

The Ages 1271

Chapter 1271 - The Sky Palace Seal

The Voidsky Skirmish could indeed allow disciples to become members of the Sky Palace. However, before the age of a hundred, new members were only allowed periodic intervals of short-term cultivation in the Sky Palace. After that, they could enter the palace for long-term cultivation, but they could also stay in their original sect to serve and repay them. Only after reaching five hundred years old would they completely belong to the Sky Palace. That was very important, because their identities were completely different from then on. If the Sky Palace had members attack their original sect, the orders must be executed.

Since the Sky Palace absorbed talents from the Myriad Solar Sects, these sects wouldn't give up their disciples in vain. That was the reason behind the five-hundred-year rule of repayment. Beyond that, members would break away from their original sects and completely focus on the Sky Palace. That was the agreement between the Sky Palace and Myriad Solar Sects that had been implemented in ancient times. In other words, before the age of five hundred, they were members of the Sky Palace, but might not be able to execute the Sky Palace's will.

The five hundred years were also a test period. Before they permanently remained in the Sky Palace, members would be deprived of their identity if they performed too poorly. What Tianming and the others faced was merely the first step; the real test would last for five hundred years. The series of harsh rules enabled the Sky Palace to maintain their majesty.

"Because of this rule, they still have to cultivate within the sect even if they enter the Sky Palace and become members. Since the Azuresoul Palace doesn't have the conditions to support their talents, the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect is their best option," Long Wanying continued. That was the premise behind their offer. Otherwise, there was no point in accepting Tianming if he became a member of the Sky Palace and continued cultivating there.

"Let's take a look at the specifics. The two of them could fall into four scenarios—they both enter, Li Tianming enters alone, Yu Ziqian enters alone, or they both fail to enter. If the first scenario happens, the Sky Palace must be up to their tricks. In the end, most of the treasures from the dragon palaces would belong to members of the Sky Palace. No one can take the Divine Worldeater Cauldron from them, either, thus the world would remain stable. According to the rules, Li Tianming and Yu Ziqian will return to the Azuresoul Palace. In fact, we can persuade them to join the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect together with Feng and Xiaoxiao with the help of Jiang Qingliu. Although they'll eventually return to the Sky Palace, there's a lot they can do for us over the next five hundred years. That way, we'll be on good terms with the Sky Palace. Additionally, we've obtained the Ninedragon Imperius and might eventually be able to keep the Dragonblood Desecration within the sect. There won't be a fight for the Divine Worldeater Cauldron and we would gain immensely. The probability of the second scenario happening is very high. If Yu Ziqian doesn't make it, the cauldron would be considered partially unowned. However, I heard that it was Li Tianming that gave the cauldron to Yu Ziqian. Given Li Tianming's personality, he might keep the cauldron first. Others are less likely to steal from a member of the Sky Palace. In that case, we can keep the cauldron in the sect for the time being. There won't be a problem as long as we don't use it, at least not openly. We can discuss this further with Li Tianming. Anyway, it isn't a loss for us. There's only a small probability for the third scenario. If so, the Divine Worldeater Cauldron would

belong to the Sky Palace. In that case, we protect the three disciples and give the cauldron according to our original plan. It won't be a loss for us either. In fact, the fourth scenario is most likely to happen."

Their decision to give up the cauldron was aimed at that situation.

"If they both fail, we must give up the Divine Worldeater Cauldron and take in all three disciples. If Yu Ziqian is willing to come back with us, we can also accept him. However, we must hand over the cauldron. It doesn't matter who acquires it, that will have nothing to do with us."

Long Wanying was finished with her analysis. The probability of both Tianming and Yu Ziqian failing to enter was the greatest, followed by the second scenario, where only Tianming was accepted. The other two scenarios were extremely unlikely.

In the beginning, they had assumed Tianming would be defeated by Weisheng Moran. Meanwhile, Yu Ziqian had barely done anything throughout the Voidsky Skirmish. He wasn't convincing at all. With the firm belief that none of them would succeed, they had to discuss whether or not to surrender the Divine Worldeater Cauldron. But now the situation had changed.

Of the four scenarios, the first three were beneficial for the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect. In the last scenario, they would still evade danger by giving up the cauldron.

"We'll go with that." The Saintdragon Emperor nodded.

"Let's see which of the two achieves success." Stroking his long beard, the Greendragon Emperor looked at the Skyward Stele with a profound smile on his face.

"Girly," the Violetdragon Empress called for Long Wanying.

"Aunt Lin?" Long Wanying looked up.

"Make sure Jiang Qingliu remains steady. When the time comes, we'll require his mediation," she said.

"There aren't any issues on his end. I've already spoken to him. He says he only hopes Yu Ziqian is safe." Long Wanying glanced at Jiang Qingliu in the distance.

"What about the other three? He doesn't care?"

"That's not true. It's because I have my eye on them." Long Wanying smiled.

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Millions of experts caused a scene outside the Voidsky Flame Pillar as they watched Tianming defeat Weisheng Moran and enter the Sky Palace's test with Yu Ziqian. There were many others hidden in the dark, covetously eyeing the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect.

"A fight would've broken out if the disciple named Feng hadn't surrendered."

"What the hell does the Sky Palace want? Why not keep the treasure for themselves? Are we supposed to fight for it?"

"What a joke it would be if Li Tianming and Yu Ziqian both enter the Sky Palace. They'd be treating us like monkeys."

"The Xuanyuan Dragon Sect has gained so much. The Dreamless Celestial Nation, wargodeans, and Voidword Shrine each obtained a treasure, but that's nothing compared to the Ninedragon Imperius and Divine Worldeater Cauldron."

"After all, those treasures were left by an ancestor of the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect. It's fine as long as they're willing to give up the Divine Worldeater Cauldron...."

"We'll see who has the Sky Palace seal on their forehead when they emerge."

The Xuanyuan Dragon Sect, who ranked second on the myriad sect ranking, occupied the best position due to their large numbers. The others could only watch from the side.

Few dreamless celestials had come to watch, which was somewhat strange. The fourth-place wargodeans, the Empyrean Sword Sect in fifth place, and the Blueblood Starocean in tenth place had all called for massive reinforcements. The number of experts from the first-rate forces were comparable to the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect. At the moment, they seemed to have the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect surrounded, blocking off all exits.

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Amid the raging fire and rain, the wargodeans and experts of the Blueblood Starocean were gathered together. The Tumulus Pill God stood silently in front of all the wargodeans, holding a black skeleton staff in hand as black mist swirled around him.

"Tumulus Pill God, Emperor Lan from the Blue Destiny Palace is here."

"Take me to him."

Turning around, the Tumulus Pill God left with the wargodean experts.

"Tumulus Pill God, it's been a long time since we last met."

Chapter 1272 - Seven White-robed Beings

A cloud of blue mist approached. In the middle of the group stood a tall man with blue hair. They surrounded the man, bowing slightly as he led the way. The blue-haired man was extremely handsome, his dark blue robes embroidered with numerous totems and sleeves gently fluttering in the wind. His eyebrows were slightly arched and his deep pupils twinkled with warm luster. His sculpted cheeks reflected the first rays of the morning sun. There was a god-like majesty and inherent nobility to him. The man exuded the aura of a monarch. Everything about him dazzled, especially his eyes. Like the eyes of a lifebound beast, they contained a river of stars. Of course, he wasn't a specter.

"Greetings, Emperor Lan." The Tumulus Pill God approached the hegemon of the Blueblood Starocean.

"You're too polite." Emperor Lan appeared before the Tumulus Pill God in the blink of an eye.

Despite being a sect master, Yun Tianque of the Supracloud Sanctuary didn't dare approach them. He knew that this was the man who had slaughtered Jiang Qingliu's lifebound beast. Today, he stood at the top of the sun, while Jiang Qingliu could only look up to him.

"Will the wargodean emperor grace us with his presence?" Emperor Lan asked with a smile, glancing at the Skyward Stele.

"He'll be here soon. Please wait a moment," the Tumulus Pill God replied.

The two sides gathered. In the crowd, Lan Feilin and Zhan Yuance, the children of both emperors, stared at each other.

"Are the wargodeans also a vassal of the celestial orderians?" Lan Feilin asked incredulously.

"Didn't you already know that?" Zhan Yuance rolled his eyes.

"Do you know what will happen next?" Lan Feilin asked curiously. She didn't even dare look at her father from a distance, much less approach the man. After all, he had many children.

"It's best to kill them all, take the treasures, and divide them," said Zhan Yuance.

"What if those dogs enter the Sky Palace?" Lan Feilin asked.

"What else can we do but withdraw!"

The Sky Palace was everything, but they were still reluctant.

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Somnium City, in the Great Clouddream Sea in the east. A loud rumble caused a splash in the lake waters. A cold voice sounded from the palace in the center, sweeping through the entire city in an instant.

"Gather the Clouddream defenders!"

A white battleship appeared above Somnium City. It was half the size of the city and burned with fundamental cosmic force. Although it was less than a tenth of the size of the Divine Sun Palace, its every movement still made the city tremble. Countless experts looked up and at least two thousand men in white armor charged into the battleship in an orderly manner. On the battleship was a strange young man with an ugly expression on his face.

Then the battleship disappeared into thin air.

"To the Voidsky Realm!"

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Light flickered.

"Wait for me!" Yu Ziqian climbed up, shamelessly grabbing Tianming's clothes.

Facing the dazzling light ahead, Tianming proceeded to move forward. The Skyward Stele that no one could approach was already in front of his eyes. The light flooded his entire body, entering his pores. At the bottom of the stele, a vortex appeared.

"Let's go." Maintaining his composure, Tianming dragged Yu Ziqian into the white light.

A lake appeared before him. This place completely resembled the world in the minorsky stele; it was white as far as the eye could see.

"Where are we?" Yu Ziqian asked in a daze.

The endless white mist lingered. This time, there were ripples in the water, so Tianming didn't have to see through any illusions. When he looked up, he realized there was a small, dilapidated wooden house on the shore. Despite its condition, it was very clean. Upon every wooden board was the vestige of time.

"A wooden house!" Yu Ziqian shouted, his eyes wide.

Within the wooden house was the Sky Palace. While Yu Ziqian was yelling, Tianming had already made his way over. This time there was an actual distance between him and the wooden house, unlike before.

The water undulated with gentle ripples. In the blink of an eye, Tianming and Yu Ziqian had reached the wooden house. Everything in front of them turned blurry, almost dreamlike. Only the small door to the wooden house remained clear.

"I'll open the door. You follow me," said Tianming.

"Alright."

Yu Ziqian was extremely nervous, perhaps because the test was right in front of him. Stretching out his dark arm, Tianming touched the wooden door. The wooden door wasn't tightly closed. With just a light push, the light swallowed Tianming and Yu Ziqian.

The world shook and the sea of stars transformed before their eyes. It was as if they were falling into the abyss.

"My kin..."

The words reverberated in Tianming's ear. They were spoken in a voice of utter sorrow and anguish. He thought it would continue speaking, but the voice stopped abruptly after those words. He raised his left hand and felt it tremble. The surrounding clouds formed a hand, spread its five fingers, and rested on the palm of Tianming's left hand. It was clearly a cloud, but what Tianming felt was the warmth of real flesh and blood.

"Sky plunderers...."

Tianming's mind was turbulent, his blood boiled, and his eyes turned red. Where was his home and his people? Was this once his home? He raised his trembling hand. As he moved amidst the clouds, numerous hands brushed across his black arm. From just a simple hand gesture, Tianming saw the hexagon scales on every hand. Tianming was immersed in the blood connection he felt.

"What's this?" Yu Ziqian stretched out his hand as he floated through the clouds, but there was no change. He was a little confused. Tianming seemed to have melted into the clouds and become part of this world.

"One day, the truth will be revealed. We may have perished, but our merits cannot be measured...."

Who was speaking? His ears were still ringing. This hand didn't feel like it belonged to him. First, he brushed the palms, then the faces one by one. What he saw were determined smiles.

"I..." Tianming found it a little difficult to breathe.

He felt the heavy weight of the intangible burden he carried within his blood. His parents had fled for their lives, so he couldn't meet them. Not even the strongest, most talented genius could fight the wind and rain. What was the reason behind all of this? Who were the pursuers and where were they?

His heart hammered in his chest.

"Move forward, keep going. All your relatives that perished in the vortex will pave the way for you! Remember, plunderers have our dao. Our consciousness will never die...."

Amidst his rapid breaths, the white mist suddenly disappeared. Tianming stumbled into a hall, almost crashing into the ground. Needless to say, Yu Ziqian landed face down. The floor was as smooth and clear as a mirror. Yu Ziqian slipped while Tianming stood firmly and looked up.

This was a vast, brightly-lit hall with no end in sight. The pillars nearby were at least a kilometer in diameter, towering into the clouds. In front of them were steps that led to seven statues—or was it seven people?

Upon closer inspection, he realized they were human beings. Though they looked different, they were all at least five hundred years old. Both men and women had neatly combed hair, their faces white as if coated with flour and eyes completely vacant, hence their lifelessness. If it weren't for their subtle movements, Tianming wouldn't believe they were alive.

Who were they? They were members of the Sky Palace.

Dropping to one knee, Yu Ziqian said, "Sky Palace Seniors, Disciple Yu Ziqian pays my respects!" He quickly pulled Tianming with him.

The seven white-robed people studied Tianming with scrutiny.

The wooden house allowed me to see the sky plunderers. Does that mean the Sky Palace is the Sky Plundering Palace, and these people are part of my race?

Sweeping his gaze across the palm of their hands, Tianming didn't find any black arms. He seemed to see a trace of impatience within their eyes. How could this be?

"Aren't they the ones who granted me the Imperial Ninedragon Tomb?" Tianming had all kinds of doubts in his heart.

"Kneel." A beautiful woman said coldly. There was so much powder on her face and rouge on her cheeks that she resembled an opera singer. It was indescribably weird. Tianming was stunned.

"Kneel!" she repeated. Powder seemed to have fallen off her face. Her willow-like eyebrows furrowed.

"Who are you?" Tianming asked. This scene was completely different from what he had imagined.

"Insolent fool! This is the Sky Palace. Naturally, we are members of the Sky Palace. You are lucky to enter. Kneel and accept your trial," the white-robed woman solemnly said. Her voice grew louder and

harder, forming shock waves that crushed down on Tianming like a mountain. His internal organs felt like they were hit by a large hammer.

"B-brother! What are you doing? This is the Sky Palace," Yu Ziqian whispered.

However, Tianming was truly dumbfounded. As soon as he entered the wooden house, he believed this was the Sky Plundering Palace and these elders were here to shower him with gifts. Why did they stare at him with such gloomy eyes?

"Why can't I stand and accept the trial?" Tianming asked.

"Scram!" the white-robed woman sneered.

A black vortex suddenly surfaced under Tianming's feet. A suction force immediately swallowed him in and Tianming disappeared from the hall.

"Brother? Tianming?" Yu Ziqian watched in shock.

Why was it all so strange? Just as he was about to follow Tianming, the black vortex vanished. Deathly silence enveloped the hall. Trembling, he raised his head. All seven of them looked at him, lips curling with the same stiff smile.

"Where is he?" Yu Ziqian asked, shivering like a leaf.

"He's dead." With the woman's movements, more powder fell from her face. Her body shook for some time, as if she was racked with convulsions. Then, lifting her chin, she stared at Yu Ziqian with her hollow eyes and asked, "Do you want to die?"

Chapter 1273 - Fiery Prison

Thunderous rumbling was everywhere. Tianming's head felt as if it would explode. A raging inferno of divine hazards formed a fiery storm more turbulent than the Voidsky Flame Pillar, sweeping past him. Ying Huo expelled the Infernal Flameshield, which withstood the scorching heat and impact. Like a ball, Tianming bounced back and forth in the abyss. Deafening explosions drowned out all other sounds. No one would hear him even if he screamed.

"Here, make a ball." With its small claws clinging onto Tianming's hair, Ying Huo fluttered up and down in the storm.

"My head is a mess.... When I first entered the wooden house, I thought this was the Sky Plundering Palace, but in the end, the seven members of the Sky Palace showed up looking like ghosts. Just because I didn't kneel, they threw me here? Then why give me the Imperial Ninedragon Tomb?"

Tianming had obtained numerous treasures from the dragon palaces with the abilities of the sky plunderer race. He felt like he had gone through the back door and was even more certain of that when he first entered the wooden house. However, from the events that had just transpired, it seemed like the Sky Palace resented him for ruining some sort of great plan.

"How did I offend them?" He couldn't figure it out.

"Could this be part of the trial? Perhaps they're deliberately mistreating you?" Meow Meow chimed in.

"It's possible. But from their tone and facial expressions, I don't think it's likely. More importantly, where are we?"

Even within the Infernal Flameshield, Tianming felt as if he was wandering in the abyss. It was extremely hot!

"If it weren't for the shield, my skin would've turned black and peeled off."

He possessed the Aeternal Infernal Physique. If it had been another person of the same age such as Yu Ziqian, they would be dead.

"What's that?" Using his Plundering Eye, Tianming observed his surroundings. After passing through countless fiery waves, what he saw was a world with only fundamental cosmic force. "Look at all those divine ordered patterns! What power!" Tianming was shocked.

"Isn't this a nova source?!" He was astonished when he'd visited the mooncore and laid eyes upon a stellar source. But this time, he was completely enveloped by immense, violent fundamental cosmic forces. There were all kinds of divine ordered patterns within. These fundamental cosmic forces raged like a storm, the violent explosions shaking the world. Not even the shield was safe. What else could it be but a nova source. The fact that Tianming hadn't been incinerated in an instant meant that he was merely on the surface.

"I'm inside the sun! I'm under the fusion formation!" Eyes widening, Tianming realized the problem. The celestial orderians and Sky Palace were the only two forces that could control the fusion formation of the sun. Only the Sky Palace could have thrown him into this place.

"They tossed me straight into the nova source. Are they trying to kill me?" His hair stood on end. This was strange; the Sky Palace was completely different from what he had imagined. How confusing!

"I still have the Lifesteal Silverdragon and Dragonblood Desecration with me. They didn't even bother seizing the treasures before throwing me in here. If I'd landed in the core of the nova source, they both would've melted. Wouldn't that be a waste?" He still had to forcibly suppress the Dragonblood Desecration.

"Not to mention, you're the only one who inherited the Ninedragon Tribulation."

These three great treasures were extremely useful—was the Sky Palace really trying to kill him?

"I certainly have doubts about this. We can't be too optimistic or pessimistic." After pondering for a moment, Tianming said, "What's important now is to find a way out."

"And you thought all the mysteries would be solved once you entered the Sky Palace. Who would've thought you'd stumble upon more?" Rolling its eyes at Tianming, Ying Huo shrugged.

"Little Li, forget about the way out. Your little eggs are starting to cause trouble." Xian Xian wailed from his lifebound space.

Tianming looked inside. In the wondrous space, Lan Huang was standing on its hind legs; there was almost nowhere to rest its huge body. Underneath it and around Xian Xian's body were almost a hundred thousand little silver eggs. On each egg were two tiny black eyes. At this moment, the little black dots were erect. The little silver eggs seemed impatient as they gathered together, jumping up and

down in his lifebound space. From time to time, they collided violently; sometimes they combined with one another and formed an enormous silver egg; and other times they swept across like a wave, rolling into Lan Huang and Xian Xian. "Little sister," Xian Xian could only sigh in despair.

"Interesting! Let it out so it can lead the way. We have a target now," Ying Huo laughed. This little guy's irritable, violent, and even selfish behavior meant one thing—it had discovered the necessary fundamental cosmic force for its birth.

"Although the process has been complicated, my main goal was to enter the Sky Palace and search for resources for Fifth's birth." Fifth was in a hurry, but Tianming was even more anxious. Who wouldn't want to increase their combat effectiveness? If it weren't for the limitations of his circumstances, Tianming would have all ten lifebound beasts born at the same time. While he was preparing to face the Sky Palace's trial, the woman in white had sent him directly to his destination instead.

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More than a dozen little silver eggs emerged from Tianming's lifebound space. They were extremely restless, bouncing up and down inside the shield.

"Don't get excited. Lead the way."

With Tianming's reprimand, the eggs calmed down a little. Although they no longer caused chaos, they were still impatient. The little silver eggs formed the shape of an arrow to show Tianming the way.

"Let's go."

With the shield working to isolate the flames, Tianming proceeded forward in the terrifying world of fundamental cosmic forces.

"Are we heading deeper inside?" Soon, Tianming discovered that they were heading into the depths of the nova source. That meant it would only become more and more dangerous. They might all be burned to death. However, there was no going back.

"Let's risk it all."

Fifth had already matured, but the conditions in the Flameyellow Continent weren't conducive to its birth. Its desire to truly come to this world was understandable.

"Even if there's risk, we can't miss this rare opportunity."

The nova source would contain fundamental cosmic forces of all the elements that existed in the heavens and earth. However, fire was still the main element. As they passed through increasingly terrifying fiery storms, Ying Huo's shield was approaching its limit. Tianming's entire body turned red from being burned, his skin resembling sweet potatoes. With each breath, he exhaled smoke; he looked rather comical.

"Are we there yet? We can't go any further." Tianming felt his throat burning when he spoke.

The little silver egg in front of him shook violently, a sign that it was the most agitated that it had ever been. That meant they were close to their goal!

Chapter 1274 - Sea of Silver Stars

"Keep going!" They weren't the kind of beings that would give up. Even if it meant losing half their lives, they would continue.

Fire-type fundamental cosmic forces swept past them like giant beasts. Without the shackles of the fusion formation, this was their paradise to roam free and wreak havoc. There were holes in Tianming's shield, but fortunately they passed through a fiery barrier and reached a new area. Before their eyes was a dazzling golden light. Obviously, these were metal-type fundamental cosmic forces. They gathered together in the nova source. Like an ocean, it was impossible to see where it ended. There was definitely enough for the birth of Fifth; the advantage of a nova source lay in its size and quantity.

The metal-type fundamental cosmic forces formed an ocean of gold, like endless molten iron. The hot, piercing sensation was more terrifying than the fiery storm. Some of these fundamental cosmic forces combined with divine ordered patterns to form divine hazards. Like wild beasts, they raged in the ocean of fundamental cosmic forces. Venussoul, majestic electricsteel river, blackcrystal flamestar... there were at least hundreds of thousands of them, all of which were grade-five divine hazards. Also visible to the naked eye were metal-type divine hazards above grade-six, such as the grade-nine golden helios or the astralriver steel that glittered like a river of silver stars.

"This is the moment we've been waiting for" Tianming was as excited as the little silver eggs. Without regard for life or death, they dived in. Any hesitation would be a discredit to their struggle for Fifth to come into this world.

A hundred thousand little silver eggs flew out from his lifebound space. It was finally vacant. Lan Huang and Xian Xian breathed a sigh of relief.

"Quick, stretch your limbs and get moving! Our little brother will return to occupy his space once he's born." At the thought of that, Lan Huang began practicing gymnastics.

The thing the Primordial Chaos Beasts had in common was their optimism and ignorance to plight. When it was time to play, they wouldn't hold back.

"Little Sis, I'll take you riding!"

"Okay! Wait for me, Turtle Bro!"

With its roots wrapped around Lan Huang, Xian Xian flicked its long whip as Lan Huang galloped around Tianming's lifebound space. Meow Meow opened its misty eyes, summoning a great effort just to glance at the two buffoons, then fell back asleep. There were five Primordial Chaos Beast eggs beside it. Meow Meow used one as a pillow, placed two on its bottom to protect its balls, and held one in each hand, stroking them from time to time. The five remaining eggs had been licked until they were smooth and glossy.

Outside the lifebound space, Tianming and a hundred thousand little silver eggs had arrived at the sea of metal fundamental cosmic force. Due to the opposing force of the fire and metal fundamental cosmic forces, a vacuum had formed where they met. It was far more stable here, and they could start cultivating.

"Let's get started!"

A hundred thousand little silver eggs formed a vortex as they revolved around Tianming. Following Fifth's inhalation, the sea of gold and silver fundamental cosmic force began rising. At first, only a tiny bit diffused through eggs, like drops of water. The little silver eggs piled up around Tianming, forming a symbiotic connection with him.

"This is different from before. The four of them came from just one egg. On the other hand, Fifth has a hundred thousand eggs... just what the hell is it?"

This was a great environment for its birth. Tianming firmly believed that the answer would soon be clear. Silver light flickered before his eyes.

They were linked to each other via symbiotic cultivation. During the process, Tianming gradually felt the power of the fifth Primordial Chaos Beast's bloodline as thousands of densely packed little silver eggs spun and fluttered before his eyes. As they absorbed metal fundamental cosmic force, the eggs emitted soft cracking noises, a sign that Fifth would soon emerge from its shell.

Tianming was dazzled by a silver mirage. Amidst a loud explosion, light and shadow alternated and a dream appeared once more. Tianming was a little nervous every time he dreamed. The last time he saw Feiling in his dream of Xian Xian, he was thunderstruck.

A buzzing filled his ears.

Amidst the dense fog, the scene before him changed again. Like the dream brought about by Ying Huo, Tianming suddenly found himself in an endless void. This was a world devoid of sound or borders. Compared to drifting in the ocean, the loneliness and insignificance he felt was stronger. The silence was all-pervasive and the sound of his own breathing was loud and clear. His heart pounded violently against his chest. In that instant, starlight came flashing from behind. When he turned around, he saw a silver astral vortex in the distant end of the world. Trillions of stars shone—it was a sea of stars.

Whizzing across the endless void, Tianming was taken toward the stars. They grew brighter and brighter. Like sand in the desert, the silver starlight was so dense it occupied his entire field of vision. Tianming grew closer and closer to the stars until he finally crashed into them. The world around him was filled with silver starlight that nearly blinded him.

"This is...."

He remained within the sea of stars and gradually approached the nearest star. It was a silver-colored metal planet, not made up of fundamental cosmic force, but was alive.

Tianming immediately surmised that Fifth was the astral vortex. Xiaowu. These trillions of silver stars were part of its body. Tianming stared in a daze. The planet that made up one trillionth of Fifth was at least the size of Lan Huang's body. It was spherical; a smooth and shiny surface without any imperfections. Not only was its hardness unparalleled, its starlight was brilliant.

"The fifth Primordial Chaos Beast isn't an individual, but a group? Or is it an individual consisting of a group?"

Tianming had long wondered which of the hundred thousand eggs was Fifth. Was there a difference between the main body and clones? But he didn't notice a particular egg that seemed like the main

body. When he was submerged in this sea of stars, he realized that they were all exactly the same, unlike broodmother-type lifebound beasts that had a clear distinction between mother and child.

"What sort of life form was this?"

Just as Tianming puzzled over these doubts, changes occurred and the silver stars flew into the distance. Tianming was shocked to find that the silver stars around him made a harsh sound of metal grinding against metal. Every star began transforming. As they morphed, the starlight grew so bright that he couldn't help but close his eyes. When he opened them again, the entire sea of stars had disappeared like the little gray egg had at the beginning. However, he knew it still existed. The invisible sea of stars transformed into a silver river, surging forward. As it wandered about the starry sky, Tianming followed it. He was very curious to see what the silver stars had transformed into.

Chapter 1275 - Hatched

Soon, the answer would be revealed. Near the end of his vision was a gigantic nova source world. A formless stream of metal flowed past it, causing it to instantly dim before being extinguished completely. The entire time, it was accompanied by the sound of metallic grinding. Tianming blended in with the stream and looked at the things that came in and out of existence, completely flabbergasted.

"Are these... insects? He couldn't really be sure how in the world those metallic stars became insects. They were constantly changing. The silver stars were their base form, which could morph into infinite silver cockroaches at one moment, then to locusts that consumed nova source, then to silver scorpions. Tianming got the closest look at the scorpions as a few of them flew directly past him. They had perfectly metallic bodies, sharp pincers, long stingers, and were armored all over.

Then they changed into silver spiders, gigantic ones that numbered in the billions, spinning threads of silver to tie up one nova source world after another and dragging it behind their swarm. There were even countless thousand-legged metallic centipedes with thousands of segments each. Not only that, they could also fuse into a gigantic beast from the stars that stretched on endlessly, devouring everything in its wake.

"A sea of silver stars... an invisible metal army that can turn into all sorts of insects and arachnids...." Tianming felt his scalp tingle. He had seen thousands of such transformations. This wasn't a specific kind of metallic insect from the stars, but rather something that could morph into almost any insect or arachnid in existence and gain their abilities, such as silver spider threads, scorpion stingers, or even the ability of locusts to devour all matter in their path, leaving nothing but an empty husk behind.

Armies of ladybugs, ants, bees, mosquitos, fireflies... there were more transformations than Tianming could possibly imagine, yet they were all threatening just the same. It was an army swarm that could sweep through the entire universe. They weren't mere lifeforms; instead, they were scourges that destroyed everything in their paths as they constantly emanated the metallic sound of their transformations, the sound of which was so loud and droning that it almost made Tianming deaf. Though this was just a dream, he felt true terror.

Right just then, a silver spider the size of Lan Huang spotted Tianming. It had a silvery body that seemed impenetrable, looking more like a dragon golem than an actual lifeform. However, Tianming could see

the light of life coming from its eyes. Its eight long, spear-like legs glinted coldly as it continued to stare at Tianming, making his heart rate rise. Yet that was only one out of billions of them.

Normally, critters like that were weak to fire. But these metal beasts seemed almost immune to such weaknesses. Tianming even had a feeling that they would fuse back together even if he bisected them. This was what true immortality looked like. Having billions of other bodies, it would never truly be wiped out.

Even a single of those spiders made him feel the swarm's terrifying destructive potential. Yet why was it looking at him? Soon, he came to understand that he wasn't its target. Instead, it was something behind him. The metallic insects soon began turning to look behind him. The sensation of being the center of attention of an army of billions was horrifying beyond comprehension.

"What's behind me?" Tianming felt animosity coming from this fifth Primordial Chaos Beast. "Did that hand appear?"

He turned back, and the sight he saw almost made him suffocate. "What in the?!" At the ends of the universe was a crack in space, endlessly large, out of which a boundless white cloud emerged. The cloud then turned into a vortex ten times the size of the entire metallic army, sucking in even more white cloud matter. Then it reassembled into many tentacles that stretched out throughout space. Each of the tentacles had countless eyes, all pale and empty, but staring at the silver army behind Tianming.

Inexplicably, the sound of human rapture came from the pale sea of white. It looked like a being of sorts that had the other half of its body beyond the crack in space. One look at it made Tianming's head feel like bursting. There seemed to be countless worlds within the sea of clouds, within which countless lifeforms lived in utter bliss.

"Why does this look like a wondersky realm that's infinitely larger than the ones I've seen?" Each wondersky realm was akin to a world in itself with countless caeli living within. Yet this cloud of white seemed like a far more ancient and mature form of it, containing countless worlds and an innumerable number of people within.

"Did it emerge from the xenomemory space? What in the world is it? Some kind of beast?" Right as his curiosity peaked, a storm broke out as the two forces of nature clashed. The metallic army behind him turned into a stream of silver stars, surging toward the sea of clouds and causing the eyed tentacles to turn to it. This was the first battle in the dream of a Primordial Chaos Beast that didn't involve a fight with a gigantic black hand. What in the world was this cloud of white?

The din of battle filled the entire realm. Tianming felt like he was thrust amidst raging currents. He couldn't even find stable footing. All he could see was a flurry of sights of the silver and white forces clashing. Not even space itself could contain a clash of this magnitude. Sharp, droning sounds echoed throughout, accompanied by blinding streams of light that eradicated all in their path.

Then that terrifying voice could be heard once more as Tianming was sent flying. In a daze, he saw a black arm descend from the skies. "You two rascals, I have been waiting for you for a long time...."

The voice completely shook his soul. By now, Tianming's vision was filled with nothing but scenes of battle. "Henceforth and forevermore, I am the master of all chaos and reincarnation." These exact words echoed once more.

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Tianming drew a sharp, cold breath as he snapped into lucidity. He opened his eyes. The dream was finally over and the silver army, white clouds, and gigantic black hand were nowhere to be seen. However, his heart was beating so fast that it felt like it would pop out of his body. He felt like his throat had been clenched the whole time. He was finding it so hard to breathe he couldn't even talk. It felt like he had been asleep, with his body a little numb from the inaction. He took a deep breath and focused on his body. Then many silver things flashed across his vision.

"Huh?" He stretched his hand out to catch one, then opened his hand. There was a metallic silver egg in it with two eyes that looked straight at Tianming. "Why haven't you hatched?" He was feeling a little anxious now.

A metallic, crunching sound could be heard coming from the egg. "Already hatched," said a cold, stiff voice.

"What did you say?"

"I have... already hatched... you idiot."

"You have?" Wasn't it still in egg form? Thinking back at the dream, the creatures' original forms were gigantic silver stars. Looking at the egg again, it did seem like it had hatched. It resembled the gigantic stars and only slightly differed in size and shape, with these looking less spherical. At the very least, they now had two little black eyes, which made them a little more lifelike.

"What kind of creature are you?" Tianming looked around him, seeing nothing but a sea of eggs.

"Myriad world... Immorta... beast beast..." the egg mechanically replied.

"The heck? Why repeat 'beast' twice?"

"So what... if I... do do?" it said, seemingly proud.

So the sea of silver stars that spanned across the cosmos could morph into all sorts of insects and arachnids, all seemingly immortal. That's why it was called the Myriadworld Immortabeast. As for why bugs like that were called beasts, Tianming didn't know. Either way, it was no normal creature. Xian Xian had already surpassed whatever tree Tianming could conceive of.

"Let go... you dirty..." the egg struggled in his hand to escape, "...dirty dirty!"

Tianming didn't know how to respond to that. His focus now was to cultivate and strengthen his newly hatched beast and form his fifth astral disc. "Come, let's cultivate all the way to the Constellation stage."

Immediately, the beast began working at it. The egg in his hand flew to join the rest as they all looked at him and engaged in symbiotic cultivation. There was a boundless amount of metallic fundamental cosmic force around them to use for it. "Communicating with you really is a chore." Fortunately, communing telepathically with it was far more efficient.

Chapter 1276 - Silver Stardust

The fifth beast had its own symbiotic cultivation technique called the Myriadworld Immortal Codex. As it had been reduced to a mere speck compared to what it used to be, it had to cultivate anew. When its bloodline entered Tianming's body, it brought with it a completely new change. His body could now disassemble and recombine without end.

When the hundred thousand eggs gathered on Tianming's body, it looked like he turned into a gigantic silver egg. They began absorbing the metallic fundamental cosmic force as both of them channeled the Myriadworld Immortal Codex.

What Tianming was most curious about was what kind of lifeform it was. So far, he still wasn't aware of where its main body was, or if it even had one. If it didn't have a main body, how could it make beast veins or spiritsources?

But soon, he figured it out. If even a tree could go through the process, why not this bunch of eggs? Instantly, they grew past the level of mortal lifeforms. The entire group of eggs was like its main body. Everything, from beast veins, to spiritsources, to unity fields formed around it. Then came the manifestation of heavenly will, followed by the terrifying transformation into a saint lifeform, which included becoming a samsaran. The saint palace and saint springs formed within the fused egg.

During the Ascension stage, the saint palace and saint springs shattered, converting into countless albi that contained all the energy of the body. This was a crucial step. Once its astral physique was formed, the gigantic egg immediately split apart. Now, it resembled the creatures within the dream much more closely. Tianming found himself in a sea of silver, surrounded by blinding light and crunching metallic sounds.

Quite a lot of time had passed. The 'momentum' of its hatching had pushed it past every level of the Ascension stage. The two of them continued absorbing fundamental cosmic force, forming the fifth myriaddiscs in their albi. The discs looked just like the sea of silver from his dream—sharp, shiny, and indomitable.

"I left a three-star universal manna for you to use. We'll get a better one later for you to catch up to your siblings." Tianming took out a universal manna called the Starsky Metalsoul, which he'd picked up in the Voidsky Realm. Naturally, he gave it a bunch of lower-tier manna beforehand so that it could evolve step by step.

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Finally, the cultivation and evolution process came to an end. The countless transformations were dazzling. An egg that was as hard as a sword appeared beside him. For Tianming, his astralforce had increased in capacity and his body had grown somewhat stronger. Not to mention, he had added another fighting unit to his team. Seeing what it had looked like in the dream, Tianming was quite confident in its fighting abilities.

"Nice to meet you. You looked like a silver sea of stardust in the dream, so I'll give you a poetic name. Let's call you Yin Chen," Tianming said awkwardly. Yin Chen, the silver dust of the storm.

"Blergh... vomit..." the critter said.

"Alright, Yin Chen it is, even if you don't like it! I've been waiting far too long for you." Currently, the many silver eggs were still circling around him. Though they were each the size of a chicken egg, they were quite sizable when gathered together. Not to mention, they seemed to be capable of increasing their number until they filled the skies one day.

"So you don't have a true main body, which means each and every egg is a part of your body and your consciousness exists in all of them. So the only way for you to die is for all of your bodies to be destroyed, right? As long as a single one exists, you'll be able to endlessly recover, correct?" If there was a center to its being, it would be the consciousness itself.

"That's right..." it answered, with the same two-word format. Looked like it wasn't a broodmother-type beast after all. There was no master or child unit, all were just as equally important.

"If all the eggs spread across the entirety of Orderia, wouldn't you be able to see everything across the entire star and gather information that way?"

"Of course... that's possible," it answered proudly.

"So you can peep at people bathing everywhere then," Ying Huo said.

"You're shameless."

Ying Huo wasn't surprised at the reaction. It had been rather prideful even before hatching.

"Come in and show the others your abilities," Tianming said.

"Okay okay." It seemed a little unwilling, but did what it was told. A stream of silver eggs entered the lifebound space, taking up much of the space within.

"Whoa!" Ying Huo, Lan Huang and Xian Xian all widened their eyes curiously.

"Cat Bro, wake up. Fifth has hatched," Xian Xian said, nudging the black cat.

"Huh? I'll just... wait for the sixth to hatch first...." It turned around and went back to sleep. Everyone else wanted to see what the eggs were made of.

The metallic crunching sound could be heard again. Each egg split into ten units, making a million of them in total. Then they began growing antennae, legs, and blade-like wings, becoming some kind of insect.

"What is this? Cockroaches? Haha..." Ying Huo and the rest laughed with fascination.

"So cute!" Xian Xian picked one up. They looked less disgusting than normal insects, as they were made entirely out of metal. They had completely smooth surfaces and antennae that curved downward. The two black googly eyes were still there, adding a bit to their cuteness. The one Xian Xian picked up looked at it and climbed out of its grip. "So dirty... dirty dirty."

When it landed on the ground, it kept shaking the legs that had touched Xian Xian, as if to shake off the filth. It appeared to be quite a clean freak, all of them, in fact. The cockroaches crawled around the lifebound space and kept kicking their legs in the same manner, as if they had stepped on something dirty. Still, their shiny bodies didn't seem to allow any speck of dust to stick to them, otherwise they

wouldn't be so reflective. Tianming could only brush off its obsession with cleanliness as its Primordial Chaos Beast quirk.

Chapter 1277 - Five-form Monster

Tianming had a feeling that would be its quirk after seeing how sparkling clean it was in the dream. Not to mention, with how well-coordinated every movement of the swarm was, it might even have some form of obsessive-compulsive disorder.

"Are you calling me dirty?!" Xian Xian snapped. It was a celestial maiden!

"Dirty dirty." Millions of metal cockroaches jumped about every corner of the lifebound space. Suddenly, it spotted Lan Huang and recalled bathing in its nine kui seas, among the cleanest places of all. Then they all swarmed together and lined up to bathe, emerging once more with completely shiny surfaces. They all flew, not wanting to touch the floor.

"Dammit, will you be sticking to Lan Huang after every fight to bathe?" Ying Huo said. It had a feeling that its siblings were getting weirder and weirder.

Even Tianming was finding it troubling. That aside, what could these metallic cockroaches do? The moment the thought occurred to him, all of them suddenly disappeared, but it wasn't just normal cloaking. They had vanished without the slightest presence at all, yet they still existed within the lifebound space.

"I see... if Yin Chen had hatched in the Voidsky Realm, I could've sent all of them out to track people without being found out. Gaining a million points would've been easy beyond belief." Tianming loved how his range of detection had increased. If he was training in a sect, he could have Yin Chen spread out all over the place, constantly keeping eyes and ears on others. No plot would be able to evade its detection, and even if it was discovered, it didn't matter. As long as all million of them weren't killed at the same instant, it couldn't be killed. It was truly a game changer.

The cockroaches reappeared and reformed together.

"Do you have other tricks?" Tianming asked.

"Of course." Ten metallic cockroaches repeatedly merged into one egg until their total number went back down to a hundred thousand. Then they turned into their second form: silver locusts. There were ten thousand of them in total, each one ten times larger than the cockroaches from before. Like before, they had shiny bodies and two large eyes. But they were longer and had strong rear legs. The parts that stood out, though, were their mandibles. Tianming noticed the text of his Aeonic Grandbane on them. "Damn, you broke the curse right after your birth."

Their blessing was called Metalbane, Undying Titan. Yin Chen's bodies were completely silver, save for the text that was made from a kind of black metal, which made its mandibles even more terrifying. The cockroaches excelled at splitting up while these locusts excelled at devouring everything. Tianming remembered seeing nova source worlds completely stripped clean after the locusts passed. Not to mention, the eggs could eat metal even before they hatched.

"How cute...." Xian Xian couldn't help playing with the metal locusts.

"You woman... buzz off." The insects all glared at Xian Xian with their googly black eyes. It was hard to deal with, after all.

"Naughty eggs. How dare you be so rude to your sister? Don't make me spurt muddy water at you!" Xian Xian snapped.

Yin Chen began panicking and quickly ducked into a corner. Ying Huo and Lan Huang looked at one another and couldn't help but laugh. It turned out that dealing with their new proud sibling was as simple as threatening to make it dirty, something Xian Xian had immediately picked up on.

Yin Chen showed off three other forms, namely, scorpions, spiders, and centipedes. They all looked rather adorable with their flawless, shiny bodies as well. The scorpion form seemed ideal for combat with the bane text focused near its stinger, allowing it to conjure up some kind of metal toxin called ghostwater mercury. Once it entered the body, it could cause it to metallize. The metallic transformation could easily affect organs and cause death.

As for its spider form, the Aeonic Grandbane enhanced the threads the spiders spun. The ten thousand silver spiders could spin a single web of infinite proportions called Infinite Siverthreads. They could greatly limit the enemy's mobility and even cause death.

Finally, the silver centipedes had many legs that could interlock with one another as Tianming had seen in his dreams, forming a gigantic centipede that was about the size of Lan Huang. It was a terrifying close-range fighter in that form. The Aeonic Grandbane turned the legs of the centipedes black, making them much tougher.

Yin Chen would be really hard to deal with, what with its ability to shift forms, split up and recombine. It was practically unkillable, especially when it could split into a million cockroaches and spread all over the place. It was a miraculous ability with boundless potential. In terms of combat, Tianming's other beasts already did well enough, so it was nice to have Yin Chen that was extra tricky to deal with.

"I don't think it has any abilities," Ying Huo said.

"That's right."

Yin Chen didn't possess any special abilities; its strength was its transformations. At the first level of the Constellation stage, it only had five forms. But Tianming recalled seeing thousands of different forms in the dream, including every insect he had ever seen or heard of. The transformations allowed Yin Chen to use their innate abilities. For instance, in its firefly form, it could join together to let out a beam of light far more powerful and blinding than nova source.

"Looks like evolving through universal manna can allow it to unlock bloodline shackles and undo the seal on those abilities." It was similar to Xian Xian in that respect, who had ten different flowers but countless variations.

"Powerful indeed," Ying Huo agreed.

"That's right. In terms of innate talent and potential, the ones who hatch later seem to have it better." Though Ying Huo was the Aeternal Infernal Phoenix, it seemed the most normal out of the bunch. Still, seeing Yin Chen bathe on Lan Huang again after demonstrating its tricks made Tianming worry for the future. "No matter how powerful, these Primordial Chaos Beasts are all unruly children."

He recalled the clouds of white that seemed to have emerged from the xenomemory space. It looked like something countless times larger than a wondersky realm. Right when the thought occurred to him, a crisp sound came from within his lifebound space. Everything turned silent within. Meow Meow was still hugging five of the eggs as it slept, only to yawn and wake up.

"This egg has gone cold...." It picked up the egg it used as a pillow and noticed that there was an additional crack on it. "Oh no! Sixth already started making a fuss before Fifth hatched!" Meow Meow reported.

The fine crack meant that the hatching process had begun, though it would still be some time before the final stages. Still, it was par for the course in the lifebound space. The hatching of one egg always signaled the start of another, but this time it was different.

Meow Meow hugged the white egg as it mumbled, "Why's this one so gloomy? It's like a baleful spirit or something...."

Then, the hundred thousand silver eggs that were lining up to take a bath suddenly chaotically bounced around, then before landed. They opened their eyes and glared at the pale-white egg.

"What's wrong?" Tianming asked.

"Utterly hateful... utterly hateful!" Yin Chen kept on repeating those words agitatedly.

"Huh? Fifth has already hatched? Why are you calling me hateful?" Meow Meow asked. Then, it tossed the pale-white egg away and began to stretch. "Don't worry. Cat Bro will give you a good lick and ensure you stay nice and shiny."

The silver eggs saw its saliva and immediately scattered like fearful flocks of sheep.

Tianming took out the pale-white egg from his lifebound space and smiled. "Interesting... I know who you are... You're the cloud that fought with the Myriadworld Immortabeast in that dream, right?"

He hadn't expected that would be the sixth Primordial Chaos Beast. The fifth and sixth looked to be old enemies. "Don't worry. One day you'll join the family, and bygoness will be bygoness."

But would it really be that simple, though?

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When it all ended, Tianming headed upward. He was within the core of the nova source and staying there for too long could kill him. Though Yin Chen had hatched, he had to find a way to survive. "It doesn't look like I can just leave the fusion formation of the sun. What do I do...."

The nova source was far too hot. Tianming didn't want Yin Chen to die right after hatching here; that would be tragic. Eventually, he made his way to the fusion formation. This was the most complicated formation he had seen up to now. It was tens of thousands of meters thick and had completely sealed off his escape route. When the nova source surged, he would be reduced to ashes where he stood. Nowhere was safe.

As he wracked his brain to think of a solution, he felt something change on his forehead. Using his third eye, he saw a white marking on it. It was the ancient character for 'sky', written a little like the character

for 'void'. He had no idea why it had appeared, nor what it did, but he knew that it was the stigma of Sky Palace. It marked him as a member of Sky Palace and meant he had passed the test. However, he had done nothing of the sort and was instead imprisoned within the nova source. What in the world was going on?

Chapter 1278 - Bathhouse Opening

The abyssal flames beneath them that was the nova source chaotically surged about, exploding from time to time and constantly bombarding their ears with loud noises. Tianming's flesh and skin was red all over. He tried sticking close to the walls of the fusion formation and attempted to use his black arm to pry at it, but to no avail. Every time he opened a single crack, the divine celestial patterns within were countless. He didn't understand how many generations of formation gurus it had taken to create a miracle such as this.

"I can't get out...." He had more or less given up, feeling like an ant standing before an elephant. There was no way the ant could move the huge beast out of the way. He turned his attention back to the 'sky' marking on his head. "I wonder if the similarity of this 'sky' character with 'void' has something to do with the name of the Voidsky Realm, as in void of the sky...."

He felt the stigma with his finger. "Gan Gangan said that it's a proof of identity that won't shatter even if my head explodes. The Sky Palace will be able to track down the killer of anyone who bears the stigma, and it even has some emergency function that helps save one's life. It looks like a really tiny grade-seven or eight formation of sorts."

That was a rather powerful formation in its own right. Even grand defensive formations like the Azuresoul Palace's Azuresky Myriadsword Formation wouldn't have that high a grade, though comparing them was like comparing apples to oranges. The effects and purposes of the formations were different. While there were many formations like the Azuresky Myriadsword Formation in Orderia, there were few Sky Palace stigmas.

Tianming switched to using his black arm to touch the stigma, trying to feel out its special properties. When his red nails tore open a small hole on the stigma, it shook, causing him to feel a little faint. He pulled his finger back. Then the stigma shook and projected something that he eventually made out to be a wooden hut. This was none other than the entrance to the Sky Palace, the place where he'd met the seven people from before. It almost looked real!

"This is...." As he watched, flabbergasted, the wooden hut suddenly rose up toward the fusion formation, fashioning a path out of it. "Can I go out?"

Tianming immediately charged into the pathway, blending into the white mist as he headed upward. The wooden hut that represented the Sky Palace continued rising above him, leading the way like a lantern through the dark woods.

"Wonderful!" the beasts within his lifebound space cheered. Xian Xian excitedly whipped its vines while Ying Huo sprayed fire to celebrate. Meow Meow rested in a corner, seemingly unmoved, while the silver eggs continued lining up to bathe in Lan Huang's bath corner. Lan Huang's bathhouse had been incredibly busy since Yin Chen hatched. It looked like it would never run out of business for the rest of its life.

"Roach Bro, come to play," Xian Xian's spiritform said as it flew over with its cute, little wings.

"Pointless activity," Yin Chen said as it continued lining up in an orderly fashion.

"Hmph!" Xian Xian smiled mischievously before it sprayed some sap from its leaves onto a row of silver eggs. Immediately, the eggs broke out of the line and charged into the nine kui seas like desperate people who planned to relieve themselves in bathrooms.

"Stop cutting in line and come one by one. Remember to pay the entrance fee. I also have a flushing service. Do you want to experience it? It's guaranteed to be good." The nine kui seas swirled on their own. The little eggs 'held hands' as they were flushed completely clean. Tianming simply couldn't believe these things were the grand beasts of old he had seen in his dreams.

"Looks like they'll make up for not enjoying their fair share of bliss in their past life in this current life. It's far more lively than before now, truly wonderful."

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The mirror-smooth ground beneath Yu Ziqian began cracking and his face flushed red as he nervously sweated all over. The heavy pressure had forced him to kneel on one knee, from which the cracks sprouted. Blood began seeping into the cracks as his face paled. Even his deep purple lips began losing color as he labored to breathe.

I have to hold on! I've never put much effort in life, so this time, I'll give it my all! He grit his teeth hard, breaking his lip as he bit down on it. However, the pressure he felt didn't just come from above. Instead, it pressed down on his entire body. Even his organs and spine felt the contortions from the force. He would be crushed into a ball of flesh if it went on.

Dammit, does it have to be like this? My member is turtling back in. Sigh, my balls.... He drew a cold breath from the torture, wondering if he could still get his member to stand up and work when this was all over. Come on, woman, you're a few centuries old! Why do you still like to crush balls? he thought, not daring to say it out loud.

"Old man... quick, show up! What can we do?" he groaned.

"Continue holding on," said the portable grandpa's voice.

The snapping continued. He cried out in agonizing pain as the moments passed. It felt like his nuts had been thoroughly cracked. Oh no... Have I been castrated? He couldn't hold on any longer.

"Alright, it's time to show off again," said the old man. This was what Yu Ziqian had hoped to hear the entire time.

"My power is back!" He hadn't felt like this since his confrontation with Lan Feilin. "Aaaaagh!" He stuffed his final myriad dao pill into his mouth. Then the energy in his body was unsealed, allowing him to slowly stand up, despite the harsh pressure. If not for the three of you that saved me from using up my power, I never would've been able to experience such an outburst of power! Yu Ziqian began tearing up at the thought of Tianming.

Chapter 1279 - Yu Ziqian's Choice

Looking up, Yu Ziqian saw the white-robed woman floating above his head. She didn't move an inch, apart from stretching her hand out to suppress him without even using the force of her constellation. Hundreds of years of cultivation had widened the distance between them to that extent.

"Is that all you're capable of?" When she spoke, the powder on her face continued falling, as if it would continue on for eternity.

Nonsense! Yu Ziqian's divine will had grown considerably during his pill advancement phase to the level of a sixth-level constellier. The myriad dao pill continued unleashing its effects in his body as great amounts of nova source entered his body, making his astralforce stronger and stronger. He began his counterattack, his power rising with his regret and grief. "Come, Divine Worldeater Cauldron!"

The cauldron in his hand suddenly expanded, instantly covering him. He had finally earned the acknowledgment of the cauldron. Though he had only used a slight bit of his power, it was enough for him to stand straight. The moment the cauldron appeared, the woman took a single step backward. The pressure she had applied vanished all of a sudden.

"It feels great!" Even his sunken balls had returned to normal. Power surged through his body, allowing him to support the cauldron and prevent the pressure she was putting on him to not directly affect him. "I can walk now!"

Yu Ziqian was moved to tears the moment the pressure vanished. Sounds of snapping came from his body as things shifted back into place.

"Huh?" He looked up and saw that the woman had returned to the other robed people. The seven of them stood neatly in a single file line, all expressionless with their hands in front of their abdomens.

"Congratulations for passing the trial. You are now a member of the Sky Palace. When you're five hundred, you'll be allowed to permanently stay here as one of us. As for the remaining time, you're free to use that as you wish," they said in unison.

"I... I passed?" He was absolutely stunned. He was still reeling and sore from controlling the astralforce of a sixth-level constellier. Had it not been for the coincidental pill advancement phase, allowing him to be at his most powerful, coupled with the myriad dao pill and cauldron, he wouldn't have passed the trial and would have been pressed into a meat patty. He had never thought that he'd be able to achieve something like this and was at a loss.

A Sky Palace stigma formed on his forehead. He took out a mirror and looked at it closely, adjusting his hair as he did so. "I... I joined the Sky Palace..." The stigma was everything. He pinched his leg to make sure he wasn't dreaming. Looking ahead once more, he saw that the seven elders all had the stigma on their foreheads as well. It was almost impossible to miss.

"The Sky Palace!" Yu Ziqian's mind numbed at the prospect. He knew now that the cauldron was truly his. Now that everything was over, the seven turned and left, not saying anything else. He looked at the cauldron and thought about Tianming. "Please wait!"

He hurried toward them.

"Halt." The seven turned back, staring daggers at him and causing him to back off from the platform.

"Seniors, is there anything else I need to be briefed on after joining? For instance, if I stay here, where would I cultivate? How do I get resources to do so?"

"All you need to do is leave. You can only start cultivating long term in Sky Palace after the age of a hundred," the woman from before said.

"I have another question!" he said, seeing as they were about to leave again. When they turned back, he took a deep breath. "Seniors, where's my friend Li Tianming? Can he leave with me, even if he didn't pass the trial?"

"You want to take him with you?" she said, her eyes squinting. her eyes looked a little yellow.

"Yes, that's right!" Now that he was a member, he felt a bit braver.

"You can. But there's a condition."

"What might that be?"

"You can trade your status as a member for his life."

Yu Ziqian blanked out. After a while, he said, "Senior, do you mean I can save him if I give up my place in the Sky Palace?"

"That's right." From the sound of it, Tianming was still alive.

"Old man!" Yu Ziqian cried internally.

"What would you choose?" asked the portable grandpa.

"What do you think I should do?"

"Losing your place here means you'll lose respect for the rest of your life, not to mention your safety. You'll also lose the Divine Worldeater Cauldron. You'll go back to the old days, drifting along in mediocrity. None of this has come easily. I suggest that you give up on Li Tianming," the old man said earnestly.

"You!" He shook his head. "What are you saying? Weren't you the one who told me to stick with them? And now, you want me to abandon him for my own benefit?"

"What else? Think about it. Your future will be set in stone. You'll be a member of the Sky Palace and own the cauldron. You don't need me to tell you this. Most people would know which to pick."

Yu Ziqian gave it some thought and took a deep breath. "Old man, to be honest, I feel a little disappointed hearing this from you."

"How so?"

"Throughout the Voidsky Skirmish, my only contributions were helping them get the Lifesteal Silverdragon and giving them the myriad dao pills. The rest of the time, they were the ones that supported me and kept me going. I could've been ranked far below one hundred and embarrassed myself, not to mention causing trouble for the Azuresoul Palace."

"But now, I have the cauldron and everyone's respect. I ranked second, and even became a member of the Sky Palace, bringing the Azuresoul Palace's name up in the rankings. But all of this is a gift from them! Li Tianming is the one who made me who I am today! I swore to cross fields of fire for him. If I can't even save his life, am I still a decent human? Surely, I'll be scorned for such an action, yet you asked me to be this person. You're far too selfish and there's no principle you won't abandon or violate—"

"Think through this properly. What you're giving up is a safe, stable life."

"There's no need to think! Who cares about a stable life?!"

Chapter 1280 - Eavesdropping

Yu Ziqian had made his decision long ago. Asking the Ultimate Pill God all those questions was just trying to get his support.

"Then do what you want. Don't blame me for this. I asked you to abandon him because I wanted to test if you were suited to be my successor, Gan Gangan," the Ultimate Pill God said with a chuckle.

"Damn you, you're shameless!" Yu Ziqian truly was impressed that the old man would even think of testing him at this moment. However, hearing that made him even more certain of his decision. His portable grandpa hadn't disappointed him after all.

"Seniors, I'm willing to relinquish my identity as a member of the Sky Palace for the life of my friend," he called out to the seven.

"Very well," they replied, as if they were a single entity. They stretched their hands out as he closed his eyes and felt the stigma leaving his body. At that moment, the entire palace began to shake. Yu Ziqian tripped and fell, causing the erasure process to stop.

"What's going on?" He looked behind him and saw a black vortex, out of which a wooden hut appeared. Its door opened and out walked a youth with white hair. Then the wooden house, the light, and the vortex all disappeared. The youth looked at the seven white-robed people with his black and gold eyes, shocking everyone into silence.

"Boss!" Yu Ziqian rushed to him and held his hand, his mouth chattering. "You're real! You're alive!" Then he saw the stigma on Tianming's forehead. "You also passed the trial?"

"Also?" Tianming noted the stigma on Yu Ziqian's forehead.

"It looks a little different!" Tianming's own stigma looked more like the character for 'void' than it did for 'sky', while Yu Ziqian's simply looked like 'sky', which was the same as the seven white-robed seniors' as well.

"My pill advancement phase just returned. Coupled with the Divine Worldeater Cauldron and the myriad dao pill, I managed to pass the test. But..." Yu Ziqian touched the stigma on his forehead, doubting it was still there, only to be glad to be proven wrong. "I understand now. Was saving you part of my test? I think I passed it!"

"You saved me?" Tianming wondered.

"That's right. They asked me if I was willing to give up being in the Sky Palace to save you!"

"How long ago was that?"

"A few moments ago? It wasn't too far back."

Tianming patted him on the shoulder, certain that it wasn't due to his efforts that he had made it back. The trip up alone had taken well over a few minutes. But he remembered the choice Yu Ziqian had made for his sake. Lightly pushing him aside, he looked at the seven people in white.

"Hehe..." they chuckled lightly before turning away and vanishing in a mist.

"They're leaving just like that? Then... I'm still a member of the Sky Palace? Are we both?" Yu Ziqian couldn't believe it; it was too good to be true.

"Theoretically, yeah." Tianming looked in the direction the elders had left in, still filled with doubts. The seven of them had looked super serious at first, but they actually ignored him when he came back.

"That's wonderful! By the way, what kind of trial did you undergo down there? Over here, that old hag... I mean, senior... applied so much pressure on me that I was about to turn into mincemeat!"

"Me? I just took a nap down there and the trial was over." After that, Tianming asked him more about what happened. "So they asked us to leave just like that?"

"Yeah, that's what they said."

"Alright, then let's not stay here." This was a mysterious and possibly dangerous place, after all.

"How do we leave?"

"Let it guide our way." Tianming pointed at the stigma on his forehead and turned to leave the empty hall. Some time after they left, the seven robed people reappeared in the hall with even more white powder on their faces, still falling nonstop. There seemed to be some kind of a blush on them, as though they were actually countless microscopic lifeforms that gathered together on their faces.

"Damn it!" they snapped in perfect harmony. "What's the wooden hut doing this time? It let the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb out and completely ruined everything! One day, I'll completely destroy it...."

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Outside the hall, Tianming and Yu Ziqian continued heading outside.

"What is... wooden house... doing now?" Yin Chen asked. Its manner of speech greatly infuriated Tianming. It was the same even when it reported important information to him.

He was using Yin Chen's spying ability for the first time. There were some tens of silver cockroaches within the hall, having disappeared into the corners without being spotted by the robed people. This ability was far too amazing. "If only this fellow can report what it sees with coherent sentences...." Tianming patiently listened to everything. "What else? Did they say anything else?"

"They have... already disappeared... again again." It was one thing for it to speak in word pairs, but it had to double the last lingering word as well.

"Try to say little yellow chicken," Ying Huo said.

"Little yellow... chicken chicken," Yin Chen said with its mechanical voice.

"I am... so embarrassed," Xian Xian said, hiding its face with its hands. The other beasts' mimicry of Yin Chen was driving Tianming insane.

He forced himself to calm down and go over what Yin Chen had reported. "So the wooden hut of the sky plunderers that appeared when I entered is the same as the one that saved me. It's also the one that brought out the Ninedragon Emperor's divine astralship. It's been helping me the whole time. Even this Sky Palace stigma was given by it. In other words, the wooden house and the white robes are two different entities in the Sky Palace. Given how good the wooden hut was to me, it might be thanks to my sky plunderer predecessors. I wonder if the hut's alive or something.

"As for the white robes, they definitely regard me with malice. They're probably top elites from all across Orderia, but their intentions are subordinate to those of the wooden hut. Whatever the hut decides, they aren't able to oppose it. The most they can do is to test the waters a little here and there. Maybe the white robes control the normal Voidsky Skirmishes and the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb, and minorsky stele were there because of the wooden house." That was the most he could come up with based on his experience and eavesdropping.

"Looks like that can't be too far from the truth," Ying Huo said.

"Then what should we do?" Meow Meow asked.

"No need to do anything, really. As far as outsiders are concerned, the Sky Palace is a monolith. Since the wooden hut supports me, and I have the stigma, too, I'm just as much a member of the Sky Palace as the rest. Now, I have their protection and nobody will dare mess with me. Not to mention, we don't cultivate at the Sky Palace either, so we don't have to know what's going on inside. If we don't, outsiders won't either. Nobody can say otherwise if we claim to be full-fledged members of the Sky Palace. The only ones we have to be aware of are the white robes. We need some contingencies."

Tianming left tens of thousands of invisible cockroaches in all corners of the Sky Palace. It was nothing more than a weird, white hall shrouded in misty clouds. The seven white robes were nowhere to be seen, but Tianming wouldn't worry as long as he had Yin Chen there. "This fellow's far too useful a spy...." Without hearing what the white robes said, he would have no idea of what's going on at all.

"My reward," said Yin Chen as many cockroaches climbed on Tianming's shoulder, their eyes staring expectantly at him.

Tianming took out some divine artifacts, as much as it hurt to do so, and fed them to the swarm of cockroaches that turned into locusts.

"I want... a reward... as well!" Xian Xian said.

Tianming was going to go broke at this rate. It was one thing for Xian Xian to want meat, but another to use divine artifacts as feed.

"Now go!" Many small silver cockroaches spread out across the Sky Palace.

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Outside the Voidsky Flame Pillar, the atmosphere was deathly silent. Many of the people hiding in ambush began surfacing. The four Dragon Imperials were there with more than three thousand elites from the Xuanyuan Dragon Sect, standing closest to the scene in preparation for what would happen. Their dragons filled the skies, ready to strike.

East of them were the wargodeans and Blueblood Starocean, with more than five thousand to their number. It was said that powerful figures like the Warlord, Tumulus Pill God, and Emperor Lan had come.

To the south were the Voidword Shrine and Emyrean Sword Sect, sitting in wait and ready to pounce. All ten of the first-rate factions were camping and waiting with many of their finest. The tens of second-rate factions the likes of Azuresoul Palace were waiting farther away for a chance, though the chief instructor of the Azuresoul Palace himself, Gujian Qingshuang, was hiding away in his stronghold back at the Azurecloud Continent.

There were some sightings of the Clouddream Ark nearby, which meant the dreamless celestial emperor had personally come for the Divine Worldeater Cauldron. He would personally be reclaiming what his disciple had lost. Everyone waited as the storm brewed. When the two youths emerged from the Voidsky Flame Pillar, their identities could spark a war among the Myriad Solar Sects.