

The Ages 1941

Chapter 1941

Tianming couldn't even fathom something like that happening. Qingyu and Yu Ziqian basically didn't have any ties with one another—they only ever interacted when he brought her some medicine. Tianming deeply trusted Yu Ziqian, as they had fought together back in the Voidsky Realm. He had even obtained the Divine Worldeater Cauldron for him, so he believed he could trust him. Yin Chen had also never reported that he'd interacted with the celestial orderians in any way.

"Don't tell me it isn't the celestial orderians?" There would be time later for pondering. They quickly went back to the ship. While the path back was short, Tianming and Lingfeng's hearts nervously beat nonstop from the disbelief and worry. Tianming already felt like his sister had been put through so much already, and now, out of nowhere, Yu Ziqian was going to cause her even more trouble.

There weren't many people left in the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb. Tianming and Lingfeng had left to fight Sovereign Sanctquility not long before, leaving only Yu Ziqian, Weisheng Moran, and Qingyu within. Weisheng Moran had tagged along because her powerful divine wonders would be a huge help, but Yu Ziqian's participation hadn't been in their original plans. His skills weren't what they needed for the current situation, but he had insisted on coming to contribute to the Myriad Solar Sects regardless.

Tianming and Lingfeng were greeted with a sight that enraged them. The purple-haired Yu Ziqian was giving off a sinister aura as he pulled Qingyu's left hand with one hand and held a miniaturized Divine Worldeater Cauldron in the other, covering her head with it. The opening of the cauldron was choking her out! Tianming also spotted a fine detail: one of Yu Ziqian's arm also had a large bulge that seemed to have exploded into hundreds of black, hair-like threads that tied themselves around Qingyu's arm. Their tips dug into the tenth bump on her arm!

The two of them immediately kicked into action, filling the entire place with their killing intent.

"Don't be so rash, gentlemen! Otherwise, I'll have my cauldron shrink and crush her ugly head. You don't want her to turn into meat paste, do you? Hahaha!" Yu Ziqian laughed maniacally, his mouth appearing much larger than before. A black miasma wafted out from the depths of his mouth. He did in fact hold Qingyu's life within his hands. Not even Shuo Yue could do much after leaving her lifebound space.

As for Weisheng Moran, her eyes were red with tears. She didn't know Yu Ziqian that well, apart from the fact that he was Tianming's friend. "Qingyu suddenly felt unwell just now, and he said that he had a pill that could relieve her symptoms. He came to help, and then...." She seemed confused and was blaming herself for what happened.

"It's not your fault. None of us expected this," Tianming said. He suppressed the killing urge in his heart and forced himself to calm down, lest he lose control of the situation. He also had to make sure Lingfeng didn't do anything reckless.

Lingfeng had already absorbed quite a lot of terrae and was covered in a sinister black miasma. The Soulfend pressed its arms on the ground, glaring at Yu Ziqian. He didn't speak, but he kept taking steps forward. The power in his body was reaching a point of losing control, as was apparent from his bloodshot eyes. The killing intent caused Yu Ziqian to take a few steps back, but he recalled the hostage he had and smiled. Qingyu yelped in pain as he gave the Divine Worldeater Cauldron a few knocks.

That cry raised the tension within the ship even more. Tianming hurriedly stopped Lingfeng; losing control would do nobody any favors. He took a deep breath to suppress his rage. "Brother, there's no need to do this, right? If you have anything to say, you can tell me. Our priority right now is stopping the invasion of Skywolf. Not to mention, I can't figure out what problem you'd ever have with me."

"Brother? Who's your brother? Look closely at who I am!" Yu Ziqian laughed and his facial features exploded into dust before reforming into a completely different face. Even the gender changed!

Tianming felt a chill throughout his entire body and almost vomited blood. That was the face of the voidheart worm! He couldn't figure out how Yu Ziqian had become the voidheart worm out of nowhere. Seeing Lingfeng almost lose control again, Tianming forcefully held him down.

"Li Tianming, I told you I wouldn't die that easily! Now, you finally see! Hahahaha!" The womanly face contorted unpleasantly as it laughed.

Tianming was enraged and confused. There were far too many questions and doubts in his heart, but he knew that rage wouldn't solve anything. Since he was dealing with the voidheart worm, he knew he couldn't lose his head here. It had limited intelligence, so he had to stay calm and play to his strengths.

"You're still alive? How'd you do it?" Tianming feigned horror and inserted a hint of fear in his voice.

"Hehehe.... People think that my only body is powerful, but they don't know that my soul is just as resilient as well. My child spawn can parasitize things, and so can my soul! Hiding in a soul...." It stopped talking and glared at Tianming.

"Soul? Parasitizing?" Tianming gave Lingfeng a look. The latter was a master of the soul, yet he furrowed his brow and said, "Brother Tianming, Gan Gangan's soul is complete, but there have been changes. That's probably what it's talking about."

"Does that mean that he's dead?" Tianming felt slightly relieved that his friend hadn't betrayed him, but that didn't change the fact that he had become a victim. How had Yu Ziqian's soul been infested by the voidheart worm? He racked his mind and thought of a key vector: the Sky Palace stigma.

Chapter 1942

Upon first joining the Sky Palace, Yu Ziqian had gained a stigma, which had probably come from the voidheart worm. Nobody knew what changes had happened after that. The only thing that was certain was that the cosmic wildbeast might still be alive in his body. In a sense, it was similar to the yellowspring fish inside the Godsins, a beast that had been refined into a semi-soul-like existence.

"I'm not sure about this. His soul's in one piece, but there's something else inside. If we pull it out, he might survive, but as for his body..." Lingfeng said while Tianming observed Yu Ziqian. The powder flakes that were the voidheart worm's child spawns had infested his body and matured to the point of being able to control it.

"Even if his soul survives, it'll be tough for his body..." Tianming's throat felt dry. He was quite fond of Yu Ziqian, and for him to suffer this fate hurt Tianming greatly. More than that, Qingyu's life was in his hands. All Tianming could do was to wait for the voidheart worm to reveal its intentions. The voidheart worm belonged to Skywolf, and Tianming had just killed Sovereign Sanctquility. It had then used that

opportunity to completely grasp Tianming's weakness, turning the tables on him in an instant! Tianming didn't dare to risk Qingyu's life, so this was the hardest decision he'd had to face.

The voidheart worm was still laughing, relishing in the joy of agonizing its foe. "Li Tianming, I want you to die! Trade your life with your sister's! A life for a life. It's a worthy trade, is it not?"

"Let's be realistic. If I'm gone, the entire sun will be exterminated by Skywolf, resulting in even more death. If it really comes to that, I can only sacrifice my sister. After that, I swear you'll face an even more gruesome death—no, I'll make you into an artifact soul so that you won't even be able to find peace in death. I'll torture you for eternity to make you regret your actions today!" Tianming refused the offer with the harshest of tones.

Hearing 'artifact soul' seemed to really startle the voidheart worm. It rolled its eyes and said, "Looks like you've really hardened your heart. Do you really want to try?" It shrank the cauldron in its hand, but Qingyu held on and didn't make a sound. However, Tianming could see the opening of the cauldron begin crushing her head, drawing blood and filling him and Lingfeng with rage. No doubt, they were in a really bad position.

Tianming drew the Godsins and pointed it at the voidheart worm! He pushed the Frostmoon Edge down into the ground beside him; he might not get a chance to gift it to Qingyu anymore.

"If you desire death, then by all means, continue!" he roared, then sprang toward the voidheart worm. It looked like he had already given up on Qingyu. "Qingyu, I'll avenge you by slaughtering the Sanctvoid Army!"

When it heard those words, the voidheart worm's tone suddenly changed. "Stop! I'll change the terms!"

Its intelligence still seemed rather subpar. Tianming immediately stopped, bringing the situation back to a tense stalemate. He had stabilized the situation for now, but his heart was pounding. The blood seeping out from the cauldron was from Qingyu's head being crushed, not a mere simple cut, yet she still didn't utter a single sound and stubbornly held on, worried that Tianming would trade his own life for hers!

This wasn't the first time something like this had happened. Way back when Qingyu had killed Yuwen Shengcheng, Tianming had risked his own life to fight Yuwen Shendu. She didn't want something like that to happen again.

The rest glared at the voidheart worm, who had given up on getting Tianming to kill himself. It clicked its tongue and said, "My condition is for you to let me return to Skywolf Frost."

The Flameyellow Guard Formation had been active during Skywolf's arrival, so the voidheart worm had no way of returning to Skywolf Frost on its own. If it weren't for taking over Yu Ziqian's body, it wouldn't even have managed to reach Qingyu.

"How do you want to go about it?" Tianming asked.

"Just take me to the astralguard formation of Skywolf Frost. Once I enter, I'll let her go."

Those conditions sounded much better, but Tianming couldn't be sure whether it had other plans. It's just a cosmic wildbeast with limited intelligence... does it really plan to go back? Even so, he didn't

refuse it, as the terms weren't unacceptable. If he didn't acquiesce, it would simply drive the voidheart worm into a corner with no recourse, which was the same as forfeiting Qingyu's life. Looks like I have to compromise.

Gritting his teeth and nodding, he said, "Fine, I'll take you there." He gave Lingfeng a pat to calm him down. The worm had a hostage, so they were still treading a fine line. The whole matter was forcing Tianming to miss out on a chance to wipe out the specter army when he held a huge advantage.

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He forced himself to stay calm as he piloted the ship past the flaming cloud layer. After emerging from it, he noticed that many specters had chosen to retreat from the Flameyellow Guard Formation, numbering about a hundred million. When they saw the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb, they hurriedly scattered. However, they didn't go far and kept watch from a distance they deemed safe, only to find that the ship didn't open fire and instead headed toward Skywolf Frost.

"A futile struggle! We'll kill you all soon enough! Hahaha!" the voidheart worm said, its face contorted. It could parasitize bodies, and even souls, to the point that Lingfeng wasn't able to tell, as expected of a cosmic wildbeast.

"Once you return to Skywolf Frost, you'll be able to grow back and become much stronger, right?" Tianming casually asked.

"Of—hey, stop trying to get information out of me. I'm no fool."

Given the speed of the ship, they soon arrived near the surface of Skywolf Frost. It was so cold that the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb frosted up. The strong chill caused their bones to hurt. The Sanctvoid Guard Formation of the star was similar to the flaming clouds, but Tianming could tell that it wasn't too stable, probably due to the two dead sovereigns. There were a lot of holes in its defenses. If Tianming and the sun emperor died, such a situation would probably manifest on the sun as well. If nobody took control of the formation core, its power would only keep weakening, but realizing that at this point wasn't of much use.

"We're here," Tianming said.

"Go lower and let the ship dive under the frost wave. Otherwise, how can I be sure you'll let me go once I release her? I'm in a weakened state now," it said.

Tianming furrowed his brow, wondering if the beast was trying to drag Qingyu down to Skywolf Frost. Qingyu is only good for threatening me with, as far as it's concerned. But it wasn't able to get me to trade my life for hers. Would there really be any use for it to take her down there?

It wasn't that Tianming was looking down on the voidheart worm. Instead, its nature as a cosmic wildbeast prevented it from scheming to any significant extent. Given that it still had Qingyu in its grasp, Tianming didn't have much of a choice, but that didn't mean he would do everything it said. He lowered the ship just enough that the opened entrance went slightly beyond the formation. At the same time, he had Lingfeng stand close to Qingyu to 'escort' the voidheart worm off.

The frost wave was practically all around them now. "Leave now!" Tianming urged.

Chapter 1943

To prevent any trickery, Shuo Yue returned to Qingyu's lifebound space. At the entrance of the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb, Tianming, Lingfeng, and Weisheng Moran closely watched the voidheart worm. Tianming's eyes were filled with his divine hazard sword ki strands, ready to shoot out at any moment.

The tension in the air rose to a peak. By then, a slight frost from the Sanctvoid Guard Formation touched the entrance of the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb, slowly seeping toward them. The inside of the ship was already coated in frost, including those within it.

"Let her go and I'll release you!" Tianming demanded. There were nearly a hundred million specter troops that had just returned to Skywolf Frost, catching up to the ship and keeping a close eye on it. While they seemed wary and fearful, they were still itching for blood. The longer the voidheart worm delayed things, the worse it would become for Tianming.

"Don't hurry. Let's do this properly..." said the voidheart worm, its contorted face making an eerie smile.

Tianming immediately felt severe danger. The fact that they were already there, but the voidheart worm hadn't immediately run, showed that it was waiting for something. It was behaving with wit and a mental capacity that were completely unlike those it had inside the Sky Palace Formation! It felt like someone was guiding it. The moment that thought occurred to Tianming, he felt danger coming! The first thing he did was to close the entrance of the ship.

The silver dragon head that was the entrance hurriedly pulled back, right before a sudden force rocked the entire ship! The ship swayed wildly in the sea of frost from the unseen force, spinning out of control. As the ship could only be piloted using the wheel formation, Tianming had to focus on it to control it. But right now, his attention was fully occupied by the voidheart worm. The ship immediately flipped over from another heavy shock before tumbling straight into the Sanctvoid Guard Formation.

Tianming could clearly see black ropes of varying thickness appear within the sea of frost, the finest of which had diameters similar to human thighs, while the thicker ones were up to ten meters thick! Not only were there a lot of them, they were also incredibly long and had come from all directions. The frosty waves around them had helped obscure them from sight.

It turned out that the ship had actually been shaken around by these very black ropes. Tens of millions more of them shot toward the ship, tightly binding it! Tianming had only just gripped the wheel formation, but before he could exert any force, the ship was being dragged deeper into the sea of frost at a terrifying speed. It seemed to be filled with endless ice and bones, the depths of which couldn't be fathomed. They were plunging toward the main camp of the enemy! It was as if the gigantic divine astralship was being swallowed up by the mouth of the planet, displacing so much frost that a gigantic wave of a thousand meters was displaced on the surface of the star.

The sound of splashing waves drowned out everything else, and the ship still hadn't managed to properly close its entrance, resulting in even more frost seeping into it. It didn't take long before the inside of the ship turned into an ice cave!

Tianming had been completely played by the voidheart worm. It had never planned to just escape with its life! While this kind of plan wouldn't seem out of place if Sovereign Sanctquility was the one to carry

it out, the voidheart worm didn't seem nearly cunning enough for it. Either way, as long as it had Qingyu, it would hold the initiative and make the threats.

"What in the world are those?!" From the force the black ropes seemed to be able to exert, they were obviously extraordinary. They seemed to possess more force than Sovereign Sanctquility and her ship combined.

On the other hand, the voidheart worm had fled with Qingyu in hand as the ship was spinning out of control; it never intended to let her go. Tianming had focused his attention on the voidheart worm the entire time and missed the threat of another monster deep within the sea of death.

He did, however, leave a few Yin Chens on Qingyu's body. It informed him that one of the black ropes had bound the voidheart worm and Qingyu before pulling them down. Soon, they would leave the Sanctvoid Guard Formation and emerge on the inner side of Skywolf Frost.

Fortunately, Lingfeng didn't have to pilot the ship and could afford to chase down the worm with the Soulfriend. He was still following close behind with Yin Chen guiding the way, but he was in trouble nevertheless, having been identified as a foreign threat by the formation. He immediately came under the attack of the frost and slammed into a huge wave!

His eyes turned bloodshot as he glared at the cold abyss. The girl that had been drawn deep into it was the most important person in his life, though, and he howled before charging straight into the frost, going deeper.

Countless blades of frost came slashing from within the storm. The Soulfriend roared and blocked them for Lingfeng, feeling them cut into its flesh. It was covered in blood soon enough, yet it didn't escape. It roared even more furiously and blocked more of the blades with its arms, covering Lingfeng along the way.

All Lingfeng could see was a single hand. Qingyu had been drawn deep into the storm and desperately stretched her hand out to him, but the frost was so strong that her fingers were turning red. But even so, she reached as far as she could like a drowning person, still struggling to survive.

"Save me...." Yin Chen relayed her words to him. It sounded metallic and completely unlike her real voice, but he had heard her nonetheless. The reach of his soul spanned much farther than his senses, allowing him to sense her breathing and heartbeat. He could tell that she still believed he would save her.

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"Qingyu!" Though he had never shed a tear before, this time around, he cried tears of blood. As if he had turned into a beast, he howled and unleashed the demonic aura from his body. His Primordial Gate spun faster and faster to speeds he had never before reached, turning his body into a vortex of darkness. The suction from his chest allowed him to go through the storm even faster! All that was left was his heavy breathing and her terrified cries. He could see her hand, still struggling. Tianming wanted to give chase, too, but both he and the ship were unable to move.

"These are the webs of a voidheart worm!" Tianming finally recognized what they were, but the ship was already mostly bound. Deeper within the mist was a cosmic wildbeast of unbelievable proportions.

The pitch-black body that was visible was merely the top of the iceberg! Its silhouette suggested that it was even bigger than the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb, at least ten or twenty times the size of the voidheart worm that was within the Sky Palace Formation! The beast stalked around the frost like an apex predator, its black webs visible all throughout. It had made its lair in the formation!

"It's another voidheart worm!" More accurately, it was a tool of colonization bred by the mysterians for Skywolf to use. It was the beast that had maintained communication with the voidheart worm while it infiltrated the Sky Palace Formation, allowing Skywolf to pinpoint the sun for another invasion.

Tianming had never heard of it before. If he had suspected anything, he would have thought that it would be situated on Skywolf Blaze, the stronger of the twin stars. Additionally, he didn't think it would be so much larger and stronger than the previous one! There was no way he could have learned about this to prepare for it. Skywolf had invaded right after their arrival, leaving him no time to gather any intelligence.

At the end of the day, the voidheart worms were what Skywolf Frost was using to turn the tables after Tianming had killed Sovereign Sanctquility. The larger one made the Sanctvoid Guard Formation its hunting ground, completely binding the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb, while the smaller one took Qingyu back to their lair. While Tianming didn't know what they planned to do with her, he knew that the larger voidheart worm definitely intended to kill him.

His troubles were only just beginning.

Chapter 1944

At that moment, a headache-inducing soundwave was unleashed from the large voidheart worm. It was a piercing, high-pitched sound, much like the horns that could be heard from Skywolf Frost.

"The Void God wants us to return first!"

"All troops, retreat!"

"The Void God has ordered a full retreat!"

'Void God' was a respectful address Skywolf used to refer to the large voidheart worm. It appeared that the mysterian-made worm had a high status in Skywolf, perhaps even higher than many sovereigns'. It was the true ruler of Skywolf Frost! As it gave its order, the specter troops hurriedly retreated from the Flameyellow Guard Formation. Even though they had suffered tens of millions of casualties, the majority of the troops of the Sanctvoid Army managed to extricate themselves from the situation.

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They had returned with one goal in mind: to kill Tianming. There were hundreds of millions of specters behind the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb, all of them entering the Sanctvoid Guard Formation. The frosty atmosphere was their home turf. The army assembled and quickly surrounded the ship.

Tianming couldn't help Lingfeng one bit as he was facing the might of the entire specter force as a price for having slain Sovereign Sanctquility. Countless black spider threads thrashed about in the restless sea of frost, tying down the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb tighter and tighter. It was hard for it to even make a

turn. Beneath the sea was a gigantic black spider-like being, only barely visible between passing moments.

During one such instant, Tianming finally got a good look at the cosmic wildbeast that was even larger than the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb. It was black all over and shaped like the voidheart worm's tarantula form. Its black legs were razor sharp and spinnerets populated its abdomen. On its back was a gigantic male face that seemed eerily handsome. The expression on the face was one of mischievous joy, as if it was toying with its prey. It appeared that this Void God was a male insectoid, while the one whose body Tianming had eradicated was a female.

Lingfeng was still giving chase and had gone almost all the way into Skywolf Frost. Tianming, however, was dragged deep into the sea of frost toward the entirety of the Sanctvoid Army. They knew that once they dealt with the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb, the Flameyellow Guard Formation alone wouldn't be able to resist them. Though Tianming was alone, he and his ship were worth more than ten million troops!

No matter how powerful the ship was, it was completely trapped and Tianming was feeling more anxious than ever. "It still has Qingyu in hand, which means she's still useful for something. She won't be killed just yet. Since that's the case, I have no reason to fear them! They'll all die!" Burning with flames of rage, he readied himself to pilot the ship. "Go!"

The ship rumbled as its miniaturized nova source went into overdrive. Energy flooded toward the nine dragon heads of the ship, which was currently being bombarded with the abilities from the specter army. Many dragon scales began shattering and the specters cried out the Void God's name in fervor as they swarmed toward the ship like ants.

"Die!" Ninedragon Apotheosis unleashed a gigantic ball of energy, which quickly exploded. nova source tore through the space in its reach, sending scorching flames through the formation, making an entire area barren! The specters in places where the flames touched were reduced to ash while many black webs began burning, boring a great hole in the web complex the Void God had woven. Even after being dragged into the Sanctvoid Guard Formation, the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb was no pushover; the power it had displayed once more struck fear into the skywolves, causing them to retreat.

But the next moment, even more webs came flying as the Void God came straight toward the ship. Given its size, one would be able to spot it far away from the star if it didn't have the frosty mist around it. It was larger than any mountain or lake on the surface and it seemed to have made Skywolf Frost its nest.

That also seemed to answer why the worm made its lair in Skywolf Frost instead of the larger star. Skywolf Blaze was more powerful, so it served as the main base for the skywolf specters, whereas Skywolf Frost was the turf of the voidheart worm, which was in turn served by the other two specter lines of Sovereigns Greenvoid and Sanctquility.

If it weren't for the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb, Tianming would shudder before the gigantic, super-continental-sized beast, even with forty billion Omnisentient Threads. All of those people bundled together probably wouldn't occupy nearly as much space! The only things larger than the voidheart worm that Tianming knew of were the Primordial Chaos Beasts he had seen in the dreamscapes. Seeing

such a huge creature made him feel an instinctual fear, as if it was the most terrifying lifeform to ever exist. It seemed destined for superiority far more than humans or specters were.

The Void God let out a piercing hiss. Tianming's ears hurt even though he had been partly insulated from the sound. Weisheng Moran's face paled with fear as she slumped to the ground, shaking. Never would Tianming have imagined that he would come face to face with a monstrosity of such scale outside the world of dreams.

"Dammit, a louse on that thing would probably be larger than Tortoise Bro, wouldn't it?" Not even Ying Huo quite knew what to make of it. Back then, Tianming had estimated that it was around ten times larger than the voidheart worm inside the Sky Palace Formation, but that was a severe underestimation. He had neglected to take into account the perspective distorted by distance.

The Void God had basically declared war on them. The hiss caused countless specters around them to howl.

"They'll eventually use up their miniaturized nova source! The Void God and the Sanctvoid Guard Formation can hold them here until they run dry, and after that they'll be dead for sure!" Many specters took that into account and sacrificed their lives to swarm the ship.

"We must avenge Sovereign Sanctquility!"

"For our dead comrades!"

"Destroying his ship is only the start! After that, we'll bury every lifeform on the sun alongside Sovereign Sanctquility as tributes!"

The bestial nature of the specters was amplified to full tilt. Meanwhile, the gigantic Void God kept shifting within the frosty sea, hard to detect despite its size. As more and more webs came flying toward the ship, it also struck it with its sharp legs. Abilities also came bombarding toward it, placing Tianming and the rest in grave danger. There wasn't anywhere to run.

"Feng... I'll leave Qingyu to you." Tianming's eyes were bloodshot. He was desperately looking for a way out of this, yet more and more specters had returned to the Sanctvoid Guard Formation and locked on to his ship! "Die!" His cry shook the whole ship. He had been pushed into a corner and had no choice but to trust the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb!

The ship rumbled with a huge surge of nova source, illuminating the sea with its nine-colored light. An energy ball formed as the Void God came charging, then tore through the sea and exploded in front of the beast!

The entire formation shook as countless specters were wiped out by the blast, but their numbers were quickly replenished. The Void God managed to ram into the back of the ship, piercing many dragon scales with its sharp claws and even breaching the hull. Its spinnerets kept releasing more and more webs, but thankfully, the Ninedragon Apotheosis wiped them out.

Then, the Ninedragon Imperial Tomb did a death roll, shaking off the Void God and crushing countless specters in its path. Webs and nine-colored divine light could be seen all across the battlefield. From the star below, an entire section of the Sanctvoid Guard Formation was shaking and rumbling. It almost looked as if a hole had opened up in the sky.

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"Hehehe... it's over for you! That kid that's giving chase will also die here in Skywolf Frost," said 'Yu Ziqian', his expression a ghastly smile. "Revenge is simply the best!"

The voidheart worm waved its limbs in utter joy like a monkey, then a black thread stretched out from the boil in his hand and linked up with the black lump on Qingyu's arm, as if it was forming a connection. It had secured Qingyu to itself using a web as it flew through the Sanctvoid Guard Formation as fast as it could. Lingfeng tried to keep up, only to be battered again and again by the many obstacles inside the formation.

Chapter 1945

"Don't celebrate too soon, voidheart worm. You've already died at the hands of my brother once. You might have some spunk, but you're weak. You won't be able to get revenge at all, and you'll suffer an agonizing death! The most you can do is annoy me a bit. Only useless weaklings like you can be so shameless. After all, your bloodline is only a mediocre one compared to many others across this vast universe," Qingyu said, much to the voidheart worm's surprise. It didn't think that the despairing and terrified girl from before who was still slowly bleeding out could actually deliver those words with confidence and pride.

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"You're asking for death, you skank!" The thing the voidheart worm was most proud of was its status. Since it had hatched, it was aware that it was a being that parasitized 'people'. As far as it was concerned, humans and specters were the real bugs, so it couldn't tolerate any insult along those lines.

"Come on, then! Kill me if you dare! I bet you don't even have the balls to crush my head!" Qingyu said with a smirk.

"Skreeee!" The voidheart worm opened its eyes wide and raged, "You're right! I never planned to kill you from the start. In fact, you're a much better host for me, given your talent! Once my soul parasite enters you and I control your body with my child spawns, everything you have will become mine! That's what Li Tianming deserves for destroying my body! I'll just take over his sister's!"

The angered words sounded fitting, coming from a lifeform of its intelligence. While cosmic wildbeasts were often considered apex lifeforms, they only had a bestia, that is, a beast soul, rather than a tripartite soul comprised of vita, terra, and caelum. As a result, their intelligence usually suffered, as was apparent from how easy it was for Qingyu to get it to reveal its true goals. Naturally, Yin Chen also relayed that to Lingfeng and Tianming.

That means it was never going to trade my life with my brother's in the first place. So how did it even come up with the ruse? Given its intelligence, that shouldn't even occur to it, Qingyu thought. The voidheart worm had shown enough wits to get two things out of Qingyu: its release back to Skywolf Frost and her body for later parasitization. It had even been able to get away with the scheme. Though she was still filled with doubts, all Qingyu could do was calm down. "You alone? How would you even be able to take over my body? If you're so powerful, you'd be able to take over my brother. He's far more of a genius than I am, haha...." She feigned casual disdain for the voidheart worm.

As expected, it confidently revealed, "What would you know, dumb lass? I put soul-surfer bugs that I birthed into the ultimate face-nourishing pill I gave you. You see that lump on your arm? That's the soul path my little bugs built! Once we reach the lair of the Void God, my bestia will be able to enter your consciousness through the soul path and infest your vita! Though it won't be a perfect fusion, as your own vita will still exist as my host, there's nothing you can do about it! I can control your body with child spawns, while all you can do is watch as I do the things you would never do with your body! You'll suffer until your final end! Let's see if you still dare to act so arrogantly!"

It had mentioned an imperfect fusion, which implied that perfect fusion probably meant consuming the vita of another and perhaps even replacing the other two parts of their soul to control their body. However, the voidheart worm didn't have a terra or a caelum. A bestia wasn't the same as vita, either, so a perfect infiltration wasn't possible. Even so, voidheart worms seemed to have their own unique traits that helped usurp their hosts.

The voidheart worm had used its soul parasite to infest Yu Ziqian's soul before using child spawns to infest his body, basically achieving complete usurpation. Perhaps after it infested Qingyu, it would still be able to cultivate with her body. That also meant that Yu Ziqian could still be conscious and technically alive, yet unable to do or say a single thing. Not to mention, the voidheart worm probably hadn't mutilated his body too much in order to ensure its peak functionality. After all, what good was a host if they were ruined?

On the other hand, it probably had to resort to soul parasitism due to its body being destroyed. If it could simply reform its body, that might not even be necessary. That meant that its physical body was properly dead, otherwise it wouldn't bother choosing between Yu Ziqian and Qingyu's bodies as hosts. Either that, or it had a preference for female bodies, which lined up with its own sex as well.

At the end of the day, Qingyu had still managed to clear her doubts about the situation by fishing information out of the beast. Killing her would be against the voidheart worm's plans, which gave her and the rest quite a lot of room to act. They wouldn't have to worry too much about her safety.

"Soul path? You're just making things up at this point. Feng is stronger than me, and you also fed him pills. Why didn't something like this grow on him?" she said, her tone doubtful.

"Him? How would I know how a monster like him works? Even pills that he ingests orally end up ground to dust. He was my first target, but I only ended up wasting a lot of soul-surfer bugs on him! But never fear—I led him into Skywolf Frost because I want to get back at him for that! I'll make you watch them suffer the consequences! Hahaha!" The voidheart worm continued thoughtlessly mouthing off.

Hearing that, Qingyu had even more questions. If it was really that simple-minded, how had Tianming fallen for its scheme and ended up being tricked into coming to Skywolf Frost?

She pondered that to no end before an ancient voice rang out from the voidheart worm. "Enough, lass. Don't bother getting more information from this bug. The plan was mine from the moment you took the pills inside the Sky Palace Formation."

The voice was completely foreign to Qingyu. How could two voices come from the same individual? "Who are you?"

"The portable grandpa," said the other.

While Qingyu didn't know Yu Ziqian all that well, she had learned from Tianming and Lingfeng that Yu Ziqian was accompanied by the remnant soul of a top expert of the cosmic aether. The remnant soul had probably survived inside some divine artifact, similar to an artifact soul.

"The Ultimate Pill God?" Qingyu asked.

Tianming and Lingfeng were also hearing the conversation in real time. Never would they have guessed that the Ultimate Pill God would plot against them! Yu Ziqian had even thought that meeting the portable grandpa had been a fortunate karmic encounter.

"That's right. However, that's not all I am. While I'm not from Skywolf, I used to be a member of the Voidsky Organization while I still lived. Naturally, I chose to help my own people."

"I see...." Qingyu's mood dampened. "Ultimate Pill God, I finally figured out what you want. Yu Ziqian is someone who has his own thoughts, so he wouldn't let himself become your puppet. However, the voidheart worm is much simpler and easier to manipulate. If it takes over my body and listens to what you tell it to do, that's no different from you controlling my body! It's almost like you'd come back to life! Sure, you can do some things that you can't as a soul, but there's no changing the fact that you're already dead. You're just lying to yourself if you think controlling someone else will bring you back."

The Ultimate Pill God laughed after hearing that explanation. "You're smarter than you look, for you to be able to think that far. You're mostly right, save for one point. To someone who should've died, yet somehow lived on by mistake, living on without any future is nothing but ultimate suffering. I've endured such suffering for far too long.

"Gan Gangan had too many thoughts of his own. He wasn't good enough for me to live through him. I tried really hard to forge him into another me so that I'd have an easier entry point, but I eventually realized that it wouldn't work. Additionally, I found geniuses like your brother and Feng on this star and wanted to become them far too much. However, there's no perfect technique for possession. After repeated failures, I chose you. At the very least, you have nine bane-rings and a lifebound beast.

"You children with bright futures would never understand! Even if I'm only living vicariously through your body, it's still a dream come true. This is no simple self-deception! The bestia of the voidheart worm can usurp the souls of others, which means that I can keep living a full life and exploring what the world has to offer! It's the only ray of light in my dark, endless life of undeath."

His frustration had been building for far too long. He said all that for the benefit of both Qingyu and Yu Ziqian, since he could still perceive what was happening. "While my disciple wasn't an obedient one, I cherish him nonetheless. That's why I'll let him go after switching to your body. In a way, your sacrifice will save a life. That's a lot of good karma." The Ultimate Pill God laughed out loud, completely unworried that the voidheart worm could hear him, too. The gap between their intellects was too wide, allowing him to suppress it as he infested Qingyu's soul together with it. Gradually, his intelligence would overcome the voidheart worm's for good.

Qingyu knew the reason he was explaining it all to them. The frustration he felt was a heavy burden, and unloading all of it to others was a way to cope. With how burnt out his soul was, there were few things other than Qingyu's shaking and fearful voice that would bring him enjoyment. It was also a final resolution between him and Yu Ziqian.

Right after that, the voidheart worm finally passed through the Sanctvoid Guard Formation and entered Skywolf Frost proper. Lingfeng came through a few moments later and spotted her. She was surrounded by more than thirty million specters, and he found himself encircled! While the specters there weren't that powerful, they were at least constelliers and above.

"Farewell!" The voidheart worm vanished into the crowd as the specters charged toward Lingfeng.

Chapter 1946

In a single instant, the wave of wolf howls completely drowned Lingfeng out. Thirty million specters charged at him from the front while endless frost blocked him from behind. There was nowhere for him to run. He'd found himself in a much more dangerous situation than Tianming had.

The countless specters had answered the Void God's summons. They were from the Greenvoid and Sanctquility lines, all blended together. Countless abilities covered the skies and fused into a torrent of frost that shot toward him.

While Lingfeng was also a specter, his physical body was incredibly small. Before the huge wave, he was nothing but a little ant. Lingfeng saw that the voidheart worm was smirking at him as it took Qingyu deep into the crowd. If it weren't for Yin Chen's presence, Lingfeng would have lost her for good right then. But now, even though he knew where to go, he wouldn't be able to reach her if he wasn't able to break through the enemy ranks. In fact, it seemed unlikely that he would even be able to escape on his own!

"Kill him!"

"The Void God ordered us to exterminate him!"

"The one that deals the finishing blow will earn great merit!"

Glorious rewards awaited the specters for their service! They rushed in front of each other to get the jump on the rest like a pack of hungry wolves. Lingfeng was like a delicious piece of meat waiting for them and they all scrambled for it, in fear that someone else would take it.

As the voidheart worm left, it laughed and said, "You'd better hold on! If you survive, I might come to see you after I parasitize her! I'll send you to hell using her hands! What do you think?"

That didn't really sound like what it would say. Most likely, the Ultimate Pill God had told it to speak like that. Coupled with the sinister laughter, it was clear to see how the endless years of existence as an impotent spirit had twisted the Ultimate Pill God's psyche.

"You'll regret this!" Lingfeng's voice was hoarse. Demonic flames covered his entire body as he reached his breaking point. Above him, Tianming was fighting the countless troops of the Sanctvoid Army and the Void God alone. Below him, Qingyu was falling toward a point of no return, at risk of losing control of her own body for good. And now, Lingfeng himself had been completely surrounded by raving wolves. Even a single of the three catastrophes they currently faced would overwhelm most people.

"You all forced me to do this! You pushed me to do it!" He clenched his fists tight as his gaze turned bloody. A bloody aura seemed to cover the thirty million specters ahead of him. The next instant, Lingfeng was completely enveloped by abilities and attacks.

A dark figure suddenly covered him, the countless attacks falling on its reliable shoulders. The Soulfierd endlessly bled, its blood seemingly watering Lingfeng's body and dying it entirely red, including the rapidly turning Primordial Gate. Blood seemed to enter the gate and tinted it with an air of evil.

The specters continued their ability bombardment, and many even leaped toward the Soulfierd to attack it with their claws and weapons. Some even bit into its flesh like savages while it defended its master with two arms and tried fending them off with the other four. Quite a lot of specters were flung away, their bodies ripped apart, yet the Soulfierd alone was far from enough. The thirty million specters weren't thinned in the slightest!

What was worse was that even more troops had returned from the astralguard formation above to gang up on Lingfeng. It was a complete slaughterfest, and there was nothing but blood in Lingfeng's world—the blood of the Soulfierd, the specters, and his own bleeding heart. He didn't just feel frustration and suffering, but also the cruel touch of reality. It was as if countless blades had been mercilessly pushed through his heart. He recalled Qingyu feigning a smile despite what she was going through just to make those around her worry less.... All that compounded into more and more rage in him! His burdens were just like the endless sea of enemies before him, as well as the sea of blood from the Soulfierd that stained him.

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As his breathing grew more ragged by the moment, his irises grew larger and larger and he felt pain like he had never endured before. The pained howls of the Soulfierd got louder and louder, joined by Lingfeng, whose wrath amplified and compounded with every memory of Qingyu that he recalled. Even though he was hyperventilating, it felt like he was having a hard time breathing. The Primordial Gate on his chest spun much faster than usual, yet his body felt completely stifled.

"Mother, what should I do? Tell me!" Since leaving the Infernal Soul Purgatory, he had learned what love was like in the outside world. Outside of his bubble, he waded his way through complex and messy realities to find his own path, yet only one sentence had truly resonated with him: "A true devil doesn't turn back!"

In his moment of greatest pain and doubt, he heard the Soulfierd's heartbeat. Through the sea of blood, he seemed to see his people. They existed within his soul, his vita! It didn't belong to him alone; there were eighty thousand people's lives tied to his, accompanying him at all times. He was the least lonely person in the universe!

"Feng, we don't know which path in this universe is the true path. We lived in an endless, nonstop nightmare, and knew nothing but pain. If there's one thing we know, if there's one path we have to pick, it would be the path of loving ourselves!"

A gentle voice amidst the crowd pulled him out of the depths of death and despair and he teared up from hearing his mother's voice. He had never forgotten her. She had always been in his dreams, and she told him to love himself!

"What does loving ourselves mean? It's simple. Stop caring about whether you're treading on the path of humans, demons, or gods. Don't care about people who have nothing to do with you! Do the things you want to do, the things that will benefit you! Make yourself your main priority! No matter how selfish

that is, no matter whether you'll be punished by the heavens for daring to make your own life better, just strive to do your best! The effort is what counts!

"Go do what you want. No matter how battered and bloodied you become, never turn back! Ignore all taboos or heavenly mandates! Even if you're misunderstood and ostracized, who cares? The infernal soul race never had an ego to speak of, so it's our wish that you find your own! Serve your own ego! Forge your own path through the world, and if that path is a demon's or a god's, so be it! The only thing that matters is that you don't regret walking it!"

Chapter 1947

The crucial words had finally demystified a doubt Lingfeng had held for a long time. He was completely different from Tianming. While he respected Tianming when he saw him stand above all others and shoulder all the burden of his subjects and believers, he knew he couldn't be the same person. Lingfeng had grown up with too much hardship and fallen for someone who'd had just as many unfortunate experiences. He had come to treat her as the most important part of his life and was willing to become a madman for her sake.

"We don't have all sentient life or a heavenly path.... There's just you and me."

He hid within the Soulfier's embrace as it bled and howled. His tears fell and mixed with its blood before flowing into his mouth. He would never forget the taste for the rest of his life. From now on, he would no longer hesitate. His mind and gaze grew stronger and sharper as a new spark of light appeared within his eyes. It wasn't bloody and savage like before. Instead, it seemed to reflect the will of eighty thousand souls to eradicate everything.

"Whether or not I survive this, I'll leave it to fate!" Even though he was still tearing up, he smiled. From this moment on, he had become a single person. An ego unto himself. Having finally found his own soul, he had truly become Ye Lingfeng for the very first time!

A pitch-black Xenoworld Gate opened up above the head of the Soulfier, out of which poured an insidious aura. The specters around him were startled, but kept charging. Countless abilities rained down. The staggering number seemed to threaten to wipe out both the Soulfier and Lingfeng.

"He's there!" The specters saw the black-haired youth standing atop the head of the Soulfier and swarmed toward him. With a flash of crimson red, tens of thousands of them instantly died and began falling from the sky. The Xenoworld Gate spun and sucked in their souls. There was no magnificent flair, just solemn and certain death. The black-haired youth's robes fluttered like he was the god of death.

Even so, that didn't stop the specters at all. They still had numbers on their side! More and more gathered until they looked like a gigantic ball of flesh of infinite size. They were all striving to be the one that landed the final blow for glory and merit, completely fearless of death. Little did they know that dying there meant that even their souls would be extinguished! Werewolf corpses flew all over the ability-ridden sky as the black vortex expanded. The youth that'd just found himself had started the path he had chosen. There was no turning back now, no matter the weight of the sins he would come to bear.

"If I end up covered in sin and deserving of the heaviest judgment by the time I see you again, all I hope is that you won't scoff at me for what I've become...." He kept striding forward without turning back no matter the hardship, all for the smallest, yet most precious fruit he desired. Lingfeng had also struggled

a lot with Tianming's beliefs. Despite knowing that treading this path would cause him to drift further away from his very trusted friend, he had no other choice. Either way, he knew that no matter how far he had gone, he'd forever left a piece of his heart beside Tianming. That alone was enough to cause his steps to stagger.

For now, thirty million specters were still far too many for him to digest. Their weight bore down on him like a mountain, causing his flesh to bleed, bones to bend, and innards to crumble. Bloody boils formed on the soles of his feet. At the brink of collapse, he and the Soulfierd kept forging ahead along the hellward path.

"Wait for me! Wait!" He saw the pitiful girl waiting for him at the end of the road. He had promised her peaceful and carefree days ahead and would live up to that promise or die trying. There was no other choice but to grit his teeth and keep going, one bloody footprint at a time. In his time of crisis, who would be able to give him a push to overcome it?

It almost seemed as if more and more tragedies were unfolding across Skywolf Frost. But eventually, Lingfeng began to see a ray of hope on his path. He looked up and saw a nine-colored sphere falling, which reminded him of the fall of the moon. A loud explosion rang out as it burst through the astralguard formation! The nine-colored 'sun' had nine interlocking layers, shining bright and brilliant; the Ninedragon Apotheosis had been unleashed once more! The light of life illuminated Lingfeng's path of darkness. It was as if Tianming himself had appeared before him in his time of dire need to give him that final push he needed.

"Evasive action!" The specters thought they were going mad. Nobody could stop the Ninedragon Apotheosis! None of them had expected that Tianming would be able to help despite being trapped himself! The nine-colored sun shot straight through the sea of frost into the homeworld of these specters. Many people, including young specter cubs, looked up at the brilliant ball of light in the sky.

The mesmerizing scenery only lasted an instant before the ball exploded above Lingfeng's head! He had never been so close to the explosion until now. Seeing a Ninedragon Apotheosis from the ship in safety didn't quite convey the true terror of the blast. In person, it felt like the world itself was ending as light swallowed everything.

Lingfeng saw at least twenty million specters being vaporized into nothingness with his own eyes. Despite their powerful specter bodies, not a single speck of matter remained after the explosion. Eventually, the nine-colored vortex swallowed Lingfeng up, the fireworks covering a good part of the sky before turning into multi-colored rain that fell like meteors onto the star below, crashing into the lands and lakes.

Chapter 1948

Skywolf Frost had never had any flaming meteors crashing into it. The explosions that had resulted shattered Lingfeng's eardrums, causing him to lose his hearing for a good long moment. His entire world suddenly turned deathly quiet, making him feel the frailty of life. The specters above and around him had perished, and only some who were below him survived, though with a couple of lost limbs. All of them were basically out for the count.

The nine-colored fireworks in the sky would remain a nightmare for the far too many specters that had seen it first hand. Twenty breaths of time felt really long without any hearing. Eventually, Lingfeng's hearing recovered and he finally heard Yin Chen speaking to him.

"My Feng... keep going!" The voice sounded mechanical, but Yin Chen tried its best to relay Tianming's voice, albeit unsuccessfully. Even so, those words were enough to make him tear up for the third time today. But this time was different from the rest. He felt happier than ever before, as he no longer had any internal struggles. The very person that'd asked him to not touch vitae had given him sanction after hearing about everything he'd gone through from Yin Chen. Not only that, he had used Ninedragon Apotheosis to pave a way for him.

No matter how troubled Tianming must have felt, the fact that he had told Lingfeng to keep going was a sign of respect and understanding, which was what Lingfeng cherished the most. It was more than enough; he could finally seek his own path without any internal struggle!

There were more than twenty million souls of dead specters before him. More and more troops from the Sanctvoid Army came over to stop him. The specters gathered around him on the ground before charging at him, but he already had a huge advantage thanks to Tianming.

"Even though I might come to betray everything, you're the only one I'll never betray in my entire life!" He was more certain of that than anything else. Nothing looked more brilliant to him than the nine-colored sun. But he didn't have any time to spare on gawking as tens of millions more troops came flying down from above toward him. "Come on, all of you!"

The countless dead souls were sucked into the Xenoworld Gate, which was connected to his Primordial Gate. He had become a monster of slaughter. Unlike others, he grew stronger the more people were killed. As long as he wasn't killed within a short period of time, he would eventually be able to kill everyone in that area. That was something that not even Tianming or the sun emperor could emulate.

It was the Nightfiend's banquet of death! Tens of millions of souls were sucked in and attached to his vita, then a boundless black miasma formed around him, making his silhouette out to be that of a cold fiend. Wherever the miasma spread, people died.

"Soulfiend..." The youth looked at his loyal servant that was on the brink of death. Unlike lifebound beasts like Ying Huo, it wasn't the least bit cute, but it meant just as much to him.

The Soulfiend groaned as it stretched a black and bloodied finger toward Lingfeng, allowing him to grasp it while it pounded its own chest.

"Come. Let's become true fiends together. From now on, you'll be a part of me, and I'll be a part of you." He tightly gripped the thick finger, feeling the warmth within.

The Soulfiend's six eyes teared up as it groaned and clumsily tried to wipe off the tears off its three faces. It was using the face of joy as its main one.

"Come!" Lingfeng cried. The Soulfiend looked up with its three heads, howling more and more with jubilation. It turned into a black storm that collided with Lingfeng and entered the Primordial Gate. Then the gate spun faster and faster until it reached its limits. The black miasma spread around Lingfeng, shrouding even his face.

"Without complaints and regrets! That's what it means to be a Transcendent Truefiend!" His uncharacteristically human specter body suddenly expanded as it turned into a black shadow, taking the form of a demonic entity. While he didn't look like an ape, he had three heads and six arms, all shrouded in black miasma. Black divine patterns covered his body and his long hair fluttered like snakes. Six bloody eyes could be seen glowing through the miasma.

Nobody was able to get a proper look at his face, yet he was visible as a gigantic, looming demonic figure from the many tall mountains across the surface of Skywolf Frost. Those that saw him felt their scalps tingle with fear. He was a true, transcendent fiend straight out of the bowels of hell!

He descended from the skies, followed behind by a black vortex that was tens of thousands of meters wide. The vortex enveloped the specters that charged at him, almost as if it was a gateway to hell with him as its gatekeeper.

.....

In a world of abyssal darkness.

The sound of battle from the outside world vanished before anyone noticed. It was a sign that the voidheart worm was approaching its destination. Nobody would be able to interfere with it there. Filled with endless joy, it muttered, "Those two are probably dead by now! It really warms my wormy heart! It's a shame that they won't get to personally see me controlling your body...." It noticed the girl crying from within the Divine Worldeater Cauldron. "So, you finally know despair? Looks like you're the type to only realize the consequences when it's far too late," it said, shrugging in an almost human-like manner.

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"I'm not despairing," Qingyu said after controlling her emotions. "I was just thinking of how fortunate I am to have him. While my life has been filled with hardship, having him around makes it all alright." While Yin Chen's reports were stunted and sometimes unclear, she didn't need too much detail to know what was happening with Lingfeng.

"Nonsense and empty words! I've already reached the right place. You'll be mine sooner or later. You can cry all you want after that!"

"Voidheart worm, you seemed confused. While you appear to have wants and desires, you fail to understand people at the end of the day. You're only just a little bit smarter than common animals. You really are pitiful."

"Bullshit! You'll soon understand that humans and wildbeasts aren't that different after all!"

Chapter 1949

Were wildbeasts, humans, specters, and lifebound beasts really no different? What about the sole beast soul, as opposed to the tripartite soul of caelum, terra, and vita? In the eyes of the voidheart worm, there didn't seem to be any difference. But if it really was that certain in its belief, Qingyu's words wouldn't be able to rile it up that easily.

It violently dragged the girl along by the head to where it thought it would be safest using the cauldron. This was the true lair of the Void God, covered in so many black webs that they easily weighed a few

tons. The sheer mass of the Void God necessitated the size of its lair. Given how revered it was, nobody from Skywolf Frost dared to tread in its territory. It was completely silent, with no lifeforms to be seen save for the child spawns within the webs. That made it a perfect place for the voidheart worm to start the parasitization process.

"I was living a fine life on my own in the Sky Palace, yet you all came to fight me and destroyed my physical body! No amount of deaths you suffer can make up for my loss! While I can't touch Li Tianming or Ye Lingfeng, at least there's you! I want to make you watch as Skywolf swallows your star and wipes out all the life on it!"

It tossed Qingyu into a dark hole. She fell straight into a pool of foul liquid that felt like a quagmire that kept her stuck and bound. She wasn't able to move a single limb, and her head was still covered by the Divine Worldeater Cauldron. Not being able to see a thing and smelling the foulness around her, she felt fear creeping toward her in the pitch-black darkness. She could hear nothing but the insidious noises the voidheart worm made as it mourned the loss of its body. "Die! Die!" it cursed, its beast soul twisted by hate.

Qingyu experienced nothing but darkness, fear, a foul smell, and icy cold. The crushing force on her head seemed to be fracturing her skull. Blood still flowed and pooled around her eyes and nose. Did she only exist to suffer? There was nothing else waiting for her in this hellscape apart from being parasitized. If it weren't for Yin Chen informing her that Tianming was still fighting the Void God and the specter army and that Lingfeng had turned into a Transcendent Truefiend and was slaughtering his way toward her, her mind would have collapsed from the pressure.

Wherever Lingfeng's storm of darkness went, countless specter corpses fell. Even so, many of them still packed enough fearless bravado to try stopping him. While Tianming had the protection of his ship, Lingfeng at least didn't have to deal with the Void God. Even so, hundreds of millions of specters were nothing to scoff at. No amount of slaughter seemed to thin the numbers of those hungry wolves.

The black vortex behind Lingfeng ground away at the specters' souls like a machine, exterminating any that were within its vicinity. Even after dying, they would be hard pressed to reincarnate. The Xenoworld Gate seemed to have hijacked the cycle of reincarnation, appropriating it for its own ends. In a sense, Lingfeng had unleashed something that'd replaced the cycle of reincarnation.

The three-faced, six-armed fiend charged in a specific direction, slaughtering anything that stood in his way without a single word. Those that dared block him ended up dead without exception. His sheer brutality startled some of the surrounding specters, but it was pointless as the specters behind them couldn't see what was happening at the front lines and kept pushing forward. The world itself seemed to groan from the weight of the sheer bloodbath! The fiend within the black miasma swept across a large continent on Skywolf Frost, wiping away every obstacle without diverting its eyes from its final destination.

Every single kill made his eyes look bloodier, and each vita consumed added another tortured soul to the miasma that hovered near the hair on the three heads. The souls soon formed a huge mass, crying and wailing about what they had suffered as they became a part of his power. Tens of millions of tortured souls piled upon him and fused with the black miasma, forming hellscape as far as the eye could see.

Endless wailing could be heard as tens of millions of faces formed in the miasma, swirling around like a sadistic killer's idea of a gaseous art piece. The more people he killed, the more terrifying Lingfeng became. Perhaps he had already seen this coming long ago—it was proof of bearing the heavenly burden of sin. But at this point, nobody was able to stop him any longer. The path to fiendhood had contorted under the weight of feelings and desires. It was the hardest path to thread, a path from which there was no turning back.

.....

Qingyu couldn't see what Lingfeng looked like right now, but Yin Chen told her that he was coming as well as the changes that were happening to his body. In the dark, silent world, she felt him approaching like a black, warm flame. He was a terrifyingly powerful mass of souls!

"Feng, that idiot...." She understood him far too well. He was a simple and stubborn man, immune to disdain and contempt. He lived his life as he pleased, but gods forbid anyone ruffle his feathers. Once wronged, he wouldn't rest until redress was attained, regardless of the method or cost. That precious, younger boy she loved so much could be the cutest person of all and the most savage fiend at the same time. He used to be so naive that he thought of worms as food, but now he was chasing after her like a man possessed. She understood him so well that all his effort only seemed all the more moving to her.

"Feng...." The sadness in her clashed with her strong feelings. Though things seemed bleak, she knew that it wasn't time to give up. She had to be mentally strong, and so did he! Thus, she bit her lip to force the sadness away.

"Yin Chen, tell him that no matter what I become, I'll always be by his side! He'll always be my cute Feng! With his strong soul, he'll be able to protect me! I'll never lose to a mere bug!"

In terms of the soul, Lingfeng's was possibly the most superior of them all. While the voidheart worm had many bone-chilling tricks, it didn't scare her at all, for before she'd even fallen to true despair, Lingfeng's demonic intent had already propped her back up. She wasn't one to try and take it. She knew what she wanted and would do anything to get it.

I can't lose! I can't let down Father and Big Brother's hopes for me. I can't waste Feng's efforts. He still needs me! That line of thought kept her going. She bit through her lip and into her tongue and used the pain to calm herself down.

"Why bother putting up a strong front? Once its beast soul makes its way through the soul path into you, you won't be able to hide your fear no matter how much you pretend," the Ultimate Pill God said after a long silence.

"Come on then! I hope it doesn't disappoint," Qingyu snapped, tasting blood in her mouth.

"The fearless are simply ignorant...." The old man would probably shake his head and sigh if he had a body.

"You're an ignorant person, too, even if you don't want to admit it. You don't know why Feng and my brother are so powerful. You're ignorant to the fact that strong belief can change everything."

"How laughable.... Belief, eh? Such pointless ideals. If they worked, nobody would need to cultivate at all. We'd only need to believe strongly enough." After a short pause, he expressionlessly continued, "The

parasitic capabilities of the voidheart worm are innate to its being. It's to be feared as much as its powerful physical capabilities. Even though you have a complete tripartite soul, which boasts a better quality, its beast soul has far more volume, easily a thousand times your vita's. No human would be able to defeat an insect a thousand times its size. However, your vita is a malleable thing. Even as the beast soul enters it, it won't burst, but inflate.... By then, you'll know what true pain is like. Your ramblings are merely the delusions of a fool."

He chuckled as he relished in Qingyu's fear. Fear was poison to the soul and would proceed to weaken it, which was why he employed it as a psychological attack. True fear couldn't simply be hidden away. The fact that Qingyu didn't snap back at him should be a sign of that fear... yet he didn't smell it in her soul. Instead, the girl's soul looked like it was being protected by faith like an immovable mountain that was stronger than any metal. It was a startlingly powerful fighting spirit. The Ultimate Pill God had never expected such a frightening tenacity to come from a weak girl like that. She simply didn't look like that kind of person. How did she do it? With mere love, fortitude, stubbornness, and blind faith?

"There's someone who's willing to turn into a fiend for my sake. I can't let his efforts go to waste. That wouldn't be fair to him." If she gave up, she would be letting others down, and that was the last thing she wanted. Her body concentrated her soul together with her firm belief and courage. So what if the bug was a thousand times larger?

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"Bugs are just bugs at the end of the day. No matter how much larger your soul is, it doesn't change the fact that you don't have a complete tripartite soul. All you know is eating and breeding. You don't know love or hate. You believe in nothing. Even after tens of millions of years of living, your life is much more boring than a simple mortal human's that lasts less than a hundred. Why should I fear you?"

"Bullshit! I'm just like you! Who said I don't know love or hate? I hate you all!" it howled, its face contorting as its eyes widened.

"Even an insect would try to hurt me if I stepped on it. So what? Is it even the same kind of hate we experience?" she retorted.

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Though Qingyu's words weren't meant to sound insulting, the voidheart worm certainly took it that way, leading to even more rage. "I'll make you regret it! Mark my words!"

As it howled, it was unlatching itself from Yu Ziqian's vita. It was a really complicated process that demanded a lot of attention. While its beast soul was large, it wasn't nearly as complete as a fourth imperial soul like Lingfeng's. If it weren't for the complexity of such a procedure, it wouldn't have had to seek out a quiet place to begin with. Even then, it seemed to be losing its reason from all the anger.

"Stop interrupting, fool!" the Ultimate Pill God cursed.

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"Shut up!" The voidheart worm was like a cosmic wildbeast on fire. It suddenly crawled out of Yu Ziqian's vita without properly taking form and entered the soul path. A beautiful, snow-white spider-like beauty was coursing toward Qingyu through the black thread. "It's over for you! You're a goner!"

From the outside, it looked like a gigantic spider beauty had emerged from the black boil on Yu Ziqian's hand in the form of fog that seeped toward Qingyu at a steady pace.

"Why do you say stuff twice like that? Isn't that a sign of your low intelligence?" Qingyu was still able to mock it despite being bloodied and completely immobilized with her skull cracking. Her tone only poured fuel on the fire of the beast's rage.

"You have to die! You have to—" It had wanted to vent by saying that twice, but that would only prove Qingyu's point. Embarrassed that it had almost done so, it grew even angrier.

"Insect," Qingyu simply said.

"That's right! Little insect!" Yin Chen repeated.

"Ah, no offense, Yin Chen. I forgot about you."

"No worries! I have... caelum, terra... and vita!" it said proudly.

A proper lifebound beast experienced the full range of emotions as people did, making them a completely different breed. Yin Chen wasn't the least bit offended, but the same couldn't be said for the voidheart worm. In its rage, it cursed and made threats without much variation. It really wasn't capable of being more creative with its insults. Even it was beginning to feel the natural limits of its consciousness!

"Die die die!" The beautiful face had contorted beyond recognition but its thousands of soul feet still charged toward Qingyu. However, it didn't realize that much of its beast soul hadn't taken form yet, and it was losing much of it from rushing!

"You're insane!" No matter how much the Ultimate Pill God yelled, the voidheart worm didn't listen. It had fully submitted to its feral instincts. Its hate was amorphous and could be warped with simple agitation, which was why Qingyu had said it didn't have any real feelings of love or hate. Hate only built up after frustration was allowed to fester. Something that could be teased out within a single instant and vented just as easily couldn't be considered hate.

Even the Ultimate Pill God had to admit that Qingyu had a good grasp of mind tricks, not to mention courage. Thanks to her wit and personality, she was able to stay calm and had ultimately found a way to deal with the voidheart worm.

Then again, even after losing that much soul, it's still hundreds of times more powerful than you! And now that you've angered it, it'll tear your soul apart as it enters. You'll just suffer all the more for your own actions! thought the Ultimate Pill God. He had been quite annoyed by Qingyu as well. Why're you still bothering with your silly tricks at this point? If you learn to submit like Gan Gangan, at least you'll suffer less.

By now, the beast soul of the voidheart worm had left Yu Ziqian's vita. No doubt, he was also going through extreme pain. The Ultimate Pill God and voidheart worm hadn't held back with regard to their cruelty toward Yu Ziqian. The former was heartless, while the latter was raving mad.

No amount of nagging from the Ultimate Pill God would manage to stop the voidheart worm's rampage. Soon, it had crawled to the back of Qingyu's hand and was in a rush to burrow into the black boil. "Die!

Die! When I go through the soul path into your sea of consciousness, you'll experience the worst kind of pain! That pain will stay with you for the rest of your life!" It stretched out its sharp soul claws and tore open the boil before entering through the black thread. Even before it reached the sea of consciousness, Qingyu was already feeling immeasurable pain all over her body.

Shuo Yue came bursting out of her lifebound space. After learning that the voidheart worm had never intended to kill Qingyu, the Divine Worldeater Cauldron was no longer a real threat. Shuo Yue rampaged around, intent on destroying the soul path to cut off the voidheart worm, but it and the Ultimate Pill God had already prepared for that. Countless black threads of the Void God came falling from above the moment Shuo Yue emerged, wrapping it in a cocoon that hung above Qingyu's head.

"A surprise attack by your lifebound beast.... The oldest trick in the book! What kind of fool do you take me for? Just you wait! Your lifebound beast will also become my puppet! The two of you shall endure my wrath soon enough!" the voidheart worm gleefully proclaimed, still tearing into the soul path.

"Nnnngh!" Qingyu's face contorted from the pain from within the cauldron, but she still desperately tried to suppress her reaction. Feng is coming... I can't lose! I can't make him tear up again! It was that notion that caused her to grit her teeth and endure. After Shuo Yue's capture, she had no real way to resist any longer. All she could do was keep her calm and continue defying death. She wouldn't let the voidheart worm's threats get to her.

The pain she was experiencing was enough to make most people twitch and groan, but she tightly clenched her fists and didn't make a sound! Most people in her place would simply choose death to get it over with, but she held on to hope and faith. Even without seeing it for herself, she knew that the beast was still worming its way into her body.

All of a sudden, the world shook and spun. The soul path had been opened and the voidheart worm made it into her sea of consciousness. Through her vita, she could see a gigantic, beautiful humanoid arachnid with a thousand legs. It spun webs nonstop as it charged toward Qingyu. The volumes of their respective souls were far too different, and that was after the voidheart worm had lost quite a lot of its volume from its reckless thrashing about. It was terrifying beyond measure.

"Hahahaha!" the beautiful face on its back snickered. "Where's your witty quips now? Come on! Keep going! Try making me mad!" it said as it approached Qingyu's vita. Its many soul webs bound her vita, completely immobilizing her down to her soul fingers. No amount of struggling before this mountain of power was going to work.

The gigantic arachnid being crept toward her soul with its many legs. Unlike her body, which had been corrupted by old gods' blood, her soul retained her original appearance, still sporting the moon-toned white hair and serene tranquility, not that the voidheart worm cared for her outer appearance to begin with. It stretched a sharp and sturdy leg toward her vulnerable chest.

"Next, I'll tear open your abdomen and burrow inside you. My soul will stretch your vita thin like a skin. Don't worry, it will hurt... a lot... more than you can ever imagine. If you could, you'd be crying by now." It wore an insidious smile as it pulled apart the dense webs that covered Qingyu, revealing her face.

"You've never understood this, but being parasitized is the worst horror that anyone can experience! You'll be an empty shell—conscious, but unable to live your life the way you want!" Normally, the

voidheart worm wouldn't mouth off endlessly like that, but it wanted nothing more than to see the foolhardy girl quiver with fear. What it didn't expect was that Qingyu would look at it with the same gaze as before. Nothing in her expression was different in the least.

"Hehehe.... You're a stubborn one, I'll give you that. Then let's begin! Let's see if you'll be able to maintain that gaze once I start burrowing into you." Using its sharp leg, it pierced it into Qingyu's chest, drawing a cold cut. It didn't pierce through her vita entirely, instead making a small opening near her chest. "Cry more! Scream more! Struggle!"

Despite its eagerness, Qingyu didn't react in the slightest, even after the cut.

"Huh?" Instead, it felt a gaze that sent primal fear into the core of its being. What kind of gaze was that?! It was cold, emotionless, and haughty, like one would hold while looking down at a lower lifeform. The voidheart worm was in the sea of consciousness, so it couldn't see the changes occurring in Qingyu's body outside. Its powder bug child spawns hadn't even managed to enter yet.

It pulled open the chest of her vita, only for her to say, "Thank you for helping me break through the shackles of life. I've managed to escape the sea of suffering by taking the final step."

"What nonsense are you spouting?" The voidheart worm loathed how fearless she was. It pulled open the wound in her chest with two of its legs and cackled. "Don't bother faking it! You'll find out soon enough!" Then its gigantic soul body seemed to melt into liquid form as it flowed toward her vita's wound. It was almost like a bull trying to worm its way into something the size of an egg.

"Fear! Agonize! Suffer! Have you finally learned what a true nightmare is like?!" When it started the process, Qingyu's vita inflated like a rubber ball. The voidheart worm still recalled how exciting it was when Yu Ziqian cried and squealed the last time it had done the same thing.