

Star Gate 901

Chapter 901: Entering the Ruins (II)

“Damn it!” cursed the pavilion master. Li Hao was hounding them on the outside, they couldn’t leave the ruins, but neither did Li Hao dare take his actions one step further either. “Do you guys think that Li Hao will dare barge in?”

“Certainly not.” The Left Guardian shook his head. “There are plant spirits in nearly all of the ruins. Li Hao has visited other ruins before, so he’s aware of the dangers within. He won’t barge in unless he’s a fool!”

The pavilion master wasn’t willing to accept how the chips had fallen, that their grand entrance in the world proper had become a joke. He mentally calculated the likelihood of the brazen Li Hao actually bringing the fight into their headquarters.

“Do we have a way of luring Li Hao here?” He looked at a leader of the Eight Legions that’d just returned.

A pained expression crossed the leader’s face, but he quickly responded, “Li Hao is arrogant beyond belief, so there is a hope. But once we do that... the entrance will be completely exposed...”

“That doesn’t matter!” The pavilion master thought nothing of it. So what if the entrance was exposed?? He hated the annoying gnat that was Li Hao! It’d be most interesting if the young man dared come inside. “Go find a way to lure those people here. This seat will reward you heavily once they enter!”

“Understood, sir!” The leader didn’t dare say anything else. Although he felt the chances weren’t high, they could give it a try since the leader had said so.

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At the same time.

Li Hao's eyes emanated a faint light in the outside world. He looked to the four corners and brought his people on a sweep through all of them. He wasn't in a rush to chase after the fleeing pavilion members. Instead, he killed all of the powerhouses hidden in the surroundings!

Whether it was scouts from a third party or more pavilion members, he killed everyone that was not one of his. He wanted to completely seal off information from leaving this place.

Silver Moon heavyweights prowled through the land and sky like falcons. Panther threaded through the forest, giving rise to the occasional agonized scream. With the dog present, no matter if one was hidden above or below, or even invisible, its keen nose sniffed them all out.

A group of people gradually convened beside a small mountain. A light danced in Li Hao's eyes when he saw the balls of light. The people he wanted were here. Was this the entrance to the Wind and Cloud Pavilion?

"There are a lot of powerhouses around us," Hou Xiaochen said. "The three great organizations have possibly sent people as well. Our targets are in the ruins, which are likely difficult to enter."

This ruin was different from the ones they'd entered before. There was more than one plant spirit on guard and the situation inside was murky. Their opponents sent out a dozen Arcanus as their first move, which meant they might have even more powerhouses in store.

Everyone looked at Li Hao. How would the young man give up at this stage, especially with Director General Wang present?

"We continue!" He led the group to the entrance of the ruins without another word. They saw the convened Wind and Cloud Pavilion heavyweights before long.

One of the pavilion members walked out of the group with an unpleasant expression on their face. "Li Hao, the Wind and Cloud Pavilion has nothing to do with you. We did indeed give offense the

day your Skystar Commander Office was established, but you've killed a lot of our Arcanus today. This is where the matter ends!

"The headquarters of the Wind and Cloud Pavilion stand behind us and there is an Apex level plant spirit inside. There are a dozen more Arcanus that have yet to take to the field as well. Do you insist on fighting us to the bitter end?" He cast a severe look at Li Hao.

The young man raised an eyebrow in response. An Apex-level plant spirit? How was that possible? One had to know that an astronomical amount of Water of Life was required to nurture so many Arcanus. That amount of resource would have to be produced by the strong, such as the Saint level. How would such a weak plant spirit produce so much?

He Yong and the others looked at each other with strange looks. Apex? Was that it? Why would they be afraid of that? So this Wind and Cloud Pavilion only had one plant spirit to their name. Did they think that their enemies knew nothing of the world?

The group was also rather puzzled. That weak? One had to know that they'd overestimated the pavilion's strength when possible in preparation for this operation.

"Kill!" Li Hao furrowed his brows and let loose with a blow instead of saying anything!

His people charged with raging battle spirit. The Eight Legions retreated and watched as their people were struck down again.

"Retreat!" one of them howled. "We have an Apex plant spirit in residence, these people won't dare venture in! Any who does so will die!"

Numerous heavyweights swiftly backed away.

"Remember to collect the entrance medallions..." someone grunted.

“We know!” The group of people rushed around in such a messy flurry of action that Li Hao continuously raised an eyebrow. Why were these people behaving like they were playacting?

As his people drew close, there were abruptly eight corpses left on the ground. The rest had retreated into the ring of light behind them and vanished from view. Inside the mountain cave, even He Yong couldn’t help but say, “Da fuck? These guys are luring us inside, aren’t they?”

First it was the mention of an Apex plant spirit, then it was the entrance medallions. It sounded like manufactured weakness no matter how he looked at it. If even He Yong could identify it, the others absolutely could as well.

The group looked at each other with nods. Plainly, these Eight Legion members wanted to lure them into the ruins. There must be a formidable force waiting for them inside. It might be very dangerous.

They picked up some of the entrance medallions—these likely permitted them entry to the ruins. Some ruins needed such tokens before letting people in.

So the Wind and Cloud Pavilion had even prepared entrance medallions for them. Li Hao couldn’t help but laugh. Did they think it was that easy to lure him in? But he was here to squash them at their roots, so this saved time and effort for him!

“Since they show us such hospitality... let’s take them up on it!” A massive shield appeared in Li Hao’s hands—the void shield. It was a military treasure designed to block Apex-level attacks. He didn’t wish to expose too much of his strength in the outside world, not to mention his movements were somewhat curtailed with a need to consider Director General Wang. How could he not set foot into the ruins when they’d prepared all this for him?

“Director General Wang, Black General, White General, you guys are the vanguard. Everyone, you have one mission when we’re inside—kill! Kill everyone you see, show absolutely no mercy!” Li Hao ordered. “Be careful, they may have numerous heavyweights. Killing the ones we just saw might be the precursor to a bigger battle. Don’t lose your lives here!”

Heads bobbed up and down through the group.

“Is your teacher not present?” Hong Yitang suddenly asked. They’d previously said that Yuan Shuo would be present for the attack on the Wind and Cloud Pavilion.

“He’s cultivating.” His teacher was a cocoon; there wasn’t enough time to wait for him to emerge from seclusion. With that, Li Hao deployed the massive shield, threw out the medallions, and charged with the three ancients as the vanguard!

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In the upper air of the ruins.

The pavilion master frowned to see the Eight Legions retreat in bedraggled manner. These latter day trained fellows were not up to par. In his memories, the Eight Legions were elites that were the cream of the crop. They were nowhere as frail and incompetent as these! These qualities weren’t normally on display, but easily observable once battle began.

It made sense, in a way. These Eight Legions had come from the outside world and some underwent training at a young age. They’d almost never experienced battle. Clashing with the Skystar Commander Office might be their first battle ever for some of them.

“Will they come inside?” murmured the pavilion master. These useless lumps didn’t even know how to properly lure someone in! Success seemed difficult if he was to rely on them.

His eyes darted in a certain direction as these thoughts crossed his mind and the Central Guardian jerked her head up as well. “So they really have come inside...”

“Wait,” shouted the pavilion master when he saw that his people wanted to strike back. “The first ones inside are sure to be just the vanguard. Let them all in first before taking action!”

Growing joy seized him. So they’d really come?

Of course, the first batch to enter were just scouts. The rest of the group wouldn’t follow suit unless the level of danger wasn’t high.

“Hide yourselves,” the pavilion master quickly commanded. “Leave only the Eight Legions. Everyone else, move out!”

The pavilion members swiftly made themselves scarce.

“Pavilion master, will he be confident of his chances since he’s dared come inside?” the Central Guardian asked fretfully.

“He has a few plant spirit replicas at most!” sneered the man. “What else can he have apart from that? Those replicas are Apex at most. The storage rings can’t contain stronger level replicas at present!”

This wasn’t Li Hao’s headquarters, it was his. These people were coming from the outside world as guests; that limited their full strength.

“Is the guardian afraid?” The pavilion master frowned. “Have I kept all of you to today for the purposes of being afraid of some modern martial masters? Then what use do I have for you??”

He was rather displeased. The limit of the enemy’s strength stared at them in the face, but how much in resources had these people expended for him?

Several of the city's plant spirits had fallen into slumber for these guys and the city's resources were nearly exhausted. The three guardians didn't say anything else. The pavilion master made sense and logically speaking, the most that their opponents could command were a few Apex-level plant spirit replicas. However, they were still ill at ease because Li Hao's group was being entirely too bold.

They'd come charging straight into the ruins—were those of the Skystar Commander Office this idiotic? Or did they think a couple plant spirits were sufficient to take down the Wind and Cloud Pavilion?

As much as they didn't understand their enemy, ripples traveled through the air. Those assembled could tell that the enemy truly had entered the ruins. The pavilion master's eyes narrowed when a massive shield appeared. A void shield, how interesting.

He didn't give the command to attack, surprising Director General Wang behind the shield. So they weren't being greeted with an immediate salvo? That was a good thing!

"It looks like they're waiting for us to go inside!"

"What an arrogant guy!" Li Hao laughed. The pavilion master thought he was cocky, but he thought the other thought entirely too much of himself! He didn't even bother trying to stop them!

However, it also made sense since the Wind and Cloud Pavilion had gone to so much trouble to lure them inside. There would be hell to pay for in a moment!

Chapter 902: Entering the Ruins (III)

Both sides felt that the other was being too cocky and self-assured. When the void shield entered the ruins, the pavilion master had thought that it'd shelter the vanguard. But when multiple presences rose behind it instead, he grinned.

"Li Hao!" He couldn't help but manifest from the darkness. "How interesting, you really did come inside! It's my first time seeing someone with such a death wish as you!"

“Revered White, seal off the city!”

Thousands of branches whipped through the air and blockaded the entrance. Everyone on Li Hao’s side was in the ruin, so he didn’t mind that the ring of light was being sealed off.

The young man materialized out of the gloom and looked around him, seeing a lot of people. He ultimately looked at the pavilion master with a laugh. “I thought we were facing an important personage, so you’re just a boy toy!”

The pavilion master assessed him with a calm look. This guy courted death! Revered White was still sealing off the exit; none of them would be getting away in a moment. Li Hao might still have a chance to escape if he attacked now.

He’d seen a portrait of the young man before and immediately recognized the overweening fellow. Instead of stirring to anger, he said with regret, “You’re the one who sought death. If it wasn’t for all the unnecessary trouble that you stirred up outside, the Wind and Cloud Pavilion wouldn’t have needed to appear so quickly. I planned to emerge after the second awakening, but here you are to present your head on a silver platter!”

As the white tree sealed off the entrance, he summoned a burst of strength from his body. He jeered at his opponent with some contempt, “Release the plant spirits’ replicas, Li Hao! This seat would like to see if those trash plant spirits dare attack me!”

Li Hao raised an eyebrow. So very strong! Was this... Apex, or seven elements? No wonder this guy was so pompous!

Director General Wang had retracted his presence and was looking suspiciously at the pavilion master. An idea struck him when he glanced at the hovering white tree in the distance. His expression shifted, but this was when several more powerhouses revealed themselves around the pavilion master.

The three guardians and a major commander of the Eight Legions were on the scene. They possessed domineering presences that put the five at roughly seven element Arcanus. No wonder the pavilion master was so self-assured that he thought Li Hao and the others courted death.

Jiang Yingli tilted her big head and looked at their opponent, suddenly confused and surprised. “That’s weird, this guy looks familiar to me,” she transmitted to Li Hao.

Familiar? An ancient? Li Hao jerked with surprise. Could an ancient survive to present day? Or had he been revived like Director General Wang?

It was slightly surprising that the Wind and Cloud Pavilion had fielded multiple seven elements. Li Hao’s primary focus had been on the plant spirits, and his opponents did indeed have plant spirits present. The white tree’s presence alone marked it as very strong.

The pavilion master wore a slight smile on his face as he remained coolly composed. “Li Hao, do you now know why the Wind and Cloud Pavilion dictates all? If you’d been willing to offer your loyalty in times past, I would’ve permitted you to live. But now... I find you loathsome!”

His presence was domineering as he paced toward Li Hao with contempt. But when he saw Director General Wang, a faint light of doubt appeared in his eyes. This person seemed... familiar.

He didn’t mind it, however, and chuckled lowly. “Attack and kill all of these people! This seat hasn’t made a move in a very long time and can have some fun with Li Hao!”

Powerhouses surged from all directions as they attacked the intruders!

“Li Hao, do you want to chat?” The pavilion master looked at the young man with a smile. “It’s been a long time since I’ve met a living opponent. I’d be happy to have a conversation with you so that you go willingly to your death!”

Li Hao raised another eyebrow. This guy wasn’t just a regular peacock! He said nothing as he flew off into the distance.

“I leave this place to you guys,” the pavilion master laughed softly. “This is a good tempering opportunity. The three guardians will hold down the formation while the Eight Legions train themselves with these people!”

“Understood, sir!” chorused the three guardians, completely ignoring the Silver Moon martial masters. They had a right to be so arrogant.

“Have some fun with them, everyone,” said Li Hao. “Don’t be in a rush to kill them. I’ll have a chat with the boy toy!”

He was a bit curious, but also found the situation strange. The most crucial was that he didn’t see the Mirror of Wind and Cloud or any imitations anywhere. He smiled as he followed the other, “A conversation is so boring. Why don’t you take me to your treasure? Or is it on you?”

“You want to see that?” smiled the other. “That’s just as well! Do you have mysterious power stones? If you do, this seat will let you witness its might! You will die a knowing death then. What’s yours is mine, isn’t it?”

It was Li Hao’s first time seeing someone more confident than him! How strange. The young man smiled and didn’t respond. What a confident guy! None of the ancient heavyweights are as confident or arrogant as him.

The two quickly departed, presenting a strange sight to Director General Wang. However, battle erupted the next second, drawing his attention. Instead of joining the fray, he observed the white tree from a distance. He... might’ve seen that tree somewhere before. But when he had, the tree had been a Saint-level existence. Was this the same tree that he’d once met?

Apart from the eight main cities, there was no other place in Silver Moon Territory with Saint-level plant spirits. If this tree was the same as the one of yesteryear... then it was a Saint.

The guardian plant spirit of the Wind and Cloud Pavilion.

The two puppets behind him were also conversing with each other. “Did that person... look like... Hong Tu?”

“A little... but Hong Tu’s way stronger than him and left Silver Moon a long time ago, didn’t he?”

“That’s right, and Hong Tu cultivated the proper dao. This guy seems to be training... the martial and supernatural dao of the modern times.” The two puppets were highly confused.

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The pavilion master landed in front of a certain hall with Li Hao.

“It’s been a long time since strangers have visited, I’ve forgotten to introduce myself,” he chuckled. “This seat is Hong Tu. I am not the lucky latter-day inheritor of your imagination, but the true master of the Wind and Cloud Pavilion!

“Li Hao, it is your fortune to stand so close to me. Many years ago, minor characters such as you did not have the right to draw near me.”

“No right?” Li Hao laughed. “Since when did a member of the Lis lack any right?”

“The Lis?” Hong Tu laughed even more loudly in response. “Even your ancestor, the Sword Sovereign, barely set foot into the ranks of exalted emperors. Do you find that cultivation level to be very strong? As I expected, one’s experience determines one’s future. You will never imagine just the splendor and glories my family once commanded!”

“You... are a reincarnated ancient, aren’t you?” Li Hao suddenly asked after a glance. “You haven’t simply re-crafted your physical body, but have been reborn with your mental strength as well?”

Hong Tu blinked, then looked behind him to see a red light sparkle in Li Hao's eyes. "How interesting, the sword eye! But it's very weak... It looks like you have indeed received some of the unique bloodline heritage of the Lis. What a pity that it's too weak!"

The sword eye!

"What is that?" asked Li Hao.

"Your forefather was indeed formidable with his sword techniques, but he found it unreliable to have the sword alone. Hence, he researched the sword eye to see through all falsehood and identify the enemy's weaknesses. Combined with his sword methods, he was able to claim lives with a single move. That was the purpose of the sword eye. Otherwise, regular moves wouldn't be able to kill enemies. It would be your ancestor who died instead..."

The sword eye! Li Hao's heart shook. He'd been wondering what the situation was with his eyes. So this was the case! Seeing through weaknesses and ensuring death with one stroke. That was the true meaning of the Li sword eye!

He'd been using it to identify people's strength, but hadn't thought to use it to peer into their weaknesses. So he'd learned something new today!

Hong Tu was an overly self-satisfied individual. Li Hao was actually curious why this was the case. Were there problems when it came to resurrection?

But Director General Wang seemed fine. Was it due to a difference in method? And yet, the ancient powerhouses—such as the Saint at Evenround Martial—seemed very much opposed and disdainful of mental strength resurrection. Why had Hong Tu chosen this method? It gave Li Hao a similar feeling to Yuming, a situation of muddled mental strength.

He could tell how strong the other was. The two had entered the great hall at this point and he immediately saw the bronze mirror. It stood in the center of the hall without being stored in Hong Tu's body or storage ring.

“Do you see it?” Hong Tu smiled. “This is what you’ve been looking for.”

“You know I’ve been looking for this?”

“You’ve had your eye on the Wind and Cloud Pavilion for this, no?” sneered Hong Tu. “You’re not the only one. Many people want it, but all of you should take a moment to think if you’re worthy of wielding a copy of the Mirror of Wind and Cloud!”

A copy? So this was indeed an imitation. Li Hao was terribly surprised, but he was confused. “You brought me here to look at this?”

“Not just this,” Hong Tu laughed. “You’re not a New Martial human!”

No shit!

“You have the bloodline of the Lis and are of the new era. I find that you’re not that afraid of me, so you should be confident in yourself. You’re not afraid of seven element Arcanus, are you?”

“I see two puppets among your group, ones similar to those we’d find in New Martial. They might be from Evenround Martial University. So you think that the Eight Legions outside won’t be able to defeat them, do you?”

“.....” Li Hao raised an eyebrow. Had this strutting peacock suddenly come to his senses?

“I am at times wide awake and at times less awake,” Hong Tu laughed. “I knew there was something about you when you dared enter this place. I find that you may have brought others with you. The guy at the very front seems a bit familiar—is he from our age? I don’t remember who he is, perhaps he’s just a minor character, perhaps he’s very strong. But with Revered White there, everything will be fine for a while.”

Li Hao took a few steps back. Hong Tu waved the doors shut.

Chapter 903: Battle (I)

“Weren’t you so confident in following me just now?” Hong Tu laughed softly at Li Hao. “You came with me just because I told you to, so what are you afraid of now? The Mirror of Wind and Cloud is right here. Take it if you want!”

Li Hao shook his head with a slight frown, suddenly saying, “For some reason... when I look at you... I feel that you and I are very similar. Is that a strange thing to say?”

“Not at all,” Hong Tu laughed. “Do you know why I chose not to conserve my mental strength and opted for reincarnation? Do I not know that there are many problems with this path? I’m not that much of a fool, but I still chose to do so. Do you know the reason why?”

Li Hao continuously backed away, unease starting to set in. He’d subconsciously followed the other to this place, and he seemed to see himself when he looked at Hong Tu. Indeed, arrogant and self assured...

He hadn’t thought of himself that way at first; he used to be a very prudent person. According to logic, he should’ve let Director General Wang make the move and outright kill this guy. He shouldn’t have ventured deep into enemy territory alone with his opponent. Hong Tu was a seven element Arcanus at the end of the day, if not even stronger.

Li Hao suddenly felt rather uncomfortable and was even a little scared. How had the situation developed to this point?

Hong Tu walked up to the throne of the great hall in a noncommittal manner.

“I’d thought that the world might be mine after I emerged with the second awakening!” he sighed. “But after seeing you, I knew that my previous concerns were right. Do you know why I’ve been targeting you all this time?”

Li Hao took a deep breath, energy from the five elements circulating within his body. This place was isolated from the aura of heaven and earth. He wrapped himself with the auras of the five elements to feel a bit more awake.

Indeed, he didn't seem to have been that awake up to this point. He'd suddenly relaxed upon meeting this fellow who seemed a bit similar to him. Li Hao had abruptly thought nothing of everyone in the world.

He realized something as he listened to Hong Tu's words and took a deep breath. "The consciousness of the world? No... you reincarnated as opposed to coming back to life because you wish to become the new master of this world, don't you?"

"You're very smart!" Hong Tu laughed. "Or rather, your subconscious told you."

He nodded. "That's right! This world is a small world separated from the main world and is closely tied to the main world. The Human King didn't destroy this world back in the day because he wished to gift it to your ancestor.

"Countless years ago, the Human King split the main world into three. He held one third, the Green Emperor held one third, and the various powerhouses of the world held another third. Therefore, no matter how the powerhouses of the world allied together, they could at most reach a draw with the Human King."

Li Hao's heart quailed from the implications!

"Thus, almost no latter day descendant could surpass the Human King. However, changes soon occurred because of the Silver Moon world!

"It is a world that the Human King gave to your ancestor, but your ancestor had other thoughts in mind. Or perhaps he wasn't willing or couldn't devour it. Or maybe he was too proud to do so. Regardless, Silver Moon world remained as it were until changes happened. The Sword Sovereign

left, Silver Moon was sealed off and became ownerless. There was no one to suppress this world anymore.

“I hadn’t thought of undertaking this plan at first,” Hong Tu laughed. “And didn’t dare to. But once the Star Gate closed, I knew that my chance had come!”

Li Hao looked at him with a shifting gaze. His chance had come!

“To devour the world?”

“Yes!” Hong Tu chuckled with a nod. “Not returning to life is a function of our pride as a New Martial citizen. I’m not interested in resurrection either. This weak body and weak mental strength is such a far cry to who I was before!

“But when the energy of the world died out, I knew that it was only a matter of time before it revived. The world would awaken again and everything related to New Martial would sink into oblivion. Everything would start anew and the world would be reborn after countless years of quiet! My chance would come when the world shook off the influence from New Martial and started over from zero again!”

Li Hao finally understood the man and looked at Hong Tu with a frown. “The chance that you speak of... is the chance to become master of this world?”

“Correct!” Hong Tu nodded. “You don’t understand—the world is an ignorant entity, particularly a new world like this one. If a genius appears at this time that conforms with the dao of the world, such a person easily takes control of the world and substitutes for its will as the master.

“Even the master of a small world is still the master of a world. A minor world is also connected to the major world. If something happens to the major world and the Human King and Green Emperor are no more, then with the linkage between the major and minor worlds, you can replace them to become the true masters of the world!”

Li Hao breathed out gently, thinking back to the scene that he'd once witnessed. Had the Exalted Blood Emperor been addressing him or the world?

So this world had been a gift from the Human King to the Li family. Meanwhile, he'd incorporated his auras into heaven and earth when he was in the outside world.

A variety of thoughts floated into Li Hao's mind. He finally understood why he felt uncomfortable at seeing Hong Tu, even a bit irritated, like he'd seen himself.

"Thus, you reincarnated to become a member of the new human race and fully assimilate into this age, didn't you? You wanted to rise in the modern world and become a unique existence that could dominate the world and take it for your own."

"That's right." Hong Tu nodded with a smile. "So I felt it was inappropriate when you rose. As strong as the older guard of New Martial citizens were, it was of no matter. I was most worried about the rise of the new guard, such as you. You've risen so fast that you remind me of someone—the Human King!

"Therefore, I wanted to see if you are a resurrected New Martial citizen or a true modern human. Now I see it, you are of the new age." The man shook his head with some regret. "I knew the moment I saw you why I've been ill at ease lately, even wavering in my convictions. I also knew why I am unable to meld into the world and become one favored by heaven.

"It's because this world has a new choice!" Hongtu laughed with resignation. "You are the choice of the new, muddleheaded world. You must have done some things to make its consciousness think that you are a better choice than me. That cannot stand. If this continues, then my rebirth will truly become a joke. I have paid too great a price for this. I had a chance of leaving Silver Moon Territory otherwise and didn't need to stay here trapped like a prisoner..."

Li Hao frowned without a word, a light brimming in his eyes as he looked around. He knew that he'd come to this hall because his opponent had purposefully lured him here via playing dumb. The mirror gave him a very dangerous feeling.

Hong Tu sat on the chair and stared at Li Hao for a long time, suddenly saying, “You’ve set foot into seven elements, haven’t you?”

Li Hao looked woodenly back without saying a word.

“You must have something special about you to be able to live peacefully in the outside world. How about this, Li Hao. I’ll let you live if you tell me everything you’ve done. You are favored by heaven...”

“No, I’m not!” Li Hao suddenly laughed with a shake of his head. “You have a lot of thoughts rattling in your brain, Hong Tu, but you’ve got one thing wrong. Any so-called favor is a result of my own work, not a gift fallen into my lap from above!

“I have my accomplishments today because I’ve worked hard for all of them! Just from this point alone... you’re really not much of anything!”

“It’s not a good thing to not know that you’re being appreciated and lifted up!” Hong Tu laughed after staring at the young man coldly for a while. “Do you hope for those outside to eliminate Revered White and save you? You won’t be leaving after I’ve brought you here!”

He punched the young man without saying anything else, not utilizing the ancient golden body or core origin dao, but supernatural force!

His supernatural abilities were different from everyone else’s, however. It seemed to break the void and a variety of abilities, such as invisibility and the dark attribute, erupted at the same time. Li Hao vanished as soon as Hong Tu made a move, but the mirror flared with faint illumination!

A beam of light enclosed Li Hao in the pitch-black hall and forced him into the open.

“Why do you think I want to kill you here, Li Hao?” Mirrors floated into view on all sides, showing only one person on them—Li Hao. Hong Tu had vanished without a trace, only his voice could be

heard in the air. “You must want to kill me and probably felt the same as me when you first saw me. That’s because I’m also devouring heaven and earth as I wish to become the master of the world.

“I must thank you. If it wasn’t for your appearance, I may have been slowly eroded by this world until I became a smear of intent without consciousness...” Hong Tu’s laughter echoed in the surroundings. A pair of fists appeared in the countless mirrors and smashed down on Li Hao!

Bam!

His golden armor shattered. Li Hao wanted to flee through the air, but there was nowhere for him to go. The young man was still shaking his head, trying to clear it. Something was wrong! A foggy sense had gripped him ever since he entered this structure. He hadn’t been able to think clearly since.

Countless Li Haos appeared in the mirror as they all suffered attacks at the same time. Boom! His armor shattered, revealing his fragile body. Blood gushed out as the blow landed on him.

Li Hao struck with his sword! A mirror broke apart into fragments, but many more mirrors quickly manifested around him.

“Stop struggling, Li Hao! A mere seven elements will not escape from a copy of the Mirror of Wind and Cloud! You were destined to die the second you entered the hall! This is the will of heaven! They are hesitating to see which is their chosen one, which is why both you and I feel the interference.”

Li Hao constantly dodged and evaded in the hall, avoiding being reflected by mirrors, but his movements were useless. Interference from the will of the world? Choosing one out of the two of them?

“What bullish interference, the hell are the heavens worth?” Li Hao sneered.

“You are... truly arrogant, Li Hao!” Hong Tu laughed. “Then... you can die!”

Hong Tu appeared with a palm strike!

Kaboom!

The world itself seemed to explode with the massive collision. Li Hao spat out a mouthful of fresh blood that illuminated the world. Blade light glinted and beat back Hong Tu!

A wave of blade intent stood between heaven and earth.

“Blade intent??” Hong Tu exclaimed with astonishment. “Aren’t you a sword cultivator??”

Chapter 904: Battle (II)

Li Hao closed his eyes, thinking back to the scene he’d observed from the Battle Heaven characters. Even the Green Emperor was afraid of the Exalted Blood Emperor. On that day, he’d seen the exalted emperor slice through heaven and earth with one stroke. The young man hadn’t understood then why he’d witnessed that occurrence, but today... some understanding glimmered at the edges of his consciousness.

The heavens were not to be feared!

They were just a muddle-headed consciousness. Human effort could overcome the heavens! That was what the Exalted Blood Emperor wanted to tell later descendants and those who witnessed that scene. There was nothing to be feared about the heavens; the consciousness of the world was inconsequential!

Blade light irradiated the premises. Li Hao used the sword as a blade and slashed it forward!

“Break!”

Boom!

Large numbers of mirrors shattered after a loud collision. Hong Tu was very surprised, but more mirrors immediately appeared and locked onto Li Hao. Meanwhile, there was still no trace of Hong Tu to be found.

“Resistance is futile, Li Hao!”

Multiple copies of the young man suddenly walked out of the mirrors. Just as Li Hao struck with his sword, so did the countless Li Haos charge him. The same sword intent and blade intent crashed down on him, as if he’d been copied many times over.

“You’re just one person, but you face innumerable people that are all you. It’s the hardest for someone to triumph over themselves. You may be able to win one of you, Li Hao, but what of endless ones?” Hong Tu’s laughter echoed through the hall again. “Such is the foundation of the Hongs! It is not something that a new human like you can replace even after countless years!”

Li Hao could feel death close in around him; there also seemed to be ghastly screams traveling in from outside the hall. Battle had erupted outside as well. The scene outside the door abruptly appeared in the mirrors—a massive tree suddenly ran through He Yong and caused his instant death!

The young man’s expression shifted. The mirror then changed to another angle and reflected Director General Wang. While the world cracked at his move, the massive tree transformed into an old man with flowing white hair. His gentle palm strike forced the director general back with cracks fissuring his body.

“You’re counting on this person, aren’t you? But you’re wrong, Li Hao. Revered White is a Saint and this person is but an Immortal!

“I will not kill you so long as you’re willing to hand over everything, including those peculiar words. It is your honor to be able to work for the Hongs...”

Li Hao looked at the mirrors, at the endless copies of him charging him from all sides. This Hong Tu was trying to interfere with him again. It was immensely irritating to watch the various Silver Moon martial masters die in the mirrors. The young man suddenly roared and erupted with rays of blood light before Hong Tu could react!

Countless supernatural locks manifested and at least a dozen snapped in unison!

“Everything is an illusion! Do you really take me for an idiot?!” Li Hao’s presence rose with his shout and his body started breaking apart, but he was promptly enveloped by an endless supply of Water of Life. In fact, he was bathed in it.

“You’re afraid. You were afraid from the very beginning and tried to break my martial heart for it!” Li Hao sneered. “You’re a fake martial master that wants to pretend otherwise!”

He broke the supernatural lock hidden deep in his head and seemed to explode right after!

Li Hao didn’t mind, he’d long foreseen this outcome. His plan was to break his supernatural locks as soon as he met with danger. There was no hesitation on his front.

His presence increased explosively the second he broke the lock of the head; a peculiar mind intent wafted instead. Li Hao seemed to see the cosmos!

The mirror fragments in front of him shattered. Stellaris struck!

BOOM!

A mirror was sent flying with a loud collision. Hong Tu flew backward, a mirror in his hand and blood in his mouth. He stared incredulously at Li Hao. This wasn’t possible!

“Impossible!” Hong Tu didn’t believe it.

Li Hao panted heavily, a steady stream of Water of Life surrounding him to repair the wounds that kept opening up on his body. His eyes were bloodshot as he stared at his opponent. “I see!”

He smiled—he’d fallen into Hong Tu’s illusory realm from the very beginning. The other’s mental strength was so strong that it captured Li Hao within the mirror. But now, he had broken free of it!

The mirror dimmed as it’d consumed a lot of energy. Hong Tu paled and exhaled softly, “I’ve underestimated you!”

“You underestimated more than that!” Li Hao summoned his supernatural characters and assembled them into a longsword. He struck!

BAM!

A ray of light erupted from the mirror to crush all of the characters!

Hong Tu looked urgently into his mirror when Li Hao vanished. He saw the young man hovering invisibly over his head and struck without second thought!

Bam!

Li Hao came into view as he crashed into the roof. He coughed up blood with a frown and looked at Hong Tu. With that mirror present, there was no way he could stay out of sight, whether he hid himself physically or in the void.

Why?

His spiraling thoughts struck on a possibility—life force!

Indeed, Li Hao had seen through things. He was being tracked because he was alive. This thing would capture him no matter where he was because he possessed life force, particularly as he was shrouded with Water of Life at the moment. It made his movements even more apparent. Hence, his reflection in the mirror was even more clearer to the eyes.

Hong Tu himself didn't seem that strong, but his mind was very capable. Li Hao couldn't draw near him at all when the man was armed with the mirror. He was instantly discovered whenever he tried to approach.

Li Hao suddenly took a few steps back; the void shattered in front of him when Hong Tu punched it. The latter was surprised that his punch didn't find its target, but he didn't mind.

"Surrender, Li Hao!" he smiled.

"Were you already setting in motion plans to lure me to this place when the Wind and Cloud Pavilion appeared at my inauguration ceremony?" Li Hao frowned, suddenly wanting to know if this fellow had purposefully provoked him into taking revenge, or if everything had developed naturally.

"I didn't go that far," Hong Tu laughed. "I just felt that you might be an existence of the new age and that you were improving too quickly. I set some preparations in motion for it. My mind's actually been a bit foggy these years, but I didn't think that much. I can only say that this is all fate."

Fate? What bullshit fate?

Li Hao cursed to himself as his opponent was proving difficult to get a handle on. He'd shatter his supernatural locks, but these locks were all very weak. Their breakage didn't help him much. It was only a matter of time before he was defeated if the situation continued.

My life force is so strong that he can continue to see me, find me, and even lock onto me!

Li Hao had also realized that his opponent's body wasn't very strong. The situation might turn out differently if he could draw near Hong Tu.

The young man abruptly dismissed all of his Water of Life—his physical body started crumbling as a result. Li Hao operated the Breathing Method of the Five Styles, brought his five supernatural characters together, and created another Li Hao in the blink of an eye!

It happened so quickly that it appeared like he'd spontaneously duplicated himself!

“Eh?” Hong Tu jerked with surprise. There was only one Li Hao in the mirror, but two in front of him. And now, both of them vanished!

Hong Tu remained staring at the mirror, seeing one of the Li Haos rush for him and the other remain invisible. He didn't hesitate to punch with a burst of supernatural energy!

Boom!

A thunderclap exploded as the void trembled. Another Li Hao appeared, stumbling backward with blood flowing out of him.

“How interesting, this is a very special technique...” Sword intent exploded next to Hong Tu's ear as he appreciated the new move. BAM!

Mirror and Stellaris collided. Hong Tu raised the mirror to withstand the blow, resulting in the erasure dimming once more. Hong Tu rapidly backed away and looked at his treasure, not seeing any sight of Li Hao.

His eyes widened with this development! How could this be? Which one of them was real? There were two Li Haos! The Mirror of Wind and Cloud could capture life force and reflect it. Whichever one it displayed had to be the real one, but why couldn't it grasp the one wielding the sword?

Another blow swung for Hong Tu's head as he thought wildly! Soundless, it was an assassin from the shadows. Hong Tu manifested a thin sword with a shout and stabbed at Li Hao of the five elements. It didn't matter which one was real, killing one would grievously injure the other!

Li Hao of the five elements transformed into a ferocious tiger, his roars shaking the world and swiping at him with a large paw!

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The two fought without pause inside the great hall, but no one heard anything of their disturbance outside. The powerhouses of the two sides didn't make a move—it was just the martial masters of Silver Moon and the Eight Legions charging each other.

In the void, the white tree constantly looked behind it. Director General Wang was locked onto it and the two puppets eyed the guardians. Panther and Deputy Zhou were also tracking guardians.

“You are the guardian plant spirit of the Wind and Cloud Pavilion,” Director General Wang suddenly said as he frowned at the white tree. “The very same one that followed Pavilion Master Hong Tu, no?”

Startled by the identification, the white tree took human form and nodded at the director general. “This old tree is slow to identify this noble one. Which New Martial general might you be?”

“Wang Ye, thought you may not know me...”

“I do,” the white tree interjected. “You are the genius of the Wangs at Battle Heaven. It’s said that you later became director general of Security. So you have resurrected?”

“I am surprised to catch the eye of a Saint!” Director General Wang smiled. “But... it’s strange, why... do you look so weak for a Saint? It even seems that your core origin has been exhausted. You do not wield the strength of a Saint at the moment.

“Li Hao has always been a cautious person.” The director general looked behind the tree. “He’s alone, but walked off with your pavilion master just like that. Your master obviously has the strength of an Apex. How would the kid be so bold?”

He also sensed how inappropriate the situation was.

“Is he Hong Tu?” Director General Wang suddenly asked.

“Yes.” The white tree didn’t deny it.

“He’s reincarnated!” exclaimed the director general. “Reincarnating in this world is to nurse a death wish... No, I see what he wants to do. He’s bold and quite decisive. This is territory that the Human King gave to the Sword Sovereign, but Hong Tu schemes after it!”

Chapter 905: Battle (III)

Director General Wang suddenly understood why Li Hao had left with his opponent. The latter must wish to become master of the world and Li Hao had already obtained some approval from the consciousness of heaven and earth. The two sides would naturally want to eliminate each other when they encountered the other.

Fighting alone without interference from outsiders might be a subconscious wish bestowed onto Li Hao by the world! It would make sense then, that the always cautious young man who wanted

nothing more than for someone to protect him would just walk off with an obviously strong adversary.

The director general's expression shifted slightly as he shouted, "Attack and kill these guys! Li Hao's in danger!"

Growing irritation budded in him. This was his first mission with Li Hao, but undesirable developments had happened straight off the bat. They'd been stymied by this big tree!

Golden light sparkled over him; Director General Wang ripped through the void with his bare hands. The strength of an Immortal erupted from him and blasted space apart.

The crowd beneath him paused with shock.

On Li Hao's side, the first to take action was Panther! The black dog was as if a wraith in the darkness—it instantly turned a golden color and slammed a paw down on one of the guardians. Rips scored the void with a crunch!

The three guardians backed away with astonishment. What a terrifyingly strong dog! They were just about to leap into action when two puppets manifested. They targeted the other two guardians while a blazing Deputy Zhou landed explosively in front of the Eight Legions main commander.

"Stop playing around and bring our full force to bear," roared the deputy wrapped in golden light. "Kill them all!"

Boom!

Sword intent tore through the void and turned heaven and earth upside down. Earthturner Sword and Sky Sword were allying together once more to bring their combined move to bear. As they struck together, one of Eight Legions leaders that'd been holding their own was abruptly chopped into two!

“Didn’t Li Hao go on purpose?” Sky Sword asked with puzzlement.

Indeed, according to what they’d seen, Li Hao had wanted to go with his enemy. One captured the ringleader first before capturing all of the followers—that was their long-standing impression of the young man. Would he take the risk if he wasn’t fully confident in the outcome?

That would be a strange development!

Hence, everyone had thought that he was fully assured in his actions. That was why the rest of them were so at ease and taking their time. But now that they thought about it... the situation rang wrongly.

Director General Wang didn’t have time to speak anymore.

Boom!

Thousands of branches shot through the air and struck him, but golden illumination shimmered over him as something akin to a shield manifested. It appeared to be a turtle as it erupted with aureate radiance that shook the vicinity!

The reaction shattered multiple branches and forced the white tree back. “You... have mastered the Black Tortoise Shield of the Wangs!”

Although the shield itself wasn’t present, this person carried the shield’s core origin strength and could bring unassailable defenses to bear.

“I remember your name now, White Evergreen!” snorted Director General Wang. “How dare you rebel!”

“I have not rebelled,” protested the white tree. “We have lost contact with New Martial and the young lord is just doing this to open the Star Gate and contact New Martial again...”

“Bullshit! This is Li family territory and Hong Tu is scheming to seize Silver Moon! You are all insurrectionists and today, I will execute you in the name of carrying out military discipline!” Director General Wang shouted sternly and punched out, wearing the power of the shield as a cloak!

The white tree jerked with dismay. It’d consumed too many resources over the years and hadn’t had time to recover. It faced a genius of the Wang family, a family most adept at defense, and one bolstered by the Black Tortoise Shield. His defenses were incomparable!

No wonder Battle Heaven dared send this person out.

The tree’s branches pierced through the void, but countless were broken by a single punch.

“Plant spirits are plant spirits in the end,” Director General Wang snorted. “You don’t know your fates and fail to recognize how insignificant you are. I would be wary of you if you were a true Saint. How dare you be so brazen with that broken Saint body of yours?!”

He delivered a punch that was very different from the ones before it. It was as if the heavenly dao itself had manifested. The director general grabbed the great dao and swung it like a club, smashing it down on the tree!

“You...” stammered the white tree.

“You what??” sneered Director General Wang, sweeping out with a staff. The white tree hastily stepped out of the way, but was still struck with the ripples. It grunted and sent out a wave of core origin. A shaking massive dao manifested in the air!

The staff broke through the air as Director General Wang loomed imposingly. He was completely without fear even though he faced a once-Saint.

“Idiot Li Hao... fell for tricks from a piece of trash! The Hong's are strong, but Hong Tu is one of the more garbage of their descendants. But it's that piece of shit that lured Li Hao away...” the director general cursed to himself as he swung around with his staff.

He was more yelling at himself that he'd also fallen for the same tricks. He'd felt that the pavilion master was just a clown and so hadn't paid much attention to him. Who would've thought that he'd be a reincarnated Hong Tu and wouldn't move his eyes from Li Hao?!

They were in trouble now!

A tattered Saint was still a Saint, their battle strength was still evident. Although he held the upper hand for the moment, it was just a surface showing of strength. Not to mention, Li Hao had followed the other into the great hall. That was a Hong family treasure! The director general might not be able to break in, even after killing the tree!

Damn it!

Director General Wang had been quite confident in himself when he left Battle Heaven. Would he be able to show himself to his comrades if someone took out the young man on his watch??

The more his thoughts dwelled on this, the more furious he grew!

Purpling with anger, he dismissed the staff and stuck it in the great dao hovering in the air.

“I will break this core origin dao today even if I don't kill you,” shouted the director general. “How dare plant spirits mutiny! You deserve death!”

He shot out as a streak of shadow, his staff nailing the tree's great dao in place in the void. The great dao shook incessantly as it pummeled the staff, but the director general was already close by and delivering a furious barrage of blows!

He only attacked and did not defend!

The white tree was finding the fight incredibly unbearable. It hadn't anticipated encountering a New Martial general. Back in the day, it would easily take out an Immortal. But now... its abilities did not service its intentions. It could only pray that the young lord quickly disposed of Li Hao.

Once Li Hao was out of the picture, the young lord would receive more feedback from the world and truly become its will. Granted, they were a ways off from that period of time, but at least he would occupy more of the auras of the world for now.

The Silver Moon martial masters fighting below them were quite formidable, but they fell short in numbers. The two puppets firmly suppressed the other two guardians, whereas Panther and Deputy Zhou were slightly weaker than seven elements, so they were suppressed in turn.

Panther didn't utilize the projection of the monster spirit envoy since it ran out of strength after one instance. If it were to cast it on the battlefield, he would use it against the powerful plant spirit. Therefore, the dog barked wildly!

It needed everyone to quickly finish with their opponents so they could help it with the guardian in front of it. Only then would it have the room to maneuver so it could coalesce the projection and smite the white tree to death.

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As the fighting raged outside, two Li Haos continuously attacked their opponent inside the hall. The Li Hao of the five elements was dispersed by a single sword stroke, whereas Li Hao's primary body pierced through his opponent's shoulder blade with a quick blow.

Hong Tu whipped his head back when he broke the Li Hao of the five elements and sneered. “How interesting, the supernatural characters gather all sorts of energy. Is this the key to why you’ve obtained the favor of the world?”

Li Hao materialized in the air and summoned his broken characters with a wave of his hand. He panted and frowned at Hong Tu. This guy was a cockroach that wouldn’t die! And the reason for that was that mirror!

The mirror kept whittling away at his damage, preventing his blows from being properly lethal enough. There wasn’t much energy that actually made it into Hong Tu’s body. His own energy consumption would be too great if this continued. All Hong Tu needed was to rely on the mirror to make life difficult for him.

Li Hao’s energy levels were continuously decreasing. Although Stellaris was a source of replenishment, it was unable to break the mirror. It was the young man’s first time encountering this kind of problem—a treasure that Stellaris couldn’t damage.

Hong Tu erupted with power once more; mental strength churned through the vicinity. All sorts of illusions appeared in Li Hao’s mind—countless Hong Tus. Li Hao wasn’t able to identify where his opponent’s primary body was. The tremendous mental strength suppressed Li Hao’s mind intent and even his auras of the five elements.

He’s a New Martial powerhouse to begin with, even with his reincarnation. His mental strength grew very quickly, no wonder it’s so strong...

Inspiration struck and Li Hao focused his mind—blade intent manifested!

Boom!

His sword cut through everything as if severing the world!

Hong Tu's true body appeared once more and stumbled in front of Li Hao.

"Blade intent of the Exalted Blood Emperor... no wonder!" he gasped. Hong Tu recognized it this time. "Li Hao, the stronger you are, the more excited I am! Only in such a condition are you worthy of being favored by the heavens. This justifies my attention on you as well!"

Li Hao looked coldly at him, then at the mirror in his hands. It was the young man's first time meeting such a difficult opponent. He'd delivered tangible damage to even Immortal plant spirits. But here, today, the mirror blocked all of his attacks.

"Favored by the heavens?" Li Hao murmured. You believe in favor from the heavens, don't you? Then let it kill you!

Chapter 906: Killing Strong Foes, Hiding in the Void (I)

Auras agitated in the void, giving rise to another Li Hao. He was as if the master of the world himself. Hongtu frowned. What was this now?

Meanwhile, Li Hao vanished again. Rumbles rang out shortly afterward!

A longsword shuttled soundlessly through the void—the young man's mental strength and the little sword were one. Sword stroke after sword stroke followed, creating an aura of the world with the five elements and keeping his opponent in check!

The two clashed with each other again—Li Hao was as if a monster that didn't know the meaning of fatigue. This time, he focused his attacks on the mirror. He'd discovered that it dimmed each time Stellaris struck it. Its energy was being consumed.

How much energy did Hong Tu have in his reserves?

Li Hao thought rapidly as they fought. Stellaris hadn't awoken by much yet, so it wasn't as strong as the mirror. However, it could swallow certain things.

A mallet suddenly appeared in the young man's hands—the mallet of the Hong's! He hadn't had much use for this thing since it wasn't very powerful, nor was he prepared to open the stone door. The weapons of the eight families were said to be keys and thus crucial. Hence, normal people wouldn't seek to destroy them. Well, they wouldn't be able to, in any case.

But, did Li Hao care about this?

This item was sure to be very nutritious! Stellaris would be much stronger after eating it and would be able to overcome that mirror. The mallet stirred when Li Hao's thoughts traveled to this point, as if sensing something.

The young man stabbed the mallet with his sword, yelling "I only need Stellaris of the eight weapons. Break!"

Bam!

Arrows of blood spurted out, covering the mallet. Hong Tu's eyes widened with horror when he saw the action. "You bastard, that's a key to opening the Star Gate, you..."

The Star Gate might be inoperable if it broke! He'd have to spend the rest of his life being trapped in Silver Moon!

And yet, Li Hao didn't care at all. It had nothing to do with him! Silver Moon is my home, so what if we can't open the Star Gate? Who says we need to open it?

Boom!

The mallet of the Hong's shook violently, but Stellaris kept it in place like the sword was a natural predator.

“How come you eat even me...” echoed a slightly shrill voice before the mallet crumbled to pieces.

Stellaris reacted like it'd never devoured energy—incredibly suction force erupted as the mallet fragmented beyond recognition. Even its shards were swallowed by the sword!

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At the same time, in the outside world.

Ying Hongyue spat out a mouthful of blood and stared into the distance.

“You’re crazy...” he murmured. Was Li Hao insane? What had he done?? The mallet of the Hongs seemed to have broken. Not even Saint-level weapons could break a weapon of the eight families, not unless Stellaris was involved!

Damn it, Li Hao, you asshole! Have you completely lost your mind?! Do you know what the weapons of the eight families entail??

Ying Hongyue couldn't believe it and was infuriated. He grit his teeth, demonstrating uncontrollable rage for the first time ever.

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Inside the great hall.

What did Li Hao care about any of that? Stellaris emanated scintillating radiance, quite excited after having eaten one of the eight family weapons. That wasn't the only change that occurred. Li Hao somehow saw the eight trigrams diagram that was available only in Silver City. He thought he was hallucinating for a split second. There was the void, eight trigrams, and the Star Gate.

Indeed he could see all of it in the ruins.

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At the same time, Silver Moon.

An ancient city trembled. Gold Armors floated out of the city and a massive guardian plant spirit shook as well. A Gold Armor hovered in the city lord manor and murmured, “The Godstrike Mallet has broken...”

The heritage weapon of the Hongts had broken! Who’d done it? Who could do it?

The Gold Armor quickly realized something and whispered, “The heir of the Lis? He broke the Godstrike Mallet with Stellaris... but why?”

The eight guardian families of Silver Moon were one. Only their weapons could open the Star Gate. Did the heir of the Lis not wish to open the gate anymore with his breaking of the mallet?

Although it was said that Stellaris alone was sufficient to open the Star Gate, that was predicated on the Sword Sovereign wielding the weapon. What kind of strength did the Sword Sovereign sit at? Without him present, it would have to take the eight families in conjunction to open the Star Gate.

“Why...” repeated the Gold Armor with a mixture of confusion, incomprehension, and sorrow. The city of the Hongts was forever sealed without the Godstrike Mallet. Even if an heir still existed, they had no hope of entering the city. Without the legacy of the Hongts and the rise of a new generation, did the city of the Hongts stand a chance in this new age even if it eventually revitalized?

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Silver City.

The void shook. As the mallet of the Hongs broke, one of the corners of the eight trigrams diagram vibrated and weakened. Of the eight lines of blood, seven were connected to Ying Hongyue whereas one was connected to Li Hao. One of the seven trembled violently, threatening to snap entirely.

In a far off age, the eight families safeguarded Silver Moon. Stellaris was the main component. If any of the eight weapons broke, it symbolized the Li family excising one of the families from the pantheon of guardians. This was a tacitly agreed upon rule, not one specifically written down.

Now that Li Hao had broken the mallet of the Hongs, it meant that he'd erased the Hongs from the list of guardians.

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Heaven and earth wobbled. This part of the world seemed rather joyous and energy flowed more freely. Although the second awakening was yet to begin, the world showed more signs of awakening after the mallet of the Hongs broke.

Energy built rapidly—even Silver Moon province found new rivulets of energy appearing in it. Any new sources of energy were quickly devoured by others.

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Inside the hall.

Hong Tu tightly gripped his mirror, staring incredulously at Li Hao and with a bit of fury. “Do you know what you’ve done?! The Star Gate is the passageway between Silver Moon and the main

world. Once it's completely shuttered, that connection is irrevocably lost! You lose not just your freedom, but an unlimited future as well!"

Even if one held the minor world in their hands, that did not mean they could open the Star Gate. Being unable to open it meant that one might never reach the main world, even if the main world was right next door.

That was a passage that the Human King, the Imperial Majesty, and the Divine Forge Emperor jointly created through the void. It prevented one from being lost among the worlds. Otherwise, even his ancestor—Daoist Wind and Cloud—might be lost amid nebulous space, to say nothing of Hong Tu himself.

The universe was endless and there were no signs directing the flow of traffic. Despite knowing the proper direction at times, just being a hair off meant the difference of galaxies and being forever lost in the chaos of the universe.

It'd taken joint effort from premier existences such as the Divine Forge Emperor to find their way from the main world and postulate a way back. Hong Tu could not do the same, not unless he reached the Human King's level.

But... was that possible?

"Li Hao, you are severing the future of this world!" Hong Tu raged.

"No no no, I'm severing your future!" Li Hao shook his head with a laugh. "Tell me, Hong Tu, why did you provoke me for no good reason? I'm going to kill you now!"

Boom!

His sword swung out! It was a blow much stronger than before and caused a hairline crack in the mirror. Although the crack swiftly closed, it drained a lot of energy from its wielder.

Hong Tu's face went pale! This mirror wasn't as close to him as it used to be, a great use of energy was required for each instance of usage. Its rate of consumption was even greater once it broke and it spontaneously leeched a lot of energy from his body.

A variety of changes filtered through his expression as Hong Tu snorted and struck with his sword as well, illuminating the premises with his sword light.

Sword intent! Or rather, sword aura. It wasn't as apparent as Li Hao's. Perhaps it was covered by supernatural abilities. however, the strength behind his blow was still evident to see!

In the New Martial age, there were multiple premier swordsmen beneath the heavens. Eternal Sword was just one of them. The Nether King of the Lis from Tranquil Star was another. He was the creator of the Voidbreak Incantation and wielded a rarely seen sword intent.

If one had to point out a sword dao powerhouse born before Eternal Sword, there was another known throughout the world. Coincidentally, he was hailed as Demonic Sword. This heavyweight possessed a weapon called the Heaven Condemnation Sword!

The world shook when the Heaven Condemnation Sword was unsheathed. He learned his skill from the second son of Daoist Wind and Cloud, the second prince of the Hong's and foremost of the four emperors. The prince wasn't known for his sword intent, but everyone knew that his sword dao was incredibly powerful to the point of terrifying.

Hong Tu's hand was being forced in his desperation and he struck with his sword, raising blinding sword radiance in front of Li Hao.

The two swords met! Hong Tu's sword seemed full of demonic character and killing intent. It was a true sword of demonic dao! Overwhelming killing intent flooded Li Hao's tattered body and ripped bloody openings in it.

Hong Tu grunted and cursed under his breath. When it comes to the sword, your family's Eternal Sword is less than that of the Hong's and the second prince! Daoist Wind and Cloud was a heavyweight of the sword too. His Human Emperor Sword could overturn the world!

Even though Hong Tu hadn't learned much of his ancestor's methods, he'd witnessed them with his own eyes. His understanding of the sword also rivaled Li Hao's.

Chapter 907: Killing Strong Foes, Hiding in the Void (II)

"The sword of killing dao!" Li Hao coughed. Despite his broken body, his eyes were bright and a red light danced in them. "Now this makes things interesting. Your supernatural abilities are too weak—why did you learn them? It's impossible to gauge your true strength from them. I can only see how strong your mirror is..."

He casually tossed Stellaris at the mirror. "Weapon to weapon, you and I are both swordsmen. Let's have a duel of swords!"

"Idiot..." Hong Tu cursed. Why won't I use my treasure on you if it can suppress you?

His treasure was suppressed by Stellaris, but Li Hao had chosen to forgo his incomparably sharp sword. This madman... Hong Tu raised his thin sword and rushed his opponent. His condition was much better than Li Hao's. Since the young man wanted to duel with swords, then they could have at it!

Crunch!

The void cracked open with Hong Tu's move and he swiftly vanished. When he reappeared, his sword was already aimed at Li Hao's head.

The young man wielded a sword made of supernatural characters. A ferocious tiger howled when he brought his weapon to bear!

Boom!

Hong Tu pierced through the tiger with one move; he grunted dismissively. You're no match for me even when it comes to the sword. It was just his memories that were slightly befuddled. Now that Li Hao exchanged moves with him, it was helping his memories sharpen with clarity.

Not only was Hong Tu not becoming weaker with prolonged battle, but he was growing stronger instead! Whether it was Li Hao's aura of the world, his supernatural abilities, characters, or sword intent, all of it faded away when met with Hong Tu's sword of killing dao.

Li Hao wilted the longer battle drew on! Although Stellaris overcame the mirror, it was Hong Tu who firmly occupied the upper hand.

The reincarnated ancient glared coldly at Li Hao while he whipped the thin sword forward, bringing move after move to bear. He just wanted to quickly resolve the battle. Even if he couldn't, he still wouldn't be afraid of his opponent.

There was nothing about Li Hao that was worthy of fear. That bastard had broken the mallet of the Hongs! Hong Tu was furious and struck with increasing venom.

Crunch!

Li Hao's sword of supernatural characters broke!

Pfft!

Hong Tu stabbed his sword into the young man's neck, drawing a bloody line. That wasn't enough to make Hong Tu stop—a surge of killing dao intent rushed into Li Hao's body and sought to tear the young man apart!

Li Hao's broken supernatural characters reformed. Light of five different colors gathered in his hand, which closed around a longsword. He looked curiously at his opponent. "You are an Arcanus, so why is your sword intent still this formidable?"

Hong Tu frowned. His longsword shook with a screech and sent out reverberations that ripped through Li Hao's arms. Blood sprayed in all directions.

"Who says Arcanus can't use the sword?" he sneered. "My forefathers created the dao of energy. The supernatural is just a mutation of that dao!"

Although it hadn't been Daoist Wind and Cloud who pioneered energy dao, it'd grown stronger through the efforts of his son. There wasn't much of a difference between the supernatural domain and energy dao.

Li Hao nodded, understanding the response. He permitted his throat to collapse and blood spray out, but retained his death grip on the other's longsword. The violent quaking shook more blood out of his arm.

"I see! Sword intent is sword intent and sword aura is sword aura. The intent springs from the heart. Where there is heart, there is intent. Aura is dao and intent is heart..." Li Hao seemed to grasp something!

Hong Tu shook his sword again, but his eyes widened with shock when Li Hao spat out a sword made of blood. The blood sword's killing intent was so concentrated that it was almost tangible!

"So this is... a sword of intent!"

Bam!

Sword intent ran through the world. "Lifeless!"

Hong Tu roared with agony and furiously backed away when Lifeless sword intent pierced through his arm. It ran straight through his flesh. He grunted and stared incredulously at Li Hao. The young man's potential... was too great!

Indeed, potential.

It was Hong Tu's first time realizing that someone's potential could reach such heights. It took only one verbal explanation for them to learn his method. Perhaps it was the result of strong accumulation from previous training, or perhaps the young man potential was really so strong that it was undefinable.

Li Hao truly understood it. Sword aura was sword aura, sword intent was sword intent. The two were different!

What Hong Yitang and the rest had said a thousand times was better off being experienced once in actual combat.

"It's so interesting when swordsmen cross paths." Li Hao smiled. "None of the swordsmen of Silver Moon are willing to truly fight to the death with me. I've considered myself invincible throughout the world after setting foot into seven elements Arcanus. Only the powerhouses of New Martial are worthy of me drawing my sword. But today, I meet you!"

"Li Hao, do you think you can scare me in this fashion?" Hong Tu snorted.

"No no, I hope for you to be stronger!" Li Hao licked his lips. "I haven't felt this way in a very long time. I'd thought that maybe only Ying Hongyue could level this kind of threat at me. I'm delighted to bump into you today!"

The look in Hong Tu's eyes shifted. This guy really did seem very happy!

“Kill!” Li Hao grunted. There seemed to be swords all throughout the world—everything was the sword. The fire sword, wood sword, earth sword, water sword...

The swords of the five elements!

There were even the swords of thunder and lightning, wind, light, and darkness appearing! All matter was the sword!

Li Hao was overjoyed. His opponent might help him comprehend the sword of wind and thunder! He chose to forget everything and put all thought out of his mind. He didn't want to think of how battle outside was proceeding or what this guy's background was. His only thought was that, as a swordsman, he would use the sword to kill his opponent and give him a dignified death.

This was what his teacher had spoken of—swords were the weapon of gentlemen. A gentleman helped his opponent die a clear-cut death in a stately way!

Indeed, Yuan Shuo had told him this. Li Hao deployed the Ghost Shadow Sword and Weeping Willow Sword. A frenzied cry rang out as the premises spun. The entire world seemed to be spinning as the move overturned heaven and earth!

Hong Tu felt that he'd encountered a sword fanatic. Countless swords underwent endless permutations. He shouted in quick succession and waved his longsword around, shattering the strange sword techniques that surrounded him.

The two were bathed with blood and the longer they fought, the more furious Hong Tu became.

“Li Hao...”

Bam!

A massive sword manifested as soon as he howled with outrage. It was like the return of a tyrant, an emperor patrolling his territory.

Boom!

Hong Tu suffered a blow that broke all of his bones. He vomited blood and glared furiously at Li Hao. There wasn't a single piece of intact flesh on the young man's body. There were even bloody bits that clung to him, ready to be blown off at any second. And yet, his sword aura grew ever more domineering!

A supernatural character suddenly appeared next to Li Hao. Thunder!

Indeed, it was the thunder supernatural character. The sword stroke from moments ago had struck like a clap of thunder and bolt of lightning. It contained electricity within it, and this was when the thunder character chose to appear. Li Hao smiled, his sixth supernatural character had finally fully appeared.

The 'exterminate' formed by his sword aura was just a massive melting pot that pretended to be wind and thunder.

"I am now a six element Arcanus!" His declaration left Hong Tu floundering.

What bullshit six elements? Have you never learned math? You're one short! You were seven elements a long time ago, so what's this talk of six elements?

In Li Hao's eyes, it was only now that he was truly a six element Arcanus. His five elements and thunder element had become supernatural characters. Only when the wind element followed suit was he a true seven elements.

The young man turned into a breeze and vanished once more, striking with a sword when he reappeared!

Hong Tu gave voice to a battlecry and charged Li Hao. His stroke brimmed with killing intent!

Li Hao was someone who grew stronger the longer he battled. Hong Tu grit his teeth with impotent fury. Perhaps this was what was meant by a person truly favored by heaven. He was just someone trying to seize some dribbles of fortune for himself.

BOOM!

The two swords clashed; Li Hao disappeared again. The Windchaser Boots lit up and brought him back into view elsewhere. He stabbed his sword down again.

Bam bam bam! Clang clang clang!

Sparks flew as both parties were exceedingly fast. The more they exchanged blows, the more delighted Li Hao was. Theory always seemed too shallow, only in practical application was there true knowledge to be gained!

A long while later, cracks finally appeared in Hong Tu's sword. His eyes widened and he swiftly backed away, evading Li Hao's pursuing weapon. He panted heavily and grit his teeth, staring coldly at Li Hao. "You asked for it!"

An item appeared next to Hong Tu—a crystalline bead. A faint pressure emanated from it, the pressure from a Saint!

Li Hao had seen Saints before, there was one at Evenround Martial. The bead floating next to Hong Tu brought with a Saint-level pressure that seemed to exude from a living person, not a treasure.

As a Hong and a reincarnated Saint, Hong Tu had more trump cards than one could imagine. However, he hesitated in this moment. This was mental strength left behind by his primary body—

or rather, the real Hong Tu. If he chose to swallow this bead, that would mean he would forgo his new identity and recover all of his memories.

He would be the ancient Hong Tu again!

He'd known long ago that there was something wrong with his reincarnated self, but he also felt that this was the reborn version of him. There was no need to put him with the past Hong Tu. After taking this bead, he would be that person again.

Chapter 908: Killing Strong Foes, Hiding in the Void (III)

Hong Tu was rather conflicted about taking the bead, but Li Hao grew stronger the longer the fight dragged on. It was more than apparent that great troubles would develop if he didn't kill the young man as soon as possible.

Hong Tu grit his teeth. It was him either way, so what was the difference? He swallowed the bead!

He'd just return to how he was before. Perhaps Revered White and the rest would actually be happier for it; they'd think that the real young lord was back. Hong Tu laughed at himself—these guys probably all thought of him as less than his previous self, didn't they?

Regardless, he would be confident of killing Li Hao after swallowing the bead. The young man was the most irritating person alive!

“Aw, screw you for not following the rules!” Having been casually aloof up to this point, Li Hao nursed budding irritation. I'm fighting you man-to-man here, but you keep cheating and now you bring out a bead with a Saint's pressure emanating from it! It's so damned obvious how dangerous that thing is!

This guy didn't conduct himself according to what was expected! On the other hand, Li Hao was used to himself being the one cheating—not having his opponents cheat. Was it worthy of respect to hail from a big family? Who was Hong Tu looking down on, huh?

As Hong Tu paused to wonder what Li Hao might do in response, items that looked like small bombs appeared in the young man's hands. The tattered golden armor swiftly reappeared over Li Hao's body and six supernatural characters enveloped him, erupting with six auras at the same time!

He wasn't activating his equipment to go on the offensive, but to defend himself. The mirror fragments materialized as well and blocked his entire body.

Hong Tu's expression shifted slightly as he roared, "What are you doing?! You madman, this area is sealed off! The force from the energy bombs will kill us both!"

Indeed, energy bombs. Standard issue military supplies. Li Hao had twelve hundred of them and took out one hundred. These bombs were used to take down cities. Each of them could erupt with the full force of a six element Arcanus. Just one bomb alone wasn't much, but hundreds of them would put the blast beyond seven elements.

"We're fighting with swords, but you want to cheat." Li Hao gnashed his teeth. "We bring out our treasures, but you still cheat. In that case, let's go with something more exciting!"

Li Hao ignited one of the bombs before Hong Tu had a chance to digest the bead. KABOOM! The massive explosion ripped through the world.

BOOM! Aftershocks churned through everything in the great hall, obliterating everything in its path. Only Stellaris and the mirror remained; everything else was decimated. Explosions rang continuously!

The mirror fragments outside Li Hao's body were obliterated and the six supernatural characters shattered. The young man swallowed large quantities of Water of Life, but was still hard pressed to defend against the blast's might. His flesh and blood recovered, vanished, recovered, and vanished again...

Hong Tu screeched and wanted to summon the mirror back to him, but Stellaris prevented the treasure from moving. He set his jaw and had to spit out the bead. It immediately transformed into a shield that was blown to bits, but quickly recovered.

Immense mental strength ran together with the aftershocks of the energy bomb and cancelled each other out. Hong Tu didn't know whether to be happy or sad. There was no hope of returning to his old self anymore; Li Hao had also just blown up the rest of his aces.

What a crazy person! Didn't he know that continuing in this vein would just lead to a pyrrhic victory? Not to mention, Li Hao would be worse off for it. Hong Tu looked across the way to see Li Hao's flesh vaporize again. There was no blood left for him to spray after he recovered right after that.

His newly formed body was ripped apart once more, weakening him each time it was torn to pieces. Some crumbling supernatural characters struggled to hang on; a battered tiger protected them and barely managed to keep Li Hao from being completely eradicated!

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In the outside world.

Explosions rang without end as the great hall shook. While the shockwaves were contained within the hall, they wobbled the structure so much that it rose from the roots and tumbled all over the ancient city!

Those battling outside stared, openmouthed at the structural carnage. What was this supposed to mean?

"Why does it feel like a mine's exploded..." murmured Director General Wang as he stared dumbly at the cartwheeling hall. Indeed, that's what it felt like, but he knew it was most likely energy bombs.

Those items exploded with quite a force. At least eighty must have gone off to create such a disturbance and move the great hall treasure to this level. The director general knew that Li Hao had

just received a large quantity of this bomb a few days ago at Battle Heaven. This was a strategic weapon given to newly formed divisions.

Suppressed by its opponents all this time, the white tree swayed with dismay at the development.

“Young lord...” This incredible force would give Hong Tu a very difficult time even if it was Li Hao committing suicide. Hong Tu was not yet at his peak, but this hall was the headquarters of the Wind and Cloud Pavilion back in the day. He was the only one who could open it.

It took him some time to open it now because he was no longer that Hong Tu. His old treasures and weapons weren't a perfect match for him anymore. When Li Hao entered the hall with him, he'd spoken at length about random topics to stall for a bit of time and fully seal off the hall.

Would Hong Tu have time to open it now?

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Inside the hall.

Explosions kept reverberating! After a long while, Hong Tu coughed up blood. The mental strength outside his body was almost completely gone. The man looked around blankly. That bastard Li Hao! He didn't know if he should thank or hate the young man.

Li Hao had ruined his plans again!

Thankfully, Hong Tu himself wasn't heavily injured. His organs were just a little damaged after the reverberations. There was no sign of Li Hao to be seen across from him.

Was the young man dead?

Such formidable aftershocks weren't worth mentioning to a Hong Tu in prime condition. However, both of them were only at seven element Arcanus and this was a completely sealed off area. There was no place to hide from the explosions. Therefore... was Li Hao... dead?

Hong Tu would be dead himself if it wasn't for Saint-level mental strength protecting him. Although Li Hao had also utilized weapons, treasures, and supernatural characters to protect him, the mirror fragments were on the ground. There wasn't a hint of light in them and neither did they move anymore.

There seemed to be some pieces left of the supernatural characters. So... Li Hao had blown himself to pieces.

"Idiot!" Hong Tu suddenly sneered. He knew this was to be courting death, but the madman wanted to give it a try. So what if he managed to stop his opponent?

Regardless, it seemed that he needed to thank Li Hao for helping him give up the notion. As he watched, a chill breeze brushed past. Wind? This place was airtight, so there was a place for the wind to enter.

Another gust of wind blew by as Hong Tu wondered about this aberration, grazing bloody marks on his cheeks. Endless energy gathered in the void to become another supernatural character—wind!

The character spontaneously grew bigger in the wind and turned into Li Hao. A Li Hao without wearing anything over his body!

The young man swayed, ready to shatter at any time. Water of Life rushed into him to strengthen his fragile form. He smiled weakly, a cocky gaze still in his eyes. "Hong Tu, I'm alive and well. I was wondering how to comprehend the existence of wind before... but thanks to you, I thought of the principle that the wind is everywhere! An explosion is wind, the air is wind, all happenings can become the wind..."

Hong Tu stared frigidly at him! How was the young man still alive?? Although he looked incomparably frail, he was indeed still alive.

“Li Hao!” Hong Tu ground his teeth. “Is this the basis of your confidence?”

What were these characters? Why could they reform after being broken? Why could new ones be born?

Li Hao was whiter than a sheet and tottered over to his opponent with a radiant smile on his face. “My basis isn’t as strong as yours. You can rely on your ancestors, but mine didn’t leave anything to me. I can only rely on myself!

“But, the energy bombs are highly effective. Do you want some more?” Li Hao smiled ruefully when he considered how they were both seven elements. He had to pull out all stops and nearly kill himself in the process. This Hong Tu was a member of New Martial aristocracy alright! Just showing one of his aces resulted in Li Hao’s near time.

Life was different when one had wealthy family seniors! His only left him the gluttonous Stellaris and the key was, the sword was so trash. It only knew how to eat. Just look at his opponent! First it was a mirror, then a bead, then countless mysterious power and Water of Life...

Compared to Hong Tu, Li Hao suddenly realized how poor he was! Despite his generous ways before, he suffered in abject poverty! Was this the life of rich second-generations? Li Hao was so envious!

Who would want to fight for their own gains if the hardships of life didn’t demand it from them? If his forefathers were still alive, they could feed him delicious food and drink everyday. There was no need to scabble for survival by himself!

It was so lovely being a rich or martial second generation. It was also said that his forefather was very poor—perhaps Li Hao would have to work for a living even if his forefather was still alive? That was a distinct possibility!

Random thoughts bubbled in Li Hao's mind as he looked at his body—it was extraordinarily weak, so weak that there only seemed to be a layer of skin left on it. He was covered by skin fashioned out of the Water of Life. It was a sign that his physical body was rather weak. Otherwise, even just recovering skin would be difficult enough.

The stronger one's body was, the tougher it was to recover. Li Hao was well aware of this theory. The weaker one was, the easier it was to recover. At the very least, he wouldn't need indestructible matter.

“Do you really have a death wish, Li Hao?!” Hong Tu demanded with an unpleasant expression on his face. “That was a fluke! If you do that again, I'll still survive despite having a hard time of things. But you... might not have any chances anymore!”

He could tell that Li Hao was just skin and bones, that the young man had nearly depleted his stores of energy. His mirror fragments were devoid of energy and his golden armor was nearly broken. What could Li Hao bring to bear to continue the fight? Going down together in a blaze of glory?

Chapter 909: Killing Strong Foes, Hiding in the Void (IV)

“I promise I won't kill you, Li Hao, so long as you teach me how to coalesce these supernatural characters. I already have some ideas about them, so I'll be able to experiment on my own even if you don't teach me. When I become master of this world, I assure you that I will keep you in mind for plenty of good things...” Being trapped inside the great hall, Hong Tu didn't wish to continue this mutually destructive fight.

“You're certainly confident in yourself!” Li Hao cast a strange look at the other. Just look at the straits they were in and the enormous losses that he'd suffered! Hong Tu wanted him to teach a secret art and was promising the sun and moon to him? What was the man thinking?

Li Hao carried roughly ten thousand drops of Water of Life on him. He'd consumed or otherwise wasted one thousand drops in this battle. It was an incredible expenditure, as well as one hundred decimated energy bombs, a nearly shattered golden armor, and a destroyed mallet of the Hong...

Although this wasn't a fight that dragged on, it was one that resulted in heavy losses for the young man. His supernatural characters were tattered beyond recognition. Who knew how long it'd take for him to repair them?

And now Hong Tu called for a ceasefire, that he would take care of Li Hao when he became master of the world. What kind of joke was that??

"Then what do you want?" Hong Tu looked coldly at him. "What else can you do apart from setting off energy bombs? If you do that again, you'll be the one to die!"

At the very least, he was in a much better state than Li Hao. The young man had been able to turn into a gust of wind the first time because he had a treasure protecting him, giving him time to withdraw from the blast. It fended off most of the detonation. Li Hao wouldn't be able to repeat that action if he set off another massive explosion again.

"I have one move that I've kept in my back pocket all this time because I didn't dare use it... Do you want to give it a try?" Li Hao smiled.

Hong Tu's expression shifted slightly. Did he have more aces up his sleeves?

A ferocious tiger manifested next to Li Hao. It was covered with injuries, but raised its head high and proud. It skewered Hong Tu with an arctic glare as Li Hao walked inside it. The two seemed to become one. He was the ferocious tiger and the ferocious tiger was him.

"I don't know if I'll be able to survive..." sighed Li Hao. "Or if I can come back from this... But even so, I won't be satisfied unless I ensure your death first!"

A huge assortment of energy bombs appeared in the surroundings, more than last time!

"Li Hao, we can talk things out," Hong Tu hastily offered. "This is just a minor world, there are many worlds in the universe. How about I give up this one? Don't do anything brash..."

Li Hao was already part of the tiger. He beamed radiantly. “The human body is said to have a secondary dimension. I’ve always wondered if I can enter that dimension if I become part of the aura. However, I’m a little afraid of death and felt the idea too dangerous. Wouldn’t I be done for if something goes wrong? But now... you’ve gotten my ire up. You’re just a second-gen who loves to cheat!”

The young man turned to smile at Stellaris. Remember to bring me back, little sword. The ferocious tiger threw its head back with a howl!

It vanished among the void and completely disappeared amid Hong Tu’s incredulous stare. There was no sign of life to be detected anywhere. Meanwhile, the mountain of energy bombs ignited.

“Open!!” Hong Tu howled with dismay. Damn it! Why hadn’t this shitty hall opened its doors yet?! Damn it all to hell! Where had that bastard Li Hao gone off to?!

The hall doors were swinging open, but an even stronger surge of energy ripped through the surroundings!

BOOM!

Heaven and earth shattered; cracks appeared in the hall. The mirror wanted to return to Hong Tu’s hand, but Stellaris caught up to it and prevented it from moving. Cracks also crawled over the mirror as it was buffeted by the energy!

Craaaack.

As the cracks grew, they ultimately reached a point in which repairs were impossible. Hong Tu continued to yell and threw out treasure after treasure. All of them were immediately obliterated as soon as they emerged into the open. He switched to origin weapons, all of which instantly blew apart as well.

BAM!

It was his physical body's turn to explode. Hong Tu wailed with pain, but his mental strength remained and it darted toward the mirror. Stellaris exploded with radiance and struck!

"No! I am a Hong..." Hong Tu roared with outrage. Stellaris was cutting down his mental strength even in the absence of its master! It was well known that it didn't possess a weapon soul, so why could it continue to fight on its own?

Hong Tu wasn't willing to accept this! He'd forsaken too much on his quest to become master of this minor world. He'd given up returning home, the strength of a Saint, his powerful physical body, and everything that was him to begin anew.

His only hope had been to become part of the new era and be accepted by the world. He wanted to replace the consciousness of the world with his own, becoming the new master of the age. But why... had things developed like this??

He'd known there was a problem when Li Hao ascended. Therefore, he'd wanted to eliminate the young man no matter what. In his eyes, there was no reason why he should fail. Li Hao had entered his territory, just as he'd anticipated. There was Revered White here and his guardians. Hong Tu had the copy of the Mirror of Wind and Cloud, as well as the immense mental strength from his past self. Even an Immortal might fall if one came.

Li Hao was just a seven element Arcanus, a cultivator on the same level as him. The young man's cultivation level wasn't even as stable or strong as his, so why had all of this happened? A so-called favored son of heaven was invincible among peers. Hong Tu had felt that he was such a person, but today, everything went awry after meeting Li Hao. Why was that?!

Shifts in his mental strength resulted in it splitting apart as two people. They looked exactly the same, but their bearing was very different. One was much more mature and calm. He looked at the swinging Stellaris and suddenly sighed, "Something that is not mine cannot be mine even through force, is it? But doesn't the martial dao spirit of New Martial denote that we must fight for everything? Is it wrong for me to fight for my future?"

“The Hongs produced four emperors—there is too much honor and pressure being born in such a family. I want to walk further along my own path. I will take what the Sword Sovereign doesn’t want, is there anything wrong with that?”

He refused to accept this situation and was also angered by it!

Am I wrong? No! I am only wrong by the fact that I am too weak. One must fight for their own within martial dao. Not vying for an opportunity I see would be the greatest regret of all!

Hummmm!

The longsword slashed down, severing the enormous mental strength. The other Hong Tu wailed with anguish. Had his era ended before it even began?

“You won’t be making it back, Li Hao!” he suddenly shouted. Don’t you think of returning if I do! So you want to use Stellaris as a homing beacon? In your dreams!

His mental strength burned with a backdrop of an agonized howl. The mirror suddenly transformed into an empty void that enveloped the world. It enshrouded Stellaris and held the sword within itself.

Although Hong Tu’s mind was starting to fragment, he viewed the scene with contempt and scorn. “Don’t even think of coming back! You won’t be getting what I can’t have!”

BOOM!

His last vestiges of mental strength exploded. Stellaris struggled and erupted with rays of scintillating sword qi, but the mirror fully enclosed it. The sword vanished without a trace.

The mirror dropped to the ground with a thud. There were only countless fractures left inside the great hall and a battered mirror. It seemed to have a sword sealed inside.

The world finally fell silent!

.....

At the same time.

The combatants paused when massive explosions sounded once more. The white tree and Director General Wang were in no mood to continue their standoff. They rushed to the tumbling great hall, seeing that cracks had formed through it.

Man and tree swiftly scanned the insides, freezing at what they found.

Nothing! There was absolutely nothing in the vast structure but a broken mirror. There was neither Li Hao nor Hong Tu.

“How is this possible...” Director General Wang didn’t believe his eyes, nor did the white tree. It was even more astounded, even shocked!

It knew how many aces Hong Tu could pull out. Not only was the mirror formidable, but he’d kept some of his Saint-level prior self’s mental strength. He could recover to his past self at a critical moment. While he wouldn’t immediately return to being a Saint, he would recover a great deal of strength.

Regular seven element Arcanus couldn’t possibly kill him. Therefore, the white tree had thought Li Hao was doomed the second he entered the great hall! But where was he now? There was no presence emanating from the tattered mirror. That meant Hong Tu was dead!

The white tree shook with incomprehension and an inability to accept the sight in front of it. Director General Wang was even more unwilling to accept it.

“The fuck?!” he snarled with crazed fervor. “Fucking hell! This is my first time out of the city and my first mission with him. We said that we’d help Battle Heaven recover first...”

Now that Li Hao was dead, not only could he not explain himself to Battle Heaven or the Ninth Division leader, but he wasn’t able to leave the ruins either. It also meant that they wouldn’t be able to open the Star Gate. Even Stellaris was gone!

There was no more bloodline of the Lis, there was nothing of anything! Could those of them remaining in the ruins open the Star Gate and return to the main world?

That wasn’t possible!

Therefore, this world had become their prison! Their hopes were shattered, completely shattered!

“Fuck you, you piece of traitorous shit!” Director General Wang howled at the white tree. “I’m going to kill you no matter what it takes!”

It was the end of the road for him! He couldn’t leave this set of ruins or return to the main world. He wouldn’t be able to live with himself if he didn’t obliterate this piece of firewood!

Did people think that the Saints of yore were noteworthy?! He’d simply thought that Li Hao would be fine with all the trump cards he had, so the director general hadn’t brought his greatest moves to bear! Blood qi surged into the vicinity as he called upon the Incantation of the Blade of Blood. His mental strength and qi were one!

Not only that, but a Black Tortoise Seal appeared in the air when he grasped the air with his hand. One large character appeared on it, one written by an invincible powerhouse!

The word spontaneously manifested as the seal was bathed in blood qi—execution!

Indeed, execution!

“Traitors have appeared in New Martial!” Director General Wang yelled. “The plant spirits have rebelled, so I, Director General Wang Ye of Battle Heaven Security, will carry out the duties in my capacity as acting city lord! With blood qi as sacrifice, I implore Supreme Zhang to execute the traitor!”

The ‘execution’ character on the seal grew more vibrant as it absorbed the blood qi. The white tree shook with terror and garbled an explanation, “No... I haven’t turned traitor! I... just followed the young lord’s orders... I have not rebelled...”

“Execute the demon!” A faint shadow appeared in front of the shocked crowd. It wielded a wooden club, or possibly a disciplinary whip. It was very faint and quite aloof, as if passing judgment.

“An execution is deserved!” came the calm declaration. The white tree was horrified!

Chapter 910: Killing Strong Foes, Hiding in the Void (V)

The two puppets were horrified beyond belief and wanted nothing more than to burrow into the ground. A terrified Li Shengzhang shrank in on herself, deathly afraid of drawing the shadow’s attention.

The world seemed to change when the shadow pronounced its judgement; it was like countless people were gathered in audible worship. The city came alive and the slumbering plant spirits awoke. Many of them had sunk into deep slumber after Hong Tu drained them of Water of Life.

When they came to and saw the faint shadow in the vicinity, all of them bent over and some even prostrated themselves. They were uneasy, afraid, and petrified!

The white tree was the most terrified and panicked of all. “No... Supreme Zhang... this minor spirit has not betrayed New Martial... I have never thought of doing so...”

When Panther heard that Li Hao was gone, the Monster Spirit Envoy projection that it was about to gather instantly dispersed. The dog shook like a leaf and didn’t dare move a muscle.

The faint shadow was the only thing that existed in the world.

“An execution is deserved!” The judgment was repeated and reverberated in the void.

BOOM!

The bloody ‘execute’ character fell with the landing of the great seal. In the air, the white tree’s great dao was fixed in place by the staff. It spontaneously collapsed!

The tree howled with pain as its colossal primary body appeared—only to crumble away. As the ‘execute’ character finalized its descent, it reduced the formidable white tree to a pile of shards that exploded!

“This minor spirit... really... didn’t betray New Martial...” Mental strength surged with grief and resignation.

Truly! It didn’t dare!

But there was no one that it could explain itself to. This was just the physical materialization of some marks left on the city lord seal. The shadow wasn’t a real person and had been summoned by the acting city lord through blood qi. It was an item that all main cities possessed. The white tree just hadn’t thought that it would be brought out on a simple excursion.

“Is this worth it?” The fading white tree projected its mental strength at the pale Director General Wang. “Is it? This is the means of the supreme, a method by which major cities use to kill Empyrean Kings or even stronger. Is it worth it to use it on me?”

All color had drained from the director general’s face and he swayed, barely on his feet. “It’s worth it!” He clenched his jaw. “You bastard shattered my hopes of returning home, fucking hell! I have to kill you to relieve some of my rage!”

Boom!

The mental strength exploded and churned through the premises. Director General Wang didn’t care about that. He grabbed some fragments and shoved them into his mouth. This method couldn’t be used on a whim; he was on the brink of death. Despite being an Immortal, he would also be done for if he was the slightest bit unlucky.

He had simply been too irate and despairing just now. If he’d known all of this would happen, he would’ve targeted the white tree from the very beginning! But who would’ve thought then that Li Hao would die so easily?

All was quiet in the world, save for the sound of Director General Wang furiously devouring the white tree. The Black Tortoise Seal lost its luster and the character completely dimmed. And yet, everyone stood blankly in place, no matter what side they were on.

What was that?

It was just a written character, a bit of might lingering from countless eons ago. And yet, it spontaneously eradicated an Immortal that used to be a Saint! There wasn’t even a chance to resist. The white tree hadn’t dared to resist even when death stared at it in the face. It simply sobbed that it hadn’t turned traitor.

“Gulp!” Someone swallowed hard, prompting Hong Yitang and the rest to leap into motion and rush toward the broken hall. The director general’s sudden berserk fury had almost made them forget that something seemed to have happened to Li Hao.

They charged over and peered at the tattered structure. There was... nothing inside!

“Arf arf arf!” barked Panther, a lost look in its eyes. Li Hao was... no more? Where had he gone?

All of the revitalized plant spirits inside the city were exceedingly weak. They were prostrate on the ground, no one daring to stand up.

Still overwhelmed with fury, Director General Wang swallowed the last pieces of the white tree. He glared frostily at the surviving Eight Legions and guardians when he was done. Gnashing his teeth, he leered, “All of you can die. There’s no need for you to be alive. All of you can despair just like me...”

Bam!

A guardian tried to flee from his palm strike, but was instantly pulverized to minced meat!

Director General Wang was clenching his teeth so hard that they threatened to break. I’ll just fucking stay here and wait for death! There’s no need to go out anymore, there’s no point in doing that. The Ninth Division leader will probably kill me next time he sees me. I’m here to protect Li Hao! I’m fine, but the kid is gone.

I took the city lord seal when I left and a tendril of the old turtle’s core origin!

All of Battle Heaven was telling me that I needed to protect Li Hao well because I left with our greatest treasures. I was careless and negligent. My failure to use the city lord seal before this was a demonstration of being afraid of death.

That is a huge taboo for those of New Martial!

“AHHH!!!” Director General Wang screamed. He’d previously felt it beneath him to attack weaklings, but now he launched a furious barrage against the remnants of the Wind and Cloud Pavilion. Corpses littered the ground in the blink of an eye. However, the sight didn’t cheer up the director general. He was beyond depressed!

Just as he was about to descend into full madness, a figure abruptly barged into the ruins. Whirling around with bloodshot eyes, Director General Wang readied to kill the newcomer.

“Why didn’t you guys bring me along for the fight?” the newcomer yelled. “That damned kid, I said to bring me along when you attacked the Wind and Cloud Pavilion! How come everyone left and I was the only one who didn’t know what was going on??”

The person landed on the ground—an infuriated Yuan Shuo!

He happened to see the director general laying around. Yuan Shuo didn’t know the man, so he punched Director General Wang without further word. The latter was glaring at him with reddened eyes like Yuan Shuo had killed his father. Who wouldn’t he hit, if not the director general?

Bam!

Yuan Shuo was highly confident in his move. Who in this world could withstand one of his blows? He’d metamorphosed again!

BAM!!

The enormous recoil sent him reeling. His arm exploded from the impact. Director General Wang blinked in his rage—he'd seen Yuan Shuo before, but the old man didn't know since he'd been a cocoon then.

“This is a misunderstanding! I'm from Battle Heaven!”

Yuan Shuo was about to charge forward again with his blade when he paused and took a good look at his opponent. Someone from Battle Heaven?

“Yuan Shuo, Li Hao is... no more!” Earthturner Sword's voice came with some urgency at this point.

“Huh?” Yuan Shuo started and vanished, reappearing in front of Earthturner Sword. He looked around with a slight frown. No more?

The old man's nose twitched and his five auras manifested. He seemed to sense something as his expression shifted. “Idiot who did things he shouldn't have!”

The world shook when he operated the Breathing Method of the Five Styles! Each of his five styles erupted in unison! A powerful force manifested and streams of blood shot out with his roar. Yuan Shuo reached into the void and came back out with a stone blade!

Radiance flared out of the stone blade as the old man ripped through the void amid the crowd's astonished eyes. A ferocious tiger appeared—not Li Hao's, but Yuan Shuo's. It carried a stone blade in its mouth before suddenly disappearing!

Yuan Shuo slammed his hand on his chest and coughed out a mouthful of blood essence. “Find him and pull him back!” he exhorted.

Boom!

Ripples shook the void; even Director General Wang stared dumbly. What was this? Where had that ferocious tiger with the blade of the Zhangs gone off to? Not even the director general could determine where the tiger left.

“Thank goodness I’m here,” cursed Yuan Shuo. “I’m always the one cleaning up after you guys. What’s the use in keeping a disciple around for? There’s so many powerhouses around, but you useless lot still let him burrow into the secondary dimension!

“Whether it’s modern people or ancient, you’re all trash. You let the Wind and Cloud Pavilion throw him into the secondary dimension! What’s Li Hao keeping around a bunch of trash for??”

“.....” No one dared make a peep while Yuan Shuo went on a tirade. Even Director General Wang felt so awkward that he didn’t know what to do with himself.

“Is... Li Hao... not dead?” he asked carefully.

“Shut up! It’ll take you dying first before he dies!”

The director general wasn’t annoyed by the snippy response. On the contrary, he heaved a large sigh of relief and plopped to the ground, relief in his eyes. Li Hao... wasn’t dead!

“Where’s my sword?” A voice seemed to echo in the air. It sounded confused.

Where’s my sword? Why can’t I locate it? Thankfully, he saw a tiger holding a blade in its mouth at a critical moment. Why... did they look familiar?

Everyone present was overjoyed. That was Li Hao’s voice! So he really was still alive!

.....

Li Hao was currently wandering among the cosmos in the form of a ferocious tiger. He was highly excited to see another tiger, one that rode on a large stone blade. Floundering for direction, he surged forward and grabbed the stone blade that the other tiger rode on.

.....

In the outside world.

Yuan Shuo grunted and used his fresh blood as a catalyst, drawing a road of blood in the void. Formidable energy burst out of his body as he roared, “Return!”

Boom!

The world shook as a person appeared—or rather, a tiger shadow. Li Hao maintained his grip on the stone blade and followed it out of the void, his mind befuddled.

Yuan Shuo sank to the ground with weaknesses, cursing up a new storm. “You always get up to no good!”

He cursed loudly without thought of his image. Thank goodness he’d gotten here in time and realized where Li Hao was. Granted, he also knew that his disciple had nowhere to go. If he was to flee, there was only one place that he could flee to.

After all, the secondary dimension of the human body was something that Li Hao himself had spoken of. He was the one who’d discovered it. With how bold the young man was, he’d certainly run here in a moment of need.

Li Hao's figure came into view, prompting Director General Wang to leap up and grab the very feeble young man. Unfortunately, he ended up squeezing the tiger's claw to dust with a loud crunch. The director general had simply wanted to express his concern, but froze upon noting this horrifying development.

Newly back in human form, Li Hao looked at his shattered palm, then greeted the other wordlessly. This wasn't him putting on an act to gather pity, but that he really was as fragile as a porcelain doll at the moment.

Director General Wang just crushed my hand.

The director general ardently wished for the ground to swallow him.