

## The Ages 351

### Chapter 351 - Six-Winged Phoenix

The Onyx Emperor and Onyx Empress exchanged a look. The two of them had been a couple for years, so they could communicate with each other instantly with just a glance. The Onyx Emperor frowned, "Yuwen Taiji, even if you're willing to trust us and allow us into the barrier, the Onyx Sect can't stay in your Grand-Orient Sect forever. This place isn't suitable for our lifebound beasts, and there would definitely be tensions if we stayed together for long."

"I never said that I'd be keeping you guys for long. Have you guys ever thought of eradicating the Cloudmist Sword Sect and dealing huge damage to Heaven's Elysium, putting them on the same level as us? Or even killing the Elysian Emperor? As long as we succeed, the Onyx Sect won't have to fear Heaven's Elysium even without your barrier. At that time, you'll have plenty of time to fix the barrier. This is the only way out for the Onyx Sect. Otherwise, you can only wait for death when Heaven's Elysium unifies the Grand-Orient Realm," said Yuwen Taiji.

His words had left the Onyx Emperor and Onyx Empress deeply shocked. They had never thought of this possibility because they felt there was no way the Grand-Orient Sect and Southsky Sect would allow them into their barriers. But right now, Yuwen Taiji was giving them another choice!

"Yuwen Taiji, you can only represent yourself. I don't believe that the entire Grand-Orient Sect will take the risk with you!" said the Onyx Empress.

"That was before," Yuwen Taiji sneered. Looking at the Grand-Orient Sword in his hand, he continued, "Right now, I'm their only hope. Furthermore, the Grand-Orient Sword represents the highest authority in the Grand-Orient Sect!"

"Alright..." The Onyx Emperor and Onyx Empress exchanged another glance. In the past, they had never imagined that there would be someone like Yuwen Taiji in the Grand-Orient Sect. "Yuwen Taiji, there's nothing for us to be afraid of as long as you're not worried that we'll stab you in the back. But I have to discuss this matter with the elders before coming to a decision. If we decide to accept your offer, we'll find an opportunity to lure in the Cloudmist Sword School. With the two of our sects combined, and the Grand-Orient Barrier, it'll be easy for us to slaughter them."

"That's fine with me. I need some time to convince those old fogeys as well. But you're right. If we come to an agreement, we'll need to prepare the best trap for them. We'll have to take the Cloudmist Sword School out in a single attack!" Yuwen Taiji said as his eyes glowed.

"Then can I go back first?" The Onyx Empress gritted her teeth.

"Not now," Yuwen Taiji replied. This was his basic requirement to allow the Onyx Sect into the Grand-Orient Barrier.

Feeling helpless, the Onyx Emperor retrieved the Onyx Empress' arms and placed them in her spatial ring before requesting, "At the very least, fix her arms to show your sincerity in the alliance."

"That's fine with me." Yuwen Taiji smiled. It wouldn't take much effort for him to fix her arms. But if he didn't show them his strength, how would they be obedient? Most people didn't know about their conversation.

When they ended their talk, the Onyx Emperor retreated with the Onyx Legion and Yuwen Taiji returned with the Onyx Empress. When Yuwen Taiji stepped into the barrier with the elders, cheers erupted from within the barrier. Everyone who had looked down on him after the Prime Tower could only be impressed and convinced by his ability. Even Huangfu Fengyun and the other elders had come out to receive him emotionally. After this incident, none of them would think that Shangguan Jingshu had made the wrong choice.

For the time being, the battle in the Abyssal Battlefield was over. On the bloodsoaked battlefield, the guardians separated and opened a path for Yuwen Taiji straight toward the sacred mountain. All of them were looking at Yuwen Taiji and the Grand-Orient Sword with their eyes blazing. Only those who could stand out to save the sect in a time of life and death could be considered heroes.

“Sect Master Yuwen Taiji!” No one knew who yelled it first, but everyone began chanting it. Those four words expressed what everyone was feeling at this moment. They had only come to understand how terrifying a war was after experiencing it personally. Since Yuwen Taiji had turned the tables, he was naturally qualified to get what he wanted.

Looking at this scene, Yuwen Taiji finally smiled. He had finally achieved his dream at this moment. “It’s a pity that I can’t share this joy with Shendu and Shengcheng.” He recalled those two and how his name resounded through the Abyssal Battlefield at this moment.

“Taiji, the sect is still fighting with the Cloudmist Sword School on the other side...” Huangfu Fengyun said anxiously.

“Got it.” Yuwen Taiji handed the Onyx Empress to Yuwen Qintian and raised the Grand-Orient Sword, “Grand-Orient guardians! Follow me to slaughter our enemies!”

“Kill!”

Voices echoed out on the horizon. Only a few people needed to remain behind to keep track of the Onyx Sect. With the Onyx Empress in their hands, Yuwen Taiji was confident that the Onyx Sect wouldn’t attack them again. So that meant he could shift most of the guardians to the Yellowflame continent, enough so that most of the elders and chiefs could head over as well!

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“Kill!” Along with hundreds of spirit hazards bombarding enemies within the barrier, the battle between the keepers and guardians had reached a climax. As the Cloudmist Sword School didn’t have any wildbeasts to lead their charge, they had naturally suffered more casualties than the Onyx Sect. Then again, the guardians had suffered great losses as well.

Corpses littered the ground within the white fog, and both sects had their eyes bloodshot from the battle. Sikong Jiansheng and the Cloudmist elders formed the sharpest blade on the battlefield, slaughtering the guardians in their path. From their position, they could roughly see the threads on the mountains.

“The Grand-Orient Sect no longer has any masters. We just need to get through the barrier and destroy the nucleus!” Sikong Jiansheng said as he slaughtered, drenched in his enemies’ blood.

“Got it!”

“The Grand-Orient Sect can’t even defend against our attack on this side, let alone the Abyssal Battlefield. I guess the brothers from the Onyx Sect are about to break the barrier soon!” said Sikong Jiansheng.

“Sect master, I thought you just had to destroy the barrier on one side? If we break the barrier on both sides, wouldn’t the Grand-Orient Sect be gone?”

“Then we can hold off on breaking the nucleus and slaughter their disciples first!” Sikong Jiansheng laughed.

“Sect master, we’ve also suffered great losses, and our casualties are probably two times that of the guardians....”

“Is that so? Then come with me and kill their disciples to take revenge!” They had to satisfy Heaven’s Elysium in the first battle. Wouldn’t they be happy when they learn that all the disciples of the Grand-Orient Sect were slaughtered?

“Let’s hope Li Tianming is also inside.” Sikong Jiansheng knew it would be a great contribution if he could capture Tianming. So with him in the lead, and several elders around him, no one could stop this small group.

“We’re exiting soon!” Sikong Jiansheng could practically see the disciples gathered on the mountains, pouring their beast ki into the threads along with their lifebound beasts.

“Such impudence! Becoming a disciple of the Grand-Orient Sect is the greatest mistake you guys made in your lives!” As he spoke, Sikong Jiansheng stepped into the Grand-Orient Sect.

“Dieeee!” Along with his lifebound beast, the Six-Winged Phoenix, he shot forth with the Cloudmist Sacred Sword, pointing at the Azure Dragon Sword Mountain. Yuan Huntian, Gu Yu, and the others were all standing on the Azure Dragon Sword Mountain. When the blazing heat wave spread out from the phoenix, the outer disciples who were in his way were all dumbfounded as they looked at the flames. In the next moment, the Grand-Orient Sect was thrown into a commotion. Fear shrouded all of the disciples, and many of them fell to the ground.

Just then, a group of people suddenly came out from the bottomless hole, with a man wearing black and white holding on to a gold and black sword. When he came out, he locked onto Sikong Jiansheng right away.

“Who is it?!” Sikong Jiansheng couldn’t see the attacker clearly. “You’re courting death!” Sikong Jiansheng immediately swung his sword, unleashing his sword ki. Then he finally took a clear look at the attacker—it was Yuwen Taiji, holding the Grand-Orient Sword!

“The Grand-Orient Sword is with you?” Sikong Jiansheng was dumbfounded. He was still under the impression that Yuwen Taiji had fallen out with the elders. But the only thing that answered him was a sword strike from Yuwen Taiji!

The collision between their swords created a huge explosion as the two separated, then Sikong Jiansheng was blown away by the attack. He had practically crashed onto his lifebound beast, the Six-winged Phoenix.

“So powerful?!” He never expected that he would be on the weaker end in his first clash with someone from the Grand-Orient Sect and immediately flew into a rage. But then he saw over twenty thousand guardians charging out from the bottomless hole.

“What’s going on?! Did the Onyx Sect succeed, and the Grand-Orient Sect is deciding to give up on the Abyssal Battlefield?” Then again, it didn’t make sense that the Grand-Orient Sect had lost, if they still had so many guardians alive. But he didn’t have the luxury of time to think about it because Yuwen Taiji had already charged over with the guardians. He only had a few elders around him, so how could he face an entire army?

In the end, Sikong Jiansheng trembled and quickly summoned the Six-Winged Phoenix to make his escape. He was dumbfounded. With so many reinforcements, there was a high possibility that the keepers wouldn’t be able to withstand it!

It didn’t take long for his fears to come true. When reinforcements had come from the Abyssal Battlefield, it instantly boosted the entire Grand-Orient Sect’s morale. The saints on the barrier nucleus gathered their power and threw it into the barrier, increasing the spirit hazards’ power to the next level. At the same time, the Grand-Orient Sect launched their counterattack!

### **Chapter 352 - The Cloudmist Sacred Sword Has Shattered**

The moment the battle began, Tianming stood atop a cliff and watched the slaughter occur within the Grand-Orient Barrier. It was so chaotic that it was rather hard to make out what was happening. Based on the howls and roars, however, it was easy to tell that people from both sects were dying at a startling rate. While the Grand-Orient Sect could still hold on for the time being, their barrier was already shimmering and shaking.

"The moment someone attacks the sacred mountain and breaks the barrier, the sect will fall!" Ye Shaoqing said, his eyes bloodshot.

"If it weren’t for Yuwen Taiji, we’d be fighting off the enemies together," Tianming said. For him to watch the fight for the sect’s survival, but not join it, was truly painful.

"To be frank, most of the elders had already chosen his side before the sect was under threat. Elder Zhao and Elder Shangguan were only carrying out the deed." It wasn’t just that Ye Shaoqing and Yuwen Taiji personally didn’t get along; their cliques and factions were also wildly different.

"Now that the sect is under threat, where’s Yuwen Taiji?" Tianming asked. The moment he finished speaking, a huge change occurred within the Grand-Orient Barrier. It glowed brightly all of a sudden as the spirit hazards created thousands of corpses.

"Die!" a resounding roar rang out, filled with hate and longing. It wasn’t the cry of the invaders, but rather the Grand-Orient guardians.

"Why are there so many guardians?" Ye Shaoqing said as he looked through the barrier on the battlefield.

"Weren’t half of them sent to the Abyssal Battlefield?" Tianming asked.

"Does them being back mean the other front collapsed?"

"How many guardians do we have in total?" Tianming wondered.

"There's an estimate of forty thousand and above here on the battlefield," Ye Shaoqing answered.

"That means around twenty thousand of them came from the other side. Don't you think the number would be lower if the front there had collapsed?" Tianming asked.

All of a sudden, Ye Shaoqing's eyes widened. "Yuwen Taiji is back."

The moment he said that, a loud rumble sent the barrier shaking and Cloudmist keepers began retreating. Beastmaster and lifebound beast alike scrambled to flee in panic. The moment the first person chose to run, the rest followed, all covered in traces of blood and some form of injury or another. The heavily injured were probably being left behind on the battlefield during the mass retreat.

"Kill!"

"Crush the defeated enemy!"

What happened next was even more shocking. The Cloudmist keepers that attacked from land, air, and sea all retreated. It wasn't that they were defeated. In fact, it seemed more like a strategic retreat, for they still seemed to be moving in some orderly fashion. Some of them even used barrier formations to aid others in their retreat. Within a flash, around sixty of the original seventy thousand Cloudmist keepers had already left the barrier. Once they were outside the barrier's range, they were no longer being bothered by spirit hazards and didn't seem as fearful anymore. After all, they still outnumbered the Grand-Orient guardians.

At the very end, a flaming phoenix lifebound beast barged out of the barrier and collapsed onto the ground, crushing a good number of Cloudmist keepers. Right after that, a silhouette was sent flying out of the barrier with the sword in his hand crumbling.

"The Cloudmist Sacred Sword was shattered!" The keepers were dumbstruck. That was a mighty artifact passed down through generations of sect masters of the Cloudmist Sword School. The sword had thirty heavenly patterns in total, and was a top-grade saint bestial weapon.

Sikong Jiansheng collapsed onto the ground with a bloody gash on his chest. His hair was mussed up, and he seemed all the more haggard thanks to the blood that covered him. Not an ounce of his mighty demeanor remained.

What kind of weapon was capable enough to destroy the Cloudmist Sacred Sword? The answer was all too obvious. Currently, thousands of guardians clad in black and gold appeared within the barrier. They didn't leave the barrier to attack, but remained within it for defense instead for they were at a numerical disadvantage.

Before all the guardians was Yuwen Taiji and the Grand-Orient Sword. More than ten elders stood behind him in support. Now, he looked almost like an emperor. There was no question that Yuwen Taiji had managed to turn the situation around.

Only a little over sixty thousand of the seventy thousand Cloudmist keepers that entered were left. They had suffered huge losses while their sect master was killing the junior disciples of the Grand-Orient Sect instead of dealing with the bigger picture. In comparison, the Grand-Orient Sect had only suffered a

third of their enemy's losses. Those numbers were a testament to the Cloudmist Sword School's utter failure. There were still some keepers who hadn't managed to leave the barrier, thanks to the clouds and fog that formed.

"Yuwen Taiji, let the rest of my Cloudmist keepers out, or else—"

Sikong Jiansheng was now heavily surrounded. Before he could finish, Yuwen Taiji ordered, "Kill them all and throw their heads out."

"Understood!"

All forty thousand guardians that weren't obscured by the fog easily killed the remaining two thousand keepers that hadn't managed to escape. The sheer disparity of numbers meant there was no contest. The next moment, the heads of two thousand people and two thousand or more lifebound beasts were tossed to the feet of the Cloudmist keepers outside.

"Grand-Orient Sect!" The keepers howled alongside their sect master like savage beasts. When they had been slaughtering the Grand-Orient Sect's members, they felt like they were at the top of the world. Yet now they could only grimace at the bitter taste of their own medicine. Most of them vomited blood from the sheer anger they felt after witnessing that act.

"You're just a bunch of dogs serving Heaven's Elysium. There's no need for hate or anger. From now on, come in if you please. The more you send in, the more we'll kill! As long as I'm here, anyone that dares take a step inside will suffer annihilation!" Yuwen Taiji's voice reverberated throughout the battlefield, overpowering Sikong Jiansheng's enraged roars.

Sikong Jiansheng seethed with anger, not that it could change the fact that he couldn't defeat Yuwen Taiji. For a divine artifact that was used to symbolize rulership over the whole realm, even the slightest amount of mastery over it would ensure that no normal beastmaster of the same rank would be able to match its wielder. With all of the Grand-Orient guardians here, that meant nobody was left in the Abyssal Battlefield.

"Quick, go to the Abyssal Battlefield and see what's going on!" Sikong Jiansheng was so mad that he was shaking.

"There's no need. Word is that the Onyx Sect was forced to retreat after Yuwen Taiji captured the Onyx Empress," Jun Niancang said. He felt rather horrible for losing in this expedition. He was quite impatient to wipe out the Grand-Orient Sect.

"Onyx Empress? Is she an idiot?!" Sikong Jiansheng snapped.

"It's not like you managed to defeat Yuwen Taiji yourself, either."

"But I wouldn't let myself be captured, at least!" It was one thing to be killed, but another to be taken captive. "Since the Abyssal Battlefield is empty, can't the Onyx Emperor launch an attack?"

"I already talked to him about it, but he's afraid that Yuwen Taiji will kill his wife. I'm unable to force him, so I sent word to my father to have him order the Onyx Emperor to fight." If the elysian children hadn't lost the Grand-Orient Sword, the Grand-Orient Sect would be in dire straits.

"That's right. She's as good as dead if she's captured! Don't tell me the Onyx Sect won't fight just because one of their sect masters was taken captive. They'd be fools to think that." While the sect masters were the strongest participants of the war, the loss of the Onyx Empress wasn't that significant to the Onyx Sect.

"We have to retreat for now, and negotiate with the Onyx Emperor. There's no way he'll give up on the Onyx Empress's life," Jun Niancang said as he looked at Yueling Long's translucent coffin, feeling his heart tingle. If he felt like this for a mere lover, how would the Onyx Emperor feel for the wife he had been married to for decades?

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Meanwhile, at the sacred mountain, every single member of the sect seemed quite different. After surviving what they thought would be certain demise, they could finally grow and comprehend the true meaning of cultivation and battle. The disciples were currently gathered outside while the guardians were located at the centermost position, and the elders, prefects, mountain lords, and exalted masters were between the two groups. At the peak of the sacred mountain were thirty elders. Yuwen Taiji took the most exalted seat within the Grand-Orient Sacred Hall. Swaying his robe as he turned, he sat down and enjoyed the respect of countless members of the sect.

"Greetings, Sect Master!" These words reverberated throughout the Grand-Orient Mountains. It had been more than a thousand years since a sect master had been shown so much respect. This was the first master of the Grand-Orient Sect that hadn't borne the Li surname since its founding. Though most still had their doubts, they acknowledged him nevertheless, as the elders themselves were the ones who supported Yuwen Taiji. Not to mention, there was nobody more qualified than him to be the sect master. People no longer cared about Li Wudi.

"From now on, the Grand-Orient Sect has reclaimed the Grand-Orient Sword! We also have a proper sect master!"

"We no longer have to worry! Trust the sect master and ourselves! The sect has lived on for tens of thousands of years and that will not change! With the sect master here, we'll definitely survive this. We'll make those crooks pay for what they've done!" Yuwen Fengtian proclaimed as he stood by his son's side.

As everyone knew Yuwen Taiji's personality, they couldn't be sure if letting him take control was a good or bad idea. Regardless, nobody cared about the fact that the Yuwen Clan had taken the spot from the Li Saint Clan in a time of crisis like this. They had no choice but to submit.

Yuwen Taiji finally stood up. He shot a gaze at the elders and said, "Bring me Ye Shaoqing and Li Tianming!" His words quieted the masses. As expected, his first act as sect master would be to kill members of their own sect.

### **Chapter 353 - Complete Extermination**

The elders all had their heads lowered. Only Shangguan Jingshu stood up and said in a half fearful voice, "Sect Master, I've let them go."

Yuwen Taiji squinted. "Why?"

"Li Tianming has done us a great boon by retrieving the Grand-Orient Sword."

Everyone knew that Yuwen Taiji and Tianming had a blood feud, yet she had actually let him go. Many immediately thought that she was a goner. As far as they were aware, Yuwen Taiji was someone that was ruthless to the bone.

As expected, he looked to Shangguan Jingshu, someone who was old enough to be his grandmother, and motioned with his hand for her to walk towards him.

She grit her teeth and said, "Sect Master, I know I wronged you. Please allow me to die in service of the sect!"

Her words made many feel for her, but little did they expect Yuwen Taiji to take out two black pills and place them in her and Zhao Zhiyuan's hands.

"You two have served the sect well. Why would I punish you?" he said with a chuckle.

Shangguan Jingshu sighed in relief. She made the right bet that Yuwen Taiji would play the role of a good guy now that he had finally become sect master.

"Thank you, Sect Master!" Zhao Zhiyuan said as he knelt and teared up.

"Please drop the formalities," he said with a wave, then looked at Shangguan Jingshu and smiled. In a voice only the two of them could hear, he said, "I knew that you'd let him go so the Li Saint Clan would live on. However, I have a way to make sure he dies."

His words sent chills down her spine. By the time she looked up, Yuwen Taiji had passed her by. He stepped in front of the crowd and said, "Bring me every single member of the Li Saint Clan!"

The crowd didn't understand what that entailed. Fatepath Peak and Goldgleam Mountain had already been abandoned, and the members of the four bloodlines of the Li Saint Clan were mingling with the rest of the sect members. However, none of them dared disobey their new sect master.

With Li Xuanyi as leader, he brought the remnants of the clan together and came to Yuwen Taiji. There weren't many of them remaining; only old men and babies aged two or three days.

"Sect Master, do you need anything?" Li Xuanyi hurriedly asked.

Right as he finished, Yuwen Taiji thrust the Grand-Orient Sword into his chest. Li Xuanyi instantly collapsed dead with his eyes wide open. The only saint of the Li Saint Clan had died in an instant.

Yuwen Taiji raised the sword and announced, "Have everyone from the Li Saint Clan exiled outside the Grand-Orient Barrier. They are to be killed without exception!" Countless people paled in disbelief at those words.

"Sect Master, no!" Shangguan Jingshu cried anxiously. "The Li Saint Clan has supported the sect for millennia! Everything we have now is thanks to them! Even though they've fallen from grace, they're still our benefactors! How can we exterminate them like this? Sect Master, you're attempting to end the thousand-generation legacy of the Li Saint Clan?!"



In fact, most of the remnants of the clan were either too young or past their prime. While they had poor talent, they were among the last traces of the once-glorious Lifesbane Clan. It was such an atrocious act that some other elders chose to speak up.

"Everyone, silence! I am the sect master, not you! Anyone that blabbers on will feel my wrath!"

That was enough to shut up the elders.

"Do it!"

"Yes!" Many Grand-Orient guardians cultivated by the Yuwen Clan stood out and surrounded the Li Saint Clan members. Now that they no longer had a single saint, they were powerless to resist. Cries of agony and fear rang out all of a sudden. It was so abrupt that they had been apprehended by the guardians before they could try anything.

"Elders! Please, save us!"

"Sect Master! Sect Master! We know our place! We'll support you! Please, don't kill us!"

Li Yansheng, Li Yunting, Li Xuanhe and the rest knelt in a panic and kowtowed with abandon. It was a horrifying sight to behold; nobody would believe that the once-glorious Li Saint Clan would be lined up for slaughter without a single one of them able to resist. Every last one of them cried and shuddered, but the key fact was that with their abilities, there was nothing they could do to resist.

In a world where might made right, their sin was being weak. No matter how they begged, the fate of the Li Saint Clan was sealed. Just moments before, the elders had supported Yuwen Taiji to become the sect master. And now, they had lost control over him and were powerless to stop him.

Huangfu Fengyun and the rest had long worried that such a thing would happen. Even so, regardless of how hard it was for the rest, the members of the Li Saint Clan were driven from the Grand-Orient Barrier without exception, including even newborns. Many others followed, but remained within the barrier to see what would happen to them.

The Cloudmist Sword School members watched from afar with interest, but they didn't approach in fear that it was a ploy from the Grand-Orient Sect.

"What's the meaning of this?" Li Jingyu and the rest came forward and said. "They're all members of our clan!"

Tianming swept his eyes across and saw thousands of them lined in rows and forced to kneel by the guardians. The guardians' blades were placed against the Li Saint Clan members' necks—an obvious sign they were going to execute them! Were they going to exterminate the Li Saint Clan at their roots?

It wasn't just Tianming; not even Ye Qing, Ye Shaoqing, and the rest could ever have expected they would go this far. What would that mean for the Grand-Orient Sect? What kind of demon would take the lives of countless innocents, including a few hundred newborns? Only Yuwen Taiji could possibly have pushed the bar so low.

They watched as Yuwen Taiji brought his minions to the members of the Li Saint Clan. Many members of the sect watched him with rage, but no one could stop him. Huangfu Fengyun and the others had shot themselves in the foot, and there was nobody left to stop Yuwen Taiji, now that they needed him.

Yuwen Taiji dragged Li Yansheng of the Fire Bloodline to him and looked around. "Ye Shaoqing, I know you're nearby, watching! From now on, I'll kill a member of the Li Saint Clan every three breaths until you show up. Whether the Li Saint Clan is completely exterminated depends on you. To be honest, I don't wish to kill the old and young either. It's a shame that you're the one who caused them to die." The moment he finished, he killed the Heavenly Will Li Yansheng and his lifebound beast in an instant.

The others from the clan were pressed to the ground alongside their lifebound beasts. After that, Yuwen Taiji killed Li Yunting of the Lightning Bloodline, as promised. The members of the clan cried in shock for each member that was killed. Many younger ones had already fainted, including Li Chiling, Li Linghe, and Li Jincan. They crumbled as they watched their family die at the hands of Yuwen Taiji.

He was a master of psychology and knew exactly which buttons to push to get others to bend to his will. He knew that even if Ye Shaoqing left the sect, he wouldn't go far, and his guess was right.

"Shameless!" Ye Shaoqing's eyes were bloodshot.

"Don't go!" Ye Qing said, holding him back.

"Brother, he's definitely going to kill you. You won't return alive," Ye Yuxi said with a pale look.

With the Li Saint Clan having so many members, there was no way they'd be able to save them all. Where would they even hide them? Not to mention, it was partly their own fault for underestimating how cruel Yuwen Taiji could be.

"He'll definitely kill them all if we don't show up! Dad, we can't wrong the Li Saint Clan like that!" Ye Shaoqing's eyes burned with passion as he looked in the direction of Fatepath Peak. The Li Saint Clan was the benefactor of the Ye Clan! "All I can do is buy time."

"He has the Grand-Orient Sword. Are you sure you can hold up?" Ye Qing said angrily.

"I must, even if I can't. Would you have me just watch them die? Dad, even as low as they've fallen, they're still the Li Saint Clan!" He managed to struggle free. "Dad, take care of Tianming if I don't make it back." He gave Tianming one final look; Tianming was unable to stop him.

"Master!" Before the words even left his mouth, however, the green silhouette zipped into the clouds and landed near the sect with his Azureflame Dragon. Despite how quickly he had made his decision, eight had already been killed. The Azureflame Dragon came charging in right before the ninth kill, but Yuwen Taiji smirked and let the blade fall anyway.

"Ye Shaoqing, it sure took you awhile. They wouldn't have died if you were faster." Everything was within Yuwen Taiji's control. There was no way they would be able to escape.

### **Chapter 354 - Once Again, a Life for a Life**

Yuwen Taiji waved and the guardians released the Li Saint Clan members.

"Run, now!" Huangfu Fengyun cried. Only then did they snap out of it and scramble. However, some attempted to flee in the direction of the Grand-Orient Barrier or toward the Cloudmist Sword School. It took quite a bit of effort for the rest to pull them back.

The tragic truth was that the rulers of the Grand-Orient Sect, the Li Saint Clan, no longer had a home. They didn't even know where it was safe to run to. Ye Shaoqing had no choice but to buy as much time as he could, but Yuwen Taiji wouldn't give him that. He summoned his Yangfiend and Yinfiend Taoties and surrounded him. In the middle of the two beasts, Yuwen Taiji drew the Grand-Orient Sword and slowly walked toward Ye Shaoqing. Each step he took shook the ground.

"Ye Shaoqing, I've always admired you, and I even made you an elder so you would support me. However, I don't understand why you choose to oppose me. Did you think you really stood a chance?"

"Help you? You're a ruthless blight that betrayed his own brother! There's no low you won't stoop to in order to achieve your goals! You're unworthy!" Ye Shaoqing charged in with his dragon.

The two taoties roared toward the skies and charged as well. The two strongest people of the sect, both in their forties, clashed. Ye Shaoqing gave ground as he fought; it was his only choice. Otherwise, he would lose more than a finger this time.

A fight on the level of saints was far beyond the league of most Grand-Orient guardians. The saint beasts' abilities covered the battlefield. The Azureflame Dragon's ability, Wrathflame Lotus, caused a gigantic azure lotus to manifest in the skies like a blinding sun. It covered the entire battlefield. At that moment, countless thunderclouds gathered.

"Voidgod Sword Intent!" Ye Shaoqing executed the true form of the ability with his saint bestial weapon that had more than twenty heavenly patterns, the Azureflame Empyrean. Countercurrent! Starfall! Countless beams shot out from Azureflame Empyrean, forming into thousands of sword lights.

The two taoties unleashed their spiritsource abilities. They gathered in a united stream of yin and yang as they drove the azure lotus back, eventually swallowing it whole. Yuwen Taiji's expression was as cool as ice, the Grand-Orient Sword glowing in his hand.

"If you had the Grand-Orient Sword, you might've been able to face off against me! But I am its wielder now! I forced myself to not shed a tear during the Prime Struggle, but today, I will avenge Shendu!"

He had said that he had no tears. So now there was nothing to stop him from tearing the world asunder.

"You shan't run. You can't run." He could tell that Ye Shaoqing didn't want to confront him directly. But there was no way he could run when faced with ultimate power. "Die!"

Boundless sword ki gathered and formed a hellish cage. The Grand-Orient Sword shone blindingly as black and gold sword ki manifested everywhere. The slash was accompanied by the attacks of his lifebound beasts.

With an audible rumble, the Azureflame Dragon's lotus crumbled. The sword had tipped the scales and Ye Shaoqing couldn't hold on. Even with Myriad's Only, the countless azure blades that manifested before were either swallowed by the Yangfiend Taotie or repelled by the Grand-Orient Sword's own sword ki.

Both Ye Shaoqing and his dragon were horribly wounded. Yuwen Taiji knocked Azureflame Empyrean out of Ye Shaoqing's hand and immediately knocked him out cold. In the next moment, he whipped out a chain and wrapped it around Ye Shaoqing and his dragon before slamming them to the ground.

He was so powerful that those who were watching shook in fear. However, Yuwen Taiji surprisingly didn't kill Ye Shaoqing and chose to imprison him instead. What in the world was he planning? The moment he landed, he looked disdainfully at Ye Shaoqing.

"Do you fear death?"

"I do. I fear dying by the hands of a shameless person like you. Your sword will stain my blood!" Ye Shaoqing was covered in cuts and he could barely move thanks to the chain.

"That's the Grand-Orient Sword you're talking about!"

"It's merely a murder weapon in your hands!"

"Haha, to think that you'd mock the Grand-Orient Sword. To be honest, those elders are spineless and too old. I feel it'd be a shame to kill you today."

"So? What do you have in mind?" Every time Yuwen Taiji said something like that, he already had something planned out. There was definitely a reason he spared Ye Shaoqing.

Yuwen Taiji pressed the sword against his neck at that moment. "Well, Li Tianming is an outsider and doesn't have any sympathy for the Li Saint Clan, right?"

"What are you planning?" He had a bad feeling at the mention of Tianming.

"It's simple. You thought I was luring you out with the Li Saint Clan. In fact, I was luring Li Tianming out!" He knew he couldn't count on the elders to keep Tianming confined. But would he really be able to leave? At the end of the day, the one Yuwen Taiji truly hated was the killer of his son. He knew that even if he exterminated the Li Saint Clan, Tianming might not show up. But it would be different if he had Ye Shaoqing, whose life he now controlled.

"Li Tianming! I know you're watching. Whether your master lives or dies is up to me. Doesn't this seem familiar? It's just like the time with your sister, but now Ye Shaoqing is taking her place. I lost this game the last time I played it. So, I'd like to ask you if you'd like to exchange a life for a life more time!"

Last time, Tianming had managed to kill Yuwen Shendu in a desperate fight for survival, forever changing the status quo in the sect. But his retrieval of the Grand-Orient Sword had allowed Yuwen Taiji to rise back up. This time around, he wanted to exchange Ye Shaoqing's life for Tianming's.

After Yuwen Shendu's death, people thought Yuwen Taiji was cold and unfeeling because of how calm he was. Now, they knew that he truly felt torn from losing his son.

"Do you think the junior sect master will show up?" Many of them looked at the mountains in the surroundings. Where could he be hiding? At the very least, he would have been with Ye Shaoqing just moments ago.

Please don't come back, Shangguan Jingshu and the other elders thought. But would that really be the case?

"He'll be fighting Yuwen Taiji this time, not Yuwen Shendu!"

"If he shows up, Ye Shaoqing might not die, but he certainly will."

"A young person like him wouldn't dare do something so suicidal like this."

"That's right. This is suicidal. He's a pentabane, so he can still grow and avenge Ye Shaoqing."

"He can even take back the Grand-Orient Sword and the sect."

That was what most people were thinking. It wasn't that they didn't believe Tianming had the courage; but making this trade would be nothing but suicidal. However, Tianming now had his eyes closed. In the world of darkness, he wanted to ask if he would give up the chance to have his loved ones spared by exchanging his own life for theirs.

There was only one answer: he couldn't. He couldn't, no matter the consequences—not even if it meant certain death. As much as the others thought that he would be far more valuable than Ye Shaoqing, he didn't look at it that way. His feelings weren't rationally justifiable; they didn't need to be. He gave it much thought and knew that Ye Shaoqing would certainly die if he didn't go down there. However, there was a chance if he did choose to go down.

"Big Brother!" Qingyu grabbed on to him, but didn't have the strength to hold him down. Both Tianming and Ye Shaoqing were too precious to her.

Not to mention, the Ye Clan members—Ye Qing and Ye Yuxi included—surely felt more for Ye Shaoqing as family. Yet, they had to muster their courage to stop Tianming and watch Ye Shaoqing die.

"Qingyu, wait for Ling'er to come back for me." He handed her Ling'er's Love.

"Big Brother!" She shook her head and bit her lip.

"Don't worry! I'm immortal. Yuwen Taiji can't kill me."

As he said that, he headed for Yuwen Taiji in an act of suicide. There wasn't the slightest hint of hesitation in him. People might call him an idiot for it, but that was just how he lived his life.

When he looked up, he saw bloody clouds gathering around Fatepath Peak. When everyone looked at the approaching suicidal white-haired youth, cracks formed all over the ground beneath them.

### **Chapter 355 - The Grand-Orient Sword is MINE**

All attention was focused on the white-haired youth dressed in black as he stepped out from the ten thousand mountains. His steps were slow, yet steady, a sign that he was fearless in the face of death.

"Tianming, why..." Ye Shaoqing muttered with a mixture of emotions, only to be answered by the young man's blazing eyes.

"This is the first time in my life that I've seen an apprentice willing to use his own life to trade for his master's. Ye Shaoqing, you're a lucky man." Yuwen Taiji rested the Grand-Orient Sword on the ground as he gazed in Tianming's direction.

No one understood where Tianming got the guts to face the enraged sect master, whose son died by his hands.

"Junior sect master...." Many elders shut their eyes.

“The gods have forsaken our young genius!”

“I admire his courage, but it’s that courage that’ll kill him right now.”

“Every single one of us here is responsible for the death of the junior sect master!”

It was a struggle for the elders as well. This was the second time Li Tianming had chosen to step out, this time without even a glimmer of hope of survival. Many even questioned themselves on whether they could do the same, only to shake in fear. That included those from the Cloudmist Sword School, like Sikong Jiansheng, as well as the red-eyed Jun Nianchang.

“Li Tianming, you’re something special, and I respect you for that.” It was none other than the terrifying Yuwen Taiji who said that.

“Cut your crap. I’m here, so let him go.” Tianming stood his ground and faced Yuwen Taiji.

Ye Shaoqing exchanged a look with him. Of course, he knew Tianming was here to buy time, but that would put him in great danger.

“What’s the hurry? I’ll definitely release him once I’m done with you, and everyone here can be your witness,” Yuwen Taiji snickered as he stepped towards Tianming.

“Do you think a scum like you has any credibility left? What are you afraid of, considering that I’m already here.” Tianming made sure his voice was loud enough that every single person could hear him.

“Well then.” Yuwen Taiji smiled and released the chains that were binding Ye Shaoqing. The person he really wanted to kill was right in front of him, so he saw no reason to worry.

While Ye Shaoqing was now free, his injuries still hindered his movements as he struggled to crawl back to his feet. Still fuming in Yuwen Taiji and Tianming’s direction, he noticed the tiny cracks that had begun appearing under his feet. As he focused, he could even feel a slight tremor in the earth below him. He was also the only one to notice the blood-red beam shooting up into the sky behind Fatepath Peak.

Yuwen Taiji had approached Tianming, the Grand-Orient Sword pressed against the youth’s head. The weight of the sword was enough to make Tianming’s legs shake.

This was a sight that many dared not watch. It was a shame for a pentabane to die in such a place, having to trade his own life for another’s. As much as his courage was praised and admired, everyone knew that there would only be one possible outcome.

“Any last words, or are you too scared to say anything?” Yuwen Taiji’s gaze was fierce, but a smile crept up his face, as he could finally avenge for his own son.

“Why should I be? Count how old you are! Were I your age, you wouldn’t even be worthy of licking my boots. I may die here today, but you’re the one that’s being embarrassed. I have nothing to fear!” Even with the sword pressing on his head, Tianming showed no fear as he stared into Yuwen Taiji’s eyes.

“Ha!” Yuwen Taiji couldn’t stop himself from laughing. “Now I know why Shendu lost to you. Such a shame that you met me while you were still young.”

“You’re just lucky. In three years, I’d be able to crush you with a single hand,” Tianming snapped back, ignoring the threat of the sword. Surprisingly, the sword hadn’t hurt him a bit, an abnormal occurrence, considering how sharp it was.

As for Yuwen Taiji, he could only see disdain in Li Tianming’s eyes. Ever since he had returned with the Grand-Orient Sword, even all the elders had knelt before his power. He said he could crush me with a single hand in three years? Yuwen Taiji felt anger burning in his chest. But when he wanted to snap back at Li Tianming, he suddenly thought of his sons.

“Shengcheng, Shendu, are you seeing this? I, your father, have already become the sect master of the Grand-Orient Sect. And now I’ll sacrifice the blood of a pentabane in your memory!

“My sons, I’m sorry, I disappointed both of you. After I’ve conquered the Grand-Orient Realm in the name of the Yuwen Clan, I’ll join you in the yellow river to apologize to the both of you! Should we meet again in our next life, I’ll bring you all the wealth and glory you can ever imagine!” With blood dripping from his eyes, Yuwen Taiji lifted the Grand-Orient Sword into the air.

“Junior sect master!” the crowd gasped. The entire sect was watching in tears as Tianming stood where he was without budging an inch.

“Yuwen Taiji! You are the only one at fault for the death of your own sons! If you’d taught Yuwen Shengcheng any better, he wouldn’t have been that cocky little brat asking for death. And if Yuwen Shengcheng didn’t die, his brother wouldn’t have had to. You’re the reason they died, so why bother me when you should be killing yourself?

“Or maybe it was because you were a rat to begin with, and one who would even backstab his closest friend! Your sons’ death is your own karmic retribution!” Each word Tianming said only further fueled Yuwen Taiji’s rage.

“Silence!!”

Yuwen Taiji sent the sword swinging down onto Tianming’s head. It was infused with the power of a saint, and that was more than enough to split Tianming into half there and then.

But as a metallic clang rang in the air, the audience held their breaths in shock. That wasn’t the sound metal was supposed to make when it met flesh. To everyone’s surprise, the Grand-Orient Sword was resting on Tianming’s head, its razor-sharp edge unable to even cut through his hair!

Yuwen Taiji was the most shocked of everyone present. It was enough to split Ye Shaoqing in two pieces, so why was Li Tianming unharmed?

Only Tianming knew the answer to that question. Since the beginning when the Grand-Orient Sword had touched his head, he could feel a resonance from his bloodline. The sword was like a person, telling him that no one in this entire world could harm him with it. It was also worth mentioning that Tianming had the Prime Tower inside his body, which was another reason the sword couldn’t be used against him.

Every last bit of Yuwen Taiji’s strength had been absorbed by the Grand-Orient Sword, proving that even an earth saint couldn’t fully understand its mysteries. It was like a living thing, even comforting Tianming as it resonated with him.

I won my bet! This is my Grand-Orient Sword! That was the greatest joy and accomplishment that Tianming had achieved from taking this risk. In fact, it was an instinct that he could feel from just looking at the sword. Yuwen Taiji was using something that wasn't rightfully his, which was why he could only use a fraction of its true power. Thus, Tianming had survived!

Yuwen Taiji couldn't believe his own eyes, and repositioned himself to stab Tianming in the heart. But although the impact of the sword threw Tianming a thousand meters away, he remained unharmed on landing!

"Is he invincible?"

"Yuwen Taiji can't kill him!"

The crowd erupted into chaos. To make things even better, Ye Shaoqing and the Azureflame Dragon had appeared by Tianming's side the moment he was knocked back. Even though Ye Shaoqing was badly injured, he still grabbed Tianming and tossed him on the dragon's back.

Only then did Yuwen Taiji recover from the shock, and when he looked up, his killing intent was ten times stronger!

"Interesting, how bloody interesting! No wonder they call you the greatest descendant of the Li Saint Clan. Even the second ancestor with bloodbane couldn't match your talent. But rest assured that I have plenty of ways to kill you without using the Grand-Orient Sword!"

Yuwen Taiji dashed forward with his Yangfiend Taotie and Yinfiend Taotie, closing the gap in the blink of an eye.

"Die!!" Even though it was just a punch, the badly injured Ye Shaoqing and Tianming could only run. It was just a matter of time before Yuwen Taiji would catch up to them!

But at that very instance, a man suddenly stumbled into the middle of the battlefield with unsteady steps. His hair was unruly, his eyes glowed red like a bloody inferno, and clouds of blood-colored mist followed in his wake and painted the mountains red. Accompanied by a weakened Void Kunpeng, his hands were placed on a dagger thrust straight through his heart!

"Yuwen Taiji!!" The roar echoed through the mountains, the voice one that the people of the Grand-Orient Sect hadn't heard for a long time.

Stunned, Yuwen Taiji stopped in his tracks and turned, just in time to witness the man pulling a Venomdrake Spike out of his chest!

At that moment, the Bloodbane Barrier released a pulse that shook the earth, and fissures ripped open the ground. The endless clouds of blood mist gathered and fused into his body as the shadow of the Li Clan ancestors appeared on the barrier. Together, their voices rang across the entire Grand-Orient Realm!

"Who dares touch the Li Saint Clan!"

The man walked out of the cloud of blood mist, a menacing crimson saber in his hands and his red-stained hair dancing in the wind.



## Chapter 356 - Ancient Infernalblood Kunpeng

It was a face recognized by every single resident of the Grand-Orient Sect. Li Wudi was back! But he wasn't the drunken, muddled Li Wudi that people thought him to be for the past decade. The Li Wudi standing in front of them could make the earth tremble in his presence, and blood mist fill the sky.

His eyes glowed a menacing red, like a hellish sea of blood. Similarly, his hair was dyed with the same shade, with blood still dripping off its tips. The only thing he wore was a pair of pants, while the rest of his body was exposed completely. As such, the crowd could clearly see that the wound on his heart caused by the Venomdrake Spike had already begun to heal.

But that wasn't even the scariest change on his body! At that moment, the four bane rings on his right arm began to distort and morph. They were also dyed red with blood, their appearances like symbols representing death that could never be forgotten once seen. As the changes settled, the four rings had turned into four blood-colored, hideous beast faces! Unlike the black text etched into Tianming's arm, Li Wudi's bane rings looked fierce and lively, each face with a different expression from the other.

Still, that wasn't the end. As the blood mist gathered around him, a fifth bane ring formed on his right arm, its shape representing the head of a roaring, blood-red dragon.

After spending the past fourteen years traversing the line of life and death, Li Wudi had awakened as a pentabane, with all of his bane rings turning into blood-red beast faces. Even the second ancestor only had four bloodbane rings, which hadn't morphed into beast faces.

Yet, it didn't stop there, as a sixth bane-ring appeared on his left arm. It was the face of a qilin, looking somewhat similar to the dragon, but even larger by comparison. And with that, a total of six ancient beasts were tattooed into Li Wudi's arms, each of them roaring.

"Hexabane!!" Huangfu Fengyun gasped from within the crowd, his jaw almost falling to the ground as he stumbled back. As for the others, they were too stunned to even make a sound.

The implication behind Li Wudi's change was obvious, especially to the elites of the sect. Never had the Li Saint Clan seen someone with six bane-rings, nor ones that could change in color and turn into the shapes of fearsome beasts.

That said, none of them knew about Tianming's Aeonian Grandbane.

"Li Wudi! But how? Wasn't he crippled fourteen years ago!"

"No, this can't be happening!"

It would be an understatement to call these changes phenomenal. Every single one of the elders had their jaws drop, gazing at Li Wudi like a group of fools. That was especially true for Shangguan Jingshu, who had collapsed to the floor and was shaking uncontrollably—not out of fear, but out of shock.

Six was a number beyond the Grand-Orient Sect's imagination. Having six bane rings meant that Li Wudi had surpassed the first ancestor, whose tales were so glorious it was hard to imagine what someone with six bane rings was capable of. Even more dangerous was the fact that Li Wudi wasn't just any young prodigy, but a man who had broken free from a painful past and emerged stronger than ever! His talent, coupled with his experience, was enough to make him the worst nightmare of his foes!

All those who had just witnessed Li Wudi's change could feel the world around them crumbling, and that included the likes of Yuwen Fengtian and Su Yunzhi.

"It must be some kind of trick... an illusion, probably! Li Wudi was crippled!" Yuwen Fengtian screamed hysterically, trying to seek the approval of those around him. But even Su Yunzhi could only stare dumbly. No cripple could ever release such an aura.

"He reached the Sky Saint stage! And that weapon belonged to Li Xinghe, the second ancestor. It's the Crimsonblood Saber, with over forty saintly heavenly patterns!" Tears flowed uncontrollably from Su Yunzhi's eyes as he spoke. As earth saint beastmasters, they knew very well how strong sky saints were. After all, only one person in the Grand-Orient Realm had reached that stage, and that was the Elysian Emperor himself!

Yuwen Fengtian also fell to the floor, recalling the day he had handed the Venomdrake Spike to Yuwen Taiji over ten years ago. When that young man from the Li Saint Clan had returned from the Abyssal Battlefield weeping and his face written with pain and despair, Yuwen Fengtian merely smirked.

"What can a dying clan and a foolish kid even achieve?" That was what he had said back then.

But this red-haired demon was nothing like the weeping young man he knew back then. Fire blazing in his eyes, Li Wudi took only one step and appeared before Yuwen Taiji. Yuwen Taiji had completely forgotten about Li Tianming, and was blankly staring at Li Wudi with the Grand-Orient Sword still held against the floor.

"Fourteen years. I never imagined this day would arrive!" Yuwen Taiji was smiling, yet tears flowed down his cheeks.

"But I've been waiting for this very day for those fourteen years!" Li Wudi rasped as he gazed at his foe.

"It's over, Yuwen Taiji!"

At the same time, a breathtaking change was happening to his lifebound beast, as well. It had long evolved using the what was left by their ancestors, but its changes had been suppressed by the Venomdrake Spike. The day Li Wudi broke free from his bane was the day of its transformation, too.

Its figure quickly expanded, muscles appearing on what had been mere bone and skin. Its old, withered feathers were all replaced by new ones ten times the original size, all blood-red in color. When the crimson kungpeng leaped into the air, its wings extended and blotted out the entire sky.

"That's the Ancient Infernalblood Kungpeng, a sixth-order saint beast!" someone cried from within the crowd, stirring yet another wave of discussions. Who could have expected his Void Kungpeng to evolve to such an extent? In fact, the Ancient Infernalblood Kungpeng was larger than the Yangfiend Taotie and the Yinfiend Taotie combined, its claws as sharp as saint weapons.

The moment had come, as Li Wudi and his kungpeng looked coldly at their opponent.

"Still as fond of bluffing yourself with bravado as you used to?" Yuwen Taiji was laughing maniacally, but could barely hide his panic. He had thought Li Wudi would at least answer him, only to find out how wrong he was. Li Wudi was like a bloody demon, a grim reaper ready to harvest his soul with the

Crimsonblood Saber. When the Kunpeng spread its wings, he could see the world going dim as even the sun was drowned by the sea of blood!

Without hesitation, Li Wudi charged toward Yuwen Taiji, his saber meeting the Grand-Orient Sword. The blood mist almost instantaneously devoured Yuwen Taiji's Black-White Ki.

"Die!" Yuwen Taiji wielded his sword and used the last stance of Godslayer Sword Art, God Slaying Strike! A sword ki mixed with Black-White Ki shot into the sky, its sparks like fireworks in the sky. His two taoties attacked from opposite directions, their abilities of opposing elements exploding out.

Needless to say, Yuwen Taiji was a fearsome opponent at his full strength. But Li Wudi was indifferent, his saber slashing out amidst the fog of blood.

"This is the second ancestor's most prized technique, the Infernalblood Strike!" Many recognized the technique that was claimed to be the deadliest battle art within the entire Li Saint Clan. It was said that this technique had long been lost to history. Yet when Li Wudi used the Strike of Ten-Thousand Bloodbanes, it appeared even more threatening than history claimed!

When the saber crashed down, countless blades rained down like a torrent of blood. At the same time, the kunpeng used its ability to shoot out innumerable bloody feathers, almost like Ying Huo's Skyscorch Featherblast.

Yuwen Taiji had no chance, facing the revenge-seeking pair. The two taoties were instantly defeated, their bodies shredded by the saber and feathers. Their blood formed a small pool on the ground, though they were lucky enough to still be alive.

However, Yuwen Taiji was in an even worse state, as the Grand-Orient Sect flew out of his hand and landed next to Tianming, its hilt still dirtied by Yuwen Taiji's blood. Another swift slash, and his left hand detached from his body and was sent flying right into Yuwen Fengtian's face.

"GAH!!" Yuwen Taiji was pale, and beads of sweat formed on his forehead. There was no way he could win against the bloodthirsty demon standing in front of him right now!

"Li Wudi!!" he growled through clenched teeth, and his eyes widened with anger. It still felt like a dream, a nightmare about his own karmic retribution. He simply couldn't understand how someone who had been crippled for the past fourteen years could be this powerful.

"Why is a long-defeated loser like you still haunting me!" Yuwen Taiji screamed as death loomed over him. Li Wudi was directly in front of him, the Crimsonblood Saber hovering right over his head.

### **Chapter 357 - I Shall Remain Undying As Long As The Heavens Do**

The Crimsonblood Saber's edge had actually cut Yuwen Taiji's scalp. Blood flowed down, soaking Yuwen Taiji's eyes, ears, and mouth, giving him an even more hideous appearance.

It was clear for all to see that Yuwen Taiji had suffered a disastrous defeat!

"Ah!" Li Wudi's blade fell again, and this time, it was Yuwen Taiji's right arm that was sent flying! Now, he was an armless man who had lost his ability to wield the Grand-Orient Sword.

“Li Wudi!!” Yuwen Taiji bit his lips and glared at the man. Perhaps all he wanted was for Li Wudi to reply to him.

“Watch clearly,” a voice said, as frigid as ice.

Yuwen Taiji saw all too clearly as the Ancient Infernalblood Kunpeng descended onto the Yinfiend Taotie. The taotie was currently in a wretched state, bloodied and battered all over. The kunpeng used its sharp claws to rip apart its body, then buried its beak in its body and ripped out the still beating heart!

Then, the kunpeng swallowed!

Yuwen Taiji’s eyes almost burst out of his sockets.

“Enjoying it? This is just the start.” Li Wudi’s voice finally broke. It wasn’t fear, but excitement from exacting his revenge.

As the Yinfiend Taotie fell, the Yangfiend Taotie came charging at the kunpeng. The kunpeng used its wings to slap it to the ground, then ripped out its heart and swallowed it as well. Finally, the sixth-order saint beast gave out a piercing shriek!

When it shot up and flew in the direction of the Grand-Orient Sect, everyone was frightened and scrambled out of the way.

“Yuwen Fengtian!” Li Wudi’s blood-colored eyes shifted from Yuwen Taiji to the shaking old man. Yuwen Fengtian wasn’t the only one shaking; Huangfu Fengyun and the rest had also collapsed onto the ground.

It didn’t matter if Li Wudi wasn’t targeting them right now, because this was the most frightening person in the Li Saint Clan’s history! Six bane-rings, and they were all blood-colored beast faces! They didn’t even know what that symbolized!

“Kill him!” Yuwen Fengtian shouted to the elders by his side. However, by the time the kunpeng arrived, only Su Yunzhi and a few other elders were still there. The rest had already run away.

“Attack together!”

Three Su Clan elders, Qin Wulie, Chen Nantian, Gongsun Shengji and Yuwen Fengtian. Seven people and seven beasts staked their everything at this critical juncture.

Then, what people saw was one lifebound beast sweeping through all of them and leaving rivers of blood in its wake.

Skyquake Taotie? Myriadeyes Flysnake? They were all directly ripped apart and eaten. The kunpeng left a trail of blood behind it as it slaughtered them.

Elder Chen Nantian rode a Starriver Stallion over, and didn’t even have the chance to show his stuff before the kunpeng directly reduced him to a bloody paste.

Qin Wulie and Gongsun Shengji were instantly beheaded by a red blur.

The three elders from the Su Clan held on the longest. However, panicked, they attempted to flee. The kunpeng sent its spirit-source abilities screaming in their direction. Blood-colored feathers turned into a storm that swept past and engulfed them, filling their bodies full of holes.

The members of the Grand-Orient Sect stared at him. They knew who he was, yet at the same time, they didn't know who he was.

Yuwen Fengtian collapsed limply in front of the kunpeng. When he lifted his head, he saw the kunpeng tilt its head and look at him indifferently.

"Yuwen Fengtian!" It actually opened its mouth.

"Mercy, mercy... I know I was wrong...."

"If I show you mercy, who'll show me mercy for the past fourteen years where I lived a life worse than death!" the kunpeng said hoarsely.

"I was wrong!" Yuwen Fengtian grabbed his throat and forced himself to speak.

"You weren't wrong!" In that instant, a Venomdrake Spike suddenly flew over and buried itself in Yuwen Fengtian's chest!

"Ah!!" Yuwen Fengtian rolled on the ground, wailing in pain.

Seeing this made flames flicker in the kunpeng's eyes, as it thought about that day. It transformed a kun bird into a peng fish. It swam through the sky, then spat out a current that swallowed up Yuwen Fengtian. The current transformed into a blood-colored sphere that the peng swallowed up.

It bellowed at the sect, "Yuwen Fengtian has been trapped inside my Bloodtear Sphere. He shall be tormented by both the Bloodtear Frigid Ki and Venomdrake Spike for fourteen years! He shall suffer ten times what I suffered!"

The bellow of this lifebound beast with sixty-five stars shook not only the sect's grounds, but their hearts as well. By now, all of Yuwen Taiji's henchmen had perished! But the worst punishment of all was Yuwen Fengtian's.

Had Yuwen Fengtian's verdict been cruel? Yes, but this was also called reaping what one sowed!

Everyone knew it wasn't over yet, as Yuwen Taiji still hadn't received judgement. Fourteen years ago, he had schemed against a brother and made him suffer at death's door until today. Then, he had even forced Li Wudi's wife to her death!

Li Wudi dropped the Crimsonblood Saber and took out a Venomdrake Spike. On that spike was Li Wudi's blood.

"Hahaha!" Despite being covered in blood, Yuwen Taiji still laughed madly.

Li Wudi grabbed him by the neck. "Have a taste of how it feels."

"Brother, this reminds me of the day I gave you a Venomdrake Spike!" Yuwen Taiji was still struggling and laughing.

“What a coincidence. Me too.”

The spike entered Yuwen Taiji.

“Ahh!!” Yuwen Taiji’s legs began wildly flailing as he screamed, his wretched state a far cry from how domineering he’d been when he was conducting a massacre earlier. Tears of blood began flowing from his eyes.

A clump of purple flame appeared in Li Wudi’s hand.

“This is blooddevouring fire. It’s even more fun than your nethermare venom. Enjoy it for the next thirty years.” Li Wudi forced Yuwen Taiji’s mouth open and force fed it to him. Yuwen Taiji’s body began burning up, but he didn’t die!

“Blooddevouring fire and Bloodtear Frigid Ki. Ice and fire don’t mix well. Ah, and how can we forget the Venomdrake Spike? You tormented me for fourteen years and took away the person I loved the most, leaving me lifelong regrets. So, my gift to you today is thirty years of desiring death but being unable to die!”

Under the pain, Yuwen Taiji writhed madly.

“Mu He...” In between his screams, Yuwen Taiji grinned at Li Wudi. “When I die in thirty years, I’ll be able to meet her in the afterlife, haha!”

Yuwen Taiji had gone crazy, or he wouldn’t have said such words.

“Okay, a hundred years works for me too!” Li Wudi changed his mind, opting instead for a hundred years of punishment. No one could be a saint in nature, forgiving and understanding. Not after fourteen years of torment.

Finally, Yuwen Taiji felt fear. He looked mutely at Li Wudi, before finally painfully asking, “Could I at least know why I lost so badly?”

Li Wudi pointed at his six beast faces. “See this? It’s because I belong to the Lifesbane Clan that can change their fate! It’s because I loved her as much as my life! I refused to die without making you pay a price a hundred times greater!”

Tears of blood began flowing when he recalled that figure. “Before, I didn’t have the strength to protect the ones I loved. Now, though, I’ve been reborn and can make you two Yuwen father and son pay in blood! I promised her I’d become someone unrivalled. That’s the only way I can protect those precious to me and slaughter vile people like you! Henceforth, I shall remain undying as long as the heavens do!”

Today was just the beginning.

The first ancestor had taken fifty years to overcome his bane and break through to become an empyrean saint. No one had accomplished that before, and no one had since.

Li Wudi had suffered for fourteen years, each year hundreds of times more painful than the last. His path as a powerhouse had only just begun.

Yuwen Taiji's, on the other hand, had come to an end. Despair was written all over his face. Then, the peng's Bloodtear Sphere swallowed him up, and Bloodtear Frigid Ki began entering his body.

For a hundred years, he would suffer three great torments, never able to die.

Yuwen Taiji's new screams as the frigid ki entered him made the scalps of everyone from the Grand-Orient Sect and Cloudmist Sword School who heard them tingle. They watched as the kun swallowed up Yuwen Taiji.

Now, the only thing left was a madman with blood-colored hair, a Crimsonblood Saber, and an Ancient Infernalblood Kunpeng.

"Grand-Orient Sect, Li Wudi is BACK!"

### **Chapter 358 - Master of the Grand-Orient Sword**

The rowdy and chaotic Grand-Orient Mountains suddenly fell silent. Su Yunchi, Chen Nantian, and the others' corpses were still bleeding, making for a rather garish sight. Tens of thousands watched the blood-haired man with blank faces. They were petrified for quite some time.

"Yuwen Taiji wasn't even the sect master for two hours and now he's gone."

Only then did the rest snap out of it. Once more, the status quo in Grand-Orient Sect had been completely upended. However, this led to the most peaceful resolution possible. Now, both the sect master and junior sect master were the strongest to have held the rank and were father and son, not enemies.

"Yuwen Taiji relied on nothing but domination to become sect master."

"There's tons who weren't happy with his tyranny!"

"Li Wudi is a true member of the Li Saint Clan and he deserves to be the sect master by right!"

Everyone's opinions had shifted. Ye Shaoqing, with his battered and bruised body, came to Li Wudi before their eyes. He watched the man with a passionate gaze and bloodshot eyes.

"You really made a grand entrance, didn't you? I don't know how many times I rehearsed this in my head." He gave him a fist on the chest, though the pain he suffered made him clench his teeth.

"Hey, don't frame me like that. You think I waited until the last moment just to look cool?" he snapped as he kept his saber away. Now finally free and relieved, he turned to look at Tianming, whose eyes were already red from agitation.

It was fortunate that the Grand-Orient Sword had saved him during that fight. Li Wudi waved his finger and drew the heavy sword into his hand. Would he be fighting the sect war with the Grand-Orient Sword? People held that question in their minds as they stared expectantly at the father and son. However, Li Wudi turned the sword around and bumped the pommel of the sword against Tianming's chest.

"What's the meaning of this?" Tianming asked. It only made sense for the stronger Li Wudi to wield it.

"Nothing much. I just don't like using swords," Li Wudi said with a snicker.

"If I use the sword, it might be easy for others to take it." Tianming was talented, sure, but not powerful enough yet. There were still many within the Grand-Orient Realm who could defeat him.

"Tianming, my son," he said as he cast his gaze around, "use the Grand-Orient Sword as you like. As long as I still live, I'll kill anyone that dares come to take your sword!"

His proclamation was heard by all and cheers followed. Almost everyone watched Tianming enviously. The Grand-Orient Sword had historically been given to the strongest within the sect. Never had a person from the younger generation been deemed worthy to wield it, for most feared they would lose it. But with Li Wudi's protection, nobody would dare covet it.

"The Grand-Orient Sword is yours in the first place, for it was you who reclaimed it during the Realm War. It's full of mysterious heavenly patterns. You can use them to aid your comprehension of the Heavenly Will stage. Use it well, and don't tarnish the name of the sword, got it? And nobody will possibly come for the sword, so forget about it."

Tianming laughed heartily. He hadn't felt like this for a long time. He had only handed the sword to Ye Shaoqing because he feared Yuwen Taiji would fight him for it, yet that man was now no more. Not to mention, now, the true expert of the Grand-Orient Sect, Li Wudi, had personally handed the sword back to him.

The sword rumbled as it returned to his hands, and he raised it to thundering applause. The folks already loved Tianming for his personality. With his good relationship with Li Wudi and Ye Shaoqing, they represented a new hope for the sect's rise back to power—far more so than Yuwen Taiji had.

Once more, Li Wudi regarded the sect members and announced, "Fellow sect members, I, Li Wudi, apologize to you all on behalf of the ancestors of the Li Saint Clan. Our clan's fall from grace has caused the sect to decline. In thousands of years, our disciples were humiliated nonstop, and that blame is for our clan to bear. But from today onward, I will eventually be succeeded by my son and daughter, Li Tianming and Li Qingyu. We pledge to bring the sect back to its glory days! We will rise and dominate again! Unlike Yuwen Taiji, I won't resort to schemes, cruelty, ruthlessness, and terror, but instead use my own true power to protect the sect and restore our clan!"

"This is our true sect master!" Huangfu Fengyun called out as he stood up. Tianming couldn't help but laugh at the old fellow who had immediately switched gears to support Li Wudi. Then again, he was once more impressed by how patient and well-hidden Li Wudi had been the entire fourteen years he was training to overcome his plight. His mental state was not one that could be trifled with.

"Grand-Orient Sect Master!" the rest cheered with fervor. Now, their sect finally had someone they could count on. As the true junior sect master, Tianming couldn't feel any better than this. Since he had come here from Vermillion Bird and experienced all sorts of trials, he was finally a junior sect master, no questions asked, subordinate to one and above all others. It truly awed him how weird life could be.

"Humble greetings to the sect master!" The outer and inner disciples, exalted masters, Grand-Orient guardians, prefects, elders, and mountain lords all knelt to pay their respects.

"Congratulations to the Li Saint Clan for once more regaining the sect after a thousand years! We believe the sect master will lead us to another ten thousand years of glory!"



This time around, Huangfu Fengyun, Shangguan Jingshu, Zhao Zhiyuan, and other elders were genuinely content with how things had turned out. They knew Li Wudi, and had seen him multiple times in the past fourteen years, but never would they have imagined that he would end up like this today. All they could do was envy Ye Shaoqing, who had been brave enough to support him the whole time and go against Yuwen Taiji. This was the day he had been waiting for.

"From now on, Ye Shaoqing is the vice sect master!" Li Wudi announced.

"Sect Master, there's never been a vice sect master in the history of the sect," Huangfu Fengyun said.

"There hasn't, so can I make one now?" Li Wudi asked with a smile.

"Of course!" answered Huangfu Fengyun. Having witnessed Ye Shaoqing's noble deeds, they couldn't be more satisfied with the arrangement. Both he and Li Wudi were strong, but more importantly, they were still young and could be beacons of hope for the sect.

"Li Wudi, don't tell me you put me in this position so you can slack off and push matters to me," Ye Shaoqing said.

"Wow, you guessed right. My main role is still to drink with my clan's ancestors. I've already sold my body to them, and this responsibility is huge."

"Buzz off!"

Ye Shaoqing had mostly recovered after using many spirit herbs to heal up. He rode his Azureflame Dragon back into the skies.

"Where are you going?" Li Wudi asked.

"Fatepath Peak. I'm going to move the throne of your clan back to you!"

He would move the throne of the Li Saint Clan back to Kunpeng Sacred Mountain. Right after he left, Ye Qing brought Jingyu, Qingyu, and the rest to them. Jingyu and Qingyu's eyes were red from crying.

"Mom, stop crying. Today's a good day. You should sing and dance instead," Li Wudi said with his arms wide open.

"Don't," Qingyu said hastily. Her grandmother's singing and dancing was so terrifying that the lifebound beasts at Fatepath Peak would be scared away.

"Qingyu, you think I can't dance well?" Jingyu said, shooting her a glance.

"No, your dancing is graceful and unparalleled...."

"Since that's the case, I'll spend two hours a day teaching you how to dance."

Who knew that they would still be able to joke around after this life-threatening ordeal? It was truly a day worth celebrating; tears were unnecessary. When the Grand-Orient Sword had bounced off Tianming's head and Li Wudi removed the Venomdrake Spike, they'd already shed all the tears they needed to.

"Qingyu, come in for a hug," Li Wudi said with his arms awkwardly open.

"Dad..." She was a little taken aback. Was this her drunk, pathetic father? Even Tianming had known that Li Wudi was trying to overcome his trials, but Qingyu hadn't until the moment he showed up.

To say she was surprised would be an understatement.

"Quick, my hands are going to fall off!"

"Okay!" She smiled and leaped into her father's embrace. She now had an answer; whether it was back then or now, she only had one father: Li Wudi. She both pitied and loved him the most.

### **Chapter 359 - Sponging Off Fathers**

Tianming only needed one look to tell how deep their father-daughter relationship was.

"My precious daughter, anyone that dares touch a hair of yours will have their ancestors' graves exhumed," Li Wudi proclaimed.

"Dad, calm down. Stop boasting like that," Qingyu said. She was actually quite touched. Anyone could tell that Li Wudi loved his daughter with a fervor. Back then, he had to endure, as he wasn't powerful enough, and he felt like he had greatly wronged her. But now, he would treasure her even more than the sect.

"What about me?" Tianming asked.

"You can buzz off. Sons need hardship to grow, go kill enemies on the battlefield!"

Tianming couldn't even find tears to cry.

Right then, a dragon flew past them. Ye Shaoqing had moved the main plaque and throne from Kunpeng Sacred Hall up the sacred mountain, a sure sign that the Li Saint Clan had regained control. Nobody in the sect would dare go against them now, especially after word of Li Wudi overcoming his fourteen-year-long trial had spread.

"It truly is a legend worth chronicling!"

"Who can take being tortured by the Venomdrake Spike for fourteen years?"

"The sect master is not only strong, but he's definitely talented too! He even has one more bane-ring than the junior sect master!"

"It took the Elysian Emperor ten years to step into the Sky Saint stage. Our sect master will definitely surpass him!"

"The Li Saint Clan will definitely rise again with a figure like that!"

Li Wudi had done all that for the day he'd taken revenge. There would be nobody who wouldn't be impressed by what he had done. When Ye Shaoqing brought the throne back to the mountain, Li Wudi looked in that direction and said, "Come, let's go home!"

Everyone cheered as the Li Saint Clan moved to the sacred mountain.

"Sect Master!" The twenty plus elders knelt as he passed. "Sect Master, we were forced by Yuwen Taiji to harm and nearly kill the junior sect master. Please punish us for our sins!" Huangfu Fengyun said as their representative.

Shangguan Jingshu, Zhao Zhiyuan and the rest shivered. They were absolutely terrified of Li Wudi. Everyone looked at him and wondered what he would do, now that they were pressured by the sect war with Heaven's Elysium and the others.

"Everyone, let me first mention that Yuwen Taiji did well in the first few days of the war. His effort is worthy of respect. I never said he didn't contribute to the sect. In fact, he can be considered our hero. I only killed him out of a personal grudge, and was only paying back a debt of blood. Our feud had nothing to do with the sect.

"Shangguan Jingshu and Zhao Zhiyuan, you were wrong for taking the Grand-Orient Sword, but as you have sincerely repented, you can make up for your wrongdoings by fighting for the sect from now on. I'll decide your punishment after weighing it against your merits during the war.

"As for the rest, while you did much to displease me, I don't fault you for it, as you did so with the sect's best interest in mind. This time, I'll let you off, but from today onward, the elders must obey the sect master and cultivate the junior sect master. You shall never do anything against our interests from now on. Otherwise, it'll be considered a slight against the sect and you'll be heavily punished, understood?"

"Yes, thank you for your forgiveness, Sect Master!" The elders kowtowed and teared up. It was both forgiveness and a warning. The elders, and by extension, the sect, were now filled with worship for Li Wudi.

"Sect Master, Yuwen Kaitai still remains." The elders brought the apprehended Yuwen Kaitai before him. An hour back, he was still parading around like a boss. Now, he was kneeling like a pathetic wretch.

"How shall we deal with him?" They all believed he would kill off the whole Yuwen Clan.

"Yuwen Kaitai," Li Wudi said as he raised his face up by his chin.

"Do you want to kill me?" he spat.

Li Wudi simply slapped him, sending him flying thirty meters. He landed and bled from his orifices. It was as if the energy within him had blown up, causing him to bleed nonstop.

"I've crippled you, so I'll spare you. You may leave now."

"Li Wudi! End the Yuwen Clan! I dare you!" he said hoarsely.

Li Wudi merely smiled, then addressed the crowd. "For a thousand years, the Yuwen Clan has done much to protect the sect. However, in the present day, they're no longer a good fit for us. So, I've decided to remove the Yuwen Clan from the Grand-Orient Sect and exile them. Yuwen Kaitai, leave with your clansmen. From now on, you have nothing to do with the Grand-Orient Sect."

Not even Yuwen Kaitai had thought he would live on. "Aren't you afraid we'll rise back up?"

"Based on what? A cripple like you?"

Yuwen Kaitai blanked out. He was the strongest of the clan as of just recently, and he was now crippled. All that remained were the branch members that didn't show much talent.

"Leave, now!" cried many from the crowd.

This was how one showed power. If a sect master like Li Wudi feared the crippled Yuwen Clan so much he would kill them, he wouldn't deserve his position. Yuwen Kaitai would never understand that he was spared because his ancestors had indeed contributed to the sect. If it weren't for them, the Yuwen Clan would be no more.

"Actually, my son would've exterminated them, and it wouldn't have been a big deal, given what he's suffered by their hand," Jingyu said.

"Why didn't he, then?" Tianming asked.

"The main culprit's already dead. All that's left are his minions. Wudi doesn't want to become another Yuwen Taiji."

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Only after everyone from the sect had reentered the barrier did the day's battles finally end. However, Sikong Jiansheng and the rest had been left hanging for a long time. He had been defeated by Yuwen Taiji, who was in turn slaughtered by Li Wudi. How could he not feel unnerved about it?

"This Li Wudi is far more terrifying than Yuwen Taiji was. How should we deal with someone who can change fate like him? Niancang, should we report this to your dad?" Sikong Jiansheng nervously asked. His ears were ringing from the sheer pressure, but he still seemed rather dispirited after suffering defeat at the hands of Yuwen Taiji. If even someone like him was terrified, the young Jun Niancang definitely was too.

"This person is Li Tianming's father!" Jun Niancang furrowed his brow.

"Your revenge will be even harder to attain now," Yuan Chen said.

"That's right. He's a sky saint who's almost as powerful as your father. While eliminating the sect will be easy, killing him won't be!" Yun Zhenzhen said.

Sky saints could fly, after all. While the numbers of the Cloudmist Sword School and Onyx Sect combined was enough to send a hundred earth saints to take care of Li Wudi, they wouldn't be able to stop him from bringing his kin away to safety.

"I suggest we proceed with care, thanks to these sudden developments. Let's leave it to the Elysian Emperor to decide," Sikong Jiansheng said. He was afraid that Jun Niancang would force their two sects to continue attacking out of his desire for revenge. While the Grand-Orient Sect had lost a few elders, taking them down seemed much harder than before.

"Their sect master has changed, they still have the Onyx Empress!" he added.

Jun Niancang finally nodded. "Fine. I'll relay this to my dad and have him decide."

"Make sure to send all details about Li Wudi to the Elysian Emperor."

"Sect Master Sikong, you're someone on the same level as Li Wudi. Please don't act too cowardly, alright? A single sky saint won't change the fact that the Grand-Orient Sect is weak. They're fated to be destroyed by us." Jun Niancang noticed that his outlook had changed considerably from before. It was as if Yueling Long had possessed him; he couldn't help but want to wipe out this sect.

"Li Tianming, even if you have your dad protecting you, don't think you'll get to survive!" After all, his father, Jun Shengxiao, was the true legend of the Grand-Orient Realm. Nobody could hope to resist him. It would take some time for news to reach them, and the troops of Heaven's Elysium were heading toward the Southsky Sect. As such, all they could do was wait.

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Within a hidden dungeon, Tianming looked at the Onyx Empress, who glared back with killing intent. Her arms had been reconnected, but she had been bound all over by a saint beastial weapon. It was hard for her to even move, let alone escape.

"So that was Yuwen Taiji's promise to you?" Li Wudi said.

"That's right. What've you decided?"

"Cooperate, of course."

"You're another brave one. Aren't you afraid we'll attack when we're inside?" she asked with a smile.

"You're mistaken. I'm anything but brave. In fact, I'm a coward, but I think the same way they do. The enemy of my enemy is my friend, and both you and I are Heaven's Elysium's enemies."

"What if we're their dogs instead?"

"Stop messing around. Your Onyx Sect has fought us for tens of thousands of years, and I've never seen you submit. You just didn't have a chance to wipe us out. But now, this is one such opportunity." Li Wudi stood up and looked down at her with a bloody aura. "If you do break your promise, however, even I might not be able to save the sect. But at the very least, I can make sure your sect's elites, you and your husband included, as well as your family, will die without a single doubt."

His eyes were the color of hell. They made the Onyx Empress shudder uncontrollably. Those were the eyes of a murderous god. All she could do was nod, for she knew he wasn't joking in the slightest. While she was part of Yuwen Taiji's plan, Li Wudi felt that she was also their best chance of fighting back. It would now depend on how Heaven's Elysium would react.

"What if they send reinforcements?" she asked.

"We'll wipe them all out at once in that case."

### **Chapter 360 - A Stunning Beauty Appears in the Mausoleum**

Li Wudi's glorious return set the Grand-Orient Sect on the path to prominence once more. Now, he had full control, with Ye Shaoqing aiding him and the elders supporting him. While the other two sects hadn't resumed their attack, the Grand-Orient Sect couldn't afford to let up on defense. They did have fewer people, after all. Both the main front on the Flameyellow Continent and the Abyssal Battlefield front were heavily defended. Anyone passing through would have to be checked thoroughly.

Tianming, being the junior sect master, had only one mission: to continue cultivating. He wasn't at the sacred mountain, but right before Li Shenxiao's tombstone. Li Wudi had become so busy that he had Tianming stand in for him to drink with the ancestors.

Within the mausoleum was nobody but him and his lifebound beasts. It was far too uneventful. Tianming really missed Feiling after not seeing her for so long.

"That old drunkard wanted me to comprehend the Heavenly Will stage using the Grand-Orient Sword, but I'm getting nowhere." Even after his rise back to prominence, Li Wudi still hadn't quit drinking. It was a habit he could no longer change.

The sword itself wasn't just mystical, it also contained arcane powers. "Back during my previous resonance with the sword, its energy flowed into me, infusing the infernalsource with black-gold energy. That power gathered in my beast ki and greatly strengthened it. It's as if I have the power of a third lifebound beast."

Initially, his beast ki was a little weak, thanks to his low level. However, he had grown much stronger in this regard. His three great sources of power—the infernalsource, lightningsource, and Grand-Orient Vortex—were quite powerful when combined. The vortex's energies were especially fierce and infused with regal sword ki. It was most suitable for executing sword arts.

Even though this vortex alone is powerful enough, the sword should hold more mysteries for me to discover. But just like the Prime Tower, I'm still unable to directly use it. I can only passively benefit from its power.

Nowadays, he'd been observing the patterns on the sword and had grown rather familiar with it. "Master's Azureflame Empyrean has twenty-eight saintly heavenly patterns. My godfather's Crimsonblood Saber has forty-five. Saint bestial weapons were forged using ores containing saintly heavenly patterns. During the forging, all of the ores, spirit hazards, and patterns would blend together and form new saintly heavenly patterns. The more there are, the stronger the weapon is.

"Naturally, during the forging, most of them would fuse and their number wouldn't really grow. Yet the Grand-Orient Sword doesn't have saintly heavenly patterns."

Even though there were no saintly heavenly patterns, it did feel like there were some kind of patterns on it. They seemed to be even more complicated than saintly ones.

"Perhaps that drunkard wants me to figure out why and embark on my journey on the grand path. The path to Heavenly Will and heavenly patterns begins now! I have to break through to the Heavenly Will stage as soon as I can. Only then can I start cultivating the Saint stage and extend my lifetime."

A few months had passed since Aeonic Grandbane had manifested. Currently, his biological age was twenty-five years old. He had aged by five years in a few short months.

Time doesn't wait, whether I survive or not. In a few more years, I'll be older than my godfather and master. It'll be awkward then. He was facing huge pressure, but that same pressure motivated him to charge toward the next stage. Breaking through to a major stage was far harder than a minor stage.

"I will break through to Heavenly Will and fight Heaven's Elysium with my fellow sect members! Those arrogant, heartless folks will definitely get it from us! Jun Nianchang, let's see how you wipe us out now."

It was only a temporary ceasefire. The real battle was still on the horizon.

"What're you mumbling about?" someone said by his side.

"It is none of your business," Tianming mumbled as he intently focused on the sword.

"Oh? Just two months of not seeing me and you're talking to me with this kind of attitude."

"Who're you?!" Tianming said, then looked up and froze. Who could be talking to him in the mausoleum? He didn't see anyone there.

"Oh, so you've forgotten my voice too!"

Tianming's eyes widened, then he felt utter bliss. "Ling'er!" He immediately took out the necklace. He was a little too focused on the sword, and didn't notice the voice until it got angry. It was Feiling's voice!

"You thug, why did you put the necklace there?"

When he took it out, a golden cloud formed above the necklace. She was about to wake up.

"I worried you'd be cold, so I was trying to warm you up!" he argued.

"Stupid Tianming! I will pinch you!" The moment she said that, a beautiful girl formed above the necklace. Eventually, the beauty he yearned for in his dreams appeared before him once again.

Her skin was pure white and her long, flowing hair was like a waterfall. Her eyes currently shone with embarrassment and anger. Her chiseled nose and teeth, not to mention a faint blush that further accentuated her alluring pout.

"It's a misunderstanding, Ling'er!" Before he finished, she pounced on him.

"What kind of misunderstanding? Don't you know how weird it felt when you were touching the necklace nonstop for the past two months?" The longer she went on, the more flushed her face got. Despite what she had said, she didn't actually pinch him.

"Come on, I was only touching the necklace!"

"That was me!" She didn't know how to react. Who wouldn't be annoyed at being felt up constantly like that?

"It's my fault, Ling'er, but you can't blame me for not knowing. Just look the other way, won't you?"

Seeing him still trying to be sleazy, she felt both anger and embarrassment. But when they finally calmed down, they did nothing but stare at each other. He had truly missed her too much. Tianming couldn't resist and hugged her tight around the waist.

"Big Brother, there'll be no next time," she said as she buried herself into his chest. Her face was so red that it looked like they would pop with the lightest touch. However, she was still sitting on him. Tianming couldn't resist her beautiful lips and couldn't control his mouth.

"Ahem. Meow Meow, this isn't suitable for kids. Look away," said a sudden voice.

Tianming looked up and almost vomited blood. Ying Huo and Meow Meow were standing just inches away. Their four little eyes were glued onto the humans, curiously watching. Ying Huo was enjoying the view and had brought its wing up to shield Meow Meow's eyes, making it move its head around to continue watching. No matter how hard the little chick tried to block it, the cat was moving so quickly that afterimages formed.

"Quick, go on. Let us little ones learn from your precious experience," Ying Huo encouraged.

"Boss, please don't stop. It was just getting good. You can't leave me hanging, or I'll scratch your balls!" the black cat impatiently said.

"Damn it!" Tianming was fuming with rage. He leapt up, placed Feiling on the ground, and drew the Grand-Orient Sword. The two critters immediately ran, Ying Huo even using Infernal Haze to get away.

"Don't run! If I don't roast you today, my surname isn't Li!"

It was too frustrating. Who messes with other people like that? He was just going in for a kiss! Did they have to put their faces so close to watch?

Thus, he began chasing those two critters down with the Grand-Orient Sword in the mausoleum, causing quite a lot of chaos in the process while the beauty quietly put on Ling'er's Love in front of Li Shenxiao's tomb. Then, she watched Tianming and the two small beasts and laughed nonstop. Her laughter sounded like the blissful ringing of a bell.

"Being alive sure is nice."

She even teared up from all the laughing. Throughout the past two months, she had experienced those events just as Tianming himself had. She watched him kill Yueling Long, retrieve her seals, and trade his life away once more back at the sect. And now was their long-awaited reunion. The only thing that embarrassed her was how Tianming had put the necklace in his pants pocket. The mere thought of it caused her face to flush.

"Ling'er! Tianming flirted around while you were away with that Weisheng Ruosu girl! He even saved her like a hero would a damsel, making her unable to resist him!" Ying Huo chirped.

"That's right! I saw it all! He even looked so badass in front of that girl. Cheating scum like him truly go to crazy lengths," Meow Meow said with a straight face.

"Ling'er, go pick some mushrooms. We're having steamed chicken tonight. And you, cat, your balls are mine!" he yelled as he passed through.

"Big Brother? Where do you suppose I can find mushrooms?" Feiling asked.

"There's one growing between Tianming's legs!" Ying Huo said.

"Damn you!" Tianming was running so fast he crashed into the tombstone. "Ling'er, don't listen to his crap. I didn't look at any other beauty but you!"

"How would you know they're beauties if you didn't look at them?" Feiling destroyed him with facts and logic.



"Hmph, love doesn't exist after all," she said, feigning anger. But when she looked at Tianming's dumbfounded expression, she couldn't help but glow with laughter. She was too beautiful for this world.