

The Ages 1221

Chapter 1221 - Who Turned On The Light?

"Why don't you switch to your other face before you speak to me?" Tianming seriously asked.

"This little fish doesn't have another face." She lowered her head dejectedly.

"Are you referring to yourself? Not the fish?" Tianming pointed at his own eye.

She nodded, her expression evoking pity.

"Bro, what do you mean? I'm so confused. Do we know each other?" Tianming asked.

"We don't, but Little Fish has been waiting for you." She plucked up the courage to stare at Tianming.

"Why were you waiting for me?" Tianming asked doubtfully.

"To save me," said Weisheng Moran.

Tianming frowned. This person was either insane or deliberately playing with him. So he said, "What's the matter with you? Irregular menstrual cycle?"

She was startled at first, but soon smiled, her cheeks rosy. Her sweet smile transcended the natural world.

"Bro, are you shy?" Tianming was a little dizzy. What the hell was going on?

"I'm not talking to you, you meanie!" Weisheng Moran pursed her lips. She seemed happy as she turned around and skipped away.

Tianming watched the beauty leave, feeling somewhat flustered.

"What does she mean? Did you two share a magical encounter? Or perhaps you were lovers in your previous life, but by some unfortunate stroke of fate, she became who she is and missed a beautiful marriage?" Ying Huo peeked out from his lifebound space.

"Fuck off!" Tianming shouted. When he looked into his lifebound space, he found Xian Xian's spiritform carving words into its leafless trunk.

"What is it doing?" Tianming asked.

"Cursing you. It's your fault for letting it starve. It's also recording your conversations with other women throughout Ling'er's slumber so it can complain to her when she wakes up," Ying Huo explained.

"Fuck...." Tianming was a mess.

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The enormous Imperialdragon Palace could accommodate at least tens of thousands of people and their lifebound beasts. At this moment, more than two hundred wargodeans were still occupying the place. For more than a month, they had tried everything, not letting go of even a single brick in the palace, but they had yet to figure out a way to uncover the secrets of the palace.

Midway through, the wargodeans began fighting when Long Longlong arrived. Relying on their large numbers, they pushed the disciples of the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect out of the palace. However, there were too many passages around. Long Longlong hadn't left, but there was nothing Zhan Yuance could do about that.

These Xuanyuan Dragon Sect disciples were all at least third-level constellers. Long Longlong couldn't be bothered to fight Zhan Yuance, but the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect disciples might not necessarily lose if the two sides actually came to battle. After all, they ranked second on the myriad sect ranking. The palace was so enormous that it was impossible for Zhan Yuance to stop them from exploring its mysteries.

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As time went by, neither side found anything. In the meantime, Long Longlong left to destroy dragon golems and other imperial star formations. When he returned, the situation was just as he had expected; the wargodeans headed by Zhan Yuance were still clueless.

"Zhan Yuance, maybe this palace has always been empty. So how much time are you going to waste? Six months? A year?" Long Longlong calmly stood at the entrance of the passage, though a trace of ridicule flashed in those dark eyes.

"Cut the crap. You and I both know that this place is the key. When its secrets surface, the tomb will be sealed again," said Zhan Yuance.

In fact, there were treasures all over the tomb, but the best ones were hidden in the palaces. Other disciples had found treasures in the passages. Casting aside the ordinary treasures to remain in the Imperialdragon Palace for more than a month only proved Zhan Yuance's determination.

"You said that the Azuresoul Palace disciples obtained several treasures from the palaces?" Long Longlong narrowed his gaze.

"Yes, they got the Lifesteal Silverdragon, Dragonblood Desecration, and the grandpath fiend pill." Zhan Yuance glanced at Long Longlong and grinned as he added, "It looks like your ancestor doesn't care about you. Instead, he's recognized an Azuresoul Palace disciple as his descendant."

"Shut up. Longlong got the—"

As soon as the girl dressed in blue started speaking, Long Longlong interrupted her. The girl stopped talking and whispered an apology.

"Oh? Did you gain something as well? Take it out so we can all have a look," said Zhan Yuance.

Without a word, Long Longlong indifferently glanced at him, choosing to focus on the palace instead. His response caused dissatisfaction among the wargodeans.

"He's just a little kid. What's with all that posturing?" Zhan Yingying said dismissively. "Big Brother, you're already a fifth-level consteller. You can easily crush him. Why don't we force them out of the game so we have one less competitor?"

"Stop messing around. He's no weakling," Zhan Yuance replied. He knew very well that no matter what advantages he had, the wargodeans were only fourth on the myriad sect ranking. The Dreamless Celestial Nation, Xuanyuan Dragon Sect, and Voidword Shrine were more powerful than the

wargodeans. The young disciples they cultivated, whether they were Weisheng Moran, Long Longlong, or that mysterious one who had never appeared before, were the ones he feared.

Just as he thought of those people, the sound of light footsteps sounded from the opposite passage. Someone was beating a black war drum. Their ears perked up.

One by one, they rose to their feet, staring in the direction of the sound. A young woman with long, dark green hair appeared at the entrance of the passage. She stood on the raised floor as she swept her gaze across the disciples on both sides. Her ethereal eyes held the deepest indifference. Both Zhan Yuance and Long Longlong noticed the black war drum in her hand.

"If you include Li Tianming's drum, this is the fourth black war drum."

Zhan Yuance examined the young woman, his gaze deepening. This was the most famous disciple before the start of the battle. Most people believed that she was the strongest. Neither Zhan Yuance nor Long Longlong would treat her as a woman.

The wargodeans were grouped together, while Long Longlong had three elite disciples for helpers. Meanwhile, Weisheng Moran was alone. From the number of people they had with them, one could tell their level of confidence in themselves. The fewer the helpers, the stronger their spirit. Even though Zhan Yuance had caught up, he didn't want to be on his own. Deep down, he categorized himself as weak. Because of that, his first thought when Weisheng Moran entered his field of vision wasn't to defeat her or drive her away. Instead, he frowned as if he was facing a great enemy. Thus, three forces now occupied the Imperialdragon Palace.

With her green paper umbrella, the girl descended, her long dress spreading out like lotus leaves. Her long, slender legs that were faintly visible provoked the imagination.

All Zhan Yuance could do was close his eyes. In fact, he found her attractive, much like Tianming. But at the thought of her gender, there was resistance despite the few short moments of indulging in her beauty.

Long Longlong wasn't into her type at all, so he didn't feel anything. "Weisheng, don't waste your time. Zhan Yuance and I have been trying to figure it out for an entire month. There's nothing here."

This time, Weisheng Moran didn't respond. She stared at the war drum in her hand, then scanned the palace. "Try all three." Her feminine voice echoed throughout the huge palace.

"Her voice is even softer than mine...." The girl in pink standing next to Long Longlong couldn't help but stick out her tongue.

However, Zhan Yuance and Long Longlong seemed to think of something upon hearing Weisheng Moran's suggestion. Glancing at each other, they pulled out a black war drum from their spatial rings.

"We've searched the Imperialdragon Palace, so the only thing that may trigger its secrets could be more war drums. Will three be enough?"

With such thoughts, they exchanged a meaningful look, holding the drums tightly in their hands. Then they moved toward each other.

There was movement. The tops of the drums vibrated on their own. Zhan Yuance's eyes brightened. He had been contemplating for more than a month, but he never imagined that the way to unlock the secret would be to gather the war drums.

As the drums got closer, the vibrations grew stronger and the sound louder. The sound waves produced a storm out of thin air, causing their hair and clothes to fly up. The enormous palace began shaking. When they were about ten meters apart, the sound spread out far beyond the palace, deafening everyone inside.

Zhan Yuance had eight ears and possessed the best hearing in the world, so the sound caused his ears to bleed. The stinging sensation was so bad it almost felt good. The sound of the drums became loud booms. As the palace shook, the wargodeans stood unsteadily amidst the thunderous drumming and vibrations.

The three black war drums suddenly expanded to about two meters in diameter as the drumming grew louder and the entire tomb violently shook. A light beam shot out from each of the drums, converging at the top. The most intense vibration transformed into a light wave and swept across the space. The three people in the center of the collision were sent flying away.

The light above seemed to change. In the light, the outline of a huge figure was faintly discernible.

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"Meow, it's so noisy. Who turned on the light?" Still sleepy, Meow Meow squinted its eyes, its body unsteady as if it had suffered a serious injury. Swaying for a moment, it fell down once more, its feet pointing toward the ceiling. "Never mind. This fish smells so good. I'll continue savoring it...."

Chapter 1222 - The Myriad Dao Pill

Tianming had discovered the right approach to fusing the Silverdragon Flashkill and Blooddragon Sacrifice. With that, tempering, merging, and synchronizing the moves would be much easier. The new Dualdragon Tribulation was fast and fierce, imperceptible as it slaughtered. As soon as Weisheng Moran left, Yu Ziqian walked over, staring at Tianming with a suggestive smile on his face.

"Not feeling well? I can give you a slap if your face is twitching." Tianming wanted to pull out the Grand-Orient Sword and continue working on his sword art.

"Is there something between you and Weisheng Moran?" Yu Ziqian chuckled.

"We're fine."

Yu Ziqian clicked his tongue.

"What the hell are you laughing at!" As Tianming strangled him, Yu Ziqian almost went into shock, his eyes rolling to the back of his head. After having gotten along for some time, Tianming had realized that Yu Ziqian wasn't bothered by trivial matters and was someone he could fool around with.

"Mercy, Bro!" Yu Ziqian quickly changed the subject. "I watched you integrate the two sword arts in just a month's time. That's a grade-eight battle art. Your talent continues to astound me." Not only was Tianming more talented, he worked harder as well. That was why he admired him.

"What're you trying to say?" Sensing there was more to his words, Tianming put Yu Ziqian down.

"Come sit down. Let's talk." Hooking his arm around Tianming's shoulders, Yu Ziqian sat down, looking like some scoundrel.

"Cut the crap. What is it?" Tianming asked.

"Are you certain you can deal with Zhan Yuance?" Yu Ziqian asked in all seriousness.

"Not at all. He also has more than two hundred people protecting him. We wouldn't be able to take him on even if he was alone," Tianming replied. He knew that in his heart the first time he fought against Zhan Yuance. The eight-eared wargodean genius was a fifth-level constellier. Born a god of war, the guy grew up fighting life and death battles. There was no way they could fight him head on. After all, there was quite a gap between their cultivation levels. Not only that, the young man had extremely sensitive hearing. If his ability was used in battle, his senses would be unimaginable. He could easily lock on to his opponent's position from the sound of their breath, and even the changes in Tianming's sword. With his ears, he could control the battlefield.

"If that's the case, no matter how long we try and drag it out, we'll be at a disadvantage when we compete for the treasure within the Imperialdragon Palace. This palace is the key to the imperial star ranking. If Zhan Yuance gets his hands on it, he might just win, causing us to completely lose the opportunity for a place in the Sky Palace," Yu Ziqian analyzed.

"Yes, we already know that." Tianming rolled his eyes. If that weren't the case, would he have to race against time to strengthen himself? After more than a month, he was still stuck at the same cultivation level, which was Tianming's biggest worry. Completing the final two steps of his Lifesbane Will wasn't going as smoothly as Tianming had expected.

"Brother, I have a way to help you. If you manage to break through your current cultivation level, will you be able to fight him?" Yu Ziqian asked.

"What do you think? Are you joking? If you really have a way, then why don't you attempt a breakthrough?" Tianming was dumbfounded.

"I'm not joking. Don't you know my situation is special? I'll be straightforward with you, I still have four myriad dao pills in my hand!" Yu Ziqian leaned in close, grinning mysteriously. He had actually plucked up a lot of courage to say this.

"What're those?" Tianming was startled.

"My portable grandpa has kept the pills for thousands of years. I originally planned to use it after my pill recession so that I can take the opportunity to break through one or two levels and consolidate my foundation. The myriad dao pill is the most gentle divine pill. It's refined from the myriad dao tree and contains grade-six divine patterns. If you take it, you can accumulate countless daos. The pill can be taken by most people. The sweetmist white clouds and sea anemone spirit are both mild divine hazards that went into the creation of the pills. Although the myriad dao pill is a grade-six divine pill, it's as valuable as a grade-seven one because of its usefulness. It'll help you guys achieve a breakthrough if you're currently stuck!" Yu Ziqian's mouth moved as fast as Tianming's sword.

Tianming took a moment to respond. "You really have them?"

"Yes! These are the only divine pills my portable grandpa left behind. It took me tremendous strength to look for them, though. I've kept them for twenty years because I couldn't bear to use them. I was preparing to use them for the Voidsky Skirmish," said Yu Ziqian.

"Then why offer them to me? Why don't you use them when the time comes?" Tianming asked.

Upon hearing that, Yu Ziqian appeared so moved he was about to tear up.

"What's the matter? Is there an insect in your eyes?" Tianming laughed.

"I'm even more convinced that you really are my friend. Your first reaction to the pills wasn't to ask for them, but to get me to use them. If it were anyone else, they might even kill me just to get their hands on them."

"I'm not like that at all. Since it's important to you, keep it," Tianming said.

"No." Yu Ziqian said firmly.

"Why?" Tianming asked.

"I've figured it out. My original goal was to be in the top ten of the imperial star ranking and raise the Azuresoul Palace's place on the myriad sect ranking. In truth, I never even considered getting a place in the Sky Palace, because it's too difficult. But now, everything has deviated from what I imagined. The three of you acquired a number of treasures and are most likely in the top ten on the imperial star ranking. I'm almost certain that you've helped me complete the goal of raising the Azuresoul Palace's rank. To be honest, I'm really grateful. At this point, whether or not I make the top ten or break through one or two levels isn't so important. On the other hand, the battle for the Imperialdragon Palace is most likely related to the spot in the Sky Palace. You've seized several precious treasures, so the Azuresoul Palace might not be able to keep you. Perhaps the Sky Palace is your only hope. It'd be great if the myriad dao pill can offer you a glimmer of hope at this time. That's why I decided to give them to you to support you and repay you for your help to the Azuresoul Palace!" Having revealed his true thoughts, Yu Ziqian felt a sense of relief. In fact, he had long wanted to give Tianming the pills, but he just didn't know how to bring them up.

After listening to Yu Ziqian, Tianming was silent for some time. Despite the fact that Tianming had never relied on pills to make a breakthrough, he couldn't help but feel a little hopeful if the myriad dao pill truly had the effect Yu Ziqian claimed. He knew very well that their current strength was nothing in the face of geniuses like Zhan Yuance.

Tianming was lucky to have seized the grandpath fiend pill and Lifesteal Silverdragon earlier. But now that Zhan Yuance was the first to seize the opportunity in the Imperialdragon Palace, their hopes were slim. It was impossible to give up the treasure. Tianming could never shy away from the battle.

"Tianming, in fact... I have another reason for doing so. It's quite direct so I don't know if you'd like to hear it or not." Yu Ziqian smiled awkwardly.

"Spit it out." Tianming said calmly.

"My grandpa could tell that you're all extraordinary, so he persuaded me to join you. He even said that you're distinguished people. In fact, after obtaining his legacy, I thought of myself as the glorious son of

heaven. I was certainly proud of myself. During this period of time, through my interactions with you, I understand that there's always someone better than me. I think fate brought us together. That being the case, I don't intend to hide anything. I'll be honest, the myriad dao pills are my pledge of allegiance. I'll follow you when the Voidsky Skirmish ends, no matter what happens." There was embarrassment in his eyes. Although he was thick-skinned, he felt a little awkward when expressing himself.

"You're being really direct. It's not at all like you." Tianming laughed.

"I don't have another choice. So will you accept them or not? Give me an answer!" Yu Ziqian frowned.

"Dude, being my younger brother will cost you," said Tianming.

"Fuck, you're so demanding! Aren't the myriad dao pills enough?" Yu Ziqian grit his teeth.

"They're alright, but if you pay up now, you can join the group as soon as possible." Tianming patted him on the shoulder.

"Here you go, Boss! This is a show of my sincerity. Please accept the pills as well as a kiss from me" Yu Ziqian's eyes lit up as he pulled out a treasure box from his spatial ring. The treasure box was a grade-two divine artifact, and its only function was to keep divine pills sealed. It was obvious the pills were of great quality.

"I accept your pledge of loyalty. As for the kiss, you can give that to your grandpa." Having received the treasure box, Tianming was in a good mood. As far as he was concerned, Yu Ziqian's pledge of loyalty solved his urgent need. If the circumstances remained unchanged, he would definitely treat Yu Ziqian well. After all, the man helped him when he needed it most.

Tianming was well aware that Yu Ziqian was different from Lingfeng. He had met Lingfeng by coincidence, saved his life twice, and watched him grow from a blank sheet of paper to the strong man he was today. Lingfeng was like his own brother. The intense emotions between them were irreplaceable; there was no gap between them. On the other hand, Yu Ziqian was someone he had met halfway through, so he didn't know him inside and out. Yu Ziqian might consider himself a little brother, but Tianming treated him as a friend. In fact, Yu Ziqian was a complicated man. He had an ego, and whether or not this friendship was pure remained to be seen.

Tianming's principle when it came to making friends was naturally to help each other and grow together. If they respected him, he would reciprocate in kind. Tianming would certainly remember Yu Ziqian's valuable gift. He had also contributed a good deal when they were fighting for the Lifesteal Silverdragon. Thus, Tianming was rather fond of this friend. Although a friend could never reach Lingfeng's position in his heart, friends could also fight side by side and treat each other well.

In the darkness, a fragrance wafted through the passage as Tianming opened the treasure box.

Chapter 1223 - Changes In The Imperialdragon Palace

The fragrance attracted both Lingfeng and Xiaoxiao. Turning their attention to the treasure box, they saw four white divine pills. Each pill was about three centimeters in diameter, enveloped in a white mist with ice-blue liquid swirling inside. A total of three complete divine patterns appeared on each myriad dao pill. In the center of the pill was the grade-six divine pattern, the myriad dao heart, an extremely

complicated divine pattern. It contained the dao that was the origin of the heavens and earth. Profoundly mysterious, the pills assailed their nostrils with their aroma.

"What's this?" Xiaoxiao sniffed. The pills smelled so good they made her dizzy.

"It's the sugar pills Gan Gangan gave us. Eat them now." Tianming handed a pill to Xiaoxiao first.

"A divine pill?" Shrinking back, she said, "I've just managed to catch my breath after reaching second-level constellation about ten days ago."

In her lifebound space, the Archaiionfiend urged, "Take it, you fool! The myriad dao pill has a gentle medicinal effect. Besides, you've never used divine pills for cultivation. The effects will be incredible the first time you use one, and the damage negligible."

"Alright then." Xiaoxiao held the huge pill in her hand, still a little confused.

"A pill taker's got to have the consciousness of a pill taker. Go cultivate," said Tianming.

Without a doubt, Xiaoxiao had been "fed" to her current state.

"Fine." She rolled her eyes at him.

"Here." Tianming handed another pill to Lingfeng.

Throwing it into the opening in his chest, Lingfeng turned to Yu Ziqian, "Thanks, Gan Gangan."

"Dammit." Yu Ziqian felt as if he had lost all dignity. Even a serious person like Feng was calling him by that nickname. After Tianming took one for himself, there was still another left in the treasure box. Sealing the treasure box once more, he handed it back to Yu Ziqian and said, "For you."

"Two pills work better," said Yu Ziqian.

"I don't need two. I just want to try one and see if I can break through to the next level. I won't completely rely on it." For more than a month, Tianming hoped to break through to eleventh-level ascension. During this period, he remained in the third level of the Violetglory Pagoda, cultivating for more than ten days. Now that his Lifesbane Will had reached the peak of the tenth level, all that was left was that final bit.

"Naturally. Leaps in cultivation level aided by divine pills are most unstable. Some people might rise in cultivation level but find that a small part of their divine will has collapsed, which in turn causes their cultivation level to fall again," said Yu Ziqian. As an alchemy guru, he knew best about the subject. However, after saying that, he glanced at Lingfeng in a daze. "Except for this monster! He's not refining them, he's breaking them down!"

Each of them had their fortunes. The Primordial Demonlord had given Lingfeng the Primordial Gate, while the Primordial God-Emperor gave Tianming the cultivation path of sovereignty.

"Alright, I'll get to it." Yu Ziqian was fine on his own. He was here to protect them while they cultivated.

A little time had passed since Weisheng Moran had left. This was Tianming's first time refining a high-grade pill, and his experience with it was satisfactory. After all, this divine pill was indeed gentle. The more gentle the pill, the more sought after it was. However, its medicinal effect was definitely inferior to

the grandpath fiend pill. He absorbed and refined the pill that lay in his stomach. With the collision of the divine patterns on the divine hazards, the strange divine patterns on the divine herbs gathered in his albi, nourishing his divine will. He found it unbelievable.

"All that was left was that one last step. Finally...."

Tianming had merely concluded the initial refining. Before the medicinal effect of the myriad dao pill completely flooded his body, Tianming's Lifesbane Will rose a level and gradually stabilized. I'll get Meow Meow to return so we can absorb the nova source together and reach eleventh-level Ascension.

There was no doubt his combat effectiveness would dramatically improve. However, Tianming never expected Lingfeng would be a step ahead of him.

"How is it?" Tianming asked.

"I've reached the second level," Lingfeng replied.

He was still exploring the medicinal effects of the grandpath fiend pill and had been closer to a breakthrough than Tianming. With the addition of the myriad dao pill, Lingfeng reached second-level constellation easily.

"Do you feel any instability in your divine will from refining the divine pill?" Tianming asked.

"I don't feel anything at the moment. It seems alright."

That was the effect of the Primordial Gate. If it could last forever, then Lingfeng could take almost any divine pill, perhaps even those that didn't match his attributes. Xiaoxiao was the only one left. Covered in cold sweat, the young woman sat in the corner with her eyes closed and blood seeping from her skin.

"Is she alright? The myriad dao pill is very gentle," said Yu Ziqian.

"There will be triumph after suffering," said Tianming.

Xiaoxiao had long outgrown such fears. In any case, this was an improvement over the time she had been completely alone and helpless in the Archaion Sect, as well as under the Archaionfiend's threat.

"Only with strength can you have freedom and the right to speak. Although it's hard on her now, she'll have a better future and live the life she wants." Tianming waited quietly by her side.

In Xiaoxiao's lifebound space, the Archaionfiend looked coldly at Tianming, though he couldn't see it.

Xiaoxiao's body seemed to waste away as earth-shaking changes began. She exuded a cruel, monstrous aura. Thousands of blood-red electric snakes rolled, forming a lightning inferno, like an ancient, ferocious beast gradually awakening. In fact, this change appeared to surpass her previous breakthroughs. As the nova source condensed, she slowly opened her eyes. A murderous spirit greeted Tianming head on.

"Have you succeeded?" Tianming asked.

Upon hearing that, her gaze slowly softened. The fierce aura enveloping her body gradually faded until it completely disappeared.

"Yes."

As expected, she was now a third-level constellier. In terms of cultivation, she was four levels ahead of Tianming.

"Can you control it?" Tianming asked.

"It's not easy. I feel..." She stood up, but exerted too much strength and hit the ceiling instead.

"Wow, I'm flying."

Ten breaths later, Xiaoxiao slammed to the ground, her expression bitter as she said, "I can't. Don't consider me as a competent teammate. I think it's better if I stay back for a while..."

"Alright, take your time. There's no rush." Tianming was very confident in her because she was a tough girl. The Archaionfiend had yet to really suppress her. How could she be weak after resisting time and again? This time, they had all improved again and it was thanks to Yu Ziqian.

"I can rival a fourth-level constellier without my totems. Needless to say, Feng can probably do the same. As for Xiaoxiao, she's already a third-level constellier. Although she might not be able to defeat a first-level constellier on her own, the Archaionfiend will have no problem crushing a third-level constellier." Their strength had improved immensely as a whole.

"Xiaoxiao's a weird one. In terms of combat, we've leapfrogged, but she's fallen behind instead," Ying Huo mocked.

"Don't underestimate her. As long as the girl has a sharp sword in her hand, she may kill the tough guys." Tianming smiled.

Seeing their tremendous gains, Yu Ziqian couldn't help but feel proud inside. Turning to Tianming, he said, "Do you think you're ready for the Imperialdragon Palace? Can you defeat Zhan Yuance?"

"Zhan Yuance has five lifebound beasts that are all at the fifth-level Constellation stage. We may not have the advantage in numbers. Moreover, he's got quite a few helpers with him. However, the situation is better than it was before. It won't be that easy for him to defeat us. We can go and fight," Tianming explained. He stared in the direction of the Imperialdragon Palace, eyes fiery as the confidence in his heart surged.

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"Let's go!"

Right then, the entire passage shook violently.

"What the hell?"

The explosive sound of war drums came from the direction of the Imperialdragon Palace. The brick walls turned into dust, spattering all over Tianming.

"The Imperialdragon Palace!"

Lingfeng rushed over with the Soulfliend wrapped around his body like a whirlwind. The man resembled a black storm.

"Yes."

"Something must have happened. Why didn't Meow Meow return to inform us?" Xiaoxiao asked.

Tianming and Ying Huo exchanged a knowing look. Meow Meow must have fallen asleep.

"It's fine."

They weren't too far from the palace. Fortunately, the changes in the Imperialdragon Palace had caused strong shocks throughout the tomb, serving as a reminder for Tianming.

"Hurry up. We still have a chance."

In the absence of Meow Meow, they flew there on their own. Tianming and Lingfeng headed out, disappearing into the darkness in the blink of an eye.

"Wait, bring me with you!" Yu Ziqian yelled.

As soon as his voice fell, Ying Huo turned around. Although it preferred to remain small, it now had a wingspan of about five meters and was considered a dazzling phoenix that could carry people on its back. Grabbing Yu Ziqian's collar with its claws, Ying Huo flapped its wings, gliding through the passage like an eagle carrying its chick. It soon caught up with Tianming and the others.

"Why all the noise? Are they trying to attract everyone?" Narrowing his dark red eyes, Lingfeng looked ahead.

The light formed waves, spreading out and sweeping through the tomb, so bright that it was almost impossible to keep their eyes open.

"This is how they design tests. The final battle for the treasure must have everyone's attention, right?" Tianming said.

"You mean to say that the noise is meant to attract spectators and the real fight requires an 'admission ticket'?" Lingfeng asked.

"That's right."

Chapter 1224 - The Divine Worldeater Cauldron

The competition in the Imperial Ninedragon Tomb was interesting, yet uncomplicated. In the face of the blinding light, the four of them rushed toward the Imperialdragon Palace. Just one more passage and they would arrive at their destination. The light was still spreading, proving that they weren't too late.

"Fortunately, there was all this noise and movement. Otherwise, we would've missed it." At a glance, Tianming saw the black cat sleeping soundly at the entrance of the passage. Despite the thunderous noise and shaking walls, it was out like a light. Tianming had to admire Meow Meow; its sleepiness had reached new heights! Trying to contain his anger, he flew across, stretched out his hand, and flicked its balls.

"Meow!!" A miserable shriek sounded. In the darkness, thunder and lightning flashed and there was a spark of electricity in his hand. In a blink of an eye, several claw marks appeared. Sure enough, it was scratched.

"Who is it? Why have you violated me?"

As soon as Meow Meow was done howling, it immediately noticed Tianming. Filled with horror, it turned around and finally noticed the apocalypse-like shocks in the Imperialdragon Palace. Gulping nervously, it said, "Well, I've been monitoring the place for more than ten days, when I suddenly felt a little tired, so I took a nap. I only closed my eyes for three breaths! I never expected these people to be so cunning that they would take advantage of my rest and cause all this trouble. How despicable of them...."

Before it could finish speaking, Tianming lifted Meow Meow by the back of its neck, tossed it into his lifebound space, and continued toward the light. There were more important matters at hand. As expected of Meow Meow, slip-ups were a common thing. Fortunately, its mistakes hadn't affected the overall situation. Most of the time, Meow Meow was reliable. With Meow Meow back, they began symbiotic cultivation. Tianming seized the opportunity to absorb the nova source. He had to completely enter eleventh-level ascension.

Right then, Yu Ziqian screamed from behind. "That's the—!"

His loud voice seemed to heighten the atmosphere. Tianming happened to take a closer look. With his Plundering Eye, he could see the whole picture clearly. Above the Imperialdragon Palace, where the light rays gathered, there seemed to be a giant cauldron. This three-legged cauldron was much bigger than Tianming's orderian cauldron; it occupied almost one-third of the entire palace. If it was placed outside, the cauldron could certainly cover the sky. It was so enormous that even Lan Huang could run around wildly inside of it.

The gigantic cauldron appeared somewhat similar to the orderian cauldron. There seemed to be countless lifelike beast faces on the surface like a gathering of thousands of beasts, including the taotie and qiongqi. The three giant legs resembled pillars that could support the sky, holding the cauldron in place.

"What's that? A divine artifact?" With only a glance, Tianming sensed that the cauldron was some sort of divine artifact, more imposing than the Lifesteal Silverdragon and Dragonblood Desecration in terms of power and size. The secret hidden in the Imperialdragon Palace was a divine artifact? Tianming had considered other possibilities. He would be disappointed if it were just any divine artifact. However, if this three-legged cauldron was truly extraordinary, it would be worthy of the grandiosity of the Imperialdragon Palace.

At this moment, the light was splendid. He couldn't quite clearly make out the details of the three-legged cauldron. It was shocking. It felt like there was an entire world, or at least a continent pressing down on his head. When Tianming was under the cauldron, the feeling reminded him of the time the Divine Moon Realm was descending.

"Bro, this is the Divine Worldeater Cauldron, a grade-eight divine artifact. It didn't belong to the Ninedragon Emperor. Or at least, I've never heard about the Ninedragon Emperor owning such an

artifact. The top-grade divine artifact appeared in Orderia millions of years ago. At that time, the Divine Worldeater Cauldron triggered a sect war that lasted tens of thousands of years. As a result, almost half of the Myriad Solar Sects were destroyed, and millions of lives were lost. It's been missing for millions of years." As Yu Ziqian spoke, his eyes were completely vacant and somewhat entranced.

"Is a grade-eight divine artifact so attractive?" Tianming asked in a daze. It sounded more valuable than the Lifesteal Silverdragon.

"It's no ordinary grade-eight divine artifact, because the weapon portion is only part of its value. Its greater value lies in the alchemy portion! The cauldron is meant for alchemy. Every divine pill is refined in an alchemy cauldron. You know that, don't you? For millions of years, the Divine Worldeater Cauldron has been a divine object that all alchemists desire. If one acquires the cauldron, their success rate and the quality of their divine pills will be greatly increased, but that's not all. It can transform an alchemy guru." Yu Ziqian's eyes shone as if he had seen a dream.

"I see." Tianming understood now.

He had learned the significance of divine pills to cultivators after watching Zhan Yuance and Lingfeng's transformation from taking the yinyang skyscorch pill and grandpath fiend pill. The Lifesteal Silverdragon could make one man strong, but the Divine Worldeater Cauldron could make an entire sect prosper! Divine pills signified breakthrough and rebirth. An exceptional and highly efficient alchemy cauldron could produce more divine pills and thus benefit more disciples.

Prior to this, Tianming only knew that the caeli of seniors and nova sources could enable the rise of an entire clan. He now understood that a top alchemy guru and an infinite supply of divine pills could also achieve similar results. Caeli were the foundation for long-term success, while divine pills meant short-term breakthroughs. Divine pills also represented wealth. Tianming heard that divine pills were circulated as currency in Orderia. Because they were panaceas, divine pills were definitely useful and could be exchanged for anything. Territory, legacy, and wealth were the foundation for any force's rise to power.

"The Divine Worldeater Cauldron is a cash cow." Yu Ziqian looked infatuated.

"The celestial orderians and sun emperor will all want to get their hands on this treasure, won't they?" Tianming asked.

"Presumably... so what is the Sky Palace doing?" Yu Ziqian seemed to regain his senses. The cauldron wasn't an item he could keep.

"Who cares about that? If merging with blood works, we'll take it. We have quite a few treasures in hand, so the others must already be green-eyed. What's one more?" Tianming retorted. They were now on a path of no return. Regardless of what the Sky Palace was planning, they'd had no way of backing down since the moment they'd seized the Lifesteal Silverdragon.

Tianming's words moved Yu Ziqian because he had used "we." It meant he had included Yu Ziqian in their camp.

"You're my brother!" Grabbing Tianming's hand, Yu Ziqian gushed, "Can you help me get the Divine Worldeater Cauldron? As long as you do that, I swear I'll do anything for you, even bleed for you. My life is yours!"

Chapter 1225 - Black Exalted Blood

"You want it?" Tianming asked.

"Yes! It's extremely important to me. For you, it's just a weapon. But for me, it's a divine artifact that can create a prosperous future. It is my faith!" Yu Ziqian exclaimed. He wanted it even if he couldn't keep it.

Tianming looked up at the Divine Worldeater Cauldron once more. There was no doubt that it was far more valuable than the Lifesteal Silverdragon and the myriad dao pills. But if I didn't have the myriad dao pill, how would I compete for the Divine Worldeater Cauldron?

Yu Ziqian had given him the pills before the cauldron even appeared, instead of exchanging one for the other. The cauldron is precious, but sincerity is also required when dealing with friends. He's made up his mind and given me the myriad dao pills. If I help him win this artifact, then he's lucky and made the right choice. At the thought of that, Tianming didn't want to overanalyze the matter. After all, he had seen his competitors; it wouldn't be easy to seize the Divine Worldeater Cauldron. As Yu Ziqian expectantly stared at him, he simply said, "Okay, let's try our best."

"Are you saying you're willing to help me?" Yu Ziqian was close to tears.

"Yes, let's give it a go," Tianming replied.

"This is a most valuable treasure, a top grade-eight divine artifact...."

"We don't know alchemy."

Waving his hand, Tianming said, "Don't get all moved. We'll try, but who knows whether or not we'll get it?"

"It would be great if I was a woman," said Yu Ziqian.

"Why?"

"I'd devote myself to you and have your children..."

"Are you serious? Then castrate yourself!" Tianming glared at him.

They were quickly approaching the cauldron. Although Meow Meow hadn't reported the situation, they weren't considered late since they were alerted by the shocks.

Despite the sudden appearance of the dazzling light and cauldron, there weren't many people gathered in the Imperialdragon Palace at the moment, mainly three parties. They were the wargodeans, Xuanyuan Dragon Sect, and Dreamless Celestial Nation. Weisheng Moran was the only Dreamless Celestial Nation disciple present. The moment he laid his eyes on her, Tianming deduced that the cauldron's appearance had something to do with her.

At that moment, the black drum in Weisheng Moran's hand had expanded to about two meters in diameter. The top of the drum opened like a door. Without hesitation, she entered the drum, and its head closed once more.

The black drum carried her up, turning into a black light as it descended into the mouth of the cauldron. In an instant, Weisheng Moran was inside the cauldron, having seized the decisive opportunity.

The four disciples headed by Long Longlong failed to notice Tianming behind them. The black drum in Long Longlong's hands had expanded and opened. The four entered the drum together and the drum head closed. Like Weisheng Moran, they entered the mouth of the cauldron.

As for the wargodeans, there was a small change of plans. Zhan Yuance was more than three meters tall, while the diameter of the black drum was only about two meters wide. As soon as he stepped inside, he realized there was no way to extend the walls of the drum and was forced to shrink as much as possible. At his urging, Zhan Yingying and two other male disciples squeezed in.

With their size, the drum was crowded. If they had been ordinary people, they could probably have fit ten people if they squeezed really hard. The drum head closed the moment the drum was full. That meant only three people could follow Zhan Yuance. Worried that he would be at a disadvantage, Zhan Yuance quickly steered the drum into the cauldron, making the wargodeans the third group to enter.

There were more than two hundred wargodean disciples left behind. Glancing at each other, they made a quick decision.

"Charge!" Without the black drum, their bodies slammed into the mouth of the cauldron. To their surprise, there were divine hazards raging in the opening and the wargodeans were swept out as soon as they tried to force their way in. It was clear that no one could enter without a black war drum.

"You guessed it. 'Admission tickets' are required."

The black drum was that ticket. The four groups had only made it here because they'd acquired a black drum.

The noise and tremors in the Imperialdragon Palace had yet to stop. Majestic drumming spread out from the cauldron. In a short period of time, tens of thousands of disciples would be attracted to the palace. However, they could only watch the battle like the remaining wargodeans on the scene. Without a black war drum, they didn't stand a chance.

"Get in." Tianming pulled out his drum, which began expanding at once.

The four of them immediately entered the drum. Lifebound beasts didn't occupy space inside. The Soulfriend was no lifebound beast, but a spiritform. It transformed into a vortex, surrounding Lingfeng's body. Hence, they had plenty of space. With that, the drum carried them to the cauldron.

"It's Li Tianming, Yu Ziqian, and the others."

"Stop them!"

"Get the drum!"

The wargodean disciples who had been swept away by the cauldron quickly locked on to them. However, they were still too late. Before they could respond, Tianming had already entered the mouth of the cauldron.

The world seemed to spin and the noise around them was deafening. The Divine Worldeater Cauldron was much larger than the orderian cauldron; just the storm at the mouth of the cauldron resembled an ocean.

"It's hard to imagine how such a huge divine artifact was forged," said Tianming.

"A top smithing guru must be an expert cultivator. The creator of this Divine Worldeater Cauldron was definitely one of the best in the astralscape of order. It may take decades, or even hundreds of years to create this kind of divine artifact. Even a grade-eight divine pill requires at least that much time." Glancing around, Yu Ziqian almost fainted from the excitement. If his portable grandpa was present, he would be thrilled as well.

It was impossible to see the artifact soul for the time being, but Tianming could hear the beasts—the roar of the lion, the cry of the ape, the horse's whinnying, and the birdsong. A cacophony of their cries arose; it was as if there was a stampede of billions of beasts rushing past their ears.

They sank into the abyss and could no longer see the exterior of the cauldron. The black war drum was out of control as it whizzed further into the cauldron. Meanwhile, Tianming continued absorbing the nova source and supplementing his astralforce, finally completing his transformation to eleventh-level ascension.

"There's probably a fierce battle up next. Get ready," Tianming reminded.

Yu Ziqian was still in the midst of his pill recession and couldn't be counted on. The three of them would have to do most of the fighting.

The violent roars still echoed in their ears as their surroundings gradually lit up. When the storm in the cauldron passed, a vast area became visible before them. It looked like they were in a formation battlefield. At a glance, Tianming noticed a drop of black exalted blood floating in the air in the center of the battlefield. The blood of the previous owner of the Divine Worldeater Cauldron was actually black.

"God knows what kind of monster that person was."

About ten breaths later, the blood disappeared. It seemed that they were meant to compete and the blood would belong to the victor.

Who were the competitors? They had all appeared: Tianming in the north, Zhan Yuance in the west, Weisheng Moran in the east, and Long Longlong in the south. The four war drums were facing one another. Tianming discovered that they were separated by a transparent barrier. The barrier wasn't a formation, but part of the cauldron, like a divider. The cauldron resembled a pot with four sections.

The exalted blood was originally in the center, but had disappeared. With that, the drum heads opened again. As soon as Tianming and the others exited the drum, it shrank back to its original size and turned into a tattoo that merged into Tianming's left cheek. The other three parties had all emerged from their drums with a war drum tattoo on their faces as well.

"Hurry up!" Zhan Yuance immediately rushed toward the position of the exalted blood, but slammed into the barrier. It was clear the exalted blood wasn't to be seized at once, but to be obtained according to the rules set by the Sky Palace.

The wargodeans soon calmed down and stared at Tianming's party. The transparent divider inside the cauldron temporarily blocked them from one another. Although Tianming couldn't hear them, it seemed they were provoking his group. Ever since he had seized the Lifesteal Silverdragon, Zhan Yuance was obsessed with defeating him. Therefore, the wargodeans looked ferocious.

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At that moment, Tianming discovered that the entire cauldron had become transparent. As a result, they could all see the disciples that had gathered outside due to the noise and shocks originating from the Imperialdragon Palace. With astonishment on their face, the disciples surrounded the Divine Worldeater Cauldron. Many tried entering through the mouth of the cauldron, but without a black drum, they could only anxiously watch on. Without an admission ticket, they could only be spectators.

The Sky Palace had deliberately arranged for the battle to be seen by everyone. That way, no matter who obtained the cauldron, they wouldn't be able to stay low. The temptation of the treasure was strong enough to suppress their fear of arousing the envy of others, and the desire to dominate the world could drag them into madness. In this world, everyone hoped to rise. No one was willing to be trampled and be forced to obey orders, pour out all their strength for someone else, or bow and scrape.

"Who's inside the cauldron?"

"It looks like Weisheng Moran, Long Longlong, Zhan Yuance, Li Tianming, and Yu Ziqian."

Chapter 1226 - The Eight-Eared Wargodean And The Divine Skypillar

The walls of the Divine Worldeater Cauldron had become transparent, so the spectators could clearly see the inside.

"How'd they get in?"

"According to those who arrived early, they seemed to have entered with a black war drum, which they obtained by destroying thousands of dragon golems."

"Thousands? That's crazy. Is there no way for us to enter?"

"We'll keep trying. The drop of exalted blood has already appeared. If we don't go in soon, we may not have a chance."

"Those disciples from the Azuresoul Palace are everywhere. It's really annoying!"

"The other three parties are disciples of the top four sects on the myriad sect ranking. Is the Azuresoul Palace joining in for the fun of it?"

"It's the Divine Worldeater Cauldron! The elders outside must be astonished."

"Those disciples whose imperial star formations were destroyed have left the tomb to report back to their elders. The events here can't be kept a secret."

More and more disciples were attracted by the movement in the Imperialdragon Palace; it was no secret at all. The drastic changes in the palace and the appearance of the cauldron were meant to lead them to the heart of the battle. The entire tomb was in an uproar and it seemed as if everyone was heading towards the Imperialdragon Palace.

At this moment, Tianming and the others were trapped within their own barriers. There was no intersection for the time being. The cauldron was a stage, and they were the performers. When the audience had all entered, the battle would begin. A battle under the scrutiny of all the disciples would be exhilarating.

More importantly, Zhan Yuance and his team were still motioning for them to go over. Judging from the movement of his lips, what he was saying was: "The cauldron is sealed. You're trapped. Let's see if you can escape this time!"

Tianming calmly waited for the next phase. Glancing at the audience in the Imperialdragon Palace, he estimated there were at least tens of thousands. In order to watch the battle, most disciples kept their lifebound beasts in their lifebound spaces. The palace could accommodate more than a million people; however, more than half of the disciples refused to give up and continued to charge toward the mouth of the cauldron without a black drum. They hoped to enter the "stage" as well.

The roars of the beasts continued and there was chaos everywhere. Tianming felt pins and needles on his scalp from watching the crowd that resembled flying locusts.

"What do you think will happen in this cauldron?" Yu Ziqian apprehensively swept his gaze past their three opponents.

Although Zhan Yuance only had three disciples with him, a maniac like him posed a strong threat. His fiery eyes seemed to burn a hole through their chests.

"The barriers may disappear. It may be a battle between all four sides, and the last one standing is the winner." Narrowing his eyes, Tianming scanned the battlefield. The wargodeans had already released their lifebound beasts. Zhan Yuance sat on the shoulders of a goldenmane skyape, staring at Tianming.

"It's going to be really hard. There's no way to deal with them all in this closed battlefield. If you can't fight them, don't insist. It's alright to give up. Keeping our gains is good enough. We mustn't lose the Lifesteal Silverdragon again," said Yu Ziqian.

"You're overthinking it. They won't let us go even if we lose the Lifesteal Silverdragon. They're going to try to kill us. He'll take whatever he can take. I plan to join forces with Weisheng Moran, what do you think?" Tianming asked.

"You don't want to join forces with the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect? They're the rightful descendants of the Ninedragon Emperor," said Yu Ziqian.

"That young man is hostile toward me. Just think about it, would you be alright if most of the treasures left by your ancestors were taken by outsiders?" Tianming asked.

"Weisheng Moran is very strange. You can't trust her fully," Yu Ziqian said.

"I understand. We only need to join forces up to a certain point. I'll keep my guard up." Tianming nodded.

In the event of a mixed battle, the worst thing that could happen was being besieged by three parties. Even if they had improved in terms of strength, they didn't have much of an advantage. Tianming was well aware they had to find an ally first.

However, Tianming's plan was disrupted. As more and more disciples came to watch the battle, a battle for points broke out. Perhaps the Sky Palace had decided there were enough spectators, as there was a sudden change in the cauldron! At that moment, the partitions in the east and south turned black, blocking their line of sight. Weisheng Moran and Long Longlong were completely hidden from his view.

Tianming was in the north and Zhan Yuance was in the west. The divider between the west and north suddenly disappeared; there was no obstacle between them now. The north and west sections merged into one battlefield. It seemed the south and east sections had also experienced the same changes. Thus, the Divine Worldeater Cauldron was divided into two, right down the middle, and it was impossible to see the other side. All they had to do was deal with the enemy in front of them.

"A one-on-one fight where the winners fight to the death?" Tianming understood immediately. The Sky Palace had put him up against Zhan Yuance, while Weisheng Moran and Long Longlong would battle it out.

"This is better. It saves us the trouble of forming an alliance. All we have to do is fight," said Tianming.

Whatever happened afterward, right now there was no avoiding the battle with Zhan Yuance. With him were the most elite wargodean disciples, Zhan Yingying and two other third-level constellier youths. On Tianming's side, only three of them were able to fight. Because of their previous enmity, the air was filled with tension the moment the wargodeans met the Azuresoul Palace disciples.

Tianming turned to look at them. The other lifebound beasts were of no interest to him; only Zhan Yuance's five lifebound beasts could pose a threat to them. This was perhaps the first time Tianming had come across an expert beastmaster with five lifebound beasts. The goldenmane skyapes had the head of a lion, its power and ferociousness, the stout body of an ape, golden muscle, and fur as hard as metal. With claws as tough as a top-grade divine artifact, they could resist swords and tear their opponent's flesh. The five beasts guarded Zhan Yuance, their bodies raging with golden flames that connected to form a sea of fire. The temperature of this half of the cauldron soared as heat waves swept across.

The eight-eared wargodean held a grade-seven divine weapon in his hand, the Divine Skypillar. With his physique, Zhan Yuance disdained to wear armor, so his upper body was bare. His flesh was as hard as metal and gleaming with countless divine patterns. His golden eyes shone on Tianming and the others like the sun, their brilliance so intense it could almost melt their flesh and blood.

The battle was about to begin.

Chapter 1227 - Rookie Archer

The goldenmane skyapes led ten other giant third-level beasts in a charge toward Tianming. The momentum at which they charged proved that the wargodeans thought of Tianming and the rest as mere prey. They were a pack of fierce lions here to bring down hapless sheep.

Mockery and ridicule could even be seen on the beasts' expressions, but those emotions were strongest on Zhan Yingying. She was carrying her golden armor and holding her spear aloft while she rode on the saintcrystal regal unicorn's back.

She pointed her spear at Li Tianming and the rest, clearly feeling in control of everything. She said to Zhan Yuance, "Big Brother, we can't break their imperial star formations or let them break them. We have to do to them what they did to us! That's the only way to get what's on them and show them the cost of challenging and humiliating us. How dare a bunch of losers from a weak power monkey around here?"

Those were words she had come up with when Tianming had traded her for the Lifesteal Silverdragon.

"Yingying...." Zhan Yuance smiled before bumping fists with her. "Great minds think alike."

"Exactly. They even dared to bully the princess. Did they forget their place just because they have some skill?"

"They must've thought the Voidsy Realm was some fair competition, so they decided to let loose."

"Second-rate will always be second-rate. When our seniors come out, their masters and the sect master behind them will go to their knees. What can they do?"

"Since when are items like the Lifesteal Silverdragon, Dragonblood Desecration, and grandpath fiend pill things they can touch?"

The two remaining third-level constellier disciples were protecting Zhan Yingying. It was them who had been speaking. They two had six-ears level talent, and were the best of the wargodeans' descendants.

"Let's not talk about backing. Bullying others like that is meaningless. We'll just talk about how they bullied my younger sister. I'll rip out their guts, does that sound right?" Zhan Yuance said in a low voice. Just thinking of the earlier hostage exchange caused fury to explode in him again.

"Yes!"

"Li Tianming is just a dog that only knows how to run away. I bet he never dreamed that the Divine Worldeater Cauldron would trap him in it with us!"

The wargodeans all roared with laughter as they rushed at Tianming's group with their lifebound beasts.

Zhan Yuance's words showed that he clearly didn't intend to let Tianming off. That was his style of doing things. He loved to talk before trampling his opponents underfoot. The fury and mockery in the four wargodeans' eyes showed they clearly didn't intend to stop at defeating Tianming's group.

Yu Ziqian recalled his master Jiang Qingliu's darkest point and could finally understand the helplessness and grievances of disciples from second-rate powers in this competition. Just because the treasure was right in front of you didn't mean you would dare to touch it. At least, Yu Ziqian wouldn't be willing without Tianming and the rest around.

"Guys, be careful. Don't lose," Yu Ziqian reminded them. He knew that tens of thousands of people were paying attention to this. If they lost, they would become an absolute laughing stock.

“Lose? What we want to do is to give them a complete beatdown!” What kind of opponents had Tianming not experienced yet? Even though these were his strongest opponents so far, it wouldn’t make his fighting spirit waver. He was already mentally prepared for a life and death battle when his opponents charged forward.

The clash made many disciples outside the Divine Worldeater Cauldron burst into an uproar.

“Hah, it’s finally the end of the road for these Azuresoul Palace fellows.”

“They should’ve gotten lost long ago, they’re an eyesore.”

“I heard Li Tianming even hit Zhan Yuance’s sister. Doesn’t he know how overprotective he is? Everyone who’s touched Zhan Yingying have all had their heads plucked off by Zhan Yuance.”

“They may be able to survive if Yu Ziqian really does have some skill.”

“They got more than enough things already. If they’d just broken their imperial star formation, they’d have been fine. But they obviously want to overestimate themselves.”

“Morons. I don’t have pity for idiots.”

Amidst the intense discussions, the two sides clashed. There were quite a few participants, so the fight should have been quite chaotic.

However, things didn’t end up as expected.

Tianming had always been thinking about how to maximize his team’s effectiveness. The difference he had with these wargodeans was obvious. His lifebound beasts, him, Lingfeng, and Xiaoxiao all had vastly different styles of combat.

Tianming was the most well-rounded. Lingfeng couldn’t fight head-on, but if he had the chance to push the advantage of his soul, Tianming and him would be greater than the sum of their parts if they could coordinate together. Xiaoxiao was currently only suitable for attacking from a distance, and her one-on-one was lacking.

A team with many strengths had a large variance in its power level. They needed good coordination, which Tianming needed to arrange!

“The two third-level constellers with Zhan Yuance aren’t that strong, but they can interfere with our teamwork. We need a quick knockout for them!” Tianming coldly looked at Zhan Yingying.

The two extra disciples had her in the center, forming a group next to Zhan Yuance to support him.

“Feng, finish them as fast as possible! Xiaoxiao and I will hold off Zhan Yuance, okay?” Tianming asked.

“Alright.” Lingfeng gave a confident reply after looking at that group.

Tianming knew Lingfeng was reliable.

“For their team, Zhan Yuance and his five lifebound beasts are over eighty percent of their combat power!”

He couldn't let Xiaoxiao fight Zhan Yingying, because while she could tie them down, she couldn't beat them. What he really wanted was for Lingfeng to quickly come over and help him deal with Zhan Yuance! This choice was evidence of Tianming's trepidation. After all, Zhan Yuance, as a fifth-level constellier, was worth at least a dozen Zhan Yingyings.

"Get them!" The start of the fight, when Lingfeng was elsewhere, would be the hardest part where Tianming would have to hold on.

Ying Huo, Meow Meow, and Lan Huang all charged forward alongside Tianming.

"Should I come out too?" Xian Xian asked as she anxiously flew around in the lifebound space.

"Let's try ourselves first." The Radix World Tree's recovery had been slow since the battle with the dragon golems, without any food to eat. Xian Xian's vines, branches and roots were all still not grown back yet. And with Feiling on Xian Xian too, Tianming couldn't bear to take the risk.

It was now a matchup of one man and three beasts versus one man five beasts! However, Tianming still had support behind him, namely Xiaoxiao and the Archaionfiend.

Eight small blood-colored dragons were revolving around Xiaoxiao. Standing between the giant horns on the Archaionfiend's head, Xiaoxiao drew the Dragonblood Desecration to full draw. Blood-colored lightning raced over her body and gathered on the arrow, which Xiaoxiao then fired. Her target was the eye of one of the goldenmane skyapes.

The arrow was incredibly fast and arrived at the ape in the blink of an eye, but it regarded the arrow with contempt. Despite its large size, it was still nimble. It dodged the arrow while raising a hand to block. However, the sharp arrowhead simply pierced through its hand. In its wake, a large volume of blood was pulled out, sucked in by the arrow. This was the blood-sucking effect of the grade-seven divine ordered pattern, the bloodgorge dragonmark.

The ape let out a cry of pain and grabbed its arm. The injured area then turned into liquid metal that turned solid again, stemming the flow of blood. However, the entire arm was visibly smaller than before. On flesh and blood, the effectiveness of the bloodgorge dragonmark was as good as Xian Xian's Vitalbane, Life Curse; however, one sucked out blood while one reaped life.

"Don't underestimate the Dragonblood Desecration!" Zhan Yuance glared at that ape.

"Yes! Me and Little Fifth will help you retrieve it," the injured ape roared.

"Go!" Zhan Yuance nodded. He was clear that Xiaoxiao was at most a third-level constellier. She could only pose a threat to his lifebound beast thanks to her weapon.

Tianming wanted to quickly clear the board of Zhan Yuance's helpers, but how could Zhan Yuance be dumb enough to let it happen? There was someone sniping his side from afar, even posing a threat to him and Zhan Yingying. Hence, he decided to deploy two of his apes.

What trouble could two fifth-level constellier beasts that had over four thousand stars each have with some rookie archer?

Chapter 1228 - Street Rats?

To Zhan Yuance, the Archaionfiend was nowhere close to a threat. Not even Xiaoxiao would be considered a proper opponent if it weren't for her Dragonblood Desecration. The two goldenmane skyapes charged toward her like two golden rays, their battle cries echoing through the sky.

The Archaionfiend took to the air, its blood-red eyes filled with eternal contempt and mockery and its fleshy wings entwined in countless blood-colored lightning. Even if its opponents were airborne, its wings granted it much greater mobility.

Since there were still caeli stored within Xiaoxiao's body, Archaionfiend devoured those and used the Bloodblitz Blast. Its abdomen burned red and its power was far greater than the time it had used it at Tianming City.

As the Archaionfiend roared, endless bolts of lightning pierced through the sky. Immediately, the Divine Worldeater Cauldron was swallowed up by a blood-red glow, causing disciples to yelp in surprise.

While Tianming had never found the Archaionfiend to be the most reliable companion, it was definitely a tyrant on the battlefield. This ability alone was enough to prove that. Even as a third-level constellier, it showed no signs of losing to two beasts at the fifth level.

To make matters worse for her foe, Xiaoxiao's blood arrow was hidden within the Bloodblitz Blast. The arrow turned into a fearsome dragon that dashed toward its enemy.

Just as the two goldenmane skyapes got back up to their feet, the Bloodblitz Blast threw them off balance yet again. The blood dragon managed to strike one of the apes on its thigh, draining its blood and causing it to scream in pain.

The shockwave from the attack sent the skyapes crashing into the ground, shaking the entire Divine Worldeater Cauldron.

"Seems like Lin Xiaoxiao isn't bad after all."

"I doubt so, she only got here because of the Dragonblood Desecration. She's already used her trump card, but that damage was not enough to stop the skyapes."

"They underestimated her, but if they were to fight back there's nothing she can do to stop them."

The audience was right that one of goldenmane skyapes' traits was their tough skin. Despite the bombardment from the Archaionfiend, the skyapes managed to produce a golden barrier using their abilities and threw themselves back into battle.

The Archaionfiend frowned and cursed at the sight of the golden rays shooting toward it, as it could do nothing but dodge.

"Let alone Lin Xiaoxiao, do you think that Li Tianming could survive this?"

Chaos had consumed the battlefield. While Xiaoxiao and the Archaionfiend fended off the skyapes, Tianming was clashing with Zhan Yuance in a fierce battle, each with three lifebound beasts.

"You're nothing but a street rat. Know your place!" That was the only comment Zhan Yuance had when he saw Tianming approaching him alone. In fact, it was no different from a cat facing a mouse the last time he had faced Tianming.

As the wargodean genius' eight ears twitched, Tianming and his beasts had nowhere to hide no matter how fast they were.

"You really dare to fight me without your constellation?" Zhan Yuance smirked.

Little did he realize that Tianming didn't even have a constellation, since he was only at the Ascension stage. Since constellations could be toggled at will, it was normal for people to assume that Tianming was at the Constellation stage too.

Even if Tianming were to not use constellations, there was no reason for Zhan Yuance to go easy on him. To him, his constellation was a core component of his power.

"Now!" At his command, Zhan Yuance and his five beasts simultaneously activated their constellations. With him as the center point, a domain covering Tianming, Xiaoxiao, and their beasts was formed. Astralforce spread across the domain, forming the outlines of golden mountains that descended onto them.

It was the myriadhills constellation, which Tianming had experienced before. Each of them felt like there were actual mountains being pressed down on them, and there was increased gravitational force hampering their speed. It felt like they could barely lift their heads up, let alone battle properly.

The constellation felt like the exact opposite of Feiling's temporal field. If she were there, Tianming wouldn't be having such a tough time. He felt his ears ringing just from the sheer pressure from the mountains. Even Meow Meow's agility was badly affected, which could prove fatal to it.

With its movement limited, the Archaionfiend was nearly grabbed by one of the skyapes. If they were to crash into the ground, then both Xiaoxiao and Yu Ziqian who were left unprotected would not escape unharmed.

It was clear that just because of this constellation, Tianming had been thrown into a perilous situation. On top of that, the five goldenmane skyapes had a special ability that could be used together with the myriadhills constellation, known as Myriadhills Vajraform.

While their speed was reduced, they were almost completely immune to physical attacks after using the ability. They were also much fiercer in close combat now, like natural war machines.

"Li Tianming, will you bow before me?" Zhan Yuance and his three skyapes were comparable to an entire army, each step they took unleashing shockwaves across the cauldron. Zhan Yuance himself was three meters tall, and like a war god clad in gold, he sent his staff crashing toward Tianming. The three beasts each used their Goldenape Inferno, forming a tide of golden lava that threatened to swallow up Tianming and his beasts.

It was an impressive sight to behold for the disciples viewing the fight.

"Zhan Yuance truly is a wargodean born for battle."

"His lifebound beasts are perfect, too, having the agility of mammals and the ferocity of tigers!"

"Shame that we can't say the same for those three beasts he's facing. What's with that bird, anyway? I'm sure it can be crushed in one hand."

Just as they were discussing, that little bird they spoke of was smashed by one of the skyapes. Anyone would have thought that Ying Huo would be turned to mush, but instead it was the skyape that let out a shriek. A bloody hole had appeared in the middle of its palm.

The burning phoenix shot into the air, turning into a featherless chicken as it used its Skyscorch Featherblast. Those feathers seemed like nothing to the skyape, and it was confident its Myriadhills Vajraform could completely block that attack.

But to its surprise, countless feathers pierced through its body and sent blood splashing into the air. The tough skin of the skyapes were nowhere near enough when faced with the penetrative force of Blazebane.

On the other side, Meow Meow had taken its Regal Chaosfiend form. With its abilities greatly enhanced, it unleashed dark lightning that made the Archaionfiend's pale in comparison.

Chapter 1229 - A Staff to Topple Mountains!

Misty Hellthunder, Cosmic Lance, and Chaos Disaster all detonated the attacks of the goldenmane skyapes ahead of time. Single-handedly, Meow Meow had stopped the attacks of the three lifebound beasts. With Blitzbane, Worldbolt Blast, Meow Meow's abilities were even fiercer than the fifth-level beasts.

Lan Huang took the chance to protect Tianming from the front.

People were shocked to see that, contrary to expectations, Li Tianming hadn't been instantly crushed! In fact, he even seemed to be equally matched with Zhan Yuance.

"How could this be possible?"

"Don't be too surprised. I bet he's like Lin Xiaoxiao. He's giving it his all and won't be able to maintain it long."

"Even so, this is a little too shocking for a second-rate power's disciple...."

Zhan Yuance shot out from the gap between his lifebound beasts, his expression ugly. His staff directly smashed apart Meow Meow's Cosmic Lance, and he gave an explosive kick that sent Lan Huang's massive body tumbling away.

He glared at Tianming, snarling, "Kneel, and I'll let you keep one lifebound beast."

Tianming response was simple. The Lifesteal Silverdragon!

Tianming didn't have any fear in his eyes as his chain lashed forward like a venomous viper. It wrapped around the neck of a skyape that was currently entangled with Lan Huang, the edges and tip digging into its flesh.

Even if its flesh were now metal, it couldn't resist voidslice's sharpness and the skyape's flesh was cut apart. Wailing in pain, it let go of Lan Huang and began clawing at the Lifesteal Silverdragon. Golden flames even traveled along the chain, headed toward Tianming.

“Get over here!” There was a powerful tug on the chain from the skyape’s resistance. Ordinarily, Tianming wouldn’t be able to pull it over. But unfortunately, the chain’s edges were too sharp and the beast didn’t dare to struggle too much, lest it decapitate itself.

The skyape gave a wail as it was dragged along the ground by Tianming. Lan Huang didn’t miss the chance to counterattack. Two dragon heads bit down on the skyape’s head, and four dragon claws began gouging out large chunks of flesh from its body.

The skyape immediately descended into peril, infuriating Zhan Yuance. Everything had happened in the short time it’d taken Zhan Yuance to speak. He now felt like he had been too benevolent in giving Tianming a chance to keep one lifebound beast.

“Ingrate!” He swung his staff again, this time using a grade-five divine art, Weighty Domination Rod. The golden staff drew an eye-catching golden arc in the air, promising violence. This strike, would surely topple mountains!

Tianming’s eardrums had almost burst before the attack even came. He let go of his Lifesteal Silverdragon; the artifact soul quickly showed its advantage as the chain automatically wrapped around the skyape, trussing it up for Lan Huang to better beat it up. That skyape was the most unfortunate of its five brethren.

Tianming drew his Grand-Orient Sword, splitting it in two and using the Silverdragon Flashkill.

The sword was astoundingly fast as it met the staff in the air. In that instant, it was as if several thousand swords had struck the staff, chipping away at its momentum. Even so, the staff still smashed Tianming away, nearly making him cough blood.

He flew over a kilometer before he could stabilize himself. If he hadn’t made a breakthrough, he would definitely have suffered heavy injuries. Tianming still wasn’t a match for Zhan Yuance in single combat.

Zhan Yuance also had more beasts than him.

Tianming wasn’t aware, however, that Zhan Yuance had felt even more shock when his attack was blocked. “He’s gotten even stronger now....”

For the first time, Tianming’s combat power had managed to make him wary.

“This kind of person has to be crushed mentally so he can never recover!” Zhan Yuance rushed forward when that thought crossed his mind. However, there was good news for him as well—one of the skyapes had caught up to the Archaionfiend. It smashed the Archaionfiend onto the ground, sending Xiaoxiao flying.

The two were now separated. As for Yu Ziqian, he had directly fled. He would have been finished if not for no one targeting him.

Another skyape pounced on the fallen Xiaoxiao, sending a punch that would turn her to mush if it landed.

“Xiaoxiao!” Tianming shouted anxiously. Now, not even the Archaionfiend could save her.

Xiaoxiao already had heavy injuries and spat out a glob of black blood. However, Tianming's words cleared her mind. "I can't lose!"

Her words galvanized her and she quickly rose to her feet, nocking an arrow. The arrow flew out, turning into a furious dragon that forced the skyape to dodge and miss its best chance to defeat her.

The Archaionfiend came at that moment, crashing into the skyape.

"Still fine?" It looked at Xiaoxiao with a look of contempt. "If you can't make it, go back home."

"You don't have the right to judge me." Xiaoxiao wiped some blood away from the corner of her mouth. She had used too much strength, so her face was slightly pale and she had trouble standing up. However, she still smoothly drew her bow, aiming it at the Archaionfiend before releasing! The arrow turned into a blood dragon, hurtling toward the Archaionfiend.

"Are you crazy...?" The Archaionfiend hadn't finished cursing when the arrow passed over its head. However, it didn't draw blood.

The Archaionfiend turned around, and found that a skyape had been about to attack it from behind. Xiaoxiao's arrow had struck true. Due to its tough skin, the arrow had only pierced through ten or so centimeters. But even so, large volumes of blood gushed out, drained by the arrow.

The skyape shrieked in pain. It hurriedly pulled out the arrow, leaving a large, bloody hole in its body. It wanted to snap the arrow in half, but it found that it wasn't able to damage it.

The arrow suddenly shot out of its hand and returned to Xiaoxiao's grasp.

This was a grade-seven divine artifact!

Whether the Dragonblood Desecration or the Lifesteal Silverdragon, they had both made great showings in this fight, making the skyapes suffer a lot. That was exactly why so many people coveted them.

"I have to admit that Li Tianming and Lin Xiaoxiao have really made Zhan Yuance's beasts suffer. But a gap is still a gap."

"Lin Xiaoxiao is already injured, and Li Tianming can't hold on for long. It's over."

"They aren't just going to be beaten up. Zhan Yuance is going to cripple them!"

"They were asking for it. Didn't they see their status before challenging Zhan Yuance?"

"Disciples from ordinary powers need to know their limits."

As the discussion raged on, someone suddenly remarked, "Don't forget about that Feng! Look!"

"What?"

"Look closely at Zhan Yingying's group!"

"My gods...."

Everyone's attention shifted to that black-haired youth called Feng.

His constellation was a black vortex. It had covered up the area, making others overlook what was happening inside. But it had started dispersing, revealing many bloodstains!

Chapter 1230 - Lose With Glory

The two wargodean youths were gone. Likely, their imperial star formations had been broken and they had been kicked out. Four saintcrystal unicorns were also whining on the ground. Although they didn't have any visible injuries, their eyes were vacant. Clearly, their souls had suffered heavy injuries!

The most shocking part was the black-haired youth carrying a dagger. He was dragging along a tall, blonde beauty behind him. The woman's eyes were filled with despair, and her entire body was pale and bleeding. She seemed mentally broken, as her body continued to shake and she wailed loudly. Deep fright was hidden in her eyes as she sobbed, "Big... big brother...."

Zhan Yuance and his five lifebound beasts all stopped. Tianming, who was with him, turned to look as well. This scene was ten times more stimulating than when he had tied up Zhan Yingying and returned her to Zhan Yuance.

Zhan Yuance completely froze.

The entire area was silent. Everyone could imagine what kind of feelings Zhan Yuance was experiencing now. And they could very well imagine the fury he was about to explode with.

"Zhan Yuance is in trouble! They have a hostage now."

"This is a suspenseful development, considering his feelings for his sister."

"He underestimated Feng. He never would have expected his sister's group to lose so fast. A fatal mistake!"

"This Li Tianming is rather sly. I was wondering why they would dare to fight Zhan Yuance. So it turned out they had a plan!"

"Aren't these Azuresoul Palace disciples afraid of retribution after leaving?"

For the stronger party to be threatened by a hostage wasn't something people liked to see. When both sides were unrelated to the spectators, they would be biased toward the stronger party. That was because they would feel more vindicated when the stronger part won.

However, Zhan Yuance had fallen into a trap, making the spectators displeased.

"Despicable!"

"Petty little tricks!"

"How shameless to do this to a beautiful woman."

Unfortunately, the Divine Worldeater Cauldron was sealed off, so Tianming couldn't hear their curses. He had no way of finding out how much anger he had incited. He and Lingfeng exchanged a look, and Lingfeng quickly grasped his intentions.

Lingfeng boldly looked at Zhan Yuance, who was currently gnashing his teeth.

“All of you will die, very, very miserably.” Zhan Yuance’s voice was hoarse.

“Really? You wanted to kill my lifebound beasts.”

“Haha, can some dumb animals be compared to my sister?” Zhan Yuance laughed.

“Feng.” Tianming was too lazy to quibble.

Before everyone, Lingfeng let go. Zhan Yingying dropped down the sky toward the ground like a rock.

An uproar quickly burst out as everyone regarded the scene with disbelief.

Even Zhan Yuance froze for an instant. Then, he quickly went down to catch Zhan Yingying. After determining she wasn’t in danger of dying, he turned around with a frown.

“Come now, Zhan Yuance,” Tianming said coolly, “what else have you got?” As Tianming spoke, Lingfeng landed beside him, and Xiaoxiao and the Archaionfiend took his right. The trio all had burning fighting intent in their eyes!

Their intention was clear, as long as you weren’t an idiot. Tianming had released the hostage; he had chosen to fight fairly.

“Gosh, this courage....” It was just a simple action, but it had made the tens of thousands of disciples look at him in a new light.

“Not bad, not bad at all.”

“I finally understand how he could climb so high.”

“Now I really want him to win.”

“With this backbone, he’ll lose with glory.”

Tianming’s reputation immediately took a one-eighty turn.

Even Zhan Yuance was looking at Tianming in a new light. “Now, you qualify as my opponent.”

Zhan Yuance placed Zhan Yingying in a corner, then made a beeline for Tianming with his beasts.

“Hey, don’t say that. We’re still figuring out if you’re worthy.” Tianming smiled.

Zhan Yuance roared with laughter, but his eyes were bloodshot as he raised his staff aloft. “We’ll know when we give it a try!”

With a snarl, the battle erupted once again!

“Come!” Tianming and Lingfeng stepped forward together. The Grand-Orient Sword was split in two, spinning in his hands. At the same time, the Lifesteal Silverdragon flew back and coiled around his black arm.

As his hair fluttered, Tianming looked very dashing.

“Wu You, let's do ‘that,’” Xiaoxiao said seriously.

“Are you crazy? Are you that eager to prove yourself?” the Archaionfiend mockingly said.

"I just want to show you I can do it." Xiaoxiao shut her eyes, then opened them to reveal lightning coursing inside.

"Well then, if you aren't afraid of pain!" The Archaionfiend swallowed over ten thousand caeli, brewing them in its stomach.

"Deepfiend constellation, activate!" Blood-colored lightning twined around them and expanded, forming a pool of lightning in the sky and merging the power of Xiaoxiao and the Archaionfiend together.

Xiaoxiao seemed to have undergone a change. Now, she had murderous intent. It was because she knew why she was fighting.

"I don't want to be a weakling anymore." She didn't want to be looked down upon anymore. She wanted to exceed herself. When one had suffered enough, they would become numb to pain and it would become normal.