lu Yin was entirely safe. He quickly broke free of the encirclement and entered the Red Beam. It was only then that he was safe.

The battle continued on for several days, though no one knew how the battle between Marquis Green Bamboo and Wan Zhiyi was progressing. Neither of them had shown themselves after that day, but judging from their previous exchange, Wan Zhiyi should hold the advantage.

The Twelve Marquises were all Semi-Progenitors who had existed since ancient times. Although this sounded impressive, if any one of them was capable of becoming a Progenitor, then they would have done so long ago and not remained as Semi-Progenitors.

The longer such beings lived for, the more they proved themselves incapable of becoming Progenitors. In contrast, Wan Zhiyi had nearly broken into the Progenitor realm before, so there was a wide discrepancy between the two Semi-Progenitors.

Semi-Progenitor Ji Feng had teamed up with Semi-Progenitor Liu Hua to fight against Marquis Xiang while Wan Zhiyi and Marquis Green Bamboo were supposed to be evenly matched. This led to a deadlocked battlefield, but when Semi-Progenitor Liu Hua fell, the entire situation suddenly changed.

Lu Yin looked into the distance where he saw Semi-Progenitor Liu Hua's hair turn white. It was as though she had aged an entire lifetime in an instant. The familiar sight startled Lu Yin; was that Vitality Poison?

The void distorted around Semi-Progenitor Liu Hua's body, blocking off Lu Yin's vision. It was as though the powerhouse had been isolated in a separate world. Still, even though Lu Yin was not able to see her clearly, he could sense that she was quickly weakening.

"Marquis Xiang, you actually used poison?!" Semi-Progenitor Ji Feng shouted angrily.

Marquis Xiang indifferently replied, "As I said, this will destroy your inner world. How long can Liu Hua endure for? Her inner world is rapidly degrading, and once it disappears, so will she."

Semi-Progenitor Ji Feng was both angry and scared, and he did not even dare to come into close contact with Marquis Xiang again.

As he waited for the battle to continue, Semi-Progenitor Ji Feng quickly retreated. Just what kind of poison could affect Semi-Progenitor Liu Hua so badly that it was able to corrode her inner world? If Ji Feng was poisoned, then he would suffer the same fate.

Wan Zhiyi also saw what had happened, and it made him furious. "You have developed your Vitality Poison this far?"

Marquis Green Bamboo smiled. "This isn't even its final limit. Once the Vitality Poison is able to easily destroy inner worlds, the Perennial World will be done for. Tell me, do you think that this poison will work on the Mother Tree?"

Wan Zhiyi felt a chill run down his back. Even a Semi-Progenitor was already nearly unable to resist this poison. If the monsters continued to develop it, while it might never be able to pose a threat to Progenitors, it would eventually be able to destroy the Mother Tree.

Once that happened, the Perennial World would suffer an unprecedented disaster.

"Palm of Thousand Skies." Wan Zhiyi let out a roar while, across from him, Marquis Green Bamboo raised his bamboo stick and thrust it forward.

The void continuously detonated, and even the true universe started warping from their battle. Not even Envoys could observe the Semi-Progenitors' battle.

Semi-Progenitor Ji Feng was forced back step by step. The moment that he fell, the Forsaken Soldiers would be eradicated.

This was the most desperate disaster that the Forsaken Soldiers had ever encountered.

Suddenly, Marquis Xiang appeared and smashed the sourcebox array with the cones. The attack damaged the entire sourcebox array and ruined it again.

This was the power of a marquis. Each one was powerful enough to casually destroy a powerful Envoy.

At that moment, Marquis Xiang turned to stare at Lu Yin.

Lu Yin felt his scalp tingle so badly that it felt like it was going to explode; what were Shaman God's intentions? Had that doll died? First, Marquis Green Bamboo had attacked Lu Yin, and now, Marquis Xiang seemed to be about to do the same. It looked like there was no path towards survival.

Lu Yin took out his jade talisman, ready to crush it, when an overwhelming aura suddenly fell upon him from above. It was like he had been welcomed into a new world, and the energy dragged Lu Yin back. He looked up, thrilled. "Supervisor!"

Qing Chen had arrived, and his timing was perfect, as he had just managed to save Lu Yin.

Qing Chen had a grim expression on his face. He tossed Lu Yin to the top of the Stacking Mountain Range. "Protect yourself."

With that, the supervisor stepped forward and charged at Marquis Xiang.

Marquis Xiang was caught off guard. "Another Semi-Progenitor? How troublesome."

With that, he simply left.

Marquis Green Bamboo had also noticed Qing Chen's arrival. "Wan Zhiyi, I won't play with you any more today. If four Semi-Progenitors are standing guard over the Forsaken Soldiers, then who is protecting your array bases? Hahahaha!"

Marquis Green Bamboo then also left.

Wan Zhiyi stared at Marquis Green Bamboo's retreating back with a sense of awe.

After Marquis Xiang and Marquis Green Bamboo both pulled back, the countless corpse kings immediately started fleeing.

Lu Yin stood atop the mountains, and he let out a sigh of relief as he watched the developments across the battlefield. This battle had been too dangerous, and he had almost died. If not for Qing Chen's timely arrival, Lu Yin would have been forced to summon Mister Mu.

The four Semi-Progenitors all landed on the ground, and Qing Chen gazed at Wan Zhiyi with an expression of absolute shock. "Wan- Senior Wan?"

Wan Zhiyi turned and saw Qing Chen. The older man's face was cadaverous to the point where he no longer seemed human.

Qing Chen quickly stepped forward and bowed low. "Junior Qing Chen greets Senior Wan."

Wan Zhiyi stared at Qing Chen before responding in a hoarse voice, "It's been a long time."

Qing Chen looked at Wan Zhiyi with anger written all over his face. "Did they imprison senior underground?"

Wan Zhiyi did not reply, but his body sank to the ground and then disappeared.

"Senior Wan!"

Qing Chen shouted, and tried to chase after the old man, but a voice rose from the ground. "Go back. Act as though you have seen nothing."

Qing Chen stood in the void in a daze, his eyes riddled with conflicting emotions.

The All-Dao family's grand elder had been heralded as a legendary, all-powerful figure who had been poised to become a Progenitor. Seeing how far the ancient powerhouse had fallen, Qing Chen felt sad and regretful, as well as powerless.

The four ruling powers sat up in the Higher Realm, and they suppressed everyone and everything in the Middle Realm and below. There were no exceptions.

Qing Chen's timely arrival was the only reason why the humans had been allowed a respite in the battle, though naturally, Qing Chen had arrived to take Lu Yin away.

Semi-Progenitor Liu Hua sat on the ground in a cross-legged position. The void isolated her body, but she also seemed to be cut off from the true universe. This was a concept that Lu Yin was unable to understand, though he did know that the woman was suffering from Vitality Poison.

Qing Chen landed nearby, and his brows furrowed as he looked at Semi-Progenitor Liu Hua.

Ji Feng sealed the Semi-Progenitor off and ordered everyone back before turning to speak to Qing Chen. "The Aeternus has developed their poison to the point where it even poses a threat to Semi-Progenitors. They are still working to improve it and it's only a matter of time until it can threaten even Progenitors, as they have already reached the point where their poison can enter and corrode a powerhouse's inner world."

Qing Chen quietly replied, "I'll report these matters to the Progenitors."

"Liu Hua has been reduced to this state, and I don't know if she'll be able to survive. The current situation is not looking good."

Qing Chen looked at Ji Feng. "Make a report to General Xia Yan. Someone will be dispatched to replace Liu Hua. I will stay here with the Forsaken Soldiers until reinforcements arrive."

Semi-Progenitor Ji Feng heaved a sigh of relief. "That's good."

Liu Hua was completely isolated, so no one knew what was happening to her.

After the battle concluded, Lu Yin also met with Qing Chen.

Qing Chen was not in a good mood when Lu Yin saw the older man. Semi-Progenitor Liu Hua had been poisoned, and Qing Chen had also seen Wan Zhiyi's circumstances, which left the supervisor with conflicted emotions.

"You've done well. When I learned that you had fallen to the New World, everyone believed that you had died, even me," Qing Chen's voice was full of emotion, as he felt truly lucky.

Lu Yin replied, "Your subordinate also thought that we were all dead. I did not expect to discover the Red Beamy or that it would be repairable. But because of the all-out assault on the five array bases, the New World did not have any strong enemies there, allowing me to travel to the Forsaken Soldiers."

Qing Chen was very solemn. "Just now, during this last battle, Marquis Green Bamboo and the other marquis both attacked you. This is not a safe place for you. Once the replacement Semi-Progenitor arrives, I'll take you away from here. With what you've accomplished on the battlefield, you can request to leave this battlefield."

Lu Yin's heart skipped a beat. "Supervisor, after we fell down to the New World, your subordinate was only able to survive by relying and cooperating with a group of people. Can they also leave this place?"

Qing Chen asked, "Are you talking about Zhou Tang and the others with him?"

"Do you know Zhou Tang?" Lu Yin was caught off guard. Even though Zhou Tang and the others were all powerful Envoys, Qing Chen should not know about them, right? After all, Qing Chen, Ji Feng, and Liu Hua were all lofty Semi-Progenitors.

Qing Chen grew more somber. "Their status is special. They belong to the Star Alliance and the Forsaken Soldiers. Since they've come to this place, the rules are clear. They cannot leave."

Lu Yin anxiously protested, "But they provided invaluable assistance to this subordinate! Without them, your subordinate would have never been able to survive and reach this place."

Qing Chen did not respond, but instead looked behind Lu Yin.

Lu Yin turned and saw Zhou Tang, Mr. Guo, and the others. The two men were not far away, and Qing Chen and Lu Yin had done nothing to hide their conversation, so the Envoys had heard everything.

Che Zhan spoke with a smile, "Brother Long Qi, it's enough for you to feel this way."

Mr. Guo nodded and grew emotional. "It has been an honor to have gotten to know Brother Long Qi during my time in the Star Alliance."

"All of us are honored," Brother Hong said seriously.

The Mother of the Eastern Mountains smiled. "I don't want to go back. Staying here is better."

Finally, Lu Yin looked at Zhou Tang.

Zhou Tang still had an unkempt appearance, but the gaze in his eyes had become much sharper compared to when Lu Yin had first seen the man. "Remember, the most important thing in cultivating battle force is your spirit. As you climb higher in this universe, your battle force will eventually break through. There are people who say that cultivating battle force serves no purpose since there are no records of a battle force user becoming a Progenitor, but I don't believe this."

Even though Zhou Tang did not explicitly say so, Lu Yin clearly understood that the man would also remain at the Folded Mountain Range.

Lu Yin earnestly replied to his companions, "I am also honored to have known all of you."

"It's too early for such talk. Brother Long Qi, you will still have to remain here at the Folded Mountains for a while longer." Che Zhan laughed.

Several people bowed to Qing Chen before returning to their own quarters.

Lu Yin's mood was ruined. He had desperately wanted to take his comrades away, and not only them, but he also wanted to take away all the members of the All-Dao family and the Qiming family. He truly wanted to rescue them, but this was not the proper time. He could only hope that they would be able to survive and wait for the day when he was able to fight his way back to the battlefield behind the Mother Tree.

Lu Yin swore that he would absolutely return to this battlefield and that he would also bring about the return of the Lu family. When the day that he summoned the Lu family's surviving vassals came, it would also be the day when he stepped onto the peak of the Perennial World.

Only after arriving at the New World had Qing Chen discovered that the All-Dao family and Qiming family had been exiled to the Forsaken Soldiers. The Humility's Gate's Supervisor met with Uncle He, Young Master Tu, and Wan Sen. Even though they had not met each other before, they were all familiar with each other, and their meeting incited many emotions.

"Hey, are you really leaving?" Young Master Tu was feeling bored, so he prodded Lu Yin while lying on the mountain.

"Of course."

Young Master Tu looked up at the vague, but massive, shadow of the array base high above the sky above them. He did not know what to think.

Lu Yin looked at Young Master Tu and smiled. "Before I leave, do you want me to kick your ass again?"

Young Master Tu grinned. "You look like an asshole, and you also speak like one."

"So yes." Lu Yin raised a hand.

Young Master Tu quickly moved away. "Don't mess around! I'm not dealing with any pain right now, so no, I don't want to fight you. Give me a few days to relax."

Young Master Tu had only sought Lu Yin to beat him up when suffering from mental torture. He had treated Lu Yin as though he were someone else when Young Master Tu drowned in his memories and was incapacitated by the pain. At the moment, Young Master Tu was not suffering from any mental torture, so naturally, he had no desire to suffer in vain.

Chapter 1523: What Has He Done?

Complicated emotions assailed Lu Yin as he stared at Young Master Tu. "The mental torture that you suffer from must be very painful."

Young Master Tu acted confused. "What mental torture?"

Lu Yin looked out at the massive form of Xiang City off in the distance. "I already know about it. You suffer from it once every month. Who did it to you?"

Young Master Tu's face twisted, and he left without looking back. It was clear that he had no desire to speak about such things.

Lu Yin continued to say, "Just live. Hope can only exist as long as you're alive. You've endured for so many years, so you can endure a while longer. Maybe you'll be able to last until you see your hope realized."

Young Master Tu snapped his head around, and Lu Yin saw that Young Master Tu's eyes were blazing red. "Live? You say that word so easily! Do you even know what sort of torture I, Master Tu, have suffered? If not for those specific words that were spoken, death would be my greatest relief! I've wished for death more than once before. Every month, every day, every hour. Even as I speak with you, I want to die. You don't understand anything, you traitor! You're all traitors..."

Young Master Tu screamed like he had gone insane.

Lu Yin simply faced Young Master Tu and said nothing. He allowed Young Master Tu to go crazy as the youth vented and cursed. Words were spoken that had never been said to Uncle He or any other person. Only Lu Yin heard these words. It was because even though there was no connection between Lu Yin and that person, they looked quite similar, and years of mental torture would leave anyone susceptible to hallucinations, no matter who they were.

"The pain pierced all the way down, deep into my bone marrow! It causes splitting headaches! My cultivation was destroyed! In the past, I, Master Tu was known as a peerless genius who was qualified to become the eighth hero..."

"If not for the Lu family, you would already be dead! Why did you betray them? What did you gain? Why have you tortured me? Why did you destroy my cultivation..."

...

Lu Yin merely listened in silence as Young Master Tu vented his pain. He listened as the man laid bare all that he had hidden deep in his heart for so many years.

Young Master Tu finally calmed down after half an hour. He laid back down on the mountainside and stared up at the vague outline of the array base with dull eyes.

Lu Yin finally said, "You will definitely endure."

Then, he left.

Lu Yin spoke these words not only to Young Master Tu, but also to everyone from the Star Alliance.

He could not reveal himself at this time. Even if these people were all absolutely loyal to the Lu family, he still would not say anything for the time being. The Lu family had been cast out of the Perennial World by the four ruling powers, and if Lu Yin revealed his true identity, then these people likely would be in danger themselves. Even though he was the Qiming family's young master, Young Master Tu had been unaware of Wan Zhiyi's presence beneath the Stacking Mountain Range.

Also, Wan Zhiyi had not spoken with Young Master Tu at all, which convinced Lu Yin that he was not able to reconcile with each other for the moment.

He could not take such a risk. He could only re-summon these people when the time was right.

On the other side, Young Master Tu ignored Lu Yin; could he actually endure? How difficult would that be? The four ruling powers had gained absolute control over the Perennial World, and unless the full force of the Lu family returned, no one could shake the status quo.

Several days later, a new Semi-Progenitor arrived to replace Semi-Progenitor Liu Hua, which meant that Qing Chen was finally free to leave.

Semi-Progenitor Ji Feng also hoped to leave the New World, but he was not able to do so. Thus, he remained at the Stacking Mountain Range.

Qing Chen took not only Lu Yin with him, but also Semi-Progenitor Liu Hua and another group of people who had been among the cultivators who had fallen to the New World along with Lu Yin. Other than Zhou Tang and the few Envoys from the Star Alliance, the others were all taken up. Even with those people leaving, there were still many people with a great deal of time remaining in their sentence with the Forsaken Soldiers. As for the tens of millions of people who had been rescued from the New World's cities, none of them were taken away. Such people could not be allowed to leave for the time being despite their fervent wishes.

Lu Yin often considered the difference between a Semi-Progenitor and an expert whose power level had exceeded a million. When he remembered being isolated from the void, he only felt confused.

Qing Chen led tens of thousands of people up towards the second array base, and the tens of thousands of people were carried upwards in what amounted to bags. Even if Marquis Xiang attacked from the distance, he would not be able to affect them one bit.

This was why only Semi-Progenitors were able to take people away from the Folded Mountains.

...

"Subordinate Long Qi greets the general." Up on the second array base, Lu Yin held out his commander token as he saluted Xia Yan.

Xia Yan was overjoyed upon seeing Long Qu, and he stepped forward to personally help Lu Yin stand up. "It's good you're alive! It's great!"

"Not only is he alive, but he's alive and well after shaking things up in the back for those monsters." Long Laogui smiled and stared at Lu Yin with admiration as he spoke.

Qing Chen's face remained calm, but pride filled his eyes. Lu Yin had accomplished plenty to make them all feel proud.

Xia Yan was exactly the same. He smiled. "Long Qi, tell me how you survived. Not to mention you, but even if I fell to the New World, I'm not sure that I would have been able to live long enough to return."

Lu Yin remained humble as he explained, "This subordinate was lucky, as there were several comrades who worked to live and die as one..."

There was constantly fighting on the battlefield behind the Mother Tree, and no one had time for foolishness. Despite the seriousness of the location, Xia Yan and others all listened carefully to Lu Yin's story, as not even Qing Chen was privy to all the details of what had occurred on the New World.

Lu Yin talked about the corpse kings he had faced one by one. Of course, he did not mention how he had defeated them all on his own, and he made the story sound more reasonable by saying that he had joined forces with Mr. Guo and others.

He also spoke of what had happened while clearing out the terror ants, and how he had been attacked by Marquis Green Bamboo. Even Xia Yan was shocked to hear that particular detail.

Long Laogui's face remained solemn, though he actually felt fear at some portions of Lu Yin's report.

"If the Twelve Marquises are actually concerned about you, then you can't remain on this battlefield," Long Laogui solemnly commented. At this moment, Lu Yin absolutely deserved the old man's attention, not only because of his talent for cultivation and his relationship with Humility's Gate, but also because he was an extremely talented Lockbreaker.

He had only needed a brief amount of time to study and gain control of the spherical red sourcebox array. Such lockbreaking talent was enough to shake up the Lockbreakers' Headquarters. As soon as Master Deng Guo learned about Lu Yin's accomplishments, he would undoubtedly accept Long Qi as a disciple. In fact, given Lu Yin's talent, why was Master Deng Guo the limit? What about even more accomplished Lockbreakers?

Long Laogui suddenly thought of a certain person, the legendary Grandmasters! If Long Qi could become such a person's disciple, then everything would change. Long Laogui's eyes blazed bright as he stared at Lu Yin.

Lu Yin noticed the old man's gaze, and it sent chills down his spine; just what was the old man thinking about?

Xia Yan spoke up. "That's true. Unless a person is a Semi-Progenitor themselves, anyone who is a target of the Twelve Marquises must temporarily retreat from the battlefield. That's not even taking into

account the fact that Long Qi has already accomplished more than enough to allow him to withdraw from this battlefield."

Lu Yin was overjoyed; of course he wanted to leave! The battlefield behind the Mother Tree was the primary battlefield of the entire human race. He knew that he would eventually return, but his current strength was not enough to do anything.

"Long Qi, do you want to leave?" Xia Yan stared at Lu Yin as he asked this question. The general of the second array base felt great admiration for Lu Yin. Even if Xia Yan was a part of the Xia family while Lu Yin was from the White Dragon Clan, such a difference did not prevent Xia Yan from admiring the young man. There were some people who were truly impressive.

Lu Yin answered in a respectful tone, "If possible, this subordinate would like to continue contributing to humanity's efforts on this battlefield and eliminate more of those monsters."

Qing Chen arched a brow; those words sounded very familiar. He could not help but glance over at Lu Yin, as the youth was spouting off such familiar words again.

Even though it was a bit of an obvious act, there were certain people who simply wanted to hear such words being spoken, and Xia Yan was one such person. As a general on the battlefield behind the Mother Tree, he had dedicated his entire existence to the war efforts. Thus, he naturally wished for the entire Perennial World to enter the battlefield and fight to protect humanity. Lu Yin's words were very reassuring to Xia Yan. "Don't worry about that. You will have many more opportunities in the future, and I will bring you back after you have escaped the Twelve Marquises' attention."

Lu Yin stretched out his hand to return his commander's token.

Xia Yan took the token and stared at Lu Yin. "The Cloudguard Robes were destroyed, but thanks to them, you were kept alive. We would have never seen you again if you had not used them."

Lu Yin also felt that he had been quite lucky. "If not for the Cloudguard Robes, I would have had no chance of surviving Marquis Green Bamboo's attack."

"At first, all of your accomplishments on the battlefield were to be put towards paying back for the Cloudguard Robes, but Supervisor Qing Chen has spoken up and stated that he has outright settled the debt of the Cloudguard Robes with his own merit points. This means that everything that you have accomplished when clearing out the terror ants and were active in the New World have earned you additional merit points. Long Qi, would you like to trade in your merit points now, or some time in the future?" Xia Yan asked.

Lu Yin did not hesitate. "I'll go redeem them now."

Xia Yan nodded. "Go and do so."

Lu Yin respectfully took his leave, and by leaving Xia Yan's office, he had effectively withdrawn from the battlefield itself.

Xia Yan stared at Lu Yin's back as the youth left, and he sighed. "If I had the choice, I would rather have this Long Qi here with me than any of the Junior Progenitors."

Long Laogui was taken aback. "Do you believe that the Junior Progenitors are inferior compared to Long Qi?"

Xia Yan answered in a serious tone, "When it comes to their abilities on the battlefield itself, there's no comparison."

Long Laogui could not argue, as Xia Yan had not spoken incorrectly. Long Qi had repaired the second array base's defensive sourcebox array as well as the spherical red sourcebox array, and just these two accomplishments were beyond what the Junior Progenitors were capable of doing. Even if Long Tian was also a Lockbreaker, his talent in the field could not compare to Long Qi's. At best, the four Junior Progenitors could contribute about as much to the battlefield as a typical Envoy. Long Qi, on the other hand, could fill a role that allowed him to influence the battlefield as a whole.

"It's a pity that he's not a part of my Xia family." Xia Yan sighed before looking down at something.

Upon hearing the general's words, Long Laogui felt proud. Even if Long Tian had been trapped in the Dominion Realm, the White Dragon clan still had talented youths who were capable of standing out and making the clan proud. No matter what it took, Long Laogui had to make Long Qi more dependent and loyal to the White Dragon Clan. As for the rift between Long Ke's main family and Long Quan's side family, such things were beneath Long Laogui's notice. All he cared about was Long Qi.

Up in the Higher Realm, at Dragon Mountain, Long Ke had a strange expression on his face; just what had Long Qi done this time? Ever since that child had stepped onto the battlefield behind the Mother Tree, Long Ke had received many messages from the family's Semi-Progenitors one after another, each one asking the clan patriarch to find a way to keep the youth safe. After a few months of silence, Long Ke had received yet another message, and this time, the tone of the message has indicated that if Long Qi seemed far important than his title as the family's patriarch.

What has he done?

The truth was that Long Ke was not the only one asking this question, as even Xia Yan wanted to know what Lu Yin had done. This was because the old woman in charge of the battlefield merit points had contacted Xia Yan and asked him to visit the exchange center.

Long Laogui naturally followed Xia Yan.

At the exchange station, Liu Jing was once again present, and he saw Lu Yin. Like before, Lu Yin had created a bit of trouble when attempting to redeem his merit points. Even though it was not a grave matter, the array base's general had been asked to intervene again. Was that not a bit much? Liu Jing had been on the battlefield for many years, but he had never seen anyone require the general's intervention when trading in their merit points.

Qing Chen was also present, though he made no move to interfere, and he simply observed as things unfolded. On the battlefield, Qing Chen was not the supervisor of Humility's Gate, but rather just another Semi-Progenitor.

"Since it's listed, then I can trade for it. Why do I have to go through so much trouble every time I want to exchange my points?" Lu Yin was not convinced by what he had been told, and he stared at an entry on the interface as he complained to the old lady.

The woman felt helpless. "Little brother, you really can't trade for that item. It's not that it's been reserved, but that we're out of stock."

"Are you kidding me? You would list something that you don't even have available?" Lu Yin angrily demanded.

The old woman was growing anxious, as she could not provide a clear explanation.

Finally, Xia Yan arrived. "What's going on?"

When the old woman saw Xia Yan, she immediately bowed. "I greet the general."

Xia Yan did not have a very friendly expression on his face as he stared at the old woman. "What's the matter? Has something else been reserved? Why is there so much trouble every time he tries to redeem something?"

Chapter 1524: Leave

The old woman was taken aback, as even the general was asking questions now. "General, it's not that this old woman is unwilling to make the exchange, but rather, there's just no stock left."

"No stock? What do you mean? How can we not have something that's listed on the exchange interface?" Xia Yan demanded.

The old woman tried to explain, "The particular items was already exchanged for, but right when the exchange occurred, the massive attack on all five array bases was launched, and the people who made the purchase perished during the attack. Still, they purchased the items, so the general of the fifth array base ordered the deceased's family to be contacted and the items to be given to them. Their family has not arrived to collect the deceased's rewards yet, so the items remain listed in the exchange interface. Still, I cannot trade them to this junior, and this junior's achievements are far from sufficient for him to exchange his points for a Root of Intelligence."

Lu Yin had actually wanted to exchange his battlefield merit points for Root of Intelligence. He had never expected to see it in the Perennial World.

"I'll get it for you," Qing Chen offered. He had accumulated too many battlefield merit points over the years, and he still had plenty left even after trading some for the Cloudguard Robes. Not to mention, he intended to take Long Qi down to the Lower Realm to hunt down the anteaters after this. Once those creatures were found, all of the merit points that Long Qi had borrowed would be returned to Qing Chen. On top of that, at this moment, Qing Chen was more than happy to offer some additional merit points to Long Qi.

Lu Yin questioned the story that the old woman had woven for them. "Can you prove it?"

He truly did not trust her.

The old woman was put in a difficult position.

Xia Yan spoke up, "I'll reach out to Wang Jue, the fifth array base's general."

Lu Yin waited.

After a while, Xia Yan lowered his communication crystal and stated, "It's all true."

Lu Yin regretted that there was nothing he could do, but he could not steal from a family who had just lost a loved one.

"What did you want to trade for?" Long Laogui was curious.

"A Root of Intelligence."

"A Root of Intelligence?" Everyone present was surprised.

The truth was that Lu Yin himself had been shocked to see a Root of Intelligence listed in the exchange interface. He had never thought that he would be able to find a Root of Intelligence in the Perennial World.

Lu Yin explained, "Actually, this junior did not intend to use the Root of Intelligence for myself, but rather to help me find the terror ants' natural predator."

Qing Chen's eyes flickered. "You want to use a Root of Intelligence to remember what you saw back then?"

Lu Yin nodded. "It happened during my first trip to the Lower Realm, and I only vaguely remember the route that we took. In particular, given the circumstances, I really do not clearly remember the creature that I saw devouring the terror ants, so I would like to stimulate my memory with a Root of Intelligence to try to uncover some additional clues."

This was not something that could be dismissed. Originally, Qing Chen had no desire to pay any attention to what Lu Yin intended to exchange his battlefield merit points for, but given these circumstances, Qing Chen looked over at Xia Yan.

Xia Yan said, "Long Qi, if this is your goal, then I'll do my best to help you get what you need."

He raised his hand to access his communication crystal, but he really did not know who to contact for this matter.

Lu Yin quickly objected, "Commander, please don't disturb the family of the person who died."

Xia Yan smiled. "Don't worry. I have no intentions of touching that particular Root of Intelligence unless the family themselves take the initiative to offer it to you themselves. No one will trouble them. Do you think that that's the only Root of Intelligence here?"

Lu Yin's eyes lit up; were there other Roots of Intelligence in this Perennial World? Did that mean that Progenitor Hui had descendants in the Perennial World?

Xia Yan was not the only person making calls, as even Long Laogui had started contacting people.

After a while, Xia Yan said, "I've already spoken to someone, and they still have a Root of Intelligence, so I can get that one for you."

Lu Yin was thrilled. "Thank you, General Xia Yan."

"However, the current owner has their own conditions, which is that he wants to have a face-to-face conversation with you. He is currently on the third array base, and he can be here in two days," Xia Yan stated.

"Then we will wait here," Qing Chen said.

Two days soon passed, and Lu Yin saw the person who possessed a Root of Intelligence. Unexpectedly, he was a young man who walked with a limp.

Lu Yin was not alone, as Qing Chen, and Long Laogui were all surprised as well. They all knew about the Root of Intelligence's background and that each one was a treasure that had been left behind by Progenitor Hui. When observing the entire battlefield, every item that was exchanged for merit points was a valuable treasure, and those who traded for them were all powerhouses. Thus, who could have expected that the owner of this Root of Intelligence was such a person, especially since he was nothing more than an Explorer.

"Xiao- Xiao Can greets the general and his seniors," the young man bowed respectfully as he greeted the powerhouses. He was pale and clearly either malnourished or suffering from a terrible injury. His looks were quite common, but his eyes were alert and wary, almost paranoid.

Xia Yan softly asked, "The Root of Intelligence was from you?"

Xiao Can respectfully answered, "Yes."

"Do you have more?" Xia Yan pressed.

Xiao Can replied, "I have another one. It is a family heirloom that was left by our ancestors."

Even though Xia Yan felt a bit curious about who Xiao Can's ancestors were and why this youth had a Root of Intelligence, it was not proper to pry into such matters.

Xiao Can looked up. "Might I ask who needs the Root of Intelligence?"

"Me," Lu Yin said. He was staring at Xiao Can, hoping to see some of the Hui family's features on the young man's face, but Lu Yin ended up disappointed. This Xiao Can looked nothing like Progenitor Hui's descendants, though a great deal of time had passed, and it was perfectly normal for such visible traits to fade away.

Xiao Can bowed to Lu Yin. "My lord, the Root of Intelligence is a treasure that has been passed down my family, and my lord should be aware of such an item's value. To begin with, I used one root to pay for the protection of the third array base's general, and I was personally promised that my safety would be ensured regarding any matter related to this second one."

Lu Yin smiled. "There's no need for you to say such things. No one will force you to hand over your Root of Intelligence. We were told that you have some conditions that you would like to put forward."

Xiao Can smirked. "Yes, yes. My conditions are very simple: I want to leave this battlefield."

Lu Yin's brows rose high, while Xia Yan's gaze narrowed in on the youth. "How long have you been on this battlefield for?"

"Three years."

"Three years is a long time. How many merit points have you accumulated?" Xia Yan continued his questions.

Xiao Can's face grew even paler. "No- I have no merit points."

Xia Yan's voice lost its friendly tone. "So, by paying a Root of Intelligence, you bought three years of safety and hid behind the third array base's general?"

"It's five years. I traded it for five years of safety," Xiao Can corrected. He carefully observed Xia Yan before continuing to explain, saying, "After five years have passed and the agreed upon time has expired, this subordinate intends to use another Root of Intelligence to trade for enough merit points to leave this battlefield. If my lord wants this Root of Intelligence, then naturally, my condition is to allow this subordinate to leave the battlefield."

Lu Yin was unable to agree to such a condition, so he looked over at Xia Yan.

Xia Yan replied, "With the merit points that can be gained for offering up a Root of Intelligence, one person can be allowed to leave this battlefield, though they must be verified to not be a traitor."

"No, I'm definitely not a traitor, and you can confirm that." Xiao Can was overjoyed. He had believed that he would need to wait another two years before being able to accomplish his goal. He had intended to spend five years and two Roots of Intelligence to leave the battlefield, so the current conditions were much better. Someone was offering him battlefield merit points for his root, which was a better alternative to selling it.

Far too many people wished to leave the battlefield, and Xiao Can was just another such person. Compared to Xiao Can, the Root of Intelligence held far greater value.

Lu Yin looked at Qing Chen, who nodded.

"Alright, I'll use my merit points to get you off of this battlefield," Lu Yin agreed.

Xiao Can was ecstatic. "Thank you, sir!"

With the transaction finalized, Qing Chen was finally able to take Lu Yin and Xiao Can away from the battlefield. Lu Yin knew that he would be taken straight to the Lower Realm to hunt for the anteaters, which also meant that he would not be able to return to Huaiyuan Gate for the time being.

Also, he could not use the Root of Intelligence on the battlefield, as an attack could be launched at any moment.

"This subordinate thanks the general for watching over him while on the battlefield. Some day in the future, this subordinate will definitely return to the battlefield to defend humanity from our ancient enemies." Before leaving, Lu Yin solemnly bowed to Xia Yan.

Xia Yan sighed. "That day is not far away, and you'd better return as an Envoy. I look forward to when that happens."

Lu Yin was somber as he answered, "Understood."

He then turned to face Long Laogui and respectfully bowed to the old man. "This junior bids senior farewell."

Long Laogui nodded. "While you are in the Lower Realm, I will return to the Higher Realm. I have already told Long Ke to enter your name into the main family's genealogy."

"This junior understands."

Although Lu Yin had only spent a few months at the second array base, he had gone through a lot. He had nearly died, and he had also learned a great deal more about his Lu family, not to mention the Qiming family, the All-Dao family, and even his own past. He had been found by Shaman God, which was temporarily benefiting him, as Shaman God would certainly work to make sure that Lu Yin returned to the Fifth Mainland, as that would complete Shaman God's scheme.

Lu Yin felt that he would be safe not only in the Perennial World, but also after he returned to the Fifth Mainland, as the Neohuman Alliance would watch over him. Even though Lu Yin's safety was a part of a plot to undermine the entire human race, he still had to follow along with it for the time being.

He believed that he would absolutely find an opportunity to ruin Shaman God's scheme, and so, he would continue waiting for that moment.

Before long, Lu Yin and Xiao Can moved out of the strip of dust and reached the edge of the Tree Realm after using a teleportation device. Then saw many cultivators exiting the Tree Realm, each one nervous or excited as they made their way towards the various array bases. Most people looked at the departing individuals with admiration, as it was clear that these people had earned the privilege to leave.

After arriving at the border of the Tree Realm, both Lu Yin and Xiao Can were checked to see if they were attempting to sneak any terror ants into the Perennial World. Even Qing Chen was forced to undergo an inspection as there were no exceptions. The individual standing guard over the Tree Realm was another Semi-Progenitor.

There were many Semi-Progenitors in the Perennial World, and the enemies possessed more Semi-Progenitors than the Twelve Marquises. It was just that only Semi-Progenitors who had reached a certain level of power qualified to be one of those elite twelve.

Suddenly, Lu Yin thought of the Nine Mountains and Eight Seas; was it possible that they were only awarded to Progenitors who had achieved a specific level of strength as well?

The Nine Mountains and Eight Seas did not necessarily represent nine Progenitors. Rather, they represented Progenitors who had achieved a certain level of power. During that glorious era in the past, had there only been nine?

The more Lu Yin thought about this possibility, the more likely he felt that it was true. After all, he had already learned about seven Progenitors in the Perennial World, not to mention the Ancestor Python and the legendary eagle up above the Mother Tree's canopy. That made for nine Progenitor-level powerhouses, but was it that easy to reach the same heights that humanity had reached during their golden era? That was impossible, and Cai Shu would not have become so emotional about such a thing unless there was a vast discrepancy.

"Let's leave." Lu Yin suddenly heard Qing Chen's voice.

Lu Yin looked back towards the battlefield. When he had first arrived, he had been assaulted by the pungent smell of blood, watched a distant planet shatter, and seen the ground crack and then reform due to an overwhelming power. At that time, Lu Yin had not known if he would be able to leave this place alive.

Xiao Can could not wait to return to the Perennial World, and his face betrayed the excitement and joy he felt at the prospect of enjoying the rest of his life.

As the three men stepped out of the Tree Realm, they entered an empty space with a vast distance between the ground below and the sky above.

When they looked up, they saw that the sky was dim, as the light here was blocked off by the branches of the Mother Tree. Still, this place was much brighter than the battlefield, and the air smelled fresh.

Before leaving the battlefield, Lu Yin and Xiao Can had reached an agreement, but Lu Yin still looked over at Xiao Can. "If you still have any more Roots of Intelligence that you can sell me, we can easily negotiate the price."

Xiao Can smiled dryly. "No, that's impossible. I only ever had two roots. Otherwise, I would have long since left the battlefield by turning in a Root of Intelligence."

This was certainly true, and it had already been confirmed that Xiao Can only had two Roots of Intelligence, but were those really his only two roots?

Regardless, there was nothing that Lu Yin could do to force the matter. "If that's the case, then we'll leave matters here. Take care, brother."

Xiao Can nodded. "We'll part ways here, so I'll be saying goodbye."

He then turned and bowed to Qing Chen and Lu Yin before moving to leave.

"Wait," Lu Yin suddenly called out.

Qing Chen looked over at the youth.

Xiao Cun hesitated and turned around. He nervously stared at Lu Yin, and asked with a dry voice, "My lord, is there anything else that you needed?"

Lu Yin smiled gently and gave Xiao Can the information of his communication crystal. "If you end up in any trouble in the future, go ahead and give me a call. After all, we can be considered comrade-in-arms, so you're welcome to reach out for help."

Xiao Can quickly recorded the information down. "Thank you, my lord. In that case, may I take my leave now?"

Lu Yin made a dismissive gesture, and Xiao Can quickly left.

Chapter 1525: Creation Realm

Qing Chen commented, "A Root of Intelligence is an amazing thing. As far as most people are concerned, these roots are even more valuable than the Cloudguard Robes you had before. That youth is not the only person in this Perennial World to have a Root of Intelligence, and it's possible that the four ruling powers have some as well."

Lu Yin was feeling quite curious. "The Roots of Intelligence came from Progenitor Hui, and did the Progenitor leave much behind? If so, then why aren't any of Progenitor Hui's descendants around?"

Qing Chen took out a blank sheet of paper and had Lu Yin sit on it. They started moving towards the east. "Just like Progenitor Chen, Progenitor Hui also went to the Forsaken Land."

"The Forsaken Land? What is it? I've heard it being mentioned many times, especially regarding the various trespassers who sneak into the Dominion Realm. It was said that they all came from the Forsaken Land, and I also heard that there's something missing from the cultivation methods that they practice there," Lu Yin asked.

Qing Chen replied, "It's true that the Forsaken Land's resources have been exhausted, and Progenitors can not rise from that place."

"In that case, why did Progenitor Hui go to the Forsaken Land?" Lu Yin asked.

Qing Chen shook his head. "I don't know. No one even knows if Progenitor Hui is alive or dead."

At this point, the old man clearly wanted to switch topics. "When we arrive at the Bifrost, try to remember as much as possible about what you saw with the Root of Intelligence. Then, we'll try to find that anteater creature that you saw."

"Understood, supervisor." Lu Yin asked no further questions, as being too curious could be a bad thing.

Qing Chen made the paper fly extremely quickly, and Lu Yin was not even able to observe their surroundings as they flew. Lu Yin suspected that they were moving even faster than his travel speed in the true universe.

Soon, a rainbow appeared up ahead of them. They had already reached the Bifrost.

The Bifrost constantly emitted a soft and beautiful light, but it was not bright enough to be a light source. After all, the only places in the entire Higher Realm that were allowed to be sources of light were the regions that the four ruling powers directly controlled.

Even though the Bifrost only illuminated a tiny corner of the Higher Realm, it was still enough to support a city. The city was quite populous, and given the Bifrost's light, there were even some people from the four ruling powers who resided there. Just like the Cloud Shuttle, anyone who reached the Higher Realm via the Bifrost also had to submit to an inspection.

Qing Chen had no interest in entering the city, so he landed close to the Bifrost and directly asked Lu Yin to use the Root of Intelligence.

Lu Yin had already used a Root of Intelligence several times before, but this was the first time that he had ever used one while being observed by someone else, and the attention caused him to be quite uncomfortable.

The Root of Intelligence was usually enough for him to make three mouthfuls of tea.

This tea was enough for even Qing Chen to feel a touch of envy.

With the first sip, Lu Yin's mind became clear and focused, and even his eyesight drastically improved. He immediately tried to recall the memories from when he had Possessed the person in the Lower Realm.

During that particular Possession, Lu Yin had been overwhelmed by fear, and all that he had noticed were the countless terror ants being devoured along with him. He had not paid any attention to the surrounding area, but since he had seen it once, the memory was still in his mind. As long as he could clearly recall the details of those moments, he would be able to uncover some hints towards tracking down the anteater.

Truthfully, Lu Yin was not entirely confident in this attempt, but he was certain that the anteater existed, so he had to at least try.

Also, Qing Chen would not blame Lu Yin even if he failed.

Lu Yin closed his eyes, and his mind drifted back in time to when he had Possessed the man in the Lower Realm. A massive mouth had been devouring everything, and there had been countless terror ants all around him being captured by tentacles and pulled into its mouth. There had also been a powerful stench.

Lu Yin froze the scene in his mind, and tried to remember everything in as much vivid detail as possible. He quickly raised his hand and drew a picture in the air. He drew plants, the landscape, and also what he had seen of the anteater's body.

Qing Chen stared at what Lu Yin had drawn, especially a specific plant. That plant and all of the nearby terror ants were captured by tentacles and were in the process of being dragged into the creature's mouth. Lu Yin would not have noticed that plant when he had first seen it, but with the assistance of the Root of Intelligence, he was able to remember these details with complete accuracy. Even though he had no idea what the plant was, and although it might just be a commonplace species of grass, he still faithfully recreated everything that he saw in his memory.

Lu Yin opened his eyes and saw that he had drawn a large and intricate image in the air before him.

Qing Chen quietly said, "The sixth region."

Lu Yin was shocked. "How can you be so certain?"

Qing Chen stared at a particular piece of vegetation in the picture. "That's a Qingcang leaf, and it belongs to a plant that only grows in the sixth region. Long ago, a creature with the strength of a Semi-Progenitor appeared in the sixth region, and it was known as the Qingcang. After it was killed, its blood watered the land, resulting in the birth of the Qingcang leaf."

After this explanation, Qing Chen grew curious. "You accompanied Long Xi to the Lower Realm to visit the Ancestor Python, so why did you two enter the sixth region?"

Lu Yin replied, "When we were attacked and pursued by Realmless's assassins, we fled and didn't even know where we ended up."

Qing Chen stared at Lu Yin for a long while. The sixth region was a vast distance away from the third region. Even if the two youths had been chased and hunted for some time, it would not have been easy for them to reach the sixth region. The Lower Realm was a dangerous place, and it was filled with perilous regions with many powerful creatures. Humans were nothing more than ants in that place.

Qing Chen did not press the matter or voice his questions, as he thought that the discrepancy in Lu Yin's story was connected to Semi-Progenitor Kui Luo. Was it possible that the Semi-Progenitor's inheritance had been hidden in the Lower Realm? That was not impossible, as no one knew where Semi-Progenitor Kui Luo had perished.

Everyone had their own secrets, so Qing Chen stayed silent, which gave Lu Yin tremendous relief. He actually did not know how he could lie about this matter, so all that he could do was play dumb.

"There are still two sips left of the tea from the Root of Intelligence. Hurry up and drink them," Qing Chen encouraged as he moved a short ways away.

Lu Yin felt grateful, and he looked at the tea he was holding before taking another sip. He had already considered what he should attempt to comprehend with this Root of Intelligence, and he had decided on his star energy control.

When Lu Yin considered all of the battle techniques he had learned, the Vacuum Palm was currently his most powerful attack. As for the Cosmic Art, he had mastered the technique up to the level that he had received, and he needed to gain the next portion of the technique before he could advance further. Battle force was not something that the Root of Intelligence could help him with as it required ambition and spirit to improve. As for his domain, he did not even know where to begin training towards the void realm. Without any idea of how to proceed, not even the smartest person would be able to make any progress.

The only thing that Lu Yin could improve with the tea from the Root of Intelligence was his star energy control.

During his time on the battlefield behind the Mother Tree, Lu Yin had repaired the sourcebox array with the cone-shaped sourceboxes, and he had also controlled the Red Beam. Both of those events had provided incredible support to the battlefield, and improving his star energy control would not only help Lu Yin with his lockbreaking, but it would also directly increase his combat strength. Mastering sourcebox arrays and lockbreaking was a field of study with no end, and seeing the Ceaseless Impetus sourcebox array had left a huge impact on Lu Yin. That massive sourcebox array was able to protect the entire human race.

Even if Lu Yin was given 10,000 years to study it, it would still be impossible for Lu Yin to understand the Ceaseless Impetus sourcebox array. First, he needed to improve himself, both by expanding his own experience and by improving his star energy control.

The Ceaseless Impetus sourcebox array had essentially reignited Lu Yin's enthusiasm for lockbreaking. He hoped that he would one day personally design a sourcebox array that benefited the entire human race.

Fortunately, Lu Yin had encountered a corpse king that had reached the Creation realm of star energy control while fighting against the gauntlet of various corpse kings at the Envoy level in the New World.

That specific encounter had given Lu Yin a vital clue. Additionally, he had also seen Liquor Hero utilize her incredible star energy control, and Lu Yin intended to use the tea brewed from the Root of Intelligence to understand the two instances he had seen such high level star energy control.

A flower was a world in and of itself. The limit of the microscopic was the macroscopic. No one knew just how vast the universe truly was. It was possible that the infinite universe that everyone knew was nothing more than a grain of sand. The Creation realm of star energy control was based on this concept. Star energy was a world in and of itself, and thus, it was able to create something on the macroscopic level. This was the Creation realm of star energy control.

One day, two days, three days. Soon, seven days had passed.

The tea made from a Root of Intelligence could only affect a person for a brief amount of time, but the epiphany that they gained from the tea could last for much longer, and people often needed to slowly comprehend what they had learned.

Some distance away, Qing Chen noticed Lu Yin raise his hand. Star energy appeared, and it transformed into water droplets. The air trembled, and slow ripples spread out. Suddenly, like the tolling of a bell, Qing Chen was startled to realize that Long Qi was actually deepening his comprehension of star energy control.

The youth had already reached the Worldliness realm of star energy control, and he had also been exposed to the concepts of the microscopic and the macroscopic, but the real test was reaching the Creation realm of star energy control.

If Long Qi succeeded in this attempt, then his abilities and potential as a Lockbreaker would rise even higher in the future.

Lu Yin opened his eyes, sipped the last mouthful of the tea without any hesitation, and then continued his comprehension session.

Soon, ten more days passed, and finally, Lu fully Yin comprehended the Creation realm of star energy control with the assistance of the tea brewed from the Root of Intelligence. He had spent half a month doing so, but Qing Chen had not disturbed Lu Yin at all. Such opportunities were rare.

Qing Chen glanced over, and his eyes flashed; he was able to see that the drops of water at Lu Yin's fingertips were formed from star energy. As the old man watched, the void warped around the droplets, only for the droplets to transform into a leaf that suddenly disappeared before reappearing again. Was this the Creation realm of star energy control?

Qing Chen stared at Lu Yin. Even though the old man was a Semi-Progenitor, he was still amazed by the youth's talent. If this child fully matured in the future, he might be able to become a Progenitor. All he lacked was the opening of three of his meridian points.

Lu Yin opened his eyes again and stared at his fingertips in surprise. He had actually achieved the Creation realm of star energy control. This new sensation was truly wonderful, and his surroundings looked different.

In the past, he had seen star energy as a type of energy, but at this moment, in his eyes, star energy had taken on a life of its own. It contained a world, a universe, and he felt confident that he was also capable of creating a maze that could trap that carrion bug.

If this world of star energy could be magnified countless times, then was it possible for it to become a world that could be inhabited by humans?

He felt that this was a viable path of cultivation.

No, star energy was nothing more than a single type of energy, which meant that it could not become a world in which living creatures could survive. Living creatures needed too many complex factors to survive, and it was beyond Lu Yin's imagination.

Star energy control was nothing more than a means to improve his attacks and his lockbreaking.

However, what if he absorbed everything a person needed to live into his star energy, could a world be created then? The idea seemed ridiculous, and yet, Lu Yin felt that it was feasible.

"The mystical Creation realm of star energy control... Once you tell Master Deng Guo that you've reached this realm, he will instantly accept you as a disciple without any hesitation," said Qing Chen admiringly.

Lu Yin smiled. "This was a rather random incident, but it's taken a lot of time. Supervisor, should we continue on to the sixth region?"

Qing Chen nodded and led Lu Yin to the Bifrost.

It did not take long for the two of them to step onto a band of the Bifrost that was moving down towards the Lower Realm, and the two officially left the Higher Realm.

The Bifrost was large, and the two were not the only ones on their way to the Lower Realm at this time. However, they were very far away from any other group that was making the same journey.

This was Lu Yin's second time descending down the Bifrost, and he could still remember the confusion and curiosity that had plagued him during his first journey.

Chapter 1526: Grandmaster Gu Yan

Slowly, the Higher Realm's landmass drifted out of sight, and Lu Yin once again saw the sky overhead along with a sea of stars. These were the stars that floated between the Middle Realm and the Higher Realm.

The Middle Realm sat below the stars, and below that was the Lower Realm.

As Lu Yin and Qing Chen made their way down towards the Lower Realm, Long Laogui left the second array base on the battlefield behind the Mother Tree. He was currently making his way to a luxurious location.

This place was still located on the battlefield behind the Mother Tree, but it was surrounded by darkness. It occasionally trembled, but neither the darkness nor the tremors took away from this place's luxury.

The ground was paved with star essence, and the walls were papered with the Mother Tree's bark. The lights were actually a sourcebox array while the glazed tiles were formed from the Celestial Frost Sect's ice-cold pond water. There were fish swimming about, but each fish had the strength of a Hunter. Every single aspect of this place exuded decadence, and such extravagance left Long Laogui uncomfortable.

This was the home of Array Grandmaster Gu Yan. There were countless Array Masters in the Perennial World, but only a select few had managed to reach the level of Array Grandmaster. All such people were peerless existences, and of the few known Array Grandmasters, this person was the first who had come to Long Laogui's mind.

"Please, you are a distinguished guest. Please help yourself to some tea." A beautiful maid brought out a tea set, and as Long Laogui helplessly watched on, the woman slowly went through a traditional tea ceremony. It took a full half hour, and each movement that she made demonstrated the essence of tea. She was not merely preparing tea, she was demonstrating a form of culture.

Long Laogui accepted the tea. He was a Semi-Progenitor, and there was almost nothing that he had not seen before. But despite his extensive experience, visiting this particular place always made him feel uncomfortable.

There was star essence under their feet. While such a thing was useless to powerhouses at their level, star essence was still a valuable resource.

When Long Laogui glanced at the table, he saw a delicate set of dim sum that seemed to glow. Each one was very beautiful.

"Brother Long, what wind has carried you here?" A soft, lazy voice spoke up. Long Laogui lowered his teacup, stood, and then turned to look behind a screen.

A man emerged. He had an elegant face and gray hair, though not a single wrinkle could be found on his face. His eyes reflected his years, but they also carried a playful twinkle. Sourcebox arrays revolved around his body, each one carrying an unfathomable energy.

His clothing, if Long Laogui had correctly recognized it, was made from the hide of a very rare creature from the Lower Realm that was known as a Qilong. The creature's hide was known to be ethereal like air yet also extremely tough. The man's boots were made from Zaw, another rare creature that was so fast that even Semi-Progenitors found it difficult to catch them. One could only imagine what boots made from the creature could do for a person's speed.

Long Laogui merely glanced at the man's outfit before determining that, if a Hunter somehow got a hold of it, they would be able to purchase enough resources to not worry about anything while cultivating all the way to the Semi-Progenitor realm. This was not even taking the man's jade pendant and cosmic ring into account, both of which were too luxurious.

Even if he just stands there, it's still enough for him to make a Semi-Progenitor feel helpless! Long Laogui thought.

"Grandmaster Gu Yan, it's been a long time. How are you doing?" Long Laogui politely greeted the man while remaining standing.

The man did not look old, and yet he had lived for much longer than even Long Laogui. The man casually sat down and waved a hand. "Sit and let's talk."

Long Laogui nodded and sat back down.

"Recently, things have not been good. Those monsters have broken into the Tree Realm, and they want me to repair it!" Grandmaster Gu Yan complained. He suddenly touched the cushion that he was sitting on and shouted, "Xiao Cui! Xiao Cui! Change this cushion made of of Meharn's skin. It's become deformed after being sat on for so long."

Long Laogui subconsciously glanced at the cushion that Grandmaster Gu Yan was sitting on, and sure enough, it was indeed made from Meharn skin.

Meharn was another creature from the Lower Realm, and they lived in herds. A single adult Meharn was stronger than an Envoy that had passed three tribulations, but that was only enough to make a single cushion. Just how many Meharn's had this old man killed? Changing such a cushion periodically was simply far too extravagant.

The maid who had prepared the tea hurried out and helped Grandmaster Gu Yan change the cushion before backing out of the room.

"Cough cough." Grandmaster Gu Yan coughed twice as he adjusted his buttocks. "Better."

He then looked over at Long Laogui. "Brother Long, what were you saying just now?"

Long Laogui smiled. "It's nothing important. I was merely remarking that I have not seen you in a long time. There are some people who are concerned about Grandmaster Gu Yan's health. They commented that the Tree Realm was only recently repaired, and that old man Gu Yan must be tired and should rest."

Long Laogui then pulled a book out of his cosmic ring and handed it to his host.

Grandmaster Gu Yan took it, only to be surprised by what he saw. "It's actually a collection of works from the original Daosource Sect. While it's not as good as a version written in ancient characters, it's still very precious. Even during the Daosource Sect's peak era, such books rarely appeared. Brother Long, what is this all about?"

Long Laogui answered with a smile, "It's just a toy that I intended to give to Grandmaster Gu Yan to play with."

Grandmaster Gu Yan laughed and accepted the book without any reservations. "Repairing the Tree Realm is indeed quite exhausting, and I really do need to readjust my condition. Thank you, Brother Long."

Long Laogui's smile grew even larger after seeing Grandmaster Gu Yan accept the gift. "As long as Grandmaster Gu Yan is in good health, all of humanity will be blessed."

"Hahahaha, I haven't seen you in so many years, and yet Brother Long has become more and more polite. Don't worry, I'm in excellent health! Does Brother Long have any other matters? If you don't, I'll study the sourcebox array and try to add a bit more to each section of the defenses," Grandmaster Gu Yan said.

Long Laogui's brows furrowed; was this person trying to chase him out already? Previously, he had heard that this old man was stingy beyond belief and that the grandmaster would never make a move before receiving some sort of benefit, though he had not expected these rumors to actually be true. "Grandmaster Gu Yan, I haven't seen you for many years. I have to admit, I'm not sure about how many apprentices you've accepted so far."

Grandmaster Gu Yan rolled his eyes. "How many apprentices? Too many. Let me think—one, two, three..."

Long Laogui was rendered speechless. The old man clearly had no apprentices at all! The one disciple that he had originally accepted had disappeared, and after that, the man had never accepted another one. With this, Grandmaster Gu Yan could be considered both stingy and shameless.

"Brother Long, it's really hard to count them all. It's a bit too much for the moment, and I'm quite tired," Grandmaster Gu Yan said in a helpless tone.

Long Laogui smiled. "Since you already have too many apprentices, then you might as well accept one more, right?"

Grandmaster Gu Yan waved a hand. "I can't accept any more. I just can't. Each and every apprentice is a piece of my heart and soul! I have to work hard to teach them, you know, and lockbreaking is such a vast discipline that it's truly difficult to guide an apprentice. Taking even one more would leave me beyond exhausted. I already care for the Tree Realm, Ceaseless Impetus, and all the sourcebox arrays for the array bases. How can I possibly accept even more responsibility? I can't clone myself after all."

Just as Long Laogui was about to continue, Grandmaster Gu Yan shouted again, "Xiao Cui! Xiao Cui! The cushion is crooked! Get me another one!"

Xiao Cui entered the room with a new cushion.

Grandmaster Gu Yan sat back down, but he was still uncomfortable in his seat. "No, no. It's still crooked. Don't we have anything new?"

Xiao Cui shook her head. "No, we lack the resources."

Grandmaster Gu Yan put on a twisted expression. "We lack the resources? That's no good! If there are no cushions, then how can I sit? How can I calmly comprehend a sourcebox array or cultivate? How am I to teach my disciples? All of them already lacking and need more guidance from me! I need to go to the Lower Realm right now and catch a few Meharms to bring up. I really can't believe that I can't even find a suitable cushion!"

Right after finishing his rant, the old man turned to look at Long Laogui. "Brother Long, just sit here and wait for me to catch a few Meharms so that I can find a suitable cushion. We'll talk after I can sit down."

After that, the man simply disappeared.

Long Laogui had not even been given the opportunity to speak, and his expression grew ugly. That shameless old man! Did he just run away? Bastard.

Grandmaster Gu Yan had really just accepted Long Laogui's gift and then run off, leaving Long Laogui behind. Really, how shameless! It was no wonder why the old man had such a bad reputation or why

none of the other Array Grandmasters wanted anything to do with the old man; he was just too shameless.

Long Laogui was furious. He had never felt such rage after becoming a Semi-Progenitor, and he almost wanted to smash the old man's home apart. But after a moment's thought, Long Laogui still had his own scruples, and so he left with a sigh. Grandmaster Gu Yan was not an option.

After Long Laogui left, Grandmaster Gu Yan reappeared in the exact same place that he had disappeared from. Long Laogui had simply not been able to sense the old man.

"How lovely. You want me to teach someone from your White Dragon Clan how to lockbreak? Keep on dreaming! Pah." Grandmaster Gu Yan might have an elegant appearance, but his words were crude, and he even spat on the floor. "Xiao Cui, if that guy ever comes back here again, add something to his tea."

"Add what?" Xiao Cui asked in confusion.

Grandmaster Gu Yan grinned and pointed at the floor.

Xiao Cui looked at the phlegm that had been spat out. "Understood."

The next day, Long Laogui returned. He did not want to return, but he had already given out his gift yet received nothing in return. Thus he was extremely resentful.

Xiao Cui silently poured a cup of tea and then prepared to conduct the full tea ceremony, but Long Laogui stopped her. "There's no need for that. I'll just drink this."

Xiao Cui blinked. She felt like her eyes were able to see through the tea cup to what it held. She saw an honest man in front of her, and she struggled with how to react or what to say.

"Where's Grandmaster Gu Yan?" Long Laogui asked.

Xiao Cui replied, "He took the Bifrost down to the Lower Realm to hunt some Meharns. He claimed that the cushion was too uncomfortable to use."

Long Laogui did not believe such a story. "Did he really go down to the Lower Realm?"

"Yes, that's where he went." Xiao Cui had a sincere expression, and it became increasingly honest as she watched Long Laogui take a sip of tea. Such an expression felt off to Long Laogui, and he could sense that something was wrong.

"What are you looking at?"

Xiao Cui pursed her lips. "Grandmaster Gu Yan asked me to entertain you. What would you like to eat?"

"There's no need for that. I'll just wait for him here," Long Laogui answered in an odd tone, his mood quickly souring.

Xiao Cui grunted and slowly retreated to a corner of the room. As she did so, she watched Long Laogui drink his tea; there was no way it tasted very good.

Just a hundred meters away from Long Laogui, Grandmaster Gu Yan rolled his eyes. That old fart came back again! It's just a broken old book. Should I give it back? No, that's impossible. Forget it, I'll just go down to the Lower Realm for real. It is about time for me to catch a few Meharms to play with anyways. It's always good to have a few extra cushions prepared.

The old man's body actually disappeared.

After arriving in the Lower Realm once again, Lu Yin stepped onto the massive roots of the Mother Tree and stared off into the distance towards a few powerful roars from creatures who were greeting their uninvited guests.

"This is the sixth region. Each region has different creatures, though there are terror ants everywhere," Qing Chen explained.

A huge shadow covered the two men, prompting Lu Yin to look up and see a thousand meter neck stretched above them and a head far above them staring at the two humans. Given the length of the neck, the creature had to be at least several thousand meters long. It was truly massive.

Qing Chen looked up as well, and he glared at the beast.

The creature was startled, and it immediately pulled back.

Even in the Lower Realm, a Semi-Progenitor stood at the absolute peak of the food chain.

Chapter 1527: Adventure King

As he followed behind Qing Chen, Lu Yin saw nothing dangerous as they proceeded along. All of the creatures could sense the pressure of a Semi-Progenitor from Qing Chen, and they all actively moved to avoid him.

The Ancestor Python's body was wrapped around the Mother Tree, and it could be seen from any point in the entire Lower Realm. The third region was the closest to the python's head, but the sixth region had a view of the snake's massive body, as it covered both the sky and the sun.

"Will your presence be enough to wake up the Ancestor Python?" Lu Yin suddenly asked as he stared upwards with fear in his eyes.

"Not normally."

"Can my White Dragon Clan really cause the Ancestor Python to roll over?" Lu Yin asked another question.

Qing Chen stayed silent for a while. "Yes."

He thought for a while, and then continued, saying, "The White Dragon Clan's predecessors received their cultivation technique from the Ancestor Python's blood, and that was the start of their path of invincibility that led to their current position among the four ruling powers. The White Dragon Clan has an intrinsic connection to the Ancestor Python."

"The Ancestor Python won't attack those monsters?" Lu Yin wondered.

Qing Chen shook his head. "Neither the Ancestor Python nor the eagle in the Mother Tree's canopy will take any such initiative."

In this manner of question and answer, Lu Yin managed to learn a great deal from Qing Chen. The Semi-Progenitor did not try to hide anything, though there were also some details that he did not know. For example, when Lu Yin asked how long the Ancestor Python had lived for, Qing Chen had no answer, only that the snake had been around for a long, long time. Lu Yin also asked if the eagle had ever taken flight, and he also asked about the legend of Wu Tian. Even though Qing Chen was a Semi-Progenitor, he was ignorant of many of these matters that came from such a distant past.

"Even though I have also lived for a long time, I barely know anything about the period when the Daosource Sect was active, and you are asking about matters that are even more ancient than that. These events actually took place before the Daosource Sect even existed, so I can't tell you about them. Even the four ruling powers' Progenitors might not know about such matters," Qing Chen explained helplessly.

Lu Yin smiled wryly. "This subordinate is just curious."

"You don't need to know about such things. Wu Tian is just a legend, just like the God of Death, Destiny, and others. Those legends represent what people believe to be true of the ancient times, but they are more like beliefs. For example, Specter Abyss has a perceived image of the God of Death, and that particular image has spread over the entire Perennial Realm, which has led to many people believing that the God of Death truly lived. However, from Specter Abyss's first founding to now, no one has ever discovered the God of Death's inheritance.

"Specter Abyss has powerful elders, but even they have not found the God of Death's inheritance yet, which proves that the God of Death is nothing more than a fable. To be blunt, I don't believe such a person ever lived. There are other people within the four ruling powers who do believe in it and are searching for that inheritance, but most people don't believe it to be real," Qing Chen explained.

Lu Yin displayed a sincere expression. "This subordinate doesn't believe it either."

Qing Chen sighed and approvingly stated, "That's the right way. Cultivate yourself and don't chase after such illusory power."

There was a bang as two powerful forces collided. The shockwave smashed the void apart, allowing Lu Yin to see the true universe.

The higher Lu Yin climbed, the higher the status of those he came in contact with. When he had been a Limiteer, he had rarely seen any Enlighters. Similarly, after becoming a Hunter, he had rarely seen Envoys. At the moment, with Lu Yin being an Enlighter, he was frequently meeting Envoys. This was not because there were fewer Enlighters, but rather because cultivators of that strength generally avoided him.

It did not take long for Qing Chen to escort Lu Yin to the site of the battle. There, they found two massive beasts fighting. One looked like an elephant that was 1,000 meters tall and 1,000 meters long, causing every one of its steps to shatter the earth. The elephant-like creature was fighting against a four-headed snake with a ridiculously long body that Lu Yin could not even see the end of.

Each one of these creatures were as strong as an Envoy who had survived multiple stellar tribulations.

"There's someone else here," Qing Chen cautioned Lu Yin as he looked to the right. There, they saw two people. When Qing Chen saw the two, they also noticed Qing Chen. None of them bothered trying to conceal their presence.

"Adventure King?" Qing Chen was surprised, but only a bit.

Lu Yin looked over. Adventure King? This was a name that Lu Yin had heard of before. According to the rumors, Adventure King seldom visited the Middle or Higher Realms, and he almost always stayed in the Lower Realm. People claimed that he enjoyed adventure, wanted to live an exciting life, and also desired to clear out the Mother Tree's parasites. He was the most important person in Root, and he was also one of the organization's top powerhouses.

Adventure King turned to face Qing Chen and bowed from across the distance. The man then looked past Qing Chen and noticed Lu Yin. At that moment, Adventure King's pupils shrank; what was going on?

Lu Yin was also able to get a clear look of Adventure King. He was an absolutely ordinary looking man who was short and skinny, only about 1.6 meters in height. Lu Yin also had a feeling that if his eyes were closed and this person was standing right in front of him, he would not be able to notice Adventure King's presence at all.

A young man was standing beside Adventure King, and unless Lu Yin was mistaken, this youth should be Wan Wu.

When Lu Yin had first reached the Junior Progenitor Planet, he had accompanied Long Tian to meet the top talents of their generation before the lineup for the Dominion Realm had been decided upon. However, Wan Wu had left due to some other incident. If he had not left, he would have been poisoned just like all the others who had stayed.

The battle between the two giant beasts soon ended; the elephant was defeated by the enormous snake. The serpent wrapped itself around its opponent and strangled the elephant-like beast to death. Before dying, the creature let out a terrible roar as it tried to break free, but its efforts were fruitless.

However, the snake was not in a good condition either, as half of its body had been trampled and smashed.

Adventure King led Wan Wu over to Qing Chen. "Senior, it's been a long time."

Qing Chen smiled. "Given the fact that you are always in the Lower Realm, it's hard for us to meet."

Adventure King calmly replied, "An opportunity will always appear."

As he spoke, his eyes shifted over to Lu Yin. "And who is this?"

"This is Long Qi, and he is the Huaiyuan Gate Master," Qing Chen introduced Lu Yin.

Lu Yin politely greeted the older man, "I'm honored to meet Senior Adventure King."

"You're Long Qi? The same Long Qi who went to the Dominion Realm with Long Tian?" Wan Wu asked in surprise from behind Adventure King.

Lu Yin looked over at Wan Wu and smiled. "And you are Wan Wu."

Wan Wu nodded.

"Brother Wan was forced to leave the Junior Progenitor Planet at that time. Otherwise, you would have been the one to visit the Dominion Realm with Junior Progenitor Long Tian," Lu Yin said with a smile.

Wan Wu shook his head. "That's impossible. I can't compare to you."

Lu Yin was caught off guard. "Why would Brother Wan say that?"

Wan Wu was completely serious as he explained, "I can feel your breath, and it's very powerful. You are much stronger than me, and even-

He wanted to say that Long Qi had even surpassed Long Tian, but thinking of the Junior Progenitor had reminded Wan Wu about the White Dragon Transformation and that other, more mysterious power of visualization. Wan Wu had never seen Long Tian's full strength, so the comparison with Long Qi was left unsaid.

Lu Yin's eyes flickered. People who fought against vicious beasts all the time were very sensitive to their opponents' breath, and they often paid attention to such things. Mister Mu had hidden Lu Yin's cultivation so that not even Semi-Progenitors could sense his power, but that did not mean that it was completely impossible to discern Lu Yin's true strength. There would always be people with special innate gifts or abilities, such as Hua Beibei whom Lu Yin had encountered when clearing out the terror ants. That youth had been able to easily determine the "beast king," or the most powerful individual, in a group.

It seemed like such people were not terribly uncommon.

"Someone from the White Dragon Clan?" Adventure King frowned, and his attitude changed subtly.

Behind the little group, the giant snake finished strangling the elephant, and it finally noticed Qing Chen and the others. The beast began devouring the elephant as it stared at the humans with its vertical pupils while letting out a blood-curdling hiss.

Adventure King turned his head and quietly said, "This junior is here to deal with this giant snake. Does senior have anything to say?"

Qing Chen replied, "We're merely passing by, so do as you please."

He then turned to Lu Yin. "Let's go."

Lu Yin nodded and followed as Qing Chen led the way.

Shortly after leaving, Lu Yin felt the ground tremble, and he turned around. The snake had most likely perished.

"Supervisor, Adventure King always stays in the Lower Realm, so he should be very familiar with this place. Why didn't you ask him to help you find the anteater?" Lu Yin asked.

Qing Chen answered in a low voice, "This is a very important matter, and I cannot easily trust other people. After all, you exposed the three Guan brothers and Yun Mubai as Redbacks, so who can be certain that Adventure King is not one as well?"

Lu Yin nodded. The monsters had planted Redbacks within humanity not only because Redbacks and traitors were able to sabotage humanity, but also because their mere existence led to an air of distrust, which was a very serious problem.

Originally, Qing Chen had made Lu Yin the acting Gate Master of Huaiyuan Gate in order to lure out Shaman God, but the supervisor had not asked any questions regarding Shaman God at all, which clearly indicated that he no longer expected Lu Yin to be able to draw out one of the Seven Skygods.

The two spent more than ten days searching through the sixth region, and they found the plant that Lu Yin had drawn in the image of his memory, but they did not find any anteaters.

Given Qing Chen's cultivation, he was able to constantly scan a wide region, but he was unable to find the anteater.

"Could it have left this region?" Lu Yin guessed.

Qing Chen felt helpless. "It's certainly possible."

The Lower Realm seemed boundless, as its area was larger than the Middle and the Higher Realms combined, which made it very difficult to find a single beast.

"Supervisor, if the creature really does eat terror ants, then if we find more ants, maybe we can find the creature as well," Lu Yin shared a sudden thought.

Qing Chen's eyes lit up. "That's certainly possible."

However, he then grew quite embarrassed. "There are a tremendous number of terror ants in the Lower Realm, and they can be found almost anywhere. It will still be very difficult to find your beast using this method of chasing after the terror ants."

Lu Yin also felt rather helpless.

"All we can do is try, and if this doesn't work either, then we can only issue a bounty to Root to have them search for the anteater. Still, doing that might expose our intentions to the enemy," Qing Chen said.

Lu Yin also felt like they were running out of options. They had already searched through every part of the sixth region where the Qingcang leaves could be found.

It was rather easy to find terror ants, and only two days later, Qing Chen and Lu Yin found a ball formed by a horrifying number of terror ant. The bugs were ruthless killing machines in the Lower Realm, and even the average Envoy would be forced to retreat in the face of so many terror ants.

Wherever the ball of bugs passed through, nothing living was left behind.

The two followed the ball of ants for two entire days. During this time, they ran into several cultivators. Everyone who ran into the ball of ants assumed that they had met their death, but all of them ended up being lucky enough to be saved by Qing Chen.

On their third day of chasing behind the ball of ants, the ball suddenly vanished. Qing Chen's expression changed, and Lu Yin hurried forward. To their shock, the ball of terror ants had fallen into a gap between the Mother Tree's roots.

While it was technically a gap, it was actually a vast canyon from the perspective of a human, and they could not even see the bottom.

"Supervisor, did all of the ants fall down there?" Lu Yin asked.

Qing Chen nodded. "Let's go after them."

With that, he grabbed Lu Yin and leaped down.

Lu Yin felt a bit flustered; who knew what lay beneath the surface of the Lower Realm? They were descending into the Mother Tree's roots, and any number of strange creatures could reside in this place. Even the Ancestor Python was present, and Lu Yin was worried that they would run into something that not even Qing Chen could handle.

It was dark below the surface, and there was not even the smallest hint of light.

Fortunately, Lu Yin was a cultivator, which meant that he could still observe his surroundings quite clearly.

Each one of the Mother Tree's roots was no different from an entire mainland to Lu Yin. No matter how far down they traveled, all that Lu Yin could see was roots, various creatures, insects, and the cracks on the root.

As they continued traveling further down, Lu Yin started to wonder if they might fall out of the Perennial World and into the location where the Mother Tree had rooted itself in the universe.

Chapter 1528: Humanoid Sourcebox

Suddenly, the sound of rushing wind rose up from deep underground. At the same time, Lu Yin felt as though his body had been suddenly moved. A gust of wind whistled by in front of him, shooting upwards and slicing apart everything that it passed by.

He felt his scalp go numb; he had been right. That gust of wind had even torn through the void, and it had definitely been more powerful than an attack from a normal Envoy. In fact, it might have even been comparable to an attack from an Envoy who had passed through three stellar tribulations, which meant that it was equivalent to an attack with a power level of more than 700,000. Even if Lu Yin was wearing his universal armor, it most likely would not be able to protect him from a direct hit from that gust of wind.

"Supervisor, what was that?" Lu Yin was quite upset.

Qing Chen stood in place in the air as he solemnly replied, "The danger field of a sourcebox."

Lu Yin looked down, and his eyes focused. "Is there a sourcebox down below?"

"Those terror ants were killed by this sourcebox's danger zone. There is a truly impressive sourcebox array down there," Qing Chen replied.

"It really is a sourcebox," Lu Yin solemnly stated.

Qing Chen waved a hand, and Lu Yin once again felt as though he had been isolated from the world. Another blast of wind whistled by, and like before, it failed to harm him in the least. This was the strength of a Semi-Progenitor.

The two people eventually reached the bottom of the gap between the two tree roots, and they were greeted by a shocking scene.

They found a sourcebox. A humanoid sourcebox!

The instance that he laid eyes on the humanoid sourcebox, Lu Yin felt something jog his memory. Humanoid sourcebox, humanoid sourcebox... I'm pretty sure that someone mentioned something about this before. Right! Xiao Shi! Back then, he said that if I ever found a humanoid sourcebox, to not unlock it.

There was only humanoid sourcebox in sight, but it radiated a very powerful danger field.

Qing Chen landed and looked at the figure. "Look at it."

Lu Yin was a Lockbreaker, and he had also reached the Creation realm of star energy control. Even though Qing Chen was a Semi-Progenitor, he had no talent or understanding of lockbreaking.

The older man protected Lu Yin as he observed the humanoid sourcebox.

This humanoid sourcebox was just as tall as an average person, but because it was a sealed sourcebox, Lu Yin could not see the person's appearance, or even sense any hint of life.

For some reason, Lu Yin grew very uncomfortable as he looked at the humanoid sourcebox.

"How strange. How can there be a humanoid-shaped sourcebox? This person has been sealed for far too long for them to become a sourcebox. Can you unlock it?" Qing Chen asked.

Lu Yin shook his head. "This one is very difficult, and I can't do anything about this sourcebox's danger field. If you want this sourcebox to be unlocked, then you will need a Lockbreaker with the strength of an Envoy at the very least."

"If there really was someone inside, he would have died long ago and certainly before we open this sourcebox," Qing Chen commented.

Lu Yin fell silent for a moment. "I don't know if anyone has ever unlocked a living creature, but this is my first time coming across a sealed person."

As Lu Yin spoke, his star energy spread out like a stream of water. Star energy could be used to suppress star energy, and Lu Yin wanted to use his star energy to observe the sourcebox in greater detail.

"Zizi, so you've actually reached the Creation realm of star energy control? Kid, you're very impressive," another voice called out, and it startled not only Lu Yin, but also Qing Chen.

Both of them whipped around and looked behind them. Neither of them had any idea when, but two people had arrived and were standing behind them. One of the new arrivals was an old man with an elegant appearance and gray hair, though no wrinkles on his face. The other looked like a bodyguard, and he maintained a solemn expression.

"Grandmaster Gu Yan?" Qing Chen was surprised.

Lu Yin was taken aback. Grandmaster? This was a truly special title. As for Array Masters, Lu Yin had only ever met one Array Grandmaster in the Fifth Mainland, and that had been Highsage Grandmaster. Was this old man in front of him another Array Grandmaster?

"I didn't expect to run into an old friend down here. Qing Chen, what are you doing running around down here instead of hunting down Redbacks in the Middle Realm?" Grandmaster Gu Yan observed Qing Chen as he asked a question.

Qing Chen explained, "Long Qi previously saw some creatures down here that might be the terror ants' natural predator, so I'm here to look for them. Why is Grandmaster Gu Yan here?"

Grandmaster Gu Yan smiled. "I need to grab some Meharns since the cushion that I was sitting on was uncomfortable."

Qing Chen was confused by this answer, and it was clearly deliberately vague.

Grandmaster Gu Yan did not explain himself, and instead, he started studying the humanoid sourcebox, amazed at what he saw. "So there really is a humanoid sourcebox. There are records in ancient books that claim that anything in the universe can be sealed into a sourcebox—living or dead makes no difference. Any creature can also be sealed up to become a sourcebox, but this is the first time that I've seen such a thing."

After speaking, he turned to look at Lu Yin and smiled, "Hey kid, why don't you give me this sourcebox?"

Lockbreakers had their own rules, and one of them was that whoever discovered a sourcebox would become its owner, as well as the owner of whatever might be exposed after unlocking the sourcebox. This humanoid sourcebox had clearly been discovered by Lu Yin first.

Lu Yin answered respectfully, "This junior can't unlock this sourcebox, so I'll have to bother senior."

Grandmaster Gu Yan replied with a smile. "Is your name Long Qi?"

Lu Yin bowed. "This junior is indeed Long Qi. I am honored to speak with Grandmaster Gu Yan."

"No need to be so polite, kid. Are you from the White Dragon Clan?" Grandmaster Gu Yan asked.

Lu Yin nodded.

Grandmaster Gu Yan expressed his admiration, "The White Dragon Clan can also give rise to a Lockbreaker? It's truly incredible that you've managed to reach the Creation realm of star energy control at such a young age."

Qing Chen's eyes shifted. "Not only has Long Qi reached the Creation realm, but he's also managed to comprehend several sourcebox arrays. He once repaired the second array base's defensive sourcebox array in a very brief amount of time, and he later mastered the spherical red sourcebox array that fell down to the New World. That second achievement gave him the opportunity to save millions of people."

Grandmaster Gu Yan arched a brow, and then succinctly replied, "I don't believe it."

Qing Chen glanced over at Lu Yin and winked.

Lu Yin immediately understood that this was an opportunity to gain an apprenticeship, which made him a bit excited. While he had not been interested in studying under Master Deng Guo, an Array Grandmaster was a completely different matter. This person was a true Array Grandmaster, and based on Qing Chen's reactions, Grandmaster Gu Yan might actually be more than that. After all, he had moved so close to them without letting a Semi-Progenitor like Qing Chen notice.

This thought gave Lu Yin the motivation to try to seize this opportunity.

When Highsage Grandmaster had asked to accept Lu Yin as a disciple, the powerhouse had not only wanted to accept a lockbreaking disciple, but also a full disciple of Eversky Island. However, Lu Yin already had Mister Mu as his master, so it had naturally been impossible to accept such a proposal.

However, this person was different. If Lu Yin accepted this Grandmaster Gu Yan as a lockbreaking master, there would be no conflict.

Grandmaster Gu Yan also observed Lu Yin with a tiny hint of curiosity hiding in his eyes.

Lu Yin raised a hand and started manipulating his star energy. After reaching the Creation realm of star energy control, it had become much easier for him to set up a sourcebox array with his star energy.

"Channeling Diagram." Lu Yin raised his hand to demonstrate the Channeling Diagram that he had just arranged.

Grandmaster Gu Yan was quite surprised. "It really is a sourcebox array."

Lu Yin waved his hand to disperse the Channeling Diagram and then quickly set up a Teleportation Formation, which caused his body to suddenly disappear.

Grandmaster Gu Yan was even more amazed by this sight, and he grew serious as he stared at Lu Yin. "Long Qi, right? Despite your youth, you really have mastered two sourcebox arrays. It would seem that you really did repair those two sourcebox arrays on the battlefield."

Qing Chen asked, "How would I lie to you, Grandmaster Gu Yan?"

Grandmaster Gu Yan just rolled his eyes. People will use any trick imaginable in order to get me to accept a disciple, and lying is nothing more than another trick."

Qing Chen coughed.

Lu Yin glanced at the older man, as he really did have such motivations.

Grandmaster Gu Yan carefully and somberly observed Lu Yin. "You are extraordinarily talented. Truly, it's most impressive. To be honest, you certainly qualify to be my apprentice based on your skills, but you're from the White Dragon Clan."

Qing Chen quickly spoke up. "Grandmaster Gu Yan, Long Qi is a Gate Master from my Humility's Gate, and he has already gained the commander's attention. He even risked becoming an enemy of the four ruling powers to expose Yun Mubai as a Redback. All of this can be verified."

"Really?" Grandmaster Gu Yan was quite surprised, and he smiled as he stared at Lu Yin. "I'll let you make a choice then: one, become the disciple of me, Grandmaster Gu Yan, but renounce the White Dragon Clan. Two, you can keep your status as a member of the White Dragon Clan, but you must return to the battlefield behind the Mother Tree with me. Much like other Lockbreakers, I intend to live out the rest of my life on that battlefield. What is your choice?"

Qing Chen stared at Lu Yin.

Lu Yin thought for a while, and then he respectfully answered, "While this junior was indeed born in a branch family of the White Dragon Clan, I have never once received even the slightest favor from the White Dragon Clan since childhood. I have no desire or attachment to the status of being a member of the White Dragon Clan and the four ruling powers. However, this junior is also married to Princess Long Xi, and I cannot forget this matter. While I can live out the rest of my life without relying on the White Dragon Clan, I am still unable to abandon my identity as a son-in-law of the White Dragon Clan's main family.

"As for returning to the battlefield for the rest of my days, this junior would prefer to stay in the Middle Realm to capture Redbacks, as that provides greater assistance to humanity than slaughtering thousands of enemies on the battlefield."

Upon hearing Lu Yin's words, Grandmaster Gu Yan's expression went blank. He then moved past Lu Yin and started walking towards the humanoid sourcebox one step at a time.

Qing Chen frowned; had he failed? It was said that this Grandmaster Gu Yan was too stubborn and had a terrible dislike of the four ruling powers. Even after encountering a youth as talented as Long Qi, this old man still did not care. If he had been any other Array Grandmaster, Long Qi would already have been accepted as an apprentice.

What a pity.

However, Lu Yin had given the only answer that was possible. Given his alias as Long Qi, how could he possibly leave the White Dragon Clan without giving them a single word? If he returned to the Perennial World after leaving, he would definitely use a new face for his second trip.

Grandmaster Gu Yan stored the humanoid sourcebox away, and then turned around and stared at Qing Chen. "Don't go randomly searching for your creature. There's a method to searching for every creature, no matter how strong they may be. After all, they are just beasts. Go to Root to ask, or post a bounty."

"And what about Long Qi?" Qing Chen asked.

Grandmaster Gu Yan looked at Lu Yin. "My conditions remain unchanged. If you decide to change your mind and are willing to live on the battlefield, then you can come find me and become Grandmaster Gu Yan's disciple."

After he finished speaking, he tossed a ring the size of a palm to Lu Yin. "Take this as compensation for the humanoid sourcebox. That thing contains an attack as powerful as my own. Don't use it unless you are in dire peril, as it can only be used once. If not even that can save you, then it can only be said that you are doomed."

"Er Gouzi, let's go." With that, Grandmaster Gu Yan and his guard left.

Lu Yin looked at the large ring of hands. This was quite the windfall.

He had originally wanted to tell Grandmaster Gu Yan that a humanoid sourcebox should not be casually opened, but after thinking about how the man was an Array Grandmaster, even a humanoid sourcebox should not pose a threat to such a powerhouse.

Qing Chen lamented, "What a pity. If you could have accepted Grandmaster Gu Yan as your master, you would have enjoyed a limitless future."

Lu Yin smiled. "This subordinate would never be able to answer to Long Xi if I made such a choice, and I have no desire to remain on the battlefield forever. I would much rather capture traitors in the Middle Realm."

Qing Chen still felt sorry for Lu Yin, but he did not say anything further about the matter. As for allowing Lu Yin to remain on the battlefield behind the Mother Tree, Qing Chen felt that such a future was also a pity. There was no shortage of people on that battlefield who possessed Lu Yin's strength, and he would be much more effective in continuing his efforts in the Middle Realm.

After emerging from underground, Qing Chen led Lu Yin back along the path that they had taken, as Qing Chen intended to find Adventure King.

Grandmaster Gu Yan had been right when he had said that there were methods for finding every creature, no matter how powerful it might be. For such a matter, Root was clearly the most qualified for the job.

Finding Adventure King proved much easier than finding the anteater, and Qing Chen quickly got in touch with a few people.

Chapter 1529: Humility's Gate's Commander Apprenticeship

"Senior, you want to find a large number of terror ants?" Adventure King was caught off guard as he had never expected to hear that Qing Chen was targeting terror ants.

Qing Chen spoke grimly. "I believe that you must have heard about the situation on the rear battlefield. At this moment, the commander believes that the enemy has snuck a new type of terror ant into the Perennial World, and there is already a suspect. Once they appear in the Lower Realm, we can simply arrest them, but we cannot do so elsewhere due to their special identity and the fact that we have no evidence yet."

Adventure King was surprised once again. "Senior, if even you need to provide evidence to arrest this person, then they clearly have an important status."

He then took out a bit of powder from his cosmic ring and handed it over to Qing Chen. "This powder emits a tempting scent that can lure in terror ants from a great distance. I pray that it serves you well, Senior."

Lu Yin quickly reached out and took the powder.

"Thank you." Qing Chen was truly grateful.

Shortly after that, Qing Chen spread some of the powder into the air, letting it drift away with the breeze. After that, the old man brought Lu Yin into the true universe.

Even though terror ants could be found scattered throughout all parts of the Lower Realm, they were not truly everywhere. It was simply that they had no geographical preference.

Also, it was impossible for this powder's scent to instantly spread across a large region.

Lu Yin and Qing Chen used powder to lure the ants in, but it still took two days for the first wave to arrive.

They were not luring terror ants in order to kill them, but rather to draw out the anteater.

Qing Chen drew in the terror ants with the powder and then led the ants around as live bait, though he mostly "fished" in the sixth region.

As he did this, he managed to draw the attention of other powerful beasts, but all of them were either scared off by the terror ants or Qing Chen himself.

The longer they spent leading the ants around, the more terror ants that they drew out. At first, there had merely been a ball of ants, but they had since taken on the shape of a giant.

Lu Yin had to ask, "Supervisor, can't a Semi-Progenitor use this method to easily eliminate all of the terror ants?"

"This method can only lure out regular terror ants, not their queens," Qing Chen explained.

Lu Yin then remembered how, when he had been on the rear battlefield, his squad and several others had been surrounded by terror ants under the control of a queen ant. The methods and control the queen ants were capable of were frightening.

"Every year, Root eliminates countless terror ants, and it is believed that even if this method were used more often, it would not affect the total number of terror ants," Qing Chen solemnly informed Lu Yin. The old man looked back at the giant formed from the countless terror ants. He could not help but feel the urge to eliminate all of these ants.

"Let's go on to the fifth district," Qing Chen said. They had already passed through the entire sixth region, returning back to where they had first found the Qingcang leaf. However, there were no traces of the anteater at all.

Lu Yin nodded.

Suddenly, Qing Chen froze and stared at the ground. It seemed that he had discovered something.

Lu Yin reflexively released his domain and searched in all directions, but he could find nothing at all.

The next moment, the ground beneath Lu Yin's feet trembled, and Qing Chen grabbed Lu Yin and shot high into the sky, even entering the true universe. The moment the scent of the powder disappeared, the ants quickly started to disperse.

"Supervisor..." Lu Yin was feeling quite anxious.

Qing Chen had become completely serious. "Quiet."

Lu Yin saw the ground where they had just been standing shift and then erupted. The movement shook the earth and the sky, and it also revealed a massive, circular mouth.

It was the anteater.

Lu Yin's pupils instantly shrank to pinpricks upon seeing the creature again. Yes, this was the same anteater that he had seen before. It had actually always been in the sixth region, but neither Lu Yin nor Qing Chen had noticed anything.

When Qing Chen saw the anteater, he became even more serious and extremely wary.

The anteater's mouth shifted to aim behind Lu Yin and Qing Chen as it started to violently feed. The suction force was so powerful that it twisted the void, and Lu Yin was nearly yanked away even though he was hiding in the true universe and being protected by Qing Chen. This anteater's strength was similar to the level of a Semi-Progenitor.

The endless amount of terror ants that had been drawn out by Qing Chen were pulled towards the anteater, and not a single one of them was able to escape.

The beast had tiny eyes for its massive size, though they were still enormous from Qing Chen and Lu Yin's perspective.

The mouth shifted once more, and this time, it was aimed at the two humans.

The moment the creature shifted, Qing Chen's eyes changed, and he grabbed Lu Yin. The old man was about to flee with Lu Yin when an indescribable pulling force latched onto the two of them from the anteater's mouth. The void parted like a curtain, and everything was sucked into the mouth. Massive spatial tears spread out in all directions, and an endless darkness descended upon the area. The true universe had been exposed.

The sky above the entire sixth region changed.

Lu Yin was unable to resist the suction force being exerted upon his body, but Qing Chen kept a tight grip on the youth. The Semi-Progenitor then raised a hand, bringing out a drop of water that he threw towards the anteater.

The clear drop of water did not enter the anteater's mouth, and it instead swept over the beast's body. The original calm and clear water grew turbid, and as it did so, the anteater's devouring force weakened significantly.

Qing Chen raised his hand once more and threw out several more drops of water.

The anteater shifted its body and lifted it up high before smashing down a paw that shattered the void and enveloped the entire sky.

Qing Chen did not know what to do. All that Lu Yin could hear was a deafening roar. Blood seeped out of his ears, and then everything ceased.

He was so close to a battle between Semi-Progenitors, but he was unable to see it, hear it, or even understand what was happening.

After an unknown amount of time passed, Lu Yin slowly opened his eyes to see the Middle Realm high above in the sky. Once he registered stars flickering overhead, he leaped to his feet and looked around.

He was still in the Lower Realm, and there were Qingcang leaves swaying in the breeze nearby. However, the land had been completely transformed.

"Wake up!" Lu Yin heard Qing Chen's voice from nearby.

Lu Yin turned to look as he rubbed his head. "Supervisor, what happened?"

Qing Chen sounded quite exhausted as he explained, "We found the anteater, but it had the strength of a very powerful Semi-Progenitor."

"Then where is the anteater?" Lu Yin glanced around.

Qing Chen replied, "It was taken away."

Lu Yin was shocked. "Supervisor, were you able to capture it?"

Qing Chen shook his head. "That anteater was no easy opponent. At best, I could fight against such a beast, but capturing it would be impossible for me."

"The commander came? A Progenitor moved?" Lu Yin lost his voice.

Qing Chen nodded and smiled at Lu Yin. "The commander indeed came to capture the anteater. Long Qi, the commander has shown great appreciation for you. Have you ever considered accepting a master?"

Lu Yin blinked; what was all this talk about him becoming a disciple? First, there was Master Deng Guo, then Grandmaster Gu Yan, and now even Humility's Gate's Commander. Each one was progressively more impressive than the last, but Lu Yin already had Mister Mu.

Qing Chen thought that Lu Yin's silence was his answer, so the old man continued, "The commander intends to accept you as his disciple. What do you think about that?"

Lu Yin was completely stunned. "Supervisor, this- this subordinate doesn't know."

"Haha! What is there to not know? Do you not want to become the disciple of a powerful Progenitor?"

Qing Chen asked with a smile. He had always admired Lu Yin, though the old man's admiration had originally come from seeing Lu Yin as possible bait to lure out Shaman God at the risk of the youth's life. However, the more Qing Chen got to know Lu Yin, the more he admired the youth.

Becoming the commander's disciple would completely change Lu Yin's status, and he would be in no way inferior to the four ruling powers' Junior Progenitors. Qing Chen was delighted for Lu Yin, as it naturally seemed impossible for Lu Yin to refuse.

Could Lu Yin refuse? Of course he could not do such a thing overtly, as doing so would invalidate everything that he had built up within Humility's Gate. Lu Yin's intention was to leave the Perennial World, but he had no desire to make Long Qi a pariah in the Perennial World either. The best option would be to have Long Qi quietly disappear after accomplishing an impressive achievement, and in that way, fade into legend.

"Master, is this subordinate even qualified?" Lu Yin asked anxiously.

Qing Chen smiled. "The commander already said that you are qualified, so you are. Alright, let's go. The anteater has already been found, and the merit points that you borrowed to trade for the Root of Intelligence have been paid back with this accomplishment, and you will still have more rewards after returning to Humility's Gate."

"Where are we going now?" Lu Yin asked.

"Back to Huaiyuan Gate while you wait for the news from the commander. After all, you are also the son-in-law of the White Dragon Clan's main family, so in order for anyone to accept you as a disciple, negotiations must be conducted with the White Dragon Clan."

Lu Yin nodded, hoping that the negotiation would fail.

At the same time, on the battlefield behind the Mother Tree, Long Laogui met Master Deng Guo shortly after returning to the second array base from his meeting with Grandmaster Gu Yan.

Master Deng Guo looked at Long Laogui and then started eagerly searching for Lu Yin.

Originally, Long Laogui had hoped that Lu Yin could become Master Deng Guo's apprentice, as Array Masters held a very respected status. In particular, this would allow Long Qi to fill a much-needed vacuum, as the White Dragon Clan had no Lockbreakers. However, as time had passed and Long Qi had improved, Long Laogui had no longer been satisfied with a simple Array Master. Instead, he hoped to find a Realm Array Master to be Long Qi's teacher. Due to this, Long Laogui had simply replied to Master Deng Guo with, "Long Qi had been targeted by the Twelve Marquises, so he was forced to leave the battlefield. By now, he should have already returned to the Middle Realm with Qing Chen."

Master Deng Guo politely replied, "I wish to accept Long Qi as my disciple, but what view does the White Dragon Clan have on this matter?"

The muscles on Long Laogui's cheek twitched. If this offer had been made just a short while ago, he would have been thrilled, and he would even have happily changed his attitude towards Long Qi. However, at this point in time, Long Laogui was hoping that Grandmaster Gu Yan would accept Lu Yin as his apprentice, which made Master Deng Guo somewhat undesirable. However, Long Laogui could not be too blunt, and he could not possibly directly refuse. "Is Master Deng Guo able to leave this battlefield? It is unlikely for Long Qi to return here for the foreseeable future."

Master Deng Guo answered with a smile, "I have already considered that matter, and I can have Long Qi stay at the Lockbreakers' Headquarters and teach him there for a period of time. He will therefore be able to remain in the Middle Realm. After all, he is still a Gate Master with Humility's Gate, and this would also exempt him from being forced to stay on this battlefield like the other Lockbreakers."

Long Laogui acted very happy. "This is the best option."

Master Lantern smiled as he nodded.

"However, might I ask why Master Deng Guo is suddenly so anxious to accept Long Qi as an apprentice?" Long Laogui asked in an odd tone.

Master Deng Guo continued to smile. "Despite his young age, he has managed to master two sourcebox arrays. Beyond that, he has also managed to quickly study and repair a new sourcebox array and shown an impressive ability to control the spherical red sourcebox array. He is such a genius that, let alone me, any master Lockbreaker would happily accept such an apprentice."

This was actually the precise reason why Long Laogui had decided to work to get Long Qi an apprenticeship with an Array Grandmaster. As the old saying went, you only looked for an Array Master if an Array Grandmaster didn't work out. As for Master Deng Guo, unfortunately, the more anxiously he wanted to accept Long Qi as an apprentice, the more obvious it was to anyone watching that Long Qi's talent was extremely impressive. Long Laogui could not afford to let the White Dragon Clan's first genius Lockbreaker in countless years be ruined by an inferior teacher.

"Master Deng Guo, please wait a bit. Long Qi is currently completing a mission with Qing Chen, and even I do not know the details. Once his mission is finished, he will immediately be sent back here to the battlefield to pay his respects to Master Deng Guo as his teacher," Long Laogui replied with a smile. He did not refuse the offer, as it was best to have a back-up for unforeseen events.

Master Deng Guo did not notice any difference in Long Laogui's behavior. "Very well. In that case, I'll return and wait for now. Don't worry, I, Deng Guo, will definitely raise an exemplary Lockbreaker for the White Dragon Clan!"

Long Laogui's smile grew even more dazzling. "Thank you, Master Deng Guo."

"It's no problem at all."

Chapter 1530: Cloakstone

After Master Deng Guo left, Long Laogui raised his hand to quickly contact someone. After a while, his communication crystal vibrated, but no image appeared. Instead, there was an eye, one that was murky and aged.

Long Laogui slowly bowed as soon as he saw this eye. "I greet the ancestor."

Long Laogui had called the White Dragon Clan's ancestor, who was known as Progenitor Long. This man was one of the top powerhouses in the entire Perennial World. The four ruling powers represented the four most powerful organizations in the Perennial World, and Progenitor Long was a pillar of one of the four ruling powers. The progenitors of the four ruling powers restricted each other, but they also

supported each other in order to protect humanity. Progenitor Long was essentially one of the four ruling powers.

The ancient, murky eye turned to look at Long Laogui. "What's the matter?"

The voice was not loud, but it caused the void to tremble. It was full of unfathomable dignity, and for Long Laogui, the entire world bowed down before this eye.

"Ancestor, a descendant of our family known as Long Qi has shown a peerless talent for lockbreaking. Master Deng Guo, an Array Master, is eager to accept the youth as his apprentice. This junior has searched for an Array Grandmaster to guide the youth, but Grandmaster Gu Yan is odd and refuses to speak about this matter. So, this junior has attempted to find other Array Grandmasters, but I have no way to proceed," Long Laogui respectfully informed the ancestor.

Progenitor Long was surprised by the news. "This is about Long Qi once again?"

Long Laogui was shocked to hear this question. "Has the ancestor already heard of him?"

The four ruling powers' Progenitors were different from Humility's Gate's Commander. Lu Yin's accomplishments while working for Humility's Gate warranted the Commander's attention, but the Progenitors of the four ruling powers stayed in the Dominion Realm at all times to hold back Aeturnus's Progenitors. Progenitor Long normally did not interfere in the lower realms' affairs. Even when the Junior Progenitors had been trapped, the Progenitors had ignored it. Long Laogui could not think of anything that Long Qi could have done to attract Progenitor Long's attention.

"Old Xie called me wanting to accept Long Qi as his disciple, and so he asked me for my opinion," Progenitor Long stated.

Long Laogui was absolutely shocked. "Humility's Gate's Commander wishes to accept Long Qi as a disciple? Ancestor, what does this mean?"

Progenitor Long remained silent for a while. "Let me check."

Long Laogui's mind was in chaos at this moment; Long Qi was a lockbreaking genius, a gifted combatant, and even skilled at finding and exposing traitors and Redbacks. Long Qi was simply talented in every aspect, which was terrifying. In a certain manner, he even surpassed the four Junior Progenitors.

After some time passed, Progenitor Long's voice returned, and this time, it was full of excitement. "Contact Long Ke and send out invitations to the rest of the world! I will contact Old Xie—the child will become a disciple and a member of the main family on the same day. We must invite all four of the ruling powers, the Middle Realm's Nong family, Virtue Archives, and people from the Lockbreakers' Headquarters. Let everyone see that my White Dragon Clan is on the rise! The four Junior Progenitors may be trapped, but my White Dragon Clan will not flounder! Even though the girl who was once known as our clan's hope died, geniuses can still rise from my White Dragon Clan! We still have talents who can draw the attention and admiration of Progenitors! We will overwhelm all of the other powerful forces."

Long Laogui bowed low. "Yes, Ancestor."

The murky eye disappeared, and once it did so, Long Laogui immediately contacted Long Ke. Since he had received a direct order from their ancestor, Long Laogui did not dare to delay for even a moment.

Long Ke was similarly shocked by what he was told. "We are to distribute the invitations that widely?"

Long Laogui somberly answered, "Yes. Send out invitations everywhere. We are to inform the entire Perennial World that my White Dragon Clan has a genius at fighting, cultivating, and most importantly, lockbreaking. This youth is the son-in-law of your, Long Ke's, main family of the White Dragon Clan. This son-in-law is to be accepted as a disciple, and he will also enter the genealogy of the White Dragon Clan's main family. This is to be a day to symbolize the rise of my White Dragon Clan."

Long Ke answered respectfully, "I understand."

Long Laogui grew solemn. "Long Ke, you should know how your family rose to power—it happened by wading through the blood of countless clansmen. You stepped through the blood that was considered the symbol of hope for a generation of my White Dragon Clan, and her death caused the ancestor's heart to ache. Our ancestor has just made a large move on his own, and this might cure his heartache. It is possible that this Long Qi could surpass even her and end up becoming a true symbol of hope for my White Dragon Clan."

Long Ke's fingers twitched. "I understand. Elder needn't worry."

Long Laogui nodded and ended the call.

Up above Dragon Mountain, Long Ke lowered his arm. The image of a certain woman appeared in his mind. She had been the daughter of the main lineage, as well as one of the seven heroes of the Perennial World. She had been expected to raise the status of the White Dragon Clan above the Celestial Frost Sect, surpassing all of the other organizations in the Middle Realm. She had excelled in lockbreaking, cultivation, and fighting.

Her talent had shaken the entire Perennial World, and her cultivation speed had been truly astounding. Even more shocking had been her talent for lockbreaking. She had truly been a daughter blessed by the heavens, and Progenitor Long had frequently spent time with her, instructing her. However, in the end, she had died during the calamitous event.

Her death had broken Progenitor Long's heart, and that was also why, when Long Tian had become a Junior Progenitor, Progenitor Long had not particularly cared. After all, Long Tian was simply far too lacking when compared to that woman.

However, Long Qi's appearance had given Progenitor Long hope that someone from his clan might be able to compare to that woman, but was Long Qi really that talented?

The more gifted Long Qi was, the greater suppression he had on Long Quan's branch family. There was no longer even a need for Long Ke to slander Long Quan, as Long Qi's rise was the same as the clan's main family's rise. As long as Long Tian safely returned, the main family's position would be as stable as Mount Tai.

With this thought in mind, Long Ke quickly called Lu Yin.

At this moment, Lu Yin was following Qing Chen back towards the Bifrost in order to return to the Huaiyuan Gate in the Middle Realm, where he would await news from the Commander.

"Supervisor, this subordinate would like to ask, how did that anteater hide from us? We searched that particular place at the very start," Lu Yin asked.

Qing Chen took something out of his cosmic ring. "Because of this."

Lu Yin looked at what the old man held, and the youth's mouth dropped open. Cloak- cloakstone?! Isn't this the same cloakstone that Aegis's top assassins used?

"Supervisor, what is this?" Lu Yin was surprised.

Qing Chen explained, "This is a curio, though I'm guessing that you haven't seen one before now. That's quite normal, as only Envoys are able to use these things. This particular item allows Envoys to hide in the true universe and absorb stellar energy. However, I never expected a mere beast to take advantage of such an item. Curios are able to completely hide a person's aura so that they are utterly undetectable."

Lu Yin's face twitched; was this really a curio? It was true that Aegis's assassins used cloakstones and that it even concealed their runes from being detected. In the Fifth Mainland, runes could be seen in both the true universe and the visible universe, so if cloakstone could hide a person from even a Progenitor's remnant power, then why could they not conceal an Envoy's aura?

Why had Lu Yin not thought of this sooner?

Lu Yin grew excited. He had indeed heard of curios before, and he knew that they were a rare and precious thing, and yet, Aegis seemed to have quite a few, to the point where they were even generous enough to give some to their Explorer realm assassins.

Lu Yin gulped; did this mean that he actually had access to an absolute fortune?

Qing Chen did not notice Lu Yin's expression change, and he continued to explain a bit more about curios to the youth.

Lu Yin managed to eventually calm himself down. He coughed, took particular note to remember the word 'curio,' and then promptly changed the subject. "Supervisor, what kind of person is the Commander?"

Qing Chen smiled. "What sort of person do you believe is behind all of Humility's Gate?"

"Someone who can kill decisively, though is also upright, righteous, and also tactful."

Qing Chen showed a small smile. "You cannot describe a Progenitor in this manner."

Lu Yin blinked.

"The Commander is very protective and overbearing."

Lu Yin was left speechless, as this description was too simple!

"It's not appropriate to speak of Progenitors. Once you meet the Commander, you will come to understand what sort of person he is, as the Commander intends to accept you as his disciple. You'll meet him soon," Qing Chen said.

Lu Yin nodded.

The two continued on towards the Bifrost. As they traveled, Lu Yin's communication crystal vibrated, and Long Ke's image appeared.

After seeing that Long Ke was the one calling, Lu Yin had initially wanted to ignore the call with every fiber of his being, but he still needed to at least try to make an appearance of effort. "Son-in-law greets father-in-law."

Long Ke had a smile on his face, and he was clearly in a good mood. He nodded to Lu Yin, and politely greeted Qing Chen when he saw the Semi-Progenitor. "Senior Qing Chen is also present, though I see that you are still troubled with keeping Long Qi safe."

Qing Chen replied, "It's fine. You can talk."

He moved to leave.

Long Ke interrupted, "Senior, there's no need to step away. This concerns your Humility's Gate."

Qing Chen stopped and turned to look at Long Ke.

Long Ke redirected his attention to Lu Yin and solemnly stated, "Long Qi, you have received the luck of the heavens—Humility's Gate's Commander wishes to accept you as his disciple. Prepare yourself and hurry back to Dragon Mountain as soon as possible. My White Dragon Clan has already sent out invitations, and we have invited many of our friends and allies to attend your ceremony. This will celebrate not only your discipleship, but also your acceptance into the clan's main family."

Lu Yin was stunned; he had not expected the Commander to have moved so quickly. Even Qing Chen was startled by the news.

"Commander has already spoken to Progenitor Long?" Qing Chen asked.

Long Ke nodded. "Everything is being done at the orders of the ancestor. Long Qi, both our ancestor and Humility's Gate's Commander have both shown their appreciation for you, and even Master Deng Guo wishes to accept you as his apprentice. However, there's no need to worry about him. We will do our utmost to find an Array Grandmaster to guide you, but for now, hurry back to Dragon Mountain to quietly await the discipleship ceremony in safety."

Lu Yin felt torn at this moment, though he could not reveal a single thing. He had to act very happy, and he put on a mask of delight. "Understood! This Long Qi will rush to Dragon Mountain as soon as possible."

Long Ke was satisfied with this answer, and he turned to look at Qing Chen. "Long Qi has always troubled you, Senior. Starting today, the relationship between my White Dragon Clan and your Humility's Gate will become much closer. Senior, you should visit my Dragon Mountain more often, and you can enjoy some White Dragon Brew while you wait. It's been a long time since you've visited, haha."

Qing Chen smiled back at the clan patriarch. "This change is only natural."

After ending the call, Qing Chen patted Lu Yin on the shoulder and excitedly told him, "In the past, if I could have worshiped a powerful Progenitor as my master, I might have opened my three meridian points by now. I do regret that."

Lu Yin looked over at Qing Chen and said, "Even if you haven't opened your three meridian points, it's still not impossible to become a Progenitor. There is always hope."

Qing Chen revealed a bitter smile. "There's no need for you to try to comfort me, little one. Let's go. I'll take you to Dragon Mountain."

...

After the passage of more than a year, the Forgotten Ruins in the Dominion Realm finally welcomed a Progenitor.

Two Semi-Progenitors had been standing guard outside the Forgotten Ruins this entire time. After the four Junior Progenitors were trapped inside, the four ruling powers had done their best to save the youths, but even Semi-Progenitors would almost instantly forget everything when they came in contact with the Forgotten Ruins. They only had barely enough time to escape, and it would take a Progenitor to rescue the four youths.

"Progenitor Ku's tactic mutual destruction to eliminate enemies caused a great deal of damage to Aeternus back then, and that's also why Aeternus did their best to place traps in the Withered Glory region. This trap is designed for Semi-Progenitors, and the Wang family's Forgotten Ruins continue to be powerful enough to lure in powerhouses. This place itself was forgotten after the passage of so much time, and it is no longer able to pose a lethal threat to Semi-Progenitors."

"There should have been a Semi-Progenitor powerhouse working in tandem with this trap. Even if it was not a powerhouse on the same level as the Twelve Marquises, it should have been someone at almost that level in order for this trap to pose a threat to a Semi-Progenitor."

A soft voice was heard just outside the Forgotten Ruins.

The two Semi-Progenitors standing guard quickly bowed. "Thank you, Ancestor, for your guidance. We understand."