

## Paradise 1401

### Chapter 1401: Lin Xin's Bottleneck

"Brother..."

Just as Lin Huang came out of the meeting room, he ran into Lin Xin who was standing there at the door.

Naturally, he knew that more than an hour ago Lin Xin had already been waiting here; he guessed that Huang Tianfu and the others had leaked the news of his return.

He had been unable to get away from the meeting room. Lin Xin had also not barged in to disturb the meeting in session; she had continued waiting outside.

Now that he was seeing Lin Xin again, Lin Huang noticed that her combat level was already at the utmost limits of imperial-level and the intensity of her aura was infinitely approaching virtual god-level.

"I haven't seen you in a year and you've grown taller again." Lin Huang smiled, reached out, and touched Lin Xin's head.

A year ago, Lin Xin was just over 1.6 meters tall. One year later, she was already close to 1.7 meters. Her shoulder-length hair was tied up in a ponytail and the naivete in her face had also faded a great deal. She had blossomed into a tall, slim, graceful young lady.

Lin Xin did not say anything; tears kept welling up in her eyes.

"Look, I didn't say anything, why are you crying?" Lin Huang smiled and looked at Lin Xin. After a year of not seeing her, this girl's personality seemed much more stable; she had obviously experienced many things in this period.

"I'm not crying!" Lin Xin covered her eyes with her palm, surreptitiously wiping away the tears.

Her tears were gone but her eyes were still red.

"Fine, you're not crying. It doesn't count as crying until the tears fall to the ground," Lin Huang said as he handed her a pack of tissue.

Lin Xin reached out and took the tissues, wiping the tears from the corners of her eyes. Only then did she look up at Lin Huang once more.

"Brother, I hope you've been well for the past year."

Although she was outside the meeting room, she had not been able to hear what was going on in the meeting room because there had been a barrier. She had merely used her cognitive processes to infer that there were many powerhouses in the great world, and Lin Huang must have suffered a lot since he had left with combat strength below virtual god-level.

"It wasn't too bad." Lin Huang shook his head. "Although there are many powerhouses in the great world, I'm not one to simply make enemies for no reason. In fact, most of my time was spent on boring cultivation and running around. There weren't many dramatic encounters. It's not a novel where the protagonist will be hunted down for various reasons wherever he goes."

“On the contrary, you give the impression of having changed a lot this year. Not only have you reached the limits of your imperial-level, but your Sword Dao has also advanced to level-5... Well, it doesn't seem like you've been lazy in your Sword Dao cultivation. I don't know how your firearms cultivation has been going though.”

“I haven't been lazy in my firearms cultivation either, alright?” Lin Xin said crossly, “I'm ranked on the Firearms Master Leaderboard.”

“Oh, let me take a look.” Lin Huang pulled up the leaderboard in front of him right away as he spoke. After a glance at it, his expression betrayed some astonishment.

Impressively, Lin Xin's name was ranked first among the imperial-level firearm masters.

Lin Xin, who had been secretly observing Lin Huang's expression, looked smug as she saw the astonishment on her brother's face.

“Huh, not bad, you're number one. Looks like you definitely didn't slack off,” Lin Huang praised her with a smile.

“I can't break through to virtual god-level so I can only spend my time practicing gun fighting techniques and sword skills,” Lin Xin muttered in a low voice.

“Can't break through to virtual god-level?” Lin Huang was stunned to hear that. “Don't you advance your combat levels by eating life crystals? If you go according to this method of advancement, in theory, you only need to replace the life crystal with something containing Divine Power, such as Divine Stones and Divine Crystals.”

“No, I've tried both Divine Stones and Divine Crystals, and there's absolutely no response.” Lin Xin shook her head helplessly. “Mr. Fu asked me to try hunting virtual god-level monsters so I did that as well, but there was no response either after the hunt.”

“A situation like yours obviously means there are special conditions for advancement...” Lin Huang frowned slightly and thought for a moment. “Have you tried eating a Godhead?”

“Eating a Godhead?!” Lin Xin's eyes widened when she heard that. “Don't they say that even a True God would find it hard to destroy a Godhead? Can this sort of thing really be eaten?”

“Normally cultivators don't eat life crystals either, but you've eaten who knows how many of them like peanuts,” Lin Huang could not help grumbling, “If you don't want to try it, we'll think of something else instead.”

“Then...let's give it a try,” Lin Xin hesitated for a moment but nodded.

Lin Huang randomly retrieved a Virtual God rank-1 Godhead from his storage space and handed it to Lin Xin.

Lin Xin took the Godhead, her expression rather odd.

This Godhead was completely red with a few black striations. It looked a bit like a gem.

Lin Xin brought the Godhead in front of her and studied it for a while, then she closed her eyes and stuffed it into her mouth.

"If you can't bite into it then don't force yourself, and don't swallow it directly," Lin Huang hurriedly added.

He noticed the current expression on Lin Xin's face was even odder. "You said that a little too late; it's already slid down."

"..." Lin Huang was speechless. "Don't you feel like you're choking?"

"No, the texture's a bit like pudding. It immediately melted once I put it in my mouth and I accidentally swallowed it."

"What pudding... I can't even bite into this thing." A virtual god-level Godhead could be said to be the hardest thing within a Virtual God's body, harder than even god relics. Even if it was just a Virtual God rank-1, the Godhead in the body was so strong it could only be damaged by Rule Bending Power. For ordinary cultivators, it was naturally inedible.

That was why when Lin Xin described the Godhead's texture as pudding-like, Lin Huang found it hard to imagine.

"Do you feel anything at all? Or do you have to spend some time refining?" Seeing that Lin Xin did not look as if she had eaten something unclean, Lin Huang asked again.

"It really seems to be working!" Lin Xin sent her consciousness into her inner world for a moment before responding. "The Godhead automatically disintegrated in my inner world. Not only is there a lot of Divine Power surging from it, but it's also leaving behind a lot of inheritance memories. One Godhead doesn't seem to be enough though..."

As soon as Lin Xin finished speaking, Lin Huang, who was standing to one side, immediately grabbed a handful of Virtual God rank-1 Godheads and brought them out.

"These Godheads ought to satiate you; it just depends on many you can eat."

Lin Xin took the entire batch of Godheads, tossed them into her mouth one by one, and swallowed them quickly as if she were eating jelly beans.

She ate nine Godheads in a row before she stopped.

"It seems like it won't be much longer. I can feel that the Divine Power within me is at saturation point; I need to go home and begin closed-door cultivation!"

After she finished speaking, she handed the remaining Godheads back to Lin Huang.

"Hold onto them yourself—what if you need them later?" Lin Huang did not take the Godheads; instead, he handed his sister a storage ring. "In addition to the rank-1 to rank-9 Virtual God Godheads in here, there are also some Divine Crystals. Go ahead and use them first for now."

"Thank you, Brother!" After Lin Xin had thanked Lin Huang, she turned with a trace of urgency and departed in a great hurry.

She could not wait to advance to virtual god-level.

'This girl—her constitution is really enviable.' As he watched Lin Xin departing, Lin Huang could not help sighing in his heart, 'I want to have this kind of constitution. Not only could I have eaten my way to lord level, but I would also definitely have already eaten my way to heavenly god-level!'

## **Chapter 1402: Two Hundred And Sixty-Eight Sword Servants**

After the meeting, Lin Huang was seen on his way back to the Emperor Palace, so the news of Emperor Lin's return spread like wildfire. Even secretly taken photos were posted on the Dynasty internal forum, becoming the hottest news of the day.

Just as Lin Huang arrived at the entrance of the Emperor Palace, he found that a figure was already waiting at the gates.

"Xiao Mo? How come you're here?"

"I've just received the news so I knew that you're back. I figured you would definitely return to the Emperor Palace, so I just waited here." Immediately after Xiao Mo saw the news on the forum, he had gone to wait at the gates of the Emperor Palace at once.

"Come on, we'll chat inside," Lin Huang said as he pushed open the doors of the Palace and walked into the depths of the main hall with Xiao Mo.

"You've changed quite a lot within this one year. Your combat strength is already at Virtual God rank-3 level and your aura is also a lot more stable. You've probably done a fair bit of actual combat training, right?" Lin Huang commented by way of greeting as they walked.

"This year I spent more than half the time in the deep sea area of the Peaceful Ocean." Xiao Mo nodded slightly. "But it's been a bit difficult to advance after rank-3; there are too few monsters above rank-3 in the gravel world."

"When this crisis is resolved, you can go to the great world with me. Over there, virtual god-level is just the starting point."

"That's what I planned." Xiao Mo nodded.

The two went into the depths of the main hall. After they sat down, Lin Huang looked at Xiao Mo with a serious expression. "Is there any particular reason why you came looking for me?"

Xiao Mo was silent for a moment. It seemed as if he was sorting out what he wanted to say; only after that did he speak.

"Ever since I advanced to virtual god-level eleven months ago, all I have to do is fall asleep and I'll have strange dreams," Xiao Mo said and paused. He glanced at Lin Huang before continuing, "The contents of my dreams are all related to the Crow God."

Lin Huang frowned slightly. "Do you remember any concrete specifics of your dreams?"

“The scenes in the dreams are very fragmented and messy. But I saw the Crow God’s will projection on the Peaceful Ocean. He appears to be planning something.”

“Are you certain it’s the Crow God’s will projection?” Lin Huang had his doubts about this because he had personally seen the Crow God’s will projection disappear during battle.

“I’m pretty sure it is. Although he occupies a human body, his aura is far too familiar to me.” Xiao Mo, who had once existed as a Crow Spirit, was naturally familiar with the aura of the Crow God.

“I did actually see the Crow God’s will projection vanish with my own eyes at the time, but I can’t completely rule out that he played a hand with Golden Cicada Molting.” After Lin Huang considered things for a while, he felt there might be a possibility that the Crow God’s will was still alive. “So you spent the better part of the year in the Peaceful Ocean to try and find him?”

“Yes. For one thing, it’s to verify whether or not my dreams were true. For another, I also want to dispose of him in case he causes even more problems. I’ve also considered the fact that I’ve advanced to virtual god-level and resources are limited in the gravel world. Even if his combat level is higher than mine, it can’t be that much higher. If I can’t beat him, I can always escape. Also, I only have to ascertain that he really is alive; there’s no need for me to face him head-on alone. I can absolutely ask Huang Tianfu for some virtual god-level helpers and join forces to kill him!”

Xiao Mo was afraid that if his dreams were just dreams and had nothing to do with reality, hastily asking for backup from Huang Tianfu would be rather awkward. Therefore he thought that he would first locate the Crow God’s will projection, confirm that he still existed, and then obtain reinforcements.

“You probably didn’t find him, did you?” Lin Huang guessed.

“No...” Xiao Mo shook his head, “I suspect that he might be able to spy on my movements in reverse. In the past six months I’ve located at least seven or eight sea areas in the Peaceful Ocean that are extremely similar to my dreams—but after searching according to what I saw in them, I never once managed to find him.”

“If you can see him, it’s very likely that he can see you too. After all, you used to be a Crow Spirit. For some reason, it is possible to have this kind of spiritual two-way connection with the Crow God.”

Although Xiao Mo did not have concrete evidence to prove that whatever had happened in his dreams was real, Lin Huang still believed that the lad might have established a certain special connection with the Crow God.

“How about this—I’ll get a few people to go with you to the Peaceful Ocean and they’ll help you solve this matter of the Crow God.” Lin Huang felt that it was time to release the Sword Servants.

“But what if my dreams are just dreams and have nothing to do with reality—won’t they have gone all the way for nothing?” Xiao Mo was still a little embarrassed.

“It’s okay, if it ends up being nothing, they can consider it a holiday,” Lin Huang said and summoned all the two hundred and sixty-eight Sword Servants within the scope of his authorization.

After elevating to virtual god-level, his control authorization over the Sword Servants had also increased—now he could summon all the Swords Servants ranked after the number one hundred.

When he saw more than two hundred individuals appearing at the same time, Xiao Mo was taken aback at first. Once he sensed the terrifying aura of the group, however, the expression on his face instantly turned to one of shock.

All of the two hundred and sixty-eight Swords Servants were affected in combat strength by Lin Huang; their actual combat abilities were now at third-rank true god-level. Even if their auras were not openly displayed, it was enough to shock all the virtual god-level powerhouses.

“Lord Swordmaster!”

Once all the Swords Servants had been summoned, they greeted Lin Huang in unison immediately.

“This is the gravel world which has incomplete rules. The highest combat strength that can be accommodated here is only Virtual God rank-9. If you want to move around freely, you’ll have to temporarily seal your combat strength at Virtual God rank-9.

“If you don’t want to stay in the gravel world, you can also return to the Great Heaven Territory first. Once I return to the great world, I’ll summon you again.”

After Lin Huang finished speaking, not a single person mentioned returning to the Great Heaven Territory. They all sat down one by one and sealed their combat strength.

These two hundred Swords Servants—Swords101 to 300—had just left the Great Heaven Territory for the first time in hundreds of thousands of years. Now that they had been released, naturally, they wanted to stay longer and take in more of what was outside the Great Heaven Territory.

As for the other sixty-eight people—Sword301 and the rest—although they had been released in the God Territory previously, they had stayed for less than a month. They were also much more curious about the gravel world that they were about to explore.

Since the gravel world had rule restrictions, even if their combat strength was sealed at Virtual God rank-9, they were still top-tier in terms of combat strength. So, without any hesitation, everyone sealed their abilities right away.

“These people are...” Only after hearing that everyone was going to seal themselves at Virtual God rank-9 did Xiao Mo realize that these two hundred over people were True Gods.

“They are members of the organization that I established in the great world,” Lin Huang briefly explained, “Although the organization has not been officially established yet.”

“They are all True Gods?” Even though he was seeing it with his own eyes, Xiao Mo still felt slightly incredulous.

“They are all True Gods.” Lin Huang nodded.

It did not take long for the Sword Servants to complete the sealing of their abilities, keeping their combat levels at Virtual God rank-9. The faint, ever-present sense of rejection from this world that they felt from before had finally faded.

“Who among you is good at tracking and investigation?” Lin Huang asked the group of Sword Servants in front of him.

As soon as he finished speaking, more than a dozen people raised their hands one after the other.

“Alright then, it will be the twelve of you. Take a trip to the Peaceful Ocean with Xiao Mo and take care of this issue with the Crow God,” Lin Huang glanced at the others as he spoke, “In this gravel world, I have two organizations under my command. One is called Dynasty and the other is called Misery. I would like to have another twenty people remain here to temporarily join these two groups, ten per organization. Those who join will be treated as highest-level guest officials and they will also be able to voluntarily participate in the high-level meetings of both organizations...”

Before Lin Huang could even finish speaking, a large number of Swords Servants raised their hands immediately.

He glanced over the assembly; at least more than 80% of Swords Servants had raised their hands at the first instance.

“Sword101, Sword102, both of you select a team of ten people each. Pay attention to how their abilities match.”

It took less than two minutes for the two Sword Servants to quickly form two teams.

“The rest of you will be led by Sword 103 as the team leader. In this gravel world, form a Sword Alliance.

“The mission that I entrust to all of you is this—to find people with a talent for Sword Dao in the gravel world. Get them to join the Sword Alliance and train them into powerful sword cultivators!”

### **Chapter 1403: Old Friends**

The formation of the Sword Alliance was not simply a whim that had suddenly occurred to Lin Huang.

The long-term plan that Bloody had drawn up included cultivating talented young geniuses as an inherent part of it.

However, the suggestion that Bloody had put forward at the time was to let Dynasty and Misery recruit more young blood.

Lin Huang had also not yet become heir to the Great Heaven inheritance.

Now that he had obtained the Great Heaven inheritance along with the support of several hundred Sword Servants, he saw this as an opportunity to do something for sword cultivation and train up even more excellent Sword Dao cultivators.

This was how the idea of imitating Great Heaven and forming a pure sword cultivator organization had emerged.

However, unlike Great Heaven who directly recruited powerful sword cultivators as his subordinates, Lin Huang hoped that he could do more. He aimed to train more sword cultivators from the grassroots, and discover more sword cultivator talents and geniuses.

Of course, he had not given up the idea of training up other non-sword cultivator novices. Neither Dynasty nor Misery had stopped recruiting newcomers.

In all honesty, when they heard that Lin Huang was about to form a Sword Alliance, almost all the Sword Servants' eyes lit up. They had not expected Lin Huang and Great Heaven to have similar visions; in fact, the new swordmaster cast his sights even further.

After he had arranged Xiao Mo's affairs and where all the Sword Servants would go, Lin Huang contacted Huang Tianfu again to tell him about the Sword Servants taking up residence, and then asked for a portal.

Although Huang Tianfu was rather astonished by the Sword Servants settling in, he did not raise any objections.

After receiving the portal from Huang Tianfu, Lin Huang immediately led a team of ten Sword Servants across the portal threshold and appeared at the Misery headquarters.

Over on Misery's side, Zhi Ji and the others had known about the news of Lin Huang's return from very early on.

They were not surprised that Lin Huang had appeared. It was only that the ten Sword Servants were all unfamiliar faces and each of them had an astonishing aura, which made it difficult for everyone in Misery to ignore their existence.

"Zhi Ji, summon all the Red Robes for a meeting in conference room No. 1!"

Lin Huang finished speaking and walked toward the meeting room right away with the ten Sword Servants.

Zhi Ji let the other Red Robes hurry to catch up while he began contacting the other Red Robes one by one.

Ten minutes later, all fifteen Red Robes from Misery had arrived.

However, when the Red Robes saw that there were ten unfamiliar faces in the conference room, they vaguely anticipated that Lin Huang might be making a big move this time.

"From today onward, these ten individuals will be official guests of Misery, enjoying the same privileges and authority of the Red Robes." Lin Huang gestured to the ten Sword Servants standing behind him.

It was not hard for Zhi Ji and the others to sense that these ten individuals were all Virtual God rank-9s. With fellows at this level of combat strength joining Misery, the organization's overall abilities would naturally be greatly improved. However, the Red Robes also harbored a great many worries within their hearts. They were afraid that Lin Huang was planting these ten people within the organization to remove the current Red Robes from power.

"You don't need to arrange positions for them. If the ten of them need anything, do cooperate as much as possible on Misery's side," Lin Huang finished speaking, turned his head, and said to the ten Sword Servants, "The formal meeting will begin next. The ten of you can stay if you want to sit in. If you don't want to, you're free to do whatever you want."

After hearing Lin Huang's latter comment, many Bloody Robes, including Zhi Ji, were secretly relieved.



They had originally assumed that Lin Huang had brought these ten individuals along to take the place of the existing Bloody Robes and slowly remove the current upper levels from power.

However, not only had he not arrange for any positions for the newcomers, but they also had the choice to listen in on the meeting or not, which proved that Lin Huang really did not intend for these ten people to take over Misery.

As several Sword Servants got up and left, the initially weighty atmosphere in the meeting room lightened up considerably.

“Zhi Ji, tell me about Misery’s expansion over the last year...”

Lin Huang very quickly brought up the main topic of the meeting.

The meeting with Misery ended after more than half an hour.

Unlike the people of Dynasty, the people of Misery were also curious about Lin Huang’s trip to the great world but no one ventured to ask about it.

Lin Huang only spoke briefly about what he had seen and heard in the great world, emphasizing that “virtual god-level is only the starting point of cultivation”.

After setting down the next stage of development for Misery, Lin Huang left the ten Sword Servants behind and returned to Emperor City on his own.

As soon as he returned to Emperor City, his communicator suddenly began vibrating.

When he pulled up the communication web page, it was a group message from a social media platform. The sender was Yi Zheng and he had tagged Lin Huang.

This group was a small one established by Lin Huang before he left the gravel world. Basically, all his friends were in it.

Not only were Fatty, Yi Zheng, and Leng Yuexin in it, but Chan Dou, Liu Ming, Xiao Mo, and the rest were part of the group as well.

As soon as he clicked on the message to read it, Yizheng sent one sentence, “Are you back?!”

After that, Yi Yeyu and Li Lang immediately followed up with a question mark emoji.

“What’s the situation? Brother Zheng, what news did you get?” Chubby Yin Hangyi asked in a text message.

After some thought, Lin Huang guessed that Yi Zheng must have received the news from the Union Government. After all, his family was in the upper levels of the Union Government’s military department.

Since this sort of thing would come out sooner or later, Lin Huang did not bother covering it up and directly replied to the message in the group.

“I’m back.”

As soon as his message was sent, the group immediately bubbled over with questions.

“Are there many powerhouses in the great world?”

“How have you been in the great world this past year?”

...

Many of their questions were about the great world.

When Lin Huang saw the situation, he simply clicked on the video chat.

Everyone there also joined in the group video chat.

“I haven’t seen all of you in a year, I hope everyone is doing well,” Lin Huang greeted everyone first.

“You’re also aware you haven’t seen us in a year and you won’t even say hello to us when you come back,” Li Lang laughed and teased Lin Huang.

“I was busy. I haven’t been back for a year and there’s a ton of stuff to take care of on Dynasty’s side. I’ve been busy all day and I’ve only just stopped to rest,” Lin Huang explained with a smile.

“If everyone is free in the next two days, let’s find a time to meet up. However, I may only be able to spare a day or two. After the next couple of days, I’ll be preparing to go into closed-door cultivation. I won’t be able to come out for at least three months.”

“Let’s fix it for the next two days then; I’m preparing to go into closed-door cultivation too.” The speaker was Chan Dou, who hardly ever sent a message in the group.

“More and more I’m beginning to feel that I won’t be able to catch up with both of you in my lifetime. I’ll just wait for a good reincarnation in my next life at this rate.” Seeing that Lin Huang and Chan Dou could not go 3 sentences without talking about cultivation, Li Lang almost wanted to give up on his efforts.

The most terrifying kind of person in this world was—a hard-working prodigy.

Lin Huang and Zen Dou were undoubtedly such individuals.

“Reincarnation is also a skill. Just because you want to reincarnate into a good person doesn’t mean that you’ll be able to do so,” Fatty said with a smile.

“Fatty, how’s your store’s business coming along?” Lin Huang immediately asked when he saw Fatty speaking.

“Fatty’s business is doing extremely well. It’s almost becoming a Dynasty cafeteria; we can’t even get a place in the queue when we come to eat,” Yi Yeyu joked with a smile.

“Didn’t I reserve seats for all of you? When did I ever let you all queue up?” Fatty demanded, aggrieved.

At this point, Leng Yuexin’s video feed finally connected.

“It’s good that you’re back. Let me know when you’ve fixed when to meet. I can’t chat much today, I have training later.”

“Alright, go do what you need to do. We’ll let you know later on,” Lin Huang greeted.

Leng Yuexin nodded and disconnected the call after that.

Everyone continued idly chatting with each other for a while before Yi Zheng finally set the time of the gathering.

“We’ll set the meeting for tomorrow then. See you at Fatty’s restaurant in Emperor City at nine o’clock tomorrow morning.”

#### **Chapter 1404: A Gathering Over A Meal**

Fatty had opened his restaurant near Dynasty’s headquarters in Emperor City. Due to his relationship with Lin Huang, its location was fairly superior. It was practically the best location in Emperor City and Dynasty had never collected a single penny for rental.

People from Dynasty often patronized Fatty’s restaurant because of his culinary skills. Fatty also did not collect life crystals as payment for meals; he let Dynasty provide a batch of ingredients every week.

He might have opened this restaurant, but he had not given up on his dream of being a food hunter. Instead, he now realized this dream in a different way.

Fatty no longer hunted for ingredients on his own but obtained them through the people of Dynasty. He was only responsible for preparing the ingredients and turning them into culinary dishes.

Contrary to expectations, this manner of cooperation with the people of Dynasty had improved his cooking skills extremely quickly and his earnings were quite considerable.

His restaurant was often visited by cultivators and his menu basically consisted of specialty ingredients that only food hunters could prepare properly.

The profit in life crystals after one of these meals was equivalent to a few months’ income for other restaurants.

There were even many ordinary people who had heard that the owner of this restaurant was a food hunter. They would patronize the place out of admiration, wishing to try the fabled culinary skills of the food hunters of legend.

This had also led to long queues in the restaurant every day before nine o’clock in the morning. It should be noted that Fatty did not serve breakfast at his restaurant.

However, on this day, Fatty arrived at his shop around eight o’clock in the morning.

Seeing that there was already a line at the door, he smiled and brought out a sign that read ‘Temporarily Closed’.

“My apologies dear patrons, we are closed today. I have booked the space to entertain some friends.” Before the people waiting in line could complain, he continued, “If you are in line now, you are eligible for a 50% discount coupon from the waiter over there. With this coupon, you can enjoy the one-time privilege of a priority seating at any time within this year.”

The people who originally had complaints immediately simmered down and quickly went to the waiter to obtain their coupons.

Not only were they getting a 50% discount, but they also had priority seating privileges—which meant that the next time they came to the restaurant, they would not need to line up as they were doing now.

After seeing to the customers in the queue, Fatty brought out the decorations that he bought last night and assigned a few waiters to decorate the shop.

By the time they were done setting up, it was almost nine o'clock.

Yi Zheng and the others arrived one after the other.

When Lin Huang arrived, everyone was already there except for Leng Yuexin and Chan Dou.

“Where are Xiao Mo and Lin Xin?” Seeing that Lin Huang had come alone, Yi Yeyu asked in some curiosity.

“Xiao Mo is on a mission, Xin Er is in closed-door cultivation.”

Lin Huang glanced at Yi Zheng and his sister. He noted that the two had not changed much; they were still the same, but their combat levels had advanced significantly.

“It seems that both you siblings haven't slacked off this year; the two of you have advanced to imperial-level.”

“This year, our cultivation speed has improved a lot. Also, with so many people to compete against in the Heaven Alliance, we dare not relax.” Yi Zheng shook his head and smiled. After using the Flawless Card, his inherent genius talent and potential had immediately elevated to the level of a super genius. Naturally, he had worked even harder at cultivation after that.

As for Yi Yeyu, she was bidding fair to outstrip her older brother in terms of talent and potential, to the point that her abilities were comparable to the level of the Five Princes, including Chan Dou. Not long after Lin Huang left the gravel world, she had also joined the Heaven Alliance under Yi Zheng's recommendation. After that, she had become the Heaven Alliance's main protégé. In the Genius Union, she was even named one of the Three Goddesses by a large number of male cultivators there. Some time ago, when she broke through to imperial-level and left the Genius Union, many fans even held a farewell party for her at the Stairway Tree.

Of course, Lin Huang did not know about these matters.

Since advancing to imperial-level, he had hardly paid any attention to the affairs of the Genius Union, let alone after he had left the gravel world for a year.

“Indeed, competition makes people more motivated. I initially used Brother Chan as my ideal and worked hard toward that.”

Before Lin Huang came along, the Five Princes were the five insurmountable obstacles for everyone in the Genius Union. At that time, Lin Huang also worked hard toward his goal of becoming like Chan Dou, who was one of the Five Princes.

However, Lin Huang had ended the rule of the Five Princes later on through his own prowess and became the unprecedented Genius Emperor of the entire Genius Union. (He had always used the name “Lin Xie” within the Union.)

After chatting for a bit with Yi Zheng and his sister, Lin Huang quickly turned his attention to Li Lang.

Unlike Yi Zheng and his sister, the changes in Li Lang were considerable. In the previous video call, Lin Huang had noticed that the lad had a buzz cut, but now that he was face-to-face with Li Lang, he realized that his friend’s aura was a lot steadier.

“Are you losing your hair or something?” Lin Huang teased him, laughing.

“You’re the one who’s losing hair! What’s wrong with your eyes? It’s obviously just shaved short,” Li Lang retorted in annoyance.

“I think you didn’t get a buzz cut; you want to become a monk.”

As soon as Lin Huang said this, Yi Yeyu and Yi Zheng hurriedly sent him some pointed looks.

Lin Huang knew right away that he had said the wrong thing, but did not quite understand what had happened.

At this time, Senior Brother Liu Ming took the initiative to defuse the situation.

“All right, stop teasing him about his hair. Why not pick a less sensitive subject, hmm?”

“It’s okay, it’s nothing that can’t be disclosed. It’s over anyway.” Li Lang waved his hand and smiled. “It’s just a breakup, that’s all.”

“Huh?” Only then did Lin Huang understand why Li Lang had not yet broken through to imperial-level. The lad had spent his time conducting a love affair.

“I don’t know who has been posting this message in the group every day for several months—’There will always be sudden encounters and unexpected joys in this world. Of course, there will also be unexpected goodbyes and unrelenting exits’. What an inexplicable saying,” Yi Yeyu grumbled on the side.

Beside her, Yi Zheng hurriedly gave his sister a swat and shook his head at her.

“Why not put your efforts into cultivation? The great world is full of beautiful women. The sooner you advance to virtual god-level, the sooner you’ll get to go to the great world—isn’t that a good thing?” Lin Huang smiled and patted Li Lang on the shoulder.

Lin Huang did not ask for any further details about Li Lang’s situation, but turned to look at his Senior Brother Liu Ming.

Liu Ming’s current combat strength had reached the peak of imperial-level purple gold-rank, and he was only one step away from virtual god-level.

“Senior Brother’s combat strength has improved considerably this year.”

“All thanks to you. After that day, my cultivation talent and potential improved substantially. Initially, I thought that as I got older, the cultivation path would become more and more difficult to follow, but I didn’t expect that my speed of cultivation this year would be even much faster than when I was young.” The elevation of Liu Ming’s talent was naturally the effect of Lin Huang’s Flawless Card. He already had a solid foundation; after the advancement of his potential, not only had his combat strength soared, but his ability had as well.

“How’s the preparation going for your advancement to virtual god-level? Have you targeted a monster?”

“I’ve found one; my preparations are almost complete too. I plan to make a move next week!” Liu Ming had planned it all out from early on.

“Do you need any help? I’ll ask Tianfu to find some people for you.”

“I’d already contacted Huang Tianfu before you came back. The members of the team are all ready to go.”

“That’s good.” Initially, Lin Huang was worried that Liu Ming would be resistant to hunting in a team, but now it seemed that he had over-thought things.

As the few of them chatted, Leng Yuexin and Chan Dou arrived at the scene almost simultaneously at nine o’clock sharp.

Lin Huang noticed that Leng Yuexin’s combat strength had also elevated to imperial-level. It was already at imperial-level crimson gold-rank even, which was a little higher than Yi Zheng and his sister.

As for Chan Dou, he had already advanced to virtual god-level. Although he was only at rank-1, his aura was very stable. Moreover, Lin Huang was also very aware that this fellow’s true abilities were definitely far beyond Virtual God rank-1.

Once everyone had arrived, Fatty began serving up the food.

Everyone chatted while eating and drinking, and the topic soon came around to Lin Huang.

“Lin Huang, what rank is your current combat strength at?” It was Chan Dou who asked this question.

Chan Dou was also at virtual god-level but he could not sense how strong Lin Huang’s aura was at all. However, he was very sure that Lin Huang must have advanced to virtual god-level.

When the other people at the table heard this, they all quietened down, obviously very curious about Lin Huang’s current combat level.

“Currently it’s at rank-3.”

There was no need for Lin Huang to conceal his combat strength in front of this group of friends. Given that there was too big a gap between his actual ability and his combat level, even if any outsiders knew about his actual combat level, it would not affect him much.

“Rank-3...” Chan Dou frowned when he heard Lin Huang’s answer. “How much do you know about the invaders who want to attack the gravel world?”

“I don’t know much. The area corresponding to the space rift is a battlefield between the territory of the Protoss and the Abyssal Tribes. That battlefield is completely accessible; anyone can enter it.” Lin Huang had also asked Bloody the same question, but she had not managed to discover who these intruders might be in the course of her investigations. “Anyway, we can’t openly investigate this matter. The more people who know about it, the more likely that the coordinates of the gravel world will be revealed—which means it’s more likely to come to the attention of the Heavenly Gods or even the Lords.”

“We don’t know who the enemy is. We also don’t know anything about their combat levels or even how many of them there are. A battle like this is really hard to fight.” Chan Dou looked helpless.

“The only thing we can do right now is to improve our own abilities as much as possible!” Lin Huang put forward the only viable countermeasure.

“Alright, today is a gathering of friends—we won’t bring up such heavy topics any more. Let’s talk about other things...” Liu Ming hurriedly smoothed the matter over.

As the topic shifted direction to something much more light-hearted, everyone at the dining table soon fell back into a lively, joyous state of mind, and the gathering of friends finally resumed the original intention of their meetup.

#### **Chapter 1405: Concealed Information**

The meal with old friends lasted until late into the night.

Although Fatty was the head chef, he only prepared a few dishes before he handed over the kitchen to a hired chef and joined in the chitchat.

Lin Huang had also obtained a general understanding of everyone’s situation this year.

Leng Yuexin had also entered the Genius Union right after Yi Zheng and his sister. However, she had joined the Hong Alliance instead. Since she had used the Flawless Card, her talent and potential were not in any way below Yi Yeyu. Since Yi Zheng and his sister had joined the Heaven Alliance, the Hong Alliance had immediately made Leng Yuexin their main protégé for training.

Like Yi Yeyu, Leng Yuexin also rose rapidly in the ranks, becoming one of the Three Goddesses of the Genius Union.

After the Five Princes and the Genius Emperor, Leng Yuexin and Yi Yeyu took the position of two of the Three Queens.

Although Yi Zheng and the other super geniuses were not weak in their abilities, they were still slightly inferior to the Three Queens.

However, the Three Queens did not maintain their name for very long.

Among the Three Queens, Leng Yuexin took the lead and broke through to imperial-level, leaving the Genius Union. Yi Yeyu followed hot on her heels, breaking through to imperial-level after half a month, and leaving the Genius Union as well.

Lin Huang had not expected that the two women would have such fruitful experiences this year.

Apart from the two ladies, everyone else also seemed to have experienced a lot over the last year.

Chan Dou had traveled in search of his memories during this time, cultivating as well. It might have been the follow-up effects of using a Flawless Card in addition to the aid of familiar scenes, but the memories that he had previously lost were now over 90% recovered.

He had even taken the initiative to visit old friends such as Tan Lang and Shen Tao.

Chan Dou also mentioned something strange. The Bug Master named Li Jia had gone missing. He appeared to have vanished without a trace after leaving the Genius Union.

Senior Brother Liu Ming's progress this year was similar to that of Xiao Mo. He had either been hunting monsters or retreating into closed-door cultivation, so his combat strength had soared.

Not only had his combat strength advanced to imperial-level purple gold-rank, but the increase in his Sword Dao had also improved dramatically. He had now reached the limit of level-6 and was half a step away from achieving Sword Dao true meaning.

With his current ability, he would be able to put up a fight even if he encountered a Virtual God rank-1.

Fatty opened his restaurant this year; cooking every day made him happy beyond belief.

With the help of the people in Dynasty, his increase in combat strength and business was smooth sailing—not only that, his life was greatly enriched. Apart from being a little busy, there was nothing else wrong with him.

However, the strange thing was that despite being so busy every day, he had not lost any weight at all.

In comparison, Li Lang probably spent his year more leisurely than the rest.

After using the Flawless Card, his talent and potential had also reached that of a super genius, but his combat level was only at immortal-level rank-7, which was far removed from Yi Zheng. Obviously, his mind had not been very focused on cultivating.

After some small talk, Lin Huang learned that Li Lang had fallen for a girl, but right from the start she had not been very interested in him.

To win this girl's heart, he had changed a lot this year.

The girl had said that she did not like men who wore fancy clothes so he had thrown away all of his clothes from before. The girl had also said that she liked buzz cuts, so he had shaved his hair...

Every day, he would shower various attentions on the object of his affections to try and win her favor. This lasted for a few months but she had finally dumped him regardless.

For around six months after that Li Lang had been in a state of dejection. He slept until at least noon every day, sometimes even until the next night. All along, he had been something of a neat freak but now he gave up completely on keeping his house clean. His bed sheets would be slept on for months without being changed and he did not care when the fruits in the refrigerator were all rotten...

In the end, Yizheng and the others could not take it anymore and forcibly dragged him out of the house...



His state of mind had only just returned to normal over the last two months.

As far as this kind of personal emotional issues were concerned, Lin Huang did not feel it was right for him to express his opinion, so he could only provide a few words of comfort. He encouraged Li Lang to devote himself to cultivation and keep himself busy so that he would not think too much.

...

By the time everyone left Fatty's restaurant, it was almost the wee hours of the morning.

Lin Huang was slightly intoxicated from drinking a lot of wine, so he fell asleep until the next morning.

He had just woken up at around nine in the morning when Mr. Fu sent him a message.

"Let's have breakfast together and catch up while we're at it."

Lin Huang freshened up quickly and headed out immediately.

When Lin Huang arrived at Mrs. Fatty's Soup Dumplings, Mr. Fu, hair up in a small ponytail, was already seated at an open-air table. When he saw Lin Huang, he waved at him.

Lin Huang immediately sat opposite Mr. Fu.

"Now that you're back this time, do you think their dumplings are more delicious?" Mr. Fu asked with a smile.

"Now that you've mentioned it, it does seem that they are." Lin Huang was stunned for a moment after Mr. Fu's words, recalling the taste of the dumplings from before. In comparison, they really did taste better. "I thought it was because I hadn't come back for a year and I'd finally gotten to eat them again."

"I taught the couple a few little tricks," Mr. Fu explained with a smile.

"Oh, so that's why."

For a top food hunter like Mr. Fu, optimizing the preparation of common ingredients was a piece of cake

"After all, I do come here to eat occasionally. They had some flaws in their previous preparation processes so there were always some small regrets whenever I ate their dumplings." Mr. Fu did not make concessions in his expectations of excellence when it came to food.

The two chatted for a while, then Brother Fatty came with the dumplings.

"Mr. Fu, if the dumplings need any further improvement, please do let me know again."

Mr. Fu picked up a dumpling and tasted a mouthful, then nodded, "Using ordinary ingredients to achieve such a result is already the peak of culinary standards. It seems that both of you have been hard at work practicing the method that I've taught you."

"The main thing is that sir teaches well!" Brother Fatty hastened to flatter Mr. Fu, "I'll get back to what I'm doing so I won't bother you."

After Brother Fatty had left, Lin Huang and Mr. Fu both ate the dumplings quietly.

In no time at all, after eating two small steamers of dumplings, Mr. Fu put down his chopstick and set a soundproof barrier around the table.

“At the meeting the day before yesterday, you didn’t elaborate on any information about the invaders. Were you really not able to investigate this properly, or did you deliberately not bring it up?”

Lin Huang also put down his chopsticks and fell silent for a moment before he spoke again.

“It’s true that I was not able to investigate it properly, but I also concealed some information.”

“Can you tell me now?” Mr. Fu asked, staring intently at Lin Huang.

“Previously, we’ve always thought that the world rules of the gravel world are incomplete, and the strength of the dimensional gateway is limited. We assumed that even if the gateway was fully open, at most only low-rank True Gods could come through.

“In fact, this is not the case. When the great world invades the gravel world and its incomplete rules, it will suppress the world will through special means and strengthen the space tunnel. The maximum limit for transmitted combat strength can be increased to ninth-rank true god-level...”

When he heard that, Mr. Fu’s right hand trembled slightly, and his brows creased in a tight frown.

“You’re saying that when the time comes, there will be not only low-rank True Gods but also middle and high-rank ones? There might even be peak-stage ninth-rank True Gods?!”

Lin Huang nodded helplessly.

“Then what should we do now? At present, we have no True Gods at all. Even with the ten Virtual God rank-9s that you brought back, at most, they can only conduct battle formations against the low-rank True Gods. Battle formations are useless if we encounter middle-rank True Gods, much less the high-ranks.”

COMMENT

“I brought back more than ten people; there are two-hundred and sixty-eight of them in total. They are not actually Virtual God rank-9s, but True Gods. However, their abilities are currently sealed.”

“Two hundred and sixty-eight True Gods?” Mr. Fu’s eyes brightened slightly. “What rank?”

“Currently they’re all third-rank.”

“Their combat strength is a bit low...” Mr. Fu could not help sighing, “However, it’s better than nothing.”

“Teacher, you don’t have to worry too much; there’s always a solution. Instead of worrying about what hasn’t happened yet, it is better to focus on the matters at hand. I didn’t tell Tianfu and Zhi Ji about this matter because I was also afraid that they were under too much pressure and the news might cause their mental health to suffer a breakdown.”

“You’re definitely right to handle things this way,” Mr. Fu agreed after hearing what Lin Huang had to say, “If our enemies are only low-rank True Gods, everyone will feel that if we work hard, we might win. But if they find out that our enemies are high-rank True Gods, I am afraid that many people will immediately give up on resistance because they can’t see any hopes of winning.”

“I won’t say anything about this, don’t worry.”

“What are your plans after this?” Mr. Fu asked again.

“I’m going into closed-door cultivation to enhance my combat strength!”

### **Chapter 1406: Closed-Door Cultivation**

After breakfasting with Mr. Fu, Lin Huang returned to the Emperor Palace and immediately notified Huang Tianfu, Zhi Ji, and the Sword Servants that he was going into closed-door cultivation.

Once that was done, he immediately initiated the barrier around the Emperor Palace, entered closed-door cultivation, and began refining the Divine Fire in his body full-force.

Within half a day of Lin Huang’s retreat into closed-door cultivation, the news of His Majesty’s return filtered out from within Dynasty’s inner circle.

For a while, this stirred up a heated discussion on social networking platforms.

After all, a year ago, Lin Huang had always been an influential figure in major social networking platform rankings and media news.

He had left the gravel world for a year and disappeared from public view the entire time. Now that he was back, many people recalled when the major rankings dreaded being dominated by the name “Lin Huang”.

When Lin Huang vanished without a trace, most people did not actually know where he had gone. Then again, he did not disclose the news of his leaving the gravel world; only the upper echelons of the major organizations were aware of this.

Although there were also opinions expressed on the internet that Lin Huang had gone to the great world, not many people were willing to believe it.

This time, however, the individual on the internet who provided the scoop on the Emperor’s return seemed to be someone who knew about the details of the matter.

A post entitled “The Return of The Emperor” not only included the specific date of Lin Huang’s return but also revealed that he had killed a true god-level monster upon his arrival.

In the beginning, replies to this post were all flames, accusing the original poster of making up stories.

However, the news of Lin Huang’s return was verified later on. Not only that, but it was also revealed that the Union Government had asked the major organizations to form a virtual god-level team. However, the authorities had then sent a message stating that the crisis had been resolved

As more and more news appeared, both genuine and fake, everyone gradually began to believe that Lin Huang—who had previously dominated the ranks—had really returned after all.

More and more people also began to believe that Lin Huang had been to the great world.

As a result, a new round of discussion on Lin Huang began on all major social media forums.

One of the most discussed topics was, “What is this great world like—the one that Lin Huang had been to?”

On Dynasty’s side, the upper echelons were practically harassed by the media for a spell.

In the cultivation world, the great world was originally a place that only existed in legend; no one had ever returned after going there.

The media and even other cultivators wanted to find out from Lin Huang what the legendary great world was like.

However, Dynasty’s answer to everyone in the outside world was just a single sentence.

“His Majesty has entered closed-door cultivation; we don’t know when exactly he will emerge.”

Only the Union Government, the Hunter Association, and other top organizations received certain information released by Dynasty.

This piece of information about the great world was part of what Lin Huang had mentioned at the meeting with Dynasty. Before he entered closed-door cultivation, he had specifically told Huang Tianfu that there was no need to conceal this news, as it would help the Union Government and the other top organizations to be aware of the kind of crisis they were about to face.

However, this piece of information also concealed the part that he had mentioned in conversation with Mr. Fu.

After receiving the news about the great world from Dynasty, all the top organizations immediately held a meeting at the first possible instance to discuss further developments and response strategies.

After that, practically all the organizations that received the news made similar decisions.

All imperial-levels, demigods, and Virtual Gods within the organizations began to frantically explore the wastelands and ruins, seizing cultivation resources on a large scale.

Dynasty and Misery were no exceptions.

Once they sensed the anomalies happening in the top organizations, other organizations all began to make inquiries, so more and more people became aware of the information on the great world.

...

While Lin Huang was in closed-door cultivation, Lin Xin was doing the same as well.

She would eat one Godhead every two or three days, and then eat another after the first had assimilated.

After she had eaten twelve Virtual God rank-1 Godheads in a row, she finally began to condense the Godhead within her...

Meanwhile, Xiao Mo had been in the Peaceful Ocean.

With the twelve Sword Servants, he had been searching for the hiding place of the Crow God’s will projection.

The other Sword Servants also adapted to their roles very quickly.

Sword101 and Sword102 became Lin Huang's new bodyguards, and the two continuously kept watch at the entrance of the Emperor Palace.

The twenty Sword Servants who stayed in Dynasty and Misery also found their positions within the organizations. Some participated in various meetings with the upper echelons and even got involved in decision-making, while others did not care about anything and just focused on obtaining cultivation resources.

As for the group of people who formed the Sword Alliance, they began to spread out in various Safety Zones, using a variety of methods to search for young people with Sword Dao talent.

...

In the Emperor Palace, Lin Huang's refining of the Divine Fire went smoothly.

The proportion of Divine Fire being refined was steadily improving every day.

Almost a month later, ten pieces of fourth-rank Divine Fire tinder had been completely refined and integrated.

The Divine Fire within Lin Huang's body transformed again, and the Godhead quickly metamorphosized once more under the Divine Fire's refinement.

After successfully advancing to Virtual God rank-4, Lin Huang did not have the slightest intention of resting. He immediately took out ten pieces of fifth-rank Divine Fire tinder, threw them into his inner world, and started a new round of refining and integration.

...

On the same day, Lin Xin, who was only a few hundred meters away from Lin Huang, successfully condensed her own Godhead in another house.

Amid the sensations of advancing to virtual god-level, Lin Xin vaguely felt that she was dozens of times stronger.

"Have I become this much stronger after advancing to virtual god-level?"

Not only had there been an increase in her combat strength, but her physical body and spiritual strength had also transformed in nature. What surprised and delighted Lin Xin even more was that she seemed to have completely inherited the inheritance memories of the twelve Godheads.

She could even directly use all the skills of the owners of the twelve Godheads.

After elevating to virtual god-level, Lin Xin immediately thought of sharing this good news with her brother. When she pulled up her message page, however, she saw the message that Lin Huang had sent almost over a month ago.

"My brother has also entered closed-door cultivation... Then I'll continue with it to improve my combat effectiveness."

Lin Xin thought for a while and sat back properly.

She took out a Virtual God rank-2 Godhead from the storage space and threw it into her mouth...

...

One month had passed since the news of Lin Huang's return but he never made an appearance. The popularity of his name on major social networking platforms had long since faded. Since the media had not received the desired response, everyone's attention gradually shifted to other topics.

However, what most ordinary cultivators did not know was that while they had been engaged in gossiping, the information that Lin Huang had shared upon his return had allowed all the major organizations to enter an unprecedented state of combat readiness.

Even the organizations that ordinarily had conflicts with each other had temporarily put aside their issues. They began to work hard to improve the overall abilities of the organizations so they could survive the coming war.

The Union Government, the Hunter Association, and other top organizations were racing against time and did not dare to relax...

#### **Chapter 1407: Advancing to Virtual God rank-6!**

As more time passed in the Emperor Palace, Lin Huang fully completed the refining and fusion of the Divine Fire.

As he had no idea when the invasion would happen, he could only race against the clock to improve his combat strength as soon as possible.

In the blink of an eye, two more months passed.

Lin Huang completed the refining and fusion of ten sixth-rank Divine Fire tinders. With the tempering of Divine Fire, the Godhead finally advanced to sixth-rank.

It took him almost three months to increase his combat strength from Virtual God third-rank to the Virtual God sixth-rank.

Since he had not obtained any higher-rank Divine Fire, he could proceed no further in his cultivation to improve his combat strength.

It took more than half an hour for him to adapt to his newly heightened combat strength. Finally, Lin Huang opened the door of the Emperor Palace and officially exited!

After three months of closed-door cultivation, he made his grand return, and his power had made another qualitative leap.

The moment he threw open the gate of the Emperor Palace, Sword101 and Sword102, who had been guarding the door for the past three months, immediately turned around and bowed to him.

Although they did not pry into Lin Huang's cultivation status in the Emperor Palace, as Sword Servants they could naturally sense it every time the swordmaster's combat strength was advanced. After all, every advancement led to their combat strength being unsealed.

Both of them were certain that Lin Huang had raised another three small levels in the short span of three months.

"Thank you for your hard work. I probably won't enter closed-door cultivation again any time soon. You can move around freely now."

Lin Huang gave the two a small nod.

However, the two did not leave. Instead, they walked to Lin Huang's side, a short distance behind, and silently assumed the roles of bodyguards.

This had been mentioned by Sword1. The swordmaster must have a minimum of two bodyguards with him at all times.

Lin Huang noted the development but said nothing.

As his Divine Telekinesis unfolded, he found Huang Tianfu and the others, and Lin Huang appeared in his office in a flash.

"Your Majesty!"

Lin Huang's silent appearance startled Huang Tianfu for a moment, but he quickly regained his composure.

"Did anything happen during my three months of closed-door cultivation?"

"Nothing significant."

Huang Tianfu sorted out his thoughts before he spoke again.

"We have followed your instructions and shared the information of the great world with the Union Government and other top organizations. After that, the news leaked further. Now, more than 80% of the transcendent cultivators have obtained the relevant information and knowledge about the kind of enemy that they will be facing. Therefore, in the past few months, everyone has been vigorously acquiring resources and improving their ability in all aspects.

"The major organizations have also relaxed their standards and began to accept more newcomers. A new wave of expansion and development has commenced. Many people who were originally scattered have also joined the organizations.

"Someone has been keeping watch at the Abyss Brink—nothing much has changed. But for us, no news is good news."l

"There is one more thing related to you, Your Majesty."

"What is it?" Lin Huang asked, a little surprised.

“The news of your return from the great world was leaked and it became a trending topic. Basically, all cultivators know about it now.” Huang Tianfu snuck a peek at Lin Huang but did not see any change in his expression.

“If it’s leaked, so be it. People will know sooner or later anyway. It doesn’t affect me.” Lin Huang really did not care about this kind of thing.

“The rest are small matters. Now, nearly all the organizations are busy scrambling for resources, and those that are in conflict have agreed to cooperate under the influence of external pressure. No one is doing anything at all. I would go so far as to say that it has been the calmest few months in the past 100 years.”

“How has Dynasty been these past few months?” Lin Huang asked.

“As we were the first to get the news and therefore were the most prepared, we currently occupy the most wastelands and ruins among all of the organizations. In terms of expanding, our recruitment of newcomers is inferior only to the Hunter Association and the Union Government. We are ranked third. Some casuals with fair ability have also joined us.”

“How about Misery?” Lin Huang pressed.

“The wastelands and ruins occupied by Misery rank second, but their expansion is slightly slower than ours. I don’t know much about the specifics, so you may still have to ask Zhi Ji.”

Lin Huang gave a small nod, then his Divine Telekinesis swept the area. He found that the building where Lin Xin lived was still open, and she was not outside.

“Xin Er is still in closed-door cultivation?”

“Yes, she has yet to come out.” Huang Tianfu nodded.

“This girl, would she get to Virtual God rank-9 in one go...” Lin Huang thought about it inside his head.

“Xiao Mo is also not back?”

“No.” Huang Tianfu shook his head.

Lin Huang frowned slightly...

...

The Peaceful Ocean was so vast that it occupied more than 70% of the entire gravel world. It was also connected to eight of the twelve Safe Zones.

The environment under the sea was more complicated and constantly changing, especially in the deep sea area.

Xiao Mo and the twelve sword servants dispersed and searched for three months without any results.

During this time, he also gradually developed a way to control his dreams under the guidance of a Sword Servant.

He saw more and more images about the will projection of the Crow God.



However, he had no doubt that the Crow God could also spy on him.

That was why every time that he found its hiding place, when he rushed over he was always a step too late.

Even Xiao Mo himself began to wonder if the scenes he saw in his dream were just illusions and had nothing to do with reality.

After three months, he was exhausted both physically and mentally.

Suddenly, a tyrannical Divine Telekinesis swept through the area without the slightest bit of subtlety. A sense of horror gripped Xiao Mo's heart and the hair on his body stood on end.

"What a strong Divine Telekinesis!" The Divine Telekinesis was so powerful that it was suffocating and he knew the person it belonged to must be at least a true god-level powerhouse.

As soon as he felt it, he noticed that a ray of Divine Telekinesis was suddenly locked onto him.

Before he had time to react, a figure appeared a short distance away.

Just when his scalp started to go numb and he got ready to flee, he got a clear view of the figure.

"Your Majesty?!"

Lin Huang appeared directly in front of Xiao Mo.

"I finally found you."

"You... why are you here?" Xiao Mo reacted after a stunned pause.

"I just came out of closed-door cultivation today. After I found out that you haven't been back in three months, I came to have a look. After all, there is no communication signal in most of the Peaceful Ocean, so I have no choice but to find you myself." Lin Huang explained exasperatedly. If the communicator had been able to reach Xiao Mo, he would not have bothered to make this trip.

"Have you not found that guy after three months?" He did not beat around the bush.

"No. I suspect that he spied on me much more than I spied on him. He might know what we said, what we did, where we went, and what we communicated about. As such, we were always a step too late, we couldn't even catch his shadow. I'm starting to wonder if the dream fragments I saw were real or if they were just hallucinations created under the influence of the Crow God."

"If that's the case..." Lin Huang touched his chin and went deep in thought for a moment, then raised his head to look at Xiao Mo. "Are there any items with the aura of the Crow God on you?"

Xiao Mo considered the question. "My Divine Power is of the same origin as the Crow God and there should be a certain degree of similarity in aura. Is that sufficient?"

"We can try." Lin Huang nodded.

Xiao Mo immediately stretched out his finger and exerted a ray of Divine Power.

The ink-black Divine Power curled like a small snake, clung to Lin Huang's fingers, and finally stopped in Lin Huang's palm.

After Lin Huang's Divine Telekinesis was released, he nodded after giving the ray of Divine Power a thorough scan.

"Let's try it first. If it doesn't work then we'll think of something else."

As he spoke, the invincible Divine Telekinesis swept out again. It swept across the entire Peaceful Ocean almost instantly.

After a while, the corners of Lin Huang's mouth twitched upward. "Found him!"

### **Chapter 1408: Do You Still Think So Now?**

Looking at the extremely familiar environment in front of him, Xiao Mo was slightly taken aback.

"This is the location where I first saw the will projection of the Crow God in my dreams..."

Lin Huang brought Xiao Mo along and Space Warped to the place where his Divine Telekinesis had zoned in on the will projection of the Crow God. It turned out to be the first place where Xiao Mo had seen the will projection of the Crow God from his dreams a few months ago.

When he came to the Peaceful Ocean for the first time to explore the will projection of the Crow God back then, the first area that he searched was here.

Unexpectedly, the place where Lin Huang's Divine Telekinesis was locked in now was the exact same place.

Xiao Mo's Divine Telekinesis gave the surroundings a quick sweep but he still found nothing.

He could only sense the presence of a virtual god-level sea king species in the depths of the trench ahead, but it did not have even a shred of the Crow God's aura.

"I can only sense one Sea King species..." Xiao Mo looked at Lin Huang rather doubtfully.

"On the surface, there is only one sea king species here." Lin Huang said as he walked to the edge of the cliff above the trench. He looked down and shouted, "Come out! We have already found you at your doorstep. It's meaningless to keep hiding."

As Xiao Mo lay baffled, a voice suddenly came from the trench.

"I didn't expect to be found by both of you."

As if on cue, the ground on the seabed began to tremor violently.

A moment later, a huge behemoth slowly protruded its gigantic head from the depths of the trench. After it exceeded the height of Lin Huang and Xiao Mo by over a hundred meters, it looked down on them.

This was a monster similar to Hydrophiinae on earth, but it was many times larger—its head alone was hundreds of meters tall.

The red and purple stripes seemed to be a bold declaration saying “I am venomous”.

However, Lin Huang’s line of sight was not on this monster, but directly on top of it.

A lone figure stood there. Although it was easy to overlook in contrast to the huge sea king species, the eyesight of a cultivator noticed it easily.

However, Xiao Mo was focused only on the sea king species in front of him after he sensed the aura of the Crow God.

The figure stood on top of the head of the sea king species, condescendingly gazing upon Lin Huang and Xiao Mo below him. There was no hint of embarrassment and fear after being discovered by the enemy. Instead, he was calm and at ease.

“The Emperor of Dynasty... I underestimated the speed of your ascent.”

Lin Huang and Xiao Mo looked at each other, and both of them knew that the voice was that of the Crow God from more than a year ago.

Lin Huang’s identity was announced in one sentence. Obviously, for the past year, the Crow God had not stopped scouring for information from the outside world.

“Since I entered the path of cultivation, many people have underestimated the speed of my rise. You are not the first and you will not be the last.” Lin Huang said it without humility; after all, it was the truth.

“On the contrary, you have been hiding in the Peaceful Ocean for more than a year and it seems that you have not made much progress. The combat level is barely at Virtual God rank-2, and the possessed body seems to have an average talent and potential. I’m quite curious why you haven’t made a move for over a year. What were you wasting your time on?”

Lin Huang’s words were enigmatic and had a mocking tone, his objective was very simple. He wanted to provoke his adversary and squeeze information out of him.

“Lin Huang, don’t think that you’re so great just because you advanced to Virtual God rank-3. In the great world, virtual god-level is just cannon fodder, and there is essentially no difference whether it is rank-1 or rank-9. If you have actually been to the great world, you should know this well.”

“As for my physical body’s combat level and talent potential, it matters not. The purpose of my will projection is not to defeat all the powerhouses in this gravel world nor to dominate this world.”

“So what is your real mission?” Lin Huang asked in a supposed offhanded tone.

“You will know soon...” The Crow God smiled grimly.

As his voice fell, the sea king species under him suddenly moved, and its body began to rise rapidly.

At this time, Lin Huang finally noticed something abnormal.

“This spatial fluctuation...”

Lin Huang used his Divine Telekinesis to scan and discovered that the deepest part of this huge trench, which was previously covered by the sea king species, actually had a huge space crack.

The space crack had even been completely firmly formed, connecting a space gateway to the unknown.

“Is that a dimensional gateway?!” Lin Huang had just completed his Divine Telekinesis sweep and Xiao Mo also discovered the abnormality of the trench below.

“Didn’t you want to know what I did this year?” The Crow God cackled wildly. “Well, here is your answer!”

“Come out!”

With a loud shout from the Crow God, a huge amount of Divine Power began to pour into the space crack.

The connected space gateway began to glow with a dazzling white light.

At the sight of this, Xiao Mo’s expression changed drastically. However, beside him, Lin Huang looked impassive, as if nothing happened.

In the next instant, several true god-level auras emerged from the gateway.

Within the blink of an eye, several figures struggled to squeeze out of the space crack.

Different from the undead that Lin Huang encountered in the Abyss Brink previously, these true god-level monsters only struggled in the space crack for a short moment before successfully descending into the gravel world.

Seeing the arrival of these monsters, Lin Huang narrowed his eyes slightly.

The Crow God was obviously familiar with the process of invading the gravel world and he directly suppressed the resistance and rejection of the world will by special means.

The six monsters that descended included two of each from rank-1 and rank-3, with the true god-level combat strength completely preserved.

Sensing the aura of the six monsters, Xiao Mo’s face went a little pale but he held his ground.

“Lin Huang, run away, I will stop them!”

He was so nervous that he even forgot to address Lin Huang as His Majesty.

However, Lin Huang, who was standing next to him, took a step forward, directly blocking the aura released by the six True Gods.

Xiao Mo, who was now a bag of nerves, suddenly could no longer sense any aura on the six monsters.

“I thought you would outright come by yourself, but I didn’t expect you to be so cautious.” Lin Huang glanced over the six True Gods and looked directly at the Crow God again, ignoring the threat posed by the six True Gods. “You just sent six small potatoes out to explore.”

“Although it’s only six small potatoes, it’s more than enough to deal with the likes of you two.” The Crow God smiled triumphantly, obviously confident he had won the game.

“Is that so?” The expression on Lin Huang’s face was still extremely calm, and it did not look staged.

At this moment, the six monsters collapsed to the ground almost at the same time, and their vitality quickly disintegrated into nothingness.

The Crow God’s expression stiffened slightly. He swept through with Divine Telekinesis and noticed that all the six monsters had an extra sword mark between their eyebrows.

Not only had their lives been taken, but even their souls were slashed by this sword.

“Do you still think so now?” Lin Huang asked with a faint smile, raising his head to address the Crow God.

### **Chapter 1409: A Game**

“What happened? Did he do that?!”

When he saw the six true god-level monsters being killed within seconds, the Crow God was thunderstruck. With his Virtual God rank-2’s combat strength, his vision was not fast enough to keep up with Lin Huang’s movements.

‘He’s just a Virtual God rank-3, no matter how much of a genius he is, he can’t have the ability to kill a True God...So, there is only one possibility—someone must have made a move surreptitiously just now. The person who did it must be extremely proficient in assassination to be able to instantly kill two third-rank True Gods in a second. Whoever that is must be at least a fourth-rank True God, or even stronger...’

Lin Huang’s combat strength under the guise of Thousand Face was still Virtual God rank-3, so the Crow God and Xiao Mo naturally thought that he was just a Virtual God rank-3.

However, in the Crow God’s mind, he knew it was impossible to kill a True God within seconds, especially a third-rank True God. Therefore, he made a snap conclusion—Lin Huang had a true god-level powerhouse behind him, and the person was at least a middle-rank True God.

After thinking about it carefully for some time, the expression on Crow God’s face became uglier and uglier.

“The first batch of six True Gods sent here to explore the path died. Could it be caused by the instability of the space gateway?”

The six small potatoes that were supposed to explore the path were killed instantly. The Crow God, who was in the great world, could sense that they had died, but he had no way to know what caused it.

In the current situation, an unstable space gateway was the most reasonable explanation for the death of the six.

The Crow God had carried out a thorough investigation and concluded that there was no True God in the gravel world.

If he had only sent a first-rank True God to explore the path who was subsequently killed by the virtual god-level prodigies in the gravel world or was ambushed and done in by a group of Virtual Gods, the possibility of this situation was not impossible.

However, he had sent over six True Gods this time, and those with the highest combat strength even included two third-rank True Gods. There should be no gravel world that could cultivate any virtual god-level geniuses that could kill a third-rank True God. And even if they were besieged and ambushed by a group of virtual god-levels, six True Gods were unlikely to be killed instantly.

Therefore, the only reasonable explanation for the death of the six True Gods was an accident caused by the unstable space gateway.

A Dimensional Storm might have struck and shattered the six; it was also possible that there was a Dimensional Whirlpool in the passage which swallowed everyone in it; he also could not rule out a Dimensional Tide happening which swept them all away...

However, these most logical inferences were not the truth.

Lin Huang naturally thought of the same things that the Crow God will projection thought of. The reason why he killed the six small potatoes that were sent to explore the path in seconds was to make the Crow God doubt himself.

If the Crow God was certain that there was no problem with the space gateway, he might assemble a large army and descend, which was not an ideal situation for Lin Huang.

The major organizations in the gravel world already had their hands full with the upcoming invasion that was about to descend on the Abyss Brink.

If a wave of invaders from the Crow God came in advance, it would greatly deplete the number of virtual god-level powerhouses in the gravel world. At that time, once the war of the Abyss Brink breaks out, things will fall into greater chaos.

To avoid this disaster, Lin Huang hoped that he could resolve the matter of the Crow God on his own.

Different from the space gateway that the invaders were already familiar with in the Abyss Brink, this space gateway on the Peaceful Ocean seabed was obviously just completed in the past few days, and had not even been operated at all.

The six True Gods that were just transported over were the first trial run by the Crow God to confirm the safety of the gateway.

Lin Huang's strategy was very simple. As long as he created the illusion that the trial operation had failed several times and coaxed the Crow God into believing that there was a problem with the space gateway, he will be in no hurry to gather an army to come down.

Once it was confirmed that the space gateway was faulty, the Crow God will undoubtedly postpone the invasion plan and find a way to fix the issue.

This delay would be enough for Lin Huang to destroy the transmission anchor point of the space gateway on the Peaceful Ocean seabed.

After that, as long as the will projection of the Crow God and his other subordinates were taken care of, cutting off any possibility of them setting up a space anchor point again, the invasion plan of the Crow God was basically nipped in the bud.

Just when the Crow God's will projection showed his worry about whether or not to give up on this invasion, the space gateway suddenly fluctuated again.

"Here they come again!" Xiao Mo stared at the space gateway, more anxious than ever.

Only Lin Huang remained calm.

Crow God making a second attempt was completely within his expectations.

The white gleams of the space gateway were prosperous and there was only one aura that teleported over this time.

The Crow God and Xiao Mo could not clearly tell who was teleporting over or what combat level it was.

Then, the head of the figure spun in a high arc and a huge headless corpse fell to the ground...

The Crow God dispatched only one person this time, a fourth-rank True God, and it was an Ankylosaurus with amazing defenses.

Seeing the Ankylosaurus that was teleported over had its head cut off by a single wave of the sword, the Crow God was even more shocked.

There was still an aura that remained on the corpse of the Ankylosaurus. He could clearly sense that it was a fourth-rank True God. In terms of defense power alone, this monster was stronger than most fifth-rank monsters. Even a sixth-rank True God was unlikely to easily kill it within seconds.

However, the reality was right in front of his eyes—the Ankylosaurus was beheaded easily.

The Crow God was beginning to become frightened. "Is it possible that the person behind Lin Huang is a high-rank True God?! But in this gravel world with incomplete rules, how can a high-rank True God survive for such a long time?!"

Crow God's back was dripping with cold sweat, and starting to feel that the situation in this gravel world might be more complicated than he ever expected.

At this moment, Xiao Mo's nervousness was turning into confusion.

He turned to look at Lin Huang but instantly dispelled the thought that had just flashed in his mind. Even if he was confident in Lin Huang's ability, he still could not believe that Lin Huang did this. Both he and the Crow God came to the same conclusion—someone made a move from behind the scenes!

Only Lin Huang maintained an expressionless front.

However, he knew in his heart that by killing the second wave of explorers, the job was already more than half done.

The Crow God replaced the six explorers with only one explorer in the second wave in order to test the stability of the space gateway. Previously, when he sent six of them, there was a possibility that the

number of transfers affected the stability of the dimensional gateway. If even one explorer could not be transported successfully, it could only mean that there was a huge problem with the transmission channel.

Moreover, he deliberately chose an Ankylosaurus with strong defenses to eliminate the possibility of the first wave of pathfinders being beheaded. Even though the Ankylosaurus was only at fourth-rank in combat strength, its defense was comparable to that of the sixth-rank monster. Even if it really met a sixth-rank True God, it could easily hold its ground for half an hour.

For it to be killed within seconds, there were only two possibilities.

One was that this gravel world had a powerful high-rank True God.

The other was that there was a major problem with the space gateway, and the Ankylosaurus was torn apart by the space rules.

The Crow God, who was far away in the great world, obviously thought that the latter was far more likely.

“Will he give up or send a third wave...” Lin Huang stared at the dimensional gateway and patiently waited for the result of this round of the game...

#### **Chapter 1410: Fight Me One-on-one If You Can!**

After the Ankylosaurus was killed, it took more than ten seconds for the dimensional gateway to finally transmit a spatial fluctuation once again.

Lin Huang, who had been staring intently at the dimensional gateway, did not even wait to see what monster was being teleported before he started attacking again.

He knew that this wave was critical.

After completing this kill, the Crow God's plans would have been thwarted for the third time. There would be a high probability that he would not try to probe again for a fourth time, and it was even more likely that he would completely give up on this invasion.

In the void, the body of the sword turned into a purple electric light and shot through the air.

Lin Huang did not hold back in this attack.

Even though the Ankylosaurus from just now was a fourth-rank True God, it had terrifying defensive power that was comparable to a sixth-rank True God.

However, as even an explorer of such high caliber was subdued instantly, the third wave of explorers sent by the Crow God would naturally be even stronger and may possess other special abilities.

Coming to that assumption, Lin Huang did not dare to hold back in his attack even in the slightest.

Sword Dao true meaning, Elemental Enlightenment, and God Rule Power were compounded into one.



The point of the blade turned into a purple thunder light and instantly penetrated through the curtain of white light from the dimensional gateway that had yet to disperse. In the next second, a corpse that had been sliced into two dropped to the ground.

Lin Huang only realized after looking at the fallen corpse that what he had killed was a Void Hunter.

A Void Hunter was a Void-type monster that specialized in Spatial Law.

Judging from the residual aura from the corpse, the Void Hunter's combat strength was equivalent to the seventh-rank true god-level.

Lin Huang now had a general idea of what the Crow God's intentions were.

As the previous explorers were defeated twice consecutively, the Crow God had therefore sent out this Void Hunter for the third round.

On one hand, this Void Hunter's combat power level was at seventh-rank, and its overall strength was much stronger than the Ankylosaurus from before. Moreover, it specialized in spatial-related powers, so even if it encountered a ninth-rank enemy, it would not have been killed easily, let alone within seconds.

On the other hand, if there really was a problem with the dimensional gateway, then the survival rate of the Void Hunter would be much higher than other types of monsters due to its spatial powers. As long as the Void Hunter was able to make it back alive, they would be able to identify the problem with the dimensional gateway and determine if it could be used. However, if even the Void Hunter could not survive the trip, that could only mean there was a major problem with this dimensional gateway and there was no hope in using it.

However, during this third wave of probing, the Crow God miscalculated once again.

He would never have thought that there was someone in the gravel world that would be able to kill a seventh-rank true god-level Void Hunter.

He would much less have imagined that there was someone in the gravel world who was calculating his moves since the beginning, guiding him toward the wrong train of thought, and allowing him to make the wrong conclusions again and again.

Seeing that the Void Hunter was killed within seconds, the Crow God's will projection was in complete disbelief.

The Crow God's will projection possessed a big chunk of the Crow God's memories, so he knew very well that this Void Hunter was an expert at dodging attacks. An average ninth-rank True God would have had a hard time merely killing it, let alone annihilating it within seconds.

But the person behind Lin Huang was able to do it, and instantaneously killed the Void Hunter the moment it was teleported over.

"Could there be a ninth-rank behind him?!"

As he considered the possibility, the Crow God's will projection was a little depressed. His Primordial form's original combat power was only at ninth-rank true god-level, and within the ninth-rank, his strength was nowhere near the top; it could only be considered upper-middle level at most.

Now, it seems that the person behind Lin Huang was also a ninth-rank True God, whose strength was not weaker than his Primordial form's. In fact, it may even be even stronger.

All of a sudden, he felt that conquering this gravel world would be more difficult than he had initially imagined.

Even if his Primordial form came here in person, it would be embarrassing if he ended up unable to go against this ninth-rank True God opponent that was behind Lin Huang. Furthermore, the prior preparations that he had been working so hard on all this time would all go to waste.

However, after thinking about it carefully, he soon discovered another problem.

"In this gravel world with incomplete rules, there's no way a True God would be able to stay here for long. Even if there are special means to obstruct the world will, it would only be temporary. Moreover, the higher the True God's combat power level, the more they will be rejected by the world will, and the shorter the duration that they can stay. If I base my calculations according to my Primordial form, then if a ninth-rank true god-level powerhouse were to come to this part of the gravel world, they would only be able to stay here for about half a month at most."

Thinking of this, the Crow God's will projection felt that he had made a breakthrough.

"The powerhouse behind Lin Huang can only stay here for a limited amount of time. As long as we invade after his time is up, he won't be a problem anymore..."

However, what he did not know was that this so-called "powerhouse behind Lin Huang" was actually Lin Huang himself.

As a native inhabitant of the gravel world, combined with the fact that his combat power level had yet to reach true god-level, Lin Huang could stay in this part of the gravel world until the end of time if he really wanted to.

Silently putting away the two halves of the corpse, Lin Huang once again turned his attention to the dimensional gateway.

He was quite sure that the Crow God would not send a fourth wave of explorers. He kept his eyes on the dimensional gateway, just in case.

After three fruitless waves of probing, Lin Huang was almost certain that the Crow God Primordium would cancel the invasion plan.

It was simply impossible for the Crow God to hastily assemble a large army and send them through the dimensional gateway without confirming the problems with the dimensional gateway.

According to normal logic, if even a Void Hunter could not make it through the dimensional gateway, then it would be even more impossible for others to make a trip, let alone a large-scale army.

Just as Lin Huang had expected, seconds and minutes passed by, and there was no new movement from the dimensional gateway.

He stood there and waited for three to four minutes, and when he saw that the dimensional gateway did not light up again, he knew that he had won this round of mind games!

He deliberately created the illusion that there was a problem with the dimensional gateway. After three times of careful verification, the Crow God finally fell into his trap, believed in the illusion, and temporarily gave up on the invasion plan.

Seeing that the dimensional gateway did not lit up, the Crow God's will projection had gradually become discouraged.

He could clearly see from this side of the gravel world that there was no problem with the dimension gateway, but his Primordium nevertheless gave up on the invasion.

It was not difficult for him to understand his Primordium's actions. If he had not witnessed the three waves of monsters being beheaded with his own eyes, he probably would have also come to the same conclusion that the three waves of explorers encountered an accident while in the dimensional gateway.

"I'm afraid that your Primordium will no longer have any contact with the gravel world for some time." After confirming that the Crow God Primordium had given up on the invasion, Lin Huang turned his head slightly and smiled at the Crow God's will projection.

Although his smile was warm and graceful, the Crow God's will projection felt a chill down his spine. Despite that, the expression on his face remained calm and composed.

"Lin Huang, fight me one-on-one if you can, don't rely on a helper!"

This was the only way he could think of for a slim chance of survival. If the person behind Lin Huang were to make a move, he would probably be killed instantly.

"One-on-one?!" Lin Huang could not help but raise his eyebrows. He rarely heard other people making such demands from him. "Are you sure you want to go one-on-one against me?"

"Are you too scared?!" The Crow God firmly stared at Lin Huang.

The corner of Lin Huang's lips quivered upward after hearing this provocation. The rays of the sun just so happened to illuminate his cheeks at this moment, and under the intertwinement of light and shadow, he looked more handsome than ever.

"Then... as you wish."