

PARAGON 931

Chapter 931: Among Us

Distraught and riled as they were, the three Soul Monarchs maintained a sense of dignity despite their individualistic challenges. The Soul Saint King had swept the situation into a prompt conclusion, sending all enemies away with two actions and two sentences. However, their emotions were as complex as the life cycle of a butterfly.

The Soul Martial Saint, still as bare naked as possible, his bulging muscles and gigantically exceptional physique aside, gazed thoughtfully towards the Spirits of War's departing route.

The Soul Falling Saint held the calmest expression despite suffering the greatest losses, only inspecting the approaching Soul Saint King with unreadable eyes. At the leaking stump of his left arm, continuously flowing dark-grey energies pulsed in a rhythmic manner. The time energies were slowly testing out the environment, hoping to initial Temporal Reversion at the soonest possible point.

The longer he waited, the more difficult it would be to reverse the damage he suffered. If he was forced to rebuild a new arm, he would lose thousands of years of effort refining his meridians, bones, and flesh within that arm. For life, he would have a permanent weak spot on his left side, which could be extremely fatal if capitalized on by experts.

The Soul Rumbling King was not the calmest, but he had the gloomiest expression despite suffering next to no injuries. After outplaying his enemies, exhausting them of their power, just about to sweep them clean, the Soul Saint King had intervened and sent them away. He had the greatest urge to interrogate and dissect those strange beings, an urge that would be very difficult to fulfil now.

When the Soul Saint King observed the three Soul Monarchs, he had a relatively aloof and neutral expression, clearly indicating his status as the elected leader wasn't for show. None of these three showed any ill-feelings when they redirected their fullest attention to him, reflecting the respect they had for him in their eyes. While the Ninestar Starfield wasn't a monarchy, more of a council of elites, the Soul Saint King was still the leader of this council and recognized as the strongest expert throughout the entire starfield—an expert worthy of their respect and pride.

"Sainthall Soul King," the Soul Falling Saint politely called out to the Soul Saint King by his official title, continuing: "What happened here?"

The Soul Rumbling King intervened directly after, "Who were those armored cultivators?"

The Soul Martial Saint chimed in as well, "Why is the Imperial Clan outside our borders?"

The questions were numerous, and these were just three of the greatest on their minds. Just earlier, they received a special transmission that the Mystic Ninestar Unity Array had been activated, a notice of activation alert was naturally sent out to all Soul Monarchs outside the Ninestar Starfield, designed to call them back immediately if possible. This function was initiated immediately after the Soul Saint King used the Mystic Ninestar Unity Array.

The three of them acted on their own will, returning back despite knowing that the Soul Saint King had activated the array and all things would easily be settled. Since there was no news of the Imperial Clan

or Hexaflame Starfield acting against them, there should be no enemies that could deal with a Soul Saint King empowered by this exceptional array.

There were others who outright refused to delay their trip to the summit, fully trusting the Soul Saint King. After all, the alert was an alert of activation, not a call to arms. They had no obligation to return.

The Soul Saint King circulated his internal mystic power, further settling his injuries to prevent a flare-up, and took a slow breath. He began to explain.

The three listened attentively and they soon gained a sense of the full story, excluding portions that the Soul Saint King couldn't know of. Immediately, their expressions were warped by extreme shock, gaping disbelief, and uncontrollable emotional changes. They were all aware of a few crucial details already, especially the Soul Falling Saint and Soul Rumbling Saint, who sent representatives to seek out Yue Lixiang.

They didn't think Trueborn had the steel guts needed to launch an attack at the heart of their territory, using the Saint Cyclic Renewal Summit's procession as an opportunity. This was absolutely baffling to them. How brazen! How audacious!

They had an urge to react to this clandestine organization's outrageous act with heated response.

"We'll kill them all," the Soul Martial Saint said, his eyes leaked out almost tangible rays of murderous light. When he tightly clenched his two fists, his muscles bulged even further, serving to exude a terrifying physical presence.

The other two might not have such a strong physical reaction, but their gazes showed their thoughts and it matched perfectly with the Soul Martial Saint's. That said, the Soul Saint King merely swept his gaze briefly over the three.

'Who knows if any of you actually would,' the Soul Saint King thought with an inner sneer. This was especially directed towards the Soul Martial Saint, giving his extremely powerful yang-attributed physique a brief glance. It wasn't exaggerated to say that many rare, ill-acquired resources had supported their rises to the peak.

Cultivation was difficult.

That said, the Soul Saint King truly was absolutely livid at the Trueborn's actions, and knew this challenge had to be met with a swift, vicious reply. So he had already made a decision:

All Shadow Eggs in his territory shall be destroyed; all Trueborn associates will be slaughtered—with extreme prejudice.

A lesson must be taught.

A lesson **MUST** be learned.

"But to act with so many forces...for a single woman?" The Soul Rumbling Saint couldn't help but point out with a light of confusion flitting through his eyes. Yue Songli was a Soul of Mysticism female, yes, her beauty was sufficient to reach number one of the Immortal Saintess Ranking before, yes, but sending six Earthly Saints and so many Demi-Mortal Lords?

It seemed too far-fetched. It didn't match up with reality. Even if you factored in their excessive caution in case the Ennea Hall Alchemic Saint took unknown precautions or the Soul Saint King might return. Either scenario, six Earthly Saints might not be enough with such preparations or geographical advantage.

Suspicious, the Soul Falling Saint added: "Yue Songli's importance is either tremendous to them or they were simply excessive in their preparations, fearful of being a lion who carelessly loses their prey."

"We should investigate Yue Songli deeper, and find out what's special about her," the Soul Rumbling Saint suggested.

"If there's anything special," the Soul Falling Saint hammered. And clearly he believed Yue Songli was merely a heaven-toppling beauty, but beauties could not allow you to reach higher limits on the endless road of cultivation. They were merely distractions. His opinion was formed from his own experience and years, seeing numerous men shattered by these exceptional women, crushed and left feeling cuckolded by their choices.

As cultivators, obsessions were their strongest feature. It allowed them to endlessly cultivate in the pursuit of greater limits, tackling profound notions that exceed mortals in thought and essence, and stifle the loneliness needed to do so. It also made them easy to find a target of their affection, overly obsessing and visualizing a life beyond their means with this target. They would fight, kill, and agonize over this target's life, neglecting their own.

A distraction, often unhealthy.

"Forget Yue Songli; she's irrelevant as she is. We have more pressing matters to investigate," the Soul Saint King strongly stated.

"..." The three went silent. A knowing tension developed amongst them. That was entirely right! Something far more important needed to be investigated.

A Soul Monarch must've given the six Earthly Saints permission to enter the Soul Saint Domain, and even used a concealed Void Gate to do so. It wouldn't work out otherwise. Such planning was dangerous, and could've been used to launch a devastating assault if the Ninestar Sainthall had ever attacked Trueborn.

They revealed one of their strongest trump cards, even ousting their possible spy, and risked six Earthly Saints. That said, it was abundantly clear that Yue Songli's situation was not ordinary. After all, their trump card and spy would've been burned regardless of the result.

However, the Soul Monarchs weren't silent because of just that, but the knowing implication...

Chances were...amongst these three was the traitor!

"I'll locate the remnants of the Void Gate, you three stay here to watch over Yue Lixiang and Yue Songli, ensure there's no second wave." The Soul Saint King calmly instructed as he took this opportunity to depart with a flicker. The three Soul Monarchs remained silent, only assenting with nods.

As for inside their thoughts, they knew the Soul Saint King was clearly aware that the Void Gate in question was definitely destroyed, likely by the traitor to erase any evidence. While this might seem to

be easily solved with oaths, Mythical Oaths were not like Spirit Oaths; they were unable to be used for upholding truths as Wei Wuyin had once done.

As for Spirit Oaths, they could be easily dealt with by beings at their level. And no one would ever know. Left with no choice, they now had a heavy investigation awaiting them. Not just towards them, but the other four Soul Monarchs with scepters!

What timing.

"Where's Zhang Ziyi?" Wei Wuyin's heart had calmed down after the situation had finally concluded. All the chips had been pushed to his side, and it was all too perfect. While reminded of the intensity of the fight, aware of his own weakness, he was also aware of his own strength—specifically his external strengths, Zhan Zheng and Wu Yu—and the unreliability of other forces.

Ma Zheng was helping seal away the captives with additional seals, a wisp of anticipation leaking as he wondered who each of these Earthly Saints were, when Wei Wuyin asked this. His expression suddenly became somewhat gloomy.

"The Radiant Jade True Queen suffered an extremely heavy rebound after the Soul Saint King forcefully severed our connection. She went unconscious, and I safely placed her into my Internal World." As Ma Zheng said this, he waved his hand to project an unconscious Zhang Ziyi via a Spiritual Projection Screen.

"Unconscious?" Wei Wuyin was startled.

"More like in a coma," Ma Zheng clarified. "She suffered severe damage to her Mystic Soul and Sea of Consciousness. She's lucky. Without Imperial Monarch Muyang and Sky Monarch Chaoyue helping her, she wouldn't be in a coma." As the one of the weakest types of Earthly Saint, a 1st Runic Ascendant, Zhang Ziyi was quite fragile. Relative to ordinary Earthly Saints, that is. While Tian Muyang, Yang Chaoyue, and Ma Zheng had been inflicted with injuries too, Zhang Ziyi suffered the absolute worst of it.

"A coma..." Wei Wuyin realized that he still suffered a loss here.

Chapter 932: A Successful Operation

Staring intently at the projected screen with a set of heavily furrowed brows, Wei Wuyin was in deep thought. Zhang Ziyi's vulnerable and unconscious state was indeed a loss. A loss that his calculations hadn't factored, an unseen complication. She was supposed to be the one in the least amount of danger, yet this happened. At this point, Han Yuhei's attitude was abundantly clear and Zhang Ziyi's stance was long since stated, they wholeheartedly supported Wei Wuyin.

Even with the War Talisman in his possession, an Earthly Saint was not an existence that could be dismissed in value. If the recent ambush revealed anything, it was that Earthly Saints were extremely difficult to deal with by those of similar cultivation bases unless the difference was extremely massive.

An existence like Wu Yu and the Soul Saint King could absolutely demolish Earthly Saints like Zhang Ziyi. And Zhang Ziyi was amongst the ordinary Earthly Saints. He knew that the average state of Runic Ascendant States for Earthly Saints in the Grand Cyclic Stellar Region, from Ma Zheng, was the 2nd Runic Ascendant State. The Earthly Saints that Wei Wuyin had come across, from Lady Clearwind, Sun Li, Ever-

Knights, Faye Liying, Tian Muyang, and the others were mostly high-level elites, top 50 amongst less than 200.

The six Earthly Saints, for example, showed clear examples of this difference. Even Sun Li was a mere 3rd Runic Ascendant despite her wealth and status. Furthermore, there was a difference between initial state and current state. Unlike Wu Yu, these Earthly Saints were all high-level Earthly Saints with exceptional backgrounds, ranging from starfield leaders to seated members of wealthy forces, and their initial Earthly Ascension had occurred thousands of years ago, or even tens of thousands of years ago, allowing them to use their status to fully comprehend one or two additional Runes of Mysticism.

Once again serving as a heartless, brutal reminder of one absolute fact: Cultivation is difficult.

Yet despite being referred to as so-called elites of their cultivation stage, they had difficulty handling Trueborn's Earthly Saints. A sign that Earthly Saints was not to be underestimated. Just the sheer power they wielded, capable of devastating entire starfields, was enough to justify their importance.

Zhang Ziyi was an exceptional loss of potential strength, but most troubling was that Wei Wuyin could feel the interested, quiet gazes of Yang Chaoyue and Tian Muyang. Wei Wuyin had used the sole Mystic-World grade elixir he possessed to bring Ma Zheng from the brink of death, reaching the Earthly Saint Phase, Fourth Stage of the Mystic Ascendant Realm. The alchemical elixir was called the Rousing-Soul Demi-Mystic Elixir, and it was low-tier, low-quality.

It was the greatest form of preparation for Cai Liuyang, the lover of that Blessed, Jing Jiu, in the Battlefield, and it was the only one that Wei Wuyin possessed. Its primary effect was extremely miraculous, according to Cai Liuyang's detailed notes. It could, for a brief period, initiate an artificial state of Awakened Mystic Intent within the Mystic Soul. That was enough to automatically initiate the Earthly Ascension, while increasing one's chances of reaching a higher Runic Ascendant State with the added support.

As stated in those notes, its specialness originated from the 100 Mystic Origin Liquids used in its concoction and a strange material labeled as Condensed Spirit Tears, generating Mystic-Soul Origin. This new material was then compiled with other mystic-graded materials to make it.

She cherished this bottle with the utmost importance. He felt it from how isolated it was in the Saint Ring, secured and stored in the proper environmental conditions. And from how it granted one a state of temporary Awakened Mystic Intent, one could see how extremely valuable this product was by examining Wu Yu's recent Earthly Ascension. As a cultivator who had a 7th Rune Ascension, he was pushed to the 8th Runic Ascendant State after having serendipitous enlightenment towards Mystic Intent.

In fact, Ma Zheng's success was three-fold. It included his own 30,000 years of cultivation efforts, a 1,000 War Souls and their enhanced comprehension effects, and the low-tier, low-quality, Mystic-World grade Rousing-Soul Demi-Mystic Elixir. His achievements were not unexpected at all. Some beyond the sealed regions might go crazed with envy after hearing of it.

Now, with the two Imperial Clan's Earthly Saints staring at him, he felt pressed to handle this matter. Unfortunately, he didn't have anything to assist her immediately. There were a few recuperative Mystic-

Earth grade products within Cai Liuyang's Saint Ring, but it couldn't achieve an instantaneous effect like he had done before.

Unfortunately, he couldn't deal with this in an impressive fashion. He knew that Ma Zheng was openly answering for the same reason, helping elevate his prestige and value once again. While he appreciated the effort, it truly placed him in a spot.

Wei Wuyin could only deliberately unfurrow his brows into a relaxed expression, relieved by Zhang Ziyi's living status. "As long as she's alive," was all he said. The response to this sentence was as expected with Yang Chaoyue and Tian Muyang's eyes flashing with various emotions. They were fully aware that injuries of Earthly Saints were absurdly difficult to deal with.

Ma Zheng caught on with Wei Wuyin's intentions, cancelling the projection with a hint of a smile. Afterwards, the comets of light finally passed the borders. The Soul Saint King had deliberately sent them his way.

"Thank you for your assistance," Wei Wuyin gave the nearby comets a glance before earnestly giving thanks to Tian Muyang and Yang Chaoyue. Their help was essential to this successful operation.

Tian Muyang merely smiled in response. He hid his tumultuous feelings. After all, they had assisted in ambushing Trueborn. The clandestine organization was not a simple entity. Moreover, Wei Wuyin clearly seemed to hold a heavy grudge against them.

First, the Fire Phoenix and likely that strange Earthly Saint from earlier destroyed a Shadow Egg. Then, the Earthly Saints fought against and dealt with Trueborn's Earthly Saints, killing one on scene and leaving two fleeing for their lives. Now, there was a planned ambush to thwart a heavily invested in operation of theirs that led to one Earthly Saint and four Demi-Mortal Lords losing their lives and more being captured.

It was an outrageous sequence of developments and a clear sign of Wei Wuyin's declaration of war on Trueborn. But for the life of him, he couldn't understand why. Now, the two of them were accomplices to Wei Wuyin's vigorous wrath. It would be a blessing if this doesn't cause troubles down the line.

Yang Chaoyue also felt similar, but instead of feeling just wary about this developing situation, her personal interest in the handsomely talented Wei Wuyin grew. This mortal's feats were becoming increasingly greater than she could've ever predicted. The fact he fielded a united effort of eleven Earthly Saints, many of them with highly reputable statuses, two of which he made, was unimaginable.

It was outright unthinkable.

Yet, here they were.

So the sparkle in her eyes refused to give way, and the alluring charm exuded from her smile was constantly on display. "A small matter, Ascendant Emperor Wei."

Tian Muyang rolled his eyes in his heart at her. Can she not be so overt with the flattering? However, considering what he'd just accomplished, maybe he deserved that title.

Wei Wuyin could sense her desirous eyes searing into his face. Maintaining an unaffected expression, he faintly smiled and watched as Ma Zheng retrieved the comets. The Imperial Monarch and Sky Monarch

immediately saw this and glanced at each other. Without hesitation, they left with mind-blowing speeds.

It was best not to complicate the situation with their presence further, especially with Trueborn captives. While they would love to continue staying, the channel for communication was established.

The others were soon brought over, revealing the captives of both sides. The masked Ascended beings of Trueborn seemed oddly quiet and dispirited while most of those a part of Wei Wuyin's line-up was confused by the sudden shift in dynamics.

Sun Li, on the other hand, who wore her exquisitely designed battle armor, brightly smiled as she moved closer to Ma Zheng, who promptly unraveled her seals, freeing her completely, and allowing her Mystic Aura to grandly flourish. "Thank you."

Ma Zheng showed a smile as well, a little less bright, but earnest and emotional. This operation could have easily gone sideways, definitely for all those who participated in the fighting. There were endless detrimental variables that could have revealed themselves during the fight. Just surviving was a huge win for them.

Huoyan Liulan saw this brief interaction from her sealed state, and her eyes glinted strangely. When Ma Zheng finally removed her seals, she unleashed her Mystic Aura in an even more impressive fashion.

Her reaction came as no surprise to Sun Li, who showed no response. She merely looked at the captives with a thoughtful gaze.

Lady Clearwind released a heavily suppressed breath after her seal was undone. While the others had light restraints, she was shackled thoroughly. The feeling was beyond uncomfortable.

"He let us go..." Faye Liying was the most baffled by the outcome. She was confused on many points, mostly with the Soul Saint King allowing her to freely leave. She was almost certain that she wouldn't be leaving the Ninestar Starfield without an exceptionally heavy cost.

"He did. What happened?" Lady Clearwind questioned immediately, looking at Ma Zheng. Afterward, she exerted her spiritual sense to try and locate Wu Yu. Unfortunately, her efforts yielded no results. A glint of disappointment flickered in her gaze.

"Where's the armored fellow?" Faye Liying added to the question. The War Commander and Soul Saint King had fought, something lasting for over two minutes, the majority of which was concealed in bright radiance, and at the end, the Soul Saint King came out unscathed and let them go free. The entire situation was incredibly suspicious.

"We succeeded," Ma Zheng calmly stated. He didn't say they won, but that their mission had been a success. From the captives present, that was clearly the case. The others couldn't help but frown at the non-answer, but when they looked to Wei Wuyin, they found themselves unable to inquire further.

Wei Wuyin and Bai Lin were already invested in other important matters. He approached the captives with his Celestial Eyes at full strength, inspecting what he could. Unfortunately, they, as Ascended beings, made this exceptionally difficult. Additionally, their concealment robes and masks were forged using high-level, mystic-graded, shadow-attributed materials. Even the burnt corpse of Huoyan Liulan's opponent was thoroughly hidden, the concealments adhering to his melted flesh.

That said, he could feel Karmic Sin on quite a few. They truly felt like fuel for Blessed.

"Unmask them," Wei Wuyin calmly ordered.

A wave of tension slowly spread out.

The question on everyone's mind was about to be answered: "Who were these Earthly Saints?"

Chapter 933: The Death of One

Unmask them!

"Right here?" Faye Liying subconsciously asked. She couldn't resist the urge to look at the Trueborn captives, curiosity blazed in her eyes accompanied by a glow of vigilance. The others also did the same. They were all elites, and they were aware of the nature of Trueborn, especially after seeing the Ravenous Edge Starfield's former Earthly Saint, the Ravenous True King, killed during an operation in her former Domain.

That strange Earthly Saint of Wei Wuyin had brutally delivered his severed head to her and then left. It was a heart-chilling scene, but it confirmed many, many assumptions. The subsequent fall of the Ravenous Edge Starfield and ongoing division revealed that the second leading Earthly Saint of the starfield, the World Prison True Queen, had likely been a part of that operation.

She was declared as missing but alive, later discovered dead. While Nansi Yuangu's identity remained unconfirmed, his convenient stay in the Golden Life Pavilion was very telling. It wasn't only Wei Wuyin, Wu Yu, or Zhang Ziyi that speculated him as the third.

This heavily suggested that the Earthly Saints of the Grand Cyclic Stellar Region, from starfield leaders to Aeternal Sky Starfield's leaders, had deeply intertwined relations with Trueborn. It was just unknown whether they were rallied by profits or indoctrinated into the Trueborn's organization itself.

It was clear that even Earthly Saints could be moved by sufficient wealth as long as it didn't infringe on their Mythical Oaths. That said, there was heavy speculation that Trueborn had ways to temporarily suppress Mythical Oaths without outright destroying them. A discounted method of evasion, but this operation could prove this.

For example, if any of the Sky Monarchs or Imperial Monarchs were a part of these masked captives. They were all equally restricted from entering other starfields without permission from the highest authorities. Not even Faye Liying could grant Tian Muyang entry permissions, and only the Soul Saint King or Ennea Hall Alchemic Saint had the rights to evade breaking the Imperial Clan's side of their oaths.

The tense atmosphere was warranted. This could very well reveal how the Trueborn operated, whether they were as shadowy as others expected, having an independent force of Earthly Saints, or simply possessing strong rallying power towards opportunistic cultivators.

The five living Earthly Saints here could be anyone.

Moreover, Sun Li, Han Yuhei, Lady Clearwind, and Faye Liying might be able to discover why Wei Wuyin seemed intent on dealing with Trueborn.

Ma Zheng glanced at Wei Wuyin, receiving the nod of confirmation. With a sharp breath, he moved towards a masked Earthly Saint whose head was tilted in such a way as if they were staring directly at Wei Wuyin. An unflinching gaze was definitely beneath that mask of theirs.

Entirely unbothered, Wei Wuyin replied to this death stare with the faintest of smiles. This particular Earthly Saint had the largest Karmic Sin aura. Their journey thus far must be drenched in tragedy, hardship, struggle, blood, and death.

While the Heavenly Daos' laws weren't strictly righteous, many of their rules were established on a strange, archaic sense of balance and equity. It was a system of law that, at first glance, might be seen as acceptable and just, but delving deeper would discover a heap of issues.

Just the absolution of soldiers that commit atrocities was a law that felt both balanced yet extremely unfair. To pile all their sins committed on a single person, disregarding what they do as long as they acted 'under the orders' of another, felt strangely out-of-place. The clarity of that law was disgustingly vague as well.

Considering how Karmic Sin distribution functioned, Wei Wuyin felt as if the Heavenly Daos' laws were established as a way to prevent overflowing of sinners in Hell, especially that law. Who knew if that was the case or not.

Ma Zheng reached out to grasp the mask. The mask itself was without any symbols, full-faced, unlike the half-masked, grey-colored, with a three-dimensional image of a hand holding a crimson sphere. These masks were blank, without human features, without eyes, only the shape of their faces were somewhat clear. Still, it was difficult to discern gender.

When Ma Zheng touched the mask, his hand enveloped in a thin layer of mystic power, Wei Wuyin's Sea of Consciousness throbbed fiercely.

"Stop." A voice erupted throughout Wei Wuyin's mind. He felt a familiar siphoning of his mental energies. After reaching the Realm World Phase, becoming a genuine Realm Lord, his innate energies had all undergone drastic changes in quality and limits of quantity.

Wei Wuyin instantly projected himself into his Sea of Consciousness, observing the Golden Egg of the Heavenly War Spirit sitting prettily at the base of Eden's vast tree trunk. It was enveloped by roots of Eden, tightly wound against it, pumping richly refined mental energies into it.

"Stop?" Wei Wuyin asked, confused but wary. Still, in the real world, he verbally called out to Ma Zheng: "Don't."

His words prompted the others to give him a look, confused by the sudden change of direction. Ma Zheng, however, withdrew his hands swiftly and without question. He furrowed his brows as he looked at the masked figure. For some reason, he felt as if the face beneath the mask was grinning.

The Heavenly War Spirit within his Sea of Consciousness has always been a mystery, an object or existence of unknown purpose. The only thing he knew was that it could communicate, had the voice of a little girl, and consumed vast amounts of his mental energies to talk. It cost 5,000,000 War Souls, so Wei Wuyin knew it was far from an ordinary existence.

The Heavenly War Spirit's egg sucked in another burst of mental energies. While he felt a little disorientated, his mental energy was vastly superior to what it was before. He didn't suffer a headache this time.

"Kill her."

Those two words were blandly spoken. There was a lack of emotions, chilling and distant, from that voice. The energy and liveliness from before vanished, and while the voice sounded the same, that of a little girl, it could easily be mistaken as someone else's.

"Her? Why?" Wei Wuyin asked.

"..." Wei Wuyin stared at the Heavenly War Spirit's egg for a long time in his Sea of Consciousness. After that long period had passed with no further elaboration, Wei Wuyin felt that the Heavenly War Spirit had become more unfathomable.

Dissipating his mental incarnation, Wei Wuyin felt the gazes of all the Earthly Saints fixated on him. It was a strange event where all these Ascended beings were awaiting word from a measly mortal, but none of them felt this was odd in the slightest.

Wei Wuyin, with his Worldly Domain unfurled, flew off Bai Lin, approaching Ma Zheng and the captives. The eyes drawn to his movements were intense. When he arrived beside Ma Zheng, the aged merchant gave Wei Wuyin a frowned look.

He didn't know if what was felt towards this captive was genuine or not. However, whether they were smiling or not would be discovered once unmasked, right?

The others were of similar thought: Wei Wuyin wanted to unmask them himself. They hoped that they could get a clue about why Wei Wuyin had acted against Trueborn so viciously, ambushing them and capturing their Earthly Saints.

However, none of them expected what happened next!

Wei Wuyin arrived before the Earthly Saint, a mere few feet of distance, and his silver eyes inspected the mask with an indifferent calmness that was bereft of emotions. Suddenly, he brought out his Essence of War saber, the quasi Mystic-World grade saber!

"..." The Earthly Saints from every side all watched.

Watched it as it was thrust!

Without the slightest hesitation or delay, Wei Wuyin plunged his saber into the masked figure's dantian. The sheer degree of raw strength he had to exert to penetrate an Ascended's physique was excessive, far beyond Mortal Limits, yet he achieved it!

The saber's quality didn't hurt.

"Urgh!" A spurt of shock and colorful blood escaped the masked Earthly Saint's mouth, leaking at the bottom of the mask.

Wei Wuyin's silver eyes were utterly emotionless as he plunged it deeper, touching the sealed Mystic Soul of the Earthly Saint. Their body instantly began to tremble and resist, wanting to break free sensing the hectic danger! Their Mystic Soul howled, yet the seal was too strong to break free in this short period of time.

The saber's tip touched the Mystic Soul, then proceeded to stab into it mercilessly. It squirmed and squealed in defiance to no avail.

Wei Wuyin twisted it.

Suddenly, a strange power from his Sea of Consciousness surged through Eden and into his meridians, coming through the saber, and entering the Mystic Soul. Wei Wuyin felt it course through him, into the saber, and then flow into the Mystic Soul.

Then, it went silent.

There were no howls of defiance. There was no pained scream or curses leaving the masked Earthly Saint's mouth. It was surprisingly quick as their body became instantly lifeless, flopping to the side.

Wei Wuyin's heart quivered. Others might not be able to sense it clearly due to the concealments in place, but through his varied senses, from his Celestial Eyes and Eden's mental emission senses, he felt the Earthly Saint's entirely be siphoned instantly.

Their life force, their Sea of Consciousness, even their Mystic Soul's innate energies, all of it was siphoned as if gulped by a gluttonous mouth. This was all due to that strange flow of power.

Wei Wuyin removed his saber after killing the Earthly Saint. Suddenly, as if the concealments were no longer attached to a life, it slowly fell off. The mask that seemed adhered to their skin fell and robes that hid everything loosened. Suddenly, the once androgynous figure became a feminine. Beneath the robes, one with a voluptuous set of breasts, long, slim legs, and long dark hair was revealed.

The hearts and minds of everyone present was violently pounding with ferocious shock! What...the hell just happened?!

Wei Wuyin took a step back, once again projecting himself into his Sea of Consciousness. His eyes were focused on the Heavenly War Spirit's egg. At this moment, there was a thin halo that was very reminiscent of a Mystic Radiance Belt above its head, sprinkling down motes of light. The color of such was beyond description for his mortal senses. Those motes of light were absorbed into the egg.

"..." Wei Wuyin furrowed his brows.

"Prisoners of War are so tasty!" The little girl's voice resounded again, this time lively as it once was. "Why?" It asked.

Wei Wuyin's frown deepened, "Because I wanted to." His answer was simple yet honest. He could've ignored the Heavenly War Spirit's words or continued questioning it, but he didn't. Why? Because the Earthly Saint was marked for death! Their identity didn't matter. Of course, the Heavenly War Spirit likely didn't know this considering the Earthly Saint was referred to as a prisoner of war.

And it didn't.

To the Heavenly War Spirit, Wei Wuyin's captives were prisoners of his ongoing war against Trueborn. A pervasive thought that was similar to everyone else's.

"Good answer!" The Heavenly War Spirit exclaimed; shockingly, it didn't use the slightest bit of Wei Wuyin's mental energies to speak. It was somehow absorbing the motes of mystic light to fuel itself. "You're lucky; these Ascended beings all have layers of protections on them. If you tried to remove their masks or robes, a talisman-like mechanism would activate and detonate their Mystic Souls."

"What?!" For the first time since this conversation, Wei Wuyin was shocked. "From what I've observed, those other Earthly Saints didn't have it." The Heavenly War Spirit was clearly referring to the three Earthly Saints that attacked Zhan Zheng before. "But they're from the same organization," she added.

Wei Wuyin felt terrified. The detonation of a Mystic Soul was not to be underestimated. It was possible that it could collapse an entire starfield, depending on its size. At the very least, obscene levels of damage would be inflicted.

"It might even amplify the explosion by a few times. There's some restrictions to it though. The talisman restricts them from detonating their Mystic Souls normally, and igniting their Mystic Souls has a high chance of initiating an automatic detonation. Scary stuff." The Heavenly War Spirit's knowledge was beyond what Wei Wuyin imagined. How did it notice this but no one else had?

"How do you know this?" Wei Wuyin asked. Immediately after asking, he realized how foolish that question was. He instantly speculated, "A talisman like that, huh? Must be a precautionary measure to protect their identities, since Legion Commander Zhan Zheng exposed one of their own before."

The Heavenly War Spirit didn't answer his initial question either, "Smart. War always has its tacticians, an ever-evolving battlefield of improvements and traps."

However, Wei Wuyin couldn't comprehend why these Earthly Saints would agree to such suicidal conditions. If their identities were exposed, it wouldn't be too bad, right?

Just as he thought this, an antsy Huoyan Liulan rushed towards the deceased Earthly Saint, her hands trembling as she reached out and pulled off the mask! When the mask was fully removed revealing the face behind it, Huoyan Liulan gasped.

"Auntie Liao?!"

Chapter 934: Liao Shuyu; NecroIntent

Auntie Liao?

Huoyan Liulan's movements were carefully observed by everyone present, infested with a fascination of discovery and intrigue. At first, their attention was all heavily invested into Wei Wuyin's killing of an Earthly Saint as a mortal. They wondered with thoughts as quick as lightning how he achieved such a thing. After all, the refined Physique of an Ascended was not ordinary nor simple. Their flesh, bone, even blood contained a uniquely constructed foundation that made them harder than astral steel.

However, Huoyan Liulan's trembling fingers holding the featureless mask followed by her emotional exclamation set aside all other thoughts. The most confusing aspect of this was Ma Zheng, whose expression had drastically shifted from its typical serenity to abject shock.

Huoyan Liulan's head tilted sideways and a little down as her left hand reached out towards the corpse, unable to muster words.

"Who's this Auntie Liao?" Lady Clearwind was the most direct amongst the group and wasted no time asking the question on everyone's mind. Instinctively, Sun Li, Faye Liying, and Han Yuhei recalled all known Earthly Saints within the stellar region. Alas, no Liao came to mind.

Ma Zheng's reaction was extremely telling, clearly aware of who this Auntie Liao was. Wei Wuyin gave both these Earthly Saints a glance before settling his attention on the unmasked corpse. The corpse was of a female, not an outstanding beauty by any means. In fact, she had a middle-aged visage adorned with bulging veins of dusky grey. Her skin tone was abnormally pale as if sunless for a thousand years and her lips were painted with a glaring red.

The red lipstick shone with a bloody light bestowing them some peculiar charm. Wei Wuyin suspected the lipstick applied had been made from an alchemical paste using refined blood essence. And from his acute beastly sense alongside his alchemical knowledge, he knew it was likely the case.

Her long dark hair was loose and messy, clearly the result of a hectic, stressful battle.

"Auntie Liao..." Huoyan Liulan reached out to rub the paler than pale skin of the female corpse. She instantly felt the coldness from her skin. The complete lack of warmth Huoyan Liulan felt made the corpse feel inhuman. She thought this was a result of a strange cultivation method, not the Heavenly War Spirit's monstrous absorption of all her innate energies, including heat.

"..." Sun Li had never seen Huoyan Liulan so emotional before. Her usual fiery and haughty visage had fallen here, showing a rare trace of extreme warmth. When she saw an injured Han Yuhei step forward, his Mystic Aura seething ever-so-slightly in preparation, Sun Li finally snapped out of her thoughts.

Right.

Wei Wuyin had just killed this Earthly Saint. What if...

Ma Zheng walked over and touched Huoyan Liulan's shoulder, giving it a slight caress of consolation, saying: "She's not the Auntie Liao you knew."

Those words felt as if a bit of conversation had taken place yet the others were unqualified to hear it. They knew there was an inside story.

"Who's Auntie Liao?" Wei Wuyin finally spoke up at this moment and openly too. Huoyan Liulan lifted her eyes to stare at Wei Wuyin, an indescribable emotion flickering within her gaze.

Ma Zheng heaved a soft sigh, "Liao Shuyu. She was a Deacon of the Hexaflame Starfield's Holy Land and leading Mystic-tier Organization, the Inferno Solaris Church." Unlike the Ninestar Starfield's ladder-like hierarchy and jurisdictions of the Ninestar Sainthall or the sole Monarchy of the Aeternal Sky Starfield, the Hexaflame Starfield wasn't as united or organized. The leading force was its strongest force, and it was worthy of such, but the internal layout of the society was dispersed and divided.

The Inferno Solaris Church was this leading force, but it was merely that. Huoyan Liulan was a member of this church, and her grandfather was its head.

"Deacon?" Those aware that a Deacon was the lowest rank for an Ascended by the Inferno Solaris Church's standard, equivalent of an Exalted, was startled. How could a Mystic Star Phase expert become an Earthly Saint?

"She died over nine thousand years ago, her lifespan coming to an unfortunate end." Ma Zheng added.

"What?!" It would be a gross understatement to say they were surprised by this! They were terrifyingly shaken.

"That's impossible; she's clearly an Earthly Saint." Faye Liying refuted, pointing to the corpse as the obvious evidence.

"I buried her..." Huoyan Liulan glared at Faye Liying with wisps of anger, obviously misplaced. She was feeling all sorts of turbulent emotions. Liao Shuyu had essentially been a genuine aunt of hers despite no blood relation. She helped raise her when she was a little girl, growing into her own.

Ma Zheng's surprise now made sense to Wei Wuyin. He must've known her as well. The concept of nine thousand years ago was vastly beyond Wei Wuyin's sense of time. He wasn't even a hundred years old yet. Yet to these Earthly Saints, ten thousand years might just be half their lifetimes. Or Ma Zheng, who lived a full 30,000 years of life.

It was hard to grasp this reality without a prompt, and this revelation forced Wei Wuyin to reflect on his youthful existence. Just seven or so thousand years ago, the King of Everlore had arrived. A thousand or so years before that, the King of Everlore and Wu Yu had just been born in the Desolate Dragnet Region.

Wei Wuyin was only briefly distracted before he inspected the woman yet again. She was an Ascended of the Hexaflame Starfield believed to have been dead? That was highly peculiar.

He sent a mental message to the Heavenly War Spirit, "Why is her face covered in black veins? Was that you?" Wei Wuyin knew the Heavenly War Spirit had essentially devoured the energies and Mystic Soul of Liao Shuyu, so this type of consumption might leave marks. Furthermore, he knew she wasn't actually deceased yet.

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After all, shouldn't he receive Karmic Luck by now? Just the halo was a sign that Mystic Soul was drawn alongside the soul it was connected to. It was unlikely the Heavenly War Spirit was eating her actual soul, but when he recalled the Ever-Knight whose body was destroyed yet remained alive, he imagined that Liao Shuyu was in a similar state, dying slowly to the Heavenly War Spirit.

"No. The icky blackness within her veins is the remnant trace of Necro Energy. That type of power is nasty." The Heavenly War Spirit replied with a wisp of contempt in its voice. Hearing that from a little girl felt a little amusing, as if she found a disgusting bug on the street.

"Necro Energy?" This was the first time Wei Wuyin had heard of it, but he did know of a mythological tale told by the Red Dove City's elders describing a demon that could control the deceased corpses. He was called Nekro.

"Necro Energy. It's born from a Unique Intent intermixed with Spiritual Energies, much like your mount's Nirvanic Flame Intent." The Heavenly War Spirit's answer caused Wei Wuyin to recall Ma Zheng's explanation of Nirvanic Flame Intent.

He said, word for word: "This type of unique Intent isn't the same as the others, because while they can fall into classifications of normal Intent, divided into Seed, Awakened, and World Heart, it's been infused and modified thoroughly by strange laws and worldly forces. They are, however, unable to be comprehended from the world unlike all things within the Material Dao. The Nirvanic Flames Intent, for example, can only be comprehended from the Essence Blood of a Fire Phoenix and only if one has cultivated the correct physique to handle its overbearing power." It was the same explanation he had given Xue Yifei.

"So is she dead?" Wei Wuyin inquired as he closely observed the blackness within the corpse's veins.

"She will be," the Heavenly War Spirit said. She verified Wei Wuyin's thoughts that she was still alive, her Mystic Soul tethering her soul, preventing it from being drawn to Hell. But this didn't alleviate Wei Wuyin's curiosity.

"But she died before?" Wei Wuyin sought clarification.

"She never died, but her body surely did at one point. The trace amount of the Necro Energy is just a side effect of experiencing total bodily death, a byproduct of life, death, and artificial resurrection. It's like an infection that grows inside a deceased body, causing decay and erosion, infused with the essence of negative life and souls. It's hard to explain in mortal terms..." The Heavenly War Spirit struggled to get out the correct words. Just the term 'negative life and soul' baffled Wei Wuyin.

In truth, Wei Wuyin felt all it said was total nonsense. It wasn't that its words lacked cohesion or a linear train of thinking, but he just couldn't wrap his head around what it meant overall. His questions might've been answered by that explanation, but he just couldn't tell.

He tried a few more times, asking how Liao Shuyu was still alive with Necro Energy if it meant her body was dead, but he merely got the same answer: She isn't dead. Or better, she died and now had Necro Energy within her.

Where did the Necro Energy come from? Why was it there if she came back to life? Did someone resurrect her? Was she ever resurrected? If so, how was she resurrected? Did Wu Yu or Hong Ru have Necro Energy? But those questions kept bringing up terms he simply wasn't familiar with and the Heavenly War Spirit couldn't quite explain. He could only marvel at his second encounter with a Unique Intent and its profundities.

In the end, he left his Sea of Consciousness as he saw Huoyan Liulan had lifted Liao Shuyu in her arms in a bridal carry with watery eyes. To see an Earthly Saint act so emotional, she must've been very important to her.

"I'll bring her home," Huoyan Liulan softly declared. The others were mostly silent as they glanced at each of the masked Earthly Saints. Could each of these cultivators be deceased beings of old? Were they refined as puppets or something else entirely?

"We need to investigate these people's origins more closely before we take further action," Faye Liying said. Wei Wuyin had essentially declared war on Trueborn and he directly killed one of theirs without blinking an eye. Clearly, Wei Wuyin had marked them all for death. But this Auntie Liao of Huoyan Liulan brought forth so, so many questions.

"That's not for us to decide," Han Yuhei breathily stated. Faye Liying's brows furrowed as she looked towards the exceptional youth with an otherworldly handsomeness. Wei Wuyin was clearly the decider of these masked Earthly Saints' fates.

"Do you need to absorb more?" Wei Wuyin asked the Heavenly War Spirit. They technically had an all-she-could-eat buffet lined up if that was one of her functions. But shockingly, the Heavenly War Spirit declined: "I didn't absorb her quintessential essence for my own enjoyment; I did it for your safety."

"My safety?" Wei Wuyin was taken aback. "What do you mean?"

"The talisman is deeply intertwined with their Mystic Souls, any attempt to kill them, cripple their Mystic Soul, or forcefully remove the talisman, will result in its immediate activation and thus detonation." Was the Heavenly War Spirit's response, causing Wei Wuyin's heart to grow abnormally heavy.

He felt that the Heavenly War Spirit might be an expression of his Karmic Luck in action. There was not a single indication of these things in his senses and no one else noticed the talisman, yet the Heavenly War Spirit had essentially saved their lives from their insidious schemes. His actions could've brought all of them a fatal calamity.

"I can't do that again in my current state. My state hasn't reached that level yet." The Heavenly War Spirit felt a little disgruntled with that sentence. After all, it was a Heavenly War Spirit. At worst, a Demi-Mortal Lord Phase absolute genius of the War Dao should've acquired her, not a lowly mortal barely at the Realm World Phase of the Astral Core Realm. By now, she should be able to exert the minimum of her means.

But nope.

Her thoughts weren't that far off from War Commander Zhan Zheng's when he was first summoned. It was clearly outside of expectations that a mortal could afford either of them. She had to feed off Wei Wuyin's mental energies just to speak. Moreover, she couldn't speak in Mysticism, so her words would come off as very confusing and nonsensical for advanced topics. To dumb it all down was incredibly frustrating.

Wei Wuyin thought for a long moment. He looked at Ma Zheng with a heavy gaze. Then, without holding anything back, he proceeded to explain the talismans and the Heavenly War Spirit's other discoveries via spiritual transmission, leaving out the Heavenly War Spirit's existence.

Ma Zheng's expression drastically changed. "That...makes things troublesome." Rubbing his chin, Ma Zheng swept his aged eyes over each captive. He recalled that strange feeling as if the masked figure was smiling beneath the mask, finding it quite strange that a cultivator would be willing to simply die after reaching their level.

When he looked at the masked captives, many of their eyes were deeply locked onto the corpse of Liao Shuyu as if they were incredibly shocked. Some of their heads, especially the Demi-Mortal Lords, stared

at Wei Wuyin as if he was some unholy monster. While their eyes were concealed, it was simply a feeling.

'Do they know about the talismans' purpose?' The strangest of thoughts entered his mind. What if...these masked captives...didn't know?

Chapter 935: Keep What You Kill

"..." Ma Zheng considered the possibility of their ignorance. Unfortunately, he wouldn't be able to confirm this. If Wei Wuyin was right, interrogation might lead to an automatic activation. Suddenly, his eyes unleashed a surge of flowing light. With haste, he flickered before Wei Wuyin, dividing Wei Wuyin from the captives.

The others all reacted instinctively, their Mystic Auras flaring slightly in preparation. After coming out of an intense battle and discovering this strange occurrence of the dead rising, they were all on edge. Ma Zheng's sudden movements only dialed that vigilance to eleven.

Wei Wuyin felt himself enveloped by an invisible barrier. His Celestial Eyes instantly realized the distortions in the surrounding space indicated a usage of Mystic Power. As a Mortal, he still couldn't acutely sense this type of power in any of his senses, especially not visual.

Ma Zheng cautiously asked spiritually, "Can these talismans be remotely activated?"

Wei Wuyin's eyes contracted. A wave of explosive fear erupted in his heart.

Fortunately, the recently loquacious Heavenly War Spirit's helpful nature hadn't ended, answering promptly: "They can't."

A wave of cool relief flowed through Wei Wuyin's body. The concept of weaponizing Earthly Saints' self-detonations as destructive tools was far too terrifying. However, with his newfound calmness, he realized that it made sense. If it could be remotely activated, then if he were holding the controls, he would've long since used it.

Wei Wuyin shook his head. Ma Zheng was a little confused because he felt the abrupt fear swell within Wei Wuyin's eyes before subsiding almost instantly. However, he concluded it was just his own sense of urgent panic that had riled him up, calming down soon after.

"What is it?" Han Yuhei's spiritual sense was expanding madly, on the lookout for any suspicious movement. Could it be reinforcements of Trueborn? As they were all extra vigilant, the death of Liao Shuyu was instantly thought of as a trigger to something else. They all were readying themselves.

"Just taking precautions," Ma Zheng calmly stated.

The gazes of everyone were subconsciously drawn to the corpse-holding Huoyan Liulan whose expression was a little bit unsightly at the moment. She harrumphed despite her misty eyes, "I'm not so stupid to risk myself for a long-dead person that died again. This could be her body, but I'm not delusional to believe that she actually was my Aunt."

Her words reflected the assumptions of many Earthly Saints as well. If Liao Shuyu died nine thousand years ago, there was definitely a possibility that her body was possessed. These Earthly Saints couldn't find a more tangible explanation. There were rumors of body possession from Evil Cultivators, and they

all understood that body snatching was a possibility. After all, they could all do it to some extent. There were heavy consequences, though, but who's to say there wasn't a Cultivation Method or Spiritual Spell to alleviate or remove these issues?

"Just taking precautions," Ma Zheng succinctly repeated. Since Wei Wuyin hadn't told everyone of the talismans, he wasn't willing to explain it yet. After all, there was no solution to this in his eyes.

He wanted to ask these individuals if they knew of the talisman's purpose or if they were independent, but they hadn't spoken a single word since their capture. In fact, they seemed abnormally calm and relaxed before Liao Shuyu's death. However, would that be considered interrogation? Could their act of voluntary talking trigger the talismans?

He definitely wouldn't risk it.

Wei Wuyin was also forced to face the lack of a solution. If the Heavenly War Spirit was right, wasn't he just holding hot potatoes? There was no way he could leave them as captives. These were Ascended beings! He had no idea if there would be drastic efforts to free them later, leading to a major catastrophe in the future.

The Demi-Mortal Lords could be killed. Their detonations could be easily suppressed by Earthly Saints if prepared for, and the other four Demi-Mortal Lords' detonations had been taken care of by the Spirits of War, an effort of hundreds of elites.

The four Earthly Saints were the problem. The intensity of these explosions couldn't be settled unless he also had hundreds of elites, mostly Demi-Mortal Lords and quite a few Earthly Saints skilled in subjugation tactics like the Spirits of War.

As for using them as genuine Prisoners of War, the main issue preventing this was location. There was no secure space to keep them sealed. The thought of using Internal Worlds or Secret Realms were thrown out immediately. Whoever or wherever they were in would be at risk for a rescue operation launched by Trueborn.

Exchange?

Interrogation?

Hostages?

Wei Wuyin thought for a long time. As for the allied Earthly Saints, none of them left. They were all curious about Wei Wuyin's next decision. Since Liao Shuyu was a dead person, were the others one too? Could they meet someone that they once knew? How did Trueborn accomplish this exactly? They were all steaming with questions.

"..." Wei Wuyin's silver eyes began to release intermittent bursts of spiritual light. A sign of his thoughts functioning at absurdly high speeds, exhausting a vast quantity of mental energies while doing so.

Bai Lin flew towards Wei Wuyin. Ma Zheng gave her a look and expanded the barrier, allowing her to enter without issue. This Fire Phoenix was a Demi-Mortal Lord and Wei Wuyin's protective mount, so it would be better if she was by his side, is what Ma Zheng thought.

Bai Lin arrived beside Wei Wuyin, looking at him with her golden eyes. She could tell his thoughts were firing off like bolts of lightning. This wasn't the first time she had seen this state. Whenever Wei Wuyin would comprehend various methods, arts, spells, or prepare himself by running calculations and simulations of concoctions, he would fall into this state.

Her gaze shifted to Huoyan Liulan. Those golden eyes of hers blazed with an intense desire. She hadn't forgotten about the feather and panicked when Huoyan Liulan said she would be taking the corpse away. This was why she felt an urge to remind Wei Wuyin before she left. But his current state made it so she couldn't say anything. She refused to be the one that broke his train of thought if it was important.

Wei Wuyin's hands instinctively reached out to caress Bai Lin's neck, feeling the soft feathers and gentle warmth of her body. When he did this, he turned his bright eyes to Bai Lin's majestic and gorgeous form.

"Wait." Those silver eyes of his widened. Like lightning, they shifted towards the burnt corpse floating in the Dark Void and then towards Liao Shuyu. "They're dead." With the softest of whispers, he instantly came to a miraculous realization.

The burnt corpse!

The Earthly Saint had died! But it hadn't exploded in a violent flurry of death and devastation.

Why?

His eyes dimmed back to normal, revealing a faint frown as he moved towards the burnt corpse and inspected it with his Celestial Eyes. Ma Zheng and Bai Lin followed along, and the others kept their full attention on this mortal. What was he planning to do next? The question of the hour.

Wei Wuyin saw that the burnt corpse had no traces of a Mystic Soul; all of its innate energies and forces were incinerated. The only reason it was a burnt corpse was that it had the refined physique of an Earthly Saint, an extremely durable physique. The energies within it weren't so durable.

"There's no Mystic Soul to detonate. Was it instantly incinerated?" There was a concept by mortals that was called 'instantaneous death'. It was when a mortal suffered a devastating blow to their vitals, mainly the brain. This led to an instance of death where the body or mind had no hope of survival or reaction.

Did the Nirvanic Flames cause a similar situation?

Did the Nirvanic Flames instantly kill the Mystic Soul? The source of this content is Freewebnovel.com.

Replicate!

"Bai Lin," Wei Wuyin pointed at the Demi-Mortal Lord with the greatest Karmic Sin. The person's sinful aura felt abnormally intense. The 'crimes' against the Heavenly Daos committed must've been tremendous in number. "Burn."

The Demi-Mortal Lord was shaken, clearly evident by their shivering body, yet they didn't speak or plead. Bai Lin didn't hesitate to release a clarion cry, opening its mouth and blasting out Nirvanic Flames to envelop the Demi-Mortal Lord entirely. In their sealed state, they couldn't even muster the slightest defense.

There wasn't a single sound emitted before the Demi-Mortal Lord vanished from this world. The sight was spine-chilling. So quick! So brutal! They hadn't expected the order of immediate execution! Not the masked figures or the allied Earthly Saints.

Wei Wuyin's eyes brightened. He touched Bai Lin.

The world froze.

A scene he was extremely familiar with occurred as the Heavenly Daos bestowed him Karmic Luck.

Karmic Luck Value: 44,659.9.

First Calamity: Survived - 7/7.

Second Calamity: Claimed - 1/1.

Third Calamity: Suppressed - 15 Years.

Karmic Luck Value: 44,834.2.

First Calamity: Survived - 7/7.

Second Calamity: Claimed - 1/1.

Third Calamity: Suppressed - 15 Years.

"173.3..."

Time resumed.

This was close to three times less than Gong Lau. Considering the difference in cultivation base and the Sinful Aura of that Demi-Mortal Lord, Wei Wuyin could all but confirm that the cultivation base of the sinner, killer, and recipient factored into the complex equation for Karmic Luck.

"So, it is the case!" Wei Wuyin's eyes brightly lit.

Nirvanic Flames could bypass the talisman! He was about to urge Bai Lin to clean up. There was no need to further speculate until he could figure out a way to unravel their identities without the Heavenly War Spirit.

"Don't!" An urgent voice sounded in his mind, originating from none other than the Heavenly War Spirit. Wei Wuyin manifested his mental incarnation once again into his Sea of Consciousness. He could see that Liao Shuyu's halo had shrunk by a third. So fast!

The Heavenly War Spirit didn't wait to amplify the mystery, and she explained: "The Nexus War Flag you possess can convert Prisoners of War into soldiers. Don't waste their worth."

"What?!" Wei Wuyin's mental incarnation received a jolt of surprise. The Nexus War Flag could convert Prisoners of War into soldiers? When? How?

"Kill them yourself, and, by the Law of War beneath the heavens, you can rightfully claim all obtainable spoils. Since beings like cultivators at the Mystic Ascendant Realm refine the essence of heaven and

earth, only their souls are theirs forever. Claim this. It's your right as the victor." The Heavenly War Spirit stated. An icy chill coursed through Wei Wuyin's spine.

He suddenly thought about how much emphasis the Heavenly War Spirit was claiming that Prisoners of War were tasty. Did she claim his spoils of war? Claim their entirety? When he recalled the totally drained corpse, his heart violently throbbed.

The temptation was...unimaginable.

How profound was the Nexus War Flag? What other abilities did it have? What abilities does the Heavenly War Spirit have?

Without hesitation, Wei Wuyin decided to claim his spoils of war. He wasn't exactly sure how all this worked, though.

"You have to kill them. Never forget this: You keep what you kill. You must kill them, not your soldiers. YOU." The Heavenly War Spirit drilled this into Wei Wuyin's mind. If Wei Wuyin had killed others before this, he might have discovered this feature. However, this now presented Wei Wuyin with a problematic issue.

The talisman would make them go boom if he went stab!

Kree!

Bai Lin released a prideful cry as she eyed the shocked Huoyan Liulan. Within the depths of her eyes reflected her greatest desire: the golden feather!

Wei Wuyin's eyes flickered as he turned to Ma Zheng, recalling all their conversations about Unique Intentions and the Tang Clan's assault on Bai Lin.

He transmitted spiritually, "Old Ma, I need you to set up a meeting with the Tang Clan's leadership." Wei Wuyin intended to establish a trade despite their contentious relationship.

"Why?" Ma Zheng asked.

Wei Wuyin didn't hide it, "To cultivate Nirvanic Flames." The reason why the Tang Clan had attacked Bai Lin, seeking to capture her for her blood essence, wasn't a hidden fact from Earthly Saints. Wei Wuyin learned of all of it, including their unique cultivation method that allowed them to have the greatest number of Demi-Mortal Lords of the Aeternal Sky Starfield—Blazing Unity of Twin Flames.

Ma Zheng's expression immediately grew odd, and then he revealed a rare grin. "Just that? No need. I already have the method." Seeing how powerful Nirvanic Flames were, anyone would wish to cultivate it.

Stunned for a brief moment, Wei Wuyin couldn't resist the urge to smile.

"Perfect."

Chapter 936: Scream & Shout

"Are you really going to execute the rest?" Unable to maintain her silence any longer, Faye Liying questioned Wei Wuyin. She had already realized that Wei Wuyin was hellbent on slaughtering these

Trueborn captives mercilessly despite their mysterious existence. Liao Shuyu and that unfortunate Demi-Mortal Lord that was incinerated entirely was evidence enough.

"That's none of your concern," Han Yuhei pointed out with gradually narrowing eyes. Despite his injured state, he still gave off a strong presence. In his mind, he already considered himself as Wei Wuyin's Alchemic Knight, so he refused to allow Wei Wuyin's desires to be openly questioned.

"You'll still get paid," he coldly added.

None of these Earthly Saints were here out of obligation except for himself, Wu Yu, and Ma Zheng. They were all being paid for their services, each serving an essential role. This included insurance for their safety. The main reason Sun Li, Huoyan Liulan, Faye Liying, and Lady Clearwind weren't terrified by the Soul Saint King's abrupt arrival was this discussed insurance measures. It was all well within their predictions, outlined and considered by Ma Zheng as he pitched their involvement.

Faye Liying was tasked with using her unique scepter to grant them permission into the domain, and warning them of the Soul Saint King's impending arrival, meant to avoid various complications for a hefty reward. She had completed half her job, not warning them of the Soul Saint King, and during the negotiations, she refused to participate and risk her life in a fight between Earthly Saints.

Han Yuhei was already dissatisfied by this noncommittal attitude of hers, opportunistic and calculative. Yet she continued to try to involve herself in the aftermath, setting the tone and attempting to dictate actions.

Investigate these Trueborn?

Not kill them?

She had no right to say a single damn thing here.

Faye Liying's expression darkened as she gave Han Yuhei a sidelong glance, ignoring him immediately after and giving Wei Wuyin a steady gaze. She didn't feel like she was wrong at all. The entire situation of Liao Shuyu was strange and brought forth many questions that affected them all. It would be better to interrogate and understand more about Trueborn than annihilate them. Wei Wuyin was in a very unique position to do so.

Wei Wuyin felt Faye Liying's unyielding gaze. When he turned his silver eyes towards her, he recalled Ma Zheng's earlier words describing her as trustworthy and stubborn. She was reliable, but similarly an unstable element due to her intelligence and ambition.

This personality marked her as a target to be nurtured and used by Ma Zheng in his quest to reclaim the Golden Life Pavilion. She had gotten a draw, but they both were aware that it was due to Yang Chaoyue's compromising actions. Yang Chaoyue could've shut down Ma Zheng's millennia-long ambitions right then and there, but Wei Wuyin's existence had changed that.

Unfortunately for her, Wei Wuyin was unable to consider her proposal at the moment. As such, he blankly answered her: "Yes." Then, he turned to Ma Zheng and began to discuss the details about the phoenix's portion of Blazing Unity of Twin Flames Cultivation Method.

"..." Faye Liying's eyes flickered with an discomforting light. She glanced at the captives, an urge swelled within her heart as she contemplated various options and paths. The unflinching gaze of Han Yuhei was fixated on her figure, as if warning her to stay quiet.

If she could just...

"Don't! Don't DON'T!" Amongst the group, a series of bone-chilling, panic-filled and desperate shouts sounded. No one responded. No one heard it. No one seemed to care.

An Earthly Saint, the cultivator that had executed Reversion Substitution, was trembling ever-so-slightly. The restraints imposed on them were far more aggressive, thorough, and restrictive than the Soul Saint King's on Lady Clearwind, yet they could still talk.

The Earthly Saint had been shouting for quite a while, trying to seek out the attention of his captive. Why? Because Liao Shuyu was killed! She was killed! Her identity was discovered, and they could only watch.

At first, they were all calm. They didn't feel any urgency after being caught, be it the Demi-Mortal Lords or the Earthly Saints, and it was a mere inconvenience to them. When their panic would rise in their hearts, they would recall the Void Displacement Talisman they had refined earlier.

These talismans had been refined into their Mystic Soul, and they've all witnessed its power to displace a cultivator should their lives be in danger, even if they were sealed like this. They would all either wait to be rescued or be sent away after their talismans had been activated. Why would they panic?

When the Demi-Mortal Lords were killed, they didn't panic. They knew that the power of the talisman was proportionate to the Mystic Soul. Demi-Mortal Lords activation could be interfered with, but an Earthly Saints could not. Unless, a Worldly Saint intervened.

When one of their own, an Earthly Saint, was killed by Huoyan Liulan, it gave way to some panic. But they were all elites, and fully knew that an incredible item had been used to instantly kill their enemy, an extremely difficult task to achieve amongst Earthly Saints. An abnormality. Unfortunate but not enough to instill panic.

Relief and ease of mind was rampant.

Wait. Just wait.

Until Wei Wuyin, this handsome mortal amongst Earthly Saints decided to act. He brought out a saber and stabbed one of the Earthly Saints! At first, the Earthly Saints sneered and smiled. When the Void Displacement Talisman activated, it would trigger a domino effect—they were all escaping!

Happy and excited, they were cheering vibrantly in their hearts.

That cheer that could touch the joyous heavens was abruptly severed by the barrenness of reality. Dead! The Earthly Saint had been killed by a Mortal, and their identity was revealed!

That's when the Substitution Reversion Earthly Saint began to scream, panic, and attempt to communicate. However, he soon discovered that the feature that sealed their identity without flaw or

exceptions also prevented them from communicating with others! What originally protected them was now harming them!

"LISTEN! JUST FUCKING LISTEN TO ME!!" The cultivator wiggled with his greatest efforts, but it came off as fearful tremors. Wei Wuyin had just proven that he could kill them all, how could they not be fearful? They were all ignored. Left facing their upcoming execution.

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A few minutes later, Ma Zheng had fully transferred the phoenix half of the Blazing Unity of Twin Flames, which included the method to refine a phoenix's blood essence for an opportunity to grasp Nirvanic Flame Intent, harnessing their ancient and exceptional power, to Wei Wuyin with annotations of his own knowledge.

While going over it, Wei Wuyin glanced at the captured Earthly Saints and Demi-Mortal Lords of Trueborn from time to time. Unlike the rest, he could acutely feel every emotion they emitted due to Eden's sensitivity. The desire to seek out survival was increasingly growing, completely against the suicidal nature of the talisman.

He also couldn't figure out why these cultivators was willing to become literal bombs in the face of defeat. Wasn't the objective Yue Songli? It felt strange that they wanted to deal such devastating damage to the Ninestar Starfield should they fail. In that event, chances were that Yue Songli would be killed along with them.

He couldn't figure it out. The only possibility was that they hadn't expected any deaths in this operation or that they had another mechanism in place to secure Yue Songli in the event of the worst-case scenario. The seventh Earthly Saint perhaps? If the former was true, then the talisman was likely a play for later.

It was their greatest misfortune that Wei Wuyin cared very little about their identities at this moment. The Karmic Sin on their bodies was far more attractive to him, and after their deaths, he could figure out each of their identities after, autopsying their bodies to deduce their strangeness. With Mystical Oaths in place, he had very little faith in an effective interrogation.

Suddenly, Wei Wuyin recalled his earlier thoughts.

"For later..." The talismans could be a play 'for later'. He had a strong feeling that these individuals were meant to detonate...just not now.

"Will your bloodline clash with the method?" Ma Zheng sent with concern. He had long been aware of Wei Wuyin's unique Spatial Bloodline at the Devil War Realm. The fact he had access to Void Portals was thought of as a tool-enabled power by the others, but Ma Zheng had personally witnessed Wei Wuyin traverse through the void with an entire continent.

Wei Wuyin's thoughts were set aside after Ma Zheng's question. He faintly smiled, "I'll be fine." He was more worried about Bai Lin. Her blood essence had just recovered through copious amounts of resources, so he didn't want to bring her further harm that could damage her chances of Nirvanic Rebirth.

"...!" Wei Wuyin's eyebrows instantly shot up as his eyes darted to Faye Liying. A surge of built-up emotions was threatening to be released. It was intermixed with curiosity, fear, determination, and self-confidence. It wasn't very clear due to her mystic-graded mental energies, but Wei Wuyin could gather the overall feeling.

She was about to do something!

As if verifying all of Wei Wuyin's feelings, Faye Liying acted! She erupted with explosive tempest of wind power! Like a twisting tornado, she caused swirling chaos amongst the group. Wei Wuyin's eyes widened as Ma Zheng and Han Yuhei acted simultaneously, not to attack Faye Liying, but to protect Wei Wuyin!

Despite the abrupt attack, they responded with the utmost quickness, establishing their priority. The two shielded Wei Wuyin and Bai Lin with their wards as they were explosively blown back. In the blink of a mortal's eye, they were sent tens of thousands of miles into the Void-Blank Space. The others were caught off-guard and unable to react as they fumbled and tumbled away.

They were sent even further!

Faye Liying had grabbed all the captured Ascended beings, shooting back into the Ninestar Starfield as she brought out an emblem with nine different colored Solar Stars etched on its surface. When she entered the starfield, the emblem unleashed gushing silver light as it enveloped them all. She spatially shifted away further into the Ninestar Starfield!

"..." When the twisting power finally subsided, Wei Wuyin and the rest were speechless as they stared at the Ninestar Starfield with dazed gazes. Did she just...

Han Yuhei's eyes glinted with nine-colored light as he was about to follow despite his injuries. But a hand clasped his shoulder and shut down his surging power. With a sharp turn of his head, Han Yuhei spotted the aged hand and sharp eyes of Ma Zheng as the old man shook his head.

Han Yuhei was no match for Faye Liying in his current state.

They had all suffered various degrees of injuries or exhausted vast amounts of their mystic power while she was the only one that was completely unharmed and in her strongest state. Moreover, the defensive arrays of the Ninestar Starfield were currently activated and passively defending against any unauthorized entity. Even he wouldn't risk it.

Faye Liying was the Soul Rising Saint, and her authority in the Ninestar Sainthall was never fully revoked. She was safe in the Ninestar Starfield. The captives were likely under that protection too, safe and secured.

"..." No one had expected this to happen.

Within the Ninestar Starfield, on the Shattered World Moon, Zhan Zheng was observing Yue Songli, Yue Lixiang, and Song Yunhai while hidden. Suddenly, he felt Wei Wuyin's thoughts as his eyes revealed a cold, murderous light. Shockingly, the light subsided entirely as he brought out a spiritual transmission

talisman meant for discreet, long-range communication with the other. This talisman was marked 'Soul Saint' characters.

After sending out a message through the talisman, Zhan Zheng returned to his stealthy observation.

At the edges of the Ninestar Starfield, at the other side of Wei Wuyin and the others, the Soul Saint King was observing a lunar satellite that was originally within his Soul-Saint Domain prior to the battle. There were signs of irregular spatial signatures that might be indicative of a recently destroyed Void Gate.

"..." After feeling a surge of power from far away, he looked to the other side of the starfield with furrowed brows. Without warning, he coughed violently while holding his chest, blood leaking from his lips and nose. This coughing fit lasted for dozens of seconds before he sensed a transmission incoming.

Taking out a talisman, his dimmed eyes were filled with exhaustion. The battle with that strange Earthly Saint ended in his total loss. Wiping off the blood stains on his face, he read the message.

"Bombs?!" The Soul Saint King's expression drastically changed after listening to the message. Then, another message came in. It was from Faye Liying!

With gritted teeth, clenched his chest tightly before circulating his mystic power. After regaining his upright, powerful posture, and domineering presence, he emitted in a burst of radiant light and left.

Chapter 937: An Unreasonable Price

"...What just happened?" Sun Li asked, baffled and astonished. Her gaze looked into the depths of the Ninestar Starfield, her facial expression slightly unsightly.

After being separated by Faye Liying's unexpected assault, the group quickly regathered together.

"She betrayed us! That bitch—I knew there was something shady about her!" Lady Clearwind held nothing back as she insulted and cursed Faye Liying. She coughed slightly as glowing and enriched blood tainted her right palm. She was injured by Faye Liying, her rage was fueled by righteous and indignant emotions.

Huoyan Liulan held Liao Shuyu's corpse tightly. It was enveloped by a dense layer of her mystic power, completely unharmed by Faye Liying's attack. Still, her expression was similarly unsightly. She glared at Ma Zheng. "She's Trueborn?" She instantly labeled her as an egregious traitor hidden amongst their midst, employed and trusted by Ma Zheng.

Ma Zheng didn't take her enraged accusation with any merit. However, he didn't leap to her defense either. While it was extremely unlikely that Faye Liying would help them if she was a member of Trueborn, there was the slightest possibility that they didn't calculate their defeat or communicate properly.

That or those talismans that Wei Wuyin discovered meant they were tasked with dying alongside them. If so, there was a possibility she was one. Yet he still found it hard to reason out, because she would've suffered too after there was a sequence of intense self-detonation of Earthly Saints. It just didn't line up.

Han Yuhei's teeth were gritted so fiercely that his expression almost seemed as if he was snarling. He had kept his senses on Faye Liying since the beginning, feeling something was off about her, and yet when she actually made a move, he was unable to stop her. Once again, he felt a sense of weakness. If it was Wu Yu, Faye Liying would've never gotten far.

If it was Wu Yu...

The crunching sound of Han Yuhei's teeth and fists would've been bone-chilling if it wasn't for the Dark Void's environment.

"She's not a member of Trueborn," Wei Wuyin pardoned Faye Liying with a few words. The others had varying expressions, but they didn't dismiss Wei Wuyin's declaration. Furthermore, he was the calmest out of them all. Despite Ma Zheng's unbothered expression, his eyes emitted a dense rage. He was likely more frustrated than anyone here, or at least matched with Han Yuhei.

"If she's not, why would she escape? A double-agent of the Soul Saint King?" Lady Clearwind refused to simply accept Wei Wuyin's words and contested his statement.

Wei Wuyin merely responded with: "The Soul Saint King sent us off himself." It dawned on everyone that they were indeed sent out by the Soul Saint King. Considering it was by his will, couldn't he just have kept the captives? It made little sense to burn a spy for no reason.

"So stubborn and foolish," Ma Zheng softly spat under his breath. "She wanted to interrogate the Trueborn without killing them." When Ma Zheng spoke, it felt as if he was aware of something the others weren't, like her motive behind such an action. After all, she had just darted off and destroyed their trust in her without hesitation. The others were close to labeling her as a traitor and enemy.

Wei Wuyin stayed silent for a long moment as he peered into the Ninestar Starfield. Afterward, he faintly smiled. "This works," Wei Wuyin commented with a nod. When he thought about it, it was best to not keep the captives in his custody or isolated somewhere. The Ninestar Starfield was fully on-guard and Trueborn would fail a second invasion attempt with Zhan Zheng there.

'The Soul Saint King and Ennea Hall Alchemic Saint should have the means to secure those captives until I fully comprehend Nirvanic Flame Intent.' Wei Wuyin didn't think Ori could swiftly absorb and extract the essence of Nirvanic Flame for him the others due to its complexity, so this might require a lot of time and effort. Who knew how long it would take?

This wasn't expected, but it could be said to have worked out in his favor in the end.

WRRRRM!

A strange sound soon thundered out from the Ninestar Starfield as four Solar Stars of the Ninestar Starfield began to emit a brighter radiance. The others were attracted to the changes. All of their eyes flickered with spiritual light, varying in color and strength, as they unleashed their ocular spells.

"He's sealing them?" Lady Clearwind pointed out inquisitively. The Soul Saint King had just sent the Earthly Saints of Trueborn into the Solar Stars.

Wei Wuyin nodded. They were likely going to be suppressed by the Mystic Radiance Belt-equipped Solar Stars, preventing any form of self-detonation. Even if they did detonate, the power of a Solar Star with a Mystic Radiance Belt and a dedicated series of formations would halt any collateral damage.

It was good that Wei Wuyin warned him. But the situation didn't stop at that. They saw Faye Liying engulfed by bright white light, not resisting as she was drawn into a Solar Star by shackles of mystic power.

"He sealed her!" Lady Clearwind was shaken by the sudden comeuppance of the traitor. But why?

Ma Zheng's expression darkened after seeing Faye Liying get sealed into a Solar Star. He turned his aged gaze towards Wei Wuyin, who met his gaze as if expecting it. Wei Wuyin replied with a sighing smile. He was aware that Ma Zheng and Faye Liying's relationship was a little deeper than he expected. He had vouched for her and trusted her to fight for him during the Golden Life Pavilion's competition.

"She'll be fine," Wei Wuyin reassured via transmission. That said, he did feel that Faye Liying's nature was unsuitable to be trusted or invested in. She acted without considering relationships or the consequences. Did she really think her actions would work out? Not just collapsing every bridge she made by outright betraying him, Ma Zheng, and the others. Even Huoyan Liuyan was self-aware that acting emotionally was a suicidal action.

Well, if one really thought about it, she wanted to prevent Wei Wuyin from killing the captives, so this actually worked out in her favor, unaware that Wei Wuyin had no intention to kill them yet. He wondered if she was satisfied knowing that she pulled off her desired goal.

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Ma Zheng, however, didn't feel exactly as Wei Wuyin thought. There was a calm, lethal glint flickering in his eyes as he stared at the Solar Star that swallowed Faye Liying.

"..." After the sealing was completed, the others just stood where they were, unsure what to do. Sun Li and Lady Clearwind were wondering if they would take another shot at recapturing the captives. After all, that strange Earthly Saint had fought so hard to keep them, likely giving up its life.

If this was a few minutes ago, Wei Wuyin might risk it. But now that the situation had changed, learning about the Nexus War Flag's unique feature of conversion, the dangerous talismans, and saddled with the problem of storing these captives, he felt relieved.

Wei Wuyin rolled his right arm's sleeves up and gave the Bloodline of Sin tattoo a look.

Karmic Luck Value: 44,834.2.

First Calamity: Survived - 7/7.

Second Calamity: Claimed - 1/1.

Third Calamity: Suppressed - 15 Years.

He rolled his sleeves forward, covering his arm. His expression had eased a little. "The mission is completed. All of you will be rewarded as promised; you can claim it through the Golden Life Pavilion. If you have a request for eighth or ninth-grade products, you can send it to Old Ma."

Lady Clearwind gave Ma Zheng a look, who nodded in agreement. She was a little shaken by how Wei Wuyin was giving up here. He felt as if he was on a warpath against Trueborn, but he was now willing to let the Soul Saint King keep the captives after refusing to do so before? He was so adamant against it that he directly faced the Soul Saint King fearlessly.

Was that strange Earthly Saint actually dead? Did they lose? Was Faye Liying's traitorous actions the final straw? She felt unwilling, even if Faye Liying was sealed for 10,000 years. She felt they should do more. They could do more.

"The Summit is beginning soon. It's about time to return to your groups," Wei Wuyin suggested as he gave the Ninestar Starfield its final glance. His suggestion was directed towards Sun Li, Lady Clearwind, and Huoyan Liulan. The trio of middle-ages beauties caught his intentions and left together.

Lady Clearwind pouted in dissatisfaction before leaving, giving Wei Wuyin a look. She was unable to leave it be, sending spiritually: "If you want to retrieve them, count me in." She was a fiery firecracker, unwilling to suffer a loss.

Wei Wuyin couldn't resist the urge to smile as he nodded in reply. No wonder Wu Yu fancied this woman. Despite being hurt, sealed, and released, she was willing to risk her life again, refusing to be on the losing end. Considering Wu Yu's nature, it matched quite well.

Thinking of Wu Yu, that Grand Knight of his definitely wouldn't be willing to accept this if he was in her position. That said, he would be included in all the information, so his thoughts definitely wouldn't be different from Wei Wuyin.

Soon, only Wei Wuyin, Ma Zheng, Han Yuhei, Bai Lin, and the unconscious Zhang Ziyi remained in the void-blank space at the edge of the Ninestar Starfield. They waited. A few minutes later, a figure delicately clutching a corpse appeared before them. It was Huoyan Liulan!

She looked at them with emotionless eyes.

Wei Wuyin didn't delay, directly offering: "Your Phoenix Feather, how much do you want for it?"

Huoyan Liulan's eyes glinted with a strange light. She coldly replied, "It's priceless." Afterwhich, she intended to leave. The Phoenix Feather belonged to an ancient phoenix that had strength beyond the Earthly Saint Phase. While it was a mere feather, it contained wisps of its remnant power. It was a trump card that couldn't be replaced.

Wei Wuyin hastily stopped her, "Everything has a price." Bai Lin's eyes blazed with a fiery might. That feather was endlessly alluring to her, belonging to a Fire Phoenix at the Third Stage of Nirvanic Rebirth Realm. Her bloodline seethed at the thought of consuming it.

"Everything has a price?" Huoyan Liulan stopped her departure, turning around and staring at Wei Wuyin. She was unwilling to lose her trump card, so she coldly said: "My price? Then," she lifted Liao Shuyu's corpse a little higher, "bring her back. That's the price."

"..." Wei Wuyin went silent for a long moment.

Huoyan Liulan sneered, "I guess everything has a price, but not everyone can afford it." While her request was outrageously ridiculous, she still sounded righteous.

Han Yuhei's eyes narrowed. He knew why Wei Wuyin wanted the feather, but she was being unreasonable. She even mocked Wei Wuyin. It seemed she still contained some animosity despite her words before stating that she didn't consider Liao Shuyu as her real aunt.

Ma Zheng inwardly shook his head. Why were these women just ignoring Wei Wuyin's means? She could ask for anything in return for a feather that was a finite item. Clearly, the power within wasn't without limits. Why not trade it for something useful to your cultivation path? If only for goodwill establishment.

However, what Wei Wuyin said next shook them all to the core. "That's a reasonable price. I can afford it. So, shall we make the trade?" With a faint smile, Wei Wuyin readily agreed and Bai Lin's eyes sparkled with joy. She would get that feather!

Chapter 938: Feather Acquired; It Returns!

"What?" Stunned by what she heard, Huoyan Liulan subconsciously glanced at Ma Zheng as if to catch a glimpse of a joking smile. This was a joke, right? A reasonable price? Bringing the dead back to life? This was a reasonable price?!

Han Yuhei and Ma Zheng's hearts thumped after Wei Wuyin agreed to Huoyan Liulan's condition. They both simultaneously sent their spiritual sense towards the cold, bereft of life, energy, and essence of a corpse in Huoyan Liulan's arms. They both sensed that Liao Shuyu was deader than dead. There wasn't a hint of any residual energy within her, nor her Mystic Soul was present. There was, however, a lingering aura of death coursing through the corpse.

Ba-dum.

Wei Wuyin didn't want to let this be a long, stretched-out interaction of ongoing disbelief and demands for proof. He had things to do, so he directly said: "Primal Flame Hex Queen, this opportunity won't last for long. You have sixty seconds to decide. If you refuse to accept, then I'll have to say that your Auntie Liao will be truly dead."

Huoyan Liulan's expression was vibrantly painted with conflict, disbelief, and uncertainty. This silver-eyed mortal youth before her suddenly became a thousand times more mystifying. Her heart began to race when Wei Wuyin set a deadline for her decision.

She once again looked towards Ma Zheng, who had a slight frown as his eyes emitted a contemplating light. He seemed to be trying to grasp the validity of Wei Wuyin's statement with his knowledge. Han Yuhei's heart was pounding as he stared intently at the cold corpse.

After fourteen seconds, Huoyan Liulan finally regained her train of thought. She closed her eyes shut. Her eyelashes fluttered while her eyebrows quivered. When she opened them, she saw the corpse's peaceful expression. All her memories of the past came rushing in, reminding her of all the times they spent together while she was growing up.

On the path of cultivation, the loss of loved ones was inevitable. Whether it was an issue of lifespan, talent, or conflict, death would always accompany cultivators. How many individuals has she, an Earthly Saint of over ten thousand years old, lost during those years? How many failed to become Ascended beings? Died in fighting wars or seeking resources? Schemes? Or just met the end of their lifespan?

While she had grasped bits of power regarding the Mystic Dao, exceeding mortal limits, she was still subjected to restrictions and governed by natural laws.

But that feather was a great treasure given to her by her grandfather, refined through thousands of years of effort to revitalize its astonishing latent power, harnessing it as a trump card that could trounce other Earthly Saints. She was reluctant to give this up for anything, and her earlier words were merely an impossible joke born out of her frustration.

She was now met with a choice that she never expected to face.

After thirty-two seconds, she calmly lifted her eyes to look at Wei Wuyin. The youth didn't seem stressed one bit. "It's not enough," she directly told Wei Wuyin. Liao Shuyu was a member of Trueborn. If reborn somehow, it was unlikely that she would be able to abandon the clandestine organization with mysterious piled-on abnormalities out of her own will. Moreover, she had last seen Liao Shuyu nine thousand years ago. It would be foolish to think she would be the same individual she remembered if she wasn't an entirely different person.

If it was possession, whose to say Liao Shuyu was the Liao Shuyu she knew? Huoyan Liulan calmly, smartly, and ultimately considered this possibility and refused the deal she had proposed herself.

Ba-dum. Ba-dum.

Wei Wuyin wasn't stressed by her refusal. Instead, he calmly offered more. "I understand. How about this: I'll add a dozen varied Mystic-Earth grade alchemical products, of low-quality at a minimum, including three thousand mystic stones and ten tons of peak Mystic-Earth grade Terra-Mystic Ore. You have about twenty seconds left." Wei Wuyin reminded her at the end that her deadline was fast approaching, but Huoyan Liulan's eyes already widened to a considerable degree in heart-pounding disbelief.

Mystic-Earth grade alchemical products? A dozen? All low-quality at least? That aside, three thousand mystic stones was stupendously high, sufficient to buy high-tier, Mystic-Earth grade Mystic-Will Convergence Pills. These pills were used during the Golden Auction, worth 300 mystic stones each.

But what really shook her was the Terra-Mystic Ore! More importantly, it wasn't the typical low-quality Mystic-Earth grade Terra-Mystic Ore circulating throughout the stellar region, but peak! She was utterly stupefied by the absurdity of Wei Wuyin's wealth.

A ton of this stuff could be roughly estimated at 80 mystic stones!

Wei Wuyin faintly smiled. According to his surveying of the ore he possessed, he had gained roughly ten thousand tons of this ore. It wasn't much to give ten tons. While its actual raw value was beneath its potential value, so were most ores and materials in the world. If used correctly, in the hands of a skilled Forger or Alchemist, then even millions of mystic stones wouldn't be near its actual worth.

The celestial rogue was definitely Wei Wuyin's second most remarkable discovery and haul, only slightly lesser in potential value than the Stellar Nest.

"Yo-you're serious?" Huoyan Liulan asked amid her shock.

"You have a few seconds left. Primal Flame Hex Queen, please decide." Wei Wuyin urged her with a frown developing on his face. He wasn't doing this solely to pressure Huoyan Liulan into agreeing—she was genuinely on a clock. They both were.

Ba-dum. Ba-dum. Ba-dum.

Huoyan Liulan's inner conflict intensified. She didn't know what to do, but when she thought about what was offered, she couldn't help but feel that she wouldn't be losing out. With that Terra-Mystic Ore, she could forge a permanent quasi Mystic-World grade armament suited to her. With the Mystic Stones and alchemical products added, she just needed to scour for the necessary materials and find the Godforge Association.

The degree of strength that she would gain would be far greater than the feather could muster. Eventually, the feather's latent power in the feather will dissipate and crumble into dust, while an armament of that quality will last her entire lifetime.

She didn't need a reminder of the time. It would be foolish for her to refuse. After looking at Ma Zheng, who nodded with a look that said: "You can trust him." She decided upon her choice, "Okay." A single word of confirmation and Wei Wuyin heaved a sigh of relief. Suddenly, he unfurled his Worldly Domain a little larger and then shot towards Huoyan Liulan, his silver eyes emanating a soul-snaring light as he glanced at the corpse.

But when Wei Wuyin arrived before Huoyan Liulan, who pushed Liao Shuyu's corpse out a bit, curiosity burning in her gaze, Wei Wuyin's expression became odd, as if he had been told about something. The Necro Energy within Liao Shuyu's body had metastasized throughout her flesh, blood, bone, and meridians like a cancer. Its spread was unnaturally swift.

While she seemed perfectly fine outwardly aside from the thick veins of blackness on her face, she wasn't like that inwardly. Her body was dead.

She couldn't be revived like this.

Wei Wuyin closed his eyes as he manifested in his Sea of Consciousness, looking at the faint, nearly intangible halo of Mystic Energy that was Liao Shuyu's Mystic Soul and innate energies siphoned by the Heavenly War Spirit. It was bordering on dissipating.

Wei Wuyin knew that Liao Shuyu was still alive. Her actual soul was tethered to her Mystic Soul, similar to how Wu Yu was stored in that unassuming black ring of Long Chen, given to him by the King of Everlore, a disembodied soul sustained via their Mystic Soul. When her Mystic Soul was completely absorbed, her soul would be forcefully introduced into the Heavenly Daos' cycle of reincarnation, processed through Hell, cleansed, and reused to become a new existence.

Considering how sinful she was, Liao Shuyu would likely be cleansed at the higher levels of Hell.

It was the Heavenly War Spirit who had told Wei Wuyin that Liao Shuyu's life was still intact. Of course, he knew that since he hadn't received the recognition and reward of Karmic Luck for slaying her yet. So when Huoyan Liulan jokingly mocked his words earlier, suggesting that not every price can be afforded, the Heavenly War Spirit scoffed and told him to do it.

"This Mystic Soul is incomparably weak. Even if she's revived, it'll be lucky if she recovers her Mystic Strength in a thousand or so years. She's no longer a threat to you," the Heavenly War Spirit said. She was unaware that Wei Wuyin wanted to kill Liao Shuyu for Karmic Luck, but Bai Lin was more important anyways. However, Necro Energy presented him with a problem.

Her body was immersed in a negative life and soul force, whatever that meant, and according to the Heavenly War Spirit, introducing her weak Mystic Soul inside that body would only be like dipping a gentle flame into a pool of water—her Mystic Soul would dissipate on its own.

She would die.

Fortunately, this wasn't much of an issue for Wei Wuyin. He brought out an Ever-Rebirth Pill. This pill was invented by the King of Everlore to construct a new body that conforms with the soul, copied off the information within one's Spirit of Cultivation to form a perfect substitute. A perfectly compatible body without rejection. It was an exceptional pill with heaven-defying effects.

However, Wei Wuyin didn't try to reconstruct the body himself. He didn't have the power or means, still requiring either the person themselves to do so or an Ascended being to oversee the process. Wu Yu had been able to maintain his consciousness and wisps of Mystic Power, so he could fully reconstitute his own body.

Liao Shuyu was not in that position.

Wei Wuyin held his hand out, palm upwards, and he allowed the Heavenly War Spirit to do the rest. A gush of mystic light poured out of his glabella and into his open palm, slowly forming into a levitating halo of mystic light. It was delicate and beautiful, but Wei Wuyin couldn't see it.

The others looked in disbelief at the mystic light halo, and Huoyan Liulan felt an incomparably familiar aura emanating from it. Her eyes grew misty as her memories flashed in her thoughts, recalling her happy times with her Auntie Liao.

This was her!

THIS WAS HER!

She knew it from her aura. She absolutely knew it!

Wei Wuyin pushed out the halo and Ever-Rebirth Pill. "Use this to revive her. Her body is unusable, and she'll die if she's placed back in, so she needs another one." After explaining this, he brought out the stones, ore, and alchemical containers from his Saint Ring. He couldn't transfer it to another Saint Ring and give it to Huoyan Liulan. They were far too valuable, and he only had three.

"..." Huoyan Liulan was astonished, left speechless for a long moment.

"Hurry and guard her Mystic Soul before she dissipates," Wei Wuyin urged cause he didn't know if it'll dissipate. Panicked, Huoyan Liulan hastily acted to secure the halo of mystic light with her own mystic power. She couldn't take her eyes off the halo, reflecting beautifully through her pupils.

BA-DUM. BA-DUM.

"The feather," Wei Wuyin demanded. For some reason, he felt a sense of urgency swell within him at this moment.

Huoyan Liulan gave Wei Wuyin another shocked look. She had so, so, so many questions. Just the storage of the mystic-graded materials, the existence of these products, and all these mystic stones...But she couldn't even speak a single word. She eventually brought out the golden feather and gave it an emotional look. It emanated a majestic glow of life and fire.

Kree!

Bai Lin excitedly stared at the feather, her eyes blazing with ardent desire. Wei Wuyin didn't grab it personally. He gestured for Bai Lin, who flew over, fearlessly sucking in the feather and taking it into her mouth. She ate it!

"..." Wei Wuyin's sense of urgency continued to intensify. He glanced at the surroundings and felt as if something was building up to warn him of something. Suddenly, his pupils shrunk as he realized what the feeling originated from.

BA-DUM! BA-DUM!!

Wei Wuyin's heart pounded in his chest, and his eyes darted towards the far-off distance of the Dark Void.

"It's coming!" Kratos roared.

"GO!" Wei Wuyin explosively shouted, shocking Ma Zheng, Han Yuhei, and Huoyan Liulan. Without hesitating, he instantly rode Bai Lin, who felt all his emotions instantly. A surge of fear swept her heart as she recalled a feeling she had before, just before they came to the Ninestar Starfield.

Ma Zheng immediately realized the urgency, trusting Wei Wuyin's decision instantly. To him, Trueborn was likely about to act. He fully unleashed his 9th Runic Ascendant Earthly Saint Phase cultivation, surging with exceptionally terrifying power. He grabbed Han Yuhei, Huoyan Liulan, Bai Lin, and Wei Wuyin, brought them to his side, and executed Spatial Shift.

Woosh!

They vanished as they became a streak of silver light that merged with fixed space.

A few minutes later, gargantuan ripples emerged in the Dark Void where they once were. It persisted for a while, growing more and more active before vanishing without a trace.

There was a series of strange, serpentine sounds emanating from those ripples. A hint of vexation could be heard from them.

Chapter 939: A Broken Oath of Marriage

A stream of silver light zipped across the Dark Void, traversing the void-blank space, the unique area outside the borders of the starfields, a nest of dead planets, decayed and dying Solar Stars, and shattered lunar satellites. The stream of light bypassed many strange phenomena, slowly coming to a halt at the outskirts of the Grand Cyclic Stellar Region.

With a surging pulse, five figures tumbled out of the silver stream alongside several bottles, a large crate of ore, and thousands of mystic stones. The silver stream of light kept going, traveling outside the Grand Cyclic Stellar Region and into the other, less fortunate stellar regions such as the Desolate Dragnet Stellar Region.

An aged old man with vibrant eyes soon stabilized himself, exerting a strong, torrential stopping force. With a wave of his hand, skilled and patient, he snagged the other four until they halted their momentum as well. With a heavy breath of relief, he lowered his two trembling arms.

At the last moment, after Wei Wuyin had shouted in urgency, he abruptly felt a sense of extreme danger course throughout his entire body, forcefully causing him to unleash his greatest strength.

Huoyan Liulan was stabilized, her eyes wide, her expression distorted, and her body shaking. She was deeply shaken by recent events. She glanced at Ma Zheng with the most bewildered stare. But when her peripheral vision caught a glimpse of the glittering mystic stones, she hastily acted to seize them all into her possession, grabbing the crate and bottles as well. Especially the Ever-Rebirth Pill bottle, treating it preciously. While it might not fully allow her to rebuild Liao Shuyu's body, it should give her an vastly inferior version that would need further refinement and her support, but lay out the essential framework. The pill itself was more precious than some Mystic-Earth grade products.

Han Yuhei was violently coughing at the side. The usually strong and healthy countenance was absurdly pale at the moment, almost like a sheet of white paper. There was a sign of disorientation in his eyes. Ma Zheng's spatial shift was extremely powerful and was like a mortal traveling on a high-speed aerial vehicle without a seatbelt. Additionally, this mortal was already injured beforehand.

Wei Wuyin was the only one amongst the four humans that was perfectly fine, completely adjusted to all spatial movements due to his True Void Dragon Bloodline. Bai Lin was shivering, her eyes closed and she was slumbering with faint glowing light surrounding her. She had digested the feather and almost immediately was forced into a hibernating state, shocking Wei Wuyin.

He had carefully sealed her in his draconic void force and kept her by his side. She wasn't disturbed during the shift. While it seemed like spatial shifting was exceedingly swift, it was not instant, and they had been within the silver stream for almost half an hour traveling alongside fixed space.

"What was that?" Ma Zheng asked Wei Wuyin. At first, he thought it was a counteroffensive by Trueborn, but the swelling of life-and-death crisis at the last moment was enough to open up other possibilities. Unless a Worldly Saint had acted...

"What was that? What was THAT?! You brought us away without a warning! That's what THAT was!" Huoyan Liulan shouted with agitation. She kept her materials, enveloping them in her mystic power while chastising Ma Zheng. However, there was a glint of her eyes that was rather strange as she observed Ma Zheng.

Throughout this entire event, she was under the assumption that Ma Zheng was a Demi-Mortal Lord. While he had revealed wisps of Awakened Mystic Intent during his fight with Sheng Jizi, this could be reasoned out through various treasures and preparations of his. When she met him, he always sported the aura of a Demi-Mortal Lord...until this exact moment.

She felt lied to. He was an Earthly Saint! An Earthly freaking Saint! Because the silver stream was certainly his own power and it was suffused with Awakened Mystic Intent, especially the Spatial-type Mystic Rune's power.

She pursed her lips with narrowed eyes, grievance pouring out of her eyes as she stared at Ma Zheng. The man in question could only wryly smile in the face of such emotion. Besides the Imperial Clan and the True Element Sect, there weren't many who were aware of his true cultivation base. He had been using a unique concealment treasure to disguise his cultivation base, and even if he leaked his cultivation a little, he would deliberately hide it with a mystic-graded armament or tool's aura.

Wei Wuyin frowned deeply, giving Bai Lin an inspecting look over as he sighed in relief. She wasn't undergoing another Nirvanic Rebirth, merely absorbing the latent energies within the feather.

"When did you become an Earthly Saint?" Huoyan Liulan questioned with vigorous momentum. She was interrogating him! And Ma Zheng felt every pressing force from every syllable, yet he was still only able to give a response of clearing his throat a little awkwardly.

Han Yuhei was still injured and Huoyan Liulan's voice was particularly annoying to his senses at this moment. He coldly spat, "What does it matter to you?"

Huoyan Liulan gave Han Yuhei a dismissive glance, "Be silent; the adults are talking." Then, she returned to staring Ma Zheng down with a sharp gaze.

Han Yuhei reeled. He was only a thousand or so years younger than Huoyan Liulan, and while Ma Zheng was definitely his senior with twenty thousands years ahead of him, she certainly was not. An urge to fight manifested in his eyes. Clearly, she was not using the term 'adult' in terms of age but strength. She was mocking his weakness!

Enraged, how could he take it lying down? But Wei Wuyin spoke up at this moment, causing his rising flames to be doused. "I thought you would know," Wei Wuyin frowned. He could see from the lingering fear in Ma Zheng's eyes that he felt it too. It was likely due to his Nexus Spatial Soul that his attunement to space caught that being's aura, maybe even clearer than him, but not on an instinctual level.

Ma Zheng shook his head. He didn't get a good look nor felt something remotely similar before. Maybe it was due to his cultivation base being too low before or that he had never met it by coincidence in his long years. Regardless of the reason, he had never met it before.

"Know?" Han Yuhei's anger had subsided by their exchange. He was of a similar thought as Ma Zheng in the beginning—an attack by Trueborn. Why were they speaking as if it wasn't a horde of unknown Earthly Saints but a creature?

"When did you BECOME AN EARTHLY SAINT?!" Huoyan Liulan was growing more agitated by Ma Zheng ignoring her question. Her current emotions felt very disproportionate to the event itself. This should be a glorious achievement, celebrated and happy, but her reaction felt as if she was betrayed. A scorned woman.

Wei Wuyin gave her a curious look.

Ma Zheng also turned his attention to her. He calmly said, "I'll discuss it with you later." Unfortunately, his response only added oil to the flames as Huoyan Liulan's expression grew unsightly and anger-filled.

Han Yuhei was lost for a moment, confused by all this. He looked to the glowing Bai Lin, enveloped in a strange spatial power that he couldn't quite see through. It felt familiar to a Void Gate or Wei Wuyin's void portals. But the power clearly belonged to Wei Wuyin, not an independent armament, talisman, or tool. Moreover, he felt a roar-like pulse emanating from it.

Strange...

Ma Zheng's expression grew dark seeing Huoyan Liulan about to throw a tantrum. He blurted out in an attempt to pacify her, "Half a year ago. I'll explain it to you later."

Huoyan Liulan's expression was distorted with shock. That was before the competition. He was an Earthly Saint then? She clenched her fist. Her chest heaved up and down with riled emotions.

Wei Wuyin felt like this scene was a wife catching her husband keeping secrets, and he was trying to not have an argument in public while she didn't give a damn. He could feel the situation was about to explode with some intimate secrets about to fly, and while interested, he was more invested in ensuring that 'thing' wasn't following them.

"I can't sense it," Kratos stated. Whatever that creature was, it had almost eaten them before. But it seemed that it couldn't sense Kratos or him clearly, and even while it was extremely close, it was unable to sniff out their existence.

"It might not be in the same spatial layer as us, existing in the depths of fixed space, chaotic space, or isolated space," Kratos surmised. This left Wei Wuyin a little stunned because Kratos was useless with explanations. Much like how King treated its words like gold, Kratos treated its coherent thoughts about the Void Dao like diamonds, even more precious.

"What is it?" Wei Wuyin had to ask. It had found him twice. Was it tracking him? If so, how? Bloodline scent or through something else?

"..." Kratos didn't respond. It clearly didn't know.

Suddenly, Huoyan Liulan's voice dropped several degrees as she coldly said: "You're coming back with me to the Hexaflame Starfield." Her words seemed to broker no argument. A definitive reality that must happen.

Wei Wuyin returned and saw Ma Zheng with furrowed brows. He couldn't help but ask at this point, "What's happening here?" Huoyan Liulan was extremely invested in his advancement to the Earthly Saint Phase.

Ma Zheng didn't hide it, spiritually communicating: "Before Ma Sujiang was born, I was planning to reclaim my pavilion, and I needed a reason to justify my claim for the seat, and it was in the shape of a deal. I had agreed to unite with the Hexaflame Starfield and the Golden Life Pavilion, either under two conditions: Through allowing a daughter of the Hexaflame Starfield, my Ma Sujiang, to become Pavilion Master after my death, or through marriage, if I become an Earthly Saint during my term as a Pavilion Master."

"..." Wei Wuyin knew of Ma Zheng's plotting, including the step-by-step plan explained by Wu Yu, reinforcing Ma Zheng's brilliance. He also knew of Ma Sujiang's origins. He questioned, "You swore an oath?"

"I did," Ma Zheng didn't deny it.

But Wei Wuyin was confused. If that was the case, then this situation shouldn't be too difficult to handle, right? He was obligated to marry, then he should just marry. Not like he could refuse to do so, right?

Wait.

"During your term?" Wei Wuyin lifted an eyebrow.

Ma Zheng nodded.

Well, that explains that. Ma Zheng had ascended to the Earthly Saint Phase, the fourth stage of the Mystic Ascendant Realm, not during his term but before! The oath had a loophole that destroyed its validity. No wonder Ma Zheng wasn't pressed to reveal this detail. He didn't have any obligation to marry her, but Huoyan Liulan felt differently.

Seeing the two communicate spiritually, Huoyan Liulan darkly said: "I won't accept any pay off, no matter the price."

Wei Wuyin and Ma Zheng put on a very similar smile, filled with helplessness. This woman was adamant. Still, Ma Sujiang's side of the oath was still effective. She would definitely be pushed to succeed Ma Zheng.

"I understand. Like I said before, we'll talk later." Ma Zheng was internally exhausted that this topic was now at the forefront. Considering the summit was happening soon, he couldn't imagine the drama that would unfold. This was especially true if Sun Li found out...

Resisting an urge to tease Old Ma, Wei Wuyin looked around and realized they were near the outskirts of the Grand Cyclic Stellar Region. Ma Zheng could travel at a stupendously high speed through Spatial Shifting. Still, his Void Portal Creation was certainly superior. He decided to recover his energies here and then portal them back after Bai Lin finished digesting that feather.

"Let's rest here for now." Wei Wuyin didn't wait for them to agree, using his astral force to manifest a makeshift Sky Palace.

Huoyan Liulan frowned. Before she could voice her opinions, Ma Zheng began to use his Earthly Saint Phase cultivation base openly, constructing a few Spiritual Formations around them. He wasn't in a particular rush to arrive at the summit. It would likely last for five years at least, and missing the early period wasn't going to matter.

Regardless of when Wei Wuyin arrived, Ma Zheng felt that Wei Wuyin's presence was absolutely necessary to set the standards of Chosen. Thus, they could take their leisure time. He just had to ensure others couldn't find them.

Han Yuhei sighed heavily with relief. He and Zhang Ziyi were injured, so they would have far less power in discussions or events if they went right now. While the True Element Sect wouldn't have an Earthly Saint of the sect guarding them, it was already expected that they could be injured or delayed. Sun Li should take care of the procession, as per their arrangement.

Han Yuhei manifested a very small flat continental earth roughly a hundred miles wide and a mile thick, sat at the center, and slowly meditated and healed using wood and yang energies.

Huoyan Liulan's eyes narrowed dangerously. In the end, she stayed very close to Ma Zheng, refusing to allow him out of her sight.

Three days!

It was announced the Saint Cyclic Renewal Summit will begin by the Evergod in three days! Afterwhich, the Mythical Oaths for allied protection will take effect. Any force that assaults another during this time will be eradicated by every other force! A complete obliteration.

A state of forced peace will soon descend from start to finish for the Saint Cyclic Renewal Summit. Yet not a single relevant individual was of the belief that the Saint Cyclic Renewal Summit will be remotely peaceful.

Immortal Saintesses, Immortal Heroes, Chosen, Ascended beings, and Leaders of Starfields, Domains, and Ancient Forces would be gathered to determine the eventual standards for what it meant to be a Chosen!

A glimmer of hope sparked in the hearts of everyone.

Maybe, just maybe, the Chosen King will be in this event!

Chapter 940: SCR Summit, Three Days Left

"Look! Look! Look! Mommy, SHOOTING STARS!" A young boy of five years jumped up and down, shaking his mother's hand with youthful energy, growing curiosity, and innocent astonishment. Alongside his mother, a young farmer's wife, they were mere residents of a tiny-sized planet in the vast stellar region, yet they stared at the skies without being able to look away.

The mother's limpid eyes reflected endless colorful lights crossing through the sky, large and small, and they were all absurdly far away and beyond her imagination. She opened her mouth and breathed out a single word: "Wow."

They weren't the only ones to be drawn by the phenomenal spectacle beyond their sky. Planets throughout the Aeternal Sky Starfield, especially the Everlore Domain, were welcomed by this marvelous display. Some were curious and ignorant, too young, too weak, and too uneducated to comprehend the cause of such an event, but others, oh the others were all unimaginably excited.

It was soon to begin!

The congregation of exceptional experts, true talents, and legendary leaders across their known world—the Grand Cyclic Stellar Region! An event of such grand proportions that the last three Golden Auctions hadn't received nearly as much attention!

Hosted by the Everlore Association, held on their capital planet Ever-Sky, and led by the strongest beings in the world, the Saint Cyclic Renewal Summit was undoubtedly happening! Set to redefine the

standards of 'Chosen', the era of their cultivation world was bound to change. It would change in ways that would affect every life, present and future.

Over the next three days, the Everlore Domain became crowded with Voidships! Be it tiny-sized, small-sized, medium-sized, large-sized, or titanic-sized, they were all here. As varying streams of colorful lights, these ships were adorned above them and on their sides spiritual projections designating their mighty forces. An announcement of sorts.

Every established force with the qualifications to enlist a Chosen, independent or otherwise, was present. Those from below could see countless symbols and characters designating Mortal-tier and Mystic-tier forces that originated from every corner of the stellar region.

Those Mortal-tier forces that held the qualifications to participate, to be given the slightest of voices, were not the lowest-ranked bronze forces, but the silver-rank and gold-rank forces. These forces not only had leaders at the Ninth Stage of the Astral Core Realm, the Star Core Phase, and the Tenth Stage of the Astral Core Realm (by stellar region standards), the Mystic Star Phase, respectively, but they had the qualifications to send in Chosen of their own to participate in the Chosen King Competition.

Silver-rank forces were allotted a single entry while gold-rank forces were given two. While Mystic-tier forces, regardless of their rank, led by 'genuine' Ascended beings, were given three slots for Chosen. In determining the qualifications to Chosen, elevated standards will certainly affect lesser forces than those higher. In fact, going into the summit, many of the younger generation of these Mystic-tier forces felt their position was unshakeable.

Only those with a keen mind and grasp of the impact of the two alchemical products, the Ever-Domain Pill and Neo-Dawn Eclipse Pill, including the time differential of six thousand years since these standards were set, would understand the world-shaking changes that will certainly unfold.

Those Mortal-tier forces weren't just here to spectate, but try their best not to remain qualified to still have Chosen! A desperate bid amid the raging excitement to secure their spots!

They feared only one result: An exaggerated elevation that only the elite forces could nurture!

Therefore, they needed to show their strength, their accumulation, and their right to participate in the actual discussion and possess a legitimate voice! These forces occupied the Dark Void of the Everlore Domain, gathering their Voidships, their military, their top-notch experts, and fielded them to arrive in an open and flamboyant manner.

Of course, as they wished to show off, how could the strongest forces not feel similar? And if the Mortal-tier forces could be considered extravagant, trying to eke out a justification for their voice to matter, the Mystic-tier forces were overwhelming.

Utterly and completely overwhelming!

Dozens of ships outfitted for war and death, exuding pristinely refined and rich auras from their ships, their projected spiritual symbols, and their elites. They came on full-force without holding back. A measuring contest that could only make those Mortal-tier forces feel beneath the word: Inadequate.

The sharp contrast between the forces justified the differences in their tier.

A silver-rank Sect Master of a force from the Treasured Light Starfield stood at the bow of his ship, exuding his Starlord-level aura with high intensity had instantly stopped upon entering the Everlore Domain. The auras emitted from the ships themselves dwarfed him, causing his eyes to widen, his heart to shake, and his men beside him to become dispirited.

They were like ants wading through a sea of tigers. By happenstance, he saw his rival force at a nondescript corner of the Dark Void, utterly silent, as they hid beneath the shadow of another. When he saw its spiritual projection designating their identity, his heart pounded with dejection!

He Clan!

A Noble Clan of the Aeternal Sky Starfield!

Like scared mice, his once respected enemy that had talked up a mighty game before had been reduced to such a pathetic showing. Swelled with complex emotions, his aura still blaring, he suddenly felt a pulse of spiritual strength that snuffed out his roused aura like a small flame in a rainstorm.

He lifted his head, alongside his armored men who were ready to reveal their brilliance, and his personal disciple, the Chosen of their force, to witness an ever-encroaching shadow that overtook their figure, blotting out the Aeternal Sky Star's light rays. Drowned in almost complete darkness, their eyes widened as the hull projected their only source of light. Spiritual characters!

It read: "Ninth Tempest."

His eyes bulged as he realized that this gigantic-sized Voidship belonged to none other than the World Tempest Starfield's current reigning leader, the Ninth Tempest Palace! He gulped heavily.

In comparison to his medium-sized Voidship, the pride and joy of his life, their dark-green Voidship made him feel insignificant. A tiny speck in a grand sea. However, his heart felt even more tiny from what he saw next. A wake of other Voidships, rivaling and exceeding his own in size, quality, and function. Dozens of them!

Just like his rival, the Ninth Tempest's lead ship and three dozen of following ships reduced him to a corner, parked and forgotten. The experts on the bow of those ships were at minimum genuine Ascended beings! And these Ascended beings were mere followers! Despair began to develop in his heart, infesting his mind with a sense of inferiority.

This redefining of Chosen...

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He looked to his young, gifted Chosen of his sect. His personal disciple that he had spent hundreds of years developing in the hopes of doing well in the Chosen King Competition. While he never had the hope of claiming such a glorious title, he now felt like it might be impossible to even participate. These forces had means far beyond theirs.

What voice could he have?

This feeling was not uniquely his, but an infectious splash of reality that washed over all the silver-rank and even some gold-rank forces. Would Mortal-tier forces be pushed out of the competition completely? Would they be...

However, the Chosen's brightly lit eyes were not filled with defeatism and nihilistic beliefs. While those eyes reflected the immensity of the world, it wasn't enough to ground his spirit born of unimaginable challenges. He clenched his fists, gritted his teeth, and recited in the depths of his unyielding heart: "I will..."

"...not underestimate anyone, Senior Sister Lin." A handsome youth said as he stared at the world-quaking gathering of talents and experts. The event hadn't begun yet, but a feeling of pressure couldn't help but envelope his heart. It was Lin Ming!

Beside him, a golden-blond haired woman of astonishing beauty was observing the various Voidships beyond the atmospheric layer of their Voidship. Lin Xianxei had just reminded Lin Ming of the summit and how it was far from simple.

"The Everlore Association has invited all those on the Immortal Rankings and Mortal Sovereign Alchemists, there's bound to be more than meets the eye to this. We're definitely not here for show, and there could be danger involved." Lin Xianxei once again explained.

Lin Ming's expression grew solemn, looking away from the array of Voidships to locate the center of everyone's attention—Ever-Sky. A large-sized planet with a gorgeous sky-blue surface. It seemed ordinary, not like those exceptional planets with a variety of strange phenomena surrounding it such as the Immortal Yin Planet.

This was explained by Lin Xianxei to be a result of the complete deactivation of all planetary formations and arrays. Yet the planet still looked extremely beautiful, serene, and absolutely amazing to live in. As the capital planet of the Everlore Domain, it was bound to be incredible.

"Mortal Sovereign Alchemists..." Lin Xianxei muttered softly, her eyes glossing over slightly as an image of a silver-eyed man flashed through her mind. He will be here, right?

Lin Ming suddenly felt a thump in his chest, giving Lin Xianxei a look and noticing her absentminded gaze. This was something she did very often recently, her thoughts seemingly occupied by something. He had an uncomfortable feeling as he asked: "Senior Sister Lin, what do you think will change about the Chosen qualification standards?"

"Huh?" Lin Xianxei snapped out of her stupor by that question, her thoughts were forcefully stimulated. This was a question that was on everyone's mind, discussed so often that many mouths have gone dry, and brains stirred into full-blown messes.

What will change?

Lin Xianxei took a deep breath, "Everything; the Chosen qualifications aren't clearly defined, and nothing is set. Thousands of years ago, the King of Everlore set these standards based on a youth he casually nurtured, and everyone eventually was forced to follow it."

"Not clearly defined? What do you mean?" Lin Ming had heard about all sorts of qualifications since his stint as striving for Chosen, such as defeating those three stages above you at certain stages and the Three Chosen Aspects—Human, Spirit, & War. He had to overcome the Three Chosen Aspects Tribulation, facing a Timelord due to his unique circumstances.

Lin Xianxei's eyes closed, "Five hundred years old. That's it. That was the only requirement to participate as a Chosen in the Chosen King Competition. There was nothing else. However, because everyone was only granted a few slots, standards were inevitably established. The youth he nurtured at the time was at the Spatial Resonance Phase, and he could triumph against all those beneath the Realmlord level and fight against genuine Realmlords without losing instantly. While it wasn't too shocking, it became the base standard.

"After the King of Everlore left, the further requirements and things such as the Three Chosen Aspects were developed by the leaders of the starfield to better develop the Chosen culture. However, not many could reach such exceptional strength, so it was lowered almost immediately. Then, over eight hundred years of no one overcoming the first challenge of the competition began. And the standards were changed with King of Everlore's Chosen as the absolute lowest standard allowed.

"This greatly shaped our goals and society until Chosen was commonplace, even amongst silver-rank, Mortal-tier forces. It hadn't changed yet no one was able to claim the title of Chosen King despite thousands of years having passed. Still, the gains and rewards from the competition were enough for many and failure wasn't rampant. We grew complacent. Sadly.

"Now, we've grown far beyond that level. Some Soul Idol Cultivators could fight against ordinary Realmlords with various arts, spells, armaments, and unique methods. For example, Tian Yinwu, a Prince of the Imperial Clan, could fight and defeat a Realmlord at the Sky Ruler Phase. There's a huge difference between fighting and defeating, you should know this."

Lin Ming digested all this and felt his heart quiver. Especially towards the absurd achievements of Tian Yinwu. When he was at the Fifth Stage of the Astral Core Realm, he felt like he had a slight chance of successfully defeating an unsuppressed Realmlord, if he deployed all his trump cards.

"While Tian Yinwu is an abnormal outlier, he's not without those who could contest his achievement, even fighting Realmlords at the Sky Ruler Phase. These are legitimate monsters. I think, for one, defeating a Realmlord at the Light Reflection Phase might be a default elevation of combat requirements." While the stellar region as a whole has been experiencing a continuous decline of results in the Chosen King Competition, the currently established standards were definitely too archaic.

"Defeating a Realmlord at the Light Reflection Phase..." Lin Ming murmured with extreme shock in his heart.

"But with the Neo-Dawn Eclipse Pill's existence," Lin Xianxei said as Lin Ming's eyebrow twitched, continuing: "another layer is added and age relative to cultivation base will definitely factor more importantly now." Considering Lin Ming wasn't fifty yet, this shouldn't be an issue given his cultivation base.

"The most pressing issue isn't the standards of Chosen," Lin Xianxei darkly said in a low tone.

Jolted, Lin Ming gave Lin Xianxei a look, realizing there was something he wasn't aware of. "What is?"

Suddenly, a woman walked towards the duo on the deck, as gorgeous as Lin Xianxei yet far more mature. She exuded a healthy aura and sported an exquisitely tailored robe that accentuated her long legs and exceptional chest, not one bit inferior to Lin Xianxei.

"The most pressing issue is the ranking of forces," Lin Xianxian answered. "The qualifications to have a slot allocated to them. The Everlore Association has the right to change the allocation of forces as they pleased, upholding the King of Everlore's will. Will silver-rank forces be relegated like bronze-rank forces after the eight hundred years of failure? Will Gold-rank forces? Or will it change our ranking structure altogether?" There was far more to it, but she didn't feel the urge to elaborate.

"..." Lin Ming's heart shook once again as he subconsciously glanced at all those silver-rank and gold-rank forces, realizing that they weren't here just for their Chosen, but for themselves.

No wonder...