

Spirit Realm #Chapter 91 — 100

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Chapter 91: Scurry

The Ice Soul Python's head exploded. Bloody fluid and brain matter leaked out along with the smell of burnt flesh. The stench on the variant python's body was just offensive to the extreme.

The six- to seven-meter Ice Soul Python had ring-shaped patterns on its body, and the black and white patterns looked quite beautiful.

Gao Yu walked forward as his dark eyes focused on those stripes. Suddenly, he slowly raised his head as if watching something rising into the air.

Qin Lie followed his gaze but did not see anything, so with doubt, he asked, "What are you looking at?"

"A departing soul." Gao Yu's eyes flashed with an eerie light. The Ogre-faced Rings in his hands were also flashing. "The Soul Devouring Beast's soul fragment did not come over. There are no black clouds on the sky, and this soul that had departed from the Ice Soul Python corpse is... slowly fading into nothingness. It has nearly merged completely with the world."

Shock bloomed in Qin Lie's heart as he subconsciously tried to sense it with a frown...

He closed his eyes, let out his mind energy, and looked about with his mind consciousness.

Vaguely, he could sense a very thin gaseous form being swept away, little by little, as if it was blown by the wind.

From the thin gas form, he could sense many complex waves. They were like many broken pictures and the soul body's unique memories...

"I know it's really hard for you to understand this and a soul body isn't something that can be detected by regular people, but souls... definitely exist." Gao Yu didn't look at Qin Lie but continued staring towards the sky. "Both because the spirit art I cultivate is special and because the Ogre-faced Rings are a little rare, I was able to see them. It's natural that other people are unable to sense them."

"But according to what I've heard, when the souls of some powerful spirit beasts and high level martial practitioners had reached a certain level of strength, even if their body died, their souls would remain immortal and would not vanish into the world. The souls of those high level existences could exist independently despite losing a body, and they

can look for a new body and be reborn again!” Gao Yu looked on dreamily. “I’ve heard all of this from the Ogre-faced Rings, so I didn’t know if it’s true or not...”

“It’s all true,” Qin Lie suddenly interrupted.

Gao Yu appeared surprised as he looked to Qin Lie and asked in confusion, “How do you know if it’s real or not?”

“These words... someone had told me about it in the past.” Qin Shan’s face appeared in Qin Lie’s head. “Moreover, I also was able to sense... just a little of that Ice Soul Python’s soul. I can feel it dissipating little by little, just like a light smoke being blown apart by the wind.”

Gao Yu’s expression turned slightly. “How can you detect them? I was only able to vaguely see them by relying on my spirit art and Ogre-faced Rings, so how can you see them?”

He really was quite shocked. During the time he had been operating with Discipline Hall’s martial practitioners outside of Icestone City, he had fought with many spirit beasts and killed quite a few of them. He had seen the Soul Devouring Beast’s soul fragments in action before.

And yet, he was the only one who was able to detect the soul’s actions after they died. Even if he explained it to Discipline Hall’s martial practitioners, they were unwilling to believe him.

Much less detect the dissipation process of the souls.

Qin Lie was the only other person who was able to detect the spirit beast’s soul dissipating — and this great surprised Gao Yu.

“I’m not too sure myself. At any rate, I can feel them, but I do not see them with my eyes... but feel them with my soul,” Qin Lie explained.

“Sense them with your soul?” Shock flowed out of Gao Yu’s eyes. “In that case, your soul must be a lot stronger than normal people’s! Only martial practitioners with incredibly powerful souls are able to sense the actions of a soul body. Th-this is also the explanation given by the one inside my rings!”

When Gao Yu looked at Qin Lie once more, his gaze suddenly turned strange. “You bastard, it looks like you hide quite a few secrets in you. I didn’t imagine your soul to be this powerful!”

“A powerful soul? Hm, I guess you’re right.”

Qin Lie himself was quietly surprised. The reason he had tempered his mind energy for the past two years was to slowly strengthen his soul. Moreover, from the moment he had memories, he could already clearly feel the existence of mind energy.

It was as if ten years ago he had already worked hard to cultivate his mind, and that was why his soul was much stronger than a normal person's.

"Your spirit skill just now was pretty powerful too. That Thunder Lightning Ball was full of power, and it blew that Ice Soul Python's head to bits instantly. Not many spirit artifacts can achieve such explosive power." Gao Yu was obviously a little envious, and he walked until he was beside the Ice Soul Python's corpse and said, "It looks like you've found a suitable spirit skill for yourself inside the Scripture Tower. That ball formed from thunder and lightning... is really powerful."

"Spirit skill?" Qin Lie was dumbfounded by his words, and after a thought, he nodded and smiled, "That's right, that Thunder Lightning Ball is the spirit skill I've recently mastered."

"Let's check out the goods." Gao Yu's face was full of excitement as he took out a dagger and began digging into the Ice Soul Python's bloody brain.

Before long, he dug out an egg-sized silver-white crystal. The crystal was hexagonal in shape and icy-cold to touch. A silver-white fog surrounded it.

"This is the Ice Soul Python's beast core. Since this beast is a variant, its beast core should be a bit odd as well." When Gao Yu touched it, his fingers were immediately covered in ice. "So cold! This beast core is ridiculously cold. It should be very suitable for those Shattered Ice Manor bastards, but not really that useful for us."

"Let me have a look."

Qin Lie walked forward and pointed his fingers at the hexagonal crystal. A bitter cold energy immediately invaded and turned his finger rigid. Even his body had shuddered once.

"Boooooom!"

However, a thunderous sound could be heard from inside the core. Since he cultivated Heavenly Thunder Eradication, he could clearly sense it.

"This spirit core may be useful for me, so I'll be taking this." He didn't bother with pleasantries, and with a chuckle, Qin Lie put the crystal into his waist bag right before Gao Yu's eyes. Then he said, "Let's melt the Ice Soul Python and have a look. Whatever's left should all be pretty good spirit materials. Let's see what it has."

"Okay."

Gao Yu took out Nebula Pavilion's acid water specially made to melt spirit beasts and poured it on top of the Ice Soul Python's body. Without an energy field to protect its body, under the acid water's powerful acidic properties, the Ice Soul Python's body rapidly melted. Very soon there was a pool of blood on the stone floor, and it was even spreading rapidly.

Within minutes, the flesh of the Ice Soul Python had melted completely. What was left was its skin, bones, sharp and poisonous teeth, and a pair of eyes.

Qin Lie examined them closely for a while and gave special attention to the pair of eyes. He rubbed his hands on the pair of eyes and suddenly picked one of them. "This eye has thunder waves inside it, so it should be a thunder type spirit material. I'll save the pleasantries. And yeah, the rest of the spirit materials are yours."

"Oh." Gao Yu packed up the rest of the python skin, bone, poisonous fang and the other eye, "These spirit materials are proof that we've hunted an Ice Soul Python. When we get back to the pavilion, we can turn them in for contribution points."

"It shouldn't be too hard to kill another Rank Two spirit beast if we combine our strength." Qin Lie suddenly suggested after rubbing his chin and giving it some thought, "Do you want to continue hunting?"

"No problem." Gao Yu nodded.

"Let's go! Let's go and look for the other Rank Two spirit beasts!" Qin Lie said spiritedly.

And so, the duo began to act and swiftly sweep the outer edge of the stone forest, looking for the other Rank Two spirit beasts.

At this moment, Shattered Ice Manor's Yan Ziqian and Water Moon Sect's Na Nuo were using the same method of angering the spirit beast horde and pulling them towards the outer edge of the stone forest while running. Even Crimson Flame Association's Xiong Ba had learned his lesson after two of his brothers were killed. They no longer dared to fight the spirit beast horde to the death and were running wherever they could with the spirit beast horde behind them.

Therefore, there were many spirit beast activities at the outer layer of the stone forest. When the people from Shattered Ice Manor, Nebula Pavilion, Crimson Flame Association, and Water Moon Sect escaped, they normally picked a random direction in panic, and quite often they would even run into each other.

But everyone understood the current situation, and after they ran into each other, they simply nodded before splitting up again hurriedly.

Even when Tu Ze, Zhuo Qian, and Yan Ziqian ran into each other, they did not dare to fight each other. They only left behind a few harsh words before continuing to escape.

—There was a spirit beast horde pursuing every group, and they all had a couple of Rank Two spirit beasts roaring in mad rage.

In the meantime, if the four groups realized that the number of spirit beasts behind them had decreased and that there were only one or two Rank Two spirit beasts, then they would halt their steps and counterattack.

Of course, there were also people who were chased into a dead end by the spirit beast horde and had no choice but to fight the spirit beasts' rush directly... in this case, those martial practitioners often had to pay a heavy price.

Water Moon Sect's Na Nuo was one of the unfortunate ones to have accidentally run into a dead end, and as a result, two girls were torn apart and eaten alive by the spirit beasts. Some of them had also suffered various levels of injuries as well.

Yan Ziqian's group was also unlucky to be pincerred by two different hordes. As a result, three men died on the spot, and even Yan Qingsong's left arm was bitten off.

On the other hand, after their initial misfortune, Crimson Flame Association's Xiong Ba sailed smoothly and did not suffer any casualties.

Tu Ze and Zhuo Qian had also been pincerred by spirit beast hordes before, but they would often risk even death to save their companions, suffering injuries or even having a few pieces of flesh bitten off in order to save their friends.

Therefore, while everyone in Tu Ze and Zhuo Qian's group were covered in blood and suffered a considerable amount of injuries, not a single one of them had died.

Out of all four sides, Qin Lie and Gao Yu were the odd ones out. They acted together, and they could often find a lone spirit beast and attack first.

Under their combined strength, including the Ice Soul Python, they had actually killed three Rank Two spirit beasts and sixteen Rank One spirit beasts.

All of these had fallen under Xie Jingxuan and Liang Zhong's eyes as they were watching them from above. Because of this, they paid extra attention to Qin Lie and Gao Yu.

"Those two kids are way too sensitive towards the spirit beasts' actions." Standing on top of the hill, Liang Zhong watched Qin Lie and Gao Yu's movements from afar. "Their sense of smell is exceptional, and more often than not, they would discover a spirit beast horde while it was still far away and avoid them ahead of time. And because of this, they haven't run into a spirit beast horde yet, instead always finding a lone spirit beast to attack. Therefore, their abilities are impressive."

"It's because of Qin Lie." Xie Jingxuan's eyes fell onto Qin Lie from far, far away. "He is able to sense the spirit beast horde approaching before getting out of the way with Gao Yu very early on. Therefore, they always avoid the powerful spirit beast horde and always keep themselves safe."

"You mean it wasn't Gao Yu?" Liang Zhong was surprised. "Gao Yu is sharp enough to detect the existence of a soul body. It wasn't actually him?"

"It's Qin Lie," Xie Jingxuan said with certainty.

Liang Zhong did not understand and was confused.

Just when Xie Jingxuan was about to explain, she suddenly saw a change from the black clouds deep inside the stone forest. She saw that the black clumps of Soul Devouring Beast soul fragments were actually writhing constantly like a sea of clouds as they suddenly dived towards the ground.

It was as if there was a powerful suction force pulling from under the soul fragments, sucking them all down.

"It has begun!" Her expression turned slightly as she quickly said, "We'll rush in there now!"

Liang Zhong's expression was extremely serious, and he quickly flew down to the ground and prepared to act with Dark Asura Hall's Ban Hong and others.

"Uncle Zhong, you should contact all four sides first and allow them to enter deeper into the stone forest. There is actually no spirit beast horde gathered inside that area, so it has changed from a danger zone to a slightly safer region. Also, bring Qin Lie and Gao Yu with you. These two people... might actually be useful," Xie Jingxuan instructed quickly.

"Understood. I'm heading off."

Chapter 92: Unstoppable

"Do you want the Silver Flame Spider's eyes?"

"No, give me the legs, I might be able to use them."

"Okay, I want the spider silk they spit out. It's very tensile and pretty good spirit material."

"Give me the teeth."

"Mn."

Qin Lie and Gao Yu were crouched beside the Silver Flame Spider that had been dissolved and were going through the spirit materials to decide how to split them up.

The two quickly divided up the Rank Two Silver Flame Spider.

The cloth pouch on Qin Lie's waist was bulging full of spirit materials. It was the same with Gao Yu. His pouch was also stuffed full.

Several Silver Flame Spider feet were still on the ground. No matter how, the two were unable to put them away.

"If we had a spatial ring, we wouldn't have to waste any spirit materials, and it would be more convenient to carry everything." Qin Lie looked at the jade-like spider feet and said with regret, "But we can't do anything about it currently. The spirit materials are pretty good, but we can't take them with us."

"In all of Icestone City, only three people have spatial rings, we don't even need to think about it." Gao Yu struck where it hurt.

"If you two can even enter Dark Asura Hall someday and obtain a high-ranking position, then you can obtain a spatial ring." Liang Zhong's voice suddenly sounded out. When his voice landed, the Profound Nether Beast arrived. "Both of you, do not waste my time right now, come up here. We need to proceed inside."

On the Profound Nether Beast, Liang Zhong was wearing dark brown armor. His chest, arms, legs, and even neck were all covered in that kind of hard brown armor. The armor did not seem like metal but some kind of special wood that even had dense wood grains on its surface.

The armor that covered more than half of his body added an intimidating presence to Liang Zhong.

"Uncle Zhong, your armor looks really good," Qin Lie praised.

"Pleasing to look at?" Liang Zhong's expression was strange. "This Hempwood Armor is a type of spirit artifact and made by Great Master Lu of Dark Asura Hall. This spirit armor isn't just good to look at, its defense is also pretty good. Even if I stand here without moving, the two of you would not be able to break through it even if both of you attacked at full power, do you believe it?"

"I don't believe it." Gao Yu shook his head.

"Come up and try." Liang Zhong beckoned with a hand and motioned for the two to sit on the Profound Nether Beast. "We are charging into the depths of the stone forest, quick!"

Qin Lie and Gao Yu exchanged a look. They did not dawdle and sat onto the Profound Nether Beast.

The Profound Nether Beast of the Nether Battlefield was a size larger than even the most ferocious horse. It was not a squeeze for three people to sit on it together.

Because the Profound Nether Beast was large enough, Gao Yu sat behind Liang Zhong and Qin Lie was behind Gao Yu. There was space between them so that their chests and backs were not pressed together which meant there was a great deal of free space.

“Hempwood Armor... let me try.” Gao Yu reached out and pressed on the dark brown armor plate on Liang Zhong’s back. Spirit energy suddenly flooded out like a sword and stabbed in!

“Bang!”

The spirit energy seemed to have stabbed onto a thick rubber ball. It did not manage to break through the armor but violently bounced back and shook Gao Yu, rocking him back and forth.

His dark face showed how astounded he became. “This Hempwood Armor is actually so strong that I cannot break through. Qin Lie, how about you try?”

“Okay!” Qin Lie was also interested. Seeing Gao Yu turn his body to the side, he also gathered his power.

A ball of light blue lightning slowly grew in the center of his palm. A hazy blue Thunder Lightning Ball slowly formed, and a violent and domineering lightning ripple slowly appeared.

“Change spots, change spots first!” Seeing this, Gao Yu’s face shook. He hurriedly got Liang Zhong to slow the Profound Nether Beast down and he moved from in front of Qin Lie to behind him.

He knew the power of the Thunder Lightning Ball was astounding.

“Boom!”

Just as Gao Yu moved away, that Thunder Lightning Ball exploded behind Liang Zhong’s back. Liang Zhong faltered due to the explosion and almost fell off the Profound Nether Beast.

Yet, while his back was burnt black, that Hempwood Armor still did not have any holes from the explosion.

But Gao Yu had been hit by the Thunder Lightning Ball even after he had moved behind Qin Lie and was propelled off the beast.

“Such a wondrous Hempwood Armor! This armor is really powerful. Is this armor impenetrable?” Qin Lie did not notice that Gao Yu had been blown away and shouted with a surprised expression.

“Wait for me!” Gao Yu suddenly shouted.

Liang Zhong slowed the Profound Nether Beast down. When Gao Yu climbed back up again, Liang Zhong turned and looked at Qin Lie, saying, “Kid, you are vicious. If this Hempwood Armor wasn’t strong enough, if I wasn’t... wasn’t prepared beforehand, I would definitely have suffered!”

Glaring at Qin Lie, he snorted, “It isn’t that the Hempwood Armor is powerful but that you kids are too weak. You are just in the Refinement Realm, and your spirit energy hasn’t even been refined, so the power is limited. If the two of you had broken into the Natal Opening Realm, the Hempwood Armor might not be able to protect my body entirely. If you break into the Manifestation Realm, naturally, I will not dare to allow you two to attack without preparing beforehand.”

“In Dark Asura Hall, the Hempwood Armor is only slightly precious and was just forged by Great Master Lu. The ‘Blackscale Armor’ that Miss wears is truly a high-level spirit armor and is much more powerful than my Hempwood Armor. You will see later.”

Liang Zhong gave a simple explanation. The Profound Nether Beast suddenly accelerated and flashed deeper into the stone forest like a wisp of smoke.

Along the way, Qin Lie and Gao Yu saw Na Nuo and the others from Water Moon Sect and Xiong Ba and the others from Crimson Flame Association that were also travelling deeper into the stone forest.

Qin Lie noticed that, then discovered that there were two less females with Na Nuo. Na Nuo and the other young women had grave expressions. No one was smiling as though they had experienced a tragic event.

“Their luck was not as good as you two. You two weren’t just unharmed, you also killed spirit beasts.” Liang Zhong sighed lightly. “Two from Water Moon Sect died, two from Crimson Flame Association have died, and there are also three from Shattered Ice Manor that have died. Only Nebula Pavilion has gotten away with only heavy injuries and no deaths...”

Qin Lie and Gao Yu’s expressions became grave as they heard him speak and said no more.

They quickly passed the stone peaks as the Profound Nether Beasts rushed forward. Soon enough, the squeals of horses came from up ahead.

Qin Lie and Gao Yu focused their attention to the front and found that there were ten variant unicorns up ahead. The unicorns were a hybrid between fierce horses and Dragonhorn Rhinoceros. They had the gentleness of horses, the healthy and resilience of the Dragonhorn Rhinoceros, and were the standard steed for Dark Asura Hall soldiers.

Astride the unicorns, Ban Hong and the other Dark Asura Hall martial practitioners were also wearing armor. That type of armor was made from the hard hide of spirit beasts and was called “Beastskin Armor.” It was the standard outfit for normal soldiers and relatively simple to make. Its defensive capabilities were limited, and it was low quality armor.

When Qin Lie and Gao Yu saw that it wasn’t just Liang Zhong that had put on the “Hempwood Armor,” and that even Ban Hong and the others had put on “Beastskin Armor,” they knew that the people of Dark Asura Hall were preparing for a bloody battle. They also could guess that the leader of these people, Xie Jingxuan, had probably changed into the “Blackscale Armor” that Liang Zhong had spoken of.

As expected, when the Profound Nether Beast passed the unicorns, amidst the shouts of “Mister Liang” from Ban Hong and the others, Qin Lie and Gao Yu saw Xie Jingxuan at the very front of the procession.

The white robes had disappeared. Xie Jingxuan had changed into closely-fitting black martial robes, and outside the robes, was thick black armor—Blackscale Armor.

It was a kind of armor made from scales. Each scale was palm-sized and tightly pressed to her black clothing. The black and shiny scales flashed with a cold metallic light.

The scale armor densely covered her arms, stomach, chest, and legs, mixing into one with her black clothing. It caused her to be attired completely in black, presenting a cold and authoritative presence like a black ghost.

There was also a black mask that had been forged into the appearance of a vicious ghost that was attached to the Blackscale Armor and covered her beautiful face, which caused her to appear as though she was standing in the darkness.

The demonic mask, the cold and black scale armor covering her body, the Profound Nether Beast she rode that came from the Nether Battlefield...

At this moment, Xie Jingxuan was the death god that reaped souls. She charged on her steed at the very front, deeper into the stone forests as though she would kill all she encountered.

In the past few days, the four sides had been working together to draw away the spirit beast herds that had surrounded the Soul Devouring Beast. In reality, a large portion of the spirit beasts started to move.

Yet not all spirit beasts left this area. There was still a small portion of spirit beasts that were guarding the place.

The advance of Xie Jingxuan and Dark Asura Hall disturbed many of the spirit beast horde that had stayed back. As the Profound Nether Beast howled, three Golden Haired Apes popped their heads up first, the golden hairs on their bodies standing up on end as they beat their chests and howled. The eyes of the beasts were sharp as swords as they suddenly charged at the group.

The largest Golden Haired Ape was about four meters tall, its body seemed to be carved from gold-colored metal. As it howled, golden light surrounded it, and its presence was astonishing.

A scythe almost two meters long suddenly appeared in Xie Jingxuan's hand. That scythe was even longer than she was tall, and its body was shiny and cold.

Waving the her scythe with one hand, Xie Jingxuan charged at the Golden Haired Ape, the scythe drawing an elegant curve in the air.

The crescent was dazzling.

"Crack!"

The Golden Haired Ape's stone-hard body was divided in half by the crescent light. Its organs spilled free and onto the ground, becoming two pieces of dead flesh.

That scythe was still shiny and did not have a drop of blood on it as though it never had touched the Golden Haired Ape at all.

"Hiss!"

Another beautiful crescent beam appeared in the air. The crescent flashed and then abruptly disappeared.

The two Golden Haired Apes that were charging suddenly split into pieces when the crescent disappeared, once again being dismembered.

Elegant crescents appeared in front of Xie Jingxuan as the scythe moved. One after another, bloody beast corpses fell to the ground in pieces.

The Profound Nether Beast under Xie Jingxuan continued to advance.

Qin Lie and Gao Yu looked at her waving the scythe while she used her wondrous technique to dismember the spirit beasts. Everywhere she passed, the ground was covered in pieces of flesh. Their backs felt cold and so were their hearts.

Any spirit beasts that were in front of her, regardless of whether it was rank one or two, regardless of whether it was one or several, if it raised its head, it would instantly land on the ground in pieces.

The scythe remained untouched by fresh blood, and the Blackscale Armor she wore was still as bright. She seemed to have not actually come into contact with the spirit beasts from beginning to end.

But the spirit beasts were continuously cut up into pieces and slaughtered. Not a single one was able to even slightly hinder her advance or cause her gaze to change at all.

Xie Jingxuan was unstoppable.

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Chapter 93: Novel Spirit Artifact

The scythe lightly spun, drawing elegant and beautiful crescents that brought up bloody pieces of spirit beast flesh.

The rain of blood fell down and splashed Ban Hong and the others so they were covered in blood. But at the front, Xie Jingxuan did not wait for the storm of blood to land and shot up ahead.

Her black and dense Blackscale Armor was still untouched by blood as the Profound Nether Beast under her body seemed to fly.

“Awoo!”

The high rank spirit beasts hiding in the surroundings seemed to be infuriated by her and howled loudly as they furiously charged.

At this time, all the spirit beasts that were guarding this place came out from every direction, regardless of their level.

“Sit tightly, don’t fall down!” Liang Zhong shouted, “Ban Hong, you guys be careful on the flanks, I’ll take the end!”

This Profound Nether Beast’s speed slowed and went from the front to the back. Xie Jingxuan, who was at the very front, disappeared from Qin Lie and Gao Yu’s field of view.

Long cold blades, sharp long spears, heavy silver hammers...

One after another of exquisite spirit artifacts were revealed in the hands of Ban Hong and the others. Each spirit artifact rippled with spirit energy, and glowed when they came into the open.

Following the activation of each spirit art, the spirit artifacts seemed to come alive and released a surge of energy vibrations.

Ban Hong held a snake spear that was engraved with a purple ringed pattern. The snake spear shook, and a purple spirit snake nimbly came out from the two finger thick spear tip.

The purple spirit snake was condensed from spirit energy and was lively and nimble. It could easily avoid the direction the spirit beasts were attacking from, and then burrow into the bodies of the spirit beasts from their mouths, eyes, and ears.

The mouth of a Rank Two Golden Crag Beast was wide open and a purple spirit snake charged in.

Three seconds later, that Golden Crag Beast suddenly wailed harshly, its healthy body quickly withering as its blood and flesh seemed to quickly dissolve. In a short while, it had almost shrunk in half.

"Zing zing zing!"

Ban Hong's left hand rhythmically moved the snake spear as circles of dark purple spirit energy followed his arm into the snake spear.

At the tip of the snake spear, purple spirit snakes flew out one after another. Each purple spirit snake seemed to have simple intelligence, and could find openings on spirit beasts, burrowing through their noses and ears into the inside of the spirit beast and quickly cause a spirit beast to die as its organs rotted.

"Are those purple spirit snakes alive?" Gao Yu noticed Ban Hong and said suddenly after observing for a while.

"The purple spirit snakes are not alive, they only have the mind consciousness that Lord Ban Hong has put in them. There is a thread of Ban Hong's mind intent inside each purple spirit snake. By relying on the connection between the mind consciousness and his soul, he can control the movements of every purple spirit snake. So each spirit snake twists in the air and appears to be alive.

Qin Lie's eyes were narrowed as they flashed with an odd light. He focused on feeling it as he explained for Gao Yu.

He wasn't the same as Gao Yu.

Gao Yu was outstandingly sensitive towards dead souls and vengeful spirits.

Because his soul was different than an ordinary person's, his mental perception was much better than Gao Yu. Thus, he was stronger in detecting souls, consciousness and vital energies.

Gao Yu was sensitive towards dead beings, and he was sensitive towards living beings.

Because of this, he was able to feel the boundless vitality of the spirit beast horde coming near in battles with the spirit beast horde and judge which spirit beasts horde they could attack or had to avoid. This allowed him and Gao Yu to never encounter a beast horde that could threaten them.

This time, he was focusing on his perception. He could clearly feel Ban Hong's mental consciousness inside every purple spirit snake.

The purple spirit snakes that flew out of Ban Hong's snake spear were made from spirit energy and a special spirit technique. They all had a wisp of Ban Hong's mind intent, and could communicate with his soul to become easily controlled. This caused every spirit snake to be extremely vicious and dangerous.

"So that's how it is." When Gao Yu finished hearing his explanation, he also understood. "This scared me to death. I had thought that every spirit snake had their own life, and thought he had caged these spirit snake souls in the spirit artifact to release them in battle."

"Spirit energy animation is a technique of the legends. Forget about you two brats, even I have never seen it before." Liang Zhong rolled his eyes. "A column of divine light is released, connecting the heaven and earth, and bestowed life and consciousness, transforming into a new species in a short amount time... Many have heard of such a miraculous technique, yet whether or not it really exists, still needs research and confirmation."

Liang Zhong's brow creased as he said, "As least, on our Scarlet Tide Continent, no martial practitioner knows this godly technique."

"Spirit energy animation..."

Qin Lie and Gao Yu exchanged a look, their faces bright as they showed clear longing.

"Don't even dream about it!" Liang Zhong snorted coldly and then looked strangely at Qin Lie. "Kid, you haven't even reached the Natal Opening Realm, but you can actually understand the spirit art that Ban Hong, who is in Manifestation Realm, is using. You

also were not confounded by the appearance and directly stated the true essence... Kid, you are not simple at all."

"Am I not suppose to understand?" Qin Lie was shocked.

"You didn't see through this, but felt it with your soul. This means that your soul... is much more sensitive than other people." Liang Zhong also found it strange and muttered, "Such a weirdo, you're just a kid in the Refinement Realm so you might not even know what the soul is, but your perception is so astounding. Strange, so strange..."

"Howl!"

An enraged cry came from the Dragonhorn Rhinoceros behind the Profound Nether Beast. Two Dragonhorn Rhinoceroses charged shoulder-to-shoulder with many Rank One spirit beasts behind them.

Responsible for the rear, Liang Zhong stopped his deep pondering. He turned his head and a strange dark azure color appeared in his eyes.

Liang Zhong opened his mouth and spat out an azure crescent from under his tongue.

The crescent was just the size of a fingernail but it quickly changed after flying out. In a short ten breaths, the azure crescent became the size of a plate. The edges of the crescent were sharp like blades as it spun quickly and flew into the spirit beast horde behind them.

After a string of hair-raising, bone-breaking cracks, howls came from the beast spirit horde behind them.

Qin Lie and Gao Yu looked back and both of their expressions changed.

The plate-sized azure crescent was nimbly spinning, the edges shooting out rays of sharp azure light. The azure lights were like spinning swords that mutilated the rampaging spirit beasts, causing them to become corpses without any life.

In these short ten seconds, the greater half of the spirit beast horde pursuing them had died.

"Return!"

Liang Zhong shouted lightly. His tongue moved as if he was going to swallow something.

The azure crescent that had rampaged for a round lightly danced as it returned. After shrinking, it was placed back under Liang Zhong's tongue.

"It is called Azure Moon, a Profound Grade Five spirit artifact," Liang Zhong introduced. "Spirit artifacts that are profound grade or higher can enlarge and shrink at will if there is an 'illusory form' spirit diagram inside. My Azure Moon wasn't at its true form just now. Its final form is even larger than that."

"Illusory Form spirit diagrams can enlarge and shrink spirit artifacts at will, interesting..." Qin Lie's eyes were slightly bright.

"We're going to enter soon, you two be careful." Liang Zhong's gaze gradually became serious. "It is fortunate that Xiong Ba, Tu Ze and the other kids drew away the main portion of the spirit beast horde away, otherwise, we will not have this so easily, and would have to spend more energy on going though. When we enter the valley later, you two listen to me and do not make any unnecessary moves."

Qin Lie and Gao Yu nodded. At this time, the two of them also noticed there weren't any spirit beasts gathering around them.

They had heard Liang Zhong mention before that spirit beasts had the notion of territory. Low level spirit beasts would not usually enter the territories of high ranking spirit beasts. That Soul Devouring Beast was not a spirit beast of the Arctic Mountain Range, but because it was Rank Three, and was extremely close to rank four, the spirit beasts in the surroundings only dared to gather nearby to absorb the world's spirit energy, but didn't dare to go close to its location.

This was a spirit beast's instinct.

Right now, no other spirit beasts appeared nearby. This meant that they entered the area the Soul Devouring Beast was active.

"If you two kids are of great help and can help us kill this Soul Devouring Beast, not only would Nebula Pavilion give great rewards, we would also not be amiss." They were going to enter the dangerous grounds now and Liang Zhong started to raise morale. "We can give each of you a set of Beastskin Armor like what Ban Hong has. With that armor, you would not be greatly wounded if you have to face Natal Opening Realm martial practitioners."

"And what else?" Qin Li was interested.

"If the Soul Devouring Beast is killed, there would be... good stuff smelted from its body. Those things would be very beneficial for the two of you." Liang Zhong looked at Gao Yu. "Especially you, they should be very beneficial to the spirit art that you cultivate. If we can truly process the Soul Devouring Beast to death by fire, you will return with full pockets."

After his words, Qin Lie and Gao Yu were excited and started to feel anticipation.

“Awoo!”

Suddenly, an earth-shaking bestial howl came from the depths of the stone forest.

When this howl came out, the stone forest seemed to quake. The stone peaks shook violently as though they were going to break and explode.

Qin Lie and Gao Yu felt their heads suddenly hurt as though an evil power had charged into their heads. They had to cover their ears with ashen faces to slightly deflect the aftershakes of the howl.

Liang Zhong’s expression changed. “It’s the Soul Devouring Beast!”

“Whoosh!”

The Profound Nether Beast under his body suddenly raced forward at full speed. Like a bolt of lightning, it passed through a narrow path and entered a strange mountain valley.

There were stone pillars erected around the mountain valley. The stone pillars on the outside were more than ten meters tall, and the deeper it goes, the shorter they become.

The shape of the entire mountain valley was like a bowl. The tallest stone pillars on the outside of the valley were the rim of the bowl, and the center of the valley was the bottom of the bowl.

At the place that was akin to the bottom of the bowl was a black stone cavern. The stone cavern seemed to be directly connected to the depths of the earth. At this moment, the mouth of the cavern was expelling a cold and dark aura. That earth-shaking howl had also come from the stone cavern.

“Such dense nature spirit energy!”

When the Profound Nether Beast stopped, Qin Lie exclaimed after inhaling in a breath. He then looked around.

In the bowl-like valley, there were pillars that increased in height as it went outwards. Qin Lie’s eyes moved and looked at one of the stone pillars, shouting, “The division of the pillars is not natural, it was done through manual movement by people who came after. There are many Spirit Gathering Boards embedded inside the stone pillars which have caused the spirit energy here to become dense.”

“You, kid, have pretty good eyes,” Liang Zhong said.

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Chapter 94: Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation

Lines of ravines filled the inside of the bowl-shaped valley like spirit lines, sketching the picture of a burning fire on the valley's stone ground.

A layer of soft soil was paved on top of the ravine, and there was light peeking from underneath. The light appeared to be due to special sort of crystal.

Black clouds that were like washbasins gathered on the sky above the valley. There were hundreds of them, and they covered both the sky and the ground in heavy black.

They were all the soul fragments of the Soul Devouring Beast.

At this moment, the clumps of soul fragments of the Soul Devouring Beast were like layers of thick black clouds blocking out the light, and these black clouds were even slowly pushing downwards.

Previously, there were always Ghost Birds flying above Qin Lie and the others' heads. Liang Zhong was able to borrow the Ghost Bird's ability to grasp the movements and precise location of everyone in the stone forest.

However, there were no longer any birds above their heads, only the Soul Devouring Beasts' soul fragments.

—Not a single Ghost Bird dared to circle above the valley where the Soul Devouring Beast resided.

From time to time, the true body of the Soul Devouring Beast would roar from the cave entrance inside the valley. Each roar would shake the sky, causing even the stone pillars to shake violently and the valley to almost collapse.

The scythe vanished from Xie Jingxuan's hands, and she got off the Profound Nether Beast before running swiftly inside the valley like a black ghost.

One after another, she pressed the enhanced Spirit Gathering Boards Qin Lie had created onto the stone pillars inside the stone valley. With the addition of new Spirit Gathering Boards, the world's spirit energy that gathered inside the valley grew thicker and thicker.

Ban Hong and the rest of the Dark Asura Hall martial practitioners left their unicorns outside. They held fine-looking spirit artifacts and their expressions were solemn, ready to face battle at any time.

"Get down." Liang Zhong exclaimed softly, leading the way by getting off the Profound Nether Beast before the others and walking towards Ban Hong and his group with a heavy expression.

The lines of intersecting ravines were right in front of him. The crystals beneath the soft soil seemed to be growing even brighter.

Qin Lie and Gao Yu also slowly dismounted, and the moment they got off, the Profound Nether Beast immediately escaped outside the valley and stood together with the other Profound Nether Beast and the unicorns.

“When a Soul Devouring Beast prepares to break into the next rank, they often find some place dark and cold. That cave entrance is one of such spots that connects straight to the mouth of a cold underground spring. We have locked on to this cold spring mouth since half a year ago in order to deal with this Soul Devouring Beast.”

Liang Zhong frown was deep as he continued, “There were two things a Soul Devouring Beast is most afraid of. One is lightning, and the other fire. Both of these things can truly kill a Soul Devouring Beast.”

“The power of lightning is usually very hard to borrow, and it is not easy to summon it either. Therefore, we have laid down an ‘Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation’ with this cold spring’s mouth as the center. A rich amount of spirit energy would be able to draw out the maximum output of the power of the ‘Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation.’ This was why we bought a large number of Spirit Gathering Boards from Li’s Shop in hopes to increase the power of the flames as much as possible...”

“Whoo Whoo Whoo!”

While Liang Zhong was speaking, waves of dark and chilly wind blew out from inside the cave in the valley. The cold wind spread out, and the valley slowly turned cold and icy.

A kind of suppressed, confusing, oppressing, and maddening aura quietly spread to every corner in the valley, affecting every person standing within it.

Qin Lie, Gao Yu, and even generals like Ban Hong and the others all changed their expressions slightly, a trace of evil seemingly breeding from their pupils.

“Calm your hearts!” Liang Zhong yelled coldly.

Everyone’s eyes focused, and they turned to look at him along the way. Shock leaked out of their gazes.

“A Soul Devouring Beast is breaking through. It needs to absorb the soul fragments it has released into its true body. Those soul fragments operating outside the body have eaten many martial practitioners and spirit beasts’ souls, and those souls were mixed with a great deal of hatred, fear, irritation, madness, and other negative emotions.”

Liang Zhong looked towards the sky. "Before it evolves, it needs to wash out the dregs from its soul fragments first, and only then can it absorb them. If you pay attention, you will see that there are many layers of cold and near indistinguishable ripples that can purify a portion of those negative emotions."

Qin Lie hurriedly lifted his head and concentrated, and he found that there were layers of tide-like ripples tens of meters above his head.

When the Soul Devouring Beast's soul fragments, that were like black clouds, gradually descended, they would go through those cold ripples.

Meanwhile, there would be wisps of gray smoke seeping out of the Soul Devouring Beast's soul fragments.

Once these gray substances were detached from the Soul Devouring Beast's soul fragments, they would spread out to every corner of the valley. They carried an intense wave of negative emotions and could affect a martial practitioner's heart.

"The purified dregs, the jumbled memories, and all sorts of maddening emotions will only accumulate over time. They will spread to every corner of the valley and slowly erode your willpower. Liang Zhong lowered his head and frowned at Qin Lie and Gao Yu. "The two of you have the lowest realm, so you are most susceptible to the soul erosion. The first thing you need to face is your heart. Remember, you must protect your heart and not let it be affected by those negative emotions. Else, not only will you be completely useless, you will even become a burden!"

"Understood," Qin Lie and Gao Yu affirmed together.

Meanwhile, Xie Jingxuan had already placed all of the enhanced Spirit Gathering Boards one by one, and the world's spirit energy inside the valley was growing thicker and thicker.

"I will be activating the 'Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation.' Get ready to protect me, and be careful of the attacks from the vile souls!" Like a flashing light, she abruptly appeared beside Liang Zhong and sat down next to a ravine near the crowd's feet.

A wisp of fiery, crimson red light suddenly lit up from the spatial ring on her translucent finger. When the crowd watched closely, they realized that the light came from a finger-sized gem.

The gem was like a red jade. It was a red's transparency and a red's purity, and on the inside, it seemed to be sealing a cluster of crimson red flames.

The fiery light had come from the flame inside the gem. Initially, it was incredibly slow, but it was gradually growing bigger.

A fist-sized flame formed first inside the gem and immediately flew out afterwards. It was like a flapping fiery bird that had landed in the ravine before her eyes.

“Boom!”

The ravine abruptly burned fiercely. The blazing light soared towards the sky, and it was as if the ravine had instantly turned into an irritable fire dragon!

The long ravine that exceeded ten meters was about the width of an arm's length. At the moment, the fire raged, and it burned until there were many crackles, immediately sweeping away the chilly feeling inside the valley .

When Qin Lie crept closer to take a look, he realized that there was actually a layer of Sunshine Stones laid beneath the ravines' soil!

This was a Profound Grade Two spirit material, one rank higher than the Fire Crystal. It was one of the essential sources of fire required to refine a Profound Grade spirit artifact.

The flames of a Sunshine Stone could melt down a great deal of extremely hard Profound Grade iron and stone into fiery juices, and the high temperature it created was incredibly scary.

Once it was ignited, if the power of fire inside a Sunshine Stone wasn't mustered and drawn out through special techniques, it could only burn for a couple of days and nights.

There was actually an entire layer of Sunshine Stones covering the over ten meter ravine. Qin Lie could not help but be shocked by such an extravagant arrangement.

“Protect me!”

Xie Jingxuan exclaimed once softly and then immediately closed her eyes, seemingly gathering her energy to activate the flames inside the gem to ignite even more Sunshine Stone inside the ravines with this special flame.

A ravine's Sunshine Stone was ignited, and it was as if a fire dragon was formed, causing the valley's chilliness to be thoroughly suppressed.

Within the cave, the Soul Devouring Beast that was using all his energy to break to the next rank sensed the changes inside the valley. Immediately, it roared loudly, and waves of evil and cold consciousness suddenly spread upwards to the sky.

Up in the sky, the clumps of the beast's soul fragments abruptly turned irritable.

They saw about ten soul fragments that did not continue the next wave of purification. Instead, they had condensed together, transforming into a green-faced, sharp-fanged, one-eyed fiend.

All sorts of negative waves filling the valley suddenly condensed into an evil mind and consciousness and was carried by the one-eyed fiend. It aimed at the top of Xie Jingxuan's head and abruptly charged over.

The cold and evil waves of fear rushed over like an avalanche, as if it would directly kill any weaklings on its path.

From where they stood, Qin Lie and Gao Yu felt as if there were demons and monsters murderously charging at them from every direction. They felt as if they were trapped in a deep part in hell and were about to have their flesh and blood eaten bit by bit by countless demons...

Within their minds, they found their arms, their legs, and even their hearts being ripped apart by those terrible demons in a mix of blood and flesh before they were eaten.

It was an indescribable kind of great fear, capable of demolishing a person instantly which could cause them to never wake up again for the rest of their lives.

This was the Soul Tremor unleashed by the Soul Devouring Beast, and it was specialized against souls, specialized to destroy a person's heart!

At this moment, Qin Lie could no longer see anyone around him, and the only thing he felt was that he was missing body parts and was being devoured by the demons in the terrifying nine levels of hell.

"Noo!"

He screamed hysterically, screamed with every scrap of power inside him, wanting to struggle out of this terrifying land and leave this endless purgatory.

Within the boiling blood and countless corpses, the endless demons hideously laughed and continued their all-out charge towards him...

He had become the delicious food of this evil world's demons.

"No!" He roared crazily; his consciousness was fading, the influence on him getting worse and worse.

Just when he was about to succumb completely, the trace of a cool sensation slowly appeared from within his forehead...

Amidst the endless world of evil, a beam of light abruptly appeared before his eyes, and it was as if this beam of cooling light could cleanse every evil and purify all the filth.

The sea of roiling blood and the world where countless corpses and demons roamed abruptly shattered because of the appearance of this single beam of light!

Like a shattered mirror, the terrifying scenes turned fragmented and broken, and the scenes that had sunk deep into his mind and seeped into his souls melted away like snow.

He returned to the real world.

He finally saw the people around him.

Inside the valley, many hideous and evil fiends howled from every direction, and they were all charging in his direction.

Liang Zhong and the martial practitioners from Dark Asura Hall were swinging their fine-looking spirit artifacts about, forming many layers of beautiful shields of light, and blocked those fiends formed from the Soul Devouring Beast's soul fragments outside.

They were completely absorbed, and their expressions were absolutely serious.

Gao Yu was screaming beside him, his expression sometimes grim and sometimes filled with extreme terror.

—He had not yet escaped the influence of the Soul Devouring Beast's evil consciousness.

Xie Jingxuan closed her eyes and focused her energy to activate the flames inside the gem. Many flames were formed inside her gem, and once they flew out and landed on the other ravines, they ignited the Sunshine Stone, then formed a new fire dragon.

At the moment, seven fire dragons had already been formed inside the valley, and the blazing flames shone so bright that even the stone pillars beside them looked completely red.

After the originally ordinary stone pillars were baked by fire, many red colored spirit patterns began to appear on their surface. These spirit patterns resonated with the flames and turned vivid, causing the stone pillars to look like they were slowly burning up...

The Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation was slowly shaping into existence.

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Chapter 95: Vile Souls!

The Soul Devouring Beast's path to break through to the next rank had only just begun, and it was already forced to stop due to Xie Jingxuan activating the Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation.

As its true body angrily roared, all the soul fragments that were about to be purified instead condensed in the sky and formed many fierce and brutal vile souls.

These vile souls were a few meters tall with bodies as black as ink and carried with them all sorts of emotional waves such as violence, oppression, brutality, and so on. They continuously dove downwards from the sky, wanting to rip apart and devour these instigators.

Xie Jingxuan closed her eyes and continued to focus on igniting the rest of the Sunshine Stone inside the ravines, not affected in the slightest by the descending vile souls.

However, Liang Zhong, Ban Hong, and the rest of the Dark Asura Hall martial practitioners looked like they were facing a terrible enemy.

Their expressions were serious, and they did their best to unleash spirit energy, forming all sorts of colorful shields of light to construct a tight defensive line that prevented the vile souls from entering.

"Kill! Kill! Kill, kill, kill!"

Gao Yu's face was twisted as he abruptly stood up with eyes filled with madness and violence. There were clusters of vengeful spirits forming atop his Ogre-faced Rings.

He suddenly attacked the person closest to him, Ban Hong.

"Whoosh!"

A gray river formed by gray vengeful spirits flew out of his two palms and flowed at Ban Hong's chest.

Ban Hong, who was expending all his strength into the purple spirit snake to form the purple spirit light defense line, turned cold as he raised his hand and readied to smash apart the annoying gray river.

If Ban Hong, who was in the Manifestation Realm, did not bother controlling his attack's output, even if Gao Yu didn't die, he would instantly suffer tremendous injuries.

"Don't! Leave it to me!"

Qin Lie exclaimed, and before Ban Hong could actually attack, he hurriedly blocked in front of him. He hastily swung out the wooden sculpture in his left hand.

Light blue electricity stabbed outwards like numerous needles, and they blocked the gray river rushing towards Ban Hong's chest. The multiple vengeful spirits screamed terribly and shrunk backwards when they touched the rampart electricity, shrinking back into the Ogre-faced Rings on Gao Yu's fingers.

"Gao Yu! Wake up!"

Qin Lie took one step forward, and a fleeting bolt of blue lightning appeared from the tip of his hands, vanishing at the back of Gao Yu's neck.

Gao Yu's body shuddered as if he was electrocuted, and the blank look in his eyes gradually faded away as he began to wake up.

A few seconds later, Gao Yu woke up completely and nodded lightly towards Qin Lie. Then he sat down suddenly and focused on adjusting himself.

"These vile souls and evil spirits cannot break through our defensive line of light shields, but the evil mind and consciousness they gathered are not affected by them." Liang Zhong cut in a word at an appropriate time, "Our defense line cannot prevent their minds from entering, so the two of you better be more alert in case you became controlled by their evil consciousness and attack us instead."

The spirit artifact Liang Zhong called 'Azure Moon' hung atop the crowd's heads. It was like an azure crescent moon unleashing a misty azure light.

The azure light was like the rippling patterns of the sea. Layer after layer and circle after circle it spread, forming an azure light shield.

It was also the outermost light shield.

The azure light shield's existence was like a azure cover made out of ice, encircling everyone inside it.

The vile souls rammed into the azure light shield until the cover resounded with every collision, but they failed to break through the cover and enter.

Beneath the azure cover was the purple light shield formed by the purple spirit snake. This was the layer Ban Hong was responsible for.

And beneath those two, there were also two layers of ice blue and dark green light shields, and they were formed by the combined strength of the Dark Asura Hall martial practitioners.

At this moment, Liang Zhong, Ban Hong, and those Dark Asura Hall martial practitioners' entire bodies were glowing brightly as they continuously drew out the spirit energy inside their dantian's spirit sea, enhancing it further with their spirit artifacts before unleashing them to supply energy to those light shields non-stop.

"Our spirit energy can only play a defensive role, and it is unable to hurt those vile souls." Liang Zhong frowned. "These vile souls formed from the soul fragments of the soul beasts cannot be affected at all by normal blades, chops, sword stabs, or other common attacks. The spirit shields also can only stop them from rapidly seeping through. Blazing fire and the berserk energy of lightning are their true bane."

While he was speaking, the frenzied sounds of the Soul Devouring Beast's true body inside the cave was growing louder and louder.

The stone pillars in the valley shook violently, and a terrifying aura gradually spread out along with the chilly air inside the valley,

"This isn't good! Its true body is coming out!" Liang Zhong's expression turned.

Qin Lie and the others also grew anxious.

"All of you, continue to defend the Miss from the vile souls' attacks with the light shields. I will deal with its main body." Liang Zhong's expression tensed up, and after he instructed the crowd, he suddenly exited the layers of light shields.

The moment he walked out, the vile souls that had covered the sky turned mad and dove towards him.

"Swish Swish Swish!"

The azure crescent moon floating above Liang Zhong's head abruptly brightened greatly. Colorful beams of cold blue lightning shot out in every direction.

All of the attacking vile souls slowed as if they had sunk into deep mud, and they screamed painfully when shone by the blue light.

Liang Zhong did not look at those vile souls. His eyes stared straight at the cave that was brimming with cold streams of air as he rapidly closed in on the entrance.

"Mister Liang watch out!" Ban Hong exclaimed.

"Aooo!"

A strange and terrible beast about five to six meters tall and tens of meters wide abruptly flew out of the cave with an angry roar.

This Soul Devouring Beast that had escaped from Nether Battlefield looked like a giant toad at first glance. Its dark brown body was covered in deep wrinkles, and in these wrinkles, were many ugly fist-sized pimples.

The pimples bulged along with its breathing body, spitting and swallowing thick streams of black.

Its three dark green eyes that were the size of a human head were displayed in a triangle on top of its tumor-like monstrosity of a head, and each one of its eyes emanated the gazes of chilliness, gloom, and evil.

It opened its mouth and roared. Within its mouth, were rows of sharp teeth shaped like broadswords. A cold light overflowed, causing terror among the men.

The moment the toad-shaped Soul Devouring Beast came out, its three gloomy and chilly eyes turned as one to look in Xie Jingxuan's direction. With that, it proceeded to immediately charge at her.

"You're not going anywhere!"

With a cold face, Liang Zhong pointed a finger at the Azure Moon. The Azure Moon abruptly changed and actually grew bigger to about the size of a millstone.

"Whoosh Whoosh Whoosh!"

The edge of the azure spinning crescent was sharp, and while shooting beams of blade-like light, it plowed towards the Soul Devouring Beast's head.

The Soul Devouring Beast was absolutely furious. Its full body of ugly pimples suddenly bulged, and as if firing arrows, it shot out many streams of green water. Each one of these streams reeked of a terrible stench, as if they contained toxin inside them.

The Azure Moon was struck by the green water arrow and became stained with green poison. The azure light suddenly dimmed.

Liang Zhong's expression was stern. His pupils suddenly turned azure, and clusters of azure light burst out of his body, instantly merging as one with the Azure Moon's light.

The Azure Moon's light turned bright again.

Qin Lie and the others were all intently watching the battle between Liang Zhong and the Soul Devouring Beast's true body. Suddenly, they heard a rumbling noise in their eardrums, looked upwards, and only then realized that the vile souls were madly ramming into the light shields.

“Don’t look at me, protect the Miss with everything you have!” Liang Zhong yelled from the other side, “Before it reabsorbs its soul fragments, the true body of a Soul Devouring Beast is very weak. I have this completely under control. All of you simply need to guard the Miss and not let Soul Devouring Beast’s vile souls invade before she completely activates the formation!”

“Understood!” Ban Hong straightened. “Everyone, get your heads together and pour all your energy into the shield above your heads. Even if we die, we will not let a single vile soul slip through!”

“Yes!” The warriors of Dark Asura Hall responded in unison.

“Over there! Charge in that direction quickly! Eh? Dark Asura Hall, they are Dark Asura Hall’s men!”

“We’ve finally escaped the spirit beast horde’s pursuit!”

“Everyone, look quickly! Inside there. What is that spirit beast inside there?”

“.....”

It was at this moment that there were exclamations from the periphery of the valley. The disorderly sounds of many footsteps also slowly resounded.

Qin Lie and Gao Yu were the ones who had it the easiest. When they paid attention and looked, they realized that Water Moon Sect’s Na Nuo and Crimson Flame Association’s Xiong Ba’s groups had already approached quietly.

Even further back were Shattered Ice Manor’s Yan Ziqian, Nebula Pavilion’s Tu Ze , and the others. They were also approaching from another direction.

Most of these people had injuries of all severities on their bodies. Many of them were in low spirits; Water Moon Sect’s Na Nuo and her people appeared gloomy, and their eyes were also overshadowed and dark.

It looked like they hadn’t put the sadness of their sisters’ deaths behind them yet.

When they arrived and saw the situation inside the valley, they all wore surprised expressions and subconsciously decided to come closer.

“All of you are not allowed to enter the valley!” Ban Hong immediately yelled out and stopped them. “The periphery of the valley is also the Soul Devouring Beast’s domain. His presence made sure that no spirit beasts would dare to enter here. Go to where our unicorns are, that is a safe zone, and no spirit beast horde would dare approach it.”

“Do not enter the valley!” On the other side, Liang Zhong did not forget to sternly instruct them even as he battled against the Soul Devouring Beast’s true body.

Currently, half of the Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation within the valley had been activated. Inside the bowl-shaped valley, the stone pillars at the outer edge were as red as forged iron. They even let out flames that connected to the ravines and formed a huge fiery web on top of the valley.

Not only could the existence of the huge fiery web prevent the Soul Devouring Beast’s soul fragments from slipping out and trap its cold and evil consciousness, the web could even burn the oppressive, gloomy, and maddening evil feelings that suffused the area.

As long as Na Nuo, Xiong Ba, and the rest did not enter the valley, the intersecting huge fiery web would prevent the Soul Devouring Beast’s evil consciousness from completely escaping the valley and stop it from rapidly invading their souls.

However, if they did not listen and entered the valley, then it was very likely that the negative emotions would evoke the evil thoughts inside their hearts, thus becoming affected by the Soul Devouring Beast and lose themselves just like Gao Yu before. They would turn into mad beasts and attack their own companions—this would add too many variables to the valley’s situation.

“We won’t come in.” Na Nuo was the first to express her opinion and led her sisters to where the unicorns were. Her dark eyebrows were locked in a deep frown. Watching the many vile souls diving into the light shield built by Ban Hong and his men and watching Liang Zhong and the Soul Devouring Beast’s intense battle, she muttered, “Only an idiot would go in and court death.”

Tu Ze had also come over. He, Zhuo Qian, Kang Zhi, and the rest were covered in dried blood, and there was no telling if this blood were theirs or the spirit beasts he killed.

“Are you okay, Qin Lie?” he asked.

“Of course I’m fine. How about you guys?” Qin Lie asked.

Tu Ze broke into a bright smile, “We’re all seriously injured, but no one died and we’re all still part of the living. Look, we are not a single man less.”

The moment he said that, Water Moon Sect’s Na Nuo, Crimson Flame Association’s Xiong Ba, and even Shattered Ice Manor’s Yan Ziqian and their people all looked unnatural.

“Hmph!” Yan Ziqian’s wore a cold facade.

“Uuu!” a girl from Water Moon Sect remembered her dead sisters and could not hold back from softly crying.

Chapter 96: Imminent Danger

In the valley, as lines of trenches were ignited into fiery dragons, the Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation slowly took shape.

At this moment, all of the stone pillars in the valley's outer circle burned red-hot as they emitted lines of fire. Connecting with the firelight formed by Sunshine Stones within the trenches, they weaved into an enormous fire net and sealed off even the valley's skies.

The high temperature within the valley was almost unbearably scorching, and everyone's sweat fell like rain.

Thankfully, the location that Xie Jingxuan chose seemed to be precisely at the eye of the Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation. None of those turbulent flames or weaved fire had passed through this area.

Qin Lie and the others stood there. Without any fire assaulting them from their sides, what they endured was merely the high temperature within the valley.

Above their heads, those enormous balls of malicious souls seemed to let out miserable screams after being slowly scorched within the flames, seeming to not be able to bear the scorching heat.

Attentively observing, Qin Lie found that the small flame that was sealed within the gem in Xie Jingxuan hand seemed to be a drop of crimson colored blood.

That drop took the form of a small bird, and every time a ball of flame flew out from the instigation of her spirit energy, that drop of blood in the miniaturized shape of a bird would shrink down in size a little.

"Blood of the Vermillion Bird, it ought to be a drop of blood on a Vermillion Bird!" Gao Yu spoke all of a sudden.

Qin Lie was astounded, "You know about it?"

Gao Yu's complexion was dark as he slightly nodded. "The moment when Vermillion Birds are born, they will already be a Rank Seven spirit beast. As they grow older and their strength increases, Vermillion Birds can still continue to make breakthroughs. The Vermillion Bird is the most terrifying fire type spirit beast. Its blood is also the most concentrated and ardent of all fire sources and is able to incite the scorching heat of any fire attributed crystals."

Seeing that Qin Lie's expression changed, Gao Yu continued, "A drop of a Vermillion Bird's blood can evaporate an entire pond if it completely combusts. It is also extremely valuable and to martial practitioners who cultivate flame type spirit arts, can be said to be the most valuable treasure that can only be found with extreme luck. Such legendary

spirit beasts like Vermillion Birds are very difficult to find for ordinary people and may not even exist in this continent we are on..."

"How do you know so much?" Qin Lie was astounded.

Tapping the Ogre-faced Rings on his hands, Gao Yu said in a quiet voice, "It told me. From the time I started cultivating Nine Hell Wandering Soul Record, I've discovered that there were some scattered memory fragments within. When I was cultivating with its help, sometimes I was able to absorb some of the fragments and obtained a lot of information that I couldn't fathom."

"So that's why." Amazed, Qin Lie looked at the rings, then turned his head around to look at Xie Jingxuan's gem and the Vermillion Bird's blood within it. "No wonder why she wanted to concentrate all the energy to induce the flames within the gem and use the flame inside to ignite Sunshine Stones. A spirit beast that starts out at Rank Seven from birth, a Vermillion Bird comparable to one of the Nirvana Realm, its blood... just thinking about it is dreadful."

"Bang!"

A vile soul crashed into the purple colored light barrier. For the first time, Ban Hong's body swayed as a hint of paleness emerged on his face.

"Lord Ban Hong!"

"Lord! Are you okay?"

"Milord!"

The other generals of Dark Asura Hall instantly noticed Ban Hong's abnormality and hastily shouted.

A touch of blood flowed out from the corner of Ban Hong's mouth. He wiped it away without trouble, shook his head, and said with a heavy voice, "I'm fine, but I can no longer protect this area on my own. I may not be able to handle the next attacks of the vile souls. All of you, get ready and prepare to take care of anything I miss."

"Yes!" everyone shouted at the same time.

Qin Lie raised his head as the expression in his eyes changed. "The vile souls are merging together again!"

At first, there were a few dozen vile souls in the air above them. Those vile souls assaulted the light barrier non-stop, continuously exhausting the strength of Liang Zhong, Ban Hong, and the others.

At this moment, of the several dozen vile souls, a portion of them stopped attacking and assembled together, as though they wanted to fuse into an even larger vile soul.

Everyone looked up to see; then, all of their expressions became solemn, realizing that the next wave of attacks would be even more terrifying.

On the other side, Liang Zhong, who appeared extremely tiny in comparison to the Soul Devouring Beast's main body, was also controlling Azure Moon while waging a fierce battle with it.

The Soul Devouring Beast was like a small sized mountain of flesh. It was not very agile, especially after the valley's flame trenches connected and ignited; the space left for it to move about dwindled further and further.

As the inferno raged on, a layer of strange grease flowed out from the crinkles in outer layer of Soul Devouring Beast's skin. That grease was like membrane, protecting its body.

As Azure Moon spun, it brought up beams of azure colored swords of light; every single one of the swords were extremely sharp and fierce.

However, when they stabbed into the Soul Devouring Beast's body, they were blocked by that grease-like membrane; those sharp and terrifying swords actually had more than half of their power cancelled out.

After gruesomely battling for a long time, not even a wound could be seen on the Soul Devouring Beast. Instead, Liang Zhong's shoulder was doused by the green poison fluid and was already rotting away and becoming numb.

If not for the soaring flames within the valley stifling the Soul Devouring Beast, perhaps Liang Zhong would be even more miserable.

The party's situation within the valley was not very promising.

Outside of the valley in the region where the unicorn resided, the youths of Crimson Flame Association, Water Moon Sect, Nebula Pavilion, and Shattered Ice Manor gathered together, all looking at the activity within the valley in amazement.

"Young Master, that Qin Lie... seemed to have gotten acquainted with Dark Asura Hall's Department of Internal Affairs." In Shattered Ice Manor's direction, one of the martial practitioners of Shattered Ice Manor had on a cold and stern expression. "Could it be that we really aren't going to do it anymore?"

Yan Ziqian's left arm was thickly wrapped in gauze, and bloodstains even seeped through it. His resentful and malicious eyes focused onto Qin Lie. "Qin Lie must die no matter what!"

“Judging from the situation right now, it’s not certain that the people of the Department of Internal Affairs can kill this heretical beast. If an unexpected problem arises, what should we do?” Feng Kai inquired as he lowered his voice. His face was also dark, for he hated Qin Lie to the bone.

“He needs to die, so we kill!” Yan Ziqian lowered his voice, “Once we discover that those from Internal Affairs can’t last any longer and find a chance, we will do it in secret!”

“Young Master, should we not worry about Internal Affairs looking into this later on?” another person asked in a whisper.

“Our Shattered Ice Manor’s supporter in the shadows... has grievances with Internal Affairs anyway. If those at the top find out that we were able to spoil the Department of Internal Affairs’ mission, they perhaps will even commemorate us.” In order to calm everyone down, he spoke clearly about the internal disputes that were best to be kept secret. “The Department of Internal Affairs are Grand Hall Master’s people, and our backstage support, is the most powerful candidate for the next term’s Grand Hall Master.”

The moment these words were spoken, the eyes of Shattered Ice Manor’s martial practitioners, including Feng Kai, all brightened. As they looked at the Department of Internal Affairs again, there seemed to no longer be any expressions of reverence and dread.

“Are you guys alright?” On the other end, Tu Ze approached Na Nuo and others of the Water Moon Sect. Looking at that girl who was softly weeping, he sighed lightly and said, “I apologize, I did not intend to remind you of your loss. It was only for the brothers inside to feel at ease, sorry.”

“It’s not your problem.” Knitting her brows, Na Nuo glared at that lightly weeping girl and shouted, “Cry, cry, cry, all you know is how to cry! What use is there in crying? Will she come back if you cry? Do you see what kind of situation we’re in? You still have the energy to cry! When you return to Water Moon City alive, you can cry as much as you want. Right now, however, all of you, get it together!”

Being yelled at by her, that girl hastily stopped her weeping; she timidly stood there, not daring to speak.

“Three of our sisters were ripped to shreds by spirit beasts.” Na Nuo’s brows were deeply creased. Looking at the movements inside the valley, she spoke calmly, “Hopefully our battle with spirit beasts of the Arctic Mountain Range can die down sooner rather than later. Otherwise, our casualties will continue to increase, and there will be more companions who’ll perish.”

When they came, Na Nuo and those girls were all still in high spirits, like birds who were released from their cages.

Earlier, on the outer layer of the stone forest, they had always had the initiative, and it was always them who were killing the spirit beasts without ever incurring any casualties themselves, so they totally did not come to realize that there would come a day that they would die, too...

Now, because their friends who they had grown up with had been shredded and eaten right before their very eyes, they gained a whole new understanding regarding the battle with spirit beasts, as their outlook and views also changed greatly.

"It shouldn't last too long, after all... the casualties of spirit beasts are also very great." Tu Ze sighed.

"You had two from Nebula Pavilion who struck the fancy of Dark Asura Hall's Internal Affairs. Mn, I congratulate you," Na Nuo suddenly spoke as she looked toward Qin Lie and Gao Yu who were within the valley.

"That isn't necessarily a good thing." Tu Ze smiled bitterly.

Just as his words fell, on the valley's side, Ban Hong vomited blood and said as his complexion abruptly changed, "My light shield has shattered, you guys hold on! Qin Lie, Gao Yu! If you two have any means, then immediately use them right now and help milady persist for three more minutes! Just three more minutes is all we need!"

During the latter part of his speech, Ban Hong's entire body trembled as blood spilled out from both his mouth and nose.

"Bang!"

That new being congealed from more than ten vile spirits roared. It had the head of a demon and the body of a vicious dragon.

Currently, it was crazily assaulting the light shield, causing the purple light shield formed from purple spirit snakes to crumble and scatter into bits of purple light, completely losing its defensive capabilities.

Below the purple light shield, the other few layers of the barrier were also nearing collapse under its assault.

The rest of Dark Asura Hall's generals sat down cross legged at this time as light soared to the skies from their entire bodies. Several of them even had their skin burst open, with beads of blood seeping out.

Their appearance was extremely miserable.

“Qin Lie! Do you have any way to draw down heavenly lightning from the Ninth Heaven?” Liang Zhong suddenly shouted from under, “Thunder and lightning are the bane of vile souls and can damage them much more than flames! If you can incite a bolt of heavenly lightning to fall down like you did before on the stone bridge, then you can immediately injure that vile soul and stifle its ferocity!”

“Qin Lie! If you have a way, then be quick! We won’t last for too long!” Ban Hong roared.

“Spurt!” A Dark Asura Hall general suddenly sprayed out blood violently from his mouth. The vigor in his eyes quickly dissipated as he slacked down to the ground and died.

“Lord! I can’t hold on!” another screamed. As though inciting the hidden potential of his life, ice-blue light surged up like clouds from his entire body and melded into the light barrier above his head.

As the last petal of ice colored light flew out from his body, there was no longer any hint of life on him as he fell down with eyes wide open.

“Two minutes! Just two more minutes is all we need! Keep holding on, keep it up for two more minutes!” Ban Hong hysterically roared in a frantic manner. Tiny wisps of light were being assembled by him with great effort, attempting to congeal into a purple spirit snake once again. Unfortunately, even though he exerted all his leftover strength, he still couldn’t cause that spirit snake to fully form.

He was already on his last legs.

“Qin Lie! No matter if it’ll work or not, you still need to at least try!” Liang Zhong exclaimed furiously.

Qin Lie abruptly jolted as he suddenly closed his eyes and immediately sat down.

He began to channel Heavenly Thunder Eradication with all his might.

Chapter 97: Giant Demon Mirage

As a wisp of his mind and consciousness floated into his dantian’s spirit sea, Qin Lie suddenly became stumped. He found that the whirlpool within the spirit sea had stopped its rotation since who knows when.

Even if he channeled spirit energy and gathered his strength, that whirlpool within dantian and the spirit sea still remained motionless.

Staring blankly for a bit, he concentrated and attentively surveyed the situation and found that the spirit energy within his dantian’s spirit sea seemed to have decreased by a lot...

Yet the spirit clouds lingering above the spirit sea that were originally spread thin and existed everywhere were currently distributing themselves in bundles; furthermore, each and every bundle was concentrated and thick.

It wasn't that spirit energy had decreased. Rather, it became more pure and congealed; from loose and scattered, to refined and concentrated.

As though it was completely purified once by the whirlpool.

"Rumble!"

Heavenly Thunder Eradication began to channel. The dantian's spirit sea still showed no change, yet the rumbles of thunder came from every bone in his body.

Trace after trace of fine electric current shot out from all of his acupoints like sparks and flowed along his body's vessels lightning fast. All of them gathered toward the spirit sea's direction.

Qin Lie's heart trembled.

Ever since he started cultivating Heavenly Thunder Eradication, the thunder and lightning energy concealed within the depths of meridians, bones, and flesh had never before drawn close toward the dantian's spirit sea of their own accord!

There had always been a clear line between thunder energy and spirit energy; normally, they would not flow together.

Only when he battled with other people would some of the thunder and lightning energy discharge as his spirit energy flowed from within his spirit sea, gathering together with spirit energy and causing it to fill with the power of thunder and lightning, thereby increasing the might of his attacks.

Under normal conditions, the power of thunder definitely wouldn't spontaneously converge into his spirit sea!

Something's wrong!

Qin Lie began to get anxious. Just as he was about to focus his mind to control them, he discovered that even his head was also rumbling nonstop. His entire body was like the origin of thunder, unceasingly quaking.

As of this moment, the thunder energy within his body had actually escaped his control. Becoming violent and turbulent, it all flooded toward the spirit sea within his dantian.

As the first batch of violent and overbearing thunder energy fell into the dantian's spirit sea, his mind suddenly jolted. With that, he instantly lost his ego, as well as all of his

consciousness and thought. It was as though he was pulled into a small world within the dantian, violently surging and roiling within the dantian's spirit sea, along the direction of the thunder's flow in his body.

He lost himself. Closing his eyes, his body slightly trembled as he was incapable of controlling it.

Meanwhile, the enormous vile soul that had transformed from the Soul Devouring Beast's soul fragments roared within the flames, crazily crashing onto the light shield congealed by Dark Asura Hall's generals.

"Bang!"

The ice blue light barrier collapsed all of a sudden as blue light scatteredly shot out.

Instantly, two generals of Dark Asura Hall madly sprayed out blood. Vigor dissipated within their bloodshot eyes.

"Qin Lie! Gao Yu! Is there anything you can do? If you do, then act on it already!" Ban Hong was raspily roaring, but unfortunately, his voice was incredibly quiet and hoarse.

He had already exhausted everything he had and didn't even have the strength to shout very loudly.

On his fingertip, a miniature purple colored spirit snake was trying to solidify, yet it could not truly take form at all.

Traces of blood uncontrollably flowed out of Ban Hong's nostrils, ears, and eyes. His expression was mournful, yet he was helpless.

At this very moment, the Soul Devouring Beast rabidly pounced onto Liang Zhong. His Azure Moon's brilliance was gradually fading. In addition, his shoulder possessed a few wounds that were still being eaten away by the poisonous fluid.

Liang Zhong could not assist the others in any way.

Outside the valley, Crimson Flame Association's Xiong Ba, Water Moon Sect's Na Nuo, as well as Nebula Pavilion's Tu Ze, Zhuo Qian, and others, all looked appalled and anxious, intimidated by the crisis within the valley.

They subconsciously approached the valley, wanting to find some way to help out in order to assist Liang Zhong and Dark Asura Hall in their fight against the Soul Devouring Beast.

"All of you stop! Don't make extra trouble for us!"

Liang Zhong's body was flung away. While in midair, he was burned by a flame ray and his hair caught on fire.

He saw the imperativeness on the faces Xiong Ba, Tu Ze, Na Nuo, and the others, so he understood what they were thinking. He hastily chided them with all his strength, not allowing them to take a single step into the valley.

Na Nuo, Xiong Ba, and Tu Ze's footsteps stopped immediately upon being scolded. Their expressions became more and more anxious, and their hearts grew increasingly restless.

They understood very well that this was the battle's most critical moment. If either Liang Zhong and Xie Jingxuan fell, Dark Asura Hall's people would end up in an extremely precarious predicament.

Especially for Xie Jingxuan. Inciting the Vermillion Bird's blood with all her power, she was completely defenseless.

Wild and bloodthirsty, that vile soul had already shattered the various layers of defensive light barriers. If the vile soul managed another step and proceeded to destroy the dark green layer, it would be able to barrel toward Xie Jingxuan's head without obstruction, becoming able to heavily wound or even kill her while she was in deep concentration.

Once Xie Jingxuan died, no one would be able to keep on increasing the Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation's power, which meant that the Soul Devouring Beast wouldn't be smelted down, that they would also be unable to stop the Soul Devouring Beast's rank advancement.

The meticulously planned extermination operation would also go down the drain, and they would all immediately bear the bitter consequences of failure.

While the Soul Devouring Beast could slaughter all martial practitioners in the stone forest with viciousness of a rank four if it successfully broke through to its next rank, Icestone City, Water Moon City, and Crimson Flame City would all likely bear the painful consequences of their failure as well, resulting in an ending where all cities would become devoid of life.

"Qin Lie!"

"Qin Lie!"

Ban Hong and Gao Yu were both staring at Qin Lie and shouting as loudly as they could, hoping that Qin Lie could induce heavenly lightning to fall down this very moment, relieving the crisis of the vile soul's descension.

Unfortunately, it seemed that Qin Lie could not hear them and was unaware of their expectations. His eyes were tightly shut, and his body unceasingly trembled.

There was no thunder rumbling in the nine heavens, and there was no lightning on Qin Lie's body either; everything seemed ordinary.

Ban Hong and Dark Asura Hall's martial practitioners gradually gave up hope and lost their faith in Qin Lie. Every one of them had dimmed expression in their eyes, as though they understood that the operation was about to fail.

"Whoosh Whoosh! Whoosh Whoosh Whoosh!"

Above everyone's heads, all of the Soul Devouring Beast's soul fragments gathered together and transformed into a several dozen meter tall dreadful vile soul.

This vile soul accumulated all of the soul fragments' strength, exuding an extremely foreboding pressure. After it took shape, that final dark green light barrier promptly burst apart.

Xie Jingxuan suddenly found herself in a defenseless state.

She had her eyes closed from beginning to end, but as if feeling the terrifying pressure from the air above, her eyelids also trembled for a bit.

"Milady! This subordinate is useless!" Ban Hong raspily shouted.

"Aooo!"

The enormous vile soul that condensed into one suddenly pounced down from the skies with heaven shaking viciousness and might, moving to eliminate all the nuisances in one fell swoop, which meant everyone, including Xie Jingxuan.

An eccentric fluctuation came from Xie Jingxuan's body. Her eyelids below the ghost mask trembled even more violently as though she was trying really hard to wake up.

But it was unknown what trouble she encountered; even though she was trying hard to struggle free, she seemingly couldn't do it.

The vile soul, as though bringing thick layers of black clouds with it, was about to descend, wishing to instantly eliminate all threats.

Ban Hong closed his eyes in despair, and all of the martial practitioners lowered their heads, not daring to look.

"Eh?"

However, at this crucial moment, Gao Yu cried out in surprise. A ripple suddenly radiated from the Ogre-faced Rings on his hands.

In the next moment, the Nine Hell Wandering Soul Record that Gao Yu painstakingly cultivated for many years, as well as his entire body's sinister and cold spirit energy, all madly flowed into the Ogre-faced Rings.

"Kekeke!"

Threads of ink-like, pitch-black, sinister energy, dispersed from his body. That ink-like energy current rose up to the sky, swaying, and slowly came together on top of Gao Yu's head, forming into a enormous and indistinct apparition.

That apparition had a mountain-like body, two large curved horns on the head, and a pair of pitch-black wings that could mask both the sky and earth.

The apparition was vague and indistinct, and its true appearance could not be made out. However, the moment it finished forming, a terrifying aura manifested, as though the apocalypse filled everything, from the heavens to the earth.

This imposing aura, it was demonic and evil to the extreme!

It was like an enormous demon from the depths of the nine hells had descended upon this land, struggling free from its infinite shackles and chains.

Both in and out of the valley, all sentient beings, as long as they possessed souls, felt their souls shuddering!

One after another, the Arctic Mountain Range's spirit beasts crawled down at the outer ranges. Their beastly bodies shook violently as though submitting onto the ground.

The legs of Tu Ze, Na Nuo, Xiong Ba and everyone else outside the valley trembled, and under that pressure of the enormous demon mirage, they couldn't even steadily stand.

Their willpower was utterly destroyed!

Inside the valley, Liang Zhong, Ban Hong, and martial practitioners of Dark Asura Hall suddenly felt their breath had become heavy, as if a mountain was pressing onto their shoulders. Their hearts quaked in fear as they all looked toward Gao Yu and that enormous demon mirage floating about Gao Yu's head, aghast and pale.

Even the enormous vile spirit formed from the Soul Devouring Beast's soul fragments also stopped its culling at this moment.

Compared to the enormous demon apparition above Gao Yu's head, that vile soul formed by all the soul fragments seemed to have been weakened all of a sudden, as though its ferocity was suppressed; it actually did not dare to pounce down.

The Soul Devouring Beast's main body, which made Liang Zhong more and more into a sorry figure, also stopped its hunt against him. Its three ice cold, sinister, and evil eyes all looked toward that indistinct demon apparition, and all three of them simultaneously revealed an intense expression of dread.

Just like how a low ranked creature that was suddenly looked down upon by a vicious entity at the top of the food chain would instinctively feel fear.

Soul Devouring Beast was afraid; whether it be the main body or the soul fragments, both felt anxious at the same time.

It stopped. Both its main body and the vile soul formed by the soul fragments were silently observing, not daring to act rashly.

Different from the vile soul congealed by the Soul Devouring Beast, this terrifying vicious demon apparition that flew out from Gao Yu's body wasn't in the slightest afraid of the scorching flames. It floated amidst the torrential flames, completely unaffected.

Its emergence caused all living things both inside and outside the valley to become dismayed and restless, resulting in the intense battle coming to a sudden stop.

Everyone was awed by the terrifying demon mirage that emerged above Gao Yu at this time. All gazes that looked toward him were filled with fear and anxiety.

Yet, Gao Yu, who was fixedly stared at by everyone, had an extremely weird expression.

He looked toward Qin Lie...

He could faintly feel the restlessness of this enormous demon mirage that had appeared inexplicably. He seemingly heard urging voices that traveled directly to his soul; that voice seemed to be the demon's voice coming from above his head.

"Quickly leave! Leave this place, leave this place!"

Gao Yu had never heard of each and every one of these odd syllables, yet he understood the meaning.

—That voice was anxiously urging him to leave.

Even though Gao Yu did not know what that demon mirage was afraid of at first, after he took a step toward Qin Lie, that voice suddenly became even more urgent and frightened. With that, he suddenly understood.

The cause of the sudden emergence of that demon mirage didn't seem be the vile soul above, nor was it the Soul Devouring Beast...

It came out because of Qin Lie!

—It was simply forced out by Qin Lie!

Unbeknownst to the reason nor what it felt, it just suddenly came out. It was continuously urging Gao Yu, telling him to leave, telling him to quickly depart from here!

—Keep away from Qin Lie!

“Why? Just why is it? What exactly do you have on you? What are you going to do? It made even the Soul Devouring Beast tremble and made the spirit beasts outside prostrate themselves, not daring to move. Yet why is it so afraid of you, why does it want me to leave your side?”

The bottom of Gao Yu's heart was shouting. Each and every sound of the urging voice that directly traveled to his soul caused his head to ache, as though it was going to burst apart.

He clutched his head in pain, his expression was hideous, and his eyes stared at Qin Lie as he retreated backwards step by step.

Chapter 98: Activate

“Gao Yu's too awesome!”

“This guy, the heck is that demon sealed inside his body?”

“Heavens, something that even the Soul Devouring Beast is afraid of? Gao Yu, just what kind of secret he fellow hiding?”

“It's all thanks to Gao Yu, Gao Yu's the one who turned the tide around!”

Outside the valley, the girls of Water Moon Sect and those of Crimson Flame Association were all looking in terror at the demon apparition floating above Gao Yu's head. They were so frightened they had fallen on their butts, and their teeth chattered as they discussed about it.

Ban Hong and the remaining surviving Dark Asura Hall generals looked absolutely and pleasantly surprised at Gao Yu, and even Liang Zhong breathed a sigh of relief, looking towards Gao Yu with a praising look.

Currently, Gao Yu was without a doubt the center of attention, and everyone thought of him as a key figure.

In their eyes, it was Gao Yu's presence that had suppressed the Soul Devouring Beast, intimidating it enough that it didn't dare to act rashly or attempt to kill anyone.

Even Liang Zhong himself felt a sliver of gratitude towards Gao Yu—the Soul Devouring Beast had exhausted him so much that he was on the brink of collapsing.

It was because Gao Yu had let out the demon mirage that the Soul Devouring Beast's true body had stopped its crazy attacks on him and allowed him a breather.

"That Qin Lie something doesn't seem to have any use at all? Why did the people from Dark Asura Hall bring such a person over?"

"No idea. I don't think he's useful as well; he's just a burden."

"Yeah, Mister Liang had even placed great expectations on him earlier, saying that he will summon heavenly lightning from the sky or something. Unfortunately, nothing happened. How hilarious, they've all made a mistake."

"Yeah, it was a mistake. Qin Lie was expected to play an important role, but he did nothing. Instead, it was that Gao Yu who had such a terrifying card hidden!"

"Gao Yu's future is limitless! With such a vile soul sealed inside his body, his accomplishments in the future will be unimaginable. We'll have to pay attention to him from now on!"

Many people outside the valley stared at Gao Yu and poured praises on him, and when they talked about Qin Lie, all of their faces were filled with disdain.

The girls from Water Moon Sect, including Na Nuo, were all staring bright-eyed at Gao Yu.

As for Qin Lie, he had been completely forgotten by them.

"I-I'm getting out of the valley first."

However, Gao Yu, the person who everyone's hopes were riding on, while unconsciously screaming and clutching his own head, had suddenly started to stagger away with a deathly pale face, attempting to leave the valley.

The demon mirage floated above his head and followed the direction he was moving in.

The other vile soul formed from the Soul Devouring Beast's soul fragment above their heads also retreated continuously when it saw the demon mirage moved, as if it was afraid that it would anger the other party if it blocked the other's path.

"Where are you going?"

"Gao Yu!"

"Don't move!"

Everyone panicked when they saw Gao Yu heading outside and quickly yelled at him. They were all trying to stop him to get him to stay inside the valley.

Gao Yu was everyone's only hope of having that even scarier demon mirage to stay inside the valley, so it would continue to intimidate the Soul Devouring Beast.

Unfortunately, Gao Yu was completely deaf to the crowd's cries. He could only hear an urgent voice that reached deep into his soul: Leave as quickly as you can! Leave Qin Lie! Get out of the valley!

Gao Yu could feel that this huge demon apparition that had suddenly appeared was formed from the memory fragments inside the Ogre-faced Rings. It did not have the slightest bad intention towards him.

He could even vaguely sense that the huge demon mirage's urgency was for his own good...

Gao Yu was originally an extremely selfish person, and he couldn't care less about Dark Asura Hall's duty or the threat of the Soul Devouring Beast.

From his point of view, as long as he could survive, no matter how many people the Soul Devouring Beast killed, it had nothing to do with him.

Therefore, after deciding for a bit, he chose to believe his own feelings and ignored the crowd's calls. With that, he droned out the frantic yells as he resolutely walked out of the valley.

The moment he left the valley, that terrifying demon apparition floating above his head suddenly shrunk back into his body and instantly disappeared.

The urgent voices that had reached into his soul suddenly disappeared. He probed around carefully, but could not detect even a trace of the giant demon.

It was as if the huge demon had expended too much energy to appear as a shadow. It was as if it could no longer keep it up and had no choice but to hibernate again.

“Crack!”

The jade inside Xie Jingxuan’s hands suddenly broke apart, and that crimson droplet of Vermillion Bird Blood had also vanished into nothingness.

She opened her eyes.

“Just a bit more! It needs only a little more!”

Xie Jingxuan’s gaze was dejected, and while she grit her teeth and exclaimed that in a low tone, she suddenly stood up.

Within the valley, the lines of ravines burned with blazing fire, and the crimson red stone pillars also released streams of flames that connected with the fire inside the ravines.

She had almost ignited all the fire sources with the flames she drew out of the Vermillion Bird’s Blood. But at the last moment, because the vile souls broke through all of the light shields and she had to hurriedly wake up to deal with the enemy, she panicked, lost control, and failed to activate a portion of the Vermillion Bird Blood. This resulted in the remaining three Sunshine Stones inside the ravines to not be ignited by the Vermillion Bird Blood.

Because of this, the Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation could not unleash its full power.

“Milady! Milady!”

“Miss!”

When she woke up, Ban Hong and Liang Zhong’s expressions relaxed as they all looked excitedly at her.

Xie Jingxuan, wearing a Blackscale Armor and covering her face with a mask, shook her head slightly amidst their gazes. “It was a bit off. The Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation could not be activated in its entirety. I hope these flames will be enough.”

While she was saying that, a bright light shone out of her clear eyes.

Rows of rainbow-like light flew out of her body and sank into the stone pillars nearby.

One by one, the crimson red stone pillars suddenly experienced a powerful wave of spirit energy, and as if the valley’s thick nature spirit energy had been awakened, the

waves of spirit energy began to flow along with the fire stream, both enhancing the flames and causing all of the fires to burn even more fiercely.

The Soul Devouring Beast's true body and vile souls began to struggle in unison. It was as if it had felt a flame that was specifically geared to purify them which instantly locked down the entire valley.

"Uncle Zhong, take these people away from the valley!" Xie Jingxuan said coldly.

"Understood." Liang Zhong quickly acted.

Xie Jingxuan's body shuddered slightly. It was like she had expended too much energy in a short period of time and would not be able to recover for a while, but she quickly readjusted herself, carried two Dark Asura Hall generals, and quickly flew out of the valley.

The entire valley was currently raging with flames that reached up to the sky, and every corner was blazing with fire. The blazing clumps of fire were like an enchanted boundary that had sealed even the skies, and it was so hot that it was completely unbearable.

The Soul Devouring Beast's true body and soul fragments howled in madness amidst the thick flames, and they slowly moved closer to each other.

Both Xie Jingxuan and Liang Zhong were moving quickly, and after grabbing the Dark Asura Hall generals, regardless of whether or not they were alive, the two transported them outside the valley.

"Qin Lie! There's still Qin Lie! Take him as well!" Tu Ze yelled loudly.

He noticed that both Xie Jingxuan and Liang Zhong's first priority of rescue were all Dark Asura Hall men, not leaving even the dead behind.

And Qin Lie, still sitting at the same spot with his entire body shaking like he was trapped in a nightmare, wasn't paid any attention by them and was not evacuated.

The fire inside the valley grew fiercer and fiercer. It was as if the entire valley was burning, and the blazing heat was too much, even for Tu Ze and the others who were outside the valley, so they had no choice but to retreat.

Tu Ze, Zhuo Qian, and Kang Zhi were all worried for Qin Lie as they screamed again and again outside the valley. They were afraid that Xie Jingxuan and Liang Zhong would forget Qin Lie or leave him behind because there wasn't enough time, resulting in him to be burned to ashes by the terrific fire.

"Be quiet!"

Liang Zhong snapped once and finally grabbed both Qin Lie and the corpse of a member of Dark Asura Hall. Having done that, he headed outside the valley through a unique path and rushed out together with Xie Jingxuan.

Once they were outside of the valley, the fiery eruptions sounded out, one after another. Many fiery stone pillars had detonated, causing the power of the Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation to be even more terrifying.

“Gao Yu! What is wrong with you?” Once Qin Lie was brought out, Tu Ze breathed a sigh of relief and immediately glared at Gao Yu. “If you had stayed inside the valley for a little while longer, you would have eased some of the pressure on them. What the hell are you doing?”

“Gao Yu, why did you suddenly leave the valley?” Liang Zhong also asked.

The limp Ban Hong on the ground, the Dark Asura Hall generals, the people from Water Moon Sect and Crimson Flame Association, and even Xie Jingxuan were all looking towards Gao Yu with reproach in their eyes.

Under everyone’s gaze, Gao Yu’s own was dark, and with a stiff expression, he abruptly walked towards another direction.

He had followed the demon mirage’s words get as far away from Qin Lie as possible, so after Qin Lie had exited the valley, he chose to distance himself from Qin Lie again.

He didn’t know what was hidden in Qin Lie’s body, and he didn’t know what would happen either, but he knew that it would be harmful to him, so that was why he left.

He ignored everyone else’s doubts, suspicions, and inquires.

“That guy is such a weird dude, what the hell is his problem?”

“It’s like there’s poison on our bodies. What is he hiding from?”

“There is a demon hiding in his body, so his disposition is also... it is as strange as you might as expect it to be. It’s better if we stay away from him.”

The crowd whispered amongst themselves, and the gazes they threw in Gao Yu’s direction were very odd. But they were also slightly wary of him because, all in all, none of them dared to do anything to him.

This included Liang Zhong and the others from Dark Asura Hall. They were also a bit wary of Gao Yu; afraid that they would provoke that thing’s emergence and cause undue trouble.

“That is the Demon God’s shadow.” Xie Jingxuan stared at Gao Yu. “The spirit art he’s cultivating and the rings on his fingers are both extraordinary. Luckily... luckily this is only the shadow of a Demon God, and luckily his realm is too low and cannot truly summon it. Otherwise...”

She did not continue, but fear could be seen in Liang Zhong and the Dark Asura Hall generals’ eyes.

“The Demon God’s shadow? What’s that?” Xiong Ba scratched his head with a baffled look. “Never heard of it, but it sounds like it’s pretty strong. Even the Soul Devouring Beast is afraid of it.”

“Zhuo Qian, do you know anything about it?” Tu Ze could not help but ask when he saw her expression changed.

“I’m not sure. Let’s check out Qin Lie’s condition first.” Zhuo Qian’s expression was also very unnatural, as if she had heard about the Demon God’s shadow before. She did not elaborate any further and instead knelt down beside Qin Lie, calling out to him softly, “Qin Lie, how are you doing? Can you hear what I’m saying? Qin Lie...”

She called out again and again, but unfortunately there was no reaction from Qin Lie at all. It seemed that he could not hear her.

Tu Ze and the others were also getting anxious as they surrounded Qin Lie and softly called out to him, hoping to wake him up from his trance.

“Miss, that Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation... can it really purify that Soul Devouring Beast to death completely? Liang Zhong’s expression returned to normal, and as he watched the continuously eruptions in the canyon he asked worriedly.

“Five of our brothers have died. If we still can’t destroy the Soul Devouring Beast, then they will have died for nothing.” Ban Hong sighed.

“I don’t know either.” Xie Jingxuan shook her head slightly. “It could have purified it to death, but the formation cannot unleash its full power now, it may not be possible.”

The way she put it made everyone anxious, and they all looked towards the valley, eyes filled with gloom.

Chapter 99: The Sky Darkens

Both the sky above and land below of the valley were covered by a great sea of fire. The heat spread out in rolling waves, and the people outside the valley began sweating through their shirts.

Everyone stared solemnly at the valley and waited in silence, hoping that the Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation would be able to completely purify the Soul Devouring Beast and eliminate this threat.

Time passed by slowly.

Gradually, following a strange 'chi chi' sound that could be heard from inside the valley, a thick, negative aura was starting to be released and spread outside the valley.

"Not only can the Trigram Fire purify the Soul Devouring Beast, it will also purify the negative feelings." Liang Zhong looked to the crowd and said in a serious manner, "The aura of negativity can be considered a layer of defense for the Soul Devouring Beast, and after it has been vaporized, it still needs some time to dissipate. All of you should be a bit more careful to not have evil thoughts in your hearts. This will prevent your mind from being affected."

The crowd nodded in understanding and calmed their hearts, protecting their minds from other thoughts.

"Is Qin Lie okay?" Liang Zhong walked over and looked at Qin Lie, whose eyes were tightly closed and body was occasionally shaking, before frowning and saying, "For him to suddenly fall into such a strange state in a situation like this, seriously..."

Although he did not state it directly, everyone knew that he was somewhat blaming Qin Lie. The Dark Asura Hall generals also softly scoffed upon hearing his words.

At a critical juncture, Qin Lie had failed to call down heavenly lightning. In fact, he had even fallen into a strange state of unconsciousness much like deep sleep, and this somewhat caused everyone to be disappointed in him.

"Luckily, Gao Yu is here," whispered a Dark Asura Hall general before lifting his head to look at Gao Yu, who was moving further away from them. "If he hadn't left the valley for whatever inexplicable reason, the chance of our plan succeeding would have been much higher."

The people from Dark Asura Hall all nodded in agreement. They also all thought that Gao Yu's odd behavior had added a complication to this trip.

Gao Yu did not bother with them and stayed far away from the crowd, wearing a dark expression.

He simply watched Qin Lie.

No one could guess his thoughts, nor could they understand why he kept staring at Qin Lie. They all assumed that Gao Yu was a weird person and felt that he was someone difficult to socialize with.

A thin trace of negative aura quietly crept out of the valley from amidst the boiling flames.

Those who kept their minds calm and clear of evil thoughts felt uncomfortable and irritable surrounded by these negative auras. Therefore, everyone sat down, steadied their auras, and focused their minds to fight against it.

Na Nuo, Tu Ze, and Xiong Ba all had their eyes closed as they cleansed the hostile feelings inside their hearts. They did not say a word.

However, Shattered Ice Manor's Yan Ziqian, Feng Kai, and their men were still whispering to each other with cold expressions; a cruel glitter shone through their eyes from time to time.

After a while, the wicked light in the Shattered Ice Manor martial practitioners grew more and more, even Yan Ziqian and Feng Kai had dark expressions on their faces...

The people from Dark Asura Hall did not pay attention to those from Shattered Ice Manor. They were only looking at the burning valley, worried that the Soul Devouring Beast would not die from this.

After a little while, the one-armed Yan Qingsong suddenly let out a harsh yell, to the crowds surprise, and suddenly made a mad rush towards the closest crimson red pillar as though he didn't care for his life.

The moment he led at the front, Yan Ziqian, Feng Kai, and the other Shattered Ice Manor's martial practitioners all attacked the crimson red stone pillar as if possessed.

"Boom Boom Boom! Bang Bang Bang!"

They did not care that the flames were burning them or even about their own lives. They used everything in their power to attack the Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation's stone pillars.

These crimson red stone pillars were originally chosen from the stones within the stone forest, so they weren't very sturdy to begin with. After being burned by fire, the rocks became brittle, and under the combined assault of Yan Ziqian, Feng Kai, and the others desperate attacks, cracks began to appear on two stone pillars.

The moment the cracks appeared, the firelight that was flying out of the two stone pillars subsequently weakened.

The barrier that sealed the sky also grew much weaker, as if a crack had formed somewhere.

The Soul Devouring Beast's shrill howls abruptly grew savage, and an even stronger wisp of mind consciousness came out of the valley, firmly controlling Yan Ziqian and the rest.

And so, Yan Ziqian and the others' attacks on the the stone pillars became even more frenzied than before.

"Dammit!" Liang Zhong's expression turned as he hurriedly summoned the Azure Moon and readied it to attack Yan Ziqian and his men.

Xie Jingxuan's eyes were also brimming with shock as she looked towards the sky above the valley and noticed the blazing flames erratically shooting everywhere. She immediately knew that the concentrated purification powers of Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation had been diminished yet again.

From the Soul Devouring Beast's howls, she could detect a trace of excitement, and this made her heart sink.

"Uncle Zhong, there's no need to worry about their identities. Kill them all." She had a cold look in her eyes as she gave the order.

Even Liang Zhong, who was rushing towards Yan Ziqian and Feng Kai, looked startled upon hearing her words, and even turned his head mid-flight. "Miss, you mean?"

"Just kill them all." Xie Jingxuan's tone was indifferent. "You already warned them to shield their minds and clear them of evil thoughts, but they did not heed your advice. They most likely had murderous intentions and thoughts of betrayal in their hearts from the very beginning. Otherwise, they would not be influenced this easily. Their hostility and murderous intent was directed at one of us."

After a pause, Xie Jingxuan calmly added, "It is possible that person may be you or me..."

"Miss, are you sure?" Liang Zhong frowned.

"Kill them!" Xie Jingxuan yelled coldly.

Liang Zhong gave a great shudder and then immediately stopped himself, sending only his Azure Moon flying.

Like a crescent moon it fell amidst Yan Ziqian, Feng Kai, and the other Shattered Ice Manor martial practitioners. The crescent spun nimbly, blood splattered, and heads flew.

Yan Ziqian and his men were decapitated and killed in their madness, and their blood splattered against the stone pillars in front of them.

Na Nuo, Xiong Ba, Tu Ze, Zhuo Qian and the others opened their eyes at this moment and watched the immediate execution of the Shattered Ice Manor martial practitioners. They all wore pale expressions, and their gazes turned unnatural.

“An opening appeared inside the valley and the Soul Devouring Beast’s evil consciousness had already taken control of Yan Ziqian and his men.” Xie Jingxuan’s voice was cool. “They had been enslaved by the Soul Devouring Beast. If alive, they would only work against us, becoming our enemies, which would place us in an even more unfavorable position.”

After a pause, she began again, “If anyone among you falls under the control of the Soul Devouring Beast, your fate will be the same as theirs.”

The moment the words were said, everyone felt chilled from the bottom of their hearts. They quickly defended their minds and kept them clean, afraid that they would be affected by the negative emotions.

“Miss, can this be repaired?” Liang Zhong asked solemnly.

Xie Jingxuan shook her head and said, “Let’s wait for a little longer.”

“Mn.” Liang Zhong nodded.

The Soul Devouring Beast’s roars would occasionally come from inside the valley, and they were terrifying. After Xie Jingxuan and Liang Zhong listened carefully for a little while, their expressions turned uglier and uglier.

Fifteen minutes later, Xie Jingxuan suddenly said, “We have failed. Let’s prepare to leave. We cannot handle this Soul Devouring Beast on our own.”

“Understood.” Liang Zhong’s eyes shone with obvious terror as he turned to the crowd, “It is no longer possible to stop the Soul Devouring Beast from breaking through. Everyone is to leave this stone forest immediately while it is still in the process of breaking through. Moreover, once you’ve escaped, return as quickly as possible to your respective cities and bring this news to your elders. They should evacuate every man, woman, and child inside the city!”

“Wh-what is going to happen?” Little Sparrow from Water Moon Sect asked sheepishly.

“Once the Soul Devouring Beast successfully breaks through, it will be able to devour souls who are not strong enough to resist. Because of this, it will attack the closest cities first. Icestone City, Crimson Flame City, and Water Moon City will be its first targets, so these three cities will be facing a most terrifying situation.” Liang Zhong let out a sigh. “We will return to Dark Asura Hall immediately and let the hall send out other elites to take care of this matter, but there is no guarantee we will arrive in time. The worst case would be that our men arrive, but the Soul Devouring Beast has already successfully

broken through and attacked one of the three cities. The consequences of that will be..."

Listening to his explanation, everyone could imagine the terrible scene of devastation and loss of life. Their faces were all ashen.

"As we are now, there is nothing we can do to stop the Soul Devouring Beast, so the only option left is to escape, immediately. We will clear the way, so the spirit beast hordes will not be a problem. Everyone, evacuate now!" Xie Jingxuan said coldly.

While in extreme terror, everyone hurriedly prepared to leave, ready to rush out of the stone forest immediately and bring grim news to their respective cities.

Xie Jingxuan and Liang Zhong had also mounted their Profound Nether Beasts, and the duo instructed the Dark Asura Hall generals to carry everyone remaining on their unicorns.

"Let's move Qin Lie up onto a horse first." Zhuo Qian yelled and extended a hand to support Qin Lie's shoulders, about to pull him up onto the horse.

"Boom Boom Boom!"

When her arms touched Qin Lie's shoulders, from inside Qin Lie's body, there was the sudden roar of rampant thunder, and a bolt of blazing lightning abruptly appeared on Qin Lie's neck like an intelligent blue snake.

"Ah!" Zhuo Qian yelled in surprise.

Everyone heard her exclamation, then looked towards her and the Qin Lie beside her with incomprehensible eyes...

"Zzzt Zzt Zzzt!"

The bolts of blue lightning were like vines or intelligent snakes. They repeatedly twisted their way out of Qin Lie's body and entangled him entirely, causing him to look incredibly eerie.

"Booom! Boooooom!"

The deafening roars of frantic thunder kept coming from his body, blasting and shaking everyone's eardrums.

The sky in this region outside the valley was originally shining with sunlight. But at this moment, it had suddenly become covered in dark clouds, and an oppressive feeling silently covered the entire area.

“The sky... the sky has darkened,” said Kang Zhi after lifting his head.

“Clap Clap Clap!”

A bolt of flashing lightning, as thick as a huge dragon, shot out of the clouds of the highest heaven as if it would tear open the sky, accompanied by thunder that sounded like it would destroy the world.

That terrifying thunder and that zigzagging dragon-like lightning shook everyone’s hearts, filling their faces with shock.

“The sun was literally blazing just now, why is there a thunderstorm all of the sudden?” Xiong Ba of Crimson Flame Association looked puzzledly towards the sky. “From the looks of it, is there going to be a huge downpour? What strange weather...”

“Boooooom!”

The rampant thunder grew fiercer and fiercer, so loud that it caused every person to tremble. Streaks of terrifying lightning like pillars that connected the sky and the land.

The thick and long bolts of lightning madly danced in the sky like chains flung about by gods, intimidating everyone there!

“Miss, th-this is...” Liang Zhong lost control and called out.

He was staring straight at Qin Lie.

“Mn, he’s the one who summoned this thunderstorm. From the looks of it... it has exceeded my expectations completely.” Xie Jingxuan’s eyes were bright and shining, and as she looked deeply at Qin Lie she said suddenly, “If... If this thunderstorm can be added to the Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation, then purifying the Soul Devouring Beast will not even be a challenge.”

“That’s right!” Liang Zhong grew excited as he hurriedly rushed to Qin Lie’s side and called out, “Qin Lie, can you hear what I’m saying? If it’s possible, can you draw the lightning into the valley?”

“I will go in myself.”

Incredibly, Qin Lie suddenly stood up without warning. His entire body was flashing with lightning and roaring with thunder. As he opened his eyes, it was as though countless electric snakes swam inside them.

Amidst the crowd’s disbelieving eyes, he suddenly headed towards the valley where the Soul Devouring Beast was. The sky filled with lightning and thunder grew even more maniacal and fearsome as it wondrously followed his advancing figure.

Just like a shadow.

Chapter 100: Heaven Shaking Thunder

At the visible edges of the sky, bolt after bolt of thick lightning raged like a crazed dragon, accompanied by heaven-shocking earth-shaking thunder. The sky here was like a purgatory of thunder and lightning.

Xie Jingxuan, who sat atop the Profound Nether Beast, still wore the Blackscale Armor. Originally, she had wanted to leave and report the unfavorable situation that had transpired to Dark Asura Hall so that they could dispatch other people to come over and deal with it.

However, as she watched the sky change, she motioned for the group to stop.

The Na Nuo, Xiong Ba, Tu Ze, and the rest's faces all displayed with panic as they didn't quite understand why the thunder and lightning suddenly became so violent. Moreover, they were still in a state of unrest.

By this time, Qin Lie had already begun walking towards the blazing valley, the full sky thunder and lightning following after him.

"Qin Lie! It's Qin Lie!" exclaimed Na Nuo, who was the first to recover her senses. Her delicate body slightly trembled as the dazzling light of surprise shot out from within her eyes.

Tu Ze and Xiong Ba's expressions also quivered as their line of sight, along with the line of sight of the generals of Dark Asura Hall, all landed on Qin Lie's body, which advanced step by step into the valley.

The fiercely burning flames seemingly had little effect on Qin Lie as he unexpectedly entered the valley without issue.

The heavenly lightning above their heads began to converge above the valley from all sides. A bolt of twisting lightning which looked like a flying dragon was discharged from the sky, rapidly shooting down like a silver chain.

An earth-moving mountain-shaking roar immediately emanated out from within the valley.

"Gao Yu?" whispered Zhuo Qian as she slightly furrowed her brows, her pretty face full of uncertainty. "What's wrong?"

Everyone all looked over.

All they saw was Gao Yu's trembling body and his colorless face. His dark, ice-cold eyes were filled with fear and unrest as he backed up step by step towards the outskirts, becoming increasingly tense with every passing moment.

"There are packs of spirit beasts out there!" hurriedly and loudly reminded Tu Ze after a moment "Once you move into the midst of a spirit beast horde, it will be very hard to calmly deal with it. Stop backing up!"

Gao Yu ignored Tu Ze's reminder, still proceeding further and further away.

He could feel the deep terror from the giant demon soul within his Ogre-faced Rings...

He finally understood why the giant demon mirage that had formed earlier urged him to stay as far away from Qin Lie as possible and it wanted him to go to the outskirts of the valley earlier.

The giant demon mirage was extremely afraid of the thunder and lightning which descended from the depths of the Ninth Heaven. The heavenly thunder and wild lightning was precisely its bane, able to instantly turn it to ashes where not even the slightest trace of it would remain.

"Boooooom!"

Heavenly thunder incessantly rumbled, causing Gao Yu's soul to tremble with instinctive fear.

He gradually understood that, following his years of cultivation of the Nine Hell Wandering Soul Record, his soul was different from normal people's. His soul was terrified of thunder and lightning. If he was ever not cautious and struck by the heavenly lightning which descended from the sky, he would suffer severe injuries, perhaps even to the point where his soul would dissipate.

Thunder and lightning were the bane of all evil ghosts as it was able to exterminate evil...

"Now I understand." Gao Yu lowered his head, his expression weird and undecipherable. "I, who have cultivated the Nine Hell Wandering Soul Record and wield the Ogre-faced Rings, am no different from the giant demon mirage... We are both heretical, and thus we are terrified of it."

Ignoring Tu Ze and Zhuo Qian's efforts to dissuade him, Gao Yu left by himself amidst everyone's shocked gazes.

A spirit beast suddenly roared from the direction Gao Yu had left to. Everyone looked over. Tu Ze swore and was about to go and assist, but was stopped by Zhuo Qian.

“Don’t go,” said Zhuo Qian, shaking her head. “There are at least ten Rank Two spirit beasts out there and around three hundred Rank Ones. If we end up surrounded by them, we will have essentially no chance of surviving or breaking out. Gao Yu can form a Demon God’s shadow and should have ways of protecting himself. Don’t go out there seeking your death.”

Tu Ze stopped, and after silently pondering for a few seconds, he slightly nodded.

“Miss?” asked Liang Zhong, requesting instructions.

Xie Jingxuan made a silent gesture as she sat high above on top of the Profound Nether Beast, then closed her eyes.

An extremely obvious fluctuation of mind energy spilled out from her body and rippled towards the blazing valley.

Within the valley.

Qin Lie’s body was completely enveloped by serene blue lightning and the sound of rumbling thunder surrounded him as he walked amidst the vast sea of flames.

He suddenly raised his head to look at the thunder and lightning raging in the sky. Then, after pondering for a moment, he shouted, “Come!”

He focused all the energy he could muster towards channeling Heavenly Thunder Eradication.

The energy of thunder and lightning within his body’s acupoints, bones, muscles, veins, and flesh wildly surged towards the spirit sea within his dantian, agitating his spirit sea and causing waves to billow across it as purified spirit energy mixed with thunder and lightning energy.

His body, which had been stripped of all thunder and lightning, became exposed amidst the blazing valley and began to act like a giant magnet.

—A magnet which attracted all of the thunder and lightning that had yet to enter.

“...Heavenly Thunder Sacred Body. So the first step of forming Heavenly Thunder Sacred Body, the very first stage, actually requires one to withstand the wild and crazed tempering of thunder and lightning.”

A boom echoed within Qin Lie’s mind as he raised his head towards the sky, his eyes blazing.

“Booom! Booom!”

Bolt after bolt of lightning emerged from within the depths of the clouds, amalgamating above Qin Lie's head. Like a dragon it quickly rushed down, directly striking his body which was amidst the sea of fire.

"Bzzt bzzt bzzt!"

As the lightning descended into the valley, the Soul Devouring Beast's black, mushroom shaped soul fragments started to emit dense smoke.

The moment one of the Soul Devouring Beast's soul fragments made contact with a bolt of lightning, it would immediately disperse like dissipating smoke. Unexpectedly, all the fragments disappeared within a short moment.

The Soul Devouring Beast itself felt pain penetrate the depths of its soul as it crazily howled, startled by the heavenly lightning.

But it definitely didn't dare to approach Qin Lie.

"Bang bang bang!"

The stone pillars beside Qin Lie were all crushed to pieces by the heavenly thunder. The sky became filled with rocks flying around and flowers of fire as the Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation was once again damaged.

"Th-this is all caused by that little guy?" Outside the valley, Xiong Ba looked up at the sky, his expression startled and pale. "The thunder and lightning from within the depths of the clouds can overthrow the heavens and extinguish the earth, able to cleanse the world of all evil! How can he attract such a terrifying power?"

The people of the Crimson Flame Association were all extremely frightened as they looked at the burning valley.

Within the sky, there were at least several hundred parallel bolts of lightning, all as thick as a person's waist. With a glance, it was as if there were several-hundred, long electric dragons wildly twisting above.

A heaven and earth shattering sound of thunder echoed amidst the sky, causing many of the stone pillars within this part of the stone forest to explode.

"Bang bang bang!"

In the surrounding area, mountains collapsed and the earth opened. After being struck by the thunder, the stone pillars all instantly turned to dust and were blown away.

Such terrifying and heavenly might caused everyone's expressions to become extremely pale, as if they were about to face the coming of doomsday. It caused all of their souls to tremble in unrest.

"Is it because of Qin Lie? Holy sheet. H-how can he fill the sky with thunder and lightning?" At this time, Water Moon Sect's Little Sparrow looked towards the burning valley, her delicate body incessantly trembling as she said, "He's too terrifying. This manner, this activity, it's like he wants to destroy heaven and earth. It's even several times more terrifying than the Demon God's shadow that Gao Yu summoned earlier!"

"I had originally thought that Gao Yu was already terrifying enough. I never would have thought that this person would be even more unrealistic. Each person is truly more abnormal than the previous!" Na Nuo's expression was slightly cold as she inwardly determined that in the future, she would absolutely not provoke Qin Lie and Gao Yu and she would try to maintain a good relationship with Nebula Pavilion. Lest the two freaks fix their gazes on her, resulting in a wicked fate for her.

"Miss, the Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation is about to collapse!" exclaimed Liang Zhong, his face sinking.

Xie Jingxuan did not panic. Instead, it was the opposite as a trace of joy emerged within her eyes.

"That's not a problem. The heavenly lightning is much more effective at killing the Soul Devouring Beast than the fire. As long as Qin Lie is near the Soul Devouring Beast, even just somewhat close, then the Soul Devouring Beast will have a very hard time escaping.

As if he had heard her words, Qin Lie, who had been standing still, suddenly began to move.

He walked towards the Soul Devouring Beast.

As he proceeded, thunder incessantly boomed around him as lightning submerged itself within his body.

His steps were unsteady as he swayed along, and he seemed to be in a somewhat difficult position because his body trembled every time he was struck by lightning or thunder.

However, his body never fell and his steps never stopped. He continued approaching the Soul Devouring Beast.

Right by him was the mouth of the cold spring which the Soul Devouring Beast lived in!

"Aooo!"

The Soul Devouring Beast, which was on the verge of breaking through to the next rank, began to clamor wildly, trying to intimidate Qin Lie so that he would retreat in the face of danger.

However, Qin Lie didn't pay it any attention.

"Zzzt zzzt zzzt!"

Two bolts of lightning as thick as an arm suddenly descended upon the Soul Devouring Beast's enormous, mountain-like body of flesh. The pimples on its body all began to simultaneously emit smoke, and while the fluctuations of its life force surged, it was clear that it was somewhat exhausted.

It continued to howl wildly as if it didn't dare to leave the cold spring. It could only unleash more evil mind attacks in an attempt to control more people like Yan Ziqian and Feng Kai. Not only that, it also tried to control Qin Lie's soul.

A wisp of ice cold consciousness, like an awl, directly lunged towards Qin Lie's soul.

This fluctuation was condensed from the greater half of the Soul Devouring Beast's mind and consciousness. If Qin Lie was struck by this attack, his soul would immediately collapse and perish.

As if it felt the threat, the Soul Suppressing Orb, which was hidden between Qin Lie's brows, suddenly appeared like a third eye.

"Bzzt!"

The mind energy of the Soul Devouring Beast had just arrived in front of Qin Lie when it suddenly and inexplicably dissipated.

The Soul Suppressing Orb was like a black pupil as it seemed to glow for a moment while facing the head of the Soul Devouring Beast...

"Boom boom boom!"

Ten bolts of heavenly lightning, as if a hand were dragging them, explosively descended, all of them striking the Soul Devouring Beast's forehead.

Instantly, its head split open, revealing flesh. The lightning had fried the beast and caused pus and blood to flow out from all of the pimples on its body, resulting in a disgusting smell saturating the entire valley as the poisonous gas spread everywhere.

A toad-shaped ghost suddenly flew out from within its head, and as soon as this ghost appeared, all of the nearby soul fragments, like homing sparrows, all hurriedly flew towards it.

That was the main soul of the Soul Devouring Beast!

The jade green eyes of the toad shaped ghost were distantly glaring at Qin Lie as it tried to remember Qin Lie within the depths of its heart so that it could take revenge one day in the future.

“Not good! The Soul Devouring Beast has given up on breaking through and wants to escape through its soul!” shouted Xie Jingxuan.

The Profound Nether Beast beneath her suddenly flew out.

Like a pillar of smoke, the Profound Nether Beast brought her with it as it rushed into the intensely burning valley. Her scythe which was even longer than her body was once again within her grasp.

As the intense flames extended over the dark light atop the Blackscale Armor that she wore condensed into a layer of essence, it magically turned into a gray sheet of light which covered her.

The cover of light crackled as it helped fend off the intensely burning flames, allowing her to calmly use her energy on the Soul Devouring Beast to help Qin Lie fight against it.

“If the main soul of the Soul Devouring Beast escapes, as long as it can attach itself to another spirit body, it can recover. This kind of vicious beast from the Nether Battlefield isn’t very dependant on its flesh. As long as its soul is strong enough, it can easily find a new body. Thus, its main soul must be extinguished, otherwise there will be endless trouble!”

Xie Jingxuan shouted as the scythe within her hand was suddenly thrown out. The scythe was like a rainbow circling the world as it flew towards the Soul Devouring Beast’s main soul, carrying an extremely sharp aura.

Enduring the attacks of thunder and lightning, Qin Lie’s steps staggered as he continued approaching the Soul Devouring Beast.

Between his eyebrows, the Soul Suppressing Orb shrunk to the size of a grain of rice. It looked like a small mole as it turned into something which wasn’t eye catching.

The Soul Suppressing Orb which now looked like a small mole was still directed towards the Soul Devouring Beast, as if it had locked onto it...

Several more bolts of thunderous lightning once again descended, striking the Soul Devouring Beast’s vile soul. During this moment, all of the soul fragments which had fused with the Soul Devouring Beast’s main soul all turned into smoke and dissipated.

The Soul Devouring Beast's soul quickly withered.

Its main soul seemed to be extremely anxious and panicked as it continuously struggled in an attempt to leave the valley as quickly as possible.

However, its main soul seemed to be deeply stuck in a mire. The more it struggled, the tighter it was stuck in place. There was no way for it to leave the valley.

At this time, Xie Jingxuan's scythe, like a rainbow, directly struck the Soul Devouring Beast's main soul.

Unexpectedly, the Soul Devouring Beast which had been unable to escape, upon being struck by the scythe, mysteriously disappeared all of a sudden, as if it had suddenly turned invisible.

"This..." Xie Jingxuan's pupils quivered as her expression immediately became shaken, shouting, "Come out!"

The scythe which was suspended in the sky quickly circled around and flew back towards her, passing by the raging flames.

Surprisingly, Xie Jingxuan didn't dare go over to retrieve it, instead immediately covering her ears and closing her eyes as she bitterly resisted something...

The scythe quickly contracted, becoming the size of an arm in the blink of an eye as it firmly descended into the palm of her hand. As soon as her hand touched the scythe, her movingly beautiful body suddenly stiffened.

After quite a while, her eyes opened again, and within one of her eyes, a blurry toad shaped soul which looked like the Soul Devouring Beast emerged.