

## Star Gate 911

### Chapter 911: Secondary Dimension (I)

“I...” Director General Wang wanted to say that he hadn’t meant to do so, but he was so worked up that he exhaled a little too quickly. The slight gust of wind that picked up knocked Li Hao’s arm off his body.

The young man wordlessly stooped down and picked up his arm, screwing it back onto his body. Director General Wang immediately jumped as far away as he could!

He stared incredulously at Li Hao. I really didn’t touch you! I admit that I crushed your hand, but I can’t hurt you simply from breathing out!

“It’s fine.” Li Hao smiled after he installed his fragile arm back on his body. Riiip... plop. A patch of skin fell off his face.

It’s fine, really!” The young man laughed dryly. A laughing face without skin was... an even more harrowing sight.

His people frowned at the scene. Why was this happening? Li Hao’s physical body was like a clay doll—it broke apart at the slightest touch.

Li Hao didn’t mind. He’d lost an incredible amount of resources and strength after that battle, but with the formation of his wind and thunder characters, it wasn’t a total loss. The key thing was, he’d successfully entered the secondary dimension.

So it wasn’t the biggest loss in the grand picture of things. There was no helping how frail his body was. He’d already been only a layer of skin before he entered that dimension.

Li Hao turned to Yuan Shuo with a smile. “Thank you for the effort, teacher!”

Skin continued to rain down from his face. Yuan Shuo rolled his eyes. “Fix yourself first, look at how weak you are!”

The young man grinned and summoned a wave of Water of Life. His physical body was swiftly nourished back to health. A trace of blood filled his face and he no longer shed skin with every single movement.

Director General Wang heaved a sigh of relief and quickly stepped forward, but didn’t dare touch the young man again. “Are you alright?” he asked carefully.

“This is just a small matter!”

Is it really now?? The director general quickly followed up with, “Where did you go just now?”

“The secondary dimension.”

“The core origin world?” asked the director general instead. “But core origin has been severed...”

The core origin world had been something similar to a secondary dimension. It was the world in which the core origin dao resided. Every path of dao ultimately manifested in the universe. This was a fact that was beyond the current Li Hao’s comprehension.

Some understanding dawned when he heard the director general’s words and he mused, “The core origin world... so this means that core origin dao has its own world?”

“Of course!” explained Director General Wang. “In the world of core origin, each person is a star. The star falls when the person dies...”

The look in Li Hao’s eyes shifted. How interesting. The cosmos again. He’d seen countless stars when he entered the secondary dimension. Were they part of the same world, or not? All daos would eventually lead to the endless cosmos, so was each dao a universe in itself?

The young man lost himself in thought, drawing strange looks from the rest of the crowd. What was it now?

Li Hao wasn't dwelling on the danger that he'd just survived. There were thousands of great daos in existence and it was very interesting to cross paths with powerhouses. Hong Tu had given him a lot of food for thought. There was pressure and peril there, sure, but also enlightenment.

The more dangerous a situation was, the more there was to gain. If it wasn't for Hong Tu being so strong that it forced Li Hao to struggle for survival amid certain death, how would he have entered the secondary dimension?

One bite and one sip at a time, such was the intent of heaven.

The intent of heaven...

Li Hao abruptly grinned. What stupid intent of heaven? That was not to be feared. The heavens might have given birth to some intent in this world; it'd entranced him and set him on a collision course with Hong Tu. It hoodwinked one's mind and heart. It was not permissible for the heavens to manipulate the human heart!

The young man found this highly inappropriate. The heavens can be conscious, but they can not manipulate the human heart! How dare they extend their hand to me. No wonder I've been obsessed with toppling the Wind and Cloud Pavilion after hearing about them. I feel more enmity for them than I do for Ying Hongyue!

That was because Hong Tu was scheming to take over the world.

Li Hao was lost in his thoughts. The rest of the group simply looked at him—some with confusion, others oddly, and more with smiling shakes of their heads.

The young man possessed so much potential that he was sorting through spontaneous enlightenment again. But... he'd just survived an encounter of life and death, his physical body was weak beyond compare. Should he not be resting first?

"That's enough, you can think about things when you return home!" Only Yuan Shuo would dare interrupt at this stage. His face was pale and he rose to frown at Li Hao. "That was very unwise!"

"The universe is rootless and you can get lost in it at any time! This holds true whether it is the real universe or one of dao. The human body is not independent of itself and life is a river that reflects the void. That was the river of life in the universe, you could've been lost in it at any moment!"

Li Hao looked at his teacher with certain understanding.

"Just look at yourself." Yuan Shuo shook his head. "You and I share the same martial dao origin as the Five Styles have the same roots. Therefore, I could vaguely sense your existence. Anyone else would've been lost—I wouldn't have been able to find them."

So that was the case!

The rest of the group blinked with incomprehension, but Director General Wang turned over the old man's words thoughtfully. Being a core origin cultivator, he'd once experienced the core origin universe. Hence, he could understand these words to a certain degree, but he still found them incredible. What did this represent?

Then Li Hao and his teacher had discovered a truly new dao. One dao, one world. One dao, one universe. Was it possible?

If not, where else had Li Hao gone just now?

A rumor of the director general's time came to mind. The Human King had once traveled through the core origin universe when he was weak. The only one who could do so in their age was the Green Emperor!

He could travel through the core origin universe because he was naturally born of core origin and nearly one with it. And yet, Li Hao and the rest were not.

A variety of expressions flickered through Director General Wang's face. Was there another dao in this world? One in the true meaning of the word?

No one had discovered any other dao during the countless years of New Martial. Even the Human King's inner world belonged to core origin dao. It was just fully isolated as a standalone world—it hadn't really broken free of the core origin universe.

A variety of thoughts manifested in the director general's mind. Li Hao was very weak! Even as a seven element Arcanus, he was very weak. The modern world's seven element Arcanus was on par with an Apex, which meant to say that they were the equivalent of Apexes cut off from core origin dao. If this was New Martial and core origin still abundant, then Apexes would be on different footing compared to seven element Arcanus.

The two were still very different!

Contrary to what they presented themselves as now, true Apex could fight one hundred six elements at once. Could seven elements fight one hundred six elements at once?

Not at all!

Hong Yitang laughed as the director general's thoughts ran wild. "All is well if you're fine. Did you want this mirror? Your sword looks to be inside."

He handed Li Hao a mirror; it exuded a faint illumination despite its tattered condition. Plainly, it was a very strong treasure.

“This is such a formidable weapon!” Li Hao sighed with appreciation when he received the mirror. This was truly an impressive object that not even Hong Tu had been able to fully utilize. Otherwise, Li Hao felt that the current Stellaris would be less than this mirror, even after swallowing the mallet of the Hong.

“This is a copy of the Mirror of Wind and Cloud, isn’t it?” Director General Wang nodded appreciatively when he saw the item. “Strictly speaking, this is an emperor weapon!

“Weapons forged by exalted emperors are called emperor weapons,” he explained when Li Hao looked at him. “This should’ve been crafted by one of the Hong emperors. As for which one... that I’m not sure of.

“The notable one of the Hong family forged the Mirror of Wind and Cloud. It was so powerful that it was offered to the Human King. He then forged a copy of the Mirror of Wind and Cloud, and more than one, so the copies are of a slightly lower level.”

They were emperor weapons regardless.

“Strictly speaking, the eight family weapons aren’t much stronger than this mirror,” said the director general after some hesitation. “Not even Stellaris is that strong. They simply carry a lot of importance. Of course, Stellaris is more special than the rest since the Human King specifically made it for the Sword Sovereign. It’s certain to be the stronger weapon when it’s fully unsealed.”

But with the sword sealed, it was less than the copy of the Mirror of Wind and Cloud.

Li Hao nodded. No wonder! He hadn’t thought that Stellaris would be sealed either. He could see it traveling through the mirror, but didn’t know how to take it out.

“Try refining it,” Li Shengzhang whispered when she saw Li Hao stumped for his next move. “Of course, it might be hard for a non-Hong to refine it. Its master is dead now, so you might succeed. You’ll be able to take out Stellaris once you refine it.”

“My target for this trip was this treasure.” Li Hao nodded with a smile. “I just hadn’t thought that Hong Tu would be so strong that he’d almost be the death of me. Ah, yes, where’s that tree?”

The tree was gone. Although there were other trees in the city, Li Hao’s thoughts were on the white tree. It was very big and very strong.

“I ate it.” Director General Wang coughed with embarrassment.

“.....” Li Hao’s jaw sagged. You... ate it? What does that mean?

“I expended too much energy just now and ate it. I wouldn’t be able to make up for my expenditure otherwise,” the director general continued coughing. Utilizing the city lord seal was much easier said than done. He would’ve used it early on otherwise. And now, he was a bit too embarrassed to go into details.

Everyone had put forth effort in this battle. Although the white tree was the strongest, Hong Tu wasn’t weak either. He was here to work for Li Hao, but he’d eaten their greatest battle loot. It was... difficult to explain.

He’d thought Li Hao had died earlier, so he hadn’t thought that much in his actions. Li Hao didn’t say anything either. So what if the director general had eaten the tree? He was surprised that the man could kill the plant spirit. That white tree had seemed very strong, but had fallen in the blink of an eye.

Had he... been gone a long time? And what was his teacher doing here? It was only now that Li Hao jerked with a start and looked at his master. “Teacher, what are you doing here?”

Chapter 912: Secondary Dimension (II)

“All of you guys were gone when I woke up,” Yuan Shuo complained. “I only learned that you’d come to fight the Wind and Cloud Pavilion when I asked. Didn’t I tell you to notify me when you set out to battle them?”

“Um well, you were a ball then...”

Screw you! Yuan Shuo didn’t have an appropriate response. He was dwelling in his metamorphosis state then, so he couldn’t blame Li Hao. You just would’ve been lost forever without me! The old man fell silent after inwardly grumbling about the situation.

Li Hao looked around to see numerous plant spirits around him. He looked curiously at Director General Wang. “These plant spirits...”

“Serve the Wind and Cloud Pavilion!” the director general explained. “The pavilion established a branch at the inception of Silver Moon territory. Hong Tu held down the fort then. He was already a known personage as a Saint—his status and identity were very elevated.

“In the entire world, there were only a few who were higher ranked than him. They could be found at Evenround Martial University and the Lis. The rest of the people, including my Wang family, were less than him.”

Jiang Yingli and Li Shengzhang didn’t say anything. When it came to personal strength, those such as the Human King and Green Emperor were powerful beyond bounds. But when it came to family influence... the Honges were more formidable than the Lis of Tranquil Star.

They could be counted as the foremost family. There were some families with two emperors, and more than one at that. But when it came to one family with four emperors... there was only one such family.

“I thought Hong Tu left when the Wind and Cloud Pavilion evacuated from Silver Moon,” Director General Wang continued. “Who would’ve known that not only did this guy not leave, but he stayed here and reincarnated instead!”



Reincarnation was not the same as forming one's physical body anew. It was a completely different concept. Reincarnation was a kind of rebirth, the experience of the next life. It took significant determination to give up everything and start anew. One had to cultivate from nothing to recover their past strength. Although they had their past memories to draw on, the memories weren't complete, which made this life different from the past.

Hong Tu demonstrated incredible willpower in choosing to reincarnate, but... he chose the wrong path. Or rather, he met Li Hao. He might've stood a real chance had he not encountered the young man. He would take his path to new heights and claim everything for himself. It wasn't a foolish plan, just that he died to Li Hao in the end.

The young man nodded continuously. Reincarnation! It might be more terrifying than the mental strength resurrection that the Lu Zhen Research Center studied.

"How does it compare to mental strength resurrection?" Li Hao asked since the thought had occurred to him.

"Mental strength resurrection... is a bit simpler, but one's strength will decline after it is complete. There isn't much of a change from one's prior self if the process is successful. Reincarnation, however, means starting from zero. Even if there are memories to draw on, the memories will be hazy..."

"It seems that Director General Wang possesses a high understanding of this process?"

"It was practiced in New Martial!" the director general admitted frankly. "Many citizens of New Martial underwent this experience. Of course, our main world was different in that it supported resurrection. The minor world doesn't as there is no boundary between the yin and yang world here."

Li Hao nodded thoughtfully. It appeared that the main world of New Martial was a much more complete place than his world. He didn't mind it much. As the heir of the Lis, he could sense that these people viewed him as one of them. But for him, he thought of himself as from Silver Moon.

This was his home. He was born here and grew up here. Hence, he didn't really care about New or Old Martial, main or whatever world.

He carefully looked over the mirror. This was his greatest gain from this trip. It was such a treasure! Sadly, this appeared to be all that he'd obtained for his efforts. What a shame! He hadn't even collected Hong Tu's storage ring. Li Hao scanned the plant spirits in the city—there were eight of them, but they seemed even weaker than General Pagoda's descendants.

All of them seemed so feeble that it looked like they would collapse at any second. Was this... a result of malnutrition? Li Hao regarded them with resignation. All he would gain from killing them was the trunk of an Immortal. There probably wasn't a single drop of Water of Life to be harvested from them.

Meanwhile, he himself was so extremely weak that he needed nutrition.

Li Hao glanced at the rest. They seemed fine. Silver Moon martial masters were much stronger than the Eight Legions, and it'd been the two puppets and Deputy Zhou handling the enemy's seven element Arcanus. The deputy's injuries were slightly heavier, but he was recovering quickly as well.

To be able to eliminate the Wind and Cloud Pavilion without suffering any losses themselves, apart from Li Hao's grievous wounds, was a wonderful outcome in itself.

"Then I'll refine this thing first and take out Stellaris. I can't sit easily until I do that." Li Hao looked at everyone. "Let's count our battle spoils. Also... these plant spirits..."

He eyed the frail plant spirits, debating whether or not he should kill them.

"The Wind and Cloud Pavilion... is not an enemy faction," Director General Wang spoke up after initial hesitation. "Well I mean, the one who faced us was and Hong Tu certainly was, as was the white tree that attacked us. But these plant spirits only followed orders and didn't take the field..."

Even though he'd wanted to kill all of them just moments ago, he spoke up to beg for mercy on their behalf now. The plant spirits had simply been following orders. They were sworn to the Wind and Cloud Pavilion and to the Hong family.

Since Hong Tu had wanted to steal this minor world, a world that was Li family territory, he deserved his death. The Earth Emperor of the Hong family could have nothing to say in protest. But it would be a shame to kill these plant spirits.

Li Hao furrowed his brows and looked at Director General Wang.

"I'm not ordering you," coughed the man. "Just... explaining the situation."

He was starting to understand more of Li Hao. The young man didn't consider himself to be part of New Martial. Neither was he truly. It was just Battle Heaven that subconsciously felt that since Li Hao was of the Lis, that made him part of New Martial.

But in actuality, Li Hao seemed to like following his own heart. Director General Wang found that to be very normal! Geniuses of the age always seemed to be thus. No matter how strong their seniors were, they felt that they could create a new era.

"Let's wait and see." Li Hao ultimately decided. "I'll refine the copy of the Mirror of Wind and Cloud first before making my decision."

A vast quantity of Water of Life flowed into his body to quickly repair it. His mind intent probed the mirror, meeting with great resistance. He didn't care. Sword aura rampaged through it as he forcefully refined the treasure. He contemplated what he'd just experienced as he made the item his.

He'd entered his aura and set foot into the secondary dimension. Although it was just a quick second, Li Hao had dwelled there for quite a while. He saw a sky full of stars, a variety of supernatural locks, and aura wandering through the area. He might... not have been alone.

Perhaps the secondary dimension of the human body was a common area like the core origin universe. It was a big universe that others had not found their way or hadn't discovered yet. Perhaps everyone's supernatural locks were within that space.

How else would his teacher have been able to lead him back out?

Li Hao's thoughts traveled back to his teacher's metamorphosis from a cocoon. He hadn't understood it before, but comprehension now tickled at the edges of his comprehension. His teacher was so bold that he might've set foot into this dimension ahead of time. One had to say, Li Hao was highly admiring of Yuan Shuo.

The young man had entered the secondary dimension only because his back had been against a wall and he had no other choice. Yuan Shuo looked to have entered it of his own accord.

Teacher's body has changed because of it... Therefore, the secondary dimension of the human body might contain special energy that can strengthen the body...

Despite his teacher being right next to him, Li Hao didn't ask for confirmation. Just as the old man had said, one should experiment and try a notion first before asking questions. One should strive for practical application first and then hypothesize how to solve an issue. Only then could one more clearly understand what they wanted.

Martial dao was very interesting! The corners of the young man's lips curved upwards. As opposed to being a king or an emperor, he'd rather be a wandering hero. Sometimes, he felt that if the supernatural domain hadn't appeared and the martial world was as it used to be, then he might be a famous hero traveling throughout the world.

He would be carefree and easy like his teacher, focusing on martial dao. Li Hao had derived much enjoyment and satisfaction from his duel of swords with Hong Tu.

The dao of a myriad swords, the dao of a myriad daos... The dao of supernatural characters, of core origin. The inner world...

Various possibilities floated in his mind. The ferocious tiger roamed over his body, abruptly vanishing and reappearing with something in its mouth. A peculiar force blossomed in Li Hao's body when the tiger spat it out. The force nurtured his heart and instantly restored it to full function.

Very interesting...

Li Hao's smile deepened as he refined the treasure. The secondary dimension seemed to contain a peculiar strength that could not be harvested. But he'd just found out that the aura could devour it. That meant to say that the aura could extract this energy and use it to nourish the entire body.

The humans of the new age possessed exceedingly frail physical bodies. This might have something to do with the secondary dimension.

Every age had its own path. The aura was a unique hallmark of this era. It seemed to be capable of many things that other existences could not achieve.

Enlightenment dawned on Li Hao. The aura was key! He'd now comprehended seven auras and was a seven element Arcanus in the true meaning of the cultivation level. Not only did he possess the auras of the five elements, wind, and thunder, but he was almost successful with the dark and light auras as well.

If all of them could enter the secondary dimension to absorb this energy, wouldn't that bring infinite energy to fortify his body? This would be more useful than Water of Life or sword energy!

Those two resources were just as good, but they didn't result in the marked transformation of the physical body that he was looking for. Perhaps they weren't suited for the humans of this era. Humans of the new age could perhaps strengthen themselves or even transform through these resources, but there was a limit to how much they could take in and it wouldn't propel them to the next stage.

More possibilities bloomed in Li Hao's mind.

### Chapter 913: Secondary Dimension (III)

Yuan Shuo smiled when he saw Li Hao absorbing a special energy. This disciple of his... was like him, possessing of supreme potential! How fantastic!

He'd come to find Li Hao to tell the young man all this. As it turned out, he didn't need to teach his student anything before the latter discovered it for himself. The key was that Li Hao was quite brazen and chose to enter the secondary dimension as well!

Yuan Shuo had made the trip because he was fully prepared. The kid had done so without the slightest preparation and barged right in. Currently, Water of Life flowed over and fully enveloped him to repair his feeble body. At the same time, a peculiar part of his body began developing.

Li Hao's heart!

Not only was his heart recovering, but the ferocious tiger continuously breathed out energy from the secondary dimension into it. It slowly ferried energy back to the young man's body; the effects were remarkable. Li Hao's heart began glowing with a faintly golden hue.

Director General Wang had been observing him all this time. The greatest weakness of humans in this era was their physical body. It was a troublesome limitation that almost everyone encountered. Their organs are even more fragile. Although seven element Arcanus was a powerful cultivation level, strictly speaking, they were weaker than some of the more insignificant cultivators of New Martial.

Perhaps New Martial fifth or sixth rank cultivators would have stronger hearts than that of seven element Arcanus. It was remarkable how many drawbacks there were to modern humans. That was why New Martial denizens thought nothing of their bodies. When Li Hao asked the Evenround Martial dean whether any of them would take possession of modern bodies, the latter almost laughed himself silly. Who would be foolish enough to do so?

As strong as Li Hao's physical body was now, he hadn't reached the golden body level.

Golden body was of the eighth rank in New Martial, the equivalent of five element Arcanus. Li Hao had continuously strengthened himself, absorbing endless Water of Life and sword energy to forge a body that wasn't as strong as someone in the golden body cultivation realm.

It was apparent from this that Water of Life wasn't very effective on his body. If Li Hao had any other resource to compare it to, the differences would be long apparent. Now that the tiger transported a particular energy to his heart, the young man's heart strengthened at an incredible speed. It was far better than any mysterious power, Water of Life, or sword energy. The ferocious tiger seemed highly excited by the results and roared with joy!

Li Hao created quite a disturbance with his refinement of the mirror; a tiger hovered over him and roared at the four directions. He really did look the part of a tiger king newly emerged from his cage.

Off to the side, a baffled Hong Yitang closely observed the young man. The other Silver Moon martial masters also crowded around and stared fixedly at Li Hao. Yuan Shuo rolled his eyes at the sight. These guys...

The old man nursed the habits of the older generation at times. While he was gratified that his disciple was walking a path that no one else could walk, he didn't want anyone to peek into his disciple's ways before he succeeded. Therefore, Yuan Shuo wasn't too happy to see people crowding the youngster.

"Brother Yuan is the grandmaster of our age, alright," Hong Yitang offered before Yuan Shuo had a chance to say anything. "Li Hao learned this from you, right? We're just taking a look to see how strong this method is..."

"....." Yuan Shuo was speechless. Was it useful to curry favor with him?

And yet, he chose to remain silent. This silly disciple of his always liked to share whatever little bit of advantage he obtained. Most recently it was the supernatural characters, now it was cultivating in public. There was... not much he could say.

Yuan Shuo sat down cross-legged to oversee the proceedings. He'd tried something similar before and attempted to bring some energy back to his body. However, his dao was slightly different from Li Hao's. This was a good opportunity to compare their two approaches.

After a while, Yuan Shuo frowned and wondered why Li Hao only employed the tiger aura. When the young man stopped absorbing energy, he spoke up, "I've tried this as well and the effects are best with the Breathing Method of the Five Styles. The speed with which energy is devoured is very fast when it's operated in the secondary dimension!"

Even Yuan Shuo had been surprised to find that the breathing method could be utilized in the secondary dimension.

"I know." Li Hao opened his eyes with a smile. "But one aura is less than multiple auras. I feel that any of the secret arts suited for modern humans can accomplish this effect. Perhaps one aura per method is most appropriate! The breathing method is slightly outdated as five auras is too little..."

"....." Yuan Shuo cursed loudly to himself. Five auras, too little?! You're getting too full of yourself!

"I possess seven auras now," the young man chuckled. "Teacher, do you think seven auras can be melded together? I think so because when you taught me the Breathing Method of the Five Styles, I remember that you mentioned combining the auras of heaven and earth. There are the five elements, yin and yang, wind and thunder, light and dark—all of which ultimately forms a world!

"Therefore, we only need to find the connection between them to meld them together. There must be a key connection between the Breathing Method of the Five Styles and the incorporation of the five elements... We need to break them apart and reassemble them..."

What he spoke of now entailed knowledge contained in The Accounts of Evenround, so Li Hao was unable to speak further. He had some new insights and closed his eyes to sink back into his mental world.



Shattering, reassembly, just like his physical body. The five elements and five organs. If the five organs represented the five elements in a minor circulation, then what did that mean for the human body? There were more than the five organs in the body, yet these five could form a human body.

Wind, thunder, light, and darkness were also within the body. Perhaps he could use a body part to substitute for each of them and complete the major circulation.

Confidence suddenly flourished from the young man. I think... I may be able to walk faster than teacher! Five auras for the five elements has fallen behind the times. I'm going to have a myriad of auras, methods, and sword auras!

He suddenly wanted nothing more than to enter closed door cultivation on the spot. Ultimately, Li Hao opened his eyes with some regret. Too bad I can't just stay here. The damned royal family and nine ministries are working to take down the massive mine as we speak. If I stay out of it and let them start the second awakening ahead of time, that will produce a lot of powerful plant spirits. I'll be in a lot of trouble then.

Those damned bastards are always creating trouble for me!

Li Hao took a deep breath and erupted with all seven auras when he saw that the Mirror of Wind and Cloud still wasn't answering his commands. Inside the treasure, Stellaris slammed into the mirror as well and sent it shaking!

Master and sword executed a flawlessly coordinated move from within and without!

How dare you eat my sword! Spit out what's mine!

Rumble!!

The mirror shook violently from the impact. After a while, Li Hao forced out a droplet of golden blood. It came from his heart!

The mirror trembled and absorbed the blood. When its cracks slowly healed, the mirror disappeared in the blink of an eye and entered Li Hao's body. Stellaris reappeared at the same time and happily darted into Li Hao's heart.

The young man frowned and couldn't help hectoring, "You come to me when you see something good. They say people are materialistic, but a sword is even more so! No wonder the character for 'sword' is a homophone for 'base-born'!"

This thing hadn't been willing to be stored inside his body up till now, but willingly entered his heart today. Li Hao would never believe that Stellaris hadn't sensed something. Had a weapon soul developed in his sword?

.....

The young man's physical body fully recovered and his heart felt stronger than before. Seven supernatural characters hovered beside him and melded into his body. The 'exterminate' character formed by the sword aura dissipated when Li Hao tapped it. That character was simply to encompass the motley array of other energy that he possessed. Now that his wind and thunder characters had formed, he had no need of it for the moment.

He was a true seven element Arcanus now.

As for whether or not he was stronger than before, Li Hao felt that he might be slightly stronger than he was previously. The difference wasn't great, however, because he'd yet to complete the reassembly of his personal strength.

Indeed, he had certain plans in mind for how he wished to proceed. The secondary dimension may be an area of note in times to come.

A mirror manifested in the air and some methods of how to use it appeared in his mind.

“It takes that much?” He frowned and murmured to himself, “I might as well break it into pieces and feed it to Stellaris since it eats so much...”

The mirror trembled, as if begging for mercy. Stellaris ate anything and everything. It ate more than Panther did! The stronger the treasure, the more Stellaris liked to eat it.

Li Hao received some new information in the exchange. This mirror could indeed probe for life force, but its range was limited. In its current state, it could only scan the central region when activated.

Therefore, Director General Zhao being on the Arcanus Ranking was more likely than not complete bullshit, a fabrication by the Wind and Cloud Pavilion. However, being able to cover the central region was also remarkable.

The treasure consumed an incredible amount of resources for each use. Li Hao sensed that it depleted three million mysterious power stones per instance. Each instance could last for five minutes. Ruins were naturally shielded, so they were difficult to scan.

Hence, the old Skystar King’s strength estimation was also bullshit.

The young man’s frown deepened. There were a lot of restrictions to this treasure and it consumed too many resources.

Of course, the mirror would require fewer stones when more of the world awoke. It would also cover a larger range then. It consumed so much at present due to lack of energy. And yet, it was still too much for Li Hao.

Three million stones per instance? That was enough for one thousand drops of Water of Life! Using it to only probe his target’s strength was such a waste. While the mirror could shrink its radius, the energy consumption was still significant. Each activation expended too much. Even investigating

someone standing right in front of him, such as Director General Wang, would cost a minimum of five hundred thousand stones.

Li Hao rolled his eyes. So there was a minimum spend to this thing? Hot damn, his treasures and dog were all gluttons! All of them cost a lot in resources. Even the two puppets spent a lot of money each time they fought.

The vast sum of stones that he'd obtained from the City of Supernaturals was the only reason why he could afford to keep them around. The two puppets had been allotted five million stones each for this battle; they consumed one hundred thousand per minute. Who knew how much was left?

All of them were bottomless pits of money! Panther was such, Stellaris was such, and now the mirror was such. He had to feed the puppets, Battle Heaven, and Silver Moon martial masters...

Li Hao sighed. Life was too hard!

#### Chapter 914: Mover (I)

Life was truly too hard for Li Hao. He'd reaped tens of millions of mysterious power stones when he took down the City of Supernaturals, but given this rate of consumption, how much longer would his stores last?

That was tens of millions! Would he be able to support all of his treasures and people if he didn't take over the mine? There was also the army, various vessels, shield, void chain, and earth driller to consider...

Li Hao's mind almost imploded.

"Ai!" he sighed. It came down to energy. And yet, the key was that the world lacked energy. There was no energy throughout heaven and earth. There was supposed to be innate energy in the world; it could support so many powerhouses back in the day. Where had it all gone?

Although the world was revitalizing, it hadn't recovered to a high degree. Did that mean there was somewhere in this world that contained large quantities of energy?

All energy in the world had spontaneously disappeared the day everything changed. Where had it gone? To the Star Gate?

Was it the Star Gate? Or had it gone elsewhere to be devoured by someone else?

Endless possibilities filled Li Hao's mind. There was only one thing he knew for certain at present, and that was that he could not rely on killing others for his sole source of mysterious power stones. If he didn't make the mine his, everyone on his side, his weapons, and all revived ancient entities might soon enter a stagnant period.

Nothing was useful without the support of the mine.

"Have you finished taking an inventory of what we gained?" Li Hao looked at Deputy Zhou. The deputy was in charge of tasks like these.

"We have." The deputy nodded. "The gains are nothing impressive. One thousand drops of Water of Life, five million mysterious power stones, and forty origin weapons—that's quite a few and they're all high level. There's also eight dying plant spirits. That makes up the sum total of our gains."

"....." Silence. This was all they'd collected after killing hundreds of Arcanus, seven element Arcanus, and an ancient Saint. This was even worse than what they'd collected from the City of Supernaturals.

The group exchanged resigned looks with one another. They'd all depleted a great deal of resources for this fight, Li Hao even more so. They might've been excited about this level of harvest back in the day, but now... this represented a transaction that didn't even cover their costs.

Other than the mirror, they'd invested more than they'd received on all counts.

“Is that it?” Li Hao asked glumly.

“Hmm... most of it was probably with Hong Tu. But he died and didn’t leave anything behind.” Even if Hong Tu had a storage ring, it’d likely been destroyed by the explosions.

Li Hao sighed, then looked at the bunch of eager old men in front of him, then at the sheepish Director General Wang. There probably had been Water of Life left in the white tree, but the director general had eaten it all.

At the same time, the young man knew that the director general had likely paid a heavy price to kill the white tree. He looked weak even now.

“Let’s go, it’s time to withdraw!” Li Hao glanced at the eight captured plant spirits, frowning at them. What should he do with them? Kill them?

Eight Immortal trunks could produce almost sufficient indestructible matter to resurrect the Ninth Division leader with. However, Director General Wang didn’t really want to kill them and felt that their crimes did not deserve death.

Being the foremost powerhouse of the group, Li Hao had to show him some face. But that was eight plant spirits! All of them had to be Immortals back in their time to survive to present day. If they later revitalized bearing a grudge, that would also be trouble for Li Hao.

Would they carry a grudge?

Probably...? After all, based on what the others said, these plant spirits answered to the Hong family. It was difficult to determine whether they would carry a grudge or not.

“Plant spirits... you did not attack me and are near slumber,” Li Hao suddenly said after momentary silence. “Director General Wang has begged for mercy on your behalf. Hong Tu deserved his death and you guys... can sever one third of your core origin and remain here to meet your fates!”

The eight plant spirits stirred faintly. They were unfathomably weak at the moment. They would fall fully asleep after severing one third of themselves. What fate awaited them after that... was likely death.

Director General Wang didn't speak up in protest, and neither did the rest. Li Hao acted authoritatively at times. No one could speak any sense into him when he was in such a state.

"Why go to that level of waste?" Stroking his chin, Yuan Shuo suddenly frowned. "Not to mention, we should either kill them or take them with us after this place has been exposed. It'll be to someone else's benefit if they fall asleep here."

He flicked a glance at Li Hao. "Your brain is seriously inflexible sometimes!"

The site of the Wind and Cloud Pavilion's headquarters had been exposed. Someone might come after they left; wouldn't they attack eight sleeping plant spirits that they stumbled upon? On the other hand, if they killed the plant spirits themselves, they would be able to revive some powerhouses back in Silver Moon.

"Take them back with us!" chuckled Yuan Shuo. "They can be subordinates for the imperial guard. All main city plant spirits have auxiliary generals. The imperial guard was the first to swear fealty to you, so we need to give it a proper title. It's a loss of face for it if there's only one in its command!"

"Bring these eight back and have them form a guard. That's not enough either. We can bring back all the ones we don't want to kill and fill out the guard's ranks..."

"Teacher, my main issue is lack of resources!" Li Hao laughed with resignation.

"I know, but don't we have the big mine over there?" Yuan Shuo laughed with delight. "It'd be an affront to ourselves if we don't take it back! Also, with those eight over there, we can even put their self-detonation to use if that's what they end up doing."

“But...”

“It’s fine,” Yuan Shuo interrupted his disciple. “The plant spirits were under the banner of the Wind and Cloud Pavilion and the Hong family of old. They didn’t answer to Hong Tu. If worst comes to worst, we can kill them after fattening them up a little! Will we be afraid of a mutiny then?”

Li Hao thought it over before nodding. Director General Wang heaved an inward sigh of relief. There weren’t many who could persuade the young man from his decided path at times like these. Thank goodness Yuan Shuo could say a few words!

The young man didn’t say anything else after thinking the matter over. There were plenty of plant spirits that wanted to join his side these days. The redwood tree of the City of Supernaturals and the jujube tree of Sky Sword Mountain both wanted to offer their allegiance. There were eight more here and the five from Battle Heaven. He abruptly had many plant spirits under his command. It was thirty-one more mouths to feed.

“Then let’s head out first!” Li Hao concluded. “I’ll go out first. Wait a while after I leave so I have time to assess the situation!”

He grinned and left the ruins with the mirror in hand.

.....

The outside world.

It’d been a few hours since Li Hao’s group went inside. There was no sign of activity anywhere. Who’d won?



No one knew and no one dared barge in. It was a battle between Arcanus inside and there were certain to be plant spirits or their replicas inside. Even a severe element might be venturing inside to their deaths if they wander in.

The bystanders could only wait.

A figure manifested in the sky as everyone stood by outside. “The evil supernatural organization Wind and Cloud Pavilion has been completely eradicated for their role in disturbing the supernatural domain,” it announced in a grand, aloof voice. “The Skystar Commander Office has zero tolerance for misbehaving superhumans!

“The three evil organizations and other superhuman parties are to hand over their criminals within the allotted time. Apart from the three evil organizations, all factions are to create a registry before the end of the year. Those who fail to accomplish this task will be sentenced as evil supernaturals!”

The magnificent voice boomed in all directions! The powerhouses waiting in the surroundings sighed. It looked like the Wind and Cloud Pavilion hadn’t been able to stop Li Hao’s rise either. They’d lost!

No one was aware of how strong the pavilion had been, but they’d been able to field at least a dozen Arcanus in the field. That meant an equal amount of heavyweights waiting in the wings. There were also plant spirits to consider, but they were all gone.

Li Hao’s side plainly possessed the ability to kill plant spirits within the ruins.

.....

In the distance.

Ying Hongyue coughed up blood. He set his eyes on a far point in the horizon, at where a Li Hao radiating a forceful presence watched over the land.

The Wind and Cloud Pavilion had lost. What level was their strength? It was one thing if they only had one plant spirit that hadn't been fully revitalized. But what if they were more than that?

A faint circle of light pulsed beneath the heavens. Ying Hongyue furrowed his brows and tilted his head at the sky.

.....

At the same time.

Figures flashed through Li Hao's mirror before vanishing. Soon enough, some of them were fixed in the reflection. The young man regarded the treasure with interest. What a fascinating item! Although it consumed a lot of resources, its abilities were truly unparalleled.

He didn't look at anyone else because he knew Ying Hongyue was nearby. That was the first figure that drew his interest. The mirror captured life force; Ying Hongyue's was formidable. Based on Li Hao's judgement, it was a little stronger than his own.

Seven elements? The young man raised an eyebrow. The Arcanus Ranking had been made according to the pavilion master's own judgment and hierarchy of power. Li Hao was doing the same now as that was the only method available to them. The treasure didn't give them an absolute measure of strength, so they could only determine it obliquely.

Is Ying Hongyue really a seven element Arcanus? If so, why could he walk around in the outside world? Or was he seven elements only in critical moments?

Li Hao disappeared with these thoughts swirling in his mind.

Chapter 915: Mover (II)

In the distance.

Ying Hongyue's expression changed slightly. He grabbed Violet Moon and Indigo Moon, disappearing on the spot.

Li Hao appeared on the same spot a beat later. He looked into the distance with a laugh. "Shake in your boots, Ying Hongyue! You better tell your master to be careful and hide in the same dog den as you. Otherwise, you're the next one I'll kill!"

"You've broken a lot of people's hopes in shattering the mallet of the Hongs, Li Hao," Ying Hongyue's aloof voice came in from far away. "You're the one who should be careful! Many are the New Martial existences who wish to return home. You've just ended their dreams. It may be that you're the number one public enemy of the eight main cities now."

"They're welcome to come!" Li Hao sneered. "Who dares move against me from the eight main cities? Who is able to do so? I'll eradicate whoever dares do so! Go collude with them if you have the ability to, Ying Hongyue. Collude for as much as you're worth! I'll have to thank you if any swear fealty to you, it makes it easy to identify who I should execute!"

In the distance.

A solemn Ying Hongyue didn't look back. Li Hao was... very strong. Not only that, but he was highly arrogant and brazen to the extreme. He didn't care who the eight main cities gave their allegiance to. The young man's words might not be fully true, but there were some hints of truth in them.

Li Hao would kill whoever supported Ying Hongyue. Could he do it?

Not in the ruins. But once out of the ruins and pre-second awakening, the current Li Hao was frightfully strong. Not even Ying Hongyue was fully confident in taking him on. As for the seven bloodlines becoming one...

Ying Hongyue quickly suppressed the notion.

.....

The news swept through the land like a gale force. The Wind and Cloud Pavilion was no more!

Ordinary people didn't have much of an impression when it came to this organization. They simply knew it as the faction that produced various rankings. It'd offended Li Hao in recent times and was slapped with the title of the fourth evil supernatural organization for its impudence.

It wasn't long after that that the faction was toppled. This was all a good show to ordinary people. But to the various organizations of the world, the Wind and Cloud Pavilion was a faction that could field a dozen Arcanus in one move.

Another key was that Li Hao's group had entered their ruins to eradicate them. Although Li Hao's losses were currently unknown, it was sufficient to highlight a terrifying point—Li Hao's side possessed the ability to kill seven element Arcanus.

That was a given bare minimum!

Perhaps he could do so through the resurrected plant spirits of Battle Heaven, or perhaps he could do so for another reason. No matter what, many had realized that the ruins were no longer safe.

In the past, one could take shelter inside the ruins even if one encountered strong enemies. They wouldn't die so long as the existences inside the ruins didn't betray them. But now, they were no longer safe harbor. Unease rocked many a faction on this day.

.....

Li Hao didn't go after anyone. He simply stared silently at the mirror. Numerous figures floated across it—nearby powerhouses such as the Celestial Sword Immortal, Yama, lord of Yonder Mountain...

The notable heavyweights of old were no one noteworthy in Li Hao's eyes. Of course, they were strong. They were at least all peak six elements based on their life force. It was unknown if they could bring the strength of seven elements to bear. But what of it even if they could?

"This is a great treasure, it just costs too much to use!" Li Hao shook his head. He'd expended one million mysterious power stones for scanning a tiny area. How was this a legendary treasure? It was an insatiable glutton!

The young man frowned in the direction that Ying Hongyue had escaped in. When he took stock of Ying Hongyue's presence, he'd sensed another existence nearby. Otherwise, Li Hao would've followed up on the hunt. The mirror had only managed to bring a smear of blood-red into view with its scan. The target quickly escaped the mirror's range.

"A scarlet shadow..." Li Hao frowned. He knew about the scarlet shadows, they were just puppets. Therefore, that shouldn't have been a scarlet shadow, but something similar. Its life force hadn't been too strong as it'd simply flashed across the screen. It moved with extreme speed, however, and disappeared in the blink of an eye.

What was that? Was it the existence behind Ying Hongyue? He knew that there was someone supporting Red Moon from the shadows. That party likely wished to open the Star Gate as well, so they supported Ying Hongyue in their quest. They might've appeared after the first awakening. His own teacher had said that Ying Hongyue already had a backer when he tried to kill this old enemy.

That had been a very long time ago!

"Now that the mallet is gone, they have to seize Stellaris if they wish to open the Star Gate..." Although the sword was long on the enemy's list, it'd now become critical as it was the only hope after one of the eight family weapons was destroyed.

"All Night Watchers and provincial branch directors are to convene in Skystar City in three days' time!" Li Hao's voice echoed through the land once more when his thoughts traveled here. "The

Night Watchers are to undergo a reorganization! Those who do not present themselves will be executed with no exception! You can try me if you think of yourself as invincible!”

The Night Watchers in the nearby South Peak and Sagittarius provinces shook with fear. Li Hao was about to overhaul the agency. The Night Watcher director of South Peak was dead and the one of Sagittarius had wanted to curry favor with Li Hao. He swallowed hard, wishing for nothing more than to instantly teleport to Skystar City. What if he was late??

Only he was aware of how formidable Li Hao must be to have eliminated the Wind and Cloud Pavilion. The young man must have killed at least one plant spirit. Who would dare offend such an existence? Could the three great organizations and seven divine mountains kill a plant spirit?

.....

News spread swiftly.

Skystar City.

Some powerhouses were already underground. The ones left behind to stand guard sighed with a mixture of emotions. The Wind and Cloud Pavilion was truly incompetent to be eliminated so easily!

Inside the Nine Dragons Pavilion.

Numerous heavyweights gathered. Some of the ministers that didn't enter the royal ruins drank their irritations away.

“Why isn't Chen Yao here?” someone asked with a gentle laugh. No one responded. The Inspectorate might have changed sides; there was nothing much to say.

It wasn't just Chen Yao, but all of the nine ministries that had declined by quite a bit. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Finance were quite perfunctory in their responses these days. Only they themselves knew what was truly on their minds.

Meanwhile, Armed Forces and Administration might have their own plans in mind. Of this, the others were aware of. But what could they do about it?

The mighty nine ministries were starting to decompose and lose their unity. They'd felt that suppressing the royal family was their top mission before, but now?

Now... the Skystar Commander Office had spontaneously grown stronger and furiously swallowed the profits of all sides. Although the three great organizations hadn't truly lost anything yet, the lords of Buddha and Sky Roc Mountain were dead. Sky Sword Manor might as well not exist, and only the mountain lords of the remaining four knew their true situation.

All of the leaders of the world factions were likely very apprehensive and worried at the moment. The City of Supernaturals had chosen to call for a cabinet meeting and were still in the thick of things. How ludicrous. Perhaps Li Hao would be there to eliminate them before they came to a decision.

.....

The skies shook!

Inside the Skystar ruins.

Several powerhouses were present—the old ministers of Administration, Armed Forces, Examination, and Foreign Relations. In addition, the old Skystar King and a thousand Black Armaturas were also present.

Of the nine old ministers, Li Hao had killed two and Chen Zhongtian wasn't present. Neither had anyone invited him. Finance and Internal Affairs hadn't sent their previous ministers. Both their old and current ministers were alive; no one knew what the Mu family and Liu family were thinking. The Ministry of Finance had stayed hidden ever since Li Hao eradicated the Four Seas Company.

Over on the Internal Affairs side, the Mus didn't make a sound since Mu Xiaorong was still being held in the Skystar Commander Office dungeons.

Four old ministers convened, each brimming with a mighty presence. Of them, Qi Pingjiang and another old man were particularly ferocious. The other looked younger, but was the old minister of Administration Zhao Tianyang. He was a truly premier existence of modern society and an existence on par with Ying Hongyue and the old Skystar King Jiang Chen.

There was another old man dressed in golden armor standing in their midst—Jiang Chen. His face was wan and he smiled weakly. “Old friends, is there a need to continue to restrict Us now that things have progressed to this step?”

Qi Pingjiang ignored the old king and looked off into the distance. “The disordered core origin is separating us and it's difficult to collect it. Revered Rose, is there a way to break this restriction?”

Disordered core origin could be found at each of the vital points of the ruins. If they wished to take joint action, they needed to sweep aside this energy first.

“It's not difficult to do so,” laughed Jiang Chen. “The strength of a peak Immortal is sufficient to break through it. All that we need is for all of you to notify your respective plant spirits first. There will be no issues if there is no resistance or intervention!

“Old friends, why don't you ease the seal first and let me activate the formation inside the city? We need to confine that one first or this will be a difficult trip.”



No one said a word; they all looked at Zhao Tianyang. Qi Pingjiang was no exception. He was their leader and the one who made it possible for the nine ministries to overthrow the royal family. It hadn't been an easy task to accomplish back in the day.

Zhao Tianyang was in no hurry. He waited for a while before saying, "The Wind and Cloud Pavilion has fallen!"

The group was surprised. It was difficult to receive news from the outside world when one was inside the ruins. How had he done it?

Zhao Tianyang smiled to see the group turn to him. "It's not as complicated as you think. Armor is functional within Skystar Town and the Ministry of Administration sends messages through the armor as soon as they receive information. Emperor Chen likely knew of it before me."

No one responded. It wasn't a difficult maneuver; what made it difficult was that Zhao Tianyang had received a military rank inside Skystar Town. This meant that he owned his own suit of armor, and it wasn't black in color. It was at least silver!

Black armor couldn't be stored within the body, but silver armor could. The group hadn't known about this detail before.

### Chapter 916: Mover (III)

"Brother Tianyang, when did you obtain your military designation? Even I'm unaware of it," laughed Jiang Chen. "It looks like you and I are of different systems. The Skystar Army has ten divisions. Which one is Brother Tianyang in and what position do you occupy?"

"That is not important," Zhao Tianyang said calmly. "The most important is that Li Hao can kill plant spirits! The Wind and Cloud Pavilion must have at least one if they are able to raise Arcanus. Any plant spirits that can survive to present day will be Immortal at the weakest. A regular seven elements will find it difficult to kill even a newly awakened plant spirit. How do you all think that Li Hao has done it?"

He suddenly turned in a certain direction. "Is that golden coconut... still alive?"

The rest of the group blinked.

“If Li Hao has the ability to kill plant spirits, will he spare the golden coconut that’s right in front of him?” Zhao Tianyang laughed softly.

“It should still be alive.” Jiang Chen frowned. “The revered one sent a probe before, it’s still there. It’s been absorbing energy today, as if preventing us from gathering enough for the formation...”

“Are you sure it was the golden coconut and not another plant spirit?”

“It most likely is the golden coconut.” Jiang Chen smiled upon further thought. “The primary bodies of plant spirits are unable to leave the ruins—only their replicas can. When it comes to a replica... they can at most sever the equivalent of an Apex. With Li Hao attacking the Wind and Cloud Pavilion, would he leave several Apex replicas here?”

He would have to leave that level of force, it was very difficult to withstand the bramble rose otherwise. The plant spirit beyond the disordered core origin had been quite strong. If it was a replica that Li Hao had left behind, then the young man was too generous with his resources.

Zhao Tianyang remained noncommittal and looked in Security’s direction again. Was it really the golden coconut there? No one could be certain at the moment.

The bramble rose didn’t dare to pierce through the disordered core origin; no one dared haphazardly break it open. If the golden coconut attacked them while they floundered in the disordered core origin, it could very well mean their deaths.

The void shook as the group conversed. Several plant spirit primary bodies broke through the air, nearly all in human form. Their leader was the bramble rose in the shape of a beguiling woman.

“You have convened,” she proclaimed coolly. “Then make haste to activate the military formation. Cease wasting time! We will travel to the mine entrance first and prevent the other from sabotaging the formation. Do not obstruct us, Jiang Chen, or none of you will have an easy reckoning!”

“Be at ease, Revered One!” Jiang Chen bowed from the waist. The bramble rose disappeared without further word, as did the four plant spirits behind her.

Five plant spirits had gathered to seize the mine. Everyone understood that occupying the mine was to obtain first mover advantage. The nine ministries and royal family had been too much at odds before to accomplish that. Li Hao’s appearance facilitated their cooperation.

“What I’m most worried about now is that Li Hao will discover we’re not in residence at the nine ministries when he returns from eliminating the Wind and Cloud Pavilion.” Qi Pingjiang frowned after the plant spirits left. “He might guess that we’ve entered these ruins and more trouble will develop as a result.”

What if Li Hao entered the ruins himself to cast a wrench into things?

“He’d be coming to his death!” sneered the old minister of Examinations. “The five plant spirits of this area have fully awakened and are moving together. The revered bramble rose is a peak Immortal and close to being a Saint. It’d be best if Li Hao came!”

Not to mention, their families’ respective ultimate weapons were very strong in the ruins. Being able to obliterate the Wind and Cloud Pavilion didn’t mean that the brat could do the same to them.

The Wind and Cloud Pavilion might have a plant spirit, but had it awakened to a great degree? In all the lands, the highest concentration of energy was here. This was where plant spirits were awake to their strongest capabilities. None of the plant spirits in other areas could recover as quickly.

“Enough,” concluded Zhao Tianyang. “There’s nothing else that needs to be said at this stage. We’ve made our decisions. What use is there in hesitation?”

Heads rose and fell throughout the group. The Black Armaturas led the way ahead as the rest of them followed. They only had one mission at present—head to the barracks and activate the military formation.

There wasn't much danger in Skystar Town, but there were a few wandering armored warriors. Some were very weak while some were ferocious as they'd absorbed a lot of energy. Regular soldiers were fine, but those that were disoriented by the disordered core origin were sources of danger.

Having proceeded thus far and reached an agreement with the plant spirits, all parties involved decided to continue their exploration despite the Wind and Cloud Pavilion being unable to delay Li Hao's group.

If this dragged on... the young man might truly eliminate them all.

.....

Inside the Wind and Cloud Pavilion ruins.

"The nine ministries and royal family should've started exploring the ruins." Li Hao looked at Director General Wang. "They'll need to bring a lot of powerhouses with them to seize the mine. The other side has their share of heavyweights as well. There are at least nine plant spirits in Skystar Town and one vice commander. All of them are extremely powerful!"

"They're certain to be stronger than me," sighed the director general when Li Hao looked at him. "Don't look at me. My only way to kill a powerhouse was used earlier. I'll need some time to recover as well."

Li Hao took stock of his forces. There was only the little tree and Director General Wang who could withstand the enemy. The two puppets probably couldn't hold their own since they were just puppets.

The young man counted off his fingers. If he moved the redwood tree over, then the jujube tree of Sky Sword Mountain... The remaining plant spirits were half dead, including the eight that he'd just picked up.

That still wasn't enough.

The other side's vice commander might be very strong and Li Hao didn't know whose side everyone was on. In such a situation, everyone had to be viewed as an enemy. Perhaps they'd truly reached a Saint level!

The dean of education?

Perhaps only the dean was confident of overcoming their enemies at this stage. He was also close by, but the crux of the issue was that he lacked all desire and motivation. That made Li Hao's plan difficult to execute. How much strength he currently wielded was also a question.

As for himself, Li Hao felt that it wouldn't be an issue to improve his strength. He just needed time, but there was no time for him at the moment. His enemies wanted to probe the mine right now. It was immensely irritating.

"Forget it, let's go back first!" The young man looked at his people. "Moving so many plant spirits at once is very annoying. I'll move them one at a time while you guys wait here. Don't go out yet, take some cover first."

The group didn't mind; they would stay in hiding for a while then. As for the Skystar ruins, they were well aware that multiple plant spirits were involved. They had hopes of taking down one plant spirit if they allied together, but multiple plant spirits were beyond their abilities.

Li Hao promptly began his new job as a mover. Although the eight plant spirits were weak, he wished to conserve resources where he could. He didn't want to use the earth driller—human labor was sufficient. He just needed to make some additional trips to move everything to Skystar Town.

After that, he would move his powerhouses. He must have that set of ruins! There were many ruins in the world, but none as rich as that town. One mine alone was sufficient to tempt him to action. He was also going to move the jujube tree and redwood over as well.

.....

Li Hao busied himself with being a human conveyor machine for the next while. He first shifted the eight surrendered plant spirits, then darted over to the City of Supernaturals. The redwood tree was still facilitating Huang Yu and the troops' cultivation; he had no choice but to transplant it for this emergency.

He then visited Sky Sword Manor. The jujube tree wanted nothing more than for Li Hao to take it away. After its replica combined with the primary body, it was deeply aware of how terrifying these people were.

It at least had a chance of revival if it stayed by Li Hao's side. Starvation might be the only thing in order if it followed Sky Sword, particularly as the man was busy with Li Hao these days and didn't come home. The jujube tree was truly starving for energy.

.....

Plant spirits grew in number inside the Skystar Commander Office ruins. There were so many that the imperial guard felt impending danger. Ten new plant spirits had joined it, making for fifteen before the five of General Pagoda's descendants arrived. Itself made for sixteen, and there were plenty more at Battle Heaven...

As a plant spirit, it was under a lot of pressure. The newcomers were almost all Immortals. Some were less than the imperial guard due to a lack of revival, but the little tree knew that at least the redwood was stronger than it.

My position... is in danger!

.....

The plant spirits nearing the giant mine looked in the same direction—Security. This was strange! That spot was extracting power at a faster pace. They could even see tendrils of energy disappearing after being emanated from the mine. The plant spirit in that direction had completely absorbed the energy.

What was... the golden coconut doing?

.....

At the same time.

Countless crystalline energy stones were embedded on the walls of a massive mine. A Gold Armor stood at a military camp outside the mine. Thousands of soldiers were arrayed in strict discipline next to him.

This was the last notable troop of the Skystar Army. In contrast to the feeble state of Battle Heaven, energy here was sufficient. Each Black Armor exuded a powerful presence and their ranking Bronze and Silver Armors were even stronger. There were only one thousand soldiers, but six Silver Armors. Each of them was patently daunting.

All of them looked outside, seeming to know that the bramble rose was scheming after them again. The Gold Armor didn't mind it and considered another direction instead—Security. It was clearly puzzled. The rate of energy consumption there had noticeably increased.

What was going on there?

Chapter 917: Inviting a Savior (I)

Just as all sides viewed Security with doubt, Li Hao entered the ruins again.

“Take it easy!” he griped. “Are you all starving or what? What are you absorbing so much for? You can have all you want once we take the mine! Do you guys want to announce your presence that badly??”

These idiots!

The eight surrendered plant spirits shook with abject fear after he flayed them with his tongue. They didn’t dare absorb any more energy; the other plant spirits also swiftly decreased their absorption rate. But... they were hungry!

Which of them apart from the little tree and redwood wasn’t hungry? They were so hungry that their primary bodies were collapsing!

“Be quiet, all of you. I’m going to find a helper. All of you will be punished if you create more trouble for me! Imperial Guard, these guys are yours. Keep them in line and tell me if anyone misbehaves. I’d like to see who dares rebel!”

The plant spirits were quite resigned by the command. Other plant spirits lorded it over the humans and were waited on hand and foot. But them? They were the servants instead. However, there was nothing they could do but bow their heads when under another’s roof. They couldn’t afford to offend the young man!

Having seen Director General Wang’s abilities in utilizing Supreme Zhang’s methods to execute unruly spirits, who would dare entertain an ounce of mischief?

The little tree was quite gratified by this outcome. There were certainly benefits in being the first to join Li Hao’s banner! What a pity that these new guys were a little too weak. Otherwise, they could join the ranks of its imperial guards.

.....

The Skystar Commander Office.



Li Hao walked out of the ruins and frowned at the royal palace and nine ministries in the distance. Truth be told, he wouldn't want to move against them right now if it wasn't an emergency. He was very weary after successive battles and didn't have time to digest his many new reflections.

Battles that were too hard fought were also not a great source of gains. It was better to advance gradually in the proper order, but not everything in the world could proceed according to one's preferences.

The enemy wouldn't stand in place and wait for one to grow stronger. Therefore, the nine ministries and royal family swiftly made their moves. Li Hao was not permitted to rest or consolidate his cultivation.

I can't take them on at all at present... Therefore, he had to locate reinforcements. He might need a Saint on his side if he wished to unquestionably suppress his opponents. Li Hao wasn't the sort who liked to ask for favors. His arrangement with Director General Wang wasn't a favor—it was more of a transaction of beneficial interests.

The young man transported profits to Battle Heaven, similar to how he worked with the little tree. Silver Moon's martial masters had volunteered their services before, so now Li Hao repaid them in kind. It was a two-way street.

But locating a Saint... perhaps he'd need to go to the dean of education at Evenround Martial. However, this one owed Li Hao nothing. On the contrary, the young man owed the school some fines. That one would never request to be resurrected or anything similar either. All he wanted was to be left in peace.

Li Hao didn't have the best impression of this one to begin with. He later discovered that the man was alright; he just possessed a different personality from the young man, which resulted in the two not getting along.

Now that he stood in front of the Skystar Commander Office, Li Hao hesitated. He could bill his actions in bringing out the two puppets as taking them out for a breath of fresh air. But the dean had absolutely no desire to experience the modern world.

Did he have the ability to persuade the other to leave the ruins? That was one unknown. The second was what kind of price he needed to pay for this course of action.

Battle Heaven had taught Li Hao the principle of equal value transactions. One received as much as one put forth. There was no such thing as receiving something for free. Director General Wang was the result of Li Hao expending a large amount of energy and plant spirit primary bodies. He didn't find anything inappropriate about that deal.

But when it came to the dean of education?

He seemed to have no desires or concerns, apart from wanting to go home. That was something that Li Hao simply could not promise. Although he liked to paint a rosy picture for those he wanted to recruit, he'd been taught that skill by Deputy Zhou. Not to mention, he didn't like to paint pictures that he could not complete. He would only mention something if there was a hope he would achieve it in the short term.

Even if he could open the Star Gate, could he contact the main world? Could he send them back home?

Various questions brimmed in Li Hao's mind, but he knew that if he didn't visit this person, there wouldn't be much to be gained from the Skystar Ruins. While General Pagoda in Battle Heaven was also a Saint, that tree was too big and too far away. The young man might not be able to travel so far with it even with a personal domain of seven elements.

Not to mention, the pagoda tree was the guardian plant spirit of Battle Heaven. It might not be able to leave. It also had thirty-one auxiliary plant spirits at hand. Was Li Hao supposed to bring them too? His domain might collapse on the spot.

The old turtle was an origin weapon and probably the heart of the ancient city. Additionally, Li Hao didn't want his force to be completely composed of Battle Heaven personnel. It wasn't that he was wary of them, but that he wanted to head off unnecessary trouble at its root. Otherwise, would he be able to refuse if Battle Heaven decided it wanted the mine?

He would be a petty person first before being a gentleman. It would be most undesirable if the two sides erupted with hostility for the mine.

"I'll have to lay low for a bit after claiming Skystar Town. Otherwise... with antiques consisting of the bulk of my forces... that renders my victories completely meaningless!" Li Hao frowned. If it weren't for the nine ministries, he might not have immediately marched on the Skystar Town ruins. But with how the situation was... he had no choice.

Breathing out softly, Li Hao made quick time to the western outskirts. Two puppets followed by his side.

At the same time.

Many people from the nine ministries were keeping an eye on him. What was the kid doing in running to and fro like this? Just as they wondered, a cold snort echoed through the world!

"You ignore me being considerate, do you I'll kill whoever dares spy on me next!" Li Hao stood in the air and looked frostily at the royal palace. He sniffed disdainfully, a reaction intermixed with sword intent that wafted in all directions.

The current Skystar King observing from the palace grunted and spat out a mouthful of blood.

"Royal father!" gasped a few royal children below the throne.

"Cough cough cough..." The Skystar King paled and looked outside, then at the mirror fragment in his hand. Cracks had suddenly appeared in the fragment!

Li Hao!

Just how strong was the young man? He'd detected the attention cast on him through the mirror fragment. Not only thought, but he promptly smashed the treasure. How was that possible??

The royal children looked at each other with worry.

"It's fine." The Skystar King gently waved them off, belying the fury and shock in his eyes. Was Li Hao at peak six elements? Or even stronger? But wasn't the void unable to support any that were stronger?

.....

The Ministry of Finance.

Liu Yunqing grunted. Next to him, his elderly father with a head of white hair closed his eyes.

"Exercise more caution next time and don't observe him for no reason. He's not someone to run afoul of. You should've understood that when we failed to kill him the first time. He will bring us untold trouble!"

"Father." Liu Yunqing steepled his fingers. "The royal family has allied with the Ministry of Armed Forces and Administration. They're about to explore the giant mine. Should we..."

"It won't be that easy. If it was, we would've done it many years ago. Why haven't we in all this time? It's not just because of the grave threat from the royal family, but that the one protecting the mines is too strong!"

“But once they succeed... The nine ministries have given up on us,” Liu Yunqing raised gravely.  
“Won’t that mean...”

“Succeed?” laughed the old man before shaking his head. “It’s truly not that simple. Not to mention, those plant spirits won’t peacefully coexist with each other. There will be more fighting to come!

“They can’t threaten us so long as we don’t enter the ruins. Who knows who the final victor will be? Do you think the plant spirits that aren’t involved in this don’t have their own plans in mind as well?”

Thus far, there was only the one backing the royal family and four others involved. There were five more from the nine ministries abstaining from the operation. The Ministry of Internal Affairs, Finance, Inspectorate, Judiciary, and Commerce were not involved. Commerce’s old minister was dead, Judiciary was all dead, and the other three had been excluded from the operation. Would their plant spirits agree to the outcome?

Not to mention, plant spirits were plant spirits, the nine ministries were the nine ministries. A victor would be hard to determine even if they successfully seized the mine.

Liu Yunqing inclined his head and thought briefly. “Does Li Hao know about this?”

Did Li Hao know? If he did, would he intervene? The young man had run back and forth today, first eliminating the Wind and Cloud Pavilion and then going to and fro after his return. No one knew what he was busy with, but he looked to have lost a great deal with the pavilion. He’d suffered heavy injuries and carried a few Silver Moon martial masters out with him each time.

But... did this guy know what’d happened in the ruins?

“What... do you want to do?” The old man looked at his son.

“How about we tell him?” laughed Liu Yunqing. “Since Armed Forces excludes us, they can have fun with dog eating dog! Li Hao has some strength to his name since he was able to kill the plant spirit of the Wind and Cloud Pavilion. Even if he can’t stir up major trouble, perhaps we’ll have a show to watch.”

“And what is your goal?” asked the old man after regarding him for a while. “Just to watch a show? You need to have a goal in mind before you undertake any action—a concrete goal! You don’t do something to offend someone or to make their day difficult. You do something to accomplish a goal and obtain profits. Offending someone for no reason at all is an idiotic move.”

Liu Yunqing blinked.

“You’ve been biding your time lately, so I thought you had something in mind,” the old man continued. “So it turns out that... you just wanted to sit by and watch a show?”

Liu Yunqing didn’t say a word.

#### Chapter 918: Inviting a Savior (II)

“Our Liu family started as merchants, so I chose the Ministry of Finance when the nine ministries were formed,” sighed the old man. “We were in charge of the world’s finances. Merchants are diplomatic and do not offend people if we can help it. If we offend someone, we immediately bend at the waist when they show signs of ascension. Dignity and apologies are inconsequential in our goal to help the other forget their grudge.

“You neither send your apologies and compensation to Li Hao, nor communicate with Armed Forces and Administration. You do not collude with the other marginalized ministries or with the three great organizations. You do not look for the eight main cities or nurture your own faction. Is this all in the name of watching a show? Just for a show?”

He cast a resigned look at his son. His son was less than him. Each generation paled in comparison to the last. Of the current generation, only the ones of Armed Forces and Administration were acceptable. The rest were... mediocre. His own son had wasted a lot of time on nothing; he didn’t know what his son wanted.

Was Liu Yunqing still furious about Li Hao eliminating the Four Seas Company? Or enraged that the nine ministries had carved up the Liu family interests for themselves? If that was the case, his shrewdness ran much too shallow!

“In all honesty... I think better of Li Hao than our peers,” Liu Yunqing said slowly after a long silence. “But father, it’s one thing to think highly of Li Hao and another to actually take definitive action. The matter of the ancient civilization alone makes it hard to come to a decision. Battle Heaven stands behind Li Hao, but there is more than just Battle Heaven in the ancient civilization!

“As for the current age, there are the two parties of Skystar Town versus Silver Moon. Silver Moon is stronger, but it has not awoken...”

The old man understood his son’s meaning. His son looked favorably upon Li Hao, but didn’t offer his fealty because he didn’t think well of the young man’s chances after the second awakening. Therefore, he chose to stay on the sidelines.

There was nothing wrong with that. Indeed, many plant spirits had revived in the central region and they could continue to absorb energy. Were there even ten recovering plant spirits in all of Silver Moon province? And so what if all of them supported Li Hao?

The seven divine mountains had their own plant and beast spirits. The three great organizations must have their own as well, and none of them supported Li Hao. The three founding dukes also possessed their own, but they also didn’t support Li Hao.

City of Supernaturals had plenty of those and neither did they support Li Hao.

His son took more into account and saw through things very clearly. But because of this, he dithered even more so.

“Since you can see it all clearly, you make the decision!” the old man sighed.

“Father’s reminder is right.” Liu Yunqing nodded. “If we continue in this vein, the family will be in awkward straits once the second awakening begins. It’ll be Li Hao representing Silver Moon then!

Right now, my question is who will be representing Skystar Town? Or... if us Lius stand a chance of representing all of the ancient plant spirits in Skystar Town?"

The old man contemplated silently before responding, "It is likely only the three great organizations who are confident in standing against Li Hao—Red Moon!"

"Why do you say that?" Liu Yunqing was rather surprised.

"They... might have a main city behind them as well," chuckled the old man.

"Main city? Aren't they all in Silver Moon?"

"Yes, but have you forgotten that Ying Hongyue is from Silver Moon?" the old man continued chuckling. "Is there a difference between Li Hao and Ying Hongyue to the eight main cities? They are both the eight family bloodlines and of Silver Moon. They are both geniuses and powerhouses. They are both of modern society. Is there a difference between who they support?"

"Ying Hongyue's swift rise must have much to do with the faction behind him, and there may be more than one!"

Liu Yunqing furrowed his brows. He'd never been able to determine who stood behind Ying Hongyue, but it was true that Red Moon had a lot of patrons. A main city...? That, he'd never fathomed.

"So father means that we shouldn't work with either the royal family or Ministry of Administration? What about the City of Supernaturals? They have the twelve ancient aristocracies and each possesses a plant spirit. There's twelve total..."

"What do you think?" smiled the old man.



What do I think?

I think... the chances aren't high for their success.

Liu Yunqing sighed and fell silent. He still didn't know how he should decide. There was another point in that Li Hao was a difficult person to befriend and someone who should not be provoked. He was of the martial world, if no other reason was considered. They had zero tolerance for certain matters.

Liu Yunqing had felt that Li Hao would become a threat ever since they lost their first engagement. He'd once thought of cooperating with Li Hao, but whether it was the Four Seas Company or their other groups, all of them possessed a fatal drawback.

They'd all colluded with pirates.

It was said that Li Hao despised pirates. There would be no problem if he was a politician, but the key was that... he wasn't. Therefore, there may never have been a possibility of them working together. Liu Yunqing was well aware of this, his father deeply understood it, so his father suggested Ying Hongyue!

Liu Yunqing grasped his father's meaning. Since the nine ministries excluded the Lius and Li Hao was not an option, then they could only choose Ying Hongyue.

However, it was Liu Yunqing's opinion that Ying Hongyue was too slippery. Someone like that was difficult to deal with. Even if Ying Hongyue didn't care about their past dealings, it might be a very bad decision for the Liu family to choose him.

"You can choose to withdraw if you find it inappropriate!" the old man laughed when he saw his son stay silent. "Hand over our financial powers, our many years of wealth, and our private army. We can find a quiet place to live out our days. That might actually result in a good ending for us!"

“Sovereigns have ever been wary of those with military power, political power, or financial power. If we choose to hand over the family fortune, even a stick-in-the-mud like Li Hao will choose to forgive us, so long as we don’t commit further mistakes!

“With the unrest in the world, our fortune will be a treasure to those who seek to rule the world. It might be worthless to cultivators, however.” He looked at his son. “Choose well!”

As for the Liu family taking center stage, that was hard. Those who held the reins of money always found it difficult to reign supreme. Anyone familiar with history would know that under these circumstances, their best choice was to choose a good liege lord to be loyal to. They would receive good endings in life even if they lost the family fortune. That made for a good decision.

While he himself had some thoughts, it was ultimately up to his son.

Liu Yunqing closed his eyes without uttering a word. He hesitated in this moment. Not only him, but so did a similar scene play out at the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Another sight was present at the Inspectorate. Chen Yao looked at his father, perplexed.

“Li Hao’s been running back and forth all day. Has he accomplished anything? Does he not know that the royal family has reached an agreement with the Ministry of Administration? What is he running around for?”

Chen Zhongtian chuckled merrily and ignored his son, raising his head only when the latter turned impatient. “What are you in a rush for! Have some patience! Look at Li Hao, he’s young, but conducts his business in a very orderly way...

“You should get busy too.” He thought for a moment. “Head out and inspect the various branches in the central region. Kill whoever you should kill, execute or demote whoever deserves it. Be tougher! Once this operation concludes successfully, half of the world will follow the Li banner!”

“That fast?” Chen Yao’s eyes widened. It’d only been a few days, but half of the world was going to be Li Hao’s?

“Is that fast?” chuckled Chen Zhongtian. “Such speed is normal when the victor is seeking to dominate the world. The attempt becomes difficult once they slow down! What is meant by churning through the world? You must move swiftly once the wind stirs. That is what is meant when we talk of conquering the world, just one night of a comfortable breeze is sufficient to bring much joy!”

The hell is he going on about? Chen Yao inwardly rolled his eyes at how his old man was spouting nonsense.

“Don’t worry.” Chen Zhongtian laughed meaningfully when he saw that his son didn’t believe him at all. “It will be soon. The world is split into three parts at present—Li Hao and Silver Moon for one part, the nine ministries and royal family for another, and the three great organizations, three founding dukes, and various local overlords as a third!”

As soon as the ones in the ruins were disposed of, the third that belonged to the nine ministries and royal family would probably go to Li Hao.

“This is only the beginning of unification. He’ll then move onto cleansing the remnants of the ancient civilization—they need to either surrender, die, or be exiled. Once the other four nations answer to Silver Moon, that will be when we return to glory!” Chen Zhongtian waxed eloquent. “The four nations... are showing signs of instability. Peace that has reigned for hundreds of years is about to be broken.

“As of current, Skystar’s internal discord is too severe. Li Hao must swiftly decimate his opposition to have sufficient energy to bring against our external foes. Otherwise, Skystar is destined to break apart! The four nations will not rest easy. Whether it is Great Li or the Divine Nation, either of the two are difficult opponents.”

“The nations of the four directions can threaten Skystar?” Chen Yao asked quietly. He was indifferent about the other issues.

“And why not? Skystar’s infighting is too pronounced! As small as the four nations are, they have many powerhouses and troops. The more difficult their lives are, the more united they are. Skystar is the great nation of the central plains, but we are a skyscraper about to topple over. Why can they not set their sights on the central plains?”

Chen Yao frowned and didn’t say anything. He hadn’t paid much attention to the four nations before, but after his father’s words, perhaps he should arrange for some spies to be installed in those nations. Perhaps all of the nine ministries already had their own people in place; he’d just been unconcerned about any situation outside of home.

Chapter 919: Inviting a Savior (III)

At the same time, Evenround Martial.

“Li Hao!” raged the Black Armor. He manifested before the young man had a chance to respond. “What do you treat this place as? You come when you wish and leave when you want?? I’ll slap you to death for harassing me day and night!”

It was so damned annoying! He just wanted to quietly contemplate life and take a walk down memory lane. He wanted some peace and serenity to be a lonely hero... but this little bastard barged in again and again!

He wanted to strip Li Hao’s student status!

“I don’t wish to irritate you either, senior, but... the situation outside is changing too quickly. I’ve even encountered Saints...”

“What does that have to do with me!” snorted the Black Armor.

“I am a student of the university.”

“So what?”

“Does the dean of education not care about the survival of the students?”

“That was New Martial, not now!”

Very well then. Li Hao laughed. “Fine then, senior. Let’s not talk about this. Do you not wish to go home?”

“Am I supposed to depend on you for that?” the Black Armor asked faintly.

“Yes!”

“Heh.” That was a derisive sneer, but Li Hao didn’t mind.

“Opening the Star Gate is one part of the issue,” said the young man. “Another part is that there might be heavyweights or powerful existences around the Star Gate. The third is that the main world might have disappeared. We need to find it. Once we resolve all three, we’ll have a chance of returning!”

“That’s correct,” The Black Armor said faintly. “Which of these three can you accomplish?”

“I’ll be able to open the Star Gate if I become master of the minor world! That’s a given.” smiled Li Hao. “As for the second point, I’ll be able to hold off the enemies with the strength of being master of the minor world. And third, if even the main world couldn’t stand against our enemies and disappeared... it will be hard to locate it. But at least this will be better than not being able to accomplish anything. At least we’ll have some hope then.

“Battle Heaven is putting in effort for the future, why doesn’t the senior nurse any hope?” Li Hao looked at the Black Armor.

“Because I know how difficult this will be.”

“Things were very difficult in New Martial, but didn’t it rise to glorious heights as well?”

“Do you think of yourself as the Human King?”

“Senior, people should have dreams,” chuckled the young man. “I’m not wildly daydreaming. I’m only twenty and haven’t encountered martial dao for long...”

The Black Armor paused. These words sounded familiar. He seemed to remember something from very, very long ago. Someone liked to speak in this manner as well. I’m still young and have all these accomplishments at my age. Who can predict the future?

He closed his eyes and didn’t respond.

“I know senior is proud of New Martial and finds modern humans beneath your consideration,” Li Hao continued. “But if my physical body is strong enough to coalesce thousands of supernatural characters, can senior predict my future?”

“The world’s limit determines your limit,” the Black Armor responded calmly. “Even if you do become the master of the world, this is where your upper limit lies!”

“No, the limit of the world is not the key to humanity’s upper limit!” Li Hao frowned. “If this world isn’t strong enough, then I’ll break this world. If that still isn’t strong enough, then heaven and earth are the world, the universe is the world, chaos itself is the world! All is as I wish and the world is beneath my feet!”

“Does the senior think that the limits of Silver Moon are the limits of the human race? The human body is the greatest treasure! As cultivators, we know that martial dao trains the heart. However broad our hearts are, is however broad the world is!

“I don’t think I can do it,” Li Hao said seriously. “But I don’t think that the upper limit of cultivators is denoted by the world. It’s not important whether or not I can attain my goals, the important thing is that the senior doesn’t even think about the possibilities. No wonder you’re only a Saint!”

“.....” The Black Armor paused. No wonder you’re only a Saint!

“Senior, powerhouses abounded in New Martial. There was Empyrean King after Saint, Exalted Emperor after that level, and the Human King over everyone. They all existed! It’s not like they didn’t. Since they existed, why not follow in their footsteps?

“Of course, you might not succeed, but we’ve got to have dreams, right? Or is senior’s dream to stay here until you die of old age?” The young man felt that the Black Armor’s mindset was wrong, very wrong.

The New Martial citizens that he knew, including Director General Wang and the others, all had more aspirations than this one. Even though they were weaker, they gave Li Hao the feeling that they had more dreams they wanted to pursue.

Why was that?

Was this all that the dean of education at Evenround Martial University and the right hand man of the Human King’s sister was good for?

The Black Armor remained quiet. Very quiet.

“Dreams do not put food on the table,” he suddenly said after a very long time. “Perhaps the New Martial citizens that you’re familiar with are too far removed from those powerhouses. Meanwhile, I am... very close!

“Though I am so close to them, I feel that I am looking up at a mountain towering into the heavens. They can be observed, but induce despair when we’re that close. Do you understand?”

“No!” Li Hao shook his head. “Why should you despair? When I was very weak, everyone said that my teacher was the martial dao genius of this world, the ceiling of Silver Moon’s martial world. My only thoughts then were that this ceiling might one day be me!”

“That’s not the same...”

“What’s different about it?” Li Hao shook his head. “Forget it, some people like to split hairs. I don’t like talking to these kinds of people. There’s no point in preaching to deaf ears. I am just a seven element Arcanus, whereas senior was once a Saint. I am nothing to you.

“But one thing senior ought to know, and that’s that you are the dean of education. I don’t care if you want to live or die, but what about your students? As part of New Martial, you won’t set even your students to the side, will you? I’ve just resurrected the director general of Security at Battle Heaven a few days ago. Perhaps I can bring back your students.

“Puppets are strong, but senior should have a way to extract their mental strength, right? We can revive them if we have sufficient Water of Life and indestructible matter. Does senior not wish to ensure that either?

“I don’t care what the senior thinks, just that if you’ll be involved or not as their teacher. If you choose to abstain, then I shall never visit Evenround Martial again! But that also means that I will not offer any benefits to the university. Once the second awakening begins and the senior wishes to leave, you must seize benefits with your skill alone. I will leave you alone if you leave me alone, but I’ll cut down the senior if you provoke me or plague the world!”



“You... cut me down?” That angered the Black Armor to the point of laughter. “You want to kill me?”

“Like I just said, only if the senior provokes me!” Li Hao replied calmly. “I will unite the world soon and Silver Moon is mine! No matter what the senior thinks, I will be the king of Silver Moon then! I will have to kill you if the senior randomly kills, raids, or steals!”

“Just you alone?” sneered the Black Army.

“Just me!” Li Hao nodded. “Just me, the one who killed Hong Tu today, the one who executed the white tree of the Wind and Cloud Pavilion. I’ve eliminated this faction in one day with a few resurrected plant spirits and Director General Wang of Battle Heaven. Is that enough?”

“It took me only half a year to accomplish all this! I will delay the second awakening for another half a year or full year. Will a Saint be anything special then?” He stared fearlessly at the Black Armor. “It’s been six short months, but I’ve already recruited a dozen plant spirits to my banner and taken over half of the world. I started from scratch! You can ask Jiang Yingli and Li Shengzhang if I can accomplish all that I speak of with another six months.”

The Black Armor didn’t say anything. The two robot cats had followed Li Hao in, but they were silent at the moment as well. They had to listen to their teacher in times like these.

The Black Armor looked around, silently considering the puppets that’d appeared. Some were eavesdropping, others were taking stock of the situation. No one said a word. He couldn’t be bothered to respond to Li Hao if he was by himself, but... he was a teacher.

Indeed, he was a teacher.

I still have a few hundred students, the Black Armor self deprecated.

“What do you want me to do?”

“Kill enemies!”

“Who is the enemy?”

“It might be a plant spirit, it might be the vice commander of Skystar Town that’s turned traitor... I don’t know.”

“The vice commander of Skystar Town?” intoned the Black Armor. “Can you bring me out into the world?”

“I can try. I had no issues bringing an Immortal with me. But a Saint... I’ve yet to try that. On the other hand, I’m stronger than before, so I might be able to do so.”

“Evenround’s prices are clearly marked if one of us is tasked with a mission!” The Black Armor suddenly grinned. “How about this, you will resurrect ten students for each operation I participate in.”

There were four hundred students at the school, so ten at a time wasn’t much. But the weakest of these students was Apex, and the strongest was Immortal. Director General Wang had consumed ten thousand drops of Water of Life and five trunks of Immortal plant spirits for his revival. If the young man was to resurrect all of the students here... it would take an astronomical amount of resources!

“What if I don’t have enough resources after killing all of the enemies?”

“If not... you can... choose to revive them via mental strength. That will naturally weaken their strength, but they will be alive again!” offered the Black Armor. That method consumed far fewer resources.

Li Hao breathed out and nodded with a smile. “Very well, we have a deal. But if I may be so bold... how much strength have you recovered, senior?”

“Once we reach the place, give me ten thousand drops of Water of Life and one hundred million of the mysterious power stone that you speak of. I will not be afraid of any Saints then!”

Just listen to him! He wouldn’t be afraid of any Saints! It looked like even so many treasures hadn’t resurrected his physical body. The dean had only recovered some energy. So... was he not a Saint?

If he didn’t fear any Saints, was he an... Emptyrean King at his peak?

“That’s too much!” Li Hao shook his head. “I can barely manage to collect sufficient Water of Life, but I’ll only have half that many mysterious power stones even if you empty my storage rings!”

Was this level of expenditure worth it?

It was if they could secure the mine. There was far more than that in the mine and he could collect more Water of Life through the plant spirits.

“Give it all to me.” The Black Armor was very calm. “But I’ll be able to handle crippled Saints only. If we encounter any peak Saints... you’ll have to pray for good fortune!”

Li Hao took a deep breath and cursed to himself again. These were all energy eating monsters! He wouldn’t have enough to feed them no matter how much wealth he had! Everyone was like this! I don’t think I can live anymore if we don’t end up seizing the mine.

“Fine!” he agreed with a gnash of his teeth. Ten thousand drops of Water of Life were the equivalent of thirty million mysterious power stones. Plus another fifty million for resurrection meant eighty million in total.

For that, he'd invited a savior to join his next operation. But after this battle, he would have to resurrect ten more people. Even if they were only Apexes, it would cost at least ten million stones to resurrect just one of them, no?

That meant a total expenditure of one hundred and eighty million stones!

And if the plant spirits involved also wanted a payout... Was this war? It was just setting money on fire! It would be quite a loss for Li Hao if he didn't collect at least three hundred million stones from the battle.

#### Chapter 920: Inviting a Savior (IV)

"Then come with me now, senior. There's no time to be lost. Those guys might make a mess of things and end up detonating the mine. That will really be a loss of everything then."

The Black Armor hesitated and turned to the puppets. "Stay here and don't go off anywhere! I'll be right back..."

A complicated mix of emotions assailed him. He truly hadn't wanted to leave school grounds; he just wanted to quietly wait here for death. But these students were young and not willing to accept such a fate.

"It'll be quick. Let's go, senior!" smiled Li Hao.

The Black Armor said nothing and cast a quick glance around him when the young man deployed his personal domain. "This thing of yours has limited isolation properties. It can bring me out of the ruins now, but it will be difficult for me to return after I absorb the gains from battle!"

"One battle will consume a good portion of your strength," chuckled an unconcerned Li Hao. "What'll be so hard about that then?"

"....." Kid, do you mean that you won't be replenishing my strength after I'm depleted from battle? That's what you mean, isn't it?

Fine, it makes a certain sense. Whatever. The dean didn't care.

When the Black Armor saw that the two robot cats were going to follow him into the personal domain, he leveled a hard stare at them. "You wait here! Only I am needed, what are you two doing heading out as well?"

"Teacher, we can come along to run errands," Jiang Yingli quickly said. "Li Hao's new dao is very interesting, so we'd like to observe it..."

Bullshit! cursed the Black Armor. They just didn't want to stay in the ruins anymore. He didn't refuse them; the group quickly exited the ruins.

Ponderous heavenly might descended the moment they emerged in the outside world and the void shook violently! Li Hao's domain of seven elements flared with power to stabilize its local space. The young man frowned with surprise. Was the Black Armor stronger than Director General Wang even in this condition?

Li Hao had only been a five element Arcanus when he fetched the director general and five sleeping plant spirits. The ripples then weren't as strong as this time's!

"It is a new sky indeed!" laughed the Black Armor as he tilted his head back at the firmament. "The void is a bit unstable and the will of heaven does not tolerate us. These heavens are starting to have their own consciousness and reject those of New Martial."

What a feeling it was, to be lords of one era and subjects in the next. New Martial was no more and even the heavens refused to accept them.

Li Hao looked up as well. Though he didn't see anything, he knew that this patch of the world was possibly starting to develop its own consciousness. He smiled, not minding the situation. "If the heavens do have a consciousness, it's a randomly scattered one. You can just ignore it."

“It’s a good thing for people of your age if the heavens are conscious.” The Black Armor looked at him with surprise. “That means they will favor you a bit more...”

Yet the young man didn’t seem to like that?

“I don’t need the heavens to favor me and I don’t like having someone control my life,” Li Hao laughed. “My life and death is not up to destiny and my prosperity is not determined by the heavens! I would be highly displeased, if in the end, everyone thinks that I succeeded because I was fated to!

“All of my efforts and hard work would be negated by a simple ‘the heavens decreed it so’. Wouldn’t that be a rejection of everything that I am?”

The heavens decree it so? Li Hao laughed dismissively. How hard had he worked to walk to his present heights? Was his labor supposed to be nullified through a simple word of fate?

How dull would that be!

The Black Armor turned over his words and finally regarded Li Hao with more attention than he had before. “You’re right, heaven’s will doesn’t mean much of anything. The will of heaven in New Martial was the Heavenly Emperor, but he was ultimately killed.

“It then became Exalted Emperor Qin, but he couldn’t emerge triumphant over the Human King. So you’re right, heaven’s will is only aimed at weaklings. It cowers when it encounters the strong!”

“There was a will of heaven in New Martial?” Li Hao grinned with interest.

“Of course.” They chatted as they walked. “The will of heaven was much stronger then as this is just a minor world with a budding consciousness. Heaven’s will was very strong in New Martial and it could manipulate the world! It was ultimately erased from existence and replaced by the Human King. However, he wasn’t interested in acting in the same capacity.”

“The Human King has such charisma!” Li Hao nodded. “Emperors have always been hailed as the son of heaven. If I become Silver Moon’s king, I’ll have people call me Dao Master.”

“Dao Master?”

“Yes, the master of great dao. What does senior think about that?”

“.....” The Black Armor didn’t want to respond. You’re a boy wet behind the ears with quite a lot of courage and bold talk. Li Hao was very interesting at times.

The young man chuckled and ensured that his domain remained stable as they flew toward the Skystar Commander Office. They were close by, so although the world brought a lot of pressure to bear, Li Hao’s personal domain held up beneath the stress.

He’d wanted to scare the Black Armor, but thought better of it when he saw how indifferent the man was. He’s so boring.

The Ninth Division leader was an externally aloof, but inwardly passionate guy. This one was cold inside and out, and didn’t care if he died or not. To be honest, Li Hao found it difficult to spend time with someone like this.

.....

Within the ruins.

The others didn’t react when the Black Armor entered; the plant spirits remained calm. However, Director General Wang’s expression shifted.

“Martial uncle!” He quickly walked up and dipped his head, inwardly tensing with nerves.

“You’re a generation off,” the Black Armor responded calmly. “All martial university students are one family and of the same generation. I come from Demonic Martial and you’re from Capital Martial. I have never taught there, so you can just call me senior!”

“I wouldn’t dare!” Director General Wang was wreathed in smiles. “It’s such a delightful surprise that martial uncle is still alive...”

“You didn’t come visit me even though this is such a delight.” The Black Armor immediately deflated the lie. “Is Daomaster Li still alive?”

“He is...”

“Good.” The Black Armor nodded. “It’s good that he’s alive, that’s very good. What a pity that it’s likely to be an uncomfortable existence.”

Daomaster Li?

Li Hao blinked and looked at Director General Wang.

“The Ninth Division leader!” transmitted the man.

Li Hao understood, but still found it strange. A Li surname and a sword wielder... Were they from the same family? Granted, there were many with the same surname that wielded the sword in New Martial.



“This is Skystar Town?” The Black Armor looked around, ignoring the plant spirits. Some of them stiffened when they recognized him. He ignored their reactions and looked through the disordered core origin.

“Silver Moon’s biggest mine still stands. That is the greatest silver lining in this situation.”

“We will have to rely on martial uncle’s might to seize the mine in this operation,” Director General Wang hastily said.

“Might? Are you making fun of me?”

“No...” The director general nearly sobbed. How would I dare make fun of you?

Li Hao looked strangely at them. Was there a need for the director general’s behavior? Was he that afraid of the man? Even if the dean was one generation older and used to be a Saint, the director general had just killed a Saint. Hadn’t the white tree been a Saint? The dean didn’t seem to have revived to the same degree as the tree.

Director General Wang couldn’t be bothered with Li Hao. What did the young man know?! The man in front of them... was different. He was one who could bring countless imperial descendants to heel. Any of these children were unbridled and enormously proud of their backgrounds. What were the duties of a dean of education?

To punish them! He could hit or beat them whenever he wished. Would this responsibility fall on the shoulders of a normal person? Was enormous strength all that was needed? They could go to an Empyrean King for that, why use a mere Saint to keep these students in line?

It was because he had a formidable background as well! It was so illustrious that these imperial descendants didn’t dare cause trouble. They could only meekly fall in line!

Few were those in New Martial who could instill fear in the hearts of exalted emperors and make them follow instructions. It was rare that anyone could whip them into shape.

The Black Armor didn't care what he was thinking and looked around again. "Sudden death, disordered core origin—who turned traitor among the eight families? I haven't been willing to consider it, but now we must. It can't have been General Pagoda, could it?"

"....." Director General Wang quickly protested, "How can it be? Martial uncle mustn't think random thoughts..."

"I'm just saying." The Black Armor smiled. "It's just that your guardian general's ancestor... Well, the ancestor was fine. But its companion exalted emperor, the Pagoda King... There's not much we can say about him."

Li Hao started and looked at the director general. The Pagoda King? Was it alright to directly use the title of an exalted emperor? Wouldn't there be repercussions?

Director General Wang didn't have the bandwidth to explain to Li Hao. "That was in the early days of New Martial, it was different later on. Not to mention, the Battle Heaven characters are different..."

"True enough!" nodded the Black Armor. "Then you tell me, who turned traitor?"

"It's... hard for me to say."

"That's fair. It seems impossible to me, but it did so happen. What you speak of is impossible to consider. Can it be the Zhaos who walked the path of energy?" murmured the Black Armor. "Their ancestor was Alliance Head Zhao, an outstanding man of the age. His descendants shouldn't be thus, should they?"

Director General Wang looked ruefully at the man. Stop guessing, what's the point in that? You can say their names, I can't!

The Black Armor grinned. "I'm just saying a bit more because I've just come out. Don't be afraid, I'm the one saying their names, not you. What are you afraid of?"

"That's true! I'm not... afraid!" the director general laughed dryly.

"Give me the items." The Black Armor looked at Li Hao. "Otherwise, I might not be able to fight even this guy with my current level of strength."

"Martial uncle is too humble..." The director general was ignored.