

The Ages 1141

Chapter 1141 - Spacetime Loops and Book of Tales

Orderia was a world of talented elites. Those who squandered their talent there were few and far between. If there was anyone whose peers had already achieved godhood while they still remained a samsaran, they would be exiled to the nearby stellunar source worlds. As such, the legacy of Orderia and the distribution of sheer talent and might in their society was strictly maintained.

"A true superior lifeform indeed. Every single one of their members are basically gods! It isn't just a few talented geniuses from time to time!" That sounded like a nightmare to Tianming. "Most people on the Flameyellow Continent are only at the Unity or Heavenly Will stages, but their powers combined allowed me to fight Sovereign Xi, Bodhi, and even a hundred thousand gods. If the celestial orderians who live on a world with a nova source believe in me and take me as their emperor one day, I wonder how much more powerful I'll be."

An emperor of a mortal world was still a mere mortal at the end of the day. They couldn't outshine the countless beams of bright light coming from the sun that illuminated the entire continent. It was no surprise that Orderia was at the center of countless stellunar source worlds and mortal planes. Every single person there was capable of lording over billions of normal people.

"Even though not every one of them are necessarily talented and of good character and mind, it's already a miraculous stroke of luck for one to be able to reincarnate in their society." Tianming was no doubt impressed as he imagined the prospect of having elite parents in an elite clan with elite access to cultivation resources and a rich nova source. Even the most pathetic of people could be molded into someone with a lifespan of thousands of years under such conditions.

"Reincarnation is a skill, it seems," Lingfeng sighed.

The three of them were already really lucky to make it to this place from the mortal world in the first place. They passed through countless flaming clouds and came to the nova source world that had tens of millions of years of history. Once they were past the layer of flaming clouds, the burning heat began dissipating, revealing a boundless world before them. This world looked like it was sandwiched between the flaming clouds above and the core of the star below. It was completely unlike the molten purgatory everyone had imagined—there were vast continents, and even seas across the surface.

The only difference was that the sky of this world had no sun. Instead, there was a sea of fire above. Rain didn't seem like it would be a possibility here, but if it did, it would probably rain fire. The world was beautiful and boundless in a manner that shook one's soul. Despite the powerful waves of the nova source washing over the place, it didn't seem uncomfortable in the slightest.

"The fusion formation must've filtered the nova source into a form that can be absorbed and used for cultivation before letting it permeate the rest of the world." The world was stable thanks to the fusion formation.

They didn't really have the time to properly admire the world, being far too high up in the sky. As the attractive forces of the star drew them in, they began plunging down until, after falling about a million meters, they finally reached the ground. The sky of Orderia seemed so much higher up. The three of them began looking around blankly like country bumpkins.

"Darn, aren't these divine herbs? Every tree here has a divine pattern..."

They had fallen into a forest. Tianming saw countless trees stretching hundreds and even a thousand meters in height. Each and every one of them had divine patterns. They even seemed to bear delicious fruit. However, none of it seemed to have been harvested.

This world seemed like it had all kinds of things—divine hazards up in the sky, divine herbs on the surface, and divine ores beneath the ground. What would be considered treasures in the lower worlds were commonplace here. To the celestial orderians, such things were all too normal. They only valued those that had high-grade divine patterns. The herbs, ores, and hazards of the normal world resulted from fractured divine patterns being pulled down by the world's attractive forces, which then mingled with spiritual energy. In other words, this place seemed to be the soup kitchen of all those resources, while the lower worlds got the leftovers.

"What in the world... what other goodies can be found here? No wonder I was so 'malnourished'! I've been served pitiful scraps the whole time!" Tianming said self-mockingly, much to Lingfeng and Xiaoxiao's laughter. The ignorant view the mortal world had of the way things were here seemed to be bliss. Finding out how insignificant one was in the grand scheme of things would be a terrifying prospect for many.

"I'm suddenly reminded of something," Xiaoxiao said.

"Let's hear it."

"Space is the fundamental essence of the universe, and time flows through it. The flow of time is like a river that doesn't have an end in sight, but there has to be a beginning somewhere. What would the starting point of the universe be? The birth of the universe? What happened before that? Was it just chaos? What comes before chaos? Will one eventually reach a singularity through near-endless regression? Speaking about space, we now know that the lower levels of the cosmic aether and astralscape of order are above the Welkin plane. But what's beyond that? Wu You said it's an empty void. How far would that void stretch? If there's a limit, what's above it? What lies in the space out of space?"

"So what's your conclusion?" Tianming asked.

"Promise not to laugh. Just treat it as an empty conjecture."

"Enlighten me, o great philosopher of nature!"

"Well... it feels to me like everything is a closed loop. Think of a thread with a start and end. Then, put the two ends of the thread together to form a loop. That way, you can't easily distinguish the start and end points. For all we know, it could be at any point of the loop. If time is a closed loop, then as we look further and further toward the starting end, we might see the destruction of a universe that precedes its creation. Countless cycles with countless untold stories of countless peoples, endlessly repeating. If this cycle is infinite, it isn't a stretch to say that what is happening now has happened before and will always continue happening completely identically down to the smallest detail, such as at what point in space each and every grain of sand is located.

"If space is a closed loop, we can travel all the way up to the astralscape of order and beyond it to what might be the realm of chaos. And if we continue traveling through that, we'd eventually reach the Welkin plane once more. That way, there will be no space outside of space. It's just an all-encompassing loop of space. It's often said that every albus in our bodies is a universe in itself, so it isn't a stretch to think that, in those universes, there exist countless other albi," Xiaoxiao said earnestly.

"So space and time are closed loops is the gist of it?"

"Yeah."

"That sounds interesting. But as far as insignificant existences like us are concerned, it isn't something that affects us. It might not even be possible for us to verify. We should be more concerned with surviving to the next day instead of considering what'll happen to us at the end of the time cycle."

"Well, I can't argue with that." Xiaoxiao seemed a little downcast from Tianming's mediocre reaction.

"Xiaoxiao, want to try considering another possibility?" Tianming asked.

"What possibility?"

"Imagine opening up a storybook. The book tells a tale with its own start and end. It contains the lives of people, who, in the context of the plot, are living, thinking beings like you. The book is the only universe they've ever known."

"Okay."

"To the people in the book, your theories might not apply. There's no closed loop there, only a defined start and end. Closed loops seem to imply an automatic restart of the loop once you reach the end, regardless of the actions and intent of the individuals within that universe. But if spacetime isn't a closed loop, there could be an even higher existence that regards our universe like a book of tales. To these beings, we are characters in a story that has a beginning and an end."

"So you're saying there's humans outside of our world?"

"Well, 'human' is a really specific category. They might not necessarily be people as we understand it. Perhaps it's some kind of universal law that governs everything in our universe and has no agency of its own. It might even be an existence we can't even begin to comprehend on our terms. Well, this is just another empty conjecture of mine. We can't really say which is true without observing it ourselves first. Either way, it doesn't hurt to have an active imagination. In fact, it helps us frame our experiences better as we move forward."

"Alright. Once I can freely travel about in the astralscape of order, I want to try looking for the end of the universe. That'll be my new life goal," Xiaoxiao said.

"Congratulations on finding your vocation."

With a new goal in sight, Xiaoxiao would be able to let go of her past. Freely roaming throughout the world without any responsibilities was something Tianming yearned to do as well. However, he had to stay grounded to watch over those he was beholden to.

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Three days later, the three of them finally made it out of the forest.

"This place really is empty! There isn't a single soul in sight after three days of traveling."

In such a vast world, lifebound beasts could roam freely without worrying about space constraints. Even Lan Huang didn't feel like a gigantic beast in this world. The past three days, it had been running about in the forest until even it got sick of it. Now, only Ying Huo and Xian Xian's spiritform were standing on Tianming's shoulders. As for Meow Meow, it had been napping for the whole past month.

"Let's hope there's some sign of people outside the forest," Tianming said as he looked for high ground.

Chapter 1142 - False Genius

Looking ahead, they saw countless mountains in the distance. Thanks to the flaming clouds, the water that flowed through the rivers was boiling and the sea and lakes in the distance looked like molten lava.

"How vast." Lingfeng felt a sense of awe as they stood upon a mountain peak overlooking Orderia.

"So Qingyu is somewhere in this world," Tianming said.

"Yeah. There's someone in the distance," Lingfeng said when he seemed to notice some activity in the valley that was accompanied by the cries of a huge beast.

"Let's head there!" Tianming was rather anxious. He wanted to blend into Orderia without letting anyone know who he was. Back at the Divine Moon Realm, his cover still couldn't hide the fact that he was from the Flameyellow Continent. However, this time would be different, as nobody would recognize him.

They descended into the valley and saw people in combat. This was their first contact with the natives of this world. There were three of them, a young man and woman, as well as a hooded fellow. It was less of a battle than a pursuit. The youths were bloodied and haggard. Even so, in terms of looks and aura, they appeared far superior to the divine moonrace, even from a distance. They looked to be in their twenties, but they were already sixth-level ascendants or better. Huiyue Jie had only become a fifth-level ascendant around the age of fifty, but he was already considered a peak genius among the divine moonrace. While Tianming and the rest didn't know how high these two were in the hierarchy of might in Orderia, they were nonetheless shocked.

The one chasing after the two was clad in a large blue mantle that only revealed his eyes. He was accompanied by a lifebound beast with more than three thousand stars that was about a kilometer in length. It burrowed out of the ground and looked to be a gigantic eighteen-headed snake with blue draconic scales. Each of its heads had long, hooked fangs. Wherever it slithered, trees fell and ground cracked; the two youths were unable to stop its advance at all. The pursuer was at least a tenth-level ascendant and didn't look older than fifty. As far as Orderia was concerned, all of them were considered young.

When Tianming and the rest were nearby, the male immediately turned around and knelt towards his pursuer. "Stop! I'm not going to run anymore, I give up! Friend from the Supracloud Sanctuary, I'll let you kill me! Just hear my final wish!" He had a pair of sharp eyes, long, purple hair and wore a long robe. He was rather attractive.

"What's your final wish?" the pursuer said, stopping.

"My junior apprentice sister and I have loved each other for a long time. We just officially got together! But our relationship has been pure, so we haven't consummated our love yet. Please, great one, give us a chance to experience this sublime union once before we die!"

"Senior, you..." The woman wore a light-green dress. Though she was injured, her beauty was still clearly apparent. She rolled her eyes and almost fainted at hearing those words. It was nothing short of impressive for her beloved to have that on his mind at death's door.

"Hahaha! To think that the top disciple of the Azuresoul Palace would be that frivolous. To think that someone like you is purported to be able to enter the Voidsky Realm," said the pursuer as he chuckled.

That instant, the couple took out a divine tome and unleashed its power, causing a fierce torrent of frost to completely envelop the pursuer. The chill spread a kilometer wide and even froze the gigantic snake monster. This was their chance!

"Come on, let's go!" The man immediately tugged on his lover's hand, much to her shock. However, the ice shattered before they were able to make it very far. The angry beast and master came charging again.

"It's pointless. Where else can you run?" At that moment, the pursuer spotted Tianming and the rest. "Scram!"

"Who are you talking to?" Tianming said.

"You've seen what you shouldn't have. Better stay there. I'll take care of you in a bit."

"Beat him up!" Tianming ordered. Lan Huang and Ying Huo immediately attacked. At their current level, defeating a tenth-level ascendant was a piece of cake. Lan Huang took down the snake with a bite and a tackle while Ying Huo hit the beastmaster so bad he immediately ran.

"Better pick your enemies carefully next time, lest you offend someone you shouldn't," Tianming said. Showing off and being the hero felt great.

"Our hero!" The man happily came to him. "Umm... thank you for saving our lives," he said sternly, wanting to maintain what dignity he still had in front of his sweetheart.

"No worries. Saving you guys isn't a big deal. I'm more interested in how you and your junior will express your mutual love," Tianming said.

"Hahahaha... uhh..." He looked at his junior and awkwardly cleared his throat. "I'm Yu Ziqian. May I know how to address you three heroes?"

"I'm really proud of my name... It's Boss. Just Boss."

"That's so badass..." Yu Ziqian shot him a thumbs up. It was obvious that Tianming was keeping his identity hidden, so he imagined he must have been someone from a really high station. His lover still hadn't said anything yet, still recovering from her close brush with death.

Yu Ziqian continued, "I'm sure the three of you are heading to the Voidsky Realm as well, right?"

It didn't sound like an actual realm, but a name of a place.

"That's right."

"I wonder if I could accompany you on your journey, Boss."

"Do you want me to protect you?"

"Well... the Supracloud Sanctuary is far too shameless. It's one thing for them to have a grudge, but they dared to target disciples of Azuresoul Palace that're heading toward the Voidsky Realm! It's disgusting! I'm fuming because of them!"

"Senior, if you hadn't pretended to be a genius for the past ten years, nobody would've turned their sights on us. It's all your fault, isn't it? You kept on pretending to be a false genius all this time, but you can't even rival me!" the woman said resentfully.

"Who said I was faking it? I'm—whatever, normal people wouldn't understand!"

"Just keep pretending, why don't you? I wonder how you'll face the masters now that you've been exposed!"

Yu Ziqian could only sigh helplessly.

"Friend, do you still want to travel together?" Tianming asked.

"Sure thing!"

"Are there many others heading to the Voidsky Realm as well?"

"Of course. Apart from the celestial orderians, all disciples from every sect under the age of thirty yearn to gain the recognition of the Voidsky Realm. There'll be at least a billion people heading there!"

Tianming looked at Lingfeng. Such a huge gathering was the perfect place to gather information. They might find out about where Qingyu was, or even how to hatch his fifth Primordial Chaos Beast. If anything, the little egg was growing more and more impatient.

"Alright, let's go!"

Chapter 1143 - Myriad Solar Sects

Tianming was completely clueless about Orderia, so he tagged along with Yu Ziqian and his junior, Mo Yuling, to the Voidsky Realm. Mo Yuling seemed quite mad about Yu Ziqian pretending to be a genius. Her attitude toward him was completely cold. Though she was beautiful, her face was filled with resentment; she seemed hard to approach.

Even toward her benefactor, Tianming, she didn't bother to approach him and instead rushed to continue the journey. It was clear from the way she talked that Yu Ziqian had obtained lots of special treatment, as he was considered to be a peak genius in Orderia, yet he was actually a weakling that couldn't even rival his junior, much to Tianming's puzzlement.

"I've heard that there's people who hide their talents to catch people off guard, but to think that there are those who'd pretend to be talented... There's no way nobody has noticed in a place filled with elites

like Orderia." As to how powerful Yu Ziqian actually was, that was something Tianming could only find out in actual combat.

Though, it was their private matter at the end of the day and Tianming didn't bother looking too deeply into it. He hadn't met a new person in the past three days, apart from these two, so he was planning to find out more about Orderia and Qingyu from them.

Soon, they reached the bank of a large river. According to Yu Ziqian, the source of the Firelotus River was near the Voidsky Realm. Following the river to its source was a good way to shorten the time required to reach their goal, but there were wildbeasts in the water to fend off along the way. It was said that the wildbeasts that had absorbed nova source were all on the level of divine beasts. There were many that flocked together as a pack, and some that even formed clans.

When they reached the river, Tianming brought Lan Huang out to carry all of them on its back as it swiftly swam along the stream. Having nothing better to do, Tianming, Ying Huo, Meow Meow, and Xian Xian all laid on Lan Huang's back to 'sunbathe'. He also engaged in casual conversation with Yu Ziqian, trying to tease out more information about the world as a whole.

"Boss, your lifebound beasts have more than four thousand stars each! You must be from a top clan or sect to be able to reach heights like these at your age!" Yu Ziqian praised.

"Stop trying to guess my identity," Tianming said.

"Fine!"

"What kind of sect do you think your Azuresoul Palace is?" Tianming asked. He knew that the Violetglory Star, a similar place to Orderia, had many continents and thousands of sects. It shouldn't be too different here.

"Let's see... if I had to say, it would be second-rate. There's at most a dozen sects or so that are more powerful than us," Yu Ziqian said with pride.

Tianming continued to tease out more and more information in a similar fashion. As Yu Ziqian lacked the imagination, he never guessed that Tianming had come from the world below. Not to mention, there were many foreign aliens that would come from the surrounding lunar outposts. Those that didn't have some measure of power wouldn't be able to remain in Orderia for long, and Tianming, with his power, was sure to have a high status.

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After a day or two of talking to them, Tianming had a rough grasp of Orderia. The celestial orderians were the unquestioned rulers of the star and the most powerful faction of all; at least half of all territories on the sun were in their control. They were basically all totem users with staggering numbers, making up a tenth of Orderia's population.

There were a few thousand branch families like the divine moonrace that made up half of Orderia's population. The celestial orderians had ordered themselves around an ancient and traditional clan structure. Though it seemed more primitive than sects or empires, they were far more combat capable. After all, everyone in the clans had similar bloodlines and were categorized according to bane-ring lineage. The group cohesion among them was terrifying, especially with the legacies they shared.

Unlike empires or sects made of people with no blood relation to one another, they were all considered the same family. Every deed they did for the clan was considered a service unto their family. As a consequence, they were far more motivated to fight for the group. Comparatively, Great Emperor Xuanyuan was able to have his will be inherited by descendants two hundred thousand years into the future.

In contrast, empires and sects included many factions, which meant that compromise was always a necessity. Motivations differed, so it was harder to get people to fight for the same cause or win the support of everyone. Rebellions and revolts weren't uncommon; for instance, the Sterling House of Fang of the Archaion Sect had placed the priorities of their own clan ahead of the sect's. It was one thing to betray an empire or sect, but betraying one's clan meant turning against their family, ancestors and lineage!

Thanks to the stable organizational structure, the celestial orderians were able to rule unchallenged for millions of years. The legacy they had accrued in the meantime would surely be terrifying, to say the least. Coupled with the branch families, their numbers made up more than ninety percent of all totem users in Orderia. It went without saying that their hegemony allowed them to hoard the best resources for their own use.

Even so, in the long history of Orderia, the celestial orderians hadn't always been the undisputed rulers. There were empires and sects that dominated everything on the sun in aeons long past, and their descendants lived on in the present day. That was why there were beastmasters, normal humans, and even some specters, instead of solely totem users. There were even some cultivators with unique methods as well, adding to the rich diversity.

All the sects and clans also had millions of years of history to boast of. The non-celestial orderians formed more than six thousand sects and three thousand peak clans, as well as thousands of other empires. These factions all revolved around the celestial orderians, striking a fine balance of power. Collectively, the factions and empires were known as the Myriad Solar Sects.

In short, the sun was split into two sides, one that incorporated the celestial orderians and their thousands of branch families, and the other that was occupied by the Myriad Solar Sects. Naturally, the Myriad Solar Sects weren't a monolith. Some of them were openly loyal servants of the celestial orderians. No doubt, there were many others that pledged secret allegiance to them as well. However, many would band together as a matter of necessity to avoid being overwhelmed by the celestial orderians. Though, among themselves, they also fought for resources, territories, and treasures. Every year, new grudges, political marriages, alliances, extinctions, and annexations of territory occurred.

Chapter 1144 - Domineering Aura

Yu Ziqian's Azuresoul Palace and the Supracloud Sanctuary were among the Myriad Solar Sects that had irreconcilable grudges with each other. In the past millions of years, the celestial orderians wanted to completely monopolize the nova source, so if the Myriad Solar Sects wanted to survive on the sun, they would have to struggle together to continue their legacies.

That was what war looked like on a nova source world. Divine patterns on such a world created divine ores, herbs, and hazards. The larger the territory, the higher the probability that such treasures would appear in it, allowing its population to benefit from and raising the power of that faction as a whole. If a

faction was powerful enough to conquer other territories, that meant more resources and more prosperity for them, which was the main motivation behind the territorial struggles.

Even though the Myriad Solar Sects had many separate internal factions, Orderia's total territory was only around a thousand times the size of the Flameyellow Continent. In other words, if each of those factions had their own territory, it would be about the size of the Archaion Divine Realm, which was already quite a large area.

Yet the celestial orderians occupied more than half of the sun, boasting power on a completely unimaginable scale. One would expect that such a powerful race would be able to completely swallow up the smaller factions of the myriad sects one by one and completely dominate. That begged the question—why did the Myriad Solar Sects still exist? That was the key to Tianming's destination: the Voidsky Realm. What he knew so far was that the existence of the Myriad Solar Sects hinged upon it through teasing the information out of the conversations.

"The Voidsky Realm is a special place in Orderia. It has a long history, far longer than the celestial orderians' own. On this nova source world, shifts in power occur relatively frequently, but the Voidsky Realm has persisted for all time. It's said that the Voidsky Realm is a continent without a sky that only has a single wooden house and a single mirror. Within the wooden house is a place called the Sky Palace. Some call it a world in itself. No matter who enters the Sky Palace to cultivate, they'll emerge as a peak elite across the entirety of Orderia. Those that do never reveal the details of what's inside. They also band together for mutual protection. That's why the Sky Palace is a cultivation sanctuary filled with mystery. Every member of the Sky Palace is famous across the whole of Orderia."

The Sky Palace was a place that those in the Myriad Solar Sects yearned to go.

"Anyone that becomes a member has to leave their original sect at the age of five hundred and properly enter the Sky Palace to serve them. It's also the main pillar of support for the Myriad Solar Sects, so it's no surprise that most of its members are from the sects as well. Regardless of age, every single one of them are the strongest people in their respective generations." Tianming repeated all the information he got to Xiaoxiao and Lingfeng.

"In other words, anyone that can cultivate in the Voidsky Realm and become a member of the Sky Palace will be automatically propelled to the peak of power. Not to mention, the celestial orderians don't dare to touch them because of the organization, right?" Lingfeng said.

"It seems like it. At the very least, no status is higher than being a member of Sky Palace as far as the celestial orderians are concerned," Tianming said. Thanks to the Sky Palace, the Myriad Solar Sects could hold a united front against the celestial orderians despite having constant internal struggles.

"Sky Palace? Why does that sound familiar?" The Archaionfiend said.

"Do you know about it?"

"I seem to recall that the sky plunderers formed many Sky Plundering Palaces across the many star worlds in their heyday. I wonder if the two are related."

"Do you know anything else?" If the faction had something to do with the sky plunderers, then Tianming had to go to them no matter what.

"Nope. My mind has felt like a mess since I returned to the astralscape of order. It feels like there's many holes in my memory. Orderia also doesn't use the calendar that's widespread across the astralscape of order, so I don't know how many years have passed. I slumbered for quite a long while before starting symbiotic cultivation."

"So you turned stupid after a long nap," Tianming said.

"Can't you put it more nicely, you ungrateful brat?!"

The Archaionfiend had said that the sky plunderers used to be the hegemon of the astralscape of order, but now the divine wondersky race supposedly called the shots. It didn't know what had happened in between, a sign of its amnesia.

"Either way, I'm still interested in this Sky Palace," Tianming said.

Yu Ziqian looked worshipful whenever he talked about the members of the Sky Palace. Their mystique was powerful, and before they joined it, each one of them were the top geniuses that didn't come from the celestial orderian clans. Everyone got their chance at the ages of twenty to thirty, and once that chance was missed, there was no hope of getting it ever again. Even so, it was a one-in-a-billion chance, given that there were close to a billion people vying for it.

Not only that, even if one rose to the top, they would have to undergo many other trials. This sacred selection process took place once every ten years, but a true member only emerged once a century or so. Basically, being the best wasn't enough to become a member.

As for why Yu Ziqian and all the other billion disciples under the age of thirty were going to the Voidsky Realm, it was because it was a chance for them to grow their reputation. Even if they didn't rise to the top, they would still honor their fellow sect members and ancestors if they performed well. In other words, it was also a chance for the many sects to show the promising future potential they held.

During every tournament, Orderia was at its most merry. It was sparsely populated due to its sheer size in the first place. As the group neared the Voidsky Realm, they saw large groups of people traveling together. Apart from the billion participants, many others had also come to make merry and enjoy the festivities.

Tianming was impressed at the sheer vastness of this world, watching from atop Lan Huang's back. "This world looks like it's figuratively on fire. Everyone seems rushed and explosive. It's a natural battlefield built for a refreshing hot blood shower. Everyone here has the ambition of dominating the world and becoming the ultimate ruler of the universe." Just by looking at this world, Tianming felt his own blood boiling.

"Do you mean you want to build your empire up here as well?" Xiaoxiao said. She was truly observant.

Chapter 1145 - Indomitable Sun Emperor

"Why not? I'll completely dominate everyone and become their one and only sovereign!" Tianming said excitedly.

"So you want to unite the Myriad Solar Sects and swallow up the celestial orderians to become the eternal sun emperor?" Xiaoxiao jokingly said.

"That's right. That's what I'll do. I wonder if it's too much."

"It's fine. Having a strong imagination is a good thing."

"This nova source world's air seems like it's on fire. It makes people really riled up, affecting them subconsciously. The entire world is like a battlefield filled with conflict and struggle, which in turn causes the talented to stand out even more," Lingfeng said.

The Soulfierd was swimming in the river, trying to catch up to Lan Huang. Tianming noticed that even the Soulfierd had worn its angry face at the front since they arrived at the sun. The atmosphere of the world itself was affecting even its mental state.

Tianming closed his eyes and was seemingly able to hear the cries of countless warriors permeating his being. "The nova source is like a poison... One that makes people crazy for it."

He looked down and absorbed the nova source around him. Though it had been filtered by the sun's fusion formation, it was still a mild poison, one that could spark one's desire to fight.

"Feng, Xiaoxiao, I used to have no grand goals. All I wanted was to be able to relax with my family and friends and live peacefully with dignity without being disturbed. But since my fight with the divine moonrace and the awakening of the true legacy of the sovereign, I feel my ambitions rising. I want to dominate and conquer, especially after coming here. Back then, the most we did was take resources from those we conquered. But now I can gain even stronger faith from the people and grow endlessly powerful. My cultivation is related to rulership, so that's how I shall grow stronger!"

His ambitions were indeed rising thanks to the nova source, and that didn't conflict with his original goal at all. "Not to mention, I'll also be able to strengthen my believers and supporters. They'll grow stronger with me." He took a deep breath, his black and gold eyes both shining with passion.

"Then do as your heart commands. Become who you want to be," Xiaoxiao said.

"Brother Tianming, I find it really interesting as well. This feeling is contagious. I used to not have a good reason to fight. All I wanted was to bring Qingyu back. But after hearing what you said, I feel my blood boiling too. If you want to conquer the sun, I'll be your weapon," Lingfeng earnestly said. He had changed somewhat after being rescued from the xenomemory space. He used to be an aimless youth, but now he saw what he wanted to be in Tianming, having been saved by him twice already.

"If you really pull that off, perhaps I might hold off on wandering for now. I'll take care of the little things for you and maybe get an official position," Xiaoxiao said.

"I allow it! Xiaoxiao, you shall be the first chief eunuch!" Ying Huo said.

"Don't you have any common sense? Women can't be eunuchs," Xiaoxiao snapped.

"Fine, then Feng will be the eunuch," Ying Huo said with a laugh. Ye Lingfeng couldn't help but chuckle.

"Go daydream somewhere else," Tianming said, flinging Ying Huo to the side. As it complained, Tianming continued, "Enough daydreaming! We need to start from the bottom of this world. We'll take it step by step. First, we'll join the rest of these people and fight to join the Sky Palace. Either way, having a high status so that others won't dare to cross us is of utmost importance. We don't have any foundation

here, and require protection. Otherwise we'll just be driven to desperation, like we were on the moon. It's better to just side with a strong power, right?"

"I'm also rather curious about how powerful the others around our age are, given the resources and nova source they have access to." Ye Lingfeng was far more powerful than before, and after all that he had experienced, he was also much colder. He sounded like a natural killer whose gaze alone could take lives.

"Better not boast for now, lest others try taking that little worm out of your belly," Tianming said.

"Brother..." Thinking about what had happened, Lingfeng looked a little pale.

"Flowers will always bloom again, but youth will never come twice. There's no need to overthink it. All we need to do is to move forward without regrets."

"Alright." Lingfeng nodded.

"I have to tell you something else about Qingyu, so be ready for it," Tianming said seriously, turning back to look at the general direction of the territory of the celestial orderians.

"Alright."

"The ruler of the celestial orderians is known as the sun emperor. He's the strongest fighter in all of Orderia and rules half of the entire world, so he's to be feared. He has adopted Qingyu and made her his heiress apparent. In other words, Qingyu's the next in line to become empress of Orderia. She's also considered the top genius of Orderia. Though she's considered to have had a really late start compared to others, thanks to the sun emperor's personal guidance, it's said that she's made up for her slow start." That was what he had heard from Yu Ziqian.

"Is that a good or bad thing?" Ye Lingfeng asked.

"It's hard to say. It sounds good, but I've got a feeling that tells me it isn't." Tianming had felt that his godfather wouldn't joke about these things. Based on the letter, it didn't sound good.

"Alright. So if we can join the Sky Palace, we might be able to help Qingyu somewhat, right?"

"Let me tell you another interesting thing."

"What is it?"

"The sun emperor has another sobriquet: the Indomitable Emperor. It's said that he's never been defeated by anyone his age. Now, he's the most powerful person on the sun." Tianming held his laughter back, but couldn't help but chuckle. "Because of that, his parents named him Wudi, meaning unmatched... And his surname is Li... So his full name is Li Wudi..."

Ye Lingfeng was completely flabbergasted.

.....

There were no nights in Orderia, only constant beams of light with heat to accompany them. A warm gust brushed along Lan Huang's back as Yu Ziqian laid on it. He had tried to console his junior, Mo Yuling, only to be brushed away once more by her mockery.

"It's over for me now. It's all your fault, you old crook! You insisted on giving me some kind of Ultimate Pill Body, causing my cultivation to unpredictably rise and fall... And right as I was about to save the damsel in distress, you caused a pill recession. Now I've lost everything... I'm at rock bottom! I'm sorry, my fellow brother... I've made you suffer with me!"

There was a picture of a large black cauldron on his skin beneath his clothes. It looked ancient and seemed to have scales, each of which seemed made from countless smaller cauldrons.

An ancient voice came from within the large cauldron. "You little brat... I was just doing it for your own good. I'm using all I gained throughout my life to forge you up, but you're complaining because of a minor inconvenience? It's just a young lass. Once your pill recession is past, you'll have power on par with an ultimate genius! That lass of yours will immediately regret it and come flying into your embrace!"

"Stop boasting! The pill recession keeps coming back every day. These years, I've had less than three power surges! The other times, I'm stuck trying to trick others! Do you know how hard this is for me? I'm always afraid I'll get exposed and be beaten up! If it weren't for you needing so many divine pills, I wouldn't have to fake being a genius to get resources!" Yu Ziqian complained.

"Why are you so impatient? Is that the attitude you should have if you want to achieve great things? Once your Ultimate Pill Body forms, you'll soar to the peak of power! The Sky Palace's doors will be open to you! When I still lived, I was known as the Ultimate Pill God. Even if you're a completely useless pig, I'll be able to feed you until you become a star."

"Then how much longer will it take?!"

"Just keep on waiting!"

"I can't... I want to show off..."

"Gan Gangan... Did you grow up eating dogsh*t?"

"I'm Yu Ziqian, not Gan Gangan!" [1]

"What's the difference? They basically look the same!"

"Gaaaah!"

"Whatever, I can't be bothered to waste too much saliva on you. Let me just remind you of one thing."

"What is it?"

"Of those three, the black-haired youth has a terrifying vita. I think he's noticed me."

"Then aren't we done for?"

"No. This fellow has no relationship with my enemies. And to be honest, these two men, while they're still young, have top talent. They might come from some peak faction in Orderia. Never cross them, and make sure to stick close to them. Trust me, it'll be good for you."

"Fine, if you're going so far to say that, I'll have to thicken my skin and suck up to them!"

"Come on, you were planning to lick their boots to begin with, right?"

"Shut up! It's called networking!"

.....

Tianming and Lingfeng were standing on Lan Huang's head. Turning back, they saw Yu Ziqian smiling as he came over.

"There's an old man in his body," Lingfeng said.

"What do you mean?" Tianming asked.

"A peak god whose divine soul survived after death possesses him."

"A portable grandpa? Then he's not a fake genius at all."

Would Yu Ziqian be a friend or foe? That was something he had to determine for himself.

. Yu Ziqian is written as 于子千. All three characters look similar to 干 Gan. ?

Chapter 1146 - Which is the Fifth?

Yu Ziqian humbled himself with his usual smile on his face.

"What's up?" Tianming asked.

"Oh, I was just bored. Since we were lucky enough to meet, let's talk about life and get to know each other better!" Yu Ziqian leaned back against Lan Huang's large horn and looked into the distance. "When the Voidsky Realm opens, heroic youths gather. I wonder how many top geniuses will be born this decade!"

The horizon he looked toward was warped by the heat thanks to the hot air. Normal people wouldn't be able to endure weather like this at all.

"Does the Azuresoul Palace have information about the Myriad Solar Sects?" Tianming asked.

"Of course! Even though the many sects and empires hide their geniuses before showing them off at the event, there's still traces. Azuresoul Palace's intelligence gathering wouldn't miss out on them!" he said proudly.

"Then let me have it," Tianming said, stretching his hand out.

"What?"

"The information." Tianming smiled, cradling his chin.

"Boss... This won't do. It's forbidden to spread the information outside the Azuresoul Palace..."

"It's fine, we'll trade. It'll be a win-win."

"Fine!" Yu Ziqian took out a small formation from his spatial ring. "Most people among the billion contestants are cannon fodder, so they aren't recorded. We only have files on the best of the best."

There's around a thousand of them. We have information about their abilities, uniqueness, power levels, and even their pictures."

The formation looked similar to the one the divine moonrace used to record battle arts. The Moonnight Patio engraved those formations on the bamboo trees. However, the ones in Orderia were much more complicated and could archive all the information about so many people.

Without a word, Tianming took the intelligence formation. He now had a certain understanding of the enemies he might have to face. Having experienced what he had at the Divine Moon Realm, he knew how bad it was to have completely no support or backing, like he did now in Orderia. If he wanted a chance to grow powerful, he needed to find a backer. There could be no talk of dignity before that.

So his first goal was to join the Sky Palace and become someone people couldn't just casually offend. Otherwise, he wouldn't be able to look into the 'experiment', faced with cultivators that had been around for hundreds, or even thousands of years. At the very least, he also had to join the tournament to find out the general strength of the people he'd be competing against.

The intelligence formation was an amazing thing indeed. Fortunately for Tianming, most contestants would be under the age of thirty. He believed he and Lingfeng would have a fighting chance. Based on what he heard from Yu Ziqian, the tournament could last anywhere from three months to a year, so they had enough time and wouldn't be swarmed like before. Tianming inspected the inner part of the formation and found that it was split into thousands of regions, each of them with visuals of the top disciples of the Myriad Solar Sects and details about their abilities. The first entry was Yu Ziqian.

It read: Yu Ziqian, normal human. Fourth-level constellier. Top genius of the current generation in Azuresoul Palace. Peak pill-refining talent. Chief disciple. Master: Defender of Azuresoul Tower, Jiang Qingliu. A famous master will bring forth an amazing disciple, his future potential is limitless and he's a candidate for Sky Palace. The rest is a secret!

Tianming was speechless when he finished reading. "Who made this entry?"

"My master..." Yu Ziqian awkwardly said. No wonder it was the first entry. Though the rest was secret, it was already good enough that it revealed his level.

"So you're a fourth-level constellier?"

"Well... sometimes, I guess! Just consider it boasting." He did say that Azuresoul Palace was a second-rate faction. That being the case, a fourth-level constellier like him was its chief disciple. That was a good benchmark for the rest of the youths in the other factions. In Orderia, anyone under thirty were considered youths, while those under fifty were considered young adults. They were still quite far from the Voidsky Realm, so Tianming had time to continue reading up on potential foes.

"Boss, didn't you say it's an exchange? Where's your information?" Yu Ziqian asked.

"Oh? I don't have any."

"Damn, you were messing with me!"

"You have a problem with that?"

"No. Boss, I have a feeling you might not belong to any faction or empire at all. I think you might've inherited a legacy from a lone-wolf elite, right?" That would explain why his new friends seemed rather unknowledgeable about the world, and even needed his information.

"Don't overthink it. Our background is normal, and we're still far from being as powerful as a fourth-level constellier like you," Tianming said with a smile.

"Stop rubbing salt in my wounds..."

"I'm not. You'll definitely rise when the time is right," Tianming said, patting his shoulder.

"I'll take your word for it then."

.....

The group had traveled for three days so far. The further up the river they went, the denser the flaming clouds above. Fierce, hot gusts blew above the river constantly.

"So Orderia doesn't have a wondersky realm." That was the conclusion Tianming had come to from the information he could squeeze out of Yu Ziqian, who hadn't even heard of the divine wondersky race.

There was a small grey egg in Tianming's palm that kept excitedly bouncing every day. "Little one, there's no use being impatient. I heard that there's only two places that lead into the suncore, one's in the celestial orderians' territory and the other's at the Sky Palace. I can only give you the nutrients you need after joining the latter."

The egg jumped and rammed into Tianming's head.

"Be nice." He carefully grabbed it. Suddenly, he heard a sharp sound. He was panicking, for the egg had cracked! "What?! Without enough power to fuel the hatching, you'll be ruined!"

Panicking, he hurriedly let go. When he opened his eyes to look, he saw that the egg wasn't cracked at all. Instead, it had split into two that looked and felt completely the same! Both of them had two small black dots.

"Which one of you is the Fifth?"

Chapter 1147 - Azure Sky Qilin

The two eggs kept jumping and knocking into his head. "Hey! Why are you learning headbutts all of a sudden?"

Tianming tried clawing at them. "Fuck!" They split into four eggs and continued to bump around.

"Go back in! You're a naughty one."

Primordial Chaos Beasts really came in all shapes and sizes, so Tianming didn't bother overthinking it. All those eggs were the same fifth egg. One day, it would finally hatch and he would see for himself what this was all about. Before Xian Xian hatched, Tianming thought it would be some kind of butterfly, only for it to end up being a tree. So it was hard to guess what was in the fifth egg, or rather, eggs.

When they returned to the lifebound space, Ying Huo and the rest were surprised to see their number.

"Chicken Bro, let's split them among ourselves and boil them up!" Xian Xian was already drooling when it imagined how the eggs would taste.

The grey eggs shuddered and split into eight before running away in different directions.

"Hahaha!"

They had fun chasing those little eggs around in the lifebound space.

.....

After spending a few days with Yu Ziqian, Tianming more or less had a decent grasp of how things worked on Orderia. He also remembered the top thousand plus participants, from their levels, to their beasts, to their battle arts. It wouldn't be a big deal for him with Trisoul Prime.

"By the divine moonrace's standards, reaching the fifth level of the Ascension stage before fifty is decent. However, only those who ascended before twenty are considered geniuses here, and the top geniuses could even be constelliers by age thirty."

Based on that information, Yu Ziqian was one of the top figures of the Myriad Solar Sects, ranking in the top ten among a billion. "It's no wonder his junior was so pissed that he couldn't even defeat her."

These days, Mo Yuling avoided Yu Ziqian like the plague, constantly resentful.

Yu Ziqian came over excitedly and said, "Brother, my master will personally come to pick up my fellow disciples that scattered because of the Supracloud Sanctuary's attack. He should be somewhere down there. Soon, we'll join up with the thousands of Azuresoul Palace disciples. Do the three of you still want to travel with me?"

"No problem. Let's stick together!" Tianming said. There was still quite some way before they would arrive at their destination, so Tianming still needed a guide. But once they were near enough, they could simply travel along with the crowd.

"Great!"

"It is rare enough that out of so many other people, I met you. I'd hesitate to part with you just like that."

"Don't tell me you fell for my looks?" Yu Ziqian said, shocked.

"No, I'm just curious how you'll spin your situation when you join up with them." Tianming turned and glanced at Mo Yuling. She obviously seemed intent on exposing Yu Ziqian's fake talent.

"Don't worry, my master was convinced by me long ago. No matter what others say, he won't believe it," Yu Ziqian said confidently.

"Then I guess I've got a good show to look forward to."

Yu Ziqian's master, Jiang Qingliu, should be among the top elites of Orderia. Tianming hadn't seen what a truly powerful person on the sun could do yet, so it was sure to be a good learning experience. How powerful would someone who had cultivated for hundreds or a thousand years be?

.....

Thanks to the fact that there was no night in Orderia, Tianming was less sensitive to the passage of time. Some six hours later, a loud noise came from behind. Tianming, Ye Lingfeng, and Xiaoxiao all turned to look and saw many green clouds rising from the horizon. There seemed to be a gigantic beast charging toward them amidst the green clouds. It looked to be at least two kilometers long. If it weren't for Orderia's sheer size, the beast could have covered up the entire sky.

Tianming could feel its majesty from afar. At the center of the clouds were two glowing balls of light, each one containing many stars. Naturally, Tianming knew they were the eyes of the beast.

"There's more than six thousand of them..." This was easily the lifebound beast with the highest star count he had ever seen. After Ying Huo got a universal manna, it came to have four thousand and eight hundred stars. Of the young residents of Orderia, that star count was among the top. Thankfully, Ying Huo and the rest had been able to benefit from the impressive manna the divine moonrace had discovered.

It was said that a constellier's lifespan was around two thousand years, with the first half being a time of peak growth while the second was a time of degeneration. Tianming noted that this beast was probably considered middle aged by now.

The beast roared, causing Yu Ziqian to turn back. "It's my master's azuresky qilin!"

He stood up and waved in the beast's direction. Yu Ziqian wasn't a beastmaster, nor was he a totem user. Instead, he had none of those talents and was a normal human. In fact the method of cultivation normal humans used was the basis of those of beastmasters and totem users. Though they were weaker when compared to totem users or beastmasters of the same rank, their sheer number meant that, statistically speaking, there would be more talented geniuses among them.

"Master!"

Tianming had Lan Huang return to his lifebound space as the azuresky qilin approached. Faced with such a grand beast, even Lan Huang looked like a small dragon. The beast stopped in front of Tianming and the rest and the green clouds began dissipating, allowing Tianming a glance of its true form. It had azure scales shaped like clouds and its grand aura made it appear like a beast of prosperity, especially its sky-like eyes.

Tianming spotted thousands of young men and women on the beast's back who looked no different from the teenagers of the Flameyellow Continent. Thankfully, Tianming looked rather young himself, so he didn't stand out too much.

Incidentally, Tianming had learned about what had happened to the disciples of Azuresoul Palace. They had sent out more than ten thousand disciples towards the Voidsky Realm in several batches. As the leaders of the batches weren't that powerful, they weren't able to effectively fend off the shameless harassers from the Supracloud Sanctuary. Angered, Azuresoul Palace sent out their elite, Jiang Qingliu, to gather all of the disciples together and escort them to the Voidsky Realm.

As for why the Supracloud Sanctuary attacked them in the first place, it was due to Yu Ziqian, the chief disciple. His talent and power was far above anyone else in second-rate sects, shocking many of them.

As their archnemesis, the Supracloud Sanctuary were driven into desperation, perhaps fearing that Yu Ziqian would obtain the recognition of the Sky Palace. Little did they know that even a normal tenth-level ascendant of theirs would cause Yu Ziqian to pathetically flee.

Chapter 1148 - Oddball Master and Disciple

After the thousands of disciples saw Yu Ziqian, they breathed a sigh of relief.

"Senior Brother!"

"Senior Brother is alive! That's great!"

"I told you he was blessed with good luck! He definitely won't die!"

"With his talent, he definitely has his ways of surviving."

Tianming noticed that Yu Ziqian had completely changed amidst the cheering. He took out a fan, unfolded it, and lightly fanned himself with a cool expression. It gave him an aura of control and assuredness.

"He really knows how to act."

At that moment, a green light appeared in front of Yu Ziqian. "Oh disciple of mine, I finally found you. After I heard about the ambush, I hurried over in fear of losing you! That would be a horrible waste of talent! The dogs of the Supracloud Sanctuary didn't uphold even the most basic of common decency and did something like that. Don't worry, though. Now that I'm in the picture, they'll pay the price!"

The white-haired man wore a loose azure robe and had messy hair. However, his gaze was sharp. He only relaxed when he had made sure that Yu Ziqian was completely fine.

"Master, calm down. Those losers can't even touch a hair on me," Yu Ziqian said, clearing his throat.

"As expected of my disciple. You act and present as the cream of the crop!" Jiang Qingliu shot him a thumbs-up in front of everyone, much to Tianming's shock. He had completely no idea how Yu Ziqian had actually convinced his master so thoroughly. Was the master in on the con as well?

"Senior Brother is amazing as expected!" Yu Ziqian was praised to the high heavens by his fellow disciples.

"Now, stay put and prepare to depart." Jiang Qingliu's mood was so good that his mustache seemed to perk up. He shot his personal disciple a look of complete satisfaction.

At that moment, a voice uncontrollably broke out. "Master, all of you! You've been lied to by him!" Mo Yuling expressed her truth, looking rather distraught as she did so. "Yu Ziqian doesn't have a constellation at all! When he was pursued by the ones from the Supracloud Sanctuary, he was even weaker than a Heptaglorious Sky ascendant! He only survived because some strangers came to save us! Think about it! He's basically been secluding himself without fighting anyone in the past years. While he's strong during the few times he does fight, his victories are all weird! He must've used some kind of trick! He's just a conman that's trying to get the sect's resources despite being someone normal!"

She felt much better after saying her piece. She turned her shaky eyes toward Yu Ziqian and said, "Senior Brother, I really wasn't explicitly trying to go against you. However, the Voidsky Realm isn't the Azuresoul Palace! If you keep spreading your false reputation like that, you'll eventually have to face contestants as powerful as you say you are. You'll embarrass the entire sect and us fellow disciples! I can't let a conman like you let all of us down!"

Everyone was flabbergasted at what they heard.

"What's wrong, Sister Mo? Senior Brother has always treated you well."

"That's right. He looked after you so much. How could you say that to him?"

"Seriously... when Senior Brother defeated a third-level constellier half a year ago at the age of eighteen in front of tens of thousands of witnesses, including many seniors, he used his constellation. How could that be fake?"

Nobody believed her no matter how sincere she appeared. Many of them had personally witnessed that fight.

"Mo, stop messing around," Jiang Qingliu said, clearing his throat and waving for her to come over.

"Master!" Mo Yuling knelt and began to cry. "I really wasn't messing around! I was on the run with him and he really isn't as strong as you think he is! You also inspected him and found no trace of injury, right? How could he emerge unscathed from battle? I'm really worried that he'll embarrass the whole Azuresoul Palace in front of all the other sects! It won't be hard for him to prove himself either! Just have him fight some of us! Of those here that respectfully call him Senior Brother, at least a third of them can defeat him!"

The Myriad Solar Sects all had a chief disciple for each generation that was acknowledged to rank above all other disciples of the same generation.

"Enough nonsense!" Jiang Qingliu was growing rather mad. He had personally nurtured Yu Ziqian, so receiving this kind of doubt and challenge, and from his other personal disciple no less, was infuriating. Yu Ziqian was his pride and joy.

"Master, the reputation of the Azuresoul Palace is at stake!" She kowtowed with all the force she had, still shedding tears.

"How about this..." said a white-robed youth. His hair was interwoven with streaks of white and black. One of his eyebrows was black, and the other was white. If it weren't for Yu Ziqian's acting, this youth would look far more eye-catching. "Senior Brother, fight me and show them a tenth of your power. That'll be enough to make Sister Mo shut up."

He seemed to have a calm personality, though he stared daggers at Yu Ziqian with a fierce desire to fight.

"It's Bai Junce..."

"How arrogant of him to challenge Senior Brother."

"Even though he's the head instructor's disciple, he wasn't a match for Senior Brother five years ago during their duel. I saw it with my own eyes."

Tianming closely watched Bai Junce. "He's only in his twenties, but he's about as powerful as Sovereign Xi..." That could only mean that he was powerful enough to rank in the top thousand among the Myriad Solar Sects. "No wonder Sovereign Xi said that she was the weakest of heptabanes."

The divine moonrace's dream was to cultivate with a nova source once more. The difference was more than staggering.

Everyone turned their eyes to Yu Ziqian. They thought he would be troubled, but he looked completely calm. "Bai Junce, you weren't my match five years ago. Are you worthy of me fighting you now? Don't worry, I'll properly school you once we get back to the Azuresoul Palace."

His confidence and demeanor was definitely not that of a faker. It was pure confidence that only a true genius could possess. Though Mo Yuling still wanted to say something, Jiang Qingliu lost his patience. He glared at her and snapped, "Alright, stop wasting time! Let's go!"

"Master, I came across three friends who want to travel with us," Yu Ziqian respectfully said.

"Do as you please." Jiang Qingliu stared deeply at him.

"Master, do you doubt me?"

"I already bet my reputation on you, so I hardly have a choice now."

"Then I won't disappoint you, master."

"Let's make it clear. If you cause trouble for me, I'll be the first to skewer you, got it?"

"Don't worry. Have I ever messed up when it really counts?"

"If you do, the both of us will be ruined and the Azuresoul Palace will no longer have a place for us. In the past few years, you've been a black hole, consuming countless of the sect's pills. You know what this means."

"Of course! I have much to thank the sect for. I'll definitely pay them back," Yu Ziqian said.

"Forget paying them back, just make sure to not leave me in ruins."

As the master and disciple pair were chatting, Tianming and the rest got on the back of the azuresky qilin. Now, they could just rest on the back of the speedy qilin without having to toil their way to the Voidsky Realm.

.....

The azuresky qilin ran across the vast ground, circled by blazing winds the whole time. Tianming and the others sat in a corner and watched Yu Ziqian keep up his act the entire time as he was showered with admiration, surprised at how he was able to do it so well. There were too many people here, so nobody really noticed how they got up. There were around a hundred senior elites leading the group apart from Jiang Qingliu, one of whom was named Qing Zi. She was a famous person in Azuresoul Palace. Like Bai Junce, she was also a disciple of the head instructor. Though she was over a century old, her outer

appearance resembled a woman in her twenties. She stood together with Bai Junce as they watched Yu Ziqian.

"Senior Sister, do you think there's something off about him as well?" Bai Junce asked.

"Yes."

"Even though he's just the disciple of Jiang Qingliu, the resources he gets are ten times ours. If we've been nurturing a weakling this whole time, it'd truly be a huge joke," Bai Junce said.

"He's been laying low the entire time, and only really fought a handful of times. How'd it feel to fight him years ago?" Qing Zi asked.

"It felt real."

"But Mo Yuling is his junior. She probably wouldn't lie about this."

"Something must be wrong. His reputation is too great, and even the whole sect is swayed. There's just too many people whose reputations are at stake if he fails us."

"We might still make it if we expose him in time."

"But Jiang Qingliu is protecting him and preventing us from acting. We don't even have a chance to make our approach. Does that old fart want to double down on his mistake?"

"Look over there," Qing Zi said, pointing at Tianming and the rest.

"The three outsiders? Are they Yu Ziqian's friends?"

"That's right. I asked Mo Yuling about them. She said they were the ones who saved him. They're also heading to the Voidsky Realm and they don't seem to be constelliers."

"What is your plan, Senior Sister?"

"Since they're his friends, his reputation is tied to them. Maybe try creating some conflict and mess with them. If we humiliate them and Yu Ziqian doesn't stand up for them, let's see what happens."

"What if Jiang Qingliu shamelessly protects him?"

"Don't worry about that. Let me deal with it. We must create a conflict and fully expose Yu Ziqian before we arrive at the Voidsky Realm."

Chapter 1149 - Third Regal Soul, Emphyrean Baize

Tianming was only there to hitch a ride, but he had inadvertently attracted some people's attention. He was currently sitting with Xiaoxiao and Lingfeng as a youth with black and white eyebrows coincidentally passed by where he was with a group of ten or so people. They stopped before Tianming and glared at them. The group's leader was none other than the disciple of the head instructor, Bai Junce, recognized to be the vice chief disciple of the group second only to Yu Ziqian.

"A specter?" Bai Junce raised his eyebrow as he inspected Lingfeng. In his eyes was a look of derision. Though specters were also humanoid, and stemmed from the same ancestor as normal humans, the branching had happened so long ago that they weren't considered to be the same anymore. Orderia was

also a place where humans dominated, so specters were the minority. Though they had factions that had risen in the star's long history, they had basically been entirely eliminated by now. The ones that remained were those that survived in the periphery like sewer rats.

Tianming and the rest weren't aware that this kind of prejudice existed in Orderia. The celestial orderians looked down on their branch clans, the branch clans looked down on the rootbeast race, who in turn looked down on normal humans that also happen to detest specters. Though specters were strong fighters and usually superior to others on the same level, they were seen as the lowest in the hierarchy due to the present state of affairs. Many sects and empires didn't take them in as disciples, so they were only able to rely on legacies of their own kind to make do. As such, the group smiled mockingly at Tianming and the rest, though the reason was unknown to them. Lingfeng merely gave Bai Junce a look and ignored him.

Unsurprisingly, Bai Junce coldly said, "Don't you think specters are dirty? Why are you hanging out with him? They are willing to eat anything to strengthen their bodies."

Hearing that, Tianming said, "Oh, I get it now. You're here to incite trouble to see if you can force Yu Ziqian's hand by humiliating us, right?"

Bai Junce and the rest were surprised. "You're a sharp one. Didn't think you'd see through the reasoning so quickly." He dropped the pretense completely.

"It's hardly a sophisticated plot," Tianming said.

"Then, friend, you understand that Yu Ziqian is only a paper tiger too, right?" His arrogance was infuriating to say the least.

"Flies like you should go elsewhere. Stop bothering us," Tianming straightforwardly said.

"Flies? You're done for." Bai Junce's expression immediately soured. Qing Zi had said that Tianming and the rest weren't even at the Constellation stage. Not to mention, the Azuresoul Palace's information didn't contain anything about them, so they were likely too inconsequential to be ranked. Bai Junce didn't fear them at all. After all, someone that needed to hitch a ride from them couldn't be that powerful themselves. A true genius would have been escorted by the seniors of their factions to the Voidsky Realm long ago, though Yu Ziqian was an exception since Jiang Qingliu was a rather easy going person and had initially let his disciples travel by themselves.

"It's over for me?" Tianming feigned suppressed laughter, trying to emulate Yu Ziqian's acting. He tapped Lingfeng on the shoulder and said, "Feng, this guy is asking for trouble. Go teach him a lesson." He hadn't seen Ye Lingfeng fight in quite a while, after all, so he would use this chance to see what he could do. It could help his future planning.

"Alright!" Bai Junce didn't expect the black-haired youth would attack before he did. A black staff immediately appeared in Lingfeng's hand and came snapping with substantial force toward Bai Junce like a venomous dragon.

"Senior Brother, careful!" many disciples warned.

Bai Junce was both startled and angered. He manifested a longsword in his hand and lightly parried the staff. After a resounding boom, he was sent flying and fell off the moving qilin, much to the shock of the thousand others.

"Bai Junce should be at the twelfth Orderian Sky level, but he's a young rootbeast human. Despite his age, he's almost as powerful as Sovereign Xi was," Tianming said.

"Do you think Feng can win?" Xiaoxiao asked.

"Let's watch." Tianming was confident in Ye Lingfeng. He was the successor of the Primordial Demonlord's legacy. Not to mention, eighty thousand vitae lived on in his sea of consciousness and he had also consumed a lot of xenofiends in his previous predicament. There was no way he would be weak after going through all those ordeals.

It was nothing short of a miracle that Tianming and Ye Lingfeng were as powerful as they were in their twenties. The growth of Tianming's Imperial Will was something nobody could ever replicate. However, since coming to Orderia, he found that he wasn't that much different from others of the same age. The people here were impressive in their own right. In Orderia were elites about a thousand or two thousand years old who were no doubt at heights Tianming could only dream of after millennia of cultivation. Tianming wasn't even all that impressive among those under thirty in Orderia, and people up to fifty were considered young here.

Tianming's recent improvements were due to his growth spurt after finally breaking his lifesbane curse and his Omniscient Threads. When cultivating as a god, it wasn't uncommon for some to seclude themselves for decades at a time. He would have to slowly learn how to control the laws of the world himself at this point.

As Tianming and Xiaoxiao were speaking, Ye Lingfeng caught up to Bai Junce and fought on the ground.

"What are they doing?" Jiang Qingliu shouted from the head of the qilin. The qilin descended from the sky and caused quite a lot of dust clouds to form.

Just as Yu Ziqian was about to shout for them to stop, he noticed that Tianming was calm. He hurriedly came over after making sure nobody was looking at him and asked, "Boss, what's going on?"

"Don't you get it? They want to force you to reveal your abilities by provoking us," Tianming said.

"That fellow is the disciple of the head instructor. He envies me for having access to much better resources than he does," Yu Ziqian said troubledly.

"Don't worry. We just need to school him a little."

Yu Ziqian blanked out for a moment, then shot Tianming a thumbs-up. Then, he went over to his master and said, "Old man, let them be. Just watch. My new friends are more than they appear!" That was something he was certain about. His 'portable grandpa' had said as much, for the first time ever, in fact.

"More than they appear? Who are they?" Jiang Qingliu asked.

"I don't know?" Yu Ziqian answered awkwardly.

"What're their names?"

"Haha, it's bound to be a good show! Look! The flaming clouds are bright today!" Yu Ziqian tried changing the subject.

"Buzz off!" Jiang Qingliu turned his attention to Ye Lingfeng. He didn't think that the battle would shock him. "This specter youth's body is about as strong as a normal human. He probably hasn't consumed any lifebound beasts. As for the power of his soul... it's at least at the third regal soul level!"

The soul could be cultivated. At a certain point of power, it would then transform. The levels were first divine soul, second general soul, third regal soul, and the legendary fourth imperial soul. Without explicitly cultivating the vita, even a constellier might not achieve the second general soul level, let alone the third. Many elders above five centuries old in Orderia might not have a high soul level at all. Yet here was a youth under thirty with a third regal soul.

In the eyes of the other disciples, Bai Junce was a legend in his own right, second only to Yu Ziqian. The only reason his level wasn't that high yet was that he was only nineteen, six years younger than their chief disciple. Given his talent, he would become a second- or third-level constellier at the age of twenty-five. And compared to Yu Ziqian, he had a huge advantage: he was a quad beastmaster.

They watched as the two youths crashed to the ground. A battle between a specter and a rootbeast human was entertaining, to say the least. Bai Junce had been suppressed since the beginning, though his pride and rage wouldn't allow him to relent. He summoned all four of his lifebound beasts, each with more than four thousand stars.

Since Liu Qinghuan's death, Tianming had never seen another beastmaster as powerful as Bai Junce, though Jiang Qingliu didn't count since he was a senior. The four beasts of Bai Junce were all huge, two black ones and two white ones. Their bodies looked like lions, covered in thick fur. They also had wings that spanned nearly a kilometer. However, their heads weren't lion heads, but goat heads instead. It was a combination of a gentle animal and a ferocious predator. Like qilins, they were surrounded by clouds. Their eyes were so deep they seemed to be able to see through all illusions.

They stood side by side with Bai Junce in the center. His clothes and hair fluttered in the wind, making him look quite impactful. Many young women marveled at his charm. Tianming could smell the genius on him. His beasts were empyrean baizes, beasts with a peak bloodline. The talent of beastmasters was usually determined by the number and species of beasts they had. Bai Junce had four beasts of an impressive species, so he was equivalent to a celestial orderian with seven bane-rings; the real deal, unlike Sovereign Xi.

Chapter 1150 - Infernal Soul curse

Bai Junce stood magnificently, wielding his grade-four divine artifact sword, Monochromic Dao, surrounded by four great baizes. The former difficulty he'd had facing Ye Lingfeng seemed to evaporate in a moment. He pointed his sword at Ye Lingfeng with a look of contempt. "Specters like you should kneel and run away with your tail between your legs."

The only reply he got was Ye Lingfeng's attack! He wielded his Evil Suppression Pillar in one hand; it was a weapon on par with the Grand-Orient Sword. Beneath him was the three-headed, six-armed Soulfier. The beast had accompanied Lingfeng for quite a while, and had recovered the power it used to possess.

At the Divine Moon Realm, Ye Lingfeng didn't let it out much, so nobody would link him with the night demon they had banished some time ago based on the Soulfierd alone. As specters didn't have totems or lifebound beasts, the Soulfierd looked a little out of place. It roared and groaned like it didn't have any intelligence at all. Anyone would think that it was just a normal wildbeast, had it not materialized from his body. While wildbeasts like that had combat potential, they weren't able to improve, so they were considered to be far weaker than lifebound beasts.

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The first battle of geniuses in Orderia finally took place, with Tianming intently watching as a spectator. Ye Lingfeng was only at the Decapath Sky level, so in terms of raw power, he wasn't his foe's match. However, his attack tipped the scales in his favor!

Bai Junce executed a third-realm divine art, Bagua Skypierce. It was a move that was even stronger than the Moonlight Subdued Strike, even down to the sword intent aspect, and was far more complex. Though it was executed without totems, it was able to manifest countless variations. The sword ki gathered together and formed a bagua diagram, each strand of it created from black and white sword ki. The bagua sword ki rampantly flew through the skies toward Ye Lingfeng's head. However, he merely watched coldly. Perhaps due to the legacy of the Primordial Demonlord, he looked like a killer of the soul whenever he didn't smile.

As Bai Junce attacked, he sent his baizes to surround Ye Lingfeng, two of which used their abilities. Another charged straight toward him and the Soulfierd and struck with its gigantic claw. The two abilities unleashed toward him were Heavenly Whirlpool and Earth Prison. As the empyrean baizes were beasts of both water- and earth-type, they greatly benefited from being close to the Firelotus River.

Heavenly Whirlpool sucked water out of the river to form a magnificent vortex that shrank until it was only a meter wide. The compression allowed it to achieve the effect of Ying Huo's Infernal Blaze, threatening to tear Ye Lingfeng into shreds if he was swallowed within it.

As for Earth Prison, it manifested in the form of multiple spears bursting out from the earth, tens of thousands of them. They then turned into ropes that knotted up with one another, forming a complex cage formed of Orderian rock. Thanks to constantly being exposed to a nova source, even the normal rock was harder than the tribulation artifacts of the Flameyellow Continent. The spears were akin to tens of thousands of grade-one divine artifacts.

From those moves, Tianming could tell that the vice chief disciple was no pushover. With that power, Bai Junce could roam the Divine Moon Realm unimpeded. It was too bad he matched up against Lingfeng, who wasn't the least bit fazed by the impending attacks. He could use abilities! Black flames burst forth from all corners of his body.

"Scatter!"

The black flames swept over the three baizes around him. This ability was called Infernal Soul Curse. Unlike normal specters, Ye Lingfeng's ability was executed using his powerful vita, further increasing its potency. The black flames looked weak and the baizes didn't really mind them. But when they began burning on their bodies, the flames invaded their seas of consciousness and started roasting away at their vitae, causing them to shriek in pain. They collapsed to the ground, twitching and shrieking, causing

countless trees nearby to fall and even blocking the entire river. Their abilities fell apart before they could touch Lingfeng—the baizes had completely lost the ability to keep fighting!

The other disciples of Azuresoul Palace watched wide eyed. Even Jiang Qingliu noticed how terrifying Ye Lingfeng was. Bai Junce immediately heard his beasts' shrieks and their complaints about the pain through their telepathic connection. It was only a single exchange of blows, and this was the result. He felt a chill down his spine.

"Attack him and stop the ability!" one of the baizes said.

Bai Junce's strike had already enveloped Lingfeng's entire body. Amidst the black and white sword ki, the black-haired youth suddenly looked up, his eyes flashing with a fatal red gleam. As he was armored, Bai Junce couldn't see the swirling Primordial Gate in his chest.

At that moment, a blood-curdling shriek rang out. Ye Lingfeng stretched two fingers out and pushed them against his temples, causing his head to seemingly split. However, he didn't bleed. Everyone watched as he drew a blood-red dagger from the hole in his head. He had pulled a weapon out from his head! But it wasn't a normal divine artifact. Instead, there was a terrifying soul power radiating from the dagger.

"He solidified the power of his soul! He definitely has a third regal soul, and a peak one at that!" Jiang Qingliu snapped as he smacked Yu Ziqian's head. "Where'd you find a friend like that?! He's unbelievable!" "Well, you know what they say... Birds of the same feather flock together," Yu Ziqian said shamelessly.

They stopped talking and watched as Ye Lingfeng suppressed three baizes with a single Infernal Soul Curse. Now, he wielded the staff in his right hand and the dagger in his left as he charged toward Bai Junce. The dagger was actually another kind of ability, called Heartpiercer Soulblade. Anyone without a strong enough soul would immediately die if pierced by the dagger. It also worked wonders against totems, being able to completely destroy the terra that totems were made of. That way, they wouldn't be able to regenerate.

Ye Lingfeng struck with his staff using Blackmoon Bewilderment, a second-realm divine art he had learned on the moon. It wasn't too powerful, as it was designed for totem users, so it wasn't able to stop the Bagua Skypierce diagram. However, the formation of the Evil Suppression Pillar could be incorporated in the strike to mitigate much of the enemy's attack.

His staff clashed with Monochromic Dao, letting out a ringing clang as the staff was sent flying. However, Lingfeng used his soul power to bind Bai Junce, causing him to cry in pain. Then, he thrust with his Heartpiercer Soulblade. Bai Junce panicked and blocked with his hand. When the dagger pricked his skin, it turned into liquid and entered his body, immediately causing him to pale and writhe in pain on the ground.

"Gaaaaaaah!" Veins were visible all across his body as he tumbled around pathetically. The battle was already over, ending in the complete defeat of Bai Junce and all his baizes. The youth's sorry state caused the other disciples to shudder; some of them even panicked and cried.

"Stop!" Jiang Qingliu said.

"Feng!" Tianming called out.

Ye Lingfeng stretched his hand out and withdrew the dagger from Bai Junce's body, sheathing it back into his head in a gruesome spectacle. Bai Junce's pain immediately vanished, but he remained on the ground with his limbs widespread and weak, his gaze empty.

"Friend, I'm of the infernal soul race. I'm not a specter," Lingfeng said as he retrieved his staff and summoned the Soulfierd that was still tangled up with the last baize. It had managed to pin it down, dominating it with its physical and spiritual prowess. When it bit the baize, Tianming noticed that the Soulfierd was biting at its vita. Ye Lingfeng could consume terrae, the Archaionfierd could consume caeli, and the Soulfierd could consume the most important of the tripartite soul: the vita. Tianming had all three soulsources by his side.

He decided he had to talk to Lingfeng about the Soulfierd's vita-consuming capabilities, but now wasn't the time. Not to mention, the Soulfierd only bit the vita and didn't consume it entirely. Bai Junce didn't deserve to have his beast killed. It was just a simple fight.

When Lingfeng returned to Tianming's side, the other disciples looked at him respectfully. A random youth they had encountered along the way had actually managed to defeat their number-two disciple. He was surely not someone to be messed with.