

Overlord 201

Chapter 201: Flame Immune Human Skin

That was a strain of flame from the millennium earthcore fire! Xiang Shaoyun's energy barrier was instantly destroyed as the flame tried to get into direct contact with his body. The sudden change gave Xiang Shaoyun a great fright. He had just personally witnessed the millennium earthcore fire burn two people to a crisp a little while ago.

Xiang Shaoyun quickly took out the coldstar stone and unleashed the final power of frost it still had to resist the invading flame. At the same time, he fully released the power of the icesnow fruit, forming a layer of frost on his body. It saved him from being instantly burned by the millennium earthcore fire.

What to do? What to do? Xiang Shaoyun asked himself anxiously. He was clear that after catching the attention of the millennium earthcore fire, it would be very hard for him to flee. He had to think of a way to break himself free. Apart from Xiang Shaoyun, others who hadn't obtained the millennium earthcore fire's approval were attacked as well.

"Ahhhh!"

Miserable wails started ringing in the air as three of them were instantly lit on fire. The Cloud Margin Pavilion overseer, Qian Chen, was among the three. Of the three, only one of them had been able to survive relying on an ice elemental treasure. However, the moment he left the crater, he was surrounded by a large number of flame beasts. His ultimate survival was rather unlikely.

It was clear that the millennium earthcore fire was not intending to let those coveting it to leave. Only those who won its approval would have a chance to leave alive. Xiang Shaoyun couldn't be bothered to pay attention to anyone else as he himself was in deep trouble. He kept thinking, formulating numerous plans to save himself from his predicament.

The Nether Soul Domain within his head did not have the ability to control or resist flame. That was the same for the Nether Dragon Soul Headband. The only thing he had that could resist the power of the millennium earthcore fire was his innate purple lightning. However, he wouldn't be able to maintain an energy barrier powered by his lightning bone for long, as his cultivation level was still too low.

If his cultivation level was two or three stages higher, the innate purple lightning would be on an entirely different level. At that time, this kind of environment would pose him no trouble at all.

Just as Xiang Shaoyun was about to give up and try to run, he caught a glimpse of the human skin in his astral cosmos sea. It was the human skin he had obtained at the Blackhill Sect's mine with Dong Ziwan.

On the human skin were some characters of an ancient language Xiang Shaoyun couldn't understand, which was why he had ignored the skin all this while. He had decided to figure out the meanings of the characters when he had the chance in the future.

For some reason, he suddenly thought of that skin. Perhaps it was because he had suddenly recalled how the skin had survived an attack of his saber and was completely fine even after being burned. It was quite clear that the skin was not as simple as it looked.

"F*ck it, I'll have to give it a try." Xiang Shaoyun decided to throw caution to the wind and do whatever he could. He took out the human skin and draped it over his body.

The skin was elastic, and like a leather jacket, it wrapped around Xiang Shaoyun's body. The moment the human skin was taken out, the flame in the surroundings was no longer able to harm Xiang Shaoyun. In fact, the flame seemed to have some sort of instinctual fear as it quickly retreated from the skin.

"It works!" Xiang Shaoyun was overjoyed, and the realization calmed him down. Just a moment ago, he was still so anxious he was sweating madly. Now, he finally had a way of protecting himself.

Unfortunately, he had been too optimistic. The millennium earthcore fire seemed to hold a grudge, and it immediately sent the flame beasts at him.

"Bastard! Are you not giving me any chance at all?" Xiang Shaoyun cursed. Without any hesitation, he started climbing up the crater. He would think of his next step after escaping it. However, the flame beasts moved faster than him. They started spitting terrifying tongues of flame at him.

Xiang Shaoyun had his back against the beasts. Although he could sense the incoming attacks, he had no way of avoiding them since he was still climbing the wall. Just as he braced himself to be hit by the attacks, the tongues of flame actually stopped when they reached him and split to the sides, leaving him unharmed.

"Huh? I'm fine?" Xiang Shaoyun was thoroughly astonished.

It was at this moment that a new round of attacks began, and an even more intense bombardment of flame came at him from the flame beasts. Something amazing then happened. The tongues of flame all stopped and split to the sides upon reaching Xiang Shaoyun, not harming him at all.

"The human skin is immune to the flame!" Xiang Shaoyun was overjoyed when he reached this conclusion.

At that realization, a crazy thought surfaced in his head—to launch a counterattack at the earthcore fire. Thus, with the human skin draped over him, he turned around and swung his saber at the flame beasts. He was now immune to the flame beasts, but they were not immune to him.

"Die!" Xiang Shaoyun shouted.

His mighty saber energies shot out accompanied by an unparalleled saber intent, killing one flame beast after another.

Rumble! Rumble!

His actions created a series of explosions in the crater, putting the people there in an even greater panic.

"Bastard! Leave right now or I won't spare you!" Huo Linfei was the first to shout at Xiang Shaoyun.

They were all busy refining the strains of power sent by the millennium earthcore fire. Thus, they couldn't do anything else. What Xiang Shaoyun did angered them greatly.

The monk also spoke, "Amitabha, benefactor, it is not your fate to obtain the earthcore fire. Please leave."

Chen Zilong said, "Only those fated to obtain the earthcore fire will get it. Just leave first. I will battle you after taming the earthcore fire!"

"All of you think the earthcore fire is already yours? Hah! It belongs to this young master!" Xiang Shaoyun said with a mad glint in his eyes.

He had decided to throw all caution to the wind. With the immunity granted to him by the human skin, he could try going all the way to the earthcore fire and harvest it by force. The moment he made that decision, he stopped climbing and started sliding down the wall again.

This millennium earthcore fire already had a certain amount of intelligence. It was definitely not only 1,000 years old. It must have been forming for several millennia. A millennium earthcore fire like this had a chance to reach the next level, and it had an astonishing destructive power compared to other millennium earthcore fires.

Xiang Shaoyun couldn't be bothered to consider if he could even subdue the fire. He only wanted to borrow the power of its flame to refine the white tiger's bone into his saber. When the millennium earthcore fire saw what he was doing, it sent a large number of flame beasts toward him.

The flame beasts charged ahead fearlessly, sending an unending stream of fire attacks at Xiang Shaoyun. It reached a point he started wondering if the human skin could survive that kind of bombardment. Fortunately, the human skin did not disappoint, as it survived all the attacks.

Xiang Shaoyun became incomparably excited as he charged downward and attacked fearlessly. Wielding his saber, he killed one flame beast after another. The explosions from the deaths did nothing to him. Instead, the others were the ones to suffer.

And thus, chaos erupted in the crater.

Chapter 202: Battling the Various Geniuses

The space within the crater was wide, but it wasn't wide enough for the explosions of so many flame beasts. The chaos made it hard for the people who were trying to refine the millennium earthcore fire to focus. Some of them were even dragged into the chaos and were attacked by the flame beasts as well.

"You damnable bastard. If I fail because of this, I will kill you!" Huo Linfei shouted furiously after dodging a series of attacks from the flame beasts.

"Amitabha. Without dust and without filth. Selfless and thoughtless. Unwavering will...f*ck! Even a Buddha would be angry in this situation! Benefactor, if you insist on staying, don't blame me if I

decide to send you back into the wheel of reincarnation!" said the young monk. He was no longer able to remain calm after an endless stream of flame beasts attacked him.

A vicious glint surfaced on Fan Ren's honest-looking face as he glared at Xiang Shaoyun. He wished for nothing more than to rip Xiang Shaoyun apart. Even Chen Zilong and Li Yaxuan wore unsightly expressions as they stared at Xiang Shaoyun with resent.

As for Xiang Shaoyun, he completely ignored them and continued sliding down the wall while swinging his saber without stop. With the skin, he did not need to bother defending himself. Thus, he entered the human saber unity mode and sent his saber intent everywhere, killing to his heart's content.

Each flame beast killed equaled another explosion. The explosions filled the crater with flame, making it hard for anyone to calm their mind or stay focused. That in itself was already infuriating enough for everyone there. Suddenly, someone cried out in alarm, "The millennium earthcore fire is sinking!"

The cry attracted everyone's attention. When they looked over, they found that the millennium earthcore fire was indeed sinking into the lava. It had most likely been frightened by the havoc Xiang Shaoyun was wrecking, so it was now seeking refuge in the lava.

The lava would be too hot for any of them to approach. Not even King Realm cultivators would be able to approach. Thus, once the earthcore fire hid within the lava, only Emperor Realm cultivators would have a chance of capturing it. Everyone fumed at that realization.

"Kid, I'm going to kill you for sure!" Huo Linfei shouted at Xiang Shaoyun before charging straight at Xiang Shaoyun's direction.

Apart from him, the young monk and Fan Ren did the same. They were all peak existences within the Transformation Realm and were no weaker than Xiang Shaoyun. In fact, they were even slightly stronger than him. The three attacked at the same time, sending three different attacks crushing down at Xiang Shaoyun.

Huo Linfei swung his blazing saber, the young monk slammed his palm forward, and Fan Ren swept his massive sword. The three attacks had differing strengths, but each of them were undoubtedly powerful.

Xiang Shaoyun was busy killing flame beasts when he sensed the incoming attacks. Without any hesitation, he swung his saber at the three attacks. He did not think that the human skin would also be immune to the incoming attacks as well. That was simply impossible.

Rumble! Rumble!

The attacks collided, creating a series of explosions. Xiang Shaoyun held no superiority hanging on the wall. The impact from stopping the three attacks caused him to lose balance and continue sliding down the wall.

Huo Linfei took the chance to pounce on him, slamming his blazing saber downward. "Just keep on rolling all the way down!"

A fiery dragon flew out of the blazing saber and blasted the spot Xiang Shaoyun was hanging, causing him to slide down at an even faster speed. Xiang Shaoyun was quick on his feet, and he immediately jumped onto a nearby flame beast, kicked it, and sent himself springing away. He swung his saber at Huo Linfei. With saber intent infused into it, the slash he sent was nearly unstoppable.

Huo Linfei was no pushover either. The instant the saber energy flashed forward, he placed his saber in front of him and blocked the incoming slash. Even so, he was blasted into the wall. It was obvious Xiang Shaoyun was the one with the upper hand in the exchange.

Just as Xiang Shaoyun was about to take the chance to stabilize himself on the wall, the young monk arrived. The monk chanted Buddhist scriptures without stop as a thick tongue of flame formed a Buddhist symbol in his palms. He then shot it toward Xiang Shaoyun.

The attack was boundlessly valiant and surpassed the might of ordinary peak Transformation Realm cultivators. From that attack, it was clear the young monk was also one with the capability of battling King Realm cultivators.

As Xiang Shaoyun was midair without any footing, he couldn't even change his direction or the speed at which he was moving. He could only release his innate purple lightning and send a punch at the incoming attack. His fist shot forward like a lightning bolt.

It connected with the Buddhist attack, instantly creating a massive explosion of lightning and fire. The two different powers were unable to do anything to each other. Instead, the flame beasts nearby were the ones killed by the impact. As for Xiang Shaoyun, the impact sent him falling.

"Shit!" Xiang Shaoyun's face fell as he quickly slashed his saber at the flame beast near him, causing the flame beast to explode. The impact of the explosion pushed Xiang Shaoyun to the side, allowing him to stab his saber into the wall and stop his fall.

"Phew! I nearly shat my pants there!" Xiang Shaoyun broke out in cold sweat from the fright. Without any hesitation, he started climbing. Since the millennium earthcore fire had hidden itself in the lava, his new priority was to flee. But of course, the others were no longer letting him leave alive. Above him, Fan Ren had dug a massive boulder out, and currently, the boulder was falling right on him.

"Just go all the way down!" Fan Ren shouted.

The boulder was only several hundred catties in weight, but combined with the strength at which Fan Ren had tossed it down, it carried a weight reaching several tens of thousands of catties.

"Damn it!" Xiang Shaoyun cursed and quickly shifted to the side. But on the wall, his speed was far slower than the dropping boulder. Thus, he was ultimately forced to swing his saber and smash the boulder apart.

That was not the only attack Xiang Shaoyun was facing. The flame beasts were still spitting tongues of flame at him repeatedly. Although the attacks couldn't harm him, they still slowed him down considerably.

Apart from that, Huo Linfei and the young monk had arrived once again. Both attacked without stop, forcing Xiang Shaoyun to flee everywhere in a sorry manner. They were not giving him any chance to run.

"Are you really not going to leave me a way out?" Xiang Shaoyun howled at them.

"We told you to leave earlier, but you refused. Now you die," Huo Linfei said, still furious.

"Benefactor, it's time you return to the wheel of reincarnation," said the young monk.

"Remember those words. If I survive today, I will come for your lives," Xiang Shaoyun swore.

Right after that, Huo Linfei, the young monk, and Fan Ren all resumed their attacks. This time, he could no longer dodge or block the attacks, and he was helplessly sent falling down. Below him the wide expanse of lava was teeming with an intense power of fire. Anyone falling into the lava would be instantly destroyed.

Would Xiang Shaoyun survive the fall?

Chapter 203: Flame Taming Technique

The people there witnessed with their own eyes how Xiang Shaoyun fell right into the pool of lava.

"Finally, he's dead," Huo Linfei said coldly.

The young monk also chimed in, "Amitabha. Benefactor, you are now in paradise. May you be a kind person in your next life."

Everyone had an odd expression on their faces when they heard the young monk. That young monk was definitely no virtuous person. They were right. The young monk was called Ming Kong, and he was an expelled disciple of Buddhism. He might look virtuous and kind, but he had a dark and ruthless heart.

"Let's go," Chen Zilong said. He did not feel anything even as he watched everything unfold.

Li Yaxuan nodded and left with Chen Zilong.

For them, Xiang Shaoyun was merely a passerby in their lives that they somewhat respected. He was not important enough that they would keep him in their minds. In truth, even they had the urge to attack Xiang Shaoyun earlier. The only reason they didn't was because they were too proud to join hands with so many people.

With Chen Zilong and Li Yaxuan's departure, the others also left one after another. They couldn't stand staying any longer. The millennium earthcore fire had already sunk into the lava. Thus, they would no longer be able to get the millennium earthcore fire. Moreover, it wasn't like they could stay for long anyway; the flame beasts had turned mad and were attacking them without stop.

At this point, they would be happy with just leaving safely. Even after the group left, people were still ceaselessly arriving. A large number of them were killed, and the rest were forced to retreat. None of them were able to obtain the millennium earthcore fire.

Gong Qinyin had also arrived with Gong Fen, but their group was unable to go through the flame beasts and failed to get anywhere near the crater. Ultimately, Gong Fen found out that even the likes of Chen Zilong and Huo Linfei were forced to return empty-handed. Thus, he had no choice but to give up as well and made the decisive choice to withdraw.

On the other hand, Gong Qinyin was unwilling to leave. She wanted to stay and wait for Xiang Shaoyun. It was then that she encountered Li Yaxuan.

"You're waiting for someone?" Li Yaxuan asked.

Gong Qinyin saluted Li Yaxuan before answering, "Yes, Miss Li."

"Don't bother. He will not appear anymore," Li Yaxuan said.

"Why?" Gong Qinyin asked anxiously.

"He fell into the lava," Li Yaxuan said. She added, "Not even a King can survive that lava."

After saying that, she left without waiting for Gong Qinyin's reply. Gong Qinyin felt like she had been struck by lightning as she stood there blankly. After a long while, she gazed at the direction of the crater and muttered, "H-how is it possible that he died just like that?"

It wasn't like she was very close to him, but through the short interaction they had, she found herself developing an odd feeling toward him, a feeling she couldn't erase. For her to suddenly hear that news, she felt so incomparably sorrowful that she had a sudden urge to charge straight to the volcanic crater.

Her intellect still prevailed, and she did not end up doing anything rash. After standing in the same spot for a long time, she finally muttered to herself, "Back at the Golden River Valley, everyone thought you were dead, but you had survived. This time, I believe you will still come back from death!"

Then, she turned and left resolutely. This incident made her feel that she was way too weak. Thus, she had decided to join the Cloud Margin Pavilion and focus on cultivation. She too wanted to grasp her fate in her own hands.

Finally, the current batch of people that came searching for the earthcore fire left. However, the number of people dead eclipsed the number of people that managed to leave alive. Even with the large number of deaths, people were still coming unendingly. Each day, numerous Transformation Realm cultivators arrived in search of the millennium earthcore fire, and each day, numerous people died on the Flame Mountain. Still, nobody was able to obtain the millennium earthcore fire.

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In a flash, half a year passed. The Flame Mountain still stood tall, and there were even more people present compared to before. However, the number of people still hunting for the millennium earthcore fire had dropped.

That was because news had spread that after the last appearance of the millennium earthcore fire, it had gone missing, and it was unlikely that the earthcore fire would reappear anytime soon.

Most of the people here now were only here to borrow the environment in their cultivation of the power of fire. One had to admit that the power of fire in the air was very thick, and it was a very beneficial environment for those cultivating the power of fire. Many people had broken through here, and slowly, the place became known as a perfect cultivation ground.

Today, the pool of lava in the volcanic crater was bubbling, looking different than how the pool normally looked. Nobody knew that there was a living human in the pool of lava. That living human was none other than Xiang Shaoyun who had fallen into the pool half a year ago.

The lava had an extremely high temperature and not even a King could stay for long. It was truly astonishing that Xiang Shaoyun was able to stay alive in the lava for so long. Without a doubt it was all due to the human skin.

On that day, after Xiang Shaoyun fell into the pond, the human skin suddenly started to emanate a unique power by itself. The ancient characters on it started shining and pushing the lava away, forming a safe zone that acted as his shelter within the pool of lava.

Apart from that, those ancient characters had formed numerous shiny symbols that orbited him. The entire scene looked incredibly wondrous and enigmatic, and the symbols emanated an ancient and profound aura that streamed into Xiang Shaoyun's mind without end.

Xiang Shaoyun had spent the past half year comprehending and accepting the profound aura. Through his comprehension, he found that the symbols represented a top ancient flame taming technique.

That was why even Xiang Shaoyun required such a long time to comprehend what the symbols entailed. He also finally understood why the human skin was immune to fire. It was because the skin's owner had tamed flames of an even higher level. Thus, ordinary flames couldn't harm the skin at all.

As for what happened to the skin for it to remain in the cave, Xiang Shaoyun had no idea. But he knew one thing—he had struck the jackpot!

Flame taming techniques were extremely rare even among top-tier sects. With him obtaining an ancient flame taming technique by luck, he would have no problem subduing the millennium earthcore fire.

Today, Xiang Shaoyun had finally fully comprehended the flame taming technique and could finally start subduing the millennium earthcore fire. He was aware that the millennium earthcore fire was hidden somewhere within the pool of lava. Every now and then, the millennium earthcore fire would show itself before him. But he was busy comprehending the flame taming technique, so he had ignored it all the while.

Not wasting any time, he started searching the depths of the pool. It was time to subdue the millennium earthcore fire.

Chapter 204: Shall I Cultivate the Power of Flame?

The millennium earthcore fire was a flame that had only managed to become a high-level flame after 1,000 years of growth. The entirety of the volcanic crater was the turf of the millennium earthcore fire, and for now, this was the only place it could actually move around freely. This would only change when it became a ten millennium earthcore fire. By then, it would be able to change into any form it wanted and leave the place.

After obtaining the flame taming technique from the human skin, Xiang Shaoyun would naturally not give up on subduing the millennium earthcore fire. If it was anyone else who had fallen into the lava, even if that person survived, moving around freely would still be impossible.

In the pool of pure lava and raging flame, it was almost impossible for one to see clearly. Thus, it would be extremely hard to search for the millennium earthcore fire when it was within the lava. However, Xiang Shaoyun had his Nether Soul Domain, which could let him sense his surroundings clearly. In fact, it granted Xiang Shaoyun a full view.

Currently, Xiang Shaoyun was already rather proficient in using the Nether Soul Domain. Inwardly, he thought to himself, In the future, nobody can hope to ambush me anymore since I can now easily sense my surroundings. Too bad the range is still too short. Maybe after my cultivation level increases and my soul power grows, the range will increase as well.

He could sense that the millennium earthcore fire was not far underneath him. Apart from that, he also sensed that there was a living being near the millennium earthcore fire. That living being was not exactly a demonic beast. Rather, it was a herb. For now, he was unable to sense clearly what herb it was. He would have to get nearer for that.

It was unknown if the millennium earthcore fire had actually sensed him approaching, but it suddenly became agitated. It kept changing shapes as its flame pulsed repeatedly, looking incredibly mystical.

Xiang Shaoyun advanced with all his strength, completely ignoring the lava around him. When he was near the millennium earthcore fire, it suddenly transformed into a flame beast king before pouncing him.

Bang! Bang!

The dreadful power of flame emanating from this flame beast king was much scarier than ordinary flame. Not even king-grade weapons could hope to stop the attack. Xiang Shaoyun was greatly frightened, but his only choice was to shut his eyes and pray that the human skin could resist the attack.

The human skin was worthy of being an item from the ancient times. Its fire resistance was far stronger than Xiang Shaoyun's imagination. The millennium earthcore fire's attack arrived but was stopped by the incorporeal power the human skin was emanating. Xiang Shaoyun was completely protected within the skin.

The millennium earthcore fire could not accept it. It attacked continuously to no avail, making it so angry it assumed the form of a furious face. Xiang Shaoyun was overjoyed to discover that he would be perfectly fine facing the millennium earthcore fire.

Haha, time for me to tame you! Xiang Shaoyun thought to himself as he started chanting the flame taming mantra.

The so-called flame taming technique was in fact a technique allowing one to form some sort of resonance with the earthcore fire, allowing the earthcore fire to sense the tamer's goodwill. It would tell the earthcore fire that the tamer would not harm it and would even treat it well, giving it a sense of intimacy.

That might sound simple, but a large amount of patience and perseverance was required. After all, the millennium earthcore fire only had a vague consciousness, and it did not actually know any spoken words. Time would be required to convey the sense of intimacy to it.

The benefit of using a flame taming technique was that after subduing the flame, the compatibility between the tamer and the flame would be near perfect, and usage of the flame would feel much more natural.

Xiang Shaoyun completely emptied his mind and focused only on courting the millennium earthcore fire. This millennium earthcore fire had only come into being not long ago. Thus, it was still rather simple-minded. When it sensed the goodwill Xiang Shaoyun was trying to convey, it slowly calmed down.

However, it no longer rashly approached Xiang Shaoyun like it had. A few days passed, and Xiang Shaoyun found that the millennium earthcore fire was less opposed to him. However, it still refused to let Xiang Shaoyun get anywhere near it.

What is the issue here? Xiang Shaoyun pondered.

With his ancient flame taming technique, he should have been able to easily tame this innocent flame. But he was not succeeding. After thinking about it for a bit, he finally understood the issue.

Xiang Shaoyun cried out in realization, "I don't cultivate the power of flame!"

He only had the power of lightning and gold within him, and he had zero intimacy with the power of flame. Even if he had a flame taming technique, he still wouldn't be able to make the millennium earthcore fire approach him. If he actually cultivated the power of flame, taming the millennium earthcore fire would be much easier.

The realization caused Xiang Shaoyun to feel somewhat disheartened. One might cultivate many types of power, but most cultivators would only focus on one. Only that way would one be able to fully unleash the power one decided to cultivate.

Cultivating more than one type of power would cause one's inner stars to be split in terms of specialization and be unable to fully unleash the strength of any of the cultivated powers. Of course, there was also a benefit to cultivating multiple powers. One would be extremely flexible during battle, and the different powers could complement each other during different situations. Through good combinations of different powers, one would still be able to unleash greatly destructive attacks.

Most cultivators would choose to cultivate two or three types of powers if they decided to cultivate more than one. It was very unlikely for one to cultivate more than three powers because it would only make things messy, causing the strength of any particular power to be more limited. That was why Xiang Shaoyun was hesitating on whether he should cultivate the power of flame.

In the ancient times, there were freaks who only cultivated one type of power, filling all nine stars with one type of energy and exercising perfect control over the chosen power. A person like that is even capable of directly drawing out all the energy from an opponent's star—provided the opponent cultivated the same type of power. Doing so would also cause an imbalance of energy in their opponent's stars, eventually resulting in the opponent's self-destruction.

There were also freaks cultivating two types of powers of either opposing or supplementary elements. They could manipulate the powers in a way that the combination results in a power no weaker than those cultivating only one type of power. In fact, such combinations are even more extraordinary.

As for those cultivating three or four types of powers, there are no records. On the other hand, there exist records of those cultivating five types of powers, also otherwise known as the five elements. These people are recorded to possess the primal astral physique, a physique said to be born for battle. People with this physique naturally have five stars, but this physique is different from ordinary five-star physiques. It is a physique that innately allows one to store five different powers and transform them into a primal astral energy that will make one undefeatable in battle.

As for those cultivating six or more types of powers, these people are almost always known as people with mediocre accomplishments in cultivation, Xiang Shaoyun pondered. He then recalled something he once read: Nine stars present together; nine origins return to one. Capable of creation and destruction; life, death, and reincarnation with a snap of one's fingers.

It was in fact a text from a prophecy. It meant that through a nine-star physique, one could store nine types of powers in one's body. With that, one would be able to create and destroy all living beings, possessing the power to control life, death, and reincarnation as easy as snapping one's fingers.

Chapter 205: Yun Flame

Cultivating nine different powers with a nine-star physique was something many geniuses had attempted since the ancient times. Unfortunately, all of them had failed. It was simply too difficult a cultivation path to pursue. The hard part wasn't gathering nine types of powers; it was cultivating all nine powers to the extremes, accomplishing a never-done-before feat.

Although Xiang Shaoyun had an insane nine-star physique, he was not so arrogant that he believed himself capable of cultivating nine powers to the extremes, reaching the point where he could merge the nine stars into one. He had only cultivated two types of powers thus far and was already feeling overstretched. In fact, he even had the urge to abandon his gold energy and focus only on lightning. He was clear that it wouldn't be sensible to start cultivating the power of flame as well.

Am I going to give up just like that? Xiang Shaoyun questioned himself repeatedly. But at the same time, there was this thought nibbling on his mind, pushing him to absorb this millennium earthcore fire, to not give up on it.

Xiang Shaoyun sank into a long silence of contemplation with the millennium earthcore fire drifting around him and wondering why this human had suddenly stopped communicating with it.

Scenes of everything Xiang Shaoyun had experienced before flipped past his mind one after another. He thought back to the oath he once took: the oath to retake all that was his family's and to trample over all who had betrayed him. He wanted to prove everyone who had once belittled and insulted him that they were all blind.

He wanted to be a man capable of supporting the weight of the heavens on his shoulder. Even so, there was still no need for him to gamble on his future cultivation prospects and step on a cultivation path none had succeeded before. He could still give up on the millennium earthcore fire.

To refine the white tiger bone, his current surroundings were already enough. But then, he suddenly thought of his father whose whereabouts were still unknown to this day. His father had headed to a forbidden area to battle an opponent, and to search for his father in that place, he needed more strength.

At that thought, Xiang Shaoyun's gaze turned resolute as he spoke to himself, "Screw it. I will subdue the millennium earthcore fire first and worry later. At worst, I just have to tread a path nobody has walked before, a path nobody will walk after me. With my talent, nothing can stop me!"

Xiang Shaoyun then started circulating his Heaven Conquering Overlord Manual and drew in the strands of flame energy in the air around him. Since he was the one drawing in the power of flame, the human skin did not stop the strands of flame energy from approaching. Thus, flame energy started gathering in Xiang Shaoyun's body.

The flame energy all gathered in his third star. Xiang Shaoyun was going to turn this star into a star of the fire element. This cultivation session lasted an entire month. A month later, he finally had a considerable amount of flame energy in him, and the cultivation session had also helped consolidate his cultivation base. In fact, his cultivation base was stably growing.

During the month, he would communicate with the millennium earthcore fire every now and then, never fully severing the connection between them. That was all for the sake of maintaining the intimacy between him and the millennium earthcore fire.

Another month passed. Xiang Shaoyun once again used his flame taming technique on the millennium earthcore fire. This time, it started approaching him more. Obviously, him cultivating the power of flame had caused the millennium earthcore fire to be even less opposed to him.

That discovery caused Xiang Shaoyun to be overjoyed. He fully emptied his mind and started focusing on chanting the mantra of the flame taming technique, communicating with the millennium earthcore fire again and again.

Slowly, Xiang Shaoyun came to understand that a naturally occurring flame like this also had its own emotions. As for the millennium earthcore fire before him, it was like a child without a playmate. It required a friend, it needed love, and it wanted a friend to play with. But it was a type of flame that existed in the form of energy. Only those similar to it would be able to form a resonance with it. Others would never be able to understand its thoughts.

Xiang Shaoyun possessed an ancient flame taming technique, which was undoubtedly a wondrous technique that allowed him to understand the earthcore fire. It also allowed the earthcore fire to understand him.

Xiang Shaoyun started persuading the millennium earthcore fire like he would a child, "Just come. A wide and interesting world is waiting out there. Let me take you out to see the world outside. You will definitely like it. I can also help you devour different flames, helping you evolve into an even more powerful existence."

Three days later, the millennium earthcore fire finally understood what Xiang Shaoyun was trying to say. It started approaching him, and Xiang Shaoyun also reached out to pet it. The millennium earthcore fire was a terrifying existence. Anything that directly touched it would be instantly burned to crisp.

Even so, Xiang Shaoyun was reaching out to pet it. If others saw, they would definitely say he was a madman. But was Xiang Shaoyun a madman? Of course not! He did that because he knew if the millennium earthcore fire had accepted him, its flame would not harm him. Sure enough, when his hand touched the millennium earthcore fire, he first felt an intense heat that vanished immediately after. He remained completely unharmed.

Xiang Shaoyun heaved a breath of relief as he thought, The flame taming technique is indeed right. A flame possesses its own wisdom. It is capable of destroying everything. But at the same time, it is also capable of not destroying anything. Everything is on its whim alone. It simply seems destructive because it remains in an agitated mood most of the time. Now that it has accepted me, it will no longer harm me.

The millennium earthcore fire behaved like a child as it turned into a small clump of flame and hopped onto Xiang Shaoyun's palm. There, it started pulsing and playing around happily like a gleeful child.

At this point, Xiang Shaoyun was no longer in any rush to draw it into his body. He had to first make it accept everything about him and drop all resistances before doing that. He spent his subsequent days communicating with the millennium earthcore fire. He had even named the millennium earthcore fire Yun Flame, signifying that it was a flame belonging to him alone.

It was also during this period that Xiang Shaoyun vowed to help Yun Flame evolve into an even higher level of flame, helping it become a hegemon of flames. In the blink of an eye, half a month had passed. Finally, he started the process of absorbing and refining Yun Flame.

"Flame, don't resist, and go along with my will. Only by becoming one with me will I be able to take you to the outside world. In the future, I can help you grow stronger. Remember, do not resist. Otherwise, I will die!" Xiang Shaoyun reminded Yun Flame repeatedly. Only after Yun Flame bent down like it was nodding did he start circulating his Heaven Conquering Overlord Manual to absorb it into his body.

Everything progressed smoothly as Yun Flame did not resist at all. It obediently entered his body and entered the third star. Right after it entered his third star, its power of flame soared. It instantly lit the star on fire, turning it into a star of flame. But the power of flame was too potent, to the point the star seemed to be on the brink of destruction. Even Xiang Shaoyun cried out from the pain.

"AHHHH!"

Chapter 206: Let's Fuse

The stars within a person's body were in a sense some sort of energy storage device. The capacity of these stars would grow along with the growth of a person's cultivation level. Xiang Shaoyun was only a third-stage Transformation Realm cultivator. The capacity of his star was far below the energy Yun Flame had, which was the reason for his pain.

The power of Yun Flame was too much for the star, to the point the star was now on the brink of destruction. If the star really did end up exploding, Xiang Shaoyun might end up crippled, or he might even die immediately.

Xiang Shaoyun started twitching in pain, feeling like his entire body had been lit on fire. The pain was so extreme he nearly fainted. Fortunately, he had experienced similar situations in the past when he drew lightning power into his first star and white tiger's ire into his second star. His fortitude had been tempered by the two situations, allowing him to barely stay awake.

Utilizing what he learned during the two situations, he quickly circulated his Heaven Conquering Overlord Manual to redirect some of the flame energy into his astral cosmos sea, using the energy to further expand it. Part of the flame energy was also redirected to his 365 acupoints, expanding their sizes as well.

But that was far from enough. Yun Flame had taken 1,000 years to form. It was dreadfully powerful, and even a tiny bit of its power was enough to make Xiang Shaoyun suffer. During this moment of crisis, he channeled some of the flame energy into the white tiger bone resting at the corner of his astral cosmos sea.

He was going to use the excess flame energy to refine the white tiger bone and use it to fix the nicks on his saber. The white tiger bone was worthy of being the bone of a supreme beast. It was terrifyingly tough, and even under the assault of Yun Flame's power, it still remained unaffected.

When Xiang Shaoyun noticed, he channeled even more flame energy to it. Apart from refining the white tiger bone, he was going to also refine the top-quality goldsteel stones. He was going to fuse them all with his Overlord Skyslaying Saber.

After splitting the flame energy, Xiang Shaoyun felt much better. But it was not over yet. He had to first expand the size of his star, creating sufficient space to store Yun Flame. The Heaven Conquering Overlord Manual was worthy of being a top-tier ancient technique. After being circulated over and over, a large amount of the flame energy was refined and used to expand the size of the third star, slowly allowing the star to be able to handle the sheer amount of power Yun Flame had.

It was a long process, but it was also a process of rapid growth. Gradually, Xiang Shaoyun forgot about time and focused only on his fusion with the millennium earthcore fire. At this point, it had already been a year since he had fallen into the lava.

In other words, Xiang Shaoyun had spent about half a year fusing with Yun Flame. During this half year, his cultivation level had increased straight to fifth-stage Transformation Realm. Even so, the fusion process was not over. After the completion of the fusion, his cultivation level would be even higher.

Through his hard work throughout this period, he was able to prevent the destruction of his third star, and it became a suitable habitat for Yun Flame, enabling him to fully fuse with Yun Flame.

"Let's fuse!" Xiang Shaoyun roared and increased the speed of his Heaven Conquering Overlord Manual to the maximum. His other eight stars also activated; all of them started swirling around the third star, forming a vast and majestic galaxy as he completed the final step of the fusion.

At this time, Yun Flame had gotten used to the environment within the third star. It no longer resisted, and it started fusing with Xiang Shaoyun in accordance with his will. Instantly, the power of the third star surged.

Once again, Xiang Shaoyun's strength soared. Instantly, he reached peak fifth-stage before breaking through into the sixth stage. Even after reaching the sixth stage, his growth did not stop. Early sixth-stage, mid sixth-stage, late sixth-stage...his cultivation kept growing until peak seventh-stage

Transformation Realm. He then forcefully suppressed the growth. If he did not stop the growth, his cultivation would most likely continue to madly grow.

Although Xiang Shaoyun himself wished for rapid growth, he remained rational. He knew that if he continued growing like this, it would ruin his foundations. That was why he had forcefully stopped it.

The stars that were still of a neutral element benefited from the suppression. His meridians, organs, bones, all of them also received the nourishment from the excess energy, causing his physical body to become stronger.

After all, Yun Flame was not an ordinary existence. Using its power to nourish one's body would naturally cleanse one's body of many impurities and grant numerous benefits.

However, Xiang Shaoyun's focus was not on any of his bodily improvement. He was fully immersed in the thrill this new strength had granted him. He could feel a boundless power in every inch of his body, giving him a feeling that he could destroy mountains and part rivers with a wave of his hand and a stomp of his foot.

It was an incredibly wondrous sensation, giving him the confidence to even face a King Realm cultivator in battle. He waved his limbs around, sending ripples all over the pool of lava.

"I can't freely test my strength here. Looks like I have to have a good spar after leaving this place." Xiang Shaoyun smiled. He then shouted, "Flame, come out!"

He opened his palm, and a scarlet flame lit up within it. Like a fairy, the flame pulsed repeatedly, looking incredibly mystical. That clump of flame was none other than Yun Flame who had fused with Xiang Shaoyun.

"Are you still not used to this yet? Don't worry. Soon, you will come to love staying with me," said Xiang Shaoyun with a smile.

One should never overlook Yun Flame just because it looked like an ordinary clump of flame. Xiang Shaoyun was well aware of how terrifying it was. It was absolutely not something ordinary flames could compare with.

A layer of outer energy formed on Xiang Shaoyun's body. It was an energy barrier powered by Yun Flame. After forming the barrier, Xiang Shaoyun put the human skin away. The only reason he did that was to test if Yun Flame could actually protect him from the lava.

And Yun Flame did not disappoint him as the ruler of this place. Its energy barrier completely protected Xiang Shaoyun from the lava in his surroundings. He was elated. "Hah, I can now move freely here by relying only on myself!"

He continued trying out Yun Flame's power, and after gaining a certain level of proficiency with it, his gaze landed on a spot not far away. There, a stalk of king medicine could be seen. It was precisely the existence of this king medicine that had helped Yun Flame take form.

This was the first knowledge Xiang Shaoyun obtained after he fused with Yun Flame. He stared at the herb with a burning gaze as he muttered, "This is a rare king medicine! Well, you're mine now!"

Chapter 207: Blaze Flower, Seven Scorching Sun Claws

It was a stalk of blaze flower, which was an extremely peculiar and rare flower. It was capable of resisting the extreme temperature of lava, and it grew through feeding on the flame energy within lava. In fact, it looked more like a pulsing clump of flame than a flower. In such an environment, it would be rather hard to separate this flower from just another clump of flame.

It had a fiery shape, and its entire body was scarlet red in color with no other colors mixed in. The most wondrous part of this flower was its petals. They spread out and closed in repeatedly, seemingly constantly absorbing the flame energy in the air. The constant movement caused the flower to look extremely lively.

This was genuinely a top-tier king medicine. It was above these petals that Yun Flame had grown previously. This flower was very beneficial for those cultivating the power of flame. It could also transform one's physique, allowing one to have a physique possessing high intimacy with all flames, increasing the speed in which one could absorb flame energy.

Apart from that, a peak King Realm cultivator could directly enter the Emperor Realm by relying on it. Thus, this flower was deadly enticing to any King Realm flame cultivators. Xiang Shaoyun came from a tier-7 sect and had seen many king medicines before. Still, it was his first time seeing a blaze flower. It was apparent how precious this flower was.

If it was blended with other king medicines into a king-grade medicinal concoction, even more people could benefit from it. A wide grin was plastered on Xiang Shaoyun's face as he stared at this

stalk of blaze flower. His joy was understandable. Anyone would be overjoyed upon encountering a top-tier king medicine like this.

"Now that my astral cosmos sea has a space of 100 square meters, I can store even more items. I won't have a problem storing this blaze flower, but I don't have anything capable of storing a flower with such extreme flame power. The moment this flower leaves the lava, without proper preservation, it will start losing its medicinal power and wither away. Therefore, I need to store some lava together with the flower, allowing it to stay fresh. Only then would I be able to use it whenever I want in the future," Xiang Shaoyun muttered.

However, he was worried that his astral cosmos sea was unable to resist the temperature of the lava. What if the lava destroyed his astral cosmos sea?

After thinking about it for a bit, Xiang Shaoyun slapped his head and said, "Why am I so stupid? I have already fused with Yun Flame. I had even used a large amount of Yun Flame's energy to expand the astral cosmos sea. Therefore, the astral cosmos sea now has a considerable resistance to fire. It won't have any problem storing some lava and this blaze flower."

Right after reaching that conclusion, Xiang Shaoyun prepared a space of 10 square meters in his astral cosmos before storing both the blaze flower and the lava around it. His conclusion was proven correct: when the blaze flower and lava entered his astral cosmos sea, he only felt a slight warmth and nothing else. His astral cosmos sea was completely unharmed.

"Hahaha, I now have the vicious tiger gold lotus and blaze flower in my possession. I won't have any trouble in the future when it's my time to advance into the Emperor Realm!" Xiang Shaoyun laughed heartily.

He would not give regular herbs his time of day, but these two herbs were precious enough to fill him with joy. Now that his cultivation level had soared straight to seventh-stage Transformation Realm, with his history of punching above his level, what would his current combat prowess be? He had the urge to leave and fight it out with a King Realm cultivator as soon as possible.

"No, I have to be patient. Although I am now equipped with the power of flame, I have yet to cultivate any flame battle techniques. I need to take some time and enrich myself with more battle techniques. In any case, Kings are capable of flight. I will be greatly disadvantaged since I can't fly. To really possess the ability to battle a King, I need to prepare accordingly," Xiang Shaoyun muttered to himself after calming down.

He then emptied his mind of all emotions and sank into his cultivation once again. This time, he was not growing his cultivation level. Rather, he was cultivating battle techniques and increasing his combat prowess.

Firstly, he needed a flame battle technique. His head was filled with battle techniques of tier-4 and above. In the past, he wasn't able to practice these techniques as he was still too weak. Now that he had grown somewhat, he would be able to handle the might of king-grade techniques.

He searched his mind and found a bunch of tier-4 battle techniques. They were the lowest of tier-4 techniques, and he had nearly forgotten they existed. Fortunately, he had an astonishingly powerful memory. After thinking for a bit, he recalled all of them in their entirety.

"Of the tier-4 flame battle techniques I know, there are Raging Spear Technique, Flame Wave Compounding Saber Technique, Seven Yang Restoration Swords...All these are decent techniques, but I have already comprehended saber intent. In the future, I will be further improving my saber intent. The main elements of the Overlord Skyslaying Saber are gold and lightning, so I can't practice a flame saber technique," Xiang Shaoyun muttered to himself. After a slight pause, he smiled and said, "Right, there's the Seven Scorching Sun Claws! It is a top tier-4 claw technique with astonishing might. Coupled with Yun Flame's power, I will possess the might to part mountains and rivers!"

Xiang Shaoyun then started chanting the mantra of the Seven Scorching Sun Claws.

The Seven Scorching Sun Claws were separated into the following stances: Iron Tearing Stance, Silver Tearing Stance, Gold Tearing Stance, Jade Tearing Stance, World Tearing Stance, Moon Tearing Stance, and Sun Tearing Stance.

Iron Tearing Stance: Attaching flame to one's claws, creating claw energy as hard as steel. Capable of tearing apart stone and iron.

Silver Tearing Stance: The claws assume an ashy silver color, seemingly having turned into a silver weapon. Capable of penetrating all equipment to directly tear an opponent apart.

Gold Tearing Stance: This was the stage where the claw energy had become as hard as gold, capable of overcoming all defenses.

Jade Tearing Stance: A stage where no weapon in existence was comparable.

World Tearing Stance: With a claw, earth would split, river would form, an attack akin to a natural disaster.

Moon Tearing Stance: Near the top of this claw technique. With a claw, one could crush the moon hanging in the sky.

Sun Tearing Stance: A stage where one would be able to destroy suns and moons, possessing incredibly destructive power.

Xiang Shaoyun was extremely satisfied with the Seven Scorching Sun Claws. He thus started cultivating.

Finger and claw techniques had high requirements in terms of one's finger bones. Without sufficiently strong finger bones, one would not be able to unleash the real power of finger and claw techniques.

Xiang Shaoyun knew himself well. With his physique, cultivating the Seven Scorching Sun Claws was nothing difficult. He started practicing from the first stance, the Iron Tearing Stance. He practiced each of the moves in an orderly and methodical manner, demonstrating a textbook-perfect version of the stance.

He was not in any rush for quick results. After all, step by step progress was what was important in any battle technique one practiced. It was even more so for high-level techniques.

Only by building a stable foundation would one be able to better unleash the power of the practiced battle technique. This place was filled with lava and was not an environment anyone else could cultivate at. But Xiang Shaoyun was able to ignore his environment as he waved his hands in the claw form over and over.

At first, the claw he formed looked rather stiff. But after many repetitions, his motions became smoother. Due to his outstanding talent, he was able to easily discover the technique's key points.

Time passed, and finally, he was able to fully complete the entirety of the first stance.

Chapter 208: Who's That Immoral Person

Another month passed, and the flame filling the Flame Mountain had suddenly receded, causing the cultivators training there to be flabbergasted.

"What's going on? A few days ago, I had sensed the flame becoming weaker. And now, it is downright extinguishing?"

"It can't be because someone has harvested the millennium earthcore fire, right? Otherwise, I really can't understand how this is happening."

"Yes, that is plausible. Someone might have gotten the millennium earthcore fire for real. But why is it still so calm if that is the case?"

"Don't waste time. Let's go take a look. With the receding power of flame, we can even approach the volcanic crater now."

"No, it is still safer to stay away. It is a place filled with flame beasts. It is still a dangerous place."

...

Still, some of them were brave and confident in their strength. These were the people that subsequently headed to the volcanic crater. The periphery of the volcanic crater was filled with flame beasts. Recently, they were becoming more and more agitated. Anyone approaching would be a subject of their relentless attacks.

Because of that, the people were flooded with attacks when they arrived. The weak ones were all killed while the strong ones were forced to retreat. Of course, not all of them had failed to reach the crater. From a certain direction, two figures were flying toward the crater.

These two were Skysoar Realm cultivators. They were Cloud Margin Pavilion elders, and their names were Long Hui and Xiao Wenbo. They were the ones who had been standing guard here, preventing other King Realm cultivators from harvesting the millennium earthcore fire. When they arrived at the crater, they hovered in the sky above it, looking down with confusion on their faces.

"The extinguishing flame must be due to the millennium earthcore fire," said Long Hui.

Xiao Wenbo replied, "Nobody has come here in recent times. The millennium earthcore fire won't change without any reason, right?" He paused for a bit and added, "Is the earthcore fire withdrawing its power by itself?"

"No, that is unlikely. The millennium earthcore fire has only been born not too long ago. It will remain in this phase for a long time before it starts withdrawing its power," Long Hui said.

"What's going on then? It can't be that someone has harvested it, right?" Xiao Wenbo asked.

"I'm not sure. Let's go down there and check," Long Hui said before he started flying downward.

Xiao Wenbo followed along as well. Each of them had a thick defensive barrier around them, their kingly presence protecting them tightly as they prepared to deal with any changes that might happen. As King Realm cultivators, they were able to directly reach the lava surface, completely ignoring the intense heat in their surroundings.

"The temperature here has dropped a lot as well," said Long Hui after scanning his surroundings.

"You are the one cultivating the power of flame, so you should know better. I'll trust your judgment," Xiao Wenbo answered. He then looked around before saying, "I don't see anyone, and I don't sense any signs of life either. I doubt anyone has harvested the earthcore fire."

Long Hui did not say anything in reply. He kept staring at the lava, as he had noticed that a certain part of the lava pool was roiling about without stop.

Xiao Wenbo followed the direction of his gaze and noticed the same. He said, "Has something really happened here?"

But after observing the lava pool for a bit, they noticed that there were other parts where the lava was roiling about madly. Moreover, the locations of where the lava roiled kept changing.

Suddenly, a fiery claw shot out of the lava, giving them a fright. The two quickly distanced themselves from the lava, and fear covered their eyes. They could clearly sense that the claw earlier belonged to a human instead of a demonic beast.

How high was the temperature in the lava? Not even King Realm cultivators could survive down there. Now that a human had suddenly sent a claw shooting out from within the lava, how could that not frighten them?

"W-what's going on here? Is there someone down there?" Xiao Wenbo cried out in alarm.

"No, how is that possible? Only Emperors can survive down there. But it is impossible that there is an Emperor down there. That claw is most likely something the millennium earthcore fire has coincidentally formed earlier," said Long Hui.

Right after he said that, a series of claws started shooting out of the lava. Each claw appeared from a different part of the lava pool, but all of them were formed of lava. The claws looked extremely mythical, and the entire scene looked as if there was an expert practicing a claw technique down there.

Both Long Hui and Xiao Wenbo were completely stupefied. The distance in which the claws flew weren't too far, but each of them possessed a destructiveness no weaker than a King Realm cultivator's attack.

"This is a claw technique!" the two concluded at the same time.

But where did this claw technique come from? Was there someone down there? Or was this coming from the millennium earthcore fire? They were utterly confused, not sure what was the truth anymore.

But since they did not feel the claws were attempting to harm them, they started silently studying them. The more they observed, the more extraordinary they found the claws. They were now sure this was definitely a terrific king-grade technique, or even an emperor-grade technique.

After a long while, the claws finally stopped appearing. The lava pool returned to its normal calm, and the two finally woke up from their reverie. They exchanged glances before attacking the lava pool at the same time.

Long Hui sent out a mighty dragon claw energy that shot down toward the lava. For a moment, it seemed like a true dragon had appeared. As for Xiao Wenbo, he formed a blue palm energy that was no weaker than Long Hui's dragon claw. The two Kings attacked together, their mighty attacks charged into the lava pool, creating massive waves.

Rumble! Rumble!

Within the lava pool, Xiang Shaoyun sensed the sudden impact and quickly hid in a corner in shock. Fortunately, the lava pool was deep enough. The two Kings were unable to see clearly what was underneath at the very bottom of the lava pool. It allowed Xiang Shaoyun to avoid being discovered, which would have brought him a lot of trouble.

The f*ck? Who's so immoral that he's attacking a lava pool? Xiang Shaoyun cursed inwardly.

His guess was that a King Realm cultivator must have decided to no longer wait and had come to harvest the millennium earthcore fire for himself. But he couldn't do anything right now. If he showed himself, he would instantly turn into a public enemy.

After all, harvesting the millennium earthcore fire would definitely become a sensation, and it would instantly turn him into a prey everyone wanted to hunt. Thus, he couldn't show himself right now. Meanwhile, Long Hui and Xiao Wenbo finally stopped attacking.

"There's nothing down there. Let's go," Xiao Wenbo suggested.

"What is your guess?" Long Hui asked.

"I think maybe an Emperor had cultivated here before, and the claws are an inheritable battle technique left behind by the Emperor? Too bad I don't cultivate the power of flame and can't comprehend the claw technique at all," Xiao Wenbo said.

"Yes, your guess might be correct. We'll talk after leaving." Long Hui nodded. After giving the lava pool a long and deep glance, he left.

Chapter 209: Volcano Escape Plan

Hiding in the lava pool, Xiang Shaoyun waited until everything was completely silent outside the pool. Then he waited some more before silently peeking out of the pool. The sight of him turning this lava pool into his personal swimming pool would drive anyone crazy.

Was that a human or was that a monster? After taking a quick glimpse, Xiang Shaoyun activated his Nether Soul Domain and extended his senses upward. The range he could sense with his Nether

Soul Domain had expanded greatly, and he was also able to sense his surroundings in much clearer detail now.

The reason for that was that as his cultivation level grew, his soul power also grew. Thus, the Nether Soul Domain also benefited in his growth of strength. He could sense that there were a lot of flame beasts outside the crater. Every now and then, there would be humans rushing to the crater.

They were not what he was looking for. He only wanted to locate the King Realm expert who had attacked the lava pool. After focusing on sensing his surroundings for a bit, he finally discovered two people in a concealed corner near the crater.

The two were able to completely ignore the concentrated power of flame in the air and were able to stay completely undetected by the flame beasts. It was apparent how strong they were.

It's them! They are indeed still around! Xiang Shaoyun thought to himself.

After discovering the two, he withdrew his senses and sank back into the lava pool and started thinking of a countermeasure to deal with the situation. He could not leave immediately, but he had to leave as soon as possible. Otherwise, it was only a matter of time before someone found him.

He came to the decision after noticing the events outside the crater. The fire was extinguishing, and the power of flame was receding. It was too obvious that something had happened to the millennium earthcore fire. Just the receding power of flame alone was enough reason for the Cloud Margin Pavilion to keep sending over experts.

Yun Flame is on me, so it is no longer possible for it to release a large amount of flame power to ignite the mountain again. How should I get the two away from here then? Xiang Shaoyun sank into deep thought.

After spending two hours thinking about it, he finally thought of a solution. His solution was to allow the millennium earthcore fire to show itself and attract everyone's attention. He could then take the chance to flee. As for how to make a millennium earthcore fire appear, he would need to have a nice chat with Yun Flame about it.

Xiang Shaoyun was well aware that Yun Flame had full control over the flame in the area. If he could create a false appearance somewhere, he would have the opportunity to slip away. Since he had already fused with Yun Flame, the moment he came up with the idea, Yun Flame reacted and transmitted a response to him.

"Master, you can allow me to release a strand of my power. That strand can directly go through the wall here to the outside world. That will be enough" was Yun Flame's reply.

Yun Flame wasn't exactly talking to his mind or anything. Those words were only a vague thought conveyed directly to Xiang Shaoyun's mind that only he could understand anyway. There were two reasons why he could now understand Yun Flame. First, they were now essentially the same entity. Secondly, he was able to maintain a certain connection with Yun Flame relying on the flame taming technique.

That was what was great about the ancient flame taming technique. The technique also contained details about how a flame could develop a full consciousness after reaching a high enough level and becoming a sacred flame or even a divine flame. At that time, a flame would be able to start speaking human tongue.

When Xiang Shaoyun first learned about it, he lamented that everything was indeed possible in this big world. He did as told and sent a strand of Yun Flame's power out of his body. The strand of power moved along with Yun Flame's will and directly phased through the wall into the world outside.

Please work, Xiang Shaoyun prayed inwardly.

He then sank back into the pool, waiting for the perfect opportunity to escape. The strand of power arrived at a certain mountain ridge before it suddenly surged in power. Instantly, that area was put on fire once again. The people near the ridge noticed the sudden change of the flame power in the air and were endlessly excited at the realization.

"The millennium earthcore fire has shown itself! It's here! There's no mistaking it! Just feel the intense power of flame in the air!"

"Yes, it's really the millennium earthcore fire! I must obtain it!"

"Why is it here? Has it developed a full consciousness and can now move around as it wished?"

"I don't care if it's really the earthcore fire, but my priority is to first get it in my hands."

...

The people in the area quickly charged toward the ridge. However, some of them were immediately set alight by the intense flame power before they could even get near. Then again, the intensity of the burning was obviously much weaker than the real power of the millennium earthcore fire, even if not many of them actually realized it. All of them were still under the impression that a real millennium earthcore fire had appeared. Otherwise, how would an entire mountain ridge suddenly burn?

Soon, people from farther away also noticed what was happening, and the number of people heading over to the ridge grew. As for Long Hui and Xiao Wenbo hiding near the crater, they were among the first to sense the change. However, they did not rush over immediately.

"The ridge over there is suddenly burning. Should we go check it out?" Xiao Wenbo asked.

Long Hui frowned and said, "True, the flame there is different from ordinary flames. Has the millennium earthcore fire really moved over there?"

"It is possible," Xiao Wenbo replied. He pointed below them and said, "So are we going to stop waiting here?"

"You go. I'll stay and observe for a bit longer," Long Hui said after a slight hesitation.

Xiao Wenbo agreed and directly flew toward the burning mountain ridge. As for Long Hui, he once again flew to the crater and looked down at the lava pool. Just earlier, Xiang Shaoyun still had his head stretched out of the pool. When he sensed Long Hui coming, he quickly sank back into the pool. He was nearly discovered.

"Phew, that was dangerous. Why is this old man still not leaving?" Xiang Shaoyun grumbled.

Long Hui stopped midair for a bit before he once again reached out toward the lava. Two fiery dragon claws nearly turned the entire lava pool over. He created such a mess that a large amount of lava splashed out, forcing himself to quickly retreat.

"Nothing at all. This is not possible." Long Hui was unwilling to let it go.

He was sure that there must be something odd within the pool. That was why he created a mess of the pool, hoping he could provoke whatever was down there to show itself. Unfortunately, he had failed.

A crimson armor suddenly appeared on him, protecting his entire body. At the same time, a kingly presence roiled out of him and formed protection around him. He then slowly dove down toward the lava pool.

When Xiang Shaoyun noticed, he quickly hid at the bottom of the pool. This old man is not thinking of coming in here too, right? What the hell should I do about him?

If this fellow really entered the lava pool with his king-grade armor and kingly presence, Xiang Shaoyun would have no way to hide himself. He did not remain panicked for long. He was of the opinion that even if the King did come into the lava pool, the thick lava would still block the King's visibility. He only needed to be on full alert to avoid being discovered.

Long Hui finally revealed his ambition as he sank into the pool: "The rule laid down by those old men in the pavilion that only those at the Transformation Realm and below can fight for the earthcore fire is simply bullshit. How can anyone in the Transformation Realm harvest a high-level flame like this? It would be much better to let me have it."

Chapter 210: Since You're Already Here, Stay

The lava was no longer nourished by the millennium earthcore fire, but it was still extremely hot. That was understandable, as it was impossible for the extreme heat to fully dissipate in a month. Ordinary Kings would never be able to enter the lava pool. As for Long Hui, he was an exception as his bravery was backed by actual strength.

He was already a powerful King with his cultivation level of sixth-stage Skysoar Realm. On top of that, he cultivated the power of flame and had a king-grade armor. All these factors combined allowed him to remain unharmed in the lava for a short amount of time. He had a large amount of kingly presence protecting him, but the moment he sank into the lava pool, his protection quickly withered under the extreme temperature.

Long Hui then activated his cultivation method and started absorbing the flame power in the lava to strengthen and help himself become accustomed to the temperature. The king-grade armor he wore came into effect as it started blocking the lava outside his body, stopping him from being completely burned.

Even with the multiple layers of protection, Long Hui was still not having an easy time. He was already sweating profusely.

I need to locate the millennium earthcore fire as soon as possible. I won't be able to last longer than an hour here, Long Hui told himself.

He started circulating his cultivation method at full power as he searched for the millennium earthcore fire. Because he couldn't see anything in the lava, he wasn't swimming around and searching with his eyes. Instead, he had to rely on his other senses.

He spread his fingers and sent out strands of energy from his fingers. The strands of energy started spreading out and searched the surroundings for him like feelers. He was trying to search for a spot where the power of flame was particularly intense, which would most likely be where the millennium earthcore fire was hiding. His search method was decent, but unfortunately for him, the millennium earthcore fire was no longer present. All his efforts were futile.

Xiang Shaoyun could sense clearly everything Long Hui was doing. He noiselessly avoided the latter's senses, careful as to not reveal himself while moving around.

This fellow is definitely no pushover. I need to deal with him carefully, Xiang Shaoyun thought to himself. He completely withdrew his aura and blended into his surroundings to the point he was hardly noticeable within the lava.

Long Hui searched everywhere relentlessly to no avail, and he started growing anxious.

Has the millennium earthcore fire really left? Long Hui was indignant, and the indignation nearly drove him mad.

In his madness, Long Hui roared to his surroundings, "I refuse to believe you are not here. Show yourself!"

Bang! Bang!

At the same time, he sent numerous palm attacks everywhere, creating massive waves in the lava pool. It made it much harder for Xiang Shaoyun to remain still. He quickly moved aside to avoid being hit. And the instant he moved, Long Hui noticed the traces of movement.

"There!" Long Hui cried out in exultation and charged over. When Xiang Shaoyun sensed Long Hui heading toward him, he knew his position had been exposed.

Damn it, this old man sure is quick, Xiang Shaoyun cursed inwardly before pushing the lava around him forward in an attempt to slow the old man down. He then quickly moved away, withdrew his aura, and stopped moving again.

He was contemplating on whether it would be better for him to take this chance to leave. But that thought was immediately suppressed. He remained still, waiting for an even better opportunity before acting.

"Millennium earthcore fire, you won't escape me! You belong to me, Long Hui!" Long Hui howled. As he said that, he formed a claw and sent it flying toward a spot near Xiang Shaoyun.

"You want the millennium earthcore fire? Sure, I'll give you a taste of the millennium earthcore fire's power! Flame, light this place up again!" Xiang Shaoyun said as a look of madness surfaced in his eyes.

He fully activated his third star and started blasting the lava around him with palm attacks. Strands of terrifying flame power streamed out, increasing the intensity of the flame power within the lava. Instantly, the temperature of the lava was pushed to extreme levels.

Long Hui was still randomly attacking his surroundings when it all happened. He hadn't been able to immediately locate Xiang Shaoyun. After all, he was unable to sense the presence of a human within the lava, and he had also not expected that a person with a weaker cultivation level would be in the lava anyway. Right as he was about to unleash a new round of attacks, he noticed the change of temperature in his surroundings.

What's going on? Is the millennium earthcore fire finally deciding to show its power? Long Hui questioned inwardly. Without any hesitation, he clawed at where Xiang Shaoyun was with his full power.

More than 10 claw attacks were sent out in a row. Each claw was incredibly powerful, and the range his claws reached expanded as well. This time, Xiang Shaoyun no longer had anywhere to run. He clenched his teeth and braced himself.

Fortunately, the lava had resisted a part of Long Hui's attacks, reducing the might of the attacks that actually reached Xiang Shaoyun. Even so, the weakened claws were still enough to give him a hard time.

"Gotcha!" Long Hui was a veteran in combat and was able to immediately detect the millennium earthcore fire's power emanating from Xiang Shaoyun. The claw gripped Xiang Shaoyun and dragged him over against his wishes.

Xiang Shaoyun no longer had any hope of remaining hidden. He thus unleashed all his power, causing his combat prowess to instantly soar. At the same time, Yun Flame's power was also pushed to the extremes.

"You want the millennium earthcore fire? Take it then!" Xiang Shaoyun roared.

Right as Xiang Shaoyun was about to be dragged over to Long Hui, Yun Flame completely erupted in power and filled the area with an intense flame power.

Bang! Bang!

The natural flame power in their surroundings was instantly replaced with the millennium earthcore fire's own flame power. In the blink of an eye, the temperature reached a point that not even King Realm experts could resist. The kingly presence protecting Long Hui started crumbling apart. Even his king-grade armor was showing signs of disintegration as cracks had started to appear on it.

Long Hui's face fell as he shouted, "Impossible! The millennium earthcore fire is not capable of speech! Who! Who is it to have harvested the millennium earthcore fire!"

He did not want to stay in the lava any second longer. He had to leave immediately. Or else, he would be burned to death. Even so, he wanted to claw at Xiang Shaoyun one last time before leaving, as he was still unwilling to give up on the millennium earthcore fire. Unfortunately, the flame power released by Yun Flame was too intense. He couldn't afford to stay an extra second longer and was forced to abandon the thought.

"Since you're already here, stay," Xiang Shaoyun said. With a ruthless glint in his eyes, he activated his Nether Dragon Soul Headband.

And to activate the Nether Dragon Soul Headband, he naturally had to first chant the mantra of the Nether Dragon Soul Curse. An ancient and peculiar incantation that was incomprehensible started coming out of Xiang Shaoyun's mouth.

At the same time, one odd symbol after another floated out of his mouth. Following that, the Nether Dragon Soul Headband in his head suddenly flew out and headed straight toward Long Hui.