

## **Paradise 1581**

### **Chapter 1581: The Price Silver Armor Had to Pay**

At that moment, the entire vine-infested world was quaking violently.

That terrifying extreme heat was no ordinary heatwave but an overbearing sequence power.

Although Nine Gloom had no idea what exactly this sequence power was, he could more or less judge that it was an extreme flame with powerful destructive and combustive characteristics.

On a certain level, this type of flame was even more volatile than most Dragon Flames.

Horrified, Nine Gloom's true form fled deep underground. At the same time, he manipulated countless vines to smother the flames. He no longer harbored any unreasonable hopes of extinguishing the blaze; he merely hoped to suppress it a little, as well as shrink its scope.

'Did that lunatic Silver Armor self-destruct?' Nine Gloom secretly cursed as he hastily fled as far away as he could. He did not even dare to release his Divine Telekinesis to do any probing, for fear the flames would burn his spirit.

However, very soon, he retracted his previous speculation.

This was because he could clearly sense that apart from himself, there were remnants of an aura in his God Territory.

Silver Armor was still alive!

Not only that, a humanoid monster formed from dark red flame was slowly stretching its body inside a deep, scorched pit.

Impressively, the monster's body was seventy to eighty percent similar to Silver Armor, but his head was many times larger. He was at least one thousand meters tall.

Unlike his body, which was completely dark red, there was an incandescent blaze of white where the pupils of his eyes should be.

He stood where he was as if momentarily dazed, but the incandescent white in his eyes soon blazed up brightly.

All he did was lift his legs slightly, and he was able to stride out of the deep pit that had just been blasted into the ground. Each time he took a step, the ground would split, and fiery red larva would ooze from the cracks.

He walked aimlessly forward, swinging his heavy fists wildly to bombard every obstacle in his path.

Mountains, rivers, swamps... Wherever he passed, that place would become a sea of lava.

Naturally, Nine Gloom also sensed that his God Territory had been severely contaminated.

Each step Silver Armor took—and even every punch he threw—would contaminate and assimilate Nine Gloom's God Territory.

After forcibly restraining himself for a long while, in the end, Nine Gloom could no longer hold back and spread his Divine Telekinesis to sense out the situation.

As his Divine Telekinesis swept the area, he immediately noticed the flame monster that seemed to have descended into madness.

Although the aura and size had changed significantly, Nine Gloom could tell at once that it was Silver Armor because traces of Silver Armor's aura still remained on the other's body.

"How did that fellow transform into something like this?!" Nine Gloom was extremely baffled. This was another life form entirely.

However, very soon, Nine Gloom was unable to continue pondering the matter because he sensed that Silver Armor's gaze was fixed on the direction where he was hiding.

His probing with Divine Telekinesis had exposed him!

Nine Gloom frantically fled without a second thought.

Meanwhile, the flame giant that was at least ten thousand kilometers away had his gaze locked onto Nine Gloom's aura. His eyes spewed forth white sparks as he ran like a maniac toward Nine Gloom.

Nine Gloom was fast, but the flame giant was even faster.

In merely ten minutes or so, the flame giant had caught up with Nine Gloom.

The sole of the giant's massive foot came stomping down without hesitation, and the entire surface of the ground collapsed.

The cracked ground rapidly began to soften, turning into dark red molten lava that began spreading in all directions and contaminating the area.

The stomp was vicious, but Nine Gloom managed to dodge it in time. Right as the flame giant's foot came down, Nine Gloom wormed his way out from the ground and just managed to evade the attack.

However, his evasive maneuver had completely exposed his form.

It was a black vine resembling a giant python, with a reflective surface that looked like snake scales.

Just looking at him on his own, Nine Gloom's size was indeed quite massive, over half a meter thick and at least a hundred meters long. However, right now, in the presence of the flame giant, he was not so different from a mudfish.

At this moment, fisherman and mudfish seemed to have exchanged positions.

Nine Gloom knew that he could not escape now.

While he observed Silver Armor's altered form quietly from close range, he also rapidly checked the revenants' imprints, attempting to summon them again.

"Silver Armor, why don't we just end the battle here." Nine Gloom tried to buy himself some time.

"Look, we've shown all of our trump cards. If we continue battling it out, it will be a fight to the death. There's no need to go to that extent..."

However, the flame giant completely ignored what Nine Gloom said. Without waiting for him to finish speaking, the huge palm of flame came down in the direction where Nine Gloom was.

The sky seemed to collapse as the massive palm hurtled down.

Nine Gloom did not dare to mount a direct resistance and swiftly teleported once again.

He could not outrun this current Silver Armor, but he could at least teleport a short distance to avoid any attacks.

The flame giant flew into a mad rage when the attack missed and began striking wildly at everything around him. Nine Gloom's mind loosened up, and he began to think.

Silver Armor's mind was obviously immature when he was in this state. One could even say that he was completely functioning on battle instinct alone.

Although his opponent was very powerful in this state of being, for Nine Gloom, there was a fatal flaw in it.

This was because when fighting while being controlled by instinct, Silver Armor did not have the ability to be calculative. He could only function in a very straightforward manner, and all of his actions could be predicted at a glance.

This relieved Nine Gloom's mind. He did not hurry to escape; instead, he remained where he was and dealt with the flame giant.

While dodging the flame giant's repeated attacks with ease, he planned his next attack.

The sudden explosion caused by Silver Armor's transformation had destroyed almost all of the revenants that Nine Gloom had summoned.

Most of them had not only been destroyed on a physical level, but even their soul imprints had disintegrated as well.

At this level of obliteration, Nine Gloom had no way of summoning these revenants again.

However, fortunately, there were still a handful of revenants that had only been destroyed on the physical level—their soul imprints were still intact. Not only that, the few that remained were the most powerful of the lot.

Nine Gloom was ecstatic when he sensed the remains of the soul imprints.

He secretly gathered his Divine Power and waited patiently for an opportunity to summon the revenants again.

Ten minutes or more passed.

At a moment when the flame giant bent to strike the ground, countless vines unexpectedly extended from thin air and entangled the flame giant's neck and limbs en masse.

Although the flames on the giant's body did wild damage to the vines that entangled him, vines kept surging over endlessly, merely to temporarily restrain his movements.

With this abrupt temporary restraint in place, Nine Gloom summoned the revenants again without hesitation.

Giant Sarcoma, Crimson Eye, the three-tailed snake lady... All these powerhouses of overlord-rank with abilities close to overlord-rank were summoned once again.

As soon as the several dozen revenants appeared, they worked together without hesitation to attack the flame giant, who had now been immobilized.

Even Nine Gloom seized the opportunity to fight, unleashing his fatal move.

Countless vines began to devour the Divine Power within the flame giant's body by force.

Right as this wave of assault began, the flame giant roared and struggled free from the vines that had entangled him.

However, he was a little too late. He was only able to defend himself from a small percentage of the attacks; the majority of the other attacks scored definite hits.

Although the flame giant was not killed in this round of attacks, his size had clearly diminished quite a bit, while the color of his body had dimmed significantly.

When he saw these changes, Nine Gloom knew that his strategy was the right one.

"Continue attacking and drain his Divine Power!"

In this state, Silver Armor quite possibly had up to a hundred times more Divine Power within him than before. However, there was no qualitative change in his nature.

His attacks were more powerful only because every time he attacked, his consumption of Divine Power was higher than before.

Judging by the change in the flame giant's size and color, he did not have endless Divine Power; it could be drained.

Nine Gloom was relieved to discover this.

This God Territory was his territory. In a competition for draining Divine Power, he feared no one at all.

Nine Gloom became calmer after ascertaining his strategy.

He no longer directly clashed with the flame giant. Instead, he manipulated the several dozen revenants to conduct guerrilla warfare by constantly harassing the giant and draining his Divine Power.

Each time the flame giant attacked, Nine Gloom would control the revenants so that they dodged and ran, avoiding direct conflict as much as possible.

Over half an hour passed.

Only half the revenants under Nine Gloom's control were left. Even though he manipulated the revenants to evade attacks as much as possible, there were times when they could not dodge in time.

However, his consolation was that the flame giant's size had shrunk to a mere 100 meters tall now, and the flame on the giant's body had begun to become unstable.

Nine Gloom patiently dragged the battle out.

After some ten minutes had passed, the flame giant's size suddenly shrank dramatically. Nine Gloom was stunned when he saw it happening.

He immediately halted the attacks and waited patiently for his opponent's form to finish transforming.

Within merely the time it took for a few breaths, the flame giant's height of over a hundred meters shrank to around two meters or so—even smaller than Silver Armor's initial size.

After his body stopped diminishing, the flame on Silver Armor's body slowly began to fade away.

Two to three minutes later, the flame faded completely, revealing a new body.

Instead of silver armor, this body was clad in bronze armor.

The bronze armor looked rather beaten-up, and it was considerably smaller than the silver armor.

If Nine Gloom had not sensed the remains of Silver Armor's aura on the other's body, he might have had some doubts as to the other's identity.

"So this is the price to pay for becoming a flame giant?" Nine Gloom smiled and looked at the bronze-armored man whose aura had plummeted to rock bottom.

The bronze-armored man before him only possessed the combat strength of an eighth-rank Heavenly God—he had dropped one entire level!

Nine Gloom stared for a while at the unconscious bronze-armored man, but he did not kill him. Instead, he extended a black vine and plunged it into the vicinity of the bronze-armored man's heart.

A moment later, the vine was retracted. The smile on Nine Gloom's massive constructed face was even broader now.

"What an excellent live seed cultivation bed..."

Now that this battle with Silver Armor had ended, Nine Gloom released a long sigh of relief. Subsequently, his God Territory began slowly disintegrating, revealing the original ancient forest.

Right at the very moment that his God Territory had been completely recalled, Nine Gloom suddenly heard a languid voice very clearly drifting to his ears.

"This battle between the two of you dragged on for so long, I'm a little sleepy from all that waiting."

### **Chapter 1582: The Outsider**

The pupils of the huge face that Nine Gloom had conjured up in mid-air contracted slightly.

Not too far away in the air, a figure slowly revealed itself and walked slowly in Nine Gloom's direction.

The figure wore a trench coat and was rather slim in build. In its hand was a black walking stick, and a golden mask covered its face.

Even though he could not see the figure's face, Nine Gloom could still vaguely sense the sophisticated charisma radiating from them.

"An outsider?!" Nine Gloom needed only a glance to ascertain the other party's identity.

"You're right. However, I'm sorry, there's no prize for guessing correctly." The golden mask on the masked man's face appeared to be smiling.

"Outsider, are you barging into my territory to provoke me?" Nine Gloom did not attack the masked man right away.

One of the reasons he did not do so was because he had just gone through a major battle, and his Divine Power and physical strength were severely drained. Another reason was that he sensed a threat emanating from the other party. Although this individual had concealed their combat strength, judging from what Nine Gloom could sense, they were definitely an overlord-rank powerhouse. Their ability was probably by no means inferior to Four Face or Silver Armor.

In all honesty, considering that he was not in the best of conditions right now, Nine Gloom did not particularly wish to have a direct confrontation with the other party.

"No, I'm not trying to provoke you..." The masked man raised both his arms. However, his arms abruptly dropped a second later. "I just want to kill you!"

As soon as he finished speaking, hundreds of monsters with formidable auras rapidly consolidated in the air. Howling, they charged toward Nine Gloom in an attack.

"An Imperial Censor?!" Nine Gloom could not help exclaiming in astonishment.

His opponent was able to control several hundred ninth-rank heavenly god-level monsters. Each of their auras was at peak ninth-rank, and more than a dozen of them had auras no lower than overlord-rank.

At this very instant, it occurred to Nine Gloom that this was karma. He remembered that he had used a similar technique to kill Silver Armor half an hour ago. He never expected that retribution would come so soon—this time, he was the one being besieged.

Regaining his composure slightly, Nine Gloom immediately extended countless vines, attempting to defend himself against the monster horde's attack.

"He fell for it."

From a short distance away, the man with the golden mask sent two voice transmissions in a certain direction.

The minute he finished speaking, two figures swiftly came into view. In a flash, they appeared beside the masked man at practically the same time.

One of them wore a gray monk's robe. His head was completely hairless and covered with Buddhist ordination scars. The biggest difference between himself and ordinary monks was that he had eight very skinny arms.

Meanwhile, the other person was clad in a black robe and even wore a black mask under his hood. The loose black robe enveloped his entire body, shielding him from any probing from the outside world. The only recognizable feature he possessed was his tall, muscular body.

These three figures were Virtuoso, Saber9, and Lin Huang's forms in Phantom City.

As he watched Nine Gloom standing in a daze on the spot, Lin Huang asked from under his black mask, "Aren't we going to seize the opportunity now and attack?"

"There's no rush, just wait a little longer." Virtuoso, on the other hand, was very patient.

"If he's still at his peak, then it would definitely be best to attack him the instant he falls into the trap because he might be able to struggle free of my illusion at any time. However, I'm estimating that currently, he only has 30% to 40% left of his total ability. The chances of him freeing himself from my control aren't very high in the short term. Let him sink deeper into the illusion for a while—it still won't be too late if we attack later on."

Naturally, Lin Huang and Saber9 understood Virtuoso's explanation.

Based on Nine Gloom's actual abilities, it was quite unlikely that he would fall prey to Virtuoso's illusion. Even if he accidentally became ensnared by it, he would be able to free himself in a very short time. Therefore, they had to strike swiftly.

However, now that Nine Gloom had been through a major battle, the Divine Power within him had been significantly drained, and his Divine Telekinesis had flagged considerably. This was the reason why he had fallen into Virtuoso's trap so easily. However, Nine Gloom was not completely blocked off from perceiving the outside world, since he had only just fallen prey to the illusion. As soon as he sensed anomalies in the outside world, he might realize that he was in an illusion and struggle to free himself.

That was also why Virtuoso had told Lin Huang and Saber9 to delay making their move.

Virtuoso wanted Nine Gloom to be ensnared even further. Once Nine Gloom was too busy within the illusion to attend to anything else, naturally, he would not have any excess energy to sense the anomalies in the outside world—this, then, would be the best time to launch an attack.

Lin Huang and Saber9 could hear the certainty in Virtuoso's tone. Therefore, they said nothing more and waited patiently.

Meanwhile, Nine Gloom—having fallen prey to the illusion— was currently facing a major crisis he had not previously encountered.

Individually speaking, there were not many imperial monsters that could pose a threat to him.

However, what made things difficult for him was that this horde of imperial monsters was not battling him one-on-one individually; instead, they had formed small teams. In every team, there were one or two with powerful defense capabilities, a few with controlling and assisting abilities, and a few with sufficiently powerful attack capabilities to incapacitate him.

What made things even harder was that no matter which team he locked onto and attacked, the other teams would immediately interfere and come to their rescue, temporarily giving the first team a respite from battle.

Over ten minutes went by, and Nine Gloom had made no progress at all. He was not able to kill even a single imperial monster. (Time in the illusion was a perception of his consciousness and was by no means the actual time flow in the real world).

Nine Gloom began to panic. He was very much aware that in his current condition, he was not fit for a protracted battle. The longer things dragged on, the higher the chances that he would suffer defeat.

After a mere moment of hesitation, he made a decision to open up his God Territory again and envelop the entire vicinity within it.

It was not just those several hundred imperial beasts that were swallowed up—even the man with the golden mask was also enveloped within the God Territory.

However, what Nine Gloom did not know was that in the real world outside the illusion, the lips under the golden mask quirked up just a little.

The second Nine Gloom slackened his efforts slightly, Lin Huang and Saber9 heard Virtuoso's voice clearly in their ears.

"Go!"

Without hesitation, Lin Huang and Saber9 attacked like lightning.

Lin Huang held nothing back in this attack.

It was the perfect integration of twelve compounded levels of sequence power and Sword Dao heavenly rule, which consolidated into a dazzlingly bright blood-red arc.

It surged through the air as fast as a bolt of lightning, looking like a moving galaxy.

This move was almost at the limit of what Lin Huang's current physical body could handle.

Even Virtuoso's eyes betrayed a flash of amazement.

Meanwhile, on the other side, Saber9 finally brought out his trump card, which he very rarely revealed.

Millions of golden saber gleams consolidated in the air before him.

His eight skinny arms pointed in the air, and the millions of golden saber gleams consolidated into eight saber formations. The eight saber formations then rapidly integrated into an even more massive saber formation.

Boosted by this giant saber formation, the Saber Dao heavenly rule's aura grew increasingly powerful more than several dozen times over.

In the air, countless saber gleams consolidated into a massive golden dragon. It opened its giant maw and charged straight at Nine Gloom...

### **Chapter 1583: A Win That Was Too Easy**

Inside Virtuoso's illusion, Nine Gloom watched his God Territory descend. It enveloped all his enemies, including the individual with the golden mask. With no hesitation at all, Nine Gloom summoned Giant Sarcoma, Crimson Eye, the three-tailed snake lady, and the other overlord-rank revenants once more.



In his God Territory, he could repeatedly summon the revenants, but it would require expending a massive amount of Divine Power. He could replenish this expenditure by recalling the revenants.

However, many of the revenants had been killed in the earlier battle with Silver Armor. This meant that Nine Gloom could not replenish his Divine Power, causing him to lose close to seventy percent of it. Even with the utilization of his God's soul, the loss was severe, and his condition was deteriorating significantly.

Now that he was left with so little Divine Power, he did not dare to expend large amounts of it. Therefore, in this confrontation with the golden-masked individual, he could only summon a few overlord-rank revenants to aid in the battle. He did not have the courage to attempt a horde attack strategy against his opponent.

However, as far as Nine Gloom was concerned, this was already sufficient.

With several overlord-rank powerhouses joining the battle, the pressure on him decreased substantially.

Furthermore, the recovery of his Divine Power was more than several times faster in his God Territory. As long as he did not use any major techniques, it was practically impossible for his Divine Power to be exhausted. He also no longer had to worry about his opponent trying to drain his Divine Power. On the contrary, if the battle dragged on for a longer time, the Divine Power within his body would replenish even more, which was much more advantageous to him.

After the arrival of his God Territory, the tide of battle rapidly began to turn.

Nine Gloom had been under heavy suppression earlier, but now, with the assistance of the several revenants he had summoned, he began massacring his enemies.

With Nine Gloom and the revenants working together, the small teams were swiftly split up and obliterated. Their numbers began to dwindle.

Just when Nine Gloom was getting enthusiastically into the killing spree, an impending sense of danger suddenly assailed him.

Before he could even discover where this new threat lay, he felt a sudden wave of intense pain.

Upon looking down, he saw that his body had already been sliced apart at the waist by a scarlet electric arc.

When he lifted his head again, everything before him began disintegrating.

Every single one of the revenants that he had summoned, the imperial monster horde that was battling them so intently, the golden-masked individual in the distance, and the God Territory that he had summoned...

Everything was disintegrating and falling apart like broken glass. The only thing that was still vivid was the scarlet beam of light that had sliced him in half.

"This is an illusion?!" Nine Gloom came to an abrupt realization. He did not even know when he had fallen for his opponent's ruse.

Once again, he lifted his head and looked in the direction from which the scarlet electric arc had originated. Three figures were standing there.

The one who had sliced him in half was a black-robed individual wearing a black mask.

However, Nine Gloom very quickly diverted his attention from the black-robed individual. This was because he saw that there was an eight-armed monk not too far from the black-robed individual. Furthermore, in front of that monk, nine gigantic saber formations were poised for action and targeted straight at him!

Without even thinking, Nine Gloom turned into thousands of snake-like vines that fled in all directions.

He was fleeing so decisively because the earlier slash from that black-robed individual had almost killed him.

He had less than ten percent of his Divine Power left after that slash; he had no more strength to continue fighting.

However, right as he moved, the hundreds upon thousands of saber gleams in the air surged down like a torrential rainstorm, completely swallowing him up.

When he saw that the area within several hundred meters had been entirely enveloped by Saber9's saber formations, Lin Huang ceased any further attacks.

His move earlier was just about his most powerful attack, which was extremely taxing on his physical body.

For one, he needed to rest his body for a little while.

For another, he was secretly calculating the rewards obtained from that attack.

That move comprised twelve levels of compounded sequence power, in addition to Sword Dao heavenly rule.

An attack like this was enough to annihilate most ordinary ninth-rank Heavenly Gods.

However, Nine Gloom had been struck by the attack when he was completely off-guard, and yet he had not been killed.

The instant he slashed at his opponent, Lin Huang had clearly been able to sense that Nine Gloom's body had immediately exuded a great deal of Divine Power and sequence power to offset the shock of the attack and its encroaching effects.

In the end, it looked as if he had certainly sliced Nine Gloom in half, but in reality, this had not done any concrete damage to his opponent. The attack had merely drained a portion of Nine Gloom's Divine Power and Rule Bending Powers.

'From the looks of it, one can't be careless when fighting top heavenly god-level powerhouses. The intensity of Nine Gloom's Divine Power and the number of rules he's mastered far surpass my own. He didn't even have time to utilize any defensive techniques whatsoever, yet he didn't suffer any concrete damage from my blow. If we were to engage in direct confrontation, I fear even this attack of mine

wouldn't be able to breach his defenses. However, all he has to do is casually launch an attack, and if I'm hit, I'll almost certainly be dead. This is an absolute gap in ability.

'Furthermore, among Heavenly Gods, there are many powerhouses who have abilities that are on par with Nine Gloom's, and there are quite a few who are even more powerful. Let's not even talk about the higher-ranked half-step lord-level powerhouses...'

After reviewing the battle mentally, the threat that Lin Huang had sensed in his heart only increased.

Initially, he had considered his current abilities to be fairly top-notch already. However, now that he had encountered a true powerhouse, he was finally able to distinctly see the disparity between his ability and theirs.

While Lin Huang was still replaying the battle in his head, Virtuoso, who was next to him, had spread his Divine Telekinesis over an area of several thousand kilometers to prevent Nine Gloom from escaping.

The golden deluge of sabers finally stopped after pouring down for several minutes.

The entire surface of the ground in the area covered by the saber formations had been bombarded until it had become a depression full of potholes. In the whole area, not even a single microorganism could possibly have survived, much less any vegetation. Nine Gloom, on the other hand, had disappeared.

"From the looks of it, he should have been killed," Saber9 commented somewhat uncertainly after he had withdrawn the saber formations and scanned the surroundings with Divine Telekinesis.

Virtuoso did not respond immediately; they seemed to be using Divine Telekinesis to sweep the area for quite a few rounds. Only after that did they observe, "My Divine Telekinesis certainly hasn't picked up any signs of life at all. Moreover, when you attacked, the entire area was under constant coverage from my Divine Telekinesis. I didn't come across any black vines that managed to escape from within your range of attack..."

"So, are we going to search his lair now?" Only now did Saber9 feel more at ease.

"Somehow, I feel... this is a little too easy." Virtuoso glanced at Lin Huang after they finished speaking.

"I have the same feeling." Lin Huang gave a slight nod. "If that fellow could become the final winner in this battle between overlords, it's not very likely that we'd be able to kill him off so easily."

"I think he was just far too gullible, so it makes sense that he would fail miserably." Saber9 was extremely confident in his own abilities. He felt that Nine Gloom, with his almost-depleted Divine Power, would not have been able to survive the onslaught of the saber formations from earlier on.

Lin Huang did not bother to keep arguing about the matter. "Honestly, it's no longer important whether he's dead or alive. Given his condition just now, even if he's still alive, he won't be an obstacle to us. We'll leave after we obtain the fragment, and it's unlikely that we'll ever encounter him again in the future."

"When you put it like that, why am I suddenly harboring a faint hope that he might still be alive?" Saber9 said with a smile, "I'm just worried that he won't show his face. If he dares to reveal himself, we'll eliminate him immediately to prevent future problems!"

Virtuoso said nothing more. Instead, they turned around to look in the direction of Nine Gloom's lair.

"Let's go!"

They were off and running the moment they finished speaking. Lin Huang and Saber9 hurriedly caught up with them, and together, all three headed toward Nine Gloom's lair, which was nearby.

#### **Chapter 1584: The Nirvana Tree**

As Lin Huang and the other two were approaching the middle of the dense forest, Virtuoso suddenly spoke.

"Stop!"

Lin Huang and Saber9 halted immediately and scanned their surroundings with Divine Telekinesis. However, they did not find anything wrong at all. Nonetheless, Lin Huang sensed a faint inkling of something being slightly off while Saber9 looked at Virtuoso, a puzzled expression on his face.

"What's wrong?" He asked in confusion.

"There's an illusion formation ahead," Virtuoso murmured, dropping his voice.

Saber9 lowered his head and carefully scrutinized the area before them. All he saw was still an expanse of dense forest; he could not make out anything unusual at all.

Once again, he used Divine Telekinesis to scan the area a few more times, and the results were the same. He was still unable to discover anything that was not supposed to be there.

"I don't see anything at all!" Saber9 could not help muttering.

Meanwhile, the outlines of the formation were gradually revealing themselves to Lin Huang's eyes.

He had never studied formations before, but he had cultivated Sorcerer Dao runes, which were considered a similar system. Furthermore, under Bloody's tutelage, he had used quite a number of battle formations before. He also had dabbled in some general knowledge and theory about formations, so he was not completely new to this.

As soon as Virtuoso's warning came, Lin Huang activated his ocular skill and was then able to see the contours of this massive formation.

It was an enormous, complex formation that covered a range of several hundred kilometers, camouflaging the entire area to look like a dense forest.

Though Lin Huang did not really understand what formation had been used here, given its level of complexity, he knew it was not merely a simple illusion. It almost certainly had various other functions as well.

"Is there a way to dispel it?" Lin Huang turned his head to look at Virtuoso.

Despite asking this, he had already secretly come up with a plan.

Virtuoso fell silent for a moment. "I'm not sure, but I can try."

“Hey, please don’t say that.” Saber9 became rather anxious when he heard this

However, Lin Huang was very calm. He already had a plan for their next step. If Virtuoso was not able to deal with this formation, he would summon a clone of Bloody’s consciousness into his physical body and have her dispel the formation instead.

Just when he was thinking about how to prevent Virtuoso and Saber9 from sensing anything odd, Virtuoso took action.

Lin Huang and Saber9 saw Virtuoso swiftly performing complicated hand seals. A moment later, three Virtuoso clones appeared.

Two of the clones immediately transformed into Lin Huang and Saber9’s current appearances.

Right after that, the three clones charged ahead at the same time. Before they had flown very far, they suddenly vanished into thin air before the eyes of the watching three.

After releasing the clones, Virtuoso sat down calmly, cross-legged. “Let’s wait first. If this doesn’t work, we’ll look for other solutions.”

Lin Huang and Saber9 did not have any better suggestions either, so they had no choice but to wait patiently for the result.

After almost half an hour, just when Lin Huang and Saber9 felt that the attempt to dispel the formation had failed, the dense forest not far from them suddenly altered in an extraordinary manner.

An instant later, the entire forest disintegrated, revealing its true face.

When the three of them saw what was in front of them, they were so utterly shocked that for a moment, they were rooted to the spot in a daze.

“Are these...Nirvana Trees?!” Saber9 was the first to react, asking rather uncertainly.

Lin Huang and Virtuoso’s silence was obviously agreement.

“All these Nirvana Trees—how did he get his hands on them?!” Saber9 quickly voiced his second point of doubt.

He brought this up because there was not merely one Nirvana tree here—there were hundreds of them, all densely packed together.

These trees were something that could only be found in the Abyss, and even then, they were a considerably rare species.

A mature Nirvana Tree was a powerful existence among Heavenly Gods. Not only could they master life and death sequence powers, but a small number were also able to comprehend time and dimensional sequences. Even half-step lord-level powerhouses were respectful of them.

However, right before their very eyes were over three hundred Nirvana Trees, practically all of them mature specimens.

What was even more peculiar was that all of the Nirvana Trees seemed to have lost their consciousness, with only empty shells remaining.

“They must have been created with the castellan’s seal...” This was the only possibility that Virtuoso could bring to mind.

Although Nine Gloom only had a fragment of the castellan’s seal and therefore could not carry out any refining, he might have used some other techniques and found a way to utilize the fragment. That might have been how he created these Nirvana Trees.

What Virtuoso was very sure of was that no matter what method Nine Gloom had used, he must have paid a heavy price to create so many Nirvana Trees.

“He must have used the illusion formation to hide this area because he was worried that people would see these Nirvana Trees.” Saber9 looked confused. “But what’s the purpose of him planting so many Nirvana Trees in the first place?”

He could not really understand why Nine Gloom had done that.

Lin Huang was somewhat uncertain about that as well.

Among his imperial beasts, Bloody was the one who had been a vine monster since the beginning. She had parasitical abilities, and she could manipulate other monsters to fight for her through the use of parasites. However, it did not seem as if Nine Gloom were creating battle puppets. Furthermore, the Nirvana Trees themselves were not monsters whose forte was fighting. If Nine Gloom were merely creating battle puppets, he certainly had better choices of monsters.

“Are both of you aware that the Nirvana Trees have a very unique characteristic?” Virtuoso suddenly spoke up after a moment of consideration.

Lin Huang and Saber9 looked at Virtuoso, rather perplexed. Clearly, they both knew very little about the Nirvana Tree.

Virtuoso glanced at the two of them and said calmly, “Nirvana Trees only grow near the death spring or the death spring’s tributaries. Their roots are forever connected to the death spring. Even if they’re moved to another time and dimension, on a spirit level their roots would still be connected to the death spring. When they die, they return to the death spring as well.

“Just like these three hundred-over Nirvana Trees here—they appear to be planted here, but in reality, they remain intimately connected to the death spring. They’re able to obtain endless cultivation resources needed for their own growth from it.

“If I’m not mistaken, Nine Gloom must be using these Nirvana Trees to obtain nutrients from the death spring,” Virtuoso gave voice to his speculations.

“Is it really possible to obtain cultivation resources from the death spring?” Lin Huang could not help muttering quietly.

To him, it was utterly unbelievable. This was because, from what he understood, the death spring was something extremely dangerous. In the Abyss, even a lord-level powerhouse would not be willing to be

polluted by it. The reason for this was that if they were not careful, they might be contaminated and mutate, or they might be enchanted and go mad.

“Theoretically, as long as one uses a suitable filtration device to filter out the contamination, there shouldn’t be an issue,” Virtuoso said and lifted their head to look at the small Nirvana Tree forest nearby. “These Nirvana Trees are the perfect filter.”

“Which means to say, we’re rich now!” Saber9’s eyes lit up when he heard this.

He even began to imagine himself obtaining all sorts of cultivation resources from the death spring through the Nirvana Trees.

“I think the matter’s not as simple as you make it out to be.”

Right as Saber9 finished speaking, Lin Huang noticed that the Nirvana Trees in front of them were starting to emit a misty blue light....

### **Chapter 1585: Living Body Reincarnation**

“This isn’t a good sign, right?”

Lin Huang pointed in the direction of the Nirvana Tree forest, turning his head to glance at Virtuoso and Saber9.

“From the looks of it, either that wretch Nine Gloom isn’t completely dead, or there’s something else guarding this area.” Saber9’s expression betrayed mixed feelings. As Virtuoso and Lin Huang had anticipated, obtaining the final fragment of the castellan’s seal was not going to be so easy.

“Well, since he isn’t completely dead, let’s kill him again! If someone else is guarding the area, then we’ll get rid of that guardian!” Virtuoso’s tone sounded calm enough, but Lin Huang and Saber9 could hear the underlying grim coldness in his voice. Clearly, having already come so far, Virtuoso was determined to obtain the last fragment of the castellan’s seal.

Lin Huang and Saber9 had no objections to Virtuoso’s statement.

After all, they were already at the final stage. No matter who their opponent was, they would have to fight regardless, or their efforts over the last few days would be in vain.

In just the blink of an eye, the misty blue light in the Nirvana Tree forest had spread rapidly.

As they had no idea what the exact situation was, the three of them did not recklessly plunge into the area.

Lin Huang and Saber9 attempted several attacks. Regardless of whether it was sword gleams or saber gleams, the attacks weakened and rapidly dispersed as soon as they were sent into the area of blue mist.

After a few rounds of futile testing, the three just decided to wait patiently.

Within merely the time it took for a few breaths, the blue mist had become so thick it completely obscured their vision and their Divine Telekinesis scans.

Very soon, the blue mist began reducing dramatically, as if there were something in the middle of the Nirvana Tree forest sucking it up at lightning speed.

Within less than ten seconds, the mist-covered area from earlier had shrunk significantly, and the entire Nirvana Tree forest was revealed.

Lin Huang and the other two could clearly see that less than ten meters of the center area was still covered in blue mist now.

Upon seeing that, Saber9 could not help taking action again; he sent more than a hundred saber gleams hurtling toward the blue mist.

However, as soon as the gleams entered the mist, they dissipated and vanished immediately.

When Lin Huang and Virtuoso saw what happened, they did not bother with any further fruitless attempts.

The three of them were basically already certain that the entity within the mist ought to be their final enemy.

After around two to three minutes, the blue mist slowly began reducing again. When it was about three meters in diameter, it stopped reducing entirely and consolidated into a humanoid figure.

At that moment, Lin Huang and the other two were already fully alert and on guard, ready to fight.

However, they could not help feeling somewhat puzzled by the form the blue mist had taken.

This was because, judging from the shape, their opponent this time very likely was not Nine Gloom.

If that was the case, then who on earth was their current opponent?

All three of them were seized by the same sense of doubt.

A short while later, the humanoid figure finally moved. It took a step forward, and the last layer of blue mist enshrouding its body finally began to dissipate.

As it strode forward one step at a time, its figure also became more distinct.

When Lin Huang and the other two saw what their opponent looked like, their faces filled with shock.

“Silver Armor?!”

Although he looked a little different from the description contained in the information they had, the three could immediately identify that this was Silver Armor, one of the six overlords of the inner world.

The three of them had the same sense of doubt rise in their minds almost simultaneously—had Nine Gloom not already killed off this fellow?!

Previously when they had observed Nine Gloom recalling his God Territory, they knew that the battle between the overlords had ended, and Nine Gloom was the final winner.

That was why they had genuinely not expected to see Silver Armor here.

When they saw Silver Armor emerging, their hearts sank a little.



Unlike Nine Gloom, Silver Armor was the enemy that they most particularly did not wish to encounter.

This was because that fellow possessed terrifying defense capabilities; Lin Huang and the others would have a very difficult time breaching his defenses.

Moreover, judging by the aura currently radiating from Silver Armor, he seemed to have recovered and was now in peak condition—completely different from the condition Nine Gloom had been in after fighting Lin Huang and the rest.

Lin Huang was even fairly certain that this current Silver Armor standing in front of them could utterly defeat Nine Gloom from earlier on.

The eyes of the three met; each saw the other's unwillingness to back down. Their fighting spirit began to rise rapidly.

No matter how difficult this battle might be, all three of them felt strongly that they should not retreat just like that.

After all, they were at the very last lap now. All they had to do was kill Silver Armor, who was there in front of them, and their purpose for entering the Abyss this time would be achieved.

With this conviction in mind, the three of them attacked Silver Armor without hesitation.

Lin Huang held back nothing at all in this strike. Just like before, his sword was imbued with the same twelve compounded levels of god sequence chains combined with Sword Dao heavenly rule, and he slashed down with it.

The blood-red sword gleam was like a surging river of blood, hurtling toward Silver Armor with earth-shattering power.

On his side, Saber9 held nothing back either.

He released all nine saber formations at once. Countless golden saber gleams consolidated into a single gigantic saber that swung straight at Silver Armor.

Not too far off, Virtuoso performed complicated hand seals with both hands.

One by one, black chains coalesced in the air, transforming into massive black pythons that charged in Silver Armor's direction.

In an instant, the massive pythons coiled around Silver Armor's limbs, preventing him from moving.

A second later, the blood river-like sword and the gigantic saber also reached Silver Armor.

Just when the three of them thought the attack would definitely defeat their foe, something unforeseen happened!

Blue mist pervaded Silver Armor's eyes. Both his arms suddenly exerted strength, and blue Divine Power washed over his entire body like a shockwave, pulverizing the black chains that were as thick as a man's arm.

The next instant, Silver Armor—who had broken free of his restraints—made no move to dodge at all. He merely raised both arms calmly, and countless ice-blue vines shot out violently from his palms. The vines from one palm turned into a tsunami, while the other turned into a massive blade. They each charged straight toward Lin Huang and Saber9's attacks, respectively.

When they saw this, Lin Huang and the other two were dumbstruck.

Before they could even come back to their senses, both parties' attacks had collided.

Lin Huang's blood river-like slash was swallowed up by the blue vine tsunami within the time it took for a mere few breaths.

Saber9's gigantic saber clashed with the vine saber and fell apart, scattering all over the ground.

The two attacks that were Lin Huang and Saber9's pride had been easily decimated by Silver Armor—no, that would be Nine Gloom!

The moment they saw him releasing vines, Lin Huang and the others immediately realized that this fellow, who looked like Silver Armor, was not the real Silver Armor, but Nine Gloom!

Although the three had no idea what Nine Gloom had done to Silver Armor, Nine Gloom did not seem to be concealing anything. After forcing the three of them to retreat, he did not pursue them in haste. Instead, he spoke to them, smiling. His tone sounded like he was sharing something that made him happy with his good friends.

"I must thank the three of you. If not for you, I fear I might not have so swiftly made the decision to use Silver Armor's body to perform living body reincarnation. I hadn't anticipated that this time, the reincarnation would be much smoother than I had expected!"

### **Chapter 1586: Battling Nine Gloom Again**

Lin Huang and the others looked dismayed.

Nine Gloom was a peak heavenly god-level powerhouse who was not that far from elevating to the status of a half-step Lord.

The three of them were able to defeat him in the previous battle because Nine Gloom's Divine Power and spirit had suffered severe depletion after fighting Silver Armor. Moreover, Nine Gloom had been utterly unsuspecting of their scheme, and Virtuoso had managed to pull Nine Gloom into their illusion as soon as they appeared on the scene. The three of them had successfully managed to kill off Nine Gloom only because of these factors.

However, the Nine Gloom currently standing before them had not only completed reincarnation with the help of the Nirvana Trees but was also in possession of Silver Armor's physical body.

Nine Gloom's combat strength post-reincarnation had not immediately elevated to its former peak standard, merely crossing the threshold of ninth-rank heavenly god-level. However, judging by the aura emanating from his body, his abilities in this reincarnation were definitely no weaker than when he had been at his peak previously.

Earlier, Lin Huang and the others had not staged a direct confrontation with Nine Gloom even when he had not been in peak condition. Instead, they had used various techniques and schemes to battle him. If they had a choice, the three of them would certainly not wish to fight the current Nine Gloom.

However, they had no choice but to face their enemy now.

Their most powerful moves had been easily countered by Nine Gloom. Under his mask, Lin Huang's brow creased slightly.

A quick glance showed that Saber9 was also frowning at the moment.

Although he could not see Virtuoso's expression under their mask, he knew that they would most certainly not be relaxed.

Unlike in the previous battle, the three of them had lost the upper hand entirely now that they were facing Nine Gloom's successful reincarnation.

Moreover, having had the chance to test his ability via their first round of attacks, the three of them knew that Nine Gloom's abilities were in no way less than when he had been in prime condition previously.

"Do we fight or retreat?" Saber9 asked Lin Huang and Virtuoso through voice transmission.

He asked this because the chances of them winning were extremely low.

Lin Huang made no reply; he was also waiting for Virtuoso's answer.

After all, this trip to the Abyss had been at Virtuoso's invitation.

They could not call the shots on whether to fight or retreat; it depended on what Virtuoso wanted.

Virtuoso only hesitated for a brief moment and rapidly came to a decision.

"Fight!"

Lin Huang and Saber9 were not at all surprised by Virtuoso's decision. After all, they were only a step away from obtaining the last fragment of the castellan's seal. They could completely understand Virtuoso's current state of mind.

Even though on the face of it, victory seemed highly unlikely for the three of them, Lin Huang was very certain that their chances of winning were not as low as they appeared to be.

He had a trump card. He also knew that as clones of Almighty reincarnations, Virtuoso and Saber9 definitely would have powerful trump cards as well.

Moreover, Virtuoso was a meticulous individual. No matter how much they wanted the castellan's seal fragment, if they were truly unable to obtain it, they would definitely not force the issue. Given their character, they would choose to retreat immediately and look for the next target.

Since Virtuoso had chosen to fight, it showed that there was a definite chance of them winning this battle.

Lin Huang felt considerably relieved as he considered this.

“I’ll be responsible for stalling Nine Gloom; both of you focus on attacking him!” Virtuoso instructed Lin Huang and Saber9 via voice transmission.

When Lin Huang heard that, he did not hesitate at all, taking the lead to charge at Nine Gloom with his sword.

His close-range attack ability was the strongest among the three of them. Naturally, he had to shoulder part of the burden of drawing Nine Gloom’s fire.

Although Saber9 was highly skilled at attacks, his forte was Sword Manipulation. He was best at mid-range and long-range combat; close-quarter combat, conversely, did not allow him to showcase his skills.

As for Virtuoso, they could only serve as reinforcements for now. They would certainly die if they had to engage in close-quarter combat.

Noticing Lin Huang coming at him with his sword, Nine Gloom knew they had decided to fight to the death. His rage knew no bounds, and he laughed in their faces mockingly. “All of you are a mere raggle-taggle group of brats with exaggerated opinions of your own abilities. Do you really think you can defeat me a second time just because you defeated me before?!”

“Whether we can defeat you or not, we’re still going to try.” As Lin Huang spoke, he had already sliced apart numerous vines, crossing the vine barrier and emerging not too far from the silver-armored figure of Nine Gloom.

When Nine Gloom saw this, he did not bother using vines to obstruct Lin Huang. Instead, he extended his arm and lightly grasped at the air. A black battle spear rapidly consolidated in his hand.

If Lin Huang and the other two had seen Silver Armor previously, they would have immediately recognized that this weapon was the Black Dragon Spear Silver Armor had used when he was still alive.

Spear in hand, Nine Gloom launched himself off the ground with a sudden burst of strength in both legs, using the air as a stepping stone. He charged straight at Lin Huang.

Wherever the head of the spear passed through, even the air itself was torn into jagged rifts.

Simultaneously, as Nine Gloom charged with his spear, a red arc lit up in the void.

In an instant, the red and black gleams abruptly collided, releasing multiple energy shockwaves in the aftermath. The shockwaves spread out over thousands of kilometers, crushing everything to dust.

However, this evenly-matched battle lasted only for the time it took for a few breaths before the red gleam began to disintegrate...

Right at that moment, countless golden gleams shot through the air like a torrential storm, completely deluging the area where Nine Gloom was.

Impressively enough, the attacker was Saber9.

He had once more consolidated the nine massive saber formations, accumulating millions of golden saber gleams that hurtled toward Nine Gloom with murderous intent.

Nine Gloom glanced at the golden saber gleams that were coming at him from all directions. A smirk of disdain curled the corners of his lips.

He did not withdraw his spear defense. Instead, his gaze locked onto Lin Huang. Once more, Nine Gloom increased his Divine Power output.

The red gleam that had already begun to disintegrate was instantly obliterated to nothing.

The black gleam turned into a terrifying shockwave and swallowed up Lin Huang's blood-red sword gleam in a blink of an eye. It then charged straight at Lin Huang.

Nine Gloom completely ignored Saber9's attack this time. The spear was directed at Lin Huang with the intention of finishing him off.

Saber9's expression was indescribable. Clearly, he had not expected that he would fail to contain Nine Gloom.

On one hand, he was rather worried that Lin Huang would be killed by the spear. On the other hand, he was also somewhat angry that Nine Gloom had utterly ignored his own attack.

Meanwhile, Virtuoso continued performing complicated hand seals off to one side. They did not stop at all.

Nobody knew what expression they harbored at the moment under their mask.

Under his mask, Lin Huang's lips quirked up slightly as he watched the black shockwave surging toward him.

Just as the attack was about to reach him, a black mirror suddenly appeared before him.

The seemingly invincible black shockwave merely formed water-like ripples as it collided with the mirror. It could not bypass the mirror at all, nor was it able to harm even a hair of Lin Huang's head.

Nine Gloom could not help feeling rather stunned when he saw what happened.

He had initially thought that his attack would be fatal. Even if it did not kill Lin Huang, it should have been enough to make him lose his combat effectiveness and retreat from the battle.

Never had he thought that Lin Huang would so easily counter an attack that contained almost every ounce of Nine Gloom's strength.

The instant Nine Gloom stood stunned, Saber9 seized the momentary distraction that this afforded. The millions of saber gleams in the air accelerated, pouring down like rain and swallowing Nine Gloom up completely.

At the same time, the black mirror in front of Lin Huang lit up with a piercingly bright red beam of light.

The next second, an alternating red-and-black shockwave—almost identical to the one Nine Gloom had released just now—shot forth. It was aimed straight at where Nine Gloom had been standing earlier...

### **Chapter 1587: A Useless Divine Power**

Nine Gloom, now utterly swamped by golden saber gleams, was calm and composed.

In reality, Saber9's saber formations were by no means considered weak—they were powerful enough to harm a ninth-rank Heavenly God. However, as far as Nine Gloom was concerned, an attack of this level was still far from sufficient to worry him.

A mere thought formulated in his mind, and countless vines writhed out from under the earth, surging toward the golden saber gleams.

Almost at the same time that he responded to his enemy, he sensed a powerful threat coming from another direction.

He lifted his eyes immediately and looked toward the source of this new danger. He saw that the mirror in front of the black-masked sword cultivator—the same mirror that had absorbed his attack—was sending out a shockwave with intersecting red and black gleams.

More peculiar still, he could sense clearly that this shockwave generated by his opponent contained a trace of his own Divine Power's aura.

“That mirror can not only absorb my attack but deflect it as well?!” Nine Gloom was rather shocked. He was even a little envious of Lin Huang's Mirror divine ability now.

He could clearly sense that the power of Lin Huang's current attack was no weaker than his own from earlier on. Such intensity was more than sufficient to cause him considerable harm.

Seeing that the intersecting red and black shockwave had cut through the torrent of golden saber gleams in an instant and was now heading for him, Nine Gloom used the black battle spear once again without hesitation.

A black gleam coalesced at the point of the spear and rapidly began expanding. In the mere time it took for a breath, it had expanded as far as it could go, transforming into a black shockwave that shot through the air.

The next instant, both shockwaves collided.

The moment the two shockwaves slammed against each other, Nine Gloom's heart suddenly started racing. He sensed immense danger coming from multiple directions.

His Divine Telekinesis immediately spread out, scanning his surroundings. He saw over a dozen figures hovering in the void, surrounding him. Each of the figures had on a black robe and a black mask; all of them were identical to the sword cultivator who had deflected his attack earlier.

What was even more extraordinary was that black mirrors had consolidated in front of them all, and identical red and black intersecting shockwaves were now surging out from the surface of the mirrors.

Each of the attacks spawned a dire sense of danger within Nine Gloom.

However, he sneered and glanced at Virtuoso, who was not far away, “Do you think I'm going to fall into your trap again?”

“Your simulation is pretty good; it was even able to confuse my senses. However, an illusion is just an illusion. It will never turn into reality!”

As soon as Nine Gloom finished speaking, the dozen-over shockwaves had almost reached him.

However, he chose to ignore them completely.

An instant later, the shockwaves swallowed him up entirely.

Almost at the same time, a devastating shriek was heard.

Even Lin Huang raised his brows upon hearing that shriek. He looked over at Virtuoso in some confusion.

“How did you do that?”

“I can duplicate imaginary images.” Virtuoso’s explanation was very simple.

However, this explanation did not answer Lin Huang’s doubts. He continued to stare at Virtuoso, waiting patiently for them to expound further.

“The imaginary images can be transformed into actual images,” Virtuoso paused for a moment, then resumed speaking.

“Is it similar to skill duplication?” Lin Huang immediately thought of a popular comic that he had seen on Earth, which had in it an ability called the Sharingan. (TN: A reference to an ability in the Japanese manga Naruto. This ability allows the user to copy a variety of attacks.)

“It’s not simply skill duplication,” Saber9 could not help interrupting from where he was standing to one side. He then shot a glance at Virtuoso.

Virtuoso nodded slightly at him, and Saber9 resumed, “More precisely, what’s known as an image is something that occurs within a specific timeframe.

“This ability of Virtuoso’s is like taking a picture with a camera or recording a video; it replicates the event that happened within that timeframe.”

“Initially, it was just a useless divine ability that could only be used to record information. However, by chance, I realized I could convert imaginary images into actual images,” Virtuoso continued the topic and proceeded to explain.

“In an attack like the one earlier, how many actual images are you able to replicate?” Lin Huang asked this, not because he wished to pry into Virtuoso’s divine ability, but so he could work better alongside them.

Virtuoso hesitated but answered regardless, “One is my limit.”

They did not explain much more than that. At their current level of ability, they could, at most, replicate images below half-step lord-level. Moreover, Lin Huang’s attack earlier was already at peak heavenly god-level, which could be considered close to the level of a half-step Lord. Replicating one actual image was indeed their limit.

“How many times can you use this divine ability, at most?” Lin Huang resumed his questions.

“If I’m not converting things into actual images, theoretically, I can use it countless times,” Virtuoso answered very readily this time, “However, if I were to convert them into actual images and use them in an attack with the same level of intensity as earlier, I can only do that three times in a day at most.”

“Alright.” Lin Huang did not enquire any further.

He was indeed a little envious of Virtuoso’s ability, but he did not plan on asking for more details. After all, everyone’s divine abilities and skills were private. The questions he asked were about things that he needed to know in order to fight effectively alongside them.

If not for the fact that he had been teamed up with Virtuoso and they were now very familiar with each other, he might have been a little embarrassed to ask such questions.

Lin Huang raised his head and looked over in the direction now completely swamped by countless shockwaves.

“If this round of attack doesn’t finish him off, we’d better prepare ourselves to battle it out later.”

Naturally, Nine Gloom could not hear the voice transmissions between Lin Huang and the other two.

He had certainly paid a heavy enough price by erroneously thinking that Virtuoso’s attack was just an illusion.

He only realized that one out of the dozen-over illusory shockwaves was real at the very moment he was struck. However, by then, it was far too late for him to dodge.

Lin Huang’s attack this time was almost equal to the attack Nine Gloom had launched at full force, and Virtuoso had replicated it in its entirety.

With no other alternative in sight, Nine Gloom had no choice but to tough it out. The attack drained close to one-fifth of the Divine Power within his body.

Very soon, the shockwaves dispersed completely, and Nine Gloom’s figure slowly emerged from within the smoke.

He was not as arrogant as before. Instead, he cut a rather sorry figure, which secretly thrilled Lin Huang and the other two.

After such a devastating loss, Nine Gloom was burning with rage. He glared fixedly at Virtuoso, the culprit.

“What an excellent technique!” From Nine Gloom’s tone, it was very evident that he was clenching his teeth.

“You’re too kind.” Virtuoso accepted this “compliment” with no qualms whatsoever.

Nine Gloom scoffed, then quietly glanced at Lin Huang. A faint trace of fear flickered through his eyes.

Compared to Virtuoso, he actually feared Lin Huang more.

Although it was Virtuoso who had wounded him earlier, the attack Virtuoso had duplicated was Lin Huang’s technique.



Based on the earlier skirmish, he had a certain understanding of the trio's abilities and where they stood. Currently, in his mind, the threat level ranking he had given them was Lin Huang>Virtuoso>Saber9.

More precisely, Lin Huang and Virtuoso were the only ones who were a threat to him. Saber9 could almost be ignored.

Naturally, he did not completely overlook Saber9.

After all, a saber cultivator was theoretically the cultivator with the most powerful attack abilities.

Perhaps Saber9 was intentionally hiding his ability, waiting for the perfect opportunity to surprise Nine Gloom...

### **Chapter 1588: Just Fight, Regardless!**

To Lin Huang and the other two, Nine Gloom standing in front of them now was the most powerful enemy they had ever faced.

Although he appeared to be somewhat clumsy, Lin Huang and the rest sensed no signs of his energy waning. This meant that he had not suffered any substantial physical harm.

Lin Huang was sure that the deflected attack from Mirror had surpassed his own strongest attack at least three times over. Despite the intensity and power of the attack, it had merely given Nine Gloom a few superficial injuries.

What was even more frightening was that Nine Gloom had taken Virtuoso's attack head-on. He had had no time to evade, nor had he been able to utilize any methods of defense. He had directly taken the hit armed only with his Divine Power and his physical body.

Under their mask, Virtuoso's expression became rather weighty.

For their attack earlier, they had copied Lin Huang's Mirror completely. As the replicator, they knew very well how powerful and terrifying Lin Huang's attack was. They had reached their limits in terms of psychic-level capacity, just from replicating that attack.

One could say that the attack was practically at half-step lord-level already.

Initially, Virtuoso had anticipated that Nine Gloom would definitely be hurt even if he were not severely injured since he had taken the attack without being prepared for it. However, what surprised them was that Nine Gloom was stronger than they had expected and had not sustained any substantial physical damage at all.

This also meant that it would be impossible to kill Nine Gloom even if he were hit two, even three times when his guard was down.

Furthermore, at Virtuoso's current ability, they could only replicate images of such intensity three times, at most.

Just as Lin Huang and Virtuoso were trying to figure out how to turn the tables on Nine Gloom, Saber9 attacked again unhesitatingly.

As a saber cultivator, his fighting style was usually to fight first and think later. Whether he won or not was another matter—but he had to take action first. Only after taking action would he decide whether or not to exercise his brain based on the battle situation.

One just had to fight, regardless!

Watching the nine saber formations consolidating again in midair and the golden saber gleams condensing into being at lightning speed, Lin Huang and Virtuoso knew that it was time for them to attack.

Countless saber gleams filled the sky, but Nine Gloom did not look at Saber9. He did not even bother to lift his head to look at the sky full of saber gleams. His gaze was fixed on the direction where Lin Huang and Virtuoso were.

He was not intentionally looking down on Saber9; this was because he could sense Saber9's attack was similar to the one from earlier. Nine Gloom could easily tell from the intensity of the wave of Divine Power.

An attack like this would not be able to breach his defenses at all.

However, to Saber9, this was undoubtedly a form of disdain, as well as a provocation.

The million-over saber gleams consolidated in the air almost immediately. The next second, they came hurtling down on Nine Gloom like a rainstorm.

Countless saber gleams surged at Nine Gloom from all directions.

Nine Gloom had no interest in this current wave of attack. When he saw the incoming saber gleams, he already knew that Saber9's attack was no different from the last round.

He did not even bother to waste effort evading it; he merely enveloped his body with a layer of Divine Power as a defense.

At present, he already possessed Silver Armor's defense abilities. Given the vast amount of Divine Power within him, Saber9's attack fell far short of being able to penetrate his defenses.

Observing that Nine Gloom had now set up his defenses, the corners of Saber9's mouth abruptly twitched up in a smirk.

A second later, the golden saber gleams collided with Nine Gloom's defense layer and exploded, taking away a portion of his Divine Power.

Yes—Saber9 had no intention of breaching Nine Gloom's defenses at all with this attack.

Once he became aware that his attacks were not powerful enough to cause any physical harm to Nine Gloom, he swiftly changed his battle strategy and designated himself as combat support.

The nine saber formations seemed no different from the last round. In reality, though, Saber9 had secretly made tiny tweaks to the formations, increasing the explosion, absorption, and interference traits.

Every time the saber gleams exploded, they would absorb around threefold's worth of Divine Power as well. They would also release this portion of Divine Power to create interference waves that would obstruct Nine Gloom's senses and his Divine Telekinesis probing.

This time, Saber9's purpose in attacking was not only to drain Nine Gloom's Divine Power but also to create an opportunity for Lin Huang and Virtuoso to deal some severe damage to their opponent.

In reality, most saber cultivators did indeed prefer to fight blindly and think less—the reason being, their ability was sufficient to crush their opponents. They did not have to think most of the time.

However, as a saber cultivator with extensive battle experience whose Primordial form was also an Almighty, Saber9 did not really have to think much after his first round of attack had failed. The strategy came to him automatically.

This was why he had attacked without hesitation while Lin Huang and Virtuoso were still considering how to turn the tables.

Not only did he give Nine Gloom the impression that he was a reckless hothead, even Lin Huang and Virtuoso thought the same.

However, Lin Huang and Virtuoso realized what was going on the instant they saw Saber9's saber gleams explode. Without hesitation, they attacked once more.

Lin Huang charged at Nine Gloom again, slashing at him with twelve levels of compounded god sequence chains combined with Sword Dao heavenly rule.

Unlike his previous assault, the compounded twelve levels of god sequence chains he added this time were not for attacking but for absorbing and draining Divine Power.

After he saw Saber9's attack, he had the same inspiration—to fight Nine Gloom by draining him!

This was because he was clearly aware that even his most powerful blow was not even one-third as powerful as the deflected wave from before, so it was difficult for him to cause any substantial physical harm to Nine Gloom.

Standing off to one side, Virtuoso took on the responsibility for this round of attack.

As they performed complicated hand seals, over a dozen figures that looked exactly like Lin Huang appeared in the air once again, a mirror swiftly consolidating in front of each of them. After that, terrifying, intersecting red and black shockwaves shot forth!

It was one of Virtuoso's biggest secrets—they could replicate an imaginary image over and over again.

After replicating Lin Huang's deflected shockwave the first time, Virtuoso could utilize it for themselves in the future. As long as they had sufficient Divine Power within their body and a strong enough psychic capacity, they would be able to use it.

Even Lin Huang could not help raising his brows when he noticed that his attack was being replicated again. He was a little envious of Virtuoso's ability now.

Nine Gloom, currently swamped by countless exploding saber gleams, was not feeling very good at the moment.

True, the assaults had not breached his defenses. However, the glaringly bright explosions were interfering with his vision. Furthermore, the Divine Power waves being released were also disturbing his sensing ability and Divine Telekinesis.

He could sense two powerful attacks coming from not too far away. However, given the interference, he could not determine the direction or the angle of the attacks with any accuracy.

After a moment of consideration, he soon came to a decision.

Countless vines surged forth from both his hands, turning into two giant half-spherical shields in the blink of an eye. As he gave both arms a slight shake, the two half-spheres integrated, creating a complete sphere that completely enveloped his body within it.

Just when Nine Gloom had practically completed forming the shield, two attacks landed at almost the same time, striking the giant spherical shield.

Lin Huang's blood-red sword attack landed on the giant shield. It did not penetrate through; instead, it began to absorb the Divine Power that covered the shield.

Virtuoso's shockwave struck the massive shield violently from another angle. After a few seconds of being eroded, traces of cracks finally began to appear on the shield's surface.

However, Lin Huang and the other two noticed that more vines were extending to fill in the cracks.

This contest lasted for some two to three minutes before the shockwaves finally dissipated.

The surface of the giant shield was now covered with cracks and pitted with holes. However, in the end, it still did not collapse...

### **Chapter 1589: Rats In A Trap?**

Within the giant spherical shield made of vines, the silver-armored Nine Gloom had not suffered any injuries to his body at all. However, at the moment, he felt exceedingly gloomy.

True, Lin Huang and the other two's round of attacks had not caused him any harm. However, this time his Divine Power had been depleted much more than in the first clash earlier.

This was for no other reason than Lin Huang and Saber9's use of techniques that absorbed and drained his Divine Power, thus depleting it significantly.

Although Nine Gloom had managed to defend himself against Virtuoso's shockwaves, overall, the drain on his Divine Power had increased. He had exhausted almost one-third of his full store of Divine Power.

On top of the Divine Power loss from that first battle, he had lost over half of his Divine Power just from these two rounds of attacks.

As far as Nine Gloom was concerned, this was not good news at all.

No matter how powerful his abilities, without Divine Power, he could do nothing.

Realizing that Lin Huang and the other two had targeted him, Nine Gloom rapidly began thinking of counter-strategies.

Meanwhile, although Lin Huang and the rest were aware that this wave of assault was insufficient to cause Nine Gloom any harm, they were still satisfied.

They had no idea what percentage of Divine Power loss Nine Gloom had suffered, but they had a rough idea of how much Divine Power would have been absorbed and drained in the attack just now.

If one round were not enough to drain Nine Gloom's Divine Power completely, they would merely repeat the process several times. Eventually, his Divine Power would run out.

Nine Gloom was clearly aware of this. More than half the Divine Power within his body had been drained just from these two rounds of attack. If he were to allow them to continue their onslaughts, he could only sustain two more rounds at most before his Divine Power depleted entirely.

Once this occurred to him, he initiated an attack the moment the shockwaves dissipated.

The giant spherical shield abruptly split apart and proliferated. Countless vines extended in the direction where Lin Huang and the other two were, blotting everything out.

The three of them hastily dodged, slicing away tendrils as they evaded the attacks coming at them from the vines.

However, the wave of incoming vines was endless. Every time vines broke off, they would regenerate within the blink of an eye and continue to attack the three of them.

As there were too many vines, the three of them could only struggle to cope. They could only defend passively; they did not have the energy to initiate any more attacks.

Nine Gloom finally had the upper hand in this round of battle.

However, Lin Huang and the other two did not panic at all. They were even communicating secretly through voice transmission.

"Has this fellow gone insane? Why is he suddenly pulling out all the big moves?!" Saber9 could not help grumbling.

"It proves that our previous two rounds of attacks drained his Divine Power significantly. He dare not drag things out any further, so he's eager to take control of the battle in order to end it quickly." Virtuoso saw through Nine Gloom's plan right away.

"You're right about that, but not entirely." Lin Huang, on the other hand, raised his head to look at the sky.

Apart from the vines that were attacking the three of them, there were considerably more vines that had grown past their heads and were now extending even further toward the distance.

"The ranged attack is just a smokescreen. His real goal is to shift the battlefield!" As soon as Lin Huang finished speaking, the all-encompassing vines had already rapidly surrounded them, completely blotting out heaven and earth.

The next instant, Lin Huang and the other two emerged in a world full of vines.

An overwhelming curtain of vines surged toward them in an onslaught.

“We’re in trouble now—we’ve been dragged into his God Territory...” Saber9’s expression instantly changed to one of dismay.

Although the three of them had powerful abilities, their combat strength was still only at true god-level after all. Their God Territories were nowhere near as strong as Nine Gloom’s; they had no way of defending themselves against being swallowed up by his God Territory.

In his God Territory, Nine Gloom was practically the god of this world. His Divine Power was almost limitless.

Therefore, the plan that Lin Huang and the other two had come up with earlier was more or less utterly useless here.

If they continued to drain Nine Gloom’s Divine Power, they might very well drain themselves to death.

“What the hell do we do now?!” Saber9 looked at Lin Huang and Virtuoso.

Virtuoso said nothing. They still seemed to be thinking about counter-strategies.

Lin Huang spoke up right away, “There are only two ways to get out of a God Territory. One is to forcibly eradicate the God Territory; the other is to kill the God Territory’s master.

“Given the current level of our attack power, naturally, we can’t achieve the former, so we can only go for the latter.”

One could only eradicate a God Territory by force if the power of their attack exceeded the limits of what the God Territory was able to withstand. Given Nine Gloom’s ability, destroying his God Territory was something perhaps only half-step lord-level powerhouses would be able to achieve.

Clearly, Lin Huang, Virtuoso, and Saber9 did not possess such capabilities. Therefore, the option of eradication by force was not viable.

However, upon hearing Lin Huang saying that only the second option was available to them, Saber9 could not help curling his lips slightly, secretly critical within his heart.

If they could not even eradicate a God Territory with force, could they kill Nine Gloom, who was now within his own God Territory?!

From Lin Huang’s tone, it sounded as if killing Nine Gloom was a piece of cake.

“Lin Huang is right. If this had been before Nine Gloom activated his God Territory, we would still have had options—if we were no match for him, we could have abandoned the battle and fled straight away. However, we have no choice now. We’ll only be able to get out of this God Territory if we kill him,” Virtuoso finally delivered his verdict after pondering for a moment.

Saber9 looked helpless when he heard this. “The problem is, how do we kill him?! If we were outside his God Territory like before, we could still drain his Divine Power slowly. However, now that we’re in his

God Territory, the Divine Power within his body is limitless. If we continue trying to exhaust his Divine Power like we did before, we'll be the ones who die in the end."

Virtuoso glanced at Saber9 after hearing him out and said calmly, "That's why we have to bring out some actual trump cards now, or the three of us really will die here."

Saber9 went completely silent upon hearing what Virtuoso had to say.

Virtuoso did not press him either. They waited patiently for Saber9's response as they continued to dodge Nine Gloom's vine attacks.

They were waiting to hear what Saber9 had to say because they were worried that their own trump card might not be able to kill Nine Gloom in one go. If they attacked with Saber9, their chances of succeeding would increase significantly. Therefore, they did not dare make any rash moves before getting a response from Saber9.

Saber9 was silent for a long time. Finally, he made up his mind.

"Alright, I'll go first! If I don't end up killing him, you finish him off."

The reason he made this decision was that he knew the situation would only get worse if they dragged things on. By the end of it, he might not have sufficient Divine Power to even use his trump card.

Naturally, Nine Gloom was aware that the three of them were discussing counter-strategies. However, he could not hear any concrete details, nor did he pay attention to what they were saying.

As far as he was concerned, the three of them were like rats caught in a trap. They had nowhere to run.

He even did not bother wasting effort to launch powerful attacks at the three of them. After all, their abilities were not weak; a strong assault might not gain him much in the way of advantages. Therefore, he opted for the strategy the three had used earlier, which was to use vine attacks to wear down their Divine Power. Once their Divine Power had been completely depleted, the three of them would naturally become sitting ducks; he could do whatever he wanted with them.

Unfortunately, he did not know about Virtuoso and Saber9's backgrounds.

If he had had any inkling at all, he would definitely have killed the three of them as swiftly as possible to prevent anything unforeseen from happening.

However, it was this tiny bit of misinformation that created an opportunity for Lin Huang and the rest.

### **Chapter 1590: Saber9's Trump Card**

High up in the air, Saber9 stood tall. Sword gleams circled around his body like schools of swimming fish, easily fending off wave after wave of vine attacks.

He began to perform rapid hand seals, and the aura radiating from him started to become peculiar.

Naturally, Nine Gloom noticed this transformation as well, but he did not really pay that much attention to it.

After the two rounds of previous attacks, he already had a rough understanding of Saber9's level and felt that Saber9's attacks were not much of a threat. His attention was focused more on Lin Huang and Virtuoso.

He did not completely ignore Saber9 either. Instead, he sent out more vines to counter Saber9's assault, and also increased the frequency of the vine attacks, attempting to hamper Saber9's moves.

However, the sword gleams swimming around Saber9 seemed to be alive. Not only did they increase in number along with the vines, but their movement also sped up in response to the increased frequency of the attacks.

Then again, Saber9's hand seals were also completed very rapidly.

The instant he was done, both his eyes suddenly lit up with a golden sword glow.

About a meter in front of him, a golden sword gleam consolidated at a speed visible to the naked eye.

There was only one sword gleam, which gradually elongated to approximately one meter in length. It did not look very different from the millions of sword gleams that Saber9 had consolidated earlier.

However, only Saber9 knew that this sword gleam was completely different from the ones consolidated previously.

The essence of this particular sword gleam was a sword formation that Saber9's Primordium had left behind. Furthermore, a sliver of energy was inserted into it.

This sword formation was originally meant to ensure Saber9's survival. The moment Saber9 died, it would be activated passively, releasing an attack that was on par with a lord-level assault.

Naturally, the effect that Saber9 activated was much weaker than that.

Firstly, this was because Saber9 had yet to master this particular sword formation and thus could not fully unleash its power.

The second reason was that he had activated it himself, which meant that the sliver of energy inserted by his Primordium could not be used. The driving force for this formation was entirely Saber9's own Divine Power.

Although on the surface it was impossible to detect the sword gleam's peculiarity, Lin Huang and Virtuoso clearly sensed that terrifying energy was concealed within it.

However slow on the uptake Nine Gloom might be, he was still able to sense the threat emanating from the sword gleam. The sense of danger coming from it was even slightly more pronounced than that of the two shockwaves Virtuoso had replicated previously.

Naturally, Nine Gloom had no idea about the background of Saber9's sword gleam. However, this did not stop him from treating it as a formidable attack-type secret skill.

'It seems I really have underestimated this saber cultivator!'

In reality, he had never actually looked down on the three opponents he was facing. However, he had not expected to have miscalculated Saber9's ability quite so much.



Nine Gloom was on full alert as he watched the sword gleam consolidate completely within the mere blink of an eye.

The instant the golden sword gleam materialized into being, it transformed into an electric arc and shot forward.

'That's fast!'

Nine Gloom was not the only one who thought so—even Lin Huang and Virtuoso could not help secretly exclaiming to themselves.

The strike was so swift that Lin Huang felt it might even be the fastest attack he had ever seen since he started down the path of cultivation.

He was unable to follow the attack at all by sight. Even when he used Divine Telekinesis, he was only able to make out the trajectory left behind by the blow.

'What a move... If I were his opponent, I might be dead before I even had time to use Mirror,' Lin Huang sighed secretly in his heart.

He could imagine that the attack would be outstandingly powerful as well as fast.

After all, it was the trump card left by an Almighty!

As the clone of an Almighty as well, Virtuoso was able to see much more than Lin Huang.

At a glance, they realized that Saber9 had not unleashed the full power of the trump card in this attack. Virtuoso was able to roughly guess at the reason for it.

'As expected, the attack is much weaker when he activates it himself,' Virtuoso thought to themselves, cupping their chin, 'It's also far less powerful... an attack of this intensity very likely won't kill Nine Gloom.'

Virtuoso began to plan the next step without waiting for the results of the attack.

Meanwhile, confronted by this attack, Nine Gloom was under extreme duress.

This attack was incredibly fast. Even Nine Gloom could only catch a glimpse of the sword gleam. It was fortunate that he possessed powerful Divine Telekinesis and could sense the sword gleam's complete trajectory.

The moment Nine Gloom caught sight of the sword gleam, he attacked without hesitation.

The vines multiplied in countless numbers, surging toward the golden sword gleam.

He no longer held out any high expectations of being able to block the attack. He only hoped that he could use the vines to wear down the power of Saber9's assault.

When the golden sword gleam locked onto Nine Gloom, it had actually completely broken free of Saber9's control.

Faced with layer upon layer of obstructing vines, it had no intention of circumventing them. Instead, it pierced straight through them. Wherever it passed, destruction followed in its wake, leaving only dust behind.

The vines could not stop the sword gleam at all. They were crushed into dust as soon as they got within ten centimeters of it.

However, Nine Gloom did not panic when he saw what was happening.

The sword gleam did not seem to dim at all, but Nine Gloom was very certain that each time it came in contact with his vines, it would weaken by just a fraction.

This time, he utilized the technique that Lin Huang and Saber9 had used to counter him earlier—he secretly infused all the vines with the ability to absorb and drain Divine Power.

The sword gleam would not weaken very obviously after colliding with the vines two or three times. However, what if they collided a hundred times or even a thousand times? What if they collided over ten thousand times?!

Even Nine Gloom had not anticipated being able to apply this method so soon—using his opponent's own techniques against them.

It was not long before Lin Huang and the rest noticed that something was off.

Although Lin Huang did not know what Virtuoso's expression was under their mask, he saw Saber9 frowning slightly. Lin Huang was not sure whether Saber9 was unsatisfied with his attack or if he was upset that Nine Gloom had used his own technique against him.

However, under his mask, Lin Huang looked rather helpless.

He had never expected that the trick he and Saber9 had played on Nine Gloom would be used against them now.

In the void, countless vines besieged the golden sword gleam.

The golden sword gleam was still moving like a hot knife through butter with no hint of any slowing down. It pierced through the multiple layers of obstacles and reached Nine Gloom within the blink of an eye.

Nine Gloom did not bother evading, knowing that it was fruitless to even try.

He had no way of dodging this attack.

Therefore, he chose to counter it full force.

He extended countless vines to fortify his defenses, forming a complicated structure of giant curved silver shields in front of him.

In short order, eighteen of these massive shields were formed.

They were like eighteen city walls acting as a barrier in front of Nine Gloom.

On each of the massive shields were entwined close to twenty thick god sequence chains of various colors. Those were the concrete, physical manifestations of sequence power.

In the time it took for a mere breath, the golden sword gleam collided with the giant shields.

Golden and silver divine rays abruptly flared up, immediately blotting out the heavens. At that instant, it seemed as if gold and silver were the only colors remaining in the world.

Even the two spectators, Lin Huang and Virtuoso, could not help squinting slightly.

However, apart from the gold and silver rays, neither of them could see anything at all.

A moment later, the two rays gradually faded, and Lin Huang and Virtuoso were finally able to see the state of battle at the moment.

The eighteen thick, massive wall-like shields had been completely pierced through, leaving a hole as big as a water barrel.

Meanwhile, Nine Gloom, who had been sheltering behind the shields earlier, was now nowhere to be seen.

'Nine Gloom... is dead?!' Lin Huang was skeptical.